

Hospitality Forever™ Sustainability Program

Introduction

ETCI's exclusive *Hospitality Forever™* program is a business and environmental sustainability program for the next generation of leaders in the world's largest industry. It is based on a very simple truism: you won't be in the hospitality business for long if you destroy the very environment your clients come to enjoy, and you can't conserve the environment if you are no longer in business. Both business and environmental criteria must function to guide decision-making, and thus enhance the profitability of your green organization.

This concept infuses the whole *Hospitality Forever™* program, and provides you and your management team with a unique perspective for planning and management of your enterprise.

Going beyond the simple day-to-day practices that increase profit and conserve the natural and cultural environment of the facility or tour operation, *Hospitality Forever™* incorporates the ISO 14001 program of systematic goal-oriented planning along with an internationally recognized science-based sustainability framework, The Natural Step. By marrying industry-specific practices with internationally proven systems and principles, *Hospitality Forever™* provides industry leaders with a realistic, step-by-step approach to reaching their environmental and business sustainability outcomes.

ETCI's *Hospitality Forever™* program thus incorporates The Three P's of environmental and business sustainability: Practices, Process, and Principles. They work together to ensure a comprehensive, practical program in which every department contributes to the whole, and which provides your customers with a clear vision of your leadership.

Practices

You are probably familiar with the "conservation hang tags" that allow your guests to choose whether or not to re-use linens for another day. The benefits of this daily practice include reduced water, chemical and energy usage; decreased wear and tear on linens; decreased labor costs; increased customer satisfaction; and increased credibility with environmental and regulatory observers.

In addition, many industry leaders already have conducted some kind of environmental review or audit, either based on industry-wide audit protocols such as those of the National Ski Area Association ("Sustainable Slopes") or the American Hotel & Motel Association ("Environmental Action Pack for Hotels") or on more generic review instruments such as those developed by industry-led groups including CERES (The Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies) or GEMI (The Global Environmental Management Initiative).

Processes

Some of these protocols go beyond practices to encompass whole systems, so that the practices function together in some systematic way. For example, without continuous training of housekeeping staff and management, the investment in conservation hang tags is simply a waste of money (i.e., it becomes a cost in itself). How many times have you dutifully hung up your towel, only to find that some super-conscientious housekeeper has changed it for a new one anyway? Not only have you wasted your money, you have damaged your credibility with your customers: what else are you promising, but not delivering to them?

To resolve these problems, some hospitality business units are now developing environmental management systems that meet the international ISO 14001 environmental management system standard, and are getting certified by third-party auditors to that standard. This is an important step in the right direction, but it is not enough.

Principles

What does your organization stand for? What are the underlying principles of environmental and business sustainability that shape all of your decisions: about facilities, purchasing, product development, day-to-day management, staff training, investment? What are some science-based, fundamental operating principles that are understandable, measurable, and useful in guiding your enterprise to its desired future?

Hospitality Forever™ Program Components

The Hospitality Forever™ Sustainability Review™

An ETCI exclusive, this comprehensive instrument evaluates your current situation and your readiness to move ahead with specific sustainability actions. Unlike an environmental audit, which usually is limited to only regulatory requirements, *The Hospitality Forever Sustainability Review™* covers the all the major areas of your environmental and business practices, processes, and principles.

The Hospitality Forever™ Training Workshops

The Hospitality Forever™ Foundation Skills Workshop The introductory workshop takes the theory of environmental and business sustainability and puts it in practical terms for the whole management team. Managers, department heads and partners begin by learning the principles of sustainability, then apply their learnings to develop suitable environmental policies, objectives and targets, and management systems to accomplish their environmental and business goals based on what we call *The Five Big EMS Questions™*:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where do we want to go?
3. How do we get there?
4. Are we getting there?
5. Did we arrive, and where do we go next?

Because many environmental management system developers get lost in the paperwork, they seem to forget that the purpose of the environmental management system is to accomplish specific goals set by the business enterprise itself. ETCI developed *The Five Big EMS Questions™* as a framework for guiding environmental management system development, so you always know where you are in the process, why you are doing a particular activity, and how that activity relates to the whole system.

In addition, ETCI's environmental management system development framework is based on the ISO 14001 international environmental management system standard, so that a client has the option of seeking third-party registration to the standard.

The Hospitality Forever™ Staff Curriculum Once the enterprise has developed its policies, objectives and targets, is well along in creating its environmental management system, and has begun to implement specific sets of best practices, it is time to train the staff. Based on identified needs, a staff training curriculum is developed and implemented, so that all staff can be trained in an ongoing way to carry out the program. For example, housekeeping staff do not need the same content as administrative staff, nor do maintenance or operations staff. Each training program has to fit with the needs of the environmental management system, be appropriate to the timing of staff work, be delivered in the appropriate language to ensure understanding, and incorporate the needs of new recruits as well as experienced staff members.

The Hospitality Forever™ Toolbox

ETCI's *Hospitality Forever™* program incorporates myriad specific analysis and development tools, including software packages for environmental management system documentation. In addition to The Five Big EMS Questions™ framework, we provide checklists and protocols for goal setting, policy development, assessing the gap between where you are now and where you want to be, identifying and evaluating suitable objectives and targets, developing procedures, measuring and monitoring progress, etc.

Hospitality Forever™ Delivery Options

Hospitality Forever™ is a flexible, client-driven program. You can take advantage of as much or as little as you need, depending on where you are in your sustainability development. The overall program framework allows you to proceed at your own pace, incorporating industry-specific standards, specialized consultants, and feedback from internal monitoring, as well as your customers and partners as you go.

The Hospitality Forever Sustainability Review™ is usually accomplished as a facilitated one-half to one-day meeting with the entire management team (including department heads). Included in the fee is a report highlighting areas of current best practice, including effective systems and guiding principles already in place, as well as recommendations for actions to enhance the sustainability of your enterprise.

The Hospitality Forever™ Foundation Skills Workshop is usually delivered as a two-day intensive workshop for top management, department heads and key suppliers and partners.

The Hospitality Forever™ Toolbox consists of a set of specific tools that can be introduced at staff meetings, provided as part of ongoing coaching sessions or periodic reviews, or used as the foundation for a training workshop, depending on the needs of the client.

In addition to the program components described above, ETCI *Hospitality Forever™* services include:

- Training design and development for the *Hospitality Forever™* Staff Curriculum
- Facilitating ongoing staff coaching sessions
- Preparation for registration audits
- Participation in annual management reviews
- Assistance in identifying appropriate consultants in energy and water conservation, green building design and construction, environmentally friendly landscape design, recycling programs, green investments, and other sustainability-related specialties

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