

Keep Current on Industry Trends

Keith Mandabach*

New Mexico State University, USA

Staying current on industry trends should be a priority for a hotel, restaurant and tourism educator. I thought I was current until a fantastic talent acquisition manager from Darden restaurants, Heidi Awan, taught me a lesson when she came to my campus to recruit my students. I learned her take on the employment market and job hunting and how it has changed from when I was looking for work and how it has stayed the same. Heidi asked everyone in my class whether they were on LinkedIn. She posted her email address, gave them her cell phone number, Facebook site, LinkedIn site, Instagram address and Twitter handle. I teach in a computerized classroom and every student has access to the computer in front of them. Usually I am trying to keep the students working on coursework and am embarrassed when they multi-task during class. But Heidi encouraged the students to multi-task as she did her presentation about her company. Instead of being put off by apparent lack of attention she embraced it and used it to build interaction. It was impressive and reminded me that today's student knows how to access an incredibly wide array of information in such a short period of time. A savvy talent acquisition manager uses these abilities to reach out to potential employees and utilizes the social media phenomenon to connect with them.

I was an Executive Chef who worked in hotels and resorts. Looking for work was all about relationships and it moved slowly. The chefs who trained me, the general managers and food and beverage directors I worked for all were just a phone call away and helped me find the next great job. As a chef, my best hires were individuals who I had a connection through my relationships. If you worked for me, then I would help you when you were ready to move on to the next position. Eighteen years after I moved into education, I still hear from my people and I am very happy that they are taking care of their people much the same as I did.

I did not think about social media, I have accounts on LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook but did not do much with them. I never thought that the connections on these sites were a lot like my

connections with my people except they move much more quickly. Heidi did a quick tutorial on what material was appropriate to put up on social media. Always post a head shot picture and never put anything personal on LinkedIn. Anything you put on FACEBOOK even if you make it private is public. Employers will often check out your sites before offering employment. Join groups that interest you and try to connect with the person that has your dream job. Make certain you communicate what you have accomplished and what your dreams are. She also talked about working in jobs and for companies that made you proud. Use social media to accentuate the positive and demonstrate that you care about your life and your work. My late chef Alfred Fahndrich would have been happy to hear that it is still about relationships. They just move a lot faster and everything one does is public. I am not sure how he would react to the cook looking up a sauce on the IPHONE, or playing with their phone while on the job, but I am sure he would find something good to say. The same professionalism he embraced can be enhanced by social media.

Before my crash course in social media, I was going to write about how important it is to get out and stay current by attending conferences and spending time on the web. Some of my attempts to stay current include attending the Nightclub and Bar Show in Las Vegas, The National Restaurant SHOW in Chicago and The CHRIE conference at least every year and attend a variety of other conferences when I can such as the American Culinary Federation Conventions, Chef and CAFÉ conferences and variety of wine and beverage events. I also am on a number of email lists that I read daily and also try to attend at least two Webinar's a month during the school year. I am also joining a number of discussion groups on Linked In. I also try to travel abroad once a year to see what the rest of the world is doing. Finally, every research project I get involved in keeps me current, and I am trying to keep myself in the game. Always have an article waiting to be published, one that you are writing and one that you are planning. This is wonderful time to be in hotel, restaurant and tourism management education. Enjoy.

*Corresponding author: Keith Mandabach, New Mexico State University, USA, Tel: 01-575-644-8073, E-mail: kmandaba@nmsu.edu

Received December 01, 2014; Accepted December 02, 2014; Published December 09, 2014

Citation: Mandabach K (2014) Keep Current on Industry Trends. J Tourism Hospit 3: 136. doi:10.4172/2167-0269.1000136

Copyright: © 2014 Mandabach K. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.