



## **Sustainable Business in Radisson Blu Hotel Prague**

- 1. How do your personal values and beliefs regarding the environment and social responsibility shape the way you approach sustainability in your role as a general manager?**

I personally believe that sustainability and social responsibility are topics that currently concern everyone. As a parent, like many others, I simply desire for my children and their children to enjoy a lifetime surrounded by the same nature we currently experience. In the past, there was a belief that this would happen naturally, without much effort in our personal lives. However, in recent decades, we have come to realize that it's not automatic, and proactive steps are required. In my role as general manager, this translates into a proactive approach towards integrating environmentally friendly policies within our business operations. I firmly believe that we have a responsibility to minimize our ecological footprint and strive for sustainable practices. Social responsibility is integral, and I advocate for workplace diversity, fair labour practices, and community engagement. Transparency and accountability are paramount, fostering trust among stakeholders. In essence, my managerial decisions are guided by a dedication to a sustainable, ethical, and socially conscious business future.

- 2. If you could implement one unconventional sustainability initiative in your hotel, what would it be and why?**

If given the opportunity to implement an unconventional sustainability initiative in our hotel, I would introduce an "Energy-Generating Gym Equipment" program. This innovative approach involves outfitting our fitness center with exercise equipment that converts the energy generated during workouts into usable electricity.

This initiative serves a dual purpose: encouraging guests to stay active and promoting energy efficiency within the hotel. It is an excellent way to demonstrate our dedication to environmental responsibility while leveraging the engagement of our guests in a positive manner.

Furthermore, the "Energy-Generating Gym Equipment" initiative aligns with current trends in health and wellness, attracting environmentally conscious travellers who seek accommodations that prioritize both their well-being and the planet.

By implementing this program, our hotel would not only distinguish itself in the hospitality sector but also make a tangible contribution to energy conservation. Guests could take pride in knowing that their commitment to a healthy lifestyle directly contributes to the hotel's sustainable practices, creating a positive and memorable experience during their stay.

### **3. What role do you believe technology will play in advancing sustainability within the hospitality industry?**

I believe technology will play a key role in advancing sustainability within the hospitality industry. Technological innovations have the potential to drive significant positive changes, enhancing operational efficiency and reducing environmental impact. Here are just some sample areas where technology can contribute to sustainability:

Smart building technologies, energy management systems, and Internet of Things devices can optimize energy usage in hotels. This includes automated lighting, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems that adjust based on occupancy and external conditions, resulting in reduced energy consumption and lower carbon emissions.

Technology can streamline waste management processes through sensors and data analytics. Smart waste bins can monitor and optimize waste collection routes, reducing unnecessary transportation emissions. Additionally, advanced sorting and recycling technologies can enhance the efficiency of waste diversion programs.

Sensor-based technologies can be employed to monitor and control water usage throughout hotels. Smart irrigation systems, low-flow fixtures, and leak detection technologies

contribute to significant water conservation. Water recycling and purification systems can further minimize water consumption.

The shift towards digitalization can reduce the need for paper-based processes. Digital check-ins, mobile room keys, and electronic communication systems not only enhance guest experiences but also contribute to a reduction in paper waste. Cloud-based solutions can streamline operations, reducing the need for physical storage and paperwork.

Technology plays a crucial role in educating and engaging guests on sustainable practices. Mobile apps, in-room tablets, or digital displays can provide information on hotel sustainability initiatives, encourage responsible behaviour (such as towel reuse, green housekeeping), and highlight local eco-friendly attractions or services.

In summary, the integration of technology in the hospitality industry holds great potential to advance sustainability by optimizing resource usage, reducing waste, and enhancing overall efficiency. As technology continues to evolve, embracing these innovations will be crucial for hotels aiming to meet and exceed sustainability goals.

**4. If you had unlimited resources at your disposal, what ambitious sustainability project would you undertake at your hotel?**

All of the above! But to start with one single project, it would be Net-Zero Carbon project for the hotel. This initiative would involve a comprehensive overhaul of our energy infrastructure, incorporating cutting-edge renewable energy sources, energy-efficient technologies, and carbon offset programs. The goal would be to make the hotel completely self-sufficient in terms of energy, achieving a net-zero carbon footprint and serving as a beacon of sustainable hospitality.

**5. In your opinion, what are the biggest misconceptions or myths surrounding sustainability in the hospitality sector?**

One prevalent misconception in the hospitality sector is that sustainability initiatives are too costly and are a burden on profitability. While certain projects may require significant initial investments or might not be even feasible for particular property, there is a broad array of low-cost or no-cost options available. In truth, even incremental changes, such as transitioning to eco-friendly amenities or various guest sustainable practices collectively contribute to significant environmental benefits when adopted industry wide.

**6. How do you involve guests in the co-creation of sustainable experiences during their stay at your hotel?**

Currently we run several initiatives that involve our guests. Just to name two: we have towel reuse program that encourages guests to reuse their towels during their stay rather than requesting fresh towels daily. This initiative aims to reduce water and energy consumption associated with frequent laundering, promoting environmental sustainability. Another initiative that we started two years ago is Green Housekeeping. It involves adopting environmentally friendly practices in the cleaning and maintenance of guest rooms and common areas. This includes the use of eco-friendly cleaning products along with an option for guests to vote for limited daily cleaning in their rooms, aligning with our sustainability goals. We've received very positive feedback for this initiative, particularly from business travellers staying with us for two to three nights. According to our internal statistics, more than 30% of our guests chose this option in the past year. This clearly shows guests' willingness to contribute to sustainability efforts while enjoying their hotel experience.

**7. Radisson Hotel Group has a 3-year sustainability program each hotels need to implement; can you tell something about that and what part as a hotel do you play in this program?**

RHG launched the 'Hotel Sustainability Basics', in 2022, together with the World Travel and Tourism Council and the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance. Those authorities defined a set of twelve criteria that a hotel needs to fulfil in order to market itself as sustainable. The programme marks the starting point of a hotel's sustainability journey and is linked to a verification programme to eliminate any potential greenwashing. There are three major pillars to work on: Efficiency, Planet and People. Within each pillar, there is a set of criteria that hotels should progressively implement over a span of three years. These criteria include activities such as measuring and reducing energy and water consumption, exclusive use of green cleaning products, or efforts to diminish inequalities within the team. This organized approach allows hotels to systematically monitor and track their sustainability initiatives, establishing a foundation for the adoption of more extensive sustainable practices.

**8. Are there any future sustainability initiatives or goals that your hotel is working towards?**

Aligned with the Hotel Sustainability Basics program, we are advancing our initiatives this year. One of our key projects involves upgrading our Building Management system to integrate seamlessly with our PMS system. This integration enables automated control of room heating/cooling based on room status in the PMS—whether it's empty, assigned for arrival, or checked-in/checked-out. This connectivity not only enhances energy efficiency but also ensures a consistently comfortable temperature for our guests throughout their stays.

Second large project includes replacing all in-room amenities with eco-friendly alternatives. Building on last year's replacement of single-use bathroom amenities for dispensers, we are expanding this effort to include all other bathroom accessories, such as slippers, toothbrushes, and vanity kits.

Talking about supporting local community, our collaboration with the local branch of SOS Children's Villages persists, featuring various initiatives and events – besides regular financial support we assist them with occasional non-financial needs throughout the year, particularly before Christmas or at the start of the school year. This ongoing commitment reflects our dedication to social responsibility.

**9. What role does employee training and engagement play in your sustainability efforts, and how do you empower your staff to contribute to these initiatives?**

Employee training and engagement are fundamental pillars of our sustainability efforts, integral to fostering a culture of responsibility and environmental consciousness within our organization. Our comprehensive training programs are designed to educate employees about sustainability principles, providing them with the knowledge needed to integrate eco-friendly practices into their daily tasks. Through the assignment of specific roles and responsibilities we empower our staff to take the lead in driving and promoting sustainable practices. This approach ensures that every employee actively contributes to our collective efforts, making a positive impact on the environment and the community.

**10. Finally, how do you see the role of sustainability evolving in the hospitality industry in the coming years, and what steps do you plan to take to stay ahead of these changes?**

Sustainability in hotels is no longer a checkbox; it's a dynamic commitment that goes beyond environmental considerations. I could foresee an increased emphasis on comprehensive sustainability strategies that exceed basic environmental practices. The industry is likely to witness a growing integration of social responsibility, community engagement, ethical sourcing, fostering inclusivity, and partnerships with charitable organizations into sustainable frameworks. Travelers are becoming more discerning, seeking authentic and immersive experiences that align with their values. As a result, sustainability will not only be viewed as a responsibility but as a key factor influencing consumer choices. Anticipating these changes, hotels that want to stay ahead should be investing in continuous innovation, forging community-centric initiatives, fostering stakeholder collaboration, enhancing transparency, and prioritizing employee training. This is not a task that can be completed all at once; rather, it is a continual journey for all of us, much like our ongoing efforts in increasing quality and enhancing guest experiences.