INDUSTRY ORGANIZATION CASE STUDY

FOUR SEASONS Hotels and Resorts
Introduction

This case study is based on information kindly provided by the Four Seasons Hotel, Canary Wharf and from the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts website. It updates aspects of the 2007 case study about Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts and provides additional background information about the company and the Four Seasons Hotel Canary Wharf. This case study also supports several new role model case studies about employees of the Four Seasons Hotel, Canary Wharf.

Background

The company was founded in 1960 by Isadore Sharp, who remains Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. With its headquarters in Toronto, Canada, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts serves the needs of both business and leisure travellers. The company continues to expand to new destinations, at all times creating exceptional hotels and resorts, which provide the finest comforts and highest standards of service, in unique locations.

Four Seasons Today

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts is a global company. It is one of the world's leading operators of luxury hotels. Four Seasons has followed a targeted course of expansion, opening hotels in major city centres and desirable resort destinations around the world. The company has grown from just one hotel in 1960 to 83 hotels in 35 countries at the time of writing (April 2010).

In the UK there are two Four Seasons Hotels currently open, the Four Seasons Hotel Canary Wharf and the Four Seasons Hotel Hampshire about 27 miles south west of Heathrow Airport. Re-opening later in 2010 is the completely refurbished Four Seasons Hotel London situated off world famous Park Lane.
Service Culture

Many years ago, Four Seasons set out to create a corporate mission statement - something that would guide the actions of everyone in the organisation. These goals, beliefs and principles are the foundation of the work done every day on behalf of Four Seasons’ guests.

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts chose to specialise within the hospitality industry by offering only experiences of exceptional quality, with the objective of being recognised as the company that manages the finest hotels, resorts and residence clubs wherever they are located. This objective is achieved by creating properties of enduring value using superior design and finishes, and supporting them with a deeply instilled ethic of personal service.
The Key to Success

The company sees the staff as the greatest asset and the key to their success, believing that each of their people needs a sense of dignity, pride and satisfaction in what they do. Satisfying guests depends on the united efforts of many. Owners, directors, managers, and staff are the most effective when working together co-operatively, respecting each other’s contribution and importance. This approach allows Four Seasons to satisfy the needs and tastes of their discriminating customers, and to maintain their position as the world's premier luxury hospitality company.

For Four Season Hotels and Resorts success is therefore a combination of key principles:

- ‘In all interactions with guests, customers, business associates and colleagues, we to seek to deal with others as we would have them deal with us.’
- ‘We demonstrate our beliefs most meaningfully in the way we treat each other and by the example we set for one another.’
- ‘Every decision is based on a clear understanding of and belief in what we do, and, when we couple this conviction with sound financial planning, we expect to achieve a fair and reasonable profit to ensure the prosperity of the company and to offer long-term benefits to our hotel owners, our customers and our employees.’
The Four Seasons Hotel Canary Wharf

The Four Seasons Hotel, Canary Wharf, London, is a quality work placement provider with Springboard’s INSPIRE Scheme. For more information click on the INSPIRE logo

The Four Seasons Hotel Canary Wharf is one of the many properties of enduring value created by Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts using superior design and finishes. The hotel offers a stylish eatery and bar with terrace and river views, excellent business services and meeting rooms, a range of high quality guest rooms from standard rooms to the presidential suite, a fitness centre and pool exclusively for Four Seasons guests plus private access to the tennis courts, gym, Dove Spa and other amenities at the neighbouring Virgin Active at Canary Riverside, amenities for children, and much more.
In addition to business meetings and conferences, Four Seasons Canary Wharf offers a breath-taking riverfront setting for other events such as an unforgettable wedding in London's vibrant Canary Wharf district. Sleek, chic and exclusive, Four Seasons Canary Wharf combines beautiful lawns, superlative cuisine and intuitive service with sweeping views of the broad River Thames.

Dine al fresco on the terrace overlooking the River Thames

As with all Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, the Four Seasons Canary Wharf has a deeply instilled ethic of personal service.

Cuisine of Northern Italy at Quadrato restaurant
The two storey Ballroom with round tables set for formal dining

Luxurious and supremely comfortable, the hotel is just steps away from shops, celebrity-chef restaurants and gleaming skyscrapers, and minutes from London City Airport and major conference, sports and entertainment venues.

The rooftop pool
Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts Hotel Divisions

Below are brief descriptions of what the different divisions of Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts do and how they work together to provide impeccable service.

Operational Hotel Divisions

Depending on the location, operational divisions may include Rooms, Food and Beverage, Spa, Fitness Facilities, and Four Seasons Residence Club.

Rooms

Reservations / Front Office: Guests typically have their first contact with Four Seasons in Reservations, where staff answer their questions and book their rooms, as well as providing other hotel services. When guests arrive at or leave the hotel, it is Front Office that ensures their experience is smooth; Front Office is also the natural place where guests direct comments, questions or suggestions.

Concierge/Guest Services: The Guest Services team ensures that guests are well looked after from the start with a warm, welcoming smile, and a helpful gesture the moment they arrive at a Four Seasons. If guests are looking for local tours or want to buy hard-to-get tickets for a show or secure a reservation at a top restaurant, then the Concierge steps in, accommodating requests from the ordinary to the extraordinary (so long as they are legal and ethical). With local knowledge and insights, the Concierge does wonders to enhance guests’ experiences, making their stay that much more enjoyable.
**Housekeeping**: Twice a day, Housekeeping members of staff keep guest rooms clean and tidy, and they also maintain all public areas of the hotel. They pride themselves on their attention to detail, looking to ensure that bathrobes are in place, amenities are in order and that guests always have fresh supplies at their fingertips.

**Laundry/Valet**: From one-hour pressing service to a last-minute emergency button replacement, Laundry and Valet is there, working around the clock to meet guests’ needs.

**Uniform Room**: While the Uniform Room team is behind the scenes, their work is seen in all areas of the hotel, where employees wear their clean, crisp and well-fitting uniforms with pride.

**Telecommunications**: As the voice of the hotel, this team ensures that all communication channels operate flawlessly, including the hotel’s phone and paging system. Most importantly, they respond to emergencies and connect with the appropriate individuals by phone or radio.

**Kids For All Seasons**: Four Seasons make a point of making their youngest guests feel welcome. This special recreational programme offers a variety of activities, from story-telling and arts and craft classes to outdoor games and sports.
Food and Beverage

It is no secret that Four Seasons has an award-winning reputation for excellence in cuisine. In the restaurants and lounges, the Food and Beverage team strives to provide exceptional quality and service to the discriminating guests all over the world.

**Restaurants and Lounges:** From a casual poolside lounge to a steakhouse, each Four Seasons property offers guests multiple choices for dining. In selected properties, outlets are created by world-renowned specialty restaurant designers to make each guest’s dining experience unforgettable.

**Employee Restaurant:** From Three Below in New York City to SMAK (a local expression for "taste") in Prague, employee restaurants provide 24-hour food and beverage options for all employees. These restaurants, which are complimentary to employees, also serve as the venue for many employee activities.

**Kitchen:** The inspiration centre for Four Seasons’ culinary delights, the kitchen dazzles guests and satisfies every craving. From a fluffy omelette at three in the morning to an elaborate banquet, the kitchens are always in overdrive, meeting the demands of all of the hotel’s Food and Beverage operations.

**Catering:** From small, intimate business meetings to elegant wedding banquets, the Catering team focuses on booking public room space, designing menus and coordinating events to ensure they happen flawlessly.
**Convention/Conference Services:** If an event lasts a few days and requires accommodation in the hotel, this team is there to help coordinate group room reservations and assist Catering with event planning.

**Banquets:** Whether for a French- or Russian-style service, the Banquets department is involved from planning, set-up and execution to the breakdown of the room so it can all happen again the next day – or even the next hour.

**In-Room Dining:** Always just a telephone call away, around the clock, the In-Room Dining team provides a wide selection of food and beverage options delivered to the comfort of guests’ rooms. They also cater functions held in the privacy of hotel suites.

**Stewarding:** Making sure that every piece of silver shines and every plate sparkles, the Stewarding team works tirelessly behind the scenes. They ensure that each outlet and function has an adequate supply of clean dishes and silverware, and also keep the kitchen area and the "heart of the house" clean and safe.

**Spa and Fitness Facilities**

**Spa:** Jet-lagged? Muscles aching after sporting activities? From Swedish massage to shiatsu, the Spa specialists provide a variety of rejuvenating body and facial treatments. They also maintain other spa facilities, including the steam room and sauna, whirlpool and spa lounge, to make the spa a sanctuary of peace and relaxation.

**Fitness Facilities:** Whether guests are training for a marathon or simply recovering from a long flight, our professional trainers aim to reinvigorate by leading yoga sessions and a variety of exercise
routines. The team also ensures cleanliness in outdoor pool areas and locker-room facilities.

**Golf services and operations:** From Lana’i to Dallas, and at all Four Seasons golf courses in between, Golf Services teams keep our golf courses immaculate and provide professional individual or group instruction for avid and occasional golfers. They are also responsible for the day-to-day running of on-site pro shops.

**Four Seasons Residences**

**Residence Clubs:** Residence Clubs are created for those who seek a vacation or second home ownership experience of the finest quality and appreciate the advantage of only paying for the amount of time they use it each year. Ownership also offers limited exchange opportunities to other Residence Clubs in the portfolio. Each property is uniquely designed to suit the location and is adjacent to, or an integrated part of, a Four Seasons hotel or resort complex.

Owners enjoy fully appointed residences with one- to four-bedroom floor plans designed to Four Seasons standards. Amenities and services vary by location, but typically include standard Four Seasons services such as daily housekeeping and maintenance, Concierge, in-residence dining service, pool, whirlpool, fitness centre and poolside dining, as well as access to the spa, golf and restaurants.

Just as each facility is customised to the location, so are the ownership packages offered at each Residence Club. Offerings range from one-week intervals at some to multi-week fractional home ownership at others that provide more “days in residence” per year. A dedicated team of sales and marketing professionals is focused on fulfilling client inquiries and matching each potential owner to the location and
ownership package that best suits his or her needs and lifestyle.

**Private Residences:** These estate homes, villas or condominiums are designed to the highest standards and range from 93 to 1,860 square metres (1,000 to 20,000 square feet) in size, with between one and six bedrooms. In resort settings, they usually include outdoor living space.

Whether located at beachfront, mountainside or city centre, these private homes give owners access to select services and amenities at their adjacent Four Seasons hotel or resort. The peace of mind that comes with knowing Four Seasons can take care of their every need, from doing the laundry to cleaning the pool and mowing the lawn while they are enjoying a round of golf or a day at the spa, is part of the attraction for owners.

**Administrative hotel divisions**

**Sales and Marketing**

The Sales and Marketing department promotes, sells and books business for the hotel. This team’s goal is to ensure that the hotel operates at maximum occupancy. In addition, they coordinate advertising, promotions and public relations activities aimed at enhancing the hotel's positioning.
**Engineering**

Leaving no faucet (tap) dripping and no room unpainted, the Engineering department makes sure that the hotel remains in peak operating condition. From daily maintenance to full renovation projects, the team handles all mechanical and technical operations at the hotel. They are also integral to the maintenance of the hotel's fire and safety system.

**Administration and General**

**Executive Offices:** The management command centre of any hotel the Executive Offices typically comprise the General Manager and Hotel/Resort Manager. Together with the rest of the senior management of the hotel, they work to establish standards and to supervise and coordinate all hotel operations.

**Accounting/Finance:** Recording and analysing the income and expenses of a hotel's operations, the Finance team works to create an accurate account of assets, liabilities and financial transactions. The Finance department also oversees the Payroll, Purchasing, and Information Systems and Technology departments of the hotel.

**Purchasing:** Procuring items as varied as the perfect slippers or the local market's freshest fish, the Purchasing department is responsible for sourcing vendors and ordering and tracking all purchases, as well as receiving them – all in a timely manner.

**Human Resources:** From the recruitment and selection process to orientation, training, benefits administration, compensation, communication and overall employee relations, Human Resources is there for all employees. This skilled team provides an array of
assistance, including confidential advice and counselling, in a supportive, professional and friendly manner.

**Security:** Providing a secure and safe environment in which guests can relax and/or conduct business, the Security team is on-site 24-hours a day. This department establishes, promotes and maintains the hotel's security, property protection and safety programme.

**Information Systems and Technology:** Assisting guests so that they can stay connected while on the road, as well as providing support for the internal hotel systems, the IST team is never far from a computer. The in-house staff team installs, maintains and repairs all computer hardware and software.

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts offer excellent training and development programmes, benefits and opportunities for career progression. Click below for useful careers information and student resources on the Four Seasons website, including videos of key people speaking about Four Seasons:

http://jobs.fourseasons.com/workingatfourseasons/careerprogression/Pages/Careerprogression.aspx

For further information about Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts visit: www.fourseasons.com or for Four Seasons Canary Wharf visit: www.fourseasons.com/canarywharf