

Integrating Total Quality Management and Human Resources Management in Hospitality: A Case Study of Swissotel Hotel & Resort

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Abstract

By using a case study of Swissotel Hotel & Resort, this research investigates the aspects of Total Quality Management (TQM) and Human Resource Management (HRM) in the hospitality industry. Swissotel utilizes TQM in key departments, such as Human Resources, Sales & Marketing, and Food & Beverage, to consistently provide excellent services and products. The research utilized a mixed-method approach, including qualitative information from management practice and quantitative information through reviews of customers and employees sourced from Accor, Booking.com, Tripadvisor, Glassdoor and Indeed. The evaluations of these services and products were reviewed by utilizing the SERVQUAL scale. According to the results of the research, there is a positive relationship between quality improvement at Swissotel, including the current quality journey, ISO 9001 and EFQM Membership, and customer satisfaction and employee engagement. The results also indicate that an effective HRM approach using various strategies, such as training to meet training needs, fair compensation for employees, and supportive leadership, are important findings to implement TQM successfully, to endure recommendations as a sustainable competitive advantage.

Keywords: Total Quality Management; Human Resource Management; Hospitality; Continuous Quality Improvement; Service Quality

Introduction

In today's more intense and competitive environment where entry of new competitors can erode market share, quality becomes more important to an organization's ability to operate efficiently, to produce revenue, or to gain market share. Therefore, it is essential for organizations to implement Total Quality Management (TQM) as a strategy that improves product quality and gives the competitive edge (Al-Ababneh 2021). In the hospitality industry, TQM focuses on providing high-quality services and products based on customer expectations; therefore, its objective should be continuous improvement as assessed by customers. First, effective leadership is an important component of TQM practices in that it builds employee confidence and encourages them to participate in decision making. In addition, the awareness of quality practices is closely related to managerial behavior, and continuous quality management requires an effective knowledge base and learning capacity among staff supported by appropriate training programs (Ramanathan et al. 2021). The implementation of TQM depends on human resources, customer needs, process management, information analysis, leadership, and strategic planning, all of which contribute to more efficient operation, differentiation in services and products, and a competitive advantage with increased market share (Anser et al., 2021). The current research will analyze different aspects of

TQM and HRM in Swissotel Hotel & Resort by examining its history, organizational structure and geographical distribution, reviewing the importance of TQM, role of personnel to maintain quality, contribution of continuous quality and service improvements on overall performance, relationship between TQM and HRM at Swissotel, quantitative results as pie charts from employee reviews and customer reviews, and evaluate the five dimensions of the SERVQUAL model; reliability, tangibility, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy.

Objectives

1. To critically examine the importance of quality management in key hospitality functions at Swissotel Hotel & Resort.
2. To assess the contribution of personnel in maintaining high service quality standards at Swissotel Hotel & Resort.
3. To explore the effects of sustained quality and service enhancement initiatives on service levels at Swissotel Hotel & Resort.
4. To investigate the link between total quality management practices and human resource management strategies at Swissotel Hotel & Resort.
5. To utilize quantitative techniques to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of Swissotel Hotel & Resort's hospitality and tourism operations.
6. To integrate quantitative methodologies and theoretical frameworks for a comprehensive assessment of Swissotel's operational performance in the hospitality sector.

Research Questions

1. How does quality management contribute in improving operational efficiency and service user satisfaction at Swissotel Hotel & Resort?
2. What role does personnel play in sustaining quality standards at Swissotel Hotel & Resort?
3. How do continuous quality and service improvement initiatives affect service levels at Swissotel Hotel & Resort?
4. What kind of link exists between quality management and human resource management at Swissotel Hotel & Resort?
5. How effective are Swissotel Hotel & Resort's hospitality and tourism operations, as indicated by quantitative measures?

Literature Review

Introduction of Swissotel Hotel & Resort

Swissotel Hotel & Resort is part of the AccorHotels group and is a globally recognized brand, operating more than 4,500 units and over 10,000 rooms worldwide. Established in 1980, Swissotel

has built a strong reputation as a premium Swiss brand, currently managing over 36 properties with a total of 14,939 rooms across 18 countries. Notable properties include Swissotel Krasnye Holmy in Moscow, Swissotel The Stamford in Singapore, and Swissotel The Bosphorus in Istanbul, with additional developments underway. The brand offers both hotel and resort accommodations designed to cater to both business and leisure travelers, ensuring that guest expectations are consistently met through high-quality services (Accor, 2023).

The Importance of Quality Management

A robust quality management system ensures that all organizational activities are well-coordinated to control operations and enhance overall performance. Such a system serves as a cornerstone for excellence, establishing a clear link between customer needs and employee efforts. By implementing a quality management framework, an organization can precisely define its processes, develop standard operating procedures, and create guidelines that ultimately lead to the delivery of superior products and services (Santos-Vijande et al., 2020).

In the context of a hotel, several departments collaborate to implement quality management effectively. Key among these are the Human Resource, Sales & Marketing, and Food & Beverage departments.

Human Resource Department

Throughout the hospitality and tourism business, a highly labor-intensive and significant job-creating sector the HR department plays a critical role. HR professionals are responsible for developing job specifications, managing recruitment, overseeing compensation, organizing training programs, and handling employee relations in conjunction with supervisors and line managers. They also ensure compliance with labor laws, particularly regarding occupational safety and health, and clarify legal obligations to both managers and employees (Hervie et al., 2021). At Swissotel Hotel & Resort, the HR department is particularly committed to support employee growth through detailed training programs and opportunities through their dedicated academy to move forward in their careers. For example, the "Swissotel Challenge" program is designed to help employees specialize in relevant fields (Accor, 2021).

Sales & Marketing Department

The marketing function is essential in developing strategic innovations that secure and maintain a competitive advantage. Through effective use of marketing tools and strategies, organizations can gain a deep understanding of consumer expectations, thereby incorporating consumer feedback into decision-making processes. One of the primary goals of marketing is to create and communicate value, which in turn fosters customer loyalty and drives profitability (Mittal et al., 2023). Swissotel Hotel & Resort exemplifies this by offering extensive facilities, such as numerous meeting rooms and wedding halls, to accommodate a range of social and business events (Swissotel, 2023).

Food & Beverage (F&B) Department

Since it is the second largest contributor to hotel revenue, the F&B department is pivotal. Changing lifestyles have led to an increase in dining out, prompting restaurants to provide innovative dining experiences regularly. Beyond offering quality food, restaurants must also create attractive ambiances, incorporate distinctive decor, and maintain high service standards to draw customers. Establishments that achieve these elements supported by positive media reviews or word-of-mouth recommendations can successfully attract and retain clientele (Dani & Rawal, 2019). For instance, Swissotel Hotel & Resort in Singapore (Swissotel The Stamford) features eight restaurants offering diverse international cuisines and five bars/lounges that provide a variety of beverages (Swissotel, 2023).

In this discussion, the article investigates the significance of (TQM) within the hospitality industry, using Swissotel Hotel & Resort as a case example. TQM is crucial for helping organizations differentiate their services and products from competitors, thereby gaining a competitive edge. This analysis focuses on three key hospitality departments HR, Sales & Marketing, F&B and highlights how Swissotel supports its employees with benefits such as free lunches, health insurance, and career development initiatives; offers versatile event spaces; and provides an array of dining and beverage options.

Role of Personnel in Maintaining Quality

Maintaining high quality standards relies on the effective collaboration of key personnel, including leadership, supervisors, and employees.

Leadership

An organization committed to quality operates in a manner that ensures long-term success while delivering customer satisfaction and societal benefits. Continuous improvement is essential for achieving total quality, and strong leadership is critical in guiding cultural changes and motivating employees. Leaders within a TQM framework are expected to be people-oriented, embrace continuous learning, and focus on service excellence. They must also ensure that their decisions align with the organization's quality commitments (Obeidat et al., 2020). At Swissotel Hotel & Resort, leaders are known for their supportive approach, offering mentorship and fostering a collaborative, positive work environment that enhances employee confidence (Glassdoor, 2021).

Employees

The performance of individual employees is a key indicator of an organization's ability to meet its objectives. In terms of TQM, the collective efforts of staff are crucial to efficiently fulfilling customer needs while minimizing costs, time, and effort. TQM not only helps organizations reduce expenses and boost productivity but also builds a strong team spirit, mutual trust, and a sense of belonging. Such an environment is conducive to attaining international quality certifications and establishing a favorable reputation among customers (Obeidat et al., 2020). At Swissotel Hotel & Resort, employees enjoy various benefits including free lunches, health insurance, bonuses, and other incentives that contribute to a positive and supportive working atmosphere (Indeed, 2022).

Supervisors

Supervisors serve as the vital link between management and employees, playing a key role in the effective implementation of TQM. They act as mentors, leaders, and advisors, ensuring that quality-related strategies are communicated and executed properly. Supervisors are also responsible for facilitating practices such as quality circles and managing the additional responsibilities associated with continuous process improvements. While these duties can increase stress, effective supervision is essential for achieving the organization's quality objectives through adequate manpower and consistent support (Valdavic, 2014). At Swissotel Hotel & Resort, supervisors are recognized for their supportive, knowledgeable, and communicative style, which helps create a congenial and productive work environment (Glassdoor, 2021).

The Connection Between TQM and HRM at Swissotel Hotel & Resort

Quality management emerged as a critical focus in the 1980s, driven by the recognition that elevating quality can boost efficiency both internally-through improved processes and cost reductions-and externally-by expanding market share, enhancing brand image, and increasing customer satisfaction. Total Quality Management (TQM) is widely regarded as key strategy for building client fidelity and achieving steady revenue growth, particularly for organizations seeking ISO certification and international recognition for service quality (Oltean & Gabor, 2020). Swissotel, as a member of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), has been acknowledged for its commitment to quality management across various industries in Europe (Swissotel, 2023).

Human Resource Management (HRM) is equally essential, as it contributes in driving growth of the business and its overall performance. Modern HRM practices aim to ensure long-term success and competitiveness by effectively managing a skilled and dedicated workforce through a combination of cultural, structural, and people-focused strategies. Managers frequently encounter various challenges while striving to advance within their organizations (Rakhmonov & Turaeva, 2020). Swissotel prioritizes the recruitment of experienced professionals with industry-specific education and the ability to perform under pressure. Moreover, the company invests in comprehensive training programs to maintain high standards and steadily increase market share (Accor, 2023).

TQM and HRM are inherently linked; quality management involves an integrated approach to ensuring that superior outputs are consistently delivered by refining processes and preventing defects at every organizational level. Simultaneously, HRM engages, motivates, and empowers employees-an essential element for the effective execution of TQM. The philosophy of TQM extends beyond manufacturing processes to encompass all organizational activities, decision-making processes, and employee development initiatives. Key HRM practices such as training, teamwork, and motivation directly support TQM principles by enhancing employee knowledge, flexibility, and accountability in quality management (Anser et al., 2021). Since 2010, all Swissotel properties and the Corporate Office have maintained ISO 9001 certification, underscoring their

adherence to rigorous quality management standards (Swissotel, 2023).

Continuous Quality and Service Improvement at Swissotel Hotel & Resort

Swissotel continuously strives to enhance its service offerings and overall guest experience by rigorously examining and optimizing its operations. For instance, Swissotel The Bosphorus in Istanbul received its initial accreditation for ISO compliance dating back to the late 1990s and has since been recognized by experts for its quality, health and safety standards, environmental practices, and food safety measures. The ISO-certified management system at Swissotel facilitates enhanced operational efficiency, which is critical in the dynamic and fluctuating hospitality industry (Swissotel, 2023).

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) is a fundamental aspect of total quality management that involves an ongoing effort to refine processes and optimize service quality. Recognized as a form of kaizen, CQI entails making incremental improvements until issues are fully resolved. This approach is essential not only for meeting customer requirements but also for evaluating the success of operational plans (Ab Latif & Mohd Nor, 2021). At Swissotel, a systematic approach to CQI has enabled properties to improve various key performance indicators, including financial metrics. For example, in July 2013, Swissotel Nankai Osaka experienced a nationwide decline in the wedding business; however, by applying continuous improvement principles, the MICE department achieved a 35% increase in wedding revenue during the final quarter of that year (Swissotel, 2023).

Swissotel's approach to CQI is grounded in five core principles

- Thorough examination of the existing systems and processes;
- Utilizing statistical analysis to identify both challenges and strengths;
- Involving cross-functional teams that include employees, managers, volunteers, board members, and even customers;
- Enabling all stakeholders to recognize issues, propose changes, and develop effective solutions.

These principles taken together ensure that continuous quality improvement is a core management tool at Swissotel, where it serves to focus both internal stakeholders and external clients on meeting consumer expectations and providing competitive advantage. Recent studies show how TQM and HRM are critical for post-pandemic recovery of the hospitality industry.

TQM frameworks enabled faster operational adjustments so that hotels can maintain service excellence through market volatility, while HRM strategies have evolved to emphasize employee well-being, flexibility, and resilience-building initiatives (Baum et al., 2020). As customer expectations continue to evolve, traditional models of service quality have also changed. For example, one of the studies showed expanding the original six dimensions of the SERVQUAL framework to include a hygiene assurance dimension in response to current health and safety issues

(Pillai et al., 2021), while another study highlighted the growing impact of digital service delivery on perceived service responsiveness and reliability (Sigala, 2020). These developments point toward an even broader trend: hotels must integrate TQM and HRM practices seamlessly rather than as add-ons if they are to provide consistently exceptional guest experiences and remain competitive in a volatile business environment.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual underpinning of this research is that when both TQM practices (e.g., customer orientation, process improvements, continuous innovation) and HRM strategies (e.g., employee training, engagement initiatives, performance management systems) are in place, service quality outcomes are enhanced across the dimensions of SERVQUAL. The framework suggests:

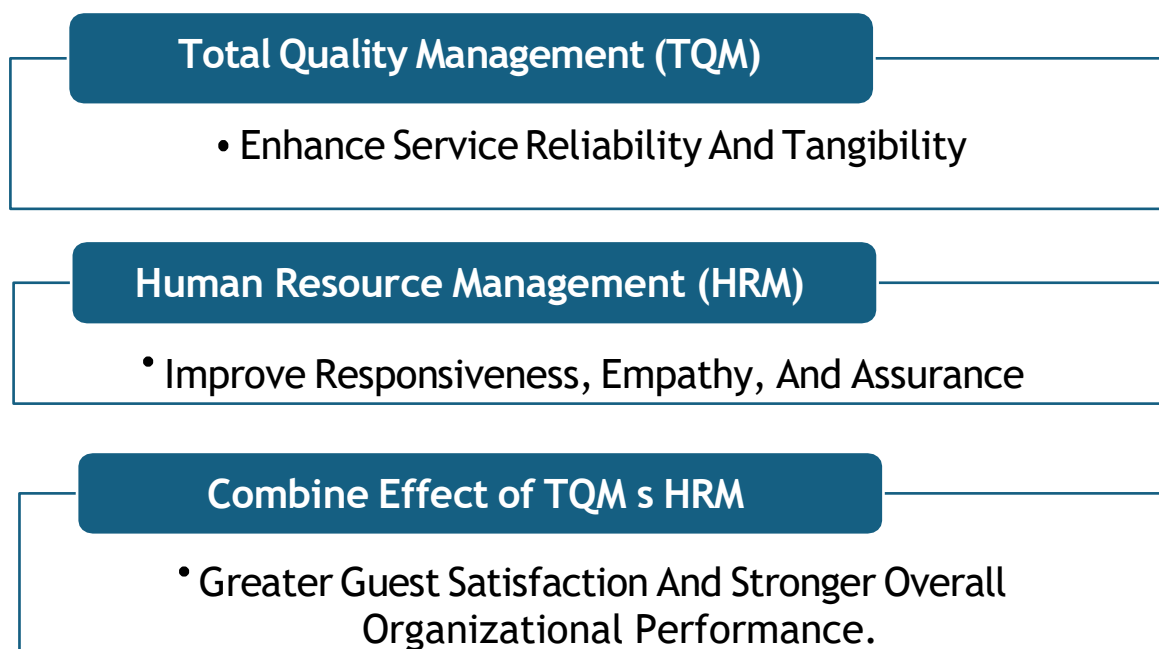


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Research Methodology

The current study employed a mixed-methods approach (qualitative and quantitative) to examine the relationship between TQM and HRM practices in Swissotel Hotels & Resorts that includes public documents such as annual reports, sustainability publications, and corporate communications about TQM and HRM practices (quantitative), thematic analysis of customer testimonials and employee reviews regarding service delivery and organizational culture.

Quantitative data were collected from reputable online sources (Accor, Booking.com, TripAdvisor, Glassdoor, AmbitionBox, Indeed) with the use of customer ratings in five SERVQUAL dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, empathy, and assurance; as well as employee feedback on work-life balance, company culture, career growth opportunities, and pay. In addition to basic descriptive statistics, inferential tests such as mean comparisons and independent samples

t-tests were employed to see if perceptions of service quality were consistent across platforms and to compare metrics of employee satisfaction. Qualitative and quantitative results were triangulated, and all materials reviewed are publicly available.

Employing Quantitative Techniques to Evaluate Hospitality and Tourism Operations

The quantitative methods were applied to analyze their operations based on data from customers reviewed in Accor (All Accor Live Limitless, 2021), Booking.com (2021) and TripAdvisor (2021).

Table 1

Customer Reviews	TripAdvisor	Booking	Accor
Location	4.5/5	8.3/10	9.4/10
Service	4.5/5	9/10	9.3/10
Cleanness	5/5	9.2/10	8.9/10
Rooms	4.5/5	9.2/10	8.1/10

Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis indicated that customer satisfaction was high across all service dimensions.

Inferential Analysis

Independent samples t-tests showed no statistically significant differences between Booking.com ratings of satisfaction and TripAdvisor ratings of satisfaction ($p > .05$), which means that there were not statistically significant differences in the way customers rated service quality on these two platforms.

Table 2

Employees Reviews	Glassdoor	AmbitionBox	Indeed
Work-life balance	3.2	3.5	4
Culture	3.9	3.7	4
Career Growth	3.6	3.7	3.9
Benefits	3.5	3.5	3.8

Employee feedback also pointed to generally positive satisfaction levels; however, noticeable

differences emerged regarding work-life balance, highlighting a potential area for further investigation.

Evaluating Hospitality and Tourism Operations Using Qualitative Techniques

Quality Service Management assesses the level of service quality experienced by tourists based on their recollections after their stay (Ali et al., 2021). The SERVQUAL scale is a widely used tool for this purpose, evaluating service quality across five dimensions: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, empathy, and assurance (Ali et al., 2021).

Tangibility

This aspect focuses on the physical elements of the providing services, such as how the facilities, appliances, staff, and marketing content look and are presented. In the hotel industry, tangibility is evident in the design and upkeep of guest rooms and dining areas. For instance, Swissotel Sydney features 369 guestrooms across nine distinct categories and offers a restaurant, JPB, which can seat up to 108 guests (Accor, 2022; Swissotel, 2022).

Reliability

It refers the ability to deliver the committed service consistently and accurately. Swissotel is known for providing outstanding and memorable luxury experiences, including a range of amenities such as spas, fitness facilities, and wellness programs (Accor, 2022).

Responsiveness

This dimension measures the willingness and promptness with which services are delivered. Swissotel is committed to ensuring that guest inquiries and issues are addressed swiftly, with an efficient online booking system and timely responses via phone or email (Accor, 2022).

Empathy

Empathy involves offering personalized and attentive care to guests. Swissotel excels in this area by ensuring that every guest receives individualized attention, contributing to high levels of satisfaction (TripAdvisor, 2022).

Assurance

Assurance is related to the ability of staff to instill confidence and trust through their expertise and courteous behavior. Swissotel not only prioritizes guest satisfaction but also invests in its employees through comprehensive training programs, competitive compensation, benefits, and a supportive work environment (Indeed, 2022; Accor, 2022).

Quantitative Analysis

An examination of customer review data from TripAdvisor, Booking.com, and Accor revealed consistently high satisfaction scores across major service aspects, including location, service quality, cleanliness, and room standards. Although slight differences between platforms were

noted, overall ratings remained strong, reflecting a broadly favorable perception of Swissotel's service delivery.

To further investigate, independent samples t-tests were performed to compare satisfaction ratings between Booking.com and TripAdvisor. The analysis indicates no statistically significant differences ($p > 0.05$), indicating a high level of consistency in customer experiences across these platforms.

Employee feedback on Glassdoor, AmbitionBox, and Indeed suggested moderately high satisfaction levels (positive) with some variation between ratings for work-life balance. These tools enable Swissotel to track service in real time, respond quickly to guest needs, and approach customer experiences proactively. Still, there were significant differences in scores related to work-life balance that may indicate a need for further exploration of employee experience on this dimension. In fact, reviews from Glassdoor, AmbitionBox, and Indeed indicated generally positive sentiment (moderate to high satisfaction) with some variation around ratings for work-life balance. These tools enable the team to track service in real time, react promptly to guest needs, and take a more proactive approach to ensuring exceptional customer experiences. Yet there were significant differences in ratings concerning work-life balance that may suggest more nuanced employee experiences with respect to this area that would be worth exploring further.

Qualitative Analysis

Thematic analysis of guest testimonials consistently identified strengths such as reliable service, excellent cleanliness, and friendly staff interactions as key factors influencing overall customer satisfaction, while employee narratives stressed the positive workplace culture and career development opportunities, although issues surrounding workload and balance occasionally arose, which could suggest potential areas for organizational improvement.

It demonstrates that human resource strategies within the company (such as continuing staff training and development, not treating performance reviews as a formality) are consistent with its Total Quality Management (TQM) objectives such as maintaining high quality. Explain how this research suggests that TQM and HRM should be integrated in order to achieve service quality outcomes at Swissotel, and discuss how their commitment to the ISO 9001 standards aligns with the overall goals of excellence pursued by Swissotel.

Discussion

The findings from this study point out the significance of integrating Total Quality Management (TQM) and Human Resource Management (HRM), as well as maintaining consistent service standards, ensuring well-kept facilities, delivering prompt responses for all core aspects of TQM, and the achievement of ISO 9001 standards to ensure operational excellence in driving guest satisfaction with Swissotel.

From a human resources perspective, employee satisfaction in particular as it relates to organizational culture and career progression is related to TQM practices. This also matches the

conclusion of Baum et al. (2020) who noted that building an HR environment supportive of organizational resilience is important for organizations emerging from the pandemic.

Secondly, the connection linking CQI practices and service excellence supports findings by Ali et al. (2021) that hotel service quality and customer satisfaction are directly linked, reinforcing the case for integrating guest feedback into continuous improvement practices. Swissotel obtains guest feedback via online platforms and through surveys conducted after hotel stays. They analyze this data in team huddles and during evaluation meetings, implements changes ranging from restructuring services, retraining staff and optimizing operations which shows their commitment towards moving service improvement to changing market demands and guest expectations.

Finally, this study confirms the applicability of the SERVQUAL model to assess quality of service in hospitality settings and suggests that post-pandemic updates may include adding health and hygiene dimensions, as proposed by Pillai et al. (2021).

Limitations and Future Considerations

Although Swissotel has made considerable progress with TQM, certain issues need further attention such as potential employee resistance when changes are implemented, cultural expectations at different international locations, and the challenge of maintaining service standards in a quickly evolving industry. Further research investigating these issues will provide greater insight into how TQM functions over time in the global hospitality sector.

Conclusion

Swissotel Hotels & Resorts demonstrates that integration between TQM and HRM practices is a key factor in achieving high levels of guest satisfaction and operational excellence through embedding continuous quality improvement strategies and investing in employee growth to create a service culture that can adapt to changing industry demands. The findings highlight the need for strategic alignment between quality management and HR practices as they pertain to competitive advantage, customer loyalty, and organizational resilience.

Yet, innovation in quality systems and HR initiatives will remain critical for future success. Swissotel has highlighted Total Quality Management (TQM), where initial results have led to better performance, increased customer satisfaction, and more employee engagement, but the challenge of maintaining these efforts across countries can also be examined further.

Recommendations

Use AI to Keep Improving

Keep Learning Adopt smart technologies such as AI tools that can analyze customer feedback in real time, so they help identify problems immediately and implement improvements swiftly.

Take Care of Your Staff

Consider how to improve the workplace environment, which can include flexible work hours, wellness programs, or mental health support, to make staff feel valued and balanced, which leads to better service quality.

Update Quality Measurements

Improve measurement of quality by Updating tools such as the SERVQUAL model to include standards related to health and hygiene that no matter to guests in terms of judging quality during the pandemic.

Go Beyond Online Reviews

Get More Feedback Than Online Reviews by using surveys and interviews with guests and staff to learn more about what is good and what can be improved.

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