



Motivating Factors within the Front Office Employees in Malta's Five-Star hotels

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Abstract

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Being that the Hospitality Industry is a chaotic one, and Front Office employees are seen to be the first point of contact with arriving hotel guests, the motivation of these employees needs to be enforced. The scope of this research is to establish the factors that maintain and increase motivational levels within Front Office employees in Malta's Five-Star hotels. Through an integrative Literature review, various motivational theories have been explained in order to gain a general understanding of motivation and the factors that affect it. And touching on supporting themes including working conditions, career development, and motivating strategies being used in hotels. This research includes two main methodological techniques in order to gain an understanding of motivation and the strategies being used in Malta's Five-Star hotels. The first methodological technique is done to gain an understanding from the managerial side, whilst the second technique aims at understanding the perspective of employees. From this research, one can conclude that Malta's Front Office employees seem to be motivated, mainly by factors relating to Social Opportunities, External Monetary benefits, and Personal Development Opportunities. These suggest that employees want and are focused on having a balanced mix of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivators. Moreover, by prioritising motivation and motivational strategies within employees, Five-Star hotels can further benefit from customer retention, engaged employees, and a higher level of guest satisfaction.		
Keywords Motivation, Front Office, Employees, Five Star Hotels, Malta, Motivational Strategies		

Declaration of Authenticity



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Declaration:

I hereby declare that this research study is based on the outcome of my own research. I, as the author, declare that this research study is my own composition which has not been previously produced for any other qualification.

The research study was conducted under the supervision of Ms Antoinette Axiag

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1. Introduction

In the field of Hospitality Management, the Front Office department is seen to be critical in terms of organisational performance and employee satisfaction. In the dynamic environment of Malta's well-known 5-star hotel sector, Front Office employees play a crucial role in coordinating seamless guest experiences while overcoming a variety of challenges that arise throughout the daily work operations. With millions of tourists visiting the Island each year due to its stunning scenery, rich historical legacy, and Mediterranean charm, Malta's tourism industry is unquestionably alluring. In this context, the front office employees have a great deal of influence since they embody their specific business culture and act as the face of Hospitality.

In the constantly changing and hectic Hospitality Industry, Motivation is seen to be a crucial aspect for success. Highly motivated employees are more likely to go above and beyond to deliver exceptional customer service. These employees usually take great delight in giving visitors experiences that they won't forget and are enthusiastic about the work being done. With motivated employees, higher guest satisfaction rates, repeat business and great reviews will follow. Since the Hospitality industry is seen to have a high employee turnover rate, motivation helps employees remain at their place of work for a longer extended period of time. When employees feel appreciated, it will help boost their loyalty and job satisfaction. (Cristina, 2023)

Although there is extensive academic literature written about motivational theories across various industries, the Hospitality Industry offers a broader perspective due to its distinct mix of dynamics centred around service. That is why a deeper understanding of motivation, specifically found within Front Office employees within Malta's Five-star hotels, is needed. Good employee motivation has been crucial yet challenging responsibilities of management (Angelo & Mel, 2012).

Its success has grown more critical than ever, primarily due to the local and international competition. Since motivation is one of the factors that affect employee performance, managers should be more aware and cater to the individual needs of each employee, this will help motivate and satisfy the employee base. When employees are involved in strategically contributing in a way that effectively progresses the hotel's goals, they typically feel inspired and motivated. Therefore, motivated employees will inevitably impact positively the hotel's ability to accomplish its goals efficiently. (Sabri, et al., 2019)

1.1 Research Aim, Objectives, and Question

Main Research Question:	What are the factors that maintain and increase motivational levels of Front Office employees found in 5-star hotels?
Sub Objectives: A)	Exploring the right working conditions
B)	How motivation helps aid in career development
C)	Exploring Motivational Strategies used by local Five Star hotels

The purpose of this research paper is to gain knowledge regarding Motivation and the factors affecting employees. The main focus will be on front-office employees working in local 5-star hotels. The main objective of this research paper is to find out what factors are affecting the motivational levels of front-office employees to perform their jobs at high levels of standards. During this research, other objectives will be revealed. An exploration of working conditions will determine what conditions must be present in order to leave a positive effect on motivation. In this research, a link between motivation and career development will also be explored. Motivational strategies used by the management of local 5-star hotels will be revealed. In the case that a lack of motivational strategies is seen, suggestions may be included as well. Motivation and how it benefits the employee as an individual will also be explored.

At the end of this research:

- A better understanding of what motivation is,
- How motivational theories are applied in the workplace,
- The effects of working conditions, how motivation aids in career development,
- What strategies are being used by 5-star hotels will be gained.

Ultimately this will determine the factors affecting the motivational levels of Front Office Employees in local Five-star hotels.

From the above literature, one can notice that employee motivation in the hospitality industry is essential. That is why the main aim of this research paper will be based on gaining a better

understanding of Motivation and Motivating factors within the Front Office employees in local Five-Star Hotels.

1.2 Methods, Materials, and Structure

This research is focused on a mixed methodology approach to investigate the motivational dynamics among Front Office Employees in Malta's 5-star hotels. The research includes two primary data collection techniques. Semi-structured interviews with Front Office managers from four renowned 5-star hotels located in Malta will be held. These interviews will cover important aspects of motivation including what is being done to maintain and increase the motivational levels of Front Office Employees. A total of four interviews were conducted to ensure a wide range and depth of understanding.

Online surveys were distributed to Front Office Employees at the same hotels. These surveys consist of a set of statements intended to evaluate the degree of motivation among employees, see how supportive managers are perceived, and how successful current motivating strategies are. For this survey, the approximate number of participants is between 55-75, providing a sizable amount of data for analysis.

The analysis for this research is based on a wide variety of sources. Most of these resources come from two primary sources being online literature already written before conducting the research and first-hand personal experiences and testimonials from managers and employees in Malta's five-star hotel sector. This comprehensive strategy guarantees that different viewpoints are included and helps deepen our understanding of motivation.

This thesis is organised in the form of a traditional format, with an abstract that summarises the main findings and conclusions of the research. The research aims, methods, findings, and consequences will be systematically examined in the chapters that follow. Regardless of the reader's level of experience on the topic researched, this methodical approach improves accessibility and understanding, as well as encourages a wider discussion of the research findings.

Ultimately, this rigorous methodology offers insights for information to both researchers and professionals, furthering the understanding of motivation in the Hospitality Industry. This research may establish the foundation for future research investigations and open up a conversation in the domain of organisational psychology and management.

2. Literature Review

In this Literature Review chapter, an analysis of what motivation is and the factors influencing employee motivation can be seen. This is followed by the understanding of several traditional themes and theories of motivation. These topics were chosen since they directly correlate to the aims and objections of this research. These are further discussed in detail to identify the research gaps found in employee motivation specifically related to the hotel industry.

2.1 What is Motivation?

The term motivation has been defined by numerous authors throughout the years. According to definitions given by Buford, Bedeian, Lindner (1995), Kreitner (1995), Higgins (1994), and others, Motivation is the psychological process that provides behavior direction and purpose. It is also characterized as an internal desire to meet an unmet need and the will to succeed (Bedeian, 1993). It has also been defined as the innate urge that propels people to achieve their individual and group objectives. (Linder, June 1998)

2.2 Why is Motivation Needed?

A big question many individuals have is why we need motivated employees. Smith in 1994 provided us with a simple answer: to survive. With today's constantly changing business environments, having a motivated employee base is needed. Employee motivation tends to increase productivity. A good practice for the management team is to understand what drives employees in the context of the job they hold to be effective. Motivating employees might be one of the hardest tasks the management faces, for the simple reason that employee motivation continuously fluctuates (Bowen & Radhakrishna, 1991). For instance, through research, we see that when the salary is raised for employees, money loses its motivational power (Kovach, 1987). Also, the older the employees get, the more they consider an engaging job as a great motivator to keep working. (Linder, June 1998)

2.3 Elements of Motivation

From research already done one can conclude that the elements that affect employee motivation and productivity are supervision, the team, job content, wages, and opportunities for career development (Vroom, 1964). Herzberg et al., (1959) also stated that the best motivator for an individual to improve job productivity increases when the management or supervisor provides a

sense of growth, especially in responsibilities. When a supervisor is looking after a team, the focus should be on what the employees need and how they feel about their job. Sometimes when someone, especially a superior, shows that they are willing to hear out an employee, they feel motivated to work better and improve themselves on a daily basis.

2.4 Maslow's Hierarchy of needs by Abraham Maslow

Abraham Maslow published a theory on human motivation in 1943, outlining a framework that included a pyramid or hierarchy of needs that drives human motivation. The foundation of Maslow's work is in psychology and human behavior. He proposed a hierarchy between psychological requirements and growing needs, all of which led to self-actualization.

In his initial publication, he explored the first four levels, known as physiological needs, which emphasize that all living creatures require food, sleep, warmth, and oxygen to survive. Safety requirements are defined as the desire for people to feel in control of their lives, including their housing, finances, health, and well-being. Love/Belonginess refers to interpersonal relationships with friends, family, and romantic partners. Finally, Esteem Needs supports the fact that people need to feel respected and valued by their peers to feel good

about themselves. If these four criteria are satisfied, then, in accordance with his hierarchy, a person can pursue self-actualization, which Maslow defines as the capacity for an individual to realize their full potential and engage in activities for which they are most suited.

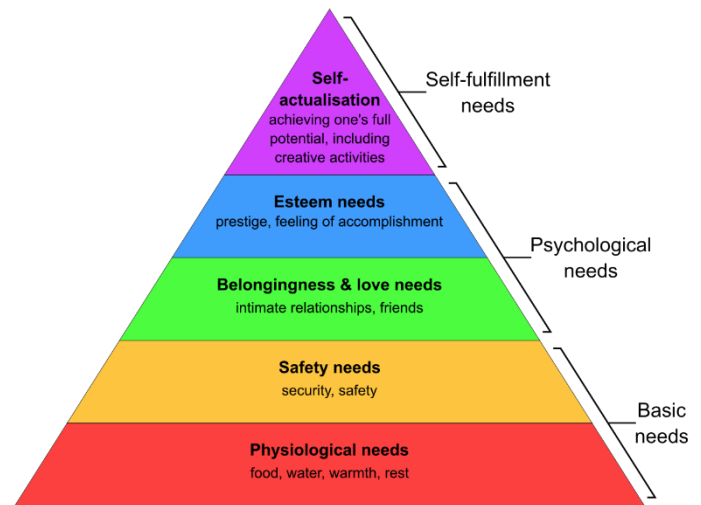


Figure 1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

These four requirements were referred to as the "deficiency needs" by Maslow because when one of them is not met, behavior to fill the void is motivated. When each of these four needs has been met, self-actualization is possible. In contrast to necessities, self-actualization is thought to be motivated by a person's desire to become more fully themselves. It is called the "being need" for this reason. This crucial part of becoming the best version of yourself solely differs from person to person.

2.5 The Theory of X and Y by Douglas McGregor

In 1960, Douglas McGregor published a book called *The Human Side of Enterprise*, where in this book he outlined his two sets of underlying presuppositions relating to how management must adhere to manage and inspire those who report to them effectively and efficiently. These two hypotheses became known as McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y. The Evolution of Theory X and Theory Y was developed based on McGregor's view of management. He believed that management is more than just making employees follow orders and pressuring them to work. According to McGregor (Bobic and Davis), there must be an equal balance between an organization's needs and those of its employees. In fact, Koppelman et al. contend that by challenging these presumptions McGregor developed a new role for management; that rather than pressuring and controlling the employees under them, managers should instead 'help them' to realize their potential. McGregor saw this as a means of assisting an organization in achieving its objectives. These two theories X and Y refer to human work management and motivation theories and directly refer to employee behavior. Theory Y is a positive theory that focuses on rewards and recognition whilst Theory X represents a negative theory that emphasizes supervision. These two theories are used by managers in various industries to inspire workers to perform better. (Singh, 2019)

In the first Theory, being Theory X, managers are seen to use an authoritative style to inspire their workforce. It entails adopting a gloomy viewpoint toward the team members and by generally implementing a traditional carrot-and-stick approach. With this strategy, it has been said that the employees will be motivated to finish their work by either rewarding them or punishing them if they don't follow through with their work. Managers, according to the notion, think that employees are unmotivated and detest their jobs. Therefore, management must take aggressive action to guarantee that the employees carry out their duties. In other words, managers must instruct subordinates and monitor their efforts while motivating them. (Wall Street Mojo Team, n.d.)

In contrast to Theory X, Theory Y proposes that managers should inspire their teams through participative management. The management in this situation has a positive outlook on the employees. They believe that a decentralized approach that fosters better team dynamics, collaboration, and trust can address employee demotivation. McGregor used Maslow's hierarchy of needs in his management ideas in an effort to strike a balance between the demands of the person and the needs of the business. In contrast to the X theory, this idea contends that for

managers to inspire their teams, self-actualization, self-esteem, and social needs must be met. It is based on the supposition that employees who report to them value responsibility and like their work. They can also be independent and imaginative. The Y Theory-following managers encourage their staff members to engage in a variety of activities. They think that team members can manage greater duties on their own.

The foundation of this idea is regular rewards and transparent communication because managers adhere to the notion that collaboration is preferable to command and control. The fundamental premise of Theory Y is that people actively seek employment and that the physical and mental effort required for work is natural. It also presupposes that strict supervision, and the threat of punishment are not the only or even the most effective ways to get workers to put out exceptional effort. Instead, if they had the opportunity, employees would demonstrate self-motivation to make the sacrifices needed to meet the organization's objectives. Therefore, avoiding responsibility is not a trait shared by all people but if the employees are given the correct circumstances, many actually seek it out. In the 1950s, McGregor did not think it was possible to build an entirely Theory Y-type organization, but he did think that Theory Y presumptions would result in more efficient administration.

Thus, from this theory, one can conclude that whilst both of these hypotheses by Douglas McGregor will ultimately work, theory Y will give employees the motivation to work and actually give their utmost naturally. This allows employees to freely go about their daily work roles. This is sometimes just what employees in the Hospitality Industry need, when they feel valued and trusted for the work they are doing, they will naturally begin to perform better and be more engaged in the workplace.

2.6 The Expectancy Theory

A big question many people have is what motivates a person to work and go the extra mile. Through research, it has been observed that in the hotel industry, it is more difficult to answer this question because of the high rates of employee turnover. Most likely, it is the conviction that the efforts taken by the individual will be rewarded. It is also believed that the level of performance and reward will increase the harder you work. (Chiang & Jang, June 2008)

The Expectancy theory, originally developed by Victor Vroom (1964) is built on a straightforward perception of cause and effect. According to this theory, an individual's motivation reflects their

expectations. The potency of three main expectations influences the level of motivation individuals have to perform in a particular way. This means the more effort is being put in, the better the performance. Superior levels of performance will be rewarded. Finally, the result of performance will ultimately bring an alluring reward. (Mind Tools Content Team, 2023)

One can say that motivation depends on valence, instrumentality, and expectancy. Hotel employees need to be intelligent, have excellent job knowledge and abilities, and be good at managing their time, but they also need incentives to progress in their careers (Wong et al., 1999). From previous research conducted by several researchers, it can be concluded that these expectations can either be intrinsic or extrinsic factors. And therefore, the more effort is being placed on their work, the more motivated one would become. Other factors such as recognition, feelings of accomplishment, developing self-esteem, and responsibility have been identified as important for hotel employees. (Chiang & Jang, June 2008)

Both the employees and management agree that employee motivation is important, and both would gain from having a greater grasp of the different types of motivation. Hotel staff members will be encouraged to work hard and enjoy their careers in the ways they choose. Effective employee motivation will be more easily implemented by hotel management, and it will either directly or indirectly affect employee performance and service quality. (Chiang & Jang, June 2008)

2.7 The Incentive Theory

Some psychologists believe that our interior desires and wishes would serve as our motivation for action whilst others believe that our actions are driven by external rewards. This idea of our behaviours being influenced by external factors is highly credited to the psychologist B.F. Skinner. Skinner stated that individuals are not motivated to act by internal states, such as behaving violently because they are furious, in his 1938 book *Behaviour of Organisms*. Instead, deprivation, satiation, and unpleasant stimulation are the main contextual events that motivate or drive people to perform.

Plenty of other psychologists have continued to develop this theory influenced by several other drive theories. Such as during the 1940s Clark Hull argued that biological deprivation, which results in motivation to act, drives behaviour. Frederick Herzberg further developed this philosophy in the late 1950s by developing the two-factor incentive theory. His idea was based on research Herzberg had conducted on employees as to see what enhanced or diminished their emotions

relating to job satisfaction. As part of this study, employees were questioned about what they enjoyed and disliked about their jobs. Based on the responses, Herzberg suggested that job satisfaction was dependent on two elements based on their responses. These were Motivators such as the desire for adulation, success or promotion, and Hygiene which covers everything from company rules, pay, and the working environment. (Kendra Cherry, 2023)

The incentive theory contends that external incentives drive us to act, as opposed to other views that contend, that we are motivated by internal or intrinsic impulses. More specifically, people are driven away from behaviours that result in unfavourable outcomes and are drawn towards those that lead to external benefits. (Kendra Cherry, 2023)

In the hospitality industry, where we see retention issues and job burnout, it is crucial for the management team of hotels or any other company to invest in their employee base. This needs to be done by way more than a pay check. As found in research, these incentives offer employees to be more dedicated and satisfied with their jobs. Starting with Atmosphere, when an employee feels happy at their place of work it makes the work more smoothly. A supportive, trusting environment that feels like a family is facilitated by hiring individuals who get along well with one another or are seen to fit with the hiring team. This encourages a collaborative environment that gives workers a voice in the business. (Tafelsky, 2021)

Career and Personal Development has also been seen to be a good incentive that motivates employees to give it their all during their jobs. Studies show that most millennials look for jobs where they can better themselves and grow. Maintaining employee engagement and career investment will make them feel like their work actually matters. This also makes the employees work harder. Psychological studies also show that recognition helps employees feel appreciated and in turn motivated to work harder. This is because when an employee gets recognised for the work, they are doing effectively improves not only their productivity but also their engagement, trust, and retention. (Tafelsky, 2021)

Managers have to be careful and avoid micromanaging their employees. Studies demonstrate what is known as the "Hawthorne effect," which indicates that individuals frequently perform worse when they feel watched and monitored. That is why giving employees a little space to accomplish their daily tasks is important (Tafelsky, 2021). One non-monetary incentive that works at the workplace is job stability. For instance, gaining tenure or finishing a trial term might increase someone's sense of security and drive to contribute to the business or organisation (Indeed,2023).

2.8 Motivational Model: Intrinsic VS Extrinsic Motivation

Plenty of Psychologists such as Skinner and Thorndike have been creating models and researching models of motivational learning since the early 20th century. Intrinsic motivation relates directly to the enjoyment gained from a particular task in the process of conducting. Whilst Extrinsic motivation relates to the benefits gained from participating in a specific task.

2.8.1 Intrinsic Motivation:

Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity for the satisfaction it brings rather than for any clear external benefit. (Oudeyer and Kaplan, 2009). In other words, the challenge, enjoyment, and satisfaction of completing the activity are the rewards if we are intrinsically motivated. This phenomenon was first recognised by experimentation studies implemented on animal behaviour where it was concluded that species engage in fun, exploratory, curiosity-driven behaviours even in the absence of reinforcement or reward (White, 1959). This innate drive for motivation is essential to cognitive, social, and physical development because it is by pursuing one's interests that one enhances their knowledge and abilities.

Numerous types of intrinsic motivation have been identified by researchers. One of the most unforgettable is the 4C's framework. This speaks about challenges, curiosity, control, and context.

Challenge:

White (1959) introduced the concept of reflectance or mastery motives, which dictates that people seek out challenges and new skills for the only reason of the pleasure of accomplishment. An example of this is seen in children where when they are learning to walk, they do not need extrinsic reinforcement. Ultimately achievement-based motivations target to achieve goals for personal development.

Curiosity:

In 1960, Berlyn described the term curiosity as a form of motivation involving learning as a process for people to get to know their world. Competence motivation which is also called learning motivation is driven by curiosity and willingness to develop new skills.

Control:

In 1961, Hunt was the first person to formally use the phrase intrinsic motivation. Hunt focused his research on the benefits associated with feeling in control. Throughout his research, Hunt

emphasized that people find having control over the environment leaves them feeling very motivated.

Context:

Within the discipline of educational psychology, Bruner (1961) discussed the significance of contextualising learning — demonstrating to pupils the applicability and usefulness of abilities acquired in the classroom that can be used for resolving issues or achieving fundamental objectives outside of the classroom.

2.8.2 Extrinsic Motivation:

Extrinsic motivation unlike Intrinsic motivation, is a concept that applies to every activity carried out with the sole purpose of achieving a distinct goal. Thus, intrinsic motivation stands in contrast to extrinsic motivation and refers to engaging in an activity just for its own sake, independent of any potential benefits (Ryan and Deci 2000). The primary distinction between the two types of motivation is that intrinsic motivation originates from inside whilst extrinsic motivation originates from external sources. The two, however, are not exclusive meaning that both types of motivation can be found within an individual. For example, a person working at the reception of a Five-star hotel may be intrinsically motivated to complete their daily work tasks because they enjoy it and want to create high-quality work, but on the other side they may be extrinsically motivated to finish in order to meet a teammate's deadline. (Sennet,2021)

Extrinsic motivation can be further split into three main sections being reward-based motivation, power-based motivation, and fear-based motivation.

Reward-based motivation relates to motivation that is gained through the use of external rewards. For example, a front office employee may be motivated to upsell rooms and food and beverage services because of the monetary incentives included.

Power-based motivation relates to a form of extrinsic motivation which depends on the need to have control over people. For example, a manager can get motivation to lead and inspire other employees in order to overcome challenges.

The last section of extrinsic motivation is fear-based motivation. This motivation tactic relates to the desire an individual has to prevent an externally undesirable outcome. For example, a manager can threaten to impose fines on employees who arrive late to work. Or an employee

might give their utmost during each guest interaction out of concern that they might be assessed by a mystery guest.

In addition to conveying information about skills, extrinsic rewards have the power to improve people's judgements of competence. Accordingly, a person's intrinsic drive may rise when their perceived ability does (Sansone, 1986). Extrinsic incentives can also reveal details about an individual's degree of autonomy or personal control. Extrinsic rewards have the potential to reduce feelings of autonomy and, in turn, intrinsic drive. Consequently, when people do not anticipate material or interpersonal extrinsic benefits, they can be less inclined to participate in such tasks (Sansone and Harackiewicz, 2000).

Nowadays, we see that individuals are either going for one motivation model or else a combination of both. By having a combination of both a lot of employees are seen to benefit from both personal development as well as receive rewards that they think they deserve for the work they are doing. This motivation model can prove to be an essential way how management in hotels can better motivate their employee base.

2.9 Exploring the right Working Conditions:

Hospitality managers are usually faced with the difficult task of getting the most out of their employee base. Conflicts between employees and management may arise from this method, which incentivizes managers and supervisors to secure labour at a low cost. This emphasis on achieving exceptional service delivery might lead to exploiting and unhappy employees. In this industry, unfortunately, since it is based around service delivery, managers are sometimes more concerned about meeting the targeted profits rather than ensuring employee satisfaction.

Numerous variables, including the manager's style, employee personalities, and the unique pressures of each workplace, affect employee satisfaction. These characteristics are all indicators of the working conditions experienced by employees. Therefore, getting input from workers regarding their workplaces is crucial to determine how satisfied they are and how likely they are to stick around. In this article written by Jill M. Poulston, the nature of hospitality workplaces is shown using employee experiences relating to unfair, unethical, and illegal practices in workplaces.

The work of Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory is used to explain employee behaviour and what they need in order to be motivated and satisfied in their workplace. This served as a great inspiration for this article relating to working conditions in the hospitality industry. Herzberg explains that employee motivation and satisfaction directly align with the presence of intrinsic satisfiers such as career prospects or development opportunities and are moderated by extrinsic hygiene factors such as the amount of pay, working conditions, and supervision. (Poulston, 2009)

In this article, one can see how many hospitality employees experience poor wages, long working hours, abusive managers, and stressful working conditions, which unfortunately lead to the demise of their motivation and in turn, lead to high levels of employee turnover. That is why it is suggested that hospitality managers focus on and address these characteristics that are making the lives of the employees harder. Employees should be treated fairly and with respect, this will not only help with improving employee morale and satisfaction within the workplace but will also raise a higher level of employee retention and raise the quality of the service given to customers. (Poulston, 2009)

2.9.1 Employee Engagement:

This concept refers to how employees are involved, motivated, and committed they are to their place of work and organisation. The first researcher to identify three aspects of employee engagement in none other than Kahn in 1990. The three dimensions of employee engagement relate to:

1. Physical engagement: relates to do with how much effort employees put into their work, both mentally and physically. In his research, Kahn gave instances of employees who reported feeling like they were "flying around" and had a high degree of personal engagement at work. He further established a connection between elevated confidence and the capacity to invest both mental and physical energy at work. (Sinclair, 2020)
2. Cognitive engagement: in order to be engaged at this level, employees must understand their employer's goals and plans as well as the performance standards they must meet in order to contribute as much as possible. Kahn also highlighted the significance that individuals placed on their profession, proposing that an increase in knowledge sparked an increase in inventiveness and self-assurance in decision-making. (Sinclair, 2020)
3. Emotional engagement: the emotional bond that employees have with their employer serves as the foundation for this. In order to foster a healthy relationship, the organisation

must figure out how to provide employees with a feeling of community at work. This will motivate them to believe in and support the company's goals and principles. In his theory, Kahn listed a number of behaviours that would help people feel safe and trustworthy, including constructive interpersonal interactions, group dynamics, and managerial techniques. (Sinclair, 2020)

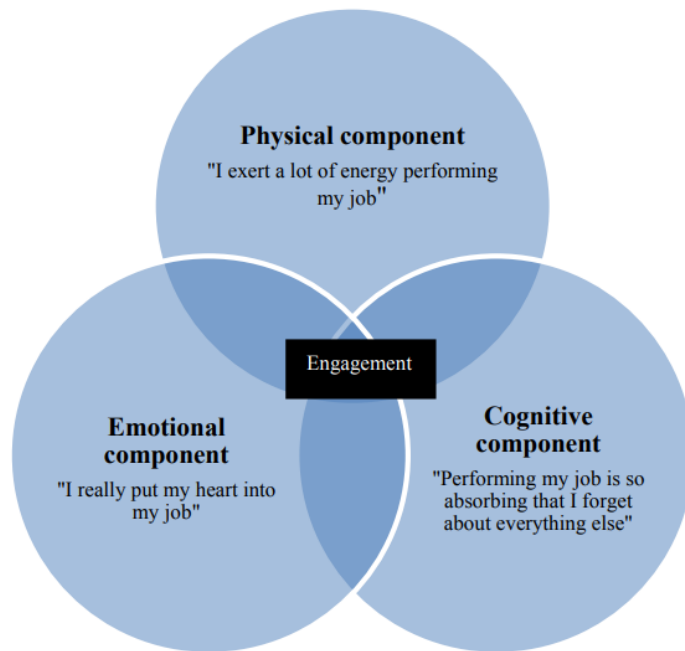


Figure 2: Engagement Components

Various other researchers have proposed different definitions and dimensions of employee engagement, such as work engagement, multidimensional engagement, self-engagement, and attitude-based engagement. Although Kahn's work is dated, many researchers still use his work as a basis to build on engagement, thus making his work viable even 30 years later.

Conclusively, employee engagement is a vital aspect that managers should focus highly on, the concept of employee engagement has multiple dimensions and thus when employees engage themselves at work, they bring their physical, emotional, and cognitive resources to use in their daily job operations. An employee's total level of personal involvement increases with their level of engagement across all dimensions therefore when employees commit to all dimensions the higher their overall personal engagement is. (Romford, 2022)

2.10 Exploring motivational strategies used by management in 5-star hotels:

Numerous studies have explored motivation techniques and strategies employed within the hotel sector. In particular, the African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism, and Leisure (Mhlanga, 2018) provides valuable insights into strategies that drive employee engagement and performance. Upon thorough review of the research, the primary strategies identified within this research include:

1. **Accountability and Recognition:** Employee motivation is fostered when individuals perceive that their contributions are valued and that they are held accountable for their actions. Notably, respect and recognition are examples of non-monetary rewards that have a big impact on employee motivation.
2. **Teamwork:** This has been noted as an important element in raising employee motivation. This includes cooperation within the department and creating a feeling of community within the team.
3. **Social Opportunities:** It is widely acknowledged that in order to preserve a healthy work-life balance, social facilities are necessary in order to keep employees motivated. When employees meet outside of their working environment, they can further build their relationship which will help in enhancing team performance.
4. **Training and Development:** Investing in training and development programs is essential for facilitating both professional and personal development, thereby enhancing motivation among employees.
5. **Fair compensation and Job Security:** Competitive salaries and having a stable job are fundamental elements that directly contribute to employee motivation.
(Mhlanga, 2018)

Based on the information obtained from the cited journal article and similar research, a clear conclusion can be made about the critical elements that employees in the hotel industry consider to be motivating. It is clear that factors such as job security, fair compensation, social opportunities, teamwork training, and development are important aspects of creating an environment where people are motivated to work.

Finding a connection between these important elements and popular motivational theories also helps us better comprehend the psychological processes at work. These theories clarify how important things like acknowledgment are in meeting our fundamental wants for respect and belonging, and they also help explain how things like having a stable employment and a living

income are in line with basic motivational theories like Maslow's Hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-way theory.

Therefore, a thorough grasp of the motivating landscape in the hotel industry is obtained through a synthesised appreciation of empirical data and theoretical frameworks. These revelations not only provide light on the factors that influence employee motivation, but they also provide organisational stakeholders with a theoretical framework for developing strategic interventions aimed at creating a work environment that fosters long-term motivation and peak performance.

2.11 Conclusion

In conclusion, the topic explored relates to motivating factors found within Malta's front office employees in 5-star hotels, which highlights the complex nature of motivation and its critical role in the success of organisations. According to a number of academics, motivation is the psychological processes that give behaviour direction and significance while highlighting an individual's inner ambitions and will to succeed. Understanding motivation is crucial due to its direct correlation with productivity and employee engagement, both of which are critical for manoeuvring through the ever-changing hospitality sector.

The following factors, which were previously mentioned in the above texts, are important in determining employee motivation. These being pay, benefits, job content, teamwork, opportunity for growth, and meeting both internal and external needs. An understanding of the intricate interactions between individual wants, managerial strategies, and organisational outcomes can be gained by integrating motivation theories like Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, Expectancy theory, and the Incentive theory.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs describes the sequence of events from physiological needs to self-actualisation and highlights the significance of meeting both being and deficient needs in order to achieve motivation that is holistic. McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y present opposing views on management approaches while emphasising the role that intrinsic motivation and participatory management play in promoting employee engagement. Expectancy theory highlights the connection between performance, effort, and rewards while emphasising how expectation affects motivation. The incentive theory recommends a balance between inner and extrinsic motivation which similarly clarifies the influence of extrinsic incentives on behaviour.

Additionally, the analysis of the working environment, employee engagement, and motivational strategies used in hotels highlights how crucial it is to have a welcoming and helpful work environment. Enhancing employee motivation and performance requires a variety of strategies, some of which include accountability, recognition, teamwork, training, growth, fair compensation, and job security.

Ultimately, a thorough understanding of the strategies used by Front Office employees to motivate themselves requires the fusion of theoretical frameworks together with empirical evidence. Hospitality managers can establish a culture of motivation, engagement, and excellence by integrating organisational methods with motivational theories and attending to the various requirements of staff members. This will help them succeed long-term in Malta's competitive hospitality market.

3. Methodology

In this research, this chapter will be based on the main methodological techniques used in order to enhance a general understanding of the motivating factors which influence front office employees, specifically those who work in Malta's 5-star hotels. When it comes to collecting data, the mixed methodology approach has been chosen. This is due to the fact that the two techniques chosen can be either and are known as both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The qualitative method will be shown through a series of interviews with Front Office Managers in some of Malta's 5-star hotels, complimented by an online survey which will be passed over to the employees of the managers interviewed. Whilst the quantitative method will be shown through statistics and graphs gained through both of these techniques.

Since the Hypothesis for this research is based on the question of what motivates people to work specifically in the luxurious hotel industry, these two methodology techniques were chosen due to the fact that out of all the techniques, implementing a direct interview with Front Office Managers as well as having employees answer similar questions to the ones being asked to the managers, will help establish what motivating factors are being used in hotels by the management team as well as how the employees actually feel about their motivation at their place of work. This will help make sure that the purpose of the research has been met and explained whilst also reflecting on the aims and objectives of this research. Ultimately, these two techniques were seen to be the best methods to ensure a successful methodology approach compared to other types of methods.

3.1 Methodological Approach 1: Interviews with Malta's Front Office Managers in 5-star hotels.

The initial methodology technique implemented relates to a number of face-to-face interviews with Front Office managers located in a few of the best Five-star hotels found in Malta. Front office managers were chosen in order to gain a general understanding of what the direct management is doing in terms of motivation and motivational techniques for their employees. These managers will be asked a number of questions related to the topic of motivation, specifically touching on the points of recognition and reward, feedback and performance, employee feedback, career development, work environment, team building, work-life balance, communication, and even in the cases of challenging times.

These types of questions were chosen as they align directly with what has been stated in the above literature review chapter. As human beings we are all entitled to be driven by something

specific to us that is why with the help of the above chapter, a thorough understanding of motivation and its factors specifically those that impact employee drive has been gained and used in order to create these 14 questions. These questions have been created with one main aim: to answer whether the management knows about motivation and its implications together with what they are actually doing to maintain and increase the motivational levels of their front office employees.

With the help of the interviewed managers perspectives and expertise, a proper understanding and analysis of what factors maintain and increase motivation within Front Office departments in Malta's 5-star hotels will be gained. These interviews will also be useful in answering the main research question, together with the aims and objectives specifically from a managerial point of view relating to what factors maintain and increase motivation, motivational techniques, working environment, and career development.

3.1.1 Description of Managers Interviewed

Throughout this research paper, the Hotels and participants mentioned will be referred to as Hotel A, Hotel B, Hotel C, and Hotel D with Manager A, Manager B, Manager C, and Manager D, directly correlating with the mentioned hotels. This is done as to keep the promise of anonymity for both participants and the company worked for.

A total number of 4 interviews will be done as to gain as much knowledge as possible on the topic of motivating factors within Front Office departments in Malta's 5-star hotels, as well as to have a more versatile discussion since this will provide useful answers from 4 different perspectives. The Hotels contacted were chosen since they fall into the category of the required target group being Five-star hotels. These hotels are located all around Malta in the central and northern areas of Malta since there are no Five-Star hotels within the southern part of the island. The management personnel focused on relates to Front Office Managers operating in the chosen Hotels. Front Office Managers were chosen since they are the closest direct link to the Front Office Department and its employees which will ultimately help gain a better understanding of what is being done in terms of motivation and what impact it leaves in these places of work.

Hotel A: Manager A

Has been Residing and Working in Malta since 2018. Before entering the industry of Hospitality, he studied in the field of Information Technology. When he came to Malta, he decided to experience a new industry and chose Hospitality. He has only worked in the hotel he is in today, where he was able to work himself up from being a Receptionist and Night Auditor to becoming the Front Office Manager in a matter of 4 years. The Interview took place on a Sunday afternoon in a meeting room on hotel premises in the form of a one-on-one meeting. This was the first interview done and took around 1 hour to conduct.

Hotel B: Manager B

Has been residing and working in Malta since April 2023. Although he did not study in the field of Hospitality, he has gained years of experience from working in the kitchen of a restaurant to moving to hotels. Manager B has been with his company for around 8 years and is another example of a manager who has started from the bottom being a night auditor to moving to Reception, Assistant Night manager, and Assistant Front Office Manager in other locations of the same company. To finally being promoted to Front Office Manager in the location found in Malta. The interview took place on a Monday afternoon on hotel premises specifically in the outside lounge area in the form of a one-to-one meeting. This interview took around 45-50 minutes to complete.

Hotel C: Manager C

Has been in the industry for multiple years' operating within the same company for about 30 years. Manager C is one of those people who signifies what being welcoming and going through exceptional ways in order to assure satisfaction from guests. He is also one of the few managers who are local and can guarantee the Maltese hospitality ways. This manager also worked his way up and practically rotated in all roles found in the Front Office Department. Other than studying in this field, he also studied Archaeology which shows love and appreciation of our local heritage. This Interview was done on a Monday afternoon on hotel premises in the main lounge area. It was done in the form of a one-to-one interview and took around 50-60 minutes to complete.

Hotel D: Manager D

Has been a Front Office Manager since January 2023. This manager is another example of starting from the bottom and worked up to being a manager. This manager had a very good interpretation of motivation and explained how when he was a student, he had to do a project also relating to motivation. Compared to the other managers, Manager D focuses on intrinsic aspects

of motivation. The interview was done on a Tuesday afternoon on hotel premises and took around 40 minutes to complete.

3.1.2 Description of Interview and Interview Questions

Throughout this series of interviews, a total of 10 questions were asked per manager. These interviews are open-ended and structured since they will be based on these specific 10 questions. Being that all of the interviews will be based on the same structure, this will make it easier to compare and reflect on the statements given by all managers.

As stated before, the questions are related to specific objectives to help gain an answer for the main research questions as well as address the supporting aims and objectives of this research. Below a table can be found which helps clarify why these specific questions were chosen and how they can help answer and understand the purpose of this research.

Question	Purpose	Connection to Aim and Objectives
Introduction	Interview with Front Office Managers or Human resource Managers in order to gain knowledge regarding what factors maintain and increase motivation within the Front Office departments of Malta's 5-star hotels.	Aim: To answer the research question specifically from a managerial point of view, relating to what factors that maintain and increase motivation within front office employees.
1. What strategies does your company have in place to motivate your employees?	-To find out what motivational strategies are being used on front office employees in 5-star hotels.	Exploring motivational strategies used by local 5-star hotels.
1. Can you provide me with some successful examples of how these tactics have raised morale and performance among employees?	-To find out how these strategies impacted on the morale and performance of the employees.	Exploring motivational strategies used by local 5-star hotels.

2. How does the company recognize and reward employee achievements	-To find out how the company rewards their employees for achievements.	Recognising and rewarding employee achievements.
3. How often do employees receive feedback on their performance?	-To find out if and how employees receive feedback.	-Listening and providing feedback to employees. -Right Working Conditions
3. How are these performance reviews used as a tool for motivating employees?	-To find out how can feedback help be used as a tool of motivation.	Exploring motivational strategies used by local hotels.
4. In what ways does the company assist its employees in accomplishing their career objectives inside the company?	-To find out how the company helps employees in terms of career development.	How motivation helps aid in career development.
5. How would you describe the company's work culture and its impact on employee motivation?	-To find out how the company's work culture is and the impact it leaves on the employees	Exploring the work culture and conditions.
5. Is there anything specific in place to promote a positive and motivating work environment?	-To find out how are work environments being kept positive.	Exploring the right work environment and conditions.
6. How does the company encourage team building and collaboration among employees? Are there any specific activities or programs for fostering teamwork?	-To find out different techniques and strategies being used to foster collaboration among employees	Exploring Motivational strategies being used by local hotels.
7. Do you collect feedback regularly?	-To find out about the collection feedback.	Exploring communication between management and employees.
7. How has the company used employee feedback to make improvements in motivational strategies?	-To find out how this feedback is being used to better help employees.	Exploring communication and motivational strategies

		between management and employees.
8. How does the company support employees in achieving a healthy work-life balance?	-To find out how the company helps in achieving work-life balance	Exploring the right working conditions and a healthy work environment.
9. How does the company encourage open and transparent communication and how does this contribute to employee motivation?	-To find out about communication strategies	Exploring communication strategies being used by local hotels.
10. Are there any strategies or support mechanisms in place during tough periods to maintain employee motivation and morale?	-To find out whether local hotels are ready and what strategies they are using in specific cases to maintain morale.	Exploring Motivational Strategies being used by local hotels.

Ultimately, these questions after being further explored, have been specifically designed to gain a better understanding of what motivates these employees to work harder from a managerial perspective as well as understand what Five-star hotels are doing to maintain and enhance their employees' motivational levels.

3.2 Methodological Approach 2: Online Surveys distributed to Front Office Employees found in the 5-star hotels interviewed.

After the initial interview with Front Office Managers is done, the second methodology technique will be distributed in the form of an online survey which is based specifically on employee perception. This was distributed between February and April and remained available to complete until the first week of May 2024.

The main aim of this technique is to gain a general understanding of how employees perceive motivation and the motivational strategies being used in their place of work. This survey is believed to be a perfect example of connecting how employees feel to the explanation made by management during the first methodological technique. The target group for this survey is made up of 57 participants who are the direct front office employees of the interviewed Front Office Managers located in 4 different 5-star hotels in Malta.

The survey was created using Microsoft Forms and includes 8 different types of questions. Most of the questions are seen to be closed-ended since they are more focused on choosing an answer rather than providing one. The first 4 questions in the survey are asked in order to gain a better understanding of the demographics of the employees, this will help gain insights on the target audience especially when it comes to the number of years worked reflecting on their motivation and job satisfaction.

Question 5 reflects on a matrix question where employees are asked to relate to the statements and choose from a selection of Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. This question can also be seen to relate to the structure of a Likert scale since it is based on gaining the answers based on the same range of options. Question 6 is set up in a multiple-choice form and question 7 displays a scale of answer options ranging from 1 to 5. The last question is the only one which is an open-ended question, since it requires the participants to write an answer themselves.

By having this survey follow this structure, it will help provide clean data and will also make it easy to compare the answers even with the responses from the other interviewed hotels. Below a table can be found which explains why these questions were chosen and how they relate to the aims and objectives of his research.

Question	Purpose	Relation to Aims and Objectives
Introduction	To find out the reality of employee motivation and how employees are being treated by direct managers in local 5-star hotels.	-Factors that maintain and increase motivation -Exploring working conditions -Exploring motivational strategies -Exploring how motivation aids in career development
Gender -Male -Female -Prefer not to say	Related to Demographics	To better understand the type of people dealt with.
How old are you? -18-28 -29-39 -40-50 -50-60 -60+	Related to Demographics	To better understand the type of people dealt with.
What is your occupation? -Reception -Guest Relations -Concierge -Porter	Related to Demographics	To better understand the type of people dealt with and the type of occupation they have.
How long have you been working at your company? -0<6months -1<4years -5<10years -10+years	Related to Demographics	To better understand how well they know the company and a clearer image of how these employees are being treated.

Employee Experience: In this section, you are asked to rate the following statements from 1-5, where 1 refers to Strongly Agree and 5 refers to Strongly Disagree -I feel driven to do my best each day -My work gives me the opportunity to grow my skills -I have a clear personal development plan -Recognition received by direct management motivates me to do my best -My manager praises and celebrates my successes -I feel that my work is seen and appreciated by my team and company -I feel that I am paid enough for the amount of work I do -I am likely to recommend my organization as a place of work.	To find out how employees actually feel at their place of work. This will include themes such as motivation, opportunity for growth, personal development, appreciation, wages, and recommendations of the place of work	-Explore factors that maintain and increase motivation -Exploring career development -Exploring the relationship between manager and employee -Exploring employee appreciation and recognition -Exploring how satisfied employees are within local 5-star hotels.
What are the types of benefits and incentives that personally motivate you to perform at your utmost? -Intrinsic motivation related to personal development -Extrinsic Motivation related to external and financial benefits -A balanced mixture of both -All of the above	To find out what is the preferred method of motivating front office employees from a personal side.	Exploring the Motivational Strategies preferred by front office employees found in Malta's 5-star hotels.
On a scale of 1 to 5 how often do you feel motivated by your direct management team. (1 being not motivated) 1 2 3 4 5	To find out how often employees feel motivated by their direct management	Exploring how motivated employees feel by their direct management.
What types of Motivational strategies are being used at your place of work? -Enter Answer -	To find out what motivational strategies are being used in local hotels	Exploring Motivational Strategies used by managers in local 5-star hotels

3.3 Pilot Study:

This pilot study aims to prove that the two methodological techniques chosen are suitable for gaining an understanding of motivating factors. Conducted in one of the hotels interviewed, the discussion started prior to the main research process, the pilot study utilized a sample of four Front Office employees and a Front Office Manager. The sample included both male and female employees across different age groups and job positions within the Front Office Department.

The first methodological technique involved a one-on-one open-ended interview with the Front Office Manager. The questions facilitated a smooth flow of communication and elicited honest responses, providing valuable and essential information. To optimise efficiency, similar questions were merged. Allowing for a greater exploration of the main research question, aims and objectives.

Following the manager's interviews, front office employees received a copy of the online survey. The survey was distributed by the manager, who forwarded it to the employee chat and provided a link or barcode scan option for those on duty. This distribution method proved effective for the sample used.

Upon completion of the sample study, employees provided positive feedback on the survey appreciating its simplicity, brevity, and lack of time consumption. Based on feedback and observations, the number of survey questions remained the same however the number of interview questions was reduced from 14 to 10 as to enhance clarity and conciseness. Questions merged when they pertained to similar topics, as it was noted during the interview section that participants often address multiple questions in their responses.

This Pilot Study has provided valuable insights into the efficacy of interviews and online surveys as methodological techniques for examining motivating factors among Front Office Employees in Malta's 5-star Hotels. Consequently, these techniques were adopted as the main methods to ensure a successful research outcome.

3.4 Ethical Considerations:

Throughout both methodological techniques, ethical consideration was given high priority. The interviews were obtained through email conversations seeking permission from the Human Resource teams of the hotels interviewed. Prior to the Interview Day, an email was sent to the Interview participants with three consent forms relating to information, permission, and participation in the research process. These consent forms can be found in the appendix section. During the interview, permission was also obtained verbally.

As stated previously, to protect the identity of the hotel, manager, and employees, all names will remain anonymous and confidential. This is why only the signature and date of signature of the participant will be shown in the consent forms. Original copies of these consent forms remain confidential. In all consent forms, as well as throughout both methodological techniques participation was kept voluntary and was stated verbally or communicated through online measures such as the opening message of the online survey.

3.5 Limitations

This research when compared to the pilot study has shown that some limitations persist even though the initial study resulted in a success. The first limitation encountered relates to receiving a reply through email from Five-Star Hotels, even during the low seasons. In order to secure the interview constantly calling or visiting the hotels seemed to work.

The next limitation encountered reflects on the participation of the employees who received the online survey, the majority of the employees seemed to not respond only a small percentage chose to answer the survey even though anonymity was kept. This reflects negatively on the estimated number of participants when compared to the actual number of participants who answered the survey. That is why a miscellaneous survey was sent out to Front Office employees working within Five-Star Hotels in Malta, however not within the ones interviewed.

This raises the next limitations encountered, referring to participants not always being honest when answering especially in the case of face-to-face interviews. In the case of the interview's honesty was achieved through anonymity.

3.6 Method of Analysis:

The method of analysis used throughout this research involves a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine factors that maintain and increase motivational levels among Front Office Employees in Malta's 5-star hotels.

The qualitative analysis will be based on Content analysis of responses to open-ended questions to identify common themes and patterns related to motivating factors. The responses are then set into categories according to themes and variations in employee perceptions.

The quantitative analysis will primarily utilise Descriptive Statistics where the data collected from the online survey were analysed using percentages and graphs. This analysis will provide an overview of the distribution of responses and the regularity of specific motivating factors.

The results of the individual qualitative and quantitative data analyses were combined to give a thorough understanding of the motivating factors within Front Office employees. By integrating information from surveys and interviews, triangulating data from various sources improves validity and reliability of the results and it enables a more complex interpretation of the data.

Overall, the research's analytical approach blends qualitative and quantitative methods to thoroughly examine motivating factors, offering insightful knowledge for both theory and practice in the field of hotel management.

4. Results, Analysis and Discussion

In this section, the results, analysis of the methodology techniques chosen will be discussed. The questions for both interviews and surveys can be found in Appendix 2 and 3 respectfully.

4.1 Interview Results and Analysis

4.1.1 Interview Results

Hotel A: Manager A

1. Monthly reward schemes,
Employee of the month,
Team building activities.
2. Employee of the month,
Yearly awards ceremony,
For Front Office, weekly upselling awards.
3. Yearly appraisals,
Monthly reviews and feedback on performance,
Offer good support and guidelines for improvement.
4. Talent Nurturing and Talent Recognition where employees can recommend each other to try different positions in the hotel. This incorporates teamwork.
5. Very positive environment starting from management, offer training, exposure and emotional support.
6. Team building is done per department,
Not on hotel premises such as Dinner, Laser Tag, Go Carting and Escape rooms.
Helps build relationships especially when more than 1 department goes out together.
7. Collects Employee Feedback from company survey,
Anonymous Suggestion Box,
The suggestions are used and enforced in order to keep employees happy and motivated.

8. Balance is gained through communication,
Adapting to employees request in terms of rostering,
When an employee is off duty, no work-related matters will be delt with.
9. Communication is essential,
It is what keeps the team working together,
Open line of communication from management to employees.
10. The biggest one in place relates to having a company therapist, where employees can
speak about any matters worrying them in an anonymous matter.

Hotel B: Manager B

1. Introduction to company's clear mission, vision, and values,
Team Building,
One-on-one conversations,
Trainings,
Appraisals,
Incentives,
Personal Development Plans.
2. Twice a year long service award Galas are held,
FO Communication meetings held to award best Up-seller of the month,
Most mentioned employee receives complimentary use of specific facilities.
3. Yearly Performance Reviews,
Daily feedback,
Following up on the feedback,
Development plan is created,
Gain a clear understanding of employees.
4. Communication in terms of employee goals,
Offering different exposure, training, and experiences,
Build more knowledge and skills.
5. Respect is key,
Good Mentor helps establish a safe environment,
Focused on hospitality, teamwork and helping each other,
Clear mission and vision helps build a better environment.
6. Budget is allocated yearly,
Activities such as walks, dinner or going out for drinks,
Done to balance mind, spirit, and soul.

7. Employees give feedback in performance reviews,
Yearly Online survey for employee feedback,
Feedback is used to improve operations in hotel.
8. Avoid Overtime,
Self-rostering, where requests are sent to the manager,
Do activities to not remain in the same work pattern.
9. Transparency is key to having an open line of communication,
Helps create a bond between employees and management,
Leads to a better environment.
10. Support employees,
Helps strengthen yourself,
Leaves behind lessons for the next challenge.

Hotel C: Manager C

1. Salary,
Upselling,
Team Environment,
Rostering.
2. A simple thank you goes a long way,
Incentives for achievements,
Employee of the month,
Departmental Appreciation week,
Team Outings.
3. Daily Feedback,
Following up on feedback,
Yearly Appraisals,
Always remain on top of things.
4. Opportunities are present,
In FO it might be more difficult since it is a small team,
Growth is encouraged even in other departments.

5. Good Working Environment,
Starts from Owner to employees,
In recent years the environment improved due to focusing on employee feedback,
Focus on Respect, Teamwork and Diversity.
6. Social Activities,
Volleyball, Padel, Marathons, and Dinners,
Helps motivate employees to try new things outside of work,
Weekly 'Energisers' where FO employees go through standards in a fun way.
7. Twice yearly a feedback survey is distributed,
Feedback is analysed and implemented for improving the hotel.
8. Employees have a good work-life balance,
Requests for rosters are always accommodated, when possible,
Care towards employees.
9. Open line of communication is essential,
Different forms of communication such as face-to-face, messages and handovers.
10. Support Employees,
Always available to talk,
Bring Awareness to issues such as Mental Health,
Focus on a safe and supportive atmosphere.

Hotel D: Manager D

1. Personal Development plan,
Departmental meetings,
Teamwork based environment,
Feedback
2. Award Ceremony,
Images of guest reviews mentioning employees displayed.
3. Monthly one-on-one meetings,
Performance Appraisal.
4. Development Plans are created,
Employees are asked regarding their goals.

5. Positive environment,
Respect, Teamwork,
Lead by example.
6. Team Building activities,
Collaboration between different departments,
Staff parties and activities,
Increase positive relationships.
7. Self-evaluation every quarter year,
Performance assessment by HR,
One-on-one conversations.
8. Initiatives from HR combining activities on and off premises.
9. Daily communication,
Open and Honest,
Issues delt there and then.
10. Awareness,
Support,
Communication.

4.1.2 Analysis of Interview

Question 1:

In the first question, the Front Office managers of Hotels A, B, C, and D were asked about the motivational strategies being used in their respective places of business. From the results gained it is easily noted that these 4 hotels use similar motivating strategies. The most popular strategies being Rewards, Recognition, Team Building activities, Feedback, Open Communication, and having a good working environment. These strategies are seen to relate more to personal and social aspects and seem to impact employee's behaviour positively at their places of work.

Question 2:

The second question reflects on the ways that the Hotels recognize and reward employee achievements. From the results gained, Hotels A, B, C, and D all hold some type of award

ceremony such as the Employee of the Month award, where the top employee who is usually voted by other employees receives the title of Employee of the Month. This award also holds some benefits usually relating to Complimentary vouchers for hotel facilities or alternatively visits to other hotels in Malta. Hotel B and C also hold yearly 'Long Service Gala's', where the employees specifically those who have worked for the hotel for a number of years are invited to attend a Gala night where awards are given based on different merits. This shows that hotels are focusing on recognising their employee's achievements.

Question 3:

The third question is based on the amount of time employees receive feedback. The results indicate that Hotels A, B, C, and D agree on implementing yearly appraisals. Employees are given the opportunity to reflect on their performance at these yearly appraisals, and having encouraging conversations about their personal development will inspire them to do better. It is important to note that these yearly appraisals are usually set up by the Human Resources department. From the Front Office manager's side, Managers A and D specified that they prioritise time once a month to give employees feedback. On the other hand, Managers B and C specified that they prefer to give employees feedback daily in order to keep an open line of communication as well as help the employees excel in performance. All four hotels follow up on this feedback provided to the employees by setting guidelines for improvements, in the case of Hotel B, development plans for improvements are made. This 'follow up' on feedback provides the hotels with a way to track performance improvements and serves as a motivator to empower employees.

Question 4:

The fourth question represents the topic of career development. Hotels A, B, C, and D are seen to be a good supporting environment that promotes and helps employees grow personally and professionally.

Hotel A has implemented the 'Talent and Nurturing program' where essentially employees can recommend any employee for another job role based on their characteristics. This hotel has a very open and assisting environment that fosters career development.

Hotels B and C follow a similar approach that is based around having an open line of communication in terms of goals, focuses on creating exposure experiences in different areas, as well as helps employees build knowledge and skills by offering continuous training. This indicates that these hotels focus on the personal growth of their employees.

Hotel D in terms of Front Office, focuses on creating development plans for employees. Manager D emphasizes the importance of knowing the goals of the employees, from the interview stage,

Manager D likes to ask interviewees about their goals once getting the job. With this Manager D ascertains developing these plans for their employees.

Question 5:

In the fifth question, the topic of working environment relating to motivation is discussed. Managers A, B, C, and D described their environment of work as being a good and positive one. Manager A explains how positive and emotionally supportive their place of work is from a personal aspect. Manager B describes the working environment to be one that is based on teamwork and hospitality led by a clear hotel mission and vision. Hotel C described the working environment to be one that has recently improved to become a very positive and diverse environment focusing on respect and teamwork. Lastly, Hotel D explains that the environment in Hotel D is focused on positivity, teamwork, and respect. Ultimately these Hotels show that they accommodate one of the vital needs for having a good working environment, as with increased satisfaction comes increased performance.

Question 6:

The sixth question relates to social opportunities such as Team Building Activities. Managers A, B, C, and D explained how they try and prioritise time to spend with their employees especially outside of the work environment. Although this is usually hard to organise, it is a great way how managers can interact with employees on a more personal level. This helps in establishing a better relationship with the employees. All four interviewed hotels see this as an easy way to improve relationships and foster a more teamwork environment. By organising different outings in different settings, employees will indirectly be motivated to try something new as well as take a break from work-related things.

Question 7:

In the seventh question, managers are asked what they do with feedback given by employees. All four participants explained that yearly feedback surveys are sent to all employees in the hotels, specifically asking for feedback ranging from satisfaction, management, appreciation, achievement, facilities, and overall feedback on premises. Hotel B also has a section during the yearly employee performance appraisal, for employee feedback. Hotel C works with an open-door policy, where employees are comfortable enough to speak about what they are feeling and what they think should be improved in the company without hesitation. This is done by all four hotels in order to constantly improve operations whilst also keeping employees feeling heard, appreciated, and satisfied.

Question 8:

The eighth question relates to the topic of work-life balance, which in this industry can be tricky to have. All four managers emphasized how sometimes it is impossible to have a work-life balance due to the 24/7 work environment. Managers A, B, and C specified that they focus on prioritising work-life balance for their employees but sometimes fail to do it for themselves. These four Managers provide work-life balance by allowing requests for weekly rostering, avoiding overtime, and keeping an open line of communication between employees and managers. Manager D also mentioned that initiatives implemented by the HR team such as Ice Cream Day, help employees balance and experience their work environment in a different way. Ultimately, it is seen that work-life balance for employees is important and managers are trying their best to give them this balance.

Question 9:

The ninth question covers the topic of communication. Throughout this interview process all participants viewed communication as an essential characteristic of having a positive work environment that fosters teamwork. In a lot of the questions, communication was mentioned as an important factor. Manager A explained that it is an essential element for success. Hotel B prefers to be transparent with their employees as they believe this helps establish and create a bond between both employees and management. Manager C explained the different ways how communication is implemented in Hotel C being direct, online, through messages, or over handovers. And lastly, Manager D emphasized that communication needs to be prioritised daily and they view honesty as being a key factor in establishing an open line of communication. Overall, all hotels prioritise and do their utmost to establish this open line of communication.

Question 10:

The last question relates to any support mechanisms in place during tough and unexpected times. This question was asked just to see how employees are supported especially when it comes to uncontrollable situations. Manager A discussed how Hotel A works with a therapist in order to offer therapy services to their employees. These sessions remain solely between the therapist and employee and therefore it is a good way how the employee can help themselves in challenging situations.

Manager B shows a lot of support to its employees and therefore provides a safe environment and encourages them to learn from these difficult situations.

Manager C provides a supportive environment prioritising communication. Manager C also tries to bring awareness to matters such as Mental Health and focuses on providing a safe and supportive environment.

Manager D also focuses on bringing awareness, showing support and communication in this case. Although unpredictable situations are not up to the management, this question has provided enough evidence that emphasizes being supportive and aware of struggles and tough situations that surround us.

4.2 Survey Results and Analysis

A total number of 57 Front Office Employees participated in this survey ranging from a few of the well-known Five Star Hotels in Malta. The results for the first four questions can be found in the Appendix 4 section since they were asked simply for demographical reasons. The results found below are based on the total number of employees that participated. Refer to Appendix 4 for the results divided into their respective hotel.

Question 5:

In question 5 of the survey participants were given 8 statements relating to the employee experience in terms of motivation. The statements were then rated ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The results can be seen in Figure 3, where the total amount of voted options can be seen.

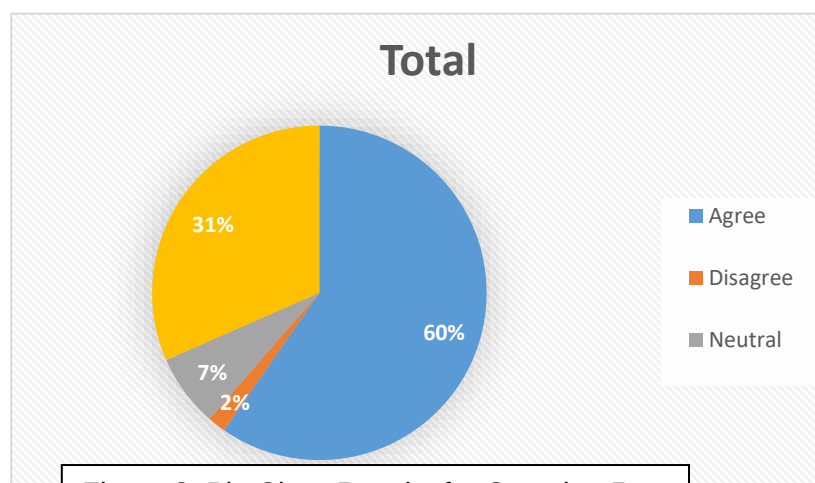


Figure 3: Pie Chart Results for Question 5

From this pie chart, it can be seen that the majority of the ratings that were chosen by the participants relate to the option of 'Agree'. This shows that on the whole, participants seem to

agree with the statements given, and therefore they seem to have a good understanding and levels of motivation in their workplace.

Question 6:

Participants were asked to choose one option out of four in terms of what the employees prefer in regard to motivating benefits and incentives they prefer at the place of work.

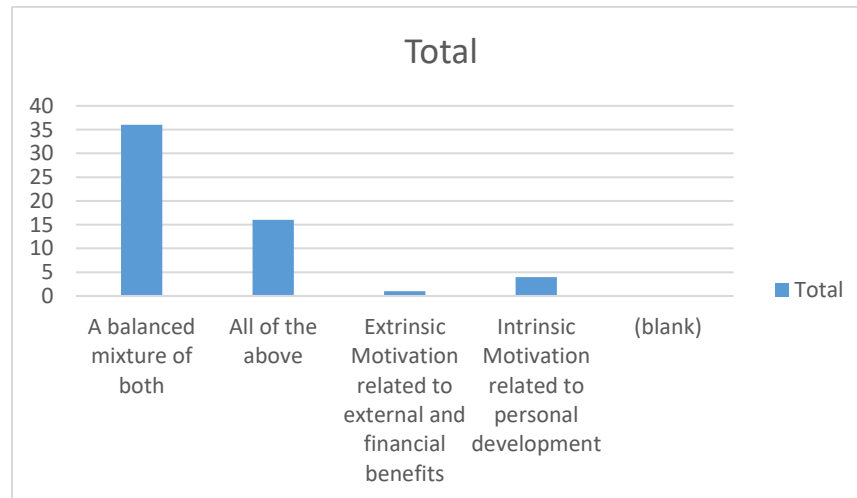


Figure 4: Clustered Graph Results for Question 6

Results for question 6 show that the majority of participants agree on the type of benefits and incentives that motivate them to perform at their best. The most popular answer reflects a balanced mixture of having both intrinsic and extrinsic benefits. Intrinsic Motivation is the most popular option out of both types of motivation.

Question 7:

Participants were asked to rate on a scale from 1-5 depending on how motivated they feel from their direct management.

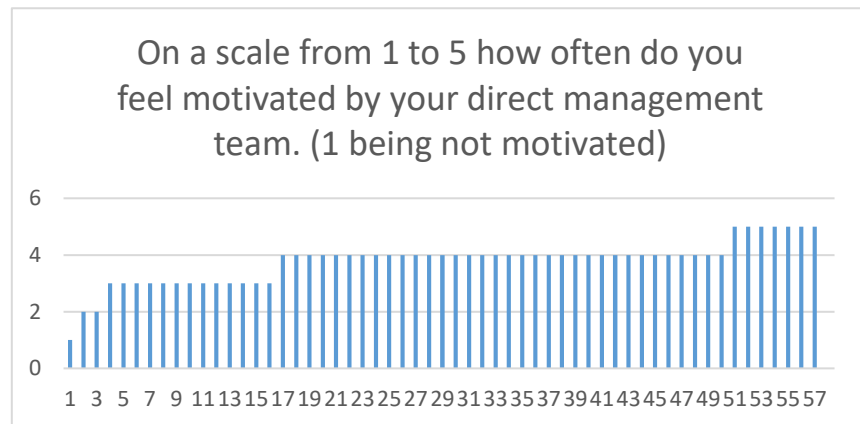


Figure 5: Clustered Column Graph Results for Question 7

Results for question 7 indicate that the majority of participants are motivated by their direct management team. 34 out of 57 participants ranging from different Five-Star hotels in Malta rated 4 out of 5 in terms of how motivated they feel by their management. This shows that the motivational levels within these front office employees are seen to be high. Of course, there are always opportunities for improvement, however on the whole it seems that the majority of the participants are satisfied with their management.

Question 8:

In the last question, participants were asked to give an answer based on the motivational strategies being used in their place of work. Out of 57 participants, a lot of similar results for motivating strategies used can be found. The most common motivating factors being:

- Personal Development Plan
- Employee of the Month
- Recognition and Awards
- Monetary Incentives
- Team Building

Results for question 8 show that out of the four interviewed hotels, they all have established similar motivational strategies during their work operations. Since participants were asked to give an answer themselves, the general findings from this question reflect on the types of motivating

benefits that are seen to make a difference for employees personally. This also shows that again, employees prefer to have a balanced mixture of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation benefits and strategies. This is due to the majority of results being related to either monetary benefits or those that relate to recognition and personal development opportunities.

4.3 Discussion

Connecting results and analysis of interviews and surveys to the Literature review:

Based on the Results and Analysis from both methodological techniques, one can conclude that the majority of employees and managers from the four participating hotels agree on the overall motivation, strategies, and conditions found in their respective places of work. Since the methodological techniques focused on both perspectives, it has helped compare and contrast the results from an employee perspective as well as a management perspective. Also, it has helped verify what the Managers have stated throughout their interviews with the help of the employees.

The most often mentioned themes throughout both methodological techniques and mentioned during both interviews and surveys related to Recognition, Feedback, Career Development, Work Environment, Team building, and Motivating Strategies used. These themes seem to prove that the research found in the Literature Review chapter is viable and credible.

Starting with Rewards and Recognition, all four hotels prioritize this aspect and therefore hold some type of awards ceremonies such as Yearly Galas or Employee of the Month ceremonies. This aspect is seen to be appreciated and highly sought after by employees, as seen in question 5 of the survey where the majority of employees choose 'agree' when it comes to being recognized for their achievements. Compared to two theories found in the Literature review chapter, the expectancy theory, and Theory Y by Douglas McGregor, this is one of the basic motivators a human being needs in order to stay improving. In the expectancy theory we see that when employees expect certain rewards when achieving work-related goals, they will continuously work hard in order to succeed and receive a reward. At the same time, Theory Y concurs that managers should not only focus on rewarding employees rather they should focus on inspiring employees and fostering collaboration and trust. The Incentive theory is also a great example since it surrounds enhancing performance only when awards and incentives will follow.

It is worth noting that the theory of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs is seen to be the basis of all of these themes that are presented within the subject of motivation. This theory was used by McGregor in order to find a balance between employees needs and business wants when creating his theory. Maslow's theory also helps create a basis for what a working environment should include. The working environment is also a determinant of motivation within employees and therefore should ensure basic needs such as food, water, rest, safety, colleagues, accomplishments, and creativity. Based on the participated hotels, the working environment of Malta's Five-Star hotels is positive from an employee and management perspective, since they focus on not only assuring that employee's basic needs are met but also fostering an environment of teamwork, respect, and hospitality.

It is also an important factor when dealing with Career Development, as for an employee to feel comfortable and confident in growing and enhancing performance, an individual must reach to the top tier of the Hierarchy of Needs which reflects on Self-Actualisation. It is only when this stage has been reached that an individual is able to truly become themselves and accomplish further their goals. Another factor that enhances career development relates to the working conditions the employees have. If the conditions are not good, employees will feel the need to just go through their work shifts for the paycheck rather than also gaining personal development from this experience. Employees need to achieve a certain level of engagement in order to fully remain loyal, enhance performance, and want to develop. That is why as proven by the participating Front Office Managers, Malta's Five-Star Hotels focus is aimed at helping, giving feedback, and setting up development plans in order for employees to reach a stage of growth. By placing focus on respect, team dynamics, communication, and honesty, employees gain trust and start giving back. This is also verified and supported by their respective employees with their appreciation and approval towards current ways of operations.

The biggest connection gained between the literature review and the main research question is related to motivating factors used by Five-Star Hotels. In the Literature Review chapter, one can see that the motivating factors found by many sources relate to Accountability and Recognition, Teamwork and Social Opportunities, Training and Development, and Fair Compensation and Job Security. A triangulation between this mentioned chapter, the results from the survey and results from the interviews show that in fact common motivating factor can be seen these being: Team Building and Social Opportunities, Monetary Benefits, and Recognition and Appreciation.

This signifies that Front Office employees are generally motivated by a balanced mixture of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational types since they will be able to reach personal goals and celebrate their success monetarily. According to the participants, Malta's Five-Star hotels are motivating their Front Office employees by both measures and are seen to be succeeding. It is worth mentioning that throughout the interview with Manager D, was more focused on the intrinsic side of motivation rather than the external monetary benefits. This positively relates to the research found and shows that when motivation is prioritised and put towards employees, better performance levels are seen and therefore improves the overall service of the hotel. This further proves that Maslow's Hierarchy of needs remains to be the basis of motivation and once employees and managers have achieved self-actualisation, then their passion and growth will drive them to exceed expectations and performance rates.

Conclusively, from the thorough analysis and discussion of both methodological techniques together with the Literature review chapter, it is clear that the results gained are in favour of the research found prior to conducting this investigation. As well as it is also clear that Malta's Five-Star hotels know about and prioritise motivating their employees specifically in the Front Office Department, which ultimately positively reflects on the personal performance of the employee and the service provided to the visiting guests.

5. Final Arguments

The main goal of this study has been to identify the elements that sustain and improve Front Office employees' motivation levels in Malta's Five-Star Hotels. The solution to this has been achieved through both Literature material as well as the methodological techniques used. And relates to a balance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivational benefits, recognition, and social opportunities.

The sub-objectives of this research relating to the working conditions, career development, and motivational strategies being used by Malta's Five-Star Hotels have also been met and have established that on the whole Malta's Five-Star Hotels foster a positive working environment with good working conditions, have a supportive management team and give employees a balance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in order to improve and maintain employee performance and satisfaction.

5.1 Implications

From the findings, it is concluded that some implications have risen mainly relating to Employee Retention, Service Quality, Management Strategies, Productivity, and Industry standards. According to research by the Incentive Research Foundation, there is a 53% decrease in employee turnover when employees have higher levels of motivation, additionally, it also implies that motivated and engaged employees will most likely provide a better service to guests (Engagement Strategies Media, 2024).

The Hospitality industry's human resources methods can enhance service quality, boost customer satisfaction, and ultimately boost hotel performance. Management strategies emphasize the need to employ strategies that address both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational needs, arguing that successful employee motivation requires a balance between the two. (Meira, et al., 2023)

Employee motivation significantly affects organisational performance and success as evidenced by the increased likelihood that motivated employees positively contribute to the hotel's objectives. These implications suggest that understanding and implementing effective motivational strategies is critical to the success of Front Office operations in the Hospitality industry.

5.2 Research Conclusions:

This research has demonstrated how crucial motivation is in terms of maintaining and enhancing employee performance and satisfaction in the Front Office Departments of local Five-star hotels. The study's mixed methodological approach, which included surveys and interviews, showed that motivation is a complex process that takes into account both extrinsic and intrinsic elements.

In order to promote a motivated workforce, managers must attend to both fundamental and higher-level employee demands, as indicated in the findings, which support well-known motivational theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of demands and McGregor's Theories X and Y. This research provides insightful information for hotel management, emphasising the value of opportunities for Career development, encouraging work environments and recognition in maintaining employee motivation.

This research shows that Front Office Employees in Malta's Five-star hotels require a healthy balance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational rewards. Employees are also seen to prioritize opportunities for personal development and acknowledgment of accomplishments, which are seen to greatly boost employee motivation. To keep employees motivated and satisfied, a positive working environment that encourages teamwork, communication, and trust is essential. This can be achieved through a helpful management team. These results underline the need for a comprehensive approach to employee motivation in the hospitality industry and are consistent with the literature on motivational theories.

This research establishes the framework for further research into motivating strategies by indicating that longitudinal studies are necessary to evaluate the strategy's long-term effects on employee engagement and overall performance.

5.3 Recommendations:

Based on observations made throughout this research journey, Motivational Strategies should be further researched followed by organisational behaviour and management roles in motivating employees.

The first suggested research is based on Why Maltese people are not choosing Hospitality as a career. From the Five-Star hotels interviewed, an observation was made relating to the majority of Managers and employees found within these hotels are seen to be Foreign and only one out of

the four hotels visited seemed to have the majority of Front Office Employees being Maltese. This research can be used to highlight the issues surrounding Maltese people choosing a career in Hospitality.

From the interviews done, Managers seemed to be coming from different generational times which was seen to impact their reflections on Motivation. Younger managers were observed to focus highly on motivation whilst older managers were seen to lack in terms of intrinsic motivation and focused on the external benefits given to employees. This research can offer insights into how generation affects the ability to understand and go down to the level of employees to help them succeed and enhance their productivity and motivation.

5.4 Evaluation, Reliability and Validity

Overall, this research has been a success since the main question was answered and the aims were reached. With the help of both methodological methods, it has made it possible to understand motivating factors from both management and employee perspectives.

The research conclusion identified recurring themes within the participated hotels mainly relating to the value of career development, feedback, acknowledgment, and a positive work environment. The recurrence of these themes across various data points suggests a high level of reliability in the results.

The findings on Motivational Factors are consistent with popular motivation theories and models which were covered in the literature review chapter. This alignment between chapters strengthens the validity of this research.

To make this research more reliable in terms of Motivational Factors found within Malta's Five-star hotels, more hotels and employees should be referred to participate in such research, this will ultimately bring in more knowledge and make the research more reliable.

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7. Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 1: Information letter, Consent Form and Permission Letter of Hotel A,B,C, and D

Information Letter	
Name and Surname of Researcher: Sharona Frendo	
ID number of researcher: 0227702(L)	
Email address of researcher: sharona.frendo001@its.edu.mt	
Mobile number of researcher: +356 99324644	
Course: Bachelor's in International Hospitality Management	
Tutor name and surname: Antoinette Axiaq	
Tutor office telephone number: +356 79539521	
Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Motivating Factors within Front Office Employees in Malta's 5-star hotels.	
Aims of the research: To determine Which are the factors that maintain and increase motivational levels of Front Office employees found in 5-star hotels?	
Sub Objectives: A) Exploring the right working conditions B) How motivation helps aid in career development C) Exploring Motivation Strategies used in local 5 Star hotels.	
Dear Sir / Madam,	
I, Sharona Frendo, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Bachelor in International Hospitality Management, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.	
My research is about exploring what are the factors which maintain and increase motivation of employees working in front office departments in Malta's 5-star hotels. The method of data collection will be a one-on-one interview as well as an online survey. The data collected from both interview and survey will be used for the sole purpose of this research. The data will be collected by asking questions face to face and answering a series of questions online at your esteemed company. The data will be collected in a Thematic analysis and will be transcribed. The data will be thoroughly analysed to collect the answers to the above-	
Institute of Tourism Studies	Page 1 of 3

mentioned aims of the research. I am kindly asking for your consent to have a face-to-face interview with you and to kindly pass along the survey to the related employees. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information so you can decide whether to participate in this study. Any questions you may have will be answered by the researcher.

There are no known risks related with this research project other than possible discomfort with the following:

- You will be kindly asked to be honest when answering questions.
- Any audio recorded data will be used for transcription purposes, after which it will be destroyed.

The information collected will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to researcher. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

You can terminate your participation at any time without prejudice. Participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer individual questions if you do not want to. Your name or the name of your company will not be attached to the analysis of the results, and will ensure that your participation remains confidential. Kindly, contact me if you have any queries or require any further clarification.

Participant's declaration

		<u>03-03-24</u>
Participant's Name	Participant's Signature	Date
<u>Sharon Kendo</u>		<u>03-03-24</u>
Researcher's Name	Researcher's Signature	Date

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my company I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Consent Form



Name and Surname of Researcher: Sharona Frendo

ID number of researcher: 227702L

Email address of researcher: sharona.frendo001@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 77621963

Course: Bachelor's in International hospitality management

Tutor name and surname: Antoinette Axiaq

Tutor office telephone number: +356 79539521

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Motivational Factors within Front Office employees in Malta's 5-star hotels

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Sharona Frendo, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

I had already sent you the information letter about my research and you had provided me with a signed information letter. If you have any further questions for clarification, please do not hesitate to ask me.

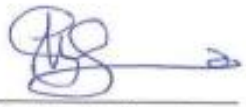
By signing this consent form, you are giving me your consent to use the data collected through the interview for the analysis of the results. I will send you a list of questions before the face-to-face interview so you can prepare yourself beforehand. The questions asked will be about motivation, motivational factors, motivational strategies, engagement, work environment.

The information collected will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to those individuals conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

You can terminate your participation at any time without prejudice. Participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer individual questions if you do not want to. Your name will not be attached to the interview and will ensure that your participation remains confidential. Kindly, contact me if you have any queries or require any further clarification.

Participant's declaration

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my company. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Participant's Name		03-03-24
	Participant's Signature	Date
<u>Sharna Kondo</u>		03-03-24
Researcher's Name	Researcher's Signature	Date

Permission Letter



Name and Surname of Researcher: Sharona Frendo

ID number of researcher: 0227702(L)

Email address of researcher: sharona.frendo001@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 99324644

Course: Bachelor in International Hospitality Management

Tutor name and surname: Antoinette Axiag

Tutor office telephone number: +356 79539521

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Motivating Factors within Front Office Employees in Malta's 5-star hotels.

Aims of the research: To determine Which are the factors that maintain and increase motivational levels of Front Office employees found in 5-star hotels?

Sub Objectives: A) Exploring the right working conditions B) How motivation helps aid in career development C) Exploring Motivation Strategies used in local 5 Star hotels.

Type of participants: Front Office Employees in Malta's 5-star hotels

Number of participants required: Estimated 50-70 participants

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Sharona Frendo, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my bachelor's in international hospitality management, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

I would like your permission to take part in this interview regarding motivation and motivational strategies in the Front Office Department. The purpose of this letter is to provide

you with information so you can decide whether to participate in this study. Any questions you may have will be answered by the researcher.

There are no known risks related with this research project other than possible discomfort with the following:

- Everyone will be asked to be honest when answering questions.
- Any audio recorded data will be used for transcription purposes, after which it will be destroyed.

The information in the study records will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to those individuals conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity and the identity of the participants will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

Participants can terminate their participation at any time without prejudice. Participation is voluntary. Participants do not have to answer individual questions if they do not want to. Your name and the participant's names will not be attached to the interview transcript nor the survey and this will ensure that everyone's information remains confidential. Please, kindly contact me if you have any queries or any further information or clarification.

Participant's declaration

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my place of work. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

_____		03-03-24
Participant's Name	Participant's Signature	Date
Sharon Prendergast		03-03-24
Researcher's Name	Researcher's Signature	Date

Information Letter



Name and Surname of Researcher: Sharona Frendo

ID number of researcher: 0227702(L)

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Course: Bachelor's in International Hospitality Management

Tutor name and surname: Antoinette Axiaq

Tutor office telephone number: +356 79539521

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Motivating Factors within Front Office Employees in Malta's 5-star hotels.

Aims of the research: To determine Which are the factors that maintain and increase motivational levels of Front Office employees found in 5-star hotels?

Sub Objectives: A) Exploring the right working conditions B) How motivation helps aid in career development C) Exploring Motivation Strategies used in local 5 Star hotels.

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Sharona Frendo, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Bachelor in International Hospitality Management, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

My research is about exploring what are the factors which maintain and increase motivation of employees working in front office departments in Malta's 5-star hotels. The method of data collection will be a one-on-one interview as well as an online survey. The data collected from both interview and survey will be used for the sole purpose of this research. The data will be collected by asking questions face to face and answering a series of questions online at your esteemed company. The data will be collected in a Thematic analysis and will be transcribed. The data will be thoroughly analysed to collect the answers to the above-

mentioned aims of the research. I am kindly asking for your consent to have a face-to-face interview with you and to kindly pass along the survey to the related employees. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information so you can decide whether to participate in this study. Any questions you may have will be answered by the researcher.

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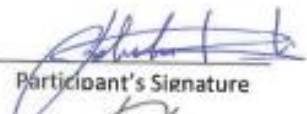
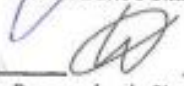
- You will be kindly asked to be honest when answering questions.
- Any audio recorded data will be used for transcription purposes, after which it will be destroyed.

The information collected will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to researcher. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

You can terminate your participation at any time without prejudice. Participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer individual questions if you do not want to. Your name or the name of your company will not be attached to the analysis of the results, and will ensure that your participation remains confidential. Kindly, contact me if you have any queries or require any further clarification.

Participant's declaration

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my company I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Participant's Name		18/3/24
Sharon Frendo	Participant's Signature	Date
Researcher's Name		18/3/24
	Researcher's Signature	Date

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my company I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Consent Form



Name and Surname of Researcher: Sharona Frendo

ID number of researcher: 227702L

Email address of researcher: sharona.frendo001@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 77621963

Course: Bachelor's in international hospitality management

Tutor name and surname: Antoinette Axiaq

Tutor office telephone number: +356 79539521

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Motivational Factors within Front Office employees in Malta's 5-star hotels

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Sharona Frendo, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

I had already sent you the information letter about my research and you had provided me with a signed information letter. If you have any further questions for clarification, please do not hesitate to ask me.

By signing this consent form, you are giving me your consent to use the data collected through the interview for the analysis of the results. I will send you a list of questions before the face-to-face interview so you can prepare yourself beforehand. The questions asked will be about motivation, motivational factors, motivational strategies, engagement, work environment.

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Participant's declaration

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my company. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Participant's Name		10/3/20
Participant's Signature		Date
		18/3/24
Researcher's Name	Researcher's Signature	Date

Permission Letter



Name and Surname of Researcher: Sharona Frendo

ID number of researcher: 0227702(L)

Email address of researcher: sharona.frendo001@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 99324644

Course: Bachelor in International Hospitality Management

Tutor name and surname: Antoinette Axiaq

Tutor office telephone number: +356 79539521

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Motivating Factors within Front Office Employees in Malta's 5-star hotels.

Aims of the research: To determine Which are the factors that maintain and increase motivational levels of Front Office employees found in 5-star hotels?

Sub Objectives: A) Exploring the right working conditions B) How motivation helps aid in career development C) Exploring Motivation Strategies used in local 5 Star hotels.

Type of participants: Front Office Employees in Malta's 5-star hotels

Number of participants required: Estimated 50-70 participants

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Participant's declaration

Participant's Name


Participant's Signature

18/3/24
Date

Sharona Preedo
Researcher's Name


Researcher's Signature

18/3/24
Date

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my place of work. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

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Participant's declaration

_____		<u>1/4/24</u>
Participant's Name	Participant's Signature	Date
<u>Sharon Frenco</u>		<u>01/4/2024</u>
Researcher's Name	Researcher's Signature	Date

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my company I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Consent Form

Name and Surname of Researcher: Sharona Frendo

ID number of researcher: 227702L

Email address of researcher: sharona.frendo001@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 77621963

Course: Bachelor's in international hospitality management

Tutor name and surname: Antoinette Axiag

Tutor office telephone number: +356 79539521

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Motivational Factors within Front Office employees in Malta's 5-star hotels

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Participant's Name

Participant's Signature

Date

Sharon Prendergast

Researcher's Name

Researcher's Signature

Date

Permission Letter



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Sub Objectives: A) Exploring the right working conditions B) How motivation helps aid in career development C) Exploring Motivation Strategies used in local 5 Star hotels.

Type of participants: Front Office Employees in Malta's 5-star hotels

Number of participants required: Estimated 50-70 participants

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Participant's declaration

Participant's Name

Participant's Signature

Date

Sherona Prada

Researcher's Name

[Signature]

Researcher's Signature

01/4/24

Date

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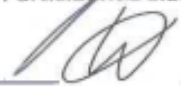
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Participant's Name	Participant's Signature	Date
Sharona Frendo		30/04/2024
Researcher's Name	Researcher's Signature	Date
		30/04/2024

Permission Letter



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Number of participants required: Estimated 50-70 participants

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Participant's Name

Participant's Signature

Date

Sharon Frendo

Researcher's Name

Researcher's Signature

Date

Consent Form



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Email address of researcher: sharona.frendo001@its.edu.mt

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Participant's Name	Participant's Signature	Date
Sharona Frendo		30/04/2024
Researcher's Name	Researcher's Signature	Date
		30/04/2024

7.2 Appendix 2: Interview Questions

General:

- What strategies does your company have in place to motivate your employees? Could you provide me with some successful examples of how these tactics have raised morale and performance levels among employees?

Recognition and Reward:

- How does the company recognize and reward employee achievements?

Feedback and Performance:

- How often do employees receive feedback on their performance? How are these performance reviews used as a tool for motivating employees?

Employee feedback:

- Do you collect feedback regularly? How has the company used employee feedback to make improvements in motivational strategies?

Career Development:

- In what ways does the company assist its employees in accomplishing their career objectives inside the company?

Work environment:

- How would you describe the company's work culture and its impact on employee motivation? Is there anything specific in place to promote a positive and motivating work environment?

Team Building:

- How does the company encourage team building and collaboration among employees? Are there any specific activities or programs for fostering teamwork?

Work-life balance:

- How does the company support employees in achieving a healthy-work life balance?

Communication:

- How does the company encourage open and transparent communication and how does this contribute to employee motivation?

Challenging times:

- Are there any strategies or support mechanisms in place during tough periods to maintain employee motivation and morale?

7.3 Appendix 3: Survey Questions

Motivating Factors within Front Office employees in Malta's 5-star hotels

Dear Participants,

My name is Sharona Frendo, a third-year student pursuing the Bachelor's Degree in International Hospitality Management at the Institute of Tourism Studies. I am currently working on my dissertation titled "Motivating Factors within Front Office employees in Malta's 5-Star hotels".

The main goal of this research project is to have a thorough understanding of the elements that support and raise Front Office employees' motivation levels. The research consists of a wide range of themes, such as working conditions, career development and motivational strategies used by local 5-star hotels.

I wish to emphasize that your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary, and I assure you of the strict confidentiality of all provided information. At any point during the survey, you retain the right to terminate your participation without encountering any adverse consequences.

I thank you in advance for your help, it is truly appreciated!

Should you require any additional information do not hesitate to contact me.

Email: sharona.frendo001@its.edu.mt

Participant Consent Form:

I have read this consent form and understand what is required of me. I hereby grant permission to use the information I provide as data in the above-mentioned research paper, knowing that it will be kept confidential and without the use of my name.

1. Gender

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

2. How old are you

18-28

29-39

40-50

50-60

60+

3.What is your occupation?

Reception
Guest Relations
Concierge
Porter

4.How long have you been working at your company?

0<6 months
1<4 years
5<10 years
10+ years

5.Employee Experience: In this section you are asked to rate the following statements from 1 - 5 where 1 refers to strongly agree and 5 refers to strongly disagree.

I feel driven to do my best each day

My work gives me the opportunity to grow my skills

I have a clear personal development plan

Recognition received by direct management motivates me to do my best

My manager praises and celebrates my successes

I feel that my work is seen and appreciated by my team and company

I feel that I am paid enough for the amount of work I do

I am likely to recommend my organisation as a place of work

6.What are the types of benefits and incentives that personally motivate you to perform at your utmost?

Intrinsic Motivation related to personal development

Extrinsic Motivation related to external and financial benefits

A balanced mixture of both

All of the above

7.On a scale from 1 to 5 how often do you feel motivated by your direct management team. (1 being not motivated)

1
2
3
4
5

8.What types of Motivational strategies are being used at your place of work?

Enter Answer

7.4 Appendix 4: Survey Results from Hotels A, B, C, D and a miscellaneous one including employees from various Five-Star hotels.

Hotel A: 8 respondents

Motivating Factors within Front Office employees in Malta's 5 star hotels

8 Responses

01:28 Average time to complete

Active Status

1. Gender

Male	4
Female	4
Prefer not to say	0



2. How old are you

18-28	3
29-39	5
40-50	0
50-60	0
60+	0



3. What is your occupation

Reception	3
Guest Relations	2
Concierge	1
Porter	2

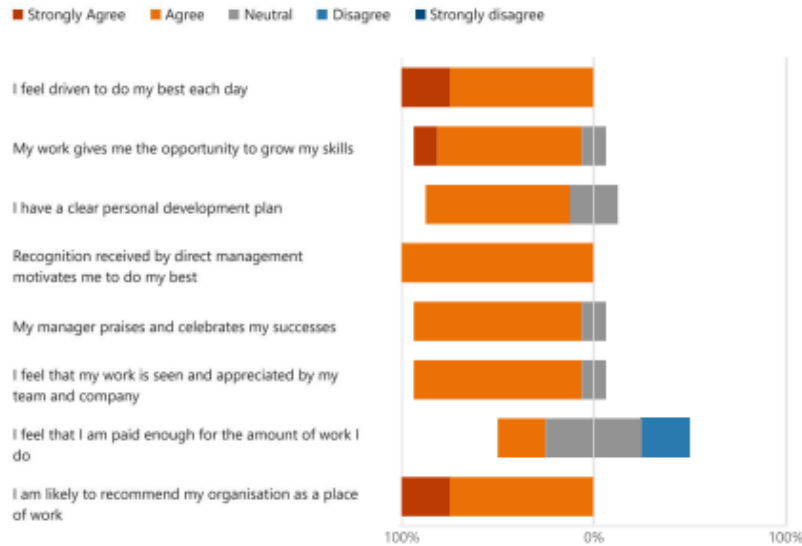


4. How long have you been working at your company?

0<6 months	1
1<4 years	5
5<10 years	2
10+ years	0



5. Employee Experience: In this section you are asked to rate the following statements from 1 - 5 where 1 refers to strongly agree and 5 refers to strongly disagree



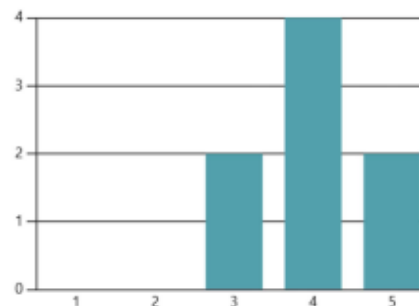
6. What are the types of benefits and incentives that personally motivate you to perform at your utmost?

- Intrinsic Motivation related to p... 0
- Extrinsic Motivation related to e... 0
- A balanced mixture of both 6
- All of the above 2



7. On a scale from 1 to 5 how often do you feel motivated by your direct management team. (1 being not motivated)

4.00
Average Rating



8. What types of Motivational strategies are being used at your place of work?

8
Responses

Latest Responses
 "Team Building"
 "Team building and benefits "
 "Team Building"

Hotel B: 12 respondents

Motivating Factors within Front Office employees in Malta's 5 star hotels

12 Responses

01:27 Average time to complete

Active Status

1. Gender

Male	6
Female	6
Prefer not to say	0



2. How old are you

18-28	4
29-39	6
40-50	1
50-60	1
60+	0



3. What is your occupation

Reception	7
Guest Relations	2
Concierge	1
Porter	2

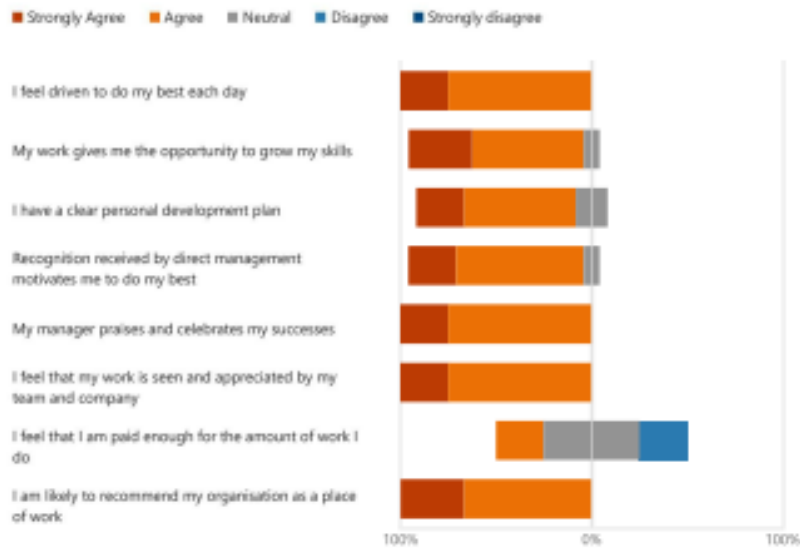


4. How long have you been working at your company?

0<6 months	1
1<4 years	9
5<10 years	2
10+ years	0



5. Employee Experience: In this section you are asked to rate the following statements from 1 - 5 where 1 refers to strongly agree and 5 refers to strongly disagree



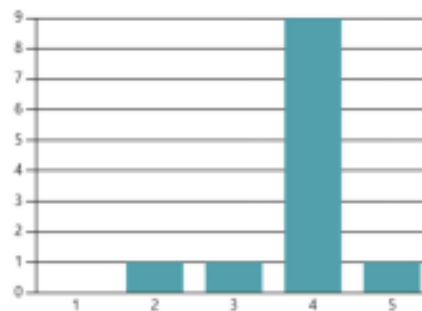
6. What are the types of benefits and incentives that personally motivate you to perform at your utmost?

- Intrinsic Motivation related to p... 3
- Extrinsic Motivation related to e... 1
- A balanced mixture of both 6
- All of the above 2



7. On a scale from 1 to 5 how often do you feel motivated by your direct management team. (1 being not motivated)

3.83
Average Rating



8. What types of Motivational strategies are being used at your place of work?

12
Responses

Latest Responses
"Team building and awards"
"Recognition"
"Awards"

4 respondents (33%) answered **Recognition** for this question.

building and awards
Recognition and Rewards
Employee Recognition
Monetary Rewards
Benefits
Recognition
Team Building
smile
trainings and team
outings
Personal Development
Monetary benefits
Development Plans

Hotel C: 19 respondents

Motivating Factors within Front Office employees in Malta's 5 star hotels

19 Responses

06:00 Average time to complete

Active Status

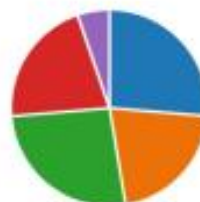
1. Gender

Male	11
Female	8
Prefer not to say	0



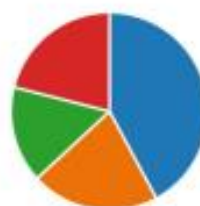
2. How old are you

18-28	5
29-39	4
40-50	5
50-60	4
60+	1



3. What is your occupation

Reception	8
Guest Relations	4
Concierge	3
Porter	4

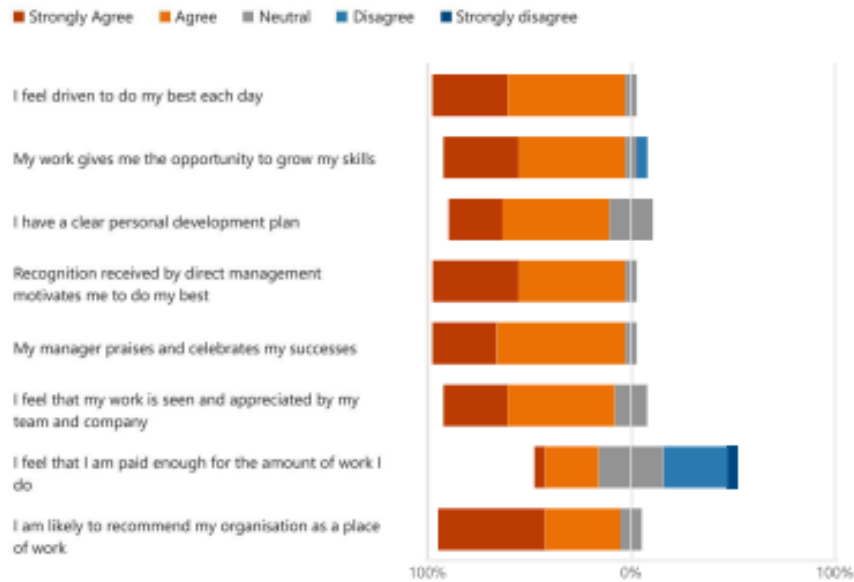


4. How long have you been working at your company?

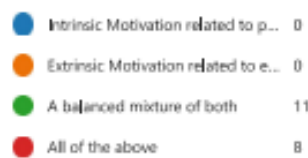
0 < 6 months	2
1 < 4 years	7
5 < 10 years	1
10+ years	9



5. Employee Experience: In this section you are asked to rate the following statements from 1 - 5 where 1 refers to strongly agree and 5 refers to strongly disagree

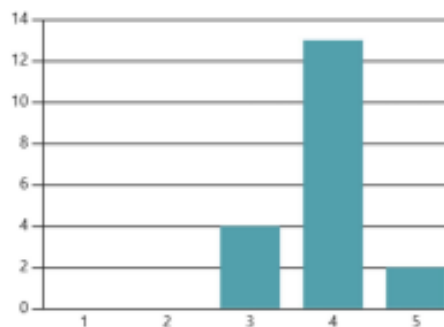


6. What are the types of benefits and incentives that personally motivate you to perform at your utmost?



7. On a scale from 1 to 5 how often do you feel motivated by your direct management team. (1 being not motivated)

3.89
Average Rating



8. What types of Motivational strategies are being used at your place of work?

19
Responses

Latest Responses
"Monetary rewards"
"Recognition and rewards"
"Recognition"

4 respondents (21%) answered **Recognitions** for this question.

Recognitions and awards Upselling team energizers positive Culture
Monetary rewards Daily Recognition and rewards
monetary strategies **Recognitions** team work Employee of the month
Monetary Incentives Gift Vouchers
Monetary benefits work employee of the month Hotel discounts
Culture and Recognitions Positivity
Friendly environment

Hotel D: 10 respondents

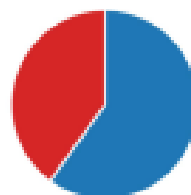
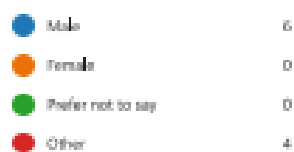
Motivating Factors within Front Office employees in Malta's 5 star hotels

10 Responses

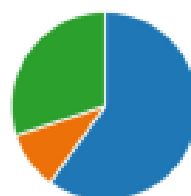
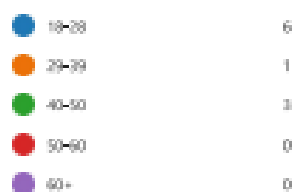
04:14 Average time to complete

Active Status

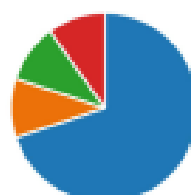
1. Gender



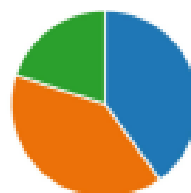
2. How old are you



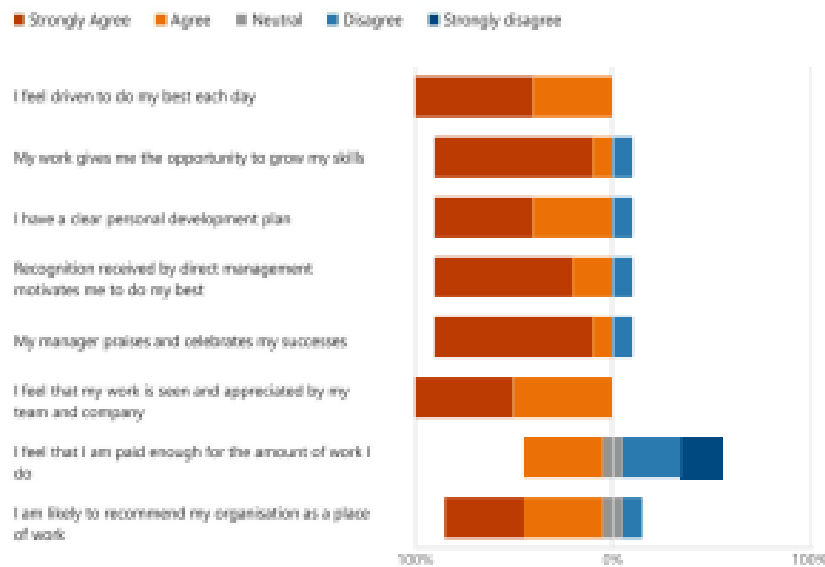
3. What is your occupation



4. How long have you been working at your company?



5. Employee Experience: In this section you are asked to rate the following statements from 1 - 5 where 1 refers to strongly agree and 5 refers to strongly disagree

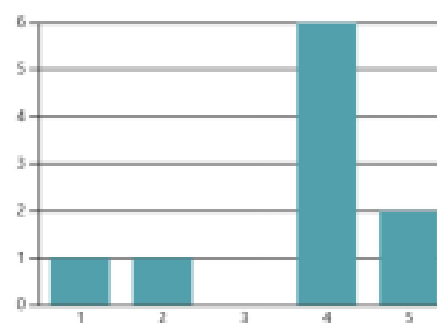


6. What are the types of benefits and incentives that personally motivate you to perform at your utmost?



7. On a scale from 1 to 5 how often do you feel motivated by your direct management team. (1 being not motivated)

3.70
Average Rating



8. What types of Motivational strategies are being used at your place of work?

10
Responses

Latest Responses
"Honesty and support"
"Monthly department outings "
"praise"

2 respondents (20%) answered **support** for this question.

team work Henry support system Kind approach normal
services related trainings **support** strong points Mintzberg
family department outings mistakes weak points theories
month commission manager day Honesty and support

Miscellaneous: 8 respondents

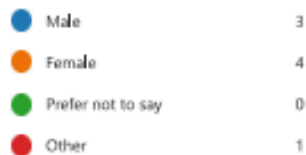
Motivating Factors within Front Office employees in Malta's 5 star hotels

8 Responses

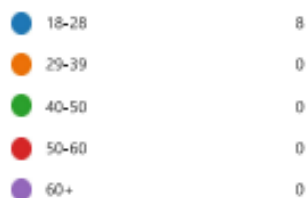
03:10 Average time to complete

Active Status

1. Gender



2. How old are you



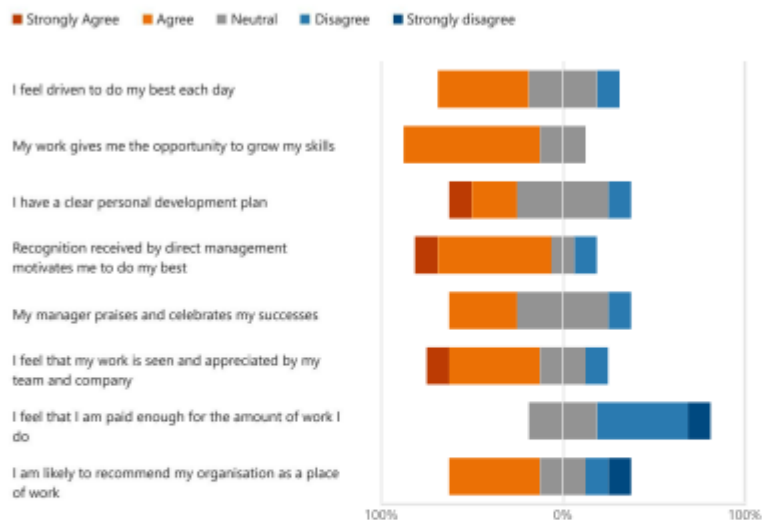
3. What is your occupation



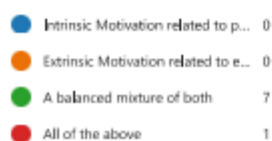
4. How long have you been working at your company?



5. Employee Experience: In this section you are asked to rate the following statements from 1 - 5 where 1 refers to strongly agree and 5 refers to strongly disagree

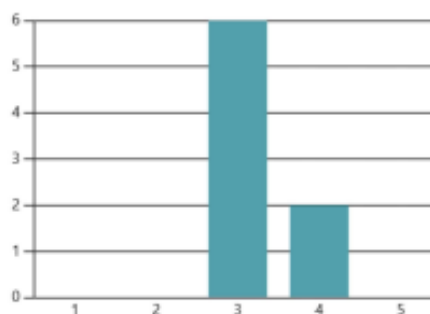


6. What are the types of benefits and incentives that personally motivate you to perform at your utmost?



7. On a scale from 1 to 5 how often do you feel motivated by your direct management team. (1 being not motivated)

3.25
Average Rating



8. What types of Motivational strategies are being used at your place of work?

8
Responses

Latest Responses
 "Commissions"
 "Upselling incentives, team building"
 "Monetary Benefits"

