

The
SPA MANAGER'S
ESSENTIAL GUIDE

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Contents

Forward	vii
1 The importance of customer care and service design in the spa environment	1
Good and bad customer service	1
The status of the customer	4
Customer service communication	5
Service design	13
2 Leadership skills in the spa environment	22
Presentation	23
Qualities needed in a spa manager	26
3 Effective team management in the spa environment	40
Human resource in the spa environment	41
4 Selling and marketing a spa successfully	62
Types of guests	62
Hotel sales & marketing department	63
Spa sales & marketing	65
Harvesting (selling)	73
Problem solving sales performance	77
5 Financial management in spas	81
Financial basics	81
Clarity of financial reports	83
Summary of reading a spa P&L	92
Preparing a budget	93
Forecasting	94
Benchmarking and KPIs	94
6 Quality management in the spa environment	100
Spa brand standards	101
Daily checks	105
Managing guest satisfaction	112

7	Health and safety and water handling	120
	Risk assessments	121
	Hygiene, chemicals and water handling	124
	Other risks	130
	Common health and safety regulations	135
	Children in spas	137
8	Spa definitions, history, facility types, challenges, treatments and trends	140
	What is a 'spa'?	140
	A brief history	142
	Spa facility types	147
	Common spa treatments	152
	Spa and beauty product lines	158
	Current trends	159
9	Health, wellness, mental and spiritual wellness	163
	Health	163
	Mental and spiritual wellness	170
	Measuring happiness	172
	The transformational wellness trend in spas	174
	Stress and de-stress programs	177
	Ayurveda and spiritual spas	178
10	Physical fitness and nutrition, detox, weight loss and active programs	186
	Physical fitness	186
	Diet and nutrition	196
	Sleep	204
11	Mineral/thermal springs, spa hotels and balneotherapy	208
	Thermal/mineral springs, thalasso and spa hotels	208
	Introduction to mineral and thermal water	214
	The medical stay	218
12	Experience design and developing spa concepts	230
	Developing spa concepts, spa design and branding	233
	Sustainability and spas	247
	Conclusion	253
	Index	257

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Foreword

The spa industry is growing dynamically – there are over 50 educational establishments worldwide offering a degree in spa management and over 700 other spa management related courses.

Looking at the industry demands for spa management skills and comparing them to what educational establishments and educational materials currently provide, it is evident that there is a mismatch in terms of what is being taught and what is actually required. Industry leaders have stated that they are looking for spa supervisors and leaders with business and management skills, as well as practical professional skills, such as flexibility, problem solving, teamwork, attitude and ethics. According to the Global Spa & Wellness Summit over 95% of spa industry leaders stated that they found problems hiring managers with the right combination of skills/experience and 63% of them stated that they have to invest further in training and mentoring because the training the managers had received was insufficient.

One of the reasons for this is that existing spa management teaching materials and courses do not concentrate on the practical skills needed in the day to day operation. They also tend to be more focused on the ‘pampering’, ‘wellness’ and ‘beauty’ sectors leaving a gap in the learning materials for the many other different types of spas, such as resort/destination spas and the large thermal mineral spring spas common in central Europe.

Mike Wallace and Dr. Melanie Smith have teamed up to produce a book specifically targeted at today’s spa managers and potential spa managers, including those who have not had any formal training and who wish to increase their knowledge in this field. The book is also designed for therapists or students interested in spa management, teachers lecturing on spa/health tourism management or indeed anybody interested in the field of spa and wellness from an international perspective, including those working in the mineral/thermal spring spa facilities.

Since working in a spa is a hands-on practical job, effort has been made to make the style ‘easy to read’ specifically pinpointing and examining the most important elements required to manage a spa successfully.

This book is divided into two sections: the first seven chapters cover the most important aspects of spa management (customer service, leadership, team management, sales, finance, quality and health and safety) whilst the second part of the book deals with essential product knowledge every spa manager should be aware of (health and wellness concepts, fitness and diet, sustainability etc). The book will appeal to an international readership, and spa managers working in Europe, particularly in mineral spring/thermal operations, will find all of the necessary advice and information to assist them in managing these types of facilities.

Culturally, particularly in Europe, spas have historically been places of rest, recuperation and healing – places to escape to, to slow down in and recharge. In today's increasingly manic, technology-obsessed world, spas have a crucial part to play in improving the quality of people's lives. They are also essential to a sustainable economy. They improve the lives and health of citizens, and compared to other industries, they have less of an adverse effect on the environment– spas, particularly those in rural destinations or resorts, help to contribute positively to the local economy. In view of the coronavirus pandemic all spas will have to change both operationally and conceptually if they are to survive, providing facilities that are hygienic and safe, as well as treatments that boost the immune system and promote holistic health. Spas do have a future in this new environment, particularly in attracting a local clientele who may be more reluctant to travel long distances – smaller, less crowded spa facilities having a distinct advantage.

The aim of this book is to help to improve the quality of spas, as well as to motivate and inspire the next generation of spa leaders and managers.

Mike Wallace & Melanie Smith
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