First Impressions and an Ethical Foundation

CHAPTER | OUTLINE

CHECKLIST | OF CHAPTER LEARNING OBJECTIVES

As a result of satisfactory completion of this chapter, readers will be able to:

1. Review the basic concerns of new employees as they begin work in a hospitality organization.

2. Explain important procedures that should be used as employee orientation programs and procedures are developed and implemented.

3. Note the importance of employee handbooks, and list typical policy and procedure topics that might be included in them.

4. Identify basic concerns that should be addressed as employee mentoring programs are planned and implemented.

5. Discuss the role of ethics in the management of human resources.

Impact on Human Resources Management

You've probably heard the old expression, "You only have one opportunity to make a good first impression!" This commonsense observation sets the scene as we address a new employee's initial on-job activities and ethical considerations that should guide the organization and its employees as decisions are made.

As new employees participate in initial work experiences, they desire reinforcement that their decision to join the hospitality organization was a good one. What managers do (and don't do) will likely have a significant impact on the perceptions of new employees. A well-planned and consistently implemented orientation program is a great first step in efforts to help assure that new employees have favorable rather than unfavorable first impressions of their employer, workplace, managers, and team.

Managers should consider their own initial work experiences and the impressions that were created. Background information about the process by which new staff members adapt to a work situation establishes the context within which orientation programs are planned and implemented. The orientation process is important for both the new staff member and the hospitality organization. Therefore, it should be carefully planned and, once used successfully, its major components can be replicated for use as initial on-job activities for future employees are required.

Employee handbooks provide a wealth of information that is helpful as managers make decisions affecting employees. Handbooks also assist staff members when they want to know about work requirements that affect them. Managers and supervisors must be fair, and equitable treatment of employees is most assured when the same requirements apply to all employees all of the time. These requirements should be addressed in a current and well-organized employee handbook provided to new employees during their orientation process.

Mentoring programs are used by some hospitality organizations to provide ongoing guidance by experienced staff members to their younger (less experienced) counterparts. Mentors may not be assigned to employees until after orientation and initial training activities are completed. In fact, they are typically only available to those employees desiring this special assistance and/or to their peers who are fast-tracking in a career development program. However, their availability, their role that supports personalized guidance to staff members, and the mechanics of how the program operates are among applicable topics to be addressed during orientation sessions.

Ethics relates to concerns about what is right and what is wrong. Professional managers are ethical managers, and they consistently use procedures that incorporate ethical considerations. The best-run organizations are influenced by a culture driven by ethical concerns, and their managers role-model the practices that are appropriate for their employees. These staff members will likely treat guests in the same manner as they are treated, so the success is better assured when ethical concerns are at the forefront of the decision-making process.

The New Employee Adaptation Process

1. Review the basic concerns of new employees as they begin work in a hospitality organization.

Adaptation (to the organization): The process by which new employees learn the values of and what it's like to work for a hospitality organization during initial on-job experiences.

Managers have an important responsibility to help their new employees learn about and become comfortable working in the hospitality operation. Whether it is planned or just happens, all newly employed staff go through an **adaptation** process as they learn about the values of the organization and what it's like to work for it.

Effective managers realize that their efforts to meet employee needs, and to reduce turnover rates, begin the moment employees are selected. They understand that new staff members are anxious and, perhaps, even stressed because they do not understand specific job expectations nor how their performance will be judged. They are uncertain about relationships with supervisors and peers, about whether there will be unexpected work tasks, and if there will be unanticipated physical and/or mental challenges. Managers should address these concerns in their earliest interactions with new staff members.

EMPLOYEE ADAPTATION CONCERNS

For employees to work effectively, they must know what to do, and they must perform job tasks properly. These concerns should be addressed in training programs that begin after orientation concludes. However, new staff members will see, hear, and experience things as they begin work that set the context for more formal experiences that will follow. Contrast, for example, two greetings that might accompany the introduction of a new employee to an experienced peer: "So glad you're here; welcome to the team," and "Hey, we really need help; hope you stay here longer than the last guy." While a manager cannot write the script for what an experienced employee will say to a new employee, the manager's history of actions that impact the work environment will be easily and quickly seen as the new staff member begins work.

The cleanliness of work stations, conversations of employees between themselves and with guests, and behaviors of employees that represent their work attitudes will be observed by and will influence the attitudes and behaviors of new staff members.

New employees want to be accepted by their peers and to quickly become contributing members of their work team. While the socialization process takes time, it begins as workers are initially put at ease and as they are involved in hospitable interactions with their peers. These are additional examples of how an organization's culture and the environment influenced by the manager will impact what and how early interactions occur. Managers know that employees want to fit in with their peers and become effective team members rather than advocates of the "them versus me" culture that exists in some operations. Managers have a

pervasive influence over the attitudes and actions of staff members. The precedence they have set with their employers and their ongoing interactions will impact staff members' interactions with new employees.

Experienced hospitality managers know that new staff members adjust to the new employment situations in similar ways, and this is the topic of the next section of this chapter.

Human Resources MANAGEMENT ISSUES   (5.1)

Cindy had been working at the Harbor View Hotel as a bartender for about two months. She liked her job (great tips!), and she appreciated the way her supervisor, Florence, treated her on the job.

Although Cindy never had any problems with Florence's leadership style, she had noticed that Florence had her favorites. Cindy was glad that she was one of them. However, Florence also had other direct reports she treated much less fairly and, sometimes, disrespectfully. Cindy also remembered times when Florence had spoken inappropriately about top-level managers, some of the regular hotel and lounge guests, and even about the hotel and the entire hospitality industry.

Florence was very opinionated (and everyone who disagreed with her was obviously wrong), and she frequently discussed the people she knew and the "real job" that her contacts would help her to obtain. Cindy had initially overlooked these aspects of Florence's workplace tactics and attitudes because they didn't directly affect her. However, she now began to think, "Why is Florence nice to me? Is this really a good place to work? I have lots of other options and really desire a career in the hospitality industry. Is it better to stay here, and learn what a supervisor should *not* do, or take another job to learn things that will help me in my career?"

QUESTIONS

1. What, if anything, would you do if you were Cindy when Florence began saying negative things about other employees, customers, and the hospitality organization and industry?
2. How might Florence be affecting the corporate culture of her department?
3. How is the corporate culture affecting Cindy?
4. What would you do, if you were Cindy, as you considered your relationship with the hotel, your interest in remaining an employee at the property, and your desire to learn as much as possible about the hospitality industry early in your career?

STEPS IN THE ADAPTATION PROCESS

Figure 5.1 provides an overview of the new employee adaptation process.

Let's review the steps in the new employee adaptation process shown in Figure 5.1:

- **Step 1:** When new employees are selected, they have basic perceptions and attitudes about the work and the organization. These are probably based on factors including (a) information learned during the employment interview; (b) advertising messages (if, for example, the new employee has experienced the company's advertising messages); (c) previous experience, if any, as a guest in the operation; and (d) feedback about the property from others in the community, including present or past employees.
- **Step 2:** Early on-job experiences including orientation and training may reinforce initial perceptions (Step 1), or they may prove them to be less than accurate. Some apprehension is typical, however, if there is a significant difference between what new employees perceived (Step 1) and what they actually experience (Step 2). New staff members must either make significant changes in perceptions and expectations or, perhaps more frequently, new employees are likely to become discontented and become additional turnover statistics. This is especially so when the new employee desires to work for an organization in a position that meets initial expectations (Step 1), and/or when the staff member has other employment opportunities, which often occurs when there are high unemployment rates.
- **Step 3:** Employees who begin to recognize and accept the culture of the organization and who want to become cooperating members of work teams will likely be accepted by their peers. They then want to become contributing members of the organization.
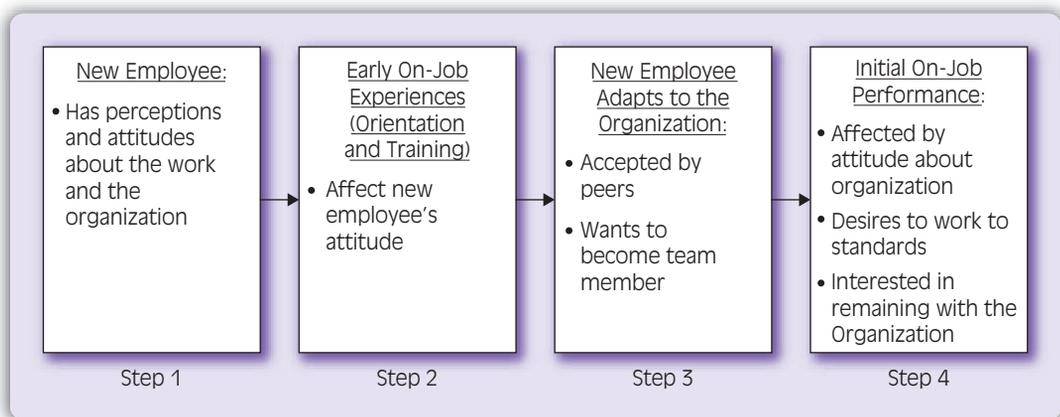

FIGURE 5.1: The New Employee Adaptation Process

■ **Step 4:** At this point, perhaps the most difficult challenge has been accomplished. The new staff member has a positive attitude about the organization and is willing to learn about and contribute to it. The initial orientation and training activities enable new employees to perform work meeting quality and quantity standards. Successful performance reinforces the employees' attitude about the organization, and they begin to experience and relate to cultural norms encouraging retention rather than turnover.

Many of the tactics required to successfully assist new employees to adapt to the organization relate to on-job leadership and supervisory concerns that extend beyond the scope of this book. However, they also suggest that a combination of big-picture human resources strategies and front-line supervisory procedures yield a workforce committed to partnering with the organization. In large organizations, human resource managers and their line department counterparts must work closely together to best assure that the work environment is favorable to staff members. In smaller organizations without human resources specialists, managers have the increased responsibility to plan, implement, and maintain work environments that encourage employee retention. This should be of obvious concern. However, hospitality managers are very busy and, unfortunately, may spend significant time addressing short-term challenges rather than longer-term actions that impact employee relationships.

Will the new staff member signing this letter of acceptance enjoy or become stressed about his or her initial job experiences? In large measure, the answer will depend on the quality of the orientation program that has been planned and implemented by concerned managers.
Courtesy PhotoDisc/ Getty Images

Orientation Programs and Procedures

2. **Explain important procedures that should be used as employee orientation programs and procedures are developed and implemented.**

Orientation: The process of providing basic information about the hospitality organization that must be known by all staff members in every department.

Orientation is the process of providing basic information about the hospitality organization that must be known by all staff members in every department. Implemented effectively, orientation efforts provide initial on-job experiences that help new staff members learn about the organization and its purposes, become comfortable with the work environment, and learn where they fit into it. In other words, orientation assists with the new employee adaptation process discussed in the previous section. Discussions about basic policies and procedures also help new staff members learn about matters of personal importance, such as their employer's expectations and job-related benefits. In effect, then, orientation and other initial work-related experiences help the new employees learn how the organizational culture views its staff members. It is critical that an effective orientation program be planned and implemented, because it significantly affects the relationship between the organization and its staff members.

Human Resources Management:
CURRENT EVENTS 5.1

MANY NEW EMPLOYEES MEAN MANY ORIENTATION SESSIONS

When the W. Dallas Hotel opened, it had 3,000 applications for 200 positions. Many people, including those without previous hotel experience, wanted to work for this stylish, upscale hotel. About 400 new employees participated in an intensive 10-day program to learn about the W brand's service style. As part of their training experience, they were able to experience the property as guests in the hotel and in its restaurants, bars, and spa.

The employees were empowered to go out of their way to assist guests with unexpected extras. Ross Cline, the president of W, refers to staff members as "experience engineers" and "talent," and new employees are easily caught up in the philosophy of "giving guests whatever they want, whenever they want it, unless it's illegal."

Suzanne Marta. "W. Dallas Had 3,000 Applications for 200 Positions"; "Whit, Whimzy Are Key Words for W. Staffers in Training." Retrieved June 10, 2006, from *www.hotel-online.com.*

GOALS OF ORIENTATION PROGRAMS

Goals of orientation include:

Mission statement: A strategic statement that indicates (provides an overview of) what the hospitality organization wants to accomplish and how it intends to do so.

- *Provides an overview of the organization.* Many newly employed staff members want to know about their employer's history, size (e.g., number of locations and staff members), and the products and services it provides. They should learn about the results their new organization is attempting to achieve. Trainees may want to know how their organization adds value for its guests, to themselves, and to the organization's owners. Hopefully, a **mission statement** explains what the organization wants to accomplish and how it intends to do so. The mission statement should also serve as a guide for decision making and be used every day (and not just as an introductory page in an employee handbook or for a slogan on the managers' business cards).
- *Indicates the new staff member's role.* If you were a new staff member, would you like to see an organizational chart showing all positions including yours and the reporting relationships between them? Would you like to learn where you fit in and about promotion tracks if you perform well? You probably would, and new staff members do as well.
- *Explains policies, rules, and other information.* Staff want to know general guidelines, including days and hours of work, uniform requirements, break times, auto parking, and other similar information to help them feel more comfortable.
- *Outlines specific expectations.* Topics including responsibilities of the employer to the staff and of the staff to the employer should be addressed.
- *Provides details about employee benefits.* Staff members want information about nonsalary/nonwage compensation and the requirements to receive these benefits.
- *Motivates new staff members.* The enthusiasm and excitement exhibited by those providing orientation experiences are important. Orientation helps establish a solid foundation for the relationship between the organization, its managers and supervisors, and the new staff members.

Taken together, the benefits of effective orientation programs can eliminate confusion, heighten a new staff member's enthusiasm, create favorable attitudes, and, in general, make a positive first impression.

Properly conducted orientation sessions address many concerns of new staff members. Managers should encourage questions and recognize their role as they provide an appropriate welcome to the organization.

Orientation is the first step in training, and it must be well-planned and organized. In smaller organizations, orientation may be the responsibility of the new staff member's immediate supervisor. In large hospitality organizations, there will, hopefully, be a cooperative effort among staff (human resources) personnel and line department supervisors or others. The new employee's supervisor, for example, can assist in the orientation program as he or she reviews the organization chart and position description and previews the training program(s) in which the new

IT'S THE LAW!

Employers are required by law to obtain some information from new employees, and this may be done during orientation. Examples include federal, state, and/or community withholding tax information, and immigration and naturalization documentation and age verification (for minors), if this was not provided (finalized) during the selection process.

Legal problems might be avoided if some information is provided to employees during orientation (or at another early time in their employment). Examples include information about the employer's sexual harassment complaint procedures and about Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) concerns. (*Note:* Sexual harassment is discussed in depth in Chapter 10; ADA concerns are explored in Chapter 2.) Also, many hospitality operations that sell or provide alcoholic beverages begin their emphasis on responsible service during their orientation program. This helps establish a priority for their concern, and it establishes a record of consistent and ongoing emphasis that could be of significant help in defending the organization if lawsuits arise.

Effective Orientation Programs Address Staff Questions

Think about the types of questions and concerns you might have had when you began working for a new organization:

- Where do I fit into the organization?
- Where and how can I contribute my time and talents?
- What are my duties?
- What are my rights?
- What are my limits?
- How can I advance (and to what positions) within my new organization?

Effective orientation programs consider these and related questions to reduce the stress and anxiety that many new employees have during their first days on the job. In the process, orientation programs help establish a relationship between the new staff member and the organization that will have a significant impact on their subsequent on-job success.

Some large hotels conduct orientation sessions for many new staff members one or more times weekly. What do you think this says about the organization's initial and ongoing interactions with staff members? *Courtesy Purestock*

Adaptation and Orientation: What's the Difference?

This chapter began by discussing adaptation: the process by which new employees learn the values of and "what's it like to work for" the hospitality operation during initial job experiences. Adaptation, then, relates to an employee's internal concerns and how they are (or are not) addressed during early activities that include but are not limited to orientation. In contrast, orientation relates to the process used by the organization to provide basic information that must be known by staff members in every department. The best hospitality managers consider and, to the extent possible, address the adaptation concerns of new employees into their orientation programs. This important task becomes much easier when existing employees who have completed the property's orientation program (and who have had their adaptation concerns adequately addressed) help to pass on the desired perspectives to new hires.

Orientation kit: A package of written materials given to new employees to supplement the oral information provided during the orientation session.

staff member will participate. Regardless of property size, the basic concerns to be addressed by orientation are the same, because the basic needs and concerns of a new staff member do not differ when they are employed by large or small organizations.

USE AN ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

Careful planning of an orientation program is important. Figure 5.2 illustrates a checklist that identifies many concepts that can be addressed in an orientation program.

It is important to assemble all needed materials required before the orientation session begins. Some hospitality operations include these in an **orientation kit.** Examples of items that can be included in an orientation kit are listed in Figure 5.3.

ORGANIZATION INTRODUCTION
☐ Welcome new staff member(s)
☐ Present/explain mission statement
☐ Discuss history of organization
☐ Review types of guests served (if applicable)
☐ Note products and services provided
☐ Review current organization chart

STAFF MEMBER – RELATED POLICIES

☐ **APPEARANCE**
__ Hygiene standards
__ Name tag
__ Uniform including shoes
__ Jewelry

☐ **CONDUCT**
__ Attendance
__ Drug-free workplace information
__ Respectful behavior required
__ Harassment policy and discussion

☐ **JOB PERFORMANCE**
__ Position description
__ Work schedules

__ Training programs
__ Breaks
__ Performance evaluation system
__ Probationary period

☐ **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**
__ Vacation
__ Leaves (personal, military, jury duty, emergency, other)
__ Sick leave
__ Education incentives
__ Insurance programs (medical, dentist, life, disability, other)
__ Workers' compensation
__ Meals/uniform allowances
__ Other: _____
_____
_____

☐ **COMPENSATION INFORMATION**
__ Salary/wage
__ Pay periods; pay day
__ Procedures for checking in and out of work shifts

FIGURE 5.2: Sample Orientation Checklist

__ Holiday pay
__ Overtime policies
__ How and when pay is received
__ Compensation increase policies

☐ **SAFETY CONCERNS**
__ Safety training
__ Emergency situations
__ Fire prevention, control, and evacuation
__ Food safety training (general; if applicable)
__ Reporting hazards
__ Reporting injuries

☐ **OTHER ORIENTATION INFORMATION**
__ Smoking
__ Access to facility during nonworking time
__ Personal time
__ Work permits (minors and non-United States citizens)
__ Use of alcohol and drugs on the job

☐ **PHYSICAL FACILITIES**
__ General tour
__ Employee restrooms/lockers
__ Employee dining area
__ First aid
__ Employee entrance
__ Other: _____
_____
_____

☐ **OTHER ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES**
__ Provide employee handbook
__ Answer questions
__ Preview departmental induction and training programs
__ Other:
_____
_____
_____

*Note: if the employees are represented by one or more unions, an overview of union relations information should be provided to applicable employees (see Chapter 12).

FIGURE 5.2: (*Continued*)

Current organization chart
Copy of employee handbook
Copies of employee performance appraisal forms/procedures
Current copy of employee newsletter
Federal, state, and local tax law materials
Layout (maps) of facility (large properties)
Accident prevention guidelines

FIGURE 5.3: Sample Contents of Orientation Kit

When Does Orientation End?

Typical staff member orientation sessions require several (or fewer) hours or, perhaps, a half day (or longer). However, they generally conclude without follow-up sessions. Some hospitality organizations schedule additional orientation sessions several weeks or even longer after the initial session(s). By this time, staff members are familiar with their organization, department, and position. Based on their on-job experiences, the new employees can ask additional questions, participate in discussions, and learn about topics including guest service and teamwork that can be better addressed and understood with personal knowledge of the organization.

Human Resources MANAGEMENT ISSUES   (5.2)

"I wonder what I'm getting into now," thought Daren, as he parked his car and walked through the parking lot. He had accepted a position as a cook in the foodservices department of a large hospital.

"I've cooked at several restaurants, and I have learned a few things: I like to cook, to be creative, and to work with a great team that feels like I do," were his next thoughts as he neared the entrance closest to the parking lot. "However, I've never worked for a healthcare facility. While it sounds good (e.g., great working hours, higher pay, and better benefits), I don't know about the environment with a lot of patients who are going to be depending on me."

As he walked closer to the building, he saw a sign: "Patient Entrance – Straight Ahead; Visitors' Entrance – Turn Left; Vendors Proceed to Purchasing Office."

"Well, what do I do now?" thought Daren. "I'm not a patient, I'm not a visitor, and I'm not selling anything. I guess employees know where to go, and they don't need a sign. So what should I do now?"

QUESTIONS

1. What would you do now if you were Daren?
2. What special orientation tactics can best help Daren and others without previous healthcare experience adapt to the unique environment?
3. Should an initial tour of the hospital include all areas, or just those in which Daren will be working? Why?
4. Assume the hospital's orientation process is excellent (except for the oversight about not telling Daren where to report to work). What do you think will be the major differences between this orientation program and a similar (excellent) one in a restaurant?

DEPARTMENTAL INDUCTION PROCEDURES

Induction: The process of providing new employees with basic information that everyone in their department must know that is unique to their department.

Induction relates to the process of providing new employees with basic information that everyone in their department must know that is unique to their department. For example, everyone in the hospitality operation must know about compensation policies and procedures and the importance of guest service. This information should be part of the orientation program. However, perhaps only food production personnel must know about kitchen workflow concerns, and, in a hotel, only front-office personnel may need to know about different classifications of hotel guests.

New employees should arrive at their department when there is time for an organized and orderly induction. Contrast this with the unfortunate situation that often arises when a new employee begins work during a busy shift and is expected to immediately become a productive member of the team. Our earlier discussion of the new employee adaptation process addressed the impact of initial experiences. An unplanned induction program can quickly destroy the benefits gained from an effective orientation program.

What concerns can be addressed in an induction program? Figure 5.4 presents a checklist of possible activities.

DEPARTMENT INDUCTION CHECKLIST
☐ Department introduction
☐ Department mission statement
☐ Review of department organization (positions and current incumbents of management/supervisory positions)
☐ How department impacts other departments

☐ Position duties and responsibilities
  __ Provide/review current job description
  __ Explain importance of position and its impact on other department positions
  __ Review performance standards and evaluate methods
  __ Work schedules (days/hours)
  __ Overtime needs (if any)
  __ When and how to request assistance

☐ Policies and procedures
  __ Emergencies
  __ Safety precautions and accident prevention

FIGURE 5.4: Sample Department Induction Activities Checklist

__ Reporting hazards
__ Sanitation concerns (if applicable)
__ Smoking and eating policies
__ Recording time and attendance
__ Breaks
__ Personal telephone calls
__ Performance appraisal procedures
__ Other: _____
_____
_____

☐ Department tour
__ Fire alarms
__ First aid kits
__ Restrooms and lockers
__ Bulletin board
__ Time clock (if used)
__ Employee entrances
__ Smoking areas
__ Explain workflow (work station layout)
__ Major equipment location
__ Other: _____
_____
_____

☐ Introduction to department employees
__ On-job managers/supervisors
__ Other on-duty employees

FIGURE 5.4: (*Continued*)

ORIENTATION FOLLOW-UP

Use of orientation and departmental induction procedures such as those outlined in, respectively, Figures 5.2 and 5.4 will take more time and effort than is spent by some hospitality organizations. However, a comprehensive program assists with an effective employee adaptation process that yields committed staff members.

Orientation follow-up activities are also important. It is not sufficient to say, "If you have any questions, just ask someone," or "Just assume you're doing okay

unless someone tells you differently." New staff members should understand they will be participating in a well-organized training program designed to help them perform job tasks that meet standards.

The trainer may or may not be the same staff member who provided orientation and induction information. If so (which is typical in a small operation), this

Human Resources Management: CURRENT EVENTS 5.2

BASIC ORIENTATION PRINCIPLES APPLY TO ALL HOSPITALITY SEGMENTS

The most important principles in facilitating the work of staff members are universal, although they do vary by industry segment or between industries. One reason is that people are people, and they have the same basic concerns and react in the same basic ways to the situations in which they find themselves.

Consider these keys to an effective orientation program:

- Plan the orientation program to ensure that it is organized and consistent.
- Prepare an agenda that includes meeting and greeting other coworkers.
- Inform current coworkers about new staff members. (E-mail messages are one tactic.)
- Provide essential information before the new employee's first day at work. Make new staff members feel comfortable by informing them about simple things: Where should they park? What entry door should they use? Who and where will they meet when they first arrive?
- Use more than one presenter for orientation sessions.
- Spread the orientation program over several days (or longer).
- Provide material that new staff members can take home to review, to reexamine, and to determine whether questions are appropriate.
- Solicit feedback about the evaluation process so the program can be continually improved.

Each of these principles represents a no- or low-cost procedure to help new employees feel welcome to and good about their recent employment decision.

Denise Moretti. "Corporate Orientation Programs: Retaining Great People Begins Before Day One." *Note:* The author represents the Hamister group, an organization that managed assisted living and healthcare properties before expanding into the hospitality industry. (To view the article, go to: *www.hotelnewsresource.com*. When you reach the site, enter the author's name into the search box.) A lesson to be learned: Human resources aspects of orientation in the healthcare industry are similar to those in the hospitality industry.

provides an opportunity for continuity as the orientation–induction–training processes evolve. When different staff members are involved (as is likely in a large organization), those involved in orientation and induction can still offer genuine enthusiasm and provide follow-up assistance as requested. They can regularly check back with the new staff member and answer questions that arise after the orientation and induction procedures have concluded.

You've learned that these early on-job experiences are important for the employee and the organization. Therefore, they should be evaluated to determine if they are cost effective (worth more than what they cost) and whether improvements are possible. Feedback from new staff members several months (or longer) after they have completed these initial on-job activities can help. Perhaps they can complete unsigned surveys or participate in interviews conducted for that purpose, or as part of more general efforts to receive employee input about operational improvements. Exit interviews of departing employees may also be helpful.

Employees will, one way or another, learn about the organization, their position, and their employer's expectations. It is better for them to acquire this information through a formal, planned, organized, and hospitable orientation effort than to pick it up in casual conversations with and by watching peers on the job.

Employee Handbooks

3. **Note the importance of employee handbooks, and list typical policy and procedure topics that might be included in them.**

Employee handbooks are personnel management tools used in hospitality organizations of all sizes.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOKS ARE NECESSARY

As you learned in Chapter 3, an employee handbook is a centralized source of information detailing an employer's policies, benefits, and employment practices. It is typically distributed and discussed when new employees receive their general orientation. This enables staff members to review information presented during the orientation, and it provides other information that, because of time limitations, may be best presented in this manner.

Employee handbooks must be current (and kept current), and they must be correctly and professionally presented. Clean and current copies make a better statement about the hospitality organization and the importance it attaches to providing employee information than do handbooks that appear to be thrown together haphazardly. *Note:* Some organizations make their employee handbook

IT'S THE LAW!

Can policies contained in employee handbooks be considered a contract that must be followed without exception or, alternatively, are they guidelines that generally explain requirements and how staff members are normally treated?

Employee handbooks or policies in them might be considered a binding part of the employee relationship if the policy language is such that an employee could reasonably believe a contractual offer was being made. Careful wording is required to help assure that employees will not construe policies to be contractual promises.

One of the most significant legal concerns relates to the employment at-will relationship that exists when employers can hire any employee they wish, and dismiss that staff member with or without cause at any time. (The employee can also elect to terminate the work relationship anytime that he or she decides to do so.) Mixed messages can be created when, for example, handbook policies specify detailed discipline and discharge procedures that must be followed before termination. As well, if statements such as "our employees are our family" or similar messages are made, readers might perceive them to supersede at-will disclaimers.

available on the company's intranet. This makes it readily available (copies will not become lost) and easy to update.

Employee handbooks tell new and all other staff members about the organization. They detail all policies and procedures to which the employer and employees agree, and they can be referenced by courts seeking to define terms of the employment agreement if disputes arise.

Typically, employee handbooks should indicate that the hospitality operation has the right to modify, alter, or eliminate any or all contents at any time. Further, it is important to indicate within the manual that it is not a contract. The organization's attorney should be consulted as the employee handbook is developed and, most certainly, before it is circulated.

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ARE IDENTIFIED

Figure 5.5 lists a wide range of topics that might be applicable to hospitality organizations and that might be addressed in an employee handbook. However, not all topics are relevant or useful for all properties.

Absenteeism
Accessibility for Disabled
Accidents
Accrual of Vacation
Advancement
Alcohol Testing
Americans with Disabilities Act
Announcements of Openings
Appearance and Grooming
Appraisal
Attendance
Awards
Badges (name tags)
Benefits
Bereavement Leaves
Bids
Breaks
Call-Back Pay
Call-Out Pay
Changing Departments
Child Care Leave
Code of Ethics
Commendations
Commercial Driver's License
Compensation
Competence
Complaints
Compliance
Computer Use (Personal)
Concerns
Conferences
Confidentiality
Conflicts of Interest
Consultants (Use of)
Continuing Education
Controlled Substances

Conventional Standards of
  Workplace Behavior
Corporate Compliance
Counseling
Criminal Convictions
Customer Service
Dental Insurance
Department Transfer
  Questionnaire
Differentials
Disability Insurance
Disciplinary Process
Discrimination Claims
Displacements
Dress Code
Drug Testing
Drug Use
Drug-Free Awareness
  Program
Drug-Free Workplace
Drugs
Educational Assistance
Educational Leave
Emergency Plans/
  Preparedness
Employee Assistance Program
Employee Badges
Employee File
Employee Identification
  Program
Employee of the Month/Year
Employee Performance
  Appraisal
Employee-at-Will
Equal Employment
Ethics
Evaluation

Exit Interview
Expenses, Noneducational
Extended Sick Pay
Family Medical Leave Act
Fitness for Duty
Funeral Leave
Gifts/Gratuities
Grant Employees
Grants
Grievance/Complaint
  Procedures
Harassment
Health Insurance
Hiring
Hiring of Family Members
Holidays
Hourly Associate Forum
Hours of Work
Identification
Industrial Injury
Integrity
Investigation
Job Evaluation
Job Opportunities
Job Postings
Job Qualifications
Job Rotation
Job Vacancies
Jury Duty
Layoffs
Leave of Absence
Leaves
Leaving Department
Leaving Employment
Lockers
Lost Time Claims

FIGURE 5.5: Sample Employee Handbook Topics

Meal Allowance/Periods	Qualifying Periods	Tax-Sheltered Annuity
Medical Claims	Recall	Telephone Calls (Personal)
Military Leave	Recording Work Time	Termination
Modified Duty	Recruiting	Time Off without Pay
Multiple Employment	Reference Checks	Training
New Jobs	Relationships (on-job)	Transfers
On-Call Pay	Resignation	Transportation Allowance
Orientation Period	Retirement Programs	Transportation Work Program
Overtime	Return of Organization's Property	Travel
Overtime Pay	Return to Work	Tuition
Paid Holidays	Safety/Security	Tuition Grant
Parking	Salary	Tuition Reimbursement
Pay and Pay Periods	Schedule Posting	Uniforms
Payroll Deductions	Scheduling Vacation	Vacancies
Pension	Seniority	Vacation Accrual
Personal Business	Seniority Calculation	Vacation Banking
Personal Code of Conduct	Service Awards Recognition Program	Vacation Pay
Personal Holidays	Severance Pay	Vacation Scheduling
Personal Leave	Sexual Harassment	Vacations
Personal Records	Sick Pay	Violence
Posting	Sick Time Accumulation	Voluntary Time Off
Probationary Employees/ Periods	Sick Time Buy-Back	Wages
Problems	Smoking	Weapons
Professional Dues	Staff Reductions	Weather (inclement)
Professionalism	Suggestions	Work Rules
Qualifications		Work Time
		Workers' Compensation

FIGURE 5.5: (*Continued*)

Managers can use a questioning approach to help assess what topics could be useful. Do new or longer-tenured staff members have questions about issues related to the topic? Is there an inconsistent understanding about how, if at all, an issue is managed from the perspectives of subordinate staff? These and related questions, when answered affirmatively, may determine the need for new or revised policies and procedures.

Keep Employee Handbooks Current

To be useful, employee handbooks must be kept current. While this appears obvious, busy hospitality managers sometimes replace written policies and procedures recorded in an employee handbook with understandings based on "how we've done things lately." Changes typically begin with small breaks in or small discrepancies with procedures that go unchallenged. For example, a restaurant's uniform code requires solid-toed shoes for kitchen workers to prevent punctures from dropped knives and burns from spilled hot liquids. However, a cook occasionally, then frequently, and then always arrives at work in canvas tennis shoes. Bending the rules the first time may have no immediate consequences, but it establishes the precedent that this policy is not always necessary or, at least, that it is not important.

Small lapses in policies and procedures can lead to larger ones. They can send the message that policies and procedures can be disregarded when it is convenient to do so, and that they involve personal interpretation. Policies and procedures should be designed for a specific purpose and, if they are not necessary, they should be discarded or revised. They should, therefore, be consistently followed. To help prevent the inconsistent application of policies and procedures, several tactics can be used:

- Insist that standards be respected. Policies and procedures should be followed all the time, and their expectations should be consistently met.
- Have managers, supervisors, and employees role-model examples for their peers.
- Inform staff members about the reasons for the policies and procedures.
- Present information about the most important policies and procedures during orientation. Other policies can be discussed on an ongoing basis as part of in-service or other training programs.
- Educate staff members that compliance with reasonable policies and procedures is part of the agreement with, and relationship between, their employers and themselves.

Mentoring Programs

4. **Identify basic concerns that should be addressed as employee mentoring programs are planned and implemented.**

Mentoring is a relationship in which an experienced staff member provides professional advice to a less-experienced staff member. These activities can arise informally when a relatively inexperienced person solicits advice from an "old-timer"

Mentoring: A formal or informal relationship in which an experienced staff member provides advice and counsel to a less-experienced staff member.

about how the organization works. Mentoring relationships can also be more formal, such as when experienced volunteers receive training in mentoring activities and then interact with staff selected for participation in fast-track"career development programs. Sometimes a mentoring relationship lasts for a short while, or it can last for many years.

BACKGROUND

Several advantages can accrue to organizations with effective mentoring programs:

- Junior staff can more quickly learn about the organization's culture and how to act within it.
- Mentorees may have increased commitment to the organization because they are better assimilated into the corporate culture.
- Higher levels of job satisfaction can occur with the decreased chance that those being mentored will leave the organization.
- Problems that hinder the mentoree's current performance can be addressed.

Advantages can also accrue to mentors:

- *Enhanced self-esteem.* A mentor will likely feel good about the opportunity to provide advice and to make a difference.
- *Increased knowledge.* Mentors learn as they interact with mentorees.
- *Seen as good citizens.* Mentors may receive special consideration as their own careers are evaluated.
- *Helps to train successors.* Sometimes mentors cannot be promoted until someone is available to assume their position, and this can be the mentoree.

An effective mentor can serve several roles in interactions with mentorees:

- *Trainer.* Mentors who are queried about specific on-job performance issues can provide applicable assistance and serve as an informal trainer.
- *Coach.* Mentors can provide positive reinforcement about desired performance, and they may advise against actions that may lead to on-job difficulties, just as a supervisor does when coaching a staff member.
- *Counselor.* Counselors do not make decisions for another person but, rather, discuss the pro and cons of a situation. They ask open-ended questions to learn what the other person is thinking and, in the process, allow the other person to more clearly think things through. A counselor provides benchmark information that can help one to evaluate personal perspectives.
- *Guide.* Just as a guide safely leads someone who is unfamiliar with a geographic area to a destination, so can a mentor help a mentoree to move on to interim locations on the way to a longer-term destination (career).

Phases of Mentoring Relationship

It is not typical that a senior staff member begins to interact with a less-experienced counterpart and immediately gives free advice. Instead, time is required for a relationship of mutual respect to evolve and for the mentoree to appreciate and trust the mentor's judgment. The relationship between a mentor and mentoree can involve the same steps as building a friendship:

- *Introduction.* A mentoring relationship can begin by chance as two persons meet on the job, or it can begin more formally when a senior staff member is paired with a less-experienced person in a planned career development program.
- *Cultivation.* Time is needed for both individuals to get to know each other, to understand each other's position, and for the mentor to understand the context within which the mentoree is soliciting advice.
- *Redefinition.* Few relationships on the job remain the same. They typically grow stronger or weaker, and they sometimes end. At some point, the junior staff member may not require or desire advice. Conversely, mentors may have a lessened desire to continue in the mentoring role. By contrast, relationships can become stronger and evolve into lifelong (or, at least, career-long) opportunities to share information and to enjoy a mutually rewarding relationship.

- *Role model.* The old saying, "Actions speak louder than words," suggests that mentorees can learn much from their mentors just by observing them as they interact with others in the organization.
- *Advocate.* A mentor in a senior position can emphasize the strengths and abilities of a mentoree to those at higher organizational levels.

How exactly can a mentor assist a mentoree? Examples of mentoring activities include:

Career ladder: A progression of increasingly more responsible positions within an organization or an industry.

- Helping the mentoree to develop a **career ladder**
- Advising about development activities that can assist the mentoree to move toward career ladder goals
- Evaluating alternative education and training programs and courses of action to address on-job concerns
- Providing applicable reading materials
- Suggesting alternative courses of action that address on-job problems
- If applicable, making special assignments and arranging for special training
- Providing ongoing counseling

Ten steps can be used in implementing a formal mentoring program, which are outlined in Figure 5.6.

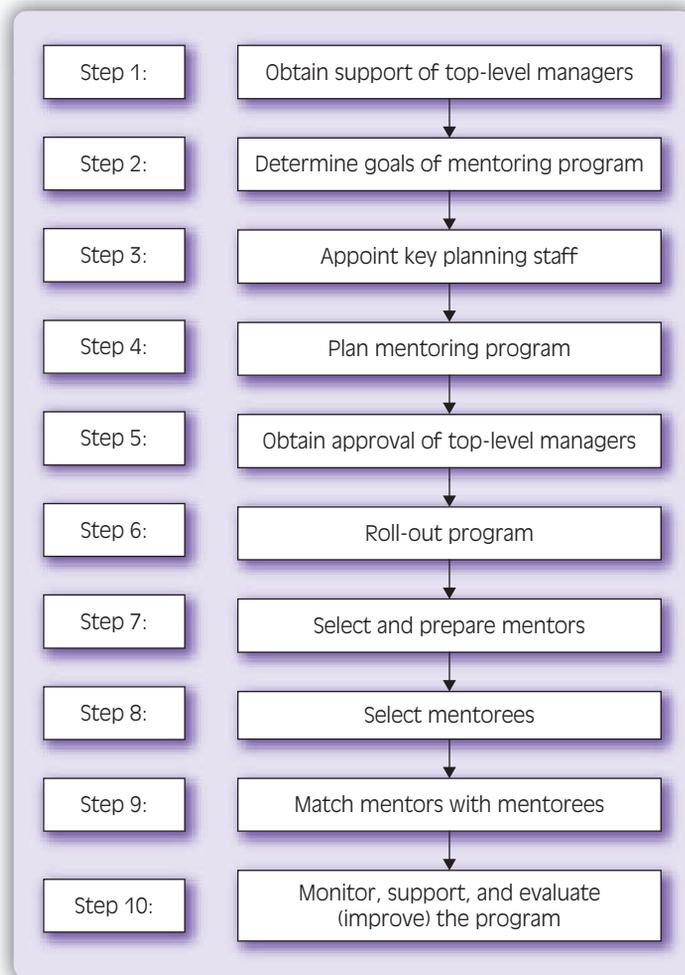| Step 1:	Obtain support of top-level managers
Step 2:	Determine goals of mentoring program
Step 3:	Appoint key planning staff
Step 4:	Plan mentoring program
Step 5:	Obtain approval of top-level managers
Step 6:	Roll-out program
Step 7:	Select and prepare mentors
Step 8:	Select mentorees
Step 9:	Match mentors with mentorees
Step 10:	Monitor, support, and evaluate (improve) the program

FIGURE 5.6: Steps to Implement a Formal Mentoring Program

Let's look at each of these steps more closely:

■ *Step 1: Obtain support of top-level managers.* Human resources personnel, managers, supervisors, and others who support the need for a formal mentoring program should serve as its advocates to top-level officials. A discussion of the benefits noted earlier may help yield approval.

- *Step 2: Determine goals of the mentoring program.* Numerous goals including benefits to the organization, the mentors, and mentorees noted previously are likely to be among desired results.
- *Step 3: Appoint key planning staff.* Those interested in developing a mentoring program are likely candidates. The project could also be appropriate for consideration by a **cross-functional team** of persons who could bring differing perspectives to the planning process.
- *Step 4: Plan mentoring program.* Decisions will be required about how mentors and mentorees will be selected and paired, their responsibilities, the mechanics of how and when the parties will interact, topics for which mentoring discussions are appropriate, and how the program will be announced, administered, and evaluated.
- *Step 5: Obtain approval of top-level managers.* Interim input from these officials may have been provided; if so, approval is likely to be easier and faster. The mentoring program should be seen as beneficial, inexpensive to implement, and with few disadvantages that will require consideration as an approval decision is given.
- *Step 6: Roll-out program.* Program announcements, staff meetings, organizational newsletters, information in orientation programs for new staff, and conversations among managers, supervisors, and staff members are among promotion possibilities. The availability of and procedures for the mentoring program should also be an integral aspect of applicable career development programs.
- *Step 7: Select and prepare mentors.* Effective mentors are usually successful, high-performing staff members. They have a track record of successful performance over many years and, probably, in several (or more) positions. However, they may need to learn basic mentoring skills. The knowledge, skills, and abilities of effective mentors frequently include:
  - The desire to assist mentorees
  - An ability to think creatively and to suggest problem-solving alternatives to mentorees
  - The ability to motivate mentorees
  - Effective oral communication skills, including the ability to present, explain, organize, and defend suggestions
  - An interest in assisting the organization and the mentoree
  - An understanding of and ability to apply change management principles
  - An understanding of the organization's culture, and the ability to use this knowledge to explain, defend, and justify suggestions
  - Detailed knowledge of business and operating principles applicable to the organization

  How should mentors be prepared for their role? Topics to be addressed in training sessions can include a discussion of:

  - Mentoring goals of the organization and for the mentor and mentoree
  - Critical attributes of the mentoring relationship

Cross-functional team: A group of staff members comprising representatives from different departments (functional areas) that address a common concern.

- Suggestions for determining the mentoree's needs and for generating alternatives that address them
- Training and career development opportunities within the organization. If applicable, a special emphasis should be placed on fast-track and other programs that include a formal mentoring component.
- Training in communication skills including active listening techniques
- Relationship skills
- Effective coaching tactics
- Problem-solving and conflict resolution suggestions

- *Step 8: Select mentorees.* In informal mentoring programs, less-experienced staff may simply request that a more-experienced counterpart discuss issues of concern. Some organizations have mentor open-door policies, where any staff member with a question or concern can seek out a more-experienced person on an ad hoc or continuing basis. In a more formal model, fast-track staff are assigned a mentor, and this input is an integral part of their planned career development program.
- *Step 9: Match mentors with mentorees.* Considerations in matching mentors and mentorees can include close proximity (same location) and the extent to which the mentor has held similar positions to that of the mentoree. In some

Ground Rules for a Mentoring Relationship

The environment within which an effective mentoring relationship exists is one of mutual respect and trust, productivity, and safety (comfort). Ground rules for managing the mentoring partnership can help ensure that this environment continues. Examples of mentor and mentoree agreements can include:

- How and when meeting times are established.
- How discussion topics are determined.
- How disagreements, if any, should be resolved.
- What, if any, contact should occur between scheduled meetings.
- Statement of confidentiality: Neither the mentor nor the mentoree should share each other's confidences without mutual approval.
- Meetings are treated as a priority, and each person's full attention is concentrated on them.
- Honesty is important.
- Humor, if used, is respectful and appropriate.
- Anecdotes of past mentoring and learning experiences are shared.
- The mentor is supportive, not controlling.

instances, gender match and/or a common ethnic, racial, class culture, or class background may be judged to reduce barriers that hinder trust. As well, observers typically suggest that mentors not be a staff member's immediate supervisor or trainer.

■ *Step 10: Monitor, support, and evaluate (improve) the program.* Mentoring efforts, once implemented, should be evaluated to ensure that they are cost effective and that they are achieving planned results. Also, like many other programs, continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts are helpful to ensure that the mentoring effort better meets the needs of the organization, the mentors, and the mentorees as it evolves.

Human Resources and Ethical Concerns

   5. **Discuss the role of ethics in the management of human resources.**

WHAT ARE ETHICS?

Ethics: A set of rules or principles that define what is right and what is wrong as decisions are made that affect others.

Business ethics: Refers to the practice of ethical judgment by managers as they make decisions affecting the organization.

Behavior, ethical: Actions in concert with generally accepted social concerns relating to the impact of decisions on others.

Behavior, unethical: Actions not in concert with generally accepted social concerns relating to the impact of decisions on others.

The concept of **ethics** relates to a set of rules or principles that define what is right and what is wrong. Unfortunately, these definitions can vary considerably based on the individual making the determination. Society, through its body of laws, does not become involved until something is illegal. It is clear that something illegal is also unethical, but something can be legal and unethical. For example, it is legal for a human resources manager to show some favoritism toward a specific employee when determining who should attend a convention in a desirable out-of-town location, and the same manager might legally assign undesirable projects to an employee he or she dislikes. However, disregarding the morale and supervisory implications of these decisions, are they ethical?

It is important that persons make ethical decisions in their personal lives, but the practice of **business ethics** is of important concern to hospitality managers. Professional managers consistently practice **ethical behavior** and avoid **unethical behavior.**

The American public has probably always been concerned about ethics. However, today, after recurring news events about numerous business organizations and political corruption and abuses at all governmental levels that most persons believe to have serious ethical consequences, these concerns have never been more significant.

While ethical conduct is required at all times, the difference between what is right and what is wrong is sometimes difficult to distinguish. Consider the following examples:

■ A purchasing agent for a large hotel receives some free tickets to a sporting event from a regular supplier. Does this illustrate a situation where the purchasing agent benefits and no one loses? Can the purchaser's future decisions about product purchases be affected?

■ Top-level managers are offered (and accept) significant salary increases, while wages for hourly staff are kept minimal because of the organization's financial difficulties.

■ Organizations increase employee benefits, but eliminate many full-time staff, and begin to utilize more part-time workers who do not qualify for the benefits.

Can these issues be addressed ethically, and can (or should) the social responsibilities inherent in the situations be considered? Perhaps so—but perhaps not—and the answer depends on the individuals confronted by the situation. The availability of a code of ethics can guide them but, unfortunately, ethical codes are disregarded in many cases.

Some writers have offered ethical principles for hospitality managers that should be followed when decisions are made. These include:

■ *Honesty.* Don't mislead or deceive others.
■ *Integrity.* Do what is right.
■ *Trustworthiness.* Supply correct information, and correct any information that is not factual.
■ *Loyalty.* Avoid conflicts of interest, and don't disclose confidential information.
■ *Fairness.* Treat individuals equally; be tolerant of diversity.
■ *Concern and respect.* Be considerate of those impacted by decision making.
■ *Commitment to excellence.* Do the best you can do.
■ *Leadership.* Lead by example.
■ *Reputation and morale.* Work to enhance the company's reputation and the morale of employees.
■ *Accountability.* Accept responsibility for decisions that are made.[1]

Other writers address factors that can serve as ethical norms.[2] For example, one or more of the following factors can be considered as decisions are made:

■ *Utility.* To what extent does a specific act generate benefits for those affected?
■ *Rights.* To what extent are the rights respected of persons involved as decisions are made?
■ *Justice.* Is a decision fair?
■ *Caring.* Does a decision consider the responsibilities that individuals have to each other?

As one reviews these recommendations, it becomes clear that it is much easier to make the statement, "Hospitality human resources managers must be ethical, and they do so by consistently practicing ethical behavior," than it is to define more specifically what the statement actually means. Given this significant limitation, most top-level hospitality leaders claim that their organizations give a priority to making ethical decisions.

An organization's culture may support and reward its members for making decisions that reflect ethical concerns or, alternatively, it may provide no benefit to those who do so. In extreme instances, the culture may even reward those who make unethical decisions. Examples include some organizations that have, historically, ignored protections mandated under Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) laws, and some lodging organizations that have emphasized expansion in remote geographic locations without regard for the affected citizens of the area or the environmental impact of their expansion.

Human resources managers should recognize that their behavior often speaks more loudly than the philosophy expressed in their organization's mission statement. Consider managers who specify food portions that violate truth-in-menu laws, their peers who raise hotel room rates in times of emergencies in states where it is legal (but perhaps not ethical) to do so, and managers in all segments of the hospitality industry who exaggerate benefits in marketing and advertising messages. Might employees think that, "If the manager does those things to our guests, he or she will also do it to me?" At best, this is likely true and, at worst, it encourages staff members to violate commonly recognized ethical standards. These management actions may (or may not!) be effective in the short term, but they will likely be ineffective over longer time periods. Consumers and employees desire to, respectively, purchase products and services from, and to be employed by, hospitality organizations that are genuinely committed to doing what is right for all of their constituents.

This chapter began by emphasizing the importance of helping new employees adapt to their new work environment because it was the right thing to do for the staff member and the best tactic for use by the hospitality operation. This provides an example of how concerns for others benefit the organization and, if necessary, provides an incentive to do so. When employee concerns are addressed in the culture of the organization, numerous benefits arise, and no disadvantages are likely to accrue. A paradox arises, however: ethical behavior benefits the organization, but some hospitality operations do not recognize the importance of ethical behavior when considering staff members.

CODES OF ETHICS

Code of ethics: A statement used by a hospitality organization to outline broad concepts to guide ethical decision making.

Many hospitality organizations develop and implement a **code of ethics** to provide broad statements to guide ethical decision making. As such, their intention is to provide a framework for decision making rather than to specify exactly what should or should not be done in a specific situation.

Hospitality organizations typically develop codes of ethics for several reasons, including:

- To identify a foundation of acceptable behaviors.
- To promote standards that should guide decision making.
- To provide a benchmark that can be used to evaluate potential decisions.
- To support the responsibility and obligations that decision makers have to constituents and to society.

The most effective codes of ethics exemplify the ethical commitment of the organization and how it will interact with others as it conducts business (in commercial organizations) or provides products and services to its constituencies (in noncommercial operations).

The best codes of ethics are developed specifically for the organization, and they utilize input from the staff members who will be expected to utilize the codes. Organizational leaders should identify the employee groups that will be bound by the code of ethics being developed, and they frequently include staff members at all organizational levels. Input should also be solicited from investors, vendors, and perhaps even other organizations in the community. Those who assist in the code's development should understand the organization's mission and be concerned about its commitment to a positive professional and community image. The support of top-level leadership is of obvious importance as codes of ethics are developed. They should be reviewed by legal counsel, and formal approval from the highest levels in the organization is required.

The tactics used to implement and educate staff members about a code of ethics are important. For example, an exhibit of the code that is hung on the walls at the headquarters office and used as a preamble for an employee handbook will do little good unless it is integrated into and actually guides the culture of the organization. It is also important to consider enforcement concerns that are applicable if or when the code is violated. A code of ethics is important, and its emphasis should last forever. It is not a program that begins and ends at specified times. All staff members should be held accountable for the behavior described in the code of ethics.

What topics might be included in a code of ethics? Figure 5.7 identifies typical concerns addressed in many codes of ethics.

Following are examples of topics commonly addressed in codes of ethics:

- Importance of guests
- Respect for individual staff members
- Need for honesty
- Relations with suppliers
- Compliance with the law in all matters
- Avoiding conflicts of interest
- Use of the organization's assets
- Confidentiality of proprietary information
- Political contributions
- Relations with competitors
- Reporting financial operating results fairly and honestly
- Business entertaining, gift acceptance, and bribes

FIGURE 5.7: Topics in Codes of Ethics

Ask Yourself the Following Questions

Asking the following questions can help one to determine whether a decision is appropriate:

- Is the intended action legal?
- Would I be proud to tell my family about my behavior?
- Would I be happy if my action was a headline in the local community or company newspaper?
- Can I live with myself if I implement what I am considering?
- Would I like someone to do this to me?
- Does the proposed action hurt anyone?
- Is the proposed action fair?
- What if everyone did it?

CORPORATE (SOCIAL) RESPONSIBILITY

Corporate (social) responsibility:
Relates to an organization's efforts to address its commitments to all of its constituencies, including guests, employees, other businesses including suppliers, investors, and society, and the community-at-large.

Stakeholders:
Groups, individuals, and organizations that are affected by an organization; also called *constituents*.

The concept of **corporate (social) responsibility** relates to the efforts of an organization to address its commitments to all of its constituencies, including guests, employees, other businesses including suppliers, investors, and society, and the community-at-large. These groups, also called **stakeholders,** are directly affected by the organization's action.

It is obvious that a hospitality organization must satisfactorily address commitments to its guests, employees, and investors. However, interactions with other businesses including suppliers should be carefully managed. (Recall the concern that codes of ethics should address supplier relationships.) It is also important that organizations act as good citizens in their specific communities and in society as a whole.

At this point, careful readers might be thinking, "While this is true, how exactly does corporate responsibility relate to the management of hospitality human resources?" The answer to this addresses two issues:

- *Cultural consistency.* Can an organization and its leaders be concerned about three constituencies (guests, employees, and investors) without being concerned about others? Doesn't the concept of business ethics noted earlier in this chapter apply beyond the organization itself? Those who shape an organization's culture in ways that attract and retain the most qualified staff members (the primary goal of human resources) will likely treat others in ways that mirror their concern for their staff members.
- *Employer-of-choice concerns.* Applicants are attracted to organizations within their community that have favorable reputations. In perhaps the most simple

example, networks of young people at high schools and colleges provide answers to questions for their peers such as "What's it like to work at specific restaurants, hotels, and/or other hospitality organizations within the community?" An organization's reputation is influenced by, and is known to, many persons beyond the market of current and potential employees. Consider, for

Human Resources Management:
CURRENT EVENTS 5.3

TOURISM CODE OF CONDUCT GUIDES BEHAVIOR RELATING TO SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF MINORS IN BRAZIL

The Brazilian hotel sector's first code of conduct has been adopted by 140 hotels that are affiliated with Accor's six chains, located in seven South American countries. It addresses a pioneering concern about a worldwide problem, and it was developed in response to the 100,000 cases of exploitation of minors reported every year in Brazil that involve sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation.

The code is designed to help protect children and adolescents, is written in three languages (Portuguese, English, and Spanish), and complies with Brazil's federal constitution, its Statute of Children and Adolescents, and other international agreements of which Brazil is a signatory.

The code contains seven principles related to each Accor hotel's commitment to:

- Developing consistent policies addressing any form of sexual exploitation of minors
- Informing, educating, and guiding all staff members about the policy, company actions, and applicable laws
- Establishing guest accommodation agreement clauses that explicitly declare the rejection of any form of sexual exploitation of minors
- Rejecting advertising that encourages sexual exploitation of minors
- Training staff members
- Committing staff to take precautions against commercial relationships with any business that is involved with the enticement and sexual abuse of minors
- Informing guests and hotel visitors about the organization's commitment to the protection of children

Hotel-Online Special Report. "Accor Hotels Has Designed a Tourism Code of Conduct to Guide and Regulate Its Ethical Behaviour Concerning the Sexual Exploitation of Minors in Brazil; Adopted by Accor's 140 Hotels in South America." Retrieved from: *www.hotel-online.com.* October 3, 2005.

Publicity: Free-of-charge information in the media that attracts attention to an organization.

example, the impact of positive **publicity** that arises as organizations participation in community activities and assist with (or take a lead in) addressing broad societal concerns.

Everyone benefits when hospitality organizations assume corporate (social) responsibility for their actions. Is this factor the primary concern of a young person applying for an entry-level position in a hotel, restaurant, private club, or other hospitality organization? Probably not (although it might prompt an employment recommendation from a concerned parent). Do those employed by an organization feel good when they hear and/or read positive things about their organization? Probably so. Would employees of a hospitality operation like to contribute their time and even money to worthwhile causes sponsored or coordinated by their employer? Many would.

You can see, then, that the extent of an organization's corporate responsibility can have an impact on the management of its human resources.

Today's society increasingly emphasizes that its organizations be good corporate citizens, and businesses do so as they:

■ Assume a responsibility toward the environment by controlling (minimizing) the pollution of air, water, and land.
■ Accept a responsibility of concern toward guests by staying clear of unethical and irresponsible business practices relating to consumers' rights, unfair pricing, and being honest with advertising messages.

Some Examples of Corporate (Social) Responsibility

It makes good business sense for hospitality operations to help to improve their communities. They can do so in many ways including:

- Contributing time and money to worthwhile community projects and charitable causes.
- Providing products and services during times of disasters and other emergencies.
- Participating in environmentally friendly initiatives such as recycling, conserving energy, and utilizing environmentally "friendly" packaging.
- Coordinating activities for employees that provide volunteer services for the community.
- Investigating and correcting supplier abuses of employees in international locations.
- Recognizing animal welfare concerns in agreements with food suppliers.

HUMAN RESOURCES TERMS

The following terms were defined in this chapter:

Adaptation (to organization)	**Ethics**
Orientation	**Business ethics**
Mission statement	**Behavior (ethical)**
Orientation kit	**Behavior (unethical)**
Induction	**Code of ethics**
Mentoring	**Corporate (social) responsibility**
Career ladder	**Stakeholders**
Cross-functional team	**Publicity**

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What is the impact of one's orientation experiences on his or her ability to perform work that meets required work standards?
2. What are some early-job experiences that you liked in previous positions you have held? Some that you disliked? How did each of these experiences impact your attitude about the organization, your manager/supervisor, and your position? What suggestions would you make to correct the things that you disliked about your early-job experiences?
3. How important do you think a code of ethics is for a small hospitality operation? How, if at all, is your response different for a very large hospitality organization?

CASE STUDY: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN ACTION

"I guess there are advantages and disadvantages to being hired at the height of the busy season at a ski resort," said Sergio as he sat in the employee lounge with Patty during a well-deserved break. "I like my job in the maintenance department, especially the group I work with, and it's great to have all of the tools and supplies needed for routine maintenance. That has not been the case in some of my previous positions, and it really caused me to stress out!"

"We're all glad you're here," replied Patty, a housekeeping supervisor. "I didn't know what you would say now after I heard you talk earlier about your initial experiences with our resort that were less than perfect. I remember you telling me that you didn't know the location of the worksites for many of the maintenance tasks because the property is so large. I also remember you telling me how silly you must have looked to your peers because you didn't know specific maintenance tasks or the required tools for servicing some of our specialized equipment. In fact, you told me you had been here two weeks before you even met the department head."

"You're right," said Sergio. "The initial orientation process could have been much more organized and better delivered. If it was, I wouldn't have felt so awkward, and I could have better helped the resort by doing things right the first time without the need for lots of rework. I remember thinking a couple of times that they weren't treating me very well, and the fact that everyone appeared to be so busy, and they weren't doing it intentionally, didn't really soften my feelings. Since then, I guess I worked my way from a negative feeling to a neutral posture where I could take the job or leave it, to my present attitude that it's getting to be a better place to work."

"I don't think things would be very different in my housekeeping department," commented Patty, "if you started in the middle of the season. I guess I've always thought, incorrectly, that the excuse of being busy was accepted by new staff members. But now I can see that, as managers, we owe our staff members much more than promises that things will get better. I'm going to make some changes in my department and suggest to other department supervisors that they consider the need for changes in their departments as well. Thanks for the education, Sergio."

Dimension: Employer-of-Choice Concerns

1. How do you think most potential job applicants would react to the resort's reputation of "rough starts, but it gets better after you've been working there for a while"?
2. Many restaurant guests say almost nothing to friends if they have a good dining experience, but they say many things to contacts when they have inadequate dining experiences. Do you think the tendency to say a few nice things and lots of bad things is also true about one's experience with an employer? Why or why not?

Dimension: Human Resources Issues

1. Because the ski resort is so large, it likely has a human resources department. Is it possible that these specialists are not aware of their property's problems with orientation programs? If they are, what are reasons that they might not be more proactive in addressing issues? If they are not, what types of changes in the property's communication network might be appropriate?
2. What, if any, role should human resources personnel play in advising (improving) the orientation program? What should be the role, if any, of top-level managers?

Dimension: Employee Retention Issues

1. What impact, if any, do you think inadequate orientation programs have on employee retention rates?
2. How might you, as a department manager, better determine how, if at all, the quality of new employee orientation impacts the property's turnover rates?

3. Assume that you could prove a positive relationship between effective orientation programs and improved employee retention, and that it was cost beneficial to improve the orientation program. What potential responses might higher-level officials at this resort give in response to this information?

INTERNET ACTIVITIES

1. General business and management resources contain information applicable to the development and implementation of orientation programs for personnel in the hospitality industry. For a good reference, go to *www.workforce.com.* When you reach the site, type "employee orientation" into the search box.
2. Human resources managers can obtain much online assistance as they develop employee handbooks. They can, for example, review sample handbooks, analyze and/or purchase hardcopy and software guides to develop handbooks, and review sample handbook topics. See, for example, *www.hr-guide.com* and *www.humanresources.about.com/od/handbookspolicies/.*

You can also review Web sites of organizations that sell handbook development resources and provide customized services.

3. The hotel industry is increasingly concerned about managing in a way that is environmentally friendly. To review current information about this topic, go to *www.hotel-online.com.* Enter "green hotels" into the Web site's search box.
4. Environmental concerns are also very important to the restaurant industry. For example, type "restaurant environmental concerns" into your favorite search engine. You'll discover numerous reports focusing on environmental issues, including sanitation and the environment, waste reduction and recycling, no-smoking concerns, managing hazardous waste, minimizing water pollution and energy consumption, reducing water usage, genetic engineering, organic foods, and a wide variety of other topics. An excellent example is *The Better Restaurant and Café Guide, www.kbeap.org/Resources/restaurantandcafe.pdf.*

ENDNOTES

1. See, for example, Christin Jaszayn and Paul Dunk, *Ethical Decision Making in the Hospitality Industry.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2006. (See Chapter 1.)
2. Ronald Ebert and Ricky Griffin, *Business Essentials,* 4th edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2003. (See Chapter 3.)