



Empowering Hospitality Excellence: The Influence of Leadership Styles on Employee Work Engagement in Department of Tourism-Accredited Hotels in the Ilocos Region

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Leadership plays a vital role in shaping the success of the hospitality industry, where excellent customer service depends largely on the performance and commitment of employees. Hotel managers are expected to do more than supervise daily operations; they must inspire, guide, and empower their teams to deliver exceptional guest experiences. Effective leadership creates a positive work environment where employees feel valued, respected, and motivated to contribute to organizational goals. As the hospitality industry continues to evolve in response to changing customer expectations and intensifying competition, strong leadership has become essential to achieving service excellence and sustaining organizational success.

Among the various leadership approaches, democratic leadership has proven to be particularly effective in fostering employee engagement. By encouraging open communication, involving employees in decision-making, and recognizing their ideas and contributions, leaders cultivate a culture of trust and collaboration. Employees who feel that their opinions matter are more likely to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility toward their work. This inclusive leadership style strengthens teamwork, improves workplace relationships, and encourages continuous learning and innovation, ultimately contributing to higher levels of employee satisfaction and organizational performance.

Employee engagement is one of the most valuable assets of any hospitality organization because it directly influences service quality, productivity, and customer satisfaction. Engaged employees demonstrate enthusiasm, dedication, and a genuine commitment to delivering memorable guest experiences. Leaders who provide clear direction, constructive feedback, and opportunities for professional growth inspire employees to perform at their highest potential. When employees feel supported and appreciated, they are more likely to remain loyal to the organization, adapt to challenges, and consistently exceed performance expectations.

Building a culture of engagement requires organizations to invest in leadership development that extends beyond technical and managerial competencies. Effective leaders possess strong communication skills, emotional intelligence, integrity, and the ability to motivate diverse teams. By promoting employee empowerment, continuous professional development, and collaborative leadership practices, hotel organizations can create a workplace culture that values both individual growth and collective success. Such an environment not only enhances employee well-being but also strengthens organizational resilience in an increasingly competitive tourism and hospitality landscape.

Ultimately, leadership is the driving force that transforms an organization into a thriving and service-oriented workplace. Hotels that cultivate leaders capable of inspiring trust, encouraging participation, and supporting employee development are better positioned to achieve sustainable growth and long-term competitiveness. By placing people at the center of organizational success, hospitality establishments can build highly engaged workforces that consistently deliver exceptional service, strengthen customer loyalty, and contribute to the continued advancement of the Philippine tourism and hospitality industry.

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