

Hospitality

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The industry guide to management and career

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WHO IS JEN?



*The rise of
FLYING hotels*

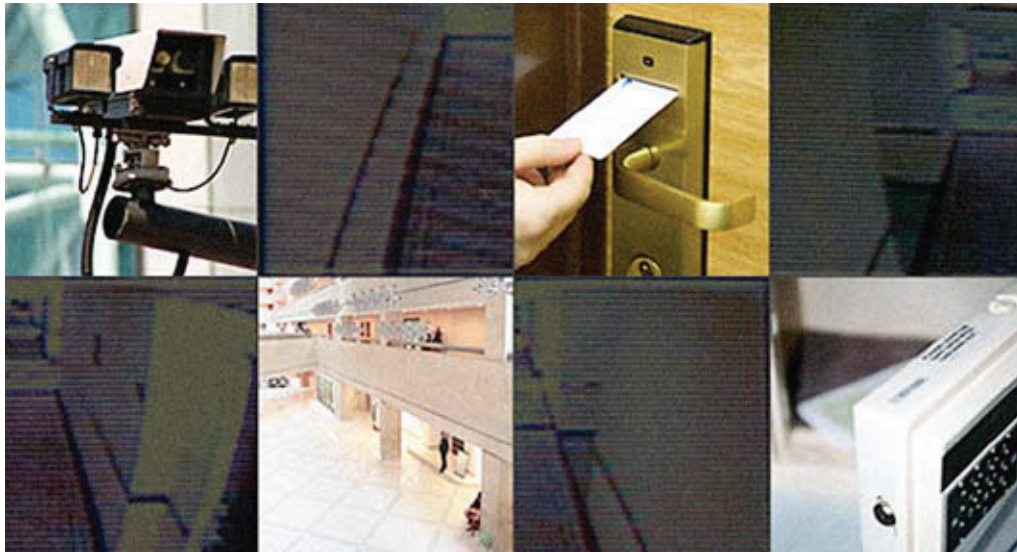


***Hotel SECURITY:**
Everybody's business*

***Q&A:** United Hoteliers
of the Philippines*

HOTEL SECURITY: EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

Protect your hotel by providing security awareness trainings to all your employees. *Hospitality News'* security columnist Lorela U. Sandoval reports.



There's nothing else any consumer would ever ask for than getting more than what they paid for. As in the hotel and resort business, guests expect more than just great food, service, and accommodation—they likewise expect utmost security within the hotel, especially in these dire times.

Problem is, not all hotel personnel in the country are trained and well-versed in hotel security, says **Danny M. Pineda**, co-founder and current president of **Accommodation Establishments Security and Safety Coordinating Council, Inc.**

But what is hotel security in the first place?

Basics

According to Pineda, hotel security means “a state of mind or perception that the hotel is safe and secure where one can stay and enjoy its luxuries, rest and do business, without fear or anxiety that he may get hurt [or] his property is lost.”

He enumerates several characteristics of a secure hotel: employment of in-house or contractual professional security force; presence of security equipment and tools in detecting entry of firearms or

explosives; trained employees in security awareness and response procedures; creation and implementation of a written security manual; and guest rooms provided and secured with chain, peephole, dead-bolt, safe deposit box, telephone or buzzer, flashlight or emergency light, and written emergency procedures, among others.

Initially, it appears that hotel security can be attributed to a security guard or officer alone, truth is that's not all.

Pineda explains that the general manager (GM) or resort manager (RM) has the responsibility of securing a hotel or resort. For a well-established accommodation property however, there's a full-time security department alongside a professional security manager or chief security acting on behalf of the GM/RM and overseeing the daily operations of the security department. For small establishments, the GM/RM is directly responsible and relies mostly on a selected senior staff or a hired contractual security.

Staff training and awareness

Whoever has the primary responsibility of hotel security, he clarifies one thing about it.



Danny Pineda

“Security is and must be EVERYBODY's responsibility,” says Pineda, also the corporate associate director of security of **The Discovery Leisure Company Inc.**

He explains that while a full-time security force is responsible for outer security and access and monitoring of the inner part of a property, employees are on the other hand responsible for their respective work areas and to assist the security force in situations requiring additional hands as force-multiplier.

Training all hotel personnel in basic security is the most cost-effective measure in mitigating possible threats in the organization.

Further research also reveals that training all hotel personnel in basic security is the most cost-effective measure in mitigating possible threats in the organization. Besides, such awareness and training make employees proactive rather than mere reactive individuals. To which Pineda both agrees.

He suggests all employees “must undergo at least an hour basic hotel security orientation/training before they start their duty, and a follow up re-orientation once or twice a year.”

Among the subject matters he recommends for teaching are access control procedures; security procedures in various situations for guests and property protection; office or work station security; phone call handling against pranks and extortion; reporting and notification procedures; materials movement control procedures; confidentiality aspects; profiling; and modus operandi and countermeasures against criminals, fraudsters and thieves.

For re-orientation, he advises teaching additional special subjects to enhance security awareness of staffs.

Pineda adds that “all persons hired to secure a hotel must learn the basics and continuously be updated on the best practices” by undergoing training or retraining in hotel security.

Security in course curriculum

Asked if hotel security should be part of the curriculum for hotel and restaurant management or tourism-related courses, Pineda believes “this is part of the curriculum because security is a major responsibility in hotel operations.”

This writer conducted a brief text survey involving some HRM graduates from the **University of Santo Tomas** and **Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP)** in Manila as well as **Lorma Colleges** and **Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University** in La Union. Most disclose not having any primer on hotel security in class, while the PUP graduate says they had a primer in the Facilities and Planning subject.

Pineda says schools don't give full emphasis on hotel security because they tend to be more focused on major hotel operations. Though he stresses many reasons to emphasize hotel security awareness in both schools and hotels/resorts.

“Nowadays, the first consideration for travelers is security and safety due to threats of terrorism, natural calamities, political [turmoil], contamination of a dreaded disease, etc., hence, hotels worldwide invest a lot in making sure their properties are safe and secure,” he explains.

Besides, he adds that it all boils down to one thing: “We want you to know that hotels aim not only to serve well and [please] their guests; they want also their guests to feel secure and safe while in the property at all times.” **HNPH**