



Development and Retention of Autistic Staff in Hospitality

Module 5

CODE OF CONDUCT

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Module Title	Module 5: Code of Conduct
<p>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</p>	<p>Module 5 aims to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educate learners on the importance of a safe and inclusive work environment in hospitality. 2. Train learners to understand organisational culture and behavior standards that support all employees, including autistic staff. 3. Provide information on the role and structure of a Code of Conduct in hospitality organisations. 4. Provide guidelines for developing and applying, a clear and inclusive Code of Conduct. 5. Equip learners with practical skills to support respectful behavior in hospitality workplaces. 6. Raise awareness of the benefits of inclusive workplace culture for employees and guest satisfaction.
<p>LEARNING OUTCOMES</p>	<p>Through Module 5, learners will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply competence in designing and maintaining Codes of Conduct adapted to hospitality environments. 2. Acquire knowledge of ethical behavior, principles of inclusivity and professional expectations in the hospitality sector. 3. Develop skills in communicating clearly, promoting respectful teamwork and supporting neurodiverse employees through structured workplace practices. 4. Use tools such as templates and guidelines for drafting and applying a Code of Conduct effectively within hospitality organisations.

1. Introduction

HoReCa is one of the most dynamic and fast-paced sectors in the global economy. It requires employees to work in customer-facing roles, handle high-pressure situations, and adapt to frequently changing environments. However, for employees on the autism spectrum, these conditions can present unique challenges.

Many autistic employees possess valuable skills such as attention to detail, strong pattern recognition, and high reliability, which can be particularly beneficial in structured hospitality roles. However, they may also struggle with sensory overload, ambiguous social interactions, and unpredictable work schedules.

A structured and inclusive work environment, combined with clear policies and expectations, can significantly enhance the performance and well-being of autistic employees in hospitality. Employers who proactively implement autism-friendly practices not only support neurodiverse employees but also enhance their overall workplace culture, improve employee retention, and boost customer satisfaction.

This module explores how hospitality businesses can create inclusive workplaces that enable autistic employees to thrive and contribute effectively. By implementing reasonable adjustments, structured work processes, and inclusive training practices, businesses can benefit from the unique strengths of autistic individuals while ensuring a productive and supportive workplace for all employees.

One of the key components of an inclusive workplace is a Code of Conduct. A Code of Conduct serves as a guiding framework that defines expected behaviors, ethical workplace standards, and inclusivity policies. A well-implemented Code of Conduct ensures that all employees, including autistic individuals, are treated with fairness, dignity, and respect.

2. Culture of an organisation

2. a. Understanding organisational culture in Hospitality

The organisational culture of a hospitality business is the foundation of how employees interact, how customer service is delivered, and how business values are upheld. A strong workplace culture not only enhances employee satisfaction and teamwork but also affects the reputation of the business and its ability to retain skilled workers.

For autistic employees, a positive and inclusive workplace culture can make a significant difference in their ability to perform tasks efficiently and feel comfortable in their role. An inclusive culture encourages diversity, provides structured communication, and ensures that all employees receive the necessary accommodation to succeed.

2. b. Challenges faced by autistic employees in hospitality culture

While the hospitality sector values efficiency and customer service, the fast-paced nature of this industry can be overwhelming for autistic employees if proper support is not in place. Common challenges include:

- Sensory overload, like loud noises, bright lights and strong food smells in kitchens or dining areas, which can cause sensory discomfort.
- Unstructured social expectations: customer-facing roles often require employees to engage in small talk, eye contact and handling complaints, which can be stressful for autistic employees who prefer direct and structured communication.
- Unpredictable work schedules: rotating shifts, last-minute changes and high-pressure peak hours can be difficult for individuals who rely on routine and predictability.
- Abstract communication and indirect feedback: hospitality workplaces often rely on implied instructions, sarcasm, or fast verbal exchanges, which may be confusing for autistic employees who prefer literal and explicit communication.

To overcome these challenges, businesses need to build a workplace culture that prioritises inclusion, structure, and support.

2. c. Creating an inclusive workplace culture

A hospitality business that actively fosters inclusivity benefits not only autistic employees but also improves overall staff retention, efficiency, and customer satisfaction. Key strategies include:

1. Educating management and staff on autism awareness: providing autism awareness training for managers and coworkers can help build a more understanding and supportive work environment. Employees should be trained on how to communicate clearly, provide constructive feedback, and recognise when an autistic employee might need accommodations.

2. Implementing predictable work routines: providing clear schedules, structured workflows, and advanced notice of changes can significantly help autistic employees perform their best. Avoiding last-minute shift changes or providing written task lists can reduce workplace stress.

3. Creating sensory-friendly spaces: employers can make small but impactful adjustments, such as:

- Reducing background noise where possible.
- Allowing noise-canceling headphones in non-customer-facing roles.
- Adjusting lighting levels in break areas.

4. Encouraging clear and direct communication: using written instructions, checklists, and visual cues rather than relying on verbal communication alone can help autistic employees understand expectations more clearly.

3. Defining a Code of Conduct

3.a. What is a Code of Conduct?

A Code of Conduct is a formal document that outlines the expected behaviors, ethical values, and professional standards that employees must follow within an organisation. It serves as a guide for workplace interactions, ensuring that all employees understand how to engage with colleagues, customers, and management in a respectful and professional manner.

3.b. Why is a Code of Conduct important for autistic employees?

For autistic employees, having a well-defined Code of Conduct helps eliminate ambiguity in workplace expectations. Many neurodiverse individuals prefer clear guidelines over unwritten social rules, and a Code of Conduct provides a structured framework that defines acceptable behavior, teamwork expectations, and communication standards.

A Code of Conduct also ensures that workplace policies support equal treatment, inclusion and reasonable accommodations for autistic employees. By explicitly outlining anti-discrimination policies, conflict resolution procedures, and workplace support systems, organisations can create a fair and safe environment for all employees.

3.c. Key components of an inclusive code of conduct

To support autistic employees in hospitality, a Code of Conduct should include:

1. **Equal opportunity and non-discrimination policies**, assuring fair hiring practices, workplace adjustments and protections against bias.
2. **Workplace behavior guidelines**, providing clear explanations of professional communication, teamwork, and respect for diversity.
3. **Support for neurodiverse employees**, including a section that explains how autistic employees can request accommodations, such as structured work schedules or sensory-friendly adjustments.
4. **Complaint and dispute resolution procedures**, providing employees with a structured way to report workplace issues without fear of retaliation.
5. **Customer interaction standards**, outlining how employees should engage with guests, ensuring professionalism while respecting neurodiverse differences.

4. Contents of a Code of Conduct

4.a. Introduction to the structure of a Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct serves as a framework that establishes the expected behaviors, ethical values, and professional standards within an organisation. In the hospitality industry, where interactions with customers and colleagues are frequent, a clear and inclusive Code of Conduct helps employees navigate workplace challenges, ensure professionalism and maintain a respectful and inclusive environment for all staff members, including those on the autism spectrum.

For autistic employees, having clearly defined workplace expectations eliminates confusion and ensures they understand what is required in various work scenarios. Unlike neurotypical employees who might intuitively grasp workplace norms, autistic employees often benefit from structured guidelines that explicitly outline acceptable behavior, workplace etiquette, and responsibilities.

A well-developed Code of Conduct in hospitality should cover the following:

- Workplace behavior expectations, defining respectful communication and teamwork principles.
- Customer service guidelines, assuring consistent and professional service standards.

- Diversity, equity and inclusion policies, addressing anti-discrimination, neurodiversity awareness and reasonable accommodations.
- Complaint and grievance procedures, providing structured ways to address workplace concerns.
- Workplace adjustments and support systems, ensuring accessibility and inclusion for autistic employees.

Each section of the Code of Conduct plays a key role in maintaining professionalism, employee well-being, and business success. In this chapter, we will explore these elements in detail and explain their significance in supporting autistic employees in the hospitality sector.

4.b. Key elements of an inclusive Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct for an autism-inclusive hospitality workplace should be comprehensive, practical, and easy to understand. It should clearly outline acceptable behaviors, responsibilities, and consequences for misconduct while reinforcing an inclusive and respectful workplace culture.

1. Organisational values and ethical principles: a strong Code of Conduct begins with a statement of values that reflects the company's commitment to several principles. These include:

- Professionalism and excellence in customer service.
- Equal opportunity and fair treatment of all employees.
- Inclusivity and diversity, including neurodiversity.
- Respectful workplace behavior and conflict resolution.

In a hospitality setting, these values are particularly important because employees regularly interact with both customers and colleagues from diverse backgrounds. Thus, a welcoming and inclusive workplace culture improves teamwork, job satisfaction and customer experiences.

2. Workplace etiquette and behavior expectations: many workplace behaviors that are considered "common sense" for neurotypical employees may not be as obvious for autistic individuals. Therefore, a Code of Conduct should provide explicit guidelines on:

- Appropriate workplace conversations – What topics are acceptable for discussion during work hours? How should employees communicate with guests and colleagues?

- Body language and eye contact – While some autistic individuals struggle with eye contact, emphasizing alternative respectful behaviors (such as nodding or acknowledging presence) can help bridge communication gaps.
- Handling workplace disagreements – The Code should outline steps for resolving conflicts professionally, ensuring that employees know how to seek support if they feel uncomfortable or mistreated.

3. Customer service and professionalism: providing excellent customer service is the foundation of the hospitality industry. A Code of Conduct should offer:

- Clear guidelines on guest interactions, including how to greet customers, respond to inquiries, and handle complaints.
- Instructions on managing difficult customer interactions, such as how to respond to misunderstandings or emotional guests.
- Guidelines on maintaining professionalism in both direct and indirect customer-facing roles (e.g., kitchen staff, housekeeping, or front desk personnel).

For autistic employees, role-playing exercises or written scripts can help reinforce appropriate customer service behaviors. Additionally, providing accommodations (such as written responses for frequently asked questions) can empower autistic employees to handle interactions more effectively.

4. Inclusivity and anti-discrimination policies: a Code of Conduct should explicitly state that all employees, regardless of neurodiversity, are entitled to a fair and supportive workplace. Key policies should include:

- Equal opportunity in hiring and career advancement – Ensuring that autistic employees have the same opportunities as their neurotypical colleagues.
- Workplace accommodations – Outlining how employees can request adjustments (such as reduced noise environments or structured task assignments).
- Protection against bullying, harassment, or microaggressions – Educating employees on acceptable language, behaviors, and attitudes toward neurodiverse colleagues.

These guidelines promote an inclusive hospitality environment where autistic employees can thrive without fear of discrimination or exclusion.

5. Workplace adjustments and support for employees within the autism spectrum: an inclusive Code of Conduct should include specific workplace adjustments to support autistic employees, such as:

- Flexible work schedules to accommodate sensory sensitivities or energy levels.

- Alternative communication methods, such as providing instructions in writing or using visual cues.
- Quiet spaces or sensory-friendly break areas to help employees manage sensory overload.

6. Reporting and resolving workplace concerns: a clear complaint resolution system ensures that employees feel comfortable reporting issues without fear of retaliation. The Code should outline:

- Steps for addressing workplace conflicts with colleagues or management.
- Confidential reporting channels for employees who experience discrimination or harassment.
- Clear procedures for disciplinary actions to ensure fairness and accountability.

5. Developing a Code of Conduct

5.a. Introduction to developing a Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct is more than just a policy document; it is a practical tool that ensures a workplace is professional, ethical and also inclusive. In the hospitality industry, where customer service and teamwork are critical, a well-structured Code of Conduct ensures that all employees -regardless of neurodiversity- understand expectations and can work together effectively.

For autistic employees, unclear social rules, inconsistent workplace norms and ambiguous behavioral expectations can create confusion and anxiety. Therefore, developing a Code of Conduct that is inclusive of neurodiverse employees is crucial. A structured document that provides explicit guidelines on workplace behavior, professional standards, and workplace adjustments ensures that autistic employees can navigate their roles confidently and successfully.

Developing a Code of Conduct should be a collaborative process that includes input from management, employees, HR professionals and neurodiversity specialists. This chapter will explore the step-by-step process of creating a Code of Conduct that meets the unique needs of hospitality businesses while promoting inclusivity, professionalism, and compliance with workplace regulations.

5.b. Steps to develop a Code of Conduct

When creating a Code of Conduct for a hospitality organisation, it is important to follow a clear development process that ensures the Code is comprehensive, relevant and truly inclusive. The steps outlined below reflect best practices and are adapted for the hospitality sector:

Step 1: Choose who will participate in drafting the Code

Start by deciding who should be involved in developing the Code. In hospitality, it is essential to include:

- Senior management (General Managers, HR managers)
- Long-term staff from different departments (reception, housekeeping, F&B, kitchen)
- Stakeholders such as disability inclusion consultants or autism advocacy organisations

Step 2: Think of previous ethical issues

Analyse past ethical challenges experienced in hospitality settings, such as:

- Handling guest complaints inappropriately
- Workplace bullying, discrimination, or harassment
- Issues with punctuality, dress code, or customer privacy
- Sensory overload situations affecting autistic employees

Anticipating these scenarios helps ensure the Code addresses real risks and supports proactive solutions for inclusivity.

Step 3: Form an outline

Develop a clear outline of the Code's contents. For a hospitality workplace, typical components should include:

- Dress code and grooming expectations (important for frontline roles)
- Guest interaction standards (politeness, managing complaints, communication clarity)
- Equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion commitments
- Policies on harassment and bullying
- Workplace accommodations (particularly for autistic employees, e.g., allowing for sensory-friendly areas)
- Use of mobile phones and technology during shifts
- Substance use policies (e.g., alcohol and drug-free policies during service hours)
- Privacy and confidentiality regarding guest and staff information

- Procedures for reporting misconduct
- Consequences for Code violations

Step 4: Communicate to stakeholders about the draft

After drafting the initial version, share it with internal stakeholders such as department heads, staff representatives and diversity consultants and gather feedback on:

- Clarity of language
- Practicality of rules
- Specificity of guidance for neurodiverse employees
- Appropriateness for all service areas (front desk, kitchen, housekeeping, etc.)

Incorporating feedback ensures the Code is realistic, inclusive, and effective.

Step 5: Create the final version

Based on the consultation, finalise the Code with:

- An Introduction explaining the purpose of the document.
- Clear sections organised around specific workplace behaviors.
- Supportive language that emphasises inclusivity, fairness, and teamwork.
- Examples tailored to the hospitality environment.
- A simple and readable format to ensure understanding by all employees, including those with cognitive differences.

Publish the final version, making it available both in print and digitally

5.c. Template of a Code of Conduct

A model template for drafting a Code of Conduct is presented below:

Content table	The table of contents lists the key themes typically included in Codes of Conduct, along with their corresponding page numbers.
Company policy and purpose behind the CoC	<p>This section outlines the intent of the Code: to ensure a respectful, professional, and inclusive environment that enhances employee well-being and delivers outstanding guest experiences.</p> <p>It emphasises that clear behavior standards support all employees, particularly those who benefit from predictable, structured environments, including autistic employees.</p>

Dress code	Staff are expected to maintain professional grooming standards appropriate to their role (e.g., uniforms, personal hygiene, minimal strong scents to avoid sensory issues).
Technology use and workplace security	Guidelines on appropriate use of mobile phones, the internet, and hotel systems during working hours, with clear boundaries to ensure guest confidentiality and operational efficiency.
Relationships between staff	Expectations for respectful and professional interactions between colleagues, including avoiding disruptive gossip, inappropriate joking or exclusionary behavior.
Expectations for workplace behaviour and business culture	All requirements for appropriate behaviour at work and the desired workplace culture are outlined in this section. This involves arriving punctually for scheduled shifts, following structured team protocols and guest service standards, communicating clearly and respectfully with all colleagues and guests, showing understanding and flexibility toward neurodiverse working styles.
Harassment and discrimination	A zero-tolerance policy for harassment, bullying or discriminatory behavior. Clear definitions are provided, and examples are included to illustrate unacceptable behavior.
Workplace accommodations for neurodiverse employees	Employees are entitled to request reasonable accommodations, such as: alternative communication methods (written instructions), sensory-friendly break areas, structured task lists and routines. Requests should be handled confidentially and sensitively.
Discipline measures	Clear outline of consequences for breaches of the Code, ranging from verbal warnings to formal disciplinary procedures depending on the severity of the infraction.

5.d. Best Practices checklist

Developing a Code of Conduct is only effective when supported by a set of best practices that ensure its clarity, accessibility, relevance, and impact. Especially in the hospitality sector—where employee interaction with guests and colleagues happens

continuously—these best practices are crucial to maintaining professionalism and inclusivity, particularly for autistic employees who benefit from structured environments and clear expectations.

Below is a detailed checklist of best practices that hospitality organisations should apply when drafting and implementing their Code of Conduct:

- Is the language simple and clear? Ensure plain, direct sentences without jargon, easy for everyone to understand.
- Does the Code reflect the company's values and culture? Make sure it supports hospitality professionalism, respect and inclusivity.
- Was there consultation with employees and stakeholders? Involve diverse staff, including autistic employees, to ensure realistic guidelines.
- Are practical hospitality examples included? Use real-world workplace situations to illustrate expected behaviors.
- Is the Code accessible in different formats? Offer printed and digital versions; provide visual aids if needed.
- Is there structured training to explain the Code? Incorporate the Code into onboarding and regular staff development sessions.
- Are feedback and review procedures established? Allow anonymous feedback and plan regular updates to keep the Code effective.

6. Applications of a Code of Conduct

Once developed, a Code of Conduct must not remain a theoretical document; it must become an integral part of the daily working life of every hospitality organisation. Application of the Code ensures that all employees, including autistic individuals and other neurodiverse staff, experience a workplace built on respect, fairness, and professional integrity.

The Code of Conduct should be visible in all areas of operations, such as reception desks, restaurants, kitchens and back offices. Staff should be familiar with its content and use it as a daily reference point for behavior and decision-making. It is particularly crucial in hospitality, where the working environment is fast-paced, dynamic, and based on constant interaction with guests and colleagues.

Application starts from the very first day of employment. New hires should be introduced to the Code during their onboarding process, through induction sessions or initial

training. Special emphasis should be given to parts of the Code that are most relevant to everyday hospitality situations, such as guest service expectations, teamwork etiquette, and standards of professional appearance and behavior. Trainers should ensure that autistic employees have access to structured explanations of the Code, including written summaries, visual aids, or additional clarification where necessary.

Managers and team leaders play a crucial role in modeling the Code of Conduct in action. By demonstrating respectful communication, inclusive practices, and fairness in handling disputes, they lead by example and reinforce the expectations outlined in the Code. Supervisors must be prepared to intervene quickly and constructively when breaches occur, ensuring that any necessary corrections happen respectfully and according to established procedures. It is important that autistic employees, in particular, receive feedback in a direct, structured, and supportive manner.

In hospitality, application of the Code extends to every guest interaction. Employees must show professionalism, empathy, and respect for diversity at all times, even under pressure. For example, when addressing customer complaints, employees should remain calm, avoid ambiguous language, and follow established service protocols. This consistent approach not only protects the reputation of the business but also provides autistic employees, who may require more structured responses, with clear procedures to follow.

Monitoring the correct application of the Code is essential. Managers should regularly observe staff behavior and service delivery, providing guidance where necessary. Anonymous feedback channels and regular staff meetings offer opportunities to assess whether the Code is being consistently applied across all areas. Hospitality businesses should also plan periodic reviews of the Code itself to ensure it remains relevant to new challenges, legal changes, and emerging needs for inclusivity.

Some difficulties may arise when applying the Code. In fast-paced environments, rules may sometimes be forgotten or adapted informally, which can lead to misunderstandings. Additionally, cultural differences among staff or communication challenges for neurodiverse employees might cause discrepancies in interpretation. Addressing these challenges requires patience, ongoing training, and fostering a culture of openness where employees feel comfortable asking for clarification without fear of judgment.

Ultimately, a Code of Conduct only fulfills its purpose when it becomes part of the organisational culture. In a well-functioning hospitality environment, employees are not merely following written rules but embodying the values of respect, inclusivity, and professionalism in everything they do. When correctly applied, the Code creates a safer, more

structured, and more productive workplace for all employees, allowing autistic staff to perform to the best of their abilities and enhancing the overall quality of guest experiences.

7. Workplace structure and behaviour standards

7.a. The importance of workplace culture in Hospitality

Workplace culture in hospitality is a critical factor that shapes the daily experiences of employees and directly impacts the service provided to guests. Culture represents the shared values, attitudes, and behaviors that characterise how things are done within the organisation. In a sector as dynamic and people-oriented as hospitality, cultivating a positive workplace culture is essential not only for business success but also for creating an environment where all employees, including autistic staff, feel respected, valued, and supported.

A strong workplace culture is based on principles such as respect, professionalism, teamwork, responsibility, and inclusivity. It provides clear expectations for behavior, reduces misunderstandings, and offers a framework for solving problems and managing conflicts. For autistic employees, a positive workplace culture—where communication is structured, expectations are clearly stated, and inclusivity is actively promoted—can make the difference between thriving at work or feeling excluded and stressed.

One of the foundations of positive workplace culture is respectful communication. Employees are expected to communicate politely, using clear, direct, and professional language, whether they are dealing with guests or colleagues. In hospitality environments where fast-paced exchanges are common, supervisors should ensure that autistic employees are not disadvantaged by unclear, overly fast, or ambiguous instructions. Written instructions, visual supports, or checklists can greatly assist in reinforcing communication standards and making them accessible to all staff.

Teamwork is another vital aspect of hospitality culture. Working collaboratively with others while respecting different working styles and abilities strengthens team dynamics and ensures smooth service delivery. Teams should be encouraged to value the contributions of every member, recognizing that autistic employees might bring strengths such as attention to detail, reliability, and consistency. Providing opportunities for diverse employees to contribute in ways that match their strengths enriches team performance and cohesion.

Maintaining professionalism in guest interactions is at the core of hospitality workplace culture. Employees must act courteously and consistently with all guests, regardless of circumstances. In situations of guest complaints or dissatisfaction, employees are expected to

stay calm, listen attentively, follow established service recovery procedures, and seek assistance from supervisors when necessary. This structured approach is particularly important for autistic employees, who may feel overwhelmed by sudden conflict but can respond well if clear steps and support systems are in place.

7.b. Establishing and maintaining behaviour standards

Behavior standards within hospitality organisations should be consistent, transparent, and aligned with the company's mission and customer service goals. Employees must know exactly what is considered acceptable and unacceptable behavior in their interactions with guests, colleagues, and supervisors. Standards must cover key areas such as communication etiquette, professional appearance, punctuality, cooperation in teams, customer handling, and conflict resolution. Clear behavioral guidelines help autistic employees by minimizing ambiguity and providing a predictable framework for workplace interactions.

Workplace culture also requires setting boundaries and ensuring a safe environment for all employees. Bullying, harassment, discrimination, or exclusionary behaviors must not be tolerated under any circumstances. Organisations must actively promote a zero-tolerance stance towards such behaviors and reinforce that every employee has the right to work in an atmosphere of dignity and respect. For autistic employees, workplace safety includes not only protection from harassment but also adjustments to the environment to reduce sensory overload where possible, such as offering quiet spaces or flexible break schedules.

Supervisors and managers must play an active role in modeling expected behaviors and reinforcing workplace culture through daily actions. Recognition programs, positive reinforcement, open communication policies, and structured feedback mechanisms contribute to embedding behavior standards into the organisational fabric. It is equally important that staff are trained not only on what behaviors are expected but also why these behaviors matter—to foster pride, professionalism, and a sense of belonging across the entire team.

Finally, workplace culture is not static. It must evolve alongside the organisation's growth, changes in staff composition, guest expectations, and broader societal shifts toward greater inclusion and diversity. Regular staff engagement, surveys, open-door management policies, and periodic training on inclusivity and customer service can help maintain and refresh the positive culture. A hospitality organisation that invests in cultivating respectful workplace behaviors and an inclusive culture is better positioned to attract and retain talented employees, provide outstanding guest experiences, and achieve long-term success.

In conclusion, establishing clear behavior standards and fostering a positive workplace culture is critical for hospitality organisations. It ensures that employees know what is expected of them, that neurodiversity -and diversity in general- is respected and valued, and that the environment supports everyone's success. A supportive workplace, where autistic employees and all team members can contribute fully, leads to better service, better business outcomes and a healthier and more vibrant work community.

8. Summary

Module 5 focused on assuring a safe, inclusive and productive work environment in the hospitality sector by educating learners on the importance of Codes of Conduct within organisations.

The module began by presenting the concept of organisational culture, explaining how shared values, beliefs and behaviors influence the work environment. It emphasised that a positive workplace culture based on professionalism and inclusion improves team collaboration, service quality and employee satisfaction. The specific needs of autistic employees were discussed, highlighting the role of structured communication, clear expectations and flexibility in building an inclusive environment.

It then moved to explain the concept of a Code of Conduct, its purpose and its role within a hospitality organisation. Learners were introduced to the key elements of a Code, including behavioral expectations among staff, customer service standards, diversity and inclusion policies and mechanisms for handling conflicts and grievances. The importance of using accessible, simple language and providing practical examples was stressed to ensure that all employees, including those with different cognitive profiles, can understand and apply the Code effectively.

A step-by-step guide to developing a Code of Conduct was presented, where key stages included selecting participants for drafting the document, analyzing past ethical challenges, structuring content clearly, gathering feedback from stakeholders and finalizing the Code. A hospitality-specific Code of Conduct template was provided, tailored to address the dynamic needs of the industry while ensuring that the rights and needs of autistic employees are respected and supported.

The application of the Code was then addressed, focusing on how it should be integrated into daily hospitality operations, employee training, guest interactions and conflict

resolution processes. Emphasis was placed on the responsibilities of staff, supervisors and management to apply the Code consistently and to monitor its effectiveness through feedback and regular reviews

Finally, workplace culture and behavior standards in hospitality were discussed, outlining how clear behavior guidelines, consistent leadership and positive reinforcement contribute to a respectful and productive working environment. The importance of evolving workplace culture to reflect growing diversity and the need for inclusivity was underlined, showing how structured behavior standards benefit all employees, especially those on the autism spectrum.

9. References

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