



“Leading the fight against climate change within the hospitality sector”

by *Sonu Shivasani*

OPINION ARTICLE

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The Value of Hoteliers Helping Hoteliers

KEYS TO SUCCESS™

By **John Hogan, CHA CHMS CHE CHO**

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*Hospitality Tip of the Week™: Focus on
Action*

*An idea that is developed and put into
action is more important than an idea that
exists only as an idea. Buddha*



In my various roles as an educator, a keynote speaker, a consultant and or a hospitality executive, I have learned there are many ways to share stories that effectively communicate the message. While I enjoy leading workshops, I have also discovered that carefully using a blend of people in a panel who are peers to the group can dramatically increase interaction, audience participation and achieve the end result of communicating the desired message.

Over the last few years, I have served as a panelist at some large venues such as the International Hotel & Restaurant Show in New York City and at a number of hospitality

meeting. I have also had the privilege of serving as the panel moderator at such events as an annual AAHOA meeting, several AH&LA meetings and at a number of brand conventions.

In this latter role, I have also learned it takes a certain amount of skill and tact to balance the inevitable egos that may surface on panels, especially if the topic is controversial or if there are perhaps competing brand representatives trying to gain position.

Below are seven questions I used at a very successful program on Guest Service for an international organization. The panelists were all operating general managers and/or owners of properties of different sizes, locations, service levels and prices. There were more questions in the session and there was Q&A with the audience at this particular program. The five panelists had a preview of some of the questions, but there was no limit set on responses.

7 Sample Questions

1. How do you define excellent Customer Service?
2. How do you compete with the brands or chains that offer a 100% guarantee? (Looking for specific examples)
3. We often hear that line level employees feel they do not have enough empowerment to succeed at their jobs. What do you do at your hotel?
4. Who follows up at your hotel if there is a problem? What about the guest who has already left and you learn about a problem?
5. Can you share some examples of providing excellence in service in areas outside of the front office?
6. Can you describe and share a funny or amusing customer service problem that had happened to you as

7. Can you quantify PROFITABILITY with delivering better service?

I have found that these HOTELIER HELPING HOTELIER Panels can have a major and positive impact on an overall program, but they must be well moderated and the panelists set at ease, especially if this is their first time to participate. If readers are interested in some of the answers to these questions, send me a note and I will recap them in a future column. I would also be interested in supporting your association or company meeting in this manner or with some other program that meets your needs

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