

teaching note

Boutique Resorts: Juveniles versus rejuvenation

Summary of the Case Study

This case study is about how to market Sam and Lisa Bracken's new boutique resort, The Canebrake. Currently, The Canebrake, offers fine dining, spa services, and yoga classes. Sam and Lisa are planning to expand their business to include lodging, with 16 small cottage suites. The goal of Sam and Lisa Bracken is to develop adults retreat boutique resort at their current establishment, The Canebrake, which will leave guests feeling renewed after a relaxing getaway. Sam and Lisa are concerned that allowing children to stay overnight will negatively affect the quality of the guests' experience; however, Sam and Lisa do not want the resort to be perceived as anti-child, thereby damaging their reputation and image. In order for Sam and Lisa to focus on their goal for The Canebrake and start accepting overnight guests, Sam and Lisa must make a decision about their child policy. These are the options they are considering:

- Marketing the resort as an "adult retreat" that does not provide any childcare or children's activities.
- Marketing the resort as a completely child-free property.
- Marketing the resort as an adult getaway that allow children over age 16 to stay overnight and maintain programs during the day that all ages are welcome to attend.

Teaching Objectives

By the end of this case study, junior and senior undergraduate/postgraduate students in hospitality and business management programs should be able to:

- Describe the importance of the following concepts in regard to the operation of a boutique resort for an adult getaway: goal setting-theory and stages of communication lifecycle.
- Discuss some challenges business owners may face in an attempt to focus on a target market without negatively impacting the reputation and/or image of the business.
- Describe the benefits of goal setting theory for implementing business plans.
- Discuss how business owners can focus on their goals without encouraging negative perceptions of the business image.
- Discuss a model of Communications Lifecycle for disseminating positive information.

Target Audience of the Case Study

This case study provides an opportunity for undergraduate juniors and seniors, and postgraduate students in hospitality and business management programs to discuss issues pertaining to appropriate decision making that could affect the goal, reputation, and

image of a new business. In addition, the case also covers a model of Communications Lifecycle and a public relations program.

Prior to Class

Prior to class, students will be asked to read the case study and the conceptual framework regarding the case including: goal setting-theory and stages of Communications Lifecycle. They will be urged to prepare to answer the questions following the case and discuss the following concepts:

- Goal setting-theory
- Stages of Communications Lifecycle
- Importance of effective communication for a public relations program
- The potential implication of each concept on The Canebrake's image

Teaching Approach: The teaching approach for this case can take either of the two approaches listed below:

Teaching Approach 1 (45-50 minutes)

- Start the class by asking if the students have done the case assignment. Continue with a brief summary of the case and ask whether any of the students have experienced a similar situation (5 minutes).
- Present a PowerPoint presentation on the theoretical concepts of this case. Describe the following concepts: goal setting-theory, stages of communication lifecycle, importance of effective communication for a public relations program, and the potential implication of each concept on The Canebrake's image (8-10 minutes).
- Divide students into small groups and urge each group to answer one or two of the four groups of questions following the case (7-10 minutes)
- Let each group present their answers (10 minutes)
- Reinforce the answers of each group (5 minutes)
- Class discussion on the implications of leadership/management decision during times of uncertainties (5 minutes)
- Summary of the case's key points (5 minutes)

Teaching Approach 2 (75 minutes)

- Start the class by asking if the students have done the case assignment. Continue with a brief summary of the case and ask whether any of the students have experienced a similar situation. Then, ask students to form small groups (10 minutes).
- Ask each group to debrief the case study by discussing the following topics and answer all four groups of questions following

the case (20 minutes)

- What is the case study about?
- Theoretical concepts regarding the case
- Implications of each decision options
- What are the business owners' concerns?
- Probe the class about the theoretical concepts regarding the case (7 minutes)
- Let each group present their answers (20 minutes)
- Reinforce the answers of each group (8 minutes)
- Class discussion on the implications of leadership/management decision during times of uncertainties (5 minutes)
- Summary of the case key points (5 minutes)

Discussion Questions for Use in Class:

- What child-policy would be most appropriate for Sam and Lisa Bracken's boutique resort? Why?
- What are the potential consequences of this decision? How would their business change based on this decision?
- Is the Communications Lifecycle model an appropriate tool to meet Lisa and Sam's needs? If not, what might they do differently?
- Are there any factors that the Brackens have not considered? What issues may arise as plans move forward and how might they be resolved?

Additional Reading References

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