

Research Reflections

From the Executive Director

This issue of *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* contains a number of articles offering commentaries and updating of earlier-published articles. *Cornell Quarterly*, which commenced publication in 1960, has been and continues to be the primary outlet for high-quality research that is directly relevant to the hospitality industry. The reflective nature of many articles in this issue has caused me to reflect on the process of reflection.

Why Spend Time on Reflection?

Spending time reflecting is worthwhile. It allows managers and academics to put things in perspective, to see the big picture, and to set meaningful priorities. By putting things in perspective, you can distinguish what's important from everything else. It's only by seeing the big picture that you can make this distinction. Having made the distinction, it becomes straightforward to set meaningful priorities.

Personally, I like the idea of the commentaries and updating papers. Researchers have a tendency to assume that if something wasn't published in the last five years, then it's not too relevant. Academics and managers easily can get caught up in the ever-increasing pace with which we seem to lead our lives. However, there remains a need to review and reflect on past work, so that we can truly see where more work is needed, and where we have perhaps done enough. The point, then, is that good research—and valuable knowledge—does not go out of style. The invention of the printing press made it possible for knowledge to become cumulative, in a way that was not possible prior to its invention. This history of knowledge facilitates reflection, and it is the reflection that enables us to move to a greater level of understanding of the issues facing hospitality businesses, which in turn leads to more informed, and consequently better, decisions. My hope is that the articles in this issue serve as a catalyst for your reflection on the earlier articles they reference, but also for your reflection on the important hospitality issues you face.



Gary M. Thompson

Tools for Hospitality Managers

At the November 2003 International Hotel/Motel and Restaurant Show in New York City, The Center for Hospitality Research (CHR), the publisher of *Cornell Quarterly*, launched the first of its “Tools for Hospitality Managers.” These tools, which will be stand-alone software programs, Excel spreadsheet models, and questionnaires, are designed to fill business needs of hospitality managers at a modest cost. The tools, which can be evaluated free of charge for 90 days, are available for download on the center's website.

The first CHR Tool for Hospitality Managers is the “Turnover Cost Evaluator” or TCE, which is a stand-alone software program that runs on Windows-based computers. TCE was developed from the work of Professors Timothy R. Hinkin and J. Bruce Tracey, of the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration. After many years of researching and teaching the practice of human-resources management, Hinkin and Tracey came to the conclusion that employee turnover may be the single most important factor affecting product and service quality and, consequently, profitability. TCE is an excellent tool for understanding the direct and indirect costs associated with turnover. The program allows users to identify how much they are spending to replace line, managerial, and executive staff. If the costs of turnover are better understood, then more effective strategies can be developed to reverse the negative effects of this endemic problem. I strongly encourage you to check out the CHR's website, <http://TheCenterForHospitalityResearch.org>, where you'll find this new tool, as well as CHR Reports, working papers, cases studies, and many other items relevant to the hospitality industry.—G.M.T.