

---

## The "Mystery Shopper" Research Method for Evaluating the Work of the Hotel Staff

*Mirjafarova A. J*

*Assistant to the department of Tourism, SAMIES*

---

**Abstract:** The "mystery shopper" research method is a way to evaluate the work of the hotel staff by sending special anonymous agents who act as ordinary guests. This approach allows you to get an objective assessment of the service and the quality of services, since the staff does not know what they will check.

**Key words:** "mystery shopper", independent service assessment, staff work control, quality service, service quality control systems.

**Mystery shopper** – independent assessment of service and control of staff work. Mystery shoppers make real reservations at the hotel, spend a night or several nights, during which they evaluate all aspects of the service - from registration and feedback to the level of cleanliness of the rooms and professionalism of the staff. After completing the visit, the mystery shopper prepares a detailed report with ratings for various categories.

This research method allows you to identify weaknesses in the service and improve the level of service of the hotel. It also helps to motivate staff to do a better job, because knowing that every guest can be a mystery shopper, employees will try to provide a high level of service at any time.

High-quality service helps to stand out from competitors, helps to increase sales, increase profits. The assessment of the quality of customer service is aimed at monitoring the processes taking place in the company. Service assessment makes it possible to determine the level of service directly at the places of sale of services and/or goods. The following reasons are the main ones for checking the quality of service in the organization:

- the desire to increase the flow of new customers,
- the desire for growth of regular customers,
- checking how well the standards of the hotels are mastered,
- checking the knowledge of employees,
- the desire to provide high-quality service to its visitors,
- the desire to increase profits,
- Employee performance assessment,
- the desire to become better than the competition,
- the desire to become a customer-oriented hotel.

It should be noted that an independent assessment of the service should be carried out at certain intervals. It's not enough to do it once or twice. Hotels do not stand still: new competitors, new technologies, products and services are emerging. To be at the top, it is necessary to constantly improve business processes, customer service, and introduce new tools. And everything, therefore,

needs to be checked and evaluated. It is always necessary to look at your hotel from the outside through the eyes of the client himself. This will help you succeed and stand out from the numerous competitors.

Systematically attracting mystery shoppers is the key to business success. Such specialists will collect the most objective information about the work of both specific employees and the entire institution as a whole. With the help of secret agent checks, several tasks can be solved at once:

- Identify problem areas. Experienced auditors will be able to understand exactly what the main problems in your institution are. They will pay attention to the behavior of employees, cleanliness in the hall, the location of goods, the general atmosphere and other factors;
- Understand your competitive advantages. Mystery shoppers evaluate everything from the customers' side. This way, they will determine exactly why people come to you. This will allow us to consolidate and improve our competitive advantages;
- additional motivation of the staff. If employees are aware of the inspections, they will begin to perform their duties more effectively;
- increased customer traffic. Systematic improvement of the quality of service will lead to an increase in the popularity of the business (and, as a result, to an increase in profits).

Thus, quality control of the services provided with the help of secret buyers will help to establish the effective operation of the institution.

Tips for preparing the team for the implementation of a quality control system

When asked if you trust your staff, many business owners will answer: "I trust, but I'm checking." And not only them. Government agencies also adhere to this approach, considering any business through the prism of financial settlement control.

Checking is normal. Why, then, do employees often have a negative attitude to the fact that their work is controlled? It's all about awareness. We are calm about the rules if we were warned about them in advance and agreed to them. Without established rules, control will be a waste of money and time. Here is a simple algorithm that will help you get the desired result from the implementation of the system.

#### 1. Development of service quality standards

Do not assign this task to one department. You will achieve a really good result if you combine the wishes of marketers, sales department and top management. In addition, when developing service standards, it is necessary to take into account the interests of several parties:

- Business standards should primarily work for profit;
- Employees who will need to comply with these standards on a daily basis;
- Customers — the service must meet their expectations.

Start with your customers: spend time on individual interviews, find out their idea of high-quality service, and compare with competitors. If you do everything right, you can find out what customers are not satisfied with in your service right now, and eliminate the shortcomings as quickly as possible.

Based on the information received, describe the standards: how employees should look, what to say, what security requirements to comply with, what algorithm to use to achieve business goals, and so on. When describing, try to ensure that the standards:

- do not change too often;
- contained examples;
- were clear to everyone;
- did not contradict each other.

## 2. Formalization of standards

Create a single document or wiki site for employees dedicated to service standards. Make the structure clear so that everyone can find the answer to their question without additional help. Do not turn standards into a cumbersome normative document of a thousand and one pages — let them be concise and easy to understand.

## 3. Employee training

The concepts of ethics and norms may differ greatly from one person to another, depending on their upbringing and social environment. Therefore, train employees in standards, even if some of them seem obvious.

Give up self—study and tests - it's simple, but not effective. It is better to conduct a full-fledged training with playing out real situations when communicating with clients. Such an interactive experience will help to better assimilate the material and reduce staff resistance to future changes.

## 4. Explaining the "rules of the game" to employees

Before you introduce new standards into your work, tell the staff what will happen if they are met and violated. To increase employee loyalty to innovations, you can introduce a reward system: this may be a material or moral motivation, part of the overall KPI, or its replacement. Do not forget to add all these measures to the digital system so that each employee:

- can assess the consequences of non-compliance with standards;
- understood how the motivational part is formed for their implementation.

## 5. Organization of control over compliance with standards

Many managers know that only what is controlled is carried out. This rule works in 90% of cases when working with staff.

The implementation of a service quality control system is not the fastest and easiest process. But it must be passed if the hotel wants to remain competitive or plans to become a leader in its business segment. And we must remember that the success of this process depends not only on the choice of the system, but also on how well your team adapts to the new rules of work. Give priority to clear communication, comprehensive training, the formation of a culture of quality, the inclusion of control mechanisms — and success will not take long.

## **REFERENCES:**

1. Sadriiddinovna, Amriiddinova Rayhona. "Improving the operation of hotels in Uzbekistan." *Excellencia: International Multi-disciplinary Journal of Education* (2994-9521) (2024).
2. Amriiddinova Rayhona Sadriiddinovna, Umarova Fotima Umarjonovna. Republic Of Uzbekistan: An Attractive Country On The World Tourist Map. *Excellencia: International Multi-disciplinary Journal of Education* (2994-9521).
3. R Amriiddinova, S Islomov. The importance of investment in the development of rural tourism and agrotourism and rural tourism. 2022/6/6. *Journal Builders Of The Future*.
4. Rayhona Sadriiddinovna Amriiddinova, Practical Tips on How to Keep Hotel Front Office Employees. Vol. 2 No. 12 (2024): *Web of Semantics : Journal of Interdisciplinary Science*.