

The Wayfinders Program

The management of a large hotel delivered a challenge to every department: What can *you* do to improve the hotel's guest satisfaction scores?

Kevin, the head of the housekeeping department, wondered what – apart from making the rooms more attractive – his group of employees could do. To see what guests were doing and what help they might need in doing it, he stationed himself in the hotel lobby and observed the incoming tide.

The one thing all the guests did was consult the map of the hotel they had received upon check-in. Even with the map, however, they still had trouble finding their way around – it was a large hotel.

Pitching in, Kevin began asking guests whether they needed help and taking them to their rooms when they did. As head of housekeeping, of course, he had his own map of the hotel right in his head.

Then he had *the thought*. Apart from the valets who carried bags to the rooms from the lobby, who indeed knew the hotel's layout better than he and his housekeepers, who were charged with cleaning every room in it? Answer: Nobody.

Kevin went to work with his group to put their special knowledge of the hotel to use. They decided to use the maps as their starting point. Whenever in the course of their duties the housekeepers spied guests consulting their maps or wandering anxiously through the corridors, the housekeepers offered help and led the guests to their destinations. They asked questions, talked about the hotel, and chatted with guests in order to make them feel at home before they ever reached their rooms.

The housekeepers called their plan the Wayfinders Program, and over time it worked on two levels: The housekeeping department began receiving thank-you letters from grateful guests – 100 in the first quarter – and other departments began joining in.

The more the *whole staff* looked, the more they found they could do.

Hospitality – the relationship between the guest and the host – is at the core of our business.

Success will come to any organization that excels in its practice.

What will you – and your department – do today to impress our customers?

– Beecher Hunter