

HOSPITALITY INDEX

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(A new concept for measuring/quantifying hospitality in event management & helping organizations for improving organizational image by making hospitality part of organizational culture)

I was working for the organization named Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA). In addition to normal day to day duties, one of my prime responsibilities was to organize state level and National level seminars for promoting conservation of petroleum products and protection of environment. One of our National Seminar with best speakers and well designed course content on the subject matter was rated vary poorly by the delegates attending the seminar, where as another seminar without any reputed speaker arranged by us was rated excellent and we even received appreciation letters. What gone wrong with the first program and how the second program became a grand success even without well known speaker or celebrity?

The saying “Atithi Deva Bhoba” or “Dupariyar Atithi Sakhyat Damodar” (means Guests are like God/Daity) are part of our culture and we can’t ignore these age old thinking deep rooted in the mind of Indian people when we try to organize any event (or when we try to build image of an organization in front of people and society). This hospitality factor is deep rooted in our mind and also integrated with basic human need and desire. Unless we take care of this hospitality factor, any seminar/workshop/meeting/sports event/cultural event/press meet is bound to be rated very low as we have faced in the case of our National Seminar.

These personal experiences lead me to the thinking of a new term for rating events in a quantifiable and measurable parameter rather than simply terming them as good or bad in general term. This leads to the term **hospitality index** to do rating of events in the matter of hospitality. Hospitality rating of any event (or organization) is based on basic human need, desire, and necessity and not on the basis of real or fundamental value or the content of the event or what the speakers speak in the event.

When you landed in a place/organization without having any friend or known person and have to utilize the official channel or links, you know the culture and hospitality of the event organizer/ organization in which you have landed. If you feel at home in the environment certainly the organization is a with high hospitality index. Down the memory lane, one day you will forget the proceedings of the event or purpose for which you have visited the organization, but hospitality of the people/of the organization will remain for ever.

We all are human beings whether we are holding the position of CEO or General Manager or Manager or any other position. Basic human character, need and attitude remain almost same except minor plus-minus (like the fact that 99% of the compositions of all human brains are same). Unless one is superman or god we have to follow the basic instinct and normal route of satisfying a man and get the desired result. I have talk to many executives who have attended training programs conducted by Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI), Hyderabad. Most of the executives rate training programs conducted by ASCI as excellent/very good. Keeping aside the course content of the

training program when we discussed further and deeper we have found that ASCI was sensitive about the basic requirement of human need and takes utmost care to satisfy the basic needs.

Six things in my opinion always influence the rating of any event (also when you are in a new organization on invitation/ tour etc) as regard to hospitality and the general impression about the event or organization. There may be many other factors like decoration, venue etc etc which may influence you regarding the overall rating of any event or organization. However for the rating of the hospitality, I have identified **six R** as the most important and crucial one.

The SIX Rs of Hospitality are:

01. **Receive:** How well you receive at arrival & send back at departure including front office management
02. **Response:** How much responsive to the person and his requirements during the event or stay
03. **Respect:** How much honor you give to the invitee/guest
04. **Refreshment:** Quality/quantity of food and beverage
05. **Recreation:** Quality of accommodation, Entertainment like cultural function, visit to Kaziranga/Manas etc
06. **Reward:** Memento/Seminar Bag/Gifts to remember the event

In Hindi in lighter vein we have summarized it as Lana (welcome & bringing) Khana (food & beverage) Gana (entertainment) and Dena (gifts). Our childhood expectation of getting a good birthday gift from friends and having the best birthday party from friends when we were invited remains with our sub conscious mind. We may hide this syndrome as we grow old but certainly like the “Athiti Deva Bhoba” this syndrome also work on our mind unconsciously.

During my last assignment in PCRA, I have the opportunity to visit most of the major industries of NE region and interact with employees/executives/house wives/students etc of the organization concern. I have also conducted many workshop, seminar, and training programs in these organizations. In the beginning of my assignment, I have to land in many organizations without knowing any one or having any contact person during preliminary visit. My only weapon was my visiting card. In some organizations I feel at home even during my first visit and in some organizations I could not feel at home even after several visits. What is difference between these two categories of organization? The difference is very simple one, only in Hospitality Index (or rating). Though financial strength or profitability directly influence hospitality, even than some well performing organizations in production/maintenance/profit are very low in hospitality rating where as some financially poor organizations are found to be very high in hospitality rating. It is not correct that the ***richest man in the locality is always the hospitable one.***

I have always found comfortable whenever I landed in Dibrugarh Airport to visit OIL India Limited. No tension, no hurry, peace of mind, as if I am visiting my home. Same is the case with Indian Oil Corporation, Assam Oil Division, Digboi (Same is also

applicable to BHEL which I visited several times during my earlier assignment). I have started to discuss about the feelings of other visitors also whenever I stayed in the OIL/AOD/GAIL/ONGC guest houses. Along with my personal experience and the outcome of my various interactions, I have made one hospitality rating table of the ten important organizations I have traveled and worked during my assignment in PCRA. The result of my experience and ratings of **six Rs** on a ten point scale of these organizations is shown in the tabular form below:

Organ.	Receive	Response	Respect	Refreshment	Recreation	Reward	Total
OIL	09	08	09	09	09	09	53
AOD	09	08	08	09	09	08	51
GAIL	07	07	07	07	07	06	41
NRL	06	06	07	07	07	05	38
ONGC	06	05	07	06	06	07	37
IOCL	06	05	06	06	06	06	35
BRPL	05	06	05	05	05	05	31
APL	08	05	05	04	04	03	29
ASTC	07	07	07	02	02	02	27
HPC	04	04	03	02	02	02	17

Hospitality Index= (R+R+R+R+R+R)/60 X 100

So the Hospitality Index of OIL = $53/60 \times 100 = 88$

Hospitality Index of AOD = $51/60 \times 100 = 85$

Hospitality Index of GAIL = $41/60 \times 100 = 68$

On the basis of Hospitality Index the above organizations can be ranked as follows as regard to hospitality.

01. OIL
02. AOD
03. GAIL
04. NRL (Numaligarh Refinery Limited)
05. ONGC
06. IOCL
07. BRPL (Bongaigaon refinery and Petrochemicals Limited)
08. APL (Assam Petrochemicals Limited)
09. ASTC (Assam State Transport Corporation)
10. HPC (Hindustan Paper Corporation)

Any organization having Hospitality Index above 80 certainly is also certainly an organization with very higher good will among people, society, and media. The organization must also be an organization with better culture, better efficiency and productivity. Hospitality is a sub culture of the over all organizational culture and once an

organization has a strong sub culture of hospitality the overall culture of the organization must be a good one.

(N.B. The views expressed by the author are his personal view based on personal experience and not based on any sample survey.)

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LIST OF PUBLICATIOIS BY DEVEJIT BHUYAN

Sl. No.	Title/Name of book	Publisher	ISBN No.
01.	Multiple Career Choices	Pustak Mahal	81-223-0779-5
02.	21 st Century Rhymes	Vishv Books	81-7987-003-0
03.	Daughters of The Soil	Spectrum	81-87502-17-7
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05.	Big Bang to Bill Gates	Spectrum	81-87502-78-9
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