



HSMAI FOUNDATION SPECIAL REPORT

# The State of Hotel Sales, Marketing, and Revenue Optimization Talent 2020-2021

A Special Report by the Hospitality Sales and  
Marketing Association International Foundation

By Karen Wollard, Ed. D., CHDM

Dear Colleagues,

Since 2017, the HSMAI Foundation has focused on the number one challenge facing the commercial sector of hotels: the need to strengthen the pipeline to ensure the industry has the top sales, marketing, and revenue optimization talent it needs. At that time, the hospitality sector was poised for phenomenal growth amid the demographic reality of a coming labor shortage. The Foundation moved forward with strategies and partnerships for attracting and identifying new sources of talent, developing emerging talent, and engaging existing talent. The goal was to ensure the industry had people in place to create, capture, manage, and optimize hotel demand. The science of revenue optimization, distribution channel management, ecommerce, and digital marketing was evolving exponentially, as were disruptive strategies and technologies that eroded margins such as price transparency and comparison and aggressive online travel agency marketing. The Foundation's commitment only strengthened as we faced the worst crisis in a century.

From the start of the pandemic, HSMAI pivoted to support and listen to our member and partner organizations. We published more than 200 articles; held 24 roundtables with 13 different constituencies; numerous virtual programs and conferences; and created an entire online Coronavirus Resource Center for members. Additionally, the Foundation hosted a global series of five roundtables with chief human resources officers in spring 2020 and, in 2021, we put on eight academic roundtables with deans and directors of hospitality programs, as well as faculty in sales, marketing, and revenue management — all with the goal of educating and preparing our members for whatever was on the horizon.

As the industry shut down and people were laid off, many were left feeling angry, bitter, and confused. Those who remained had to take on new responsibilities and manage increased workloads. Trust and commitment are essential if we are to attract, develop, and engage tomorrow's talented commercial professionals, and both have been undermined. Restoring them will be a key ingredient in driving recovery and developing an effective workforce of talented and skilled commercial professionals who have the motivation and sophistication to lead the rebound.

And slowly but surely, we're on our way. Scenarios of failing to return to pre-pandemic RevPAR and business travel rattled the industry through 2020 and most of 2021, yet the rebound has been faster than expected. Some leisure and resort markets are seeing higher rates and occupancy than before the pandemic. In many cases, as Hotel News Now reports, guests have returned to our properties before our associates.

As we venture into a post-pandemic world, the need for talent has never been greater. Staffing challenges in sales, marketing, and revenue optimization are being felt across all hotel companies at the unit and corporate levels. We must look at the entire workforce ecosystem to ensure the people who will take our businesses to the next level are available, capable and passionate about the future of the industry. The insights featured in this report offer food for thought for every leader in our profession as we continue to navigate how we cultivate the talent pipeline.

Sincerely,



**Bob Gilbert,**  
Executive Director,  
HSMAI Foundation



**Michelle Woodley,**  
Chair,  
HSMAI Foundation

## State of Talent Research Development

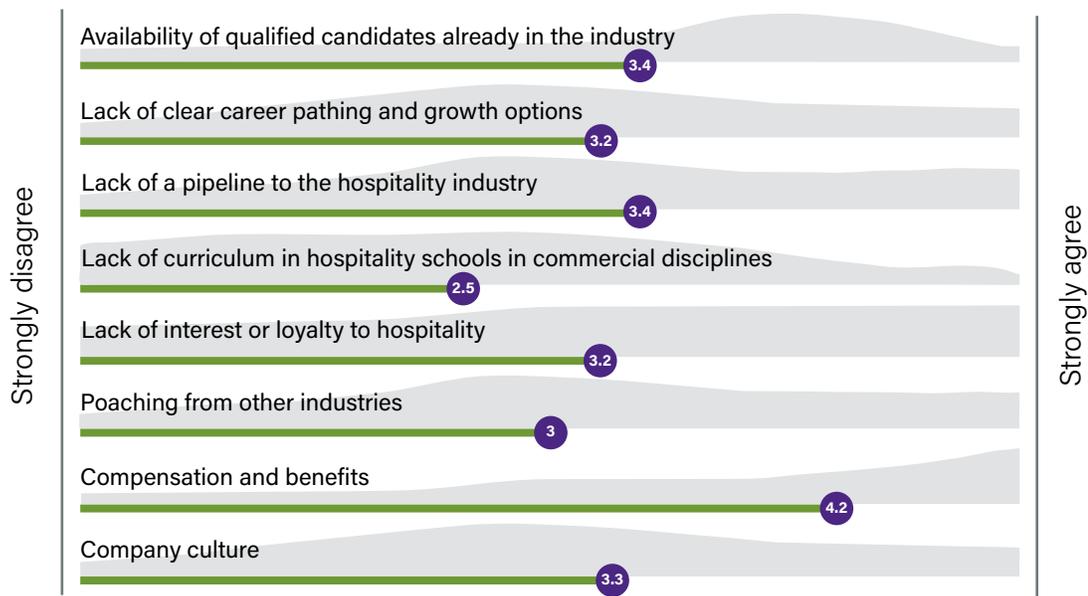
The research in this report is grounded in industry and hospitality data, specifically sales, marketing, and revenue optimization where it is available.

In late September 2021, through a series of round-table discussions, HSMAI asked 50 brand and hotel management company revenue executives and ownership group commercial executives across disciplines to rate the challenges facing commercial talent in hospitality. The top-ranked challenges included: compensation and benefits, availability of qualified candidates, pipeline issues, poaching, loyalty and company culture (see figure below).

HSMAI would like to specially thank Dr. Peter Ricci, director of the hospitality management program at Florida Atlantic University (FAU), and his faculty Dr. Ye Zhang, Dr. Soyoung Park, and Dr. Anil Bilgihan for sharing the results of their spring 2021 Hospitality & Tourism Workforce COVID-19 Sentiment survey of 4,500 respondents, as well as the original research data from 650 sales, marketing, and revenue optimization participants.

As the industry recovers, HSMAI and the HSMAI Foundation will continue to focus on addressing the challenges that lie ahead by sharing best practices and identifying trends. We look forward to continued support from the industry to facilitate these efforts.

### How would you rate these challenges facing commercial talent in hospitality?



## Talent-Related Trends of 2020-2021

The devastating COVID-19 pandemic laid bare the talent crisis that has been slowly brewing in the hospitality industry since at least 2007. Sales, marketing, and revenue optimization talent has always been a key ingredient in the success of the industry, yet now we are facing a new landscape. What has changed over the past two years? How should companies be moving forward? The following outlines the talent-related trends we have identified and will discuss in this report.

### 1. Corporate culture and values matter.

Restoring trust and commitment are essential across the industry, as is rekindling the passion for hospitality. Organizations with people-first cultures made impossible decisions without betraying that trust. Corporate culture will dictate how teams can function and thrive. This is even more important now that four generations are in the workforce for the first time ever.

### 2. Expectations of leadership are changing.

Strong leaders with diverse teams moved decisively and with empathy. Leadership humility and servant leadership have proven to be productive. Authenticity, accountability, and transparency are the trends in leadership that matter.

### 3. Mental health, safety, and well-being move to the forefront.

These became essential considerations for surviving the crisis for employees who remained onsite, those who were furloughed, and individuals working from home.

### 4. Doing more with less is a treadmill.

With the abrupt shutdowns, initial cutbacks were a strategy for survival. Talent was redeployed to ensure multiple tasks were completed with less cost. This became a two-edged sword, as workers insisted

on compensation increases and flexibility to return to work. Burned out talent simply resigned or left the industry.

### 5. Silos continue to disappear.

Sales, marketing, and revenue management teams — stripped to their minimums — became partners who learned from each other, sought out new tools for finding business, and became generalists who had to do what it took to get the job done.

### 6. The above-property office community changes.

Remote work became essential in an industry based on personal interaction. Organizations are wrestling with how to put policies and guidelines in place to maximize the quality of community and collaboration as workplaces reopen. Having had time to reflect, people are choosing to prioritize work-life balance.

### 7. KPIs and incentive plans are being reevaluated.

Salespeople watched all their business fall off, while marketers found their entire plans were no longer useful. Revenue professionals' analyses and strategies were upended. Goal setting is a particular challenge with individual goals and variable compensation being adjusted to an uncertain environment.

## Talent-Related Trends of 2020-2021

### 8. Talent pipelines went dry, and new channels have to be tapped.

The talent ecosystem requires repairs. Seventy-five percent of hospitality schools report falling enrollment, while [Joblist](#) reports that, as of Q2 2021, 60% of job seekers are not interested in a hospitality job. Innovative approaches for recruiting are needed. Returning employees are demanding more choice and control over their pay, timing, hours, schedules, compensation, benefits, working conditions, and management.

### 9. Development, reskilling, and upskilling are necessities as technological acceleration continues.

Learning for the future and cross-training for flexibility are essential. The future requires associates who can adapt, adjust, innovate, create, and collaborate. Building skills and abilities for a more resilient workforce can buffer volatile market changes. COVID-19 accelerated technology adoption, specifically in the ways we communicate and collect data, driving innovation across

commercial applications. Technology is continuing to change us in ways we don't yet recognize or see coming.

**60%** of job seekers are not interested in a hospitality job.



### 10. Organizations can lower turnover and increase retention.

Diverse industries have been poaching sales, marketing, and revenue professionals with the lure of higher compensation and quality of life. Burnout, better opportunities, regular hours, and changing generational values are prompting talent to look elsewhere. The solutions start with reigniting the passion for hospitality and showing the positive changes organizations within the industry have made to acknowledge the damage done and prioritize talent well-being. ■

# 1. Corporate culture and values matter.

Human resources issues moved to the forefront in March 2020 when the world shut down. HSMAI held global chief human resources executive roundtables in Asia Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, and North America in summer and fall 2020, finding that experiences were eerily similar around the world: People were doing more with less, managing low team morale, quickly implementing new technology for virtual communication and more. One of the bright spots was the way HR leaders were quickly elevated to C-suite levels as the pandemic unfolded. The quick handling by capable HR teams who had the support of senior management was a huge differentiating factor in the outcomes of massive furloughs and layoffs.

As corporate commercial teams shrank and began remote work, they had the monumental tasks of maintaining communication, enhancing teamwork, and ensuring wellness. For those associates who remained, flattened decision-making hierarchies made quick and nimble responses to crises possible. Silos crumbled and everyone pitched in to keep whatever business was available booked. Resilience and flexibility became essential, traits that were more easily adopted in organizations that valued teamwork. Transparency and compassion proved to be key factors in reputation management.

Communication and consideration mattered enormously to those who were laid off, those sent home to work remotely, and those who stayed. Organizations with people-first cultures made impossible decisions without betraying employees' trust, while those who felt they were treated unfairly lost the faith. Hospitality organizations have long considered themselves to be in the people business, and this belief was put to the test. As one employee offered, after nearly three decades working with one organization, they were terminated (in writing) with "no advanced planning, no crisis prevention of any sort, and no care or concern for [my] well-being and long-term status of [my] leadership." Transparency in the face of unforeseen events was most effective in organizations where leaders were trusted to take employee and guest well-being into

account. Empathy will be remembered long after the rebound occurs.

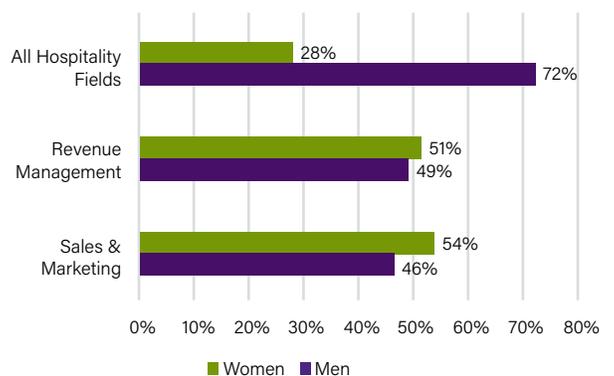
Across the HSMAI C-level roundtables in 2020 and 2021, executives consistently reported that few (or fewer than other departments) commercial professionals were furloughed or laid off, or they were among the first to be recalled. FAU's hospitality research found that even among these departments, less than 13% felt the industry had protected its workers better than other industries.

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion & Intergenerational Collaboration

Two corporate culture issues of particular importance to commercial professionals are likely to return to the forefront as employment rebounds: DEI and workplace collaboration among four different generations.

DEI efforts were moving forward in many organizations as the pandemic arose. For sales, marketing, and revenue management professionals, women represented nearly half of all VP- to chief-level positions and were well represented at the director levels, holding more than 60% of current positions in 2021, according to the Castell Project's 2021 Women in Hospitality Industry Leadership study. Yet, 57% of all those laid off in the pandemic were women, so it will take time to see what the ultimate impact might be.

### Gender in Leadership: VP to Chief Levels



In 2021, a task force of the HSMIAI Americas Marketing Advisory Board surveyed more than 70 sales, marketing, and revenue management leaders from a range of organizations and found that nearly 55% had an existing DEI initiative or committee. These efforts ranged from executive education to comprehensive training for all colleagues. The HSMIAI Foundation continues to work with several organizations who are researching, making recommendations, and fostering success in addressing DEI efforts, specifically across the commercial professions.

The reality of four generations (baby boomers, Gen X, millennials, and Gen Z) in the workforce for the first time in history adds a new dimension to the challenges of corporate values. In sales, marketing, and revenue positions, senior managers tend to be baby boomers and Gen Xers, both generations that have spent most of their working lives in offices, with clear work and leadership policies. Millennial and Gen Z professionals seem more interested in fluid structures and policies. The need to recalibrate existing logarhythms, adapt existing systems to new realities, and the enormous changes in social media and big data challenge many commercial professionals, particularly those who aren't digital natives. This is a consideration for managers as they work to navigate these challenges.

One highlight in developing supportive cultures among different generations has been the concept of "reverse mentoring," which pairs more experienced workers with new professionals, often with the intent to work together on technology challenges. The Foundation will be watching for success stories and best practices with this approach, as well as other learning, development, and teamwork solutions.

Aside from DEI and intergenerational collaboration, the pandemic has heightened awareness of the importance of accommodating employees with familial responsibilities, supporting those with heightened risk factors, and addressing varying levels of need for job security. As workplaces redevelop, organizations

will have to work with their employees to determine their needs and foster an environment of inclusion and understanding. Corporate culture will dictate how teams will function and thrive. "Companies that aren't aligned with the work-life needs of their employees will continue to see a migration of talent," wrote author Connie Steele in her book "Building the Business of You." The days of celebrating those employees who are best able to tolerate the pain of overdemanding days, burnout, multiple jobs, short staffing, and unending demands may soon be over.

Surveys of 70 sales, marketing, and revenue management leaders from a range of organizations found that nearly

55%

had an existing DEI initiative or committee.

As we rebuild, there is an opportunity for a cultural reset and renewal. Honest assessment of organizational values, the actions of its leaders, and the future expectations of guests, employees, owners, and other stakeholders are crucial. Organizations must ask: What does it take to be extraordinary? How can we listen and connect more?

One leader told us that the future is about more than just booking rooms; it is choosing the mix of guests and ensuring purpose and kindness are shown throughout the property. There is a renewed commitment to mentoring and growing the next generation of hoteliers who know how to drive the business and are intensely passionate about the guest experience.

## 2. Expectations of leadership are changing.

Authenticity, accountability, and transparency are the trends in leadership that have been most strongly associated with successfully navigating the pandemic's challenges. Good leaders listened and adjusted, allowing the difference between what was and was not within their control to dictate the right actions to move forward. Every leader we spoke with talked about the humanity of leadership being critical, along with humility and leading with a servant mentality. Compassion and curiosity are key elements in leading organizations with strong manager/employee relationships. Leaders who embraced this acknowledged that their people were human first and addressed the physical, mental, and emotional aspects of the crisis. They also admitted they, too, were feeling the strains. Servant leaders look to make their team's lives easier.

Authentic leadership was personified by the late Arne Sorenson, who was president and CEO of Marriott International, when he took to [video in March 2020](#) to deliver the unwelcome news "face-to-face" with Marriott's employees, stakeholders, and customers:

"I can tell you that I have never had a more difficult moment than this one. There is simply nothing worse than telling highly valued associates — people who are the very heart of this company — that their roles are being impacted by events completely outside of their control."

Before his passing in January 2021, Sheldon Adelson, CEO and chairman of Las Vegas Sands, called on corporate executives to maximize the number of employees and families they could help. He paid his 10,000 employees as though they were still working, even as the resorts were shuttered. Many large organizations raised funds to support furloughed workers and extended benefits. Others shared food, resources, job leads, support for unemployment applications, and more.

### Managing Challenges at Every Level

Leaders at every level had to become comfortable with the uncomfortable and expect the unexpected, while moving decisively and empathetically. They had to keep a steady direction, while managing major crises, to help teams focus on priorities and find efficiencies wherever they could. Additionally, flexibility and resilience in the face of reduced bookings and mounting costs led some teams to creative solutions, including taking on new tasks such as stripping beds or helping prep food. One leader said this also brought out strengths in people that may have otherwise gone unnoticed.

As change became a constant, leaders had to make decisions without full data and then constantly reevaluate as new information changed the landscape. Managers had to be flexible as their employees struggled with homeschooling their children, caring for sick relatives, and learning new technologies and techniques to do their jobs. Inflexible managers who tried to stick to the rules or enforce one rule on many created stress and burnout.

With their data and insights, as well as experience representing their brands, chief marketing officers were invaluable strategists during the pandemic, determining the profile of the "new" guest, devising plans on increasing occupancy, and crafting unique messaging to address those who were still traveling.

In addition, chief human resources officers and chief commercial officers had to collaborate to determine how to move forward. While some organizations chose to furlough sales, marketing, and revenue staffers because there was no business, others combined the teams, encouraging them to work together to figure out how to fill rooms at a profit. These early decisions continue to reverberate as the industry rebounds. General managers are still working to determine the balance as they employ new workers and continue to deploy existing staff across multiple roles.

## Broader Leadership Issues

Along with the pandemic came additional crises that demanded leadership attention:

- Stockholder demands for bold strategies and aggressive measures. Investors and owners, especially hotel owners, have seen nearly two years of losses, and many markets are still slow to rebound.
- Stakeholder capitalism — the idea that business serves not only shareholders but consumers, suppliers, workers and the greater society — has gained prominence as the COVID-19 crisis demonstrated the interconnections between business and society, according to [McKinsey](#).
- New focuses on social justice and sustainability, and environmental challenges from wildfires, floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes. From George Floyd's

**“It is in times of great disruption and uncertainty that our ability to stay grounded in our sense of purpose and remain true to our identity is of the utmost importance.”**

— *Satya Nadella, CEO at Microsoft*

death sparking social unrest to record-breaking weather and climate challenges, the pandemic was just one disaster on top of others.

There have been extensive changes in the C-suites of many hotel companies, as leadership continues to grapple with enormous business pressures. These issues will be part of what marketers and revenue managers will be adding to their environmental scanning as they view the post-COVID landscape.

## 3. Mental health, safety, and well-being move to the forefront.

A renewed focus on mental health and well-being of talent emerged with the pandemic. As the entire world masked up, social distanced, or sheltered in place at home, hoteliers grappled with finding ways to keep those who were still working safe. Quite suddenly, employees were examining their job security, their physical safety at work, their fear of getting sick, their worries over being replaced by technology, and their long-term career prospects. New protocols were designed to keep people safe, while tight budgets and short staffs created stress, burnout, depression, insecurity, and fear. Wellness and mental health issues became essential considerations throughout the pandemic for those who remained in the workplace or transitioned to working remotely, as well as employees who had been furloughed or laid off.

[Gallup's State of the Global Workplace 2021](#) report discusses the effects of COVID-19:

- Seven out of 10 workers are struggling or suffering.
- 80% are not engaged or are actively disengaged at work — at a cost of nearly 10% of GDP in lost productivity each year.
- 40% reported daily worry and stress, while 25% reported daily anger and sadness.

These problems are not new — negative emotions at work have been rising over the past decade — but the importance of measuring and managing mental health and well-being of employees is more crucial now than ever before.

## Creating a Good Place to Work

McKinsey's [Better Bosses](#) report demonstrates that relationships with supervisors and/or managers are the No. 1 factor in employee job satisfaction, a major determinant of employee well-being. The research shows that 75% of those surveyed said the most stressful aspect of their job was their immediate manager. Focusing on employee happiness can improve overall life satisfaction, while potentially increasing profitability and the organization's overall health and well-being.

Good work organization, meaningful work, and psychological safety are key components to creating good places to work. Focusing on these can improve trust and confidence, which, in turn, encourage employee empowerment and engagement. There is long history to show that employee satisfaction, customer loyalty, and profits are inextricably linked. Organizations that wish to emerge from this crisis will focus on improving the

relationships between managers and employees. Improving the employee experience improves the customer experience and can be significant in lowering turnover and increasing guest loyalty. In sales, marketing, and revenue management, there may be an opportunity to reinvent the way these teams interact and report, boosting workplace satisfaction while enhancing work quality.

In summer 2021, Hospitality Upgrade addressed talent issues and mental health and included one key takeaway: The pandemic irrevocably changed individual and team relationships. Fear, insecurity, and the awareness of alternative occupations have altered expectations. In an environment of perennial staffing shortages, employees want more job stability, competitive wages, assured hours and scheduling, fair benefits, and organized, transparent management. According to FAU's research, appropriate pay increases and long-term job security were the most important expectations for encouraging commercial professionals to remain with their organizations.

## 4. Doing more with less is a treadmill.

With the abrupt shutdowns, initial cutbacks were a necessity for surviving the crisis. Commercial teams sought profitable strategies, focusing on cutting costs drastically while aiming to identify, attract, and book market segments that were still traveling. This often meant eliminating all outside contractors or consultants or moving everything in-house, just as the markets became more unpredictable and volatile. Suddenly, marketing teams were doing their own media planning, buying and execution, without depending on the expertise of agencies and research firms. Social media demand exploded, with some hotels using their platforms for transactions, not just as brand awareness vehicles. Salespeople were working to drive revenue, not spending as much time on reporting or administration, while often doing double duty in covering other departments.

Teams had to think differently and deploy people in new ways. This focus often came at the expense of

human experience and connections. Long-term relationships with colleagues, clients, contractors, and partners were severed for many teams. One executive shared her view that it wasn't about doing more with less; it was about prioritization, efficiency, and finding the flexibility to meet the constant changes. Cross-training became a necessity, often using internal resources or free training resources from partners such as Amadeus, Knowland, Cvent, Expedia, Google, STR, and more. Education on tools and data sources that could help find potential business was implemented across departments. Some hotel sales teams held trainings to encourage every person — front desk staff, bartenders, banquet captains, housekeeping and concierge, as well as operations management teams — to learn ways to assist in revenue generation.

Leveraging technology such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and OneNote helped teams stay connected.

Salespeople learned how to create virtual site visits and property tours, as well as creative ways to sell their property in the absence of onsite visits. Demand for hybrid meeting resources forced group salespeople to create new video plans and packages. Workflow design applications were pulled into group meetings to search for ways to streamline clunky reporting and data flows. Some properties began using AI systems to score leads and prioritize best opportunities or propose alternative dates or patterns.



Hotel owners and asset managers at HSMIAI roundtables shared lessons, beginning with the reality that profitability, not consumer satisfaction, drives decisions. In the interest of safety, guests were expected to follow new rules and accept huge cuts in amenities. In addition to checking themselves in remotely, guests didn't receive housekeeping services or breakfasts, they couldn't use the lobby or pool, and some complaints simply went unaddressed. The result was often the loss of any ancillary spend or loyalty development.

This concept of doing more with less became a two-edged sword, as workers insisted on compensation increases or other concessions to

return to work, while burnout and turnover within their departments drove existing workers to seek work elsewhere. Some groups eliminated consulting and agency support to save expenditures, but found they lost the holistic view of comp sets and superior skills at strategy and execution. Still, other organizations chose to use agencies to fill gaps rather than bringing back employees. Revenue management saw a wide range of change. Some organizations that had always had singular onsite revenue managers found that remote work was possible, and that one remote worker could often manage several locations. Revenue management functions were also outsourced to consulting teams capable of managing dozens of sites.

Talent was redeployed to ensure multiple tasks were completed with less cost. Sales, revenue management and reservations often were merged into a single team, serving multiple properties, according to Hospitality Upgrade. Sixty-nine percent of respondents in the McKinsey survey Building Workforce Skills at Scale indicated that skill-building was the most used approach for closing skills gaps, followed by redeploying remaining staffers.

Hotels have been hiring back staff who can fill multiple roles. Many learned through the small and nimble teams during the pandemic that when jobs are merged, people can fill multiple roles, boundaries (or silos) are eliminated, jobs get done, and situations can be met swiftly and effectively. Medallia Zingle's hospitality employee experience report states that 61% of hospitality workers say they are having to do more with less, and according to Hospitality Upgrade, hoteliers are overwhelmingly recruiting (64%) and prioritizing (86%) interdisciplinary workers.

## 5. Silos continue to disappear.

The new job description for commercial teams is evolving quickly, as agility and the ability to capitalize on short-term changes become key skills. When historical data is no longer appropriate or sufficient, teams must let go of what was working and look for what will work now. This combination of innovative technologies and new challenges has created a need for learning and development that has outstripped the abilities of many organizations.

According to a summer 2021 Hospitality Upgrade article written by Jennifer Hill and Cindy Estis Green, organizational structures are changing so the hotel's revenue generation team is one unit, combining revenue and commercial analysis, sales deployment, and digital marketing spend. This has necessitated changing budgets and performance expectations. Smaller and more nimble teams were necessary to address the impacts of the pandemic. It will take time to determine whether this realignment continues.

Commercial departments were slowly merging in most hotel organizations; the pandemic accelerated this. Dr. Kelly McGuire, managing principal at ZS, stated in her presentation at HSMAI ROC Americas 2021 that the ability of these teams to achieve maximum market potential would necessitate key changes. First, it is essential to delegate, automate, reduce, and eliminate the non-essential work that these key players have been performing. Second, the teams need to be reconstituted to ensure there is a mix of strategic thinkers, relationship builders, communicators, and business experts. More critical thinking and less data cleaning and report writing are needed if commercial teams are to be agile in delivering on KPIs.

**As the pandemic took hold, the convergence of revenue strategy and digital marketing rapidly progressed.**

---

A recent article by Drs. Peter Ricci and Anil Bilgihan in *Hotel Business Review* reported on insights from 14 revenue managers. They summarized the challenges this way:

“The majority of revenue management models are based largely on historical data; however, incorporating big data such as the political environment, weather, flights, holidays, events, social reputation, and online prices/inventory, vaccination rates, number of daily COVID-19 cases [and] security of a destination into the algorithms, may help revenue managers to improve the accuracy of their forecasting. Through the effective use of big data in real-time, room rates or packages can be tailored to each guest which, in return, will maximize revenue and improve guest satisfaction.”

Challenges from technology, remote work, and smaller teams tackling the commercial activity together have also made it unclear what the goalposts are. KPIs and appropriate measures of success are changing rapidly, challenging managers to find new ways to monitor and upskill their teams.

Bonnie Buckhiester, president of Buckhiester Management, has authored several articles on the leadership roles that revenue managers, working with their marketing and sales counterparts, had to learn to play, beginning with, “Fish only where the fish are.” As the pandemic took hold, the convergence of revenue strategy and digital marketing rapidly progressed. Website data from marketing informed pricing decisions as booking windows shortened. Sophisticated business intelligence tools had to be acquired and learned if these teams were going to access real-time data about feeder markets, travel patterns, traveler sentiment and other non-traditional sources of data. Buckhiester contends that the pandemic has accelerated the shift to “fourth-generation revenue strategy directors” who,

along with their numbers and analysis, are looking for clues to understand and better characterize demand. These are leaders who have acquired new skills that allow them to challenge tradition and discover new insights to finding demand.

Strategic thinking is more essential than ever in the commercial areas. People must follow trends and markets more closely and with new insight. Technology and year-over-year comparisons no longer substitute for a lack of planning and the need for comprehension of new dynamics and market forces.

In addition, organizational structures are changing so that the hotel's revenue generation team is one unit charged with revenue and commercial analysis, sales deployment, digital marketing spend, and technology deployment. Budgets and performance measurements must change as these structures and duties evolve. Determining proper incentives and measures was a huge topic for sales, especially as the pandemic saw more than two years of hard-won sales fall off the books. Responsibility and accountability for action and execution are essential determinants of success for these new teams.

## 6. The above-property office community changes.

Working remotely had a rocky start as few companies had infrastructure in place to accommodate this before the pandemic, according to the HSMAI chief human resources officer roundtable discussions in summer 2020. In the beginning, above-property offices emptied, and companies figured out how to better communicate as each day passed. The initial period of sheltering at home was accompanied by uncertainty, stress, and anxiety. Salespeople scrambled to stay in touch with clients and properties; marketing teams learned new tools and strategies for finding potential guests; and revenue managers struggled with wonky connections to their systems and technology.

According to McKinsey, prior to the pandemic, 92% of C-suite executives felt that the primary center for work would be the office. That number has dropped to 88% of executives who expect employees in the office at least three days per week. LinkedIn reported that in March 2020, only one in 67 job listings were for remote workers. In November 2021, it was one in six. The McKinsey Global Institute estimates that 20% of global workers could work much of their time away from the office and maintain effectiveness. The most likely candidates are in highly skilled jobs, working with technology that facilitates their efforts. Over 80% of employees report they would

like a more flexible working model in the future.

As teams begin to return to the office, hybrid may be the future of work. Working from home has challenged employees and managers alike. Eliminating the commute, saving on office expenses, expanding hiring options, and the ability to maintain productivity make remote work attractive. On the other hand, employees report fatigue and stress, as well as feelings that they're not part of a team and always at work, as negative aspects of working from home.

In an address at HSMAI ROC Americas in September 2021, economist Adam Sacks discussed the concept of relational equity. When people are together in person, they have a greater opportunity to build goodwill and deepen their relationships. Casual conversations and opportunities to learn more about and from each other help create understanding and collaboration.

When individuals and teams are forced to solely communicate virtually, there are limited opportunities to assist or foster relationships and communication. Remote work tends to reduce the goodwill in relationships. When people are physically together, whether at a conference or in the office, there is opportunity to build equity for the future.

Teamwork and camaraderie must be reimagined and reinstated, perhaps in new ways, to help rebuild and strengthen reorganized work groups.

There are good reasons that companies would like their teams, especially their commercial teams, back in the office. The need for sales, marketing, and revenue optimization collaboration is as great as ever, and the volatility of markets and COVID-19 variants continues

to create uncertainty when booking future business. Agile teams looking at the same data and information together can react quickly to client requests. There is still hope that “normal” is right around the corner.



**80%**  
of employees report they would like a more flexible working model in the future.

When it comes to remote work, a lot of questions have remained: Who gets to work remotely and for how many days? How will teams work together? What collaboration and communication tools will be effective? How will productivity be measured? What are the policies for pay, promotions, attendance, behaviors, evaluation, and reporting? Who will monitor the selected measurements? The list goes on, as attendees at the October 2021 HSMAI Sales Leader Forum discussed.

Some teams will remain remote but will connect in person more often. This could be a potential business opportunity for hotels, facilitating the ability for organizational teams to meet and spend quality time together. While some larger team meetings may seem more like small conferences, the difference is that these teams are working together virtually most of the time. These are people they email or videoconference almost every day. Teamwork and camaraderie are requirements for when the team assembles in person. The idea is not to simply continue the business of the company, it is to recharge relationships so that cooperation, communication, and collaboration are facilitated and strengthened.

## 7. KPIs and incentive plans are being reevaluated.

The strong economy of 2019 brought with it record-setting group business. As the pandemic took hold, companies of all sizes cut meetings and travel. Bookings fell off and new bookings stopped. How can you keep sales, marketing, and revenue staffers when their quotas and expectations cannot be met through no fault of their own? Knowing the key metrics that matter to various stakeholders and adjusting them based on the shifting realities of the pandemic became an important way to keep employees focused on driving profitable business. The pandemic taught everyone that reliance on systems and historical data is no longer enough. There are so many other components that can change the outcomes in a volatile environment.

One hotel company's approach was to create an analytics workgroup that was tasked with identifying and defining 30 metrics. In doing so, it became clear, for example, that the value of the salesforce is in talking with the customer and that the paperwork, coverage expectations, and follow up on planning they were doing undermined their key contribution. In the past, the expectation was that sales would just go up. Now, there is a need to make and justify changes in strategy to drive sales. Revenue managers and marketers must provide the data to right-size expectations for their sales goals. One CEO added that while the measurements haven't changed, the benchmarks have. For some resort properties, 2020 and 2021 were their best years ever, while city properties have yet to recover. Leisure travel is fueling demand and growth worldwide, as attendees at the Americas Lodging Investment Summit heard in January 2022.

Commercial teams need to have realistic goals and feel like they can win, even when the old indicators aren't useful. Setting goals once a year may no longer be effective. HSMAI has begun to look at the impact of COVID-19 on the attraction, motivation, and evaluation of front-line sellers. Hospitality saw a lot of sellers leave for other industries such as medical devices, pharmaceuticals,

**Commercial teams need to have realistic goals and feel like they can win, even when the old indicators aren't useful.**

technology, and others whose compensation, benefits and work schedules were preferable.

Sellers are motivated by incentives; they are competitive by nature. This drive was thwarted as travel halted. In 2019, many hotels and brands worked from annual plans, adjusting in 2020 and 2021 by suspending incentive plans or shortening the plan period. Setting quotas became a moving target as forecasts were recast. Many organizations moved away from individual incentives to team incentives in 2020 and 2021 to adjust to volatile markets and smaller headcounts. Organizations that want to retain their top sellers will have to continue to tweak and monitor compensation to ensure that sellers are working to reconnect with previous clients while reaching out to new targets and markets. There is increasing attention on "hunters" versus "farmers" as salespeople are hired back, a direction that HSMAI and the Foundation will continue to watch.

Increased coordination across sales, marketing, revenue optimization, and IT have been hallmarks of the pandemic response. Shifting specialized individuals toward broader segments to target priority potential markets required coordination and integration. Account management became more of a team effort. Commercial executives had to demonstrate support for their teams and build a culture of collaboration that may have otherwise taken years to evolve.

Sales teams are expected to do more than ever, including performing the tasks of their previous support teams. Hiring will be challenging. The layoffs of early

2020 were aimed at reducing the low performers or consolidating positions; now new hires will be expected to not only be top talent, but they must be able to take on additional accounts and work across a broader spectrum of markets. Where these exceptionally skilled individuals will come from and how organizations will attract and retain them will be a focus of HSMAI's advisory boards and the HSMAI Foundation's research activities. In the past, tenure has correlated with improved performance to goals, suggesting that

planning to bring aboard new sellers may require a different mindset and development strategy.

The overall impression is that hospitality salespeople are not as well compensated as those in other industries. This may mean that base compensation needs to be increased and that incentives should be competitive to compete with other industries. Finding the balance to attract top new talent while retaining existing top sellers will be challenging.

## 8. Talent pipelines went dry, and new channels have to be tapped.

Deloitte's 2019 Travel & Hospitality Outlook states that "the travel industry cannot grow without talent." In 2009, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated 353,000 job openings across leisure and hospitality; by 2018, that number swelled to over 1.1 million. In April 2019, unemployment sat at 3.5%. In January 2020, the labor shortage that has been predicted since birthrates began dropping in the 1980s was reality. Declining birthrates and the retirement of baby boomers were long-term indicators of the shortages to come. There is a continuing shortage of workers overall, as more than 2.5 million people chose to retire in 2020 and 2021. Some of these workers might be lured back, but many have stopped looking for work.

The labor shortage is real, and there are few easy answers. Talent was lost in 2020 to furloughs and layoffs, but also to individuals who chose to retire, transition to other industries, or downsize their household income to accommodate diverse needs. Globally, the pandemic has changed visa rules, and immigrant workers who are essential, especially in operations, have not returned. Hotel Management magazine posed this question in late May 2021: How can we market the career potential and the core purpose of the industry to a new base?

The shock of the coronavirus pandemic has cost the travel industry 8 million jobs. Three million of those are hotel jobs, of which half a million were not expected to return by the start of this year, according to the American Hotel & Lodging Association. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports a dramatic drop in the accommodation sector in the United States in 2020. Many hotel employees who have weathered 20 years and multiple downturns have questioned whether they should look for a career opportunity in a different industry. "Consider all options because the firm [you worked for] has shown their true opinion of you by furloughing you," offered one consumer marketing executive with more than 20 years of experience at a major hotel brand. At this point, it is hard to imagine that there is a global labor shortage, but consider this analogy: Weather is not climate.

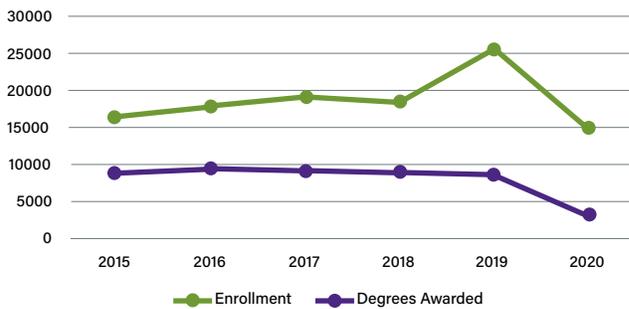
Employees who were separated for a year or more sought positions in other industries and chose not to return. The reputation of hospitality and tourism organizations was that they did not support their people in a crisis. This was a major reason 60% of 30,000 job seekers said they would not consider a hospitality job, according to a survey conducted by Joblist.com. Even with incentives

such as higher pay, more benefits, signing bonuses and free food, 69% said nothing would change their mind about considering a hospitality job.

### Hospitality Schools

Hospitality schools have traditionally been the source of talent for career-oriented interns, management trainees, and first-level supervisors. Declining enrollment in hospitality programs began in 2016, when demographic changes resulted in fewer college-aged students. In 2020, management training programs were abandoned, and new hires were few, so new graduates had to seek other sources of employment. HSMIA Foundation's academic roundtables found that the top area of concentration in hospitality schools is event planning, followed by operations and then food and beverage management. Marketing, sales, and revenue areas never rank above fourth place.

**Enrollment & Degrees Awarded: 5-Year Trend**



For sourcing sales, marketing, and revenue management rising stars, the number of skilled graduates isn't likely to improve, since 49% of hospitality schools still offer no sales classes, and 44% offer no revenue management courses. Most schools offer a general marketing course for hospitality, using a marketing principles concept. This means that hoteliers must either completely train new people for these commercial positions or offer incentives to lure trained talent from other companies.

Faculty told us that most of their students have no exposure to commercial hotel career positions until they take a course in one of the disciplines. Students don't know how to learn more about these jobs, and hotels rarely expose interns or management trainees to the work in these departments, so there is not a clear career pathway for students to follow. It can be hard for those who have interest to get information or a foot in the door. To make matters worse, the operations departments often have and foster negative opinions about the sales department.

### The shock of the coronavirus pandemic has cost the travel industry 8 million jobs.

Looking beyond hospitality schools to fill commercial positions is one option many hotels pursue. Business, computer science, accounting, math, and other majors can often be a good fit with appropriate training. Hotels have historically been hesitant to hire people from other industries, preferring to nurture their own talent within the organization, yet necessity is likely to broaden recruitment prospects.

The world is entering a talent migration that's bigger than anything we've seen before, as many employees found their skills were transferable to other industries and that many jobs could be done from anywhere with a reliable internet connection.

The talent shortage is also driving up wages, with new hires being paid, on average, 20% more. Some operations job openings are at the highest levels in history. This is causing HR staffers to commit all their time to recruiting line-level operations people, leaving most commercial executives to source their own talent.

Some hotels have begun applying the sales and marketing strategies usually used to attract guests

to the staff recruitment process. Creative advertising design and placement, along with robust sales efforts at job fairs and college recruitment events, are just a few examples of how sales and marketing skills are being applied across new markets.

Commercial executives must help their organizations better sell the dream if they are going to attract

and/or retain top talent who will address the challenges of building back business. No longer will the right talent be looking for us. Hotels need to be creating talent workgroups who can ask the tough questions: Do we have clear career paths? Are our salaries competitive? Are we offering the right incentives? Are our supervisors respected, knowledgeable and liked? Are our expectations in line?

## 9. Development, reskilling, and upskilling are necessities as technological acceleration continues.

New skills are emerging as essential: technology versatility, interdisciplinary knowledge and expertise, leadership, and management skills across in-person and work-from-home teams. COVID-19 accelerated technology adoption, driving innovation, and commercial teams learned quickly as they found untapped resources, tweaked algorithms, reorganized their tracking, built new models, and got creative in their processes.

**“You’ve got to start with the employee experience and work back toward technology — not the other way around.”**

— Steve Jobs

Job descriptions are being rewritten to reflect the need for employees to develop versatile skill sets that can be applied across multiple roles. This includes being fast-paced, nimble, agile, creative, quick to capitalize on short-term changes, and willing to let go of what worked just two days ago, says Hotel Business Review. The ability to adapt to new work environments will increase demand for critical thinking, creativity, adaptability, and emotional intelligence. In hospitality and travel, there will be a renewed emphasis on global competencies, strengthening the ability to think about, understand and appreciate the perspectives and world

views of people from diverse cultures and backgrounds. Strategic thinking is in demand in the commercial areas, where planning and comprehension of trends and markets have replaced year-over-year comparisons and dependence on third-party technology.

Where will these highly skilled people come from? Do hotels have the infrastructure to develop, reskill and upskill their newly lean sales, marketing, and revenue optimization teams and equip them with the knowledge, competences, and technology to compete in their markets?

During the pandemic, demand for HSMIAI certifications rose. More than 1,200 new applicants earned 785 new certifications from the beginning of the pandemic through January 2021, as individuals looked to strengthen their skills, and organizations realized that investing in the development of their marketing and revenue teams was crucial.

# 785

**new HSMIAI certifications were earned from the beginning of the pandemic through January 2021.**

Recently, the Wyndham organization held a graduation ceremony, complete with caps, tassels, and Pomp and Circumstance to celebrate the completion of the certifications. The graduates appreciated the recognition, while franchisees reaped the benefits of upskilled professionals.

A long road to recovery began with 62% of hoteliers prioritizing multidisciplinary skills for workers and 86% saying interdisciplinary expertise was crucial, according to Strategic Partnership Solutions. As the unemployed scurried to find work after being sidelined for a year or more, many worked to diversify and upgrade their skill sets. Those commercial employees who remained employed were forced to merge forces as smaller teams worked together to bring new and creative approaches to generating revenue. Big data, market research, niche opportunities, and emerging trends were the focuses of the entire team.

A great deal of development has been on hold. There is pent-up demand for projects ranging from systems conversions and upgrades to reconciliations and reorganization of job flows. Staff learning and development halted as the pandemic took hold. In 2018, the second HSMAI Curate executive forum focused on inadequate technology platforms. Even then, the top challenges identified by C-suite executives focused on the ability to attract tech talent to the industry, the lack of hotel business knowledge in the tech space, and the lack of intellectual talent or knowledge to use systems and bring out their value. There continues to be a critical shortage of qualified people to perform work, especially highly skilled commercial and business functions.

Interestingly, the FAU research showed that 89% of revenue management staffers valued up-to-date training and development over all other expectations, including fair pay and fringe benefits. Sales and marketing respondents ranked support for learning new skills highly. Both groups felt that their organizations could do a better job of providing more support for learning and development.



Managers at all specialty levels need training for HR skills from recruiting and hiring through development and retention. HR is consumed with staffing operations and getting the units running effectively. Few managers have been trained in the HR management skills they need to staff and retain their commercial teams.

Upskilling has interesting implications across the four generations of people in the workplace. New skills and learning are needed to ensure smooth business operations. Competencies such as collaboration, communication, and empathy are essential for resilient workers in changing times.

## 10. Organizations can lower turnover and increase retention.

McKinsey's top story of 2021 featured the "Great Attrition or Great Attraction" debate. With a record number of employees quitting their jobs or thinking about doing so, organizations that choose to focus on the employee experience and sell their opportunities effectively will be able to attract and retain talent. To do so, it is crucial to begin with a clear-eyed view of the employee experience during 2020 and 2021.

McKinsey's research in November 2021 showed that employees in leisure and hospitality planned to leave because their workload was unmanageable, as short staffing means remaining employees must constantly be closing the gap. Diverse industries have been poaching sales, marketing, and revenue professionals with the lures of higher compensation and improved quality of life. Burnout, better opportunities, and changing generational values are prompting talent to look elsewhere. The 24/7/365 nature of the hotel industry has been another factor that potential employees are taking into consideration. Marketing and revenue professionals have been particularly attractive to other industries. These workers have transferable skills that are desirable because they use them in an environment that has a highly perishable product. Companies with more tangible inventory appreciate the urgency and the hospitality orientation of hotel commercial managers.

New professionals entering the workforce are embracing the "gig" economy, which is being facilitated by innovative technologies. Amazon, for example, has a system that allows employees to sign up for less-desirable schedules or work in four-hour time blocks — with more desirable options being offered to more senior staffers. This allows even full-time hotel employees to consider a "side hustle" in another business or industry. The concept might be an option for hotels looking for part-time help in sales, social media, digital marketing, or revenue management.

**"Looking back at all the people that have left the industry, I think that is probably the saddest part of all this. I've seen some great people in areas like sales and HR move to other industries because of the hit we took."**

— *Brian Hicks, SVP of Commercial and Revenue Management at IHG Hotels & Resorts, at ROC 2021*

One promising aspect of FAU's original research with sales, marketing, and revenue management professionals showed that these key staffers were more likely than the overall sample to feel committed to their organizations; 60% felt like part of the family and had a keen sense of belonging. These workers also tended to be more engaged and less likely to turn over than the overall sample. Additional findings from these 650 respondents in sales, marketing, and revenue management positions were more daunting:

- Most sales, marketing, and revenue management workers consider the impact of COVID-19 on their job as significant and long term. Just 10% of revenue managers agreed that the industry would protect employees' jobs in a crisis.
- Turnover intention is high, with many respondents agreeing that they intend to leave their employer and the industry. One-third of respondents admitted interest in other industries or organizations.
- Commercial associates feel the industry does not offer appropriate pay increases or long-term job security.

## Career Motivators - 90%+ Agree

### All Departments

1. Provides a pleasant working environment
2. Gives them responsibility
3. Respected
4. Provides intellectual challenge
5. Able to gain transferrable skills

### Sales & Marketing

1. Provides a pleasant working environment
2. Gives them responsibility
3. Enjoyable
4. Respected + with colleagues they can get along with
5. Provides intellectual challenge

### Revenue Management

1. Provides intellectual challenge
2. Gives them responsibility
3. Provides pleasant working environment
4. Respected
5. Offers opportunities for further training + able to gain transferrable skills

- Career motivators are changing as the recovery takes hold. The industry may not be prepared to meet the needs of their workforce. The chart shows the top motivators across all 4,500 survey participants, and the data specific to the 650 participants who identified as sales, marketing, and revenue management staffers.

Participants in the October 2021 HSMIA Sales Leader Forum roundtable discussions indicated that their most effective retention strategies were "creating a fun and nurturing environment for the team, monetary incentives, unlimited bonus potential, recognition, constant career conversations and clear development plans, promotability and flexibility."

Of course, in the continued atmosphere of tight budgets, many of these strategies remain on hold.

Taming turnover is going to require a lot of trust and communication being rebuilt across the industry. Employees are looking for competitive compensation and benefits, career opportunities, a robust culture with values that align with theirs, and an organization with a future business outlook that offers stability and growth.

Hotels have long depended on people who have a passion for the industry. The pandemic has challenged everyone. The road back must rekindle the magic of delivering memorable travel experiences.

## Resources

Mary Abbajay. "What to do when you have a bad boss." Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2018/09/what-to-do-when-you-have-a-bad-boss>.

Strategic Solutions Partner's 2021 Gig Study: Rethinking the Recovery. <https://searchwidgeglobal.com/strategic-solutions-partners-2021-gig-study-rethinking-the-recovery/>.

Ken Greger. "The Hotel Labor Shortage: Three Things You Can Do Right Now." Hotel Business Review. [https://www.hotelexecutive.com/business\\_review/6471/the-hotel-labor-shortage-three-things-you-can-do-right-now](https://www.hotelexecutive.com/business_review/6471/the-hotel-labor-shortage-three-things-you-can-do-right-now).

Hospitality and Tourism Management Program, Department of Marketing, College of Business, Florida Atlantic University. "Hospitality & Tourism Workforce COVID-19 Sentiment Survey" (Custom Data Selection). <https://business.fau.edu/images/business/newsroom/files/2021-05-03%20hospitality-sentiment.pdf>.

Joblist.com. "Q2 2021 United States Job Market Report." <https://www.joblist.com/jobs-reports/q2-2021-united-states-job-market-report>.

Kathleen A. Cullen. "Integrating Technology in a Post-COVID Marketplace." HSMIAI Insights. <https://global.hsmiai.org/insight/integrating-technology-in-a-post-covid-marketplace/>.

Medallia Zingle. "Global Staffing Report: Employee Experience Impacts Hospitality." <https://info.zingle.me/en-us/2021-thank-you-direct-link-hospitality-ex-report>.

Kelly McGuire, Ph.D. "Revenue Management's Finest Hour." <https://global.hsmiai.org/insight/revenue-managements-finest-hour/>.

McKinsey & Company. "The Great Attrition: Same turnover, but the 'why' differs by industry." <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/the-organization-blog/the-great-attrition-same-turnover-but-the-why-differs-by-industry>.

McKinsey & Company. "Building workforce skills at scale to thrive during—and after—the COVID-19 crisis." <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/building-workforce-skills-at-scale-to-thrive-during-and-after-the-covid-19-crisis#>.

McKinsey & Company. "The next normal arrives: Trends that will define 2021—and beyond." <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/leadership/the-next-normal-arrives-trends-that-will-define-2021-and-beyond>.

Rasmus Hougaard. "What the CEO of 2019 Thinks About Caring for His People." Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rasmushougaard/2019/04/23/what-the-ceo-of-2019-thinks-about-caring-for-his-people/?sh=fd5db72c474ea>.

Jennifer Hill and Cindy Estis Green. "In Play and On Deck: The Commercial Strategy Playbook, An Imperative Driven by Digital Disruption." Hospitality Upgrade. <http://mag.hospitalityupgrade.com/publication/?i=716610&ver=html5&p=118>.

Peggy Berg. "Progress Toward Gender-Balanced Hospitality Leadership." HSMIAI Insights. <https://americas.hsmiai.org/insight/progress-toward-gender-balanced-hospitality-leadership/>.

J. Bruce Tracey. "Hotel HR Responses to the Pandemic." HSMIAI Foundation. [https://global.hsmiai.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/HSMIAI-Foundation\\_Hotel-HR-Responses-to-the-Pandemic.pdf](https://global.hsmiai.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/HSMIAI-Foundation_Hotel-HR-Responses-to-the-Pandemic.pdf).

Ali Hoyt and Isaac Collazo. "Growing Occupancy, Profitability Pave Hotels' Path to Recovery." STR Hotel Data Conference. <https://www.hospitalitynet.org/news/4106140.html>.

Bryan Wroten. "Hotel CEOs See Paths to Growth as Recovery Gains Steam." Hotel News Now. <https://www.costar.com/article/1385481176/hotel-ceos-see-paths-to-growth-as-recovery-gains-steam>.

THIS REPORT IS PRESENTED WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE HSMAI FOUNDATION'S 2022 CORPORATE TALENT PARTNERS:

Trustee Level



Patron Level



Supporter Level



ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The HSMAI Foundation is a 501 c3 organization established in 1983 to serve as the research and educational arm of the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International. The Foundation's mission is to elevate the overall caliber and performance of sales, marketing, and revenue management professionals in the global hospitality industry by driving initiatives that will attract new talent, develop emerging talent, and engage existing talent. The work of the Foundation is supported by private donations and corporate talent partners. Visit [hsmfoundation.org](http://hsmfoundation.org) for more information.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Karen Wollard, Ed. D., CHDM, has been an adviser to the HSMAI Foundation board since they adopted their talent-focused mission in 2017, and currently serves as its research manager. Dr. Wollard has been teaching and learning about talent and leadership development for more than three decades. She earned her doctorate in adult education and human resource development from Florida International University and has written and researched extensively in the areas of employee engagement and guest service.