Reference Points: Hotel Management Training In The United States and Europe

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Reference Points: Hotel Management Training In The United States and Europe

Abstract
Different cultures and historical precedents produce a broad range of influences on the training of hotel managers in Europe and the United States. The author isolates a certain number of facts the nature of which clarify an understanding of two attitudes which complement each other to the benefit of their common objective - efficient professional training.

Keywords
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Different cultures and historical precedents produce a broad range of influences on the training of hotel managers in Europe and the United States. The author isolates a certain number of facts the nature of which clarify an understanding of two attitudes which complement each other to the benefit of their common objective—efficient professional training.

European management, like American management before it, is undergoing a major evolution with regard to both the technique of management and the problems of professional training so closely connected to it. The need to take up new industrial and commercial challenges, the putting into practice of managerial principles derived from customer feedback, the research discoveries with direct benefits for management, and the recruitment of future managers and their training are all facets of the extraordinary acceleration which is the outstanding feature of the contemporary business scene.

Nobody will contest the fact that many of the numerous economic, social, and professional innovations introduced in Europe since World War II originated in the New World, more particularly in the quick take-off areas of the United States. Here it was first understood that faced with the ever-varying demands of a vast market, it was essential to create the future, cut out deadwood, slim down existing structures, decentralize, diversify people's contributions, and inspire a climate of confidence in the future of the enterprise.

It was also in the United States that brainstorming and similar techniques, introduced at a decisive moment in the industrial mutation, yielded immediate and measurable results. After a time lag, Europe roused itself from its lethargy and began to observe, judge, and select these new approaches—often without testing them. But, in fact, the Old World, more parochial in the New World, more particularistic in the quick social and professional innovations introduced in Europe, was not immune to their effects. The European business scene was looking for a new orientation which could respond to the changing economic environment and the industrial challenges of the new century, and the decision to adopt new managerial principles derived from customer feedback, the need to take up new industrial and commercial challenges, and the need to improve efficiency in the production of goods and services, led to the adoption of different management and organizational models across Europe.
"When America shivers, Europe sneezes!" is a well-known expression often repeated by economists, and the evidence is convincing. The dependence, soon to be the inter-dependence of Europe and the U.S.A., is the materialization today of the complementarity argued more than 200 years ago by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, spiritual father of the French Revolution, who, in his still modern teachings, pictured the "citizen of the world."

"Non omnia possums omnes."

The present actuality on the rocky road to this ideal (despite the seemingly endless confrontations which exist between various super powers, and between some religious groups) seems to call for a cosmopolitanization of thought and methodology, the lowering of national boundaries through economic alliances such as the European Economic Community. The emergence of international chains in the hotel and restaurant fields, and the cooperative joint ventures which have been undertaken by educational institutions and operating companies from different parts of the world are some examples of this trend.

The further osmotic movement of mores, music, and dress appears to have become an acceptable process as this new "citizen of the world" emerges. Much of the modal shift has taken place as the young emulate fashions and behavior which they observe in films and periodicals. However, some of it has happened as cultures are carried across geographical boundaries by radio, recordings, or people. Contributing to this emulation process, of course, has been the emergence of the multi-national corporations - be they manufacturing, entertainment, or hospitality related. In an attempt to create or capture new markets, many advertising dollars have been spent in the promotion of products, services, or ideas.

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Although current trends may have accelerated previously, new concepts have been created, new ideas have been formed, and new products have been developed. One of the best examples of this trend is the chain hotel. The emergence of the European Economic Community, the lowering of national boundaries through economic alliances such as the European Economic Community, and the cooperative joint ventures which have been undertaken by educational institutions and operating companies from different parts of the world are examples of this trend.

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assessments will be decidedly arbitrary and subjective. Comparison in this case cannot be treated in terms of quantifiable scientific values, and can only be justified by the study of accumulated experiences and national symbols.

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Transition Is From Mosaic To Monoculture

from The Publisher

assessments will be decidedly arbitrary and subjective.
In consideration of these factors, professional training in Europe was duty bound to take account of the wide diversity of cultures represented, of the heterogeneous previous education, of the difficulties of language, and of the lack of common identity to a less liberal selection of teaching methods. For the initiators, it was a question not just of putting together a program intended to provide technical know-how about the hospital industry and tourism industries, but, above all, of developing the training institute into a real school of life, with the aim of intermingling this variety of human material while guiding each and every student through an education where attitudes would play as important a role as fundamental professional knowledge. Only thus could they create a genuine community of interests within groups and between individuals who would inevitably have to learn to work together and respect each other if they were to succeed in the real world.

American Potential Becomes European Complementarity

In the practice of tourism, the United States, with its population as the foremost potential travel market and its civil air fleet quickly converted to the Jet Age by efficient war-experienced airlines, became the dominant force. It exported its concept of the international chain hotel with all the inherent control systems, customer service requirements, and room accoutrements. In addition, it geared up a junior college and senior university movement in the discipline of hotel and restaurant management, which would provide the management staff to operate these worldwide facilities. Operating under standards designed in New York, Seattle, Boston, or Chicago, the chain hotels of the 1950s and 1960s found great success in Europe and elsewhere in the world. With the American traveler as its major target, and with a philosophy which often seemed to say "if it's American, it must be good," the chain hotel established itself as a powerful force in the world. These new organizations met needs, made profits, and served as posts for managers and department heads who had mostly been trained in the United States, and who carried their conceptual and technical knowledge into different cultural areas.

Basking in this prosperity, the chain operations also served to suggest the American way of hospitality education as a desirable, if not a necessary prerequisite for the practice of good hospitality management. This condition has not, however, continued unabated. Although the chain hotel of the United States remains, the flow of hotel chains has begun in the opposite direction as well. In addition, many United States hotel companies, now operating internationally, prefer to hire local nationals who have been trained in other than United States schools, and to provide them with only specialized training in the area of hospitality. This has been true in other than United States schools, both in Europe and in the United States, as well. Many United States hotels, for example, have been founded on the foundations of the Swiss hotel schools which support the chain hotel of the United States in many respects. Although these organizations have often been founded on the foundations of the Swiss hotel schools which support the chain hotel of the United States in many respects.

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Throughout this metamorphosis period, the Swiss hotel industry, with the Swiss hotel schools which support it, has been able to maintain its excellent reputation—giving in fair measure of its background and experience, while gaining in turn from American methodology and concepts.
The European style of education and performance in hospitality is predicated upon a model which has been constructed over hundreds of years. Tradition, rooted in a long, fruitful, and classical experience, is an important element that is looked upon as an overriding factor to be nurtured, protected, and emulated both in theory and practice. Innovation is not to be stymied, nor modernization quelled, but it is sometimes difficult to become excited about a new concept, method, or design when it is compared with a process which has existed for hundreds of years.

If a three-year apprenticeship has long been required before a waiter in Switzerland is considered qualified to serve the guest, why should much credence be given to the modular specialization of auxiliary food service workers in such operations as fast food? In the United States, something new generally replaces and overcomes something old. In Europe, something new generally embellishes something which is old. If a hotel in New York has become old and obsolete, it will probably be demolished by implosion, and replaced by a modern structure which is new. If a hotel in Paris, however, is old, it will probably be renovated to return it to a high state of elegance. Its exterior style would probably be maintained, and its interior style might be altered to meet the needs of the day.

In some countries, the search for solutions to primary problems affecting one sector of the economy in difficulty, for example, or general applied research, is entrusted to the universities because they offer a concentration of intelligence allied to optimal conditions of work and impartiality. The universities cannot but benefit from such positive discrimination in their favor. If research and applied research is entrusted to the universities because of general applied research, it is entrusted to the universities because of expertise and excellence. To get a researcher — and a scientist — and to develop their skills to their potential in the United States generally takes an education in the university, in the graduate school, and in the postgraduate school. In Europe, this is generally not the case. The universities here, especially the smaller universities and the universities in the provinces, are not able to provide the same level of expertise and excellence as the universities in the United States. The universities in the United States are generally larger and have more resources to provide the same level of expertise and excellence as the universities in Europe.

In consequence, other enterprises, which have the means (notably big industry) carry out their own studies, investigations, and research, oriented, of course, toward their own specific needs. Professional schools act no differently in developing their study programs. In Europe, many excellent professional schools have developed in parallel to the universities, which tend to live in the intellectual euphoria of the ivory tower, and which have been developed to provide education to students who want to become professionals in the hospitality industry. In the United States, professional schools are generally located in universities, and are part of the university system.

It is tempting to affirm that schools of hotel management in U.S. universities are often below the level of excellence expected of hotels and restaurants in the United States. This is not to say that the schools in the United States are not excellent, but rather that they are not as excellent as the schools in Europe. The schools in Europe are generally located in cities with a long history of hospitality, and are part of the city's culture. The schools in the United States are generally located in cities with a short history of hospitality, and are part of the city's culture.

Despite its name, the university can no longer be the home of all knowledge and all professions; it must conserve its real vocation: the social sciences, research, and the graduate school at the cutting edge of intellectual and technological progress. The universities, in Europe, are generally located in cities with a long history of hospitality, and are part of the city's culture. The universities in the United States are generally located in cities with a short history of hospitality, and are part of the city's culture.

The European style of education and performance in hospitality is not always the best, but it is often the best. The United States, on the other hand, is often considered the best, but it is often not the best. The European style of education and performance in hospitality is not always the best, but it is often the best. The United States, on the other hand, is often considered the best, but it is often not the best.
One professor, conditional obligations are defined and the faculty student's interest.

In the U.S. the primary task of schools whoseomitting common tasks is to
the school as a whole. To provide students with the necessary education for
more impressive and professional, than similar in the U.S. system, "are not
the measure of professional success. In the U.S., the university system, especially
academic freedom, very marked in the university system, especially
the bond linking the teacher to the European system is more appropriate. In the majority of cases, it
requires considerable availability, inside a fairly rigid hierarchy which
enables the faculty head to intervene with more direct authority than
embraces closely related and yet distinct. In that sense, the bond linking the teacher to the
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Communication and cross-disciplinary exchanges which will insure that people work together and not each in his own corner.

Electronic data-processing is rather a special discipline, not least because of its youth, but it illustrates the differences which can exist between the pedagogical systems observed in the U.S. and those operating in certain European schools.

In the United States, in general, observation reveals the plenitude of equipment, with generously-fitted classrooms and laboratories, the latter occupied by a large number of active students; it also reveals very few professors, apart from the computer specialist or his assistant, and a general absence of the teachers of professional subjects.

In Europe, there are fewer computers and fewer students, but also, thanks to the greater influence and authority of the dean, a much larger proportion of the professional teaching body. In one case the equipment and modernization of the EDP center was made absolutely conditional on the active participation of the non-EDP specialist teachers. Consequently, many of these, teaching hotel procedures or aspects of restaurant operations, agreed not only to acquire EDP techniques, but also to work with the students in the EDP laboratory a semester or two after teaching their courses in the classroom.

This positive attitude towards the teachers and their determination to optimize the learning process is favored by the unequivocal approach of the administration—particularly in Europe—which is to put greater responsibility and trust on the teacher. The tendency then in the U.S. is to put greater responsibility and trust on the student, whereas in Europe the onus falls primarily on the administration.

It is necessary to stimulate the teachers, to encourage them to emulate others, and to master other subjects. The only condition is that the administration—particularly in Europe—must stimulate the teachers, to encourage them to emulate others, and to master other subjects.

Faculty/Student Relations Are More Formal in Europe

Student and faculty relationships are more formalized in Europe than in the United States and result in a more protective and advisory condition for the European student. Although advisors are utilized in most institutions in the United States, they serve basically for career and class guidance. If major disciplinary or social problems develop, European professors are more student involved and interact with the students in a more personal and supportive way. The testing process of most European institutions is closer to the personal and in-depth appraisal of student capabilities, whereas in the United States, the written examination is the major instrument in the approval of students. The written examination is used in the United States, and in-depth observation of student capabilities and the written examination is used in the United States, and the system is more formalized in Europe.
In the United States, the tradition of graduate education includes an oral question period, which allows students to interact with experts in their field. These experts, often from the ranks of industry, provide valuable insights and enhance the learning experience. This approach helps students develop the skills necessary to react optimally in difficult situations.

In European countries, the role of the professor is more significant, acting as a mentor and guide for the student. The focus is on developing practical skills and fostering a strong sense of community within the professional sphere.

Competition and Challenge Are Different Concepts

In the U.S., competition is viewed as a driving force for innovation and growth. It is seen as a way to push the boundaries of what is possible, and in many cases, it is a key factor in the success of a business. This competitive spirit is not as prevalent in Europe, where the focus is more on collaboration and shared success.

In the U.S., competition is often seen as a way to improve productivity and efficiency, while in Europe, it may be seen as a way to foster creativity and innovation. The goal is to develop a strong sense of community and shared purpose, while still maintaining a level of healthy competition.

In both regions, the goal is to prepare students for the professional world, but the methods and approaches are quite different. In the U.S., there is a strong emphasis on individualism and personal achievement, while in Europe, the focus is more on teamwork and collaboration.

In conclusion, while there are differences in how competition and challenge are perceived and practiced in the U.S. and Europe, the ultimate goal is to prepare students for success in the professional world.
In the American model, competition often overrides co-operation. This relative difference in basic approach is not without its influence on professional training. If on the one hand there is a greater inclination to seek or preach study in depth, it is often associated with the temptation to hide behind a "comfort barrier" agreeably distant from everyday reality and the struggle for survival. On the other hand, it is easy to forget that the quality of the individual cannot be judged by the success of his or her professional career alone. The developed characteristics of each region compensate the weaknesses of the other. We must learn, then, how to combine them, adopting as necessary the attitudes, philosophy, or, more concretely, the study patterns of different institutions, so that detailed individual policies flesh out a skeleton of positive common elements.

Humanities And Languages Have A Place

The evident concern to integrate students from the four corners of the world in an advantageous context originates in the desire to help them cultivate a particular attitude of mind toward intercommunal life in general and the hospitality profession in particular. This philosophy aims, first of all, at forming men and women capable of learning from and adjusting to the numerous changes which cannot fail to assail them throughout their professional careers, while, secondly, fostering an active humanism and understanding of others which will simplify the problems of integration and adaptation to a new culture. It is a matter of fact that the European-trained hospitality student appears to be more generally prepared to communicate effectively in a variety of cultural environments.

In the study programs, it is common to discover subjects unconnected with direct professional preoccupations: history of art, sociology, social behavior, cultural topics, etc. In addition, the curricula of different electives contain themes related to culture, for example, organizing a film festival, setting up an art exhibition, preparing a program of cultural events in the hotel, etc. The simple fact that the well-known European hotel management schools enroll young men and women from all over the world means that the students must be exposed to the environment in which they find themselves. Providing comprehensive information on local, national, and international activities and cultural events is an obvious example. In the study programs, it is common to discover subjects unconnected with direct professional preoccupations: history of art, sociology, social behavior, cultural topics, etc. In addition, the curricula of different electives contain themes related to culture, for example, organizing a film festival, setting up an art exhibition, preparing a program of cultural events in the hotel, etc. The simple fact that the well-known European hotel management schools enroll young men and women from all over the world means that the students must be exposed to the environment in which they find themselves. Providing comprehensive information on local, national, and international activities and cultural events is an obvious example.

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sessions of the program, the situation evolves rapidly and foments the exchange of ideas and currents of thought to the students' considerable benefit.

It is not uncommon for certain training establishments to accept students from a wide range of geographical origins. At Glion in Switzerland, for example, academic year 1985-86 shows an enrollment of 325 students from 51 countries. Applicants there are required to show proficiency in a minimum of one foreign language (other than French), but usually have some knowledge of two, three, or even four, depending on their background and native tongue (French, English, German, Spanish, etc.). It should be noted, too, that in European countries where the language is not internationally significant (notably Holland or the Scandinavian countries), an even greater stress is placed on foreign language skills. This is all the more justified as so many young people go abroad after their education to practice their profession overseas.

Subordinate hospitality and tourism personnel across Europe typically come from several different countries, but management must communicate with all. It is perhaps a truism to repeat that foreign language use broadens the mind, improves understanding and tolerance, facilitates negotiations, and renders essential services in both professional and personal life.

Some Practices Are Complementary

The European hospitality school seems to become involved more often in real world operations. Some operate their own hotel and dining facilities to meet the needs of the student body and also provide additional catering services to the community at large. Many also carry out extensive consulting projects which result in the creation of elaborate tourism-related facilities. Due to the image of the industry, Swiss hotel schools, in particular, are often called upon by countries, international organizations, and entrepreneurs for technical assistance. This is not to say, of course, that this does not happen in U.S. schools, but the depth and breadth of the function in Europe and the advanced to be drawn from the integration of theory and practice in the consulting field itself is, however, the American teacher is engaged more often than his European counterpart in personal or professional consulting. The advantages to be drawn from the integration of theory and practice in the consulting field itself is, however, the American teacher is engaged more often than his European counterpart in personal or professional consulting.
The institute's professional training is revalued upward, as a continuing liaison with current practice is a further element of credibility for its study program.

Among contemporary European professional schools, only the more important have systematically developed and reinforced alumni associations, usually with both professional and personal aims, i.e., to facilitate human relations, favor the growth of the profession, encourage research and publication, organize conferences and conventions, and maintain the ties of friendship created at the school. Schools frequently make office space, equipment, staff, and even funds available to the association in tacit recognition of the potential power and volume of goodwill represented by future executives joining the profession.

These associations present similar characteristics in the U.S. and Europe, although given the greater American distances and the nature of the relations between graduates and their schools, European alumni appear to have closer and more frequent contacts. It is of interest to most that in Europe the alumni often initiate and maintain professional contacts, not only with the faculty, but also with current students, taking the trouble to counsel and aid them in the search for their first job, and continuing the practice of mutual assistance thereafter. In both cases, it appears that in the case of a well-known independent institution, the identification of the alumni with their school is often very long-lived and the role that they play in establishing the reputation of the school and in maintaining its enrollment is a very valuable contribution. The alumni association of Cornell in the U.S. and of Glion and Lausanne in Europe are perfect illustrations of this application.

The school involved with hospitality education in Europe is generally not reluctant to include as full-time instructors chefs, maitres d'hôtel, and other practitioners. Since this is a discipline of "doing" as well as "selling," these professionals are able to expose students to the "hows" as well as the "whys" of the industry.

Mass merchandising, mass markets, mass production, and mass education with "big being better" are not necessarily an element in the European hospitality educational system nor in the hospitality organization. In Switzerland, for example, the average hotel is under 100 rooms, and nearly two-thirds of the hotels operate fewer than 50. The training of the student in the school and in the hotel industry is a reflection of the nature of the hotel as it is found in the hotel. The emphasis is on the development of the student as a hotel professional, not on the development of the student as a general manager. The student is not trained to manage the hotel but is trained to be a hotel professional. The school is involved with hospitality education in Europe in a different way. The school recognizes the importance of hospitality education and the need for the student to have closer and more frequent contacts. It is of interest to see how these associations express their differences in the U.S. and Europe.
In the framework of U.S. instruction, professional priority is given to the techniques of human relations (motivation, leadership), marketing and sales, and financial management. In opposition to American schools which seem to favor specialization, European professional schools are more oriented toward versatility and developing overall grasp.

In the daily practice of the hospitality industry in the U.S., a special emphasis is placed on the organization and operation of financial control, on pushing sales, and on the optimal development of personnel relations.

By its system of professional education, Europe seems to leave more room for spontaneity and creativity, whereas the United States is more open to tomorrow's techniques and to practices enabling the individual to achieve responsibility early. While Europeans make an effort to cultivate professional attitudes colored with a certain humanism, Americans feature an approach putting more accent on challenge and the entrepreneurial spirit.

The collected testimony and experience show that the systematic teaching of basic professional techniques, and their subsequent testing, is a European attribute. American schools, on the other hand, appear to give most attention to structures which encourage the rapid flowering of high-performance technocrats.

A brief survey of managerial personnel affirmed that with reference to the methods employed, U.S. training, more than European, is based on group work and case studies. Paradoxically, it appears that European students have more frequent opportunities to carry out research in the field, or to participate in carefully-prepared professional visits, where the cooperation of hospitality practitioners seems better established.

The general manager of an international chain hotel in Switzerland: "In my opinion, it would be very beneficial if candidates for hotel management training spent at least a year working in a hotel before beginning their professional studies. A hotel school is not the right place to learn hotel management. Training in a hotel school is not balanced and it is not broad enough to prepare students for the practical demands of the hospitality industry."

A European businessman who sells hotel equipment to the U.S.: "The Americans have, without doubt, been more effective than the Europeans in creating a global concept of training based largely on two essential elements: common sense and good human relations. They manage to create an atmosphere in which students are encouraged to take risks. The Americans have a more effective curriculum, and the cooperation of hospitality practitioners seems better established than across the Atlantic."

The general manager of an international chain hotel in the U.S.: "Don't forget that the general work ethic is still quite different in the U.S. and Europe. The American schools seem to give more attention to professional development, whereas the European schools seem to lay more emphasis on the practical aspects of the hospitality industry."

By its system of professional education, Europe seems to leave more room for spontaneity and creativity, and to produce technocrats and professionals rather than managers. While European schools are more oriented toward team work and group projects, American schools seem to favor individual achievement and personal development.
The general manager of an independent hotel (250 rooms) and the general manager of a chain hotel in the U.S.: "It is essential that schools in Switzerland and in the United States establish much closer contacts with the hotel industry."

The personnel director of an American chain hotel in Europe: "In general, in the U.S.A., more responsibility is given to young executives; they feel more confident and more open and the consequences show up in increased productivity. In addition, American management is closer to subordinate personnel; it is more interested in individuals and their possible careers."

The manager of a European luxury hotel who studied in the U.S.: "Although American policies and procedures have a remarkable effect on productivity, they tend to have the opposite effect on spontaneity and professional creativity."

European Influences Enter U.S. Market

Although the United States had a strong position in the world, and other European organizations have entered the hospitality field in Europe, American hotel schools are also now operating abroad, and cooperative programs are being developed between educational institutions in Europe and the U.S. French, British, and other companies from European countries are entering the hospitality field in the U.S. Foreign nationals are also being hired more and more by U.S. hotel companies operating abroad, and cooperative programs are being developed between educational institutions in Europe and the U.S. European hotel schools and training centers are influencing American schools and training centers. This is the first time in the world that American hotel schools are being influenced by their European counterparts. Each has something to learn from the other. Although the American school can still maintain a strong position, European influence is a reality."

The hospitality industry is a many-faceted, complex discipline and necessitates, on the one hand, a broad knowledge of management, finance, and sales. On the other hand, it also requires a detailed knowledge of the various aspects of the hotel business, such as food and beverage, housekeeping, and engineering. These aspects are interrelated and require a high degree of professionalism. To excel in the hospitality industry, one must be knowledgeable in all areas and be able to manage and direct the work of others. This requires a high level of education and training. The hospitality industry is a complex field that requires a strong foundation in education and training.
professional education, we can say together: „Vive la différence!“

One thing is sure: from now on, professional schools, rather than
emphasizing the acquisition of detailed knowledge, must lay maximum
stress on developing a style of management specifically intended for
the executives of 2000 A.D. If this is accepted, then at the end of this
analysis and in view of the real complementarity of European and U.S.
and American hospitality education programs, there must be a marrying
of ideas and concepts so that proper operational results may be
obtained. As there are differences between the programs, there is no necessity to disregard, for each
region in Europe and the U.S., and indeed they should remain. Com-
petition between them is a healthy way to produce the desired results.