

Making a tough personnel decision at Nova Waterfront Hotel

Mary Kuchta Foster

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Laura Green, Director of Event Planning at the Nova Waterfront Hotel in Baltimore, had been through the hiring process many times. She was very comfortable with Nova's selection and behavioral interviewing processes. They had only interviewed two candidates for the open senior event manager position, yet they had been discussing what decision to make for two and a half hours. Normally, these kinds of meetings wrapped up in 30 minutes with a clear consensus about what to do. But today, they were gridlocked, unable to agree on a path forward. Shannon Smith, the internal candidate, had been with Nova for three years; she was really nice, well liked, and had an excellent track record as an event manager – she rarely had a customer issue. Matt Mayes, the external candidate, worked at a smaller Nova hotel in the city, he was already a senior event manager there. However, he did not have experience working with larger groups and budgets like the ones at this hotel. But he was hungry and eager to grow. Who should they hire? One or the other? Neither? Both? They could not agree on anything. This was a very unusual situation; Green felt uncomfortable and suggested that they all “sleep on it.” They would get together first thing in the morning, when they were fresh, and decide what to do.

The place

The Nova Waterfront Hotel in downtown Baltimore had 733 rooms and 21 suites. The hotel featured a swimming pool, fitness center, and stunning views of the inner harbor. The hotel had facilities appropriate for any special occasion from intimate business meetings to elaborate weddings and conferences. The hotel had 80,000 square feet of meeting space and a grand ballroom and was in close proximity to many other downtown attractions and amenities (e.g. the National Aquarium, the Orioles at Camden Yards, the Convention Center, Maryland Science Center, and the Ravens at M&T Bank Stadium). The hotel could accommodate meetings of up to 1,200 people.

The hotel was owned and operated by Nova International, a leading hospitality company with more than 3,900 properties and 18 brands around the world. The company had revenues of nearly \$13 billion. Nova was known as an organization that puts people first. The company had been recognized worldwide for their enduring values, their spirit to serve, and their corporate commitment to creating better places to live and work. See Exhibit 1 for a summary of Nova's corporate values and their human resource policies.

The selection process

According to the general manager of Nova, when there was a job opening, the hiring manager was responsible for recruiting a selection team and managing the selection process. Traditionally at Nova, a selection team was composed of: the hiring manager (in this case Laura Green),

The names of the hotel, the parent organization, and the people have been changed to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

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the boss of the hiring manager (the general manager), peers of the position, both within the department (i.e. senior event manager) and from other departments (i.e. Alex Hartnett, Senior Banquet Manager), and subordinates of the position (i.e. Michelle Sederas, Event Manager).

Nova used a structured, behavioral approach to interviewing[1]. As the hiring manager, Green was responsible for defining the job description and qualifications and for getting input from the selection team on selection criteria. The hiring manager was also responsible for coordinating with the external recruiting and selection firm, posting the job, organizing the interviewing schedule, facilitating the selection team debrief, making the selection decision in consultation with the team, and making an offer to the final candidate. In the event that the process did not yield a suitable candidate, it was the hiring manager's responsibility to reinstate the process.

Nova used an outside recruiting and selection firm because staffing was a challenge in the hospitality industry. The growth in jobs in the hospitality sector, combined with the demanding nature of the jobs (e.g. the need to be very responsive to customers and co-workers every day, the need to be very service oriented) and the relatively low pay resulted in high turnover. When jobs were advertised, there were often hundreds of applicants, but finding high-quality candidates was time consuming and challenging. So Nova, contracted with a firm to screen resumes, select candidates for phone screening, conduct the phone screening interviews, refer finalists for in-person interviews, and provide feedback to candidates who were not offered a position. The recruiting and selection firm used the selection criteria provided by the hiring manager to evaluate candidates. For a given position, the firm typically recommended three to four candidates for in-person interviews.

The selection team was responsible for providing input on the selection criteria, interviewing the candidates, evaluating the candidates, participating in the team debrief, and providing input on the selection decision. Typically, the team interviewed all the candidates for a position on the same day. Then at the end of the day, the team would meet, usually for a half an hour or an hour, to discuss their findings and make a decision. According to Nova best practices, selection team members were supposed to use an agreed upon structured interview guide with a common rating system[2]. During the debrief they were expected to share and record their ratings, discuss evidence from the interviews that led to their ratings, calculate average scores for each candidate on each evaluation criterion, and reach a consensus on a decision.

One of Nova's key values was putting people first, so they were committed to promoting from within their organization. If an employee met the following conditions, they could apply for a posted job: been in his/her position for at least 12 months, met the requirements of their position (i.e. not on a performance improvement plan), and secured approval from his/her boss. The employee's current manager had to approve the application, noting whether or not they considered the candidate eligible for the new job.

Each candidate was given feedback after the interview process via the hiring manager or the outside recruiting/selection agency. See Exhibit 2 for an overview of the selection process at Nova.

The job and the selection criteria

Green had an opening for a senior event manager, who would be responsible for handling complex events like conferences, wedding receptions, meetings, and parties. The core responsibilities of this position were to work with clients, plan events, and coordinate/oversee an event as it evolved from planning to execution to wrap-up/evaluation. See the job description and qualifications for this position in Exhibit 3.

Green reported that normally she would have asked the selection team what criteria they thought were important to select the best candidate. However, in this instance, to save time, she pulled the selection criteria together (see Exhibit 4) and sent them to the selection team asking them to pick their top three criteria. Based on feedback from the team, the top three selection criteria were leadership, innovation/creativity, and holding people accountable. See Exhibit 5 for definitions of each behavior and example interview questions.

The selection team debrief

Green had recruited the following people to serve on the selection team with her:

- her boss, the general manager;
- a peer of Green's from another department, John Wilson, Director of Event Management;
- a peer of the position in another department, Alex Hartnett, Senior Banquet Manager;
- a peer of the position within the department, a senior event manager; and
- a subordinate of the position, Michelle Sederas, Event Manager and another event manager.

See Exhibit 6 for an overview of where each person on the selection team fit in the Nova organization.

All seven members of the selection team individually interviewed each of the two candidates during one day. Team members were provided with a list of the selection criteria and a list of example interview questions from which they could choose (see Exhibits 2 and 5). Each team member had 30 minutes to interview each candidate. At the end of the day they met to debrief on the candidates: Shannon Smith and Matt Mayes.

Shannon Smith was an Event Manager at Nova Waterfront Hotel; she had been in her current position at Nova for three years. She had completed one year of college at James Madison University. She had consistently received good performance evaluations. She was well liked and had an excellent track record planning events – customers were almost always very pleased with her work. Shannon had an easy going and informal style. Matt Mayes worked for a smaller sister hotel as a Senior Event Manager. He had been in his position for two years, had received good performance evaluations, and had his supervisor's support for this move. He had an associate degree in business administration from Pierce College. Matt had a dominant and formal style.

Green convened the debrief meeting and asked everyone to share his or her opinion about the candidates. She asked people to summarize the candidates' strengths and weaknesses and to give a "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" on each candidate. Green got the conversation started by asking Hartnett what he thought. Hartnett said, "I give Shannon a "thumbs up." She is open, friendly, and easy to work with; she gets the job done and satisfies customers." Then the senior event manager chimed in "I agree with Alex, however, I think Shannon needs to develop her leadership skills – she gets by on personality and persuasiveness – a senior event manager also needs to have strong financial skills and be able to influence through their expertise." Then Sederas gave a neutral hand signal for both candidates. She said, "I know both candidates and like them both. They get the job done. But I just don't see them as senior managers." The other event manager agreed with Sederas, but she gave them both a "thumbs down." She felt she was more qualified and capable than either of the candidates. Then Wilson weighed in, "I'd give them both a chance. Neither fits all the selection criteria but they are both strong contributors with excellent technical skills like planning, budgeting, communicating, etcetera. However both lack strong leadership skills and Matt lacks experience with large events." Green had mixed feelings about both candidates, as did the general manager. Green sensed that there was a lot of support in the room for Shannon as a colleague and a strong performer. However, Shannon's casual laid-back style and "flower girl" persona made it difficult for some people to see her as having the potential to be a strong leader. Green asked the event managers, "If you faced a challenge at work would you go to Shannon for help or advice?" Sederas said "Yes, probably" but the other event manager said "No." The conversation continued for quite a while, much longer than usual. Green felt like they were not getting any closer to making a decision. To her it seemed like people were waffling, changing their minds, and making contradictory statements. She was frustrated and tired so she decided to call it a night: "Let's break for the evening and get together tomorrow morning to continue the discussion."

Laura Green's perspective

Laura Green, Director of Event Planning at the Nova Waterfront Hotel and the Hiring Manager, had been with the company for 15 years. She spent two years at Syracuse University and two

years at James Madison University and had a degree in hotel and restaurant management. Green started her career with Stouffer's in a management-training program; she did so well in the two-year program that she was promoted six months early. Over the course of her career, she had been a front desk manager, an assistant housekeeping manager, a front office manager, a computer systems manager, and an event planner. Green had been in event planning for five years. She came to the Nova Waterfront in 2002, the year after it opened, as a senior event manager. She had been the director of event planning for two years.

She said, "I thought both of these candidates were technically capable. Shannon has been a devoted employee; she has been here a long time – three years – she deserves the opportunity to grow. People like her, she is really nice, she never loses her temper, and she rarely has a customer service issue. But, when I asked people if they would go to her for advice in a bind, they said no. She needs to be able to run the show when I'm not here. Matt works at a smaller sister property. He is currently a senior event manager. But he does not deal with the same level of budgets, forecasts, and size of groups that we deal with here. My concern is would he be comfortable with a 1,200-person group when he was used to working with 600 person groups. But he was hungry and wanted to grow. Basically, I felt it came down to an internal candidate without leadership skills or an external candidate with some leadership skills, but not all the experience we needed. The question is: Do we hire people and let them grow into the job or do we demand that they have all the skills needed to do the job from the outset?"

Green said, "The discussion went back and forth. No one was overly excited about either candidate." I said, "I can't support promoting someone like Shannon who you are not going to go to." I thought Matt was a big risk, but he was hungry. We talked about hiring one, hiring neither, hiring both. We could downgrade the position to event manager and hire Matt. The reaction of the interview team was mixed, some were relieved, some were anxious. They thought we would lose Shannon, if we did not offer her the job. If we lowered the standards for the job, then people who would have applied, but did not because of the initial job criteria, would be mad. So, it felt very frustrating. Should we start over and look for more qualified candidates? Should we rethink the job criteria? Should we rethink the job? Should we reward people with opportunities to grow or should they earn opportunities by demonstrating the required skills? It was a long, emotional discussion.

Michelle Sederas' perspective

Michelle Sederas, Event Manager at the Nova Waterfront Hotel, had been with the company for three years. She graduated from the University of Delaware with a hospitality major and interviewed with Nova, expressing a preference for the Baltimore area and event management. Nova offered her a job, but told her that she would have to start in banquets or restaurants and work in operations before she could get a job in event management. Later at a career fair at her school, she met John Wilson, then Director of Event Management at the Nova Waterfront, and he offered her a position as associate event manager, where she would handle events for 1-150 people. She started a week after graduation from college and was promoted to event manager a year later. Sederas was a peer of Smith's and would be a direct report of the person hired to fill the open position.

Sederas said, "I know both of the candidates. I work with Shannon and I know Matt from the other Nova hotel downtown. When we met as a team, at the end of the day, after the interviews, it was the hardest discussion I've ever been a part of. We went around the room and everyone stated their opinion about each candidate, their strengths, weaknesses, a yea or nay. It was a casual conversation, but things were flying around. I said no to Matt. I felt he couldn't do as good a job as Shannon, based on the size of the hotel and the level of service. Others thought that Matt could bring new ideas to the team. They thought Shannon was great, but leadership was missing. They said she would make a great senior event manager at another hotel, but not here. She is great at what she does, she never fails us, but leadership is lacking. Green and the senior event managers have drilled down to us from the top, that it is critically important to be a strong leader, to think out of the box, to bring new ideas; you really have to shine and be a strong leader to get this job. A number of people were discouraged

from applying for the job because of the emphasis on strong leadership. Shannon is an outstanding event manager, she performs at an extremely high level, but I don't know about her leadership, can she develop it in the role? Can we give her a shot? One senior event manager was for Matt. Another event manager said no to Matt, she thought we should give Shannon a chance, she might not be a strong leader, but she could grow into it. Wilson recalled how Shannon had started out as an assistant event manager and been promoted to an associate event manager and then to an event manager. He said, 'She has never failed us; she gets along great with colleagues.' He also thought we should give Matt a chance. Green asked me and the other event manager, 'If Shannon was the senior event manager and you had a difficult client and needed my help would you go to Shannon?' I said probably not, the other event manager said no."

Sederas said, "Let me explain why I said that. Shannon and I, we have the same role, we share an office and ask each other questions everyday. I see Shannon and myself as equals, side by side. I look to my director when I need direction, I don't look to Shannon. I do go to her for advice. I do it on a daily basis, if I have a difficult client situation and I need an answer on the spot. She is always friendly and accommodating. I have no issues with her strength or decisiveness. It is not something bad on her part, I just don't think of her as the director."

According to Sederas, Green's question about whom you would go to was one of the most difficult questions asked. It was followed by an open discussion of leadership. If leadership is so important to this position, Sederas asked: "Are there ways to develop it? Can Shannon be trained? She deserves a chance. She gets along great with everyone. I'm still confused and need to know, if we are only looking for strong leaders or could it be developed? I never got clarity. Green said, 'Since leadership is my direction maybe we should reconsider what we need, maybe we are looking for something we'll never find. Shannon is one of our best event managers. Is it worth losing Shannon, because we don't promote her?' We had a very open conversation; things were flying around. But, we had been talking for two hours and still didn't know what we were going to do. Someone suggested we give them both a chance and offer them both jobs. I thought we agreed to that."

Alex Hartnett's perspective

Alex Hartnett, Senior Banquet Manager at the Nova Waterfront Hotel, joined the hotel in 2001, the year it opened. He had a degree in hotel and catering from New Castle College. Halfway through college he did an 11-month internship at the Chicago Nova working five days a week from 6:30 A.M. to 2:15 P.M. at the front desk and then 4:00 P.M. to 11:00 P.M. as chef. Since he had been at the hotel, he had worked in banquets, as a beverage captain, as an event services supervisor, as director of event services, and as senior banquet manager.

Hartnett said, "We fought backwards and forwards about this position. Shannon is a young girl, fresh out of college in flip-flops with flowers in her hair. She is bubbly, fun. When I saw the job criteria, I thought they were unachievable. They wanted prior experience as a senior event manager and strong financial skills. When we went over the criteria after the interviews, I could tell they didn't want Shannon. Two of the event managers are very much the same; Shannon is very different. She would bring more balance to the team. Her strengths are: she is very open, friendly, positive, doesn't act like she knows everything, when she makes a mistake she apologizes in person, and asks how she can make it better; she is a pleasure to work with, she doesn't stand out as being outstanding, but all her groups that came in were happy. She is a bit quirky with an odd fashion sense (she would fit in in Europe). She reminded me a lot of me. I saw her potential. The senior event managers thought that she was too young and didn't have leadership. They questioned if she would know what to do, if a client got angry. If a group has 400 people and something goes wrong, they are going to yell; if a group has 600 or 800 people and something goes wrong, they are going to yell. They are not going to yell twice as loud. Each customer is important and deserves the best. With Shannon things didn't go wrong. I expressed my opinions. The meeting had been going on for over an hour and a half. Then I left. They went on for another couple of hours. The next day they wanted to meet again; but I refused to participate. I had shared my opinions."

John Wilson's perspective

John Wilson, Director of Event Management at the Nova Waterfront Hotel, had been with the company for 23 years. He grew up in the UK; his father taught hotel management and advised him not to go into the business because it was a tough industry. Despite the warning, he worked in a couple of hotels and then he wrote letters to hotels in the USA. Only one company responded – Nova. Wilson said, “They truly cared about me and offered me an opportunity to flourish. I didn’t join the company for the immediate job, but for the opportunity to work for a company with good people, who care about me, and gave me the opportunity to be part of something bigger.”

Wilson said, “Hiring people is one of the biggest decisions we make. It affects people’s lives. And the higher up the position, the more important the decision. The key criteria for this position, senior event planner, were leadership, mentoring, and willingness to help others. The interview team realized that the candidates were technically very good, but there were issues around leadership. Neither candidate had great leadership or mentoring skills. If you look at Shannon, this is someone we’ve invested four or five years in, she has grown with us, and she has a very different personality, very carefree. We have a lot of structured people. Matt is coming from a smaller Nova property, where they feel like stepchildren. We’ve never hired someone from their hotel. I was pleasantly surprised by his interview. Neither had leadership. But for both, this was a natural progression of their careers. If we didn’t promote Shannon, we could expect her to leave. So, what if we changed the criteria and made it more of a technician job? We had two people, around the interview team table, who were more qualified than the candidates, if you just considered technical skills. Should we consider both candidates? Should we start over with a new candidate pool? The whole process was great feedback for training and development. We faced a devastating decision. If we chose Shannon, we would be responsible, because of the way she deals with people – she flies under the radar and charms people. At the next level of management, people are not going to buy it. She’d be dealing with more structured, rigid people. We need someone who can stand his or her ground. She folded. Then we have to ask ourselves, if not Shannon, why Matt? He had no examples of mentoring; his scores were not as good as Shannon’s. Should we walk away from both of the candidates?”

The selection decision

Green was unsettled; she knew how important hiring decisions were. They had spent a long time discussing this particular position and the candidates and yet she felt that they had not reached a satisfactory conclusion. She felt like she had even more questions now, than when she had started the discussion. Should she hire to a very high standard or give people the opportunity to grow into the position? Can leadership be learned? Can different styles of management and leadership be effective in an organization? How important was it for her, as the leader, to stick to her guns, when she really believed in something vs listening and adapting to feedback from her team? And what should she do in this specific situation? Hire Shannon Smith? Matt Mayes? Neither? Both? Start the recruiting and selection process over?

Notes

1. Behavioral interviewing is based on the assumption that in similar situations, future behavior is likely to resemble past behavior. So the interview process is designed to gather information about past behavior that might be relevant to success in the current job. A structured behavioral approach to interviewing typically involves: analyzing the skills needed in the job, selecting skill dimensions, selecting appropriate questions for each key skill dimension, creating a structured interview, executing the interview, and rating skills (Green and Horgan, 1982).
2. If there were many selection criteria, the criteria were divided among the interviewers with two to three interviewers being randomly assigned a subset of the criteria. This ensured that multiple interviewers collected data for each criterion and that the length of the interview were not excessive.

Exhibit 1. Nova's values and human resource policies

Values

- We put people first: take care of employees and they will take care of customers.
- We pursue excellence: our dedication to the customer shows in everything we do.
- We embrace change: innovation has always been part of the Nova story.
- We act with integrity: how we do business is as important as the business we do.
- We serve our world: our spirit to serve makes our company stronger.

Human resource policies

- We offer competitive compensation and benefits for all employees.
- We recognize employees for their commitment to delivering exceptional guest experiences and their passion for the business (as demonstrated via exceptional leadership, commitment to local communities, and providing referrals for new employees).
- We encourage long-term growth and development of employees. Nova promotes from within and offers lifelong careers where employees can increase their level of responsibility, accountability, and leadership.
- We encourage all Nova employees to gain experience in a variety of disciplines to fully understand the hospitality business and expand their career options.

Source: Nova International.

Exhibit 2. The Selection Process at Nova

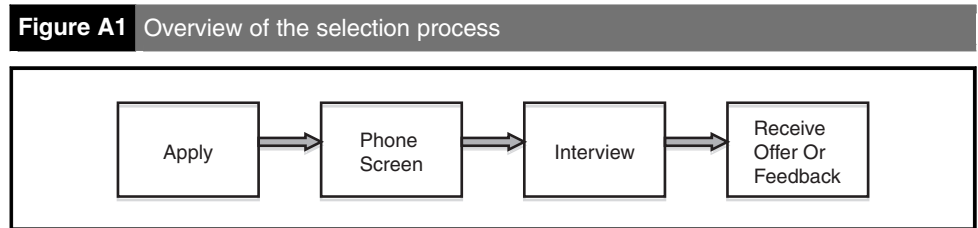


Table A1 Key responsibilities

<i>Hiring manager</i>	<i>Recruiting/selection firm</i>	<i>Selection team</i>	<i>Candidates</i>
Define job description, qualifications, and selection criteria (with input of selection team)	Review/screen resumes Select candidates for phone screening	Provide input regarding selection criteria	If internal candidates, must have been in position for at least 12 months; must meet performance requirements of current position; must get supervisors approval to apply
Recruit selection team Post job	Conduct phone screening interviews Recommend/refer finalist candidates for in-person interviewing	Interview candidates using behavioral interviewing technique	Apply
Organize interviews Interview candidates using behavioral interviewing technique	Provide candidates with feedback	Attend debrief meeting Share feedback on candidates; participate in evaluation of candidates and selection decision	Prepare for interview Interview
Facilitate selection team debrief			

Source: General Manager, Nova Waterfront Hotel

Exhibit 3. Job description and qualifications

Senior event manager

Nova Hotels, Nova International's flagship brand with more than 500 global locations, is advancing the art of hosting so that our guests can travel brilliantly. As a host with Nova Hotels, you will help keep this promise by delivering premium choices, sophisticated style, and well-crafted details. With your skills and imagination, together we will innovate and reinvent the future of travel.

Prepares all event documentation and coordinates with sales, property departments and customer to ensure consistent, high level service throughout the pre-event, event and post-event phases of property events. This position primarily handles complex events. Ensures a seamless turnover from sales to service back to sales. Recognizes opportunities to maximize revenue by up-selling and offering enhancements to create outstanding events. Supports and acts on behalf of the director of event management or director of event planning and operations in his/her absence. Serves as the client's primary contact (following turnover) on property and is responsible for his/her experience.

Core work activities

Executing event operations:

- solves problems and/or suggests alternatives to previous arrangements if necessary;
- leads pre-event and post-event meetings for assigned groups;
- identifies operational challenges associated with his/her group and works with the property staff and customer to solve these challenges and/or develop alternative solutions;
- manages customer budgets to maximize revenue and meet customer needs;
- oversees his/her customer experiences from file turnover through the post-event phase until turnover back to sales;
- conducts pre- and post-event meetings as required to review/communicate group needs and feedback;
- manages group room blocks and meeting space for assigned groups;
- adheres to all standards, policies, and procedures; and
- celebrates successes and publicly recognizes the contributions of team members.

Executing the sales and marketing strategy:

- up-sells products and services throughout the event process;
- participates in customer site inspections and assists with the sales process when necessary; and
- acts as liaison between field sales person and customer throughout the event process (pre-event, event, post-event).

Managing profitability:

- manages revenue and profitability associated with events;
- forecasts group sleeping rooms and event revenue (catering and audio-visual) for his/her groups; and
- reviews billing and payments with clients.

Providing exceptional customer service:

- interacts with guests to obtain feedback on product quality and service levels;
- handles guest problems and complaints;
- makes presence known to customer at all times during entire event process;

- follows up with customer post-event;
- greets customer during the event phase and hands-off to the event operations team for the execution of details;
- strives to improve service performance;
- sets a positive example for guest relations;
- reviews comment cards and guest satisfaction results with associates; and
- coordinates and communicates verbally and in writing with customer (internal and external) regarding event details.

Education and experience

High school diploma or GED; two years experience in the event management or related professional area.

Or

Two-year degree from an accredited university in Hotel and Restaurant Management, Hospitality, Business Administration, or related major; no work experience required.

Source: Nova International

Exhibit 4. Senior event manager selection criteria

Leadership**.

Coach, mentor, and develop others.

Excellent customer management/relationship skills.

Ability to bring new ideas, innovator, creator**.

Passion to join/contribute to a high performing team.

Ability and desire to take initiative/ownership.

Knowledge of hotel industry and intra/inter departmental working relationships.

Prior convention hotel event planning experience (social and group).

Dependable/reliable/responsive.

Team player.

Strong communication skills.

Strong time/task management/organization skills.

Ability and willingness to hold people accountable**.

Ability to handle stress.

Motivator.

Passion for hospitality industry.

Ability to manage change.

Attention to detail.

Ability to manage conflict independently.

Strong multi-tasking/productivity skills.

Honest/trustworthy.

**Per Laura Green, the top three criteria, based on her e-mail poll of the selection team.

Source: Laura Green, Nova Waterfront Hotel

Exhibit 5. Selection criteria definitions and sample interview questions

Leadership

At Nova, leadership was defined as including the following behaviors:

- having concern for employees;
- communicating with employees;
- meeting employees needs;
- developing and recognizing employees;
- being a hands on manager;
- setting the pace;
- being involved in details;
- following through;
- being committed to customers;
- keeping units clean and attractive;
- being courteous and helpful; and
- providing the best possible products.

Source: The Nova management philosophy: a living tradition of values and beliefs

Example behavioral interview questions

Have you ever had difficulty getting others to accept your ideas? What was your approach? Did it work?

Give an example of a time in which you felt you were able to build motivation among your co-workers or subordinates?

What is the toughest group that you ever had to get cooperation from? Describe how you handled it. What was the outcome?

Innovation/creativity

At Nova, innovation and creativity included the following:

- thinking about better ways to do things;
- making suggestions about how to improve the business; and
- introducing a new, better way of doing things.

Source: The Nova management philosophy: a living tradition of values and beliefs

Example behavioral interview questions

Can you think of a situation where innovation was required at work? What did you do in this situation? How did it work out?

Describe the most creative work-related project, which you have carried out.

There are many jobs in which well-established methods are typically followed. Give a specific example of a time when you tried some other method to do the job.

Hold people accountable

At Nova, managers were expected to be willing and able to hold people accountable, including:

- Making crystal clear what decision each employee is responsible for and what decisions you reserve for yourself.
- Delegating and holding people accountable for results.

- Not trying to do an employee's job for him/her. If the employee is unwilling or unable to do the job, counsel and suggest. Or find a job he/she can do. Or terminate. Do not wait, do it now.

Source: The Nova management philosophy: a living tradition of values and beliefs

Example behavioral interview questions

Give an example of a time when you helped a staff member accept change and make the necessary adjustments to move forward. What were the change/transition skills that you used?

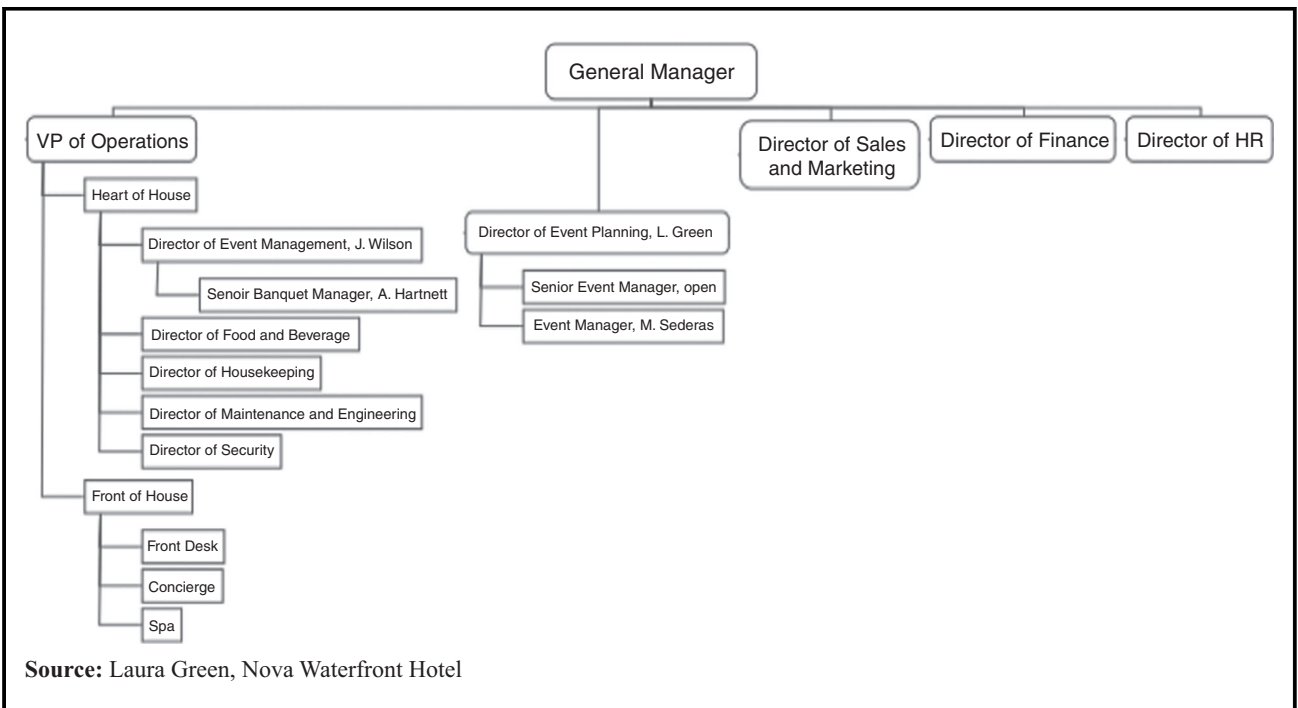
Tell us about a specific development plan that you created and carried out with an employee. What was the specific situation? What were the components of the development plan? What was the outcome?

Tell me about the last time you gave positive feedback to someone at work. Describe a time when you gave constructive criticism to a peer.

Source: Nova International

Exhibit 6. Nova organization chart

Figure A2 Nova organization chart



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