

# 2: Overview of the Housekeeping Department

## This chapter will help you to:

- Understand the role and responsibilities of housekeeping department
- Evaluate the effective coordination of housekeeping department with other departments
- Review the organisational structure of housekeeping department

The housekeeping department's responsibility lies in ensuring cleanliness, hygiene, comfort, and safety of the customers. Among all the departments in the hotel, the efforts of housekeeping department are most overt. The impact of great housekeeping develops confidence in the customer so that they can check in at the hotel with a positive, stress-free mindset. Witnessing the housekeeping standards of the hotel, a guest decides whether he or she is going to return to there and become a loyal customer, or is going to depart with a negative review.

The housekeeping department is a part of the rooms division department in a hotel. In larger hotels, the rooms division has a front office and a housekeeping department underneath it. However, this may differ from hotel to hotel. The front office department is responsible for maximising the sales of the guest room and therefore needs to use effective pricing policies to attract the customers. The front office works closely with the housekeeping department as the room can only be sold to a prospective customer when it has been made ready for sale by the housekeeping department. Other than the housekeeping and front office department, the concierge, reservation, spa, and security are part of the rooms division. All these departments have specific roles in meeting the guest expectation and creating a positive experience and therefore they work closely with each other. In a large hotel, the rooms division manager (RDM) overlooks the operation and is supported by the front-office manager, revenue manager and executive housekeeper. A RDM reports to the general manager.

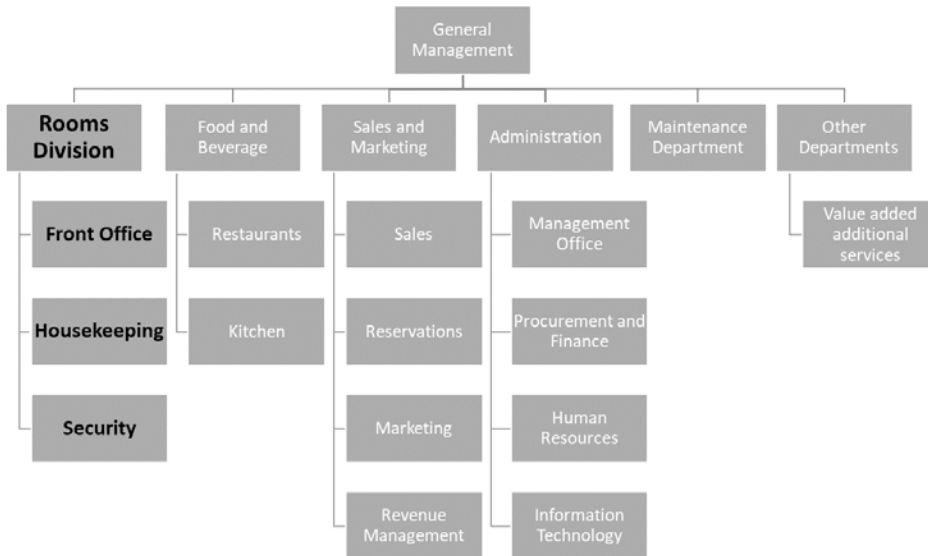


Figure 2.1: Overview of hotel departments

## Housekeeping's coordination with different departments in a hotel

The housekeeping department is responsible for maintaining the high standards of hygiene of the rooms and communal areas as well as creating a pleasant environment for the guest, and follows a systematic manner to keep the establishment clean and fresh. The housekeeping department has one of the essential roles, which also requires great level of intercommunication with various other departments for the smooth delivery of services to the guest.

The department's responsibilities are carried out by room attendants. These responsibilities include cleaning the rooms using chemicals, replacing the linen in the guest rooms and bathrooms, and replenishing all supplies daily. This must be done in accordance with the wishes and demands of the guests. It is especially significant and becomes more valued when the guest's room is expensive. For a seamless operation, each department of the hotel needs to coordinate and communicate effectively with every other one. A hospitality operation requires a great deal of teamwork and therefore those hotels where staff are hugely motivated to work with each other and support each other, climb the ladder of success. The interdepartmental coordination between housekeeping and front office, housekeeping and food & beverage, housekeeping and maintenance, housekeeping and sales and marketing will be discussed below.