

# **The Importance of Communication Between Hotel Reception and Restaurant**

## Abstract

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<b>The Importance of Communication Between Hotel Reception and Restaurant</b>		
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Abstract		
<p>The topic of the thesis is to examine the importance of communication between hotel restaurant and reception employees. This thesis was carried out as a qualitative study for the hotel Scandic Patria and the purpose was to conduct research on how well the communication within the company's work community works.</p> <p>The thesis consists of an introduction, theoretical framework, research implementation and summary. The theory section discusses internal communication, the characteristics of good communication, and different communication channels. The empirical data collection for this thesis was done with semi-structured interviews, where the interviewees were members of the work community. Author's own observations on the research topic, as well as the research results can be found in the research implementation. The research results suggested ways to improve communication within the work community.</p>		
Keywords		
Internal communication, communication, community communication, organization		

## Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Thesis objective and research question.....	1
1.2	Research method.....	2
1.3	Thesis limitations.....	2
1.4	Introduction to Scandic Patria.....	2
1.5	Thesis structure.....	3
2	Theory.....	4
2.1	Work community communication.....	4
2.2	Characteristics of good interaction.....	6
2.3	Rich and lean communication channels.....	7
3	Research implementation.....	9
3.1	Description of the work community.....	9
3.2	Current status of communication.....	10
3.3	Interviewee profile.....	10
3.4	Results of observations.....	11
3.5	Interview results.....	13
3.6	Conclusions from the results.....	15
4	Summary and discussion.....	17
4.1	Overview of the objective and results.....	17
4.2	Assessment of the research.....	17
4.3	Recommendations for Further Studies.....	18
	References.....	19

## Appendix 1. Interview questions

## 1 Introduction

Communication inside different communities has changed fundamentally, and development is accelerating all the time. Communication between parties is easier and faster than before, but on the other hand also more demanding and hectic. When considering work community communication, this new era places different demands on each employee; everyone needs to be able to communicate in different ways in different situations, and with different people. Despite the changes and developments, the foundation of communication is still interaction. People's appreciation and respect for others are major factors in the success of interaction. Individuals desire to influence matters that concern them, and to trust their communication partner, have not disappeared, which is why consideration for others should be remembered in interaction and communication. (Kortetjärvi-Nurmi & Murtola 2016, 4-5.)

The following qualitative research will focus on the current state of internal communication at Scandic Hotel Patria. The author herself is interested in working in the hotel industry and wants to develop herself in communication within the work community so that the customer experience and the atmosphere in the workplace can be as good as possible. During the author's work experience at Scandic Patria before and during the research, the company has faced significant changes, which have clearly had an impact on internal communication. These changes include, for example, Scandic's Finland-wide change negotiations. For these reasons, the author wanted to explore the issue in more depth, and through this also deepen her own knowledge of communication.

### 1.1 Thesis objective and research question

The objectives of this research include understanding how important the communication between a hotel reception and restaurant is and obtaining insight into how the communication within the work community could be improved. The purpose is to benefit the work community at Scandic Patria, improve the staff's productivity and well-being at work, as after the research they are aware of the problem areas, can improve those, and continue with the practices that have already proven to be good. The aim is to highlight potential problem areas in communication and offer suitable solutions, as well as to highlight practices that are already working and encourage their continuation.

The topic of the thesis came from the author's own interest in improving internal communication. The author has worked at the case company for a few years, in periods of varying lengths, and during this time the author's interest in the subject has grown and she wanted to hear other employees' opinions on the subject.

To achieve the objective of this research, the thesis aims to answer the following research question:

How to improve the communication between reception and restaurant staff?

## 1.2 Research method

The method used in this research work is a qualitative case study. The case company for this research is Scandic Hotel Patria, and the target group is the organization's work community.

## 1.3 Thesis limitations

The research is limited to hotels that in addition to accommodation services, also offer restaurant services. This limitation has been made to provide a broader perspective on work community interaction. A limitation has also been made to exclude the hotel cleaning department from the research, because the cleaning of the hotel in question has been outsourced, so the cleaning department is not involved in any of the restaurant and reception's shared communication channels. Regarding the data collection, kitchen staff have also been excluded from the interviews, because only a few of their employees have access to computer-based communication channels.

Although the research interviewees also include managers, and part of the questions were directed at them, this research does not delve into the work of managers and their role in communication. It was decided to exclude management work from this study, as this would require a better understanding of the work of managers, which the author does not have.

## 1.4 Introduction to Scandic Patria

Scandic Hotels is the largest hotel operator in the Nordic countries, based on the number of rooms. It was founded in 1963 in Laxå, Sweden as a hotel concept named Esso Motorhotell. Throughout the years 1966-1969 the hotel concept continued its expansion in Sweden, and in 1972 the first hotels outside Sweden were opened to Norway and Denmark. In 1984 the Esso Motorhotell was sold and rebranded as Scandic Hotels. After the rebranding, Scandic Hotels first expanded outside the Nordic countries, and eventually also to Finland. In year 2023, Scandic celebrated its 60th anniversary with 280 hotels and 58 000 hotel rooms in operation and under development in six different countries. (Scandic.)

Scandic Patria is a medium-sized hotel located in Lappeenranta, and it is part of Scandic Hotels Group AB. It was built in 1991, but before this, a wooden hotel operated on the same

place in 1889-1989. The old hotel Patria was one of the most significant accommodation and restaurant companies in Lappeenranta, especially the years 1920-1930 were years of success.

Patria's customer group consists of business customers as well as leisure travellers. Business customers use both accommodation and meeting services, especially outside the summer season, the number of business and conference customers increase. The summer season is busy when leisure travellers arrive to Lappeenranta.

Scandic Patria offers accommodation, restaurant and conference services to its customers. The restaurant offers breakfast and dinner, as well as possible catering of meeting services, such as a meeting lunch, conference coffee services etc. The hotel has 133 hotel rooms and five conference rooms.

## 1.5 Thesis structure

The introduction of the thesis provides information about the background of the work and a brief introduction to the case company. In addition, the aim of the thesis, the research question, and the limitations are introduced. After this, a theoretical framework is formed for the research in chapter 2. The research implementation section reviews the baseline situation, describes the interviews conducted, and goes through them question by question. This section presents the conclusions from the interviews and observations and provides suggestions for development. The summary and conclusion part reiterate the research objective and results, evaluates the research and provide possible suggestions for further research. At the end of the work there is a list of references and appendices.

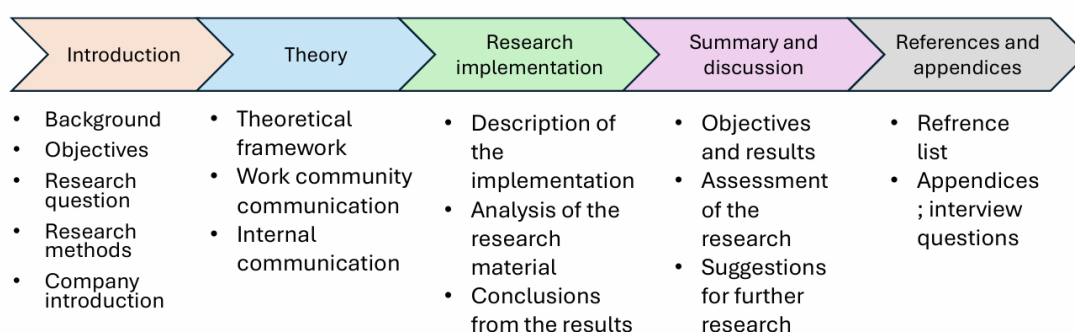


Figure 1. Thesis structure in detail

## 2 Theory

### 2.1 Work community communication

Work community communication refers to oral and written communication between members of a workplace, in physical or virtual work environment. Communication is not just one-way, the information moves from management to employees, and vice versa, as well as between groups, teams, departments and different offices. In work community communication, no one's role is simply to receive the message, it is everyone's responsibility to be both the producer and the transmitter of the message. The aim of work community communication is that all members have the information they need to do their job successfully, and up-to-date information about their own work community and industry. In addition to basic information, members need information about different changes regarding the work community, and about future plans. (Kortetjärvi-Nurmi & Murtola 2016, 150-151.)

According to Kortetjärvi-Nurmi and Murtola (2016, 153) work community communication is dialogue. In their opinion it can be said that communication in the work community is effective when it is based on openness and dialogue. This allows each member to participate in the discussion and express their own opinions, views and expectations without being judged. Communication is a key part of customer service work, as providing incorrect information to customers can negatively impact the company's image. It must therefore be noted that work community communication applies to more than just people within the work community.

Internal communication refers to the internal flow of information and interaction within a work community or any organisation. Internal communication, like communication in general, is a broad phenomenon that affects all aspects of a company's operations. On the one hand, it is about the exchange of knowledge and information, and on the other hand, it is about community, sharing experiences and culture. (Juholin 1999, 13.)

According to Hola and Pikhart (2014, 161-162), communication is defined as the process of exchanging ideas, thoughts, opinions, and perspectives. However, within the context of corporate communication, this fundamental understanding proves to be insufficient.

As internal communication is developing gradually, it can be seen as a tool which can, in the best-case scenario, act as a great motivator. This requires, that internal communication works effectively, because if it does not, it can also cause great distress. (Hola & Pikhart 2014, 161.)

Työturvallisuuskeskus (TTK, 2016) states that good work community communication that produces results and is efficient can be identified by the following characteristics:

- Systematic
- Innovative
- Goal-oriented
- Inclusive
- Interactive
- Open
- Allowing for dialogue and feedback
- Allowing for questions
- Listening
- Motivating
- Anticipatory and proactive
- Prepared for changes
- Unifying and energizing the work community
- Promoting creativity
- Encouraging new innovations and ideas.

Internal communication within the work community is an important part of improving the work atmosphere. When internal communication is well managed, misunderstandings and resulting conflicts can be avoided or at least resolved more easily. If the communication within a work community is not working, in the worst-case scenario, this can even lead to employees not knowing essential information about their workplace. Employee motivation and productivity may decrease as a result of this. In today's world, when everything is constantly changing, it might be difficult to keep up with all the changes. The importance of communication in these situations is extremely important, since it plays a key role in internalizing the change in the workplace.

Smooth communication is the responsibility of every member of the work community and poor internal communication affects the atmosphere of the entire organisation. When the work community has a good atmosphere, and the internal communication is of high quality,

employee well-being can also be better. Conflicts and disagreements are somewhat normal in the workplace, when people with different backgrounds, communication skills and temperaments work together. (MIELI Suomen Mielenterveys ry, 2021.)

Nowadays, the flood of information is so large, that it can cause problems in communication. In working life, it may be assumed that a large number of communication channels enhance the communication. However, competing channels lead to information overload, and searching for essential information might take too much time.

## 2.2 Characteristics of good interaction

It is good to recognize the characteristics of good interaction, as it allows one to pay attention to one's own behaviour in interactions and the interaction skills of other members of the work community. Being able to create an emotional connection can help in interaction. A good connection allows communicators to think about what they can identify with in the conversation partner and what they value in them. Once an emotional connection has been created, it promotes interaction positively and is also reflected in the tone of voice and gestures. Conversational intelligence is required, especially in conflict situations. This means that one is able to see past an unwanted reaction and understand the issues behind it.

In today's work community, work requires more interaction, cooperation, innovation and also efficiency. Good work community communication typically is characterized by multidirectional openness and a desire for communality. (Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2016.)

Good communication skills need more than just transferring information. These skills are an art and must be practiced effectively in the workplace for successful results. (Halim & Wa-hid 2024, 3.) Poor communication skills are a big reason why effective communication fails in the work communities. In order for appreciative and constructive interaction to prevail in the work community, it is necessary for the members to encourage, thank, and support colleagues. It is also important to remember good manners, sometimes even greetings, thanks and necessary apologies, which seem obvious and make cooperation smoother. However, individuals may have personal barriers that prevent communication from flowing smoothly; a good example is a lack of empathy. (MIELI Suomen Mielenterveys ry, 2021.)

In today's world, gossip is also something that needs to be considered when talking about communication. Gossip is a concept that happens in daily life, sometimes even without realizing it. Gossip is generally viewed as harmful and malicious talk about others, however, it is characterized by its verbal, covert, and indirect nature, which differentiates it from other negative behaviours that may involve both overt and covert behaviours, as well as direct

and indirect forms of communications. The general belief is that gossip always has a negative purpose and is intended to cause harm to individuals and organizations. (Wu et al., 2018.)

There is also positive gossip, and casual chatting with coworkers is important and good, but if the tone of the speech is negative, and it happens in the absence of target, it can have a negative impact on the work atmosphere. If there is a lot of gossip in the work community, always about third parties, without them being present, rumours and misunderstandings may increase, and trust among personnel may weaken. However, positive gossip can create more relaxed atmosphere among employees. Gossip should not be confused with formal communication within the work community, as it is classified as an informal form of workplace communication, which may harm the reputation of the target in the workplace.

### 2.3 Rich and lean communication channels

Daft and Lengel (1986) have classified communication channels into rich and lean communication channels (Puro 2004, 47).

<b>Rich channels</b>				<b>Lean channels</b>
Face-to-face communication				Formal announcements
Group communication				Videos
	Video conference		Bulletin board	
	Telephone		Email	
		Intranet		

Table 1. The classification of rich and lean communication channels (Puro 2004, 47)

In communication, it is important to know which channel is right for each situation. The sender of the message should be able to think about the content of the message, its meaning, and how it is presented, in order to minimize inaccuracies and uncertainty.

The purpose of the classification (Table 1) is to clarify how the message is understood through different communication channels. If the sender wants to avoid uncertainty and inaccuracy, they should use rich channels. Conversely, for routine messages that are not intended to have a substantial impact on the receiver, lean channels are a good choice. The

classification helps one to choose the right communication channel, considering the message and the topic of communication. (Puro 2004, 47-48.)

The choice of channels used for work community communication is influenced by, for example, the size of the company and whether the entire work community operates in one location, or whether some of the employees are located elsewhere. The work duties of each member also affect the choice of channels. (Kortetjärvi-Nurmi & Murtola, 2016.)

The tasks of communication can be defined by assessing the channels and means of communication. The number of communication channels in organizations is large, and it can still increase significantly over the years. It is believed that the more different electronic and graphic channels are in use, the better things are. This often turns out to be a misconception. Channels are divided into three different categories: face-to-face communication, printed communication and electronic communication. Of these channels, face-to-face communication is the strongest one and should be used to address the most important issues. (Juholin 1999, 35-36.)

Meetings, one-on-one meetings, job orientation and guidance, presentations, other informal events, workshops and seminars are all oral communication channels for face-to-face communication, while printed communication channels can include magazines, newsletters, bulletin boards, manual, brochures, reports and orientation materials. Electronic communication channels include telephones, emails, radios, TVs, the internet and intranet. (Juholin 1999, 139-140.)

### 3 Research implementation

Qualitative research aims to approach the world 'out there'. Qualitative research can use the following ways to understand, describe and sometimes also explain social phenomena 'from the inside':

- By analysing experiences of individuals or groups
- By analysing interactions and communications in the making
- By analysing documents or similar traces of experiences or interactions.

For this research, interviews and personal observations were chosen as the data collection methods. The interviews were conducted as semi-structured interviews; ready-made questions (appendix 1) were presented for each interviewee, to which the interviewees responded freely, and the interviews were held in a conversational style. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because it allowed the interviewer to ask additional questions with some interviewees if necessary. The interviews were conducted in Finnish, but the interview questions and results will be translated to English for the thesis. The interviews were held as individual interviews, as it was thought that the interviewees could speak more freely when there were no others present besides the interviewer. The interviews took place between March and April 2025. All other interviews were arranged separately at the workplace, except for one interviewee whose schedule was difficult to coordinate with the authors' schedules, so the questions were sent to her by email. The author recorded the face-to-face interviews and then transcribed these materials for herself, and she was able to record written responses from the interview conducted via email.

During the time the author has worked for this company, she has made own observations about how internal communication has worked in this company. The first observations are from the year 2022 when the researcher completed first internship at this company. A report was made about the internship, in which she also collected some observations about the communication from that time. The most recent observations are from the last year before the study was conducted, when the author has been working at this company.

#### 3.1 Description of the work community

The company's personnel consist of 14 persons; five of them are reception employees, four of them are restaurant employees and five are kitchen employees. In addition, the work community also includes extra workers who work occasional shifts through a staffing company. Each department, kitchen, restaurant and reception have its own shift manager, who

is the immediate manager of the department employees in question. In addition, there is the hotel manager, who is of course everyone's manager, but he acts as the immediate manager of the department managers.

### 3.2 Current status of communication

When conducting the research, the company's internal communication is handled through the entire staffs' common WhatsApp group, and the restaurant and reception also have their own groups for employees in that department. In addition, the reception staff each have their own personal work email, in addition to the shared email at reception, which is for communication with customers, but Scandic's internal information emails also come to this email. Reception staff and the restaurant manager also have access to Scandic's intranet, where new things are shared between all the countries where Scandic is located.

Important, quick changes are usually shared face-to-face between departments during the work shift. If the matter concerns other employees who are not on duty at the time, a note is usually left so that the information is passed on. In addition, there are occasional meetings between departments, about three to four times a year. These cover bigger current topics that everyone working in the department needs to know about.

<b>Electronic channels</b>	<b>Meetings and printed material</b>
Email	Physical department and full-staff meetings
WhatsApp group	Bulletin board/paper notes
Company-wide intranet	Face-to-face briefing during the shift
Phone calls	
Teams-chat	

Table 2. The communication channels used by the company

### 3.3 Interviewee profile

The kitchen staff was left out of the interviews, because they don't have computer credentials that would allow them to access Scandic's internal information systems, such as email and intranet. They also don't face customers during their work shifts as much as the waiters and receptionists, so they don't really have experience with whether internal communication

affects customer service situations. Therefore, interviewees were selected from the restaurant and reception staff, including management staff as well as employees. Two of the interviewees work at the restaurant and two at the reception. The interviewees were chosen based on the fact that the author felt that she had noticed that these members of the work community have strong opinions on different issues, and they are not afraid to express them. The author felt that these employees would definitely provide comprehensive answers to interview questions.

There was a total of four interviewees, this was an appropriate amount for the research to obtain enough data. By selecting a diverse group of interviewees from the work community, broader perspectives were obtained. By also selecting managers, the interviews revealed how managers keep things together and how they feel their communication with employees is working. Because there were so few interviewees, detailed profiles of the interviewees will be kept anonymous. This creates greater trust between the interviewee and the interviewer and ensures that the interviewees can speak freely about their opinions and perspectives. The purpose of the interviews is to highlight possible problem areas in the communication, in the employees' opinion, for which solutions can be found together.

### 3.4 Results of observations

Three years before conducting the research, the author completed an internship at Scandic Patria. The author wrote a report about this internship, which summarized the author's work tasks and lessons learned from the internship. The report did not focus on work community communication, but the author wrote about her observations and experiences related to it. In addition to the report, the observations summarized in this study were collected after the internship, during which the author was working at the company, even during the implementation of this study. The main points of the observations are presented in this chapter.

The author's observations show that in her opinion, one of the biggest problems is that some of the older employees might still operate in ways that are no longer relevant. This sometimes creates a conflict when newer employees are unaware of these old ways of doing things, and they try to act correctly according to the new instructions. So, the workplace should be stricter in ensuring that when new instructions and procedures are introduced, everyone adopts them, and not so that older employees operate with outdated instructions because "why change a good old thing". An example of this is when the customer's payment card is read at the reception upon check-in for the reservation, so that this opens the room bill and acts as a guarantee, i.e. if a customer wants to transfer a restaurant bill to a room bill, this does not work unless the payment card has been read for the reservation. However, reception staff can manually open the room bill from the computer, without

the payment card information. Nowadays, the company's guidelines are that all customers are asked for a payment card upon arrival, and room invoices are not allowed to be opened manually. However, the restaurant staff may have asked the reception to open the room bill manually, although in that case if the customer's room bill is not open, they should be asked to visit the reception to open the room bill with a payment card. This has caused minor conflicts when some employees operate in the old way, where the room bill is allowed to be opened manually and the restaurant staff does not ask the customer to visit reception.

The author's own observations show that over time, she has learned that if one wonders whether something that seems small needs to be communicated to others, it is usually worthwhile to share. The author has experienced that sometimes it can make you feel a little bit stupid when you share something really small and obvious with someone else, but she has noticed that it is better that way than not sharing the matter, and then this will lead to resentment or conflicts. The observations also revealed that at first, it felt somewhat strange and challenging to share information using paper notes, but once the author got used to it, it has been easy.

When talking about communication from managers to employees, the author has noticed that the reception manager asks the staff whether they noticed new things that have been communicated. The author believes this is a good way for the manager to ensure that there are no interruptions in the sharing of information, and in addition, the staff can then ask if anything is unclear.

The author finds the organizations intranet to be a difficult source of information. This is because new information is updated on the intranet, but outdated information is not deleted. When searching for information on the intranet using a specific term, outdated information may be the first thing that comes up, and sometimes, if it is a busy situation, you may not realize this until afterwards. The intranet is not clear, and there is information for all the Scandic countries on one platform, so it could be easier to have, for example, a separate intranet for each country. This is not directly related to the sharing of information within the Scandic Patria work community, but because the intranet is one of the communication channels in this organization, the author believes it is worth mentioning this.

The author has noticed significant developments from the time she wrote the internship report when she was working at the company while conducting this research. For example, there has been progress in who is asked what, and who is responsible for what. These are partly a result of organizational changes at Scandic, where the goal is a more unified Scandic.

### 3.5 Interview results

Based on the interview question 1, in the opinion of the interviewees although there are sometimes communication gaps, they are not earth-shattering. All interviewees are aware that the situation with the internal communication is not the worst, but there is always room for improvement. In order for internal communication to remain good, or even improve, it is required that everyone in the work community shares with others also matters that seem small and unnecessary. Interviewee 1 said that she has learned how sometimes matters that seem obvious must also be passed on to others, and as mentioned earlier, the author has observed the same.

The purpose of interviews question 2 was to identify potential problem areas in communication within the work community. The interviews revealed that some feel that even though the atmosphere is always positive and relaxed during the work shift, problems may arise from already learned and outdated communication methods between departments.

The answers to question number 3 *How has communication changed during the time you have been working here? Has the change been positive or negative? What do you think has caused the changes (e.g. personnel changes, new tools, management style)?* revealed that the WhatsApp group among all personnel has been a decisive factor in the smoothness of internal communication. Interviewees told that when creating the group, it was considered whether it would put too much pressure on the employees, and if it would burden the personnel on their free time as well. However, rules were created; free time affairs, such as vacation photos or other personal news should not be shared in the WhatsApp group. It was also agreed that if it is not necessary, group members will not respond to messages. Despite this, there were also negative opinions about the WhatsApp group. Some interviewees find the lack of a common communication channel, which can only be monitored during working hours, to be a problem. Although the WhatsApp group reaches everyone, it is not considered the best way to communicate internally about work matters within the work community, precisely because work matters can also be reached during free time. In addition, it must be remembered that communication channels such as WhatsApp and email can more easily cause misunderstandings because they lack nuances.

Changes in communication have occurred during the interviewees' employment and everyone feels that the changes have been more positive than negative. The changes that have already taken place have been the result of, for example, personnel changes. Information sharing has become a little more active during this time. The interviews revealed that in the last couple of years there have been more practices and changes in the company's operating methods, and these have also helped to clarify communication.

When question 4 discussed the effects of possible poor communication on the work atmosphere, the answers differed slightly. The results show some interviewees feel that a possible lack of communication affects themselves, which is why it might be difficult for them to trust other members of the work group. This is partly because some people in the work community have such strong emotional reactions that others feel they need to be careful about what to say and do. Emotional reactions cause conflicts between employees, and as a result of this, it also occasionally affects the work atmosphere in such way that cooperation between departments may become difficult. However, some respondents feel that although conflicts sometimes occur, these issues do not remain a source of friction between employees for a long time. These respondents believe that old issues do not affect the present, and do not reduce, for example, trust in other colleagues.

Question 5 discussed the importance of communication quality in customer service situations. The interviewees were unanimous that the quality of internal communication affects customer encounters, but they do not consider it to be a major problem in this work community. The responses revealed that the flow of information in these matters is quite good, so it is relatively rare for the customers to receive contradictory or incorrect information. Cooperation and smooth communication between department managers are also important so that the level of customer experience remains high and in line with values, and all employees can communicate things in the same way during shifts. If the flow of information does not work and messages are not delivered when they are relevant, errors occur that affect service situations and can increase the number of refunds for customers. Often, these situations are left to the reception to handle, which may cause discomfort among employees.

Considering the company being discussed in the research, it must be noted that employees that the customer encounters may change during the customer experience. The customer continuously uses the hotel company's services for longer than other services. If communication in the work community does not work well, employees on different shifts may give the same customer different information, which can confuse the customer and damage the company's image.

The last questions *Do you feel that as a manager you are able to communicate all the necessary information to other employees well enough? How do you ensure that the information gets through? Are there situations where the message has not reached everyone? Do you feel that you need support in communication as a manager?* were only asked from managers, so only two out of four respondents answered these questions.

Interviews with managers revealed that they feel they are doing a good job in communicating with staff. However, they are aware that even if they themselves feel that way, it does not automatically mean that the staff feels the same way. Managers ensure that the information they share has been received, for example, by simply monitoring whether new practices etc. have been internalized in everyday work. Since the managers work the same shifts as the employees, it is easy to notice during work if an employee, for example, gives customer incorrect information, which allows the manager to verify that the employee has received information about the new policy, etc.

Apparently there have been situations where the information has not reached everyone, but the interviewees did not recall any specific situation, so in their opinion, these situations have not been ground-breaking.

In addition to communication from managers to employees, it is important to remember the smoothness of communication from manager to manager. Communication between departments is largely based on how managers are able to share information with each other. If the cooperation between department managers is not smooth, it affects the communication and atmosphere of the entire department's personnel. However, the managers interviewed do not feel that they themselves need help with communication, for example, from their manager, i.e. the hotel manager.

### 3.6 Conclusions from the results

When considering the classification of rich and lean communication channels (Table 1) and compare it with the communication channels used by the company (Table 2) and with the research results, it can be noted that the communication in the work community is evenly divided into rich and lean communication channels. One of the problems in the work community may be what information to share on which channel. It seems that sometimes communication takes place through the wrong channel, which causes misunderstandings and uncertainty among staff.

When comparing the author's observations and experiences with the results of interviews, it is clear that some of the same points emerge from both. Based on the research results, it can be stated that, in general, communication within the work community is going well, but there are points to consider. The work community atmosphere is not bad, except when emotional reactions lead to conflicts. For this reason, each member of the workplace should consider their own reactions and challenges in communication. The situation could also be improved if the entire work community talked openly about how everyone reacts to different situations.

Although the cannels already in use are quite functional, one concrete development suggestion would be to have a folder where all matters related to the restaurant and reception would be collected. This way everyone would have access to this, unlike, for example, email. It would be easy to update even small details in the folder, and it would be easy to return to these by looking at the folder. This would also not require additional resources to maintain, and it also would not burden the staff during their free time, unlike the WhatsApp group where notifications can be seen even when you are not at work. In addition, because working days and working hours vary, the flow of information is also fragmentary, so the folder between departments could be useful in this regard.

At the reception, the paper notes are left on the reception counter so that everyone who comes to work can see them. Through interviews, the author discovered that the restaurant staff has a bulletin board where they post notes. Once everyone becomes used to this, it is an easy way to share information, and everyone knows to check the bulletin board when they come to work to see if there is any new information. This, of course, requires that new employees are informed about the practice so that they can also adopt it.

In addition, there should be better practices to ensure that everyone is on board with the new practices. This could mean, for example, having departmental staff meetings more often instead of the current 3-4 times a year. Because these meetings are good for staff to always go through new things together, so that everyone understands them. If these were more frequent, employees would be better informed about the common way of working, and this would reduce resentment and conflicts as outdated working practices decrease.

## 4 Summary and discussion

### 4.1 Overview of the objective and results

The aim of the thesis was to investigate the smoothness of communication within the work community at Scandic Patria and the importance of internal communication. The research was limited to reception and restaurant personnel and was conducted as individual interviews. The purpose of the thesis was to benefit the work community of the company in question, notice problem areas in their internal communication, improve those, and also the atmosphere.

Based on the research results, everyone is aware of those small problem areas that do not cause problems on a daily basis. Of course, if some people have to be careful in their actions and words fearing other people's emotional reactions, it can be stated that the situation has room for improvement. Even with small changes and open discussion, a more open and relaxed atmosphere could be created.

### 4.2 Assessment of the research

The research could have been started earlier so that the scheduling would have not been so tight. Despite this, the research results were sufficient, partly because the data used for the research was not only interviews but also the author's observations. If more time had been allocated for interviews, there could have been more interviewees, which would have given an even broader understanding of employees' opinions on the topic.

The theoretical framework of the thesis could be more comprehensive, because it would bring a better understanding of the topic before moving on to the implementation of the research. The theory section could include more information on the use of different communication channels in different communication situations. It would also have been good to include some information about the specific characteristics of the hotel and restaurant industry in communication, and the author tried to search for this, but due to the schedule, could not find a proper source on this topic.

The interview questions (Appendix 1) are a strength in this thesis, the questions are good and comprehensive, but in addition to these, the author's own observations also support the research implementation well. The observations gave the author a better understanding of the research topic, which led to a higher interest in conducting the research.

### 4.3 Recommendations for Further Studies

The research conducted leaves space for further research, where, for example, the hotel cleaning department could also be included in the study. In this way, it could be investigated how much of the misunderstandings and conflicts between the restaurant and reception are related to the fact that information has not been passed on to the cleaning department.

In addition, since this thesis did not discuss the role of managers in communication in more detail, there is room for further research in this area as well. The study could examine the importance of supervisory work in the smoothness of internal communication within the work community. For this, the hotel manager could also be interviewed. For this purpose, the researcher should have a broad understanding, or even personal experience, of the work of a manager, and the role that managers play in communication.

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## Appendix 1. Interview questions

1. Do you think communication within the work community is currently working well?
  - Could you give an example of a situation where communication has worked particularly well or poorly?
2. Do you think there are any problems with internal communication? What are those problems? In what situations are these problems most visible?
  - How do these challenges affect your own work? E.g. motivation, task performance, emotional reactions, etc.
3. How has communication changed during the time you have been working here?
  - Has the change been positive or negative?
  - What do you think has caused the changes (e.g. personnel changes, new tools, management style)?
4. Do you feel that a possible lack of information or poor communication affects the work atmosphere?
  - How is it reflected in everyday life (e.g. in trust, work motivation, cooperation)?
5. Does the quality of communication affect customer service situations?
  - Have there been situations where the customer has been provided with contradictory or incomplete information?
6. How could communication be developed? Do you have any concrete development suggestions?

### Questions for managers:

- Do you feel that as a manager you are able to communicate all the necessary information to other employees well enough?
- How do you ensure that the information gets through?
- Are there situations where the message has not reached everyone?
- Do you feel that you need support in communication as a manager?