

# InnFocus

SUMMIT 2024



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
HOTEL ASSOCIATION

## KEYNOTE

Making connections

## AWARDS

A nod to excellence

## OPERATIONS

Rising to challenges

# THE POWER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

ACCLAIMED SPEAKER LESRA MARTIN HEADLINES THE BCHA SUMMIT



# BICHIN

## LAUNDRY EQUIPMENT

PASSION FOR EFFICIENCY

Equipment • Chemicals • Laundry Carts  
**Sales • Installations • Service • Parts**



 wascomat



**DEXTER.**  
**LAUNDRY**

 **DOMUS**  
WINNING THE FUTURE THROUGH INNOVATION

**ACCEPTING NEW CHEMICAL CUSTOMERS, CALL TODAY!**

Proud to service all of British Columbia & Yukon

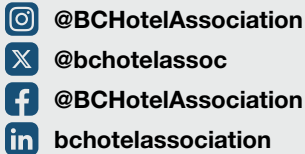
**Contact: Shane Bichin 778.229.3338**  
**shane@bichinlaundryequipment.ca**

**bichinlaundryequipment.ca**



## BRITISH COLUMBIA HOTEL ASSOCIATION

200-948 Howe Street,  
Vancouver, BC V6Z 1N9  
T 604-681-7164 1-800-663-3153  
www.bcha.com



### BCHA Team

**Ingrid Jarrett**  
President & CEO

**Karissa Bourgeault**  
Project Manager

**Gareth Allen-Symmons**  
Communications Manager

**Samantha Glennie**  
Member Services Manager

**Lien Chang**  
Member Development Coordinator

**Dylan Tomlin**  
Energy Specialist

**Alison Langford**  
Workforce Strategist

**Mike Macleod**  
Sponsorship, Advertising  
and Premier Programs

### 2023/2024 Board of Directors

**David McQuinn** - Coast Bastion Hotel,  
Nanaimo (Chair)

**Tanya Stroinig** - Prestige Hotels & Resorts,  
Kelowna (Vice Chair)

**Bryan Pilbeam** - Invictus Properties, Kamloops  
(Past Chair & Governance)

**David MacKenzie** - Pemberton Valley  
Lodge, Pemberton (Treasurer & Executive  
Committee Director)

### Directors

**Jessica Dolan** - Ramada by  
Wyndham, Penticton

**Angie Eccleston** - Crest Hotel, Prince Rupert

**Madone Pelan** - Oak Bay Beach Hotel, Victoria

**Haris Bokhari** - Sandman Signature &  
Sandman Hotel Vancouver Airport, Vancouver

**Gary Yu** - DoubleTree by Hilton, Kamloops

**Eda Koot** - Inn at Laurel Point, Victoria

**Jonas Melin** - Pinnacle Hotel  
Harbourfront, Vancouver

**Pablo Contreras** - Blackcomb Springs  
Suites, Whistler

# contents

## 06

### Making Connections

Summit keynote speaker is all in on helping hotels connect directly with their guests

## 10

### A Nod to Excellence

Highly coveted BCHA awards will be presented at gala Summit event

## 14

### Rising to the Challenge

Keeping an eye on operational trends and innovation

## 18

### Start a Project. Build a Relationship.

Meet BCHA Allied Members at the Summit Marketplace

## 04

InnFocus Summit Edition:  
President's Report

## 20

The Other Side of the Mountain:  
Whistler is more than a snow lover's playground

## 24

Fast Track It: Your Future Development Track  
Branding and business growth

## 28

Building a Positive Culture:  
Nurturing psychological health and safety in the workplace

Undeliverables can be returned to  
BCHA  
#200-948 Howe Street  
Vancouver, BC  
V6Z1N9  
membership@bcha.com

InnFocus is published three  
times a year.



# InnFocus Summit Edition: President's Report

I am pleased to be reporting in 2024 that our hospitality industry continues to grow despite so many world issues, unrest and the challenges we face. 2024 has some hopeful signs indicating we are moving to recover, yet we continue to be dependent on the international market returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Most certainly, the cost of doing business is crippling many hotels around the province. As the research shows, costs are rising faster than the profits, which is not what we want to see. This is the reason we are deeply committed to the advocacy files, and to listening to your priorities and being guided by them. Please access our advocacy report and policy files on our website.

We all continue to innovate, to collaborate and to be positive about the opportunities that arise working together during

these challenging times. I am very excited to be hosting the 2024 BCHA Summit at the renowned Fairmont Chateau Whistler Resort. Many years ago, when I was assistant food and beverage manager at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver, I was stationed at Chateau Whistler on the preopening team. It was a time in my career I will never forget—there was so much learning and so many new friendships—and I continue to love returning, especially with our BCHA Summit.

I know our friends and partners at Tourism Whistler will ensure Whistler Village is ready for us, and the team at Fairmont Chateau Whistler will be all set to welcome us.

We have a great program developed, with an eye towards learning and networking, and featuring many innovative companies in the marketplace. The development track

is something new this year; it's been specifically formulated for the middle managers and department heads in your hotels. We have also tiered our pricing so you can purchase one-, two-, three- or four-person packages.

The presentation of the Awards of Excellence always makes for an incredible evening, as we celebrate our industry's best. Our industry—albeit an innovative and resilient one—remains an industry that is people-centric. It is our precious employees, our owners, our guests and our partners that make it shine. I'm looking forward to all being together to honour the best of the best at the Awards of Excellence presentation.

See you there!



Whistler Village.

# CANADIAN HOSPITALITY HEALTH PLAN

***Your Health,  
Your Plan,  
Our Community***



Founded by the Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association and the British Columbia Hotel Association, the Canadian Hospitality Health Plan is committed to empowering hoteliers. Through the ownership of an unbeatable benefits program, association members can achieve true long-term cost savings and stability.

TO GET STARTED VISIT **CHHP.CA** OR CALL **(866) 744-1632**

**AVANCE**  
INSURANCE SERVICES

# Making Connections

Summit keynote speaker is all  
in on helping hotels connect  
directly with their guests

By Don Descoteau

Often, the best new business ideas emerge from either failure or frustration.

For Charlie Osmond, it was the latter that prompted him to take a deep dive into the world of hotel bookings.

His personal vacation experiences led him in 2015 to co-found Triptease, a way in which to help properties maintain better direct relationships with and knowledge of their most valuable guests, streamline the communications to them and other potential guests, and reduce the impacts of online travel agencies (OTAs).

Osmond, an energetic UK-based entrepreneur with a background in business consulting, market research and data analysis, is keynote speaker at the 2024 BC Hotel Association (BCHA) Summit, set for May 1-2 at the Fairmont Chateau Whistler.

He recalls the pathway that led to his current passion.

“I had sold my last company and was trying to decide what to do next,” he says. “I found the single greatest pain I had in my life was booking family travels. I’d have weekends full of work just to go on a seven-day trip.”

Much of the hoped-for excitement and anticipation of planning a travel experience was lost with having to spend time comparing prices, bouncing between aggregator websites and apps, just to find an acceptable price for suitable accommodation. Doing so often gave him no direct connection to the property or the people there who would be working to make his family’s stays pleasurable and memorable.

As he dug deeper into the details, he discovered just how much hotels and other types of accommodations were losing in OTA fees, not to mention brand loyalty.

“I think we’ve had a solid 10 years now of hoteliers fighting for more direct business—it’s been a strategic imperative for hotels,” Osmond says. “OTAs have meant a bigger cheque that hotels have to write every year.”

He eventually found that 40 per cent of travel bookings were made through e-commerce, online bookings made external to the accommodations themselves—through OTAs. He vowed to work to change that situation.

“Hoteliers want to have control of their business, and direct contact with their customers is so important,” he says.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many hotels received more direct bookings, Osmond says, as people called and emailed to check about public health policies and requirements. But for some properties those contacts soon evaporated as restrictions were lifted.

While the rate of use of external booking sources varies around the world, he says, there is always room for hoteliers to increase their revenues through devoting more attention to direct-contact strategies.

“We can’t generalize, but there are different segments of guests. Some, for example, like to use their American Express travel agent, while others have had bad experiences with third parties and are diehard users of direct booking for the service factor.”

There remains a “large middle mass” of potential guests who are easily swayed and tend to book more spontaneously, he says. Price is the most important aspect for most people, but if the price is not too different, Osmond adds, people tend not to show preference to one booking option over another. It’s a big reason OTAs began their own loyalty programs.



Charlie Osmond.

His personal vacation experiences led him in 2015 to co-found Triptease, a way in which to help properties maintain better direct relationships with and knowledge of their most valuable guests, streamline the communications to them and other potential guests, and reduce the impacts of online travel agencies

Hotels have a great opportunity to take advantage of this middle group of travellers, Osmond says.

“What the research found was a hotel will get significantly higher click-through rates and conversions at one or two per cent cheaper. It shows that just being a tiny bit better can make a difference.”

Triptease offers a service, for example, that allows hotels to place themselves in the online price mix alongside the OTAs in a Google search. Using such strategies tends to be far more effective—even among younger travellers prone to using mobile apps for everything—than simple generic advertising, Osmond says.

Ingrid Jarrett, president and CEO of the BCHA, is excited to have Osmond share his wisdom and experience at the Summit.

“Charlie’s content is going to be really helpful for independent and branded hotels on the topic of how to own your own guest,” she says. “When it comes to reservations through OTAs, hotels don’t know who [their guests] are, where they live, how many times they’ve stayed with them. There are some real tech changes that Charlie is going to speak about to increase that personalization and innovation.”

Osmond’s keynote address is the cherry on the top of a program that will touch on various current issues and challenges of importance to hoteliers.

Panels and speakers will discuss innovation, sustainability, transportation, including air access and BC Ferries, as well as trends in hotel operations. Destination Canada will provide an update on the return of the international market. The Hotel Association of Canada and BCHA advocacy updates this year will be followed by a town hall.

Among those are sessions on emergency preparedness management as well as sustainability initiatives, transportation—with

speakers from BC Ferries, Vancouver International Airport and BC Automobile Association—innovations, trends in hotel operations and more.

“The hospitality industry has a reputation for working together and preparedness is key,” says conference committee chair Erin Cassels, who is general manager of the Huntingdon Manor and Pendray Inn and Tea House in Victoria. “We’ve secured some really incredible speakers, but I think the panels are also going to be really informative for hoteliers.”

The annual BCHA Awards of Excellence presentations are also expected to be a highlight of the event, along with the experience of visiting Whistler in springtime. But above all, the face-to-face interactions that happen between hospitality people and those in ancillary industries will provide a main takeaway from the Summit, Jarrett says.

“When we send out our post-event survey, networking is always number one for attendees. The value of being together as an industry and learning from each other cannot be overstated.”

Celebrating the leaders, the best in the industry and the contribution of team members is important and pleasurable, she notes, and at the end of the day, “hospitality is a people-centric business.”

To register for the Summit, visit [bchasummit.com](http://bchasummit.com). ■



## Set the stage for engagement.

With turnkey solutions and a local team, we help you create memorable impressions every time.

Elevate your events  
[encore-can.com](http://encore-can.com)

 **encore**<sup>™</sup>  
EVENTS THAT TRANSFORM





Among the Summit speakers, from left, are: Emile Gourieux, regional manager, STR; Adrienne Foster, VP of policy and public affairs, Hotel Association of Canada; and Nicolas Jimenez, CEO, BC Ferries.

## Speaker List (as of March 15)

- » **OPENING KEYNOTE** | **Charlie Osmond**, Co-Founder Triptease
- » **CLOSING KEYNOTE** | **Lesra Martin** | Acclaimed Lawyer & Motivational Speaker

### Main Stage Speakers

---

- » **Adrienne Foster** | Hotel Association of Canada
- » **Ingrid Jarrett** | BC Hotel Association
- » **Alexis Kereluk** | ConnectSeven Group & Meetings Mean Business Canada
- » **Marsha Walden** | Destination Canada
- » **Alana Dickson** | BC Hospitality Foundation
- » **Anthony Woo** | Amadeus Hospitality
- » **Emile Gourieux** | STR
- » **Carrie Russell** | HVS
- » **Michelle Collens** | Sport Hosting, City of Vancouver
- » **Nicolas Jimenez** | BC Ferries
- » **Serge Corbeil** | Air Canada

- » **Eric Pateman** | YVR
- » **Dave Frank** | BC Aviation Council
- » **Jens Moesker** | Fairmont Hotels & Resorts
- » **Tanya Stroinig** | Prestige Hotels & Resorts
- » **Eda Koot** | The Inn at Laurel Point
- » **Trevor Scott** | CFO Capital
- » **Irwin Prince** | RealStar Hospitality
- » **John Wilson** | President & CEO of The Wilson's Group of Companies

### Fast Track Development

---

- » **Jay Ashton** | Sysco Canada
- » **Brent O'Connor** | Sales Expert
- » **Jessica Harcombe** | Fleming // tartanbond
- » **Samantha Geer** | tartanbond
- » **Mackenzie Macdonald** | Fairmont Hotels & Resorts



# A Nod to Excellence

Highly coveted BCHA awards  
will be presented at gala  
Summit event

By Don Descoteau



Robin Hood Inn & Suites.

Hotel and motel employees and management start their days looking to do their best to make their guests' stays comfortable, enjoyable and worry-free.

Positive guest reviews and kind words about extra efforts made by employees reflect well on a property. In a similar way, a word or two of encouragement to an employee or thanks for a job well done from a supervisor or colleague can go a long way.

Being nominated for the BC Hotel Association (BCHA) Awards of Excellence, as a property or an individual, takes to the next level the professional recognition of going above and beyond for guests.

"It really means something and it's highly competitive. The Housekeeping Award is one of the most coveted," says BCHA president/CEO Ingrid Jarrett. "When we think about being recognized by our industry, our colleagues are recognizing us, whether it's as a leader of the future, as a [current] leader or as a business."

At the awards gala—part of the BCHA Summit in Whistler—winners are often overcome with emotion, she adds. "We celebrate them and we champion them."

For Pink Yu, director of operations and marketing at the Robin Hood Inn & Suites in Victoria, winning the 2023 BCHA Leader of the Future award represented a significant career milestone. It also was a validation of the "outstanding collaborative efforts" of the Robin Hood team and their "dedication, meticulous attention to detail and genuine passion for delivering exceptional hospitality experiences," she says.

Yu leads by example, tirelessly guiding her team's efforts to uphold a level of quality and care that makes their guests' stays not just comfortable, but unforgettable and unique.

Winning the award has inspired her to continue striving for excellence in the hospitality industry and to look for more ways to show leadership. That has included leading her team to complete



Pink Yu.

**ADA**  
COSMETICS



«A modern interpretation of traditional craftsmanship.»



❁

**YOUR COMPLETE  
SOURCE FOR  
LINEN  
AMENITIES  
AND MORE!**

**TRUE NORTH**  
TRUE NORTH HOSPITALITY®

1-800-663-7913 info@truenorthdistributors.com

www.truenorthdistributors.com

the Biosphere sustainability management program, as well as undertake culturally enriched community engagement that reflects a commitment to responsible corporate citizenship.

“Leadership, in my view, entails mentorship and setting an example and nurturing growth, and I am resolute in my commitment to perpetuate these principles,” she says.

Robin Hood general manager Sam Kirsch couldn’t speak highly enough about Yu.

“Her passion for the industry, coupled with her unwavering commitment to leadership, ensures that she will continue to be a guiding force in the word of hospitality, setting a shining example for future leaders in the field,” he says.

For the Kingfisher Oceanside Resort & Spa in the mid-Vancouver Island community of Royston, capturing last year’s BCHA Accommodation of the Year award was a testament to the “unwavering commitment to excellence and hospitality that defines our establishment,” says marketing manager Inès le Ricque.

There was an overwhelming sense of pride and joy among employees and management upon learning that the Kingfisher, routinely voted among the top resorts and spas on Vancouver Island, had achieved the top rung in the BC hotel industry, she adds.

“It was a moment of collective celebration, recognizing the hard work, passion and dedication that each team member contributes to our shared vision of hospitality excellence.”

As someone deeply dedicated to the hospitality industry, le Ricque calls the award win “an incredibly gratifying and humbling experience” that acknowledges the resort’s commitment to



Kingfisher Oceanside Resort & Spa.

“It was a moment of collective celebration, recognizing the hard work, passion and dedication that each team member contributes to our shared vision of hospitality excellence.”

delivering exceptional guest experiences and “underscores our position as a leader in the hospitality sector.”

It also serves as motivation to raise the bar through innovation and setting new standards for providing unparalleled service, she says.

The Kingfisher is following up its big win in style, with work continuing on its state-of-the-art expansion of the multi-award-winning Pacific Mist Spa. The end result will be an immersive, multi-sensory spa experience, featuring underground caves and environments that utilize innovative, cutting-edge technology.

Other Kingfisher upgrades completed or in progress include renovations of its beachfront suites and working with a Victoria agency to rebrand the resort with a new logo and website.

Le Ricque’s team has also leveraged the award win to showcase the resort’s commitment to excellence, incorporating it into marketing and promotional efforts. That recognition has created new opportunities for partnerships and collaborations within the industry, and helped to further enhance the overall guest experience, le Ricque says.

“We see this award as a catalyst for continued growth and success in the ever-evolving landscape of the hospitality sector.”

Other honours to be announced at the 2024 BCHA Awards of Excellence gala include Hotelier of the Year and Supplier of the Year, as well as separate awards for housekeeping, recruitment and the Heart of Hospitality.

Erin Cassels, general manager of the Huntingdon Manor and Pendray Inn and Tea House in Victoria and chair of the BCHA conference committee, says the awards program provides much-needed recognition.

“Hospitality is a service-based industry and we’re facing challenges all the time,” she says, noting that it’s an industry made up of workers who are often on the front lines of public health crises and providing refuge for their communities from natural disasters.

“Getting an award from your peers, it’s not only validating for hotels and employees, but it could also be a catalyst for career advancement. It’s also a source of major bragging rights,” Cassels says, noting the very visible sign outside the Robin Hood Inn & Suites highlighting its various award wins and nominations.

The 2024 awards gala happens during the BCHA Summit, set for May 1-2 at the Fairmont Chateau Whistler. ■



Kingfisher Oceanside Resort & Spa.



# Rising to the Challenge

With an eye on operational  
trends and innovation

By Lauren Kramer

For hoteliers, keeping up with operational trends and staying innovative are key challenges amid an ever-changing hospitality environment. Understanding how these two topics affect business is crucial for any successful hotelier and these will be addressed in a not-to-be-missed panel discussion at the BCHA Summit in May.

Among the panelists is Jens Moesker, regional vice president of Fairmont Pacific Northwest and general manager of Fairmont Pacific Rim, and we asked him the following questions:

### Inn Focus: Why is community engagement so important for hoteliers?

**Jens Moesker:** Engaging with the community enables partnerships and activations and embeds a hotel in its environment in a meaningful way. For example, one of the innovative themes at the Fairmont Waterfront in Vancouver is Indigenous culture, exhibited via a partnership with an Indigenous gallery through which the hotel displays Indigenous art on its walls. For a time, the hotel also helped promote Indigenous-led tours in Stanley Park, and Indigenous-themed food in its restaurant.

That's an example of the innovation you need to make your restaurant a compelling place to local diners. Our restaurants depend heavily on the local community because, for our travellers, the majority of the meals they will have will be outside of the hotel.

The theme at Fairmont Pacific Rim is focused on art, fashion and music. There is daily live music at the hotel and its art is prominently on display, but that "urban resort" theme is also evident in its menu of craft cocktails.

### InnFocus: Retaining labor is a challenge in many hotel environments. What's the key to successful retention?

**JM:** Labour retention is about staying agile, marketing to the labour force and showing value to your labour force. [Employees] have options, and they're not doing you any favours by showing up every day. That means the hospitality industry needs to make an effort to be attractive and to stay attractive.

We've seen a lot of burnout and turnover in middle management, where it's essential to maintain stability and keep managers engaged through growth and leadership opportunities, as well as [providing] benefits.

In our hotels, we give additional incentive to managers, and if they achieve certain benchmarks every month, there's an incentive to be paid out. We also put in place a pick-your-perk system. There's a list of perks managers can choose from, such as movie tickets, pet food or classes that support personal growth and development. You pick your perk, and we will cover it.

We've had challenges retaining some entry-level employees. It was especially difficult getting skilled labour back into the kitchen after the pandemic, and housekeeping positions were difficult to fill, as well.

One hiring strategy we used at the Fairmont Waterfront was to visit the churches that our Canadian colleagues of Filipino descent frequent, because the Filipino community is quite close. That was a really successful hiring strategy. We've found our current team is our best help in terms of marketing and recruitment, although we also work with LinkedIn and engage a regional recruiting specialist.

**WYRK.io**  
Qualified Wyrkers

In your area

In your industry

On-demand

**What is a wyrker?**

A wyrker is a qualified professional in your area who can be invited to fill your shifts. Individual wyrkers decide when they are available to work, but there are wyrkers available 24/7.

**How do I get started?**

Sign up on the website at [wyrk.io](http://wyrk.io) or scan the QR code below. We will be in touch with next steps.

**How much does it cost?**

Membership of our community and use of our platform is free. You only pay when you hire workers. You determine the maximum pay rate that you think is fair for your jobs.

**How do I hire wyrkers?**

Create a shift that you need to fill in our application. We will match you with qualified professionals in your area. You can choose who you want to invite to work your job.

**Do I have to deal with payroll?**

No. Wyrk takes care of timekeeping and payroll for you. All you have to do is create your shifts and choose wyrkers to invite.

**How do you ensure the quality of wyrkers?**

We check the qualifications of all wyrkers. When you invite wyrkers, you will be able to see their qualifications, work history and ratings and reviews for the worker.

Scan to sign up





## ACCESS OUR NEW HEALTH & SAFETY ADVISORY SERVICES!

Questions or advice about enhancing  
your health & safety program?

Book a **FREE** consultation!

Scan to  
learn more



go2hr.ca/hsas  
604-633-9787



## O'CONNOR IS HERE TO HELP

Hotel owners all over Canada are crying for help!  
They want to know how their peers in the U.S.  
were able to successfully challenge tax  
assessments?



### PROPERTY TAX

Property tax is one of the largest components of a hotel's  
operating expenses. Reducing property tax is the  
quickest way to boost up your bottom line significantly

### TANGIBLE & INTANGIBLE PROPERTIES

Personal properties, both tangible and intangible, are not  
taxable. Tax assessors in Canada only deducted Tangible  
(FF&E) but failed to deduct Intangible value associated with  
a hotel's flag.

#### Intangible Properties Include:

- Franchise License
- Permit
- Goodwill
- Quality Control

### THE O'CONNOR APPROACH™

After years of research, a proprietary breakthrough  
methodology was developed by O'Connor. It was tested in  
40+ states in the U.S. with great success, resulting in far  
greater tax reductions than ever before.

### SAVE TAX OR PAY NOTHING NO RISK, WE COVER ALL COSTS

4 major components are needed to  
achieve a successful tax appeal

#### Experienced Tax Consultant

O'Connor has 1,000+ professionals worldwide,  
representing 350,000+ properties including 6000+  
hotels in the U.S. Aggressively pursuing multiple rounds  
of appeal

#### Tax Attorney

O'Connor coordinates with reputable tax attorneys in  
your area to pursue judicial appeal after administrative  
appeal at no additional cost to you

#### Appraiser

O'Connor coordinates with reputable appraisers to  
prepare appraisal reports and to serve as an expert  
witness at no additional cost to you

#### Massive Data Resources

Massive sales data is needed to challenge the Tax  
Assessors who are using high sales to justify their values.  
O'Connor provides the most updated sales data to  
appraisers nationwide to assure you are not being  
valued higher than comparable properties in your area.

#### Contact Us

To set an appointment for a free consultation

888-666-1876  
hotel@poconnor.com

**InnFocus:** Your front desk staff are the face of the hotel, and a warm, welcoming personality is crucial. How do you get the right personalities into those positions?

**JM:** One guideline we use is the "talent meter," and we benchmark every new employee against that. But we also conduct panel interviews to screen new talent for personality. It's challenging because every guest has only one check-in experience, but for the front desk staff, it's like Groundhog Day with every arrival, and they have to be on top of their game. It takes a certain personality to be able to do that, but you monitor feedback from guests, watch trend lines, and gauge collectively as a team how successfully you're meeting your goals.

**InnFocus:** How do you keep your hotel environment innovative?

**JM:** One way we do this is by putting an emphasis on wellness, which is no longer just about the spa or a workout in the health club. It can cover everything from your offering of teas to your spirits and cocktails, to how you enhance sleep in the room—for example, with a pillow selection or a personalized mist scent.

For guests, the ability to personalize their experience is very important. Wellness also extends to the minibar: how can you make that healthier? At Fairmont we strive to be a partner in the journey, not just a station in the journey. So, we're constantly considering new ways to be an ally in guests' stays and contribute to their lifestyles, with the understanding that travel can be very disruptive. ■





Jens Moesker, regional vice president of Fairmont Pacific Northwest and general manager of Fairmont Pacific Rim.

**Prestige**  
HOTELS & RESORTS

**Proud Sponsor of the  
BCHA Summit**

[prestigehotelsandresorts.com](http://prestigehotelsandresorts.com)

Kelowna ♦ Vernon ♦ Salmon Arm ♦ Kamloops ♦ Golden ♦ Radium ♦ Cranbrook  
Rosland ♦ Nelson ♦ Sooke ♦ Smithers ♦ Prince George ♦ Prince Rupert



Eda Koot, general manager at the Inn at Laurel Point is also taking part in the Summit panel on operational trends.

**HVS**  
Superior Results  
Through Unrivaled  
Hospitality Intelligence.  
Everywhere.

**PLANNING**  
Site Selection  
Market Study  
Product Recommendation  
Financial Projections  
Financial Feasibility Analysis  
Economic Impact Analysis  
Architectural Concept Design  
Construction Costs Estimates

**ACQUISITION & DEVELOPMENT**  
Valuation & Pricing Guidance  
Appraisal for Financing  
Due Diligence Coordination  
Brand Selection & Contract Negotiations  
Operator Selection & Contract Negotiations  
Interior Design & Project Management  
Executive Search  
Pre-Opening Oversight

**HVS.com**

**OWNERSHIP & OPERATION**  
Asset Management  
Management Agreement Analysis & Negotiation  
Appraisal for Refinancing  
Operations Performance Analysis  
Repositioning Study & Valuation  
Repositioning Design & Budgeting

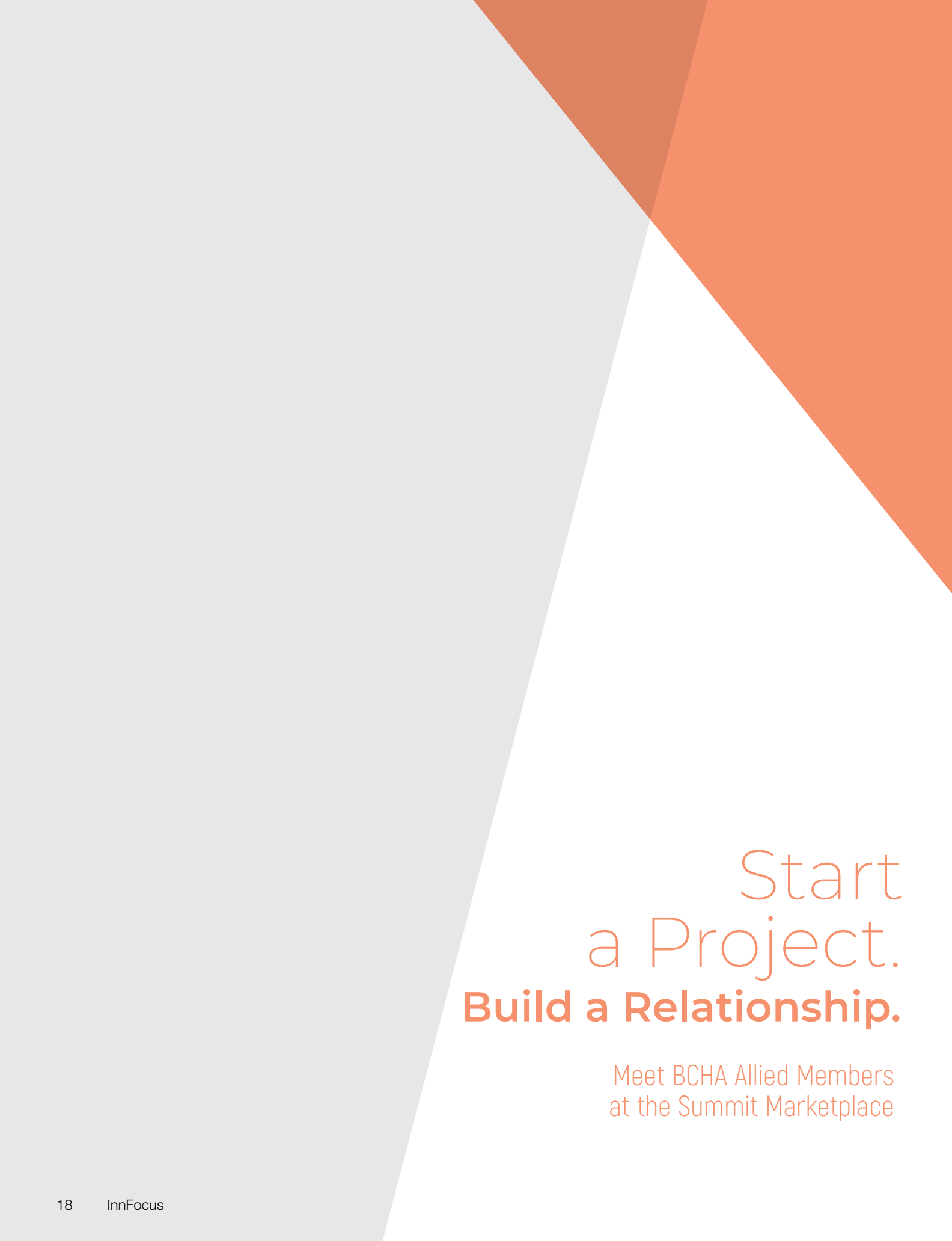
**DISPOSITION**  
Exit Strategy  
Adaptive Reuse Analysis  
Pricing Analysis

*HVS provides expertise through every phase of ownership across a wide range of hospitality assets.*

**For more information contact: Carrie Russell, AACI, MAI, RIBC, ISHC  
Senior Managing Partner | (604) 787-0574 | crussell@hvs.com**

**HVS Works With You – Across Each Of Your Property Types**

Hotels | Mixed-Use Properties | Convention, Sports & Entertainment Facilities | Golf Clubs and Wellness Services | Casinos



Start  
a Project.  
**Build a Relationship.**

Meet BCHA Allied Members  
at the Summit Marketplace



Welcome to the 2024 BC Hotel Association's BCHA Summit buyers' guide!

The BCHA is pleased to connect you with over 50 of our accommodation industry's incredible allied members and trusted partners who will be in attendance at this year's BCHA Summit in Whistler.

The membership team has worked closely with our hotel members to understand their unique needs—expanding and perfecting our collection of allied members. As a result of working more closely with you through surveys, webinars and open dialogue, we are proud to have updated our offering with new suppliers to fit the needs and demands of your business.

During your time at the BCHA Summit, please stop by each of the tables in the Marketplace. This is a great opportunity to get a project started, build new relationships and discover the latest from each of our partners.

As part of our aim to expand our list of partners, we focused on enrolling companies with more relevant and competitive offers, unique technologies and innovative solutions.

For the full list of BCHA Allied Members, please visit [bcha.com/benefit-programs](http://bcha.com/benefit-programs). You can also search for benefits, special offers and discounts inside your member portal. (Access the portal by visiting the BCHA website's home page at [bcha.com](http://bcha.com) and clicking on the member portal button.)

This list is easy to use and tailored to members of the accommodation sector, offering all contact information needed to find the product or service that you may be interested in. Information is organized by category for members' convenience.

All vendors listed are trusted suppliers and colleagues of the association. Our team has collaborated with these allied members to ensure that service standards and product offerings are representative of your association.

Many of our allied members offer incentives and discounts, which are made available exclusively to our BCHA community, and we encourage you to connect directly with the vendors listed to get the most out of your membership.

We want to continue to hear from you throughout the year about these suppliers, who in turn will help drive the most value for your guests, as well as your membership value. Please stay in touch

with all requests and feedback. You can reach out to our member services manager, Samantha Glennie, at [samantha@bcha.com](mailto:samantha@bcha.com) with any comments or suggestions.

Stay up to date for the latest offers and newest members by visiting [bcha.com](http://bcha.com). ■

- » ADA Cosmetics International
- » ASSA ABLOY Global Solutions
- » Bell Alliance LLP
- » BetterTable.ca
- » Bichin Laundry Equipment
- » Canadian Trade House
- » Coldstream Commercial Sales Inc.
- » Dyson Canada
- » ECNG
- » Western Financial Group
- » Ecolab
- » Eden Textile
- » Encore
- » Foodbuy Canada
- » FortisBC
- » Genuine Comfort
- » Gordon R. Williams Corporation
- » GreenKey Global
- » GreenStep Solutions Inc.
- » Guest Supply
- » Haddon Equipment & Supplies
- » Imperial Dade Canada
- » LG Electronics Canada
- » Liv Hospitality
- » LOC International
- » Matrix Fitness Canada
- » MTech Locks & Key Card Ads
- » Nerval Corp
- » Nespresso Professional/EVS Canada
- » O'Connor & Associates
- » Precise ParkLink Inc.
- » Prostar Contracting
- » RHB Enterprises Inc.
- » Rogers Business
- » Salt Spring Coffee
- » Serta Simmons Bedding
- » Sherwin Williams
- » SONA
- » Spring Air Hospitality
- » Standard Textile
- » Sunco Communication and Installation
- » Symmons
- » Sysco
- » TELUS Business
- » Tempur Sealy Canada
- » The Cooperators, Solve Insurance
- » True North Hospitality
- » Visions Business Solutions
- » Maestro PMS
- » Procter & Gamble Professional
- » Stream Financial Services Inc.
- » Northern Feather Canada
- » Worksafe BC

List current as of March 15th



# The Other Side of the Mountain

Whistler is more than  
a snow lover's playground

By Susan Lundy

It's a wintery Monday morning and each of my senses zings with life as I move between warm, cold and relax cycles at the outdoor ScandinaVe Spa, located just down the highway from the beautiful mountain town Whistler—the site of this year's BC Hotel Association Summit.

Sitting in the hot pool, I feel a brush of breeze on my face and hear a whisper of wind in the spruce trees above me. Moving indoors, and now relaxing on a cushiony recliner, I take in the beauty of lush foliage seen through floor-to-ceiling windows. And the moment after I run through an icy cold waterfall, my skin tingles with an electric-like buzz.

There's the heat of a firepit, the cosy embrace of a blanket, the sound of a running stream, the scent of essential oils and the sensation of steam and sweat lingering on my skin.

Most important—the experience of every sense is exaggerated due to the absolute and mandatory silence. People move between the various stations without a word. And I understand completely: silence is golden.

This is our last stop before my husband and I head home, and as I revel in the all-encompassing sensory experience, my mind wanders back over the past few days, realizing that beyond everything else, I'm surprised by the diversity of our Whistler adventure.

The mountain playground has been a big part of my other trips to Whistler: I've ridden the slightly terrifying Peak 2 Peak Gondola, zoomed up Blackcomb in an exhilarating jeep ride; I've zip-lined and explored off-road on an ATV. But on this weekend getaway, we hiked, played, feasted and learned about local First Nations culture. We've had a wealth of experience, and, in some ways, we've discovered the other side of the mountain.



BC HOTEL ASSOCIATION

SUMMIT

JOIN US | WHISTLER | MAY 1-2

Keynote Speakers, 50+ Vendors,  
BCHA Awards of Excellence,  
Welcome Reception, Fast  
Track Development Track,  
& Much More!

REGISTER  
TODAY

[WWW.BCHASUMMIT.COM](http://WWW.BCHASUMMIT.COM)



Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre.

This Whistler adventure begins with a stop at Function Junction, an industrial neighbourhood 10 minutes south of Whistler's main villages. With a totally different vibe than Whistler main, Function Junction emerges like the beer-drinking sister to the more coiffed, upscale main villages. After tucking into a delicious vegan lunch at the highly recommended The Green Moustache, which has two locations in Whistler, we sample beer at Coast Mountain Brewing and Whistler Brewing, and then land at Montis Distilling, Whistler's only craft spirit maker. A tasting reveals a flourish of local flavours. We purchase a bottle of Winter Spirit, the distillery's answer to young whiskey, but we could easily have chosen either of their tasty gins or super-smooth charcoal vodka.

After checking into our hotel in Whistler's upper village, we head out to explore on foot this remarkably walkable community. First up is the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre, where we learn about local First Nations, view a spectacular exhibit by Lil'wat artist Ed Archie NoiseCat, step into a replica longhouse and wander along a forested educational trail. Outside the centre, a Sunday farmer's market springs up, presenting a colourful array of produce, food and artisan wares.

From the upper village, we follow the connector path to the lower village, grab coffees and wander around the pedestrian-friendly village. Eventually, we pick up a snowy forest trail that takes us back to the hotel.

But there's no time to rest! For our next adventure, we meet up with our daughter, also visiting Whistler, and embark on a new-to-us-all escape room experience. We arrive at Escape!



Montis Distilling.

I've ridden the slightly terrifying Peak 2 Peak Gondola, zoomed up Blackcomb in an exhilarating jeep ride. I've zip-lined and explored off-road on an ATV. But on this weekend getaway, we hiked, played, feasted and learned about local First Nations culture. We've had a wealth of experience and, in some ways, we've discovered the other side of the mountain.

Whistler and, after a quick briefing, we set out to solve a series of riddles and puzzles to escape a cottage buried in snow—one of Escape! Whistler's four escape rooms. This is a lot of fun!

Although we don't quite solve it before time is up, we're close, and have a lot of fun trying.

Next is dinner at Il Caminetto. Located directly on Whistler's

Village Stroll, Il Caminetto is the spot in Whistler for an upscale Italian il pasto. The menu sets our mouths watering, and our choices present as perfection personified. A 41-page wine list creates a major conundrum but, no matter, the sommelier swiftly leads us to a divine Amarone. Its silky-smooth flavour provides the perfect complement to my husband's rigatoni Bolognese, and my seared tuna and roasted cauliflower. The food, the ambience, the service and the wine are the ingredients for a spectacular dining experience.

Dinner marks the perfect segue to our nighttime Whistler experience—one which surpasses all of our expectations. After driving 10 minutes north of the village, we turn onto an obscure road... and re-emerge in another world. Vallea Lumina is a stunning, immersive multimedia show that is truly spectacular. This is a dazzling experience that invites guests into an enchanted universe, inspired by Whistler's natural beauty. Expect to have your breath taken away around each corner on this mesmerizing forest walk. Created by Montreal-based Moment Factory and brought to life by The Adventure Group in Whistler, Vallea Lumina offers two experiences—one in the winter months (bundle up!) and one in the summer.

And so it is the next day that, cocooned in the pools at ScandinaVe Spa, I come to an easy conclusion. Whistler and Blackcomb mountains—with their combined 3,036 hectares of terrain and abundant annual snowfall—are indeed a wicked winter destination for snow enthusiasts. But there's a lot more going on, and visitors should definitely check out the other side of the mountain. ■



Next is dinner at Il Caminetto.



# Fast Track It: **Your Future Development Track**

Branding and business growth  
among topics at Summit's four-part,  
in-person training course

By Lauren Kramer





**Jay Ashton, National Brand Activation Manager, Sysco Canada**

If you're ready to grow into a new role at your hotel, you don't want to miss Fast Track Your Future Development Track, an in-person, workshop-style training course at this year's BC Hotel Association Summit in Whistler. Fast Track is usually a six-week online program, but it's being offered in-person with new topics at the summit this year.

"We survey our industry often, and one of the biggest issues that has come up over the past year or two is retention and staff upskilling opportunities," says Karissa Bourgeault, Fast Track lead for BCHA. "Upskilling allows staff to grow into the positions they want, and it's a big retention piece when it comes to the hotel industry."

Each of the four 45-minute sessions will feature a Q&A period, encouraging open conversation and dialogue amid the learning opportunity.

In the presentation called Dishing Up Optimism, Jay Ashton, the national brand activation manager in Canada for Sysco Corporation, will address food and beverage service, with a specific focus on celebrating the Canadian restaurant industry's resilience, innovation and undeniable contribution to the culture and the economy.

"My presentation will share stories of triumph, community engagement and culinary brilliance, shifting the trend away from the negative storytelling followed by digital content creators," he says.

There are many inspiring stories of the industry's sustainable practices, its support of local agriculture and its eco-conscious transformation of dining experiences, Ashton says.

"We should be celebrating the rich diversity of Canadian cuisine and its role in job creation, tourism and community development."

How do you brand your hotel restaurant? Ashton will draw on the success of New York's upscale restaurant Eleven Madison Park, which is using a podcast forum via its celebrated chef Daniel Humm to discuss fine dining, sustainability initiatives and its culinary philosophy. (Check out the Apple Podcast called Eleven Madison Park: Daniel Humm.)

"It's an example of a digital platform that offers a fresh, interactive way to connect with diners beyond the traditional dining experience," Ashton points out.

He will share remarkable stories of restaurateurs and chefs who are making a difference and inspiring journeys of those who have overcome adversity to revolutionize how we think about food and dining. Their innovative approaches are exemplified in many ways, from menu design to customer service and community involvement.

In the presentation A Journey Beyond Reservations, business growth strategist Brent O'Connor will discuss how to enhance guest experiences to increase hotel sales.

A guest's experience in a hotel is very much more than a series of transactions, he says: "It's an opportunity for hotels to create experiences that not just satisfy guests but also drive sales."

That process begins well before guests step into the lobby, he

# HIP | HOSPITALITY INSURANCE PROGRAM

## Your Insurance Program

- Preferred Rates for Members
- Risk Management Services
- Long-Term Cost Stability

Find out how you can benefit from the Hospitality Insurance Program

### Employee Benefits

Mike Madison  
Director, Employee Benefits Sales  
1-204-942-2555 ext 50160  
mike.madison@westernfg.ca

### Commercial Insurance

Drew Woytko  
Director, Business Development  
1-800-665-8990 ext. 50152  
Drew.woytko@westernfg.ca



[westernfinancialgroup.ca/hip](http://westernfinancialgroup.ca/hip)



- ✓ Hotel Housekeeping
- ✓ Floor and Carpet Cleaning
- ✓ Commercial Janitorial Services



[info@mastercare.com](mailto:info@mastercare.com)

1-800-889-2799

[www.mastercare.com](http://www.mastercare.com)



Brent O'Connor.  
Business Growth Strategist



Jessica Harcombe Flemming.  
Senior VP, tartanbond



Samantha Geer.  
VP tartanbond



Karissa Bourgeault.  
Project Manager, BCHA

The Fast Track workshops present tremendous learning opportunities, and their focus is hand-picked by industry members via surveys about what they want to improve upon.

adds, noting that impressions are formed online, where great websites, engaging social media content and compelling travel platform listings allow hotels to captivate and attract guests.

“Picture a boutique hotel in British Columbia that showcases its allure through virtual tours and glowing guest testimonials. This digital appeal attracts guests but also sets their expectations,” he notes.

The reservation process is also crucial, particularly in terms of its ease and guests’ ability to customize and personalize their stays.

“Can they choose their room views, add tours and select pillow types? Offerings like these enhance the value of their booking,” he explains.

Hotels can build pre-arrival excitement by sending personalized emails with information about the property, local attractions, upcoming events and weather forecasts. And check-in is the “crucible moment,” O’Connor says, one that sets the tone for a guest’s stay.

“If that process is seamless, friendly, efficient and personalized, it can make guests feel valued and increase the likelihood of good reviews and future bookings.”

O’Connor’s seminar will discuss the many ways hotels can personalize a guest’s stay, use technology to enhance their experience and encourage feedback after they leave.

“Small gestures like leaving a personalized note, offering a guest amenity as a complimentary treat or personalizing the room setup can have a significant impact,” he notes. “You can implement apps for easy room service orders or use chatbots for service requests. And when you get feedback, respond directly to demonstrate your guests’ opinions are valued and that you aim for improvement. Each phase of a guest’s journey presents opportunities for hotels to enhance experiences, build relationships and boost sales.”

The Fast Track workshops present tremendous learning opportunities, Bourgeault says, and their focus is hand-picked by industry members via surveys about what they need and want to improve upon. To general managers and directors of operations, she adds, this is a chance to bring together food and beverage managers, sales managers, supervisors and other hotel staff who want to grow in the organization.

“In these workshops you can fast track your career and continue to grow while networking with amazing people at the Summit,” she says. “We hope attendees will take advantage of this incredible series.” ■

**EXPERTS IN FRANCHISING ACROSS CANADA.**

**SUPERIOR Lodging Corp.**

QR code for Superior Lodging Corp.

Logos: Super 8, Travelodge BY WYNDHAM, Thriftlodge, WINGATE BY WYNDHAM, WYNDHAM GARDEN, RAMADA BY WYNDHAM, Hawthorn EXTENDED STAY

**ISSofBC Gateway to Tourism & Hospitality Jobs for Newcomers**

QR code

**Benefits of a talented and diverse workforce!**

Partner with us to support hiring, training, and retention of newcomers.

*Over 50 years of experience helping immigrants find jobs and connecting them with employers.*

Funded by the Government of Canada's, Sectoral Initiatives Program

**Canada**

Connect with us  
604-809-7103  
gateway2tourism@issbc.org  
issbc.org/gateway



# Building a Positive Culture

Nurturing psychological health  
and safety in the workplace

By Ginger Brunner, Manager,  
Industry Human Resources & Mental Health, go2HR



In the highly competitive landscape of British Columbia's hospitality industry, the cultivation of a positive workplace culture stands out as a key factor in attracting and retaining top talent. However, it is important to recognize that efforts to build a positive culture may fall short without the foundational support of psychological health and safety in the workplace.

Investing in the culture of your business is not just the right thing to do; it represents a sound business strategy. Research indicates that positive, psychologically safe workplaces experience lower costs and time investments in recruiting, onboarding and training new employees, leading to increased employee retention, productivity and efficiency—all of which positively impact the bottom line.

### Understanding workplace culture

While there is no single official definition, workplace culture is often described as “the shared values, belief systems, attitudes and set of assumptions that people in a workplace share with the organization.”

One way to shape your culture is to align with elements that foster psychological health and safety. The National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (called the Standard) provides voluntary guidelines, tools and resources to help workplaces identify and mitigate psycho-social factors that can impact employees' psychological health. In psychologically safe workplaces, employees feel accepted and respected, and experience a shared sense of trust. They possess a clear understanding of expectations, feel empowered to contribute ideas without fear and know where to turn with questions or concerns.

The process of understanding and assessing psychological health and safety in your workplace may initially seem overwhelming. However, go2HR has underscored our commitment to psychologically safer workplaces by partnering with CMHA BC and creating industry-specific tools to foster familiarity and facilitate easy implementation. There is also ample opportunity for employers to take stock of current systems, practices and processes in the workplace and integrate psychological health and safety, considering health and safety practices, HR practices and onboarding employee handbooks and training programs. Not sure where to start? One of our go2HR Psychological Health & Safety (PH&S) coaches can meet with you to discuss your needs and help get you started.

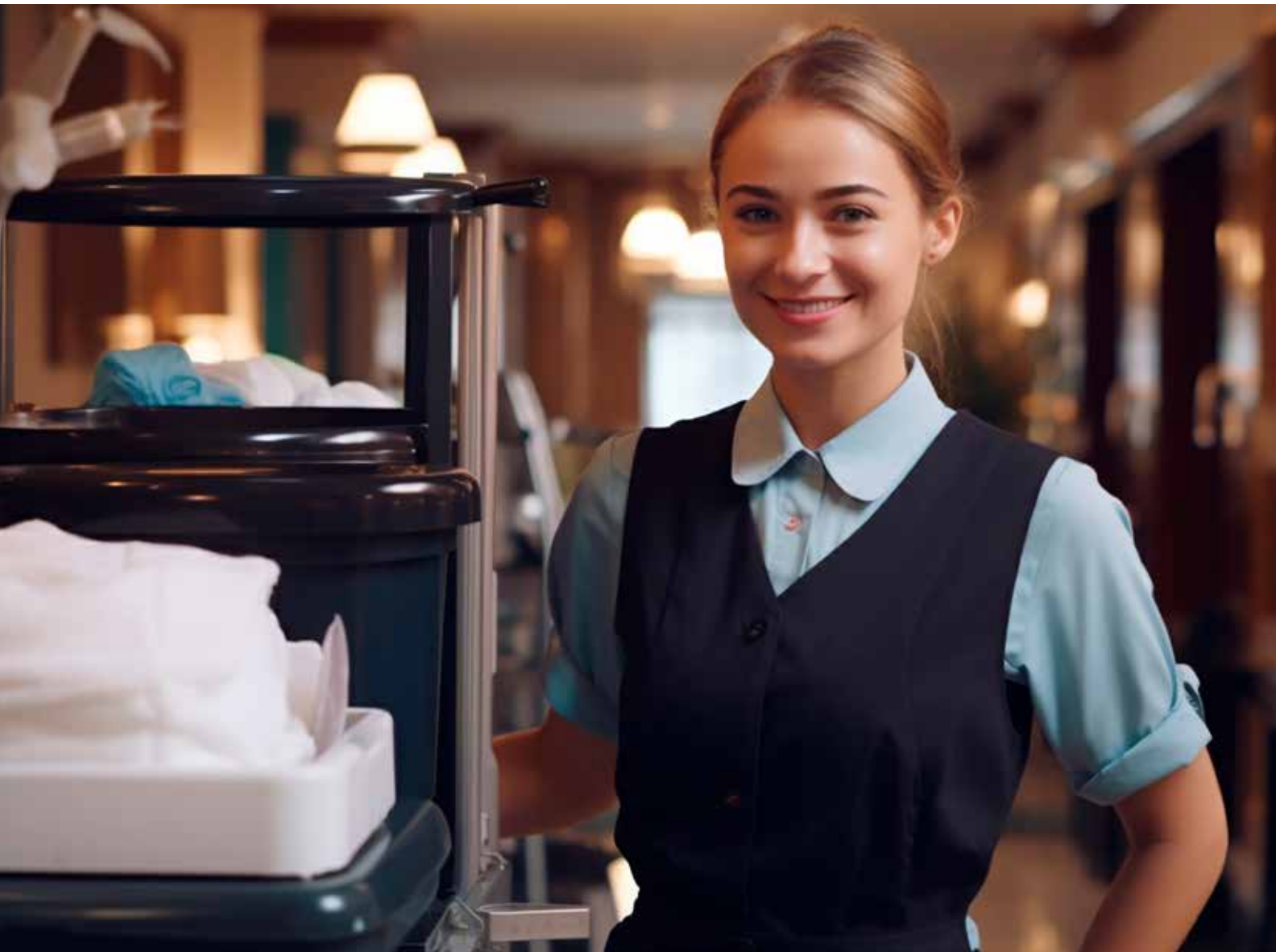
### What is psychological health and safety in the workplace?

The Standard defines a psychologically healthy and safe workplace as one that “promotes workers' psychological well-being and actively works to prevent harm to worker psychological health, including in negligent, reckless or intentional ways.”

Simply put, it is a workplace that identifies and addresses hazards to employee well-being, such as bullying, harassment and discrimination, while also striving to promote positive health and well-being through employee involvement, development, support and appreciation.

The Standard, comprising voluntary guidelines, tools and resources, identifies 13 psycho-social factors within the influence and responsibility of employers that can impact the psychological health and safety of employees—both positively and negatively.

For instance, in psychologically safe workplaces, employees feel



accepted and respected, and share a belief in trust. They take pride in their work, how they accomplish it, and have input into their responsibilities. Clear expectations are set, and employees know whom to approach with questions, comments, ideas, or concerns without fear of intimidation. All these factors contribute to an employee's perception of a great culture, emphasizing psycho-social aspects such as civility, respect, involvement and influence.

Investing in your business's culture goes beyond best practice; it represents a strategic move. Research consistently highlights that psychologically safe workplaces spend less on recruiting and training, resulting in increased employee retention, productivity, and efficiency.

### **Why should I invest in the culture of my business?**

A positive workplace culture means engaged employees who feel cared for and valued. In return, employees are more invested in doing their best and going the extra mile. Hotel employees more likely to share concerns and make suggestions for improvements to the guest experience and identify cost-saving opportunities.

This isn't just rhetoric. It's proven to be good for business and

your bottom line. There is also growing research that younger workers today expect their employers to support their mental well-being. (See "Younger workers want training, flexibility, and transparency" at [strategy-business.com](http://strategy-business.com).) They are also at a higher risk of burnout and conflict on the job. So, building a culture of psychological safety is critical to your hotel's success.

### **How can I build/support a psychologically healthy and safe workplace (AKA positive workplace culture)?**

Attempting to improve the culture without considering psychological safety is akin to pouring water into a bucket filled with holes and expecting it to remain intact. For instance, it would be counterproductive to focus efforts and resources on designing and implementing a rewards and recognition program if job expectations are unclear and no one knows what constitutes a "good job." Here are a few tips that we've gathered to help you to take the first important steps.

Assess your current culture: Utilize tools like employee stay interviews or formal surveys to understand employee values, satisfaction and challenges. Existing data on sick leave, turnover,

Research indicates that positive, psychologically safe workplaces experience lower costs and time investments in recruiting, onboarding and training new employees, leading to increased employee retention, productivity and efficiency—all of which positively impacting the bottom line.

and mental health claims can also inform where there are opportunities for improvement.

Identify improvement opportunities: Compare interview or survey results with your desired culture, acknowledging positives, and targeting areas for enhancement.

Involve your employees: Seek employee input, particularly in areas like communication and making them active participants in the process. Employees can help define what success could look like by defining their top two or three psycho-social factor priorities (for example, workload management, growth and development) and help implement changes towards continuous improvement.

Follow up and implement: Act on all suggestions to build trust. Genuine feedback and implementation (where possible) is crucial, as a lack of follow-up and follow-through can erode psychological safety.

Building a positive workplace culture is an ongoing journey. Begin with small steps, involve your employees and leverage go2HR's support. Let's collaboratively create workplaces that not only drive success in the hospitality sector but also prioritize the well-being of your team, ensuring your hotel is a thriving business and a fulfilling workplace.

For more information or to learn more about how we can support you and your team, contact Valerie Lister or Erin O'Byrne, go2HR's Workplace Psychological Health & Safety Coaches. ■



## We're finding low-carbon energy in unlikely places



Like biogas captured from compost to create Renewable Natural Gas<sup>1</sup> (RNG). It's a low-carbon<sup>2</sup> energy that can be used in homes and businesses across the province—and we're adding more to our supply every year.

Our gas system can provide RNG to buildings and developments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This means buildings can meet strict emissions guidelines without expensive upgrades or retrofits.

Find out more about RNG at [fortisbc.com/rngbuild](https://fortisbc.com/rngbuild).

<sup>1</sup>Renewable Natural Gas (also called RNG or biomethane) is produced in a different manner than conventional natural gas. It is derived from biogas, which is produced from decomposing organic waste from landfills, agricultural waste and wastewater from treatment facilities. The biogas is captured and cleaned to create low-carbon Renewable Natural Gas. <sup>2</sup>When compared to the lifecycle carbon intensity of conventional natural gas. The burner tip emission factor of FortisBC's current Renewable Natural Gas (also called RNG or biomethane) portfolio is 0.29 grams of carbon dioxide equivalent per megajoule of energy (gCO<sub>2</sub>e/MJ). FortisBC's current RNG portfolio lifecycle emissions are -22 gCO<sub>2</sub>e/MJ. This is below B.C.'s low carbon threshold for lifecycle carbon intensity of 36.4 gCO<sub>2</sub>e/MJ as set out in the 2021 B.C. Hydrogen Strategy. FortisBC uses the FortisBC name and logo under license from Fortis Inc. (24-004.38 03/2024)



# Wow your guests with the best the hospitality industry has to offer

Benefit from a wide selection of cutting-edge hotel equipment, electronics and security devices.



IN-ROOM ELECTRONICS



HOSPITALITY TVS & SMART DISPLAYS



MINI BARS & FRIDGES



RFID LOCKS, KEYCARDS & SAFES

AIR CONDITIONING SOLUTIONS & LARGE IN-ROOM APPLIANCES



Get in touch with our local representative



We excel at hospitality, like you do!

1-800-724-5904  
locinternational.com

Michelle Lee  
mlee@locinternational.com  
236-990-1072