Unit 9

Hotel Services

# Additional Reading

Read the passage from a training book for hospitality managers and do the tasks that follow.

Concierges

Though the concierge position has existed for quite some time, it is perhaps the least understood position in the uniformed service.

In the distant past, the concierge was the castle doorkeeper. A concierge’s job was to ensure that all the people in the castle were safe in their rooms at night. Travelling royalty were often accompanied by a concierge. Concierges provided security and travelled ahead of the royal party to arrange food and lodging. As hotels became more common in Europe, the concierge became part of the staff that provided personalized guest services.

The concierge position was brought to the United States during the 1970s. It is common to find a concierge at a world-class or luxury hotel.

Certified concierges may be identified by the gold crossed keys on their jacket lapel. To earn these keys, a concierge must be certified by the international association of concierges, known as Les Clefs d’Or (Golden Keys). This concierge association has established high standards for its members. While many hotels employ experienced staff to help guests with special needs, the title concierge technically applies only to members of Les Clefs d’Or.

Concierges may provide custom services to hotel guests. Duties include mak-ing reservations for dining; securing tickets for theatre and sporting events; ar-ranging for transportation; and providing information on cultural events and local attractions. Concierges are known for their resourcefulness. Getting tickets to sold-out concerts or making last-minute dinner reservations at a crowded

restaurant are part of a concierge’s responsibility and reputation. Most successful concierges have developed an extensive network of local, regional, and national contacts for a variety of services. Especially important, however, are the local contacts the concierge has established at restaurants, box offices, car rental offices, airlines, printers, and other businesses. Some hotels actually encourage concierges to visit appropriate businesses and organizations to establish and strengthen such relationships. Finally, a highly successful concierge should speak several languages.

The concierge position is generally a salaried position, but gratuities from guests are common expressions of gratitude for excellent service. In some hotels, the head concierge is the manager of the uniformed services department. When this is the case, the head concierge has additional responsibilities for supervising all uniformed service personnel. In large hotels, the head concierge is often too busy, and supervises employees in the concierge department only.

Service is becoming more important in attracting and holding a hotel’s guests. In many hotels offering world-class and mid-range accommodations and services, the role of the concierge is becoming a key to establishing the reputation of the hotel.

Work in pairs.

Decide whether the following statements are true T or false F .

*  The concierge position appeared in the USA not long ago.

2  Only world-class or luxury hotels employ a concierge.

3  All hotel concierges are members of Les Clefs d’Or.

*  If someone wants to become a certified concierge he must satisfy the high demands of the international association of concierges.

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| 5 | All hotel concierges wear a badge of gold crossed keys on their jacket. |
| 6 | The job of the concierge consists only in making reservations for dining. |

*  Concierges are very good at finding ways of dealing with practical problems.

8  Concierges never get gratuities from hotel guests.

*  In large hotels the head concierge supervises all uniformed service personnel.
1.  The success of the concierge depends largely on the contacts that he has established in various local businesses.
2.  The role of the concierge is becoming very important for establishing the reputation of the hotel.