

Hotel Handbook for Intercultural Competence: Romania and Turkey

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Executive Summary

In hotel management, examining cultures has become a key factor for successful performance in today's diverse market. It is necessary to keep in mind that the whole hotel industry experience is not only about receptionists. In Romania, there are many different visitors, such as the elderly, pensioners, local people and foreign visitors. The employees' job is to make them feel welcome and comfortable. Guests' feelings are closely related to their perceptions of the staff's behavior and attitude towards them (Davidescu et al., 2020). Romanian guests enjoy more benefits from a service provider than Turkish customers since Romania has more egalitarian values. The Romanian culture emphasizes the importance of relationships in business transactions rather than efficiency or profitability. There are many similarities between Romania and Turkey in terms of culture with respect to rank differences. This report will examine the similarities and differences between the two countries and will illustrate how Romania's hotel staff can provide better services to customer visitors from Turkey. Customer Service is essential for all hotels in Romania and Turkey, both international and domestic. The main differences are usually in the way they handle customers and provide services to them. The differences can be due to many reasons, which include cultural differences. The greeting is a very important aspect of any service industry since it starts with a positive feeling for the guest, which will directly influence their perceptions about the restaurant. Turkish citizens usually greet each other with the right hands (Erlend, 2019). In Romania, they can use both hands. Hotel staff should be diverse and ready to conform to any culture.

Hotel Handbook for Intercultural Competence: Romania and Turkey

Romania and Turkey have different scores in the Hofstede cultural dimensions, which can affect their staff and visitors. The six Hofstede dimensions for this analysis are: "Power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term vs. short-term orientation and indulgence versus restraint" (Huang & Crotts, 2019, p. 2). The Hofstede dimensions is a model insight by Geert Hofstede, which was developed in 1970, and since then, it has become a standard analysis model. It measures the economic and cultural values of different countries with different forms of the score (Radojevic et al., 2019). Despite the two countries having slight differences in the scores, the difference is very significant regarding customer service.. The staff of Romania might need help understanding guests' needs and demands due to their different Hofstede scores. On the other hand, Turkey guest customers from cultures that are more distant from the Romanian culture might find some staff members difficult to communicate with because of the distance between their cultural values.

Romania Culture

Romania's power distance score is at 90, meaning there is a strong hierarchy, the power difference is significant, and people know rank differences. The low individualism score, which is 30, indicates that people are seen as consequences of the group and that teamwork is more valued in a job (Malea, 2019). This is true because the most important rule in Romania is to conform to others and respect authority. According to Hofstede Insights (n.d), the 42-masculinity level indicates the moderate competition of individuals over status. People also value quality and consensus in a working environment. Romania has a very high score, 90, on

uncertainty avoidance. Countries with such high score do not take risks but work according to the rules to avoid future uncertainties. Employees follow the organization's rules over customer requests that may be against the rules. 52 score of Long term orientation indicates an intermediate level of value of traditions. According to Lukacs and his colleagues (2020), Romanian employees can moderately accept changes in their cultures. Romania's indulgence score is at 20, meaning its culture is restrained. They value work over pleasure and personal desires and an indication of a commitment to work.

Power distance	Individualism	Masculinity	Uncertainty Avoidance	Long-term Orientation	Indulgence
90	30	42	90	52	20

Turkey Culture

The power distance score for Turkey is 66, indicating a robust hierarchy and a substantial power gap. The low individuality score of 37 shows that "WE" is more valued in the workplace than individual effort (Hofstede Insights, n.d). This is accurate since, in Turkey, conformity to others is the essential rule. The 45-masculinity level denotes a moderate level of status-based rivalry. Customers will prefer quality over quantity in any case. Turkey's score is 85 on uncertainty avoidance showing that they doubt risks and avoid them as much as possible (Hofstede Insights, n.d). According to Yıldırım (2019), there is no obvious prevailing cultural preference based on Turkey's intermediate score of 46, which is in the middle of the range of long-term orientation. A similar moderate score of 49 shows that people balance pleasure and time.

Power distance	Individualism	Masculinity	Uncertainty Avoidance	Long-term Orientation	Indulgence
67	37	45	85	46	49

Comparison Analysis

Most of the scores between the two countries are almost at the same rate except for the differences in power distance and indulgence levels. The power distance difference between the two countries illustrates that Romanian is more authoritative than Turkish. The difference is portrayed in how Romanian managers can be controlling to the juniors and thus employees. The power distance demoralizes hotel staff which may affect their performance and customer care. Romania has a higher score on power distance which is why employees and managers are more hierarchical in Romania than they are in Turkey. Indulgence levels have similar rates, but since Romania is more open to change, there are many more opportunities for people to be creative.

Critical Analysis

As a Romanian employee, it is important to understand that Turkey visitors will expect much respect from the employee, especially when the visitor is older than the employee since its power distance is high. Another vital aspect is greeting; for Turkish people left-hand handshake is regarded as disrespectful (Erlend, 2019). Based on Davidescu et al. research in 2020, one of Romania's general rules is that employees have the right to dress in a way they like, although employees cannot wear provocative clothing when they are inside the hotel. Romanians may be reluctant to change due to their low indulgence levels, but since the Turkish prefer uniforms and decent clothes, the employee will be expected to wear job attire.

Another important factor related to Romania staff is offensive and suggestive language (Davidescu et al., 2020). It mostly occurs among Romanian staff, and with Turkish visitors, it is common for guests to use this language with each other. In some countries, it is usual for Romanian workers to speak loudly during work hours. Generally, conversation between employees is more lively than normal among Turkish

visitors (Erlend, 2019). Another difference between Romanian visitors and employees is how they treat women. Romanian workers are used to women being served last for example, in a restaurant with both male and female workers, guest visitors can be sure that the females will be served last. This aspect is unexpected in Turkey. In Romania, most of our employees are not used to giving compliments. Therefore, while visiting Romania, it is best to avoid offering compliments.

DO's	DON'Ts
Offer Restaurant Menu that doesn't contain pork meat	Do not greet Turkish with the left hand
Always respect hierarchy and age gaps	Employees should refrain from speaking loudly during work hours.
Listen to the guest's needs	Do not shake hands with Turkish women
Respect if a Turkish guest burp after a meal. It's considered respectful toward the Chef	Avoid sitting in any position that allows one's shoe to face another person
	Don't show affection in public towards Turkish guests

Conclusion

Romania visitors will be better served if the employees can understand the cultural differences and provide better services for those visitors. The slight difference in the Hofstede scores indicates a significant difference in terms of greetings, employees' dress code and employee-customer engagement. Even though both countries' power distance is similar (Huang & Crotts, 2019), they differ in the way that the respect is presented. Generally, the values and etiquette aspects of every country must be considered in the customer-employee relationship.

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