

Where Do You Go From Here?

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"Please send me the book on how to succeed in the hospitality industry"

From time to time, someone at Cornell's School of Hotel Administration has received a phone call to the effect of, "Hi. I've just bought a hotel. Could you please send me the book on how I should run it?" Unfortunately, there is no simple book to tell you exactly *how* to run a hotel. Even after reading this book, you now have only a broad overview of the intricacies of hotel operations. With this book, though, you can see the Four Paths to Success that you can follow in the hospitality industry. With this overview you can investigate further the many issues you need to consider in order to be successful in the hospitality industry.

Having read this book, you can see that we did not write for people like Bill Marriott Jr., E. M. Statler, Herb Kelleher, Horst Schultze, Isadore Sharp, or other such legends of the industry. Our picture of you, the reader, is that you may be experienced in the industry and looking to learn something new, or maybe you were just checking up to see what the Cornell Hotel School is up to these days. Even if you're far advanced in this industry, the breadth of this book should make it valuable to you. Perhaps the book helped refresh your perspective on issues you have not thought about for a while. Or it may have helped you recall components of the industry that indirectly affect you but, because of the way they affect your work, you haven't given the topic serious in-depth thought in a while. Or you may be an advocate of continuous learning and you read the book simply to see what various experts in the field have to say.

We also considered people who are not yet in the hospitality industry. If you are considering entering the hotel industry, or perhaps you suddenly found yourself in this industry for whatever reason, we hope this book was useful to you. You may be switching industries to find a more fulfilling career (or simply to find a job at all), you may have worked your way up in an organization and are now managing a property, you may have found a deal too good to pass up and acquired a property, or you may have moved suddenly from the property level to the corporate level and are facing a new world of decision-making issues.

Regardless of your background, experience, investments, and goals, you still may have many questions. Novices and experts alike are faced with similar issues when they seek to make a decision. Do you want to buy a property? If so, how will you finance it? If you own it, will you run it or hire a management company? Will you be an independent property or part of a chain? What will be your strategy? How will you attract the right customers? How will you deliver the desired service product? How will you set the right price? How will you get the right employees? How will you get these employees to behave the right way? How will you develop yourself as you go through this entire process? And what on earth are you going to do to make money with that restaurant?

If you are new to the industry, it may be overwhelming to figure out where to begin. We hope that the sequence of chapters and sections provides a sort of progression. As noted above, we can't tell you *how* to do your job. How you make your decisions will be forged through a combination of experience, analytical skills, and person skills that you will need to combine to make the decisions that need to be made.

If you are a veteran of the industry, you are still faced with many of these questions, but bring to bear an arsenal of experiences and applicable human capital that help you make your choices. Nonetheless, we know from decision-making research that we can often over-rely on the experience and information that is easiest to acquire. The broad perspective of this book should have helped remind you of the types of issues, information, research, and other resources that exist to help you continuously improve within the industry.

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Now that you've read this book, you are better equipped to enter and advance in the hospitality business, but your education should not stop here. There are two reasons you need to continue reading and learning. First, this book provides considerable introductory and intermediate-level material to help you become successful. But success in the hospitality business comes as a result of the most advanced thinking to gain an edge on competitors. Second, growth industries such as the hospitality industry are characterized by rapid technological and environmental changes. Business professionals in the industry must remain current about new theories and practice to ensure continued success.

The Cornell School of Hotel Administration presents a number of avenues for you to continue your hospitality education. Our *Office of Executive Education* offers a variety of programs to keep hospitality professionals abreast of the ever-changing needs and trends of the industry. This includes offerings like short, focused courses (Professional Development Program); a 10-day program focused on

strategic property-level issues (General Managers Program); other formal multi-day programs; online learning; and custom programs. The Hotel School provides a wealth of material—including our journal, the *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*. We also produce research reports, tools, industry perspective white papers, and roundtable programs—through our Center for Hospitality Research, Center for Real Estate Finance, and the Leland C. and Mary M. Pillsbury Institute for Hospitality Entrepreneurship. Most of our reports are available at no charge.

In the past, when we've gotten that strange call looking for the book on how to run a hotel, we are often at a sad loss of what to suggest. We may have told such callers to consider heading back to school, hiring a consulting firm, hiring the right kind of people to assist in the situation, or referring them to any number of the resources that the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration offers to further knowledge in the field. But any of those approaches is unsatisfactory, as you still need a foundation to understand what questions you need to ask, and what type of information you need to gather before you figure out how to deal with your problem. It is our hope, now, that this book serves as this foundation.

It should be clear from all the chapters in this book that the hospitality industry provides wondrously rich personal, professional, and financial opportunities. The authors of this book share a passion for this industry, for the type of product it provides, and for the role it serves in our society and economy. If you are a veteran of the industry, we hope this book provided you with new insights that broaden your perspective and let you see new opportunities. If you are new to the industry, we hope this book can serve as a resource for understanding the many opportunities our industry has to offer. As a veteran in the industry, we appreciate your continuing efforts. We hope you enjoy your stay.