

Hotels Up Their Hiring Game, & How!

About 100,000 jobs likely to be created in hotel industry in 12-18 months

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Mumbai: Hotel operators that had cut jobs in hordes during the Covid period are back in the market and hiring in thousands, to cater to their aggressive expansion plans and fill vacancies caused by high attrition.

An estimated 200,000 jobs are likely to be created in the hotel, restaurant and tourism space in the next 12-18 months, according to an estimate by staffing services firm TeamLease Services. About half of these will be in the hotel industry, said Balasubramanian A, vice president and head of consumer, hospitality and ecommerce at TeamLease.

Hotels across segments are ramping up their workforce as they are adding more rooms and entering new markets amid a strong pickup in business and leisure travel. The jobs they are recruiting for are a mix of permanent, temporary and

Peak Season

Search firms see **20-30%** increase in hiring mandates for hospitality talent

Reason Expansion of hotel chains

30-40% monthly attrition at mid-sized and small hotels

Tourist Boom

India gets **180-200 m** domestic tourists/year

Of this, 140 m are religious tourists

Data source: TeamLease Services

Top Roles in Demand

Front desk agent, concierge, guest relations manager, housekeeping and maintenance staff, maintenance technician, chef, recreation manager

Foreign tourists to India

(at around 10m/yr) may grow 20% in 1-2 yrs, triple in 5-6 yrs



gig, said Balasubramanian.

"We are planning to add about 2,000 rooms this year across our various properties and are looking at hiring a total of around 5,000 across levels," said Chander K Baljee, chairman and managing director at mid-tier Royal Orchid

Hotels. Attrition numbers are also high — as much as 30-50% a month for most small and mid-tier hotels — leading to a surge in replacement hiring, said industry executives and staffing companies.

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"Out of a total of 8,000 employees, we saw attrition of 30-35%. This needs to be filled," said Baljee.

Royal Orchid has plans to launch three new brands, including a new upscale five-star brand for which it signed a new 300-room property in Mumbai.

Its current portfolio is a little over 100 hotels with close to 6,000 rooms. Most of its upcoming 2,000-room inventory will be in western India, followed by north and east.

According to TeamLease estimates, the number of annual domestic tourists in India is likely to grow by 10 million in the next one to two years from 180-200 million now. Foreign tourist arrivals, meanwhile, are projected to grow 20% in the same period and triple in five-six years from around 10 million annually at present. A direct beneficiary of this growth will be the hotel industry.

Samir MC, managing director of Fortune Hotels, expects the company's hiring to increase 8-10% this year compared with last, "driven by our ambitious expansion plans".

Fortune Hotels operates more than 5,000 rooms across 56 cities. It is hiring for front desk, housekeeping, administrative and food and beverage sections, he added.

Another mid-tier hotel operator, LemonTree, is looking to add about 2,000 rooms this fiscal year and hire 3,000-4,000 people across levels, said chairman and managing director Patu Keswani. "This (hiring) includes the attrition refill numbers of 1,500," he added.

"Once worst hit, the hotel industry has recovered from the Covid-19 pandemic, which had caused significant job losses and reduced staffing levels... We have seen 20-25% more demand from hotels compared to last year. These de-

mands are coming from existing hotels as well as new properties," said Alok Kumar, ManpowerGroup India's president-manpower.

"With travel restrictions lifted and consumer confidence returned, both leisure and business travel are on the rise. The demand for hotel rooms has reached an all-time high, pushing hotels to hire more staff to maintain service standards," he added.

Top roles in demand include front desk agent, concierge, guest relations manager, housekeeping and maintenance staff.

Some specialised roles like maintenance technician, chefs, recreation manager are also in demand wherein Manpower has seen demand exceeding 35% last quarter compared with a year earlier, he said.

"We have seen at least a 20% y-o-y increase in demand for manpower from the hotels and hospitality segment," said Aditya Narayan Mishra, chief executive of Ciel HR Services. "We are seeing a lot of demand for professionals in sales, marketing, digital marketing, technical staff, HR, among others," he added.

The hotel industry is likely to report 7-9% revenue growth in fiscal 2025, according to a recent report from ratings firm ICRA.

Travel platforms too have stepped up hiring due to the overall pick-up in leisure and business travel.

Ajay Sreedhara, head of People Function at online travel firm Cleartrip, said: "As we grow our business, we have continued to ramp up hiring especially for various leadership positions... We are actively seeking talent across categories including technology, product, and business development. From product engineers to senior leaders, we are keen to explore talent with relevant travel experience."

