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7 Staffing Myths Costing Your Hotel Money (and Guests!)



Presented by HotelStaff.com

Introduction

Running a successful hotel requires balancing numerous responsibilities. You strive to create exceptional experiences for your guests, making sure every detail is perfect, from the moment they step into the lobby to the time they check out.

But you're also managing a business, which means keeping a close eye on costs and maximizing profitability. And let's be honest – finding and keeping great staff can feel like one of the biggest challenges in the hospitality industry today.

The competition for talent is fierce. New hotels are opening on a consistent basis, all trying to hire from a limited pool of qualified candidates. And guest expectations are higher than ever.

Travelers have endless choices, and a single negative experience with your staff can lead to damaging online reviews and lost bookings.

So how do you create a winning team that consistently delivers those five-star experiences your guests expect while also protecting your profits?

It starts by challenging some common misconceptions about hotel staffing.

Too often, hotels fall prey to outdated ideas or quick-fix solutions that ultimately cost them more in the long run.

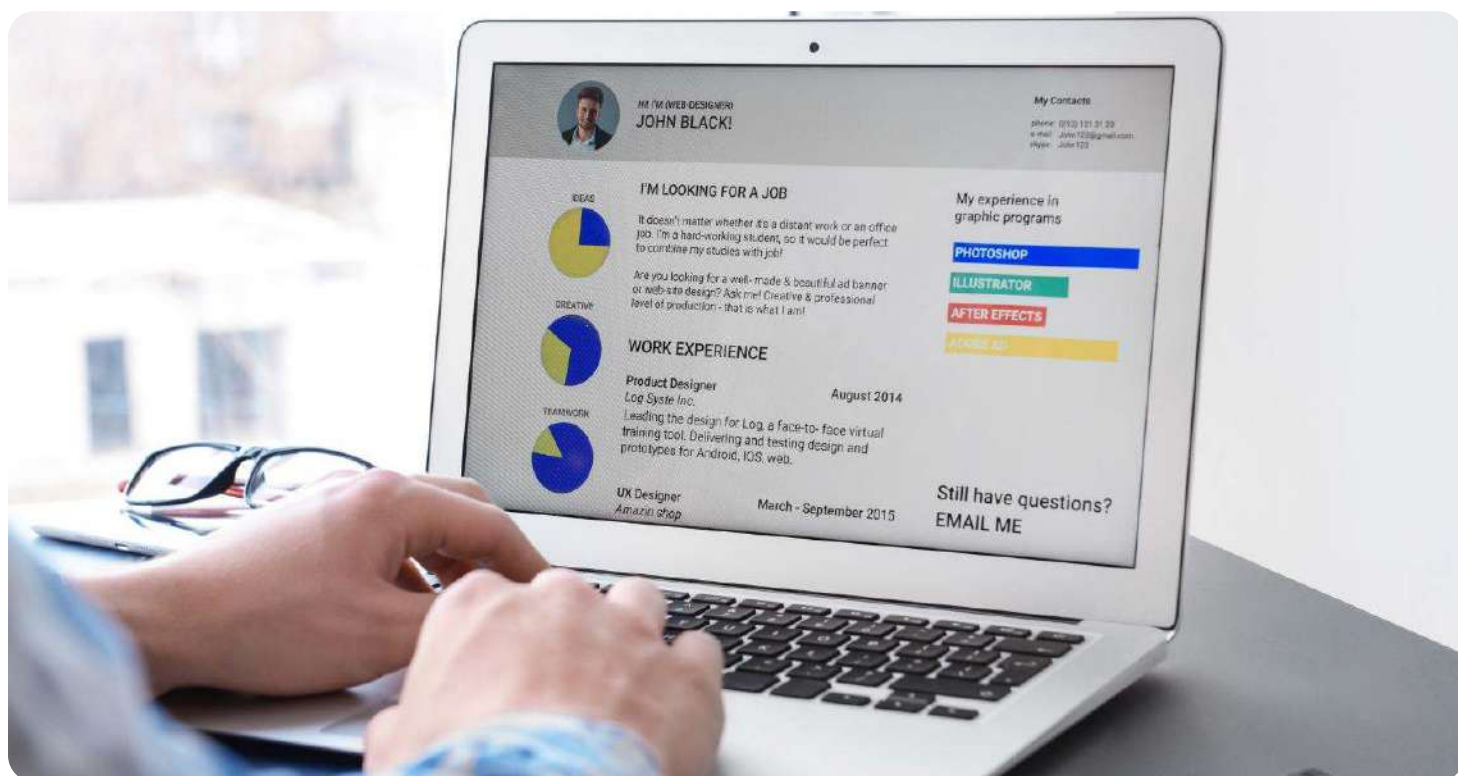
They struggle with high turnover, inconsistent service, and a revolving door of new hires who require constant training and supervision.

In this guide, we're going to debunk seven common staffing myths that could be holding your hotel back.

By understanding these misconceptions, you can make smarter decisions that save you time, resources, and a whole lot of headaches.

Let's dive in!

Myth #1: Online Job Boards Are the Most Effective Way to Find Qualified Hotel Staff



These days, it seems like everyone turns to online job boards to find new hires.

And sure, they can be a convenient place to post open positions. But if you're only relying on job boards to staff your hotel, you're missing out – and potentially losing money in the process.

Here's why: those seemingly endless lists of candidates often translate into a lot of wasted time.

You might spend hours sifting through applications, only to find that most applicants haven't provided honest information about themselves and aren't a good fit for the role or your hotel's unique culture.

Additionally, it's a crowded marketplace.

With more hotels and all other businesses going online to find staff, you're not just competing with the place down the street anymore – you're competing with everyone across the city, state, or even the country.

This increased competition often means spending more on advertising to get your listing noticed and waiting longer to fill those crucial positions.

And hiring the wrong person? That's a mistake that can really hurt.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, a bad hire can cost your hotel up to 30% of that employee's first-year earnings in wasted training, lost productivity, and even the cost of finding a replacement.

Actionable Tip #1: Review your last three hires from online job boards. How much time did you or your team spend on each step of the process – posting the job, reviewing resumes, conducting phone screens, holding interviews, and getting that new hire trained?

Add it all up.

Now, factor in the hourly cost of your time (or your hiring manager's or trainer's time). The results might surprise you!

Myth #2: Staffing Agencies Are an Unnecessary Expense for My Hotel



While online job boards may seem cost-effective, relying solely on them can be misleading. This brings us to another common misconception: the perceived unnecessary expense of staffing agencies.

We understand that managing expenses is a top priority for every hotel. It's tempting to think you can handle all your staffing needs in-house to reduce overhead costs.

But before you write off staffing agencies completely, it's important to examine some of the hidden costs of understaffing that can really eat into your profits.

Think about it: what happens when you don't have enough people to meet all of your operational needs?

Your current staff gets stretched thin, leading to burnout, more mistakes, slower service and churn. Housekeepers rush to clean rooms, leading to oversights. Front desk staff struggle to answer questions mindfully and manage guest requests efficiently.

Even a simple breakfast service can become chaotic and disorganized if you're short-staffed.

Suddenly, those exceptional guest experiences you're known for begin to decline.

Unhappy guests are more likely to complain, leave negative reviews online and tell their friends to stay elsewhere. You might even have to issue refunds or deal with lost bookings.

And let's not forget about the high cost of employee turnover! When your staff is overworked, they're more likely to leave for better opportunities.

According to Cornell University, replacing a hotel employee can cost you anywhere from 75% to 150% of their annual salary. That's a significant expense that directly impacts your profits.

Those hidden costs add up quickly.

Actionable Tip #2: Think back to a recent negative guest experience related to staffing – maybe a long wait at check-in, a room service order that went wrong, or a rude interaction with an overwhelmed employee. Now, estimate the cost of that experience.

How much did it potentially cost you in refunds, lost bookings, or damage to your reputation? Have you factored in reputation damage and the “invisible cost” to your revenue with friends, family and colleagues you can't see online?

By considering these factors any business can develop a more accurate “total labor cost.” Compare this total cost to the potential ROI of investing in reliable staffing solutions.

Myth #3: All Staffing Agencies Are Created Equal



When it comes to choosing a staffing partner, it's easy to assume that all agencies are pretty much the same.

But this couldn't be further from the truth.

Just like hotels, staffing agencies have different areas of focus, each with its own strengths, weaknesses, and areas of expertise. While some agencies might take a more general approach to filling positions, others specialize in specific industries or roles.

For hotels, it's essential to choose a staffing partner with a deep understanding of the hospitality industry – a partner who understands your unique challenges, your commitment to guest satisfaction, and the specific skills required to thrive in a fast-paced hotel environment.

Some agencies may lack the hospitality expertise, language capabilities, or commitment to diversity and inclusion that are essential for today's hotels.

Working with the wrong agency can mean longer hiring timelines, a mismatch between candidates and your hotel's culture, and ultimately, a negative impact on your guests' experiences.

Actionable Tip #3: Before you even start contacting staffing agencies, take some time to define your ideal partner. Create a list of five non-negotiable criteria – the things that are most important to you in a staffing agency. This might include factors like:

- Proven experience in the hospitality industry
- A strong track record of placing qualified candidates
- Fast turnaround times and efficient communication
- Robust screening and onboarding of workers with strong work ethics
- Alignment with your hotel's values and culture

Having these criteria in place will help you quickly identify the agencies that align with your values and are best equipped to meet your specific needs.

Myth #4: I Don't Have Time to Train Temporary Staff, So I'll Just Do It Myself

When you're short-staffed and swamped with guests, the last thing you want to think about is adding another task to your to-do list.

Training new employees, especially temporary ones, can feel like a time-consuming burden. But what if you could bring on new staff who were already equipped with the skills and knowledge they needed to hit the ground running?

Working with a reputable staffing agency means gaining access to a pool of pre-screened individuals who are familiar with the tasks at hand and ready to begin with minimal onboarding.



These agencies often have their own training or education programs tailored specifically to the demands of the hospitality industry, covering a wide range of skills, including:

- **Guest Service Etiquette:** From handling check-in and check-out procedures to managing guest requests with a smile, proper etiquette is crucial for creating a positive first impression.
- **Communication Skills:** Effective communication, both verbal and written, is essential for interacting with guests from diverse backgrounds, resolving issues smoothly, and ensuring everyone feels heard and understood.
- **Safety Procedures:** From handling emergency situations to maintaining a clean and secure environment, hotel staff must be well-versed in safety protocols to protect both guests and employees.
- **Technical Proficiency:** Today's hotels rely on a variety of software and systems. Training on these systems can be time-consuming, but staffing agencies can often provide candidates who are already familiar with common hospitality technology.

This saves you precious time and resources, allowing you to focus on managing your hotel and continue delivering exceptional guest experiences – not getting bogged down with basic training.

Of course, every hotel is different, so integrating these considerations with supplemental training can maximize effectiveness by delivering customized hotel specific information to the workforce.



Actionable Tip #4: Choose a position at your hotel with a historically high turnover rate. This might be a housekeeping role, a dishwasher position, or a front desk agent. Now, think back to the last time you hired someone for that role.

How many hours did you or your team spend training that person during their first month on the job? Multiply that time by your average hourly wage.

That's how much you invested in training just one person for that role. Imagine the potential cost savings if you could bring on someone who was already trained or experienced and ready to go.

Myth #5: Using a Staffing Agency Means I Have Less Control Over My Staff



Letting go of any part of your hotel's operation can feel a little unnerving. You've worked hard to build your team and maintain your hotel's unique culture. It's understandable to worry that using a staffing agency means sacrificing some of that control.

However, a truly effective staffing partnership isn't about relinquishing control – it's about gaining a valuable extension of your team.

Reputable staffing agencies understand that every hotel has its own specific needs, expectations, and even unspoken rules about how things are done.

They understand that finding the right fit goes beyond just skills; and a rigorous screening process helps them identify individuals who also have the attitude, work ethic, and alignment with your hotel's culture that you're looking for.

Think of it this way: a good staffing partner acts as an extension of your Human Resources department, carefully screening candidates and presenting you with only those who align with your vision and requirements.

Actionable Tip #5: Before you even start talking to potential staffing agencies, take a moment to define your hotel's non-negotiables when it comes to staff performance. Create a simple document outlining your top three priorities, such as:

- **Guest Interaction:** Maybe exceptional customer service is paramount. You could outline specific behaviors you expect from staff, like greeting guests with a smile, addressing them by name, or proactively offering assistance.
- **Efficiency:** Perhaps speed and productivity are key in certain roles. You could define realistic expectations for task completion times or outline specific efficiency metrics.
- **Presentation:** Maintaining a polished and professional image is essential for many hotels. Your document could detail uniform standards, grooming guidelines, or even preferred communication styles.

By sharing these priorities with potential staffing partners, you'll ensure that everyone is on the same page from the start and that the candidates presented to you are a true reflection of your hotel's values.

Myth #6: My Hotel Has Unique Staffing Needs, My Labor Requirements Are Too Specific For an Agency to Handle

Each hotel cultivates its own distinct operational approach and brand identity. A common misconception is, "My staffing needs are so specific, no agency could possibly understand them."

But here's the truth: a truly dedicated staffing partner thrives on challenges.

They understand that cookie-cutter solutions don't work in the hospitality industry.

Let's look at some common examples of what makes hotels unique and how the right staffing partner can actually become an asset in these situations:



- **Niche Expertise:** Maybe your hotel caters to a very specific type of guest – luxury travelers, eco-conscious adventurers, families with young children, or business travelers looking for a seamless stay.

A good staffing partner won't just focus on general hospitality skills; they'll help you find candidates who understand the nuances of your target market and can provide personalized service that resonates with your guests.

- **Cultural Fit:** Your hotel has a distinct personality, whether it's chic and modern, cozy and traditional, or vibrant and trendy.

A skilled staffing partner can identify candidates who not only have the right skills but also embody the attitude and energy that match your hotel's vibe, ensuring a seamless experience for both guests and your existing team.

- **Language Barriers:** In today's globalized world, hotels often need staff who are fluent in multiple languages.

Rather than struggling to find multilingual candidates on your own, a specialized staffing agency can tap into a wider network and connect you with individuals who can communicate effectively with guests from diverse backgrounds or include people on the team that can bridge some language barriers.

- **Location-Demographic Challenges:** Some hotels and resorts are in close proximity to very competitive, extremely thin or remote labor markets.

These cases leave the hotel forced to find for labor where area demand is high, driving up costs and limiting availability. In remote locations sometimes hiring local staff who aren't ideal, don't align the hotel's needs and culture, or go without.

Many hotels assume their labor needs are unique, but a flexible partner can adapt, whether it's sourcing multilingual staff, accommodating seasonal demands, relocating labor to challenging markets or fulfilling last-minute requests.

An experienced staffing agency will work closely with you to understand your challenges – finding staff for a high-profile event, managing seasonal fluctuations in occupancy, or filling unexpected vacancies at short notice.

Actionable Tip #6: Make a list of the top three most challenging staffing scenarios your hotel has faced in the past year. Maybe it was a major holiday rush, a big conference in town, or a sudden surge in bookings due to a local event.

Next, ask yourself these questions about each scenario:

- Did this situation cause stress for you and your team affecting morale and potentially your talent retention?
- Did it lead to operational hiccups, service delays, or guest complaints?
- Did you feel unconfident in your ability to handle the situation effectively with your existing staff?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, it might be time to consider how a staffing partner could help you prepare for – and overcome – those situations in the future.

Myth #7: I Can't Afford to Outsource My Staffing Needs, Especially During Slow Periods

When business is booming, it's easier to justify investing in staffing solutions. But during slower periods, it's tempting to think, "I can handle things myself and save some money."

However, this mindset can lead to a costly cycle of overstaffing and understaffing, ultimately impacting your hotel's efficiency and profitability year-round.

Think about it: when you have too many employees on the payroll during slow periods, you're essentially throwing money away on unnecessary labor costs, but you are forced to keep people on for the next peak, shoulder season, unforeseen demand or to limit the financial impact and liability of letting people go.

But when you cut back too much, you risk being caught short-handed during unexpected surges in bookings and then costs of overtime spiral out of control eating into the profitability you work so hard to preserve.

These approaches can both lead to frustrated staff, overworked employees, a decline in the quality of customer experience and a hit to your bottom line.

According to Tripadvisor, 93% of global travelers say online reviews influence their booking decisions. Even one negative experience due to staffing shortages can have a ripple effect on your hotel's reputation and future revenue.

A strategic staffing partner can help you break free from this cycle.

The right staffing company will empower you, allowing for more flexible adjustments to your staffing levels on demand, bringing in extra support during peak seasons or unexpected events and scaling back during slower periods.

This ensures you always have the right number of people to meet your operational needs without overspending.

Actionable Tip #7: Take a look at your hotel's occupancy rates and staffing levels over the past year. Identify periods when you were consistently overstaffed or understaffed.

Then, ask yourself:

- Could a more flexible staffing approach have saved us money during those slower periods?
- Were there times when we could have benefited from additional support to maintain service quality and prevent guest complaints?

- Is it possible that labor shortages are impacting our bottom line with unfavorable reviews that decrease booking rates, or create excessive overtime costs?
- Is it difficult to forecast with certainty the labor demand this year based on the past fluctuations in inflation, the economy, economic trends and consumer confidence in spending.

If so, it's worth exploring how a staffing partner can help you create a more adaptable, flexible and cost-effective staffing strategy.

Imagine If You Could Create a Winning Team and Consistently Deliver Exceptional Experiences...



In the fast-paced world of hospitality, your staff is your most valuable asset. They're the face of your hotel, the ones who bring your brand to life and create memorable experiences for your guests.

But as we've explored in this guide, many common misconceptions about staffing can lead to costly mistakes, frustrated employees, and ultimately, a negative impact on your hotel's profitability.

By challenging these myths and adopting a more strategic approach to staffing, you can:

- **Attract and Retain Top Talent:** Go beyond generic job boards and find the qualified individuals who are the right fit for your hotel's unique culture.
- **Control Costs and Maximize Profitability:** Optimize your staffing levels to match demand, preventing overspending during slow periods and ensuring you have the support you need when it matters most.
- **Elevate the Guest Experience:** Provide consistent, high-quality service that earns rave reviews and builds a loyal customer base.
- **Free Up Your Time:** Focus on strategic management, guest relations, and other high-level tasks, knowing that your staffing needs are handled.
- **Decrease your stress:** Let's face it. Not having the most important ingredient of great people to help run your business successfully can make the days feel like a grind and draw the wrong type of attention.

Imagine having a partner who understands these challenges and also has a proven track record of helping hotels like yours thrive.

That's where we come in.

Our team at HotelStaff.com has helped thousands of hotels, resorts, restaurants, and other businesses with service, staffing, consulting, support, information, and more.

With near three decades of combined experience serving the hospitality industry, we are committed to providing top-tier staffing solutions that drive profitability and enhance guest experiences.

Our management team achieved a 374% growth rate in 2021, due to our unique approach of providing qualified, high quality candidates who fit the hotel culture perfectly.

With a goal to make our clients' lives easier and help them make more money, we focus on providing reliable and high-quality staffing solutions faster.

And we offer a guarantee unheard of in hospitality. The first two shifts for each person of up to 8 hours are on us. Try us with zero risk.

If you're ready to:

- Build a winning team
- Decrease stress
- Improve profitability
- Achieve operational excellence
- Improve your ability to serve clients
- Improve your hotel ratings and reviews

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We'll work with you to understand your unique needs and develop a customized staffing strategy that helps you achieve your goals.



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