

Chapter IV

Research Results and Analysis

4.1 General Description of Hotel

Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba characterized itself to be a simple and minimalistic hotel. The hotel itself didn't register for how many stars, but in trip advisor or online travel agent websites, the hotel is said to be 3 stars. It has a total of 9 floors, 112 guest rooms, 4 connecting rooms in every floor. All the guest rooms are non-smoking. The hotel facilities are vending machines that are located in the 5th and 9th floor, safety box located at the 1st floor, coin laundry machine on the 2nd floor and breakfast hall or mainly known as the restaurant is located on the 1st floor.

Safety deposit box is not placed in the room to refrain from the guest complaints if there is any lost item. So, safety boxes are placed in the 1st floor secured by guest's own room cards. At the same floor, smoking room is also available since all the rooms are non-smoking. The hotel has no laundry services but there is a laundry corner in the 2nd floor. Hotel also has two vending machines located separately in the 5th and 9th floor (the highest floor in the hotel) and free breakfast service in the 1st floor hotel restaurant.

Moreover, the staffs of this hotel are mainly in the front office department. For restaurant staffs they are actually part of the front office team but get the chance to be in charge in the restaurant. After breakfast shift is over and break time then they will standby in the front desk again.

As for positions in Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba, there is manager, assistant manager, chief, leader for several parts of the hotel operation and staffs. Since the general department in the hotel is the front office department, the assistant manager or manager is not as front office department but as a whole of Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba.



Figure 4.1.1 Hotel Building from Exterior View

Source: Agoda Website



Figure 4.1.2 Hotel Facilities: Safety Deposit Box (1st Floor)

Source: Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba website



Figure 4.1.3 Hotel Facilities: Smoking Room (1st Floor)

Source: Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba website

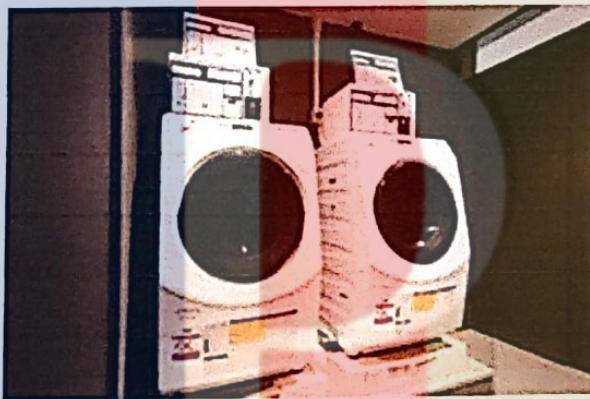


Figure 4.1.4 Hotel Facilities: Laundry Corner (2nd Floor)

Source: Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba website

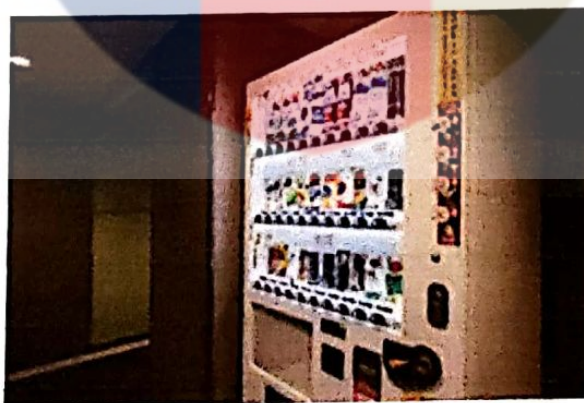


Figure 4.1.5 Hotel Facilities: Vending Machine (5th Floor & 9th Floor)

Source: Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba website

4.1.1 Brief History of Hotel



Figure 4.1.1.1 Xymax Corporation Logo

Source: Xymax Corporation website



Figure 4.1.1.2 Karaksa Hotels Corporation Logo

Source: Karaksa Hotels website

Karaksa Hotels corporation is formed under Xymax corporation. Xymax corporation is originally a real estate business. In the year 2016, it launches its hotel brand name 'karaksa' with a target of being the choice for foreign travellers. There are several sub corporations that can benefit in the hotel operation such as the building management called the Xymax Alpha Corporation and cleaning services such as for housekeeping called Xymax Sala Corporation.

Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba is established in November 2017. It is located in the centre busy area of south part of Osaka. Often called as *Minami* area, *Minami* means south in Japanese. The hotel is located 5 minutes away from *Shinsaibashi* shopping street and *Dotonbori* street, these two places are the famous for shopping area for tourists. The hotel address is 2 Chome-9-13 Nishishinsaibashi, Chuo Ward, Osaka, 542-0086.

4.1.2 Structure Organization of Hotel

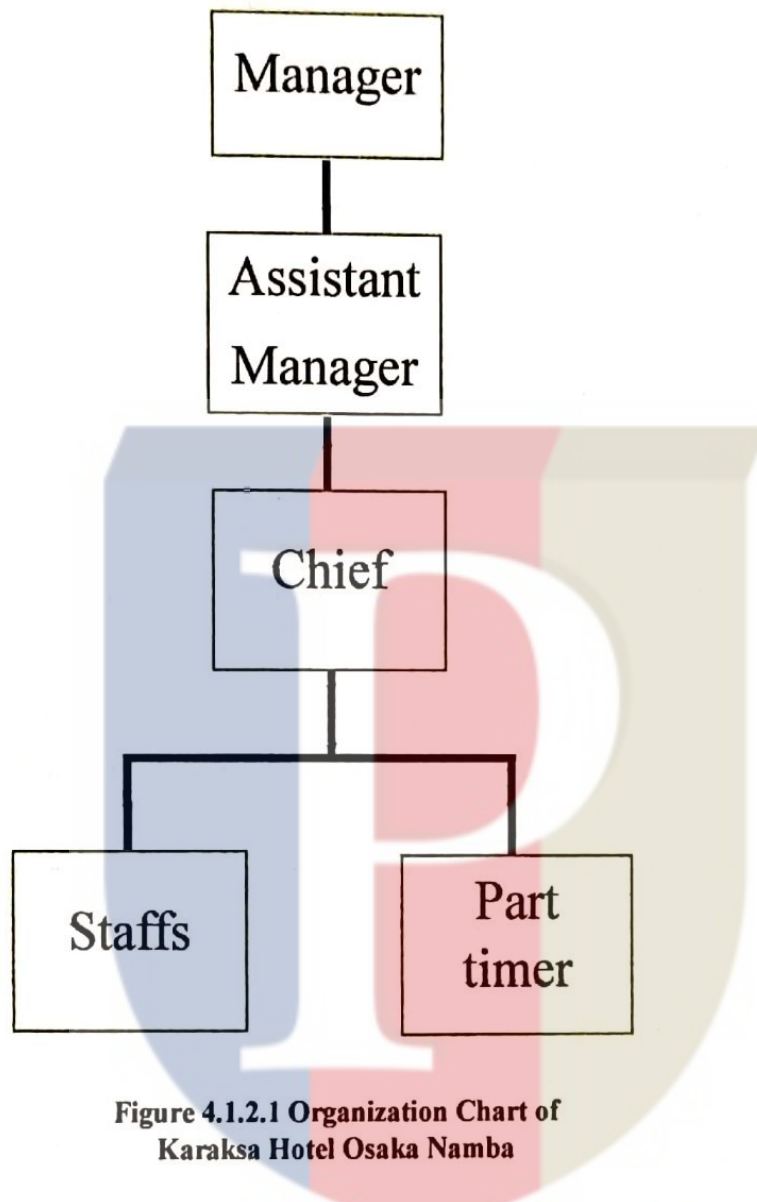


Figure 4.1.2.1 Organization Chart of Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba

The organization chart in Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba is considered to be quite different than other hotels. Since the hotel is not a big hotel, there is no general manager but only manager who help in being a medium to contact to the headquarters. Assistant manager does more work after the staffs have done such as history and cashier audit checking to be sent to the accounting team in the headquarter office. Chiefs are in charge to help training the staffs and also the ones who will recheck the tasks performed by staffs before it is being passed over to the assistant manager. They also are

the ones handling more sensitive tasks such as forgotten item to be sent to police or money related things.

4.2 Observation Findings

As for the observation findings, it is done by the author for 5 months. The duration of internship that the author performed in this hotel. From there, she has observed several changes that happened throughout 5 months of working in Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba.

Few months back, the hotel provides service to send guests luggage prior to their check in time. Because the hotel's check in time is at 3, so the guests who came earlier to finish their check in details, kept their luggage at the hotel. While that time, the guests who came earlier, staffs will prepare their room key so that when the guest come back and wish to pick up their room key, it is already ready.

However, because there are times that there are sudden room changes and the staffs are not informed. The chances of miscommunication happen between the hotel staffs has risen. The cause may be because no communication in between the hotel staffs or it is also the hotel staffs that are not careful of the extra note written. As a result, the hotel came up with a policy to not make any keys for the early arrival guests, but will make the room keys when they come back at 3 o'clock (hotel's check in time). To minimize the risks of having miscommunications between staffs.

Also, when the staffs misheard the room number for that certain luggage to be sent to the room. It is either result of misread the room number that is assigned in the Opera system or the person hearing misheard what the other person is saying. Ever since that happening, sending luggage to guest rooms have been stopped to refrain from misplaced luggage in guest rooms and guests' bad complaints on loss of luggage.

Next, the hotel staffs used to help in making restaurant reservation for in house guests through phone with the desired restaurant the guest requested. However, because there are several times which in the end guests did not

come to the restaurant, they have requested to make reservation. The hotel made a policy not to help making restaurant reservations for guests through phone. This is because when the guests did not come according to their reservation, the restaurant will call the hotel and make it as it was the hotel's fault. Resulting bad image for the hotel. From that time onwards, the hotel stops in helping guest to make reservation through phone.

So, to refrain from getting complaints for guest as a result of not helping them, staffs may help them to make reservation through their phones (guests) in online restaurant websites. Or through the personal phone number of guests.

Then, there is recent policy in regarding of ordering taxi for guests. The hotel staffs now cannot take reservations for normal taxis except for big taxis, because big taxis require reservation beforehand. The hotel staffs used to help taking reservation for guests with their desired time. Such as today, 20 March 2019, the guest checked in. however, because the guest is catching up with his/her flight is unable to book our shuttle bus, therefore they have to go to the airport on their own. Their check out date is on the 22 March 2019, and so they requested the front staff to arrange it and for the taxi to come at 10 am.

Upon hearing the guest request, after explaining about the hotel information and give the room key, the front staff made reservation for the taxi according to the guest request. After the hotel staff made the reservation, he input the reservation details that this guest inquired the taxi and it will arrive at 10 am. And on the check-out date, the staff who handled the check-out details to guide the guest that the staff has arranged for a taxi to come.

However, because there is miscommunication in between staff, which is no message is placed at the front desk area, only a printed paper of the list of traces (from Opera system), no communication about taxi, then the staff who worked from 10 is not informed. And when the guest checked out, he inquired a taxi to come, and so the staff called for a taxi. And few minutes the taxi came and the guest departed. Few minutes later, the reserved taxi arrived, and at first the other staff thought it is another guest who inquired for the taxi. But

turns out the recent guest who just checked out was the one who ordered the taxi upon their check-out desired time.

As a result, the reserved taxi came, but no passenger will rode into it, that is why, as the consequence the hotel must pay for the cancellation fee. Which is the minimum meter price of the taxi. From that time onwards, to refrain any miscommunications or cancellations between staffs, the hotel decided to stop receiving taxi reservations except for big taxis. If guest wish for the taxi to come on their desired time, staff can explain to guests that it only takes 10 minutes for the taxi to reach the hotel. So, inform guests to come earlier so that the taxi can come according to their desired time.

Also, since June 2019, the hotel starts collecting city tax from the guests. It is a different tax compared to the accommodation tax that guests have paid when they made their reservation. The total price of city tax that guest must pay will be inform during their check in time. For group reservations (called as party reservations in the hotel) they are guests who booked for connecting rooms.

One of the daily tasks of the staffs are also assigning rooms and after the room is assigned, they will print the connecting room reservations and write the Opera number for the connecting room reservations, to make easy for the staffs to search for that reservation. And also, writing whether the room is already paid through the travel agent or will be paid upon the check in period. Because of the new policy from Osaka, the city tax that is charged to guests in according to the room rate they paid. So, the hotel staffs not only have to write the room that is assigned but also have to write the total tax that need to be paid by that guest.

However, because there are times when the staffs made a mistake in writing the total amount of tax to be charged to guests. The staffs who will make the room keys for the connecting room reservations, must also check the total amount of tax written is correct or not.

Throughout a daily operation, communication is a very important aspect in a hotel. The communication in the hotel is always conducted in Japanese. However, between some staffs there are times communication are done in English, Indonesian, Chinese or Korean. When there are new policy or information in the hotel operation it is always written in the hotel operation site in the *hikitsugi* list.

The *hikitsugi* list are not only about the recent new policy of the hotel operation but also for the upcoming guest information or details that are to need to be handover to the next staffs.

When conducting the handover list or *hikitsugi* to the next shift, it is mostly done in speaking. *Hikitsugi* is usually conducted when exchange of shifts such as from evening shift to morning, then afternoon briefing and afternoon to the evening shift. Mostly *hikitsugi* that are explained are the important handovers, other than that is written in the list and staffs must read to be aware of what is going on in the hotel.

When there is a new *hikitsugi* and some staff did not understand what it meant, they will ask from the person who wrote the file and explained it through speaking. And from there some will also state their opinion or feedbacks on the new operation procedure.

The changes that has been done for the hotel operation is not mostly a result of miscommunication. But there are several aspects in which the communication is not done properly, resulting changes in the hotel operation. This is why, having responses from the communication partner is needed, to show whether that person clearly understood the message trying to be informed by the sender.

As being explained by Harnish, Robert M., et al. (2010) that two-way communication is one of the keys to effective communication. When there is one person receiving and giving feedback, that is where communication in the operation will improve gradually.

4.3 Findings on Interview Results

Based on the results of interview done with 10 staffs of Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba, it will be summarized per interviewees. As listed below,

1. Sakai Eriko is the assistant manager of Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba. She answered that although throughout the daily operation in communication, all foreign staffs are indeed fluent. Although entirely in the hotel operation is using Japanese language, there are times when they use other languages to communicate. Having a working environment with different nationalities and culture made the environment more diverting. However, because the foreign staffs are not native Japanese, knowledge of vocabulary may be considered limited. This is why, as Japanese native, to allow the other interlocutor understand the message that is being delivered by the sender. Sakai Eriko also mentioned that communication is better done in both ways writing and speaking. This is because in an industry like hotel, everyone is not working at the same period. Thus, to let everyone aware of the things going on or things that needs to Passover to the next staffs, it is better with writing. And for the current present staffs explaining through speaking.
2. Piriya Apitha Pasini Oom, the front desk staff from Thailand. Despite previously she had background studies in Japanese language back in Kyoto. She considers herself to still lack in the skill to communicate in Japanese. However, throughout the daily operation in the hotel, she considered the communication to be alright. However, if to ask about her fluency in communication, she said that she can handle daily conversations very well. But, when taking up telephone calls from Japanese native, she thinks that her skill to be lacking. In her opinion, to make communication become better, it is better to do it more through speaking.
3. Park Gyeong Beom, the front staff from South Korea. He has joined Karaksa Hotel for 1 year and 7 months. Throughout the communication in the hotel, he thinks so far it is still manageable.

However, because most of the staffs aren't native Japanese, may be a bit challenging when it comes to communication. Because every person's Japanese level is not the same, resulting misunderstanding to rise. This is why, when having conversations, have to know the companion's Japanese level in order to achieve an effective communication. Park said that having both written and speaking in the communication is a good way of achieving better communication.

4. Nielyn Grace Sa Ayo, the front desk staff from the Philippines. She is also the chief in Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba. As a chief, she takes the role in handling more trivial things in relation to the operation in the hotel. Grace said that sometimes she considers herself to have a difficult time to communicate in Japanese. Because of the different backgrounds every staffs had. This does not apply to the other foreign staffs only but also with Japanese staffs. Despite that way, in terms of daily conversations, Grace said that she has no problem with that. But, when it comes to meetings, with the people from the corporate, she has hard times in expressing her opinions because of the difficulty of selection of words. This is because when facing the people from the corporate, usage of a formal terminologies is needed, which is why in that part is quite challenging for her. As for her thoughts in having an effective communication, she suggests communication done through speaking.
5. Kuo Ruey is the front staff from Taiwan. She has been working in Karaksa Hotel for 1 year, she considers herself to still lack in skills in communicating in Japanese. She explained that also because there are lots of problems occurring in the hotel, and with Japanese skills that are only average, the tendency of misunderstanding to arise. Especially based on Kuo's experience that, when she explains her point of view to a Japanese staff, it seems like that staff did not get what actually understand what the message Kuo wish to convey. However, after getting to know that person for few months, Kuo starts to understand Japanese way of thinking and also the chemistry

between the two is better. Which makes the communication done to be good and in a correct track. Using formal terminologies may be considered to be challenging, but in terms of reporting to managers or to high position staffs, it is a must to show respect. In Kuo's perspective, in a multi-culture working environment like this, a person must have a culture tolerance when communicating. Such as giving the other person sometime to understand the message being conveyed and etc. As for better outcome of communication, Kuo said that it is better to first do it by speaking and make some important points through writing to make it easier for the message to be understood.

6. Tabata Jyuri is one of the Japanese staffs of Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba. She still can understand English for basic conversation. Throughout her experience working, she said that although there are lots of foreign staffs, but their Japanese level is fluent. Making communication not a big problem. However, she added that there might be times which the message is not understood by the receiver or herself, she said at this case she might try use another alternative like using some English terminologies for the message to be understood. But, if still the message is not well understood, then she will consider in using the pocketalk which is a translator device that is also use when encountering foreign guests who is having difficulty in conveying their message to the front desk staffs. And as for opinion for better communication, it is better for it to be done in speaking.
7. Moon Sin Hyoung also one of the South Korean hotel staff. He said that for communications, he did not consider it to be a problem throughout in the hotel operations. And for his own fluency level in Japanese communicating, he considered it to be both good in terms of business Japanese and daily conversations too. Furthermore, in regarding of any challenges he faced when communicating, he said actually there is none in particular. However, if to be said, it is language barrier that will be a problem which is hard to overcome. For example, the message being conveyed by the sender and in the

end the receiver also didn't understand what is the sender trying to tell because of the limitation knowledge of vocabulary used in the conversation. To achieve good communication, Moon said that it is better to do it through writing this is because through speaking he then can see the person's mood and eye contact, making the communication to be understood better. Because through speaking meeting in person, the receiver is able to see a person body language and intonation when the message is being delivered.

8. Fitriyani is an Indonesian hotel staff. Fitri has background knowledge on Japanese language which is why conversations throughout the hotel is not a problem for her. For her own Japanese skills for communicating she considered it not to be a problem. And throughout the period she has been working she said that there is no problem in particular. For her own thinking in having a good communication, it is better to be done through speaking.
9. Miyazaki Toshiro is one of the Japanese staffs in Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba. From Miyazaki's point of view, he said that so far in the hotel, the communication that is done is easy to comprehend. In easy to comprehend, he meant that in the hotel there aren't much in using formal or deep Japanese terminologies, resulting the communication to be easy. As being Japanese, Miyazaki said that all of the foreign staff's Japanese level are fluent, however since in the daily operation not only common terminologies is used, polishing their skill on deep or formal Japanese is a good way to improve their knowledge on Japanese language. When explaining about the challenges that he faced in a multi-cultural environment, he said that if a specific challenge he faced is none. But if he try to reconsider about the challenge it will be when there are documents written in formal Japanese or Business Japanese, might be hard for foreigners to comprehend. And from there it might be hard for the foreign staffs to actually understand what the sender wishes to convey. Miyazaki

added that for communication to turn out well, it is better to be done through speaking.

10. Shidochi Masaaki is also a Japanese hotel staff. He has been working for Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba ever since the opening which is November 2017. Shidochi mentioned that it is indeed challenging having to work with people of different backgrounds. However, with everyone's cooperation and team work, the operation in the hotel turned out well. Shidochi considers the foreign staffs working in Karaksa Hotel Osaka Namba to be quite fluent in Japanese. Even so, again there are lots of Japanese terminologies that might not be understandable by foreigners, especially formal Japanese language. Because of not commonly use, therefore resulting it to a bit challenging for the foreign staffs. Shidochi added that business mails or information that has lots of relation towards deep Japanese will therefore affect the understanding of the foreign staff. Shidochi also said that for messages and good communication to turn out, it is better to be done first through note taking in other words, writing and then for further explaining in speaking.

4.4 Results and Discussion

Based on the results of interview and observations, there are some parts that the researcher has come to understand and analyse throughout these 4 months. Starting from the daily conversations throughout operation together with staffs from different countries and about their thinking of the communication done in the hotel.

Firstly, based on the researcher's observation, when communication is done it is in Japanese. Although there are times when English is used, especially when foreign staffs who speak English as their main language. But other than that, everyone uses Japanese.

In the operation system like Opera, it is in English. But the alerts or comments of Opera system are written in Japanese. But there are some areas have some English terminologies. Moreover, the handover tasks known as hikitsugi is written in Japanese. such as the recent happenings in the hotel. Or what must be aware when encountering this guest and etc.

Since in the hotel as front desks, they are also handling replying for email. In the operation manual there is a common FAQ as a template and is written in English. So, the staffs will know how to write when replying to guest mails and their inquiries.

In the daily operation, before the staffs start their shift. They first must measure their temperature and input in the excel file for health. When inputting their body temperature, there are sections where stated whether they are having headache, stomach pain, diarrhoea and etc. These abnormalities are written in Japanese, however there is a translation if they tap on the word.

For daily communication in the hotel, from handover of shifts, briefing and daily operation it is done in Japanese. Handover is done through speaking and is written for the highlighted events for the happening in the hotel (guest related or staff related). As for daily operational manuals or information, it is written all in Japanese. But since there are some staffs who understand

English so when the staffs don't really understand what it says in the explanation, they will ask help from the staffs who understand better.

Working with staffs from different countries will surely affect the way of communication. Especially they are working in a place which they can use their first language. The language used as main is Japanese language, with many staffs from different backgrounds, certainly Japanese language is their second language. With the language which is not their mother tongue, they use to communicate might go through some difficulties especially through writing or speaking.

However mostly during the working shift, normally they will first do it through writing and later for further explanation will be done through speaking. When being explained through speaking, there is always a feedback from any side, to clarify and giving out their own opinion.

Interview Questions	Responses
How long have you been working in this hotel?	The interviewees who worked more than 1 year: 80% The interviewees who worked less than 1 year: 20%
What is your position in this hotel?	Front Staffs
How do you think of the communication in the hotel?	All interviewees answered that the communication is good.
The hotel has Japanese language as their main language, how fluent do you think are you? (foreign staffs)	70% of the interviewees agreed that their level for Japanese conversation both formal and informal is fluent. 30% of the interviewees considered for their ability for formal Japanese conversation to not be very fluent.

Interview Questions	Responses
The hotel has Japanese language as their main language, how fluent do you think the foreign staffs here? (Japanese staffs)	All Japanese interviewees agreed that all foreign staffs are fluent in Japanese conversation. 20% said that formal terminologies might be challenging for the foreign staffs.
Based on your experience, did you encounter any challenges / difficulties when communicating in the multi-cultural environment?	80% of the interviewees said no challenges in particular throughout the daily operations in the hotel. 20% of the interviewees mentioned that the deep or formal terminologies in Japanese language might be a challenging. Such as documents like business mails, articles and etc.
In your opinion, is it more effective to communicate through speaking or writing?	60% of interviewees said that communication must be done through speaking. 40% of the interviewees said that communication must be done in both writing and speaking.

Table 4.4.1 Interview Result

Based on the interview conducted by the researcher, in finding out their opinion about the communication carried out in the hotel operation. The Japanese staffs understood that because the foreign staffs didn't have Japanese language as their first language. Therefore, there might be some terms that are not familiar to them.

As being explained by Harnish, Robert M., et al. (2010) that by having two-way communication, feedback from receiver takes place making sure the message being conveyed is understood and received properly.

When conducting the interview within the staffs, the author asked several questions in relation to hear their point of view. Such as, to achieve a better way of communication in the operation, is it better to write or speak to communicate.

From the answers of the staffs the author has interviewed with, everyone agreed that communication should better be done through speaking which also means two-way communication. Because this is where their opinions or feedbacks take place while communication is done between staffs.

The comparison that the author has found out is that the comparison between the data collected through observing and interviewing. As what majority have said that actually in particular there is no problem in communicating throughout the hotel operation. It just that from the changes in operational procedure, to not let the previous mistake to occur, the hotel changes its policy to refrain from getting into such troubles again. And as what majority says that communication is better to be done through speaking than writing because in speaking, the communication is actually done in two ways. And if one person does not understand what the message is about, he or she will be able to ask for further explanation. On the other hand, although through writing might have more details but the tendency of the person who don't understand to ask another person isn't very high.

So, to be more time efficient and everyone to understand easily, it is a better way to communicate through speaking. This way, a person's understanding is guaranteed, because the interlocutor will ask if there are further explanations needed or they will voice out their own opinion.

But just as the assistant manager, Sakai Eriko mentioned, "in hotel everyone works in different shifts, and the chances of not meeting the certain staff will be possible. Therefore, for that case, it is better to write so that the other working shifts will be aware of what is going on in the hotel."