



WINTERGREEN
♦ HOSPITALITY ♦

DELIVERING UNFORGETTABLY POSITIVE HUMAN
INTERACTIONS

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN US?

Welcome to Wintergreen Hospitality! We created this document to share with you what we believe in and why we are in the hospitality business. We hope that if you find yourself agreeing with everything you read, you'll be thrilled by the idea of joining our team and will connect with us about how to do that.

We believe that our greatest asset is people, and we relish our every interaction with all kinds of people. We believe that if we have a happy and hospitable team, then our guests will have the unforgettably positive interactions we are aiming for.

We think that the capacity to deliver these kinds of interactions comes from a “servant” mentality, which recognizes that our first priority is to delight others. We believe that this mentality is a natural way of being for some individuals. So we choose to bring folks onto our team only when we've determined that they also share this belief in the servant mentality.

We take our commitment to hospitality very seriously, and we hope that you will connect with us if you also share that commitment.

THIS IS OUR STORY AND WE'RE STICKING TO IT

WHY HOSPITALITY

To create unforgettably positive human interactions...because:

- We believe that people are naturally inclined to serve others.
- We believe that people find inherent joy in the pleasure of others.
- We believe that people should always be kind and generous to one another.

Since our hospitality business happens to take place in hotels, guests actually pay us money to be kind and generous to them. Considering that all people should already be treating each other with kindness and generosity, isn't it incredible that we get paid to do that?

WHAT WE DO

Wintergreen Hospitality is a team of individuals that's redefining the notion of hospitality, based on a burning desire to make people happy. The way we're redefining things is by imagining a world without “VP's”, “directors”, “supervisors” and “managers”, and creating a new one where every individual takes responsibility for making others happy. In our new world, titles don't mean much since real authority comes from the soundness of every individual's ideas and actions. We think freely, constantly initiate, and always challenge the status quo to achieve what's impossible in other organizations. So anything goes when it comes to the human interactions that take place in our organization, and how well we delight

others is completely up to us. This includes encounters with our guests, our coworkers, our suppliers, our neighbors, unexpected strangers, and yes, even our competitors!

WHO WE ARE

Our leadership team has been in the hotel real estate business for over 30 years, and in 2007 we came together to create a different kind of business – one that’s focused on building a servant minded culture of people dedicated to pleasing others. Right now we are working every day to do just that across our portfolio of hotels across the Southeast.

WHERE WE ARE HEADED – WANT TO COME ALONG FOR THE RIDE AND HELP DRIVE?

- We are prioritizing people’s happiness and hotel quality above everything else. Conventional wisdom about wages, reinvestment, investor returns, performance management, and industry practices is all debatable, especially if it gets in the way of happiness and quality.
- We are creating a work environment where people who identify with Wintergreen’s beliefs can be themselves, have fun, think freely, and are autonomous to initiate decisions and action to impact our vision.
- We are developing and operating hotels that stand out from their peers: renovations are done before they are actually “needed”; staffing is always a little heavier than what’s “typical”; food and amenities are more plentiful than what’s “required”; extras such as snacks, internet access, and rides around town are always thrown in without the “need to charge”. Basically, when it comes to quality we are always asking ourselves, “what more can we do, and how can we do it better?”

SERVICE V. HOSPITALITY – WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?

According to Danny Meyer, CEO of [Union Square Hospitality Group](#), “**Service**” is delivering on your promise. “**Hospitality**” is making people feel good while you’re delivering on that promise.” Danny’s company owns several restaurants in New York City, and has become a well known differentiator in the industry for going beyond the basics of service. Its team consistently focuses on human interactions to make people feel good when eating in their establishments.

In hotels, “**service**” means that we check in guests to the correct rooms, we present the rooms with an indisputable standard of cleanliness, we provide amenities that are functioning properly and easy to use (wireless internet, fitness room, business center), and we serve up a hot breakfast that tastes great. We must do all these things at a minimum to survive, but that alone is not enough.

Beyond all of that, making people feel good by delighting them is where “hospitality” comes in. This notion of hospitality refers to the way we interact with people. In our hotels, this means that we are always the first to make eye contact, smile, and enthusiastically greet our guests. It means that we eagerly jump on every opportunity to serve and please our guests – grabbing their luggage, making dinner reservations for them, finding hard to get basketball tickets for them, letting them borrow a tie for a business meeting, helping to jump start their car, and anything else that may come up.

It means we take a sincere interest in all people, starting with our coworkers. We use our human sensibilities to connect with all individuals by listening, empathizing, and serving. This way everyone gets all they need or want in a warm and friendly way, leading to our ultimate goal of happiness.

At our hotels we are delivering Hospitality, not just Service.

WINTERGREEN’S HOSPITALITY – OUR SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

To illustrate what we mean by our vision of redefining hospitality, we’ve listed what really matters to us. These values guide our approach in everything we do:

1. **Kindness and Generosity** - We are nice, respectful, and helpful to others, and we give abundantly what we can to our guests, teammates, and collaborators.
2. **Imagination and Idealism** - We brainstorm for possibilities, not constraints - so we embrace all ideas without judgement; we aim for the impossible and find a way to make it possible.
3. **Initiative** - We take bold action to make people happy without waiting for instructions or approval.
4. **Innovation** - We constantly ask why things are the way they are, wonder if there’s a better way, and take risks to try new ways of doing things.
5. **Thoughtful Communication** - We communicate clearly and effectively by taking the time to say exactly what we mean. We thoughtfully choose our language and words to convey the precise tone and interpretation we want our audience to receive.
6. **Empathy** - We listen to what others are saying before even thinking about a response or reaction; We encourage them to finish expressing themselves completely, and we commit to understand them so we can serve them effectively.
7. **Reciprocity** - We return all calls and acknowledge all people (that means respecting the dignity of the telemarketer by getting back to her to thank her and politely let her know we are not interested in what she is selling.)

8. **Accountability** - We take ownership of what we see. “Job titles”, “departments”, and “policies” be gone. We follow through on every guest need that lands in front of us until everyone is happy. We never, ever think to ourselves, “that’s not my job”.

For example, picking up stray trash is equally the responsibility of the hotel’s owner as it is of the housekeeping team. If it needs to be done, everyone does it. And we don’t make excuses to our guests or to each other. If we mess up, we take full responsibility no matter how embarrassing.

9. **Joy** - We have fun! We don’t believe in work/life balance because that idea implies the two are opposing forces. We don’t believe that they have to be balanced, and we certainly don’t believe in the idea that life is good and work is bad - we think that both should be great. So the two should be in harmony, and we focus on bringing joy and happiness to the work we do every day.

BEING WRONG IS OKAY – PENCILS HAVE ERASERS FOR MISTAKES, AND WE’RE ALL PENCILS HERE WITH SHARP POINTS

We are all human, and humans make mistakes. We understand that, so we don’t fear the mistakes. When one of us makes one, we have a huge opportunity to learn from it. And the best way we can all learn from each other’s mistakes is if we share them shamelessly.

We also believe that we grow and evolve from failure. So we expect people on our team to stare failure in the face and push the envelope and take risks to realize our vision of making people happy. That’s the kind of behavior we notice and reward.

Of course, pushing the envelope and taking risks doesn’t always work. No big deal. By acting boldly and taking chances, we will experience our fair share of mistakes and failures. But it takes enlightened leadership from all of us to have the courage to admit when we’re wrong, courage to change our minds, and courage to admit we don’t know the answer - this reflective attitude will keep our organization on the forefront of the hospitality revolution.

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK – CAN WE WORK TOGETHER?

You’ve now had a glimpse into what we believe and how we live, so please take a moment to reflect on how you feel about it. Do you relish your every interaction with all kinds of people? Do you have a “servant” mentality and believe that delighting others is a natural way of life?

If you have a passionate commitment to our version of hospitality and are jumping for joy at the idea of joining our team, please connect with us! Call Jay Patel at (919) 824 4194 or email him at jaypatel@wintergreenhospitality.com.