



Institute
of **Hospitality**

THE REAL

HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Planday
FROM XERO



THE REAL HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Much has been written over the years about the parlous state of the industry – skills shortage, low pay, long hours.

But it is time to take a longer and more productive and proactive view, and I am delighted to announce that the Institute of Hospitality, in partnership with Planday, is doing just that with this paper, which defines the problem and looks at constructive actions that can – and should – be taken.

Read on!



GRASPING THE NETTLE

Things may not look too good but the problems we have in the UK hospitality industry are universal.

It is time to shine a bright light on the enduring warmth, positive culture and countless opportunities that are **HOSPITALITY!**

THE PROBLEM

Historic staff shortages in hospitality have been exacerbated by Brexit and by entry level talent returning home during lockdowns. This has combined with war in Ukraine, inflation, rising prices and supply chain disruption to create a perfect storm for the industry.

The big – and most longstanding – obstacle is finding home-grown talent. Not only are young people not thinking of coming into the sector but their teachers, careers advisors and parents have such a poor perception of hospitality that they have little encouragement to do so.

Low wages, long hours and a volatile environment (in kitchens) are how young people's main influences view hospitality; and worse, the disparate elements of the sector – trade bodies, buyers and suppliers – all wring their hands and talk about 'crisis'. But there is no one, positive voice that is robustly and ably defending, promoting and highlighting the many opportunities in hospitality.



DON'T CRISIS... THINK OPPORTUNITY

Much good is being done by individuals and organisations, who are working with people with autism, disabilities – visible and hidden, former prisoners and more. However, this is not communicated to the wider world. The industry is monumentally bad at promoting itself – what it does, how it looks after staff, how employees succeed and go on to do great things and most important, how quickly those at entry level are recognised, trained, developed and rewarded. A good waiter or waitress does not have to remain in that position for long.

None of this makes much sense when there is 3.8% unemployment in the 16 years and over age group (ONS, Feb to Apr 2022) and 8,817 (21.4%) people described as 'economically inactive', some of whom are presumably in the groups described above. It is interesting to note that people with autism, for example, are known to have excellent attention to detail and to be adept with numbers but only 17% of that cohort is in employment.

Although the sector does not have a cohesive voice or message, the other major drawback is perception. The worsened talent shortage has forced employers not only to pay better wages but also to be more flexible about working hours. Some are offering three or four-day weeks, others provide contracts for ten hours' work for one person, two hours for another. It may look like they are employing more people but strictly, they are employing more hours.

MOVING ON

THINGS ARE CHANGING;

THE INDUSTRY HAS BECOME **KINDER**,
MORE **THOUGHTFUL**

Ten or more years ago, there were few apprenticeships, there was little respect for the requirements of people's faiths and the very idea that staff might be valued and told that, was not considered. Now,

hospitality is leading the way in offering apprenticeships that provide on-the-job learning, training and development, backed by the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviour. Similarly, those who need time off to worship according to their religious beliefs are given it and those remaining come together to fill the gap.

Employers are approaching not just culinary colleges to fill jobs but any sector that has transferable skills, from cabin crew to former retail employees. Not before time, they are employing for personality and training skills. But organisations still have to go out and look for potential recruits, who are not considering hospitality as a career. Even the candidates for Restaurant Manager of the Year fell into hospitality accidentally, including winner Abigail Clark, who joined from drama.

Employers are also thinking differently about how they recruit. Young people coming into the industry not only want to know what they will earn, their shift patterns and work-life balance; they also want to know the culture of the business they are joining, whether there are environmental initiatives, charitable work or community involvement. For this reason, managing this group requires a different approach.





THE SOLUTION

PEOPLE NEED TO SEE **OUR INDUSTRY** AND BE ABLE TO SEE THEMSELVES IN IT

The combined fractured messages and industry bodies working in silos do little to engender faith and enthusiasm in anyone looking in. The wide range of age and ethnic, socio-economic and professional background does little to recommend the industry when someone seeking work is unlikely to see or hear about it.

It is about communication, people and image.

The first remedy for this is to get all bodies that represent the industry – Institute of Hospitality (IoH), Springboard, UKHospitality, Hospitality Rising and more – to come together to agree the way forward.

ACTION

WE NEED A **STRATEGY**, A LONG-TERM APPROACH

Ad hoc thinking is a thing of the past. Having agreed on the message, the next step is to devise a strategy. This should cover action to be taken over the next year, the planned outcome and what this will lead to over the ensuing five years. This will show focus and intent, which will inspire confidence in those the industry approaches. It should, however, have flexibility built in to allow for unforeseen events – economic, political or other. It must also be fashioned to be as useful to a 20-seat restaurant as to an international hotel chain.

Audiences the industry needs to reach are:

Buyers and suppliers

Parents, guardians and teachers. This group is essential as they are the voice young people are most likely to hear, and in the first two cases, they hold the purse strings

Students at school, college and university – to reach individuals and because young people listen to their peers

People with barriers to entry, whether educational, emotional or socio-economic. Access to this group includes Springboard, The Clink (prison services), charities that deal with people who have a range of difficulties, Only a Pavement Away (unemployed and homeless) and more

Those employed elsewhere that have transferable skills, including MOD (member of IoH), county Lord-lieutenants, NHS (via Phil Shelley)

Sahara Hospitality, which has opened in the East End of London and is training 120 students from the local community

HR helplines of membership bodies, so that when people ring for advice, those who answer are informed about the sector.

HOW

Social media is easy to deliver, inexpensive, potentially viral and can be posted on a number of platforms. The suggested first option is a YouTube post led by someone who is an excellent example of individuals the industry wants to attract – a young person who is relatable and has energy and enthusiasm. Culturally, twinst and pearls are out, tattoos are in! IoH could make the video and distribute it to members and use its relationships to get it into local schools. If young people can be inspired to think about the industry, they will convey the message to their parents: 'this is what topflight looks like'.

It is also essential to reach careers advisors; adults are the more difficult nut to crack. Since this group often bemoans lack of material, we should supply a 4-5 minute video telling them what the industry does and the huge variety of people that provides the service – both customer facing and, less recognised, behind the scenes. The faces to deliver this should be a combination of successful individuals such as RMOY winner Abigail Clark and a well known established hospitality voice.

Recruitment of younger candidates should be online. It is quick, easy and is a medium they have been familiar with since they could speak; they are tech savvy. IoH, with Springboard, UKHospitality, Hospitality Action and Savoy Education Trust were founding partners of CareerScope, and Springboard and CareerScope, along with Caterer.com recognise this and recruit accordingly.



Round Table Series

IoH in partnership with Planday



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The corollary to this is to promote the learning and development opportunities in hospitality. This could start with the apprenticeships at many levels that are available. IoH is a professional development body, and the IoH I'm in podcasts are a window on the industry and are free.

In addition, the Institute has created a bursary to give access to education to those who would otherwise not have benefitted. It has raised more than £30,000 and has started spending.

The Institute's new YouTube channel, to be launched this year, will be accessible to all and will host the IoH webinars; this is another potential vehicle.

This paper is a call to action to the industry.

We need to come together as one voice with one message to reach the eclectic mix of potential candidates that does not yet know the industry is for them.

Communication is all and it starts here.

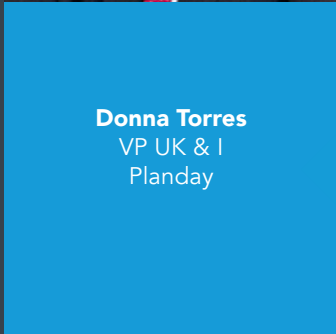
THE DRIVING FORCE



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Abigail Clark BA AIH
Restaurant Manager
Brown's Hotel
Restaurant Manager
of the Year Winner 2022



Peter Avis FIH
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Andy Lowe
Regional Director for
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