

Four seasons hotel and resorts

Business



A unique opportunity was given to the Four Seasons Hotel and Resorts when the F. S. George V was in need of a new management team. The F.

S. George V (George V) was one of only 6 palatial and historical hotels in Paris, France. Although they have operated many international resorts, the management team of the Four Seasons knew that the George V would present challenges unlike others they have encountered. To face these challenges, they encouraged Toddler El Calved to return to France after 25 years and become the general manager.

However, hesitant, El Calved understood the French way and set out in a pragmatic fashion to lead the George V through the revolutionary change that was to occur. El Calved had a good idea of what his adaptive challenges would be from his French background and his experience with the Four Seasons.

Historically, the French has strong labor unions, El Calved decided that in order to create the 'Four Seasons Environment' he told the unions that they needed to work together. This showed commitment to the unions that the Four Seasons wanted to create a good environment.

Also, El Calved faced the challenge of transforming the staff to the Four Seasons culture. He brought in task forces to help with this process. He also hired 40 individuals with North American or international experience to help 'de-demon' the United States. He encouraged the use of first names over the traditional 'Madame' or 'Monsieur'.

He also went against the French tradition by instituting the 'Golden Rule' and putting the guest first. El Calved was disciplined in his approach in hiring the right people. He was looking for 'people' people.

The candidate goes through four interviews and the last one being with El Calved. The purpose is to see the adaptability of the candidate.

He also had to deal with the Fresh's 35 hour work week. Because of the high customer service standard required by Four Seasons and the 35 hour work week requirement, George V has a higher staffing ratio than other Four Season Hotels and Resorts. Communication amongst the employees was a challenge El Calved would have to overcome to create the climate reflective of the Four Seasons culture.

El Calved had to pretzel and face these challenges in a deliberate and concise fashion in order to be successful. Maintaining the French ideas of luxury, El Calved introduced several unorthodox ethos to continue this French attitude of luxury.

The spectacular floral arrangement, containing over 1000 roses, in lobby of the George V is designed by an American. He also knew that a hotel the caliber of the George V required a chef of the same magnitude.

He hired Philippe Legendry, whose initial hiring was problematic because he had to still fit in the Four Seasons culture regardless of his talent. With only 6 palace hotels in Paris, knowing your customers desires and needs is an important leadership skill. El Calved knew the having a great concierge service to improve customer service needs.

He went against the norm and hired women in these positions. El Calved desires was to keep the French luxury but to make it fresh, new, and International. These leadership skills could be described as 'Get on the Balcony'.

El Calved 'maintained disciplined attention' not only by meeting regularly with nylon leaders but also created League Detente workers, supervisors, and a sensor management by setting up monthly meetings. El Calved would have his operating managers present an issue, deal with the issue, and lead the discussion during these meetings to improve collaboration and communication. He allowed all groups to work on common goals even though this went against French culture.

El Calved encouraged the supervisors and employees to begin to own the process of achieving common goals.

He wanted to instill in his employees the notion of enjoying one's work. Families would be allowed to come 'behind the scenes' of the George V several times a year. El Calved knew the greatest challenge would be to get the managers to accept accountability and he worked to achieve this through group meetings, collaborative team efforts, and open communication. Although the idea of employee of the month/year failed at Disney, El Calved thought it was a good tool to identify those who are hard workers and instill confidence.

It was designed not to show favoritism and colleagues would be able to see others who work hard. The idea was to encourage others to work hard (giving work back to the employees). El Calved regulated stress and inspired

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change through many avenues. One way he inspired change was in instituting annual reviews. This, also, went against French tradition.

He used it as a method to allow for open and constructive communication for the employee, allowing their work to be at the center of the conversation.

El Calved felt this was crucial to the success of the George V and the success of the employee. El Calved overcame tension and stress from employees over the long renovation process and skepticism by consistently adhering to the Four Seasons model even when they only wanted to see an American version not a new French/elimination version. He utilized the extended time period of the Task Forces to set the tone and instill the Four Seasons culture without alienating the employees.