



10 Things a Hotel General Manager Can Do to Generate Sales **By Jo-Anne Hill, Founder, JH Hospitality, April 2016**

The role of hotel general manager is multi-faceted and requires talents and skills to be the ambassador of the hotel to guests while being fiscally responsible to ownership to deliver the bottom line.

But nothing is more important than generating revenue and by incorporating some basic activities into their weekly or monthly schedule, general managers can see exponential results.

1. Get to know the top 5 accounts (by segment) and the key contact at each account. Make a point to meet them.
2. Develop a relationship with the President or CEO of top accounts with monthly breakfast or one-on-one lunches. These are the key influences of where their organization travelers choose to stay.
3. Help to close business during a site inspection; say 'Hello' to the customer using the client's name. Know something about the event, meeting or their business and show genuine interest in getting the business.

4. Rally the operational side of the hotel for key site inspections. During operational meetings, endorse when the sales department talks about key sites and why they are important to the whole hotel. Orchestrate the site with positive enriching experiences that are bespoke to the client's needs and interests. For example, a visit to the Pastry Kitchen for just out of the oven croissants for clients with an interest in French pastry.
5. For the group market, meet with the meeting planners while on site, daily if possible. Pass by the registration desk and check-in to see how everything is going.
6. Open door policy for service breakdowns. When a service issue happens at the hotel, encourage the sales team to go to the GM to solve the problem. When the hotel knows the GM is personally involved, it sometimes helps to solve the problem faster.
7. Once per month, call 5 clients to either close tentative business or to thank past clients for selecting the hotel. It's a quick phone call, even leaving a voice mail is fine and will help to increase the potential for the client to return. Always ask if you can help them to book the next meeting, event or guest stay. Turn over the appropriate Sales Manager to finalize.
8. Give the Sales team all of the tools that you can (and at least do the due diligence when they ask for something that is expensive). Things like Sales training, fast computers, updated professional photography of each room type and function room help them to book more business for your hotel.
9. Get rid of distractions in the sales department such as Lobby Duty, Saturday coverage for non-social sales managers, Operational meetings and even daily Revenue meetings. Free up the Sales Manager's calendars to be able open to sell and bring revenue into the hotel.
10. Hug your sales team (figuratively that is!). Recognize and appreciate them. Drop by the sales office on a regular basis. Ask how their day is going and ask how you can help them succeed.

Knowing that the Sales team has your support will encourage them to make that extra prospecting call or two that could lead to 'the' piece of business that moves the hotel in #1 in market share and/or exceeds the hotel budget for that quarter. Good luck – you can do it!