

Hospitality Management a brief introduction Roy C Wood

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Hospitality as a context to study management offers unique opportunities for learners and researchers because of the complexities of operations and the transferability of learning across other service sectors. A number of recent efforts to offer insights to new hospitality students have been attempted by a number of hospitality academics (Baker and Huyton, 2001; Powers and Barrows, 2011; Walker and Walker, 2014). Considering the slow rate of change we see in the hospitality industry one could argue the redundancy of yet one more introductory text in hospitality management.

Yet this book provides industry insights and hospitality management principles in a concise manner making it a great addition to the arsenal of a new hospitality management student. Introductory texts have often tried to fit too much into a single volume delivering a cumbersome and unwieldy tool to hospitality management learners. This book avoids the trap of describing and attempting to analyse every hospitality sector. This may be seen as a weakness by some academics but the approach allows the author to deliver insightful hospitality essentials in just about 151 pages. The book title after all clearly states that this is meant to be a brief introduction.

I have only one minor concern and one regret with this book. The concern is that insights in the authors preface and the first chapter could be lost in the eyes of an undergraduate student that has not read much about hospitality. The regret is that if the author attempted to go with his original intention and delivered a

hotel management focused book this book would be even more concise and a great reference book to be utilized as supporting other introductory texts.

There are nine chapters in this book addressing hospitality management definitions, industry structure, human resources, food and beverage, management, marketing and education. Chapter titles avoid cliché approach of boring titles and instead work as markers that make the chapter intended content clear to readers that have minimal or no previous reading about the nature and scope of the hospitality industry.

In the first chapter the author challenges what has become the norm, seeing hospitality as a smaller part of the tourism industry, the author recognises a number of approaches in developing an understanding of hospitality and hospitality management but I am not sure that it clearly answers the key question of the chapter “Where are we going?”. The second chapter is an easier read for students and the various tables help students better understand the nature of the industry. The third chapter identifies a number of human resource issues and offers early insights to readers that the industry may not be as people oriented for its internal customers as it is for its external ones. The accommodation chapter does a good job introducing the reader to the hotel accommodation but misses out on other types of accommodation in hospitality such as hostels, Bed and Breakfast establishments, and would have been good to see some introductory remarks about key challengers to accommodation such as Airbnb and couch surfing (although the author does mention Airbnb in the conclusions chapter). The fifth chapter concisely introduces the reader to food and beverage management principles and research approaches. The sixth chapter mainly focuses with hotel marketing with a brief commentary on

restaurants. The seventh chapter considers the role of a manager in hospitality with the key focus in hotels and in combination with the eight chapter that delivers key insights in hospitality management education it can allow students to engage in deeper thinking and consider sooner rather than later if this is an industry they wish to pursue a career in. The concluding chapter summarizes the key themes and insights of the previous chapters and offers a positive conclusion for the industry at least and a hopeful one for the future of hospitality education and research.

The book clearly states early on that it was originally intended to cover the hotel sector yet using the term hospitality management leaves the reader with the feeling that the book often marginalizes all other sectors in the analysis and evidence gathering. Still this is a book that can strongly compliment the reading list of hospitality students. Written by a prolific researcher and educator of hospitality management it offers insights and debates that would interest not only students but also academics of hospitality management.

References:

Baker, K. & Huyton, J. 2001, *Hospitality management: an introduction*, Hospitality Press, Melbourne, Australia.

Powers, T.F. & Barrows, C.W. 2011, *Introduction to management in the hospitality industry*, 10th edn, Wiley, Chichester; Hoboken, N.J.;

Walker, J.R. & Walker, J.T. 2014, *Introduction to hospitality management*, 4th edition; Pearson new international edition.; edn, Pearson, Harlow, Essex.