

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

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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 approached each change of direction very cautiously before deciding on the line it should take until, finally, swept along in the wake of American commercial and industrial competition, Europe was obliged to speed up its transformation to have any hope of staying in the race.

"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 possunt 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 in many aspects of daily economic and cultural life.

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 emulative 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.

U.S. Generally Serves As Catalyst

Although currents and movements carry new ideas and concepts in all directions, the preponderance of the flow has generally been from West to East — from the United States to Europe. In this regard, the United States has served as a catalyst for many new concepts, standards, and ideas, be it colas, blue jeans, or the chain hotel. Being a product of a multi-cultural, mostly European background, the United States has either taken another concept and by a process of synthesis, modification, or elaboration become able to export it as a new idea or product, or, lacking this, it has invented a new product, or method which has become both efficient and profitable. This article has the title "Reference Points" rather than "Comparison: USA — Europe." The relativity and subjectivity of so many comparisons, condensed in the French saying "*comparaison n'est pas raison*," points up the need to compare the comparable. Popular wisdom, traditionally skeptical and unbelieving, shows up better in the Swiss saying: "When I observe myself, I'm worried; but when I compare myself to others, I'm reassured."

This preamble is intended as a reminder that if we have to multiply or divide statistical values a hundredfold, analysis and comparative

assessments will be decided arbitrarily 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 facts, the sole method capable of giving the reader a credible picture of real life.

Quantitatively, then, the disproportion between Switzerland, and, in some respects, even Europe, and the United States is so great that it renders comparisons difficult in so many fields, e.g., number of rooms-nights, hotels, universities, airports and transport companies, and the volume of turnover, balance of trade, and investments of all types.

From another angle, since the contemporary situation is the result of a multiplicity of historical vectors, all the complications of differing mentalities, motivations, policies, and circumstances limited to particular countries or regions combine to produce a decisive influence on values and priorities.

Transition Is From Mosaic To Monoculture

The transition from Europe to America is one from a mosaic of ancient cultures to a cosmopolitan monoculture. Nobody will deny the multiplicity of cultures in Europe, deeply rooted cultures which have endured even within national frontiers. Switzerland is a notable case in point. In admittedly simplified terms, we can add to this a pale regionalism compared to a much more marked American nationalism, state-dominated socio-political systems and industrial structures compared to corporate independence and the absolute dedication to the private sector, and a remarkable diversity of tongues and habits of thought compared to a common language and attitudes. In brief, it is a Europe which is more fragmented, more often turned toward the past, deriving its precedents from its long history.

Applied to the field of education, this attitude of mind has given rise to effects different from those abroad. Europe has accepted its liability for fulfilling a wide range of commitments to professional education within which behavioral, philosophical, and cultural elements are fully incorporated.

It is but one step further to affirm that in the United States priority is given to technological efficiency and the training of high-performance specialists and technocrats, whereas in Europe the main emphasis is on producing generalists trained in the skills of synthesis. (In passing, the case of medical training is very revealing: U.S. conditions, subject to a much more restrictive legal straitjacket than in Europe, incite the formation of specialists to the detriment of general medicine.)

In contrast to an apparently timorous Europe, always calling itself in question, America has rapidly identified itself with the idea of progress as defined by the economist Schumpeter (that is, the adoption of a positive attitude toward all new technologies): a permanent state of creative destruction allied to an impressive identification with the North American continent — a unified culture, desired and accepted as such. Paradoxically, viewed from the Old World, the New World appears more consolidated, regrouped behind enthusiastically-accepted national symbols.

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 hospitality 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 accommodations. 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 hotel schools, and to provide them with only specialized training in the standards of the company. Throughout this metamorphic period, the Swiss hotel industry, with the Swiss hotel schools which support it, has been able to maintain an excellent reputation — giving in fair measure of its background and experience, while gaining in turn from American methodology and concepts.

Styles of Education Vary

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 over-riding 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 has become old and obsolete in New York, it will probably be demolished by implosion, and replaced by a more modern structure with atriums and observation elevators. In Europe, Paris, for example, this same type of building on becoming old might be renovated to return it to a high state of elegance. Its exterior style would probably be maintained and the theme of the district preserved.

In some countries the search for solutions to primary problems affecting a region — 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.

It is, however, also true to affirm that the research carried out and the results published do not always live up to the expectations and, what is more, often lack realism, an overall grasp of the practical problems to be resolved.

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, schools which have deliberately renounced purely intellectual ambitions — basic research, for example — in favor of training men and women who will be sought after by professional circles often in preference to university graduates.

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 technological progress (medicine, engineering, etc.).

It is tempting to affirm — after having visited many — that schools of hotel management in U.S. universities are often slightly below the

general level of the universities in question, whereas certain non-university hotel schools in Europe, particularly Switzerland, are on a par with them and would no doubt be qualified as universities in a U.S. context.

In fact, it may boil down to a dispute in semantics and is certainly, in part, mere hair-splitting, for the concessions consented to by some and the efforts agreed to by others have a common interest to do their best to satisfy the needs of the profession, which is, after all the essential.

Faculty Styles, Programs, And Priorities Differ

It should be noted that hospitality management studies are neither systematic nor frequent in European universities. It does appear, however, that a reputable European hotel school (Glon, Lausanne, etc) is as much in demand on the job market as a B.S. or M.S. holder from one of the many university schools of hotel administration in the U.S. It is enough to list the representatives of the big international chains, including those with their headquarters in the U.S. who maintain close and favored relations with both U.S. and European schools.

Nevertheless, programs, styles, and priorities differ noticeably from one side of the Atlantic to the other. Educators frequently say, "With a good administrator or dean, and first-class teachers, you won't have any student problems"; but, of course, this assumes that administration/faculty relations and dialogue are given the necessary priority within the limits of contractual obligations. It is, in fact, on the value of this continual, positive process that the quality and success of a professional school depend, and hence its credibility in professional circles.

Academic freedom, very marked in the university system, especially in the U.S., is often, perhaps inevitably, associated with lack of co-operation, insufficient availability, or personal interests taking precedence over those of the school, whereas attaining the school's objectives presupposes constant efforts to insure the coherence of the subjects taught and hence the valid synthesis to be drawn from them. In this respect, it seems that the bond linking the teacher to the European school 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 in the U.S. He can thus insist on the pursuit of the school's goals. The individualism so characteristic of teachers in general is favored in the U.S. system and, consequently, American faculties are frequently more motivated for their own discipline, for research, or for private commissions and publications, than imbued with the desire to contribute to the school as a whole. The European setup is better suited to fulfilling the primary task of schools whose overriding concern is the students' interest.

Once professors' contractual obligations are defined and the faculty complete, the crux is to make it work, to establish the channels of com-

munication 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 re-equipment and modernization of the FDP center was made absolutely conditional on the active participation of the non-FDP specialist teachers. Consequently, many of these, teaching hotel procedures or aspects of restaurant operations, agreed not only to acquire FDP techniques, but also to work with the students in the FDP laboratory a semester or two after teaching their courses in the classroom.

This positive attitude with respect to the teachers and their determination to optimize the learning process is favored by the unequal American and European philosophies. The tendency then in the U.S. is to put greater responsibility and trust on the teacher, whereas in Europe the onus falls primarily on the administration.

Obviously each system has its advantages and disadvantages, and in the end the success of the service to the student depends on the sense of responsibility of all who have chosen to teach. It devolves upon the administration — particularly in Europe — to stimulate the teachers, to encourage them to emulate others, and to master other subjects, while creating the conditions in which each teacher will find motivation and satisfaction. The transfer of these responsibilities to the teacher himself will cause problems if the latter — for reasons of age, comfort, or egotism — ceases totally or progressively to take care of his own self-motivation.

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 more often on a personal basis.

The testing process of most European institutions also tends to suggest a closer and more personal relationship between faculty and student, and a more in-depth appraisal of student capabilities. The written examination, which is the major instrument in the approval system of most institutions in the United States, is used, of course, but

it is generally augmented by an oral question period, usually given only to graduate students in the United States. The use of "experts" in each discipline, usually from the ranks of operating establishments, is also undertaken. These experts, in a particular part of the discipline, enhance the oral presentation experience, help to test the competence of the student, and insure that the instructor is providing relevant and timely information.

Insofar as one of the aims of professional education is to learn to react optimally in difficult situations, the teacher must be prepared to give fully of himself, to be readily available, and to counsel the student to the best of his ability, whether on professional or personal problems.

Doubtless, one of the noticeable differences is to be found at the level of effective support given to the student. In this respect, the varied nature of European community life — different from the traditional U.S. campus — requires the professor to be both a periscope and a depth gauge for the student crew of the submarine, a crew which in the '80s needs a reliable instrument of moral guidance as much as a source of technological knowledge.

So it is that reliable induction procedures, open communication channels, and other deliberate measures are important components in the internal organization of certain hotel management schools. The other side of the coin is that such measures are almost inevitably accompanied by constraints which naturally tend to stifle spontaneity, a quality worthy of conservation at almost any price.

Competition And Challenge Are Different Concepts

The notion of challenge, basic to the managerial function, is not perceived in exactly the same way on opposite sides of the ocean. Prominent in the U.S., where it constitutes one of the pillars of economic ideology, it is more attenuated in Europe, where it remains a philosophy of action directed toward rationalization, a major element in the functioning of an enterprise.

In the U.S., it is resolutely aggressive, materializing as actions responding to a permanent state of vigorous competition between and within enterprises. In fact, it appears that there is a high level of competitiveness both at the hospitality school level and among companies. This often seems to result in a certain reluctance on the part of some operators to provide "confidential" information to students, particularly if it is of financial nature. Many operators in the U.S. find it difficult to share their concepts with others in their own industry, or to train employees other than in specialized ways which may be applied only in their own setup.

In most countries of Europe, the relationship which exists between educational institutions and operating establishments is outstanding. If not directly involved in providing financial support to an institution, the operating hotels, restaurants, and other commercial facilities provide students with an almost carte blanche access to their facilities, reports, plans, etc. In addition, key members of the industry are generally eager to participate in the training by frequent lec-

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 solely in the light of professional performance or productivity. At this level, examination of the two situations reveals a real complementarity. 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 for those whose careers develop outside their native countries.

Such an aim implies that considerable care and attention must be devoted to exposing students 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, and preparing a program of excursions linked to major cultural events.

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 languages, according to the needs of international tourism. As English has become to the practice of business in the modern world what Latin was to the ancient world, most European institutions require all students to have competence in the language. It is felt that most schools in the U.S. offering hospitality-related courses give little attention to foreign languages, except at the graduate level. The simple fact that the well-known European hotel management schools enroll young men and women from all over the world entails a cultural and linguistic inflow from the beginning and militates in favor of language learning, and, even better, of language use. Although this linguistic diversity poses some communication problems in the early

sessions of the program, the situation evolves rapidly and foment 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 Giron 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 for a few years.

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 experiences which are returned to the classrooms, are much greater in the European situation, particularly in Switzerland, and especially in the fields of catering and restaurant operations. There is no doubt that the American teacher likes to know what is going on in Europe in the gastronomic arts. Europe, on the other hand, does the same when it comes to marketing or sales promotions and the techniques of food and beverage control.

In the consulting field itself, it seems, however, that the American teacher is engaged more often than in Europe on a personal or professional basis for consulting in hotel or tourism which often takes much of his working time.

The advantages to be drawn from the integration of theory and practice are as interesting in Europe as in the U.S. on more than one count: the positive benefit to the professor/consultant working in the field as well as the practical reinforcement to the student who participates, at one remove, in the up-to-date professional experience of the teacher.

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'hotel, 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 all food operations have three employees or fewer.

European schools with 50-300 students seem satisfied with their numbers, are profitable in their operations, and do not always equate excellence with large numbers of students, an outstanding sports team, or a grant from a gracious entrepreneur. In fact, one major difference between schools in Europe and those in the U.S. may be the degree of competition. European institutions seem more eager to cooperate than to compete.

Managers Affirm Training Difference

Seasoned hospitality professionals who are knowledgeable about the U.S. and Europe, having trained in one and worked in both, offer some interesting comments. The following generalizations grew out of a dozen or so soundings:

- 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 than across the Atlantic.
- 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 a finishing school and it is painful (disheschmerzhaft) to realize the proportion of graduates who quit the profession after 10 or 20 years."
- 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 which often leads to success."
- The general manager of an international chain in the U.S.: "Don't forget that the general work ethic is still quite different in the world of hotel chains and large hotels, either in Europe or in the U.S."

- The general manager of an independent hotel (250 rooms) and ex-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." (Hyatt 1985 - Training Year: Training for Your Future.)

- 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 hotel chain still maintains a strong position in the world, and other related organizations, such as the fast-food industry, continue to expand into new world markets, the expansion of European companies into U.S. local markets is also taking place. 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. Certainly differences do exist for these events to have taken place.

It appears that knowing of these differences and capitalizing on them to the limits of one's abilities will make the teacher, the operator, or the student more able to handle their mandates, and better able to meet the needs of the hospitality industry. This will result in customers who are satisfied and income statements which give better bottom line results.

It is certain that the European hotel school or operating establishment cannot long hold off (or in fact want to hold off) the advancing technology nor the marketing and conceptualization theories of the U.S. education and operational model. But it is equally certain that in formulating these theories and achieving these benefits, many institutions of hospitality education and operating organizations in the U.S. have neglected to give adequate attention to the "nuts and bolts" aspect of the discipline.

The Uniform System of Accounts, the management information systems, the internal controls, and the computers are, of course, all important elements in managerial performance. However, they are only "paper tigers" if a manager or supervisor is not able to judge the palatability of a wine, to speak with a professional chef about the food item being offered, or to welcome properly an influential member of a diplomatic mission when he arrives at the hotel.

The hospitality industry is a many-faceted, complex discipline and

it is quite impossible to teach in depth everything which would be required to operate in this diversified arena. Rather, it is necessary to be generally informed on most all aspects, and to utilize the diverse talents of others within a cohesive organization in order to produce the desired results.

Of course there are differences between hospitality education programs in Europe and the U.S., and indeed they should remain. Competition between the programs is not necessary nor desirable, for each has something to offer the other. There must, however, be a marrying of ideas and concepts so that proper operational results may be obtained.

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 agreed, then at the end of this analysis and in view of the real complementarity of European and U.S. professional education, we can say together: "*Vive la difference!*"