



УДК 640.4:17

**ETHICS OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION IN THE HOTEL
INDUSTRY AS A PREREQUISITE FOR SERVICE EFFICIENCY**
**ЕТИКА ДІЛОВОГО СПІЛКУВАННЯ В ГОТЕЛЬНОМУ БІЗНЕСІ ЯК ЗАПОРУКА
ЕФЕКТИВНОСТІ СЕРВІСНОЇ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ**

Moroz S.E./ Мороз С.Е.*s.p.s., as.prof. / к.пед.н., доц.*

ORCID: 0000-0001-7180-3060

Kalashnyk O.V./ Калашник О.В.*s.t.s., as.prof. / к.т.н., доц.*

ORCID: 0000-0001-9281-2564

Vovk M.O./Вовк М.О.*s.e.s., as.prof. / к.е.н., доц.*

ORCID: 0000-0001-8173-0918

*Poltava State Agrarian University, Poltava, Skovorody 1/3, 36003**Полтавський державний аграрний університет, Полтава, Сковороди 1/3, 36003*

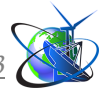
Abstract. *The article examines business communication ethics in the hotel industry as a key prerequisite for service efficiency. Contemporary scholarly approaches to ethical norms in hospitality are synthesized, highlighting the shift from formalized codes of conduct to integrated ethical decision-making models that account for organizational context and psychological factors. The role of ethical leadership, ethical climate, and employees' psycho-emotional state in shaping service communication quality is analyzed. The practical dimension is illustrated through the case of Premier Hotel Palazzo by analyzing guest reviews on digital platforms, which enables interpreting business communication ethics as a tangible driver of trust, loyalty, and service efficiency.*

Keywords: *business communication ethics, ethical leadership, hotel industry, service activity, ethical climate, guest experience, service quality.*

Introduction

In the contemporary hotel business, the effectiveness of service activities is increasingly determined not solely by material resources or the level of technical equipment, but to a greater extent by the quality of business communication among staff, guests, and management. As hotel services are inherently interactive, every communicative act performed by an employee constitutes an integral part of the service product and directly influences guests' perceptions of service quality, their satisfaction, and the formation of loyalty. In this context, business communication ethics acquires significance not only as a moral category, but also as a practical factor of hotel performance.

The relevance of this issue is driven by intensifying competition in the hospitality market, the standardization of service processes, and the growing role of digital



communication channels. Online booking and review platforms have made hotel operations highly transparent, transforming individual communication failures into public reputational risks. Under these conditions, guests increasingly assess service quality not only through tangible attributes, but also through ethical dimensions of interaction, including honesty, respect, politeness, and the ability of staff to respond empathetically.

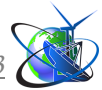
Contemporary scholarly research in hospitality reflects this shift by moving from the analysis of formalized ethical codes toward the examination of real mechanisms of ethical decision-making in service encounters. Particular attention is paid to the role of ethical leadership, organizational climate, employee autonomy, and psycho-emotional factors that shape business communication styles under conditions of high workload and emotional pressure.

The purpose of this article is to substantiate business communication ethics as a prerequisite for service efficiency in the hotel industry and to identify its practical significance for shaping positive guest experiences and ensuring the sustainable development of hotel enterprises.

Main Text

Business communication ethics in the hotel industry today appears less as a matter of politeness and more as a practical infrastructure of trust. In a hotel environment, any interaction between staff and guests simultaneously constitutes a service action, a managerial decision, and a micro-signal conveying the brand's values. Consequently, contemporary research demonstrates a clear shift from discussions of abstract moral norms toward the analysis of how ethical rules actually function under conditions of standardized procedures, high workload, staff stress, and digital transparency, where the quality of communication is immediately reflected in online reviews.

The analysis of academic literature indicates that the initial approach to addressing ethical business communication in the hotel industry was based on codification. A foundational assumption for the hospitality sector was that ethical codes serve as visible behavioral standards and provide guidance for decision-making in complex situations [1]. Studies examining ethical codes of hotel enterprises reveal that their

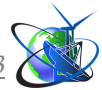


content is primarily focused on regulating potential risk areas. Most commonly, such documents emphasize issues of conflict of interest, requirements for employees' personal and professional qualities, norms governing interactions with clients, as well as rules concerning gifts and financial transactions. This structure reflects hotels' efforts to minimize ethical violations and reputational risks, while leaving the communicative aspects of everyday service interactions insufficiently elaborated.

At the same time, B. Stevens draws attention to a crucial point: the mere existence of an ethical code does not guarantee ethical behavior; rather, it reflects those risk zones that an organization seeks to control and monitor [1]. A similar perspective is shared by R. Coughlan, who argues that ethical codes have the potential to serve as a normative framework for professional communities and to translate abstract moral values into practically applicable guidelines [2]. However, this potential is significantly weakened if the code is not integrated into everyday work practices, staff training systems, and organizational culture. In the absence of «living» procedures and well-developed communication skills, an ethical code tends to become a formal document, while the resulting formalization of service is often perceived by guests as coldness or indifference on the part of the staff.

At the next stage in the development of scholarly thought, the focus gradually shifts from analyzing what is formally prescribed in ethical rules to explaining how individuals actually make ethical decisions in real work situations. In this context, particular importance is attributed to the integrated ethical decision-making approach proposed by M. Schwartz, which combines rational components – such as the assessment of consequences, norms, and professional duties – with non-rational factors, including intuitive reactions, emotional states, and the influence of situational context [3].

For the hospitality industry, this approach is especially relevant, as a significant proportion of decisions are made under conditions of limited time, high interaction intensity, and emotional pressure. In such situations, employees are often required to make immediate choices between strict procedural compliance and ethical responsiveness – for example, honestly informing a guest about service limitations,



refraining from shifting responsibility during a conflict, or maintaining a respectful tone when communicating with an irritated client. Importantly, the proposed model does not adopt a moralizing stance; instead, it explains the internal logic of ethical lapses by demonstrating why even conscientious employees may deviate from ethical norms in situations characterized by high moral intensity and insufficient time for deliberation [3].

Such an interpretation of ethical behavior naturally leads to the next research question: which organizational conditions, managerial practices, and communication tools are capable of supporting employees in making ethical decisions in real time, rather than limiting ethical regulation to formal familiarization with rules and codes.

It is within this context that ethical leadership ceases to be an abstract managerial concept and acquires practical significance for everyday service interactions. This involves not merely the declaration of values, but a mode of work organization in which employees feel entitled to exercise professional judgment. When managers demonstrate consistency, openness, and fairness in communication, they create a space of trust in which staff members are not afraid to move beyond standardized scripts and propose individualized solutions for guests. In such circumstances, job autonomy functions not as a risk but as a resource for ethical behavior, as it is supported by clear reference points and a sense of organizational support [4].

This logic is further reinforced by studies on ethical climate in hotel enterprises, which show that employees' perceptions of organizational moral norms directly affect their job satisfaction, motivation, and willingness to engage in so-called extra-role behavior – that is, to do more than is formally required by job descriptions [5]. In a service context, it is precisely such behavior that often determines the quality of the guest experience: attentiveness, patience, additional explanations, or timely assistance are not always prescribed in regulations, yet they are perceived by guests as manifestations of genuine care.

From this perspective, it becomes clear why minor details play a decisive role in hotel service. Ethical climate not only shapes general notions of «appropriate» behavior, but also sets the emotional tone of daily interactions. When employees



internalize the ethical norms of the organization, politeness and correctness cease to be enforced roles or elements of a service script and instead transform into a natural style of professional communication.

Extending this perspective further, researchers increasingly examine ethical behavior in connection with employees' psycho-emotional states and working conditions. In the hotel business, where service interactions are intensive and emotionally charged, chronic stress and ethical ambiguity create an environment in which even well-assimilated norms may be violated. Therefore, reducing stress levels and ensuring clarity of moral reference points should be regarded not as secondary, but as key factors of ethical business communication. When employees understand the boundaries of responsibility, feel supported by management, and are empowered to make reasoned professional decisions, the likelihood of unethical reactions in complex situations is significantly reduced.

In this sense, ethical leadership performs a dual function: on the one hand, it establishes clear and understandable «rules of the game», and on the other, it reduces psychological tension, which often serves as a hidden source of inappropriate communication with guests. This is particularly important for the hospitality sector, as ethical violations rarely manifest themselves in overtly aggressive forms; far more often they are masked as fatigue, standardized responses, avoidance of responsibility, or emotional detachment.

When considering these scholarly findings in an applied context, using the example of the four-star Premier Hotel Palazzo in Poltava [6], it is appropriate to examine the digital traces of guest interactions. In contemporary hotel business practice, online reviews represent one of the most visible indicators of ethical business communication, as they capture not declared standards but actual communication experiences. On the Booking.com platform, guests consistently emphasize the hospitality and politeness of the staff, as well as cleanliness and comfort, which typically correlate with adherence to ethical principles of respect, empathy, and professionalism in everyday service interactions [7] (fig.1).

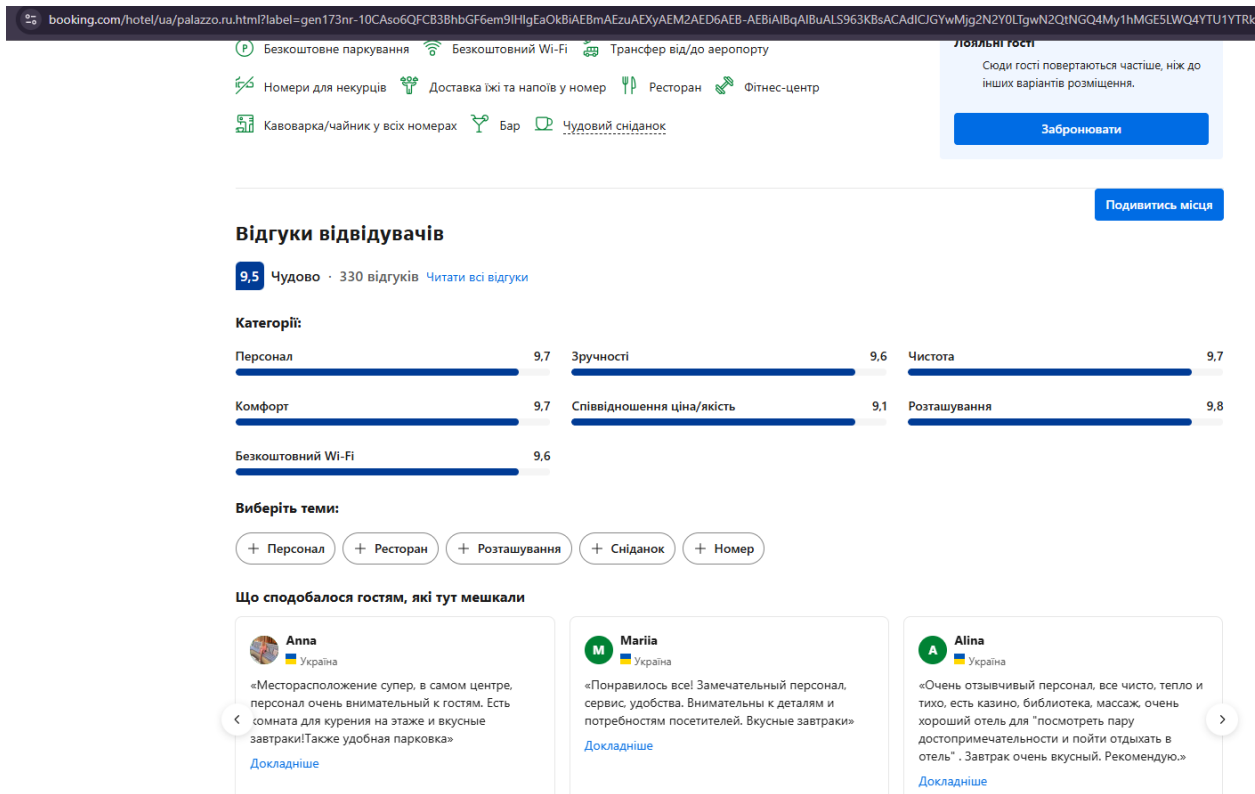
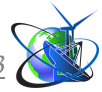


Figure 1 – Guest reviews on Booking.com

A source: [7]

Aggregated reviews on KAYAK repeatedly include markers such as «friendly, helpful staff», with an emphasis on service quality and organization [8]. Similar patterns are observed on Tripadvisor, where guest attention is focused primarily on staff politeness and attentiveness – characteristics that directly reflect the ethical dimension of business communication rather than the hotel’s material attributes [9].

From a scholarly perspective, this makes it possible to argue that, in hotel operations, ethical climate and service standards are transmitted outward through guests’ subjective experiences and can therefore serve as an empirical basis for content analysis of reviews and the development of practical recommendations. In particular, such an approach enables the identification of effective complaint-handling models, appropriate formats of apologies and compensation, as well as potential risks of communication scriptization during periods of peak workload.

Conclusions

Contemporary scholarly approaches to business communication ethics in the hotel industry can be interpreted through the prism of three interrelated dimensions. The first



is the normative dimension, which defines behavioral frameworks through ethical codes and formal rules. The second is the organizational-behavioral dimension, within which ethical leadership, ethical climate, and employee support reduce stress and restrain unethical practices. The third is the psychological dimension, which explains the formation of ethical decisions in real time, taking into account emotions and situational context.

The practical case of Premier Hotel Palazzo convincingly demonstrates that business communication ethics becomes tangible for guests through simple yet fundamentally important service details: willingness to help, honesty of explanations, appropriateness of behavior in conflict situations, and the preservation of human dignity even under conditions of standardized service delivery.

References

1. Stevens B. Hotel ethical codes: a content analysis. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*. 1997. Vol. 16(3). P. 261-271. DOI: [https://orcid.org/10.1016/S0278-4319\(97\)00014-5](https://orcid.org/10.1016/S0278-4319(97)00014-5).
2. Coughlan R. An analysis of professional codes of ethics in the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*. 2001. Vol. 20(2). P. 147-162. DOI: [https://orcid.org/10.1016/S0278-4319\(00\)00048-7](https://orcid.org/10.1016/S0278-4319(00)00048-7).
3. Schwartz M. S. Ethical Decision-Making Theory: An Integrated Approach. *Journal of Business Ethics*. 2016. Vol. 139(4). P. 755-776. DOI: <https://orcid.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2886-8>.
4. Dhar R. L. Ethical leadership and its impact on service innovative behavior: The role of LMX and job autonomy. *Tourism Management*. 2016. Vol. 57. P. 139-148. DOI: <https://orcid.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2016.05.011>.
5. Karatepe O. M., Agbaim I. M. Perceived ethical climate and hotel employee outcomes: an investigation in Nigeria. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*. 2012. Vol. 13(4). P. 286-315. DOI: <https://orcid.org/10.1080/1528008X.2012.692291>.
6. Premier Hotel Palazzo. Official website. URL: <https://palazzo->



hotel.phnr.com/ua/about-hotel

7. Booking.com. Official website. URL: <https://www.booking.com>

8. Kayak. Premier Hotel Palazzo URL: https://www.ua.kayak.com/Poltava-Hoteli-Pryem-r-Gotyel-Palacco.300910.ksp?utm_

9. Tripadvisor.com. Official website. URL: <https://www.tripadvisor.com>

Анотація. У статті розглянуто етику ділового спілкування в готельному бізнесі як ключову передумову ефективності сервісної діяльності. Узагальнено сучасні наукові підходи до осмислення етичних норм у сфері гостинності, зокрема перехід від формалізованих кодексів поведінки до інтегрованих моделей етичного прийняття рішень, що враховують організаційний контекст і психологічні чинники. Проаналізовано роль етичного лідерства, етичного клімату та психоемоційного стану персоналу у формуванні якості сервісної комунікації. Практичний вимір проблеми проілюстровано на прикладі готелю Premier Hotel Palazzo через аналіз гостьових відгуків на цифрових платформах, що дозволяє інтерпретувати етику ділового спілкування як реальний чинник довіри, лояльності та сервісної ефективності.

Ключові слова: етика ділового спілкування, етичне лідерство, готельний бізнес, сервісна діяльність, етичний клімат, гостьовий досвід, якість сервісу.