

# Four seasons goes to paris case study tourism essay



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One of the world's leading operators of luxury hotels, Four Seasons, renovated George V and operated it as Four Seasons Hotel George V Paris in 1999, which is its first property in France. George V was opened in 1928 and since that has been a landmark which is located in the Triangle d'Or (golden triangle). In "Four Seasons Goes to Paris" case study shows how Four Seasons developed the diversity and adapted to French market, with the Four Seasons outstanding standards.

The purpose of this report is to analyse how Four Seasons, a Canadian company adapted the big cultural difference, also to be able to apply and explain the management principles identified in the case study and the management strategies in today's reality. Furthermore, by understanding how the management adapt to become the French employer and what the company core values were implemented in Four Seasons team, in order to know how the management stand out in this process. Finally, comparing to Four Seasons years of management in Paris how does the current internal and external environment affect the managers to be more entrepreneurial.

### **Cultural awareness, Adaptation and Management Changes**

"Cultural awareness can be thought of as internalized attitudinally insights about those common understandings held by groups that dictate the predominant values, attitudes, beliefs and outlooks of the individual." (Adler, 1986: 31) Four Seasons opened its first property in Paris and it was a huge challenge for the management to go into the local.

According to the case study, French is characterized by cultural researchers as having Polychromic Culture, which means they consider the importance of

human relationships and they prefer building lifetime relationships. On the contrary, Americans are much more easygoing to develop short-term relationships. French do different tasks at the same time usually, but their attention can be taken away very easily. Additionally, the management explained that “ there is simply an incredible pride in being French” and “ the French have a very emotional way of doing things”. They cannot keep the standards and do not respect the Golden rules as it is too American as well as changing plans often because their decisions sometimes are unpredictable and not based on any reasons. For the management has to adjust to the French regulations especially in labor policy regarding to the staff working hours and conditions.

David Crowl, noted that “ each hotel is tailor made” and adapted to its national environment. Four Seasons have learned across borders from different countries and properties, trying to incorporate the native elements inside the property. Richey, the president of Richey International, which was hired to audit service quality and he felt that Four Seasons adapted to the local market very successfully from a design perspective at the first place. Also they understand the national idiosyncrasies, business culture and labor laws in order to become a French employer.

Besides, Four Seasons hired Didier Le Calvez to be the General Manager of George V. He had 25 years working experience outside France and he acquired patience and tolerance to prepare the hotel opening. Four Seasons had assigned a 35-person task force which composed of experienced Four Seasons staff to help Le Calvez and his teams, to be “ Four Seasonize” as well as making sure that the opening will be succeed. It helps to establish <https://assignbuster.com/four-seasons-goes-to-paris-case-study-tourism-essay/>

norms, attitudes and beliefs by reflecting the operating needs and is a good way for communicating the right information to all staff.

In addition, the management implemented the 35-hour workweek at George V in order to meet the spirit of French law. Besides, starting “ direct line” meeting for General Manager with managers, supervisors and employees in groups of 30 once a month, in order to promote communication and address the problems.

It is very important for staff to be aware of different national and organizational culture because management is a process of coordinating work activities with the management skills in order to complete the work efficiently and effectively with and through people. (Robbins and Decenzo, 2008) It enables to work well with other people both in a group and individually, as hospitality is a people industry and about interaction with people from different culture, language and beliefs, communication can be improved by developing and understanding the cultural awareness Besides, a successful management for today should be able to be flexible, create ethical work environments and exhibit entrepreneurial skills when facing the changes. As we are not all the same and everyone is unique, we have to recognize the similarities and differences of each individual us, in order to achieve the same goal for the company.

### **Instilling the Core values into the team**

Core values are “ operating philosophies or principles that guide an organization’s internal conduct as well as its relationship with the external world.” (businessdictionary. com, 2010) It is important for stakeholders of

the organization because it is a performance guide and clarification of what behaviour and attitude should be performed. According to Sharp, founder and CEO of Four Seasons, he mentioned that the reason for their success is no secret. It comes down to one single principle that transcends time and geography, religion and culture. It's the Golden Rule - the simple idea that if you treat people well, the way you would like to be treated, they will do the same. (Fourseasons. com, 2010)

Sharp emphasized that " The Golden Rule is the key to the success of the firm". It is not only a positive belief that provides consistently exceptional service and " just for you" to the guests, but also is a monitor to the employees and helps to shape relationships between the guests and staff. Base on the Golden Rule, the management needs to stand out by directing the activities of other people in the company with the functions of management, which is a " process have generally been condensed to the basic four: planning, organizing, leading and controlling" (Robbins and Decenzo, 2008: 7)

### Planning

It is a process to establish an overall strategy for achieving the goal of organization and helps to remind the staff what is the most important. (Robbins and Decenzo, 2008). The management mentioned the Four Seasons is a family and completes with rules, traditions and tough love. In order to provide consistently exceptional " just for you", the Golden Rule was established to guide the family. The behaviour of all staff over the world were expected to follow the seven Four Seasons " Service Culture

Standards” (Refers to Appendix I), Departmental Sample Core Standards and Four Seasons Goals, Beliefs and Principles. ([http://www.fourseasons.com/about\\_us/service\\_culture](http://www.fourseasons.com/about_us/service_culture)) They are the foundation of the organizational goals and it shapes the relationships between staff and guests, as well as enriches the service culture.

## Organizing

### Structure of the Organization

The responsibility of the general manager is supervising the day-to-day operations of the property and the regional management structure of the company (Refers to Appendix II) is the most important of its ability to maintain and deliver “ the highest and most consistent service standards in a cost-effective manner”.

### Hire the right person with right attitude

Four Seasons is trying to look deep inside of the applicants in the selection process in terms of finding the potential employees with right attitude. Refer to Frederick Taylor, the “ father of scientific management” believed that increased efficiency could be achieved by selecting the right people for the job and training them to do it precisely in the one best way. Hire the right person with right attitude and proper training, not only increasing the strength of the property, but also controlling relationship between input and output in order to minimize the resource costs.

## Leading

“ When managers motivate employees, direct the activities of others, select the most effective communication channel, or resolve conflicts among members, they are leading.” (Robbins and Decenzo, 2008: 8) Le Calvez, carried out some programs for motivation such as the invitation to the employees and their families for an open event about three times a year, in order to break down the barriers and remind them the pleasantness of working. Furthermore, achievement was celebrated by launching employee-of-the-month and employee-of-the-year programs to let the staff understand the recognition and the work speaks for them.

### Controlling

The basic controlling process is the responsibility for monitoring, comparing and correcting. (Robbins and Decenzo, 2008) The management of Four Seasons hired both external and internal auditors to audit and evaluate the service quality. It is very essential because the standards of Four Seasons “ are the foundation for all our properties” and “ it is based on which we build” according to a senior manager noted.

Therefore, the top management team gathers every morning for reflection and reviews in order to go over the mistakes, which have been done unprofessional and comparing to the company’s goal and service standards, then identify and address the problem for improvement.

## **How does Current Internal and External Environment affect managers to become more entrepreneurial**

Compared to the year of Four Seasons management, it is very important for the current managers to be more innovative and creative, as well as flexible in order to become entrepreneurial to both change and adapt the changes.

### Current Internal Environment Analysis

#### Management Change

Le Calvez worked with Four Seasons for 18 years and 8 years General Manager and Vice President in George V, he joined Shangri-La in 2007. He was credited for the renovation and his leadership while facing the adaptation and challenges.

In my opinion, it effected the work motivation of the managers but they should be able to adapt the changes all the time. " The hotel's culture is embodied in the General Manager," An F. S. George V manager noted and it is a opportunity to establish innovative ideas and new promotional strategy in order to create a new hotel's culture.

#### Ownership

Four Seasons agreed to be taken private in 2007 and was sold to the company's chief executive officer Sharp, as well as investment companies, one is Microsoft founder and Chairman, Bill Gates and the other by the owner of Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, the prince owned around 20% of Four Seasons already. (Usatoday. com, 2007) Gates and Prince Alwaleed invested on Four Seasons and there are opportunities to <https://assignbuster.com/four-seasons-goes-to-paris-case-study-tourism-essay/>



expand the Four Seasons and increase market share in other countries, where is the needs of luxury hotels and resorts. In this case the managers should work ambitious and pre-active to do market research in order to get the chance of promotions and working in another country.

### Current External Environment Analysis

#### Political

There are more upcoming infrastructure including convention centres, highway, mobile portal and urban planning. Furthermore, Paris is strongly promoted as a sustainable tourism destination as long as global warming becomes serious. It is also the new trend to “ being green” in these few years, hence it provides the opportunity to explore Paris in eco-friendly way and helps to create an image of “ Paris is a green capital” (parisinfo. com, 2010)

As the French government promotes Paris as a green destination and it is part of the trend of tourism, the managers can create eco-friendly offerings and policies in order to enrich the reputation of Four Season through this opportunity.

#### Economical

“ Even with a tax rate of 43% in 2008, France is the fifth most attractive place to start a business.” (industryweek. com, 2010) Therefore, the goods’ price in France is very stable as inflation rate is about 0.9 - 2% in these 5 years. The GDP contracted 2.1% in 2009 due to the financial crisis and there was world tourism collapse because of the Iceland volcano eruption in first  
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quarter of 2010. Hence, there is a big lost since tourism is the largest income in Paris.

Paris is the capital and gathers with most of the culture and technology of France, the manager can through this opportunity to more establish innovative conference package and facilities as well as eco-friendly meeting offer to fulfil the new demands. On the other hand, the managers can learn how and what to do during the financial crisis especially know what strategy to do when the hotel was in low occupancy rate and how to reduce the extra costs and arrange the work schedule properly in order to survive in bad financial situation.

#### Socio Cultural

Paris is well-known as a floury city but full of artistic and cultural atmosphere. There are 25, 000 artists living and working in Paris because of its historic and romantic atmosphere. (Hurriyetdailynews. com, 2010)

The managers will increase the cooperation with company which provides luxury city tour service as well as the training of the concierge service since the tourists come to Paris mostly for culture and sightseeing in order to create more revenue base on the advantage of the location and outstanding service.

#### Technological

France Telecom Group Orange Business Services and Disneyland Paris have built the wireless bar code of mobile messaging services for the visitors.

(Technow. com, 2009) In meanwhile, the government is planning to increase <https://assignbuster.com/four-seasons-goes-to-paris-case-study-tourism-essay/>

building mobile portal. (Proximamobile. fr, 2009) It is very innovative and convenient and the visitors can access to the useful travel information.

The managers can cooperate with the telecom companies about implement the new hotel wireless system in order to attract new target markets and turn it into the new unique selling point. Then the guests will be able to find the information of the property as well as the tourist information through this innovative service.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, Four Seasons has grown effectively over half a century with the exceptional and unparalleled service. The success of Four Season all bases on a simple idea - Golden Rules " If you treat people well, the way you would like to be treated, they will do the same." Likewise, Four Season George V has been renovated successfully through by understanding the cultural awareness and adapting to the local market with universal standards. The successful management is not only required the qualifications but also be able to take accountability for decisions and policies, with the positive attitude, exhibit entrepreneurial skills and flexibility to create ethical work environments. Besides, the internal and external environment factors need to be recognized and overcome by the management skills. Hence, the spirit of the Four Seasons consistent personalize service will be highlighted perfectly.

## **Appendix**

Appendix I - The Seven Four Seasons " Service Culture Standards"

(Sources: Four Seasons Goes to Paris Case Study)

SMILE Employees will actively greet guests, SMILE, and speak clearly in a friendly manner.

EYE Employees will make EYE contact, even in passing, with an acknowledgment.

RECOGNITION All staff will create a sense of RECOGNITION by using the guest's name, when known, in a natural and discreet manner.

VOICE Staff will speak to guests in an attentive, natural, and courteous manner, avoiding pretension, and in a clear VOICE.

INFORMED All guest contact staff will be well INFORMED about their hotel and their product, will take ownership of simple requests, and will not refer guests elsewhere.

CLEAN Staff will always appear CLEAN, crisp, well groomed, and well fitted.

EVERYONE EVERYONE, everywhere, all the time, show their care for our guests.

Appendix II - Four Seasons Reporting Structure

(sources: Four Seasons Goes to Paris Case Study)

**Regional**

**Vice Presidents**

**Hotel**

**General Managers**

**Regional Marketing Director**

**Area Director of Finance**

**Regional Human Resource Director**

**Supporting**