The Implementation of Service Sequence in Improve Operational Service at Muscadet Restaurant, Hotel Sentra Manado

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Article History	Abstract
	This study aims to analyze problems and find solutions in staff service at Muscadet Restaurant in relation to guest satisfaction at The Sentra Manado Hotel. There are three main issues that are the focus of this study, namely the additional number of participants(guests) in the restaurant, extra service, and overtime. This study applied data through literature study, observation, and interviews. The data obtained was then presented qualitatively. The results of the study found several obstacles in waiter/waitress service. Based on the results of data observation and interviews with guests at The Sentra Manado Hotel, several obstacles in staff service were found. Some of the problems that commonly arise are an additional number of participants, technical problems such as check-in during breakfast, extra services that do not meet expectations, and overtime due to a lack of staff and a lack of cooperation and readiness in serving guests. The conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that the quality of waiter's service at The Sentra Manado Hotel can meet the needs of guests and make them feel satisfied. Recommendations to improve the quality of restaurant staff service at The Sentra Manado Hotel include conducting training or workshops.

INTRODUCTION

In the hospitality industry, a waiter is defined as an employee who works at a hotel and has responsibilities and duties in the restaurant to provide professional service related to the beverage and food needs of customers or hotel guests. Meanwhile, if waiters are observed based on the term, it means individuals who work or are responsible for serving beverages and food to hotel guests (Dahmer, et.al, 2008; Dixon, & Verma, 2013; Dixon, & Victorino, 2017). In addition, waiters are also defined as a position or job commonly found in a number of food and beverage outlets, such as banquets, bars, room service, and restaurants (Lee, et.al, 2021; Odeniyi, et.al, 2020). In the hospitality industry, guest satisfaction is crucial. Therefore, employees need to strive to provide optimal service to guests so that they are satisfied. Guest satisfaction through aligned competencies has an impact on good performance (Yusnita & Yulianto, 2013; Andini, & Amaliasari, 2020); Armada & Armada, 2023; Guntur). Service can be defined as an effort that prioritizes the fulfilment of requirements and needs, and is also related to the accuracy of time in meeting customer expectations. In hotels, service plays a very crucial role because there are many guests visiting at the same time, so proper service is required in

accordance with applicable service rules or standards (Verhoef, et.al, 2004; Setiawan & Rahmawati, 2020; Kalele, et.al, 2025).

The importance of service quality will have an impact on guest satisfaction at hotels. From the results of the researcher's observations during a six-month internship at Muscadet Restaurant at Hotel Sentra Manado, several problems were found, including: waiters and waitresses often received complaints related to service, such as negligence in serving guests during breakfast, which led to complaints from guests. Furthermore, the workflow of waiters and waitresses was often inefficient and ineffective (in terms of time, energy, or human resources). Overtime often occurred as restaurant staff had to work beyond normal working hours due to unfinished tasks. There was an additional number of guests (cover), which was usually caused by changes in plans or unexpected guests arriving. For example, if an event participant brought friends or family without prior notice. Extra service arises due to additional guest requests during breakfast or special needs from guests. Requests to provide additional equipment such as cutlery, juice glasses, or other eating and drinking utensils during breakfast.

Overtime often occurs when restaurant staff have to work beyond normal working hours due to unfinished tasks. This could be due to a lack of staff in the restaurant, meaning there are no replacement employees for the next shift. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to several things, such as improving the quality of service to guests, improving the quality of working hours based on regulations, improving service support facilities, and improving the work performance and motivation of each staff member to be more productive. Ultimately, this disrupts the established service standards, which in turn causes the Sequence of Service—the order in which service is provided to guests—to be neglected, as waiters omit steps in the restaurant service procedure. The purpose of this study is to examine the application of the waiter sequence of service in improving service at Muscadet Restaurant at The Sentra Hotel Manado.

RESEARCH METHOD

Descriptive qualitative research was employed as the research method for this study. Qualitative research is designed to provide an in-depth description of a particular setting, or to clarify and explore a phenomenon as it naturally occurs. Descriptive qualitative research specifically focuses on examining existing conditions, events, behaviours, or processes, and presenting the findings in the form of a systematic narrative. The aim of this approach is to produce comprehensive illustrations, explanations, and interpretations of the relationships that emerge within the phenomena being studied.

This study was conducted at Muscadet Restaurant, The Sentra Manado Hotel, located in Manado City, North Sulawesi, Indonesia. The location was selected because it serves a high volume of guests during daily breakfast and à la carte service, making it an appropriate setting for analysing the implementation of the sequence of service and operational challenges.
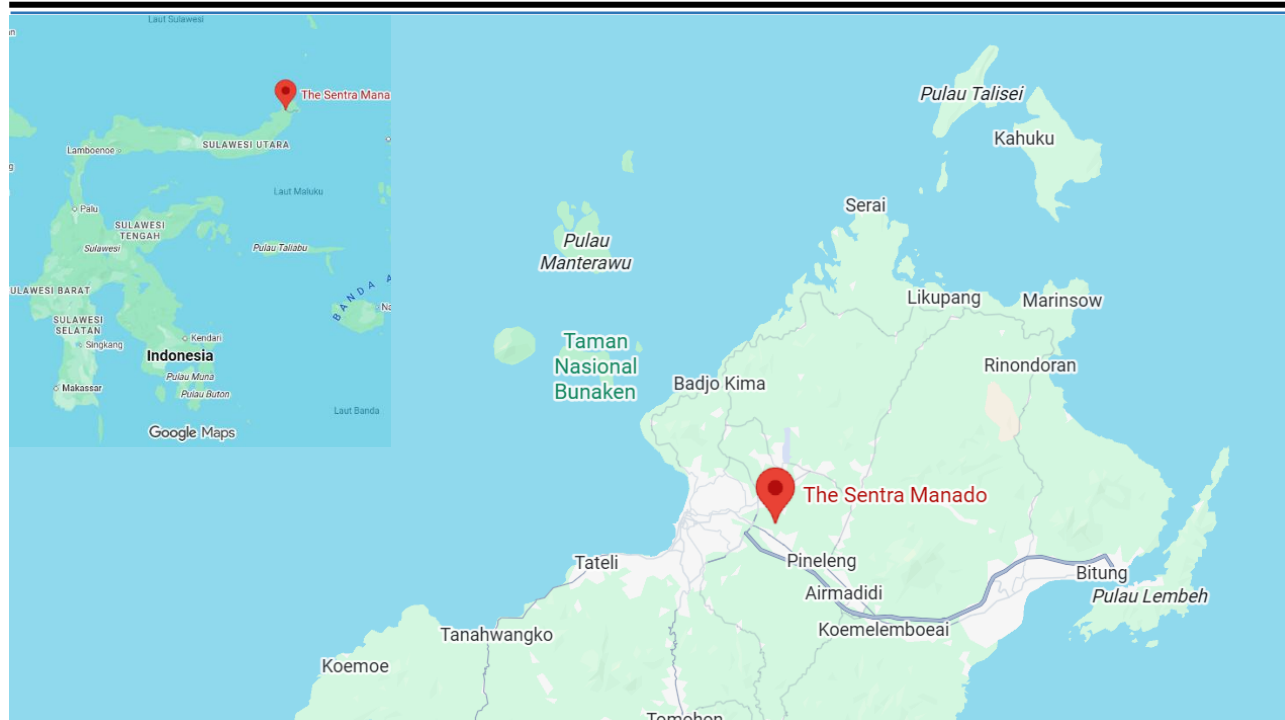
Figure 1: Research Location.

Data collection played a central role in this research, as the accuracy and relevance of the findings depend heavily on the collection techniques applied. According to Sugiyono (2010), data collection in qualitative research can be carried out through various methods, sources, and settings. In this study, three primary data collection techniques were used:

1. Observation

    Observation was conducted to obtain a direct understanding of guest behaviour, service performance, and staff interaction. In accordance with Widoyoko (2014), observation refers to systematic recording and careful monitoring of phenomena within the research setting. Observations were carried out throughout operational hours at Muscadet Restaurant to capture real-time service practices and guest satisfaction indicators.

2. Interviews

    Interviews served as the main technique for collecting primary verbal data. The study utilised unstructured interviews, which allow flexible questioning while remaining aligned with predetermined research themes (Arikunto, 2021). These interviews facilitated natural two-way communication, enabling the researcher to explore issues in greater depth. The key informants in this study were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in daily restaurant operations. The informants consisted of two main informants including Ricky as a Waiter and Reka as a Waitress and Supervisor. In total, two key informants participated in the interview process. Their insights were essential because they possess operational knowledge and experience directly related to the sequence of service practices and challenges observed in the restaurant.

3. Literature Review

    The literature review was conducted using books, academic journals, and previous theses relevant to hospitality service quality and sequence of service. Following the definition by George in Djiwandono (2015), the literature review served as an exploration of expert

opinions and scientific sources that support the conceptual and analytical framework of this study.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data analysis process involved systematically organising, categorising, and interpreting data obtained from observations, interviews, documentation, and field notes. The analysis followed an iterative process of identifying patterns, themes, and relationships within the data, thereby enabling the researcher to draw meaningful conclusions and ensure that the findings are easily understood by both academic and professional audiences.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A waiter and waitress must be able to serve guests and use service sequences in accordance with hotel procedures. A waiter must also interact with each other to support smooth restaurant operations. Waiters play a very important role in restaurants. They must carry out service sequences in performing their duties. To improve their service, waiters must be familiar with the facilities and food menu available at the restaurant when guests arrive. Waiters are required to greet guests, assist them when taking orders, and provide information about the various menus available, including any promotions. In carrying out their activities, waiters must be polite and courteous, and quick to help when guests need assistance. All of this is done so that guests feel comfortable and satisfied while enjoying the dishes served (Mohamed, et.al, 2022; Sazdova, et.al, 2022). The following is an overview of the staff at The Sentra Manado Restaurant.

Table 1. Table 1 Employee Data for The Sentra Manado Restaurant

No	Name of Employee	Position	Length of Work
1	Rezza Johassan	(FBM) F&B Service	3 months
2	Reka Tulas	SPV *Muscade Restaurant*	2 years
3	Jessika Sahoming	*Waitress*	2 years
4	Sintia Towoliu	*Waitress*	2 years
5	Bayu Fahrizal Adam	*Waiter* (Room Service)	2 years
6	Ricky Lie	*Waiter* & Bar Attendant	2 years
7	Jeje Adam	*Waitress*	1 year
8	Arie Kahiking	*Waiter*	1 year
9	Vilson Muhamad	Bar Attendant	1 year

Source: Hotel data

Based on the table above, a summary can be drawn if the number of Muscadet Restaurant employees in the long term can be seen for 2 years of work, there are 5 people, 3 months of work there is 1 person due to the replacement of the new FBM, while for 1 year there are 3 people.

Observation Results

Observation Results of the Sequence of Service Waiters at Muscadet Restaurant

Table 2. Observation Data on the Sequence of Service Waiters

No	Sequence Of Service	Often	Rarely	Not	Description
1	Welcoming Guests	✓			Performed daily
2	Escorting Guests	✓			Performed daily

3	Inviting guests to sit down		✓		Performed once a month
4	Unfolding the Napkin			✓	Never implemented
5	Providing a Menu List	✓			Performed daily
6	Taking Order	✓			Performed daily
7	Repeating Orders	✓			Performed daily
8	Delivering Captain's Orders			✓	Orders are placed through the system
9	Serving Drinks	✓			Performed daily
10	Delivering Food	✓			Performed daily
11	Ensuring Food is Ready	✓			Performed daily
12	Offering Dessert		✓		Promotional slides that are valid every month.
13	Offering Promotions		✓		Using social media
14	Cleaning the Guest Table	✓			Performed daily
15	Delivering the Bill		✓		Directly at the cashier
16	Words of Thanks	✓			Performed daily

Source: researcher data.

It can be seen from the table above that the observation results can be summarized as follows: some of the waiter workflow system is implemented, while some is not, based on the standards applied in the operational service at Muscadet Restaurant.

In terms of waiter service

Table 3. Observation Data in Terms of Waiters Service

NO	OBSERVED INDICATORS	IMPACT	DESCRIPTION
1	Slow to clear up the table after guests have finished their food and drinks.	The next guest who sits at that table will feel uncomfortable, and there will be broken equipment due to rushing during peak season because there will be many guests taking turns sitting at the table they want.	Must be done every day after guests have finished using all tableware.
2	After serving food and drinks, waiters often leave the table without saying excuse me or offering assistance if the guests still need anything.	Guests will complain to the cashier or SPV for not asking about the things they want.	This often happens when there are a lot of guests eating, especially at breakfast.
3	There are still waiters who cannot fully explain the basic composition of the food and beverages served, because sometimes there are guests who are unfamiliar with the names of certain types of food and beverages, so they need an explanation regarding the composition of the food and beverages served, for example, the basic ingredients used in the seasoning.	Guests will be confused when picking up food and drinks. When asking waiters if they don't know the types of food and drinks on the menu, for example, if a guest is allergic to certain ingredients and it turns out that they have eaten food that was not explained in detail to the guest, this will lead to complaints from guests to the waiters.	This often occurs due to a lack of training for waiters.

| 4 | Slow in responding to guests' requests expressed verbally, not very attentive to guests' needs, such as guests who need additional drinks or tea and coffee, etc. | If guests need water while eating, a slow response from waiters will lead to complaints because they are not being served properly. | This often happens when the restaurant is crowded with visitors. |

Source: researcher data.

Interview Results

Data collected based on direct field research with the aim of gathering data necessary for the continuation of thesis writing.
1. Interview Location: The Sentra Manado Hotel
2. Interview Source (Guest)

Table 4. Interview Data from Waiters

NO	QUESTIONING	INFORMAN	ANSWERS
1	What is the sequence of service steps that are often carried out every day in a restaurant?	*Waiter* (Ricky) *Waitress* (Reka)	When guests are 15 steps away, give them a smile and greet them after 5 steps. Escort guests and ask if they would like to sit in the smoking or non-smoking area. Offer the menu, take food and drink orders, bring drinks first, then food, deliver to the guest table, ask if anything is missing or if they have any complaints, bring the bill, and say thank you.
2	What are some common challenges in working as a waiter?	*Waiter* (Ricky) *Waitress* (Reka)	When waiters experience difficulties in performing the sequence of service, and also due to the small number of waiters during operations, poor communication leads to complaints, poor teamwork, and a shortage of employees.
3	During your time working as a waiter, have you ever received a complaint from a guest? Please provide an example.	*Waiter* (Ricky) *Waitress* (Reka)	The operations that receive the most complaints are during breakfast, including: slow food refills, resulting in some buffet items being empty; food that is too salty; slow juice and water refills, often resulting in empty containers; empty juice glasses; and cutlery that is often empty and slow to be refilled.
4	How should a waiter respond when faced with a guest complaint?	*Waiter* (Ricky) *Waitress* (Reka)	The first step is to remain calm and not panic, listen to all guest complaints until they are finished, then apologize to the guest and offer a discount or free food and drinks as a token of apology. After that, evaluate the situation with the work team based on their shift to discuss the problem that occurred, and remind each other to remain united and focused.
5	Is training provided to improve the performance of waiters?	*Waiter* (Ricky)	Yes, training is conducted once a month on topics such as effective communication, teamwork, and knowledge. However, it is

			conducted very quickly due to the ongoing operational schedule.
		Waitress (Reka)	

Source: researcher data.

From the results of the interview table above, it can be summarized that there are a number of obstacles faced by waiters, as well as ways to overcome each problem that occurs in service operations.

Based on the results of the research, both observation and interviews with waiters, a number of obstacles were found in service operations, including: the number of guests/covers continues to increase, resulting in service operational obstacles; the sequence of service is not carried out optimally due to extra service; staff shortages cause overtime work; and briefings are not carried out properly, resulting in positive communication not being achieved optimally. In order to improve the quality of service at Muscadet Restaurant at The Sentra Manado Hotel, waiters must pay attention to guest needs, carry out supervision, improve the implementation of an optimal sequence of service, and ensure sufficient staff availability. By overcoming a number of obstacles, it is hoped that Muscadet Restaurant's operations will run smoothly and guests will have an enjoyable experience.

Based on the problems encountered during the research, there were a number of operational standard discrepancies, namely the Sequence of Service, which differed at Muscadet Restaurant. According to the theory, the Sequence of Service is described in detail in relation to the steps of service. However, in reality, the industry only outlines the general steps. Furthermore, there is a discussion regarding the shortage of employees at The Sentra Manado Restaurant, which causes difficulties in providing operational services when there is an increase in the number of guests. This can be seen based on the responses given by guest respondents during interviews. Guests visiting the restaurant complained about the cleanliness, the responsiveness of the employees, and the employees' responsiveness and sensitivity to guests. Therefore, all employees need to pay attention to their responsibilities and duties. This must be implemented optimally so that the problems that arise can be resolved through the Sequence of Service.

Based on the results of the research findings on the title "Analysis of the Application of the Sequence of Service Waiters in Improving Operational Services at Muscadet Restaurant the Sentra Manado," the performance of Waiters and the application of the Sequence of Service are still considered suboptimal, so that operational work is not running smoothly. Therefore, the points that must be implemented to improve operational service for waiters include:

1. A briefing is always held at the end of each shift. The briefing routine is carried out at the end of the shift or after the operational lunch break. Briefings are held every day, except on public holidays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Briefings on the latest information and discussions related to operations are delivered by the morning and afternoon leaders to all employees. Leaders will immediately provide an evaluation if they find that operations are not running optimally. Furthermore, employees are free to express their opinions during the briefing process.

2. Training must be provided to employees on a regular basis. The training that needs to be conducted is related to cross-training on the Sequence of Service SOP for greeters and waiters. Cross-training is carried out through role swapping between greeters and waiters and vice versa. This is intended so that all employees understand each other's jobs, duties, or roles, enabling them to assist their colleagues whenever needed. Product knowledge is another training provided in addition to cross-training and role-playing. Employees must understand the products offered or served at the restaurant, such as the a-la carte menu, which includes beverages (non-alcoholic or alcoholic) and food, the buffet menu, and any events or promotions currently taking place at the restaurant.

3. Feedback provided by guests must always be taken into consideration. Guests will provide suggestions to employees if they are dissatisfied with something related to products or services. These suggestions must be taken into consideration by all employees because they can affect the satisfaction of visiting guests. One form of service that can be provided is through the implementation of guest suggestions, so that when guests return in the future, they can feel satisfaction and happiness because the feedback from those guests has been implemented and listened to.

4. Provide greeters and waiters with communication tools. Communication tools are crucial for companies to provide because they facilitate operations during dinner, lunch, and breakfast. Generally, the communication tools provided by hospitality companies are headsets, hangers, and walkie-talkies. Through these tools, greeters and waiters can exchange information and communicate with each other regarding guests during operating hours. This also facilitates communication between the back of house and front of house.

As described above, it can be summarized that the implementation of optimal SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) can influence the quality of service provided by employees. Every day, SOPs must be implemented so that waiters can properly carry out their responsibilities and duties and achieve guest satisfaction.

DISCUSSION

This section provides an in-depth discussion of the findings by integrating observational data, interview results, and the analysis of the sequence of service at Muscadet Restaurant with relevant theories and previous scholarly work. It also highlights the theoretical and managerial implications derived from the study.

1. Interpretation of Findings within the Framework of Service Sequence Theory

The findings reveal that several components of the sequence of service—such as greeting guests, providing menus, and delivering food—are consistently implemented. Nevertheless, other critical steps, including unfolding napkins, conducting table checks, and maintaining responsive interaction, are not performed optimally. These shortcomings indicate a significant discrepancy between the restaurant's formal SOPs and their actual execution.

Dixon and Verma (2013) emphasise that the sequence of service operates as an interconnected system in which any inconsistency in execution can diminish perceived service quality, particularly during critical touchpoints. Similarly, Verhoef et al. (2004) argue that customer experience is shaped by a series of service events, underscoring that

gaps at any stage can strongly influence overall satisfaction. The results of this study thus reaffirm the importance of adhering to a structured and consistent service sequence.

Furthermore, the deviation from established SOPs observed in this study aligns with Setiawan and Rahmawati (2020), who found that ineffective application of service standards in high-traffic restaurants often results in reduced service efficiency. Within the context of Muscadet Restaurant, these deviations are exacerbated by the increasing number of guests, limited staffing, and insufficient product knowledge among employees.

2. Relationship Between Findings, Service Quality, and Guest Satisfaction

The study demonstrates that delayed table clearing, inadequate product explanations, and slow responses to guest requests significantly affect guest satisfaction. These findings reinforce the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988), which asserts that the responsiveness and assurance dimensions are particularly influential in shaping customer perceptions in hospitality settings.

Empirical evidence from international studies supports this conclusion. Sazdova et al. (2022) highlight that prompt service and adequate staff knowledge are key determinants of restaurant guest satisfaction. Meanwhile, Mohamed et al. (2022) indicate that positive interactions with restaurant staff contribute not only to immediate satisfaction but also to long-term attachment and intention to revisit. Given these insights, the challenges observed at Muscadet Restaurant—especially during peak breakfast hours—pose risks to the restaurant's ability to deliver consistently high-quality service.

3. Human Resource Capacity and Workload Analysis

A central issue identified in this study is the shortage of staff, which leads to increased workloads, frequent overtime, and diminished service performance. This aligns with Odeniyi et al. (2020), who assert that when customer arrival rates exceed staffing capacity, service delays become inevitable and staff performance declines.

Interview data also reveal that staff training is conducted only once a month and tends to be brief due to operational demands. However, Lee et al. (2021) argue that continuous training is essential for improving service accuracy, consistency, and overall operational flow. The lack of sustained training at Muscadet Restaurant therefore contributes to gaps in product knowledge and inconsistency in following the sequence of service. To address these performance issues, strengthening human resource allocation, revising work schedules, and implementing comprehensive training programmes are necessary.

4. Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to advancing theoretical understanding of the sequence of service in the hospitality industry by demonstrating that:

a. Service sequence is not merely a procedural checklist but a dynamic system influenced by staff competency, internal communication, and operational workload.

b. The effectiveness of service sequence implementation depends on service flow, load, and internal coordination, supporting the conceptual framework proposed by Dixon and Victorino (2017).

c. Consistent with the "peak-end rule" (Verhoef et al., 2004), negative experiences at critical service moments disproportionately influence overall guest perceptions.

These contributions strengthen the theoretical link between structured service delivery and guest satisfaction.

5. Practical Implications for Restaurant Management

The findings provide several actionable insights for restaurant managers seeking to enhance service quality:

a. Continuous Training Programmes:

Regular, structured training in product knowledge, communication skills, and service standards is essential for improving employee competence.

b. Cross-Training and Role Rotation:

Implementing cross-training helps ensure that staff can support one another during busy periods, reducing service delays.

c. Enhanced Communication Tools:

Providing staff with communication devices such as walkie-talkies can significantly enhance real-time coordination between front-of-house and back-of-house teams.

d. Workforce Strengthening and Scheduling:

Revising staff allocation and balancing workloads are crucial for preventing fatigue and ensuring consistent service quality.

By adopting these measures, Muscadet Restaurant can improve operational efficiency, strengthen service performance, and enhance guest experiences.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research findings, the researcher was able to draw a conclusion that: Guests who visit feel that waiters are still not skilled enough in carrying out their work. This is particularly related to menu capabilities, which include inefficient service, such as waiters not being skilled enough in serving guests (not fast and agile enough), as well as not having sufficient product knowledge. Judging from the workflow of waiters at Muscadet Restaurant, there are still employees who do not perform their jobs according to the Sequence of Service workflow, so that during operations, this will have an impact and lead to complaints from guests who are not served as they should be in a hotel restaurant. In terms of service, waiters are still experiencing negative impacts due to not performing their jobs effectively. From the interviews, it can be seen that there are still waiters who are not performing their jobs optimally because the training provided by the hotel seems rushed and insufficient. From all the results of the discussion, it can be seen that there are still waiters who do not perform their jobs in accordance with the standards set by the hotel, which still causes complaints from guests regarding food and beverages.

Recommendations regarding Analysis and Observation of the Application of Sequence of Service, including: (1) Improved service delivery capabilities, such as waiters' knowledge of the products sold, responsiveness in handling complaints, skill in persuading guests to return, serving guests with high standards of etiquette, speed in providing service, ability to understand and assist guests with special needs, and ability to pay attention to their own appearance as waiters. (2) Continue to adapt to guests or visitors who come, give a positive impression to all visitors, be polite, friendly, and not stiff. (3). Meet human resource standards

such as education and work experience. (4). Maintain training in accordance with standards. Always conduct briefings after completing tasks and responsibilities to assess the performance of each team member, determine whether there has been an improvement in service quality, and enhance knowledge not only about products but also about existing facilities and infrastructure.

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