



Marketing Benefits of Hospitality Philosophy

Your general brochure says you offer:

... world-class retirement living with the comfort, convenience and attention to detail delivered only at the finest establishments.

*Can you deliver on your promise? We're finding a growing trend among communities who are implementing an entire culture change focused on **hospitality** in order to deliver on promises such as this. It's a trend that's been building for years, and now, those who've taken a step in the hospitality direction are reporting a positive impact on their marketing efforts, too.*

A number of senior living communities are emulating the hospitality industry by emphasizing *hotel-like* or *resort-style* services and amenities. But adopting a hospitality philosophy is so much more than training your receptionist to be a concierge or delivering the newspaper to your residents' doors each morning.

Seniority, Inc., who studied the practices of Ritz-Carlton for two years, calls hospitality within their communities *Seniority Spirit* and defines it as "an attitude, behavior, and the standards enabling us to provide exceptional service and positive experiences to our residents, team members and clients." *Notice how all-encompassing their philosophy is?* First of all, the drive and initiative starts at the top. Then, everyone is trained and oriented in this overall culture change — hence, the Seniority hospitality motto: "Exceptional people providing exceptional care and services." Read their executive white paper [From Style to Substance: Offering Authentic Hospitality in Senior Living](#).

Santa Marta in metropolitan Kansas City is on-board with the hospitality culture, too. Executive Director Chester "Chet" Surmaczewicz, who has more than 25 years in the hotel and hospitality industry, says his hospitality goal at Santa Marta is to infuse the details of the ultimate living experience into "every sight, sound and smell throughout the community." Detailed training of the culinary and service staff. Fresh flowers in the lobby each day. Piped-in music in hallways and common areas. Ice sculptures in the dining room. All of Surmaczewicz's meticulous attention to detail is truly paying off for the community's marketing efforts. Just six months into a full-fledged, community-wide hospitality initiative, resident referrals at Santa Marta tripled.

Communities who've adopted a hospitality philosophy and molded it to fit their community, report the following positive results:

- A community environment that is more accepting of the independence and self-determination of its residents
- Differentiating service
- Increased engagement by residents in leadership and decision-making that affect the shape of community life
- Improved team member satisfaction, resulting in improved retention and less time and money spent on hiring and training

These factors have led to a positive impact on sales and marketing efforts because of:

- An increase in resident satisfaction
- More resident referrals
- Increased inquiry and an elevated position in the marketplace due to positive word-of-mouth communication throughout the surrounding community.

In conclusion, ask yourself this question:

What is the culture of your community and who defines it?

Perhaps a shift toward a philosophy of hospitality would benefit you, as it has others.

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