

Subject: Tourism & Hospitality

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Paper: 07, Front Office Operation and Management
Module: 12, Bell Desk Operations: Role and Functions



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Items	Description of Module
Subject Name	Tourism and Hospitality
Paper Name	Front Office Operations and Management
Module Title	Bell Desk Operations: Role and Functions
Module Id	Module no-12
Pre- Requisites	Knowledge of duties and responsibilities of Bell Desk in hotels
Objectives	To study the role and functions of bell desk in hotels
Keywords	Bell Boy, Paging, Escorting

QUADRANT-I

Module 12: BELL DESK OPERATIONS: ROLE AND FUNCTIONS
1. LEARNING OUTCOME
2. INTRODUCTION
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3.1 Organisation
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3.3 Role and function of bell desk
3.4 Left Luggage Procedure
3.5 Scanty Baggage Procedure
3.6 Formats and Records maintained at bell desk
4. SUMMARY

1. LEARNING OUTCOME

After completing this module students will be able to:

- Understand the role of bell desk in hotels.
- Organisation of bell desk
- Various procedures of bell desk
- Forms/formats used at bell desk

- v. Duties and responsibilities of bell staff

BELL DESK OPERATIONS: ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

2. INTRODUCTION

The first area which guests gets in a hotel is lobby. Lobby is an area consisting of open space in the centre and one side generally having series of desks to facilitate guests like bell desk, reception, travel, concierge, etc. The other side of the lobby has comfortable seating for house guests or their visitors to sit and relax. For more extended services lobby level lounge is been given for sitting and service of beverage or snack items. A lobby reflects the quality of hotel and adds to brand image of the property. Lobby is headed by a lobby manager and looks after VIP's, groups, crews and other important guests of the hotel. The lobby manager is overall responsible for functioning of lobby area including lobby desk, bell desk, valet desk, concierge desk, etc.



http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_0Wk-PAWDWBw/S2JtOE5h-3I/AAAAAAAAACE/1TBWWk6oFZc/w1200-h630-p-k-no-nu/bell-desk-hotel-sign.jpg

Bell desk is a section of front office department providing uniformed services. Bell desk is preferably located on left hand side of the lobby area from the entrance to generally ease up the operations of front office. The bell desk is headed by a bell captain and has a team of bell boys according to the size of hotel property. Bell desk primarily helps in transportation of guest luggage at the time of arrival and departure.



Source:

https://www.tutorialspoint.com/front_office_management/images/handling_luggage.jpg

3. BELL DESK OPERATIONS: ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

3.1 Organization:

The various duties and responsibilities of bell desk are handled by team headed by bell captain and followed by number of bell boys and trainees depending on the size of hotel. The bell desk works 24x7 and so work in three shifts to provide service to the guests. The bell desk is located mostly on the left side of the lobby area while entering in the hotel. And is considered to be the first department to come in contact with the guests on their arrival.

Organizational Structure of Bell Desk

Bell Captain



Senior Bell Boys



Bell Boys



Trainee

3.2 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

3.2.1 Bell Captain:

The bell captain is a supervisory job and is responsible to lobby manager. His main duties include allocation of tasks to bell boys and trainees, inspection of tasks given, welcoming regular guests on times. He implements any instructions received from management. He listens to the grievances of his staff and tries to resolve. A bell captain heads one shift generally of eight hours and is directly responsible for the smooth functioning of department. The main duties and responsibilities of bell captain are:

- 1) He/she records the attendance of the bell boys and trainees at the beginning of each shift and takes briefing of staff and passes on special instructions to them about their activities and conduct during the shift.
- 2) He is even responsible to ensure grooming and personal hygiene of bell staff for providing proper service.
- 3) Assigns errands to bell boys

- 4) Left luggage room is controlled by him/her and maintenance of register.
- 5) Message distribution has to be supervised by him/her.
- 6) Distribution of newspaper and magazines is also supervised.
- 7) To control the moment of bellboys by maintaining the control sheet to summarize the activities of bell boys.
- 8) Any arrivals with scanty baggage are to be recorded in log book, arrival register and scanty baggage register and needs to inform about scanty baggage to the reception.
- 9) Maintain Left luggage register to keep record of luggage left by guest in the hotel.
- 10) Arrange for paging service for the guests within the property whenever required and maintain the paging board stock.
- 11) Maintain and supervise wake-up call procedures.
- 12) Postage stock is checked and maintained at the bell desk and is provided to the guest on behalf of the hotel.

3.2.2 Bell Boy:

Bell boys do multitasks like paging, luggage boys, lift operators, etc. A bell boy is expected to work for eight hour shift and on times to do broken shifts. He has to report to the bell captain and comes under uniform staff. The main duties and responsibilities of bell captain are:



https://2.imimg.com/data2/PW/LK/HELLOTD-925317/paging_board-250x250.jpg

- 1) Carry luggage of the guest at the time of check-in and check-out.
- 2) Carry the luggage of the guest after registration to guest room and escort the guest.
- 3) Supposed to market hotels other products to guests while escorting to room.
- 4) Delivery of newspapers, magazines, mails and messages, parcels to the guest rooms.
- 5) Page guests in hotel public areas like restaurants, pool side, bar, banquets, health clubs, etc.
- 6) Keep left luggage of the guest and issue luggage tags and request the same at the time of delivery.
- 7) Keep track of scanty baggage guests and maintain register for same.
- 8) Issue loan items to the guests like wheel chair, torch, tracking sticks, etc.
- 9) Makes errands for each day and every arrival.
- 10) Shifting of guest from one room to another.
- 11) Check guest belongings in a check-out room.
- 12) Check check-out room for any damaged property or a stolen item and inform the same to front desk personnel.
- 13) Prepare and hand over departure errand to the bell captain.



Source: <https://i.ytimg.com/vi/VwEgATmKto0/hqdefault.jpg>

3.3 Role and function of bell desk:

Bell desk is one of the important sections of front office. Being the first section to come in direct touch of guests makes its role significant. Efficiency and effectiveness are the basic requirements for the employees on this desk. The desk staff is engaged in performing various functions related directly or indirectly to the guests. The main roles and functions of bell desk are:

- Carry luggage at the time of arrival for both FIT's and Walk-in guests: The bell desk staff performs important function of greeting the guests at the time of arrival and helping them in unloading luggage from the vehicles. The bell boys further escort the guest to the room after registration and transport the luggage from lobby to the guest room. While escorting the guest, it is expected that the bell boy will inform the guest about various other facilities the hotel offers as an approach of suggestive selling. Once the guest reaches the room, the bell boy makes guest comfortable and gives details about different facilities in the room and the usage of various electronic/electrical gadgets.
- Carry luggage at the time of guest departure for FIT's and Walk-in guests: The bell desk is responsible to transport luggage of the guests from rooms to vehicles at the time of departure. Care needs to be taken while transporting luggage looking at the nature of luggage being carried as could be fragile.



Source: <http://www.hospitality-school.com/bellperson-guide-front-desk>

- Luggage handling for groups at the time of arrival and departure: Handling luggage of groups becomes little complicated as the number of luggage could be high. And the important part is transporting luggage to different rooms allotted to group members after identifying the correct luggage of every individual guest. In this process, a rooming list is handed over by the front desk staff to the bell desk clearly indicating the guest name and room numbers allotted. Further the bell boy puts luggage tags on all the luggage items and makes a note of that separately. It becomes easy as the group members are informed to attach name tags on every luggage which is otherwise also recommended by tour operators for travel purposes. And then the bell desk transports the luggage to every guest room. The process of carrying luggage from porch/lobby area to guest room is called as Up-bell. On the other hand, at the time of group departure the luggage is collected from each dedicated room to a group and is brought down and loaded to the vehicle of the groups. The bell boys need to be careful for the same because on times a two or more groups may be checking-out at same time. The process of transporting luggage of group from rooms to porch/lobby is termed as Down-bell.
- Paging service for the guests: Another important function of bell desk is to provide paging services to guests in order to locate them for any message and mails delivered looking at the urgency of the message received on behalf of the guest by the hotel. A paging board is used for the purpose which shows the name and company of the guest.
- Newspaper/Magazine delivery in guest rooms: The bell desk staff is also responsible to deliver complimentary and requested newspapers and magazines in guest rooms. The process starts early in the morning as hotel receives them from the assigned vendor. The bell boys check from the register for the newspapers and magazines to be distributed in the guest rooms. The newspapers/magazines are packed in newspaper bags and are then distributed by bell boys' floor wise for speedy distribution. The bags are hung on guest room door knobs.
- Postal services to guests: The bell desk even acts as mini post office and provides various types of postal services like postal stamps, postcards, envelopes on guest requests. The bell desk also arranges for courier services for the guests for any urgent mails.

- Helping in housekeeping services: The bell desk staff also assists housekeeping staff in conducting light housekeeping services in lobby and reception area. The services may be light dusting and wiping of entrance door. The bell boys sometimes even help housekeeping staff in making rooms in case of urgent check-ins or due to lack of staff on times.
- Others: Bell staff even purchases various items requested by guests like cigarettes, drinks or may be some eatables if not available in hotel and asks reception to prepare visitors paid outs in case guests does not pay for the same at that moment of time.



Source: <https://resumegeenius.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/hospitality-porters-assisting-customers.jpg>

3.4 Left Luggage Procedure:

Left luggage term is given to a guests who have left their luggage at the hotel premises at the time of departure and wish to collect the same later. It generally happens when guests feel inconvenient and expensive to carry luggage to a place they are moving forward and would come back later. Moreover, if a guests flight/train is in the evening it becomes expensive to retain the room for that day and guest keeps the luggage in the left luggage room and goes out for a city tour and collects the luggage later. This facility indeed may bring back a prospective guest to the hotel on his/her next visit to the city. The hotel management takes guarantee of the safety and security of the luggage left by the guest.

The procedure for receiving luggage is as under:

- Before accepting the luggage from the guest, it is ensured whether the guest had settled all the bills.

- Bell boy needs to check the luggage properly for its locked or not. And in case of some damage on the baggage, same needs to be informed to the guest at the time of receiving only.
- A luggage tag needs to be prepared and the one part of tag needs to be pasted or tied to the guest luggage and the other part may be given to guest for the collection of the same.
- Bell boys need to check if luggage contains any fragile item and a suitable sticker for the same be pasted for the indication to other members on different shifts.
- Keep the luggage in the left luggage room safely under key and lock.
- The bell boys maintain and update the left luggage register.

The procedure at the time of luggage delivery:

- The guest is requested to produce the receipt/part of luggage tag and if the guest has lost the same, he/she may be requested to sign on the left luggage register.
- Check the luggage tag and bring out the luggage from the room safely.
- Bell boys then need to make entry in left luggage register mentioning the date, time and number of items delivered to the guest.
- The luggage is further transported to the guests' vehicle.

LEFT LUGGAGE REGISTER

HOTEL ABC

JANPATH, NEW DELHI

DATE	ROOM NO.	NAME OF THE GUEST	NAME OF THE BELL BOY	LUGGAGE TAG NO.	DESCRIPTION OF THE LUGGAGE	DATE OF DELIVERY OF LUGGAGE	REMARKS

3.5 Scanty Baggage Procedure:

Scanty baggage register is one of the important record to be maintained by bell desk staff for those guests who come to the hotel with few baggage or without any baggage. The scanty baggage record need to be prepared at all shifts of the hotel and to be verified by the lobby manager who signs the same and provides instructions for billing of scanty baggage guests. The list of such guests needs to be circulated among all the point of sales to keep a watch on such guests who may leave the hotel premises without intimation. These guests are even termed as Skippers in hotels. It becomes important for the hotel to take advance from such guests to be on safer side.

The procedure adopted by bell desk for guests with scanty baggage is:

- Lobby manager and the reception are notified immediately for any arrival of a guest with scanty baggage.
- The arrival errand card prepared is indicated with scanty baggage.
- The registration cards at the reception are even stamped with 'scanty baggage'.
- The registration card and the scanty baggage register needs to be signed by the lobby manager.

SCANTY BAGGAGE REGISTER

HOTEL ABC

JANPATH, NEW DELHI

DATE _____

S.N O.	ROO M NO.	NAM E OF THE GUES	DESIGNATI ON AND ADDRESS	ARRIV AL DATE	DEPARTU RE DATE	BELL CAPTAI N	REMAR KS	SIGNATU RE

		T						

3.6 FORMATS AND RECORDS MAINTAINED AT BELL DESK

3.6.1 Bell Desk Log Book:

A log book has to be maintained by bell boys for all the shifts to keep a record of all activities and instructions that are performed during a particular shift and need to be shared with next shift.

LOG BOOK

HOTEL ABC

JANPATH, NEW DELHI

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

SHIFT: _____		
LOBBY MGR./GRE: _____		
S. NO.	DETAILS	REMARKS

3.6.2 Bell Boy Errand Card:

The bell card is an important format maintained by the bell captain during the shift timings of individual bell boys to control the activities when they leave desk for any purpose like luggage delivery, newspaper distribution, message delivery, etc. The bell boy errand card is printed on both the sides, front side used at the time of arrival and the back side used at the time of departure.

BELL BOY ERRAND CARD			
FRONT SIDE FOR ARRIVAL			
GUEST NAME _____			
BELL BOY'S NAME _____			
ROOM NO _____		DATE _____	
MISCELLENOUS _____			
SERVICE CALL	WAKE CALL	ERRAND	OTHERS

BAG S	BRIEFCAS E	COA T	GOL F BAG S	TRUN K	PACKAG E	LAUNDR Y	VALE T	S/ C	OTHER S

BELL BOY ERRAND CARD
BACK SIDE FOR DEPARTURE/SHIFT

SHIFT FROM ROOM NO. _____ TO ROOM NO. _____

B.N.P/B-IN HOLD

AMOUNT _____ HOLD TILL _____ ROOM NO _____

BELL BOY

CASHIER

LOBBY MANAGER

DEPARTURE: BAGS DOWN _____ ROOM NO. _____ DATE _____

INFORMATION

RECEPTION

CASHIER

3.6.3 Lobby Control Sheet:

This sheet is maintained by bell captain during a particular shift in the hotel. The sheet is summary of all the activities performed by bell boys during shifts. It even helps in preparation of individual errand cards of the bell boys. This format is further used by lobby manager to counter check the moment of bell boys for better performance.

LOBBY CONTROL SHEET

HOTEL ABC

JANPATH, NEW DELHI

CAPTAIN _____

SHEET NO. _____

DATE _____

SHIFT-FROM _____ TO _____

ROOM NO.	ATTENDAN T NO.	ARRIVA L	DEPARTUR E	ROOM CHANG E TO	SERVIC E CALL	TIME		COMMEN T
						FRO M	T O	

3.6.4 Guest Location Form:

This form is used to know the location of the guest when they leave the room and inform the location which is kept in key/mail rack. When a guest is expecting any message, he usually informs whether he will be in hotel or outside and accordingly gives his location in hotel or provides a phone number in case goes out of hotel premises. And intimates to reception once returning back to room. In case of a visitor, only after his instructions by the guest about his where about.

GUEST LOCATION FORM

HOTEL ABC

JANPATH, NEW DELHI

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

NAME OF THE GUEST MR./MS

ROOM NO. _____

I WILL BE AT

PLACE	FROM	TO
Swimming Pool		
Health Club		
Bar		
Beauty Parlour		
Business Centre		

3.6.5 Inventory Register:

The inventory register keeps record of all inventory items of the bell desk such as: bell trolley, torch, formats, wheelchair, metal detector, paging board, stationery.

INVENTORY REGISTER

HOTEL ABC

JANPATH, NEW DELHI

S. NO.	ITEM	ISSUED TO: TIME:	RECEIVED FROM: TIME	REMARKS

3.6.6 Message Form:

Message form is used to deliver any received message for an in-house guest in their absence from the hotel. The message is delivered immediately on the arrival in the hotel. Two copies of message are prepared, one copy is taken by bell boy and slotted through under the door of guest room and the other is kept as a record in key/mail rack. It is done to make the delivery/communication of message to the guest.

MESSAGE FORM HOTEL ABC JANPATH, NEW DELHI DATE _____ TIME _____ NAME OF THE GUEST MR./MS. _____				
--	--	--	--	--

ROOM NO. _____ A MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED WHILE YOU WERE AWAY	
FROM: MR./MS. _____ ADDRESS _____ TEL. NO. _____ MESSAGE _____ _____	
MESSAGE TYPE	REMARKS
CALLED	
PARCEL	

WILL CALL AGAIN	
PACKET	
IN PERSON	

3.6.7 Wake-up Call Sheet:

Wake up call sheet is used to wake guests who wish for the same. It is generally requested by guests who want to be waked up early in the morning or want to get reminder about some important work. This sheet is prepared by the telephone operator or is done by the bell captain.

WAKE UP CALL SHEET HOTEL ABC JANPATH, NEW DELHI DATE: _____ TIME: _____ Please wake up the following guests:	
TIME	ROOM NUMBERS
3.00 AM TO 3.15 AM	

3.15 AM TO 3.30 AM	
3.30 AM TO 3.45 AM	
3.4 AM TO 4.00 AM	
4.00 AM TO 4.15 AM	
4.15 AM TO 4.30 AM	
4.30 AM TO 4.45 AM	
8.30 AM TO 8.45 AM	
TELEPHONE OPERATOR CAPTAIN	BELL

3.6.9 Room Shifting Slip:

In case a room of a guest has to be changed, in that case room shifting sheet is used to maintain records of the same. It is done with the approval of front office manager/lobby manager.

ROOM SHIFTING SLIP		
HOTEL XYZ		
JANPATH, NEW DELHI		
S. NO. _____	DATE _____	TIME _____
SHIFTED THE GUEST	FROM	TO
NUMBER OF PAX	FROM	TO

RATE CHANGED	FROM	TO
NAME OF THE GUEST _____		
REASONS FOR CHANGE _____		
ROOM SHIFTED BY _____		
SHIFTING AUTHORISED BY _____		
RECEPTIONIST SIGNATURE		
C.C. BILLS, H.K., TEL DEPT., ROOM SERVICE, BELL DESK		

4. SUMMARY

Bell desk is a section of front office department providing uniformed services. Bell desk is preferably located on left hand side of the lobby area from the entrance to generally ease up the operations of front office. The bell desk is headed by a bell captain and has a team of bell boys according to the size of hotel property. Bell desk is one of the important sections of front office and is responsible for multiple tasks related to guests' arrival and departure. The main duties include luggage handling, paging, delivery of message, delivery of newspapers and magazines. The bell staff has to be active while handling guests. The bell desk becomes significant as it's the first and last section of guests contact. All tasks performed by the bell staff have a direct impact on guests' satisfaction and further in guest retention.