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Special Message:

Approaching Full-Service Hotels

Full-service hotels are great volume builders for those of us in the cleaning chemical business. But, like any other business, these prime prospects must be approached properly.

First, before going any further, let me address the subject of national accounts and contracts. Most of you who have tried to approach these prospects have been subjected to the old excuse that the customer has a contract with _____ (you supply the name). This usually means that the prospect has a pricing agreement with one of several chemical companies.

Although this is a great way to get rid of a sales rep, this does NOT mean they can't buy from you!

Yes, there are a few companies who have relationships with suppliers that are very difficult to break, but most can buy from you if they want to. You just have to keep trying. The plus here is that if you succeed, you've got an excellent account that can boost your sales (and income) considerably.

So now, let's talk about who to approach when calling on a full-service hotel. Let's start with your local Holiday Inn as an example.¹

For the housekeeping business and the laundry business as well, start with the Executive Housekeeper. He or she will be able to listen to your story, and tell you whether or not there is any interest. If there is interest, they will help you get started in the right direction. Pretty simple.

For the kitchen, you will want to see the Food & Beverage (F&B) manager. The same is true here for what I said about the housekeeper. The F&B manager will be able to evaluate your introductory approach, and will also tell you how to proceed further if he's interested in your product story.

These individuals are not difficult to find or approach. As your prospects get bigger, you'll find the same management structure in place, they'll just be more assistants and extraneous "others" to go through in order to get to the right people.

They're still there though, so...

Good Selling,

John White

First gets the business, second gets the leftovers, third gets thrown out - which one are you?

¹ All full-service hotels will be similar to this example. The bigger hotels will have the same departments; they'll just be bigger.