

Why it's become important for hospitality employees to expand their skills

With the growth of the hospital industry evolving - especially when it comes to being economically resilient - it has become essential for hospitality employee to expand on their skill sets, whether it be locally or internationally. Here, local hotel group, the Fortis Hotel Group, Austrian based luxury hotel, Hotel Goldener Berg, and local hospitality consultants, D&K Hospitality Consultants, share fundamental qualities and characteristics they look for in a potential hospitality employee.



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They're looking for an attitude – but the good kind

Sometimes it may not necessarily only be about the skill set and experience in the hospitality industry. It's clear from the feedback from the three hospitality establishments that, much like a CV cover letter, a candidate's attitude will encourage potential employers in the hospitality industry to 'read further'.

Fortis Hotel Group's sales and marketing director, Sandra Masson says that by attitude, she means that she looks for passion and willingness to grow and learn and considers a candidate's ability to be able to adapt to the logical and methodical internal processes that align to the businesses objectives as key qualities to look out for when interviewing candidates.

Internationally, Daniela Pfefferkorn from Hotel Goldener Berg in Lech, Austria looks for potential employees who demonstrate kindness and politeness, also those who are team players and eager to work.

D&K Hospitality Consultants' Don Elliot looks more closely at how a candidate conducts themselves: what body language they use, how self-confident they are and whether they use eye contact in addition to a great attitude, sense of humour and attentive communication skills.

Soft skills and experience – it's more than just the qualification

Although the pertinent experience level can motivate whether an individual is able to climb up the proverbial hospitality ladder, Elliot goes as far as to say that skills can be taught but it's how the individual's character is best suited to a specific hospitality role that is of far greater significance. Elliot further highlights high energy, flexibility, independence and particular personality traits like passion and an outgoing personality that influence how quickly an individual can work their way into a management position.

Pfefferkorn says although some experience is required, a candidate's references from previous employers are as important. Relevant training and hospitality knowledge is fundamental for any candidate as they start their hospitality career journey, however, the length of service in a specific role plus the areas of expertise like management, strategic planning and financial skills will be evaluated for management promotions.

According to all three respondents, aside from being 100% committed to guest satisfaction and the ability to put the customer or guests first, another key component in identifying good hospitality candidates is astute organisational skills, paying a meticulous amount of attention to detail and understanding the relationship between results-driven financial savvy and guest gratification.

If you don't love it, don't do it

Hospitality is one industry where this saying may ring truer than in any other career. "Working in hospitality is a lifestyle, not just a job," says Elliot. Having to be adaptable, humble and committed requires passion, and that passion is what makes people in the hospitality industry successful.

International vs local recruitment

Interestingly, when questioned on whether hotels prefer to employ local or International candidates – aside from the local BEE requirements, these hotels preferred local candidates as their cultural and area-based knowledge, with linguistic knowledge always proving advantageous.

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