

CAREER
OPPORTUNITIES
in

TRAVEL AND
HOSPITALITY

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JENNIFER BOBROW BURNS

Foreword by
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FOREWORD

First and foremost, I want to congratulate you on taking proactive steps to further your education and professional development by picking up this book. You are on your way to a career in one of the most exciting and diverse international industries. The well-established field of hospitality provides one of the strongest and most interesting functions in the world.

Through upturns and downturns, the American Hotel and Lodging Association (AH&LA) has been the sole national organization representing all sectors and stakeholders in the lodging industry. Our members, who are professionals in the field, receive many benefits that help them to run their businesses effectively, with a separate set of benefits uniquely designed for students of hospitality.

Our Educational Foundation funds approximately \$1.3 million in academic scholarships, research grants, school-to-career, and workforce development programs. The Educational Institute provides training DVDs, videos, distance learning programs, and certification in the industry, and also serves as a major source of curricula and textbooks around the world.

In the United States, the tourism industry is currently the third-largest retail industry, and one of America's largest employers. Travel and tourism is the nation's largest services export industry. Residents and international travelers in the United States spend \$2 billion a day, \$84.5 million an hour, \$1.4 million a minute, and \$23,500 per second.

There are more than 48,000 lodging properties in the United States, totaling nearly 4.5 million rooms. The industry employs approximately 1.4 million workers at these properties alone and directly supports more than 7.5 million jobs on

various other levels. With an overwhelming majority of positions available outside the hotel itself, there will never be a shortage of diverse jobs that need to be filled. Rather than being pigeonholed in one area throughout your career, there is opportunity to switch career categories, often within the same company.

Employment directly generated by travel has grown nearly 30 percent in the last 10 years—a rate almost one and one-half times as fast as that of most other industries. With limited growth, however, a conservative estimate is that the hotel industry will require more than 300,000 new employees by 2014.

The hotel industry has a wide range of opportunities—from advertising to operations, marketing to management, and everything in between. Our industry offers opportunities not only in the United States, but throughout the world. With luck, you will be able to take advantage of an international posting sometime during your career.

Hospitality is not limited to hotels. It encompasses all phases of the travel and tourism industry, from airlines to cruise lines, travel agencies to tour operators, and from hotels to national tourism organizations. In all, when you refer to the “tourism” or “hospitality” industry, you are really talking about more than 15 interrelated businesses.

The diversity in this industry means there is something for every personality, talent, and skill set. And as students of hospitality and future industry leaders, the skills you learn along the way are interchangeable and transferable from job to job.

As a result, now more than ever, there is a greater emphasis placed on education and specialized training. Today, education is an important

commodity in our industry. By picking up this book, you have taken a giant step to ensure a successful career.

Optimism about the industry and what you can contribute to it is essential. Employers consider attitude in addition to skills. Once you are in the door, you must work hard, and doing so will allow you the opportunity to qualify for leadership positions with your hotel or company. The nature of our industry is one that offers great opportunities for diverse, robust, and long career growth.

And one more point I would like to add is that hospitality is not merely a profession; it is a way of life. The industry is truly a place where you will

make friendships that stand the test of time. With more than 45 years spent working in this industry, I can personally attest to this.

As you embark upon your career, my advice to you is to keep abreast of industry developments and become active in your community and industry associations. As they are great sources for networking, building relationships, and giving back to your community and industry. I wish all of you distinguished careers and the greatest success.

—Joseph A. McNerney, CHA
President/CEO

American Hotel and Lodging Association