Key outcomes of the World Tourism Forum Lucerne Talent Boost Global Café

Customs House, Brisbane, Friday May 18

Background

The 2018 World Tourism Forum Lucerne (WTFL) Talent Boost hosted by the University of Queensland Business School brought together industry, academia and government to discuss talent management for Australia's Tourism industry. The Global Café session, facilitated by Dr Jason Fox and some of Queensland's inspiring Young Talents, provided a platform for open dialogue in response to a selection of questions relating to talent management as nominated by attendees. The ideas that emerged from this interchange are presented below under the respective questions.

How do we ignite passion for the tourism and hospitality industry among school students considering their careers?

- Work with schools to provide rewarding and inspiring work experience opportunities
- Field trips to Hotels that feature guest speakers from the industry
- Encourage past students to act as ambassadors for the industry
- Allow students to experience what it is like to create or be part of an experience that instils a sense of pride and enjoyment from making someone's day!
- Find students who hold the passion for the industry and create career pathways that make entry easy
- Promote the industry as being one about the 'people' and one that requires big personalities
- Create the diversity that comes with a hospitality career
- Discover how to identity those who are naturally 'hospitable'
- Create mentored work experience programs – an industry 'buddy' system that ensures school students have a connected and positive experience.
- Younger mentors / ambassadors should replace formal career counsellors as promotors of careers in the tourism and hospitality sector.

What can the industry do to better attract and support indigenous peoples?

- Training and education for the industry on indigenous culture that would enhance understanding of the history of indigenous peoples, the Moiety system and their culture.
- Soft skills training of indigenous peoples
- Autonomy for indigenous workers to better prepare them for leadership roles.
- Allow indigenous to take ownership of their roles , responsibilities and outcomes of their decisions
- Public investment in indigenous training and work placement programs

How can we make tourism and hospitality jobs in regional areas more attractive?

- Create and promote ex-pat style communities and promote the benefits of being part of this community
- Pay more money – lobby government for tax cuts and incentives

- Promote the regional life-style benefits
- Partner with educational institutions to offer Regional Australia Graduate Internships
- Develop a cooperative strategy among different regional locations to allow for destination rotations for the work force
- Promote regional locations as offering career 'jump start' opportunities
- Cultural awareness programs
- Have a local welcoming committee that helps new employees to the region settle in
- Multi-generational talent pool that provides opportunities to older generations, semi- retired people looking for a life style change
- Cooperative, local government supported, branding strategies to market regional work opportunities with a focus on the benefits of living in regional communities

What is needed from from both the private and public sectors to enhance public perceptions of the tourism and hospitality industry?

The private and public sectors need to work together and keep lines of communication open with each party being responsible for the following:

Private Sector - Industry	Public Sector - Government
- Take ownership of the issues surrounding the image of the industry	- Influence grass roots, parents and children through public campaigns
- Avoid the default	- Subsidise training packages
- Change CEO's perceptions towards the importance of talent to the business	- Support industry collaboration that will create a united front on talent management and the promotion of careers and opportunities in the sector
- Understand the importance of good employee management	- Promote the industry as developing important life skills
- Need to sell themselves in a different light to mitigate current perceptions	

With a significant gender imbalance when it comes to high level management, particularly in the hotels sector, what can the industry do to better support career progression for women?

- Resolve the gender pay gap
- Break through the stereo-type that suggests women don't take risks
- Provide quotas and targets for woman leadership positions
- Educate the boys!
- Support team parenting so woman can also pursue top level careers
- More recognition for woman as idea generators
- More opportunities for women to voice their views – boards, industry associations etc
- Mentoring programs that involve women supporting women, e.g. CEO shadowing opportunities
- Flexible working arrangements to cater for women who have or would like to have children – for example: job sharing

- More attention for successful women leaders who can advocate for the industry and attract more women
- Reduce insecurities that woman may have regarding their potential career prospects in the industry
- Re-think leadership…role sharing, strong 2 IC's that can support or step up into the GM's role when needed
- Organisation culture needs to accept that women need flexibility and cater for this

There are many things we cannot change in our industry such as lower pay rates and unsociable working hours. What can the industry do to incentivise staff in order to counter such working conditions?

- Job rotation
- Flexible working hours
- Sharing the organisation's success
- Time off in leiu during quieter periods
- Work from home options – where viable
- Profit share bonus system
- Attract a more mature work force – different social needs
- Annual salary increments
- Shift swapping options
- Company ambassador program to highlight benefits of working in the industry / for the organisation.

What skills and talents are essential for the industry in times of rapid technological growth and disruption?

- Must not forget the importance of soft skills regardless of technological opportunity
- Employees need to be able to maintain the balance between technology and face to face interaction
- Effective decision making and problem solving skills
- Measurement and analysis skills – must be able to make sense of the data that will be accessible with new technologies and understand privacy laws
- Must be able to train people of all ages – reverse mentoring ability
- Technology development skills
- Be able to make sensible and informed decisions around technological fit with the organisation
- Openness to learn and adapt accordingly
- Know how to get the 'right' feedback and identify opportunities / challenges the feedback presents
- Be able to see disruption as an opportunity not a threat
- Identify / create viable unique selling propositions through disruption and technological innovations

What are the key attributes we should focus on when promoting careers in tourism and hospitality to the next generation?

- A job in the industry is a career / a profession, not just part time
- Varied experiences and opportunities to be had
- Skills for life that are globally transferable
- Inspiration from the beginning, i.e. the first job should leave a lasting impression
- Flexibility - not just 9 to 5
- Opportunities for travel and working overseas
- Opportunities for professional development
- Recognition and a sense of worth through advancement opportunities to higher management
- Target parents and career advisors focusing on the career advancement opportunities
- Share success stories that feature star players that the next generation are likely to connect with
- Focus not only on hard skills but also soft skills that allow big personalities to shine
- Focus on the numerous entrepreneurial opportunities that exist in the industry.

What defines quality talent among the tourism workforce?

- Ability to foresee, read and respond to guests – emotional intelligence
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Ability to convey information accurately and with cultural sensitivity
- A good attitude and a good personality
- A degree
- Sense of environmental and social responsibility
- Guest focused
- Experienced
- Good understanding of tourism product and destination
- Someone who is an ambassador for the region and the industry
- Someone who is passionate
- For SME's education and support is needed as well as a rounded understanding of how to run a tourism business
- Breadth of knowledge
- Diversity
- Combination of tourism and hospitality knowledge

What is more important…a strong skill set or a good personality? What soft skills should training institutions be focusing on when preparing their graduates for our industry.

- Both personality and skills are important, but can teach skills but not personality so better to employ based on personality and attitude, but
- Employers want skilled employees as they often don't want to invest the time and effort required to train employees and want them to be able to the hit the ground running – this needs to change

- Emotional intelligence is important as employees should be training to pick up on customer cues to identify satisfaction or potential dissatisfaction
- Maturity and good judgement skills are essential for dealing with people and work-related problems
- The industry cannot afford not to invest in training
- Train mentors to be accessible and provide purposeful coaching for new and existing staff
- Government need to subsidise the industry to enable them to devote time and resources to proper induction, coaching and training that will instil a good work ethic among employees and mentors
- Personality was deemed more important at the conclusion of this discussion.

What are the key personality traits of someone who is 'born to thrive' in the tourism and hospitality industry?

- Respectfulness and humility
- Driven and focused
- Selfless
- Thick skinned
- Social and environmentally responsible
- Self-aware
- Calm
- Leadership qualities
- Honest
- Passionate
- Patient
- Energetic
- Multi tasker
- Supportive

- Intelligent
- Amicable
- Team player
- Others focused
- Friendly

- Punctual
- Attentive to detail
- Problem solver
- Adaptive
- Willing to learn
- Empathetic
- Charismatic
- Good communicator
- Good listener

How can the industry attract more chefs? What support do we need from both the public and private sectors?

- Enhance the creativity side of chefing by using key descriptors in job specifications such as food designer, culinary artist
- Promote the Australian Gastronomical Culture to change the perception of the industry
- Inspire the passion in apprentices by providing opportunities to innovate and create in the kitchen
- Encourage / enhance gender and ethnic diversity
- Continuous support for apprenticeship programs from government
- Government subsidised specialist training for qualified Chefs
- Minimise and manage workplace stress
- Implement mobility programs within and between organisations to alleviate boredom and enhance learning opportunities

- Choose appropriate advocates for the industry to minimise the negative stereo types the public often associate with the industry – e.g. Gordon Ramsay

How can we take jobs in hospitality from being a means to an end to a means to a beginning?

- Make individuals part of the employer brand
- Provide professional develop opportunities and communicate the value of these to career growth within the sector
- Offer and promote exchange and mobility programs within the organisation
- Recognise and reward soft skills and create a sense of belonging in the industry
- Communicate the transferability of skills and the different pathways within the industry
- Collaborate with like-minded SME's to create a sense of community within the sector
- Provide training for technical skills
- Incentivise, celebrate achievements and recognise heroes
- Create role models for younger staff
- Empower staff with decision autonomy
- Offer opportunities to be innovative and entrepreneurial
- Allow for the sharing of ideas
- Share and celebrate success stories and aspirations and make employees feel that are a part of the future organisation.