

Internship Report on

**“Effective Customer Complaint Management
in Food & Beverage Service: A Case Study on
The Sanya Edition”**

*An Internship Report Presented to the Faculty of Business and Entrepreneurship in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Tourism and Hospitality
Management*

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Internship Report on

Effective Customer Complaint Management in Food & Beverage Service: A
Case Study on The Sanya Edition

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Date of Submission: November 24, 2024

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Date: 24-11-2024

Mr. Mahbub Parvez

Department of Tourism & Hospitality Management

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Subject: Submission of Internship Report.

Dear Sir,

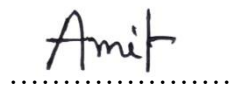
I am pleased to submit my internship report titled “*Effective Customer Complaint Management in Food & Beverage Service: A Case Study on The Sanya Edition*”, which I have completed as a part of my internship in the Food & Beverage (F&B) Service department at The Sanya Edition.

Throughout my internship, I had the opportunity to explore various best practices for managing customer complaints within the F&B industry. This report focuses on effective techniques that ensure customer satisfaction, improve service quality, and handle challenging situations with tact and professionalism. My time at The Sanya Edition allowed me to observe and understand the practical aspects of these strategies, providing valuable insights into how they contribute to creating a positive dining experience.

I have invested considerable time and effort in researching and analyzing the processes of handling customer feedback and complaints. This experience has been instrumental in enhancing my professional growth, and I am thankful for the opportunity to undertake this meaningful research.

I sincerely appreciate your support and guidance during my internship, and I look forward to your feedback on the report.

Yours sincerely,



.....
Amit Joyanta Das Opi

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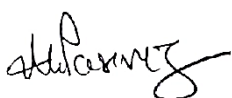
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the report titled “*Effective Customer Complaint Management in Food & Beverage Service: A Case Study on The Sanya Edition*” submitted by **Amit Joyanta Das Opi**, ID: **201-43-114**, as part of the partial fulfillment for the **Bachelor of Tourism and Hospitality Management** degree at **Daffodil International University**, has been completed under my supervision and guidance.

The report has been thoroughly reviewed, and I attest that it meets the required standards of quality and depth, both in research and presentation, to merit the award of the **Bachelor of Tourism and Hospitality Management** degree. The study demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of customer service practices in the hospitality industry, specifically within the context of the Food & Beverage service sector.

Amit Joyanta Das Opi has shown commendable dedication and effort in conducting this research, and I believe that this report reflects the skills and knowledge gained throughout his academic journey.

I wish him continued success and prosperity in all future endeavors.



Mahbub Parvez

Department of Tourism & Hospitality Management

Faculty of Business and Entrepreneurship

Daffodil International University

Executive Summary

The report “*Effective Customer Complaint Management in Food & Beverage Service: A Case Study on The Sanya Edition*” explores how customer complaints are managed in the Food & Beverage (F&B) sector. This study is inspired by my internship experience at The Sanya Edition, focusing on identifying practical approaches to address customer complaints effectively and promptly. The goal is to resolve service issues for a highly satisfactory outcome within the hospitality industry.

During my time in the F&B Service department, I observed and documented complaints related to food quality, service delays, and staff behavior. The Sanya Edition employs structured steps, including early acknowledgment, thorough investigation, and prompt resolution, ensuring guest concerns are addressed efficiently. This approach prevents situations where guests are left dissatisfied or forced to follow up later, ensuring a seamless experience.

The report highlights best practices such as proactive communication, regular staff training, and leveraging guest feedback for operational improvements. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining service consistency under high-pressure conditions and meeting the elevated expectations of luxury hospitality guests.

The study concludes that effective complaint management is critical to sustaining a hotel's reputation and fostering guest loyalty. By implementing efficient strategies, hotels can enhance their brand image and improve guest retention, providing a competitive edge in the industry.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Introduction

The Sanya Edition is a Marriott International brand luxury hotel, known for its unique modern luxury and personal touches nestled within the dramatic scenery of the Riviera of China. Opening its doors, The Sanya Edition has grown to become the crowd's darling among leisure travelers and business travelers alike due to its world-class amenities and unparalleled hospitality. This hotel boasts a stay experience no less than smooth, complemented with the best dining and luxury facilities to meet up to the most refined tastes of the guests.

1.1 Origin of the Report:

This report entitled “*Effective Customer Complaint Management in Food & Beverage Service: A Case Study on The Sanya Edition*” is prepared as a partial fulfillment of my internship requirement for the Bachelor of Tourism and Hospitality Management degree. My on-the-job training took place in the five-star hotel - The Sanya Edition, owned by Marriott International, in which I was actually exposed to the F&B Service department. The following report is based on my observations and practical experience concerning how consumer complaints are managed in the hotel's F&B sector. The focus is on finding out what the best practices are in handling customer grievances towards service quality and attainment of increased guest satisfaction. My internship gave me an opportunity to gain insight and data in helping me with the shaping of this report.

1.2 Background

The hospitality industry relies on consumer satisfaction, while in the luxury hotel sector, it's a matter of life and death. Guests in five-star hotels like The Sanya Edition demand to be serviced at the best level, and any problem should be solved without delay. Being one of the direct contact points with guests, F&B frequently gets guest complaints about food quality, delay in service, and the behavior of staff. Taking guest complaints seriously is very important for the hotel to uphold its prestige and provide a stay experience that will keep guests coming back for more. During my internship, I saw how the complaint management system at The Sanya Edition follows a systematic process in handling complaints from the guests' perspective. This report analyses the complaint-handling strategies of the F&B service and draws on how the strategies may help the hotel maintain its service standard.

1.3 Objectives

The purpose of this report is to outline the best practices followed by The Sanya Edition in handling customer complaints in its F&B service department.

Specific objectives of the report:

1. To know about the types of complaints received most frequently in the F&B department.
2. To assess the structured approach used by The Sanya Edition in resolving customer complaint.
3. To identify areas needing further improvement and suggest opportunities to develop the complaint management process.

1.4 Methodology

This report is based on both qualitative and quantitative data collected during my internship at The Sanya Edition. Primary data were obtained by means of direct observation of the complaint handling process, as well as through an informal conversation with F&B staff and managers. Secondary data, such as guest feedback reports, performance reviews, and company policies regarding complaint resolution, also are extensively analyzed to give a wide view of how the hotel performs in handling guest complaints. In particular, the following methodology was used:

- Observe the day-to-day activities of the F&B service with a special emphasis on complaint handling.
- Interviews: Casual, open-ended discussions with all staff including the managers, waiters, and supervisors on how they handle complaints.
- Review Analysis: There are many ways to give feedback and reviews in Sanya Edition Hotel, like Guest Voice, Dianping app, C-trip. In this app, there guests who observe and write their feelings about the hotel.

1.5 Limitations

During the pursuit of this research, certain limitations were met. First, the language problem, as everybody here speaks Chinese, so it is difficult to manage some data for reporting. The scope of research was limited to the F&B Service department. Thirdly, since the internship was limited in time, it couldn't be able to cover all the broad areas and observe a wide range of complaints and resolutions. Some of these data, like the financial impact and customer retention rates, were not available due to confidentiality policies, which might have enriched the analysis even further. There is also an overload in terms of work; hence, the need for management in terms of time. Besides the work, it isn't possible to analyze data without going off duty. With all these limitations, the report does try to offer some inputs on best practices in the management of customer complaints in the F&B service sector of a luxury hotel.

Chapter 2

Organization Part

2.1 Management Aspect

History of The Sanya Edition Set on the breathtaking coastline of Hainan Island, China, The Sanya Edition is considered one of the best luxury properties within the Marriott International portfolio. Since opening its doors, it has instituted its recognition very fast for its unmatched blend of modern sophistication and unspoiled beauty, catering to discerning travelers across the world. This boutique resort represents one of sustainability and deep immersion for guests, while redefining in the ultimate manner what pure luxury can be by combining outstanding architecture with innovative amenities and unparalleled service.

Vision, Mission, and Goals

- ❖ **Vision:** Position itself as the most desirable luxury destination in Asia, blending inspiration from nature with an un-matched guest experience.
- ❖ **Mission:** to provide excellent hospitality with attention to guests' individual needs, good sustainable practices, and innovative services that will help to make memories for each customer.
- ❖ **Goals:**
 - To achieve consistently high levels of customer satisfaction through guessing and exceeding guests' expectations.
 - Promoting business based on a sustainable and eco-friendly model.
 - To continuously innovate in F&B service, providing world-class dining experiences for guests.
 - To establish a supporting work culture wherein employees can give their fullest performance.

Philosophy: The operational philosophy of The Sanya Edition is "luxury redefined" and places much emphasis on creating a stay of luxury while making it personal, interwoven with both local culture and nature. This property ensures the incorporation of environments and experiences that set creative opportunities in action, relaxation, and engagement with the environment.

Organogram and Departments The Sanya Edition follows an organized structure in terms of organizational setup, which ensures proper management in each department.

Main departments included:

- Front Office: In charge of check-in, checkout, concierge, and guest relationship.
- Food & Beverage: This department is responsible for all dining and beverage services in the property, including complaint management and guest satisfaction.
- Housekeeping: keeps the guest rooms and public areas clean and tidy.
- Sales and Marketing: Concerned with the advertisement of the hotel, public relation, and attracting clients by running various marketing campaigns.
- Financial and Accounting: Oversees financial operations, budgeting, and financial reporting.
- Human Resources: Recruitment, training, and welfare of employees.
- Engineering and Maintenance: Ensures all facilities are functional and properly maintained.

The core management principles at Marriott International have guided Resort Sanya Edition to focus on:

- 1. Customer-Centric Approach:** Guest satisfaction is given top priority, along with quality, customized services.
- 2. Employee Empowerment:** This is training employees to make decisions in favor of guests and to foster a good work culture.
- 3. Sustainability and Innovation:** To take care of the environment, and invest in new technologies that increase customer comfort.
- 4. Integrity and Accountability:** Transparency and accountability in the business, from the books to guest interaction.

2.2 Product and Services



Sanya Edition is offering a range of products and services to cater to the needs of luxury travelers, including:

- **Luxury Accommodations:** Everything from beautifully appointed rooms and suites to private villas overlooking the ocean. Here have total 501 rooms, including 45 suites and 12 villas
- **Food & Beverage Outlets:** Many restaurants with different types of food, including specialty restaurants, beachfront dining, and bars. Here have total 4 restaurants-Market, Egret, Xianhai, Barbacoa; 2 Bars Sky Bar and Beach Club;
- **Recreational and Wellness:** Services at the spa, fitness center, pools, and wellness programs for the health-conscious guest.
- **Event Spaces:** Luxury conference and event spaces designed for business conventions, weddings, and social events; these are operated by the Banquet.
- **Children's Program:** For the children have lots of activates including one Play Land and children pool where have so many activities for the children
- **Concierge Services:** Personalized guest assistance to enhance convenience, such as arranging local excursions, airport transfers, and custom experiences.

2.3 Financial Highlights

With the financial strength and international reach of Marriott International as its parent company, The Sanya Edition is assured of Marriott's stability and reputation that will keep this hotel working at high standards, commanding its market share at luxury levels, and maintaining the best services possible for its guests. Moreover, The Sanya Edition significantly enhances Marriott's profitability thanks to the Asia-Pacific high occupancy rate, premium room, and service rates, as well as strong revenues generated through its F&B stores. The food and beverage operations for themselves have a remarkably robust turnover due to the commitment to quality and innovation. Because the figures are proprietary, the hotel is financially stable, reflected in its continuous efforts of property upgrade, staff training, and market promotions.

2.4 SWOT Analysis



Strengths:

- **Reputation for Excellence:** Recognized for its opulent accommodations and superior service, thereby appealing to an affluent clientele.
- **Strategic Location:** Situated on Hainan Island, offering stunning views and proximity to natural attractions.
- **Backed by Marriott International:** Benefits from Marriott's economic stability and resources and global standards.
- **Unique Food and Beverage:** A range of culinary experiences not offered by the competition.

Weaknesses:

- **High Operational Costs:** As a luxury hotel, maintaining standards incurs significant expenses, impacting profit margins.
- **Target Market Limited:** The hotel best caters to affluent travelers, perhaps limiting its flexibility during periods of economic decline.

- **Complaints Management:** Complaint management is complex in the F&B industry due to high guest expectations.

Opportunities:

- **Expansion of Wellness Programs:** Increasing demand for wellness-focused offerings can attract new guests.
- **Digital Transformation:** Embracing new technologies for seamless guest services and data-driven decision-making.
- **Sustainability Initiatives:** Opportunities to lead in eco-friendly practices, appealing to environmentally conscious travelers.

Threats:

- **Economic Fluctuations:** Economic downturns or currency fluctuations may impact international travel and, correspondingly, occupancy rates.
- **Intense Competition:** Other luxury hotels in the region and increasing competition from alternative accommodations, such as luxury rentals.
- **High Guest Expectations:** The luxury market comes with high expectations, putting constant pressure on service delivery.

Chapter 3

Learning Part

3.1 Services in F&B Department: The Sanya Edition offers varied F&B services to its luxury guests, which include:

- **Fine Dining and Casual Options:** From gourmet meals to relaxed dining with a variety of cuisines. Inside the hotel have four types of restaurants for the guest which is available for in-house guest and also outside guest and these four restaurants serve different type of food. These four restaurants are-
 - i. **Market:** this is an All-Day Dining (ADD) restaurant their normal guest can try European style food and Chinese food this actually a mix cuisine.
 - ii. **Egret:** This a western cuisine restaurant and here serving style also western.
 - iii. **Xian-hai:** This is fully Chinese cuisine delicately for the Chinese guest those guests don't like others food. On the other hand, foreign guest also can test the authentic Chinese food.
 - iv. **Barbacoa:** This is an Indonesian cuisine mostly serve Barbeque style food this restaurant is inspired from Bali.

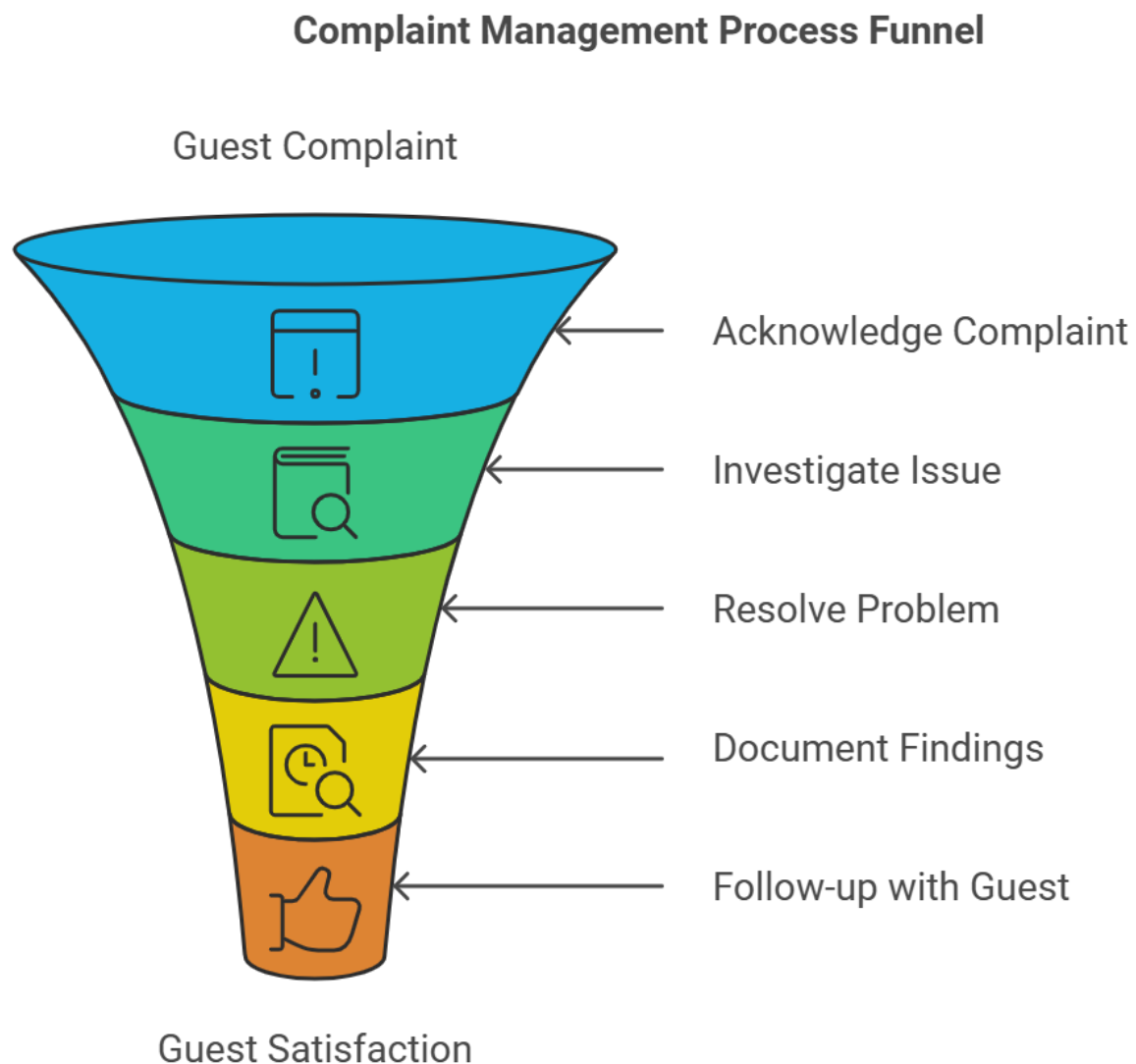
The reason of that time of restaurant so that the guest being satisfied with the food. Sanya Edition always things about the comfort for the guest that is their stay period, adventure and also about the food because food is the main things for enjoy a relax holiday with family or friends.

- **Room Service:** Some of the guests don't want to go to the restaurant for the meal sometimes they are busy for meeting or they are feeling tired or they are spending quality time with their friends and family that time they order the food through the room service. The hotel also focusses on this service that the guest get a superior service and enjoyment.
- **Banquet Service:** Personalized service for the event like for weddings, conferences, and private events. In the Banquet service depend on the guest requirement we provide them the food service which continent food they like and what type of service style they want that have provided by the hotel so that the event beings more memorable for the guest.
- **Bar and Lounge Services:** Specialty cocktail menus, beachfront bars, and lounges with scenic views. Specialty Diets and Special Orders: Tailor-made meals for dietary restrictions, cultural preferences, and special occasions.

These services require seamless operations, quality assurance, and an agile complaint resolution process to ensure a positive guest experience.

3.2 Process & Principles in Complaints Handling

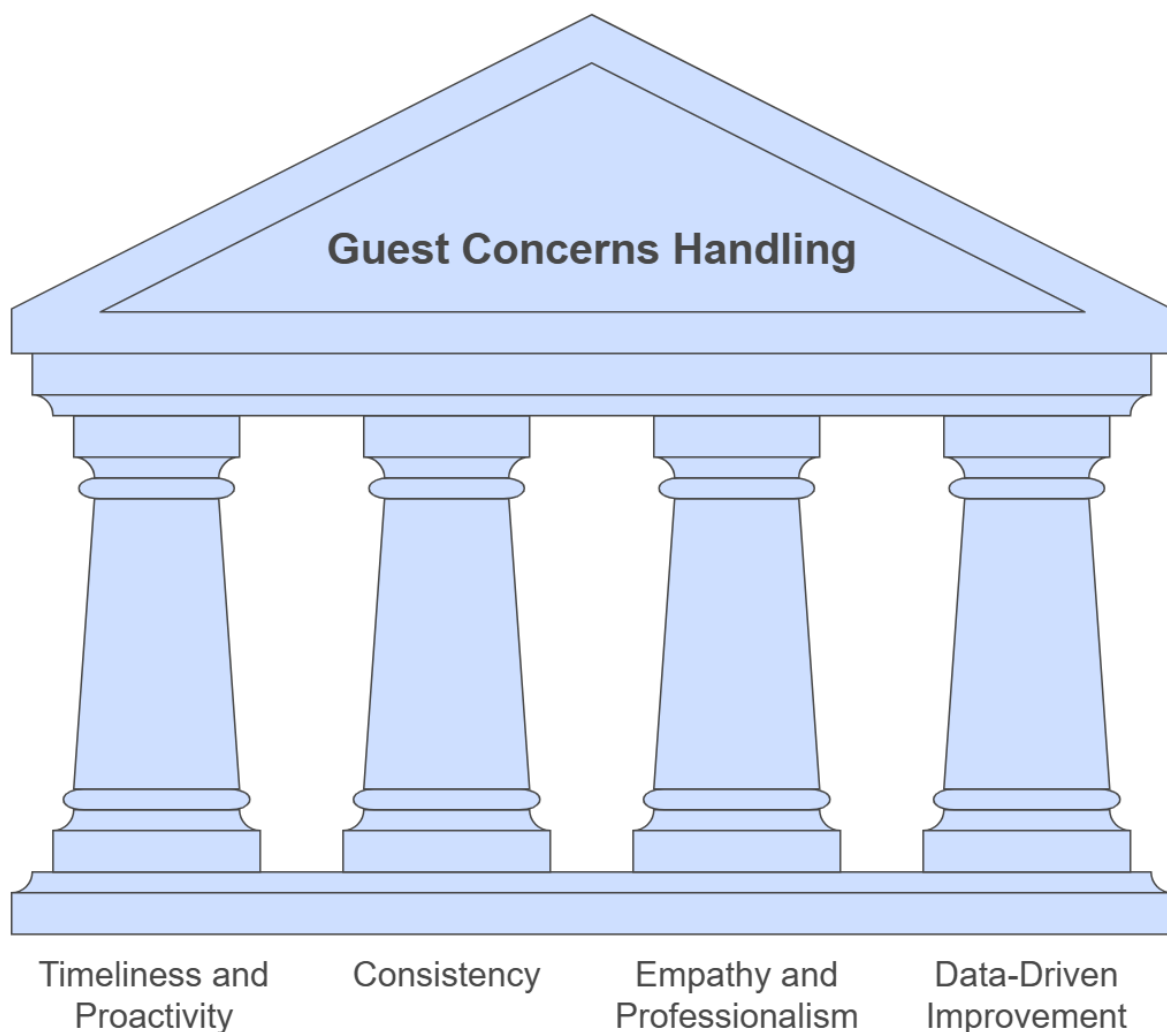
Complaint Management Process



- ✓ **Acknowledgment:** As soon as a complaint is brought forth, we respond immediately. All our people are trained to listen carefully to what the guest is saying, recognize his/her concerns, and reassure him/her that the problem will be solved quickly and surely.
- ✓ **Investigation:** After the admission of a complaint, we gather all the relevant details. For instance, if a guest complains about poor service, such as delay in service; then, our F&B team would check the service logs and discuss with staff concerned to find what went wrong.

- ✓ **Resolution:** After getting all the details, our staff or managers would recommend a solution to the problem. It may be replacing a dish that was not liked by the guest, or it could also be in the form of offering a complimentary service. We always follow up to make sure that the guest is pleased with our solution.
- ✓ **Documentation:** We document each complaint in detail. This helps us to identify any patterns or recurrent problems that we can then address and improve.
- ✓ **Follow-up:** We do not stop at the resolution of the complaint but rather follow up with the guest, usually within 24 hours, to ensure that they are totally satisfied with how we handled the situation and that their experience has improved. This is to ensure they are happy with the solution.

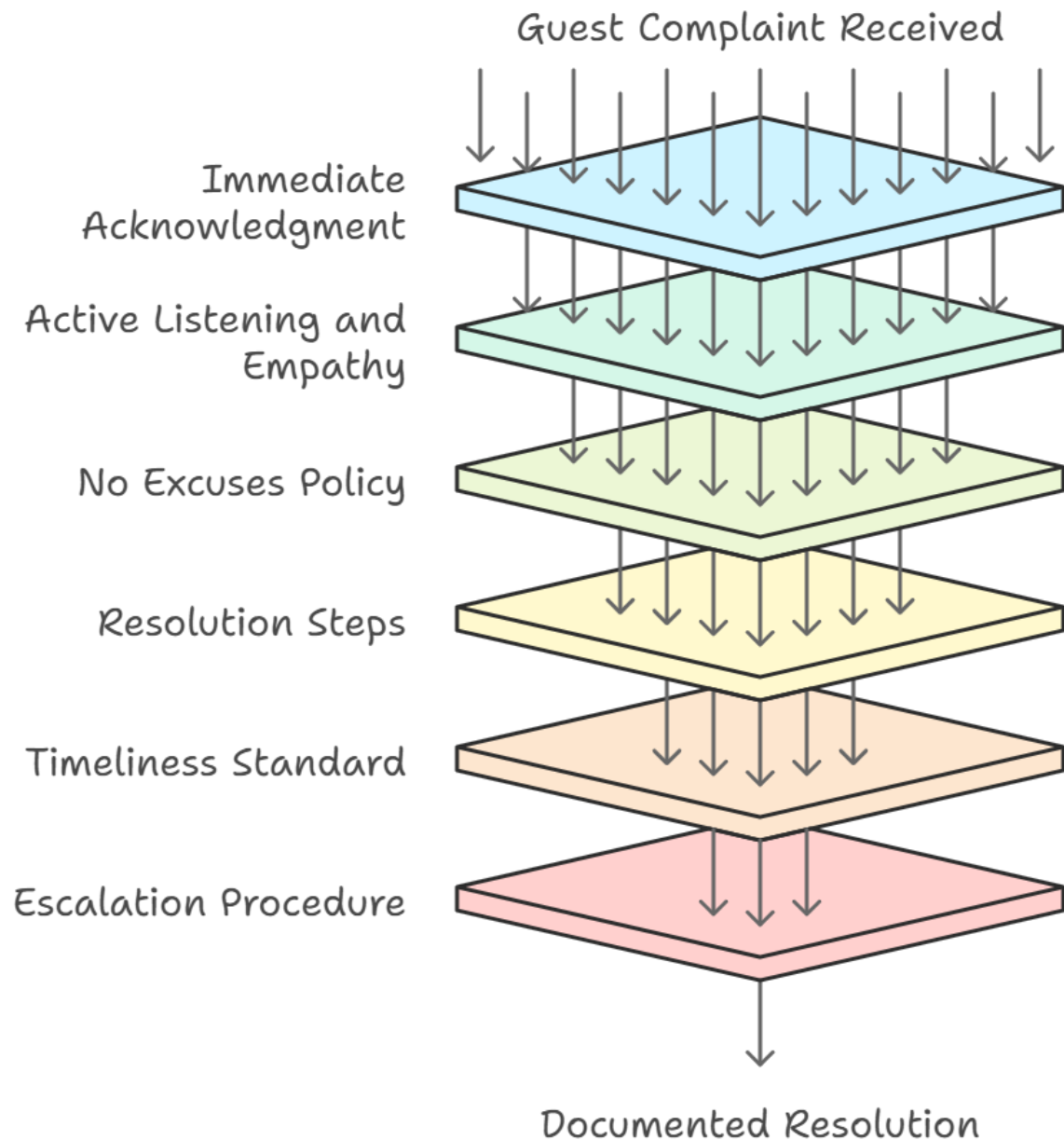
Guiding Principles for Guest Concerns Handling:



- ✓ **Timeliness and Proactivity:** It's important to respond to complaints quickly. By doing so, you show guests that their concerns matter and are taken seriously.
- ✓ **Consistency:** Follow the same steps every time a complaint is made, so that every guest will get the same level of high service, regardless of the situation.
- ✓ **Empathy and Professionalism:** When guests share their concerns, listen well and treat them with kindness. Let the person know that you understand and are concerned with what is happening to them.
- ✓ **Data-Driven Improvement:** Record the complaints and the reasons for them. Analyzing this will enable you to see where our services can be improved and where to prevent the same problem from arising in the future. e situation.

3.3 Rules and Overcoming Procedures: Sanya Edition has formulated some rules for complaint management in their F&B department and made structured procedures to ensure consistency in service recovery and guest satisfaction. These rules help them to maintain high standards of rectifying issues promptly and professionally to help uphold the hotel's reputation of luxury service.

Streamlined Complaint Resolution Process



Standard Rules for Complaint Management

1. Immediate Acknowledgment:
 - Staff are required to acknowledge any guest complaint immediately, regardless of the nature of the issue. Acknowledgment is the first step in showing guests

that their concerns are valid and important, which can help de-escalate situations early.

2. Active Listening and Empathy:

- Employees are trained to listen actively and express empathy in every interaction, ensuring guests feel understood. Staff are instructed to use phrases like, “I understand how you feel” or “Thank you for bringing this to our attention,” which conveys respect and helps diffuse any potential tension.

3. No Excuses Policy:

- To maintain professionalism, staff members are instructed to avoid excuses and instead focus on solutions. This rule encourages employees to take ownership and responsibility rather than placing blame or explaining failures.

4. Structured Resolution Steps:

- Each complaint follows a structured process: acknowledgment, gathering information, offering a solution, confirming guest satisfaction, and recording the interaction. This standardization ensures no step is missed, reducing the risk of unresolved issues.

5. Timeliness Standard:

- F&B staff must adhere to a strict 15-minute response window. This is especially relevant for complaints related to food quality or delays, where quick resolution directly impacts the dining experience.

6. Escalation Protocol:

- For complex issues or VIP complaints, staff members must follow an escalation process. Issues that can't be resolved at the ground level are passed to a manager or supervisor, who is empowered to make higher-level decisions, including providing complimentary services or more substantial resolutions.

7. Documenting Complaints:

- Every complaint is logged in the hotel's service database, capturing details such as the nature of the issue, the guest's feedback, and the resolution provided. This

documentation supports future analysis, allowing the team to identify patterns and implement preventive measures.

Overcoming Procedures for Specific Complaint Types

1. Food Quality Issues:

- Procedure: If a guest is dissatisfied with a dish, the server immediately apologizes and removes the item from the table. Kitchen staff are notified to prepare a replacement promptly, and the guest is offered a complimentary item if needed to compensate for the inconvenience.
- Preventive Measure: Regular checks on food temperature, taste, and presentation standards help minimize quality complaints, reducing the need for reactive measures.

2. Delays in Service:

- Procedure: If delays occur, the staff member informs the guest proactively before they notice the delay, apologizing and offering a small token like a complimentary drink. If a significant delay persists, the manager may intervene with further compensation.
- Preventive Measure: The team maintains a buffer time in service schedules to avoid backlogs. High-volume times are managed by additional staff support, and pre-order arrangements for larger groups help avoid delays.

3. Staff Behavior Concerns:

- Procedure: Staff behavior complaints are escalated immediately to a supervisor. The staff member is then briefed, and, if necessary, retraining is arranged. The guest receives an apology and reassurance that their feedback has been taken seriously.
- Preventive Measure: Continuous customer service training ensures all staff uphold the hotel's standards, reducing the occurrence of behavior-related issues.

4. Ambiance and Cleanliness Complaints:

- Procedure: If a guest raises an issue regarding ambiance (e.g., temperature or noise levels) or cleanliness, the staff quickly addresses it by adjusting the

settings or involving housekeeping to resolve it promptly. For more substantial concerns, such as complaints about décor or lighting, the F&B manager addresses them.

- Preventive Measure: Regular checks are conducted before each shift to ensure the dining area is up to standard. These checks help maintain an environment that meets guest expectations, preventing common ambiance-related complaints.

Guest Recovery and Compensation Procedures

The Sanya Edition has specific guidelines for compensation based on the complaint's impact on the guest experience:



The Sanya Edition has specific guidelines for compensation based on the complaint's impact on the guest experience:

- Minor Complaints (e.g., delay in orders): Offer small compensations like complimentary beverages or desserts.
- Moderate Complaints (e.g., incorrect orders, dissatisfaction with a dish): Offer meal replacements, a complimentary dish, or a discount on the bill.

- Significant Complaints (e.g., prolonged delays, major food quality issues): Escalate to the manager, who may offer larger compensations like complimentary meals or gift vouchers for future visits.

Training on Procedures Overcoming

Periodic training is conducted to employees in order to handle complaints with confidence and professionalism. Scenarios and the role-playing activities help employees practice various responses for types of complaints that may occur, reinforcing the seriousness of the outlined procedures. This training promotes enhancement in speed and quality of complaint resolution while instilling a positive attitude toward feedback.

Through these codified dos and don'ts, service recovery at The Sanya Edition is taken to an exceedingly high pitch: customer complaints are not resolved but used to an advantage in fine-tuning the guest experience.

3.4 Feedback and Service Environment

Feedback and a positive service environment are the two most vital components of the process for effective management of customer complaints at The Sanya Edition's F&B department. In this respect, customers' feedback directly relates to guest satisfaction and further refines service processes, thus building a warm atmosphere and dealing in advance with guests' needs. A structured approach toward feedback can thus help The Sanya Edition maintain high standards of service, manage customer expectations, and respond to evolving guest preferences.

Importance of Guest Feedback

1. Improvement in the Quality of the Service: By regularly acquiring feedback, The Sanya Edition becomes aware of guest preferences and overriding problems, thereby allowing it to fine-tune the quality of service extended and shape its offerings toward the guest requirements. Feedback related to food quality, service speed, and staff behavior lets the F&B department align their services with the expectations of the guests and ensure maximum possible levels of satisfaction.
2. Proactive Complaint Management: Direct feedback from the guests identifies many a gap in service that can be addressed before it grows into bigger proportions. Patterns identified in complaints or suggestions pertaining to food temperature or delays in the service can immediately be adjusted by the team so as not to let minor issues affect the overall experience of the guests.

3. **Motivating and Training Staff:** Feedback improves employee performance with the fact that the management may point out good comments from guests and may check on constructive criticisms. Secondly, guest feedback is constantly reviewed in adjusting training programs, enabling the staff to stimulate their work in areas like improving customer interaction and complaint resolution.

Feedback Collection Methods

1. **On-the-Spot Feedback:** F&B staff are trained to take the feedback in every step of the guest. For example: when the guest finish one course or just test that course that staff will ask the guest that how was this food? Did you like the cooking style? Is this food is perfect that type of food you have expected? If these are answer have provided by the guest in a positive way then it's okay with the food but the answer is negative that immediate have to do for the guest satisfaction. That is the real on spot feedback and on spot solution. The staff will inform the chef and chef will cook another food and chef also serve the food on guest table that time guest will things that the staff and all of employee care about their feeling.
2. **Digital Feedback Forms and Post-Dining Surveys:** After each meal, guests are usually contacted through an online survey to provide feedback on everything, from the quality of the food to the service ambiance. This structured feedback allows The Sanya Edition to gather comprehensive data on the experiences of their guests and monitor the trends in satisfaction of guests, together with service improvements over time.
3. **Online Review Platforms:** Web review monitoring will also be provided by TripAdvisor, C-trip, Diaping, Meituan and social media commentary to provide an outside perspective on the experiences of their guests. Review engagement, especially to negative reviews, shows where one can improve. Also, positive feedback is a good marketing tool.

Feedback Analysis and Implementation

1. **Data-Driven Analysis Sessions:** Weekly and monthly meetings are conducted to assess guest feedback for patterns and discussion on improvements. Through systematic analysis, the F&B department will be able to adjust their processes using the feedback received as a contribution to the continuous development of service.
2. **Actionable Insights for Process Improvement:** Need to take immediate action on the negative review. If that is occurs by the any employee need to train them in that thing.

Communicate with the guest and provide them extra discount on their next visit in any other property of Marriot.

3. Feedback as a Performance Measure: We can set for the staff that if they get good review that time they will get some incentives. In that case, all of staff will be more focused on the service that will be provide a best experience for the guest.
4. Problem-solving Effectively: The staff is oriented to handle these in calm and professional manners so that, for issues that arise, the guest experience does not go bad. The fact that replies to issues are prompt and empathetic-whether resolving service delays or responding to certain requests-shows that a hotel means serious business in keeping its guests satisfied.

Feedback as the Driver of Environmental Quality

The feedback from guests directly impacts the development of the service atmosphere at the hotel. For instance, if guests feel that there is a need to adjust the lighting, music, or seats, then such adjustments will be made to suit their satisfaction. In returning to such aspects of the environment, F&B will ensure that the service atmosphere is positive hence serving the needs of guests and creating value for them.

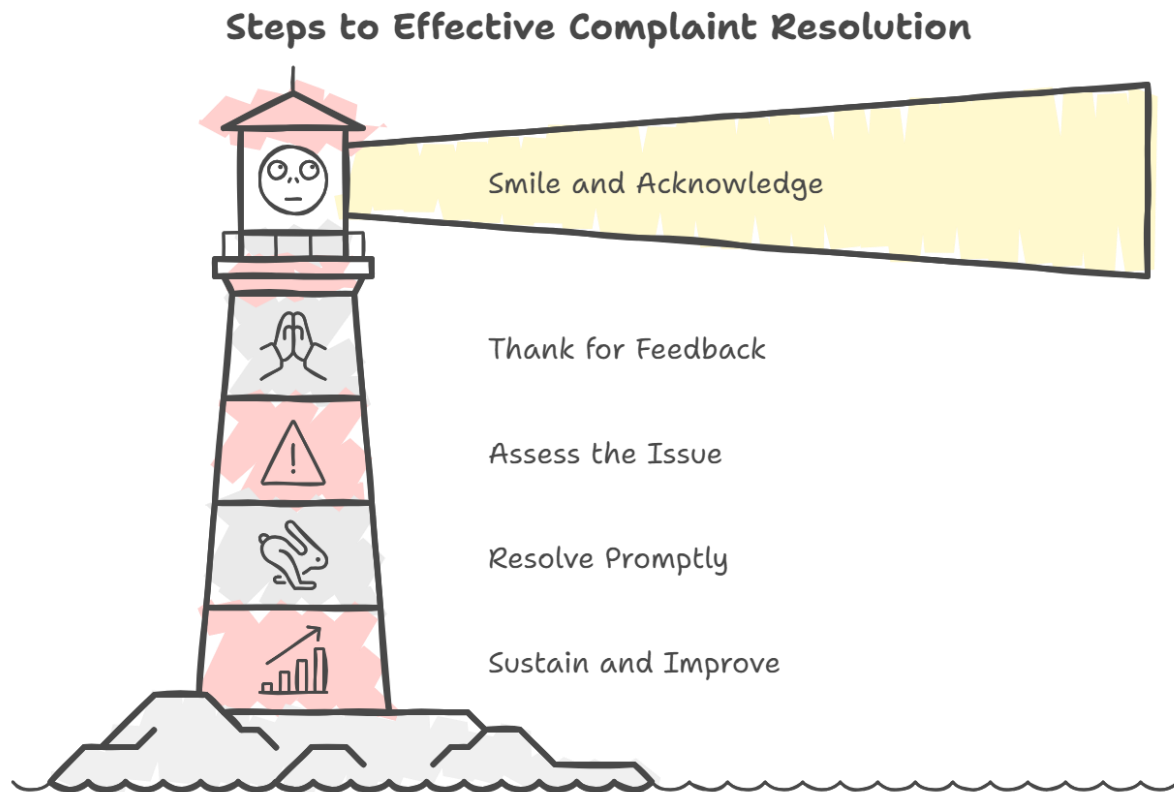
Through continuous collection of feedback, with a well-designed service environment, the food and beverage department of The Sanya Edition continues to be committed to providing superior guest satisfaction and complaint management. By doing so, the hotel can sustain its levels of excellence while ensuring that guests have a superior experience that justifies the luxury reputation of The Sanya Edition.

3.5 Best Practice Model for Handling Customer Complaints

Handling customer complaints effectively in the F&B service sector is essential for maintaining high levels of guest satisfaction and loyalty, particularly in a luxury hotel setting like The Sanya Edition. A well-designed model for handling complaints not only allows the staff to address and resolve issues swiftly but also fosters a positive impression that the hotel values guest feedback and is committed to continuous improvement. This best practice model outlines a structured and proactive approach to managing customer complaints and ensuring a consistently high-quality dining experience.

Best Practice Model for Managing Customer Complaints

The following model, referred to as the **S.T.A.R.S. Model** (Smile, Thank, Assess, Resolve, Sustain), represents an effective, step-by-step method for addressing and managing customer complaints in a luxury F&B setting:



S.T.A.R.S.

Model

1. Smile and Acknowledge (S)

- **Objective:** Initiate a positive interaction by acknowledging the guest's concern with a friendly demeanor.
- **Practice:** The staff should approach the guest with a smile and an understanding tone, making eye contact to signal attentiveness and genuine concern. This step is crucial, as a warm acknowledgment often de-escalates the situation and reassures the guest that their concern is taken seriously.

2. Thank the Guest for the Feedback (T)

- **Objective:** Show appreciation for the feedback, recognizing it as valuable information that helps improve service.
- **Practice:** Thank the guest for bringing the issue to your attention, as this reinforces the hotel's commitment to guest satisfaction. This step also creates a positive rapport, setting the stage for effective problem resolution. Phrases like "Thank you for letting us know; we appreciate the opportunity to address this" convey appreciation and respect.

3. Assess the Issue Thoroughly (A)

- **Objective:** Investigate and understand the specifics of the complaint.
- **Practice:** Listen carefully to the guest's explanation, avoid interruptions, and take notes if necessary. Staff should ask clarifying questions to ensure they have all the necessary details about the complaint. For instance, if the complaint is about food quality, inquire about specific aspects like temperature, taste, or presentation. A thorough assessment helps in identifying the root cause of the problem and prevents misunderstandings.

4. Resolve the Complaint Promptly (R)

- **Objective:** Provide a suitable and immediate solution to address the guest's issue.
- **Practice:** Based on the nature of the complaint, offer an appropriate resolution. Solutions might include replacing a dish, offering a complimentary item, or extending a personal apology from the manager. The key here is to act quickly; prompt action shows the guest that their satisfaction is a priority. If a quick fix is not possible, update the guest on steps being taken to resolve the issue, ensuring that they feel informed and valued.

5. Sustain and Improve (S)

- **Objective:** Use the complaint as a learning opportunity to enhance service quality over time.
- **Practice:** After resolving the issue, document the complaint and share the insights with the team during regular feedback sessions. This helps identify patterns or recurring issues and enables the team to make preventive adjustments. For example, if there are multiple complaints about specific dishes, the team might re-evaluate their preparation

methods. Additionally, continuous training on complaint handling reinforces a proactive, guest-centric service culture.

Application of the S.T.A.R.S. Model at The Sanya Edition

The S.T.A.R.S. Model is particularly relevant in luxury settings like The Sanya Edition, where guests have high expectations for personalized and prompt service. By implementing this structured model, the F&B department can ensure that all staff members follow a consistent approach to complaint management, maintaining the hotel's reputation for exceptional service quality. Here's how it benefits each aspect of complaint handling:

- **Consistency:** Provides a clear, uniform approach, ensuring all team members handle complaints similarly.
- **Training and Development:** Offers a framework for ongoing training, helping staff gain confidence in addressing complaints.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Encourages documenting and reviewing complaints regularly, which helps prevent similar issues in the future.
- **Enhanced Guest Satisfaction:** Ensures each complaint is managed professionally, turning potentially negative experiences into opportunities to strengthen guest loyalty.

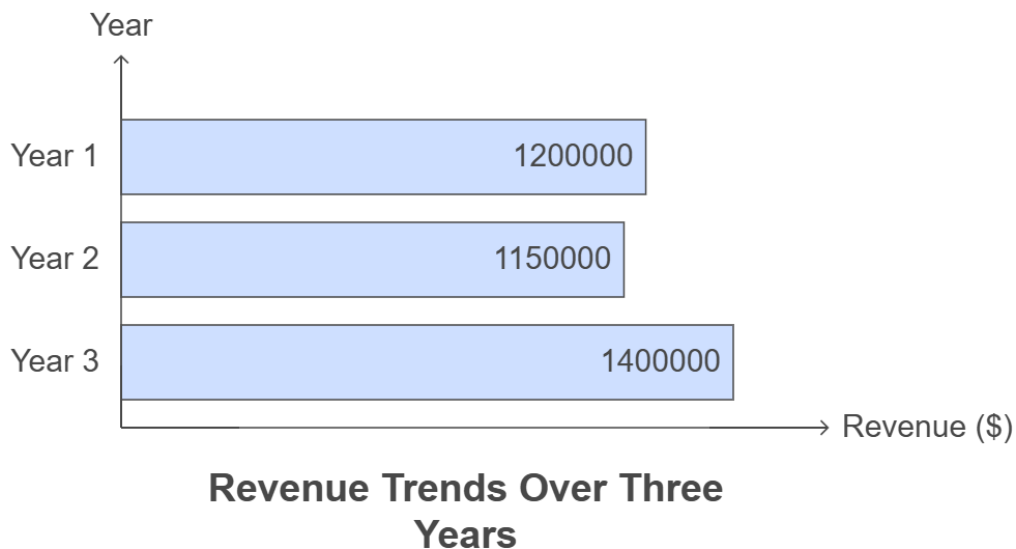
By following the S.T.A.R.S. Model, The Sanya Edition can effectively handle customer complaints, turning challenging situations into opportunities for creating positive guest experiences and reinforcing the hotel's commitment to excellence in F&B service.

3.6 Performance of the Department

In the evaluation of the F&B service department at The Sanya Edition, for a period covering the last three years, lie some indications about financial growth, staffing stability, and customer satisfaction. Key performance indicators related to revenue made, employee turnover, interdepartmental comparison, and customer feedback analysis would tell a lot about the effectiveness of the department in question, particularly regarding complaint management. Here's an in-depth review:

3.6.1 Revenue Generated

Revenue growth is one of the most important indicators of any F&B department, reflecting a hotel's capability of attracting and retaining guests while delivering quality service. The trend of revenue for the last three years seems to correspond with customer satisfaction and good complaint handling.



Source: Finance Department of The Sanya Edition

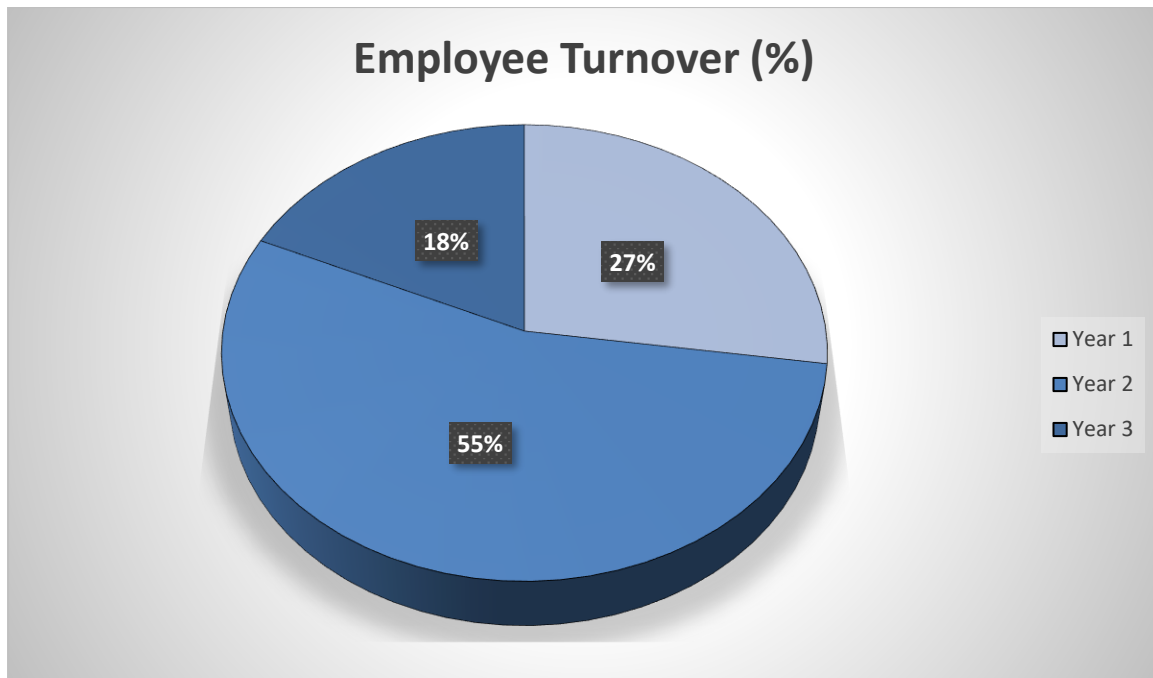
Year 1: Revenue steadily grew with the support of an effective complaint resolution system.

Year 2: Slightly reduced growth, with any increase in customer complaints seemingly impacting repeat visits.

Year 3: Best practices in complaint handling result in a significant boost in revenues, as repeat guests contributed to such an increase.

3.6.2 Employee Turnover

Employee turnover also forms a wide base in the area of stability and efficiency for the F&B department. High employee turnover will affect consistency in service that would, in turn, impact customer satisfaction.



Source: HR Department of The Sanya Edition

Year 1: Moderate turnover: With a measure of stability in the first year, the effect is toward a cohesive team effort on complaints.

Year 2: A spike in turnover potentially impacted service quality; feedback reflected inconsistencies in complaint management.

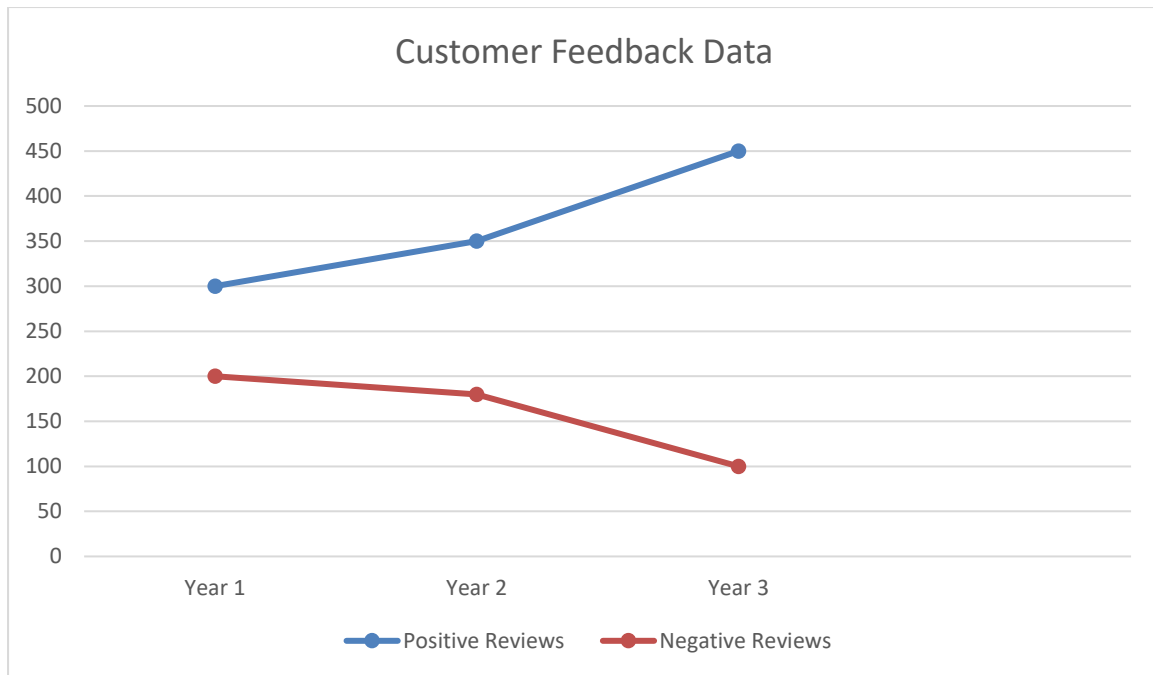
Year 3: This can be attributed to improved efforts in staff training and retention, which have led to a more responsive and stable service team

3.6.3 Customer Feedback Analysis

Customer feedback over the past three years indicates evolving guest expectations and provides insight into the department's responsiveness and adaptability.

Common Issues: Complaints were often about food quality, service speed, and service quality.

Resolution Trends: Graded feedback over the years indicates improved guest satisfaction, with Year 3 marking an extremely considerable improvement following the adoption of new complaint management models.



Source: Sales & Marketing Department of The Sanya Edition

Explanation of Data

- **Year 1:** Moderate satisfaction, with a significant number of negative reviews related to issues like food quality and service speed.
- **Year 2:** Slight improvement, with an increase in positive reviews and a small reduction in negative reviews, as minor adjustments in service and quality began.
- **Year 3:** Significant improvement, with a high increase in positive reviews and a substantial decrease in negative reviews due to the adoption of new complaint management models and staff training.

The F&B service department's performance is closely tied to its ability to manage complaints effectively. Through regular evaluation using key performance indicators, the department can ensure it meets guest expectations and continuously improves service standards. In luxury hospitality, where expectations are high, efficient complaint management contributes significantly to the department's success, driving both customer satisfaction and financial performance. By paying attention to ensuring the quality and responsiveness of complaint handling, the F&B department of The Sanya Edition can reinforce its reputation for excellence and ensure long-term loyalty from guests.

Chapter 4

Findings, Recommendation & Conclusion

4.1 Findings

Based on the analysis and experience gathered during the internship at The Sanya Edition's F&B department, various insights emerged regarding customer complaint management. Here are the key positive and negative findings:

❖ Positive Findings

- **Proactive Training:** The Sanya Edition's F&B staff are regularly trained, enabling them to address complaints effectively and consistently. This reflects in enhanced service and faster issue resolution.
- **Clear Complaint Resolution Process:** The establishment has a well-defined complaint resolution process that allows for quick acknowledgment and a thorough follow-up, contributing to improved customer satisfaction.
- **Data-Driven Decisions:** Customer feedback is systematically collected and analyzed, allowing the department to adapt to guest preferences and maintain high service standards.
- **Efficient Collaboration Across Departments:** The F&B department collaborates closely with housekeeping, concierge, and other departments to ensure customer problems are handled holistically, thus enhancing overall guest satisfaction.
- **Employee Empowerment:** Employees are empowered to decide on minor complaints on the spot, as this would ensure quicker resolution and assure the guests that remedial measures are being taken seriously.
- **Effective Use of Technology:** Feedback monitoring software and real-time notifications for complaints from the guests are some of the digital tools implemented to keep the staff constantly updated for swift responses and reducing complaint resolution times.

❖ Negative Findings

- **High Expectations in Luxury Setting:** The high-end expectations of guests in a luxury hotel setting mean that even minor service delays can lead to dissatisfaction.
- **Inconsistent Staff Communication:** There were occasional gaps in communication between team members, leading to delays or inconsistent handling of guest complaints.
- **Staff Turnover:** Despite efforts to retain employees, turnover in the F&B department remains a concern, affecting team cohesion and impacting consistent service delivery.

- **Resource Constraints during Peak Hours:** Due to resource limitations, the F&B department cannot always respond effectively during peak service times, which results in less efficiency related to complaint handling and serving guests.
- **Inflexible protocols for special requests:** While the complaint management process is generally structured, the rigidity of certain protocols makes it challenging to address unique or high-priority guest requests promptly.
- **Limited personalization in complaint resolution:** Although complaints are handled in a structured manner, follow-up with guests after complaints are resolved to reinforce positive impressions and loyalty is not always done on a personalized basis.
- **Inconsistent Documentation of Complaints:** Not all complaints from guests are thoroughly documented, especially minor issues handled by junior staff. This gap leads to missed opportunities for improvement and limits data accuracy for feedback analysis.

4.2 Recommendations

The findings have allowed several specific recommendations for targeted improvements regarding complaint management in The Sanya Edition F&B department, which will contribute to better guest satisfaction and operational efficiency. Key recommendations are outlined below:

- **Improved Training Programs:** Design and deliver dedicated training sessions on sophisticated communication and emotional intelligence with a problem-solving approach to dealing with high-end expectations of guests. These training sessions could be conducted quarterly to maintain the updated and refined set of skills among employees.
- **Empower Staff with More Autonomy:** Increase the level of autonomy in decision-making for staff at the frontline in handling minor complaints without the need for managerial approval. This will afford quicker resolutions, especially in peak hours, and assure employees that the hotel trusts their judgment. **Improved Complaint Documentation and Tracking System:** Institute a stricter system for documenting all complaints, no matter the level of severity. This should be implemented as a standardized digital form that is easily accessible and updateable by all team members, ensuring that each complaint is documented and tracked and reviewed for further improvement.
- **Introduce Personalized Follow-Ups:** Add a process after the resolution of the problem for personalized follow-up with the guest. This can involve sending a personalized message or call from the manager himself or offering a small token of goodwill-a complimentary dessert or drink-to improve the satisfaction of the guests and make them feel valued.
- **Improved Collaboration Tools:** Introduce a real-time collaboration tool to improve communication between departments, especially at peak periods, to minimize miscommunication and delays in inter-department resolution of issues that affect F&B service.
- **Digital Platforms for Feedback Collection:** Utilize digital platforms for the collection of real-time feedback directly from guests during their dining experience. For example, tablets or QR codes on tables will be able to let guests provide feedback there and then so that if something goes wrong, the team can quickly act on it.
- **Complaints Handling Protocols for VIP Guests:** Design flexible complaint-handling protocols for VIP or repetitive guests, considering their peculiar needs. It could be that a certain staff member is assigned to handle the complaints or issues raised by the VIP guests in order to ensure fast and efficient resolutions.
- **Improve Staff Retention Programs:** Try to combat high labor turnover with more effective employee engagement and recognition programs. Competitive incentives, career opportunities, and frequent team-building activities can help make staff feel appreciated, decrease turnover rates, and thus improve consistent service quality.
- **Increase Resources at Peak Times:** Devote more resources or even create a task force for peak times, so staff is not burdened and hence can entertain complaints in a much more efficient manner. Temporary part-time staff or a guest relations team dedicated to busy hours would ease the load off the F&B team.

- **Use Customer Feedback to Innovate:** Review documented complaints and feedback regularly to highlight observable trends and areas needing attention. Analyze this information for innovation in services offered, menu items revised, and ambiance enhancements, based on guest preferences and frequently noted issues.
- **Establish Mystery Shopper Evaluations:** Set up a mystery shopper program to assess the efficiency of complaint-handling practices. Such evaluations through feedback will help pinpoint areas that specifically need improvement and provide a realistic look at how the F&B team performs in real-time.

Implementing these recommendations will help The Sanya Edition's F&B department to proactively manage guest complaints, improve service consistency, and foster a more engaging service environment that aligns with the hotel's luxury standards.

4.3 Conclusions

Effective customer complaint management within the F&B Department is very fundamental for maintaining high levels of satisfaction among guests, which increases the popularity and reputation of luxury hotels such as The Sanya Edition. This report has shown how the F&B department at The Sanya Edition, although it has built a very commendable system for handling guest complaints, there is still room for improvement in key areas relating to communication, retention of human capital, and technological adoption.

All these have been done with a structured approach: regular staff training, collection of feedback, and systematic complaint resolution processes. Thus, it has been able to maintain a service standard matching the luxury expectation. Commitment to training and development within the F&B department has empowered the staff to respond promptly and in an effective manner towards complaints, building proactiveness wherein not only are the problems addressed, but also pre-empted. These have greatly contributed toward earning the hotel a very good reputation, improving customer loyalty.

Yet, one cannot disregard the high-end challenges inherent in a high-end hospitality environment. High expectations for guests translate into often unreasonable expectations when minor issues in service can easily escalate into more significant complaints. Additionally, there have been instances where employee turnover negatively impacted team cohesion and consistency of service, a factor that had to be revisited for improved retention strategies. These can affect overall guest experiences and therefore become areas that require further investment in employee engagement and well-being.

Carrying out the recommendations of this report, such as communication training with a focused approach, improving staff retention policies, and installing feedback collection mechanisms in real-time, will ultimately give The Sanya Edition a more robust structure for complaint handling. Proactive feedback collection, in particular, allows guests to make their concerns known early, which can prevent complaints from escalating and develop a sense of partnership between the hotel and its guests.

With these targeted improvements, The Sanya Edition F&B department is in an excellent position to further its current practices. Also, by emphasizing better communication, employee retention, and advanced feedback technology, it will come closer to the ideal standards required in the luxury hospitality industry. This will not only ensure that the guests have the best dining experience but will also establish The Sanya Edition as the leader in hospitality, always setting benchmarks to excel with regard to customer service and satisfaction.

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