

MARRIOTT

30 MINUTES WITH...

Carolina Beltrán

DIRECTOR OF GUEST RELATIONS & AIRLINES

What is your role at Madrid Marriott Auditorium Hotel?

I'm Director of **Guest Relations and Airlines**. I've been working at the hotel **for 9 years** in behalf of taking care of the Airlines. From the joining **Marriott** the importance of the guest as well as offering them an exclusive service have been increased, trying to achieve a closer relation. This is why a new **Guest Relations** department has been created.

It's the merge between two departments; but my job is mainly about improving the expectations of the client, surprise them and personalize their stays, promote loyalty...

We're talking about individual clients, attendees to events, delayed flights... We also are on behalf of knowing the **satisfaction results** of Marriott's surveys and those comments which our clients share in several booking webs. We analyse these comments trying to find positive points and where we can improve the services. We value the most repeat ones and analyse them in detail in order to be able to design an action plan involving the different departments.



MARRIOTT
MADRID AUDITORIUM

What is the relation to the Airlines?

We're working in two different parts. On the one hand, the recruitment of airlines in terms of crews staying overnight in **Madrid**, and on the other hand the **incidents that may happen at the airport** such as cancelled flights or delays, among others.

Related to crews, we make an annual contract with the Airlines. For us it's an important segment due to it's a fixed production. We currently have five crews and this means that we need to dedicating a time to them because they are clients who go at a different pace from the usual ones.

The crew sleeps, for example, in the afternoon when here the activity of the hotel has more movement, the rooms are being cleaned... The most important thing for this type of clients is resting so that they can carry out their function of taking a flight with 300 people on board. For all this, we take care of crews, we do specific activities for them, they have an exclusive are in the Hotel, free shuttle service to the city center... In addition, we need to have in mind that they're from other nationalities and other cultures and we should to achieve that they feel at home.

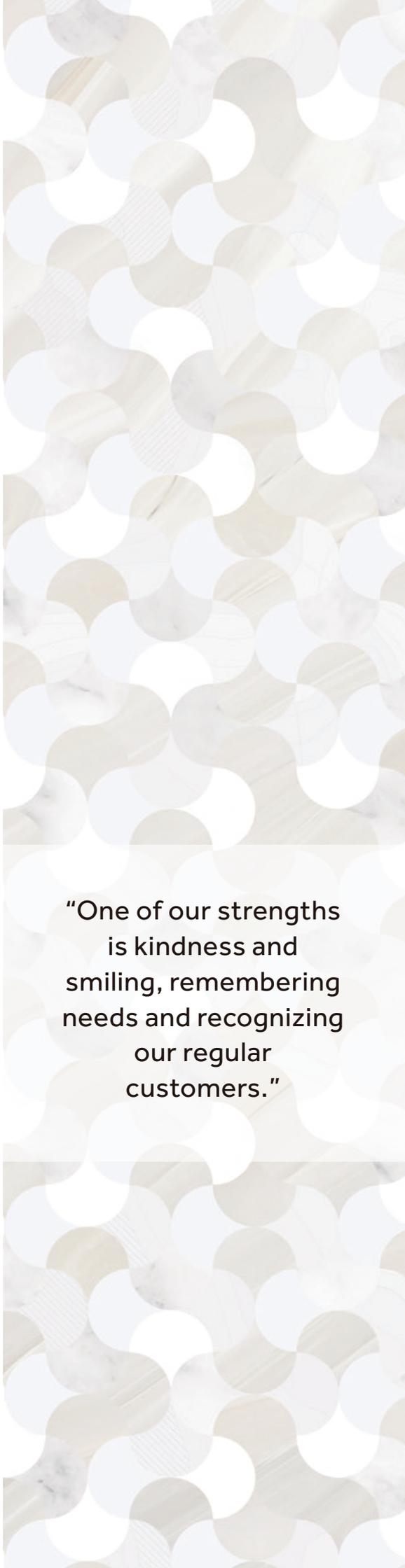
On the other hand, our relationship with the airport passes through **cancelled flights**. That is somewhat tensor, because it is an unforeseen situation for the hotel. Within the department there're two people dedicated to the Airlines operation and they're at the airport in situ. You have to know what kind of incidence is, what kind of client is and how they are going to get to the hotel. Sometimes 200 passengers come at once, sometimes they come little by little. We have to have a lot of coordination with all the hotel departments. These incidences change the forecast completely of food, waiters or even staff. Many times, we try to work with planning, but when there is unforeseen what we try is to coordinate in the best way so that the client is not affected. The most important thing for us is to turn a delicate situation into a pleasant experience in order for the client to rest and have a good flight home.

What is the strategy to follow?

First, we do a very fast check-in. We already have the keys prepared in advance. We warn the F&B team to prepare buffet and to housekeeping so that the next day they prepare the check outs, as well as to coordinate the transport between the Airport and the hotel. In summary, it's a work of each department.

How do you meet the expectations of all customers?

We meet expectations when we know the guest's needs. The MICE client already knows their needs because previously the commercial department has already done a detail investigation of the type of client that it is. With this information we act.



"One of our strengths is kindness and smiling, remembering needs and recognizing our regular customers."



“Calm down, be patient, analyse and decide the next steps that are going to be taken. It’s the key.”

With the individual guest it’s more difficult because you don’t know what you want. Another type of client is also those who belong to Marriott loyalty program. This is a very demanding type of client that seeks the same service and quality in all Marriott hotels. Some of them sleep more than 100 nights per year. What we do try with all of them is surprising them and personalize their experiences.

“One of our strengths is kindness and smiling, remembering needs and recognizing our regular customers.”

How is your daily routine?

It’s an adventure and every single one is completely different. It starts before coming to the hotel. Before arriving, I take a look to the mailbox in order to see the possible incidents during the night before. When I arrive, I know what I have to prioritize. I comment on these incidents with colleagues. I take a walk around the hotel, lounges, galleries, reception and the Executive Lounge where our VIP clients are. I’m also very aware of the **transportation of the hotel** in order to confirm that everything is working without problem.

On the other hand, we prepare the attentions of our VIP clients, we check if we have a client’s birthday to congratulate him and upload a cake and a note from the entire Hotel, and we also prepare something special for anniversaries or honeymoons. “I remember one day that we go to sing happy birthday to a girl while she was eating with her family at the buffet, when you see the face of the girl and her family, you know that they’ll not forget

this Hotel, because this effect is what we want to achieve in our guests, the WOW effect”.

In my daily, I use the 3P “Passion, patience and perseverance.”

What is the relation with the team?

A wonderful relationship. I’ve a team of eight very professional people. There’re two of them on the ground floor, taking care of the events in house. There’re two more working on Airlines. Two others dedicated to guests and answering the complaints or congratulations of them as well as meeting any special need they have either at the hotel or to plan their visit to the city (areas to visit, museums, restaurants, etc.) And two people in the area of technical coordination, which are those in charge of managing the event with the client in terms of technical needs, Audiovisual media, sets or branding. The truth is that it’s a very varied department and, above all, very united.

“We´ve a meeting on Fridays to discuss things that are happening at the hotel or to analyse projects proposed by Marriott.”

What do you do in crisis moments?

The first thing to do is calm down, think and take action, always knowing what the consequences are. In most of

the situations, you’ve to work with other departments because the teamwork is essential. You cannot do everything individually.

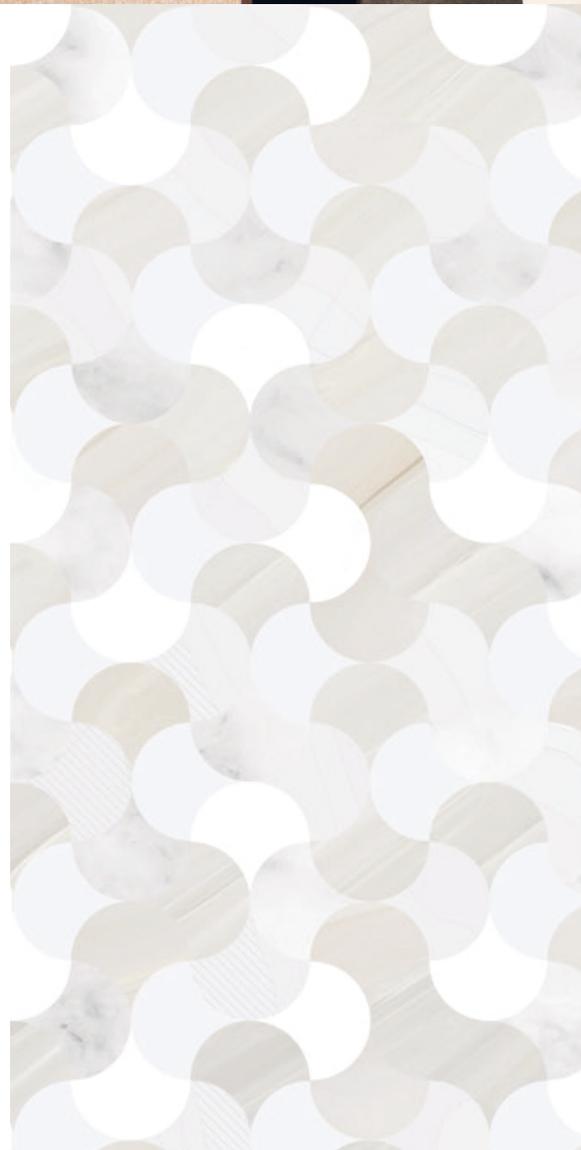
A moment of crisis that I remember, was the strike of controllers in Madrid when we took care of more than 3,800 people. We had the hotel completely full and we had to transfer passengers to other hotels, even in Toledo. It’s not the client fault it is full, and I must help him, because he is my client during all year.

“Calm down, be patient, analyse and decide the next steps that are going to be taken. It’s the key.”

How have you lived the change to Marriott?

It’s a continuous learning. It was hard at first, because it was a lot of information at once. It is an important culture change.

We started with an online and face-to-face training. We began to notice the physical change of the hotel that meant a motivation to say “What a hotel we are creating! We have a product that is going to sell itself, customers are going to be the first to recognize the change.” The refurbishments works had to live with the clients. This was the most difficult thing to handle; however, this was planned so well that it was hardly noticed.





For me Marriott is a school. They create so many projects which I refer to the departments that we have to develop. **We´re constantly learning together**

What is the differentiating element of the hotel?

Referring MICE client, it´s the facility that the assistants have to be able to be in their meeting: hotel and convention center in one only space. They´ve everything at home. There´re many facilities in terms of restoration, audio visual media ... The proximity to the airport is also a very important factor.

How do you imagine this hotel in a couple of years?

Our purpose is to be at the **top 3 Europe hotels specialized in MICE**. Apart from here, I would like to see it among the firsts in terms of customer satisfaction. With work, sacrifice and desire we can do it.

Define Madrid Marriott Auditorium Hotel in just three words...

Learning, greatness and service.