

The Hotel Yearbook 2023
The Uncertainty New Normal



HYB



The Attractiveness of Hospitality Management (Education)

Markus Venzin
CEO, EHL Group

This topic has been at the center of many discussions at EHL Group. In our latest industry outlook, we ask ourselves “How can hospitality reposition itself as an attractive, tech-savvy, sustainable and innovative sector in the face of today’s shifting times and changing customer needs?”. This is the question that keeps coming up after a few tough years where many old, ‘safe’ industry assumptions were turned on their head.

BROADENING THE SCOPE OF HOSPITALITY

The term “hospitality” used to be associated strictly to hotels and travel, and was pictured as an industry of adventure and excitement, transcending culture and geography, bringing people together and catering to deeply rooted emotional aspirations.

Today, however, it is often viewed as less attractive to skilled professionals and in need of revitalization. Specifically, the HoReCa sector suffers from a workforce deficit as it is often perceived as less gratifying, lucrative, innovative, and more stressful than other industries. This may be why currently at EHL about half of our Bachelor graduates are highly sought-after to bridge the gap between hospitality and other industries through careers in luxury retail, fashion, private banking, consulting, food and many more, using their unique set of hospitality management skills. The relevance of those skills across all sectors was placed at the center of the evolution of our 130-year-old institution: from Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne into EHL Hospitality Business School.

WHERE IS TRADITIONAL HOSPITALITY HEADING?

Cross-functionality or cross-disciplinarity is key to unlocking the hospitality industry’s potential. By integrating AI, robotics, energy and waste management, and the use of new materials it would answer to the call of the new generation for a better, more sustainable and dynamic way of operating. What makes hospitality so complex is also what makes it so compelling; it isn’t just one trade, and today one needs to know as much about cooking as about algorithms.

The hospitality industry has been slow to adapt to these new trends and innovations, with leadership often fragmented by design, and change being reactive rather than proactive due to the latency of the widely-used franchise model. With more agile structures, hospitality leaders would be able to further invest in their employees’ training and retention, thus making the branch more attractive and profitable.

As positive outliers in the industry have demonstrated, human-centric approaches and profitability go hand-in-hand. We should all take note of these successful models and strive to make a difference in the industry by putting the spotlight on the importance of knowledge and innovation. Young professionals are looking for a shift away from rigid hierarchy systems and towards more innovative, flat and dynamic environments allowing them to demonstrate their knowledge. So let’s try to give them exactly that.

In short, the hospitality industry has the potential to offer a wealth of opportunities for those who pursue a career in it. By highlighting the valuable competencies and opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship, and by valuing individuals as much -if not more than- other industries, the hospitality trade can attract the most brilliant talents and continue to grow and thrive. The global travel and tourism industry is back on a growth path. Working together, educators and employers can create traction and help the industry move forward, because there will be no shortage of job opportunities.

THE « JE NE SAIS QUOI » OF OUR HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT GRADUATES

A key skill of EHL students is their ability to provide human centered experiences. They are well-versed in communication, presenting, and they understand the importance of providing a sensorial and emotional customer experience rather than a solely factual analysis. These skills are developed through classes in communication, theater, leadership and influence, as well as experiential learning through role play, problem solving, and hands-on experience.

We like to think of our students as “plug and play”, immediately able to perform their job effectively, without the need for extensive training or onboarding. They hit the ground running and keep an open mind about how to improve processes and experiences. As educators, we are fortunate to have such a pool of talented and passionate students and we must ensure that they are provided with the proper tools to thrive and express their creativity.

I am hopeful and confident that the hospitality industry will, as it has many a times in the past, rise to the challenge and be a mirror of the best that our world has to offer.



Markus Venzin — CEO, EHL Group

Markus Venzin is an expert on growth strategies with a focus on innovation and corporate entrepreneurship. Before joining EHL, Markus was a Full Professor of Global Strategy at the Management and Technology Department of Bocconi University and its Dean of Innovation. In his long experience as professor, management consultant, speaker and entrepreneur, Markus has learned to apply research results to business issues and innovative teaching methods. In 2017 he co-founded the Venture Builder Corporate Hangar in Milan and since holds the position of its CEO.

EHL Hospitality Business School — www.ehl.edu

EHL Hospitality Business School (Lausanne) is an ambassador for traditional Swiss hospitality and has been a pioneer in hospitality education since 1893 with over 25,000 alumni worldwide and over 120 nationalities. EHL is the world’s first hospitality management school that provides university-level programs at its campuses in Lausanne and Chur-Passugg, as well as online learning solutions. The School is ranked n°1 by QS World University Rankings by subject and CEOWorld Magazine, and its gastronomic restaurant is the world’s only educational establishment to hold a Michelin Star.



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