



Job Preview – Engineering Role

When people think of jobs in the hospitality industry, wearing coveralls and carrying a tool kit is likely not the first image that comes to mind. Instead, individuals often picture customer service roles that involve significant interaction with guests. While some of these jobs certainly focus on these types of services, many other “behind the scenes” jobs have significantly less customer interaction, but are equally as important to ensuring customers have a satisfying experience. Examples include jobs in housekeeping, maintenance and engineering, in the kitchen as a dishwasher or prep-cook, or in the back office as a file clerk or assistant. Many of these jobs are entry-level positions, with an opportunity to grow and move into higher-level positions with greater responsibility and a bigger paycheck!

This job preview focuses on the “engineering role” within a hotel. We’ll be highlighting some of the common tasks performed, as well as some of the challenges of the job to help you gain a better understanding about the position. So let’s get started!

Your duties in the engineering role will be to perform general maintenance and repairs in the guest rooms, meeting spaces, kitchen, and common areas of the hotel. This may include inspecting and replacing smoke alarms, checking the lights and replacing bulbs as needed, making sure the television and other electronics in the guest rooms are functioning properly, and testing thermostats to ensure that the heat and air conditioning is working effectively. You may also be required to perform common repairs such as fixing a leaky faucet or a broken piece of furniture, replacing a cracked mirror, or installing a white board in a meeting room. A key responsibility of the role will be to conduct routine maintenance and safety checks, and to identify and log any problems throughout the hotel that need fixing to help prevent bigger issues from occurring. The engineering role is essential to the smooth operation of the hotel, and to ensuring the safety and comfort of guests at all times.

If you like working on your own, this position offers an independent work environment with limited social interaction. You will typically be provided with a list of tasks that need to be completed, so you will know exactly what work needs to be done and what is expected of you. Activities of the job require attention to detail and the use of problem solving skills. Daily tasks are often repetitive and predictable, though you may be asked to respond to unexpected problems that may pop up from time to time. Training for this role is often by example - instead of reading a manual or being told what to do, you will be able to see it demonstrated and participate while you learn. Some tasks however, may require specialized skills and training, such as mechanical or electrical maintenance and repairs, and you may want to explore getting a certificate or a degree in building maintenance to enhance your skillset.

There are also some challenges to this job that you should consider before deciding if it is a good fit for you. Since you will often be working alone, you must be able to keep yourself focused and on track to complete your daily workload.



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At times, you will have to communicate with other departments to address their needs and respond to issues as quickly as possible. While routine maintenance and safety checks are repetitive and predictable, repair work will vary. For example, you may need to repair a dryer hose in the laundry room one day, and fix the hinges on a pantry door in the kitchen the next day. There are also some physical demands with this job – you'll be on your feet for your entire shift and you will have to do some bending and lifting.

No matter which role you work in at a hotel or within the hospitality industry, dependability, consistency in attendance and a positive attitude are important. You'll be able to meet new people and learn tasks that are easily transferable to other positions and industries. For example, the skills you develop and gain in an engineering position could be applied to similar roles in a school, hospital, an airport, and a wide variety of commercial buildings, or you may consider pursuing an apprenticeship as a plumber, electrician, or in carpentry.

Another important point to note is that hotels are one of the few businesses that are open 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so your schedule might include shift work and working on a holiday.

If you're looking for a positive work environment and the opportunity to grow and advance over time, the engineering role might be a good fit for you and a great place to start your employment and career journey!