Job description
A hotel manager manages the day-to-day operations of a hotel, including reservations, food services, housekeeping and conventions. In a small hotel, one manager usually makes all the important daily decisions, whereas in a large establishment, a general manager hires a number of managers to be in charge of individual departments.

Work activities
- Planning menus in consultation with chefs and ordering supplies as required
- Hiring, training, supervising and motivating permanent and casual staff
- Organising staff rotas
- Ensuring health and safety regulations are strictly observed
- Monitoring the quality of the product and service provided
- Setting and monitoring budgets and maintaining financial and administrative records.

Work conditions
Travel: not a normal part of the working day (unless working on cruise liners). Overseas employment possible.
Working hours: unsocial; long hours likely, including weekends and bank holidays.
Location: opportunities exist mainly in towns or cities throughout the country though also in hotels located in rural areas.
Opportunities for self-employment: possible if one owns the hotel.

Career development
Promotion prospects are generally good for those with ability, strong interpersonal skills and a high level of motivation, though much will depend on the size and type of organisation. Hotel management is an area where you can progress really quickly. According to the Irish Hotel Federation, the majority of managers in hotels are in their 20s or 30s.
Most managers start as a section supervisor or manager with responsibility for supervising operations in a particular area, such as the reception or the bar, before taking on more hotel-wide operational positions as duty manager. The general manager is the most senior executive of a hotel or venue.

Salaries
Salaries will vary depending on the turnover, star rating and size of the property.
Republic of Ireland: Starting salaries for section supervisors/managers are around €25,000 while duty managers earn €27,000-37,000, general manager can earn anything from €50,000 to €160,000. Employers are now offering attractive employee benefits packages and incentives which may be exclusive or inclusive of the actual salary.

Entry requirements and training
Entry is possible without a third level qualification, which means that this career is open to graduates from all disciplines. However, relevant qualifications are becoming increasingly more in demand by employers.

Typical employers
- Hotels
- Holiday resorts
- Cruise liners
- Conference centres (including those on university campuses).

(continued overleaf)
Hotel manager (continued)

Other relevant degree subjects
- Business/management studies, especially those with tourism management
- Hospitality management
- Hospitality, leisure and tourism
- Hotel management
- International hospitality management
- International hotel management.

Postgraduate study
A pre-entry postgraduate qualification is not a requirement but is available.

Training
Opportunities for continuous professional development (CPD) exist. Hands-on experience in each department of a hotel will be key to becoming a general manager.

Skills and qualities
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Strong organisational and time management skills, combined with a high level of initiative
- Ability to manage in a diverse environment with a focus on client and customer services
- Well organised, good business and commercial acumen, enthusiasm, strong leadership and motivating skills including the ability to build strong relationships with customers and staff
- Energy, stamina and the ability to work under stress creativity, good at thinking quickly and sorting out problems on the spot, ability to stay calm in a crisis
- Financial, budgeting and stock-taking skills
- Knowledge of food, food hygiene including HACCP and food preparation.

Tips for applications
Previous relevant work experience is often a requirement. Find part-time or seasonal work in catering outlets such as pubs, restaurants and fast food outlets at weekends and during university holidays. A smart personal appearance is essential. Knowledge of foreign languages is also useful.

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