

Got Soul? Got The Hands???

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Got Soul?

Great doctors and great club managers have Soul. Want a great club? Want it run by someone with “Soul?” Make sure that someone has The Hands.

There are lots of doctors out there who can diagnose and prescribe. Not so many who can rip out your appendix, do “the stuff,” and then make you feel good with a smile, or the banter or the touch. Those who can have great bedside manner. They’ve got soul. They’ve got The Hands.

There are a lot of computer whizzes out there who can diagnose and prescribe. Need Windows 2000 instead of Windows 98? They can do it. Need to recover a lost document? They can try. Need some psychic support while you learn something about a computer program? No way! No soul. They need The Hands. If you find a computer tech with soul, keep ‘em.

Lots of club managers out there who can diagnose and prescribe. Cost of sales gone whackie---he can fix it. Labor costs in the locker rooms skewed---she’s you’re girl. Greeting the octogenarian widow group in the lobby---dead on their feet. High fiving a five year old in the main dining room---unimaginable. CEO’s, maybe, but not club managers. Club managers need soul. And they’d better have The Hands.

Board members need The Hands. An aberrant member “gone postal” with the front office staff. Time to counsel. The Prez will need The Hands. A member gone delinquent, tough times at the office, strapped for cash. They need to talk. The Finance Chairman will need The Hands. Working the living room during the Friday evening cocktail hour, making guests feel special and members glow. The House Committee Chair will need The Hands. No hands---no soul. And clubs need soul.

The Hands make the act of “doing” special. Added value. The people side of the “to do” equation. More than just “getting the job done.” The Hands connect people with the core humanity in other people, binding them together in a spiritual embrace. The Hands

express soul, soul is key to the “warm embrace” and the warm embrace makes a club community special. Find The Hands and get some soul.

Getting Soul

Clubs are about community. Communities are built on relationships. Relationships are built with The Hands. Those who build have soul. The general manager, the president and house committee chair are builders of community. Time to get soul.

Soul is a two sided creature. Soul is about people and things. A maitre ‘d has mastered people. A CEO has mastered things. Each compliments the other. Can’t have soul without both. Mastery of the yin, the “stuff side” of the equation---systems, things, numbers, operations. Mastery of the yang, the “people” side of the equation---hiring, firing, educating, compromising, explaining, embracing. Job descriptions talk lots about the stuff side of the equation and less about The Hands. The people side is too “touchy-feely,” hard to pin down, intangible. Like bedside manner. You know it when you see it but what “it” is evades description.

“It” is The Hands. The essence of the “yang side” of soul. Those with The Hands understand that interviews are more about “intuition” than interview. Those with The Hands give comfort to those who have just lost a parent or a relative. Those with The Hands make new members feel like old members during orientation. Those with The Hands inspire staff loyalty.

The Hands requires personality. Social personality---responding instantly with a look and a smile and a kind word to anyone who speaks. Social enthusiasm---seeing others, wanting to connect, going out of the way to say hi and embrace others in conversation. Wanting to do good instinctively when things need to be done---cleaning up popcorn that got dropped in the lobby by an errant child, leaving a conversation to help an older member down the stairs. The Hands ooze curiosity, always asking the “great why,” filled with questions that focus on others, encouraging the others to yap and reflect, listening actively by asking the others follow-up questions based on the answers given. Those with The Hands need to have an interesting personality, the sort of broad spectrum entertaining life that draws others to them unbidden. The sort of personality that draws out “the great why” in others.

Someone with The Hands needs The Skin to survive the give and take of the club business. Skin that’s thin enough to “hear” needs, wants and expectations from staff and members. Skin thick enough to filter out rough language, boorish comments and infantile behaviors so that the kernel of truth hidden within the deluge of words and gestures and innuendo can be found without irreparably bruising the ego.

Soul requires emotional intelligence. Understanding one’s hot buttons, one’s emotional weaknesses. Knowing what tactics to use in curbing those weaknesses. Having an interest in controlling their expression. Empathizing with the needs of others and how they’re perceiving what you’re doing. And having the social skills to interface with

others effectively. Talk a lot? Be aware of your yapping, appreciate how others react to your deluge of words, accept that you need to curb the runaway chatter, ask questions that focus on those you're talking to and do so in a way that soothes, embraces and entertains the others who gather with you. Emotional intelligence. The Hands have it.

Hospitality Soul requires an understanding of and the ability to live the mission statement of the hospitality professional. EIIP. Empathize---know what they want. Inspire---give others "the buzz, the love and the glow." Inform---know the details and articulate those details effectively. Provide---delivering what has been promised. Empathize, inspire, inform and provide. EIIP.

Hospitality Soul needs The Seven hardwired into the psyche, dominating the personality, strengthening The Hands. First of The Seven---give joy to those you meet. Second of The Seven---give dignity to those you meet. Third of The Seven---anticipate need before those who need it know it. Fourth of The Seven---respond cleanly to questions asked. Fifth of The Seven---know the technology of the operation. Sixth of The Seven---stay focused on those you're serving. Seventh of The Seven---see what needs to be done then do something about it. Clubs need Soul, Soul needs The Hands and The Hands need The Seven.

The Big Question

The big question is this---is the manager born with The Hands or can she learn how to do The Hands? How about The Prez? Hmmm. Experience suggests that The Hands are either hard wired into the genes or they're not. If they are, reflection and study will enhance. If not, you'll need to restrain the handless while pursuing another with Soul.

Has your club manager got "soul?" How about the president? Does he or she have The Hands? Are they a technician, a commodity easily replaced or are they a "value added" club personality? Do they have soul? Have they got The Hands?

Do the "walk and talk" with the G.M. or President. Look closely. You'll see The Hands---or you won't. Better check.

Time for your club to get some soul. Find The Hands.

And enjoy the journey-----