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HILTON GARDEN INN EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PROPOSAL

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Hilton Garden Inn Emergency Operations Proposal

Mikaela McDaniel

HSEM 494

Concordia University Portland

Executive Summary

This project is assigned as a senior practicum by Concordia University for seniors to demonstrate the knowledge and skills acquired throughout their college education in pursuit of a degree in Homeland Security. The ability to identify and assess threat and risk in a company's emergency operations is a definite demonstration of a student's acquired knowledge and skill. Such an assessment was done for the Hilton Garden Inn located in Corvallis, Oregon. Through assessment of their current emergency operations, concerns were found regarding their lack of employee training, updates to the emergency operations plan, and documents. This project outlines the concerns found and provides the Hilton Garden Inn with viable solutions and options to those concerns. The ultimate goal of this project proposal is for The Hilton Garden Inn (HGI) to uphold mission in providing the best service for guests and a safe environment for guests as well as employees. As a company in the hospitality sector, HGI is therefore prepared for all emergency situations and will handle such events with efficiency and professionalism.

Introduction

The Hilton Garden Inn (HGI), located in Corvallis, Oregon, works to uphold the mission of giving guests quality service while also ensuring a safe environment for guests and employees. This project addresses the issue of a safe environment within the HGI. The hotel is located right across from the Oregon State University (OSU) campus and only a five minute walk from Reser Stadium. There are a lot of stakeholders connected with this hotel due to the hotel's convenient location for families of students, OSU sports fans, as well as businessmen and women who stay at the hotel when they have business both at the school and in town. "Disaster planning is a unique resource that effective executives use to reduce one type of uncertainty and thereby enhance their capacity to protect the autonomy, security, and prestige of their organization" (Drabeck, 1995, pg. 8). In order for the Hilton Garden Inn to ensure a safe environment for guests and employees, the hotel needs to be prepared for emergency situation and trained on how to carry out emergency protocols.

As a hospitality sector, HGI runs year round and is tasked with the safety and security of their guests and employees. Establishments that are trained and prepared for all possible emergency situations will minimize the risk of chaos, confusion, loss of life, and property damage.

Hospitality sectors are an important part of homeland security as it ensures the security of those who are visiting, doing business, or traveling within our homeland and internationally. As a hospitality sector, HGI's evacuation plan needs to be held to the utmost standard to ensure the safety of employees and guests. During a stay, guests are under the impression the hotel is secure and prepared for any emergency situation. "Each hotel establishment is responsible for ensuring

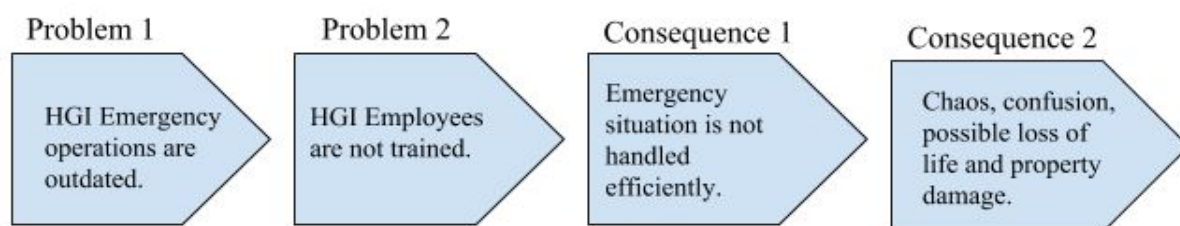
that guests not only feel safe and at ease during their stay, but also know where to turn in the event of an emergency”(Smart Planning: Planning for Hospitality Disasters, n.d.). Guests should also be provided the necessary emergency operations documents in their rooms so that they are knowledgeable of what to do and who to turn to for answers to their questions. The HGI’s mission is to provide the best service and care for guests as well as a safe environment for guests and employees. Although it is not specifically stated their mission also includes providing safety for their guests and employees. There are many factors that go into preparing hospitality sectors for emergencies. Including updating emergency operations as needed, making sure it is organized, ensuring that employees are receiving proper training, as well as making sure everyone is aware and knowledgeable of the protocols, and of their responsibilities.

Defining the Problem

The two biggest issues are that the emergency operations are outdated, and majority of employees are not trained nor are they knowledgeable of the emergency protocols and responsibilities. Through problem analysis, it is evident that this combination of problems can cause serious consequences for the hotel and those staying as guests (see Figure 1). The first problem is that the emergency operations has not been properly updated in years. There are many sections within the emergency operations manual that have handwritten notes and corrections on the plan which is an unacceptable form of an update. It is important that all updates are made so in the correct format and done so that everyone who is reading it can easily find what they are looking for. The lack of organization and updates within the emergency operations poses a great risk for HGI in effectively responding to an emergency.

The second problem is the lack of knowledge and training within HGI. A small scale study was conducted by Mikaela McDaniel with the question of “Where do employees evacuate to in case of a fire?”, out of seven employees, only two were able to answer the question confidently and without error. One of the five employees who has worked with HGI for many years speculated that it was in a different location it was in the past and was unaware the location had been changed. Training employees is vital in emergency preparedness in any industry and building. But more so for hospitality sectors in which guests are trusting their hotels to ensure that they are safe and secure during their stay. In the event in which an evacuation of the hotel is necessary, it is imperative that all employees are familiar with evacuation protocols and layout as well as familiar with all possible evacuation routes. Employees who are to assist in the event of an evacuation are required to know what and how to proceed with their responsibilities. (Evacuation Plans and Procedures eTool (n.d.). This is a clear indication that there is a lack of knowledge and training within HGI and will prevent HGI from effectively and efficiently responding to an emergency.

Figure 1: Problem Analysis



Outdated and unorganized emergency operations manuals are other factors that contribute to the possibility of chaos, confusion, loss of life, and property damage. Untrained employees are heavily reliant on the Emergency Operations Manual and the information that is provided. Therefore, the information needs to be in an organized format so the information is easy to read and follow. If the information that they need is not easily accessible or does not hold current information there will be much confusion regarding what they need to do and how they should proceed.

Analyzing the Solutions:

There are a variety of options that HGI could use to approach their emergency operations problems and find a suitable solution. The most prominent options are:

- Option 1: To hire an outside consultant to restructure and update the current emergency operations.
- Option 2: To reassign to temporarily assign a current employee with emergency operations knowledge to make the necessary updates.
- Option 3: To utilize Options 1 or 2 and only make a couple necessary changes.
- Option 4: To leave operations as is.

Option 1: To to hire an outside professional consultant is a viable option that would make the necessary changes for a fee. This would also ensure the emergency operations is dealt with professional care and that it will be held to the highest standard that hospitality sectors should have. However, it would cost HGI a consultation fee.

Option 2: To reassign or temporarily assign a current employee this solution could save HGI money of a professional consultation fee but the employee would need knowledge and have demonstrated skill in constructing emergency operations. There are HGI employees that hold the skill and knowledge to see that the necessary updates and restructuring of emergency operations are done properly such as Mikaela McDaniel.

Option 3: To utilize options 1 or 2 and only request partial changes in the emergency operations would save HGI money but still leave holes in their emergency operations that would still leave risks. This option is to be seen and considered as a temporary solution due to it only providing a partial solution.

Option 4: To leave operations as is would not cost HGI any money but it would leave all problems unsolved and leave HGI with the risk of chaos, confusion, possible loss of life and property damage. All of these options hold pros and cons for HGI but most of them would see to it that there are solutions to the problems that HGI currently has (See Figure 2 for an analysis of options).

Figure 2: Options Analysis

<u>Options</u>	<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
<p>Option 1: Hire an outside professional consultant.</p>	<p>-Promise of quality work and deliverables.</p> <p>-Promise of dependable work and deliverables.</p>	<p>HGI would need to spend money on hiring a professional consultant.</p>
<p>Option 2: To reassign or temporarily assign an HGI employee.</p>	<p>-Not as costly as hiring a professional consultant.</p> <p>-An employee will have a better understanding of operations at HGI from an inside perspective.</p> <p>-An HGI employee could be hired to do routine updates and ensuring emergency operations are always in order.</p>	<p>-It would still cost HGI money.</p> <p>-Reassigning an employee may leave gaps of responsibility or strain in another employee’s other department.</p>
<p>Option 3: Minimal Changes to emergency operations.</p>	<p>-Utilizing option 1 or 2, it would lessen the cost of hiring since they would only be providing half of the whole solution.</p> <p>-Some problems will be solved.</p>	<p>-Other problems go unsolved</p> <p>-Risk of further problems in the future.</p>
<p>Option 4: Leave emergency operations as is.</p>	<p>-HGI would not have to spend any money.</p>	<p>The risk of chaos, confusion, loss of life, and property damage is still probable without any changes.</p>

Recommendations

After reviewing and analyzing the viable options in the table above (Figure 2), the most cost effective and productive option would be to hire an employee with knowledge of emergency operations to analyze, update, and restructure HGI current emergency operations. They would have the advantage of having inside knowledge and perspective of how to implement changes in the HGI emergency operations that an outsider would not think of. This option will also provide HGI with a solution to all of their problems which would help HGI be able and prepared to respond to an emergency. The only con with this option as stated in the Figure 2 Pro/Con list above is that there is still a fee. However, it should be known that the fee for an HGI employee to make the necessary changes and updates to emergency operations would be considerably less than that of an outside professional consultant. With this option, there are more pros than cons which not only makes it a real option but a recommended course of action. To apply Option 2, HGI will need to find a suitable employee to make the changes in the emergency operations then create guidelines and realistic deadlines to ensure that operational changes are made in a timely manner.

Conclusion

HGI strives to provide the best service and care for their guests during their stay. As a part of their goal, HGI also strives to ensure that not only do guests feel safe and secure but that they truly are. Ensuring that HGI has updated emergency operations as well as properly trained employees will help with the problems HGI currently has in their emergency operations. The two

major problems present are that the emergency operations are outdated and unorganized as well as lack of emergency training amongst employees. With the solution options presented in this project proposal, HGI will be able to find a viable solution to strengthen their emergency operations. It will assist HGI minimize the risk of chaos, confusion, loss of life and property damage if they are able and prepared to respond in the event of an emergency. Emergency preparedness is a serious matter that should be held to the highest priority for all those within the hospitality sector. The options and recommendations provided in the project proposal are viable and if HGI wishes to make the necessary changes in their current emergency operations, there will be a great improvement in their functionality as a hotel within the hospitality sector.

References

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Appendix A

Hilton Garden Inn Project Plan Proposal

Mikaela McDaniel

November 30, 2018

Goal:

The Hilton Garden Inn (HGI) upholds its mission to provide the best service to guests and a safe environment for guests as well as employees. As a company in the hospitality sector, HGI is prepared for all emergency situations and will handle such events with efficiency and professionalism.

Background:

The Hilton Garden Inn is located in Corvallis, Oregon across the street from the campus of Oregon State University(OSU). Due to its location, HGI is a very popular hotel for OSU recruits, families, businessmen, and people who attend sports events at the university. There are many stakeholders who count on HGI's hospitality, customer service, as well as safety and security. As a part of the hospitality sector, HGI must aim to be prepared and confident in the event of an emergency to safely carry out emergency operations.

Project Objectives:

1. HGI has current emergency operations with organized emergency protocol guidelines.
2. HGI staff are properly trained and knowledgeable of emergency protocols and responsibilities.

3. All HGI offices and rooms are equipped with the necessary emergency operations documents to refer to in the event of an emergency.

Deliverables, Tactics, and Timeline:

1. HGI has current emergency operations with organized emergency protocol guidelines.

1a. HGI Emergency Operation updated with current locations and protocols are to be completed by the first quarter of 2020.

1b. HGI an updated Emergency Operations is to be reviewed to ensure that it holds all necessary information and data by the third quarter of 2020.

2. HGI staff are properly trained and knowledgeable of emergency protocols and responsibilities.

2a. HGI employees are to receive proper emergency training by the first quarter of 2021.

2b. HGI employees will undergo emergency practice runs twice a year starting 2022.

3. All HGI offices and rooms are equipped with the necessary emergency operations documents to refer to in the event of an emergency.

3a. Emergency Operations documents both printed and electronic will be made available to employees by the end of 2021.

3b. Emergency operations documents are supplied in all guest rooms by the end of 2021.