

A pain-relieving partnership

HOW STAPLES HELPED HOTEL ALLEGRO CHICAGO PURCHASING SUPERVISOR SABRINA MARTINEZ ALLEVIATE ONE EMPLOYEE'S WORKDAY PAIN



CHALLENGE

A sales manager at Hotel Allegro in Chicago developed tendinitis and could no longer do his job, which required extensive typing on a computer.

SOLUTION

Purchasing supervisor Sabrina Martinez contacted her Staples account manager, who brought an ergonomics specialist to the hotel to design a custom desk for the employee.

RESULT

The desk allowed the employee to do his job without aggravating his injury and allowed him to heal.

CHALLENGE

As the purchasing supervisor for Hotel Allegro in Chicago, the largest Kimpton property in the city, Sabrina Martinez's responsibilities extend beyond the typical procurement duties. She is not only in charge of the day-to-day ordering for the hotel but also serves as a resource for all five Kimpton hotel properties in the Chicago area. And as any procurement professional knows, unique and unexpected challenges frequently arise.

Recently, Martinez's colleague in the company came to her with a pain point — a literal pain point — for her to solve.

"We had a sales manager who had developed tendinitis related to working on his computer. We had to find a way to alleviate his pain during the workday so that he could still do his job," she says. Tendinitis is a painful condition where the tissues connecting the muscle to the bone become inflamed, often due to repetitive movements. Martinez was tasked with finding a solution so that he could still work on his computer — a must — but work differently than he had before. "He was in a lot of pain, and it was my job to find a workaround," she says.

On a daily basis, Staples makes Martinez's job run smoother, with its powerful, easy-to-use website with order tracking. But its personalized customer service also plays a major role in assisting in solving more complicated problems. In this case, Martinez was grateful that her Staples account manager, Lucas Austin, was just a phone call away.

SOLUTION

"If I have a problem or need something that is not on the Staples website, I always reach out to my Staples account manager," she says. "He researches it for me on his end and tries to find a solution."

After listening to the challenge and reviewing options, Austin's solution to help Martinez's employee with tendinitis was to enlist an expert.

"An ergonomics specialist came out from Staples to meet with us in person and discuss the issue," Martinez says. "They took the information and then custom-built a desk for this employee. We put in an arm for the monitor and adjusted a piece of the desk to have the mouse and keyboard in a certain position."

“One thing I love about my Staples account manager is, even when he sends someone out, he’ll be here as well. He’ll drive an hour just to show up to a 20-minute meeting; he’s always here when I need him.”

*Sabrina Martinez,
Purchasing Supervisor,
Hotel Allegro Chicago*

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RESULT

The project was a success. The employee is able to do his job comfortably and safely thanks to the new desk setup, and Martinez had the satisfaction of having facilitated his relief. “We worked on this project for a couple of months because we wanted to get it perfect,” she says. “It was so great to see the project through, to see him comfortable at work again.”

Martinez is now working with Staples to solve a similar challenge: “At a sister property, one of our managers was sitting on a banquet chair every day for many months and lost feeling in part of his body. I reached out to my Staples account manager to talk about solutions, and he said, ‘Sure, we have some demo chairs we can bring out. We can test out a few chairs,’ and he brought them right over.”

The employee is testing chairs to choose the one most comfortable for him — another project crossed off Martinez’s list, with a little help from her friends at Staples.

COMPANY AT A GLANCE

Hotel Allegro, a Kimpton Hotel

OVERVIEW:

Boutique hotel in downtown Chicago owned by Kimpton Hotels, the first boutique hotel company in the U.S.

KEY FACTS:

- 14,000 square feet of meeting and event space; fitness center
- 483 rooms
- 5 Kimpton properties in Chicago
- A Green Key 4-Key certified property for its sustainable, earth-friendly practices.

WEBSITE: allegrochicago.com