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## **THE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN HOTEL FRONT OFFICE DEPARTMENT**

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**Abstract:** This study aimed to find out the internal communication of front office department at Kytos Hotel Bandung. Communication is the important key in directing and coordinating of establishment. Poor communication of front office department will be impact to customer satisfaction and will decrease the revenue of the hotel. Problems arised in this research: 1) 1. How is the downward communication of front office department at Kytos Hotel Bandung?; 2) How is upward communication of front office department at Kytos Hotel Bandung?; and 3) How is horizontal communication of front office department at Kytos Hotel Bandung. The purpose of this research is to find out the downward communication, upward communication and horizontal communication of front office department at Kytos Hotel Bandung. The method used is a quantitative method. Observation, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires are used as a technique data collection. While the data analysis technique uses a Likert scale. Based on the results of the study, it can be seen that vertical communication (upward communication and downward communication) and horizontal communication performed by front office department at Kytos Hotel Bandung are still in the less category.

**Keywords:** Internal communication, vertical communication, upward communication, downward communication, horizontal communication, front office department

### **INTRODUCTION**

Indonesian tourism is currently growing very rapid development. The government should introduce tourism as one of the potential assets in Indonesia. It is necessary to have adequate accommodation facilities to meet the need of the tourist by developing the tourism sector in Indonesia. Every trip requires a place to stay temporarily. Ismayanti (2010: 135) states that accommodation facilities are needed if tourism is held for more than 24 hours. Therefore, if a person travels for more than 24 hours, an accommodation facility can be used by the person to take a rest. One type of accommodation is a hotel.

Hotels are business accommodation services in which there are elements of service, hospitality and other facilities needed for those who want lodging facilities for family and leisure purposes. This business supports the tourism industry which provides various facilities such as room, banquet, meetings and so on. It is can be used to spend their leisure time for the holidays.

According to Sulastiyono (2011: 5), a hotel is a company managed by its owner by providing food, drinks and room facilities for sleeping to people who travel and are able to comply a reasonable

amount in accordance with services received without specific agreements.

The receptionist in the front office has many terms, some mention the term "Front Desk Agent, Front Desk Clerk, Guest Service Agent, Guest Room Service, and others mention as a Receptionist." A Front Office officer must be friendly, polite and skillful because they are contact directly with guests. A front office is department who give business and income to the hotel. The Front Office Department has several parts in it, one of which is the Guest Service Agent. This part has responsible in the ongoing check-in and check-out process.

Front office has a big contribution to run hotel operations in serving guests well and giving satisfaction to their guests. For that front office, employees must be able to serve and pay attention to each guest as well as possible so that the satisfaction of guests staying can be fulfilled. Good communication between employees and customers is needed to meet this.

Front office officers are required to have good communication skills with colleagues. This competency is a need in one department or another department in handling guests to perform daily

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operations. Front office staff good communication can serve requests attendance of the guests quickly, precisely and responsively.

Front office is the center of all operations in hotels that are directly or indirectly related to guests. The front office responsible for handling guests both directly and indirectly is started from before the arrival of the guest, upon arrival of the guest until when the guest leaves the hotel.

According to Bagyono (2012: 21), the front office comes from the English "Front" and "Office. In the context of the definition of a hotel, the front office of a hotel is a department in the hotel which is located at the front, not so far from the front door of the hotel or lobby.

Good communication is not only applied to coequal colleagues but also applied to guests who come to the hotel. The application of good communication is needed in order to maintain good relations and also fluency communication with guests. In the event of a misunderstanding between the front office officers with the guest, then this is likely due to a message that is not properly delivered by the front office officer so that the guest request is not reached. This can be not good for the hotel because it can cause guests complaints and the worst possibility is to lose the guest because guests feel disappointed with the services of the hotel. The guests would be decided not to re-buying the product and service of the hotel because they felt disappointed with the services of the hotel.

According to Sopiah (2008: 148) communication has a very important role in integrating and coordinating all parts and activities within an organization. Based on the preliminary observations carried out by the author, the author found that internal communication at the front office of Kytos Hotel Bandung did not work effectively. There are some complaints from front office officers about the use of log books are used as a medium to send information among fellow employees as indicators that show that internal communication in the front office of Kytos Hotel Bandung does not work effectively. In addition, there are guest complaints found in guest comments.

Based on the background of the research, it can be identified the internal communication problems of the front office employees; how the supervisor's communication with the Front Office subordinates at the Kytos hotel in Bandung, how communication of subordinates Front Office to supervisor at the Kytos hotel in Bandung and how communication between Front Office employees at Kytos hotel Bandung.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Internal Communication*

Internal communication is communication that occurs in one establishment or organization. This communication is carried out by individuals within an organization. Every company needs to build good internal communication in their organization to reach its goals. Communication can occur between employees, employees with superiors, and superiors with superiors.

Sopiah (2008: 148) states that: "Communication plays a very important role in integrating and coordinating all parts and activities within an organization". Within the organization, internal communication is needed to maintain the good activity of operations. Communication that is carried out between the leadership and subordinates and the cooperation of coworkers must go well in order to maintain operational activities to run well in order to achieve the goals previously set. Internal communication is very important in supporting operational activities.

As explained by Effendy (2009: 122):

Internal communication is the exchange of ideas between administrators and employees in an organization or agency that causes the realization of the organization complete with a distinctive structure and exchange of ideas horizontally and vertically in an organization that causes management operations run well.

According to Liliweri (2014: 373), internal communication has 2 functions:

general functions and special functions.

1. General functions:

1) To tell

Communication functions to tell the latest information about some or all of the things related to work.

2) To sell

Communication functions to "sell" its mean to promote ideas, opinions, facts, including selling organizational attitudes and all about something that is related to service.

3) To learn

Communication functions to improve the ability of employees so that they can learn from others (internal), learn about what others think, feel, and do, about what is a promotion or what others tell about the organization.

4) To decide

Communication functions for how to delegate the occupation and who becomes the superior or who is subordinate, the amount of power and authority, determine how to handle a number of people, how to

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use resources, and allocate people, machines, methods and techniques in the organization.

## 2. Specific Functions

- 1) Make employees get involved in organizational issues and then applied into certain actions under a command.
- 2) Make employees create and handle relationships between people to improve organizational products.
- 3) Make employees have the ability to handle some problem and make decisions in an ambiguous policy.

According to Effendy (2009): 122):

Internal communication consists of two communications; vertical communication (upward communication and downward communication) and horizontal communication. Vertical communication is communication that takes place between superiors and subordinates (downward communication), as well as between subordinates and superiors (upward communication). Horizontal communication is communication that takes place among individuals who have the same position or position, such as managers with managers or employees with employees.

### **Vertical Communication**

Vertical communication is communication that occurs between superiors and subordinates in the organization. The vertical communication process takes place in two directions, communication from the top down (downward communication) and from the bottom up (upward communication). In vertical communication, the leader gives instructions, direction, and information to their subordinates. Subordinates provide reports, suggestions, and complaints to the leader or supervisor. Superiors and subordinates make good communicate (anticipated communication behavior), for example asking voluntary questions, discussing one's intentions openly, honestly. This communication is behavior expected by superiors and subordinates, of themselves or of others.

Reciprocal two-way communication in organizations is very important because this communication takes place between leaders to subordinates, reports, responses, or suggestions from officers so that a decision or policy can be taken in order to achieve the stated goals.

Vertical communication can help leaders understand their work, colleagues, and companies in general. The company leaders depend on this communication to get ideas and about how to improve the quality of work.

Downward communication according to Effendy (2009: 122) is referring to the flow of messages that flowing from superiors or leaders to subordinates. Downward communication in an organization means that information flows from a

higher authority position to a lower authority position. The message is usually related to direction, purpose, or discipline, orders, questions, and general policy. Downward communication is to convey goals, to change attitudes, form opinions, reduce fears and suspicions arising from misinformation, prevent misunderstandings because of lack of information and prepare all personnel of the organization to survive with change.

According to Faules (2011: 25), downward communication shows the flow of messages flowing from the superiors of their territory. When assumed that information moves from management to employees, but in organizations, most relationships commonly occur in management.

Muhammad (2007: 15) explains that communication of information flows upwards (upward communication) occurs when subordinates (subordinates) send messages to their superiors. This communication flow function from the bottom up is:

1. Submission of information about work and work issues or tasks that have been carried out.
2. Submission of information about tasks or problems that cannot be resolved by subordinates.
3. Submitting suggestions for improvement from subordinates.
4. Submission of complaints about themselves and subordinates and can provide a stimulus to employees to participate in finding policy implementation for departments and organizations.

Flippo in Mangkunegara (2008: 152) suggests that subordinate communication channels to superiors are as follows:

1. Face to face contact
2. Monitoring group meetings
3. Top management meetings
4. periodically
5. The speak up the program where employees are
6. given a telephone number for call
7. Contact complaints without names
8. Meeting employees with stakeholders
9. every year
10. Use the complaints procedure
11. Moral questionnaire
12. Interview
13. Open policy
14. Labor union
15. Employee extension program

According to Wahyudi (2011: 8) states that there are 5 elements in upward communication:

1. Subordinates provide an accurate report.
2. Bring on time about the problem.

3. Subordinates always deliver their complaint.
4. There are opportunities for improvement done by employees.
5. The manager expresses his opinion regarding the performance of its employees.

#### **Horizontal Communication**

Horizontal communication is communication between employees or communication between managers or with those who have the same position. Horizontal communication is a form of horizontal communication where there is a side exchange of messages and is carried out by two parties who have the same position, the same position in an organization.

Horizontal communication can facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experience, methods and problems so it will help organizations to avoid some problems and solve problems and build morale and job satisfaction.

According to Pace and Faules (2010: 190), lateral or horizontal communication consists of delivered information among employee in the same work unit. This work unit includes individuals who are placed at the same level of authority in the organization and have the same position.

Horizontal communication is different from vertical communication. Horizontal communication is not too formal because communication does not always occur during operational activities. The message that occurs because of this horizontal communication flows in the same section or another. Horizontal communication can solve the problems experienced by people who communicate.

According to Wahdi (2018: 8), communication besides flowing from top to bottom, along the chain of command, communication flows from one part to another, both sideways and diagonally. This horizontal information flow helps employees share difficult problem information. For example, in an organization, the manager can write a memo or send an e-mail to the General Manager, explaining the outline of future sales forecasts.

Elements of horizontal communication elements are:

1. How to submit messages or information.
2. Media to submit information.
3. How to receive messages or information.
4. Always understood the message sent by the colleague.
5. Feedback from the message submitted by the previous officer.
6. Colleagues always carry out message messages delivered by the previous officer.

#### **METHOD**

The research method used by the author in this study is a descriptive method with a quantitative approach.

According to Sugiyono (2017: 8), quantitative research is a research method that is based on the philosophy of positivism, used to examine certain populations or samples, collecting data using research instruments, analyzing quantitative or statistical data, with the aim of testing predetermined hypotheses.

Data collection techniques in this study through observation, interviews, literature study and distribution of questionnaires to employees of the front office. The population in the study were the front office of Kytos Hotel employees consisting of 5 front office staff members (1 front office supervisor and 4 front office staff). The research sample is a saturated sample where the entire population is used as a sample.

**Tabel 1. The number of officers at the front office at Kytos Hotel Bandung**

Position	Number
Front Office Supervisor	1
Front desk agent	4
Total	5

Source: Front Office Department, Kytos Hotel Bandung

Data that has been obtained is processed with a Likert Scale. Likert scale is used to measure the attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of a person or group of people. With a Likert Scale, the variables to be measured are translated into variable indicators. Then the indicator is used as a starting point for compiling instrument items which can be in the form of statements or questions. Likert scale is a scale whose answer is multilevel (Sugiyono, 2010: 93-94).

The data obtained were analyzed using a Likert scale then the results of the individual answers concerned were given weights score from the answers chosen by the respondent.

Research instruments that use can be made in the form of a checklist or multiple choice, with calculations as follows:

$N$  = Total number of respondents

$f$  = Number of respondents who are answer

$T$  = The total number of each Question answered

Percentage (%) =  $f/T \times 100$

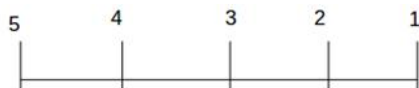
The research scores for the questionnaire answers are as follows:

3 = For Outstanding Answer

2 = For Average Answer

1 = For Poor Answer

The average value of each respondent was analyzed by calculating the average answer based on scoring of each respondent's answer in the form of scale interval data for the research instrument used was semantic differential. This scale is used to measure structured attitudes on a continuum line where the "very positive" answer is located on the left side of the line, and the "very negative" answer is located on the right side of the line or vice versa. The data obtained are interval data (Sugiyono, 2010: 97) Following are the interval scale images that will be used in this study:



Source: Sugiyono (2010:95)

**Figure 1. Research Interval Scale**

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Upward Communication**

The front office officer's response regarding communication with supervisors at Kytos Hotel Bandung can be seen in Table 2 below:

**Table 2. Front office responds to communication with supervisors at Kytos Hotel Bandung (n=4)**

No	Aspect	Outstanding		average		Poor		T	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Briefing	1	-	4	100	-	-	4	100
2	Understanding Organization	1	25	2	50	1	25	4	100
3	Feedback	-	-	2	50	2	50	4	100
4	Information	-	-	1	25	3	75	4	100
5	Ideology	-	-	1	25	3	75	4	100
6	Information on SOP	-	-	1	25	3	75	4	100
	Total	1	4.17	1	45.83	2	50	4	100

Source: Results of data processing, 2019

Based on the results of the study, the front office staff's response to communication with supervisors at Kytos Hotel Bandung can be seen in Table 2. From the aspect of direction given, delivery of organizational goals, feedback on the implementation of work to employees, delivery of ideological aspects and information on work to be carried out (SOP) generally answer enough

categories with a score of 45.83% of the total score.

In terms of delivering information from front office officers, the delivery of the vision, mission, and organizational culture are not disseminated to subordinates, in this case, Front Office officers. This should be the basis of the work behavior of each employee both supervisor and subordinate to achieve common goals.

In the aspect of delivering information in the form of SOP, supervisors rarely provide information to officers about the workings carried out using work procedures or often referred to as SOP (Procedure Operational Standards) to be more optimal, so it is very useful for an employee who gives information about SOP. This condition makes difficult to front office officers.

According to Ardianto (2014: 89), some psychological barriers in communication are "interest, prejudice, stereotype and motivation". These obstacles are elements of human psychological activity.

The scale range uses a Likert scale with the following calculations:

Maximum Index Value  
 = score maximum x number of questions x number respondent

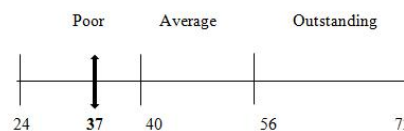
= 3 x 6 x 4  
 = 72

Minimum Index Value  
 = minimum score x number of questions x number respondent.

= 1 x 6 x 4  
 = 24

Interval = maximum index value - index value Minimum  
 = 72 - 24  
 = 48

Distance interval = interval / level = 48 : 3  
 = 16



Source: Results of data processing, 2019

**Figure 2. Interval Scale Upward Communication**

In Figure 2, according to the interval scale, it can be seen that upward communication is in the less category with a weight score of 37. Informal delivery of information from the leadership to the staff is not a subjective product but is objective data. Although the information is the data of management or other leaders, the material and

substance must be based on objective data. The formal information for service purposes should not subjective or a reflection of one's ambitions. The existence of good and effective communication is expected to create a pleasant working atmosphere and good cooperation so that employees can express difficulties as well as ideas for the progress of the company.

#### **Downward Communication**

The supervisor's response regarding communication with front office officers at Kytos Hotel Bandung can be seen in Table 3.

**Table 3. The supervisor's response regarding communication with front office officers at Kytos Hotel Bandung (n=4)**

No	Aspect	O	A	P
1	The front office clerk provides accurate reports	-	√	-
2	The front office clerk always complains that is experienced during the operation	-	-	√
3	The front office clerk is on time in handling the problem	-	√	-
4	Deliver opinions about the performance of its employees	√	-	-
5	Opportunities for improvements made by employees	-	-	√

Source: Results of data processing, 2019

The supervisor responded that Front Office officers were sufficient to provide accurate reports about the activities that took place during the operation that took place. The supervisor evaluates that officers were timely in handling the problems that occurred. The supervisor assessed that they had provided an assessment of the front office officers' performance. However, the supervisor was considered that Front Office officers who were under their control were lacking in conveying complaints they experienced during the course of operational activities to the supervisor. The lack of opportunities for repairs carried out by Front Office officers causing the same problems to occur again to deliver the information.

#### **Horizontal Communication**

The front office officer's response regarding the delivery and reception of messages between officers at Kytos Hotel Bandung can be seen in Table 4.

The clarity aspect of information conveyed by front office staff and the delivery of information using media in delivering messages has a dominant with weight score of 75%. This percentage is poor criteria.

This can be caused by obstacles in delivering information to fellow colleagues at the same level. The lack of media used can be the cause. The use of logbooks is a mainstay in the delivery of information. The lack of media used is also accompanied by its use that is not optimal.

**Table 4. Front office officer responds to horizontal communication at Kytos Hotel Bandung (n=4)**

No	Aspek	O		A		P		T	
		F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Clear information	-	-	1	25	3	75	4	100
2	Media information	-	-	1	25	3	75	4	100
3	Message reception	-	-	2	50	2	50	4	100
4	Message understood	-	-	2	50	2	50	4	100
5	feedback	-	-	2	50	2	50	4	100
6	Message is carried out	2	50	1	25	1	25	4	100
TOTAL		2	8.3	9	37.5	13	54.2	24	100

Source: Results of data processing, 2019

Based on the results of the study, front office officers' responses regarding communication between fellow officers at Kytos Hotel Bandung can be seen in Table 4. From the aspect of clarity of information conveyed by front office staff, information delivery using media, clarity of information, messages conveyed are understood, feedback messages are delivered by the previous officers and colleague always carry out the message delivered. Generally answering in poor categories with a percentage of 54.20%.

Submission of information using the media between fellow officers is considered less by front office officers. This is because important information from guests or related to operations is not included in the logbook or in the system. The officers in the next shift do not know the information and this problem causing the work to not run well.

Information or messages received from coworkers are clearly among fellow front office officers is considered lacking. Because the information submitted is less clear and the use of media to convey information is not used properly, it causes the information received is also not good which causes problems in communication and work.

The message conveyed by colleagues is always understood among fellow officers to be considered sufficient. This is because the officers often neglect the messages that are conveyed so that the officers do not understand about message delivered.

The lack of response from officers in same levels regarding the handling over delivered indicates that the feedback from the fellow officers was not good enough.

For aspects of coworkers always carrying out the messages conveyed by the officer is considered less, because front office officers sometimes often procrastinate carrying out orders or messages that are conveyed, causing ineffective work.

The scale range uses a Likert scale with the following calculations:

Maximum Index Value  
= score maximum x number of questions x number

respondent

= 3 x 6 x 4

= 72

Minimum Index Value

= minimum score x number of questions x number respondent.

= 1 x 6 x 4

= 24

Interval = maximum index value - index value

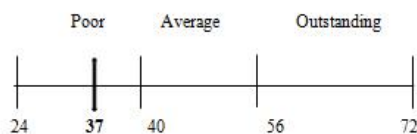
Minimum

= 72 - 24

= 48

Distance interval = interval / level = 48 : 3

= 16



Source: Results of data processing, 2019

**Figure 3. Interval Scale Downward Communication**

In Figure 3 according to the interval scale, it can be seen that downward communication is in the poor category with a weight score of 37. Submission of information gets less weight with a weight score of 75%.

Submitting the right information is precisely the information conveyed to the target, namely the user for information. In fact, information is sometimes not given to those who actually need it. As a result, the recipient feels that the information does not have a relocation for his work unit so that it is only kept as a record. In order for information to be exact on its purpose, the speed of its distribution must be considered and distributed according to the wishes of the information maker to those who must be given the information.

Horizontal communication in the front office of Kytos Hotel Bandung has not run optimally.

## CONCLUSION

From the results of the data obtained in the previous chapters, the internal communication that took place in the front office of the Kytos Hotel Bandung can be summarized as follows:

1. Downward Communication in the front office of the Kytos Hotel Bandung is not good enough. Aspects that must be done in conducting vertical downstream communication are giving instructions or work instructions, giving information about work procedures to officers, presenting information about the ideological aspects that can help officers and instill an understanding of organizational goals. But the reality found by the author is that there are still responses from front office officers who assess that the supervisor is lacking in providing feedback on the implementation of work for employees, providing information on why a work should be done, presenting information about the ideological aspects and providing information about work procedures and organizational practice. As well as briefings that are not often carried out every day or before and after conducting operations so that front office officers often lack information when going to start operational activities.
2. Vertical downstream communication (Upward Communication) in the front office can be said to be sufficient. The supervisor considered that the front office officers were sufficient to fulfill the aspects needed in the upstream vertical communication such as giving accurate reports about the activities that occurred during the ongoing operations, giving an assessment of the performance of front office officers. However, the officers were judged to be lacking in conveying complaints that they experienced during operational activities as well as a lack of opportunities for improvements made by front office officers. The upper current communication channel towards the supervisor should be fulfilled in an organization but what happens is not all fulfilled, which is the cause of the lack of communication by front office officers with supervisors.
3. Horizontal communication that took place in the front office of Kytos Hotel Bandung was considered lacking. The officers themselves assess the aspects needed in horizontal communication have not been fulfilled, such as information or messages delivered by coworkers is not clear, the delivery of

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information using media is ineffective, information or messages received from coworkers is not clear, the message delivered is not too understood by the recipient, the feedback or response of the officer from the message delivered is not effective. The author can conclude that among fellow front office officers there are still problems in communicating with fellow coworkers, which of course can harm and disrupt operational activities. The author also found that not often and less accurately conveyed information in the Logbook writing carried out by fellow officers. This causes miscommunication between fellow officers.

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