

# Hospitality as a form of theatre



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In the main, the hospitality industry can be compared to various aspects of a theatre such as the genres, stagecraft, characters and terminology of acting.

Explain, using examples

In the words of William Shakespeare

“ All the world’s a stage and all men and women merely players. They have their exits and all their entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts”. (Shakespeare 1992, act 2, scene 7, line138)

The world and the stage are made comparable through the words of William Shakespeare, that is, in the thorough examination of his well-known quote, it is evident that, just as done in theatre, all men and women will ultimately play their roles accordingly as done in life. As such, it will be made identifiable, that through the correlation of theatre and the hospitality industry, the alike between the two are evident through the similarities in their various aspects. Hence, the genres, stagecraft, characters and terminology (Vago 2017, slide 14)

within acting will be made relatable to the services of the hospitality, despite their catering for differing purposes. Furthermore, the link between hospitality and theatres will be used to explain the experience economy and how experience is obtained by guests.

The component of the genre in hospitality can be seen parallel to the genres in theatre. Theatres hold performance with a variety of genres from romance, to horror to fantasy adventures (reference article talking about theatre genres), similarly, within hospitality, there are various genres from

Luxury to budget, Restaurants to cafes (Vago 2017, slide 17). These variety of genres enable customers to access different markets and thus allowing the establishment to cater to guest's preferences. Thus, the type of genre allows the performer to dictate and create the type of service with varying stages for the performers to perform their scripts and roles for the customer. (Stuart & Ian 2004)

Stagecraft in theatrical terminology is the effective use of skills, techniques and devices (Stagecraft 2014). Within Hospitality is it closely parallel theatre as mentioned by Pine and Gilmore (1998) "service as the stage, and goods as props". Stagecraft is the use of costume, design, sound, lighting and acting. Components from lighting, t, costume, props, and music affect the customers experience (Cameron and Gillespie 1980). Parallel in theatres with actors in their costumes, in the hospitality industry there are set uniform, dress and style codes. These uniforms alike costumes in theatre provide the audience with knowledge about and aesthetics and actors with impressions and presence on stage as they perform their roles (Wilson 2001). Moreover, the use of the stagecraft such as the design, the lighting, the music and other physical aspects enhance how the audience perceives the experience (Grove & Fisk 1992). Furthermore, among these Stagecraft the actors' manner and appearance are vital as it affect their ability to perform their role, and reveal heir dedication to the performance on stage and to the audience (Grove & Fisk 1992). In a similar manner, the appearances and mannerisms in hospitality are important to show a glimpse of loyalty, dedication to perform their role properly. As in theatre the design influences the audience's perceptions, the designs and its features of the

establishment, the service and create an atmosphere. This can have portrayed by the differences between McDonald's and the Intercontinental Hotel. The setting of the establishment or in a play plays an important role in their representation of their genre and thus attracting a specific target market (Booms and Bitner 1982)

Characters are the main players and support of every operation and establishment and each with their own important role (Williams & Anderson 2005). The theatre involves multiple characters each with their own roles from the director, lead actors, supporting actors and the audience (Williams and Anderson, 2005). These roles are parallel to the general manager, directors, back of house, front of house, front office, housekeeping and maintenance which are all equally important to keeping an establishment running as well as in the theatre to produce and run a play. (Vago 2017, slide 17). Like an actor's passion and charisma, in hospitality grooming and demeanour, portray the attitude and create an identity for the theatre and establishment adding a tangibility to the service. A character's skill is reflected in their knowledge, expertise and communication abilities, which creates unique identity of the characters and their roles and to the establishment (Berry 1980).

Within every industry, they have their own unique language, known only to those belonging to the industry. In theatre, they are thousands of terminologies used from "fourth wall" to "understudy" In the vast hospitality industry they are various jargons created known to each type of business such as "Ap, CP, EP" within the accommodation sector. These

specialised terms and phrases allow people in the industry to explain hidden meaning not necessarily understood.

How is hospitality related to the theatre? “ Theatre productions demonstrate a rich poetics of hospitality is attainable within the event of the performance itself” (Duffley 2016). Theatre and hospitality are related as they both offer tangible and intangible aspect to their audience as hosts providing, amenities, a unique ambience and a professional performance by inviting them to their own world. This allows theatre and hospitality to establish a connection with the guests and hosts through the creation of memorable experiences. According to Pine and Gilmore (1999), we are in the experience economy, and that instead, the memorable experience becomes the product by adding value and transforming the experience. When a customer makes a payment whether as an audience at a theatre or a guest in an establishment, they also purchase the service, a combination of intangible acts carried out for the customer benefit and pays for a memorable experience that the establishment has created uniquely and personally for the customer. (Pine & Gilmore 2001). Through Staging experiences, it greatly increases the perceived to customers. By being able to turn a service into an experience it provides excelling service which thus creates a memorable service encounter. When hospitality staff stages experience it is a work of theatre alike actors in a play. Hospitality staff must act in a certain way whenever they are with internal or external customers, therefore, engaging with them every interaction and every act they perform “ an act of theatre “ to create a long lasting impressions of the establishment(Pine & Gilmore 2001).

Therefore, it can be compared to that hospitality and the theatre have similarities and as made evident and discussed through the examples of the components genre, character, stagecraft, and terminology.

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