

# BRAIDWOOD'S VIEW



HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT, INC

*Partners in Hospitality*



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## FROM THE DESK OF:

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My mother claims I was born in an apple orchard in a small village in the quiet, rural countryside of Kent. I grew up on RAF stations and in British boarding schools; sadly, I have never visited my home town of West Malling even though I lived in the UK for 16 years prior to immigrating to the colonies. My father told me that I had to earn my own passage to the New World. The rest of the family would be travelling first class at the expense of the RAF on the SS Rotterdam; the task seemed overwhelming.

My first reaction to this news was to leave school and find a job. I approached a hotel and spoke to the manager. He was less than helpful, suggesting that the hotel business was not one that would offer me any sort of career; let alone one in which I could earn enough money to pay for my first class passage. Looking elsewhere, I secured a job in a factory, working nights making foam rubber car seats on an assembly line. We were paid in cash which I dutifully turned over to my parents. At the time, I was naïve enough to believe I had successfully earned enough money to travel. It was only years later that my father told me that the RAF had paid my way.

My father believed that you worked for the things that you wanted in life, there was no free ride; the world did not owe you a living and you got what you wanted the hard way... you earned it! He never owned a credit card and paid cash for everything. His negotiating skills were legendary and he drove a hard bargain, never paying full price in the belief that the whole world was his personal bazaar.

My father discouraged me from joining the RAF. He had spent his life moving from one station to another, never owning a home, never putting down roots and wanted something different for me. He wanted me to settle down in a small village, raise a family and put down roots. Instead I found my career in the hotel business where, like my father before me, I have lived out of a suitcase moving around in life's apple orchard from one tree to another while discovering along the way that one can make a very good living in the hotel business and perhaps, one day soon, this will allow me to put down those roots in a small village and grow some apples.

## CLAPTRAP

It has been interesting listening to the many "talking heads" pontificate on the root causes surrounding North American and Global **economic melt down** along with their collective expectation that we will experience the status quo and ongoing economic chaos for the foreseeable future. The real danger in all of this is that once these dire predictions enter our subconscious and conscious psyche, they quickly become our reality, which in turn, affects our ability to think medium and long term. Whereas there is a natural tendency in tough economic times to hunker down and focus on survival in the short term, it should not be at the expense of our medium and longer term planning for the eventual economic recovery.

## FINDING THE TIME!

On average, modern parents manage to squeeze in just **15 minutes a day** enjoying each other's company amid their hectic family life. Most parents are able to relax and chat for just five minutes together before the kids wake up, and 10 minutes at night before going to sleep and, on one precious night of the year, they will call in other family members to look after the children to allow them an overnight stay in a hotel together.

It's quite shocking how little time couples have together when their children are young.

A poll of 4,500 people revealed that parents only get 235.25 hours a year together without the children. Busy couples call on a babysitter once a month giving them a much-deserved opportunity for an overnight get-a-way in a local resort, a romantic dinner or simply so they can stay at home without having the responsibility for the children.

## STAY FOCUSED

When the economy is strong and demand is high, hotel sales are all about up selling and serving the potential guests or groups' needs in creative and profitable ways. Worldwide, we face an economic meltdown, and the uncertainty of today's market challenges is a genuine concern to hotel managers and owners. Stay focused by taking the necessary steps to **insure your continued business** survival which more than ever depends on finding innovative sales solutions and making effective use of your staff by keeping them focused and by not allowing today's short term operational challenges overshadow your hotel's immediate and long term survival. Planning for today; while focusing on the future is a guaranteed recipe for future success.

## HAIL TO THE INDIVIDUAL

Effective leaders instinctively recognize that the success of the team rests squarely on the shoulders of the individual. An individual, as defined by Webster's is "A person considered alone, rather than as belonging to a group of people" whereas "Team" is defined as "A group of interacting individuals sharing a common goal and the responsibility for achieving it." To appreciate the "whole" we must first acknowledge the "sum of its parts". There is a place and time for team, but not at the expense of the individual. A team has never accomplished anything. Accomplishment is the realm of individuality, not of teams. Teams are valuable as a resource to implement or review ideas with colleagues.

Teams are valuable as a resource to establish standards of one kind or another. However, teams are the shackles that keep "star" performers in mediocrity. The view that teams trump individuals is what is encountered in many hotel sales departments, with disastrous results. Productive and proactive sales managers can often be found languishing in a management environment that rewards team mediocrity rather than individual accomplishment.

It's the individual self-starters and achievers that not only pull their own weight, but that of the team as well. Whereas individuality or standing out in the crowd can mean a death sentence in a police line up, it is what sets us apart from the herd, it is what distinguishes me from you and them from those. It is true that there is **no "I" in team**, but if you care to look close enough, **you will find "ME."**

## THE VIEW ARTICLES

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Industry information, tips on the industry,  
what is going right, what is going wrong,  
or simply what is going on!

*Braidwood uses many of our  
reader's suggestion and questions  
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## CUTTING EDGE THINKING & PRACTICES

A new book written by the faculty of the Cornell School of Hotel Administration presents a comprehensive analysis of four pillars for success in the hospitality industry. The book, ***The Cornell School of Hotel Administration on Hospitality: Cutting Edge Thinking and Practice***, offers a comprehensive examination of the hospitality industry's best practices, along with the best research-based concepts from the Cornell faculty.

It starts with an overall analysis of the nature of service, and then organizes its chapters according to these four pillars: "Success in Your Hospitality Career," "Success through Operations and Service Excellence," "Success as a Real Estate Owner and Business Operator," and "Success through Managerial Excellence." With chapters written by well over two dozen Cornell faculty and expert industry practitioners, the book presents the results of first-hand research on numerous topics. Many of the research studies were supported by the Cornell Center for Hospitality Research.

**Pillar one**, success in your career, provides specific advice to prepare for a hospitality career and how to advance to leadership positions.

**Pillar two**, operations and service excellence, offers detailed discussions of such critical topics as customer choice, demand management, revenue management, service excellence, and competitive strategy, as well as ensuring restaurant's success by focusing on finance.

**Pillar three**, which covers real estate and business operation, constitutes an unmatched analysis of asset-related issues. This section includes chapters on how to determine hospitality ownership; how to value hospitality assets; how to analyze franchise agreements, management contracts, and leases; how to program a new hotel or renovate an existing property; and how to assess a hotel's financial risk.

**Pillar Four**, the final pillar, managerial excellence, shows the best approaches to marketing strategy and the use of social media for customer relationship management; provides an extensive discussion of the best practices involved in guest service and operations management; and addresses critical legal issues surrounding human resources, including employee lawsuits and labor organizations.

This book is a 'MUST READ', from the novice to the seasoned hotelier. A well-rounded fresh, but also traditionally based, overview of today's hospitality industry.

## SOME PEOPLE STILL LOVE EATING OUT

The current economic situation may have put a crimp in consumer spending, but lots of people are still letting **the good times roll** in restaurants and/or F&B outlets. A recent "Dining Out" survey of consumer behavior conducted last month among 4,000 online diners found some surprising facts about eating habits, culinary choices, and favorite foods. Among the top findings of the survey:

In this survey of selected "Dining Out" consumers, the average person ate 4.8 meals per week in restaurants or 249 total restaurant meals per year (both dining in and carry out). The most popular restaurant meal is lunch, with 2.6 eaten on average each week (both carryout and dining), followed by sit down dinners (1.4 per week) and brunch/breakfast (.8 per week). Nearly half of respondents (45 percent) described themselves as "meat lovers," 22 percent as a "sweet tooth," and 19 percent as "fast food junkies." By comparison, just 18 percent described themselves as "health nuts" and 5 percent as "vegetarians or vegans"

Four types of restaurants dominate the eating scene with respondents saying they frequently eat Italian (65 percent), Mexican (62 percent), Chinese (59 percent) and Pizza (58 percent) more than 22 other types of cuisine. Spouses top the national list of dining companions with 56 percent saying they dined out with their spouse or partners almost every time or every time. Other popular dining companions included friends (25 percent almost every time), followed by dates (8 percent) and business colleagues (6 percent).