



Satakunnan ammattikorkeakoulu  
Satakunta University of Applied Sciences

TINA SALO

# **Green Key Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori**

GREEN KEY VIDEO FOR THE EMPLOYEE'S  
ORIENTATION

DEGREE PROGRAMME IN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM  
DEVELOPMENT  
2024

## ABSTRACT

Salo Tina

Green Key Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori: Green Key video for the employee's orientation

Bachelor's thesis

Degree programme in International Tourism Development

June 2024

Number of pages: 38

This thesis is project-based and was created to offer orientation material for the Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori employees. The outcome of this thesis was the Green Key employee orientation video for new or seasonal employees, which will also be used as a refresher for long-term employees.

Over one hundred establishments in Finland are Green Key certified, and Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori is one of them. It has had the Green Key certificate for the past nine years. The Green Key-certified establishment is committed to increasing its positive social and economic impacts and minimising its environmental footprint.

This thesis focused on Green Key's introduction, hotel areas' introduction, eco-activities and practices, and Green Key's awareness of employees. It also focused on the hotel employee's orientation and involvement in Green Key. Furthermore, it aimed to understand the need for and create a tool for hotel employees.

The research was conducted as qualitative research. Thematic interviews were used as the primary data collection method. Based on the data collected from the interviews, the author could analyse and benchmark the outcome. The video was scripted and created for the commissioner and uploaded to the Workplace and WorkChat platforms, the organisation's social media; it is accessible to all the organisation's employees.

Keywords: Green Key, Sokos Hotels, Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori, Visual content, Sustainability, Employees orientation

# CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION.....	5
2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES.....	6
2.1 Commissioner.....	6
2.2 Delimitations .....	7
3 SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY .....	8
4 GREEN KEY .....	11
4.1 Green Key Finland.....	12
4.2 Imperative criteria's and guideline criteria of Green Key .....	12
5 EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEES RESPONSIBLE AND MOTIVATION .....	18
5.1 Employee's engagements .....	19
5.2 Employees Green Key activities in Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori .....	20
6 PRACTISE-BASED THESIS.....	21
6.1 Qualitative research method.....	22
6.2 Theme interviews .....	23
7 THEMATIC INTERVIEWS .....	24
7.1 Interview Outcome.....	25
7.2 Reliability and Validity.....	27
8 THE VIDEO PRODUCTION.....	28
8.1 The Green Key video of Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori.....	29
8.2 The content, length of the video .....	32
9 CONCLUSION .....	33
9.1 Suggestion.....	34
9.2 Commissioner Feedback.....	35
REFERENCES.....	37
APPENDIX 1 .....	39
APPENDIX 2: FIRST INTERVIEW.....	40

APPENDIX 3: SECOND INTERVIEW.....	42
APPENDIX 4: THIRD INTERVIEW .....	45
APPENDIX 5: SCRIPT FOR THE VIDEO.....	47

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism, sustainability, and development rely on each other as a chain process. The global tourism sector needs to uphold sustainable development; hence, the sector provides its products for consumers. To maintain this, it must develop sustainability actions and progress in tourism. Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects. Sustainable tourism development requires the participation of all relevant stakeholders in this industry. (Website of UNTWO.org 2023.)

Sokos Hotels is a well-known name in Finland's accommodation sector. There is only one Sokos hotel in Satakunta. The hotel was chosen for this thesis because of its vast potential for development and ideas. Also, the author herself started her career in this hotel as an intern. This thesis is practice-based, and the outcome will be a visual content video for the hotel employees.

This thesis focuses on the staff's involvement in Green Key practices and awareness of the eco-label certificate in the hotel by producing visual content for the hotel employees. The visual content, which is video material, will be used for employees at the orientation level to learn about Green Key and will also be available for all employees to acknowledge the Green Key eco-label. The video material of Green Key ensures hotel staff know the rules and regulations of the Green Key, its requirements, the hotel's recycling system, and possible use as a base for future development ideas. The commissioner keeps up with Green Key requirements and standards monthly and does well. With this thesis, it is possible to involve more departments, employees, and supervisors in creating sustainable environmental routines at the hotel.

## 2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The thesis is project-based; the research task is to develop or create a tool based on the Green Key eco-label certificate for employee orientation for the commissioner of this thesis, Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori. As the thesis is project-based, there will be no research questions. This thesis uses qualitative research and development methods, and the researcher will interview three different hotel environmental managers to benchmark.

This research focuses on Green Key's introduction, activities, and awareness for employees. The objective was to understand the need for and create a tool for Green Key orientation for hotel employees. This thesis aims to improve awareness and orient the staff about the existence of the Green Key certificate. Also, it might enhance staff involvement in environmental activities in the workplace in the future.

### 2.1 Commissioner

Sokos Hotels is the largest hotel chain in Finland, with 45 hotels across the country, one in Tallinn, Estonia and three in Saint Petersburg, Russia. Sokos Hotels is divided into three categories: Original, Solo and Break. Original hotels usually are located in the city centres, and the customers vary from business travellers to domestic sports clubs and families with children. Sokos Hotel Solo focuses on personalised services for their customer and mainly for single business travellers. Sokos Hotel Break is usually near nature parks, valleys and outdoor activities, and it focuses on seasonal travellers and skiing and hiking groups. Sokos Hotel belongs to the S-group, which operates various businesses such as department stores, shopping complexes, supermarkets and gas stations. S-Group has a customer benefits loyalty card called S-etukortti, which can be used at Sokos Hotels and other S-group businesses. Hotels have their S-card business travellers benefits loyalty card, used in all Sokos Hotel chains. (Website of Sokos Hotels 2023.)

Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuuna Pori opened its doors for the first time on the 15th of March 1939, with 30 rooms and called Hotel Satakunta. Nowadays, there are 137 rooms and two different buildings. There were many renovations, redesigns and changes through the years, but the hotel stayed at the exact location. The main building is located at Gallen-Kallelankatu 7, and another is at Gallen-Kallelankatu 8. (Website of Sokos Hotels 2023.)

There are seven different conference rooms available at the hotel. Also, there is a huge breakfast, and occasionally, it is used as a banquet hall on the second floor of the main building. S-Group-owned restaurants are located relatively close to the hotel, and there are three different restaurants and a pub where the customers can use their loyalty and benefits cards as well. It is Restaurant Amarillo, Torero, Rosso and Pub Winston. The hotel has been certified with two eco-labels: Green Key and Sustainable Travel Finland STF. (Selinkoski, personal communication on 28.10.2023.)

Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuuna Pori customers vary from international to domestic business travellers, sports clubs, families with children and detours travellers. The hotel's high season will be in summer, as well as other cities and hotels in Finland. In Pori, there are two significant events: Pori Jazz and Suomi Arena. It is called super week here in Pori, where Pori accommodates approximately 150,000 travellers and visitors from domestically and internationally. The low season will be around the end of December and the beginning of January when the hotel mainly depends on business travellers. (Selinkoski, personal communication on 28.10.2023.)

## 2.2 Delimitations

The thesis research method and development focus on the accommodation sector only, even though the hotel includes other services such as restaurants, bars, and conference services for customers. The author focuses only on the accommodation sector because creating some methods and outcomes for the commissioner multiplies and proliferates into a multi-idea, such as handbooks,

videos, and questionnaires for the whole organisation of Osuuskauppa in Pori. Therefore, the research task was limited to making a Green Key video for the hotel employees' orientation.

Sokos Hotel is part of Satakunnan Osuuskauppa, which also has multiple other businesses, such as supermarkets, markets, banks, department stores, and gas stations. Therefore, as mentioned above, some delimitation has to be made, which includes only the accommodation departments: breakfast, hotel reception, and housekeeping. These three departments are connected and communicate with each other from the beginning of a customer's reservation until the customer checks out of the hotel. Since these three departments work as a team to accommodate a paying guest, it is wise to focus on and limit these departments for this thesis.

### 3 SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY

Sustainability is a vast subject; it is a chain reaction of behaviour that effects another behaviour to help and to guide humankind from doing any more harm to planet earth. (Sloan et al., 2013, p.2.) Sustainable tourism as a concept emerged in the early 1990s, and it is inspired by the already existing idea of sustainable development that occurred in the mid 1980s. It resulted from an interest in environmental protection and increasing awareness of ecological problems. Sustainable development was introduced in our common future, known as the Brundtland report by the world commission of environment and development. (Mariani, 2015 p.195-196.) According to Goodwin (2016, p.12) the world commission on environment and development was convened in 1983 to discuss the worsen of the human environment and natural resources and the consequences for economic and social development. The commission and the UN had decided that humans and the world need long term environmental strategies to achieve sustainable development.



This subject in this part will focus on sustainable tourism or, more accurately, the sustainable hospitality industry because it is one of the more prominent industries in the world. The tourism industry gives job opportunities for millions of people and increases economies in countries worldwide; as one of the major service industries, tourism and hospitality contribute about five per cent to the worldwide Gross Domestic Product GDP and employ approximately 234 million people worldwide, which has a significant impact on the environment. (Sloan et al., 2013, p. 2.) According to Goodwin (2016, p.16) the definition of sustainable tourism is the importance of cultural integrity, ethics, equity, solidarity, mutual respect for all the stakeholders involved and quality of life itself at its core.

The hospitality industry has various services and products, including luxury hotels, cruise ships, casinos and catering, all of which produce the same product: hospitality. Hotels fit within the general context of hospitality; when travelers travel away from home, the hotel is the place to provide shelter and comfort for them. Managing a hotel is a challenging task, not only providing services to customers from various backgrounds but also taking responsibility for many other fields such as marketing, customer relations, social media relations, finance, environmental management, ethics and social responsibility. Most hotels have multiple units under the same roof, such as restaurants, bars, spas, shopping complexes and entertainment and recreation facilities, making the hospitality industry one of the large industries that produce an environmental footprint. (Sloan et al., 2013, p.15.)

The hospitality industry might not be the first to come to mind when mentioning carbon footprint. The main focus would be manufacturing, steel, oil or the chemical industry. Still, the average hotel is estimated to release between 160 to 200 kilograms of carbon dioxide per square metre of room floor per year. (Sloan et al., 2013, p. 15.) The world population multiplies and there is no sign of slowing down. This means more individuals have time and financial resources for travel and leisure, and tourism depends on natural resources, which are limited on this planet and will be out of source if no sustainable action is implemented for change. Even though tourism is an individual experience,

sustainable tourism is possible only when it is a joint effort of all the stakeholders in the industry: efforts, interests and contributions of legislators, administrators, enforcers, politicians, government, NGOs and business stakeholders. (Goodwin, 2016, p. 20-22.)

Hospitality industries have to consider many different dimensions to achieve sustainable development. The environmental dimension focuses on the ecosystem involved in the establishment's environmental footprint and its operation, facilities and finished products. The objective is to minimise all practices that affect the planet and environmental resources, avoiding short and long-term environmental damage. The economic dimension focuses on saving costs through investing and installing energy and water-efficient technologies. The social dimension deals with the organisation's impact on the local society where it operates. The establishment is committed to sustainability and deals with, for example, social justice, human rights, labour rights, community issues, skills and education and workplace safety. Again, in order to take those dimensions into practice, a massive commitment from multiple stakeholders is a must to approach sustainability in the hospitality industry. (Sloan et al., 2013, p. 23-24.)

Sustainable tourism can be embraced when responsibility takes place in this industry. Responsibility is a way of acknowledging one's actions and behaviour and accepting the outcome of it. Society often puts responsibility on one individual rather than one's initiative. In tourism, of course, more significant and intensive decisions are made by the person in charge; however, at the end of the day, all the buying, spending and decisions to create sustainable tourism lie in the tourist's hand. (Goodwin, 2016, p. 25-26.)

## 4 GREEN KEY

The Green Key Programme was founded in 1994 in Denmark by HORESTA (association of the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Denmark) before becoming the programme of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), which is a non-profit and non-governmental organisation. Green Key is a very well-known and prestigious eco-label certificate in the hospitality and tourism industry globally. More than 4,400 hotels and other accommodation establishments in more than 60 countries are Green Key certified. (Website of Green Key Global 2023.)

To get the Green Key certificate, the establishment needs to commit to the strict criteria as required by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). These establishments are required to maintain high environmental standards continuously and update yearly. Green Key focuses on informing and involving visitors to be more environmentally friendly. They also ensure that employees of the establishments are well-informed and trained in this field. Green Key is constantly updating and searching for the latest sustainable methods and technology to reduce its environmental footprint. (Website of Green Key Global 2023.)

Green Key symbolises responsibility for travellers as they are committed to the environment and sustainable development. It also, aims to increase environmentally friendly and sustainable operation methods overall in establishments to reduce the use of resources. Also, to create awareness and behaviour changes in travellers, employees and suppliers. Green Key Global guides tourism and hospitality establishments to do their part to achieve the 17 sustainable Development Goals set by the UN in 2015. Sustainability is the core of Green Key, which is the reason it contributes to all of the 17 goals. (Website of Green Key Global 2023.)

#### 4.1 Green Key Finland

One hundred fifty-eight establishments in Finland are Green Key certified. The certificate is more than a sign at the entrance; it is part of an international community that shares best environmental practices and experience. The certificated establishment is verified to be the forerunner of sustainability, and the certificate based on the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN. The Green Key-certified establishment is committed to increasing the positive social and economic impacts and minimising its environmental footprint. There are five types of establishments in Finland: hotels and hostels, small accommodation sites, camping sites and holiday villages, cafes and restaurants and attractions. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

There is a straightforward and phased application process on their website for Green Key applicants. To be certified by Green Key, the applicants must follow the strict sustainability requirements. The criteria are divided into 13 different chapters. The required criteria may differ depending on the type of establishment and are updated regularly. The current set of criteria for Green Key is valid from 1.1.2022 to 31.12.2025. The criteria are divided into two categories: imperative and guideline criteria. The imperative criteria are the basic requirements the applicant must have when applying for the certificate for the first time. The re-application, however, requires the establishment to meet all the imperative needs and annually growing number of guideline criteria. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

#### 4.2 Imperative criteria's and guideline criteria of Green Key

Environmental management refers to managing and developing the ecological and sustainability of work at the establishment. Management's commitment and encouragement on sustainable issues create a responsible work atmosphere for the staff. To have sustainable, systematic and evolving environmental works at the establishment, it needs an environmental manager. The imperative criteria include the management involved, appointing an environmental manager from among the staff at the establishment, and having made a

sustainability policy. It also made objectives and annual plans for improvement and development. All documentation is kept ready for inspection. The establishment collaborates with local stakeholders. Guideline criteria include calculating carbon footprint using carbon measurement tools, setting targets to reduce the carbon footprint, offsetting greenhouse gas emissions with certified projects, and offering customers the possibility to compensate for the emissions caused by their visit. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

Criteria for staff refer to cooperation and information flow between management and staff for long-term sustainability work in the establishment. Sustainability initiatives must be supported by management. Staff are also committed to Green Key activities as a daily work routine and can tell the guests about the sustainability work at the establishment. Imperative criteria include management arranging a meeting with staff to brief them on environmental issues and initiatives. The environmental manager participates in meetings with management to present environmental development ideas. All staff members receive yearly training and information available in the staff area to promote responsible behavior. Guideline criteria include the establishment providing staff with opportunities to evaluate its environmental or socio-cultural performance. The establishment encourages staff to use environmentally friendly transportation to work. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

Guest Information refers to sustainability-related education as an essential part of the operations and sustainability of green activities establishment by involving customers. It aims to encourage individuals and communities to be a part of and participate in environmental activities. Establishments can achieve environmental awareness by enabling customers to practice environmentally friendly activities in their daily lives, not only when travelling. Imperative criteria include a certificate displayed in public and prominent places with information about Green Key activities visible and accessible to customers. Information is available on social media and communication channels. Staff members have been able to explain to customers about green activities and environmental initiatives. Guideline criteria include establishments providing their customers opportunities to evaluate their performance. Communication about the

environment and sustainability is included in the annual plan, and various target groups are included. The management and establishment reward their customers for their environmental actions. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

Criteria for water refer to reducing its direct water consumption, and the establishment controls the costs related to water consumption and the environmental footprint. So far, Finland has not suffered a lack of water, but using it less will also reduce the water purifying process and the use of chemicals. Imperative criteria include a water consumption register, staff checking for any leakage or dripping, and showers at most nine litres per minute in the establishment. The hotel toilets have urinals and water taps with sensors. Dishwashers do not consume more than 3,5 litres per basket, all wastewater-treated grease traps are installed in the kitchen, and water-saving instructions are displayed near the machine. Guideline criteria include a swimming pool cleaned with chemical-free products, wastewater treated and reused, and rainwater collected and used for a suitable purpose. Establishments do not have bathtubs in the rooms, only in the typical spa facility area. Establishments with water-free toilets might have a computerized water leakage detection system. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

Cleaning and hygiene criteria refer to the fact that cleaning has a significant role in daily environmental work. Responsible cleaning methods optimize the uses of chemicals, energy and materials. Imperative criteria include information to the customers about the routine of room make-up or cleaning service during their stay. All the cleaning products have recognized eco-labels; the same goes for all the tissue, paper towels and single-use sauna seat covers. All the chemical cleaning products are eco-labelled, and dosage information must be clear on the container for usage. Guideline criteria include a dosing system for daily cleaning, fibre clothes, a chemical-free disinfection method, and eco-labelling of all soap and other hygiene products for customers and employees. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

Waste criteria refer to the waste management of the establishment. In Finland and the EU, it is directed by a five-tier roadmap that aims to develop a circular economy and minimize the quantity of material that ends up at the waste collection sites since 2008. Imperative criteria include the establishment of separating waste and adding to recycling as per national legislation and local regulation of recycling. Instruction for recycling and separating waste must be available for staff and the customer in a simple and understandable format. Avoid or do not use at all single-use material for food and beverages. The establishment registers monthly the total amount of waste, electronic waste collected and recycled, and all staff trained in recycling. Guideline criteria include that all hygiene products only be provided in dispensers and establishments, not providing individually packaged toiletries at all for the customers. All the rooms are equipped with three recycled waste compartments. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

Energy criteria refer to reducing the environmental footprint and increasing energy efficiency. Innovations and development are consistent in the energy industry, and Green Key establishments are encouraged to act as a forerunner. Imperative criteria include energy use registered at least once a month, heating and cooling systems appropriate to the capacity and having set a standard temperature in the room. Most light bulbs are energy efficient, and electronic devices in the rooms are also energy efficient. The sauna is equipped with a timer. Guideline criteria include the energy used for heating being at least 75% from renewable energy sources and not from fossil fuels. The establishment produces renewable energy for heating, for example, solar power, earth and wind power. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

Food and Beverage criteria refer to the vast consumption by consumers caused a substantial environmental impact on this sector. Consumers can reduce their footprint simply by minimizing food waste by consuming more local, organic and plant-based foods. Imperative criteria include establishments purchasing more local food, eco and fair-trade labelled food and increasing their purchases based on this regulation. Breakfast departments and restaurants in the establishment purchase and serve more than one local product. Avoid

using ingredients from threatened or protected animal species; plan and develop on reducing food waste. Guideline criteria include the establishments registering its food waste, using more organic food choices, and more than 25% of the main dishes are vegetarian. Purchase meats and seafood products that are certified with a sustainability label. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

Indoor environment refers to indoor air quality, which is an essential factor in health, hygiene and consumer satisfaction, and the establishment is responsible for this. It is necessary to prevent the release of chemicals and microbes into indoor air. The establishment must ensure proper air circulation in the indoor space. Imperative criteria include personnel policy concerning smoking for customers inside the establishment and smoking at working hours for the staff. The restaurants with outdoor terraces are required to reserve a section for non-smokers. Guideline criteria include that the establishment management regularly monitors indoor air quality. Offers allergy-friendly rooms for customers who need them and designated rooms for pets only. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

Green areas criteria refer to establishments with green areas and huge lawns, and its maintenance may cause huge costs and environmental impacts. The most important is to choose the proper maintenance method, equipment and chemicals that won't cause unnecessary environmental effects. Imperative criteria include chemical pesticides not used in the green area, litter-free and frequent cleaning and the establishments taking action to prevent new footpaths or soil erosion in the garden or green area. Guideline criteria include electronic machines with eco-labels and the establishment taking measures to protect and support local biodiversity by keeping or planting native species of flora and fauna in the outdoor green area. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

Corporate social responsibility refers to promoting sustainability development to the society around it through actions. Responsible business includes respect for human rights, fighting discrimination, and respecting collective labour agreements. Imperative criteria include the establishment following all the



regulations regarding the environment, health, safety and labour. All its employees, trainees and volunteers are covered by establishment insurance at the workplace. All the historical and archaeological artefacts are not traded, sold, or displayed except as permitted by law. Guideline criteria include the establishment not allowing shows or performances with animals. Accessible services and information are visible for people with physical disabilities. The establishment hires workers from local minorities, provides traineeships for students, and supports environmental or social community development activities. Also, it helps local and micro-entrepreneurs with opportunities to sell their sustainable products and has a sustainable purchasing policy. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

Green activities refer to nature elements; Finnish nature is one of Finland's finest tourism and attraction assets. Green Key-certified establishment must base on the sustainable use of nature. Imperative criteria include available information about nearby parks, landscape and nature conservation for the customers. Also, there is information about public transportation and the possibility for the customer to borrow a bicycle for use. Guideline criteria include providing customers with information about responsible tourism behavior and awareness focused on sustainable development. The establishments offer customers information about nature schools, activities, guided nature tours and services. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

Administration criteria refer to the establishment purchasing policy that impacts its ecological footprint. It is possible by choosing products and services from suppliers who are committed to sustainability and its activities. Imperative criteria include the third-party operated businesses in the establishment must be informed about Green Key and the sustainability initiatives. All paper and printed materials are eco-labelled, reducing the usage of papers at the office and front office. It informs its suppliers about its sustainability commitments and encourages the suppliers to follow the same as the establishment. Guideline criteria refer to the eco-certified suppliers committed to sustainable development, purchasing or renting textiles from environment-friendly certified

suppliers. Newly purchased durables are eco-labelled. (Website of Green Key Finland 2023.)

## 5 EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEES RESPONSIBLE AND MOTIVATION

Environmental and eco-friendly activities are growing globally and will eventually reach most workplaces. Implementing an environment management system requires financial and human resources investment. Employees' behaviours and attitudes towards environment management systems are significant for employers to implement the system into the organisation. However, the most crucial part will be to get employees to invest emotionally in this environment management system and change their behaviour. Staff awareness and involvement are essential, but consumer environmental awareness is related to the business's profit. Consumers with a better ecological understanding are willing to pay for the services and products. (Härkönen, 2012, p. 20.)

Organisations save financial and environmental resources through many green and eco-friendly activities. To change the workplace into an eco-friendlier zone, it is not enough that the employers and employees randomly follow some green activities at the workplace. Employers need to plan carefully for the flow and consistency of those green activities at the workplace, followed by the responsibility of employees on how they work live. (Härkönen, 2012, p. 21.) Green solutions and developments grow rapidly and seem like a step ahead of us; most likely, the challenge is for people to green their actions and activities at the workplace.

A key factor for a successful environmental management system is the practical environment, eco and awareness training and education. This training and education provide employees and all staff members the necessary tools to practise environmentally friendly activities and make responsible decisions at the workplace. Instead of focusing on becoming more sustainable, the

workplace should maintain an environmental culture which changes the whole organisation's environmental attitudes and behaviour and is committed to the new goals. With an effective environmental management system, companies reduce costs and reduce the usage of natural resources. Resources or tools such as environmental training for staff at work enhance the staff's abilities involved in environmental activities. (Härkönen, 2012, p. 22.) The communications, work training, environmental training, initiatives and sharing responsibility among the staff should be equal and reach all employees, not only those responsible for each department. Efficient communication improves team working attitude, and employees work together towards the goal. (Härkönen, 2012, p. 23.)

### 5.1 Employee's engagements

Any organisation's most crucial objective is to deliver products, services and solutions for its stakeholders. It is the people who create value by leveraging resources and utilising them. Some employees invest their complete being in their organisation, work, and workplace success. When employees' efforts and motivation align with the organisational mission and vision, it transforms into a better quality of work and a better quantity of work. This phenomenon is a construct of employee engagement, which refers to a positive employee work-related state characterised by one's willingness to contribute to organisational success. Engaged employees are enthusiastic about their jobs, work harder, are loyal, and stay in the same workplace longer. (Maheshwari, 2019, p. 5.)

Employee engagement is a commitment of the employees to the organisation's success; this occurs when the organisation respects and values the employees. The employees believe in the organisation, have a self-desire toward working better, respect and be helpful towards colleagues, and keep updated with the latest developments in one's work industry. (Maheshwari, 2019, p.12.)

## 5.2 Employees Green Key activities in Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori

Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori and restaurants have approximately 160 employees. The staff has trained to do the operational produce up to hotel standard. Usually, it starts at orientation week for the new staff by their department supervisor or manager. Housekeeping departments in charge of cleaning routines include daily room makeup services for the long-staying customers. Usually, customers will be informed that the room makeup service is available only by request rather than automatically, and most of the time, customers gladly accept it and seldom request daily room cleaning. The housekeeping department also does the most waste separation when cleaning the rooms, taking notes and informing maintenance if a tap leaks or has an electrical fault to avoid the waste of resources. During the cleaning routine, the staff usually ensure the TV, lights and other electrical devices are switched off, and the room temperature is adjusted to the standard temperature. (Selinkoski, personal communication on 28.10.2023.)

The front desk department avoids all unnecessary printings, reduces paper usage, and controls and adjusts lighting around the lobby area. The light surrounding the lobby goes dim after midnight until five a.m. All the staff were encouraged to use their regular coffee cup instead of disposable coffee cups, and the same intention goes for utensils. Sauna time is reduced; on weekdays, the sauna is available from six until ten evenings. On weekends, scheduled sauna time for customers, first women's turn and then gent's turn. (Selinkoski, personal communication on 28.10.2023.)

The hotel's food and beverages departments increase the purchasing of organic, eco-labelled, fair-trade labelled seafood guided by WWF and eco-labelled with MSC or ASC and more locally produced food. They reduce meat product purchases and increase plant-based products. They controlled food waste and reduced food waste to decrease the environmental footprint. For example, the breakfast department focuses mainly on seasonal and local products produced by micro companies. The staff are also encouraged to use environmentally friendly transportation to the workplace, such as bicycle and

public transportation. Most of the staff in the hotel are aware that the Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori is certified with a Green Key certificate, and most of the staff follow instructions as told daily at the workplace. However, some staff might only be interested in environmental activities if necessary. Recycling and separating waste include paper, glass, and plastics; however, every staff's responsible. (Selinkoski, personal communication on 28.10.2023.)

## 6 PRACTISE-BASED THESIS

A practice-based thesis is goal-oriented, a development process, a process that lasts for a certain time. It can be a part of a bigger process and project with a limited outcome. Practise-based thesis is a form of research where the knowledge comes from doing the practice, which is for personal or professional knowledges on a daily basis. Practise-based thesis answer the practical and theoretical needs and have always a concrete outcome. (Vilkka & Airaksinen 2003, p. 47-56.)

Those projects with a solid and concrete outcome can be for example a safety guide leaflet, new staff induction booklet or video material, website, event and fair or exhibition. The projects should be designed with the customers and target group in mind. As mentioned above, a practice-based thesis is a development process; that defines the objectives and plans the implementation, chooses the work method, schedules the work method, evaluates the outcome and gathers feedback. The report of a practice-based thesis includes the basis, decisions and solutions for the outcome. (Vilkka & Airaksinen 2003, p. 60-63.)

The idea for this thesis and the project came from the present workplace. The author has worked in Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori as a receptionist for over three years. The author of this thesis observed the lack of orientation or induction of environmental material such as Green Key for the new staff. There is a booklet for new staff to read independently, which is good practice, but the information

in the booklet could be denser with theory and easier to remember. This is why the author decided that digitalisation material, such as video, can be easily watched as a part of orientation and understood better, with the support of the Green Key guide booklet.

### 6.1 Qualitative research method

Qualitative research refers to the term for a wide variety of approaches and methods for the study. The information and data collected and analysed are mainly non-quantitative and consist of textual material such as interview transcripts, fieldnotes, documents, visual materials, photographs, information from the internet and documents of human experiences in social action. Qualitative analysis requires absolute precision meaning, that all the facts and analysed data are reliable and be able to be clarified therefore it is not conflict with the outcome. (Saldana 2011, p. 4.)

Some qualitative research studies may use only one data collection method, such as interviewing participants. Other studies might incorporate at least a few different methods as interviews, participant observations, written surveys and notes. Some other studies may not include interaction with participants at all, relying solely on the examination of artefacts and other materials humans have created. During data collection, certainly will use several tools such as notepads, computers and phones, but the researcher itself is regarded as the primary data collection instrument in qualitative research. (Saldana 2011, p. 32.)

The collection of material and data sometimes might grow unmanageable and carry onward from original thoughts and the idea of outcome. The reduction and narrowing of collected qualitative material are an important step to finding the most essential and relevant discoveries from this research method. After subtracting the material and information, the researcher needs to separate the observation materials to reduce the unnecessary material and findings as a

final step for interpretation. (Saldana 2011, p. 32-33.) Qualitative research method aims to support this thesis outcome.

## 6.2 Theme interviews

We have all been interviewed in our personal, professional and social lives or seen and read interviews of others. The format is well known what to do and how to do it, one person asking and another answering it. Most of us are probably more personally familiar with the role of the interviewee. It is aware that those interviews can differ widely, from confidential probing and private space to publicly oriented interviews. It is essential to identify the structure and the characteristics of the interview and to use the qualitative interview as a methodological and research tool in social science. (Edwards & Holland 2013, p. 1.)

There are four types of interview methods: structured, thematic, unstructured, and semi-structured. A structured interview is based on a prepared questionnaire with a sequence of questions asked in the same order and the same way. The thematic interview is a more casual interactional exchange of dialogues between one or more participants. Semi-structured interviews are almost the same as structured interviews, with the same questions for every participant; the questions and the order of the questions can be altered. Semi-structured interviews are used primarily on study projects where the themes are pre-planned. Finally, the unstructured interview is more of an open discussion where there is a subject but not necessarily an identical theme for every participant. The main idea and goal of this unstructured interview are to gain in-depth knowledge from the participants. (Edwards & Holland 2013, p. 3-6.)

Thematic interviews are one of the used methods. This style is ideal for studying and identifying the subjects that are less familiar to us. There are vast opportunities for an interviewer and interviewee to have a versatile interaction. The questions in thematic interviews are not structured, scheduled or written. Instead, there is a theme to follow and work as content for the interviewer. It is

essential to select a suitable participant for an interview to support the objective of this thesis. (Edwards & Holland 2013, p. 6.)

## 7 THEMATIC INTERVIEWS

The thematic interview was chosen for this thesis due to the similarity of practices in the Sokos Hotels chain. The objective is to understand Green Key's staff involvement and orientation level. Also, it is the best way to get a similar hotel's Green Key managers' internal opinions, options and expertise in detail. The author contacted five hotel managers and the Green Key managers for the interview, and three responded to the e-mail. Due to the busy holiday season, arranging an interview session with them was hard at the beginning. The author told them before the interview that it would be about a thirty-minute discussion, and the interviewee agreed. As additional information, the author informed them that the conclusion from interview material would be used in the thesis; the interviewee agreed to participate and told the author that the interview could be conducted in any form, video, phone call, or mail. Before the interview, we contacted each other by email and phone with the general manager of Hotel Kimmel.

The Interviewees were from three different hotels: Hanna Coker-Appiah from Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Mikkeli, Maarit Silvennoinen from Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Seurahuone Savonlinna and Petri Mustonen from Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Kimmel Joensuu. Table 1. displays the interviewee's names and their titles. The interviews were conducted through teams, video calls, and phone calls, and all the interviews lasted about half an hour as we planned beforehand; the themes used in this interview were listed in the appendix 1. Also, the transcript for each interview is detailed in the appendix 2, 3 and 4. All the interviewees had no problem answering the interviewer questions; more likely, we discussed the Green Key in our workplaces.



<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Profession</b>	<b>Hotel</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Hanna Coker-Appiah</b>	Hotel Manager	Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Mikkeli	15.11.2023
<b>Maarit Silvennoinen</b>	Reception Manager	Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Seurahuone Savonlinna	24.11.2023
<b>Petri Mustonen</b>	Hotel Manager	Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Kimmel Joensuu	14.12.2023

Table1. Interviewees for the theme interview

### 7.1 Interview Outcome

As mentioned above, there are four themes for the interviewees; questions were not written or pre-planned, nor were those themes asked in the same order to the interviewees. The themes include staff orientation, involvement, future development plans, strategies, ideas, and suggestions for the Green Key video. For the first theme, all three interview participants agreed that their department supervisor would orient the new hotel staff in their hotel during the orientation week. The orientation begins with the hotel introduction, staff introduction, and hotel rules and regulations and continues on eco-labels and their own rules, regulations, and restrictions. The Green Key booklet is available for the staff to read, understand, and get insight into the hotel's and management's environmental involvement.

Coker-Appiah says the hotel's Green Key issues and updates will be included actively in their weekly department meeting for the second theme. However, Mustonen and Silvennoinen say the hotel's Green Key updates and plans are not discussed with the staff or department weekly or followed up on as a weekly task. Still, they follow up on Green Key updates and plans for monthly department meetings. All three participants say their hotel's staff regularly follows Green Key rules and regulations and sometimes might make new environmental suggestions, which will be implemented if possible.

As for the third theme, Coker-Appiah and Mustonen say they follow the Green Key annual requirements as a future Green Key plan and development: less usage of natural resources, less food waste, and cooperation with their local community. Mustonen adds resources such as electricity, which comes as a prime issue regarding sustainability due to the long and harsh winters in the East; plus, their hotel includes a spa facility that uses more resources than other hotels. Therefore, reduce electricity use and look for other resources such as solar power in the plans for Mustonen. Silvenoinen and the team were ahead in their future Green Key development plans, such as using eggs from the local organic farm for the hotel breakfast table and their yearly hotel tour for the local kindergarten kids. Silvenoinen mentioned they plan to add more news and updates on their social media website about their environmental actions for their customers and to increase staff involvement.

The suggestions and ideas for the Green Key video are exciting. All interviewees agree with making a relatively short and informative video for the staff. Usually, the visual communication is created for the customers rather than the staff, as the informative booklet and brochure are available at the workplace. However, all of them agree the information Green Key video is a good idea. Apart from the themes of this interview, the author noticed at the discussion that none of those three hotels had any other Green Key material for the staff besides the Green Key booklet guide.

<b>Staff Orientation</b>
<b>Staff Involvement</b>
<b>Future developments plan and strategies</b>
<b>Ideas and suggestion for the Green Key video</b>

Table 2. Themes for the interview

## 7.2 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are used to evaluate the quality, method, and technique used in the research. Reliability in research ensures the consistency of the research method, which means the same consistency can be achieved by other researchers using the same process, and the results will be the same. Validity refers to the accuracy of the method measurement. If the research has high validity, it produces outcomes related to fundamental properties, characteristics, and variation. Validity is usually harder to assess than reliability; the method used, data and conclusion must be valid to obtain the results. (Middleton, 2023.)

Reliability is approximated by comparing different versions of the exact measurement, for example, benchmarking the interviews for the result. Validity is estimated using three types of evidence: construct validity, a measure of existing theory and knowledge; content validity, which covers all aspects of research; and criterion validity, which is the result of other valid measures of the same concept. The reliability and validity of the research result depend on the research design, concept, method, and consistency of the research methodology. Validity should be considered at the early stage of research when the researcher decides on the research methodology to ensure a valid outcome at the end. Reliability should be considered throughout the research process. The researcher has to make sure the technique or tool of data collection produces a stable and precise outcome at the end. (Middleton, 2023.)

It is necessary to plan the methodology carefully at the early stage of the research. It is also important to ensure the same method is used for each measurement; for example, interviews, observations, questions, or specific behaviour or responses will be counted using the same phrase all the time. (Middleton, 2023.) As previously mentioned, this thesis used thematic interviews with the interviewees to benchmark the outcome.

The reliability and validity of this thesis research method are ensured by collecting reliable data throughout the process and using the correct references

in the text and the reference list. The author contacted hotel industry professionals, such as hotel managers, Green Key managers, and heads of departments, for the interviews and confirmed the interview date, place and time. With the permission of the interviewees, the author collected and recorded the interview material to be used in this thesis; the record was disposed of afterwards as agreed with the interviewees. The author also sought to confirm the commissioners' opinions on the benchmark outcome.

## 8 THE VIDEO PRODUCTION

The digital revolution has changed the way humans create and distribute knowledge, information, and projects to others. If a project is good, it can attract millions of visitors online. However, according to Owens, the primary production principles stayed the same while embracing the new technologies surrounding us. With equipment available at the lower consumer level, anybody can produce visual communication without any technical background or experience. (Owens 2011, p.1.)

However, it is essential to create a quality video and good storytelling that engages the viewer. A good idea does not automatically turn into the screen; how the subject is presented will influence the audience's response. Video making involves many steps, including planning, arranging, shooting materials, and editing the material to produce the final product (Owens 2011, p.1.) Nine different phases of the video production process are explained in Figure 1 below.

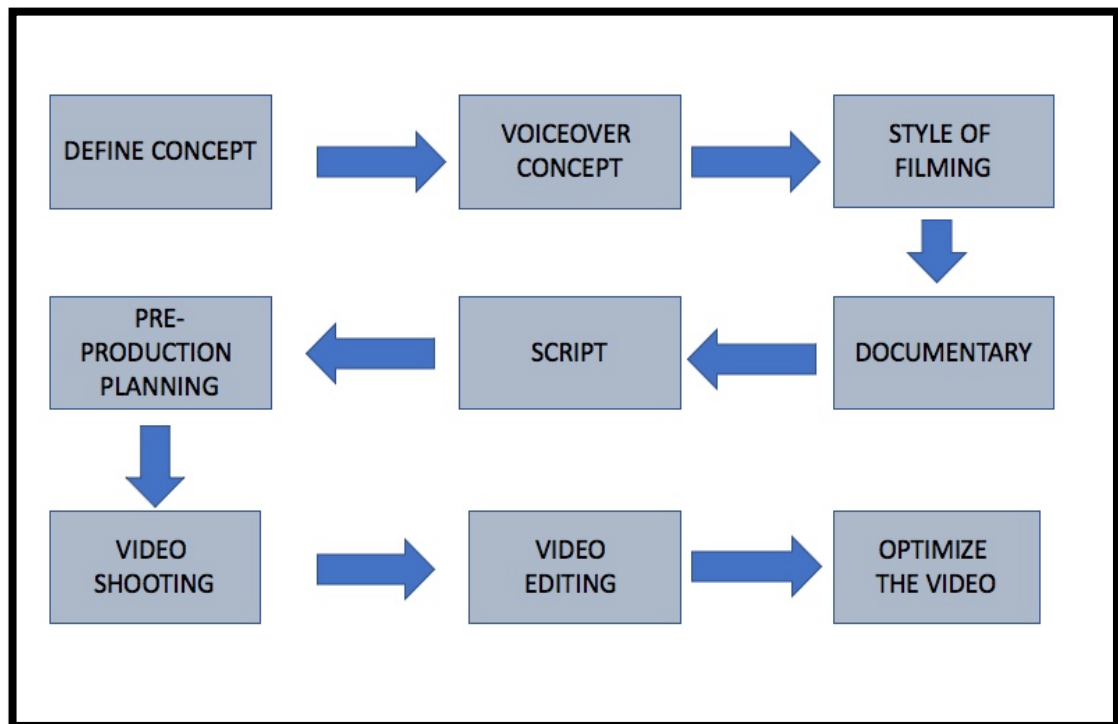


Figure 1. Process of designing the video

### 8.1 The Green Key video of Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori

There are nine different stages and steps for this video-making; as a first step, developing a concept of the video is essential. Who are the audience and target group, and what kind of message do they get from this video? The answers to these questions are necessary to guide the entire video production process. Otherwise, the outcome might fail to reach its audience. (Owens 2011, p. 34.) The target audience for this video comes from different ages and backgrounds; all of them work under the same employers and rules and regulations, including recycling and eco-friendly activities at the workplace. This video focuses on Green Key practices at the workplace, a basic guide, an introduction and information for the hotel staff at the orientation level.

Audio is the most essential element in the world of visual communication. According to Owens, if one needs to find out the importance of the audio for the video, just turn off the audio and try to follow the storyline. It will be a short journey of watching the video and getting lost in the storyline. Just by listening to the audio without the visual, one might still follow the story. Audio is

important for image and visual communication. (Owens 2011, p. 229.) As for this video, the audio will be background music, a voice-over explanation, and a visual.

Most first-timers or beginning directors find the illusion of reality more challenging to create than imagined. In reality, pointing the camera at a scene and expecting to absorb all the information at once on the spot is impossible. The camera can only show limited and selective aspects at a given time. There are various types of filming depending on the events, needs, and audience. For instance, for a wide shot of the entire football field or a close-up shot for an interview with a person, the filming style differs according to the need. The camera and filming will pick up the most essential detail of the topic; there is no time to cover everything that we could imagine that fit the topic of the video. (Owens 2011, p. 29-30.) This video covers most of the Green Key areas in the hotel, such as recycling spaces, guest rooms, breakfast area and the lobby. The audience can experience and learn where and how the rules and regulations of Green Key have been practised in this hotel.

Content must be translatable, with the content to translate. Production companies use different techniques, technologies, and multi-platforms to document as much material as possible for the final product, and they can't assume shooting for a few minutes will fit all the needed information. Gathering as much as a visual material method gives the director incredible flexibility later in the editing section to try out several different versions to improve the outcome. (Owens 2011, p. 57-62.) This video mainly focuses on the actual event, such as Green Key and the hotel staff, which is included in the documentary section of filming. The actual footage and visual material gathered, filmed, and documented for the Green Key video is double the actual video's amount.

The time, resources, and workforce for pre-production depend on the production size. Most of the work and planning are in pre-production and post-production, again depending on the size of the production and the outcome. The bigger the production outcome, the bigger the resources needed. Pre-production includes concept, goals, scheduling, script, location, design, artist, casting,

and rehearsal. (Owens 2011, p. 59-61.) This video production is a one-person production; however, it consumed a significant amount of time in pre-production and scheduling timetables for video making. A lack of experience in video making also contributes to the delay in production.

The script forms the basis for the production and helps the production team and the director develop scenes and ideas. According to Owens, professional crews on shooting locations might seem to work spontaneously, but they work diligently through pre-production before starting filming. The scriptwriting depends on the production; drama scripts differ from documentaries, and film scripts differ from stage directions. Professionals in the production industry should learn this skill before starting production to avoid wasting valuable resources. (Owens 2011, p. 75-86.) For this video, the author used a single-column script because of the style of the video production. This video focuses on introducing Green Key and its practices for the hotel employees, hence the single-column script is most suitable for this video production; before each scene, an explanation describes the location and the scene.

The next step in video making is editing the whole material to create the final production. Editing is the process of blending all the material together to produce an engaging story for the audience. It has an essential role in the final product; it is a technique of selecting shots and choosing the order and duration in which they blend for the audience. Poor editing will leave the audience confused or bored with the whole storyline. Editing is entering the postproduction step of the whole production process. (Owens 2011, p. 345-348.) Without proper knowledge in the editing field, the process took more time than pre-planned. This video has been edited to fit the audience, which is the hotel staff.

Optimization refers to the process of distributing the final product on various platforms; nowadays, creators can simultaneously feed real-time video and content to the entire world. Traditionally, distribution or optimization does not belong under the production team; they create content, and someone else will put it out for the audience. However, nowadays, distribution often becomes the production team's responsibility. Before the online distribution platforms, this

process will cost thousands of dollars to broadcast the product through the television station for the audience. The optimization changes and updates from time to time, from television, CDs, and USB storage to online platforms. (Owens 2011, p. 368-370.) For this video, the possible platform is the Workplace of S-Ryhmä, and the link will be provided for the staff.

## 8.2 The content, length of the video

The video of Green Key at Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori begins in front of the hotel, filming a bit of the entrance and front. It starts with an explanation of what the Green Key is and how the hotel got it. The video also films around the lobby and reception area, with the staff included. Their images were used with their permission for this video. Now, at the 1m36s, the video films eco-labels, the conference areas, and the conference rooms.

The video footage now shifts to the hotel corridors and guest rooms, providing practical Green Key information. The video also explains lights in the corridors and rooms and the energy-saving methods available in the newly renovated rooms, which are empowering our guests to make sustainable choices during their stay. All the rooms in the hotel are provided with recycling waste bins, Green Key information, guides, and stamps, not only in the room to read but also in the shower and toilet as reminders for the guests. This video mentions the daily room cleaning and make-up services for guests available only on request; the video length at this part so far is 2m11s.

The video then moves to the hotel's sauna department, briefly explaining the sauna timetable, units, and location. It also mentions the hotel sauna experience certificate. The video also demonstrates the importance of the sauna timetable and how much we can save resources by reducing only a few hours of sauna usage time per day. The length of the video is 2m52s; the house-keeping department mostly handles both areas. The video moves to the hotel's breakfast area and explains the use of local products in the breakfast buffet and the use of single-use paper cups and utensils. There are takeaway cups



for the customers, but we encourage them to use regular washable cups if they enjoy their beverage inside the building. The hotel breakfast department employees weigh the breakfast waste daily and write it at the breakfast entrance for awareness. The footage available in the video and the duration of this phase shows 3m30s.

In the next phase, video footage switched to the hotel's recycling area, explaining where it is located and the importance of recycling waste. Each bin has been labelled clearly for easy access for all of the hotel's employees. Every employee must know where the recycling area is located in the hotel, and if every employee throws the rubbish in the correct bin, the recycling process will be easier in the workplace for everyone. The length of the video at this phase is 4m09s. The last few parts of the video explain the hotel's bicycle for guests, which the guests can use to cycle around the suburban area ecologically.

The video ends with a thank you to the viewers for their time and for the ecological decisions and actions everyone will take in the future; the footage ends with a view of the Green Key certificate in the hotel's lobby. The whole video of the Green Key for employee orientation lasts 4m41s. The author sent the video to the commissioner for upload at the Workplace website, which is a social media platform for organisations and their employees. The commissioner might also upload this video to other platforms inside the organisation in the future for a reference purpose. The script for the video is displayed in Appendix 5. The video was edited using the CapCut App editing tool.

## 9 CONCLUSION

The author started working at the Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori as an intern in the reception department in the summer of 2020 and has continued working there until now. The workplace and the commissioner of this thesis have given the author complete freedom to choose any subject that interests the author

the most from any department for the thesis. Every year, many summer workers and interns work for a short period during the high season; some stay longer. Usually, during this period, the permanent employees are on their summer holiday and some work entire shifts with busy schedules. The orientation and introduction for everyone separately would take more time for every department, though every department has its workstation, work style, rules, and regulations. Eventually, each department will orient its new employees according to the department's requirements.

However, the rules, regulations, requirements, and recycling methods for the Green Key are the same for every department. Having material for every new employee's orientation, which can be done individually or as a group, will benefit the commissioner by saving time and resources, and the material can be reused or re-watched. The video of the Green Key introduction for orientation would be a tool for new employees to learn about the eco-label and get to know the hotel itself.

### 9.1 Suggestion

Currently, there is a "responsible ecological team" at the workplace consisting of three people; in the future, more employees could be involved in the team. The team plans a proper schedule for responsible and ecological acts in the hotel. The team could develop monthly Green Key thematic acts for different departments, rewarding the most responsible employees every month or rewarding employees who suggest new ecological practices for the departments. Encourage the heads of departments to involve Green Key's ecological practices in the weekly meeting discussion. Actively pass information about the hotel's environmental practices and involvement to the guests in person or on social media platforms, as only some guests know the hotel's actions toward ecological and sustainability; this could be a task for the hotel's social media team.

For a further sustainable suggestion to the hotel, which could include the employees, the social media team, the responsible team, and the supervisors

could collaborate with restaurant employees, sales departments, and hotel employees to create a separate and short video about the 13 different Green Key criteria. This video would be not only for education purposes for employees but also for visiting customers.

Additionally, a QR code link could be an easy access option for anyone interested in learning about Green Key and the hotel's effort to reach more environmental goals. The link could also be in multiple languages. This could be a task for employees or a project for some departments. The hotel management could collaborate with the local day care, preschool, and primary school, offering students a unique educational experience. The hotel employees could conduct a day tour of the hotel. The children could learn about Green Key, our recycling system, and the importance of conserving natural resources. However, this suggestion is taken into consideration by the management for the coming season.

## 9.2 Commissioner Feedback

“The topic of this thesis is very current and rare; rarely, if ever, has a presentation like this been made available for employees. Videos like this and other training materials are usually aimed at the customer base. Thank you to the author for taking the employees as a leading subject of this thesis. The theory part is well structured and functioning. The text is good and flows well from larger entities to more minor details, making it easy for the reader to keep up with it. The interviews were conducted well and described easily and understandably. Ideas from the interviews have also been used in the final result, i.e., in the orientation video. This video will be part of our hotel's orientation process for new employees in the future. In addition, it will work well as a fresh-up for the current employees. The commissioner of this work is satisfied with the outcome of this thesis.” (Kuusijoensuu 2024)

”Aihe on erittäin ajankohtainen ja harvinainen; harvoin, jos koskaan, on tehty tämän kaltaista infoa henkilökunnalle. Yleensä tämän kaltaiset videot ym.

perehdytysmateriaalit suunnataan asiakaskunnalle. Kiitos työn laatijalle että hän otti henkilökunnan keskeiseksi segmentiksi. Teoriaosuus on rakennettu hyvin ja se on toimiva kokonaisuus. Teksti on hyvää ja soljuu hyvin isommista kokonaisuuksista kohti pienempiä yksityiskohtia. Näin lukijan on helppo pysyä tekstissä mukana. Haastattelut on tehty hyvin ja kuvattu työhön ymmärrettävästi. Myös haastatteluiden ideoita on käytetty lopputuloksessa, eli perehdytysvideossa. Tämä video tulee olemaan jatkossa osa hotellimme perehdytysprosessia uusille työntekijöille. Lisäksi se tulee toimimaan hyvin Fresh Up:ina nykyiselle henkilökunnalle. Tämän työn tilaaja on tyytyväinen Tinan tekemään kokonaisuuteen.” (Kuusijoensuu 2024)

The author and commissioner had this face-to-face feedback meeting at the workplace, and the written feedback has been sent to the author's email. The original feedback was in Finnish; the author translated it and also added the original version to this section.

## REFERENCES

- Edwards, R. & Holland, J. 2013. What is Qualitative Interviewing? London: Bloomsbury Academic. 10.01.2024.  
<https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/58752>
- Goodwin, H. (2016). Responsible tourism: Using tourism for sustainable development. Goodfellow Publishers, Limited.
- Härkönen, M. (2012). Spa Hotel staff awareness and commitment to environmental practices: The case of Green Key in Estonia and Latvia [Master's thesis, University of Tartu]. <https://core.ac.uk/reader/14497551>
- Kuusijoensuu, R. Commissioner feedback. Receiver: [tina.2.salo@student.samk.fi](mailto:tina.2.salo@student.samk.fi). Sent 27.05.2024.
- Middleton, F. 2023. Reliability vs Validity in Research / Difference, Types and Example. Scribbr. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/reliability-vs-validity/>
- Mariani, M. M. e., Buhalis, D. e., Czakon, W. e., & Vitouladiti, O. e. (2016). Tourism Management, Marketing, and Development: Performance, Strategies, and Sustainability (1st ed. 2016.). Palgrave Macmillan US.  
<https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137401854>
- Maheshwari, S. (2019). Engage!: Co-creating organizational vitality and individual fulfilment. SAGE Publications India Pvt, Ltd.
- Owens, Jim. 2011. Video production handbook. Focal Press.
- Saldana, J. (2011). Fundamentals of qualitative research. Oxford University Press, Incorporated.
- Selinkoski, M. 2023. Front desk manager of Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori. Personal communication on 28.10.23.

Sloan, P., Legrand, W., & Chen J. S. (2013). Sustainability in the Hospitality Industry (second edition). Routledge.

Vilkka, H., & Airaksinen, T. (2003). Toiminnallinen opinnäytetyö. Kustannus-  
osakeyhtiö Tammi.

Website of CapCut. Referred 03.05.2024. <https://www.capcut.com>

Website of Green Key Global. Referred 24.10.2023.

<https://www.greenkey.global>

Website of Green Key Finland. Referred 26.10.2023. <https://greenkey.fi/en/>

Website of Sokos Hotels. Referred 20.11.2023. <https://www.sokshotels.fi/fi>

Website of UNTWO. Referred 07.11.2023. <https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development>

## APPENDIX 1

Thematic interview:

Staff Orientation

Staff Involvement

Future developments plan and strategies

Idea and suggestion for the Green Key video

## APPENDIX 2: FIRST INTERVIEW

### **Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Mikkeli**

Interviewer: **Tina Salo (TS)**

Interviewee: **Hanna Coker- Appiah/ Hotel Manager (HCA)**

Date of interview: **15.11.2023**

Location of interview: **Teams video interview**

Hi Hanna, thanks for your time and this interview. This is a theme interview, more like a talking section, which means there are no specific questions written down; it is also why I did not send you any pre-questions.

Oh, OK. No problem, I am glad to help you.

Let me start with the staff orientation for a Green Key; how is it done in Vaakuna Mikkeli? Are there any specific orientation steps for the new staff, or is it included here and there as a daily task?

We do not have specific steps or separate orientation for the staff about the Green Key here in Vaaakuna Mikkeli. However, the hospitality department supervisors ensure the new employees are informed and go through the Green Key information booklet on the orientation week.

Every new employee?

That is how the task is given to the supervisors and department managers. The Green Key is part of the hotel's practices and orientation.

What about the staff involvement in green activities? Are they considering volunteering for the green tasks, or are there Green Key and house rules and regulations to be followed automatically?

As we know, Green Key has strict rules and regulations to be followed, and we need to improve the requirements yearly. Every department participates in Green Key tasks, such as recycling, guest information, hiring locals, etc. If the employees do any extra green action, it is a bonus! For example, the choice of vehicles for public transportation in the workplace is good, but cycling is better. Summer is an excellent time for cycling! Pori is wonderful in summer.

It is, indeed. Welcome to Mikkeli in summer for a change!



Sure! What about the weekly tasks or Green Key updates? Is there any meeting organised for the Green Key team, or is it just discussed between supervisors?

We include the necessary Green Key issues, updates and ideas in weekly meetings between departments.

What about the future development plan for Green Key in Vaakuna Mikkeli? Can you share something with me? Maybe some new strategies and improvements?

Oh, for sure, we try to improve the yearly requirements of Green Key; that is a long list and a goal for us, the Green Key team. All the natural resources need to be used less in the coming years. Have you followed our renovations here in Vaakuna Mikkeli?

No, I am not. I have read about some other hotel renovations, mainly in Helsinki and so on.

Oh OK. Yeah, there are quite a lot, let's say, massive renovations ongoing here and scheduled to finish in May 2024. When the renovation is completed, we will add a more sustainable and green touch to our hotel; it is in the plans. I hope plans will become practical.

That is awesome; Vaakuna Pori will also start the renovation, most likely after Christmas. I got so much helpful information from you. Thanks.

Lastly, I plan to do a Green Key introduction video for the new employees for my thesis. Any ideas and suggestions? It will be helpful.

Good idea! I never come across a Green Key video for staff yet. Make sure the video is short. We all know how dense the Green Key rules and regulations are; there are so many. Are you going to include all of the information in the video?

Only some of the information, the critical part of the Green Key hotel practices such as recycling, cleaning methods and staff information. This video will be a supportive resource for the booklet.

OK, a short video will be excellent. And maybe you can figure out 13 short videos about 13 criteria; it is just my suggestion.

Thanks. That is an excellent suggestion. I will think about it.

We came to the end of our interview/discussion. Thank you again for your time!

Hanna: You are welcome! Bye.

## APPENDIX 3: SECOND INTERVIEW

### **Original Sokos Hotel Seurahuone, Savonlinna**

Interviewer: **Tina Salo (TS)**

Interviewee: **Maarit Silvennoinen/Front Desk Manager (MS)**

Date of interview: **24.11.2023**

Place of interview: **Teams video interview**

Hi Maarit, how are you? Thanks for your time and your willingness to do this interview.

Hi Tina, I am well and have no problem; I am glad to help. So, what is the interview about? I hope to answer all your questions.

This is a theme interview; no specific sets of questions were pre-made before this session. Also, that is why I did not send anything requiring any pre-preparation. It will be more like discussing Green Key activities in your hotel.

Oh, ok.

Let me start with the: weekly tasks or Green Key updates. Is any weekly meeting organised for the Green Key team, or is it just discussed between supervisors now and then, and the employees are included as well?

Hotel Green Key updates and tasks are not organised weekly nor followed every week. We discussed Green Key issues as more likely in monthly meetings between department supervisors. If some of the staff or their supervisor came up with new ideas or suggestions, they could contact me immediately without waiting until the meeting. Everything can be arranged but following the exact timetable in the hospitality sector is challenging, especially in the high season.

Exactly, everything can be arranged. What about the new staff orientation for a Green Key; how is it done in Seurahuone? Are there any specific orientation steps for the new staff, or is it included here and there as a daily task by their supervisor?

The Green Key introduction happens during the orientation week for the new staff by their department supervisors. It has been implemented for a few years now, and it has become a routine for the new staff here in Seurahuone to be

oriented about the Green Key. But the Sustainable Travel Finland certificate is relatively new here.

Oh yeah, we in Vaakuna Pori got our Sustainable Travel Finland certificate last year. What about the staff involvement in green activities? Are they considering volunteering for the green tasks, or are there Green Key and house rules and regulations to be followed automatically?

Automatically follows the rules, regulations and restrictions of Green Key. For example, recycling, food waste, reduction of natural resources, customer information, and involvement. But we got plenty of suggestions from the staff for Green Key improvements, and I see that as volunteering.

Can you give me an example of that?

For instance, the RESQ app has been implemented to reduce food waste from breakfast; we have a bar in the lobby area, and the reception department handles the complete recycling and reusing of the bottles, cork and leftover alcohol we gave to the hotel bar for use.

What about the future development plan for Green Key in Vaakuna Mikkeli? Can you share something with me? Maybe some new strategies and improvements?

We try to improve the annual requirement of the Green Key. RESQ application: we use organic eggs from a local farmer for breakfast. We also have a yearly tradition here in Seurahuone; every year, one week in spring, we invite kids from the local kindergarten to our hotel to participate in the hotel Green Key tour and show them something like a recycling system. We also plan to add more hours to our social media website for a sustainable customer and staff awareness.

Such great ideas! I might take some as an example for our hotel in the future. Yeah, no problem; I sometimes look at other hotel social media accounts for inspiration.

I plan to do a Green Key introduction video for the new employees for my thesis. Any ideas and suggestions?

Such a good idea! A clear, instructive and short video may be good enough. When your video is ready, I might also take a look for inspiration.

Of course. That's all for this interview session; we are done. Thanks again for your time and have a nice holiday season.

You are welcome! Same to you as well.

## APPENDIX 4: THIRD INTERVIEW

### **Original Sokos Hotel Kimmel Joensuu**

Interviewer: **Tina Salo (TS)**

Interviewee: **Petri Mustonen (PM)**

Date of interview: **14.12.2023**

Place of interview: **Phone Interview**

Hi Petri, how are you? Thanks for your time, and I'm sorry about the timetable changes.

Hi, I am good and it is ok. It was a misunderstanding on my side; it is a busy season here, and we had a water leakage problem a few days back; not a big one, but, anyway, we need a lot of extra time to settle a few things.

Oh, I'm so sorry to hear that. Here is a bit of information about this session. This is a theme interview; no specific sets of questions were pre-made before this session. Also, that is why I did not send anything requiring any pre-preparation. It will be more like discussing Green Key activities in your hotel.

Oh, ok, no problem.

I will start with the staff orientation; how is the new staff orientated for a Green Key? How is it done in Sokos Hotel Kimmel? Is there any specific orientation for the new staff, or is it included as a daily task by their supervisor?

It is orientated like other hotels, the same as Pori, I believe; all the staff are provided with Green Key material to get to know, more precisely, the information that is important for the new staff's department. If new staff members start in the housekeeping department, they must learn about recycling, saving water and electricity, etc.

Ok. We also have the Pori Vaakuna Green Key booklet for new staff to read. Err, what about the weekly Green Key updates and tasks for the team and staff?

We don't have a weekly meeting just for Green Key, but we update Green Key ideas or, say, new implementation monthly or twice a year if there is something to discuss or to improve.

Are the staff involved in green activities? Considering volunteering for the green tasks, are there Green Key and house rules and regulations to follow?

The staff follows Green Key regulations, which are strict. Hotels also have their own rules, for example, laundry system and staff uniform washing system; we do all of this with the thought of natural resources in mind to create less unnecessary waste, especially natural resources such as electricity.

Does it also apply to food waste?

Yes, it does.. breakfast, and to our restaurant, avoid unnecessary waste, which is sometimes challenging. But we try to improve all the time.

Can you share some of the Green Key future development plans and strategies in Hotel Kimmel with me?

When we renovate the hotel, we use all the energy-saving light bulbs around the hotel, with the moving sensor, of course. The moving sensor avoids public areas such as lobbies, restaurants and walk paths. There is also a spa here in Hotel Kimmel; we are trying to implement the usage of solar panels for electricity. The winter is usually long and hard here in the East, so electricity always comes first when discussing sustainability.

It is good to know that Kimmel has its own spa; very few Sokos Hotels have spa facilities.

Welcome to Kimmel Joensuu!

Thanks! I plan to do a Green Key introduction video for the new employees for my thesis. Any ideas and suggestions will be appreciated.

Erm.. good idea. Hope will be helpful for the staff. I don't have much idea about that, but usually, visual communication is much better than reading communication. In this case, can you include all the information in the video?

The video is planned to be an introduction to the Green Key in Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Pori. The Green Key booklet will be the primary source because of the accuracy and the amount of information in the booklet; the video will be an additional resource for the booklet. Only some people go through every page in the booklet of Green Key rules and regulations to begin.

Erm, yeah.. it is true. Video as a supportive material is a good idea. Make it short and include all the main steps of Green Key in the video.

Thanks for your idea. Ok, we come to the end of our session, I got a lot of information about Hotel Kimmel and how your staff practise the Green Key there.

You're welcome. Happy Holidays! Same to you. Bye.

## APPENDIX 5: SCRIPT FOR THE VIDEO

- Tervetuloa Porin Original Sokos Hotel Vaakunan Green Key:n esittely.-  
ALKU
- Green Key on kansainvälinen matkailualan vastuullisuussertifikaatti, jossa on mukana yli 5300 yritystä 68 valtiossa ympäri maailman. Original Sokos Hotel Vaakunalla on ollut Green Key sertifikaatti yhdeksän vuotta ja vuonna 2023 hotelli sai STF:n kestävän kehityksen vastuullisuus merkin.- AULA
- Green Key ei ole pelkästään merkki hotelleille, vaan se on sitoutuminen kestävään kehitykseen ja ympäristönsuojeluun. Green Key:n merkki on sitoutuminen parempaan tulevaisuuteen, se on matka kohti kestävämpää ja vastuullisempaa matkailua. Jokainen pieni askel vie meitä lähemmäksi tätä päämäärää. -AULA
- Joten, olipa kyseessä sitten hotellin henkilökunta tai vieras, me kaikki voimme olla osa Green Key -yhteisöä ja tehdä osamme ympäristön suojelemiseksi. Tule mukaan tähän matkaan kohti kestävämpää huomista, jolla olemme ansainneet Green Key merkin Porin Original Sokos Hotel Vaakunassa -AULA/ KOKOUSAULA
- Matkalla kohti majoitushuonetta, käytävillä olevat liiketunnistimella varustetut valot syttyvät ja sammuvat liikkeen mukaan, aikaisemmin remontoituissa huoneissa ei vielä ole saatavilla liiketunnistimella varustettuja valoja, mutta uusissa huoneissa tekniikka on jo käytössä. Jos kyseessä on useamman yön yöpyminen, huoneen välisiivous tehdään vain pyynnöstä, näin pyrimme vähentämään tekstiilien pesusta aiheutuvaa kuormitusta. Jokaisessa huoneessa on Green Key tietopaketti asiakkaiden tutustuttavaksi. Huoneissa on myös roskakorit, joissa on useamman lajikkeen lajittelu mahdollisuus. - HUONEET
- Hotellilla on käytössä kaksi asiakas saunaa, arkipäivisin sauna on käytössä 18.00–22.00 välisenä aikana ja viikonloppuisin on vuorosauna. Järjestelyllä on vaikutusta sähkön- ja vedenkulutukseen positiivisesti. Hotellimme sauna on saanut the Authentic Finnish Sauna Experience- laatusertifikaatin -SAUNA

- Original Sokos Hotel Vaakunan aamiainen on tunnettu maanlaajuisesti, pyrimme hiilijalanjäljen pienentämiseen käyttämällä aamiaisen valmistuksessa mahdollisimman paljon paikallisia tuotteita. Pyrimme pienentämään kertakäyttöastioiden käyttöä asiakkaille sekä henkilökunnalle. Tavalliset uudelleen pestävät astiat ovat ekologisesti kestävämpi vaihtoehto. Kiinnitämme huomiota ruokahävikin vähentämiseen ja siksi henkilökuntamme punnitsee ruokahävikin päivittäin.-AAMUPALA
- Tervetuloa hotelimme kierrätys pisteelle. Sinne on esteetön pääsy henkilökunnalle ja kierrätysastiat ovat selkeästi merkattu lajikkeiden mukaan. -ROSKIS ALUE
- Kannustamme työntekijöitämme käyttämään julkisia kulkuvälineitä työmatkoihin, riippuen toki etäisyydestä. Hotelli lainaa myös polkupyöriä asiakkaiden käyttöön, jotta he voivat tehdä retkiä lähellä sijaitseviin puistoihin tai muuten tutustua kotikaupunkiimme ekologisella kulkuvälineellä. -TAKAPIHA/PYÖRÄKATOS
- Kiitos ajastasi, jokaisen henkilökunnan jäsenen panostus vastuulliseen matkailuun on yhtä tärkeää ja askel kohti parempaa tulevaisuutta. -LOPPU