

UNIT 5 - P. 40-41

5

Dealing with guests



DESCRIBING PEOPLE, P. 40

speaking **1** Work in pairs. What makes a good hotel manager? Put these characteristics into order of importance and discuss your ideas with your partner.

A good hotel manager:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> likes people | <input type="checkbox"/> can think like a child |
| <input type="checkbox"/> likes variety | <input type="checkbox"/> can entertain like a clown |
| <input type="checkbox"/> is charming | <input type="checkbox"/> understands body language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> has good financial skills | <input type="checkbox"/> pays attention to routine detail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> needs good computer skills | <input type="checkbox"/> possesses a sense of humour |

2 What other skills and qualities do you expect a good hotel manager to possess?



"Every single part of a hotel is an offering you make to your guest who for all intents and purposes is your real boss. No act of heartfelt service is below a good hotel manager who is unafraid of leading by example."

— M. Pierre Barthes

— a girl who serves at the hotel's cake shop. Mr. Barthes is Chinese inside and French outside. What greater tribute can a foreign GM enjoy than one that clearly suggests his arrival in the hearts of the people he serves?

Friends & Admirers

Few general managers impact such high profile guests like actresses and business tycoons as Barthes does. Of his style of management entrepreneur par excellence Dato Farah Khan, founder and president of Malaysia's leading luxury retailer The Midland Group says: "I have been a regular client of the Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur for years. I have had the pleasure to personally experience one of the most dedicated, hardworking, decisive, attentive GMs I have ever met. He lives and breathes his brand not just for his hotel but always recommending other Mandarin Oriental sites around the world. I wish him the best of success as he truly deserves it."

Alongside other screen icons and actress Michelle Yeoh says: "Pierre is simply the best! He is a hostler who loves his work and all who come his way. Charming as he is impeccable in every way, his thoughtfulness always keep homesickness at bay."

The Secret's Simple. Really

So, what's the secret, pray tell, we ask.

"There is no secret. I guess I got this quest for perfection from my parents.

They kept going on about giving the finest job more than your best so it became a habit.

Yes, I am a perfectionist but it isn't about "me". It's about

creating bespoke services that surprise and touches the hearts and emotions of the guests.

I want my hotel staff to be a family you want to come home to. Nothing less. Absolutely, nothing less!"

"To me it's all about authenticity. They say a crisp croissant tastes special on the streets of Paris. Does it really? Yes, it does because it's an awesome feeling to enjoy the crispness of a freshly baked croissant or baguette in the heart of France. It's warm, it's exciting, it's sexy!"

"To me, every tiny part of a hotel is an offering you make to your guest who for all intents and purposes is your real boss. He/she is the reason you are



Staff at the Mandarin Oriental Puding wear glossy-eyed with happiness and pride at seeing their GM wear their uniforms at the shoot on the yacht overlooking the hotel.

DESCRIBING PEOPLE, P. 41

vocabulary Describing people

5 Complete the table below.

-ed / -ing adjectives

-ed adjectives describe how a person feels:

I feel tired.

-ing adjectives say what makes the person feel that way:

It was a tiring journey.

noun

1 motivation

2 charm

3 excellence

4 enthusiasm

5 fulfilment

6 pleasure

7 success

8 variety

adjective

motivating / motivated

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

verb

motivate

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

speaking 6 What skills and qualities are required for the following jobs?

accountant

housekeeper

head receptionist

sales manager



Cloning the perfect hotelier

In a recent study Dr David Young, a leading psychologist, was hired to devise a personality test to reveal the characteristics that make hoteliers not just good but excellent.

The study showed – unsurprisingly – that the most successful owners and managers have two key qualities: the first, a genuine liking for people; the second, the ability to motivate others. These are the factors that put the X in excellence, but liking people is more than skin-deep. It has nothing to do with the ‘have a nice day’ attitude found among second-raters.

It means being good at dealing with all kinds of people, being able to share other people’s feelings and imagine what it is like to be in their situation. They understand body language and can detect non-verbal messages in order to gain a better understanding of a guest’s needs.

According to the psychologist, enthusiastic and motivating hoteliers are ‘child-clowns’. Like a child they must be filled with energy and enthusiasm and, like a clown, must be able to excite others so that they find their work more pleasurable and fulfilling. Another aspect of the child-clown personality is a love of variety and an equally strong dislike of routine.



Language focus Articles

Read the extract from the text on page 41 and underline all the uses of **a** and **the** and all the nouns that do not have an article in front of them.

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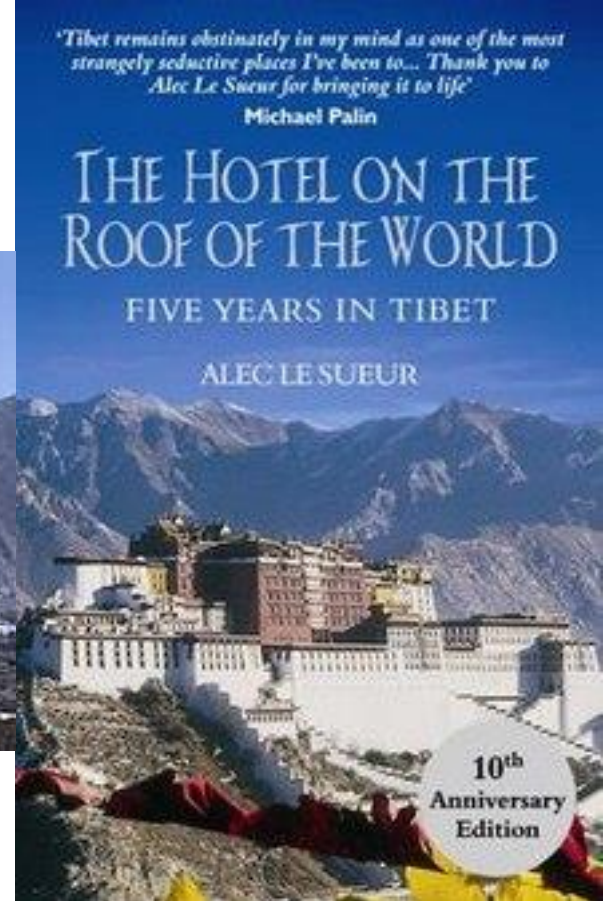
Read the rules and complete the information below with examples from the text on page 41.

- We normally use no article before the names of people and their titles.
Professor Wilson, Dr David Young.....
- We use *a* before professions
a receptionist.....
- We use *the* before a noun that has been previously mentioned or is clear.
I had a passport and an identity card but the passport was invalid.
.....
- We use *the* before a noun identified by a phrase or clause that follows.
It's not the hotel that I stayed in last year.....
.....
- We use no article when countable, plural nouns are used in a general sense.
Guests staying in expensive hotels expect better facilities.....
.....
- We use *the* in superlative expressions.
The Lanesborough is the most expensive hotel in London.....
.....

► For more information turn to page 126.



READING, P. 44



Communication problems

11 In his book *Running a Hotel on the Roof of the World*, Alec Le Sueur tells the story of his experience of working at a Holiday Inn hotel in Tibet. Before you read the extract below think about these questions.

- What physical problems could guests experience staying at 12,000 ft?
- What could the hotel provide to prevent these problems?

12 Read the extract and answer these questions.

- 1 What is meant by 'red carpet treatment'?
- 2 Why was it important to give this visitor 'red carpet treatment'?
- 3 Why do you think it was 'the last straw'?
- 4 What mistake did the operator make?
- 5 As the manager of this hotel what would you do to improve the situation?
- 6 Do you know any similar stories involving language problems?



READING, P. 44

'Why don't your staff speak English?' was a question which was asked by guests throughout the day. It became very annoying and although it was extremely tempting to reply, 'Why don't you speak Tibetan or next time stay at home?' this answer was not really acceptable in an international hotel. Instead I answered with a polite, 'Oh, I am terribly sorry, we are constantly looking for ways to improve the service to our guests and thank you so much for bringing this matter to our attention.'

The last straw with the 'lack of English' complaints came from an investment banker who had been invited to Tibet to discuss important financial projects with the local government. We had special instructions to provide red carpet treatment and the General Manager escorted him and his wife to the best suite in the hotel. The financier was concerned that his wife might suffer from altitude sickness and he looked around the suite for the oxygen supply. He found the bottle beneath the bedside table and followed the instructions on how to release oxygen into the room. But nothing happened and he called the operator to ask for someone to check the oxygen. 'Yes,' the operator responded. He waited patiently for an engineer to arrive. Fifteen minutes later no-one had appeared and his wife was complaining of a headache. He called the operator again to ask for the oxygen. 'Yes, wait a moment. I check for you,' was the reply.

Another quarter of an hour passed, and still no-one had arrived – his wife's headache was worsening and he was beginning to lose his temper. He snatched the receiver, dialled 2222 and demanded to know why there was no oxygen. The operator gave him an irritated reply, he had been wasting her time. 'Yes, I checked for you, but there is no Mr Oxygen staying in the hotel.'

LISTENING – A COMPLAINT, P. 45

vocabulary **Misunderstanding**

14 Complete the expressions with the words from the box.

cross crossed point stick tail

1. She completely missed the
2. They were talking at purposes.
3. She got the wrong end of the
4. I think we both got our lines
5. I couldn't make head nor of what she was saying.

listening **A complaint**

15 A guest checks in at a hotel and loses something of value. Read the following list of events. Then listen and number the events in the order in which they occur.

The porter shows Mrs Horton to room 212.

Mrs Horton reports the missing necklace to reception.

Mrs Horton goes to her room.

Mrs Horton telephones her husband.

Mrs Horton unpacks her clothes and uses the bathroom.

The receptionist offers to ring the housekeeper.

The receptionist misunderstands the name.



DIALOGUE – AN ANGRY GUEST AND THE RESTAURANT MANAGER (DODATNA LITERATURA)

2 Complete the dialogue between an angry guest and the restaurant manager with sentences a–g.

- a Hmm, that's not good.
- b Then can I offer you coffee and liqueurs in the lounge? Obviously, there will be no charge.
- c I understand. I'm sorry, but we've been very busy this evening.
- d *What seems to be the problem?*
- e You're quite right. Please accept my apologies. Have you had coffee?
- f If you'd like to take a seat in the lounge, I'll get the waiter to come and take your order.
- g I see. And what is the problem exactly?



MANAGER: *What seems to be the problem?* 1
GUEST: I want to complain about the standard of service in this restaurant. 2
MANAGER: 2
GUEST: We had to wait over thirty minutes before the waiter took our order. 3
MANAGER: 3
GUEST: We've had a long day and we just wanted to eat. 4
MANAGER: 4
GUEST: But thirty minutes is unacceptable. 5
MANAGER: 5
GUEST: No, we haven't. We didn't want to wait another thirty minutes! 6
MANAGER: 6
GUEST: Thank you. That's more like the service we expect here. 7
MANAGER: 7
GUEST: Thank you. 7



DEALING WITH A COMPLAINT, P. 46

Professional practice Dealing with complaints

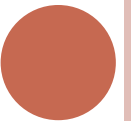
Match the phrases in the box with the advice below.

I'm (very / terribly) sorry. What seems to have happened is that ...
There's been a misunderstanding. We'll look into the matter and ...
I suggest that we ... I'll see to it straightaway.
I do apologise for the inconvenience.
Thank you for bringing the matter to my attention.
There seems to have been a problem / a mix-up.

- if the guest is angry go somewhere private
- listen carefully to the complaint and don't interrupt or argue
- thank the person for bringing the matter to your attention
1. Thank you for bringing the matter to my attention.....
- speak normally without raising your voice
- apologise for the inconvenience
2.....
3.....
- explain what happened
4.....
5.....
6.....
- explain what action will be taken and how soon
7.....
8.....
9.....



ROLE-PLAY: DEALING WITH A COMPLAINT



- Thank you for your attention!