


Essential Financial Techniques for Hospitality Managers

Cathy Burgess

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Foreword

Hospitality is a 'people business' - but it's also a money business. No matter what sector you work in, if we don't effectively manage our revenues, costs and profits then we won't survive in an increasingly competitive and complex market place. Managing the money isn't just the responsibility of the finance department - all managers have to take financial responsibility for their area of the operation, whether it's staff, beds, food stocks or cash.

It's not difficult - in fact most of it is common sense combined with knowledge of 'the business' - and any manager can make a difference. By leading from the top and setting a good example, managers can have a significant impact on driving forward revenues and building the bottom line, for the benefit of both their career and, of course, their organization.

There is no doubt that this book can help you to become a better manager and I recommend this text for all managers in hospitality who need to manage the business finances responsibly and effectively.

Paul Dukes, FCA,

Chairman of the British Association of Hospitality Accountants (BAHA),
baha-uk.org

Preface

What's the point of this book?

Well, it's about money! Whether you're working for a large corporation operating in many countries or helping on a takeaway stall, if you don't manage effectively then you'll lose money. You, as an individual, are important because your actions as a manager or supervisor determine how your staff will behave. A pound saved (or made in revenue) on one transaction multiplies to a vast sum when you consider the number of transactions in a day, and repeated time after time. Thirty pounds a day is almost £11,000 a year, enough to pay your wages for several months.

The hospitality and tourism industry is enormous, employing almost two million people in the UK (about 7% of the UK workforce, and growing) in its many different sectors, all of which have their own individual characteristics. The skills you acquire in one sector can be used in another, so although you may think, for instance, that hotels are 'different', many of the features are similar. This is particularly true of the finance area, as all key activities are transferable and have an impact on the money aspect in one way or another.

Also, many financial aspects of the hospitality business are common to all industries. For the successful management of any type of business (including those that are non-profit-making) you need to address three main areas:

- Improving revenue
- Reducing costs
- Caring for assets.

Purpose

The purpose of this book is to give you an understanding of how your actions can affect the management of the business and the financial consequences of these actions. We will look at the different features of the various sectors, and identify many of the areas in which you can help improve efficiency and hence the financial results. You will develop an

understanding of the basic principles of financial control and how it can affect the organisation as a whole.

You do need 'accounts' to help you do this. However, this isn't an 'accounting' book. Although we will be looking at some of the accounting statements the approach throughout is to look at management first and then numbers second. You don't need to be good at number-crunching to be an effective manager - as long as you can use a (simple) calculator then you will be able to work through some of the examples that are given in the different chapters. What is important is that you are able to understand the effect of your actions and those of others on the finances of the organisation.

So - the book is more of a manual that you'll be able to use both now and in the future. By the end of it, therefore, you should be able to:

- Understand why the 'bottom-line' is important
- Use some of the main techniques to control your area of business
- Calculate the effect of your actions in a range of real-life scenarios.

Structure

This book is divided into 11 chapters. The first two look at the importance of control, the basic accounting statements and how the statements are put together. Chapters 3 and 4 focus on the management of revenue and costs. Chapter 5 looks at pricing issues and Chapter 6 deals with forecasting future levels of business, which is crucial to planning your activities.

Managing cash and stocks appear next – two of the most susceptible areas for losses – and this leads in to standard costing which is a technique essential to sectors with exact recipe specifications, such as airline catering. Chapter 9 shows how you can utilise simple spreadsheets to help you perform all these tasks more easily. Chapter 10 then looks outside the unit and gives you an insight into how it relates to the 'bigger picture' of the whole organisation, and why different types of company structure might be relevant to you. The final chapter summarises the book, gives a brief introduction to forecasting future trends and then suggests some resources that could help you further develop your skills.

Approach

The approach is very pragmatic and ‘hands-on’. You will see lots of real-life examples from a variety of industry sectors and each section will have some mini-exercises to practise so that you know how to use the different techniques. There are answers to these exercises at the end of the book.

We assume that you are working, even if only a few hours a week, so you’ll also have chance to go and find out how things operate in your workplace and what makes your business function effectively (or not!). If you aren’t in employment then please use a facility you know - your local pub or cafe will do fine. Also included are some useful tips. The key word throughout is control.

At the end of the book is a reading list to help you find out more about different areas. Some of these are financially-based, others focus on other disciplines or specific sectors. You will also see a list of on-line resources, and don’t forget too that industry journals can be really helpful (e.g. *Caterer and Hotelkeeper* and *Hospitality*) in providing you with up-to-date industry practice and ideas about what is happening elsewhere in your own and other sectors.

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Chapter extract

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