

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GOLD CARD PROJECT AS AN EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAM AT SOFITEL BALI NUSA DUA BEACH RESORT

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ABSTRACT

Engaging the employee is one of the challenges currently faced by the companies. Without good human resource management, the company will not be able to run effectively. The purpose of this study is to find out in-depth the latest employee recognition program implemented at Sofitel Bali Nusa Dua Beach Resort which is called “Gold Card” project. An in-depth interview was performed to get the details of the program. To enhance the result, a simple survey questionnaire was given to 60 employees to gather some feedback about the implementation of the project. The result of the research indicated that the “Gold Card” project is well received and is supported by the employee.

Keywords: Employee recognition, project, Sofitel Bali Nusa Dua

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the world’s largest industry. this statement is supported by the data which showed that in the year 2000, 698 million people were classified as an international tourist (Hundloe,2018). In 2017, International tourist arrivals grew by a remarkable 7% to reach a total of 1,322 million and expecting to reach 1,8 billion in 2030 (unwto.org). The statistic showed us on how competitive the tourism industry will be especially with the company who would challenge the opportunities.

Advances in information technology and the introduction of new methods of communication have led to increasingly significant changes in consumer behaviour (Cantalops & Salvi, 2014). Tourism services are intangible and cannot be tested before purchase, therefore it is important for consumer to have the information before making a decision (Robbiani, 2016). At present, tourists are able to access travel information and share travel experiences through a variety of technology-mediated outlets (Cohen *et al.*, 2014).

According to the PwC Switzerland report, online reviews are an important source of information for customers booking accommodation and travel. In addition, the reviews reveal many insights on how well a hotel is meeting its guest's expectations. The management will be able to perform any actions whether it is remedial action or commendations towards the performance of their employee.

The ability of organizations to achieve their business strategy and have a sustainable competitive advantage depends on the performance of employees (Amoatema *et al.*, 2016). As work continues to play a more important role in how people define themselves and the lives they lead, the perceived value of this work impacts not only their sense of identity but also their overall well-being (Cannon, 2015). In this case, we perceived the employee recognition as one of the ways to provide the well-being of the employee.

Effective recognition occurs in organizations with a strong, supportive culture that understand the psychology of praising employees for their good work, apply the principles of employee recognition and encourage another employee to initiate in their working relationship (Harrison, 2005; Saunderson, 2004; Amoatema *et al.*, 2016).

Many types of research have been conducted especially in terms of examining the impact of motivation to work on performance and highlighted employee recognition as an essential component of motivation (Brun & Dugas, 2008). In addition to that statement, he also mentioned that the research of Brun and Biron *et al.*, (2003) reveals that a lack of recognition constitutes the second-largest risk factor for psychological distress in the workplace.

According to Canon (2015), Amabile & Farmer (2007) mentioned that one of the driving forces behind the field of Organizational Psychology is the desire to achieve increased levels of performance through motivation. He added more than employees' level of motivation will increase when they feel that they, as individuals, together with the work they do, are valued by others.

Punke in Amoatema *et al.* (2016) mentioned that the recognition program should be balanced between performance-based and value-based initiative, but the program should be comprised of three methods: formal, informal and day-to-day recognition. More he defined the formal recognition is an extremely organized

recognition involving recognizing employees who have done so many years of service at the organization. Informal recognition is unstructured, timely and easy to deliver, it focuses primarily on performance achievements, goal accomplishments and other milestones by individuals or teams (BC Public Service Agency). Meanwhile, day-to-day recognition could be defined as a simple “thank you”, notes, and all kind of daily praises.

The paper seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To find out in-depth on what the “Gold Card” project is and how it works.
2. To find out on how the employee perceives the “Gold Card” project.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses both of qualitative and quantitative research method or widely known as the “mixed-method”. Mixed-methods can provide an investigator with many design choices which involve a range of sequential and concurrent strategies (Terrell, 2012), which is suitable explain more about the project. In the first phase, qualitative research was conducted through an in-depth interview with the Assistant Quality Manager of Sofitel Bali Nusa Dua who is the initiator of this program. This research aims to find out the clear image on what the project is and how the project works. In the second phase, the simple survey questionnaire was conducted to get feedback on how the employee perceived the program. The questionnaire was formed in yes/no question and in the last question, we clearly asked whether the employee agrees to continue this program or not.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research took place at Sofitel Bali Nusa Dua Beach Resort. Sofitel is part of the French-based Accor Group. Sofitel is the only French luxury hotel brand with a presence on five continents with 130 addresses, in almost 40 countries. Sofitel Bali Nusa Dua Beach Resort is situated in the Bali Tourism Development Complex. It has 415 Room and Suites, 3, Restaurants, 3 Bars, Spa, Fitness Centre, Ballroom and Meeting Rooms.

Gold Card

The result of the in-depth interview with the initiator of the Gold Card Project is as follows:

1. The aim of the project.

Gold Card Project is a program that recognized the good work of the employee. The gold card could also be perceived as a non-financial recognition program. A non-financial recognition is a method of identifying either individual employees or teams for particular praise or acknowledgement (Silverman, 2004).

The sole aim of this program is to fully motivate the employees through an appreciation of their outstanding performance. The expected result is that the employee could maintain their good performance consistently through a good work-life environment.

2. The employee who is entitled the Gold Card

The employee which is entitled to get the gold card is the contracted employee (from all levels), trainees and daily workers, not including the outsourcing. The employee works on the same goal which is to achieve the guest satisfaction and the same work hours which makes them equals to be entitled to get the gold card.

3. The official date release and the period of issuing

Gold Card was effectively working since January 1st 2018. Gold Card is an informal recognition program which happens weekly (every Tuesday of the week). Up until now, the employee who got the gold card is counted over one thousand gold cards issued. The form of the gold card is a card which has the identity of the entitled (e.g. full name, position, date issued) which is exchangeable into some particular rewards.

4. The redemption and the rewards

The Gold card takes the form of a voucher that can be collected and redeemed with some prizes. The reward is varied depending on how many gold cards the employee want to redeem (from 1 to maximum 40). The highest redemption is 40 gold cards which equal to a 1- night stay including breakfast at the resort for 2 people.

5. How to get Gold Card

Silverman (2004) stated that “the behaviours or actions which are reflected in the recognition scheme criteria should be based on those behaviors or actions that the organization wishes to emphasize”. Meaning that the organization or company itself has the full rights to set the parameters on which behavior they want to recognize. Thus, the employees are entitled to get a Gold Card when they:

- a. Perform an outstanding performance.
- b. Deliver Cousu Main service (it needs to be validated in writing as per the template).
- c. Exhibit the ‘extra-mile’ attitude and service.
- d. Continuously achieve the target set for them.
- e. Got mentioned on VOG.

The “Cousu Main” is a culture of service of Sofitel brand all over the countries. It has a meaning of the service from the heart. “Cousu Main” is personal attention to the guest that every staff should implement in every contact. To create a cousu main service, the staff should go for an extra mile to anticipate the need of the guest, so the guest would feel personally pampered. We trust that the staffs have the right to be recognized for their extra-mile in form of a story to share with the entire employee at the hotel.

The recognition does not always come from the management side, but it also comes from the guest itself. With the online review platform, the guest is free to share their feedback. The unique "Voice of the Guest" program (VOG) developed for AccorHotels allows the centralisation of all customers reviews shared via social media.

This program improves the gathering of customer feedback, allowing better responses, enabling the spreading and sharing of information, answering directly to customer reviews through an internal collaborative community (thesocialclient.com). We can track the name of the staff mentioned in a review through the daily VOG and reward them with the gold card.

Perceived acceptance of Gold Card Project.

The simple survey questionnaire was conducted to collect the opinion from the staff in regards to the implementation of the project. The questionnaire asked them about how the gold card could make them feel recognized and valued, challenged to perform better, is the reward motivating and whether or not they agree to continue the project. The result can be seen as the table below:

Table 1. Gold Card Survey

Survey	Yes	No
Feel Recognised & Valued	60	0
	100%	0%
Challenged to perform better	57	3
	95%	5%
Reward list is motivating	56	4
	93%	7%
We should continue the program	60	0
	100%	0%

From the statistic, we could clearly see that the gold card could make them feel recognized and valued. It indicates that the staff could work in a good environment. The good work environment leads to the desire to perform better as it showed that 95% of the staffs are challenged to perform better.

The reward takes an important role in the project. The survey revealed that 93% of the staff thought that the reward is motivating. We trust that it will make an impact to get the interest of the staff and to be a tool for engaging employee.

The last question is whether the project is worth to continue or not. The result is expected with the perfect score of 100% support of continuation. It shows us on how the gold card is now accepted and supported by the employee.

CONCLUSION

We agree that to create a better work environment, we should recognize every effort of the extra miles or the good performances. The gold card takes a form of a simple way to recognize them. The collection and redemption allow them to choose the reward they desire and as well to be a tool of a self-assessment of the performance. Hence, the gold card project is well accepted and carried out the good impact on the development of the performance of the service.

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