

Embracing face-to-face hospitality in the modern tech era

In a world where modern technology is developing at a rapid pace, connectivity and personalisation have become two key factors that play a fundamental role in ensuring a business does not become stagnant. It is for this reason that Ronel Bezuidenhout, managing director and principal at Capital Hotel School will continue to educate at one of the leading training institutions for hospitality and professional cookery.



Ronel Bezuidenhout - managing director and principal at Capital Hotel School

Bezuidenhout firmly believes in focusing on guest hospitality and prioritising an excellent experience. “When a guest receives the pinnacle of hospitality treatment, they become the advocate for your brand and this starts with how your staff is trained and the knowledge they are empowered with.”

Ronel believes that there are **six vital business principles** to adhere to:

- **Educate.** Education is not learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think.
- **Employment.** Train your students and staff to learn to think and apply their knowledge (experience) in the workplace.

- **Perceive your workplace.** Find solutions to daily tasks and challenges.
- **Service to the next level.** Remember, a guest will never remember the service (the task that was expected) but rather how you made them feel (the smile and care – the feeling of ‘I belong’).
- **Understanding the personalisation concept.** Connect your staff and guests, personalise their experience and empower them with your knowledge.
- **Involve the customer.** Going above and beyond and creating offerings which they cannot receive anywhere else. This involves the customer in a ritual which makes them feel they are getting an exceptional and exclusive experience.

Bezuidenhout says that empowering staff is key to a successful organisation: “Staff should never take orders from a guest but rather create an experience which subsequently increases customer satisfaction and the likelihood of repeat visits.”

Creating trustworthy brand loyalty

It is predicted that by 2020, society will harness the idea of robots and programmes taking over the duties of hospitality staff. As scary as that may sound, Bezuidenhout believes that guests, starting from millennials and up, will still crave a true, honest and genuine exchange.

Although we cannot ignore the fact that everything around us is either connected by a smartphone or a tablet, the hospitality industry needs to understand and ensure that every immersive touch point for the guest is an opportunity to deliver excellent customer service and experience. Hospitality groups and institutions need to ensure that they stand out from the crowd by creating trustworthy brand loyalty with real-time interaction.

One of the benchmark products at Capital Hotel School is the online training facility and e-learning portal, Hospitalit-e. The blended learning programme successfully incorporates online and face-to-face tutor training and assessment. “This is an objective to merge into the modern tech era,” says Bezuidenhout.

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