

BA International Hotel Management
Foreign languages and cultural awareness

Professional Reflection

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Introduction

Front-line staff members are crucial in the fast-paced hospitality business for delivering a seamless and satisfying visitor experience. Cultural misunderstandings, however, can occasionally occur among a broad international clientele, which may result in unpleasant circumstances and unfavorable perceptions. This study examines a typical situation in which a Front of House (FOH) staff and a hotel visitor have a cultural misunderstanding, with language difficulties serving as the main contributing factor.

Concrete experience

A situation that starkly illustrated the possibility for cultural miscommunications occurred while I was working as a Front of House employee at a busy hotel. The front desk was contacted by a guest who spoke English as a second language. The language barrier made it clear that communication was an uphill task, despite my best attempts. I could not help but feel inadequate in my duty as the guest seemed frustrated (Brown, 2015).

Reflective observation

Considering this experience, I acknowledged the significance of language as a key element in intercultural dialogue. I came to see that even while speaking a common language like English, misunderstandings can readily occur when people from diverse linguistic backgrounds attempt to converse. It soon became clear that the language barrier between the guest and me was a major cause of the cultural misunderstanding. Communication was significantly hampered by linguistic nuances, including what I would refer to as simple expressions and cultural context. It occurred to me that these misunderstandings had greater ramifications for the hotel's reputation, not just how they impacted the visitor experience.

In a news article by the East African (2020), language barrier was blamed for poor customer service in the tourism sector, where the article goes ahead to highlight the need for various language mastery. Considering the work by Maheshar and Sharma (2018), I concluded that effective communication in the hospitality sector goes beyond only linguistic competence but still plays a significant role in the guest's satisfaction. Understanding various cultural conventions, expectations, and communication methods is necessary. Delesky's work in 2016 on "International Management" emphasized the significance of cultural intelligence in successfully navigating such situations.

Abstract conceptualization

I realized I needed to improve my communication and cultural intelligence to avoid similar cultural miscommunications in the future. This entails exploring the cultural quirks that influence communication methods in addition to honing one's linguistic skills. A theoretical framework for comprehending the nuances of cross-cultural interactions was made available by studying Delesky's observations on managing across boundaries and cultures. To do this, I might need to constantly update my knowledge base using a variety of sources that can offer insightful analyses of how cultural dynamics are changing.

Active experimentation

With this newfound insight, I am determined to make substantial behavioral adjustments to improve my ability to interact effectively with visitors from diverse backgrounds. First, I will look for opportunities to develop my language skills with a concentration on expressions frequently employed in the hospitality industry. In addition, I will participate in cultural awareness training, utilizing both real-world encounters and scholarly revelations offered by sources like Maheshar and Sharma's guidebook. This will entail routinely attending seminars and courses geared toward intercultural communication in the hospitality industry.

Reference list

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