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*In the last issue of South Asian Journal of Management Research, in the editorial note I mentioned about humor. Humor can increase the happiness and reduce the stress.*

*Stress is most vulnerable condition in the organization because experts as well as non-experts are handling the stress situation of the employees. Some scientists still argue that they know little about stress whereas many people claim that they know everything about stress. And the result is handling the stress improperly.*

*Job stress has several impacts on individual employee and organization. Most of the employees in modern organization experience stress. It can have a damaging effect on employee, especially managers. It can affect the effectiveness of the organization as well as employees. The problem of stress is very much relevant of change that is spreading across the globe in all the fields. The employees are unable to cope of with changes. Organizations are doing little to handle the change process. For any organizational process the change must be helping the employees in improving the ability of organization to cope up with the change in its environment.*

*Lazarus's view on stress is that an individual perception of the psychological situation is the critical factors for stress. It includes potential harms, threats, and challenges on one hand, and on another an individuals ability to cope with them. The ability or inability to cope with stress is the perceived ability of an individual. Coping strategy differs from individual to individual in a different manner.*

*Less research is available on coping strategies of stress. Readers can contribute research articles on coping strategies of stress.*

**Dr. Babu Thomas**  
**Editor**



# CASE STUDY

## The Landscape Resorts Limited (A)

Barnabas N.  
NMIMS University, Bangalore Campus

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**Landscape resorts limited** is a chain of five star and seven star hotels in India. The group hotels are present in most of the locations in India and have gained a market position for the customer experience and the service provided by them.

The customers may be classified as the Individual customers, Corporate customers, Travel agents, and Charter agents. Since its inception the company has strived hard by designing policies and structures to gain customer loyalty and it has been successful to a great extent. Landscape Resorts Limited has two properties in Kerala, one in North Kerala and one in South Kerala. Sources claim that 36% of the customers visiting the Kerala properties are repeat customers. They largely comprise of empty nesters and small families. It is interesting that people perceive landscape resorts' Kerala properties as their second home and hence they are enchanted to celebrate special occasions like anniversaries,

birthdays, success parties etc.

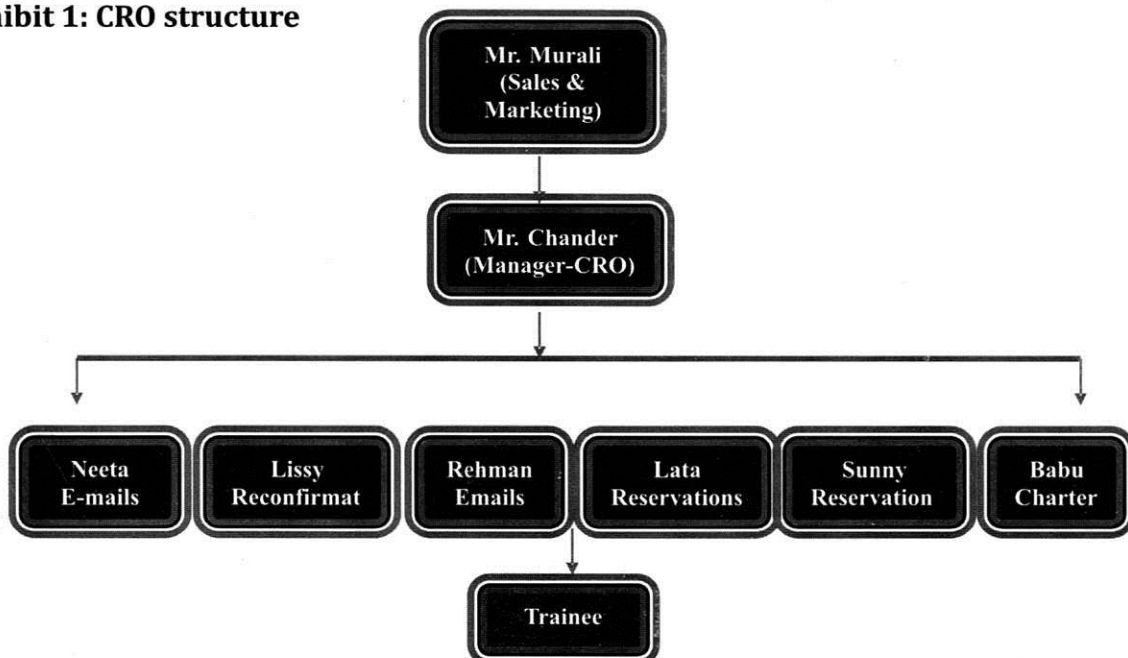
All these factors associated with the resort makes it even more important for the management that the customer is delighted and willingly continues the patronage.

### The Central Reservation Office (CRO)

The central reservations office of Landscape resorts Ltd, CRO is a well designed and staffed office situated in the North Kerala property of the group. It handles the bookings for both the properties of the group in Kerala. The CRO is an interface between the customer and the Hotel. It is also responsible for coordinating with the national reservation call centre and takes care of all the reservations that are routed from there.

This case was prepared by Prof. Barnabas N., NMIMS University Bangalore Campus and Prof. Nandakumar Mekoth, Department of Management Studies, Goa University as instructional material for class room discussion.

**Exhibit 1: CRO structure**



### **Job descriptions of the Customer Interacting Employees of the CRO:**

**Emails:** - responsible to check and respond back to all the emails received directly from the customers and the one forwarded by the National reservation call centre situated in Mumbai and Chennai.

**Reconfirmation:** reconfirm the bookings to avoid last minute cancellations, send reminder calls and emails, accept the payment details, and cancel the reservation if payments not received before the cut off date.

**Reservations:** answer to all the phone calls made by the customers for reservations, query, and special requests.

**Charter:** coordinating with the charter agents, for the purpose of reservations customer details & specifications, payment details, special queries, and follow up with the agents etc.

#### **CRO Crisis:-**

As evident from the structure (Exhibit 1 ) the responsibility to attend the phone calls was bestowed upon the reservation officers. On an average the resort received more than 35 calls with average time of 8 minutes per call. It was also observed that most of the calls were between, 11.00 hours to 13.00 hours and then 15.30 hours to 17.00 hours. As a policy matter the customers are asked to fill the feedback form, where their opinions on various aspects are invited. It was through these forms that the management realized that customers had problems with reference to the waiting time in CRO. The same was then informed to the CRO manager.

What should the CRO Manager do and why?

### **The Landscape Resorts Limited (B)**

#### **Fact Finding**

□ The CRO manager personally visited the major travel agents (company associates) and sought their opinion, it was surprising but almost all of them complained that their calls were not attended at once, at times they had to call more than twice but still they were not received.

□ One of the travel agents, to prove his point, made a call to the CRO office in front of the CRO manager and the outcome of the call was no surprise for the travel agent.

□ Couple of agents even confirmed that because of delay in attending calls, which is very frustrating, and hindrance to their business functioning, they rate landscape resorts on fourth rank and prefers other competitors.

□ It was then realised by CRO manager that the delay in attending the phone calls a major issue needs to be handled with immediate care.

□ To be more ensured for the next three weeks he made some dummy calls , and the outcome was;

#### **Exhibit 2**

Out of the 50 calls made  
5 calls were attended in 2-3 rings  
12 calls were attended 4 to 5 rings  
19 calls were attended in 6 -8 rings,  
6 calls were received after more than 8 rings  
8 calls were not received at all

Once convinced of the gravity of the issue the CRO manager thought of possible measures to address the problem. The first alternative that he thought was to increase the staffing and get one more person. However the General manger did not accept the alternative because it would have increased their yearly cost by another Rs.1 lakh rupee. Secondly there were space constraints in the CRO and there were no alternate premises available.

The issue was referred to senior managers as it was evident that there were similar issues with some other properties and CROs. Hence the company introduced a new policy of "3 Rings" wherein it was necessary that all the calls are received and attended within 3<sup>rd</sup> ring and the CRO manger along with the sales and marketing manager was made in-charge of implementing the same in the Kerala property.

One of the co-workers at CRO also quoted that "*reservations officers don't take their work seriously*". When investigated it was observed that in total there were *five local women* working

in the CRO, and they spend most of their time in chatting, however the reconfirmation officer, Emails head, Reservation officer for charters, their workload was evenly distributed and involved a lot of non-talking work as a reason they could manage their tasks well, however the reservations officer often delayed in answering the phone calls that made a bad image for the CRO.

What should the CRO Manager do and why?

### **The Landscape Resorts Limited (C)**

#### **The Solution**

□ As the first measure it was decided to change the sitting arrangement. The two reservation officers were made to sit in-front of the CRO manager's desk so that they can be continuously monitored. However, within a week's time the manager realised that he was judgemental about the inefficiency of the two reservation officers and hence they decided to go for a structural change.

□ Till date everyone at CRO was doing specific tasks. Calls were handled by only two officers. In-order to implement the three ring policy of

the company, work responsibilities was re-assigned. All the six CRO officers were made responsible to attend calls and the changed scenario was explained through a workshop.

□ As per the new system, the two reservation officers were mainly in-charge to answer the calls. If they were busy attending calls, then the new call got transferred to one of the remaining officers and they need to answer the same.

□ Fast Reservation was made a team responsibility activity and all the members of the CRO were entrusted with the responsibility. Further, to reduce the call timings and hold timings, FAQ replies were pasted on the office walls that helped the officers to make quick references to support customers over phones with the necessary information.

□ As a controlling practice the CRO manager along with other executives regularly interacted with the travel agents to see the efficiency of reservation operations. The feedback was shared with the CRO employees.

Critically evaluate the measures Implemented by the CRO Manager.