

CLEANSTAY CHAMPION INSIGHTS ON PREPARING FOR HIGH OCCUPANCY

To get insights on how teams can prepare for higher occupancy, we turned to our latest CleanStay Champion – Mark Ricketts, President and Chief Operating Office of McNeill Hotel Company, which has 26 properties around the country. Several of their properties have experienced occupancy spikes, most recently exceeding March budgets by significant margins, and Mark shared tips to prepare for busier months ahead:

- Set the tone: “I send out an inspirational message to our team every day. It may be a quote or a leadership lesson, and it sets the tone. We still conduct daily huddles. Sometimes we conduct them in the lobby to allow for social distancing, and guests join in!”
- Celebrate successes: “At the start of the pandemic, we set up a weekly call for hotel leaders. We make a point to highlight sales guest satisfaction wins every week – and each hotel has a cowbell that they ring to celebrate one another. We also reward exceptional performances, like having a pizza party for Home2 Gainesville after they sold out 10 consecutive nights.”
- Taking care of the team: “The pandemic has been hard on our people and we are doing everything we can to support them. From working with our insurance company to expand mental health services to bringing a person into hotels to give Team Members someone to talk to, we’re prioritizing our teams’ wellbeing. We’re also seeing a lot more sharing of responsibilities, such as Front Desk agents helping with Housekeeping tasks. In a sense, it’s a wonderful training program, and it’s created so much more empathy and understanding between departments.”

Mark and his team are focused on the future, with an eye toward how to best connect with guests by continuing to raise the bar on cleanliness and providing outstanding service experiences as travel continues to bounce back.

We want to hear from you! Post your team’s story and best practices to your 1st Up Brand Community today.

While the light at the end of the tunnel is brighter in some parts of the world than others, our culture will see us through the continued ebbs and flows of our recovery. Thank you, as always, for leading with hospitality and making Hilton a place we can all be proud to call home.