

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND BENEFITS

The company has continued its policy of investing in staff at all levels, in order to provide a professionally fulfilling and challenging environment in which to grow. Career development is viewed as essential not just to retention of staff but also to the ability of the teams in head office and operations to project the corporate culture in a positive manner when interfacing with the business partners and various guests.

A new company orientation video has been produced and will be rolled out systematically in conjunction with related induction training programmes. Primarily intended to introduce new recruits to the company's business and corporate culture, the video will also reinforce knowledge of the company among existing staff, and may be used as appropriate at education fairs, relevant industry events, and for other groups unfamiliar with the scope of the company's interests.

A significant milestone achieved this year was the graduation in September of the first group of executives to undertake the Group Management Development Programme (GMDP). Aimed at grooming the next tier of senior managers from within the company's own talent pool, the success of the programme has been demonstrated by the promotions of several of the participants to positions of greater responsibility.



The first graduates of the GMDP

Among the major benefits of the experience have been the broadening of perspectives and understanding of the company's business, the acquisition of new skills relevant to present and future personal and professional development, and the relationship building with colleagues from other operations.

The first Group Professional Development Programme for middle managers was initiated during 2004, with similar objectives to the GMDP. Specially tailored courses have been developed to enhance skills, nurture abilities and help participants to fulfil their potential. The company is engaged in developing further training schemes aimed at other levels of staff, such as the Group Front Line Management Development Programme, designed for assistant section heads and front line staff to help build their leadership and management skills.

In addition to implementing corporate training for existing staff, the company engages in medium-term planning and investment in training to meet the needs of future operations such as The Peninsula Tokyo, now under construction. The hallmark of a successful team encapsulates understanding of local cultures and behaviour, appreciation for and practice of the company culture, and exposure to handling international visitors. Through on-going contact with tertiary institutions in Japan, HSH has identified a number of promising students who, on graduation, will be drafted into the Peninsula Ambassadors programme and will embark on an intensive six-month, fully funded practical training exercise, split between the hotels in Hong Kong and Bangkok.

Having been immersed in the Peninsula culture and gained valuable practical experience, the graduates will form a core employee group within the new Peninsula Tokyo; they will be exemplars to other employees of the standards of service and professionalism expected, which will in turn assist management in building a cohesive team. This programme will become a core part of staffing plans for future hotels.

In addition to corporate educational programmes, the hotels implement their own on-going staff training. These initiatives include providing cross-training at sister hotels and other operations and sending managers on professional courses such as those offered by Cornell University's Professional Development Programme. In addition, various hotels offer internships to local and overseas students taking degrees in hospitality management and administration.

Although not exhaustive, other training across the hotels has involved programmes such as orientation to improve staff retention, safety issues on handling chemicals, financial and budgetary seminars, English proficiency courses, legal compliance, and anti-trust sessions.

The company subscribes to ethical employment standards and conditions within the countries in which it operates. It contributes to retirement funds for employees in the owned businesses in its different operational jurisdictions, complying with the statutory laws in each country. These schemes are variously mandatory or optional, with some staff choosing not to participate. Below is a summary of the current numbers of staff eligible to participate in these benefits.

	Hong Kong	Other Aisa Pacific	United States of America	Total
Participating	1,780	1,544	755	4,079
Non-participating	-	58	429	487
	1,780	1,602	1,184	4,566