

Cultural understanding helps Radisson SAS Hotel Manchester Airport give guests a home from home

the challenge

Scandinavian based Radisson SAS, part of Rezidor SAS, is a well respected hotel chain which spans the globe.

Since opening in 1998, Radisson SAS Hotel Manchester Airport has entertained millions of international guests with facilities which meet both business and leisure requirements. To provide this wide variety of guests with only the highest level of service, Radisson SAS Manchester Airport employs approximately 250 people, 57% of which are from overseas countries.

Radisson SAS operates a strong equal opportunities policy, supports the development of language skills and provides employees with the opportunity to gain varied experience in a short space of time.

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radisson



lisa wade

radisson sas manchester airport



the solution

To foster such a multi-cultural environment, the hotel must provide appropriate training and support to meet the needs of its international employees. Lisa Wade, Human Resources and Training Manager, explains: “As an international brand we naturally attract nationals from all over the world. Many of our employees are here to gain experience on a one or two year placement abroad, which means we are continually carrying out inductions and ongoing staff training and development programmes.”

“Throughout the induction and training sessions we have to remember that different cultures have their own ways of working – managing an Italian person requires a totally different approach to managing a British person. We’re lucky! We have gained invaluable experience of various cultures.

Radisson SAS has a policy of moving employees around the globe, if they want to gain the exposure that will help fast track their career and help them develop as a person.”

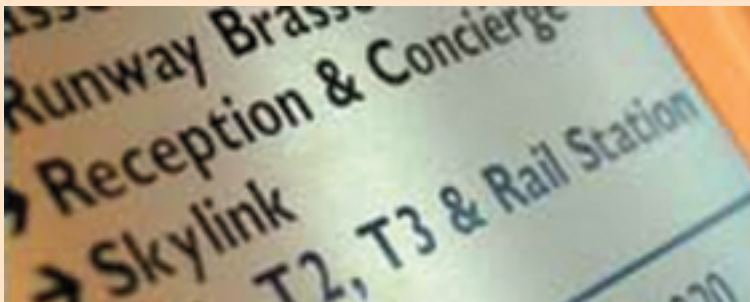
This cross-cultural focus filters through to its communication strategy, from recruitment to induction. Lisa continues: “It is essential that we get the right message across to our audience. So we fine tune our recruitment material and communication etiquette accordingly.

“In order to deliver a consistently high level of service to our guests, we need to ensure all of our employees understand our culture as a company and our processes as a hotel. That’s why our training materials have been developed to meet the needs of all employees – local and international. For example, we avoid using business jargon that might be specific to English and use visual images to convey some of the key learning points.”

Dedicated to developing cross-cultural understanding within the company, Lisa is working with the Regional Language Network North West (RLN NW) in order to gain insight into how the hotel’s working practice with international employees can be expanded.

Lisa explains: “By working with the RLN NW, we are able to access a wider range of services and network with other businesses that operate on an international level. Broadening our outlook in this way will help us to develop the package we offer to our overseas staff and ultimately improve the way we attract, train and induct them into the business.”

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the benefits

With a total of 31 different languages spoken by employees of Radisson SAS Hotel Manchester Airport, it is almost guaranteed that any guest can walk in and communicate in their own language. This is promoted by having a record list at reception. So if a guest arrives and wishes to communicate in Dutch, for example, the appropriate member of staff can be located and assigned to reception.

The multi-cultural environment encouraged and supported by the company not only improves customer interface by providing a communication benefit to guests, it also provides an ongoing development opportunity for employees.

Lisa concludes: “Our hotel has a constant flow of people from various cultures speaking different languages. This raises the awareness of our indigenous staff to different ways of life. Overseas staff, on the other hand, are given the opportunity to improve their understanding of our culture and to develop their English language skills. Collectively, these benefits contribute to a continuous cycle of development for the whole team.”