

# CHSGA hotelier

CEYLON HOTEL SCHOOL GRADUATES ASSOCIATION **MAGAZINE**

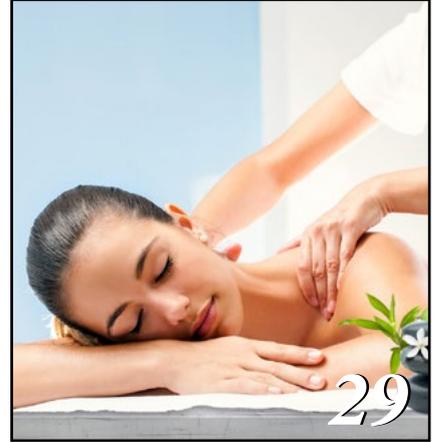
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## EDITOR'S PAGE

My Dear Readers,

**A** lot of extra work! But much more importantly, again, a privilege and a serious responsibility: to reread and reconsider, with the great help of my advisor Mr. Shafeek Wahab, honor all those writers for their interesting articles, and to give readers the opportunity of discovery and rediscovery.

We sincerely trust that you will have as much pleasure reading this edition of CHSGA Hotelier as we enjoyed compiling this for you, our dear readers.

Happy Reading!



**THAKSHILA GALAPPATHTHY**  
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### DISCLAIMER

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Hotelier is the official magazine of the Ceylon Hotel School Graduates Association (CHSGA) and is published bi-annually - March or April and September or October.

**CHSGA**  
**hotelier**  
CEYLON HOTEL SCHOOL GRADUATES ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE



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Graduates Association**

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## CEYLON HOTEL SCHOOL GRADUATES ASSOCIATION

Ceylon Hotel School Graduates Association - Executive Committee 2017/2018



#### Seated from left to right:

Ms. Brindhah Rengaswamy, Mr. Sumithra Gunasekera, Mr. Shafeek Wahab, Mr. Eksath Wijeratne, Mr. Upul Attapattu, Mr. Asela Wavita, Mr. Samantha Gunarathne, Mr. Sanjeeva Perera, Mr. Priyal Perera, Mr. Patrick Pereira, Mr. Adrian Kulatunga, Mr. Palitha Wijemanne, Mr. Trevine Gomez, Ms. Gitanjali Haaland.

#### Standing from left to right:

Mr. Chandima Kanakarathne, Mr. Dilanka Abeywardena, Mr. Gamunu Sri Lal, Mr. Dickson Kumara, Mr. Tharinda Weeraratne, Mr. Pradeep Liyanage, Mr. Kumar De Silva, Mr. Naranjan Morais, Mr. Thakshila Galappaththy, Mr. Vronsky Arendtsz, Mr. Gamin Keerthisinghe, Mr. Kavinda Rankothdiwela, Mr. Sugath Rajapakse, Mr. Dilan Bandara, Mr. Bashitha Amarasekara.



Dear Colleagues,

I am deeply honored to be the president of the CHSGA. I take this opportunity to thank the committee members and look forward to our teamwork in creating guidelines to achieve the best standards for the industry that we have chosen.

The official e-journal of the CHSGA is released in April 2019. As a member for many years, I have witnessed the Society's steady growth, thanks to the efforts of all its previous leaders and highly enthusiastic members. I would like to express my recognition for the excellent work and tireless efforts of our predecessors.

The Hotelier e journal is aimed to spread knowledge and update the members with the latest news / trends that is available. We would like to encourage our young members to share their experience.

Your membership and interest in our Society is what makes CHSGA such a strong and vibrant organization. Welcome to be our members and contribute to the e journal!

**SAMANTHA GUNARATNE**  
President

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## EVENTS DATES OF CHSGA -2019



### AWRUDU HAMUWA

27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2019  
CLUB PALM BAY

### NATIONAL BAR TENDERS COMPETITION

25<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2019  
COLOMBO HILTON



The Showcase for Hotel Supplies and Services

### HOTEL SHOW

26<sup>TH</sup>, 27<sup>TH</sup> & 28<sup>TH</sup> JULY  
BMICH

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

11<sup>TH</sup>, 12<sup>TH</sup> & 13<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER  
CINNAMON LODGE & VILLAGE BY  
CINNAMON HABARANA



Christmas  
Party

### CHRISTMAS PARTY

17<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2019  
COLOMBO HILTON



## CHSGA 2019 Awrudu Hamuwa *With a New Twist*

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சிங்கள மற்றும் தமிழ் புத்தாண்டு நிகழ்ச்சி  
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Ms.Dilrukshi  
077 3 200 250

Contact - Club Palm Bay, Marawila  
Mr. Keerthi  
070 3 776 705




Q

&amp;

A

## WITH MR. DILIP DE SILVA CHAIRMAN, SLITHM

*The following 'Question & Answer' session by CHSGA's 'The Hotelier', with the Sri Lanka Institute of Training & Hotel Management's Chairman Dilip De Silva (FCHSGA), was held in February of this year.*

### CAN YOU PROVIDE A BRIEF BACKGROUND ON YOURSELF:

I joined the tourism sector in 1970 as a trainee at Lihiniya Surf hotel Bentota (Currently Surf Bentota) under Ceylon Hotels Corporation. In 1974 I received a management training scholarship from British Hotels and Restaurants Association in UK for two years. After completing two years training I was appointed as Food & Beverage Controller at Wiltshire hotel in Swindon England. In 1977 I was promoted as Food & Beverage Manager and Resident Manager at the same hotel.

Returned to Sri Lanka in mid 1978 and joined the Ceylon Hotel School (current SLITHM) as Food & Beverage lecturer.

I left Sri Lanka in 1981 to join Brunei Governments Tourism Training Institute as a Instructor and spent ten years until I migrated to Darwin Australia in 1991.

Having worked in the hotel sector for one year in Darwin, I joined the Charles Darwin University (CDU) as a Food and Beverage Lecturer in 1992 and was promoted as Head of Tourism & Hospitality Management department under the faculty of Business and Law.

I left CDU in 2001 to take up an

international consultancy as a Tourism training consultant for a Tourism project in Indonesia funded by the Australian government (AusAid). After completing the assignment in 2005 I returned to Darwin Australia.

In mid 2005 I was appointed as Tourism & Hospitality Advisor for Australia China Technical and vocational Training project in Chongqing China under AusAid funding.

In 2008 joined International Labour Organisation (ILO) under United Nations (UN) as Technical and Vocational Training expert based in Bangladesh covering South Africa, Kenya, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

After eight years with ILO/UN I decided to retire and returned to Sri Lanka in 2016. While in Sri Lanka, established International Tourism Volunteers Association (ITVA). I was appointed as the Chief Judge of "Rising Star" Awards competition organised by Tourist Hotels Association Sri Lanka (THASL) for the first time in Sri Lanka.

2017 joined Charles Darwin University in Australia as international consultant and trainer for East Timor Tourism development project funded by the Australian government.

2018, I was selected as International Consultant and Team Leader for Capacity Building of Tourism & Hospitality Providers in the East Coast under the Skills of Inclusive Growth (S4IG) Program funded by the Australian Government.

### WHAT BRINGS YOU TO SLITHM?

I always wanted to contribute towards helping the tourism sector in Sri Lanka since I left the country in 1981. In this regard over the past 10 to 15 years I have been conducting volunteer training programs for leading companies like Aitken Spence, John Keells, Jetwing hotels, Hayleys Amaya hotels, McLarence hotels, Blue Waters Kalutara and recently with The Golden Crown Hotel Kandy.

With SLITHM, I have always kept in touch while working abroad and have conducted various workshops for faculty members and students over the past 20 years including Strategic Planning residential workshop for Tourist Board Directors and senior faculty of SLITHM in 2001.

I suppose two events that took place in 2016 and 2017 prompted me to settle back in Sri Lanka. In 2016 while I was with ILO in Bangladesh, I was invited as a Panelist for the Tourism sector during the Human Resource Summit organised by the Human Resource Council of Sri Lanka. Then in 2017, I was appointed as the Chief Judge of the inaugural "Rising Star" Awards competition organised by the Tourist Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL).

I suppose my continuous involvement with the industry and SLITHM over the past decades gave me the opportunity to join SLITHM as the new Chairman.

### HOW DO YOU ASSESS THE QUALITY STANDARDS AND HR CAPACITY BUILDING OF SLITHM AT PRESENT COM-

### PARED TO OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTES?

The quality standards of SLITHM compared to other international institutes can vary geographically. If you consider South Asia and South East Asia, I think SLITHM can be proud of its quality of outputs and maintaining sound academic standards based on European curricula. However, when you compare with more developed countries like, Australia, New Zealand, UK etc, I must say we have room for improvement especially embracing the modern technologies which is part and parcel of global tourism industry.

### IN YOUR VIEW WHAT ARE THE HR REQUIREMENTS FOR THE INDUSTRY OVER THE NEXT 3 YRS GIVEN THAT THE COUNTRY IS TARGETING TO SERVE 3 MILLION+ TOURIST PER YEAR?

HR requirements in tourism industry has always been an uphill task mainly to attract youth for operational and frontline vocations. Since the end of the 30 year war in Sri Lanka, the tourism sector has progressed leaps and bounds over the past decade and creating a huge demand for skilled hospitality workers form operational to supervisory and middle management levels.

At any given point of time one could safely say that there is a shortfall of approximately 15 thousand shortfall of skilled workers in the hospitality industry. SLITHM over the past couple of years have been able to supply 50% of the industry requirements while other public and private training providers contribute towards the shortfall.

With the visitor arrival targets set above 3 million mark in the coming years, definitely the outputs from SLITHM and other providers need to accelerate to meet the new demands. SLITHM is targeting to train nearly 9000 hospitality workers in 2019 from its programs covering Craft level,

Certificate and Diploma level programs supplemented by short term apprenticeship and franchise arrangements with selected private providers.

### WHAT ARE THE INFRA-STRUCTURE AND TRAINING RESOURCE IMPROVEMENTS REQUIRED BY SLITHM TO RAMP UP CAPACITY AND TO IMPROVE QUALITY STANDARDS TO BE BEST IN CLASS COMPARED TO OTHER INTERNATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTES?

SLITHM's current training facilities in Colombo nearing twenty years. Although periodic upgrading has been done from time to time, I think it is time to think of a major expansion to cater for the demand in the next two decades. It may be prudent to contemplate even moving out from central Colombo to a more environmentally friendly location which could also facilitate student accommodation and extra curricula activities.

Similarly, we need to take a strategic approach for the expansion of our regional campuses in the country. This year we are planning for extensive renovations for Colombo as well as for regional campuses to cater for the high demand we are experiencing for all our programs. Major renovations are also in the pipeline to upgrade the Samudra hotel facilities and the auditorium.

### YOUR PLANS TO IMPROVE THE ACADEMIC REPUTATION OF SLITHM

There is no question about the academic reputation of SLITHM locally. However in keeping with market demands and private sector competitors establishing and offering international qualifications beyond traditional diploma programs with study options abroad, we need to get our act together to move towards bachelors and masters programs in Tourism & Hospitality in the future.

Over five state and semi govern-

ment higher education institutes already are offering under graduate and post graduate tourism related degree programs. SLITHM seems to be the feeding ground for these institutes.. In the private sector there are over ten education providers offering international diploma, degree and masters programs with study options aboard.

While we congratulate these organisations for their efforts to uplift the academic reputation in the Tourism and hospitality sector, SLITHM as the pioneer in this field need to be proactive in raising the academic bar to be competitive in the market.

### WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS TO ATTRACT TALENT TO JOIN THE INDUSTRY ACROSS REGIONS? WILL YOU BE PARTNERING WITH PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS SUCH AS THASL, CHSGA AND SLAITO ON THIS MISSION?

Definitely, we are in close contact with THASL, CHSGA and SLAITO as well as with Chefs Guild of Lanka with whom SLITHM has signed a MOU to work closely offering specialised short courses. THASL, CHSGA and SLAITO are represented in SLITHM's governing body is an indication of strong industry representation.

Judging from the unprecedented applications received for 2019 programs in Colombo and regional campuses is a good indication of the demand to attract young talent from all parts of the island. I must thank the SLITHM faculty for their untiring efforts to accommodate maximum number of students this year offering back to back classes.

### HOW DO YOU SEE SLITHM'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INDUSTRY AND HOW DO YOU PLAN TO REINFORCE HOTEL-INSTITUTE INTERACTION?

I can safely say that SLITHM's relationship with industry or-



organisations is very strong and cordial. Most of the star class establishments employ SLITHM graduates both full-time as well as for internships. High number of industry frontline managers is students of SLITHM faculty. SLITHM students are very much in demand among the star class establishments island wide as well as finding employment abroad. A classic example of SLITHM relationships with industry is that at any given point of time over 100 students from our Colombo and regional campuses are undergoing in-house training at the two Shangri-La hotels situated in Colombo and Hambantota. All other leading hotels groups also accommodate substantial numbers for SLITHM students.

In our 2019 action plan we have plans to reach out to industry organisations and conduct in-house training programs with SLITHM faculty. In early March we hope to start this initiative in several Colombo hotels and in main tourism hubs utilising our faculty from provincial campuses.

**HOW WOULD YOU ENSURE THAT THE STUDENTS FROM SLITHM PURSUE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AFTER THEY GRADUATE?**

Currently there are very few

options available for SLITHM graduates to pursue professional development after graduating from SLITHM. Small number of graduates go abroad to continue their career development as well as seeking migration.

We are in the process of negotiations with the University of Vocational Technology (UNIVOTECH) to get credit transfer for SLITHM graduates to complete the Bachelor of Hospitality Management training program of UNIVOTECH.

Academic pathway also available for SLITHM graduates with minimum of five years frontline industry experience to follow University of Colombo (UoC) post graduate diploma in tourism economics and progress towards masters as well as PhD. Programs in tourism and hospitality.

**HOW CAN THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CHSGA WORK MORE CLOSELY WITH SLITHM?**

Over the past decades CHSGA has played a leading role to support SLITHM initiatives. Recently the introduction of PROPEL soft skill development program will help the students to sharpen their communication skills, Team Work and Leadership skills while studying at SLITHM.

CHSGA's Continuous Professional Development (CPD) concept introduced recently will benefit the SLITHM graduate immensely once they pass out and seek employment in the industry. CHSGA is also planning to introduce a MBA program for its graduates who are already working in the industry at various management levels.

**WHICH ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE THE HOTEL MANAGEMENT STUDENTS THAT ARE ABOUT TO ENTER THE INDUSTRY?**

The best advice one could give is not just look for a job in the industry but pursue a rewarding career. Be ready to work long hours and hard work in the first two to three years to establish oneself. Invest your time and energy wisely in your work place while you are young and your bosses will reward you appropriately.

**WHAT IN YOUR OPINION IS THE BEST PART OF HOSPITALITY?**

Passport to travel free around the world while earning and enjoying life!

**THE END**



## SLITHM- BUILDING SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE IN THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

The Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM), throughout its 62 years of existence, have been performing yeoman services to the hospitality industry of Sri Lanka. With the tourism and hospitality industry booming in Sri Lanka at present, the Chairman of the Sri Lanka Institute of Hotel Management, Mr. Dilip de Silva gave his views on the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism & Hotel Management and its involvement for the tourism & hospitality industry. Mr. Dilip De Silva was appointed as the Chairman of Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM) under the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Christian Religious Affairs in January 2019. Newly appointed Chairman, Mr. Silva worked as a Lecturer in Food & Beverage Operations at Ceylon Hotel School (SLITHM) in 1978 and also In 1981 he joined the Brunei Government Tourism Institute as an Instructor under the Ministry of Education and served for 10 years until he migrated to Australia in 1991.

Whilst the conversation Chairman has said that, “we are

producing trained and competent personnel for the hotel industry in Sri Lanka and abroad at present. Now Tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka are forever increasing. The employment rate of our Graduates is 100%.”

The country is targeting three million visitors in the year 2019. While tourists from European Countries visit more in the traditional “Season” tourists from Asian countries visit Sri Lanka all year around. With the rising mobility of the local population, Domestic tourists have also greatly increased. After a lapse of nearly thirty years, two international chains of hotels have started operations in Colombo. Number of local and international brands have started hotels and resorts all over the country. Even though the infrastructure to accommodate travelers has increased, one vital factor needed for the sustainability of this growth is lagging behind is the skilled human resource factor. By 2020 it is estimated that the skilled workers will be need at least 400,000. This is why the work of the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM) has become critical.

**HOSPITALITY** IS SIMPLY AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW LOVE AND CARE



**The SLITHM has been at the forefront of training high caliber professionals to meet not only the national demands of this rapidly expanding industry for the last 49 years, but also to cater for the global requirements. The fact that many of the alumni of SLITHM are employed all over the world is good testament for the sound foundation they receive as they embark on a career on Hospitality. The theme of SLITHM is "Taking Sri Lanka to Global Heights – A journey towards excellence in Sri Lankan Hospitality." The Management and faculty are working hard to make this a reality**

SLITHM traces its roots to the 1960s when the Ceylon Hotel School (CHS) was established. It was housed at the old Colombo Club building (later named Samudra hotel) located on the Galle Face Center Road and was there until 1979. It provided training for just a handful of students. Four basic courses namely cookery, front office, housekeeping and F&B were the areas of training available.

Today the successor to the CHS, SLITHM is the foremost premiere state of the art training institution

established by the Government of Sri Lanka in 1966 by an act of Parliament in collaboration with the technical expertise of the International Labour organization (ILO) to train young men and women in the complex field of Hospitality and Travel Industry which presently comes under the purview of Ministry of Tourism Development, Wild Life & Christian Religious affairs.

Also the SLITHM has now established campuses in far flung corners of the country. Currently, besides the main campus in Colombo it

has established satellites in Anuradhapura, Bandarawela, Kandy, Koggala, Kurunegala, Ratnapura & Pasikudah. Brand new campus has opened in Jaffna as the 8th Member on 27th September 2018. This has enabled youth from the rural areas to gain skills in this high- demand sector. Also, obviously the number of persons being trained has increased exponentially. According to an ILO report only around 300 students completed courses in the early 1980. However, presently almost **7000 students are trained by the SLITHM annually chairman said.**

SLITHM is spreading its wings, both in depth and extent. Today, the courses that they offer are numerous as you could read this.

- Diploma in Hotel & Catering Operations
- National Diploma in Hospitality Management
- National Tourist Guide Training Program
- Chauffer Tourist Guide Training Program
- Pastry & Bakery Courses
- One month Apprenticeship Courses
- Certificate & Craft level courses in
  1. Professional Cookery
  2. Food & Beverages (Restaurant & Bar Service)
  3. Front Office/ Reception
  4. Hotel Housekeeping

Also the SLITHM has now established few courses of Adventure Tourism & Event Management. As well as Jointly offered by the Institute

of Certified Management Accountants of Sri Lanka (CMA) and Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM), the CHFMA qualification supports Sri Lankan professionals by pre-empting that process, giving them the skills, they need to excel in finance and management accounting in the hospitality sector, even before they have spent years in the workplace.

As a result, SLITHM-qualified management hoteliers are well-equipped to handle the challenges they will face in the hospitality sector and also those in attendance of the value of a professional qualification in Tourism Hotel and Hospitality industry. SLITHM is always supported by the Ceylon Hostels School Graduates Association (CHSGA) who are housed in the SLITHM building. CHSGA is taking an active role in students soft skills development as well as providing opportunities for graduates to pursue management qualifications through Masters degree program affiliated with international university. SLITHM is also fortunate to build

a close partnership with the Chef Guild of Lanka (CGL) to train and certify students who are undertaking culinary studies. SLITHM recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Chefs Guild of Lanka headed by veteran chocolatier Mr. Gerard Mendis.

To join these accomplished professionals and power up your career in the tourism hospitality industry, or for further information please visit our

Website- [www.slithm.edu.lk](http://www.slithm.edu.lk)  
Contact-011-2208300/15

**BY GANGA WALPOLA**



## HOW MILITARY VETERANS BRING VALUED SKILLS TO HOSPITALITY

When Abie Chong exited the military after more than 20 years of service, the veteran unemployment rate was in the double digits. Like many fellow veterans, he faced a sea of challenges while navigating the civilian job market and readjusting to civilian life. His first job out of the U.S. Air Force required him to live in another state, away from his family. After 30 months of making the weekend commute and trying to maintain two households, a fellow veteran encouraged Chong to apply to Hilton Worldwide. Chong is now a recruiter for Hilton's military programs, a role that aligns with his previous experience acquiring, developing, and retaining top talent.

Chong is one of 10,000 veterans and family members hired across the country by Hilton Worldwide's corporate offices, owned and managed hotels, and franchisees in the last three years. Military veterans are a natural fit for the hospitality industry because they possess core values like integrity, ownership, leadership, and teamwork, says Matt Schuyler, chief human resources officer at Hilton Worldwide. "Returning military

personnel have developed skills that are highly transferable and valued, including communication, the ability to work under pressure, self-confidence, cultural and generational awareness, team leadership, decision-making, and problem solving," he explains.

Hilton reached this hiring milestone two years ahead of schedule as part of its Operation: Opportunity program, which launched in August 2013 via partnerships with Hiring Our Heroes (a program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation), the White House's Joining Forces initiative, and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies. At that time, approximately 10 percent of post-9/11 veterans were unemployed and active duty military were transitioning to civilian life at a rate of more than 250,000 per year. Hilton has since received an award from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for effective and sustained efforts to find post-9/11 veterans and transitioning service members to meaningful employment.

"Hilton has been strongly committed to supporting veterans and their families since our founding nearly a century ago by Conrad Hilton, a U.S. Army veteran, and we saw Operation: Opportunity as a chance to build on a strong foundation," Schuyler says.

Moving forward, the company aims for veterans and their family members to be 10 percent of new hires in its corporate offices and owned and managed locations in the United States.

Veteran hiring programs in the hotel industry recognize the great sacrifices veterans have made in the service of this country, and ensure they have solid careers when they return home. But hiring veterans is only part of the solution, Schuyler stresses. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation recently published a study that examined the challenges in creating long-term employment opportunities for veterans.

The study found that while veterans are now considered a top target demographic for corporate recruiters,

there is less attention paid to veteran employee retention, he explains. "Specifically, the study found gaps in veteran recruiters' knowledge about military service and related skills; a lack of specialized training to help civilian employees relate to veterans; and a lack of ongoing training and career pathing for veteran employees."

To address these challenges, Hilton has created a military friendly work environment within the company, offering military specific training for its recruiters, hiring managers, HR professionals and team members, and continuing to expand apprenticeship and development programs for veterans.

The program's hiring data shows that the most frequently filled positions require strong leadership and managerial and operational skills. The top five areas where veterans have been hired within the company are food and beverage, work from home, guest services/operations, house-keeping and laundry, and call center.

National Park Service concessioner Forever Resorts is another hospitality company that has received accolades for its efforts and dedication to hiring unemployed veterans. One of its properties, Callville Bay Resort & Marina, which is located within an hour of Las Vegas, was recently named Partner of the Year for 2016 by the U.S. Veterans Initiative Workforce Department. The property worked directly with U.S. Veterans Initiative to hire seven employees for the summer 2016 season.

Last spring, General Manager Kim Roundtree and her team members traveled to U.S. Vets' local career center, about 40 miles away, to give a presentation on the property's available jobs and conduct interviews with interested veterans. They made an agreement with U.S. Vets to provide rides into town once per week for veteran employees, since the marina is in a remote location without public transportation, but otherwise used the same onboarding process as they do for all new employees, Roundtree says. "We do not treat veterans any different than the other employees we have—they want to be right in there with the norm." When it comes time to hire more employees next spring, Roundtree will return to the career center, this time with a couple of veteran employees who can share their experiences with job seekers.

Roundtree agrees with Schuyler that military personnel bring many strengths to hospitality roles. But most important, "Absolute discipline," she says. "They are very self-motivated, they've got a good work ethic, and are just very disciplined in their regimen." "Now there is NO war in Sri Lanka, Time to think about well-disciplined military officers for hotels"

*Article re-produce herein was written by Megan Sullivan, first appeared in the (Lodging Journal)*

**THAKSHILA GALAPPATHTHY**  
Editor

**AGM**

CEYLON HOTEL SCHOOL  
GRADUATES ASSOCIATION

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# FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN IN RISING TO MANAGEMENT POSITIONS IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY IN SRI LANKA

GITANJALI CHAKRAVARTHY HAALAND - FCHSGA  
General Manager, Ulagalla Walawwa by Uga Escapes,  
chakravartygi@gmail.com



This Study aims to scrutinise the representation of the women workforce within the Hospitality industry in Sri Lanka, as the Hospitality sector is now the most lucrative and fast-growing industry in the country. Which is a concern owing to the dire need for a competent workforce in this particular industry, as well as a severe lack in the number of employees in this industry. Further, this study will look at reasons why females are not considering 'careers' in this industry, as well as the opportunity this industry offers for career growth for the female employee.

There is a perceived deficiency in the overall representation of females in the hospitality industry, hence the significance of this study will be to examine first, the current engagement of female employees in the industry, the contributory factors should there be a marked deficiency, and arrive at plausible recommendations to bridge the gap.

Recommendations presented include the adoption of pro-active policies to encourage the representation and empowerment of women in the industry, revision of existing HR policies to provide equal and equitable opportunities for female employees, with cited examples in length and conclusion.

## INTRODUCTION

The status of a woman in society is synonymous with the roles played by "Her" in an institution such as a family, in a political arena, and other social groups, including corporate organizations. It is true, that Sri Lankan women now are able to wield and practice more power than in the past. One of our proudest boast being the first country to produce a female Prime minister and served as Prime Minister not once but three times over.

Under the glossy veneer of

the political fore front, gender inequality still does exist. Granted not to the horrific levels in some countries where females are not considered citizens and have not gained the privilege of voting. However, we indeed see an imbalance of gender representation within the work force. This study will inspect one of Sri Lanka's booming industries, since the end of the 30 year civil war, which has opened the economy in the country.

Sri Lanka's Hospitality industry

## KEY WORDS

Wage gap, Glass Ceiling scenario, Limited job scope, Underlying biases in recruitment, Gender Pyramid, hospitality industry, workforce, women, career development, representation of women, occupational sex segregation, discrimination.

although gaining tremendous momentum in the past 10 years, has an overall low representation of women in the work force. Although data will prove an increase in the number of women employed within the Hospitality Industry, over the past decade, a precious few are seen rising to be among the senior management positions. Even with an increase of women employed in to the work force, the Hospitality Industry in Sri Lanka, still appears to be a largely male dominated industry.

In the recent past there had been an upward trend in women involvement in the labor market, more prominently in the service sector. As outlined in the Sri Lanka Labor Force Statistics, 3rd quarter 2017, depicts that of the total labor force of 46.6% in Sri Lanka % distribution between male to female is 47.6 to 45.0. Given the fact the numbers are similar, which shows an upward trend in more women involved in the service sector. However, if compared to their share in labor force distribution women hold few positions compared to males in the Hospitality Industry and still fewer rise to senior management positions within the industry.

This however seems to be opposite to where women dominate in senior management positions in other industries such as

banking, human resources, and entrepreneurship. The hotel industry has become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in Sri Lanka, subsequent to the post-war economic development and peace prevailing in the country.

The deficit of trained staff versus the vacancies generated in the industry for a year is estimated to be 1:4. For every trained resource to enter the Hospitality industry there are four vacancies to be filled. With a void akin to the above to be filled annually and a projected growth by 2020, Sri Lanka should be geared to train, produce, and manage Hospitality Staff, whether male or female, should they endeavor to be successful. This too since, the loss of the female representation in the industry would represent a loss of talent, which the sector cannot afford to waste presently.

## OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To assess the effect of glass ceiling on women career development and factors of poor representation of women in senior manager levels in the hotel industry.
- To analyze the factors affecting career progression of women in the hotel industry.
- To analyze the limited number of women in senior management positions in the hotel industry.
- To assess if the vertically typical "Gender Pyramid" is prevalent, and if occupational sex segregation and discrimination lends hand fewer numbers being represented

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Limited data gathered due to time constraints and also slow comeback from hotels in response to the questionnaire sent. 10 hotel companies were approached to gather data and timely and positive responses were less than 40%.

Further integrity towards the respective institution, means the answers provided, apart from the data, is "by the book", and may not be indicative of the true nature of the organization, but merely ideals, and policies put in place by the HR team, and not what is practiced on the ground. Further policies seem to provide a remedial approach to gender based discrimination, hence it is

uncertain if all dissatisfactions are raised and recorded.

## RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Of the 40% of the respondents, there is a clear deficiency in the representation of females in the workforce of the industry as a whole, clocking in percentages of 7.9%, 10%, 10.3% and the highest female representation being just 16.3% of the total staff strength.

All respondents professed to encouraging female participation and have taken measures to encourage women in to the industry. From "Equal opportunities of employment, safe and conducive environment, flexible hours, awareness in schools and education institutions

for opportunities for women in hospitality", to "forming a private partnership with the IFC to increase female participation in our cadre.", and "10 pm door to door night transport for female staff, a "Ladies Dialogue Sessions" to address female staff's needs".

When asked if senior management positions in the hotel industry were open to women and if there were any barriers for a woman joining and sustaining in the industry, all respondents confirmed that higher managerial positions are open to both men and women without discrimination, and no barriers were perceived to effect a woman's ability to join and sustain a career in the hospitality field.

# DISCUSSION/ INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

## GENDER PYRAMID

The "Gender Pyramid" indeed is prevalent in the hospitality industry and is clearly demarcated. It is observed that at the lower level of the pyramid, representative of entry level jobs in the Hospitality industry there is nearly equal representation of the male and female genders. This number however dwindles towards the mid and senior level job roles. This typical of a management structure, however we observe that the numbers compared to male representation is lower. This is indicative of a smaller resource pool for management to pick from when it comes to male vs female candidates. This is owing to the sudden drop of female resources, thereby inhibiting the feeder system to higher level also known as career progressing. Simply put, if there is insufficient female representation in the work force, by virtue of the lack of numbers, there would be a deficiency of experienced female candidates who are able to rise among the ranks.

## UNDERLYING BIASES IN RECRUITMENT

This study is indicative though not conclusive of preferences and biases in management practices in deference to official policy on gender equality and equal opportunity. The preferences were clearly in favour of males for senior positions and younger

unmarried female at lower levels of job roles within the hospitality industry. This study points towards existence of orthodox attitudes that act barrier to the types of jobs that men and women should carry out in hotels. A conclusion can be arrived at from the above study and pre-existing studies, that there is a wide inequality between females and males relating to job tasks, responsibilities, and work-related issues of promotion, pay, training which direct factors are. Additionally, indirect factors such as family issues such as childcare responsibility, being married, conflicts between family responsibilities and career advancement, are the main factors contributing to biases when it comes to hiring male versus female employees at various stages within a career in Hospitality. While the constitution is proactive and provides for equality of opportunity sexes in employment, and policies of various organisations reflect equal opportunity in their policies and in fact grants special favour to women, the fact remains the in a social scenario, equality is not so progressive and patriarchal social patterns restrict progress of women in almost all fields of life, if not particularly in the Hospitality Industry. Respondents have biased opinion on the question that women can manage long working hours with family and childcare responsibilities, while female respondents agree that they can manage both responsibilities efficiently.

## LIMITED JOB SCOPE

At workplaces of certain select industries, it is largely practiced that some jobs are termed as 'female jobs'. Service industries in particular such as insurance, banking, travel, telecommunication, and hotels are considered to have more of these so called "women jobs". More so prevalent in the Hospitality industry, women's roles constitute majority of secretaries, front office assistant, housekeeping attendant, housekeeping supervisor, executive housekeeper, guest relation executive, and in positions supportive of men; these are attributed this to personal qualities of a female of patience, tolerance, willpower and empathy for others that come from being a mother and the mothering instinct. Alternatively, male roles comprise of front office manager, shift manager, food & beverage manager, food & beverage controller, human resource manager, training manager respectively. While this is indicative of harnessing resource to the best advantage according to psychometrics, it also points towards a subtle occupational sex segregation. To quote a respondent "There aren't very many ladies moving up due to late shifts involved with the operations in certain departments as per the industry needs". Seemingly many are satisfied to justify a lack of female representation, due to "industry needs"



## GLASS CELLING SCENARIO

Women around the world today, have achieved higher levels of education, and represent more than 40% of global work force. However, their share of management positions remains unacceptably low, with just a tiny proportion succeeding in breaking through the "glass Ceiling". There have been two factors which have been recognized and accepted that determines the glass ceiling. These are: 1) Internal factors: which amount to, educational training (both the level and the type of studies), in addition to aspects related to family and the role that women play within her direct family and society. 2)

## WAGE GAP

The Tribune by Head of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and mentions that "in the UK financial Institutions women employed full-time in the city earn 47 per cent less in annual gross salaries than men, compared to a 28 per cent pay gap across the economy. A disparity in bonuses and other performance-related pay is a major factor behind the "massive gender pay gap". Reports also indicate that women workers who become pregnant face redundancy. This sex stereotyping of work across the sector was compounded by the sexism and gender related perceptions and preferences.

In relation to the Hospitality industry, it has been established

External factors: Which have a direct impact on women's career and may have their origin in their own natural environment, for instance, sociocultural factors, the corporate culture and company policies. In this study most of the female respondents were of the opinion that the hotel industry is male dominant. The study found very less women at managerial positions and majority of female respondents are uncertain about the continuity their career in hotel industry in comparison to males. It has been revealed that men outnumber women in terms of attaining top managerial positions. Review of secondary sources

that there is a wage gap, in an already poorly compensated industry, which makes the job unattractive for lower level applicants, and serves as a demotivational factor in career progression and tenure within the organization as well as the industry. The origin of this disparity is perhaps rooted in the consideration that women are naturally limited in physically, in the effort they can exert in delivering expected tasks. Hence while males are tasked to the "heavy lifting", they are compensated or overly compensated for doing so. Whereas a simple job reorganization would have mitigated the need to over compensate, thereby eliminating if

shows that data of Sri Lankan female managers in the hospitality industry is a rarity and endemic only to certain Hotels within the industry. Research undertaken in this area with "Breaking through the Glass Ceiling" being one of the most comprehensive international studies presents: the very fact of women being adequately represented in the work-force, but hardly present in the managerial positions is the main reason for the label "the glass ceiling", "a barrier so subtle that it is transparent, yet so strong that it prevents women and minorities from moving up in the management hierarchy"

not narrowing the wage gap, at the lower rungs in the industry.

Nevertheless, one must also consider that perhaps the gender wage gap is perceived to be larger and wider in tourism and hospitality, merely owing to the fact that female Senior Management in this industry are employed in relatively smaller firms or boutique hotels. While these relatively smaller and exclusive properties in the industry offers women better odds of reaching the top, but the female managers employed in smaller and exclusive firms offer less pay in comparison to the larger chain of hotels setup.



## CONCLUSION

There is a clear patriarchal attitude prevalent towards women in work force be it underlying or outright effecting components of a career which effects the overall numbers of females who present themselves in various industries.

Female employees perceive that they are not fairly treated in selection and promotions and that their employers do not value their contributions as much. Female employees are also unhappy with many other issues about their career and the percentage of those who might quit their jobs at the earliest opportunity is higher than that of male employees.

Findings further suggest that female managers in certain hotel chains have “given up” some aspect of family life in order to get ahead and stay competitive with their male peers. Whereas strong credentials and skills have proven to be important in female advancement into middle-level management, they have not helped them to attain executive level advancement on every occasion. It was found that women in the industry were encouraged to accept large amounts of senior management responsibility for middle management salaries, where routes to promotion remain unclear and indecisive.

The Hospitality industry in particular has a strong propensity towards gender segmentation in labour, and are pre-disposed to see the female labour force predominantly in lower and entry levels, with less pay and less training and merger development opportunities. Women’s career opportunities perhaps are equal to those of men in organizations, but they did not have any ‘women friendly’ policies for encouraging more women to enter in hotel industry. In spite of equal hiring policies, the study revealed gap between equality of sexes legislation and actual practice and the experience of women. There is strong evidence to suggest that management prefer men for managerial positions. There is a popular opinion that women are employed more at visual area like the front office, and even female respondents agreed that women are employed in areas where less physical work is required. A majority of female respondents are of the opinion that they have to make extra efforts to prove their credibility and had limited access to a number of positions are traditionally perceived as men’s jobs.

The career/family conflict and gender stereotypes are the

predominant obstacles existing in women’s career development. Most respondents accept that unmarried and young women are preferred in this industry. Whereas a married woman with children may be discriminated against even at the hiring stage.

As women many have experienced that during the time of interview, interviewer poses questions which prompt specific of as to how she will manage her domestic responsibilities, whether there is a support system at home, and family plans so on, which a male counterpart which will not have to face with perhaps the only question being posed to him being the number of dependents in his family. While the origin of such probing interview questions towards women could be genuine concern, it clearly points to reasons as to why she may be overlooked, in comparison to male counterpart. It is also indicative of the stereotypical biases towards career women, and a preconception of her ability to commit owing to family responsibilities, which a male is not subjected to even if he is considered the head of a family.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Women in the professional world has, without a doubt, changed the dynamics of the workplace over the past few decades. It has been observed that women bring an element of diversity in the workplace that cannot be ignored. Studies have emphasized that the role of women in management has a competitive advantage and noted that it was important for businesses to recognize that female managers are part of a talent pool that is essential to be retained and developed.

As such the few women who have succeed in breaking the glass ceiling, have through numerous hurdles to prove their credibility for the benefit of the management. Management in turn should endeavor to understand the special need of women and attempt to provide more benefits to them and should take proactive steps to minimize the discrepancy between organizational policies and ground level practices.

Women have as much capacity for hard work and talent for intellectual inputs, creativity and efficiency as their male peers. Hotels need to enrich their workforce by recruiting and retaining more women employees. Conscious decisions have to be made to evolve certain policies, which are women friendly and take care of their special problems by providing women friendly services like crèche facility, flexible timing, extended maternity leave, pick and drop services not only in night but for whole day, more compassionate leaves as they have family responsibilities (from which married men usually escape), less frequent long shifts, fewer night shifts, family accommodation provision, level applicable concessions on family expenses such as school fees, etc. to attract and retain talented women, indicating that the Hospitality

industry is a serious and beneficial industry where, committed and driven females can make a serious and rewarding career of. Yes, the above suggestions seem to be too “Female Friendly” however, this are necessities and considerations should the hotel industry choose to encourage more women to enter the industry and stay in the industry and be an empowered contributor striking the right work-life balance.

Many sources suggest that women and men have different opinion regarding gender equality in hotel industry. However, one opinion that both males and females agreed on, is that ‘that the working environment of hotel industry is a not woman friendly one’ and women are pushed to work very hard, in mannish type of environment to survive and get the top position in the boardroom.

Consciousness of the under-representation of women in top positions, in the corporate world has elicited that many corporations to revise their policies and practices. If organisation are to endure in their productive and competitive state in an increasingly demanding global market place, steps are to be taken to recruit, retain, develop, and promote their most talented resource, regardless of their sex, as people are valuable.

This is increasingly perceived to be the right or ethical thing to do, but also the smart thing to do. Organizations are attempting to become more women-friendly. Having women in key positions is argued to be associated with long term organisation success and adds to the competitive advantage. As it’s deemed to add value through women’s distinctive set of skills and creating a culture of inclusion through a diverse workforce.

Accordingly, hotels would

probably benefit by adopting proactive policies to encourage the representation and empowerment of women in the industry. They need to reform the tendency of female employees to be concentrated at entry or operational level, retain the numbers of entry level female staff to ensure that a higher number of females then graduate to the next rung of the career ladder and so on. At the end of the day ensuring better female representation at higher managerial levels, is a game of numbers, and increasing the odds, boils down to proper retention and unbiased advancement opportunities. “Industry Needs” should no longer be a justification for inadequate rostering and in efficiencies that limit a female from joining a department.

Based on the results study Hotel industry to rework on HR policies to provide equal and equitable opportunities for female employees, beginning from the type of questions posed to female candidates at interviews, ensuring that a standard free of gender bias is maintained, and a clear score system and records are kept when recruiting and of interview outcomes, to avoid inconsistent and complex outcomes, HR and Recruiting department heads and managers should attend mandatory training programs on a frequent basis to calibrate thinking, policies and ethics on how to effectively interview. This will mitigate the gender and gender-role stereotyping which severely influences hiring decisions

Management in the Hospitality industry need to examine their career ladders with an eye to creating opportunities for women to move into positions that will eventually allow them to break the glass ceiling at the top.



*“Cooperate and Thrive”*  
**GOLF AND TOURISM  
 IN SRI LANKA**

**W**e know the good news. Sri Lanka is a fast-growing tourism market in the world and we are all enjoying the increased commerce.

While Sri Lanka is hot now, growth cannot be expected to continue or even the current levels maintained without constant improvement and reinvention of the tourism industry.

While there have been many initiatives by the government and private sector, it is no secret that the key improvements to infrastructure and product offerings that will be essential to sustained growth are behind the demand. We applaud the efforts being made in the way of promotion and improvement and know that at some point Sri Lanka will be the well-functioning destination we envision.

We have seen and heard on various forums and media about the potential and the possibilities of attracting golf tourists to Sri Lanka. Let's discuss a little bit about golf tourism, the potential it has for growth in Sri Lanka, some challenges we face, and a few ideas of how to work toward improving this sector of tourism.

There is no doubt that Golf travel is a lucrative source of tourism business around the world. However, there is fierce competition for the prime demographic, the well-heeled traveling golfer. Unfortunately, Sri Lanka is well behind in the development of its golf products. On the positive side given the country's abundance of natural resources and spectacular scenery, is in a position to parlay these unique advantages into potential revenue streams that not



only benefit golf, but ancillary businesses, and the local community. Realizing this, Sri Lanka Tourism is planning to attract golf enthusiasts to visit the country while touring the different regions where they could play their favorite sport.

Sri Lanka currently does not yet have enough available product of an international standard to promote as a competitive industry. At present, Sri Lanka has only 5, 18 hole courses spread around the country. This is few and far between to promote and make it attractive to die hard golfers. Victoria Golf and Country Resort and Shangri las Resort and Spa are two of the main courses with international standards. In fact, Victoria Golf and Country Resort have embarked on the major renovation project, aiming at raising the bar even further with regards to facilities provided and the course conditions. It has engaged the services of golf course specialists for this purposes Qualitas Project Control, a leading golf development consultant to ensure the facility is up to international traveler's standards. Even now enjoy much positive feedback from our guests. When we have completed our upgrade, we will truly be an international destination. In addition to the improvements, we have engaged the world-renowned management company, TROON Golf Management to build our clientele through their top rated hospitality program and vast network of the prime demographic customer.

There is the Shangri-La which was built with an international standard golf course and excellent accommodations.

Nonetheless these are the only two properties in the country that will be actively promoting and have the ability and standards to attract international golfing tourists.

We have a few other courses in the country but for one reason or another they are not realistic venues for touring golfers.

A fact that gets tossed around a lot is that travelling golfers spend 3 times more than the average tourist. (By definition they are golfers whose primary reason for traveling is golf). Given that a lot of travel in Sri Lanka travel is "budget travel" and group excursions, the gap may be wider here.



That is if there was truly a gap. An important distinction is that those traveling golfers who spend 3-5 times more are not coming to Sri Lanka in significant numbers. Nor are they likely to until there is a reason to do so.

There are very good reasons to be optimistic. Sri Lanka was never a copy of any other destination. I believe the uniqueness of our country is the key to begin building this segment of the industry. It will just take some direction out of the mainstream formula for golf promotion.

There are several primary reasons that golf is difficult to promote in Sri Lanka.

Difficulty of travel to the few legitimate and available venues, lack of product, and lack of product clusters.

It is a misconception that Sri Lanka is in a position to promote golf travel in the way that other countries do. Royal Colombo Golf Club may qualify as a venue for the traveling golfer but doesn't really have available tee times in sufficient quantities that can be relied on by booking agencies to fit their client's needs. Victoria Golf and Country Resort is in the process of upgrading. Presently only The Shangri-Las Resort truly meets the standard required by the prime target guest. The Nuwara Eliya Golf Club and Eagles Links are the other options.

I am told by international experts that the other golf offerings in the country are not close to meeting the standard that the traveling golfer will gravitate toward and even if they do, they are few and far between. Just to illustrate the numbers, Japan has over 3000 courses, South Korea has over 700 and India has over 300.

VGCR and Shangri-Las will attract a reasonable amount of traveling golfers on their own, but things could be so much better with some nearby competition! Why you might ask?

IAGTO, the international authority on golf tourism, has demonstrated the importance of Golf Course Clusters for the successful development of golf tourism.



# ITS PEOPLE, PEOPLE AND PEOPLE



- One Export Ready course within 45 minutes' drive of the accommodation hub has the potential to attract only 15% of all international golf travellers who would be interested in visiting Sri Lanka for their next golf vacation;
- Two Export Ready golf courses will attract 25% of potential golf travellers;
- Three Export Ready golf courses will attract see this jump to 75% of potential golf travelers;
- Five Export Ready golf courses will attract 100% of potential golf travelers;

While it is clear that development of more product in the right places will benefit all facilities, it is not likely this will happen in the near future.

Therefore, the challenge remains as to what can be done now.

Good enough for now is not sustainable whether it is in the general tourism sector or the more specific golf sector.

With the Tourism Ministry actively promoting overall tourism but with hardly a mention of golf. It would surely be beneficial to cross promote.

Countries who have successfully promoted golf and the ancillary benefits to surrounding businesses, have done so with the firm cooperation of their governments. Things like tax and duty relief, permits for turf specific treatments, engaging professional consultants, are but a few way governments help to promote golf development

Sri Lanka Golf in general is not ready to be promoted as a true destination but the idea of an exotic vacation with

golf could be very appealing to today's travelers looking for something different. And Sri Lanka certainly has the uniqueness.

Until roadways are improved, float plane golf adventures could be an exciting prospect. Working several days of golf into a longer overland adventure packages can be a great way to break up a trip and get rejuvenated.

Golf promotions through agents and even hotel associations can be cross promoted and integrated into package trips to the benefit of all.

Of course these are just a few thoughts about how to help promote tourism in general and golf in specific on the island. But it is clear that the first example we can follow of successful golf destination countries, is cooperation. The second is cooperation. And the third, cooperation.

**ASELA WAVITA - FCHSGA**  
GENERAL MANAGER - VICTORIA GOLF AND COUNTRY RESORT

## HUMAN RESOURCE THE GREATEST ASSET

In economics, they identify three basic resources or factors of production: land, labour, and capital. Some modern economists even suggest that time also can be considered as a factor of production. However, it has to be stated that today almost all organizations have accepted the fact that the people (the employees) are the most important resource in an organization and should be given the pride of place.

Sir Harvey Jones puts his success down entirely to the proper management of people, saying:-“Put your people first, above your Board of Directors, even ahead of the Customers and... above the world.”

The main object of proper management of people is to create a work environment where high self - esteem can flourish to make the people feel great about them. They should feel that every one of them is part of the show.

The great business tycoon Henry Ford adds to Sir Jones' thinking:“You can take my Factories, burn up my buildings, but, give me my people and ....I'll build the business right once again.”

Human Resource forms the most important factor of production in an organization. If the employees are happier at work, then they will contribute more to the organization. If you have compassion for working people, you win their trust and loyalty, success will automatically follow. It is all about trust, mutual respect, co-operation and teamwork.

If you are a part of an organization, it provides you with the opportunity to grow with the organization. The Organization's Mission should ensure that one of its objectives or aims is - “To add value to every Employee's life “.

### HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Human Resource (Employees) should be so nurtured and developed so as to meet the demand of the future. Human Resource Development can contribute to organizational growth by preparing its employees to meet the changes in the business environment. Human Resource Development increases employee satisfaction and thereby productivity

“  
*You can take my  
Factories, burn up my  
buildings, but, give me  
my people and ....I'll  
build the business right  
once again.*

HENRY FORD



and growth of the organization. Productivity and quality depends heavily on the efficiency of the key resource – People. If you pay more attention to your people and share the Vision and Values of your organization with them, they will then, develop a positive attitude and a commitment towards creating “Excellence” for the customers.

It has been very often said that - Your Organization is only as good as Your People. If both of those things can be incorporated into the equation, you will have happy workers and a very productive organization. Everyone has a part to play in this process, but it begins at the top. Every leader should set the tone for their followers.

As Kathryn Minshew, CEO of The Muse of New York City puts it – “you know, as most entrepreneurs do, that a company is only good as its people. The hard part is actually managing the team that will embody your company culture and propel you forward”.

When people work in a friendly environment, they deliver better results and thereby, make customers happy. “Empowered Employees” is the secret to better customer service.

### POSITIVE ATTITUDE AND TEAMWORK

A company’s success as a business depends largely on the quality of its “Team” and how effective the “Team Culture” is. Developing an effective team by inculcating right attitude of mind in the team members, is the best way to get the most out of them and for them to contribute satisfactorily towards the success of the business.

Successful teamwork cannot be an accident; it should be within the organization. An effective team of individuals can turn the vision of the organization into a working reality. Teamwork is often associated with moral. Moral refers to the attitude of people. Positive attitude is the key in building team culture. Where positive attitude exists, better productivity is more likely to occur. Organizations should take every effort to instill “can do” attitude in the minds of their people.

Thomas Jefferson, the 3rd President of the United States, once said ... “Nothing can stop a man with the right attitude from achieving his goal”. And this he said will help the Organization and the Team.

### IN CONCLUSION

The company and its employees should be collectively accountable for the achievement. Feeling of trust enables the employees to respond positively. Looking at the future, the organization will need resourceful, versatile and innovative people to face the challenges of the fast changing business world. Organisation and developing the most important asset, the Human Resource, for the future should be the prime objective of any organization.

The great son of India, Mahatma Gandhi had this to say; - “Trust your people, believe in them, organizational success is assured” Our own, Deshamanya Ken Balendra, the first Sri Lankan Chairman of John Keells Holdings Ltd, when, once interviewed, identified 3 reasons for the success story of his company – he said; Firstly, its People, Secondly, it’s People & Thirdly, it’s People - after all, the companies existence is because of the people, who work for it.

### SAMAN RAJAPAKSE FCHSGA

*The writer is a hotelier by profession, who has served the industry for more than 35 years, holding senior management positions.*

## HOW DOES ONE DIFFERENTIATE?



People in the hospitality trade often ask me about differentiation. First of all, let’s examine the true definition of product differentiation. Product differentiation is a marketing strategy whereby businesses attempt to make their product unique to stand out from competitors. Businesses do this to gain an edge in industries where multiple competitors produce similar products. There are other methods businesses can employ to gain that edge, like pursuing a low-cost strategy and advertising, but while those are legitimate marketing strategies, they are different from product differentiation. Product differentiation means that some feature, physical attribute, or substantive difference exists between a product and all other alternatives.

Put simply; it is the process of distinguishing a good or service from others by providing something unique that is valuable to the buyers beyond simply offering a low price. I.e., making it stand out. An easy method of seeing product differentiation at work is to go to your nearest supermarket. Wander across to where the cereals are on display. There are several options – generic oats packed in very plain packaging, or Quaker oats – ‘serving up wholesome goodness in different ways’. Observe that the oats in the generic brand and those in the Quakers look almost the same. What differentiates one from the other is the superior and much more eye-catching packaging by Quaker.

Few, if any, businesses sell a product or service without any competition and being unique in the marketplace is a distinct advantage. However, as in our example, packaging alone, even when attractive, will not differentiate for long, unless the three elements of product or service differentiation are in-place. So, what are these three elements?

1. Convenience (or precision / timing)
2. Customisation
3. Cost Recovery

### CONVENIENCE

Nowadays, no one likes to wait. In order to differentiate your product from your competitors, consider how you can deliver your goods and services precisely when they are needed. Did you know that 70 per cent of online shoppers say it’s important to see delivery times before buying? More significantly, 11 per cent – more than 1 in 10 sales – are lost if they aren’t provided. Precision allows customers to make choices based on their schedule and lifestyle. It makes buying online easier.

All of us at some point in time have faced a situation where the food we ordered at the restaurant took inexplicably longer than the twenty minutes it usually takes. I know of friends who avoid certain restaurants because everytime they went - they had to wait a long time

for the food to arrive. One of many reasons why eating and dining are not the same.

### CUSTOMISATION

Customize to differentiate, but do it efficiently. The new generation of customers expects to get what they want, when they want it, customized to their taste.

We have moved from the era of mass customization to collaborative customization. Today, differentiated companies enable customers to determine the precise product offering that best serves that customer’s needs. For example, if I were renovating my hotel and ordered material for new curtains, a company that can deliver what I need... when I need it, will certainly earn my interest. However, the company that earns my business is one that in addition to promising the above, also offers to advise me on the style and colour that goes best with my hotel bedroom/s.

More hotels will make the effort to take the guest experience to higher, personal levels. This experience will become more customized, not just differentiated. A frustrating experience narrated to me by a friend was his visit to the dry cleaners. He dropped off his laundry at least once a week for more than a year. Yet every time he walked to the counter, he was asked his name and how he wanted his shirts cleaned? (it was always wash and press). Additionally, on every visit he had to tell them not to fold the shirts, instead put them on hangers. Not once did they greet him by name when he walked through the door! Now that’s a sad example of failure to customise.

### COST RECOVERY

Whilst customisation is an important differentiation strategy, be sure to strike a balance between the revenue potential of the effort, versus the costs required to execute. Cost recovery does not mean been cheap. In fact it makes sense to spend a bit more to produce a product or service that most closely aligns with customer needs and expectations.

As Michael Walsh puts it “Companies that focus on providing the above three elements (apart from other factors), and keep improving on them continuously, will be in a stronger position to gain and retain a competitive advantage over their competitors. To put it simply, paying attention to these three ‘C’s will result in the Fourth: Commerce and commerce happens when your customer needs equal your ability to satisfy them, building in the process a steady flow of continued customer satisfaction and business growth”.

### SHAFEEK WAHAB - FCHSGA

*Editor, Hospitality Sri Lanka, Consultant, Trainer and Ex-Hotelier*  
To read similar articles visit; <https://www.hospitalitysrilanka.com/>

# THE MANY MOMENTS OF TRUTHS



Applying the theory that by creating positive outcomes at every interaction the business would be successful, Jan Carlzon, president of Scandinavian Airlines in the 1980's went on to make that airline one of the most admired in the industry. Thus was born the concept of the Moment of Truth which he defined as: Any time a customer comes into contact with a business, however remote, they have an opportunity to form an impression. Indeed a strong and powerful concept that described customer behaviour. In 2003, the CEO of Procter & Gamble, A.J. Lafley coined the phrase the First Moment of Truth to describe the crucial first few moments when a consumer's first impression about a product or service is formed. Lafley explained that there were in fact two moments of truth, going on to add a third:

- The 1st Moment of Truth [1stMOT] occurs at the store shelf or online, when a consumer decides whether to buy or book one brand or another.
- The 2nd Moment of Truth [2ndMOT] is when the customer actually purchases the product and uses it...and is happy or unhappy with it. The [2ndMOT] is the moment when the customer, having embraced the [1stMOT], now uses it for the first time and each time after. 2ndMOT is truly the total consumer experience (or UX for "User experience").
- The 3rd Moment of Truth [3rdMOT] is when the product or service experience catalyses an emotion (happiness, disappointment, anger, etc) and where the customer shares feedback with the company as well as with family members, friends, colleagues, etc.

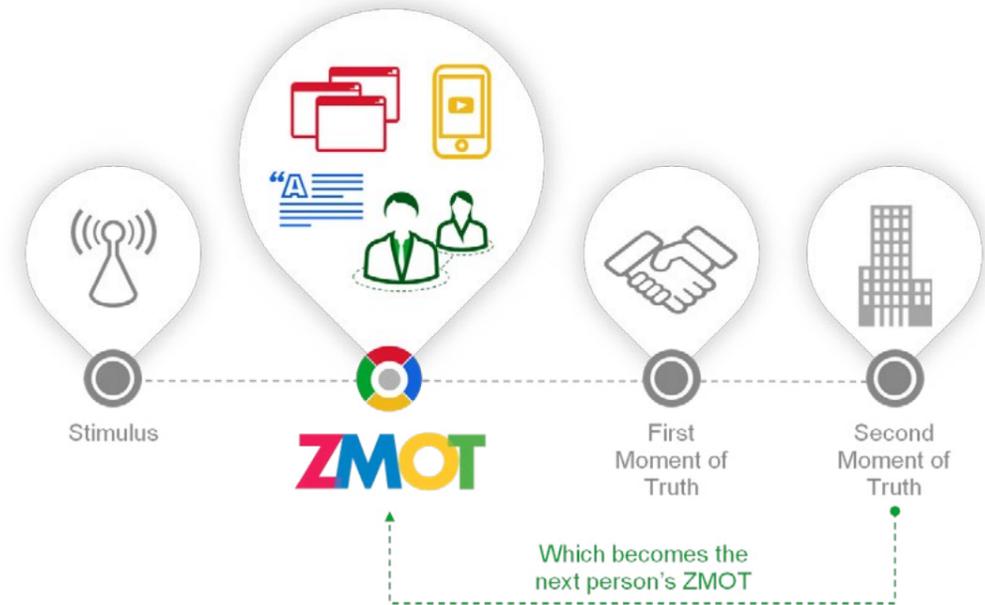
The 1stMOT is considered to be the first few critical seconds when a consumer is making a decision of where to eat and / or what to buy. Having decided on the restaurant, the customer-turned-guest, then encounters the 2ndMOT. If the delivered product or service fails to meet the expectations of the guest, the feedback shared during the 3rdMOT will be negative. A repeat visit by the guest is also unlikely. Conversely, should the 2ndMOT and 3rdMOT be positive, the restaurant has won over a potential repeat guest and possibly a good number of positive tweets.

Likewise, your product (hotel room) may be the best in the competitive set, (i.e. at 2ndMOT) but business turned away by inefficient reservations staff at the 1stMOT means the customer will never know it. However, the public at large may get to know about the poor service from the hotel's reservation staff. Earlier, it used to be said that one unhappy customer would tell between 9 and 15 different people about their experience. But in the age of Facebook, Twitter and others, you would be happy to contain negative word of mouth to 15 people. The average Facebook user has 140+ friends, and negative comments often jump from social circle to social circle. A tweet really is worth a thousand words. The key to success therefore is ensuring that both 1stMOT and 2ndMOT are in harmony. If not, the road ahead is bound to be rocky.

We've all heard about Google's Zero Moment of Truth [ZMOT]. Like many other things in the digital age; the internet has changed the way consumers shop. A study by Google in 2011 showed that the majority of consumers head to the web to make an informed decision when it's time to buy, whether they want a new car or where to dine or when planning a trip: where to stay. People began

conducting more research, asking questions such as, (say when choosing a hotel):

- Is the hotel conveniently located? (In the city / noise-free / near a metro station).
- How does it compare with similar hotels? (Price / within budget / special offers)
- What are other people saying about it? ( Reviews on TripAdvisor / word-of-mouth)
- What is the cheapest way to make the booking? (Direct with hotel / OTA )



Yes, people Google whatever they are looking for. Call them what you like but Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc are just high tech Yellow pages. Digging deeper, there's actually a moment before the Zero Moment of Truth that marketers need to recognise. Called the Less Than Zero Moment of Truth [<ZMOT] by Eventricity in 2014, it is the moment when something causes the customer to start looking for a product or service. To win the Less Than Zero Moment of Truth, your product or service must have a previous connection with the customer. They need to have seen or heard you (N'paper, radio, TV, billboard or similar display ad) or have engaged with you - be it on or offline before they decide to click on you. What matters is that the customer has some sort of stimuli to recognise, by reason, conscious or subconscious, as to why they decided to click on to your link over your competition. Which means that you need to spend time building your brand out there in the non digital world as well.

Now, there is another Moment of Truth, which is a concept described by Amit Sharma, CEO and founder of Narvar. Called the Actual Moment of Truth [AMOT], it

focuses on the after experience which is a period of time from when the customer buys a product online to when he/she receives it. This can be as short as a few hours or several days or longer. It is that 'gap' which is where the Actual Moment of Truth lives. The 'gap' is the problem - particularly when a customer purchases something online and hits the 'buy' button. Most companies unless they have their own delivery department turn that order over to an outsourced 3rd party. That's when the ball is dropped and that's the 'gap' - because the company now has no control over the outcome (delivery).

In the hospitality industry, this gap emerges when the 'takeaway' you ordered is delivered after eternity. It could be because of bad weather or transport breakdown (mechanical or too many orders). In hotels it could be the room service order which is perpetually 'on-the-way', because of a delay in the kitchen which room service has no control on.

**ILZAF KEEFAHS**

*The writer is passionate on hospitality related experiences which he shares with his readers*



## HOW TO EVALUATE YOUR GREATEST ASSET

**F**orming of judgements on your greatest asset is a continuous process. Very often it is subjective based on incomplete information garnished with an element of bias. It is how we interpret the information we receive about our team members.

In many organizations today, they do performance appraisals as a part of their annual agenda of events to grant annual increments. In some cases, it is done in the absence of the team member on the whims and fancies of the team leader. Final rating is sometime even not known by the team member.

How should we do an effective performance review in a professional manner?

All performance reviews should be conducted with respect. Therefore, it is important to prepare the team member physically and mentally for the review Meeting. It is ideal to conduct a review Briefing at least week before the actual performance review meeting; to clarify the purpose and agenda of the review meeting. Explain the review process and agree on a date, time and venue of the review meeting.

Establish the value of a full and honest self-appraisal by the individual by issuing a blank appraisal form to review and record his thoughts. Providing a copy of last review form with the section that covers the Key Result areas and Objectives for the coming year or Job Description as reference to self-review is important. Inform the appraisee that you will also be completing the form as part of your preparation for the meeting.

Rushing through the Reviews in a hurried manner and

speaking in general terms without referring to specific details and instances and carrying a monologue, having only a blank appraisal, should be avoided. Eye contact should be kept at all times.

Sitting behind the table with the appraisee in front of the table creates a barrier. The whole idea is to help the appraisee to relax and to be comfortable. Sitting at a right angle is therefore recommended.

To hold the Performance Development Review in a room or area where there is privacy and quietness is important. Provide some refreshments if not at least some drinking water. Putting your calls on hold or let someone else answer them will avoid disturbances to your review meeting.

One has to be mindful of the Consequences of ill-preparation that will demonstrate lack of concern for team members. Unsubstantiated rating will be prone to disagreements. Not having the facts can lead to inference of bias or pressure in rating. Team leader will not be able to advise on the team members development needs and career planning. Performance problems will also be overlooked.

A Team Leader must also give themselves time to “switch into” review discussion, not leave it until the last minutes to arrive in the room and hold reviews back-to-back. Remember, an effective review will always help to build a strong team.

**WASULA WIJEGUNAWARDANE**  
FCHSGA, MBA, MSc (Finance), CHE, MAHRP



## THINKING OF OPERATING A SPA?



**S**o you want to open a day spa. Have you considered what type of spa you want to operate? What range of treatments do you plan to offer? How do you decide which treatments work best for your customers? For years, spa industry surveys and spa experts have told us that the majority of guests, who go to spas, seek escape from stress, to relax and to feel better. Don't get carried away by those advertisements and images that portray a spa as a place that is representative of exotic treatments. Now, it is an entirely different story in several different ways. The hyped up splurge to grab media attention on spas is giving way to more simplified menus that reflect the main effect of each category of services – all aimed towards relaxation, feeling better or looking better. The goal is to guide guests to a transformative experience, and not to change them. This makes it less confusing and all the more easier for guests to make clearer decisions on treatments that will be beneficial to their individual

needs. In addition, the effective offering of stress reduction requires adequate relaxation spaces including lounges and amenities that offer the flexibility of spending more time at the spa before and after a treatment. I've seen Spa's, some in 5-star city hotels, where guest rooms have been converted to treatment rooms with hardly any relaxation spaces. Regrettably, the first and last impressions are that of an unpleasantly confined operation. Just as with all hotel spaces, having all or a wide variety of relaxation amenities does not work if they are crowded and uncomfortable. It is better to plan the spaces for serenity and leisure, even if it means reducing the variety of amenities, since space and menu go hand-in-hand.

Most of the day spas create a theme for the spa. There are a variety of themes, like "Spiritual," "Health and Wellness," "Cultural," or one conducive to your environment. Environment would mean that you wish to open a spa next to the hotel's fitness and recreation centre or if you operate a property which is known, say for its golfing. Many spas used to put sports massage on their menu as a way to appeal to men. As spas have become more sophisticated, however, they realize they shouldn't list sports massage unless they have some therapists with specialized training. Once you have selected a theme and created a rough draft of your menu, two of the most important things you next need to think about is a business plan and the location of the spa.

Before embarking on the business plan, you have to do considerable research on the idea and the feasibility or viability of a spa operation. As defined by the market research, the spa facility will represent the type, number and flow of treatment rooms. A spa menu created for the services offered in your treatments may include facials and scrub treatments, signature applications and custom blended body scrubs. Visit spas in your region and observe the services that are being offered to the client. This would enable you 'differentiate' your offerings and distinctively position your spa. Develop a business plan to track the progress, prior to the opening of the spa, and following through with a five-year plan. This includes start-up funding - necessary for a spa to run smoothly without any hiccups in the operation of the establishment. Ensuring a steady revenue stream, optimum spa utilisation, attractive rate structures, adequate staffing, lean payroll and operating expenses, identification of revenue sources and the margins of each source, will be the building blocks of your business plan. The location of the spa is critical to attracting and retaining clients. It must be centrally sited, in a convenient, visible spot, easily accessed with adequate parking for non residential spa customers. Location is also pivotal to the overall concept design to address the image and eventual positioning of the spa. Don't be discouraged if you find yourself having to make adjustments to your menu, design or theme as you progress with the design concept.

Your spa may consist of remedies for relaxation, skin and body treatments, fitness, health/lifestyle management and nutrition. Several packages designed, even group package themed programs to suit the individual/individuals that serve your spa market could be developed. Your spa fixtures and equipment includes facial steamers, massage tables and

other treatment specific fixtures, shower and sauna equipment, depending on what services you offer. Equipment has the longest lead time when ordering. It also can be one of the more expensive investments for your day spa. Think long-term when considering equipment. What is going to produce the quickest return on your investment? For example, you can put portable massage tables in your new four-room day spa. They will be less expensive now, but are they able to produce the most return? Conversely, you might decide you need multifunction tables that can be adjusted to meet the needs and services of your clients quickly and easily. The more often you are able to use the equipment, the quicker it's going to pay for itself! Also keep in mind is that you generally will get a better deal if you can purchase all of your products, including crèmes, lotions, mud's, equipment, stools, bolsters, uniforms, disposables, herbs, skin care items, etc., from the same "one-stop shopping" source. The last thing you need to concern yourself with is calling six to ten different distributors to check on delivery! Your budget of course will determine how to balance these factors.

Hiring a full service consultant, with competent industry knowledge on mechanical, engineering and plumbing requirements, in spa programming and operations is advisable. Choosing the right candidate for the position at the beginning of the project, can save money on costly mistakes in facilitating flow, engineering and equipment, and also add to the competitive edge of the spa program. Good management skills are vital for the smooth flow in steering a spa concept, to manage the guest's experience, to help staff grow within the spa and the control of expenses incurred in operations. Spa directors have to manage diverse groups of people, who mostly are trained to work on their own. Job descriptions, standard operating procedures and staff training are decisive in the running mechanism of a spa. The staff in a spa needs consistent training and the opportunity to work in a pleasant atmosphere. They will need appropriate training by the spa and the product companies in order to be effective educators of the intended result of the products. Partnering with product companies that offer thorough and effective training and support raises the likelihood of successfully retailing products. Most reputed product companies offer training, a few are better than the rest.

Be mindful of the overall experience of the client in the use of the oils and lotions, treatments aromatherapies, other offerings special lighting, music, décor-all suited to add to the ambience of the spa, and enhance the expectation of the client's overall experience. To summarise, the success of a spa is concept, program and facility design, spa operations, marketing and profitability of the operation.

#### MEHROON WAHAB

*The writer is a former media representative for 'Spa Asia' in Sri Lanka & the Maldives and it was during her tenure that the Singapore based magazine published a 14-page feature on Sri Lankan Spas.*



## WHAT IS INNOVATION?

*A re-definition in the context of International Hospitality and Tourism Industry*

### BRAIN STORMING ON INNOVATION

"Innovation" has been a buzzword for some time now. Its meanings in contrast to the word: "Creativity" has resulted in some confusion. There are many different definitions for "Innovation", widely varying based on different types of professions, businesses, sectors and regions in the world.

In four international academic conferences on hospitality and tourism management in 2017 and 2018 chaired by the author, he encouraged brain storming among conference delegates, with an aim of re-defining the word "Innovation" in the context of Hospitality and Tourism Industry. The author recorded the keywords listed by teams of conference delegates and identified the following as most popular statements and **keywords** related to innovation:

1. **New ideas, methods, processes, products and services**
2. **Efficient and practical implementation of new ideas in a strategic manner**
3. **Solutions to key challenges from customer's perspective**
4. **Increasing customer satisfaction**
5. **Organizational value enhancement**
6. **A new idea tested, implemented and communicated very well to all stakeholders**
7. **"Creativity" is imagining new ideas and "Innovation" is effective implementation of new ideas by a team**
8. **Applied creativity in a strategic manner**
9. **The art of creating new markets for existing products or creating new products for existing markets, while optimizing profits**
10. **Positive action or process to improve products and services**
11. **A viable business model popular with customers**
12. **Thinking outside the box and implementing it within the box**
13. **A creative way to continuously improve productivity, revenues and profits**
14. **New thinking involving customers to improve customer relations**
15. **Be ahead of competition in improving products and services to meet evolving customer needs**
16. **Finding sustainable solutions to industrial / organizational / departmental problems and challenges**
17. **Gaining insight into complex problems / opportunities and discovering unforeseen implementable solutions.**

Some of the conference delegates felt that "Innovation" is simply a buzzword, which does not require a single definition. A few of the conference delegates felt that using the word: "Innovation" should be toned down in Tourism and Hospitality Industry.

### RE-DEFINING INNOVATION

Using ideas listed above and best practices around the world, the author presents the following 50-word definition for "Innovation":

*"Innovation is the art of efficient and practical implementation of new, creative and "outside the box" ideas, sustainable solutions for challenges to improve processes, products and services with input and support from organization's teams; with an overarching focus to enhance competitive advantages, value, customer satisfaction, organizational productivity, revenues and profitability."*

### WRITING ON INNOVATION

Editing the (2019) Volume 11 Number 2 of the Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes (WHAT) which was dedicated to innovation in tourism around the world, was a rewarding experience. This theme issue is truly international, as it seeks to share a series of innovative initiatives in tourism from many parts of the world – North America, Central America, South America, the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, the Far

East, Australia and the Pacific. A versatile team of 25 scholars examine initiatives from 17 countries to write a series of thought-provoking papers.

### ANALYZING INNOVATION

Innovation is relevant to all aspects of all industries. The above definition was tested when editing 13 papers / case studies in this WHATT volume, which analyzed a variety of different aspects of innovation and concepts as listed in Table I.

**TABLE I  
INNOVATION IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INDUSTRY**

INNOVATION TYPE	CONCEPT	COUNTRY
Technological	Blockchain	Canada etc.
Alternative lodging	Vacation rentals	USA etc.
Sustainable developmental	Public-private partnerships	Costa Rica
Special interest tourism	Slum tourism	Colombia
Environmental	Regulations	Guyana, Barbados and Jamaica
Hotel design	Hotel room 2030	Germany, Austria and Spain
Hospitality educational	Teaching innovation	United Arab Emirates
Market research	Domestic tourism	India
Cross-cultural	Post-war tourism	Sri Lanka
Change management	Industrial Revolution 4.0	Malaysia
Employee recruitment	Generation Y	Singapore
Digital connectedness	Visiting international students	Australia
Segmentation	'No children' accommodation	New Zealand

In an attempt to identify common elements in all these 13 case studies, the author refers to the new definition on innovation presented at the beginning of this paper. Although it captures most key elements of "Innovation", at times this 50-word definition may appear long,



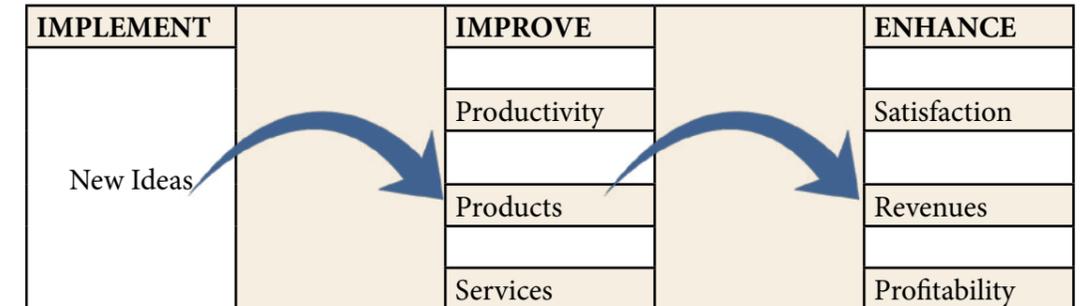
**INNOVATION IN A NUTSHELL**

It is felt that a shorter definition would be useful in identifying common elements of "Innovation" in most of these case studies. Therefore, in conclusion, the following shorter definition is presented:

***"Innovation is the art of implementing new ideas to improve productivity, products and services, while enhancing customer satisfaction, revenues and profitability."***

The concept of the above shorter definition is also presented in Figure 1.

**FIGURE 1  
ART OF INNOVATION**



In addition, three essential and common ingredients of innovation are noticed in most of these 13 case studies. These are:

- **Vision** – providing an aspirational and clear guide for action to improve.
- **Mission** – instilling a strong commitment and sense of duty to achieve the vision.
- **Passion** – enjoying enthusiastically actioning the vision with an eager interest.

Innovation indeed needs vision, mission and passion!

#### REFERENCE

JAYAWARDENA, C. (2019), "What are the key innovative strategies needed for future tourism in the world?", Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes, Vol. 11 No. 2.

This article and other articles in this volume can be purchased via: <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/loi/whatt>

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Chandana (Chandi) Jayawardena is the President of Chandi J. Associates Consulting, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada. He has spent over four decades in the international hospitality and tourism industry in various capacities, including hotel general manager, professor, dean, VP and consultant. He is an International Ambassador and Past President of the Institute of Hospitality, UK. His publication record includes 10 books, 11 journal theme issues and over 110 papers.

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# THE TOP 10 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HOTEL'S FINANCES FOR A GENERAL MANAGER AND THE BEST ANSWERS

Interviews are tricky, for both the candidate and the interviewer. A GM's job interview is a challenge for the incumbent because they need to be ready for just about anything. This is especially true as it relates to the financial picture of the business as seen through the interviewer's eyes. The opposite is also true as many times the person doing the grilling does not have a broad base of experience relating to the daily inner workings and nuances of the hotel world. Here is a list of common questions and good answers as well as a few bonus questions you can ask the person doing your audition.

1. What makes you qualified to be the person in charge of the financial direction and health of my hotel? This is a wide open and leading question. Wide open because the health of the hotel is like your body and every inch counts and needs to be properly looked after because it all adds up. Leading because it's designed to catch up the fair weather GM's that think the finances are the Controller's baby. The best answer here is: as the GM, my job is to lead all aspects of the hotel. The finances are what I consider to be one of the three pillars of our business. The guests, the colleagues and the money are all what I come to work to manage every day.
2. Who in your opinion is ultimately responsible for the finances in this hotel? Again, this is a leading question. The inexperienced answer is: the Controller or Director of Finance is responsible for the numbers since they run the accounting department and produce the financials. The correct answer is: as the General Manager I am ultimately responsible for all aspects of the business and in this case "especially the numbers."
3. As the GM what is the most important thing you will do to ensure the hotel is a financial success? This is a pinpointed question and there are several good answers. The one that I like the best is: as the GM, my job is ultimately to ensure each department in the hotel has their financial plan. I am also responsible to ensure the plan is executed on a consistent basis with a high level of success.
4. What exactly does each hotel department head need to do to be successful with their financial plan and how will you ensure this happens during your tenure? This is a vision and planning question. You already laid out the vision for the departmental finances in your answer to question 3, and the best plan is to ensure each manager is trained to F T A R W on a consistent monthly basis. That is – Forecast Track, Adjust, Review and Write. For my complete F T A R W recipe read my article at <http://hotelfinancialcoach.com/f-tar-w-the-secret-recipe-for-creating-financial-leadership-in-your-hotel/>

5. Under your tenure as the GM what are each manager's financial responsibilities? This is a wide-open question that cries out for a Cracker Jack answer. Exactly what is it you will be asking each leader to accomplish with their financials? The best answer is: there are sometimes three things, but always at least two for which each manager is accountable to me. These are departmental revenues in some cases, but always their payroll and expenses. The answer is simple, but most people miss this because they don't see the effective strategy of having each person on the team charged with their own piece. Many fumble this one with mumbo-jumbo about the Controller and director/divisional organization; the simple and effective method and the response is if someone does the schedule or orders the supplies for their area, they are the ones with whom we will organize and create agreements on the necessary financial responsibilities.
6. What will you do when you have a bad month and miss the forecast? This is a great question and one that you should expect. We will all have months when we miss the forecast; that's just part of the game. But what will you do when you screw up is a tough question to answer. The most effective response is: learn from what didn't work, analyze the areas where we missed, examine why and determine what we can do going forward so as not to repeat the same mistakes. There will always be challenges to overcome and learning from our mistakes is the best answer. Skip the Trumpesque answer that we never miss a month or get captured (sorry I could not resist).
7. What are your thoughts on managing and measuring flow thru? This is a very technical question, but it's easily handled if you understand and utilize the concept. A super answer is: it's always our focus to maximize profits when revenues are higher in the current period compared to the last and focus on retention when revenues are lower. Each area should have a detailed plan for their payroll and expenses as well as utilize a monthly flow-thru analysis to determine exactly where costs are higher. With this information we can take the appropriate actions going forward to ensure we don't repeat the same missteps. The answer shows you know how to analyze the variances with the flow-thru concept and most importantly how to manage into the next month to continually get better.
8. Can you tell me your specific ideas on controlling payroll in the hotel? These guys are tough and it sounds like they are really trying to nail you down, but again if you know your stuff the answer is right in front of you. Each department must have an approved staffing guide and formula in my hotel. An approved list of fixed positions by department and a formula for determining variable payroll should be provided based on rooms occupied or cover counts in rooms and F&B. From this a weekly schedule is produced that revolves around measuring productivity with the goal of always

making or beating the monthly productivity targets. Wow – I think you just got the job!

9. How do you go about writing an effective monthly commentary that the owners will find useful? This question is calling out your understanding of the "full disclosure principle" as well as your broader leadership philosophy. The seasoned answer falls off the W (Write) in #4. The commentary serves three main purposes to help your hotel move forward:

- To tell the stakeholders what you see coming in their business that the financial statements cannot reveal like: competition, impending regulations, capital issues, human resource challenges, etc.
- It's an incredibly effective way to let your stakeholders know you're on top of the many challenges you collectively face, and you use these current variances to plan and manage future activities to mitigate negative impact and capitalize on the positive.
- By having your management team participate in the creation of the commentary you ensure that the future direction and challenges of the business are being met in all areas by your team.

10. As the GM what would be your personal leadership style? This is a wide-open question that gives you an opportunity to demonstrate how you see your role and what you will bring to the table during your tenure, should you get the job. I think a great answer goes something like this and it's two-fold. One, my belief as the GM of the hotel is that leadership is about developing my team and communicating the wants and needs of all stakeholders. This is done while continually moving the business forward. Secondly, leadership in a hotel is about knowing that all three pillars of the business are equal. We all come to work every day with a high level of enthusiasm and energy all the while knowing that the job is never done, and things will never be perfect! Sounds great right?

**DAVID LUND** – THE HOTEL FINANCIAL COACH  
[www.hotelfinancialcoach.com](http://www.hotelfinancialcoach.com)





## A PROFESSIONALLY DESIGNED INDUCTION AND ORIENTATION PROGRAM

**M**ore a bare necessity than a best practice and the prelude to a healthy beginning of a long relationship

The words 'Induction' and 'Orientation', though used synonymously, has somewhat different meanings. Induction is the process of introducing a new - comer to the organization and work environment, while Orientation refers to preparing an employee for his new job, department and culture. Consequently, Induction and Orientation go hand - in - hand.

Even though Induction and Orientation has a multitude of benefits - both to the employer and employee, some hotels do not assign due importance to it, resulting in poor attendance, inconsistency in program scheduling, content covered, and several other issues.

A new recruit will be worried, anxious and nervous when he or she walks into a new job. This can be greater with a school-leaver taking on his/her first job. The new environment will have many things he/she is seeing for the first time in his/her life including many new business-related words (jargon) h the new employee may not understand.

So, here are some of the benefits in investing on a proper Induction and Orientation Programme:-

1. The new comers will be made aware of the Vision and Mission of the Hotel and the short / long term goals of his/her department
2. He or she will get to know the contribution he/she will make towards achieving the above.
3. New employees will receive a comprehensive briefing of the Product i.e. history of the Hotel, Is it part of a chain of hotels, how many guest rooms there are, details of available F&B outlets, recreational facilities, operating timings and so on. This will enable him/her to handle frequently asked questions (FAQs) from by guests confidently, thereby maintaining high levels of professionalism and service.
4. The new employee will be introduced to the team: - from the General Manager to all Heads of Departments. Some hotels make it mandatory for the Management team to have lunch with the newcomers on the first day. This gives them the much needed morale boost, motivation and confidence, that the superiors are there to support them whenever needed and also gives them the opportunity to connect the names, faces and titles of the Management team. This will also prevent awkward moments where the staff does not know the General Manager and/or the Heads of Departments. Once, in a certain hotel, a newly recruited houseman asked a Head of Department, "Aiye, welawa keeyada?" not knowing to whom he was talking to. On another occasion, a team member asked for cigarettes from the expatriate General Manager, assuming that person to be a guest. The team member was unaware that that foreign person was the hotel's General Manager, nor did he realize that it was wrong to ask for cigarettes from a guest - as he had not properly briefed.
5. A new employee will get know the Hotel Rules, 'Dos & Don'ts' - all of which are vital to maintain discipline and to follow hotel policies properly.
6. Awareness of Customer Service - to realize that customers should be provided with the highest levels of service at all times.
7. What to do in cases of emergency - crucial for any hotel at times of crises.
8. The feeling that "I am a part of this wonderful team" and "this is how I fit in as a vital cog in the massive operation"
9. How can I grow with the company? If I perform my duties with commitment and do my best, this is the pathway for me to move on.
10. After the orientation, if the new comer feels that he has joined the right hotel, with superiors who are supportive and encouraging it will create a sense of belonging, and develop loyalty.
11. All of the above will contribute immensely in keeping high performing employees motivated and increase retention levels of your hotel.

**RUWAN PUNCHIHEWA, FCHSGA**

# PROPEL

by CHSGA

**T**he Ceylon Hotel Schools Graduates Association (CHSGA) in collaboration with Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM) recently launched the PROPEL program aimed at soft skills development of final year SLITHM students. The event was held on the 24th and 25th of August 2018 at Pegasus Reef Hotel.

"PROPEL" training program is a value addition to the already established curriculum of SLITHM. Soft skills development is vital for those who seek employment in the hospitality sector as they will be working in challenging environments where clear communication, presentation and public speaking are considered as core competencies.

The sustainability of this initiative will be vital in producing hospitality leaders who possess a wide range of skills required to take Sri Lankan hospitality to greater heights.

CHSGA will further collaborate with SLITHM to uplift standards of hospitality education which in return will also increase the brand value of the two organizations. 'PROPEL' is a training module focuses on adding value to the already commendable curriculum of the institute by adding a soft skill development program that would be parallel to the technical skill curriculum. The main objectives of 'PROPEL' program is improving the required Soft Skills of Intermediate Level and Final Year Management Diploma students in order for them to be fully competent in today's challenging hospitality industry while increasing the increasing the employability of students by developing industry needed competencies. This in turn will develop a pool of hospitality leaders to take on the Sri Lankan Hospitality to the future. Through this initiative, CHSGA will further continue its commitment to uplift standards of SLITHM and thereby increasing the brand value of SLITHM and CHSGA to value co-creation.



*Headed by Patrick Pereira - FCSHGA*



# SRI LANKA TOURISM and NATIONAL EXPORT STRATEGY for WELLNESS TOURISM

With the end of 25 year old civil war in 2009 that was mainly in the Northern and Eastern parts of the country, Sri Lanka has increased it is Tourist visits from 447,890 in that year to 2,333,796 in 2018. This is a fivefold increase in numbers over a period of 9 years.

Sri Lanka Tourism has received unprecedented government support in promoting the destination and upgrading the infrastructure. As a result the room capacity of 20,407 in 2009 has been increased to 35,986 (76% increase) in 2017. Occupancy of all establishments are 75.4% in 2017 from a 48.5% in 2009. The supply of rooms however remains less than what is required by the increase of arrivals. As a result, the Home Stay units have sprung up in many part of the country and are gaining popularity due to Airbnb and similar online travel agents.

## WORLD WELLNESS TOURISM

General Tourism broadly defines travel for pleasure or business and may be international or within the traveler's country. Wellness tourists also fall within this framework but differs being the Primary or Secondary. Former would be those who travel exclusively for the purpose of treatments and wellbeing activities while the latter combines Leisure and Exploring journey with a window of a few days on Wellness.

As for Sri Lanka Tourism, main stream continues to be traditional Tourists ranging from High end Boutique Hotels to back packers

who bring in diversity to Sri Lanka tourism. Ayurveda medical tourism has been one of the main slayers of Sri Lanka for a very long time and in direct competition with Kerala of India, has gained an edge in the traveler producing countries of Europe.

According to Global Wellness Institute (GWI), "Wellness tourism is travel for the purpose of promoting health and well-being through physical, psychological, or spiritual activities. It is motivated by desire for healthy living, disease prevention, stress reduction, management of poor lifestyle habits, and/or authentic experiences. Wellness activities are proactive, voluntary, non-invasive, and non-medical in nature".

Lonely Planet that has already identified Sri Lanka as the Destination of the year for 2019, says wellness tourism is the world's fastest growing travel sector. Reason for emergence of this segment is as a solution to, our hyper-connected existence.

Current life style of people of the world has resulted in much deterioration of general health and wellbeing. While wealth creation has taken place by the individuals and companies, neglected are one's own wellbeing. This has motivated people to combine the holiday for reversal of negative aspects of living and seeking life changing experiences. What used to be Sun and beach holidays have now become wellness and experiential holidays. A traveler who used to spend 90 % of holiday budget excluding Travel, now spends less than 50% on accommodation and engages in

Shopping, Experiences and Wellness. What used to be 3 or 4 week holidays are now 1 or 2 weeks.

Wellness has made it into the main-stream Hospitality with all major hotel chains designing Wellness / Wellbeing programs with the aid of alternative therapies and clean eating. All of them have invested in facilities substantially and some even have acquired Wellness brands to be affiliated to the hotel. Hyatt Hotels recently acquired an unknown but classy Spa Operator Exhale to ensure they offer the best in Wellness. Other examples are Westin Hotels with Peloton, Fairmont Hotels with Techno gym, Shangri-La with Lulu lemon and Mandarin Oriental Hotels with the medical specialists the Mayo Clinic.

Key Findings as per GWI Research:

- Wellness tourism grew from a \$563 billion market in 2015 to \$639 billion in 2017, or 6.5% annually, more than twice as fast as tourism overall (3.2%). It's forecast to grow even faster through 2022 (7.5% yearly), to reach \$919 billion.
- North America drives the most wellness tourism revenues (\$242 billion yearly) and Europe the most wellness trips (292 million) – but Asia-Pacific is the eye-opening growth leader, with wellness trips growing a whopping 33% in the last two years.
- China and India rank #1 and #2 for growth: adding roughly 22 million and 17 million wellness trips respectively from 2015-2017.

It can safely assume that the Ayurveda tourism is within this \$ 639 Billion and would constitute a very small percentage. Therefore what is left to be explored is a big new market in Tourism.

## SRI LANKA'S WELLNESS ASSETS

Any country with an Airport and road infrastructure cannot engage in Tourism and even more so on Wellness. It needs to have the main ingredients to deliver a worthwhile product that the traveler will embrace. Singapore for example has created many attractions for Tourism but there is no substitute for natural beauty of a country.

Some Wellness Assets for a country would be;

- Accommodation in perfect serene Locations
- Different Climatic conditions conducive for therapy
- Clean Air, water
- Richness in Flora and Fauna
- Traditional Medical – Ayurveda/ Natural healing services.
- Healthy Cuisine
- Spiritual and Holistic journey
- Hot / Thermal Springs
- Activity centers for trekking climbing etc.

Ophelia Yeung, GWI senior research fellow, pointed out Sri Lanka as an example, where the country can be under-developed but provides pristine assets in conjunction with traditional Ayurvedic health practices. The country has seen a tremendous rise in investment and arrivals since promoting it as such.

In holistic wellness journey, travelers are increasingly looking to connect with destinations through nature and local traditions. Ancient wellness in mankind was essentially the Ayurveda and Traditional Chinese Medicine dating back to 3,000 BC. Sri Lanka in the recent past has earned a good reputation as a genuine Ayurveda destinations and our expertise in delivering is world class.

Ayurveda as the leading agent in attracting Wellness tourist, Sri Lanka's Wellness Assets mentioned above are within the best in the world. The country is blessed with year round tropical weather and lush greenery. Different climatic conditions are accessible within a few hours of travelling.

## WELLNESS TRAVELLER

A typical hotel 30 or 40 years ago had Rooms, Food & Beverage and Swimming pool. When the traveler got more sophisticated every hotel needed a nice gym, then it was having a spa that became standard. In the last 10 years or so when wellness started surfacing in educated traveler's itinerary, hotels have gone far beyond that and incorporated life style changing programs that would have a take home pack in the form of menus and cooking classes to change in eating habits and, exercise routines and many more.

The new wellness traveler, both Primary and Secondary, seeks life changing experiences and expect changes for the reversal of negative effects of modern commercial information based economies. Knowledge workers take lead in this segment whose sedentary life styles require mind body and soul adjustments. Some of the activities that the New Wellness travelers seek are listed below and can be enlarged greatly with more offerings. These are already on offer with best of Eastern Wellness Resorts such Chiva-Som, Como Wellness, Kamalaya, Aman among many more than US\$ 1,000 per day destinations.

Ayurveda	Massage Steam / Sauna
Yoga	Acupressure
Acupuncture	Meditation
Aromatherapy	Fitness Programs
Music Therapy	Nutritional Counseling
Thalassotherapy	Halo therapy
Earthing Sessions Spa Treatments	Pilates
Tai Chi / Qi Gong	Chiropractic
Relaxation Therapy	Weight Loss methods
ExerciseHydrotherapy	Trekking / Biking and Mountain climbing.



Some of above are Naturopathy based treatments and are easily delivered in a Spa Operation. A Wellness resort however should go beyond Spa Resort and offer organized professional elements such as healthy living consultations, body analysis, natural nutraceutical supplements, specialized diets such as Ketogenic, Ayurvedic and Macrobiotic, Natural Detox mechanisms, outdoor fitness activities. It is pertinent to note the latest business venture by famous actress Angelina Jolie in promoting Keto Pure as a way of sliming wellness. Within a period of one year, it has become a multimillion dollar business.

#### NATIONAL EXPORT STRATEGY

The government through the Export Development Board in 2018 launched the NES where Wellness Tourism was identified as one of the key drivers of Exports. This segment was identified as new business and is to be promoted along with the regular tourism activities.

The NES focuses on the short and medium term approaches aimed at elevating the export sector of Sri Lanka from its current level of approximately USD 10 Billion annual figure to USD 28 Billion by the year 2022. Of this, the Service Sector is expected to contribute with a US\$ 7 billion (Rs. 1,260 Billion).

Six Focus Sectors of Sri Lanka National Export Strategy:

- Information Technology & Business Process Management (IT/BPM)
- **Wellness Tourism**
- Spices & Concentrates
- Boating Industry
- Processed Food & Beverages
- Electrical and Electronic Components

NES will Support Tourism with Main market opportunities

- Anchor market development on a strong quality assurance mechanism for existing German and Japanese markets, and to be able to diversify into new ones.
- Moved to new untapped markets, such as the United Kingdom, Sweden, the Russian Federation and Eastern Europe, and Gulf States and business cities in the Far East.

NES Strategy will result in

- Develop a framework for this nascent sector, both institutional and regulatory, to ensure controlled expansion and avoid negative impacts (quality, environment, reputation, etc.).
- Support gazettement of the Ayurveda Act and complement it with additional regulations for other wellness services to establish a strong quality assurance system.
- Foster R&D efforts, develop IP protection and support branding and promotion of the industry

In order to achieve above objectives the Budget presented on 5th March 2019 has allocated Rs. 250 Million for the purpose of promoting identified sectors. These will support the following activities.

- Trade Information and Promotion
- National Quality Infrastructure
- Innovation and R&D (This strategy was done by World Bank with Ministry of Development Strategies & International Trade (MoDSIT)
- Logistics

#### CONCLUSION

Tourism in Sri Lanka engage greatly in Ayurveda promotions and to the credit of our operators, they have done a remarkable job even in the absence of regulatory body to monitor the establishments and services to tourists. This process however was started recently and is not fully functional. Outside this segment of Wellness travelers of the World, there is a larger slice of untapped foreign exchange potential in Wellness Tourism. It is now the time for Sri Lanka Tourism to reap benefits of this Global Trend.

In conclusion, as Sri Lanka move towards increasing the number of Tourist Arrivals, the government is mindful of capacity and has to ensure the qualitative improvement supercedes the quantity increase. Therein lies the best solution in attracting Wellness Tourism going beyond simply Ayurveda, Sri Lanka should work towards achieving the Best Wellness destination in the world and all infrastructure is available with only the dedication required.

**UPUL GAMAGE**  
FCHSGA, NBA UNI. J



## SLITHM CATERING TO VITAL NEEDS OF THE NATION AND YOUTH



#### OUR VISION

“To be the Center of Excellence in Training and Education for Human Resource Development of Tourism and Hospitality Industry in Asia.”

#### OUR MISSION

- Identify, design and deliver training and education programmes in travel, tourism and hospitality management to produce the highest quality professionals for the tourism and hospitality industry.
- Train the required manpower to meet the demand for tourism and hospitality industry by addressing ever changing and challenging trends in tourism and hospitality industry.
- Deliver tourism and hospitality education and training on par with national and international standards while promoting Sri Lankan hospitality and its values to global heights.
- Provide equal opportunities to create an equitable working environment for all youths living indifferent parts of the country while ensuring sustainable growth in the tourism and hospitality industry.
- Expand the capacity of delivering tourism and hospitality education by creating partnership with local and international education entities in a mutually beneficial manner.
- To demonstrate excellence through research in tourism and hospitality that adds to international knowledge and connectedness.

“ We are a human resource training organization and we deal with two types of Human resources. Trainers and trainees. Being a student centric organization, great care is taken that each and everyone that enters the institute leaves competent and immediately employable. To this end not only do we training infrastructure but also in selecting, improving and expanding our faculty of trainers.”

**BUDDHIKA HEWAWASAM**  
(Director General – Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Management)

#### 3 SIMPLE STEPS TO START ON A GREAT CAREER

##### Step 01:

Complete the SLITHM Application form hand it over to Colombo or to the Principle at the Provincial at the Collages, the Registrar’s Office of the SLITHM Colombo.

##### Step 02:

Suitable candidates will then be called for an interview

##### Step 03:

If your application is successful and you are selected, the Institute will send you a confirmation letter indicating the courses that you have been selected for. You may pay the fees in installments, according to your course duration.

(Application forms can be downloaded from our website or it could be obtain from the SLITHM Colombo Office and Provincial Collages Island- Wide)

#### WHY CHOOSE A CAREER IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY?

The answer is obvious. Worldwide more people are traveling then ever before, both for leisure and business. This is especially seen from the emerging superpowers India and China China which didn’t have a single tourist departure 30 years ago, now has a number of visitors to Sri Lanka in increasing. This is one sector where growth is definitely continuous. Start your career in this sector and you too can start growing.

*Join hands with the nation’s pioneer of excellence in hospitality.*

“The World is a book,  
and those who do not travel  
read only a page.”  
Saint Augustine

**T**ourist arrivals in Sri Lanka are forever increasing. The country is targeting a total of 2.5 million in the year 2019. While tourists from European Countries visit more in the traditional “Season” tourists from Asian countries visit Sri Lanka all year around. With the rising mobility of the local population, Domestic tourists have also greatly increased. After a lapse of nearly thirty years, two international chains of hotels have started operations in Colombo. A slew of local and international brands have started hotels and resorts all over the country. Even though the infrastructure to accommodate travelers has increased, one vital factor needed for the sustainability of this growth is lagging behind. It is the skilled human resource factor. By 2020 it is estimated that the skilled workers needed will be at least 400,000. This is why the work of the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM) has become critical.

### THE BEGINNINGS

SLITHM traces its roots to the 1960s when the Ceylon Hotel School (CHS) was established. It was housed at the old Colombo Club building (later named Samudra hotel) located on the Galle Face Center Road and was there until 1979. It provided training for just a handful of students. Four basic courses namely cookery, front office, housekeeping and F&B were the areas of training available.

Today the successor to the CHS, SLITHM is the foremost premiere state of the art training institution established by the Government of Sri Lanka in 1966 by an act of Parliament in collaboration with the technical expertise of the International Labour organization (ILO) to train young men and women in the complex field of Hospitality and Travel Industry which presently comes under the purview of Ministry of Tourism Development & Christian Religious affairs.

### SPREADING IT’S WINGS

SLITHM is spreading its wings, both in depth and extent. Today, the courses that they offer are numerous as you could see below.

- Diploma in Hotel & Catering Operations
  - National Diploma in Hospitality Management
  - National Tourist Guide Training Program
  - Chauffeur Tourist Guide Training Program
  - Pastry & Bakery Courses
  - One month Apprenticeship Courses
  - Certificate level courses
1. Professional Cookery
  2. Food & Beverages (Restaurant & Bar Service)
  3. Front Office/ Reception
  4. Hotel Housekeeping

Also the SLITHM has now established campuses in far flung corners of the country. Currently, besides the main campus in Colombo it has established satellites in Anuradhapura, Bandarawela, Kandy, Koggala, Kurunegala, Ratnapura & Pasikudah. Brand new campus is opened in Jaffna as the 8th Member on 27th September 2018. This has enabled youth from the rural areas to gain skills in this high- demand sector. Also, obviously the number of persons being trained has increased exponentially. According to an ILO report only around 300 students completed courses in the early 1980s. However, presently almost 6000 students are trained by the SLITHM annually.

### THE HEADS OF THE INSTITUTES ISLAND WIDE

Colombo	Mr. S.A. Hathurusinghe	Principle/ Senior Lecturer
Anuradhapura	Mr. K.D.Y.N. Kahatapitigama	Principle/ Senior Lecturer
Bandarawela	Mr.H.K.C. Perera	Principle/ Senior Lecturer
Kandy	Mr.R.W.G.K. Wickramasinghe	Principle/ Senior Lecturer
Koggala	Mr.R.D.A. Lenard	Principle/ Senior Lecturer
Kurunegala	Mr.E.K.Sarath Kumara	Principle/ Senior Lecturer
Ratnapura	Mr. Kanishka N. Jayathunga	Principle/ Senior Lecturer
Pasikudah	Mr.G.L.B.R. Perera	Principle/ Senior Lecturer

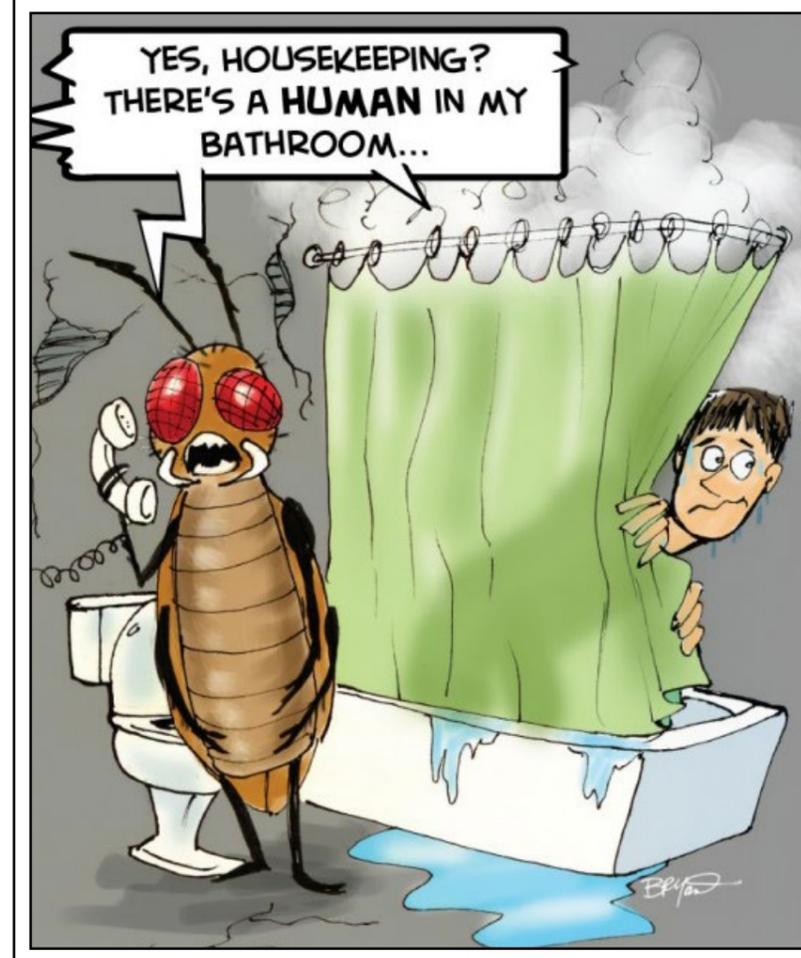
### LOCAL TRAININGS TO MATCH GLOBAL NEEDS

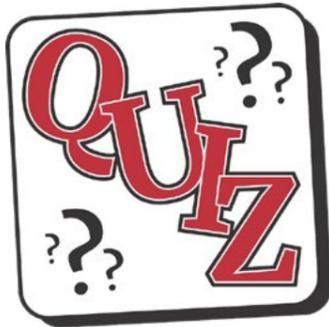
The SLITHM has been at the forefront of training high caliber professionals to meet not only the national demands of this rapidly expanding industry for the last 49 years, but also to cater for the global requirements. The fact that many of the alumni of SLITHM are employed all over the world is good testament for the sound foundation they receive as they embark on a career on Hospitality. The theme of SLITHM is “Taking Sri Lanka to Global Heights – A journey towards excellence in Sri Lankan Hospitality.” The Management and faculty are working hard to make this a reality.

### TRAINING FACILITIES

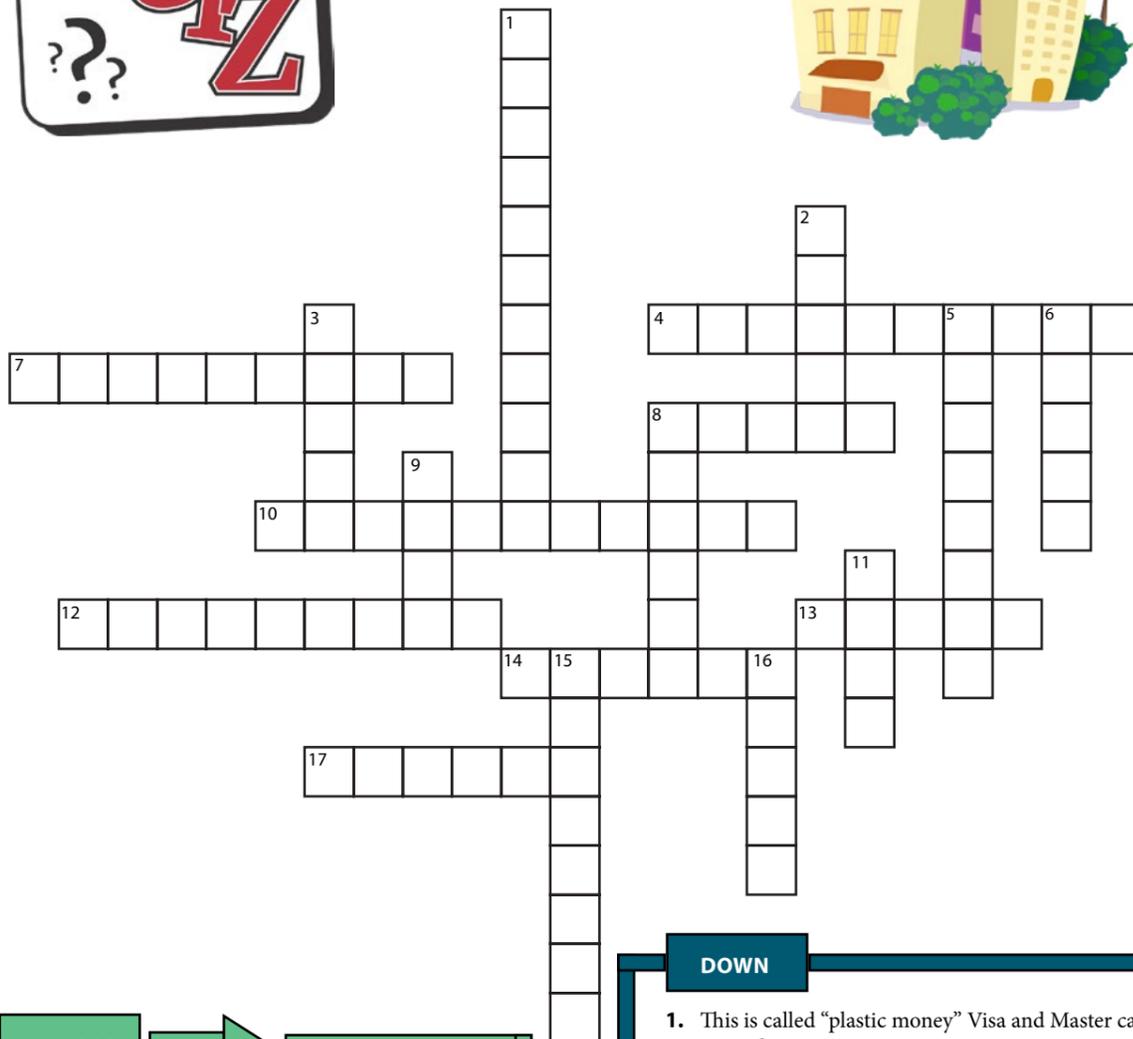
A student is as good as the teacher and the school. SLITHM has a qualified and dedicated faculty of lecturers, not only in Colombo but also in its satellite campus. True to life hands-on training is provided in the facilities of the school whether it be a fully equipped kitchen or a hotel grade laundry, students get the training in a realistic work environment.

# Cartoon





# AT THE HOTEL



### ACROSS

- 4. If you would like the clerk to call you in the morning you ask for a "\_\_\_\_\_".
- 7. There is nothing wrong.
- 8. A luxury room in a hotel. Sometimes two or three rooms together. You might stay here if you are on your honeymoon.
- 10. Another way to say "2nd story."
- 12. Something exists and is ready to be used.
- 13. A place you can stay when you are away from home.
- 14. Take something for payment.
- 17. A hotel room with two beds.

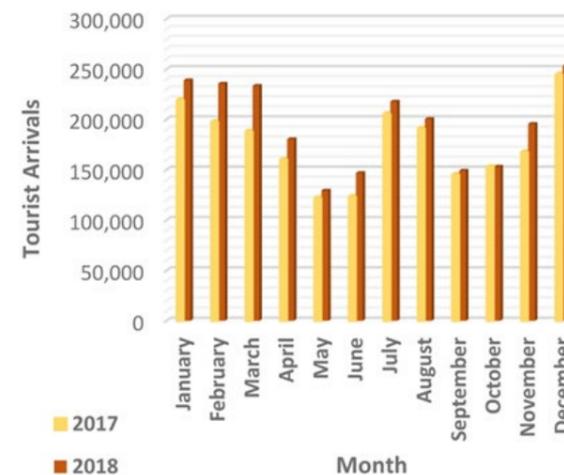
### DOWN

- 1. This is called "plastic money" Visa and Master card are examples.
- 2. A Visitor or customer.
- 3. If there is nobody with you, you are \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5. Sons and daughters are examples of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6. The main entrance room in a hotel or bank.
- 8. This is another way to say husband or wife.
- 9. This is like a bathtub but much larger. You can go swimming in it.
- 11. Another way to say price. "How much does this \_\_\_\_\_?"
- 15. The time you must leave the hotel by in the morning or pay for another day.
- 16. Something we use to dry off after swimming or a shower.

## OBSCURE FIGURES PUBLISHED ON THE TOURISM & HOSPITALITY SECTOR IN SRI LANKA?

The hotel industry is highly susceptible to tourism-related crisis events. The high degree of sensitivity of hotel room demand to macro-environmental determinants creates acute challenges for hotel industry stakeholders. There are four main disrupters identified in this article "political in-stability, extremists groups, natural disasters, and pandemics" are demand shocks which, exacerbated by ever-changing international and domestic tourists' expectations, manifest themselves into reduced hotel sales revenue. The domestic macro-environmental factors on the Sri Lankan hotel industry does not reflect negative impacts derived from the four disruptors described in this article. Out of the four disruptors; the first impacting on the domestic macro-environment is the "Political Instability" which should effect the hotel industry during the month of October 2018.

Total Tourist Arrivals in 2018 up 10.3%  
January, 7, 2019



Month	2017	2018	% Change 2017/2018
January	217,360	238,924	8.9
February	197,517	235,618	19.3
March	188,076	233,382	24.1
April	160,249	180,429	12.6
May	121,891	129,466	6.2
June	123,351	146,828	19.0
July	205,482	217,829	6.0
August	190,928	200,359	4.9
September	145,077	149,087	2.8
October	152,429	153,123	0.5
November	167,511	195,582	16.8
December	244,536	253,169	3.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,116,407</b>	<b>2,333,796</b>	<b>10.3</b>

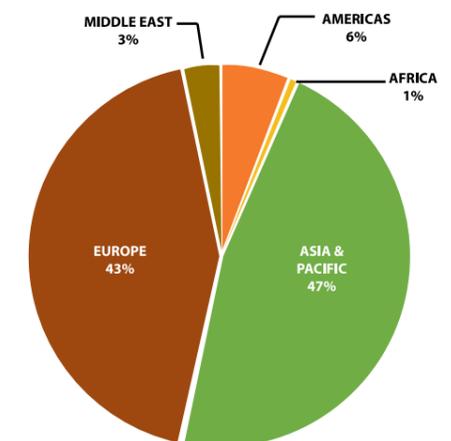
<http://bizenglish.adaderana.lk/total-tourist-arrivals-in-2018-up-10-3/>

But the above data reveals a higher number of tourist arrivals compared to 2017 October was achieved despite the political instability which occurred in October 2018. Another serious set-back to the tourism industry was the partial closure of the country's main airport from January to April 2017 where many airlines either scaled down operation or completely halted flights to Co-lombo.

### TOURIST ARRIVALS BY REGION

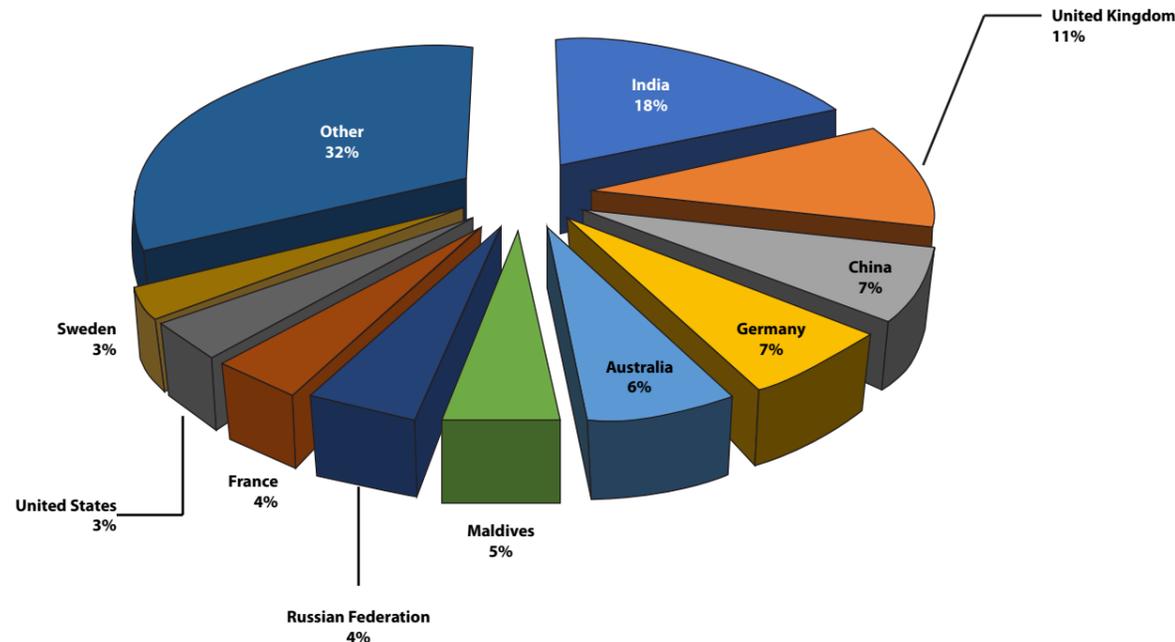
Asia and Pacific continued to be the largest source of tourist traffic to Sri Lanka with 47% of the total traffic received in December 2018.

Europe accounted for 43% of the total traffic, Americas 6%, Middle East 3% and Africa 1%



## TOP TEN SOURCE MARKETS

India, United Kingdom, China, Germany and Australia were Sri Lanka's top five international tourist generating markets in the month of December this year. India was the source of tourist traffic to Sri Lanka with 18% of the total traffic received in December 2018. United Kingdom accounted for 11% of the total traffic, while China, Germany and Australia accounted for 7%, 7% and 6% respectively.



As per a stakeholder in the tourism & hospitality industry; "He said the month of October in 2018 would go down in Sri Lanka's history as one of the worst drops of tourist arrivals. The foreign offices of these western governments issued the caution notice for Sri Lanka by publicizing these warnings on their websites which in return triggered all major tour operators to issue the publication of the Sri Lanka caution notice to all their travel agency outlets".

<http://www.dailymirror.lk/article/Drop-in-tourist-arrivals-160238.html>

The second disruptor for Tourism & Hospitality sector was affiliated to the "extremists groups" operating in Sri Lanka which creates a fear psychosis & rustling in the issuance of travel advisories by westerner governments. **AVA Group advisories** - "Many news reports that emerged from the north produced details related to a criminal gang called 'Ava' group wreaking havoc in certain areas and the purported attempts being made for the revival of the LTTE by some extremist elements. Let alone, these are two issues that have political implications, both in and outside the Northern Province".

<http://www.dailymirror.lk/article/-Ava-group-a-social-phenomenon-in-Jaffna--154517.html>

**The Bodu Bala Sena BBS** - (translated as the Buddhist Power Force) "is a radical Sinhalese Buddhist nationalist organisation based in Colombo, Sri Lanka that was formed during 2012. The BBS seeks the enforcement of Buddhist predominance in Sri Lanka. It has organised various campaigns against the country's minority Muslim and Christian communities which, according to the organisation, poses a threat to Sri Lanka's Sinhalese-Buddhist identity. The BBS engages in hate speech and attacks against minority religions. Its headquarters are located at Sri Sambuddha Jayanthi Mandira in Colombo. Sri Sambuddha Jayanthi Mandira is owned by the Buddhist Cultural Centre, an organisation founded by Kirama Wimalajothi. Ethnicity and religion are closely linked in Sri Lanka, with the Sinhalese majority predominantly Buddhist, the Tamils mostly Hindu, and Muslims regarded as a separate ethnic group".

<https://www.trackingterrorism.org/group/bodu-bala-sena>

"In a travel advisory, Canadians have been asked to "exercise a high degree of caution when travelling to Sri Lanka due to the ongoing political unrest throughout the country. Even Canadians of Tamil descent have faced "difficulties, including arrest and detention," as the military maintains a stronghold in the country's northern and

eastern areas".

[http://www.island.lk/index.php?page\\_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code\\_title=196893](http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=196893)

Australian Government Travel advisories for Sri Lanka (December 2018)

- Exercise normal safety precautions in Sri Lanka. Use common sense. Look out for suspicious behaviour as you would in Australia. Monitor the media and other sources for changes to local conditions.
- Avoid all demonstrations and large public gatherings, as they may turn violent. Monitor local media for updates. See Safety and security
- All regions of Sri Lanka experience outbreaks of dengue fever. Over 185,000 suspected cases of dengue fever were reported in 2017. Protect yourself from mosquitos. See Health
- Some security forces maintain a visible presence, particularly in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Military and police checkpoints are sometimes established and roads closed without warning. See Safety and security
- In the Northern and Eastern Provinces, stay on main roads and pay close attention to signs warning of landmines. See Safety and security
- Pay careful attention to your visa type. You could be detained or deported if you don't comply with your visa conditions

[https://smartraveller.gov.au/Countries/asia/south/Pages/sri\\_lanka.aspx](https://smartraveller.gov.au/Countries/asia/south/Pages/sri_lanka.aspx)

The third disruptor for tourism in Sri Lanka evolves around the **pandemic decease** resulting from the reported cases of "dengue deaths" through the media, especially during the monsoon sea-sons.

"Minister of Health Rajitha Senaratne advised the Dengue Control Unit to commence this pro-gram as the risk of dengue breeding sites developing had increased due to the shower spells the country has experienced. The Unit reported that although 8988 cases were reported within the first week of July, the number decreased to 2484 by the fourth week of July. Furthermore, out of the 1,560,500,000 cases of dengue patients that were reported during this year (2017), 327 were reported dead".

<http://www.adaderana.lk/news/42306/dengue-claims-327-lives-min-of-health-to-execute-swift-action-plan>

This was followed by an unprecedented dengue epidemic cantered around the commercial capital Colombo that lasted several months which too resulted in negative reports on international media resulting in at least one country issuing a travel advisory based on the issue. [http://www.island.lk/index.php?page\\_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code\\_title=196893](http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=196893)

The final disruptor for tourism in Sri Lanka is "Natural Disasters" due to global warning caused by carbon

emissions. The southern half of the country experienced devastating floods that cut off access to many resort areas resulting in adverse international media publicity that had an impact on forward bookings in 2017 & 2018.

"Sri Lanka is ranked the second-worst affected country in relation to extreme weather events in 2017, only next to Puerto Rico, in the report, Global Climate Risk Index 2019, produced recently by the climate think-tank, Germanwatch".

<http://www.sundaytimes.lk/181223/news/lanka-hugely-vulnerable-to-climate-crises-report-326212.html>

It is evident that the direct impacts of domestic macro-environmental disruptors mentioned in this article according to the owners & senior managers of the industry has effected negatively on the Sri Lankan tourism & hospitality industry performance. But on the contrary all the figures & data published by the stakeholders thus far does not reflect any negative impacts from the disruption to this sector. Hence further research must be carried out on the figures & data to verify the true picture of the real impacts from the above macroeconomic disruptors to this sector. The media also has a pivotal role in reporting accurate authenticated validated figures & data which provides investors a true insight into the financial viability of this sector to obtain healthy returns on their investments (ROI).

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Lecturer Mr. Peter R FERNANDO (BBHM, MHM. MIH), Australian College of Business & Technology (ACBT) Colombo Campus affiliated to Edith Cowan University (ECU) Perth Western Australia.

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<http://www.dailymirror.lk/article/-Ava-group-a-social-phenomenon-in-Jaffna--154517.html>  
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