

Changing Times

During difficult times it's hard for most to see the silver lining due primarily to the onslaught of bad news heard in the media and the financial problems encountered as a society in everyday life. In the hotel industry we are approaching two years of negative revenues in the U.S. and hopes for a recovery in 2010 are slowly turning into a recovery in 2011.

But wait; there it goes...my mind gets caught up in what I am hearing in the media. It's not easy and it takes some discipline, but we have to stay focused on our own efforts here and now as a country, as an industry, and most importantly as individuals to effect "change."

Charles Darwin said, "It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

Change is hard if we cling to our old habits from times of prosperity and success. It seems unlikely that thoughts or ideas of our own can really make a difference especially in the face of urgent situations such as medical needs or bankruptcy. On the other hand, the process of worrying about the same problems over and over clearly leads to nothing beneficial and only creates more physical and psychological issues in addition to the original problems.

In the words of the great Irish writer George Bernard Shaw, "Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything."

You may ask how we can find the inspiration to move in a new direction, especially when we are busy putting out fires in our day to day lives. We need to step back from the never-ending stress of the time obligations of modern life and look within ourselves for what we need and the direction in which to move towards change.

In one sentence Mahatma Gandhi gave a timeless message that really speaks to the heart of the matter. "You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

So, start today, start right now and change your mind for the positive; read what others have written about change in the face of adversity. Discuss things that can change within your family, your friends and your peers. Remember the small changes effect the larger changes and perseverance is your guiding light.

It's miraculous...look at how far we have come in our collective consciousness through so many challenges that were once thought could not be overcome. Change is GOOD!

About the Author: Jeff Westgor, CHB, is president of Minneapolis-based Westgor & Associates, Inc. a full-service hotel brokerage firm and 50 year member firm of Hotel Brokers International. Mr. Westgor serves as the 2009 president of HBI.