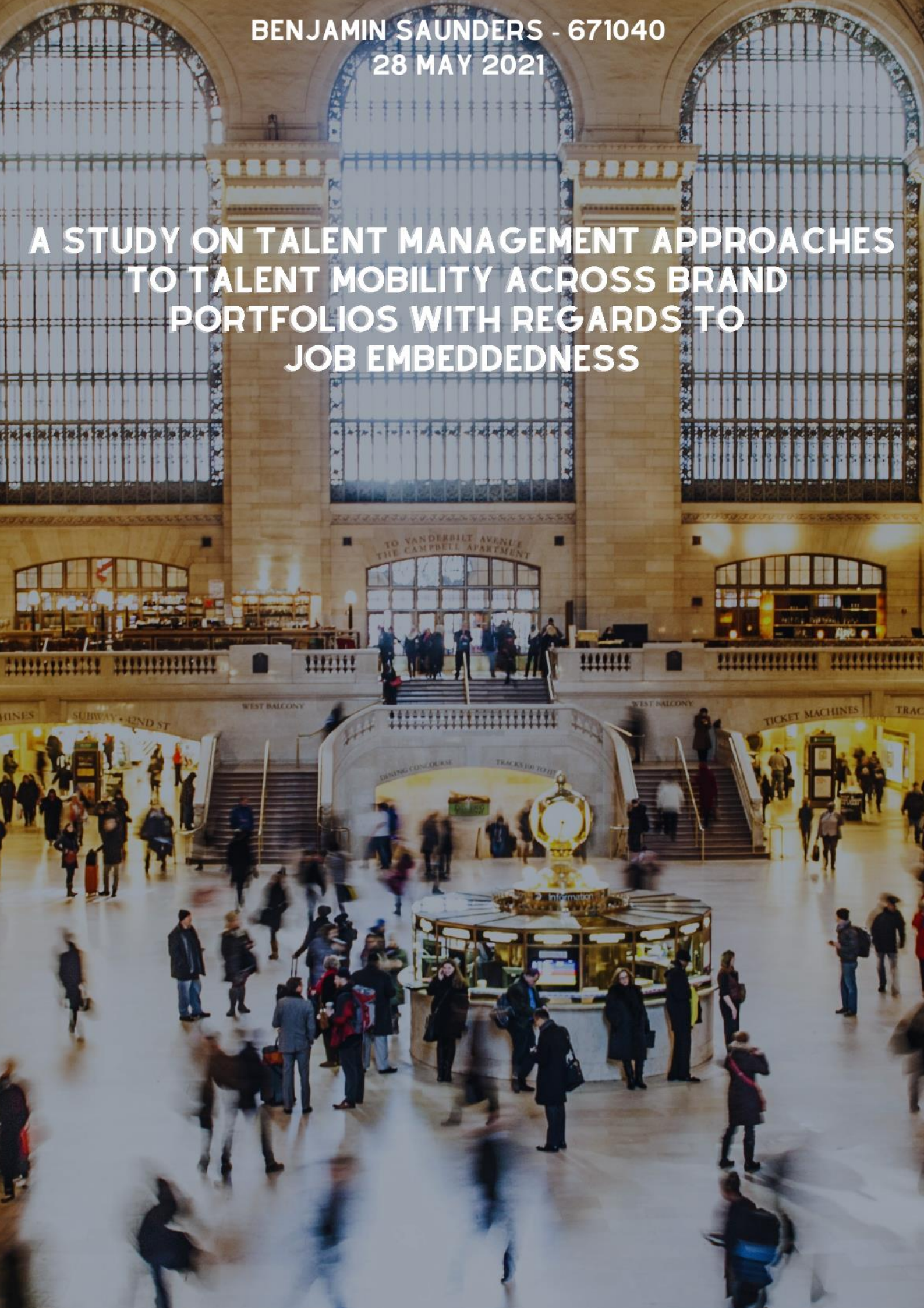


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**28 MAY 2021**

# **A STUDY ON TALENT MANAGEMENT APPROACHES TO TALENT MOBILITY ACROSS BRAND PORTFOLIOS WITH REGARDS TO JOB EMBEDDEDNESS**



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## *Executive summary*

The following study explores Talent mobility across the different brand portfolios of a hotel network with regards to Job Embeddedness. Furthermore, it aims to explain how Talent Management can best support Talent in their aim for more and better mobility. With an apparent labour shortage currently characterising the industry, there is a need to focus on the employees themselves and to support their mobility wishes, embodying the ethics of good work and well-being (United Nations, 2019).

The research follows the Design Based Research model, introducing the problem, analysing the data and stakeholder's involvement, designing a solution fit to resolve the problem, and the necessary evaluation post implementation. Talent, defined in this paper as unique contributing individuals, are hindered by internal factors that weight heavily on their decisioning to move across the different hotel brands. With the benefits of mobility evident for career growth and development, the following question was posed:

*How can Talent Management support mobility across hotel brand portfolios addressing Job Embeddedness?*

An exploration of the literature categorised Job Embeddedness into three variables all effecting the relationship employees have with their job. All three variables affect employees, both on-, and off-the-job, in the community and surroundings. The **Fit variable** deals with the ability to match one's own beliefs, values and preferences with the company's (Ghosh and Gurunathan, 2014). Off-the-job factors of fit result in one's ability to feel comfortable within the city, neighbourhood, political system etc. The **link variable** addresses the connection and ties made with colleagues, professionals in the workspace, and friends, effectively network creation. Voluntary work, council work, neighbourhood involvement, all account for important links made off-the-job (Ghosh and Gurunathan, 2014). Lastly **Sacrifice** represents all the factors at stake, and possibly lost, when making the decision to move. Factors such as status within the company, salary, or job position, and off-the-job sacrifice factors such as family members relocating or giving up the comfort of lifestyle (Zhang, Fried and Griffeth, 2012).

All three variables are interlinked and affect each other, representing a considerable weight for Talent to address when taking a decision concerning mobility. This is where the research introduces Talent Management as the "new", modern approach to HR. Talent Management are responsible for the recruitment, development, training and care of Talent within an organisation (Barron, 2008). The research therefore proposes that Talent Management are responsible and have a duty towards supporting Talent in their mobility endeavours, incorporating Link, Fit and Sacrifice, and alleviating the mobility hinderance of those internal factors.

With this research, exploratory, qualitative data was collected from semi-structured interviews conducted with Talent within the Marriott network in Perth, Australia. Insights on mobility experiences, support received and impacts of the three Job Embeddedness variables was collected. After a thorough review and deductive colour-coded analysis, it could be concluded that Talent across the brand portfolios received unquestionable support and encouragement from executives towards mobility.

Although Job Embeddedness posed definite barriers and important factors to consider, Talent still pursued career mobility transfers, using the vast, global brand portfolios available to them. However, the research also produced an unexpected finding. It was seen that Talent often feel unsupported during the onboarding process, let alone when they are accustoming to the new company culture and brand standards, resulting in feelings of loneliness and frustration. With Marriott owning more than 30 different brands, the company culture and service values differ considerably. Talent, albeit receiving support during the transfer, are not properly introduced and personally followed during the onboarding process. Without proper support and help, Talent are not adapting to the new values and company standards of the brand, resulting in possible misfits with the new culture and a lack of value integration. The onboarding process was shown to be a critical point for employee's adjustment within a company, when adopting cultural knowledge, and gaining an understanding of the values and standards surrounding the brand (Bauer and Erdogan, 2011). In turn, correct culture integration leads to distal factors such as employee satisfaction and conformance within the brand, ensuring a more flourishing environment and feeling of well-being (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein and Gardner, 1994).

To counteract this situation, and to best provide support for Talent, the researcher has suggested the implementation of three Critical Conversations during the three weeks of onboarding. The solution was specifically designed for the placement company of the researcher at the Ritz-Carlton in Perth. The Critical Conversations, through active verbal exchange with learning coaches, enable Talent to clearly express their concerns with regards to their recent mobility transfer, and any apparent issues with culture integration and brand standards application. With the aim of creating a better onboarding process, the Critical Conversations need to be reviewed and evaluated through KPI's such as employee turnover, and employee satisfaction, that will determine if these conversations had a positive effect on retention and in terms of general satisfaction.

This research has touched relevant stakeholders of the industry, the Ritz-Carlton Perth, for whom this solution was developed, Talent facing post mobility concerns and finally for Talent Management executives to best improve their Talent management abilities. This research only starts the cycle of exploration to improve Talent mobility, with future research exploring either the consequences of Talent misfits in a company, or on improving the engagement of employees during the onboarding process. The aim being to facilitate company culture education and more importantly, to focus on regenerating a flow of movement across hospitality brand portfolios.

This will be achieved through effective and personal support, in essence pushing leaders and executives to fulfil their duties of interest and care into the most precious intangible resource currently in the industry, the Talent itself.

## Glossary

**Fit**, as part of Job Embeddedness theory, refers to the extent of which the personal goals, values and commitment of one individual match that of the company culture or organisation at hand (Ghosh and Gurunathan, 2014) (**page 6**).

**Job Embeddedness** represents the broad set of influences on an employee's decision to stay or not, within the job (Holtom, Mitchell and Lee, 2006) (**page 7**)

**Link**, as part of Job Embeddedness theory, defines "all ties, formal and informal connections, family and friends, community social implications, religious and school work that bind one individual to a particular organism"(Ghosh and Gurunathan, 2014) (**page 8**).

**Mobility** as *"The job changes that involve a change of workplace within the same or between two different destinations or labour market regions"* (Cassel, Thulemark and Duncan, 2018) (**page 1**)

**Onboarding** is the process through which *new employees move from being organisational outsiders to becoming organisational insiders* (Bauer and Erdogan, 2011) (**page 51**).

**Sacrifice**, as part of Job Embeddedness theory, manifests the concept of psychological, social or material loss and what would be forfeited in case of self-dismissal i.e. departure from a set organism work or social (Zhang, Fried and Griffeth, 2012) (**page 7**)

**Talent** as those "individuals who are currently, or have the **potential** to, contribute differentially to a firm's **performance**" (Cappelli and Keller, 2017) (**page 4**).

**Talent Management** is the body responsible for the source, development, recruitment, training and promotion of Talent (Barron, 2008) (**page 2**)

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## Introduction

The mobility of employees within the hospitality industry is widely celebrated today with an estimated 41% of the workforce of a hotel organisation being expat (Matic, Vojinic and Becic, 2016). The hospitality industry, being diverse and sporting multiculturalism, is attracting an international workforce, combining cultures and embracing change. Hotel companies have been in pursuit of new Talent, reshuffling their workforce in response to labour shortages. In an industry that promotes life experiences, travelling and cultural awareness, there is an obvious push for mobility, embracing flux of people and jobs. However, it is fair to say that with labour shortages, the focus to regenerate employment and economics should be centred on line level Talent (Rahman, 2019). This specific Talent should be experiencing the best of brand mobility; the ability to move between hotel properties. Human Resources, (HR), representatives have been failing to promote the true benefits of mobility, not addressing potential internal barriers that might hinder change and appropriately support the movement. Furthermore, there seems to be a lack of mobility support and care from leadership. Therefore, Talent is not exploring the true value of internal brand mobility across brands. Large hotel companies have spent significantly on external recruitment while neglecting the benefits of internal promotion (Khdour, 2021). For this reason, hospitality Talent is being restricted in its ability to pursue mobility, hindered by internal barriers.

Despite the obvious need for additional labour, the industry is facing the challenge of sustaining the current workforce (Rahman, 2019). In 2018, the industry supported **322m** employees worldwide, representing **11%** of the global workforce, and over **1m** new job openings, compared to **353k** in 2009 (Deloitte, 2019; Dobrosielski, 2019; Vetrakova, Simockova and Pompurova, 2019; Goh and Okumus, 2020). The broader hospitality industry employs **1 in 10 people** globally. Furthermore, the US Bureau of labour statistics has projected a labour growth of **14%** for the industry by 2025 and the need for more Talent to join the trade (Pearlman and Schaffer, 2013). Furthermore, hospitality Talent is currently more interested in moving and pursuing more lucrative career interests, due to the industry offering low rewards (Tolkach and Tung, 2019). Voluntary turnover, the term used to describe the self-dismissal of a position to pursue more attractive aspirations, is applicable in the industry (Vetrakova, Simockova and Pompurova, 2019). The crisis in the industry with regards Talent migration, voluntary dismissal and labour shortage is clearly evident (Pratt, 2019). There is therefore an apparent problem with the future of hospitality defined by the recruitment and mobility of talented staff whilst employees in the industry currently are stood still, not fully appreciating the value of hotel networks (Tolkach and Tung, 2019).

The decision of mobility for an employee weighs heavily, with additional factors to consider such as moving families, financial constraints, and new job conditions (Causin, Ayoun and Moreo, 2011; Jooss, McDonnell and Burbach, 2019). Job Embeddedness (JE) defines those barriers that limit and possibly hinder Talent from the benefits of mobility. Through different reasons including possible sacrifice of power and status, misfit in a new company and broken links with colleagues, JE is slowing Talent from being mobile (Causin, Ayoun and Moreo, 2011;

Jooss, McDonnell and Burbach, 2019). Mobile Talent today are the “unsung heroes”, keeping faith in the industry whilst embodying multiculturalism, bringing critical thinking and emotional intelligence to daily application (Whitelaw, 2010). In the context of labour supply, there is a clear need to address these mobility issues, internal Talent being the core of the remaining supply, supporting the shortage and thus fuelling companies’ growth.

In response to a shift in employee worth, and exits from the industry, Talent Management (TM) tools were introduced by higher executives with the aim of training, developing and sponsoring employees in their search for their career aspirations (Barron, 2008). The success of hotel organisations has previously relied on a diverse, multicultural, talented and experienced workforce, with HR Management and TM seeking multicultural Talent (Causin, Ayoun and Moreo, 2011). However, TM are omitting these important influencing factors (JE) that are affecting the decision making of line-level Talent. Executives and HR representatives are failing to address and counter these barriers towards change.

The industry today is yearning for Talent mobility, especially in a sudden period of resurgence and growth. Showcasing enormous promise, the hotel trade accounts for **10%** of world GDP, with an increase to **1.3bn** international arrivals in the next ten years (EHL Insights, 2020; WTTC, 2020). These guests stay in more than **4m** hotel rooms worldwide, contributing **US\$1.6 trillion** globally (WTTC, 2020). Overall growth within the tourism and hospitality industry is still increasing and outpacing global economic growth by **3.2%** (EHL Insights, 2020). Despite the rapid plummet of occupancy numbers and hotel closures worldwide in 2020, there is optimism that the market will recover at a CAGR of **8%** to **US\$5593bn** in 2023 (Business Research Report, 2020).

The apparent growth of the industry is another indicator of the support and care that needs to be brought forward to hospitality Talent, discouraging the exodus towards other industries. The benefits in mobility have been clearly evident for Talent with regards to career aspirations and growth. More importantly, mobility is equally beneficial for hotel companies that can benefit from trained and skilled loyal staff, and for internal growth and sustained Talent supply (Bjurgert and Karlsson, 2010; Jooss, McDonnell and Burbach, 2019). TM organisms are responsible for effectively managing such resources and must support Talent in overcoming JE barriers. Internal recruitment concerns promoting Talent that has been trained specifically in brand standards and familiar with brand processes (Bjurgert and Karlsson, 2010). Accordingly, TM are left with the dilemma of developing specialist employees embodying specific brand identities but lacking mobility or training flexible employees who are mobile across brands but diluting their hotel brand identities.

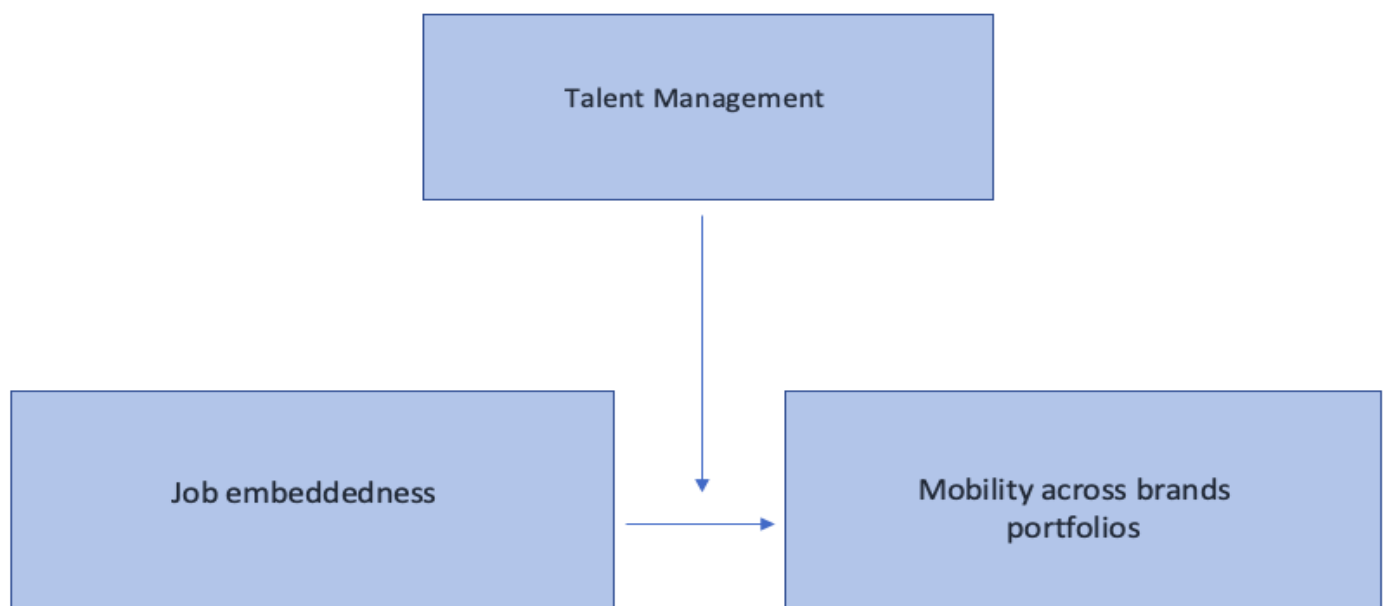
With that said, there remains a challenge in understanding and following Talent daily, providing assistance and support, dually overcoming intangible factors in JE effectively, and supporting development and growth, thus preventing career immobility. There is an evident need for research on this, at the dawn of what seems like a labour crisis within the industry.

There is a possible answer to the question of supply of Talent for hotel companies sharing staff as talented unique resources that can positively contribute. This research aims to touch the ethical principles of good work and employee well-being that modern societies are attempting to endorse (United Nations, 2021). Lastly, the focus needs to be towards Talent and TM representatives, the main stakeholders involved in the process of mobility, the internal barriers that are hindering change, and TM executives **promoting and supporting the necessary mobility of hospitality Talent across the industry and brands.**

In conclusion, it is evident, based on the above, that Talent in the industry is facing a mobility “standstill” where the benefits of career change and promotion within brands are not promoted by leadership representatives and explored by Talent. Where there might be a will for Talent to move and grow within portfolios, TM executives are still debating about forming employees for life, experts in their fields, brand standards and values, or supporting change and mobility at the expense of time and training resources. Regardless, TM representatives are responsible for the care and development of Talent from onboarding through to career moves. With such promise of growth and development in the future, with job creation and booming occupancy numbers, Talent is not exploring and adopting a career change.

*So why is hotel Talent not exploring mobility across brand portfolios? What are the reasons and apparent barriers that are preventing such change? To what extent is JE influencing mobility of Talent? Are TM executives appropriately supporting Talent in their mobility aspiration goals?*

These gap introducing questions pave the way for this paper to dive deeper into line-level Talent mobility options, career aspirations and the mobility support received. As displayed in the conceptual framework, the ultimate aim of the research is to address the support of TM towards Talent mobility across brand portfolios addressing internal JE.



*Figure 1: How can Talent Management support mobility across hotel brand portfolios addressing Job Embeddedness*



# Research analysis

## Literature review

### ***Talent Mobility***

Literature is perhaps abstract in defining Talent, posing the question of what can and cannot be considered Talent. It is also commonly assumed that Talent is subjective to one's mind, and rather left to be interpreted individually. In the context of this paper, it is crucial to clearly define the usage of the word Talent to the understanding of TM and mobility. Talent can be seen as "an above average ability that makes the individual possessing, developing, and performing excellently in a given performance domain or as the euphemism of the word 'people' (Nijs, Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and Sels, 2014; Lewis and Heckman, 2006).

Mobility, deriving from mobile, refers to the possibility of movement and circulation from a familiar context towards novelty (Caligiuri and Bonache, 2016). In the context of an HRM approach, mobility today is viewed as the possibility of movement within one's organisation, aspiring to higher positions, or changing position within branches. Above all, mobility represents the willingness and the ability to influence one's movement (Jooss, McDonnell and Burbach, 2019). Mobility is to be applied in the context of set defined Talent. Mobility is a necessity for top management-Talent nowadays, and a key factor of impact for higher positions (Jooss, McDonnell and Burbach, 2019).

Mobility is more than the ability to move, it is equally regarded as a quality, a competitive advantage to dissociate Talent pools (Cassel, Thulemark and Duncan, 2018). A Study by Jooss has shown that the willingness to be mobile and strive for global experience are determining factors in the hiring process in terms of managerial positions (Jooss, McDonnell and Burbach, 2019). Where work mobility is usually seen as the temporary or permanent geographical relocation such as migration of work, Cassel et al suggests work-related mobility "*as the job changes that involve a change of workplace within the same or between two different destinations or labour market regions*" (Cassel, Thulemark and Duncan, 2018). They suggest internal mobility be defined as the switch of job position within the same organisation, academically referred to as 'intra-sectoral labour mobility' (Zampoukos, 2018). Furthermore, transferring to a new position is seen as the flow of knowledge from one hub to another, with mobility seen as an exchange of tacit, intangible and unquantifiable knowledge between Talent and an organisation (Caligiuri and Bonache, 2016).

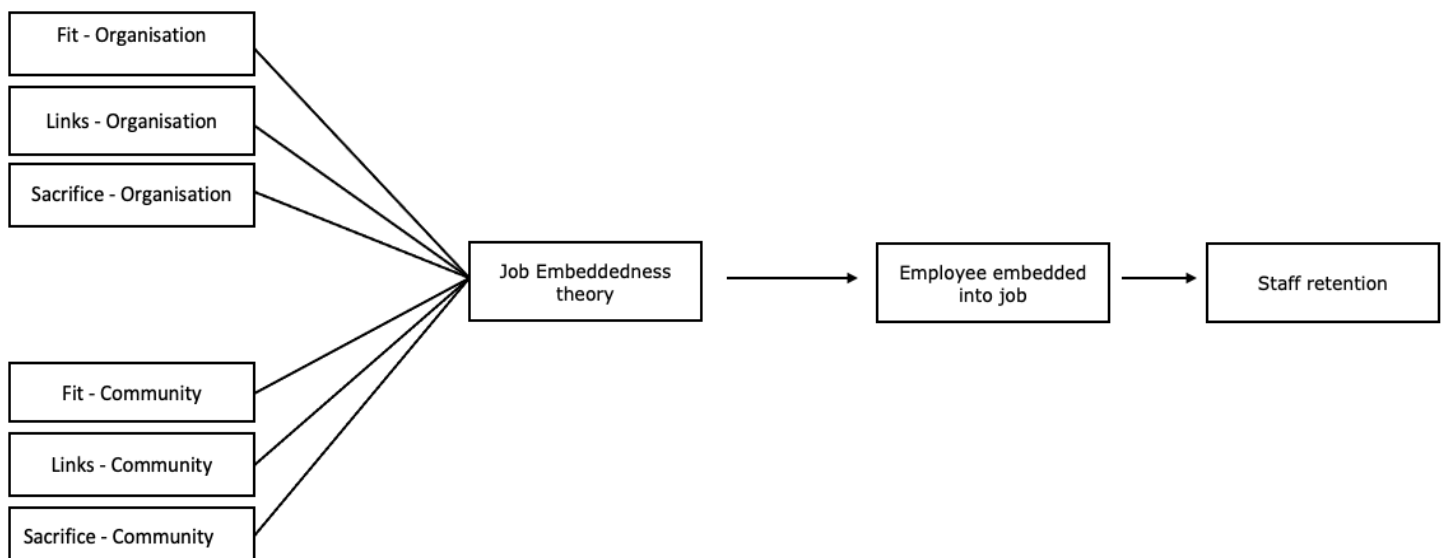
There is a discouragement from Talent itself, and additional forces, that are preventing Talent from exploring elsewhere, causing immobility. Mobility failure was seen as detrimental and harmful to one's growth within a company and to the ascension aspiration to top-tier positions. It is therefore clear that flexible Talent is more favourable and prone to faster growth and that Talent growth implies mobility (Jooss, McDonnell and Burbach, 2019). Mobility is a clear need for employees, vital for their growth and future careers.

However, currently it is being hindered by either the employee themselves through voluntary dismissal or by other internal barriers such as JE.

### ***Job Embeddedness***

In simple words JE represents the broad set of influences on an employee's decision to stay within a job such as affinities, bonds, and connections (Holtom, Mitchell and Lee, 2006; Ghosh and Gurunathan, 2014). JE theory encapsulates the motivation and reasons for engagement within a certain field (Holtom, Mitchell and Lee, 2006). JE is the definition of the relationship between employee and employer surpassing attitudinal factors (Holtom and O'Neill, 2004). The theory justifies the link and connection to a company culture, the in-cognitive reasoning behind one's loyalty and affinity for a particular work environment.

A high JE was shown to have a positive effect on a Talent's performance within the workplace, concluding a favourable influence mobility within an organisation (Sekiguchi, Burton and Sablynski, 2008). JE has been refined in the context of on-the-job (organisation embeddedness) and off-the-job (community embeddedness) factors and influences affecting perception of the job. According to Robinson et al, JE follows the work and roles of three interrelated factors. Firstly, non-work factors influence a person perception of their job such as family and friends. Secondly, the social commitment and attachments one follows in daily professional life such as group projects and meetings particularly influence (Robinson, Kralj, Solnet, Goh and Callan, 2014). More recently, Ghosh has built upon the works of Robinson introducing a model identifying three majors dimensions (Ghosh and Gurunathan, 2014). In the context of this paper, the use of this model is key in understanding the influences that hinder possible employee mobility.



*(Mitchell, Holtom and Lee, 2006)*

*Figure 2: First generation Job Embeddedness theory*

**Links** to on- and off-the-job factors, implies all ties, formal and informal connections, family and friends, community social implications, and religious and school work etc, tying one individual to a particular organisation (Ghosh and Gurunathan, 2014; Holtom, 2018). Links is the first dimension of JE. Links includes all ties to friends, colleagues and relationships that have been formed on the job premise (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski and Erez, 2001). Links could affect one's mobility as per the ability to bond with colleagues over extra work activities, sharing with neighbours and engaging in a community (Felps, Mitchell, Hekman, Lee, Holtom and Harman, 2009). The social interactions, the moral teachings, and benefits that can be taken from human connection all embody Links. French sociologist Bourdieu famously introduced the notion of social "agent" as entities that humans encounter in society that will provide them with social learnings, development and growth (Irvine and Lupart, 2008). Bourdieu explains that through group interactions, humans can learn norms and values of society, thus underlining the links around us as paramount for human construct. It is proposed that Link represent an important barrier of hinderance towards mobility that need be considered by TM addressing the ties, connections made in the workspace and recognising the impact of links to country and culture.

*How can TM support mobility across hotel brand portfolios addressing Link?*

**Fit** refers to the extent at which the personal goals, values and commitment of one individual, match that of the company culture and organisation (Ghosh and Gurunathan, 2014). According to literature, one's goals, dreams, ambitions must fit with the global company culture, (Holtom and O'Neill, 2004). In this case, the reason one might stay in a position is based on the fit between the beliefs, norms and values of the individual versus the company and culture. Fit is also the match between one's skills and the job requirements (Halvorsen, Treuren and Kulik, 2015). Off-the-job factors such as weather, location, neighbourhood, are particularly important considering Fit (Holtom, 2018; Holtom and O'Neill, 2004).

In a study conducted on the JE of migrants in Australia, participants responded that activities and onboarding were particularly important in one's fit with the company, noting that the introduction to the company culture, values, together with team building activities, going out with colleagues and team projects increased their view and Fit rating within an organisation (Halvorsen, Treuren and Kulik, 2015). Barriers of Fit towards mobility have huge importance in company culture integration and need to be supported by TM to help Talent adjust to new surroundings, endorsing the values but also fitting within a new external environment.

*How can TM support mobility across hotel brand portfolios addressing Fit?*

Lastly, **Sacrifice** defends the concept of psychological, social or material loss and what would be forfeited in case of self-dismissal (Zhang, Fried and Griffeth, 2012). Perceived cost of departure, loss of contacts, projects within a company, benefits, status within the company, job stability are all considered Sacrifice when leaving a job (Bambacas and Kulik, 2013). Job related Sacrifice could entail the loss of friendships, colleagues, and notable projects. Off-the-job factors related to Sacrifice bring back modern HR theory on rewards and benefits introduced with the Herzberg two factor model (Sanjeev and Surya, 2016). In brief, employees can sacrifice hygiene factors, e.g., monetary rewards, health care bonuses, and also good commuting. Sacrificing on-the-job factors lie deep in the motivational factors of Herzberg, in that of peer recognition, validation from others, and growth. The Sacrifice here could be failure to grow and develop within the organisation, foregoing a chance for promotion.

A study of nursing staff showed group cohesion and entente as a particular retainer for staff, a factor too important to forfeit (Holtom and O'Neill, 2004). Other small factors such as switching costs and relocation are all considered Sacrifice when considering leaving a job. Lastly it is proposed that Sacrifice such as job status and power within the hotel organisation, or loss of friends and comfort in the workplace are all barriers that slow and possibly discourage Talent mobility (Holtom and O'Neill, 2004; Halvorsen, Treuren and Kulik, 2015).

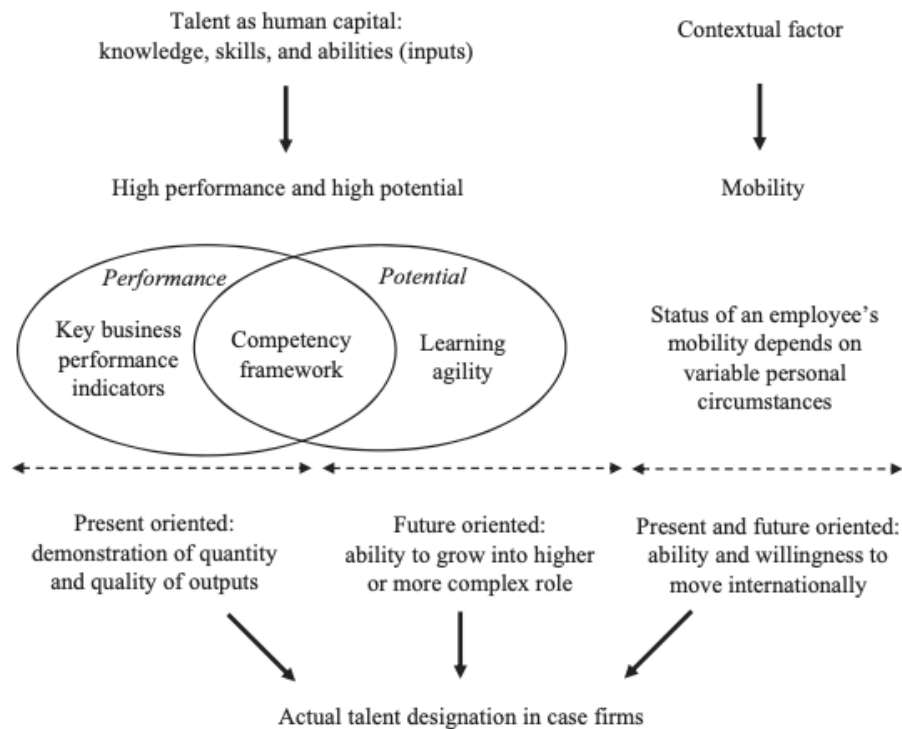
*How can TM support mobility across hotel brand portfolios addressing Sacrifice?*

### **Talent Management**

TM is the body responsible for the source, development, recruitment, training and promotion of Talent (Barron, 2008). TM refers to Talent pools and the constant management of Talent resupply and succession (Brannon, 2020). Increasingly, the hospitality industry has adopted exclusive TM approaches focusing on external labour rather than internal promotion, resulting in outsourcing departments and streamlining of operations (Brannon, 2020). The hospitality industry is outsourcing crucial hotel department sectors while reverting to management contracts and franchising for the top-tier management roles within operations (Bharwani and Jauhari, 2013; Brannon, 2020). Organisations within the hospitality industry have been found to be more strategically profitable, prone to innovation and promising growth if engaged actively in TM practices. TM approaches have taken such a predominant place in the last ten years that major CEO's have decided to undertake TM and not leave this difficult function to HR (Scullion, Collings and Caligiuri, 2010). What remains a difficult task is defining TM.

Lewis and Heckman conclude a lack of clarity, scope and objectives for TM today (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). The value of TM is unquestionable and the need for Talent attraction, development and retention paramount. *The Economist*, reporting that seven out of ten leaders spend in excess of 20% of their time on TM activities, demonstrates such value (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2006). TM could be doing what HR have commonly done previously only faster and more efficiently focusing on global mobility (Lewis and Heckman, 2006).

As mentioned above, TM is the recruitment and support of Talent and literature defines Talent as those “individuals who are currently or have the **potential** to contribute differentially to a firm’s **performance**” (Cappelli and Keller, 2017). This definition derives from the two dimensions associated to Talent in performance and potential.



(Jooss, McDonnell and Burbach, 2019)

*Figure 3: Talent designation in multinational hotel organisations*

Performance is seen as the first dimension and considered in the context of organisation performance system management; more simply put, how one performs within a system in place (Jooss, McDonnell and Burbach, 2019; Schleicher, Baumann, Sullivan, Levy, Hargrove and Barros-Rivera, 2018). The second dimension, Potential, is perhaps vague in essence but represents a future state; “the promise or possibility of an individual becoming something more than what he is currently” (Jooss, McDonnell and Burbach, 2019). Performance and Potential are variables to help TM evaluate and support Talent.

The term “war of talent” is at the heart of the purpose of TM in organisations today. The notion of war revokes two main assumptions: one that Talent is a rare and intangible force that cannot be easily copied or stolen, and second, that renewing Talent is increasingly difficult (Dries, 2013). TM is involved in successfully managing and harbouring Talent efficiently. This showcases the importance of having TM practices responsible for the renewal of Talent, progression and succession, all factors potentially increasing the performance of the organisation and of individuals (Brannon, 2020). Those individuals referred to as Talent are the sole applicants of the company culture and brand standards.



Consequently, the customer experience provided by Talent derives from the constant application of unique brand standards that have been transmitted by TM through trainings that apply the values of the organisation (Brannon, 2020; Saad and Mayouf, 2018). This last emphasising the importance of brand standards proper integration, application, and training for good customer experiences. It is TM that is responsible for the training and education of Talent (Barron, 2008). Newly recruited Talent is trained to the standards of the brands, increasing the retention of staff within the brand.

With that said, TM approaches are faced with challenges today between the time and resources spent on training reliable Talent to the brand values and entities or developing flexible mobile employees diluting their core brand identity. One could argue that investing would develop employees “for life” associated only with the particular brand. By doing so, TM would be creating a unique workforce, albeit one only capable of working in specific brand portfolios, significantly reducing their ability to move and therefore compromising their Fit (JE) elsewhere, (Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou, 2019). Alternatively, TM can focus on developing multicultural and adaptable Talent at the expense of strengthening the core values and identities of the brand. This particular organisational dilemma showcases the effect of TM impact on Talent mobility. Nevertheless, certain aspects such as the Sacrifice, Fit and Link of Talent counteracting their suitability for a position and affecting the mobility process should be questioned. TM needs to engage with their Talent and gather a deeper understanding of these JE factors. TM must incorporate the Fit, and the potential Sacrifice when seeking to help the process of inter-brand mobility with Talent.

### ***Conclusion***

In conclusion of the view of academics on the three-variables defined in the framework, there are three propositions that stand out relating to Link, Fit and Sacrifice. It is suggested that TM must incorporate and support Talent mobility across brand portfolios addressing the factors of JE. Theoretically, these factors may have an internal impact on Talent’s decisions to move, and therefore might be a hinderance.

## Methodology

### *Population method*

To fulfil the aim of the research, in-depth knowledge and insights were required from hospitality Talent. Employees of the four Marriott properties (Aloft, Westin, Four Points and Ritz-Carlton) in Perth, Australia were interviewed. **A non-probability sampling** was applied, as the participants were selected based on their past mobility and transitions experiences through properties across brands of the Marriott network.

10 employees were interviewed. During the interviews, valuable perspectives were shared on the experience of mobility across Marriott brands, the factors impacting on the mobility decision and the relevant support received in transition. Six interviews were conducted in person and four interviews over WhatsApp video call. The snap lockdown in place in Western Australia during the research affected the ability to conduct all interviews in person. All interviewees were given a choice of time and location so that the interview was easy and comfortable for them. Before the start of each interview, the participants were asked three questions regarding ethics of the research: “if it is ok for the interview to be recorded i.e., consent from the participants?”, “If it is ok for me as researcher to use their **first name only** during the interview process” and “If their **first name** can be used as header in the data transcription process”. Crow et al suggest that consent is appropriate when participants are given sufficient information, full and accessible to the decision to take part and the opportunity to decline freely without pressure consequences (Crow, Wiles, Heath and Charles, 2006).

Accordingly, all but one participant gave consent for the recording and use of their first name during the interview and transcription. One participant gave consent towards recording but was guaranteed anonymity. In the data, all interviewees’ names follow the format [FIRST NAME Marriott Employee]. Furthermore, the researcher presented to HR at the Ritz-Carlton Perth. The research presentation included 17 PowerPoint slides, following the structure of the research paper and finally presenting the solution outlook and design. The presentation aimed to gather insights into the solution, collecting feedback and comments from HR on the implementation, feasibility, relevance and on the evaluation of the solution proposed. The presentation was given in the HR training room of the Ritz-Carlton and lasted 1h45mins. For corporate policy reasons, the presentation and feedback received could not be recorded.

### *Scope*

The researcher was based in Perth, Australia and working on placement for the Marriott Ritz-Carlton. With four Marriott properties based in the city and the research on an exploration of mobility across brands of the Marriott network, participants were selected from **all four properties** to allow for unique insights into mobility across different tier brands and to prevent biased opinion.

### **Data collection**

Research philosophy developed by Saunders et al suggests a system of belief and assumptions of knowledge on the specific topic. The researcher embarks on series of assumptions and predisposed thoughts with regards to the topic (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill and Bristow, 2019). The research philosophy principle was applied to this research.

Primary **qualitative** data was collected, offering an explanation and exploration of a deeper understanding into Talent mobility and the support that Perth's Marriott brands TM could provide (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013; Grbich, 2012). To enrich the data collection, **semi-structured interviews were conducted**. Semi-structured interviews offer the most flexibility allowing the conversation to deviate and dive deeper into a particular point. Using open-ended questions allowed the participants to elaborate, narrate their own story, and personal perspectives into their transition process through brands without feeling restricted (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill and Bristow, 2019). The researcher had a series of fixed questions to introduce the subject, then was able to dive deeper into particular points that were not primarily expected. Lastly, the open-ended question format allowed participants to engage more during the conversation, taking control of the flow of speech and not feeling pressured towards answering, (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill and Bristow, 2019).

All interviews were recorded and transcribed using *Otter software*, to avoid any missed information. All information was collected and stored as per the ethics management guidelines set by Hotelschool The Hague. To ensure data was accurately transcribed, a copy was sent to every participant for review, possibly adding to what might have been missed during the interview. This process increases the strength and relevance of the data collected, (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009).

All interviews feature the name of the participant given by consent to the researcher. Before each recording, the researcher made sure to introduce the topic to the participants and cover ethical questions. When recording the interviews, the researcher paid close attention to patterns developing and reached data saturation after 10 interviews. All data was deductively coded into categories: categories were formed based on the JE theory suggested in the literature, and patterns observed during transcribing thus increasing the reliability and validity of the data (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). One interviewee evaluated the transition between two Marriott brands leading to the category "transition between brands". Another subject mentioned the support they would have needed to better enjoy their mobility experience generating the category "Talent onboarding support". All interviews were colour coded using the index shown below.

A first round of colour coding was done, followed by a second round conducted a few days later in order to go over possible data miss coded or dismissed during the initial round. Although the colour coding index has 14 categories, the researcher grouped the findings into five categories, three covering the propositions suggested based on JE, and two covering brand culture and values integration, and onboarding support, relevant for the solution outlook and problem solving.

<b>JE Fit</b>	
On-the-job fit factors	
Off-the-job fit factors	
<b>JE Sacrifice</b>	
On-the-job sacrifice factors	
Off-the-job sacrifice factors	
<b>JE Link</b>	
On-the-job links factors	
Off-the-job links factors	
<b>Mobility</b>	
Mobility desire growth	
Mobility Marriott brands	
Brand transition	
Support towards mobility	
<b>Brand Culture</b>	
Brand culture importance	
Communication HR Brands	
Values and norms integration	
Talent onboarding support	

*Table 1: Colour coding index*

### **Limitations**

The research presented a number of limitations. Firstly, the bias of the interviewer can partially compromise the data collected. By introducing semi-structured interviews, the researcher can nudge the interviewee towards the wanted answer through comments, body language and responses given (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Secondly, non-probability sampling was used in the context of this research. Participants were selected based on their past experience of mobility across Marriott brands. The researcher selected participants from a population implying a non-probability sampling and thus possibly not representing their entirety of the population. The researcher's judgement of the selection was done to the best interest of the research. Thirdly, as the presentation could not be recorded for corporate policy reasons, notes based on memory were compiled following the session, similar to a research journal (Appx.2). These notes were written based on the researcher memory of what was said during the event and therefore could include a certain level of bias. The researcher might possibly unconsciously include self-emotion and his own interpretation which might tamper with the data collection (Annink, 2017).

## Findings

### ***Talent mobility addressing Link***

During the interviews it became clear that, depending on where employees worked, there was a sense of family and closer networks formed that affected the decision to possibly leave the company. These on-the-job Links were expressed through colleagues becoming friends, sharing projects together and bonding over common principles and values *"They make me feel like I belong in somewhere, you know, like I belong in a family"* (Interview 2). Another interviewee mentioned the sense of recognition that was received for being around other employees and the sense of connection it brings *I definitely feel like recognised here. And I definitely feel comfortable"* (Interview 6).

Working for bigger international brands that are recognised around the world was showed to have a stronger effect on the professional connections made. The bigger brands such as Ritz-Carlton and Westin offered more networking opportunities, with one interviewee highlighting the option to meet colleagues working for the same brand globally *"meet so many colleagues from all around the world, from the Ritz-Carlton so you do make connections and I mean, friends"* (interview 1).

On the other hand, smaller brands such as Aloft and Four Points although not as prestigious and globally renown, proved to be better at creating more intimate and closer ties between colleagues, nurturing a sense of family and togetherness *"So for me work is my colleagues, and they are also my family, you know"* (Interview 5), *"all these colleagues, that make me feel like family"* (Interview 2). The smaller companies have been able to create ties through small teams; *"I mean, for Four Points it is kind of like a family, it's a smaller team"* (Interview 8), and therefore personally affect the decision to move to a new property; *"I wanted to go back also for my colleagues. At that time, they were there"* (Interview 9).

Links between colleagues in smaller hotels also tend to facilitate the transitioning and settling in process *"like everyone knows each other, it's like a big family?"*. Whilst in a bigger brand, the links are harder to generate and more time consuming *"Maybe in a big one, it's more difficult, it's more like spread around"* (Interview 5). Lastly, Links created can also be a source of mobility, a reasoning towards moving to a new brand *"Actually that was the reason why I also moved because I knew that there was one of my colleagues in the past that was working there, and he has good intentions, that for me working together with him, I would actually give all of my best"* (Interview 5).

### ***Talent mobility addressing Fit***

All interviewees mentioned the importance of fitting within the specific brands standards, embodied values and the norms applied daily. Being able to adapt and positively associate with the company culture, the service values, was paramount to staying or moving around the Marriott brands. All four brands apply different visions and service qualities.



The infrastructure within the same tier brands proved to be critical and encouraging with regards to mobility *"That was easier because I have had some exposure to almost an identical role at a different property"* (Interview 7).

The Fit to one's company culture is very important in being able to understand and flourish professionally in the workplace *"Yeah. 100% and it's a match between me and the principles of the company"* (Interview 1). The association between one's personal conviction and beliefs and the company's culture is shown to be very paramount towards mobility decisioning, with either Talent being convinced to stay within a particular brand *"I want to stay in this company, I am happy to be at the Ritz-Carlton"* (Interview 2) or seeking the right fit within a brand's values elsewhere *"So, W Brisbane, I've always loved the W brand, because that suits my personality"* (Interview 4), *"it's reflecting a lot, my personality, the W hotels, because it's a little bit more casual, but still, it's like, it's bubbly"* (Interview 5).

The Fit between the company and the employee is very important with regards to mobility opportunities. In a place of genuine care and comfort, Talent is more reluctant to explore other opportunities. The perfect match seems to have been found and therefore closes the opportunities to explore other potential offers. Most employees expressed being happy in their current workspace *"Yes, at the moment Yes, yeah, I still, I'm still working on what I really want to do and I'm happy here"* (Interview 5), and not interested in moving to another property *"I'm not considering moving, I'm happy here, happy being in Perth and at in the Ritz-Carlton Perth"* (interview 1). The feeling of personal Fit in a group that validates and recognises the individual is very influential in the decision to move *"Pretty comfortable. Like, I know that I am valued here, which is good"* (Interview 6).

The importance of Talent's Fit with an organisation is pivotal, with an interviewee highlighting the time spent at a company depends on the Fit and comfort *"It's a big impact! Because at the end, I spend, like most of my life with my family, and then with my, at my workplace, you know, so I need to be confident, and I need to be comfortable in my workplace as well."* (Interview 5). Moreover, the importance of personal Fit also cannot be neglected. Being in a big city or fitting well in the new neighbourhood have been conditions that affect the mobility of employees. It seems that the Fit between companies' values and norms is not enough to guarantee the comfort of employees and their well-being in a new environment.

### ***Talent mobility addressing Sacrifice***

When considering moving across brand portfolios, the risk to lose the comfort of family or partners came up most often as a reason to stay within a current work environment, and are considerable, with one interviewee rating the importance *"I think it is. seven out of ten. Okay, if we measured in points"* (Interview 9). Most Talent realise truly what is a stake when considering leaving a current workspace with answers reflecting responsibilities and status in the current company: *"had to take a couple of steps back to be to maintain in the brand."* (Interview 4). The potential of being out of a comfort zone repeatedly came up as a risk factor that would influence moving *"at the beginning I didn't want to leave Four Points, because I was too*

*comfortable*" (Interview 5), with another employee saying leaving behind known processes and familiarity *"yeah the missed opportunity at staying somewhere I was already familiar with, and obviously all the people I already knew on the job"* (Interview 7).

Furthermore, Sacrifice means giving up privileges such as pay, and growth opportunities that Talent might currently have in order to move and this a sensitive point in decision making. With Links made in the workplace mentioned above, Sacrifice can entail losing contacts with such Links, breaking friendships, and leaving colleagues *"What's I guess yeah as I said there were the people I was leaving behind"* (Interview 7).

When considering moving, interviewees with partners or families were far more reluctant to change. Families, partners, children are high weighting factors that considerably affect the mobility of Talent across brands. *"I would move somewhere else this would change again and new friends, and my husband has to move as well and maybe I go further away from my family again"* (Interview 1) showcases the importance of considering partners, *"Yeah if I move without job because now I got some responsibility, I got a house and a family so not on my own I can't just move"* (Interview 3) highlights family and housing as import sacrifices to make for a brand move.

One particular interview highlighted the multiple Sacrifices made when moving aboard or further away from comfort, including finding housing, and being in a stable financial situation, are all risks when Talent is not being supported *"At the same time, there's so much you have to risk to do those changes, like when you work in the hotel industry you don't really have that, that back support. [...] So, I think that's the hardest part about it. Well, you lose a lot of money, because you have to find a place to live, you've got to make sure that it's close to work [...] So, you're living standards, you've got to really like consider if you can afford that, so more like financially, its risk taking"* (Interview 4).

### **Importance of brand Culture**

Of the ten participants, all six who had previously experienced mobility across the Marriott brand portfolio, stressed the benefits of gaining new opportunities with mobility, finding the best Fit within one particular brand, and accustoming with the values and brand standards. With that comes challenges, with interviewees highlighting that getting trained to the new standards of a brand can be daunting and scary *"I was a bit scared to be honest, because, of course, Four Points and Ritz-Carlton. It's such a big difference"* (Interview 5).

Furthermore, it is easier to transition from tier-to-tier brand rather than make the switch to a different tier brand with new values and norms that will take more time and training to adjust to *"I think because I was going from select service to select service, I sort of saw it as an advantage"* (Interview 7), *"yes, definitely. I mean, the fact that all our E-learnings and all that are literally the same [...] So it wasn't really a big difference."* (Interview 8). Whilst It was equally challenging to transition to upper tier brands with differences in values *"going from like a select*

*service to like a five-star brand would be I imagined very different, [...] would have required more adaptability and bigger adjustment” (Interview 7).*

### **Talent Onboarding**

All ten said that mobility represented growth opportunities and the possibly to grow further and move up the ladder. All participants stressed the importance of considering brand mobility to explore other opportunities and ultimately seeking a new challenge *“So it was more about the actual new, moving to a more challenging role”* (Interview 7). Mobility can also be used as a tool to benefit from the vast network hotel brand companies like Marriott have to offer. In addition, all participants agreed on the necessity of more support during onboarding and help with the integration of values and norms as mentioned above in fit. *“Yeah. But I do believe that these open sessions, training like I said before to the brand standards, all these small things would help feel better about where we are working”* (interview 5), *“at the start, during introduction and the first few weeks, we could have a lot more help from management about how we are doing, how we are adjusting [...] I was trying to understand all these new processes and if I ask HR they will help 100%”* (Interview 10). Furthermore, it was mentioned that transiting can be emotionally challenging *“Emotionally, it's draining physically, it's draining financially and straining”* and that there could be more follow through once the move is completed *“I think you'd need more emotional support”* (Interview 4).

## Conclusion

From the findings, it is clear that Link, Fit and Sacrifice all weigh heavily on the decisioning of Talent towards mobility. JE is an integral part of the reasoning that Talent considers when making a career changing decision.

Link clearly affects the relationships that are developed whilst in the workplace and the Fit that one has inside the brand. The links to colleagues, developed over time into friendship, have proven to construct this sense of belonging and family that is difficult to break when considering mobility. The sense of family and belonging expressed by Bourdieu in the literature link an individual to a certain group and impact on this individual's mobility aspiration. The feeling of family and group recognition is superior to that of growth aspirations.

Fit has evidently shown that Talent will pursue mobility if the brand culture does not adjust to their own convictions and values. Talent will utilise the hotel brand portfolio and use a process of "try out" until the norms and values both match accordingly. Time and training are therefore necessary to adjust to the new company culture, training that has been already conducted elsewhere and more time spent on a new change. Hospitality Talent is fearful of the potential mismatch with a new brand culture system. But it's not just the culture fit; Talent must also fit within the current environment and will choose other factors such as comfort of living and city before making a work-related decision. The weight of having a "good fit" can be heavier than the match with the company.

Sacrifice represents a huge variable to consider. Talent incurs a significant risk when moving, shuffling family, partners and the financial cost. Furthermore, there is an uncertainty towards moving into a new brand with different values and norms that might present with a challenging adjustment. Mobile Talent is potentially sacrificing the comfort of the workspace, the status within the company that has been attained, the validation of peers.

This is why Talent needs to be supported, provided with the necessary resources, followed up with emotional support during their mobility process. The onboarding stage was highlighted as most important so that the values are correctly integrated. By providing this extension of support, Talent will feel acknowledged, suppressing possible Sacrifice factors that are enduring, and more importantly, focusing on new Links, connections with the brand and a harmonious Fit between employee and brand. All JE are valuable factors that need to be addressed when managing Talent and supporting their mobility. Discarding these factors could have important repercussions on Talent's will to be mobile. This affects brands on the wider picture since they will not benefit from a multi diverse Talent pool and will suffer in labour shortage.

Lastly, external hospitality Talent find the transition untroublesome, moulding into the new norms and company culture of the brand without prior brand experience. The focus for Talent management is in providing this constant support to a mobile hospitality Talent pool.

It is those employees who have experienced the brand values and culture of multiple brands across various networks that face difficulties with adjusting their Fit to the newer standards. Furthermore, by extending this support past the transition stage, early on in the joining process, additional physical, emotional and financial strain can be addressed and cast aside. By extending the support, TM leadership are demonstrating their true value set by Barron as responsible for the development and promotion of Talent (Barron, 2008). This evident support developing Talent into new ambassadors of the brand and embodying mobility as a growth trend for careers progression. It is the role for TM executives to represent Talent in their best interest and work closely with them across brands to facilitate the transition process, discarding friction and Talent pool exchange rivalry, instead sporting the values of knowledge and skill-share, creating a more diverse, mobile, and culturally aware Talent pool.



# Research Solution

## Solution design

*"When you talk, you are only repeating what you already know. But when you listen, you may learn something new." – Dalai Lama.*

After analysing the findings, it was concluded that there is a need for Talent support during the onboarding stage. Talent needs to be followed and supported to adjust to the new values and company culture. There is an urgency to solve the problem since Talent feel lost and disorientated resulting in misfits from the onboarding. The solution explores the creation of one-on-one 'Critical Conversations', offered to all employees during their onboarding process. As this constitutes a recommended solution, the following goals and model have been created based on literature and different conversational methodologies (Appx.3).

### Goals & Model

#### **I. Facilitate employee in transiting through brand of hotel portfolios**

The one-on-one conversations are a means for Talent to openly discuss and share their recent mobility experience, express concerns about current culture integration, and thus experience a more pleasant and embellishing transfer (Perkins, 2003).

#### **II. Help employees resolve the misfit, JE impacting factors, and culture integration issues**

The conversations are meant to uncover those issues that have been impacting the view Talent have of mobility. Furthermore, they should be seen as instrumental in the development with the brand, fitting with the values and adjusting to the culture.

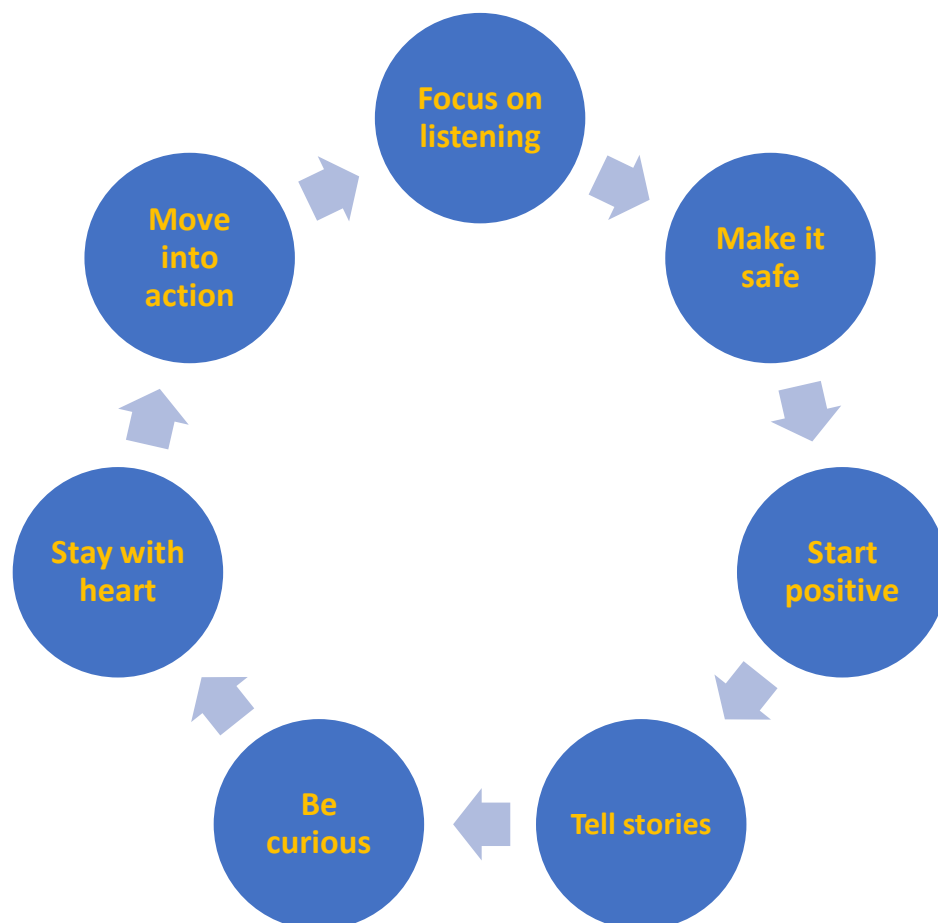
These Critical Conversations need to include concrete goals and action points involving both parties to make sure the individuals can move forward appropriately and resolve any underlying concern (Major, Abderrahman and Sweeney, 2013).

#### **III. Improve the engagement and involvement of HR and Executive involved in TM in the onboarding process.**

The findings suggest that HR and Executives could have a more predominant role in communication during mobility transfers and onboarding. The Critical Conversations are seen as a pathway to open honest dialogue between both parties.

The following model should be applied by HR and Talent representatives offering a guideline on how to construct, direct and deliver the conversations.

- **Focus on listening.** Know when a conversation is needed and fix an appropriate time.
- **Make it safe.** The conversations are meant to resolve issues that Talent are experiencing with regards to onboarding, culture integration and possible impacting of JE factors. Allow a safe environment for the participant to share in comfort (Major, Abderrahman and Sweeney, 2013).
- **Start positive.** The conversations are meant to progress, using process smart theory focusing on the exchange of information and fostering solutions (Perkins, 2003).
- **Tell stories.** Ensure the participants are sharing facts and making use of details to dive deeper into the root cause of the problem.
- **Be curious.** Listen for feedback, use open ended questions, placing in a comfort position and making use of selective listening skills that will encourage Talent to share (Knight, 2016; MO Leadership Skills Team, 2021).
- **Stay with heart.** Focus on what you really want to achieve in the conversations, encouraging the free flow of information and factual exchange (Major, Abderrahman and Sweeney, 2013).
- **Move into action.** Take common actionable decisions to resolve discussed issue, document and follow through.



*Figure 4: Critical Conversation model*

### **Benefits and stakeholder impact**

The benefits of the Critical Conversations are extensive. The main stakeholders impacted are the employees, that are experiencing mobility across the brand portfolios, and executives.

As the Dalai Lama says, by listening, you may learn something new. HR and leadership executives will benefit from the conversations as a chance to learn on how to improve the onboarding process, culture integration and support of Talent from other brands.

Talent clearly benefit from these conversations by expressing their point of view, openly sharing their experiences about the moving process, and alleviating the stress highlighted in findings.

The solution focuses on addressing communications errors, frustrations, misfits and disorientation towards brand and culture standards. The conversations plan to open a communication process between both hotel and employees.

The benefits of Critical Conversations have been highlighted in a Proposition Value Canvas (Appx.4).

## Implementation

In order to implement best the proposed Critical Conversations in the researcher's placement company, a presentation was given to the Ritz-Carlton HR Director, Angela, (Appx.2).

### What

The Ritz-Carlton Perth have recently redesigned the learning coaches onboarding program. According to Angela, learning coaches for Ritz-Carlton are empowered senior staff members who are trained to support, assist and develop new staff members into the values of the brand. The learning coaches who are responsible for the onboarding of new Talent and for following their learning development for 21-days, prepare a day-to-day plan that includes a detailed schedule for learnings and objectives. After the initial 21-days, all onboarding Talent are required to join the mandatory "Day-21" training event. Extensive research was done to determine that 21-days represents the perfect time length for when a new employee has developed enough personal and professional opinions of the workplace (Michelli, 2019). Additionally, Angela mentions that this training event covers all the trainings received in the first three weeks and includes feedback through interactive Q&A.

### Why

The Critical Conversations are meant to engage in a process smart exchange between the employees and the TM leaders (Perkins, 2003). *"I think you'd need more emotional support. Feedback"* (Interview 4) implies that the onboarding process currently lacks personal support. The current onboarding "Day-21" event is done collectively in groups. Angela mentions that the same orientation onboarding group attends the event. During the event, employees are asked to share their concerns regarding the learning process and asked for feedback. Yet employees have stressed many times the need for personal support. A study by Harvard Business Review shows that employees feel more confident and more inclined to share personal concerns in a private environment rather than a group setting (Knight, 2014). Furthermore, a medical study on employees speaking up demonstrated that employees experiencing stage fright and possible stress will suppress sharing honest opinions whilst in a group (Jones, Blake, Adams, Kelly, Mannion and Maben, 2021). Given the main objective is to encourage honest exchange about possible issues that employees might be dealing with at the end of their mobility journey, the researcher suggested making the conversations **private and personal**. Angela and the researcher both agreed that there is a need for more personal engagement during onboarding.

Three Critical Conversations are suggested to be conducted during the 21-day onboarding. Through the conversations, the learning coaches can discover and exchange more information and solve any potential issues regarding the recent mobility experience. Employees must speak up and share more on possible sacrifice factors that have been impacted, misfit they are experiencing in their learning plans, and the possible effects of weak-links adjustments. The conversations are seen as an upgraded progress review where it is not the performance that is evaluated but rather the experience.

The leader of the conversation is the employee and not the learning coach. It is imperative for the listener (learning coach) to use the theory and the steps to guide the conversation and obtain as much exchange as possible. Steps such as 'be curious' and 'stay with heart' offer theory to be applied during the entirety of the conversation. The Critical Conversation model, the literature review and all detailed steps has been shared with the HR Director and the Training Manager.

All learning coaches attend a fortnightly meeting hosted by the HR and Training Manager. It is recommended by the researcher to train and thoroughly review the theory with the learning coaches to make sure all steps and the reasons for implementing the Critical Conversations are fully understood. Finally, it is crucial that these conversations **finish with action decisions**. Both employees and learning coaches need to take ownership of the situation and set goals that will be carried out the following week. As the model mentions, these goals need to be specific in what they are resolving, actionable, and realistic, giving empowerment to the employee to own and solve the problem.

### **When/How**

Both the researcher and Angela agreed on the need for Critical Conversations. Angela requested that the conversations be included within the 21-day training plan for all **future onboarding employees**. The research recommends implementing **three Critical Conversations on day 7, 14 and 21**. The reason for three conversations is to conclude one in each of the three weeks of the 21-day plan. Conversations are shown to be most effective when facts and specific examples are shared relating to the situations experienced and allowing drawing of appropriate conclusions (Major, Abderrahman and Sweeney, 2013). For this reason, conversations are likely to be richer in content and facts towards the end of the week.

The researcher recommends the following plan.

#### **Conversation 1**

The first conversation is meant to address first impressions, orientation and cover any possible issues surrounding the mobility experience. Studies conducted with Police Crime Investigators show detectives interrogating witnesses no more than 48 hours after a crime to conserve the memory and keep events as factual possible (Skerker, 2021). For this reason, the researcher recommends addressing any remaining mobility transfer issues during the first week and collecting as much information as possible.

#### **Conversation 2**

The second conversation focuses on the learnings and the core of the brand values and company culture. Through the conversation, the learning coach needs to make use of the steps "be curious" and "stay with heart", gathering as much feedback as possible on the learning process. According to Angela, days 8-13 represent the core of the teachings as they cover the 12 services values of the Ritz-Carlton, the unique set of standards that are applied directly in the workspace (Ritz-Carlton, 2021).

Conversation two occurs on day 14, and it is therefore relevant to collect feedback on the progress of the employee, and any stress related towards brand integration.

### ***Conversation 3***

Conversation three occurs at the end of the 21-days and is meant to conclude the onboarding process. Through this last conversation, learning coaches need to encourage employees to share their thoughts on their fit within the company, the Links that have been generated and the potential stress factors that still exist. This is the core of the “be curious” stage, listening for feedback and collecting valuable insights before the “Day-21” event. This should also be a review of the actionable goals/decisions that have been put into place.

Below is an example of the new coaches learning plan with the Critical Conversations.



THE RITZ-CARLTON

PERTH

## 21 DAYS TRAINING PLAN

(Front Desk – Employee Name, Position)

Description	Employee's check	Trainer's check
-------------	------------------	-----------------

### DAY 14

#### Philosophy Training

##### The Pyramid



##### **The Ritz-Carlton Mission and Vision**

(Discuss the meaning of The Ritz-Carlton Mission and Vision and your department's Mission and Vision)

#### Resolve a Guest Opportunity

(To practice on how to handle a guest opportunity, find role plays at INSPIRE's website in the link Learn and Grow, <https://inspiretrc.com/learnandgrow>)

#### Standard Operating Procedure

Description of SOPs		
1. Ordering Process		
2. Petty Cash and Expense Claims		
3.		
4.		
Learning Coach's name and signature:		
Employee's name and signature:		

#### Critical Conversation 2

Remember Step Be curious and Stay with Heart: Listen for feedback, use open ended questions, make use of selective listening skills that will encourage the person to share and put him in a comfort position. Focus on what you really want to achieve in these conversations, next 4 points:





THE RITZ-CARLTON

PERTH

**21 DAYS TRAINING PLAN**  
(Front Desk – Employee Name, Position)

Description	Employee's check	Trainer's check
1. Review of Critical conversation 1 goals		
2. Learning coach notes – Learning values		
3. Learning coach notes – Service Values 1-12		
4. Critical Conversation 2 Goals		
<b>Learning Coach's name and signature:</b>		
<b>Employee's name and signature:</b>		

*Figure 5: Critical Conversations new learning plan*

## Whom

The implementation of the Critical Conversations is recommended in stages:

### **Stage 1**

The **HR Director, Angela, and the Training Manager, Ana**, receive the solution recommendation from the researcher. The content includes the literature review, solution model, expected results of the solution as well as suggested learning plan copies for days 7, 14, 21 as seen above.

### **Stage 2**

**Both** apply the theory and the learning in the workshops. **Ana** integrates the Critical Conversations as part of the learning plan for the coaches in the 21-day scheduling as recommended by Angela.

### **Stage 3**

**Ana** instructs all learning coaches during fortnightly meeting to schedule Critical Conversation in each of their following onboarding plans.

### **Stage 4**

All **learning coaches** conduct, direct and manage Critical Conversations one, two and three with new onboarding employees.

## Academic evaluation

### Solution

Nietzsche said *“evaluation is the most valuable treasure of all that we value, only through evaluation that true value exists”* (Ansell-Pearson, 2007). For the solution to hold true value, reflection is necessary to re-evaluate, making sure that the Critical Conversations are still implemented to alleviate the possible areas of stress caused during the final stage of the transition between brands. The researcher and Angela set the following “must haves”:

- I. All employees that onboard will be invited for three Critical Conversations during the 21-days plan.
- II. All learning coaches need to set appropriate decisions, goals to focus on with employee and review at the start of each Critical Conversation
- III. All employees are invited for a Critical Conversation following the “Day-90” review.
- IV. All employees will be invited to training (approx. 4 months) to test for knowledge gained.

On a study by the US Defence Department on bridge engineering, **Testability** (repeated testing to make sure the solution is as expected), **Ethics** (acts in the best interest of client and users) and **Maintainability** (designed to last) were highlighted to be used in evaluations (Defense Acquisition University, 2001). The IT industry use **Time**, **Risk** and added value as markers to evaluate proposed solutions. Time is defined here as short-term (1 - 6 months), medium (6 - 12 months) and long-term (1+years) (Olsen, Ching-Yick Tse and West, 1998). Combining both approaches, the following criteria have been used:

- Testability
- Maintainability
- Measure
- Risk
- Ethics

### Testability

In the short-term, the Critical Conversations are to be implemented three times over three weeks. Following the “Day-21” event, Angela and the researcher agreed that all employees should follow up personally during the Marriott standard “Day-90” review. This occurs approx. four months after onboarding. Although the main focus of the review is on performance and work-related feedback, the last section of the review will include a “Critical Conversation” moment. The researcher recommends using this review to reflect on the goals set during the first three Critical Conversations and for learning coaches to ensure that they have been achieved following the intense onboarding procedure.

### **Maintainability**

According to Angela, the Critical Conversations will hopefully be implemented in the next phase of onboarding starting Q3 (August 2021). The conversations have been designed to be included in the onboarding of the employees at four different moments (W1,W2,W3 and Day-90 review). The conversations are fuelled by the learning coaches who will continuously follow and guide employees through their learning process during onboarding. Furthermore, the conversations are meant to offer employees a voice with regards to mobility related issues experienced in transition. So long as employees have a voice, the conversations will be effective and meaningful.

### **Measure**

Measure defines what is quantifiable during the evaluation process, set by KPI's to showcase how well the solution is performing (Olsen, Ching-Yick Tse and West, 1998). The following KPI's have been set:

- Turnover rate
- Employee satisfaction survey
- Employee knowledge test

These KPI's are set to evaluate the solution in the long-term. Angela mentioned using turnover as an indicator of the effectiveness of Critical Conversations. Over the next 6 - 12 months, looking at employee turnover would give a good indication as to the effectiveness of the conversations with regards to stress factor alleviation, JE factor acknowledgement and goal achievement.

The employee engagement survey is set to come out by Q1 of 2022. The Researcher recommends including a sub-section on onboarding process, and Critical Conversations to gather insights into feelings and possible improvements.

The "knowledge test" is currently being used during the Day-21 event, as a group activity. The test is composed of 50 questions based on the overall culture. Angela and the researcher both agree on moving this "test" further down the timeline, giving more time for the conversations to impact. The knowledge test would be a good way to evaluate the effectiveness of the conversations, more specifically the culture integration aspect. This group activity testing the knowledge and integration of values should occur between the Day 90 and 180 reviews.

### **Risk**

Olsen recommend using risk on a three-point scale based on time to implement, size of implementation and resources required (Olsen, Ching-Yick Tse and West, 1998). The risk here is being evaluated as low-medium. Although the time and resources needed will increase based on training the learning coaches, adding hours, time to sit through conversations and applying and following through the goals, the infrastructure to work on is already in place.

Angela suggested this solution be added to the 21- day training plan already in action. With the foundation currently in place, the risk to add on the conversation remains low.

### **Ethics**

Lastly, the main goal and the reason for the creation of the conversations are for employees to voice their concerns during onboarding, receive all relevant support with value integration and be able to adjust to the new standards.

The conversations remain an additional measure to increase support. They require involvement from both learning coaches and new employees. New onboarding Talent will be notified of the conversations beforehand and are in no way pressured to share and exchange if this is not wished. Angela and the researcher both agreed not to intrude too much on the personal life of employees. It is important to evaluate the conversations as anonymous and all learning coaches will have a duty of confidentiality towards what is shared.

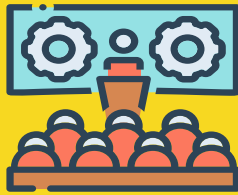
In conclusion, it is vital for the solution to be evaluated:

- In the short-term, collecting feedback for insights and improvements
- In the medium-term, evaluation of the knowledge gained and goals set by employees to assess the effectiveness of the conversation
- In the longer-term, assessing the KPI “big picture” such as employee turnover, number of employees completing 180-days and 360-days and the employee satisfaction survey

The solution outlook is summarised in a timeline infographic below:

*Figure 6: Critical Conversations infographic*

# CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS TIMELINE



## Learning plan

Learning coaches include critical conversations as part of the 21-day learning plan for new talent onboarding



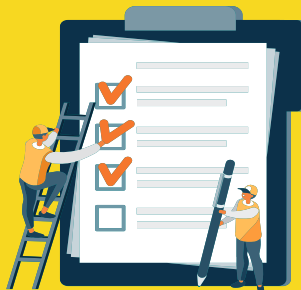
## Day 14 - Conversation 2

Talent and learning coaches focus on the value and culture integration, learning standards and fit related issues



## Training Event "21 day"

Training event organised by HR to review company standards, service values, onboarding process and feedback



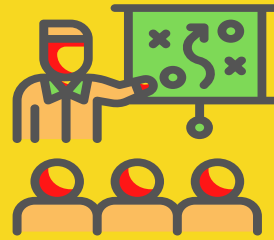
## Evaluation A (short term)

Knowledge test to evaluate effectiveness of new onboarding process including critical conversations support



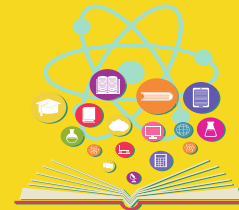
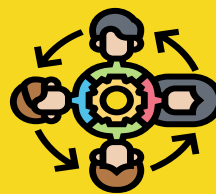
## Critical Conversations workshop

Learning coaches receive training on model created and theory surrounding planning and leading critical conversations



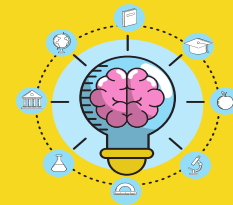
## Day 7 - Conversation 1

Talent and learning coaches discuss the mobility experience and cover any remaining mobility transfer issues



## Day 21 - Conversation 3

Talent and learning coaches conclude onboarding, review goals set and discuss any remaining fit, link, and sacrifice factors



## Review "90 day"

Performance review ending with one extra critical conversation reviewing goal achievement and intense onboarding process



## Evaluation B (long term)

Turnover rate and employee satisfaction survey used as KPI's to measure and evaluate solution

## Discussion

The research set out to explore and to address brand mobility hinderance as a result of JE factors and how TM can best support mobility. Research dissemination with Grow Impact posed the question of the problem being facilitating mobility for Talent or trying to solve employee retention in the industry. With the shortage of labour expressed in the introduction, it can be discussed whether improving mobility can also mitigate the labour shortage crisis and impact future business.

Although the literature review on TM is diverse and extensive, it does not specifically define what TM is or how it can be used. The confusion is reflected in the research on the usage of the word TM and its true significance. With the apparent confusion in mind, new literature from Cheloha suggests TM as a mindset with exclusive focus on talent and growth, thus showing TM as tools to be used to best manage Talent (Cheloha and Swain, 2005). Similar new insights from Ying, show TM as the activity of managing employee development, activities relating to talented employee growth in key positions and career aspirations (Ying Guo, Hussain G. Rammal, and Peter J. Dowling, 2016; Ratten and Ferreira, 2016). In the context of the research problem, this could see TM as tools, not specific leaders, that anyone could grasp and use to assist and help Talent in career growth and development.

Critically looking at the research, the introduction provides interesting insights into the current situation in the hospitality trade though does not provide enough numbers about Talent mobility. It would have been interesting to share what the mobility situation is currently in the industry, looking at expat numbers, employees' transition across brand etc to showcase a current standstill mobility issue. Hence the work with Grow Impact in understanding a bigger picture problem in mobility involving Talent retention.

The research addresses two abstract concepts that are making way in the HR vocabulary that are difficult to find in the literature. TM is the most important and urgent matter in HR management, yet no-one can bring forward a unanimous definition (Shafieian, 2014). The research therefore, takes a decision in defining what TM implies, suggesting that TM is a group of people involved in the support and training of Talent. Yet this might bring implications for the research and a certain point of view. The research could have benefited from another perspective.

The rest of the research clearly combines Talent mobility and TM support as one, showcasing the importance of support in mobility and how it can be improved during the onboarding process.

The findings do not mirror what the researcher originally expected to research. The findings from all ten interviews clearly state ongoing support and a positive attitude towards Talent mobility. All interviewees, regardless of the brand they currently work in, mention being encouraged to explore mobility, supported in their decisions and helped during the process. These findings of ongoing support were not expected.

The JE factors of Link, Fit and Sacrifice all appear to impact the decisioning but not to hinder it. In all interviews conducted, it seems that the different JE factors all impact and weigh on the decisions for Talent to move but do not appear to hinder and stop Talent from moving. The researcher was expecting to find JE factors as hindering mobility. There is a self-consciousness and clear evaluation of what is missing and of the help Talent need to counter JE. Often, Talent have expressed financial concerns and family difficulties with regards to moving to a new property. Contrarily, Talent is moving and taking on new challenges and opportunities but expecting relevant support from management to counter the consequences faced. TM may be aware of these factors but are clearly not sure about the process to adopt. The researcher hoped to find out if TM executives were supporting employees; if not why, and if so, were they aware of JE factors? Based on the above, the research question could have been answered immediately. Surprisingly, the findings show that Talent will transfer and move across brands, and that HR and TM are aware of these factors.

These findings seem at odds with the literature review. As stated, the literature offers thorough explanations of mobility and the benefits but fails to address why Talent would consider mobility and the reasoning behind decisions to move. With the findings showing Talent's willingness to move regardless of impacting influential factors, the literature could have covered more academic theory of the reasoning behind moving, to understand and perhaps explain such mobility decisions. Solimano brings an interesting theory, implying that Talent experiencing mobility are attracted to other Talent, have financial motivation and clear career enhancing opportunities. (Solimano, 2011). Solimano's theory correlates some of the decisions behind the interview findings, such as interview 8 stating *"there was more the persuasion from old colleagues, so Francois"*.

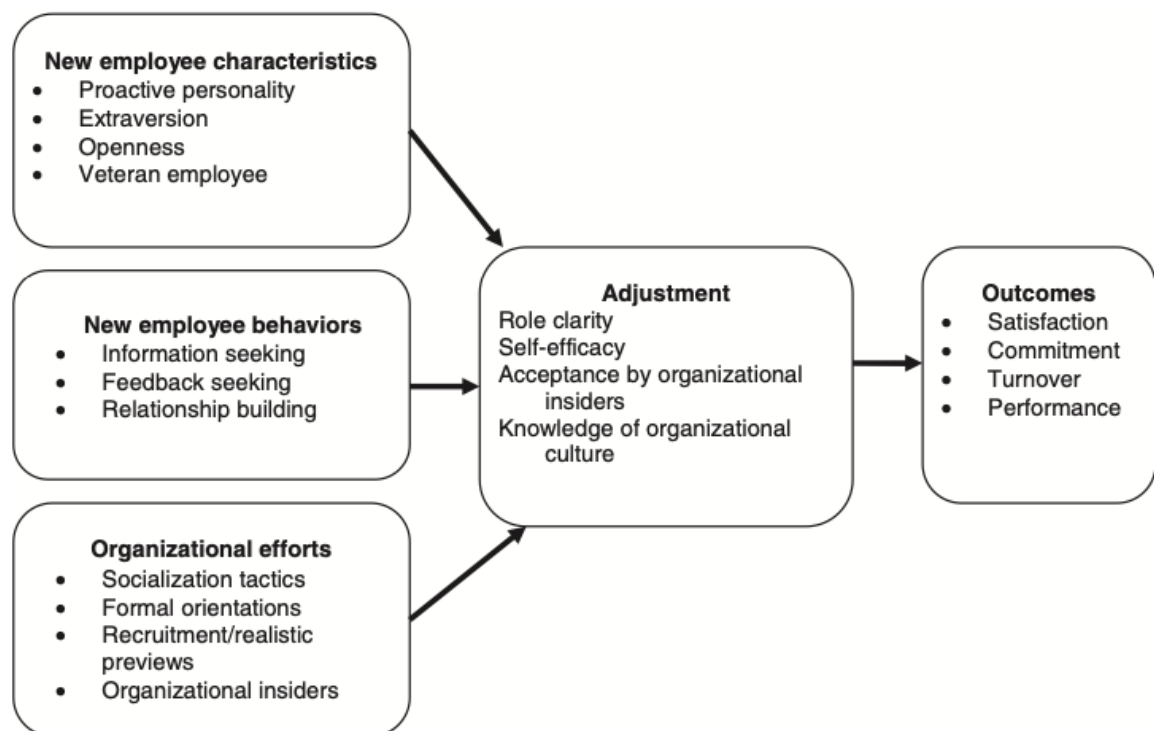
Where the focus had been on TM and their awareness of JE factors, the choice was made to interview line level Talent and explore their experience with regards to mobility and the impact of JE on their decisioning. As such, the research changed perspective and focused on Talent. The findings highlight a new insight not covered in the literature review, namely more support needed during the onboarding stage and the impact of this on Talent development. It is very interesting to note that onboarding in a new company culture and service values is significantly important for Talent fit within a company.

Consulting new literature from Bauer shows that the onboarding process introduces employees to a new socialisation model, vital in the perception of their job performance and satisfaction (Bauer and Erdogan, 2011). The focus should be on the adjustment quadrant. The findings all suggest the need for support in adjusting to the new culture and value standard of the brand.



The new theory shows the importance of role clarity and acceptance of organisational insiders (Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg, 2003). What's most interesting is the importance of cultural knowledge that Bauer place on the adjustment quadrant showing correlation between both. In essence, cultural knowledge and integration is vital to the adjustment of individuals confirming the necessity for a solution supporting employees in company culture implementation.

Understanding an organisation culture and adapting to the values is treated as a key aspect of employee socialisation in turn affecting more distal outcomes such as satisfaction, commitment and turnover (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein and Gardner, 1994). The new literature found confirms huge importance on the support needed by Talent during onboarding.



*Figure 7: Socialisation onboarding model (Bauer and Erdogan, 2011)*

In hindsight, the data collection poses a number of limitations that could alter the data. Three interviews were conducted at the hotel property. During the interviews, participants were asked questions that explored their experience in moving and the relevant support received from upper management. Being onsite at the hotel and with management close by, those participants could have felt influenced and possibly restricted in the answers given. Following this observation, the researcher conducted the remaining interviews outside the workplace, offering a change of scenery and a more relaxed atmosphere, with the aim of obtaining as honest and accurate answers as possible.

Finally, the research explores the topic of Talent mobility across brand portfolios. Answers to questions such as “would you like to travel with your job”, “are you considering future opportunities elsewhere” etc. have been affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. With global uncertainty, the answers of participants may have been influenced by the current situation and not have reflected their full desires. Most interviewees reflected on being just lucky to work during the pandemic and not wanting to alter such luxury. The research would have benefited from different insights outside of the “force majeure” pandemic impact.

An interesting outlier finding from interview 8 reflects on the current shortage of Talent in Perth. This brings an interesting perspective to the research, suggesting that Talent might be restricted and hindered not from a JE perspective but by, in this case, labour shortage, an external factor compromising Talent’s mobility. The focus of the researcher on JE being the only reason for hinderance was shifted with the perspective from interviews 8 and 5 about work being restricted in small cities like Perth with a limited Talent stream available. This raises the question of hotel properties refusing to let Talent leave and being reluctant to share resources, and raises doubt in the researcher’s mind as to the opportunities offered to Talent by the four ‘competing’ Marriott properties in Perth. This would possibly question the research, suggesting a new impact implying that internal factors are not the only cause for immobility. Talent could be indirectly hindered beyond their control. McKinsey’s war of talent concept is applicable here, metaphorically characterising talent as a valuable possession worth fighting for and consolidating (Beechler and Woodward, 2009).

Lastly, the solution is recommended for the Ritz-Carlton brand specifically. Although the solution seems to solve the issue of support and offers personal attention to Talent, it is uniquely designed to fit the onboarding program of the brand. Although the research involved Talent from all Marriott properties in Perth, there is research to be conducted to see if it could be replicated at other properties. The research findings are encouraging in highlighting the need for personal support regardless of the brand, suggesting that other brands could implement similar designs as part of their onboarding system. Interestingly, Ritz-Carlton globally use a uniform onboarding system implying the durability and viability of such Critical Conversations.

In conclusion, this research takes a different, more engaged perspective towards the end of the paper. Although the research starts by suggesting a problem with regards to Talent mobility and a need for TM understanding and support, the initial findings contradict this and show unanimous support. However, the researcher was surprised to find that support was most needed in the final stages of mobility towards onboarding. This has opened a whole new perspective for research on the effects and impacts of onboarding.

The most valuable finding remains the need for ongoing extended support past the mobility stage to welcome and follow employees on the way to adjustment and job conformance. Consequently, this research opens the door for future research:

- **Consequences of JE fit.** Research to explore the effects and consequences of Talent misfit with brand culture from a Talent and company perspective on performance, satisfaction (Talent), revenue, turnover (Company) etc would be interesting.
- **Onboarding process.** As the research explores a solution implementation during onboarding, it is recommended that further research into the impacts of the onboarding process for Talent with regards to support received and value integration be conducted.
- **TM.** One obvious recommendation would be to interview TM and leadership executives to gain perspective on their approach to mobility, Talent support and acknowledgment of JE theory. More importantly to answer one of the key questions of the researcher above about the awareness of JE factors and impact.

**Finally,** the research aimed to touch and add value to both employees and executives with scope for the Marriott portfolio in Perth. The main stakeholder, employees, has been impacted positively through a possible solution generated to best endorse their mobility aspirations. TM representatives have been engaged and are working on developing and implementing a solution that will generate support and positive care for their employees. The ethics of well-being and good work have been applied to the Ritz-Carlton with the aim of bringing well-being and satisfaction to employees in their onboarding support, leading to a good work ethic and positive outlook.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Interview transcripts

### Interview with Valentina

#### **Benjamin Saunders**

Valentina, thank you very much for doing this. The first question I had was, how long have you been working in the hospitality industry?

#### **Valentina Marriott Employee**

I'm 14 years now, 2006 so many years, 14-15 years.

#### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And so where did you start, talk to me about the journey?

#### **Valentina Marriott Employee**

Well, I started from school. I went to into a professional school, it's, it's basically like, three years of studies, and then two years, which is studying and working, like doing internships. So they gave me a choice between working in hotels or in travel agencies, which I was more keen for travel agencies, but in my country, the pay is really, really bad. So you cant even survive by working in a travel agency. But I'm also glad that I haven't, I didn't choose it. Because now everything is online. So the travel agency is not as luxurious as before, you know. So yeah, my other choice was hotels. I actually got inspired when I was in Italy, from a very old hotel, he was been like in the 1800. So every time I was looking into the hotel, I was fascinated, and, and I always said, oh, maybe after school, I should go and try to work there. You know, like something, something cool to try. And actually, during the internship, the school gave me the option to either choose, or they could choose for me. And I went into that hotel, and I asked him, can I do an internship there? And they said, Yeah, why not? Like, you can do like, as much as you want. So we're supposed to work there for five weeks, but then I've extended it was during summertime, but then I extended for the two months. And I really enjoy it because I worked from, like, at the reception. And I've seen I've seen so many people working there around, you know, back from all over the world. And for me, it was kind of something new, you know, like living in a small country is more like in the countryside in a small village where nothing happens. And then you go and work in the hotel, you see like the word in front of you, you know, so that's what inspired me to to start in working you know, in a hotel industry.

#### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so that was was that a an independent hotel? Was that a chain hotel?

#### **Valentina Marriott Employee**

It's four hotels, so it's two five star hotels and two four stars so they are like all together that three are in Lake Como and one is in Tuscany in Florence.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. So you worked in Italy to start with then where did you go?

### **Valentina Marriott Employee**

Well, I most likely I had I worked for this company four years in one hotel and then four years in another one. So I didn't move that much. To be honest. That's the reason why I came in Australia because I said okay, I'm 27 by the time I was 27 I said okay, maybe it's better if I go outside Europe and see what's outside you know, and then I decided I had some contacts in Australia so I decided to come to Australia and to start my journey here.

I didn't have luck to be honest the first year that I was here because maybe because of my visa my working holiday visa so I've applied in many hotels here in Perth.

I never received any call but then I moved to Sydney and three days after I got hired by the Four Points in Sydney so I started immediately there while here in Perth I was more doing like waitress things you know like call centres which was not my cup of tea. Then from from Sydney in the Four Points there. I actually did my six months because of my visa restrictions. And then I decided to come back in Perth just because really I prefer more Perth. Sydney's to chaotic just like everything to faster not easy to find good friends, you know, like like long term friendships. So I decided to come back. And what happened is that for the Four Points in Sydney called the Four Points in Perth, by saying Valentina is coming back to Perth, you should really call her and so she can continue there. And this is I didn't even know that this was happening and actually, because I drop my bags and then I went to Bali just for four days holiday. And they call me when I was in Bali and they said okay, when you come back, if you are looking for a job we can, we can have a like we can organise an interview as well. That's perfect. And then when I came back from my holidays, I went there for an interview and they just hired me and from there I worked four years. well enough to four years I moved to Ritz- Carlton. Yeah, I'm very loyal. I like to stay always in a place because I'm far away from my family. So for me work is my colleagues, and they are also my family, you know, so.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

yeah, okay, so I want to ask you about your transition from Four Points Sydney to Four Points Perth. How did you experience that?

### **Valentina Marriott Employee**

It was everything so easy. It was just very easy. They were they did everything for me. They just wanted me and I started immediately.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So you got good support from the team in Sydney. They helped you a lot.

### **Valentina Marriott Employee**

Actually, they actually organise everything for me because I didn't even start to look for a job. So as soon as I went, I actually while I was flying there, they were already on the phone and just saying, Look, she's moving there.

Because also Marriott likes SPG before they were Starwood before Marriott. So Starwood was the one always that they prefer to keep people rather than maybe hiring new people, you know, because there's also a whole training behind. So also, we did transitioning the trainings that I have done in Sydney, I didn't have to do them again in Perth, because everything has been transferred through the system, and also all everything is recorded.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And this was because you were transiting from the same branch, right, from Four Points to Four Points. Yes.

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So did you experience that being easier for you? Was that an advantage?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Was so easy, it was actually very easy was kind of unexpected, yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So yeah, sorry, you were saying that it was, you know, when you learned everything? You did all the training procedures, you learned all the values and the standards at the Four Points when you moved from Sydney to Perth. It was the same thing.

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

It was the same thing. Yeah. Yes, yeah. It was actually very easy. And I wasn't not nervous at all. Like for me, it was already Yes, it was. Yes, it was a different reality, because the one in Sydney was 900 rooms. And from a 900 rooms moving to a small hotel, because this one in Perth, it's 180 no how how much? 287. So it was a smaller reality. Yes. But it was it so easy also, because moving from a big to a small hotel is much easier, because then they're you know, like everyone knows each other is like a big family. You know why? Maybe in a big one, it's more difficult, it's more like spread around and like people are maybe just coming just contacted while there is always the same people, you know, yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. Okay. And so then when to you stay in Perth at the Four Points for four years? And then you move to the Ritz-Carlton, how did that happen?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

So this happened. So basically, my rooms division manager in at Four Points he called me at one evening, and he said, look, at Ritz- Carlton, they actually need someone to help for the service experience, would you like to go? And I was. And they said, just for two, three days, I said, Yeah, that's totally fine. I'm open to new opportunities. You know, why not? I was a bit scared to be honest, because, of course, Four Points and Ritz-Carlton.

It's such a big difference, like high standards and everything, but actually didn't scare me. Because in the hotels, where I was working in Italy, that was also very high standards, because it was always under like the, you say it was always like a brand standard under the leading hotels in London, so they had very high expectation and I was already used to high expectation, you know, well, Four Points is more like a little bit lower. So I think that was that's the one thing that helped me. So I went to Ritz-Carlton I started to work they told me Okay, you this is your department. This is how you answer the phone. And they just showed me only few things. And they saw immediately how I had the experience how I was moving around and asking questions like smart questions, not like the basic ones, you know, so they after not even two hours, they already told me you know, right, that you're not going back to Four Points. Just laughing you know, but they were saying that constantly and it was they were actually serious about that. So one day, Gopu (Front of House Manager) sat down with me and he said Look, you've been like making fun of this thing that you are going to be here but actually we want you here. So think about it and then I decided to move on because it Four Points. Yes. It was a quarantine hotel. But I've pretty much learned everything on what I wanted to learn, you know, because at Four Points I had a lot of opportunities with the trainings because they like even when they do like the performance review, they always check what you want to learn and where you want to progress in your career, you know, so even when I because from the working holiday visa, I actually moved into the student visa by working 20 hours a week. But this didn't actually stop them to teach me more things, you know, because from GSA, I moved to service experience. And then there was the time where they merged Starwood and Marriott.

And actually, they moved me into events, and they also group reservations. And then from there, the managers from the reservations and group reservations that they actually were focusing on emerging and I replaced them. And they gave me so many opportunities. They're like, really, I'm so grateful. Yeah. Yeah. So then live, yes. Then when I sat down with Gopu, at the beginning I didn't want to leave Four Points, because I was too comfortable. And it was my my family, as I said before, but I think I thought they said, that was a perfect time for me to move on, you know, to do well is even more or less supervising and managing, because I was doing that in four points, but I was not recognised like that, you know, so it was kind of in a small place. You do a little bit of everything, you know, while in, let's say, in your Ritz-Carlton, you are more like in a specific, you have a specific role, you know, yeah.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. So, so, in terms of like, because, because when you said you moved from Sydney to Perth, you said it was really, really easy. Because there was Four points to Four Points, it was the same trainings, the same system, the same brand, everything. So how did you experience moving from Four Points to Ritz-Carlton?

### **Valentina Marriott Employee**

Look, to be honest, it was not easy at all. Most likely for the contract, because I got the contract after maybe a month, a month and a half. So I was struggling because I was working, I had another job. So and then, at Four Points I was part time while at the Ritz, they were giving me full time hours. Plus, I had a second job. So I was working 17 hours a day.

So and then I told him I said, if you please let me sign a contract, I can quit from the other job, you know, and from Four Points as well. It took so long and I'm not too sure why. Because they were it was like between the two HR you know, when then reference and it just took so long relate was not not easy at all.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So what happened between because you mentioned the two HR departments there what what do you think happened? What was the the issue?

### **Valentina Marriott Employee**

Its just delays from the Ritz-Carlton, so many delays. And it was just like following up every single day, every single day. And this was not happening. And they were telling me, don't worry you like you're going to be here you will have the contract is just like with some delays. And yeah, just all about waiting time. Yeah, it was it was a bit frustrating to be honest. Yeah. And I they know that I told them, they just said, Oh, it's just because you're special. That's why it took so long. Yeah, in terms of transitioning for the culture, from Four Points, culture, and Ritz-Carlton, that one, I found it very easy. I really liked the orientation, which I never had before, like, an orientation like that I've never had in my life makes your life easier to understand, like what's the intention, what's the mission and all like that. But then I truly understood and embraced their culture, the culture, when I actually participated to the three days of trainings, so this is like, leadership training that they have organised. And they're really I opened up my mind, and I understood what's really what they really want to do all of these wow's and, you know, like, the service values and all like that. It's like, really, it's like a kind of religion, you know, like, where you have to believe, will you if you believe in that you will give your best, you know, and I think it really works. Yeah, yeah. I do understand though that participating in these three days training was special like not for everyone, just for us learning coaches and this changed the way I see the culture.

So if they were offering these kind of trainings at the start when you join Ritz-Carlton but for everyone not just learning coaches maybe would be better.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah so interesting point of view. And speaking of these trainings, talking about the values you learnt, would you say that you've you've identified more to those now?

### **Valentina Marriott Employee**

Yes. A lot

### **Benjamin Saunders**

And do you think those kinds of things are things that would keep you for working for another Ritz-Carlton, or would you again, move to another brand in Marriott?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

You mean, like using these values?

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. Using that identification to values.

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Yeah, I will use these values. Like, forever, like even even in my private life, you know, because they are really valuable, you know, like it makes sense and makes your life better. So it for another Ritz-Carlton or for another workplace or even another industry, I will always keep them these kinds of service values.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. So when you said that you were working for so long at the Four Points that it you know, you use that sense of loyalty, that you spent so much time that you didn't want to leave? What convinced you to leave in the end, like if you had all of those things, and that job...

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

The new challenge to be a supervisor and to have people to train, and to share all of my knowledge with all of these years of working in hospitality, and also the challenge to create a structure in that department that was missing. So that was actually a good challenge and an opportunity for me to show what I can do you know, while before in other words, because this is a new hotel, you know, so in other hotels is everything structured, you cant put, you cant put that much of yourself, you know, like, sometimes it's all already done, so they have done it for so many years. So it's very difficult to change things, you know, even if something, maybe the if there's a procedure that takes like five steps, if I know what it is maybe two, three steps less, then you know, it's a bit difficult. It's like people don't like so much changes, you know, while maybe in a new place, where there's nothing still build, it's actually an opportunity, you know, where you can put all over yourself. And actually, by looking at the quality of work, it has increased, I'm receiving so many good feedbacks from people working there and from managers. And that's actually what makes me happy.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And because I'm using this word loyalty that you mentioned, but you were saying that what kept you in the job so long was your friends and that you made them the connections? Was it?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Yeah, but also the environment, the environment, like I can't, I can't picture myself in working in a corporate place, you know, where it's always the same things while in a hotel. As I said before, people are coming from everywhere, always different things. So this keeps me motivated by staying in the same industry.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And in the same, for example, what Four Points, the reason you stayed for so many years in Perth was because of the specific people you met over there and made...

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Specific people but also by seeing that they were listening to me and also to mine and trying to fulfil my needs, you know, like to, I would like to spend more time and learn how to use GXP, you know, and that's what I've learned, I would like to do this, and they give me they gave me the training and the tools, you know how to how to grow. Of course, after four years, or a little bit more than this not so much to learn anymore, you know, so you you have to move on. But to be honest, to move on, I would have never moved on and go to another and to a different brand. To be honest, I would have stayed always in this format.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you would have stayed with Marriott, but would you have stayed with Four Points? Or would you have changed?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Sorry.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you said you would have stayed with Marriott, but would you have? Would you have gone to another brand? Like like would you have stayed with Four Points? Or would you have gone with a different brand?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

No no no, I would have changed maybe just to see also what other brands are doing, but not for another company like Hyatt lets say,

**Benjamin Saunders**

And why is that?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Because I think they have really I have feedbacks from friends and I have connections. So I feel Marriott has a big big pro training programme. You know, they always teach like, there are so many trainings, even if you go into the MGS they have trainings that you assigned to yourself when like people they would love to have these trainings and actually pay for having these trainings while we have them for free. You know, like it's from the, from how to handling of a call with a difficult guest to how to check in a person.

There are videos to give you some examples, you know, so that's, that's what I really like while in in, let's say in Italy, I've never had a training manual. Never you know, so it's from the basic stuff to like really, like difficult ones, you know, like from sales to revenue. Everything.



**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, okay. And so you because you said, okay, you would stay with Marriott, where else would you go? Now that you're working for Ritz- Carlton, would you stay with the Ritz-Carlton? Or would you go again with someone else, like another brand,

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

I would, I would actually maybe consider to work for a W. Because few guests told me that, like, it's reflecting a lot, my personality, the W hotels, because it's a little bit more casual, but still, it's like, it's bubbly. While Ritz-Carlton is more like classy, you know, like you have that kind of standard. So this doesn't mean that I don't fit in there. But like, from people that they know my personality, they say, I think you will really enjoy that kind of culture, the W.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so for example, you know, when you said how easy it was to move from Four Points to Four Points, now that you're working for Ritz- Carlton, if you wanted to go work for W Do you think it would be as easy? Or do you think there would be challenges?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

No, I don't think so. I don't think there were going to be any challenges. I believe, like the only challenge between Four Points and Ritz-Carlton it was it was most likely this waiting time from the HR department and being kept a little in the dark you know. But other than that, it was actually easy, like I felt welcomed, you know, again, and, and part of the group, you know, so I don't, I don't think it will be difficult moving to another brand.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And do you think like you would get the support from the HR here? Because you said that, you know, it was difficult for them in the transition? So do you think that you would get enough support from them? If you want to go to another? Say like a W or something like that? Ma I think so yes. Yeah. I mean, like, they are seeing positive things coming out from what I'm doing. So in that case, support Yes. In terms of maybe paperwork, and no like that. I don't know, to be honest. I don't know. And what more would you would you need?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

What do you mean, sorry?

**Benjamin Saunders**

I mean, so, because when you were talking about that transition process from the Four Points, the Four Points you said it was good, the manager called the other manager, there was contact, they talked about you, you didn't even know what's happening, and suddenly you got offered a job in Perth. So if you're having doubts about how this would be from the Ritz-Carlton to the W what would you need from the HR department to make this happen?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Well, maybe maybe because I had these experience from the HR was taking too long, maybe I would, as a reference, I would give maybe other people, you know, like, let's say, Dario (General Manager) which he made it clear for since the beginning, that he will always support all of his employees. And then also my first managers, you know,

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you would need their references. And do you think that HR could help you in any specific way in achieving this movement?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Yeah, I think so. Yes. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Yeah. And, you know, I, I'm thinking because we hear a lot about how in the next few years, Marriott is expanding in Australia, they're opening like Ritz-Carlton in Melbourne, they're opening Aloft in Margaret River, they're opening Westin, all of these new buildings are coming out. How does this make you feel? What is your feeling with this?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

I like this, actually, this idea, I really like it also because I really like this idea that let's say for example, if they if they open a new when they open a new hotels in Perth or in because we have Moxy up opening and then I think there will be the courtyard as well. And then the, I think is the Westin one in my in Margaret River. They what they what Marriott tends to do is also to take the people working already in their hotels here and to send them as Task Force you know, just like to do their pre openings. I've seen that doing it from so many colleagues from Four Points they were even sending them to Fiji you know, or like to New Caledonia. I find this really, really amazing that they did take people already working in, in hotels where they move them around and just do all of these openings, you know, so maybe I don't know, maybe We can be part of that, you know, just go there and teach them how to from, like, their checking standards, especially like from, from the Ritz Carlton, which is high level, you know, I said, Maybe instead of asking to Aloft, maybe they will pick like they pick one of us, you know, like, and give us this experience?

**Benjamin Saunders**

And do you see yourself staying with the Ritz-Carlton?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Yes, at the moment Yes, yeah, I still, I'm still working on what I really want to do and I'm happy here. Because it's always changing, you know, like, it's always opportunities you try to find, because you don't want to stay always in the same position for too long, you know. So it will be at the moment, I'm focusing a lot on the service experience, because there's really so much thing to do.

So that's my biggest goal at the moment, but then in the future, I would like to see a little bit in loyalty and maybe grow or so from that part over there, you know, so I, that's my near future what I'm planning. And then if you ask me, where do you see yourself in five years? To be honest? I am not sure yet. I'm still working on it yet. But still, he will be in the hotel industry.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And I'm guessing from all the answers you've been giving me that you have, you have this desire to move around with your job?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Yes, yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And and from what you were also telling me if I understood you were saying that, you know, you wanted to stay with Marriott. So you wanted to combine moving, and being with Marriott? Because you said you had identified to that company with the trainings that they offered with all the values, you thought that that was the perfect fit for you? What would be the main reason why you would go to why you would move in your job? Would it be because you want a new challenge? What would be the main reason?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

If I would, if I move, it's probably internationally. So I mean, like, maybe still maybe in Australia, but then International. Just because also the culture, you know, it's Yes, Ritz-Carlton is the same everywhere, but it's also the culture of the locals, you know, leaving there, you know, and see how they think. And then maybe learning more and more like, it's not just about opera, but even like the process or even how to Wow, a person or their, their mindset, like the way how they think, you know, because like maybe in Asia, they think differently than us, you know, like they're more, they have more more ideas, or like, of course, in Asia, they have way more people staffed in, in their hotels, of course, they they have more opportunities to create to wow a person, you know, like a guest, for example, will be most likely learning culture, new cultures, for me personally, and combining this my desire of travelling and learning new cultures with also working within the same company

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, of course. And this might be a similar question to the one you were the points you were mentioning before, but would there be certain things that would discourage you from moving? And I'm referencing when you were talking about, you know, the connections and all the friends and how comfortable you felt at Four Points? Would there be similar things that you think would, you know, influenced your decision to move somewhere else?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Maybe, yes, maybe? Yes. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

What would those what would those things be?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Well, maybe if I know that maybe some people that they were with, were I work with, maybe for a long time, they are maybe working in a different place. And as a team, I maybe I will join them maybe because I know that it's actually a good team, and we can do make the difference in the company. You know, so let's say for example, if I stay for like, you know, in hospitality, like the staff members, they change and change all over again, you know, but then you maybe sometimes you feel like you have you can create a team and do more maybe, let's say for example, if I can explain:

Well, example, when I will work at Four Points, and I knew that Francois (Loyalty Manager) was at the Ritz-Carlton and I knew that I was working with him. I actually that was the reason why I also moved because I knew that there was one of my colleagues in the past that was working there, and he has good intentions, that for me working together with him, I would actually give all of my best, you know, while maybe and feel more confident while maybe with someone that I don't know, it takes me a while, you know, that maybe maybe as has different backgrounds has different thinking, you know, while maybe with Francois, because he worked for Four Points for six years and me four years, we kind of have, like a similar way of thinking,

**Benjamin Saunders**

So those kinds of things, you know, give you, encourage you to make that decision.

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Yes, yes. Yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And how much do you think that those those small little things, like, you know, how comfortable you are in your job? The people, you know, how much do you think they impact your decision?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

It's a big impact! Because at the end, I spend, like most of my life with my family, and then with my, at my workplace, you know, so I need to be confident, and I need to be comfortable in my workplace as well.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And do you think that in your work, for example, and I'm thinking of the HR department, because they help with all of this moving around? Do you think they can help you with this?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Yes, I think I think okay, so I don't want to blame the HR department for anything.

But I think because we are still a new hotel, you know, there are still procedures they need to be put in place. So I think that in the future, I want to have this kind of issue that I had, like, when I moved here. Also, because the hotel opened, they went then there was the lockdown. So most likely, like the hotel close, you know, so and then reopen again. And as soon as we open again, then I came in, you know, so it's it's a new, it's a new place, and the Ritz-Carlton didn't have the opportunity to really start, you know.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Sure. Yeah. But do you think that they could? If this is just coming from you, you know, how do you think that they could help you with this? If you were having these doubts, these concerns?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

What do you mean, helping me? Like to transfer to somewhere else you mean?

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah.

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Yeah, I, I believe that they are open to help me to transfer me somewhere else. Absolutely.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And I'm thinking about, you know, when you were saying that this has these small little things, you know, that you're mentioning, they have an impact at the end of the day, you know, because you said you want to be comfortable where you go, you want to feel that this is the right decision. I'm thinking, do you think there was a way that HR could help you with these concerns that you have?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Yeah, I think so. Yes. Yeah. I think I would just, we'll probably have like, a, like a private conversation and talk to them and maybe search for some answers. And I'm pretty sure they will actually fulfil all of my, my request.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, just in the future looking at, you know, solutions and how this process could be better. You know, I was just the, I was asking you all of this and looking for an answer into, you know, what, what could be done differently?...

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

So feedback, yes. And constructive feedback. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you think that sessions for example, where you openly discuss these factors concerns that you have and for example your hiring process, they would help you in making a better decision or a better transfer?

**Valentina Marriott Employee**

Yeah, absolutely. I believe they will. Well, they are improving anyways, a lot so they know about my situation anyways, but I don't think I will have to have the same this the same issues for the next time. I think it's just like circumstances, same circumstances that just happened when when I moved in. Yeah. But I do believe that these open sessions, training like I said before to the brand standards, all these small things would help feel better about where we are working you know.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Perfect. All right. Valentina thank you very much for this insightful interview. I will be transcribing everything and will send you a copy if this is ok for you to review and possibly add to your points.

## Interview with Rebecca

**Benjamin Saunders**

All right, Rebecca, thank you. Thank you so much for doing this interview with me. My first question to you is how long have you been working in the hospitality industry?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

I've been working for six years now. hospitality that is

**Benjamin Saunders**

Is that six years in hotels as well?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

That's also restaurants. Yeah, small businesses.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. So how long have you been working in hotels?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

In hotels would be five years.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Yeah. So what have you previously worked?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

I've worked for Samson pack in Mosman park here in Perth. I've worked for a couple of other cafe's, in Liderville, one of them was the Garden, other cafe called Anymore. They went out of business, but that was also in Liderville. And then I've always done like waitressing jobs here and there. But that's about it. My passion was to get into hotels. So as soon as I got the opportunity to apply, I applied straightaway.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you apply for the Ritz-Carlton?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

I applied for Aloft Perth by Marriott. Okay, so I was doing. I was doing some work for a construction company for BCG for the Riviera apartments in Riverdale, there were new residential apartments that were getting built. So I did a sales administration job for them. Through that there was the presentation happening from the general manager of Aloft of the time Stephen Moore. And he was doing a presentation for BCG, the stuff about, so more information for the residents, the people that were going to live in those residential apartments, to let them know about that construction that was happening across the road. So which was the Marriott property, Aloft Perth. And I got a lot of information from him.

I was at this presentation being registration, I was behind registration. So I met him personally. And then he seemed like he had a really good energy about it. And then he started talking about Aloft Perth, the property. And I was like, he's really amazing, because really, like, passionate about the industry. And I did a couple of like hotel units in university. So when I saw, I knew a lot about it anyway. But he kind of inspired me. So when I met him automatically, I wanted to go, how do I work for you?

And he said, Look, there's, you know, we're going to need people for the Aloft when we open. So I'd love for you to jump on board. He gave me his business card. And then I was like, Yes, this is amazing. Like, how can the university does to me like this is exactly what I wanted. And then I acquired through Stephen Moore. So I sent my resume to him. And then he got me the job in Aloft Perth.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So then you joined Alfot, that was part of Marriott. And since then, where have you been?

### **Rebecca Marriott Employee**

So then I transferred to W Brisbane.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Yep.

### **Rebecca Marriott Employee**

And I did the preopening with them. During pre-opening phase, obviously, it's like you got to educate people to about the property. So about the brand, or many people know about W hotels. And so when you pre open a hotel, you don't actually do one job. Like if you're in front office, you also do sales also do because you're showing potential clients of the hotel, potential guests, educating them about the property overall. So it's very hands on like you do so many, and you end up being a housekeeper too, because you got to like, put beds at the beginning because there's not enough people to open the hotel, you got to make sure everything's impeccable for someone checks-in. You got to do amenities, you got to do so many things. That is out of your comfort zone. It teaches you how to think quickly on your feet. That was really cool. After that, because I opened those two properties, I was able to do Task Force. So I did a little bit of task force for Westin in Sydney. And that was pretty cool. Because once you already know the ins and outs of hotel rooms, you kind of get that opportunity to teach others. So I did that and then I got made redundant at W Brisbane. So just, I was doing my performance review to take that next step in management because I was an event and catering coordinator. And then yeah, I've got made redundant because of Coronavirus. So I had the decision before the board is closed either to come home or stay there and I just decided to come home to my family. And yeah, then that's how they transferred me to the Ritz-Carlton, and the position available at Ritz was Bar tender, so I just started picking that up pretty quickly. I used to do bartending anyway. So yeah, and now I am there.



**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Wow. So you've actually, in your whole hotel career, you've been mostly with Marriott?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So I want to talk to you more about that pick your brain on, how did you experience your transferring from Aloft to W, to the Westin back to the Ritz-Carlton.

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

The transfer was was good. I mean, you have to obviously, always you have to have that respect for your mentor, your leaders, mentors, your leaders, because at the end of the day, it's all about respecting them and your communication is super important. I've managed to have really good communications, communication with all my directors, and managers.

So when I told them that I wanted to transfer, they were all for it. It's more about timing. They took a little slower than what I expected, but we managed to get there. So yeah, it is a smooth transition. At the same time, there's so much you have to risk to do those changes, like when you work in a hotel industry is you don't really have that, that back support, where it's like, okay, you have to start a new life. And it's all based on what your financial position is at the time. So I think that's the hardest part about it. But as in transferring to one property to another, it's quite easy.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. So talking about the risks, what would that be, for example?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Well, you lose a lot of money, because you have to find a place to live, you've got to make sure that it's close to work, then you've got to make sure on how to get your stuff there. Like how to get all your stuff at home to the next apartment. So you're living standards, you've got to really like consider if you can afford that, because there's there's no help there. What I do know, though, that some hotels, some Marriott Hotels, do let you stay in the hotel through the transition, so that you stay there for a period of time before you can get everything rolling. But I guess that's about it. And you get your discount for breakfast, lunch and dinner. I can't say that, but that's about it. Yeah, so more like financially, it's risk taking, you've got to save up a lot of money to take that risk for that position. I wouldn't know about any other industry. I mean, a lot of corporate companies, you know, they tend to pay all that stuff, but not for us. Unfortunately,

**Benjamin Saunders**

Would you say that this is discouraging to the opportunity of moving around, or is it not?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

100% Yeah, I mean, it would be helpful if the industry of hospitality or at the moment, it's, it's at a low at the moment with hotels and stuff with everything that's happening with the world, but I feel like they could be a little bit more supportive in the sense that you're transitioning from one state to another, the reputation is still there. It's like, oh, but she lives in Perth. But that person lives in Melbourne. So a little bit more mental and financial support, like a credit or something that will be able to make that easier, because it's scary as well, for the younger generation to take that risk without not being financially stable.

**Benjamin Saunders**

For sure, I would love to come back to that point later on. I was just thinking, so you started with Aloft, what made you move on from Aloft to the W etc...

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

I needed more. So Perth is a little bit of a slow paced city. So it's easy going. And I wanted to be a little bit of more. I wanted my earth to shake a bit to be like, Okay, what more can this opportunity give me. So W Brisbane, I've always loved the W brand, because that suits my personality.

So when I heard it was opening, I wanted to gun it straightaway. So what I was going for that that was my kind of like, main focus. So when I applied for it, I knew that that's what I wanted.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So that was just a bit of identification to the brand values that they have and the company culture?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Yeah, so obviously Marriott has different brands. Each brand is different in their own work. They have a different personality and depending on what city they're in, they have different you know, culture as well. So for me, the W, the brand is what I went for. Like I could have gone for Ritz-Carlton I could have gone for another Courtyard by Marriott or Marriott Hotel, but it's that brand that influences like new travel, new generation of travellers that kind of led me to that.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you had that aspiration still staying within Marriott network?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Why is that?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Because everyone knows each other, and that's a benefit. Because when you get to know people within the industry, it's a good way to communicate and let them know what your next step is. And it's a push and pull industry, so they can help you in any way to get to that position. Because of who you know, so yeah, once you, that's why I like the side where Marriott does a lot of big events for staff. So that gives you the opportunity to network. And not and you know, some people do take that time, that advantage of staying in their own nest. But that is amazing, I learned that that is an amazing opportunity for you to catch up with other general managers of other companies and introduce yourself and get out there and let them know that this is what you do for life. And this is what you want to do. So I like that about Marriott.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Its a huge asset, to be able to benefit from the network, the fact that they have so many brands, and that each brand is different in its own way, and you have to find the one that you identify to the most.

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Yeah, yeah. And then you know, so many people in that industry, and you know, so many people within brands, it's also good for your, when you're trying to pick up business. For example, a client doesn't like the W. But I have contacts at Marriott Hotel, which is a little bit more corporate. So maybe that will suit so you push and pull from each other as well. So not make that client go there like Accor or another brands etc..

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, and so then so, so you were at the W and you had identified to the values, the brands, you thought this was one for you. And then from the W you went on to Westin. How did that transfer come about?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Amazing. That was a really cool team, too. That was a really good experience. Unfortunately, I wasn't there long enough because of Coronavirus restrictions. But it was good. Like I've always had that leadership skill in me, so for me, it was really nice to give that to the next GSA's (Guest Service Agent) that were jumping on board. And the Westin brand is not as outfit as the W but it's a still a bubbly brand. So yeah, that was really cool.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So, you know, because just listening to you talk about the way you've been moving at least in the last four or five years to different brands every time. What made you do that? The fact that you've always been moving to different brands?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Just to have a feel about other brands and see what they're like, because a lot of a lot of Yeah, all of them are different. I cannot say that not like any of them are the same because they're trying to get different people, different personalities.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So it's it's just such a feel for the brand. Is there anything else it's always encourage you to move around or?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Gain experience and know more about other brands.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so now that you've moved again, so from Westin, back to Perth to the Ritz-Carlton, do you see yourself staying within Ritz-Carlton, would you see yourself using that logic of going after different brands, again?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Everyone has this, everyone has this mindset that once you've reached the Ritz-Carlton, you've made it, whether it's like a server position of bartender position, whatever. And I think Ritz-Carlton as a brand knows that. And that scares me for a little bit. Because it doesn't, it's not as welcoming as it should be, from my experience. It should be a part that they have this amazing reputation where if the next generation is able to work for them, that is opening the doors. And that is you know, amazing that we have that type of reputation. And I feel like maybe because maybe this is my maybe I'm wrong with any other Ritz-Carlton around the world. But I feel like as a brand that's just opening within Australia, it could have been a little bit more welcoming. So for me at the moment, I am cold feet about the Ritz-Carlton but because it's a little bit. It's very high class. And I get that, but it's still still you have to have morals and principles like you've got to have, you've got to be welcoming, you've got to be willing, and I still haven't felt that connection.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so when you were saying it's a little bit scary Do you feel that's because once you've reached that elite point, you are saying you're not you're not looking to go anywhere else, you're kind of stuck at the top so to speak?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

No, I mean the opportunity is out there too. Now that the borders are open, there's in this there's so many new properties coming into Australia. So the opportunity is there. Like there is W Sydney coming up. There's You know, there's Moxy coming into this the Westin in Margaret River coming into Perth as well.

So there's all these like new opportunities. I guess it's more trying to get back into what I was doing before my passion.

Which is, which is thought it was hard. last a couple of weeks ago, I went to this meeting with James Warden, which is one of the area team for Marriott international for Asia Pacific. He is a great guy. He's very admirable. And like when he talks about Marriott International, and you know what's coming and where they're at at the moment for the company, is really admirable in the sense he really cares about people and employees. And I like that mindset that he has, because I've known him since I opened Aloft Perth because he opened that hotel. And he was there as a guest for W Brisbane. And then I had a beer with him at Mardi Gras parade. Because our hotel was one of the partnerships for the Mardi Gras parade in Sydney. And I met him there and I had a beer. He's a just a general nice boy. And when he came, when I went to their meeting at the Westin, I felt like I had to get something off my chest. So after he spoke, and after we were able to, I was able to get a one on one with him, which was nearly impossible. I had to wait a bit end of the meeting, and I was like hovering around. I was like, No, I have to speak to him. I need to know the answer. So when I like, when I saw him, I was I was like, hey, James, I don't know if you remember me. I just like told him a little bit about me. And he was like, Yes, I do. Remember you. Yeah. How are you? And the person is like, what are you doing here? Like, I suppose he said, and I was like, Oh, well, I was born here. Right? So I'm back home because obviously as a situation, and then he was like, and I said, and he's like, Oh, yeah. And I said to him look. And that's when I basically told him, I just let it all out in the most professional way. I could say, but I was just saying that, you know, there's a lot of employees for Marriott that got made redundant or had to take a couple of steps back to be to maintain in the brand. And to obviously, stay financially driven as well and be able to support have a roof on under our heads and my agreements have food on the table, but still wanting to work within the brand. You know, our leaders are open minded enough to be like, okay, let's have a look at this list of people who were made redundant or had to take that step back, let's really look at this list and see if we can get them back on board. Like, is there any moment in time that they're going to do that. So when I asked him this, he said, 100%, he's like, we don't want to outsource anymore or recruit any more from people from the outside. We don't want to recruit anyone from outside. For those who that made redundant other people, we need to be kept touching base on. And then I feel like now going back to Ritz-Carlton, that has not been really applied.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So you still feel that there's no sense in a way where there's no mobility from within, it's either bring people from the outside or just, you don't see the opportunity to be able to go within or move position within?

### **Rebecca Marriott Employee**

To change the culture of certain departments. That's the reasoning for outsourcing, recruiting, recruiting out, you know, out of people who have never been in the hotel industry before. Why it's like, it is a culture that got some like, really nasty behaviour, big set of behaviour, you know, if it's not working, but don't find other people to do your job. So reason why you're in that position. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so considering this, we could call it almost immobility or not being able to move around, does this do you think that's, I would say, limiting you and your ability to go somewhere else? So do you think that's encouraging you to go somewhere?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

That's encouraging me to go somewhere else? Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And would you then think, am I going to another Ritz-Carlton, or would you open up to go to another brand like you've done before?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

At the moment, I am saying I'm staying within luxury hotels, and the only two that are pretty up there is the Ritz-Carlton or the W brand. And now those two I will be going for another W brand for sure

**Benjamin Saunders**

And that was because at the end of the day, you had identified better with the brand standards. They had the values that they had.

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Yeah, I feel like they, they believe more in the international values of Marriott, which is like, if you take care of your employees, they'll take care of the business and the rest will basically, they follow that pattern. But that's because the brand pushes that they push for the next generation of travellers to basically come to the government. So yeah, so that's fine. They always want fresh new people to come to that property, because they're the ones that are.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So they have, they have an open culture towards change towards mobility towards having new people, as opposed to say, the Ritz-Carlton where they have a more reclusive approach where maybe they want to bring people from outside

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Because of their standard and their reputation because of their reputation, because they have that power.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so, so when you were at Aloft and you move to the W, and the W to the Westin, and so on, every time we made that change within the Marriott network, what kind of support we're getting towards that change, towards that mobility? Did you feel like you were encouraged to move to another property? Did you feel like you were supported enough?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

They were afraid every. It's just like every company they are afraid to lose to lose staff. And the reasoning to Why? Because obviously, the turnover gets recorded, right? When you go through human resource. So for them, it was more like, Is there a reason why you're leaving? With that question always comes up regardless. And you just got to be honest, we're going to explain No, this is because I want some more skills and experiences with another hotel with another property, I think that's more of a self decision that you make, but in terms of like moving up, like if you want to be in the same property and move up, I would say, and you want to move to a different property, that discussion needs to be spoken first with your leader.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, and so considering where where you are right now, in your position within the Ritz-Carlton, and now that you think you've identified that kind of culture that Ritz-Carlton are applying, and it's giving you the idea to move, would you utilise Marriott's network and the support that the hotel company here to go back to a W property?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Will I use the Ritz-Carlton?

**Benjamin Saunders**

Would you use what you've learned here? And, you know, would you feel like the standards that you've learned from the Ritz-Carlton, would that help you go back to the W, for example?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

The reputation of the Ritz-Carlton and the brand's name? Yes, my experience, I wouldn't want to take another property. I mean, the standards, the standards of the company of the property, but my experiences there, of course, I'm going to take that on, you know, for my next role, if I take that next step, so 100% yet my skills and my, my experience, but the standard of what the hotel gives me.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And comes that time to make a decision, do you feel like you would have the support in the hotel at the Ritz-Carlton to make that career move?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Well, they have no choice really. If you want to move because that's a, that's a because you're going for a different property based on personality, that's your choice. It becomes an issue where it's, you know, if it's something to do with what the company what they're doing that is wrong, within the Ritz. So I would say support financially, that would be great if they can implement some kind of system where they can help financially for you to make that move, because it's all coming out of your pocket.

**Benjamin Saunders**

In terms of, if it's just introducing you to networks or, you know, facilitating you with the transition period, you know, moving all of your affairs from one hotel moving into the other, you know, your orientation etc... would be supported?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

No not 100% and in it, maybe 40 or 40%.

**Benjamin Saunders**

In what way do you think?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Supporting your career wise? Yes. Emotionally, it's draining physically, it's draining financially and straining.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so, in that sense, have you always experienced that when you've been moving from W to Westin from Aloft to W Have you always experienced those emotional those draining practices? And have they discouraged you at some point to stop moving around or have you always?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

No they have always said it's what makes you happy? And if you want to have it has anyone ever offered? That's a good question. Has anyone ever offered to be like, you know, we want to keep you here, because you're good at what you do, how can we progress here for this branch? I've never had that discussion with anybody.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And yeah, judging by your answers, that is something that you would have wanted to see.

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

100%? Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So it's more of a follow up within, where you're working within your environment about what makes you happy, what will you want? How can we help you, if it's within our brand, or whether it's just supporting you moving on? And so moving ahead, and um, I think I'm bouncing back on your earlier point, when you're talking about, you know, those financial risks, those, you know, things that you would be leaving behind your family? Or if you feel good within a job, all of that, and you said that there were things that were weighing hard on your decision to move? Do you think that those factors would again, discourage you and your decision to move to somewhere else? Or would it still be beyond all of those factors? Would you still have the ambition?



**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

I think it's very, it's, in our mind, we always think that the more skills and experience you have no matter the risk, the more successful you will be, right. But that's always been a reputation for hospitality, right? The more hours you work, the 60 hours a week, someone's going to recognise you're, you know, if you do overtime, you're going to get that promotion. Unfortunately, the hospitality industry still has that reputation. So I don't know when that's gonna change. Because at the end of the day, if your leader sees potential in you, if you put your hand up for everything, if you show that you're determined, then that should already be showing something different about this person. And I was going somewhere with that. Sorry what was the question?

**Benjamin Saunders**

The question was about, if you would see those factors at the end of the day, and discouraging you to move or if regardless of that, you would, as you just mentioned, you would see that the benefits of growth and experience will counter away, you know, leaving things behind sacrificing financials and so on.

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Yeah, it's like your position 100%. But it takes time. It's not easy. That's the downfall. Like all my directors are in their 30s. Have you ever seen a director that's 25?

Hardly manage. I've only seen one general, I've only known one general manager, before the age of 30, he made it to General Manager for the Emporium in Brisbane, which is not even a W, which is not even a Marriott brand. So I don't know if Australia is educated enough or like, because Marriott all these properties are coming into Australia right now. I like educated enough to be like, Okay, I see potential in these people. Let's just bang bang grand focus on them to come the best they can be. Because they know what's coming next. Like

**Benjamin Saunders**

if I'm looking ahead, and using what you've just told me, thinking of future outlook, what would you need more? Because you've experienced a lot of mobility in the last few years of experience moving to different brands. And we've touched a bit upon this during the conversation, what would you need more support? You were mentioning financial support. But you also said something about? It would also be nice to have emotional support or you know that people to help you in that transition? What would you think we need more?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

I think you'd need more emotional support. Feedback. So not a lot, not a lot of leaders, unknown rely, leaders do not book themselves in full time for the time of their team. So for example, if probation comes up, being able to book in their diary when it is a probation for your next team member, you know, like that is important. You know, it shouldn't be I mean, it should be, you know, like, I was a coordinator, doing my performance review to become an executive in events, sales within the hotel industry. Even for me, it's always been about me pushing myself to be that big elephant in the room to be like, Hey, we need to catch up. We need to catch up.

**Benjamin Saunders**

It has always come from you instead of coming from leaders and management, saying, you know,

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

I've got it in my diary. Next day is on the 30th of April,

**Benjamin Saunders**

Those, we call them, you call them feedback moments, but those those periods of time where you get time alone to talk about how you've been doing How you been adapting?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

And what can you do better?

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, yeah, no. And also, you know, if you're joining a new property, how's it been for you? How, How's everything? Maybe even, you know, the way you're dealing with joining a new team and those moments you would see them as beneficial for you to be able to express?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

I probably wouldn't have bounced that much maybe.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you're saying that he would have kept you longer within a team?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

100% yes that would. If you, if your directors and your leaders, if your directors or leaders see the potential of you to move up and they don't want to lose it because they find this uniqueness? This, you know, drive or like, the ability for you to move forward? And they said, No, we don't want to lose you. That's awesome. Like, what else would you like? That would be like amazing, because then you know, within that brand, you're gonna move faster within that one property. And then you can make a decision to branch off.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So looking at looking ahead at like, so as you mentioned, Marriott booming in Australia? Apparently, there have been a lot of projects in the upcoming years. What is your take on that? With regards to, as you said, you're bouncing off to different places?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

I love it. I reckon it will loosen up Australia a little bit, in terms of like, having more international business come in. Tourism come in.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And for you?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Yes, it's a lot of opportunities for people who are graduating from university those that want to like, move up quickly. This is a time now.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So now is the time you see this as also an opportunity for you now, it's the time to move on to another network? Yep. This is something that you would be I imagined you would be interested in, then you would definitely seek to do.

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Yes 100%. Like, at the end of the day, Business is business and you need to broaden your mindset. And you need to know who wants to, you know, so we're not gonna fall. You know, at the end of the day, even though you love one brand, like I love the W. I would 100% go back and like open another property if I could. But at the same time, if they're not going to give me the opportunity, then then I'm going somewhere else. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And if you were, for example, because you've identified a lot with W, if you were given an opportunity to go back with W, do you think you would stay within the W branch? Or would you again, decide one day to go export?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Yeah, I would if they gave me my next promotion.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So this would then be more question of internal mobility, rather than external to other brands, if you've identified with that gratitude statement. And that has to do with identification to the brand standards.

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Yes absolutely 100%

**Benjamin Saunders**

This has been really insightful, to be honest. And just I'm glad that we've been able to touch upon, you know, you've been using Marriott's network for a while.

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And have you ever considered using going to a Hyatt or to Accor?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

Yeah. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And is there a reason why you've stopped with Marriott, rather than going to those companies?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

there's no reason because I've never actually given it a try. So I've had people left Marriott international have gone to a different like Accor whatever. And they, they were like I've, I've been able to make it faster than Marriott. But then I've had other people who have had terrible experiences. And they've come back to Marriott. And unfortunately, that ruins your reputation. So when you do come back, you're not guaranteed that position, then again, it affects it affects either way. So like, you may come back, and they may go, we're not going to give you that position, we're going to have to go back to down to coordinate, instead of manager level, because you made that decision to get somewhere else. Which shouldn't be the case. Because if you have drive to see where your next vision is, or what you want to do next shouldn't be judged. for that, you know, because that's you've been like, No, I know my potential and I'm gonna go for it no matter what, no matter you know what hotel it is, you love hotels, but no matter what it is, you want to still progress. And if one company isn't doing that for you, then obviously you would branch off to see what others would. And that mindset of reputation that needs to change with Marriott, because at the end of the day, that's what our new generations are doing.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, I mean, absolutely. Thank you very much. I mean, we've covered all of these topics. I was just wondering, you know, based on what we've covered on, you know, what you would need more of support. We talked about mobility while you were moving around the properties and so on. Do you think there would be anything you'd want to add on those topics?

**Rebecca Marriott Employee**

No I think we have covered the most of it.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Well thank you very much for this and you time of course. I will be transcribing the interview. I will send you a copy once done so that you can have a look, review or add anything to the points made!

## Interview with Madeline

### **Benjamin Saunders**

All right. Thank you, Madeline for being here. I'm just going to repeat one more time if you don't mind this being recorded,

### **Madeline Marriott Employee**

No that's fine.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Thank you very much. So we're just gonna start off with a few questions. So how long have you been working in hotels?

### **Madeline Marriott Employee**

This is actually my first hotel job. So, I've worked here since October 2019.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, and why did you choose working for the Ritz Carlton?

### **Madeline Marriott Employee**

Why did I want to start working?

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah.

### **Madeline Marriott Employee**

Kind of the brand. Actually, I always kind of wanted to get into hotels that I could travel with work, because that's really, that's something that I want to be able to do, unfortunately, can't really do that now. But yeah, I thought that's a really good brand to get my foot in the door. And it's worked out well, for me, really. Yeah!

### **Benjamin Saunders**

And what excited you about the brand?

### **Madeline Marriott Employee**

Because it's a luxury brand. It's not just the everyday like Ibis or Novotel, I'm sorry! But like, the luxury brand, like everybody knows who Ritz-Carlton is and like, you know, thought so highly of around the world. So I just thought that was something I want to be a part of.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

And who gave you those ideas? Was it just research?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Well, it's actually just like, what I knew from, you know, friends and family who travelled and because I had done a little bit of like, looking into the industry, like, I sort of, you know, you're what's the top tier? What's not top tier kind of thing? Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So considering you working for the Ritz, how well do you feel connected to your job?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

I'd say pretty, like, you know, I think my position especially like, I have a lot of customer service, you know, background. So it's really just easy for me to just, like fit into the role that I have, you know, and I apply what I know everyday. I definitely think that it's like, something that I've, you know, strengthened my service skills, and even the operational skills as well like, it's something that Yeah, like, I definitely, definitely do gel with the position, I think!

**Benjamin Saunders**

And would you say that those skills you've enhanced when working here?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah, definitely. With the operation side, like, I definitely have a better understanding of how things are supposed to run. And when things don't run properly, like, you know, what happens, then? We get to say that, you know, here and there, but yeah, definitely, I've enhanced my skills here.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So how comfortable you feel in your job in general?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Pretty comfortable. Like, I know that I am valued here, which is good And I know that I do my job well, most of time. But yeah, like, I definitely feel like recognised here. And I definitely feel comfortable with the position that I have. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And would you feel recognised from is that colleagues or the institution or the friends you have on the job?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Well, colleagues and also management, the peoples I have met here and I guess the friendships that have developed. I just feel very comfortable and recognised here at work.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And is that something you particularly valued in your job?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Definitely, like, it's always good to feel recognised when you do something good. And when you do something that was incorrect. Like, you should be pull up on it as well. But I feel like yeah, they don't get, you're not in trouble. You are shown things. And I think that's super important. We like being comfortable to grow in the job.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So talking about growth in the job. What are your thoughts on that?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Like what do I want to do?

**Benjamin Saunders**

For example, you sort of talked about, like growth, for example, and growth on your job? Is that something you're looking to do?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah, definitely. Yeah. I, Like I do want to grow, because like, if you're not growing, what's the point right? I definitely would like to go up a few levels, you know, sort of soon, but right now, I'm comfortable. But I definitely see, you know, the path there is different roles that you can go up on. And they make it quite easy, I think in the company for you to do that.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So also, you mentioned the company. So you said that you make it easy. And in what way? Have you been shown support towards that?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah, definitely. Yeah. they've they've approached me a few times and asked me if I wanted certain positions and stuff. I think they're quite happy to, you know, promote from within, I think. Yeah, because if you already have the stuff, they ignore everything that you need to build up from inside. I think that's a really good, you know, really good way to go about it. And yeah, definitely feel supported. If I wanted to go up a level. I know, I could go to Gopu (FOM Ritz-Carlton) or Stephanie (EAM Ritz-Carlton). Definitely for sure.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. So you have that sense of support when looking at internal growth and moving up the position?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yes definitely. I know they have come to me many times about being able to take on something more and move up but I have always been happy where I am at the moment so will see.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And in terms of, for example, movement and mobility, so considering moving Have you ever thought of moving somewhere else for your job?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah, like, like transferring? Yeah, I've definitely thought about. Yeah, that's the idea. Really, I mean, I really would love to travel with work. So to be able to move around. That would be a dream for me, like, the stories that Dario (GM Ritz-Carlton) and Gopu have, you know, like Dario in Germany, in Egypt and all that, and then Stephanie in Spain or wherever she was, like, **that's awesome to me. I would love to do that.**

**Benjamin Saunders**

So okay, and have you considered doing that with Marriott for example?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah, definitely. Like, in my spare time, I'm looking up around Australia at the moment like to **see what's opening what's available, what sort of like different properties there are.** Because in Perth, there's only four. So like over East, there is heaps of them. So there's heaps to look at. And even around the world, like, obviously not right now. **But I was talking with Gopu about, you know, like Japan and Bali and stuff.** And what that's like to say, yeah, definitely does interest me.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And would you considered moving with Ritz-Carlton? Or would you go to another Marriott brand?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

I don't know, because this is my first hotel. So I don't have much to compare it to really. So that's a tricky one. **But I think I would like to stay within the Ritz-Carlton brand, because it does still, you know, capture my attention like the luxury brand.** Right? So I didn't know if I would be able to go from luxury to another tier. I don't know.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Why do you have that feeling?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

The thing is, there is a different clientele, like the different way you run business? and that sort of thing? I don't know. **That's not that's not really like, based on anything. That's just like, how I feel about entering into a luxury.**

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. And would you would you say that's because that's all you know, about the service of luxury?



**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah, probably indeed, that could be it Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So that would be perhaps when you joined the Ritz-Carlton two years ago, and you started learning about that type of service? You're now you think you're accustomed to it?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

I think so. Yeah. Yeah. Like, we definitely did our training on what Ritz-Carlton is and, and you know, what we should be doing and stuff. So it's definitely like, in my brain, that this is how I should be working, you know. Not even how it should be but more like, how I, like want to present my service and that sort of thing. So yeah, I think that might be it's like, in my head, but.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And you feel like that is limiting you in terms of where you might go in the world? Or do you feel like that's an opportunity for you?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

I think that's an opportunity, because you can carry that sort of service anywhere really, like it doesn't need to just be Ritz-Carlton, or like luxury. But I think for myself, I would want to be in those brands and luxury brands.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So because you mentioned, you know, the projects opening up, for example, over East, so those projects, would that be something that you would be interested in?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah, so I've already done pre-opening here. And that was a lot of fun. And that was really interesting. And I know that Melbourne will be opening soon, and the thought of like doing a pre-opening with a new hotel. That's quite exciting. I know, it comes to a lot of challenges, but it was a lot of fun during this hotel. So yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And if that meant, for example, say moving to Melbourne on that job, and then leaving this one. Would you see that as a challenge? Or would you embrace it?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Definitely would be a challenge. Because I do love it. Yeah. But I would embrace it, because that's the opportunity. growth, like we said,

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yep. So in terms of you loving it here, would there be anything that would tell you otherwise? Not to go to Melbourne, for example? Or would there be anything keeping you in your job?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

This is definitely a lovely team here. That's hard, because it's like, I do love my job. But I do want to grow. And I do want the opportunities. So yeah, I think it would be hard to say goodbye to the team. And because, you know, I've been with your most of the teams since the opening and stuff. So that would be tricky. But if they could offer like, you know, and like maybe a higher up position than what I already have, then yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. So at the end of the day, you would still look at it, as you know, it might be hard because of the connections you have here and the way you feel on your fit, but at the same time, come in opportunity for growth and for moving forward, if you would embrace that, that change. Yeah, so that Yeah, that sounds exciting. And in terms of so moving forward, say that change? Would you say you have support from the organisation to be able to achieve that?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Definitely. Yeah, yeah, they've made very clear since like, day one, if you want to move around, like if you have a goal they will help you with it. Like I was like, coming to Angela (HR Director Ritz- Carlton) about it before she's Yeah, like, the HR department is so supportive with that, because that's what everyone here has done. Like all the management, that's what they've done. They've travelled around and they've, you know, they've come here now, they might, they might go elsewhere to like, their sense of worth that because that's what they have done to.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So that's in terms of management. So you would say that also as an employee, you also get that confidence?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah, yeah, definitely support. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. That's nice. I mean, it's good to hear it in terms of, for example, looking at just Perth, have you because of either networks or just the way Marriott portfolio is have you considered working for another property in Perth, for example?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Not really really, to be honest, I feel that this is really like, the kind of the jackpot sort of thing, like, and I think what we are most compared to is like the Crown properties. But I think that's just a completely different way of working. I don't know, I feel like there's not really you don't kind of compare what we do at Ritz Carlton compared to what they do at Crown. And I have, actually. Sorry, I did look at working at the Esplanade in Fremantle, you would know that. Yeah, but that's a smaller hotel. It's, you know, it's already established, which, like, sort of had an appeal to me as well.

**Benjamin Saunders**

In terms of the the Marriott network, would you utilise that network to go somewhere else?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Probably not in Perth to be honest because we, I think, though we're talking about opening up a Moxy, which would be interesting. But I still don't know much about the brand. So not? Yeah, I wouldn't be actively looking to move or anything.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you think that if you knew more about, for example, the extent of Marriott's portfolio, would that be something you'd utilise to go? Not only say in Australia, but would that be something you might be interested in going around the world?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah, well, if I was a little more educated on, on the brands and values, that we have actually have under the banners, I would probably be able to make a more defined decision on things. But I think I would like to stay at like the premium luxury level at least.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And you feel like that education would would have to come from you. And you felt like you could also get that that supportive movement from either HR or the Leadership Committee

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Think HR would be able to help with that. And I come in that. And we also have so much on MGS (Marriott internal sources website) and stuff that we can look into about the brands and things like there's so much on me that I'm like, yeah, if I wanted to learn more about something, if I wanted to move, I definitely think the resources are there.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And is that something that Marriott is offering to you as because they're a big network and brand? Or is that something that you feel that just this type of properties is offering

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Marriott as a whole for sure, I think, because they they definitely do things like thoroughly, Yeah. Like they make sure that Oh, everything is accessible and all that. So I mean, they do it. Right.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And is that? Is that something that in terms of talking about? Because we mentioned growth? I mentioned moving around properties? Is that something you particularly value?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah, yeah, I think so. Because a company that, you know, provides all the support and resources and all that necessary for you to be able to do your job and do it well. And do it the way you want to do it that you're happy with. That's awesome. Like, yeah,

**Benjamin Saunders**

So I just want to finish off looking ahead, for example. And so those were mentioned, the projects opening up East and so on. In the next few years or so, do you see yourself moving around in your job?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah, yeah. I reckon. I think. Yeah, I definitely would like to do that's like the goal. And I think I think we will, the new things opening and, you know, hopefully the world is in one place in a couple years, I think it would be a lot. You know, I think it'd be very easy for the hospitality industry to open up and I think it'll make a lot easier for us to transfer if we wanted to. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so moving upon for that, why would you do that?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

I don't know. I just always wanted to be able to move around to the job. Like, I'm not really that you know, that desk nine to five office person, I think that would drive me nuts. So to be able to go and explore and you see your country and work. And, you know, like, it's not just like a I don't know how to describe you know people go to Europe and they work in bars and things and then they go down next to you. I think it would be quite like that would be like still professional work that like. That makes sense. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

That makes sense. And so you said you use the opportunity to travel. And you mentioned also that you use that opportunity to be able to develop yourself and your career as well.

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah. Yeah. Those are the able to two things that I want to be do with my work.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so the self development or development within your work your growth, and then at the same time possible travelling and experiencing as well.

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Yeah, definitely.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And would you see yourself doing that within a particular brand? Or would you see yourself doing that, no matter where?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Maybe not particularly Ritz Carlton, but that I would like to stick with like the premium luxury? Like I said, I think, yeah, but I'm not, as I said, I don't have the, you know, knowledge about every single brand. So, yeah, if I was to learn maybe,

**Benjamin Saunders**

Would that be the luxury segment in any hotel brand? Or would that be? Would that be something with Marriott, for example?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

I think Marriott is kind of one of the biggest hotel companies, right. So I think I'm pretty set. There. I mean, obviously, I don't know, the other brands, what other companies and what they do. But Marriott is very well known and very big, and there's a lot to offer. So they really need to explore too much else, when I can explore, what they have to offer, you know?

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. Is there anything else you would like to touch upon or share?

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Like, what?

**Benjamin Saunders**

It's, it's literally, um, we've covered the most important topics. And I think what's most insightful about what you mentioned, was your willingness to travel, obviously. And what I thought was interesting was, you mentioned that you just you don't want to do just travelling, you want to do this with your idea of being able to grow within a job and move around. And so you'd use this aspect of mobility for your career growth as well as your cultural awareness and scholarship.

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

Definitely. That's it you have nailed it! I don't think there's anything for me to add, but yeah think I pretty much nailed it.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Madeline, thank you very much for doing this, for your time during the interview.

**Madeline Marriott Employee**

That's okay.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Let's stop the recording here, I will be transcribing the interview and will send you a copy so that you can review and possibly add anything if you would like!

## Interview with Kuen

**Benjamin Saunders**

Kuen, thank you very much for being with me. Um, the first question I had for you was how long have you been working in the hospitality industry?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Since 2014, okay. Yeah. the first hotel I worked at was Sheraton in Macau in 2014.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And what were you doing at the Sheraton?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

GSA - Guest Service Agent

**Benjamin Saunders**

And then so you work for Sheraton and then where did you go?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

And I worked for a couple months, and then I had a few months off, and then I moved to the Ritz-Carlton in Macau. Okay, yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you work for Sheraton, Ritz Carlton, Macau. And then have you worked for any other property in Marriott?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yeah the Sheraton Macau, the first one, the Ritz-Carlton Macau the second one. The third one was the Westin Perth. The fourth one is the Four Points.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Well, and then every, every time have you been working in the same positions?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Three of them are the same position. The one is different was when I was working at the Westin, where I was working as a porter.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Perfect. Yeah. Yep. And so now you're at the Four Points in Perth?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So going back to, you know, your first hotel, the Sheraton in Macau? Did what made you choose to transfer to the Ritz-Carlton?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Okay, before I joined the Ritz-Carlton, the news was moving around about Starwood and Marriott could merge. And I've tried this Sheraton, which is five star hotel, but I want to try something tier of the hotel content categories.

So I moved to the Ritz-Carlton. And my friends also invited me to work there. Because they said, you have to try and brand that there. And yeah, I didn't regret it. Yeah, it's kind of it's kind of good. Okay,

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you moved to the Ritz-Carlton because it was like the, you know, the top of luxury?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes, the biggest difference categories. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And how did you experience you know, the transition from Sheraton to the Ritz-Carlton.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I don't think there's much, much I need to care about except the service quality, except the service quality, you know, they are brands standards that are very important. There are a lot of things that you have to remember "we are Ladies and gentlemen, service, ladies and gentlemen", this kind of thing. And also the service value, the gold standard. So this type of thing amazed me. And I also need to remember it in my mind. Yeah, that's the most important thing, but for the workload or the task, get the daily tasks, they almost like the same.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And when you when you moved from Sheraton to Ritz-Carlton, how did that happen? Like what was the process like, the moving process?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

What do you mean sorry?

**Benjamin Saunders**

More how did you experience we know that the HR department helped you with moving around because you were moving from one Marriott to another Marriott.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Ah, yes so at that time, the Sheraton had not merged yet. So that was not a typical transfer. But in Macau is you just need to go and find a job.



And then in hospitality, especially in hospitality sector, is very easy to get a job because they really need manpower. They really need the people to work in that sector. So I've applied and then they checked my resume, and I passed two interviews and then I got into the Ritz.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. So then yeah, so then on the timeline, you spent some time at the Ritz-Carlton. And then you moved from Ritz-Carlton Macau to Westin in Perth.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I did do the transfer. I had just moved here the first time I was on a working holiday visa. So for my first year, I try my best to extend my second year visa. And then after I made it, I applied to the Westin.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, yes. Yeah. But was it important for you to apply to another Marriott brand? Because, you know, you had worked for, I guess Sheraton and Ritz-Carlton before?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes, yes. I think it's very important, especially to my resume. Yeah, this I think I remember the first day I came here in Perth. And at that time, the Westin was still under construction. And I told myself, I have to work in this hotel. And, yeah, I think it's really important, because especially if you really want to stay in, stay in the hospitality sector, you want to stay in a giant hotel chain, you know? Yeah, biggest amount of opportunity.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So it's important for you to stay within the same group within the same, you know, for example, Marriott. Yeah, and if I understand correctly, this is because you're saying it's opportunities. And it's, it's better to be you have better opportunities. If you're within one group, is that correct?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Correct yes

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Yeah. And so when you joined the Westin, I want to talk to you about, you know, how did you adapt from, because you had been working for Ritz-Carlton before? Now, it was a lot of standard values, you said, a lot of things to remember how did you adapt going to the Westin?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Okay. First thing is because the position, they are not the same, so from GSA, and then I moved to Porter. So this day, is like, I need to learn a new thing. And the other thing is, they are totally different working culture, especially power distance in the western country. And Asian countries. Yeah. Yeah, there's a thing.

And besides all of that, and also the target customer because they are not the same as well. So in Macau, there are lots of tourists, and also the guests who come to Macau to gambling. So there are different target markets.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. So you know, you if you're saying that there's a lot of difference between all of these things. How did you adapt? Did you adapt? Well, was there challenges in this in this part?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

not personally not challenged. Actually. Interesting, too. I feel like I needed to spend, spend more time to see how the how that working environment works. I also see different people, I think that's the best thing because I think Marriott, the thing that they have is their structure, structure brand standard. And also you just need to follow it. For instance, the SOP's their so interesting to read back, really to know what you are doing at works. So that's the best the most easy things you can accomplish. But the other part is about working with different peoples obviously. So for me, I need time to really settle in and learn.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, because you said you needed more time to get used to this and everything...

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I think almost one or two months

**Benjamin Saunders**

And in this time where you were new and you needed to adapt. Was there perhaps things that you needed more, maybe more help from people to help you adapt? Did you need more, maybe support from your management or from HR to help you really settle into this new culture?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

No, not really, I didnt need their support really

**Benjamin Saunders**

okay, so it is this was just you just needed time for yourself.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes, correct personal time.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Okay. And then. And then after this, you went from Westin to Four Points, how did that happen?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Oh, yeah, because working on a holiday visa, although you can only work under the same employer, maximum six months. So after that I finished that I went to applied for the uni, which I was studying. And as soon as I knew that, I got my student visa. So I applied for one of the hotel here. I did my first choice of work was just back at the Westin here to get the same position very easy. Like, I maybe I try another brand to see which properties they had positions for. So I still really was interested in a front office position. So at that time I applied for GSA.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. So because you said you wanted to go back to Westin because it was easy. Was that because you....

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I liked the job, the task were very easy and I felt comfortable.

**Benjamin Saunders**

But was it? Maybe also because you were familiar with the hotel or?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes, Yes, correct.

**Benjamin Saunders**

All right. Okay. So you were familiar with the hotel? Was there other reasons why you wanted to go back to the Westin?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I wanted to go back also for my colleagues. At that time, they were there, but now most likely they left. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So it was all of those things that basically, you know, kept you within the Westin. They were keeping you there instead of maybe like, you know, going somewhere else.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes, yes. Correct.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. But then, you know, you still made the decision to go to Four Points. And I want to ask you, how did because when you were coming from Westin you were going from essentially one Marriott property in Perth to another one in Perth. How did this transition happen?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Between transaction?

**Benjamin Saunders**

Transition, sorry,

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

You mean from HR?

**Benjamin Saunders**

Why not? You know, the whole transfer process?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I don't remember. The transfer. I totally forgot.

**Benjamin Saunders**

But did you? Did you remember being helped in this process? Or were you was it on your own?

How did do you remember this?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I applied through Marriott career, which is the websites that's helpful, because you just click Marriott career and then you check. You check the location, and then just click search and or the position.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, yeah,

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

yeah. And it was really fast. It the whole process was very fast. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And yeah, do you do remember that maybe HR would have helped you specifically going to another Marriott property? Or?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I just remember. I didn't think that HR actually helped a lot. I think the only thing is, I put the references down from where I worked and they helped.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so just yeah, just the references from coming from another Marriott, but they didn't specifically help you. Okay,

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

yeah, the reference see, because at that time the Westin and Four Points management team knew each other very well. The FOM and Room Division Manager were very close so it did help a lot for the transfer.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. It makes sense.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

They just get the reference and just do a quick check. That's it.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. So the references helped you, but do you think that you could have had more help?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes, of course, of course. Especially at Four Points here, HR helped a lot. If you need any support, you can just go ask for help. So yeah there was more help at Four Points than Westin.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, yeah. And when you were moving from Westin to Four Points, could you have had more help as well?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes, as I said before just about more information and being more in process to know where things are going

**Benjamin Saunders**

And when you were doing your transfer did, could you have had more help in that sense? Because you said that they were not really the references help helped you. But you know, HR were not there. What more help could you have wanted?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes. As I know, the HR between two properties they have direct communications or emails or something that they can just say, remember, there's someone who wants to apply your properties or something like that they could do it. So this is the thing I wanted help from and that I didn't get. The open part where they tell me what is happening, the communication.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So if I understand you're talking maybe more communication being more involved in the process?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes, correct.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Yeah. So you felt like this was a lot of this was happening without you being included? You said that the references because of people were close together, that helped as well.

But yeah, ultimately, you want it to be more involved in this process, and more included within you know, transferring from one place to the other.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes absolutely, more included, and a part of the process so I know where my application is going.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, and so, then you arrived at Four Points, and then of course, this is another brand with different values different, you know, standards and everything. How did you how did you adapt to this?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Okay. Yes, same, the daily tasks they are totally different in between the position, and of course they are depends as well. To get used to because I feel like Four Points because they are an older hotel, they already had everything in place to best learn like SOP's, checklist etc so it was easier to get to know the task already. Of course also the peoples around me that helped me with this process.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, yes. So it was it helped that you had SOP's and trainings and that kind of thing.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yeah, all the peoples that are here around me. So it's fine. For me, it's very easy to just like, get in there into work. Yeah, like two weeks time to get used to everything.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So because now you've you've experienced moving around quite a lot from different positions. And you mentioned that when you were at the Westin, there were certain things that you know, that you were really happy with, like you were familiar with the hotel, you had great colleagues. So those were kind of factors that were keeping you perhaps from going to another hotel, how important were those factors when making a decision? For you?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I think it is. seven out of ten. Okay, if we measured in points.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So they actually they're quite important, if I understand for you.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yeah 100% super important

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so it has a huge impact on your decision.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Correct.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And so have you experienced other factors like these in the other properties that you were at that have impacted your decision? No just at the Westin so far So this was just when you arrived at the Westin, you found maybe a perfect fit between you and the hotel

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes, that's right.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So what made you move to Four Points if you had such a perfect fit?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Basically the position they were offering that was different. So as I said, I was a porter there and now I'm the GSA, so they told me to do the different thing, but sometimes Four Points because it's a four star hotel, they also do the job like the Westin does. So if you want me to choose again, I definitely would choose Westin instead of the Four Points, for the job and all the people and the city and surroundings, the management. But in terms of positions I feel like the Four Points is much more, it's much more better.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. So yeah, in terms of like you know, colleagues work management, you were really happy at the Westin, but the position was much better at the Four Points which is why you changed and that's why you wanted to go there.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes correct

**Benjamin Saunders**

So I understand your opportunity to grow was higher than the other factors to make you decide to leave?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes, correct.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. So is that the logic that you've been using to move around? Because you went from Sheraton to Ritz-Carlton to Westin. Have you always been looking to grow and move around?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Absolutely, yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And so because you've experienced different brands from Marriott. Now, you know, you've experienced, like four different brands. Looking ahead at, you know, the future what's coming? Are you interested in continuing to work for different brands? Or are you going to stay with one brand?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I still want to try different brands in the Marriott group.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, why is this?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Because, okay, I think I've done enough with Four Points. Like four stars hotels, I would try a different tier hotel. Again Marriott they have 4 tier hotels. I want to try the others. I want to try. For example, by sample getting my mind out I want to try W Hotel. Yes, I'm gonna try different tiers and challenge. There customers and the cultures are totally different.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So it's because the cultures in the hotels are different that you want to try them?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I mean in the hotel, their brand customers, values, cultures, they are all totally different.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And because obviously, you're going to be used to adapting a lot more to these new cultures and everything. How do you see yourself adapting every time? How are you going to manage this?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I, the only thing is, I really need time to get used to and and is the best? And most importantly, the second thing is, is the support. If you have enough supporting you don't need that much time, I think. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so talking about this supporting what exactly do you mean?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

People around you like, and people who, who would tap who tell me that what I'm doing right, what I'm doing wrong?



And also basically, you have to let me know the whole structure of the hotel, what is the ideas behind, the philosophy and the entire values. This is really important especially when i start something new.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. And would this be better to happen at you know, the start when you join in the onboarding? Maybe?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yeah, yeah. Especially at the start. and when I joined Four Points.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yes. Okay. So especially when you join Four Points, it was important for you to have a strong onboarding to really get used to everything.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And so, you know, now you're at Four Points. How long have you been working for Four Points?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Nearly two years

**Benjamin Saunders**

Wow. Okay. Are you looking for new opportunities at the moment? Are you looking for something different or

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Now, yes technically this is the last semester of uni, so after this I will be looking for new a new position.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yes. Obviously, you've worked for Westin and Four Points already in Perth. Have you considered working for Ritz-Carlton in Perth as well?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Maybe I'll try Aloft (laughter). Because Aloft is the sister brand of W hotel. Yes So I want to try Aloft and then maybe go W after.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And, and why wouldn't you try with Ritz-Carlton for example.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I've tried already.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so you've applied to...

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

But not in Perth you know already in Macau

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. And so, because you've tried it already, you're not interested in trying again.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Okay, if there is a position or opportunity for me to grow then yes I might go to it.

**Benjamin Saunders**

But otherwise, you want to go, you want to do something else.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I want to try another brand yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you will keep on trying other brands everywhere in the world.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes

**Benjamin Saunders**

Would it be in Australia? Would it be in the world?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

No matter doesn't matter.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. So yeah, so for you moving around with Marriott is very important.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes, it is yes. is quite important actually.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And yeah. So you will always use the Marriott network, you will always try different brands. And how you're going to experience because, you know, you've talked a lot about how you've also fitted well within one brand.

And you've fitted well with the colleagues, the management everything, how are you going to manage all of these things? If you keep on moving around different brands, and so on?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

It is just time and repetition. Like I said, I just need the time to get used to everything, and the help from the team at the start but after a while if I do this often there will be no trouble.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. Okay...

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I think this is what makes most sense..

**Benjamin Saunders**

you're just gonna get used to it. And you're always going to use this opportunity to grow and so on.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes correct

**Benjamin Saunders**

So, you know, thinking about the opportunities that are happening in Australia, you know, they're opening a lot of hotels over East at the moment. They're building, new Ritz -Carlton in Melbourne and Sydney afterwards. Are those kind of opportunities that you're looking out as well or not?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Ah, yes. In the east new property, I really want to try.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Yeah. So those are things...

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

I really want to go to Brisbane as well

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, yeah. And so when you would be moving, would you be looking at going somewhere where there's the brand that you want, or would you be looking at the city and then possibly the brand?

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

The city, I think the city is more important because I need to fit there and match what i like and the environment.

**Benjamin Saunders**

okay for you. And then once you're in the city, you will look to work for a Marriott property.

**Kuen Marriott Employee**

Yes, that's right.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Well, I think I have everything. Thank you very much for this Kuen, I appreciate your time this morning. I will be sending you a copy of this interview once transcribed for you to review and add anything if you like.

## **Interview with Marriott Employee 1**

**Benjamin Saunders**

All right, thank you very much for doing this interview with me. So yeah, just the first question, trying to understand how long have you been working in the hospitality industry?

**Marriott Employee 1**

More than 10 years for sure.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So where did you start? What was the career path?

**Marriott Employee 1**

So I studied Hotel Management. I did internship in a hotel. And then I worked in two more hotels after that. And then after that, I worked my family bed&breakfast for many years before working at the Ritz-Carlton, which is almost it will be two years in October.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Wow. So you said working in the other hotels? How did you find those hotels?

**Marriott Employee 1**

I found them through for uni. Yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And were they part of? Were they just independent hotels?

**Marriott Employee 1**

So they were all different Yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And how did you decide to work for the Ritz-Carlton?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Well, it's definitely the name, why I chose to apply. I applied for a few more position. But I was hoping for this one, and I did get it. So that's really good.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so it was the name that attracted you to work?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Even though I didn't know that much about it. It was the name first and then obviously, I found out much more about it.

But it was the name. I think everyone knows the Ritz-Carlton stands for and it's the top of the hospitality. You can think of the best hotel in the world. I would say 90% of people will tell you Ritz Carlton.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Did you when you heard about the name Ritz-Carlton. Did you know that it was also Marriott or?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Not necessarily, I think I would have come across that information so many times. But because I didn't work in hotels for such a long time, just working for family business, it's a bit different to just kind of get out of it. But um, I think it made sense. Pretty quickly. Yes. I was aware of it. I just needed some reminders, I guess.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yes. And now that you've been at the Ritz Carlton, for you said two years. And you know that for example, with Ritz-Carlton is part of Marriott. Does that bring any opportunities for you? What does that make you feel?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Like If I decide to live anywhere in the world, I could find a job with a Marriott again, definitely.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So would you would you use that opportunity?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Definitely. 100%

**Benjamin Saunders**

And how would you? How would you go about that? Would you be encouraged to work for another Ritz-Carlton or another property in Marriott? Or?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Well, definitely, I would go Ritz-Carlton with my first choice, because that's something I'm very familiar with now and this is what i know. But I believe it would open the option with all the other hotels, it would even give me more opportunity, because coming from the Ritz-Carlton and I think going into any other facility you would have a few less pluses than at The Ritz-Carlton

**Benjamin Saunders**

When you said you would choose Ritz-Calrton, because that's what you know what you mean?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Because I haven't worked for another Marriott property. And it's one of the best out of all the Marriott brands, Ritz-Carlton.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So would you say that it's because you're familiar with the brand standards, the values?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Correct, I am familiar with them now

**Benjamin Saunders**

And do you feel like that's an encouraging you to work for another Ritz-Carlton? Or do you think that this maybe only limiting you to work for Ritz-Carlton?

**Marriott Employee 1**

It gives me opportunity to work for any other hotel within the Marriott brand. 100 percent% It doesn't limit me whatsoever. But just coming from the Ritz-Carlton, I think it gives me even more opportunity within all the other brands.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so you said that this is something, knowing that Marriott has a lot of brands, that's something that you would use, you would be open to work at other brands? St. Regis or JW Marriott

**Marriott Employee 1**

Yeah. Correct.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So in general, are you open to moving around with your job?

**Marriott Employee 1**

If the opportunity comes, I would definitely think about it. I'm not thinking about it at the moment. So I wouldn't know how to answer the question correctly. But if you know what life brings, if there's an opportunity, you never know. Yeah, I'm definitely open to it.

**Benjamin Saunders**

For sure. I mean, it's more of you know, sometimes people are, for example, not open to travel or to move, you know, be an expat, kind of, but that's something you would be willing to do?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Especially coming from Europe and having family all around the world and moving a lot. So yes I would be more willing to move around the world in my job.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So when you're thinking of, for example, moving in your job, what are things that you're considering?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Can you repeat that question?

**Benjamin Saunders**

Of course. So for example, when you would consider, say, moving around with your job, what would be the things that you consider when moving when applying for another position? What would you be looking out for? Would you just be moving to another country?

**Marriott Employee 1**

That depends. So if the opportunity comes and they offer me, someone offers me the job. There'll be many factors, obviously in place. The position, the location... Definitely location, how close it is to my family or friends. And the position, what department, is it higher than I was working before, better salary... So many factors, I guess. Yeah. So it needs to fit into my lifestyle. I'm not 20 anymore. If I go away, you know, far from everyone. So of course those would be big factors when considering moving.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. And in terms do you think of, for example, where you are right now and your job? Would there be things that are keeping you from moving around? Because you mentioned, for example jokingly that you're not 20 anymore. So you're saying I can't move around? Would there be other things that are keeping you from doing that?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Other than the family? life?

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yes, for example?

**Marriott Employee 1**

No, no. So if I will, if that if I was much younger, and that. I think it wouldn't stop me at all, I would just be seeking to move and get better position, learn more get experience, travel.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, that was actually my next question. So you would move around for experience?

**Marriott Employee 1**

For sure, number 1 experience, travelling, meeting new people, and especially new opportunities.



**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. And so talking about moving around? Do you feel like when you have this idea of wanting to move job to feel like you're getting all the help you can from either the company or management?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Well, that's a tricky question, because I haven't been in that position. I could only tell based on what I've seen people moving to our hotel at the moment and what support they are getting. And it's not easy, but you do get the support 100% you can get the support from the team, the guidance team, I think, the biggest support here for everyone that comes on board. Either it's from a Marriott property from somewhere else, or just starting with a Marriott for the first time.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, that's interesting. So for example, coming from another Marriott, do you think that happens often?

**Marriott Employee 1**

100%. Just thinking about the front desk team now there's so many people that came from other Marriott hotels in around Perth.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So they used that network from Marriott to Marriott?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Yes, I think and I can't guarantee that but it must have been a big advantage at the interview as well. Because you know, you are coming already over the with the culture.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So is that something that you see as well as an advantage?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Yes. 100%

**Benjamin Saunders**

So in what in what sense? Would you see that as an advantage?

**Marriott Employee 1**

So you getting someone with the Marriott mentality, the culture already it's inbuilt, so you don't start already from the beginning. So its just getting someone already prepared, same in any job if you get someone with the experience in the same industry, It's an advantage. 100%.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And, you know, we spoke about you said, for example, the Ritz-Carlton has its own values and its own brands standards. And maybe that's different from, I don't know, St. Regis or the Westin. Do you think when you want to move from Ritz-Carlton to another Marriott brand, do you think that that's still an advantage to move to another brand?

**Marriott Employee 1**

I just coming from the Ritz-Carlton and what I got on familiar with until now, I think I can just bring, I think I'm confident enough to say that I would bring them something, of course you will learn from them, but I'm gonna bring them something that from the Ritz-Carlton culture, they're going to appreciate. I'm pretty confident with that now. Yeah, that's gonna be a plus for them. Obviously, I'm gonna learn and have to adopt. But I don't think we'll be any problems.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Have you explored or considered exploring other options with Marriott?

**Marriott Employee 1**

For the last year and a half I have been happy, so I haven't looked no.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And is that something in your life that you would do explore with Marriott again? Or would you go with another company?

**Marriott Employee 1**

I would, I would stay with the Marriott.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And that's because?

**Marriott Employee 1**

I'm just comfortable, I feel comfortable with it. confident.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And you mentioned that it would also help you with the fact that Marriott has a lot of brands and hotels.

**Marriott Employee 1**

Yes of course wherever you go in the world you can always find a marriott and always find some place to work at with all these brands.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so, for example, because, you know, you have you heard of the projects that they're opening up east, for example, with Ritz-Carlton, for example Sydney and Melbourne?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Yes, yes, yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So how does that make you feel?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Well, in my case, I'm not considering moving there. For now. I'm happy here. But just thinking in future, who knows what life brings? If I do decide, you know, there's more opportunity?

**Benjamin Saunders**

Can I ask you why you're not considering at the moment?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Because I'm happy here.

**Benjamin Saunders**

You're happy, in Perth, or happy in the Ritz-Carlton?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Happy being in Perth and at in the Ritz-Carlton Perth.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And what makes you happy to stay here?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Oh, my private life. So the combination of my private life and my career, it matches each other at the moment, there's no need to change this.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And if I may ask you about your career, what makes you happy to stay in the Ritz-Carlton?

**Marriott Employee 1**

I think just being in the hospitality my whole life and working in a family business in a small family business where you take care of the small amount of people, you cannot devote all your time to them.

And it's so personalised and then coming to the big hotel where we have 205 rooms and we have the same principle. It's just amazing. So it's just kind of doing the same thing, just on a different scale. But the principles are the same. I think that's amazing.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And you've identified to those principles?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Yes. Yeah. 100% and it a match between me and the principles of the company.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. Okay. And so because of that, that makes you feel like you found your fit with the Ritz-Carlton and that this is enough to tell you that at the moment, you are happy here

**Marriott Employee 1**

Correct yeah! Yes for sure, from here, but also but from the whole Marriott network. I think they have a really good network where, you can move easily and get supported.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so that would that would encourage you to make a decision to move.

**Marriott Employee 1**

Yes, yes. I mean, I haven't I haven't looked into it. But just based on my colleagues and what I've heard, I think it works like that. And I've heard so many stories, people moving all the time. Just recently, we got a lady from Brisbane, join us in the finance. And the process was really easy for her. She's got a good support so far. And she was coming from another Marriott property, but I'm not I can't tell you, I can't remember which one it was. I think it was W, I'm not sure.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so, when you hear of that, and how easy it was? Does that reinforces your...

**Marriott Employee 1**

Yes. kind of gives us a glimpse of security, you know, what the future brings? Yeah, I mean, even thinking going living back to Europe, you know, I'll be able to find a job easily. Okay, so thinking about like, thinking of home and like there's so many Marriott properties and like...

**Benjamin Saunders**

yeah, so that gives you hope that you as well, right, that you will...

**Marriott Employee 1**

I think I would be a good candidate for them. Okay.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Very interesting, your outlook in general, on the whole, you know, moving around mobility subject. And it's interesting to see you being interested in that you see that as an opportunity.

**Marriott Employee 1**

Not interested in interested that I would go for it, but if the life brings something that I feel confident and secure and that there will be opportunity for me. I just feel that even though I haven't tried, I think there won't be any issues.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And I just want to ask you, because I'm curious when you said about, you had matched the principles of the Ritz-Carlton. And you said that it's because when you were working in your, your family properties, you had those standards, and that they were maybe the same or very similar to the Ritz-Carlton standards.

**Marriott Employee 1**

Oh, they did introduce it to us on the preopening. Yes. So that's when it started, but through the job as well, the whole time. So we get, you know, we go through our little meetings, and we even had a training for few days. We get reminded of all that every day, and we live it every day, I think, yes, we try to. Not obviously on busy days, yes. So you get reminded every day!

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yes. And you said that having those brand standards is an advantage for you? to go somewhere else?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Yes. Makes me feel very confident. Yeah. confident in in the way that I would bring myself correct, and what the expectation is already, you know, coming from brand like this.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And if you were gonna go to maybe another Marriott brand, where the standards were different, how would you think that you would approach this?

**Marriott Employee 1**

I don't think the sensor would be different, they will be very similar. They would just need to be perhaps reinforced, or you would remind it, but standards would be the same. That's the thing. It's the standards are the same everywhere. Now, are they getting implemented? And do other brands follow and live by the standards? That's the thing, I don't know that right. But yeah, that would just need to be reinforced, I guess.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Do you think that when you're being taught the way, Ritz-Carlton does something? And for example, when you would go to W and this is how W do it? Do you think that coming from Ritz-Carlton, you would have an advantage going to that property where things are done maybe differently?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Well, there will be challenges, how that 100%. I think it will be advantage just coming with the experience. And I think we could just be advantage, obviously, you're gonna have challenges, you're going to a place where if you go to different Ritz-Carlton, you will have challenges because it's a different place. There's challenges everywhere. But I really think it would be advantage. And this all sounds amazing.

And, you know, easy, but obvious, not easy to do the job. Yeah. But just having that philosophy behind you to motivate you. I think that helps a lot.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. And you know, you're talking about the job every day. How important do you think when you're making a decision, like, for example, moving away? What do you think, are your connections with the job?

**Marriott Employee 1**

100% percent, not just here at the Ritz-Carlton, but everywhere, we had opportunity. When we opened this Ritz-Carlton to meet so many colleagues from all around the world, from the Ritz-Carlton and the other brands so you do to make connections and I mean, friends, obviously, they keep in touch. And well, now, due to this COVID time, we couldn't travel enough. But if it was normal, we would see each other even more and build those connections up as well. So you never know what the future brings, you know, you can move to one of those places. That's how it works. That's the beauty of this job that just having connections and knowing people.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And you know, so thinking about your decision, one day maybe to move to another place. Do you think that there wouldn't be things on the job here, that would keep you back?

**Marriott Employee 1**

I can't think of anything specific, But yes as I said before, I am happy here with my family and my friends and if I would move somewhere else this would change again and new friends, and my husband has to move as well and maybe I go further away from my family again so. I mean, there'll be many factors like, like I said, before, location, you know, the position, the pay, there'll be many factors,

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Yeah, no, it's been interesting. But I'm glad that you have outlook on the whole moving around. This is positive. You see...

**Marriott Employee 1**

I think it's amazing. I think just because at this stage of my life, I kind of want to settle. So you're looking for job, and the location to suit your lifestyle. But if, like I said before, if I was in my 20s, I will take full advantage of being part of a Marriott, and I will travel.

**Benjamin Saunders**

But why not now?

**Marriott Employee 1**

I just like I said, because of my current private life and settling down need a family. So it's a bit different.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yes. But even even with all of those things, would you not still consider it? Would you not?

**Marriott Employee 1**

Now depends, you know, depends. Depends what the situation brings up. But I will be a little bit a little bit harder than if I was younger, you know, yes. Yeah, obviously, it would just be hard. I would never say no, I'm open to like moving travelling. **But I think it just would be a bit harder.** So let's get a look. I don't know. We'll see. That comes. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Do you think there's anything you'd like to add to the topic?

**Marriott Employee 1**

No, I just, I think you should travel even more, you should go.

**Benjamin Saunders**

I'm planning to!

**Marriott Employee 1**

where do you plan to go?

**Benjamin Saunders**

I don't know, I have that same mindset as you that you know, the world is small. And that if you have the right opportunities, you can be able to go anywhere with your job with what you love. That's why I was asking you, you know, if you would consider things that would not allow you to travel when you mentioned, you know, being away from your family is hard. You said that your private life here the way you fit within your private life the way your job also, you're happy with your job. Those are the things but yeah,

**Marriott Employee 1**

I think everyone will tell you that. It obviously depends on where they are in their life. But because you can move your family with you. I mean, you can but you can't move everyone. **So yeah you have to make choices and that really does depend on a lot of things.**

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. Yeah, it was more I was wondering if you know, if you as a person also, there are things that you know, you personally, of course, everyone will tell you they have challenges with moving but what I was also I was picking your brain on you particularly as a person, how would you...

**Marriott Employee 1**

I think i would adjust easily. I was so used to travelling and being somewhere for a few years and then moving on. I think there would never be a problem for me.

It's just includes a few more people now. So yeah, that's the only thing Yeah. Like Melbourne sounds amazing. Melbourne and an opportunity that I could explore.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Thank you very much for you time during the interview, I really appreciate all the information!

**Marriott Employee 1**

Oh im glad I could help Benji!

**Benjamin Saunders**

Thank you very much for you time during the interview, I really appreciate all the information! I will send you a transcript of the text so you can have a look and let me know if you would want to add or adjust anything!



## Interview with Florian

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, thank you, Florian, for doing this interview with me. The first question I had for you was, how long have you been working in the hospitality industry?

### **Florian Marriott Employee**

I'd say around 15 years now.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And have you worked 15 years for Ritz-Carlton?

### **Florian Marriott Employee**

No for a group like Marriott group just Ritz-Carlton is the first one as Marriott. So it's been since the opening. So October 2019. And before I've been working more, more in a restaurant and bar, but like a small company in France, and I did work for in London for Hilton, Hilton Parklane for one year. And as a big group also work at the Stars Casino in Sydney.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So you work for the Hilton, that was a hotel, you worked for Ritz- Carlton now...

### **Florian Marriott Employee**

The Stars Casino was a mix for me between Hotel and in club like a nightclub, but we did a lot of training. There was a lot of training about all the policy with the hotel and casino. I don't know if he's related.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. And so so you've Is it okay to say that you've experienced a lot of moving around with your work?

### **Florian Marriott Employee**

Yes.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

And have you experienced this?

### **Florian Marriott Employee**

No it is interesting to see how the difference between my work has been different and the Stars and Marriott, we do have a lot of refreshing training different not just perform the work but like a general training about cleanliness, security and stuff like that. I will say that's a big difference between a small company or when you work you just do your work. And when you work for the group, that's when I realise it's like you learn a lot of things all around not just about your work, which I think is very exciting and I like this perspective that you can learn and you understand

more all the things going around is you you can tell that you work for international company who everything is involved not just your small business so that's what I discovered and that's why I like so all these group I work for it was just my last experience or when I was young he was more the small company and after once I discovered this in London I thought it was very good and that's why I keep now when I if I like to look for a new job. I like to try to see on there with a big company so I can learn more.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you've identified more to working for a big company like Marriott?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And now and is it okay to say also you said something about you know, the values of the company, the brand standard is that important for you?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Yes, it does it yes something value add and add value. It's like I say the extra training that you will not have if you work in a small company or events. I did work for like small clubs and bars that were very well organised so I still like I did learn a lot of there all my past experience helped me for my current job that is on the big company you can see that they ask you to be more organised is always something extra.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So how did you because, you said you worked in London, you worked in Sydney now you're working in Perth. How did you experience moving around from all of these places?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

I do like to move in different country and it was just that I like to discover new city and and yeah about life like, I met my wife, I was in working holiday in Perth first. At the time, my girlfriend we decided to move to London I did not move for the work. Yeah, that's not the work to made me move. It's more or less I wanted to experiment different city and once I was in a city I was 22 looking for which kind of job I could do.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. But now that now you're working in a big company. Do you think your perspective has changed? Do you think that now you would move?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Even if I'm more settled down, married and I got a baby I'm still hoping that now that I am in a big group that my next goal will of course be to grow and progress. I am supervisor and also I'm hoping to be a manager eventually you're even more in the future.

We also are will be still willing to move to another city or country to I won't stay in not specially Marriott will be happy to work with them or another group that in another city or country.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So now you say your perspective would would change right now you would be looking to move to another city but also thinking about your job and...

**Florian Marriott Employee**

if I have to move from a city, if I have to move from Perth it will be not because I cannot travel but more because I will have to find a job first. I will never move like I used to do when I was more young that I moved to a city and just find a job more like career priority so if I move on to a country or city you will have to be because I found a good job first if no we don't take the risk because also if you want to yeah that's why I won't it is more career priority so

**Benjamin Saunders**

Because you said take the risk, What did you mean? Would it be a risk, would you see it as a risk?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Yeah if I move without job because now I got some responsibility. I got a house and a family so im not on my own I cant just move and if I don't if I'm not working for few more, that's fine. I can just travel you know, it is not like that, I got responsibility so yeah, so I can't just decide to move and see what's happened. No. Yes,

**Benjamin Saunders**

Absolutely. And so you said it you were not sure if you would stay with Marriott or if you would go with another group. Why is that?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

I do like Marriott, but I am always curious to see, I do like the group but for me I'm not only going to work for them. If there is another opportunity even in Perth with a company, big company with an opportunity, job opportunity. Now I won't progress in my career so if there's a good opportunity for this company which can be another one I will be happy to move that not my I will not stay just because it is Marriott. Some people I know they really like one brand and only want to work for one brand. For me I'm more career focused I would say and I'm happy to move in a different company.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Is that because you haven't been convinced by your growth with Marriott or is it because you just think that you would have more opportunity with anyone?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

By nature I'm curious and I always like to see different so yeah, maybe it's I just see for me it's not like one best place to work is always is good to see the same if I move it have to be a new work challenge. Yeah, isn't that I'm not convinced but just yeah, just opportunity if I can have better like I like my job that I believe I cannot I still can have a better job with a new challenge new responsibility.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, yeah. And you know, when I'm when we're looking at the Marriott brand, for example, just one company there's Ritz-Carlton as a brand but there's also other brands, have you thought about them as different opportunities?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Yeah, eventually, like I saw right now I will be happy to move on as a challenge. Right now with the situation I'm not playing right now to move to another country for a hotel. But yeah if the Ritz-Carlton, like luxury hotel and everyone talk about how the brand is very strong. The same is like for me, so like I will be happy to move for another company for Marriott or for another like other brand. But yeah, I did see like St Regis or Pullman, sorry not Pullman but W, whatever. I still, I will still be more proud to work for a five star luxury hotel. But I could also, i will take time to see an opportunity if it's a good opportunity, even if he's a hotel, four star, It will not stop me if it's a good opportunity for my own professional career.

**Benjamin Saunders**

I understand and I'm curious, because you said, it's clear for you you're focused is your career and your aspirations. But you said you also identify to the type of service you know, the five star service that you've learned is that something that you are because you've learned to be...

**Florian Marriott Employee**

It is because I am proud always, even when I work in some restaurant, or I worked a lot in a nightclub as well. Always make me just proud to work for a good brand that I can be Yeah, I work for this company. I'm proud of work too.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, yeah. And so, now that you have this sense of, you know, of what you've discovered, what you've learned, you would want to keep on applying that throughout your career

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Yes absolutely

**Benjamin Saunders**

Interesting and so you want to be able to combine this type of service and your career progression with also possibly not now because of COVID but later on moving around is okay and so you will be with your family you will be pro doing this?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Yes absolutely, after if i believe if we move it will be only for a few years. We are happy in Perth at the moment and with the moving of the family, maybe in a few years when everyone is older but I would still like to do it for a few years.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Do you think it would help your career to move around?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Yeah i think so to see different country yeah i'm sure it will.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so, there's been a lot of talk recently about a lot of projects that are happening with Marriott for example you know Ritz-Carlton opening in Melbourne there's Aloft opening soon, there's Moxy in perth, are those the kind of opportunities that you are interested in with regards to moving in your job?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Could be yeah, I keep my eyes, as in the hotel like a newsletter so always interesting about hotel what's happening around then yeah I could even move from my city if it is a new good challenge around...

**Benjamin Saunders**

so it wouldn't be...

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Could be Marriott but like i said i work for Marriott right now i'm happy to it everything's going well but that's not because it is Marriott, it will not stop me or we don't feel bad if i go in another hotel which is not the part of the company.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Nice yeah i understand of course and i just want to talk about you know you said there was you were considering a difference between when you were younger where you could move a lot and there was there was no risk you said that you were a little bit older and you had other things there were certain factors that were keeping you from moving could you tell me a little bit more about that those factors you said that influenced your decision

**Florian Marriott Employee**

The pay i will not move for even if yeah it will be the most of them like if i have to move it will be for at least the same salary and more exciting so right now i'm making about the room service which is good but in Food and Beverage there is a lot of things so i would like to look after a different outlet that's why as well sometime I would like because on this hotel when you were in charge of one department you will just in one department and i saw some add about different

hotel because it's smaller hotel so you can look after different outlets if your supervisor assistant manager and i think it's very it's nice even if he's like like a smaller hotel but you have an overview of different outlets

**Benjamin Saunders**

Exactly I was just wondering you know if there were things maybe either in your job or in your personal life that would challenge you in making a decision about travelling you know, about moving if there was things that were keeping you back for example?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Okay yeah if there was no COVID, it will be like better pay and exciting challenge the new hotel are very good position you have to be combined like few and of course if he's a country still how yeah **i will plan also is my wife and daughter how we will move in, like we got a house so we'll have to pay some paperwork** but i'm not I know paperwork is can be long anything but if it's a you have to be a good opportunity if he's like just the same we don't take a risk for you have to be talk about and make sure it's something that is not something we do it's like okay next month we will like next week yeah

**Benjamin Saunders**

I understand absolutely and thinking about you know future opportunities and you have said several times that it could be with marriott but it could be with another company if for example, you found a good opportunity how would you experience your whole moving would you feel like it would be a good experience from this hotel to another hotel or not?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Yeah i did learn a lot here like i will leave with like happy with my experience i did with the Ritz-Carlton and in Perth, I did learn a lot and i met a lot of contacts. Actually one of the things I will remember the most on so far since i worked there it was the first we had like 10 days. Every Ritz-Carlton on the opening is like 10 days countdown. 10 days so there was manager for different Marriott hotel in Asia who came here and trained us And he was very interesting like to be trained from different person people and I still have some contact with them. So I actually eventually like had a good contact with one F&B Director in Ritz-Carlton Bali and one in Japan. So I was like maybe I could email them, text them eventually they could have help me for opportunities so yeah

**Benjamin Saunders**

So and yeah in that sense you will be using contacts contact...

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Contacts that I discovered here yeah Yes. I will try because I think contact it helps, it is always helpful to find a new job. Yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And do you think that so you would have those contacts to go to maybe Ritz-Carlton Bali or in Japan you said do you think like he would also have the support from here to help you move?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

I don't know. I never talked to them about that because we always too busy the people above me. I wish, I will say I wish but I am not sure.

**Benjamin Saunders**

In what sense do you think that they would be they would help you or do you think that they...

**Florian Marriott Employee**

I wish but I feel, that's what my issue with the Ritz, they are always like busy with other things so I feel sometimes they forget about me. I'm not the priority of everyone but even in this hotel, I wish I could grow faster and I deserve to but it's not happening right now. So a lot of dissapointing but my work that I hear a lot that I'm doing a good job that I deliver as well. But I did ask, how and what can I do to be promoted and be assistant manager but I never really have a clear answer. So it's very disappointing and frustrating but that's what it is right now and so

**Benjamin Saunders**

And is this making you feel like you want to therefore leave or does that make you feel...

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Yeah and make me feel I'm looking around which global other opportunity I know it's kind of sad because these opportunity in this hotel but for some reason yeah it's question me actually like to if I'm not good enough yeah it's make me feel are looking around not determined because I've seen a lot of things that is good there so I'm I'm aware that it's I still have a lot of good thing this hotel so yes I realise that if I would move to another hotel in Perth, the pay, and the position would have to be better.

**Benjamin Saunders**

But regardless, you feel a little bit maybe frustrated about this the fact that you're not being supported maybe...

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Yes, I do feel frustrated. And somedays it is very annoying in some other day I am like all these things are ok and I actually like my job, is not too bad and I still enjoy my work but it is it I feel like that's bad because it could be so much better and more motivating. But yeah, that's what it is.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah so for example what more would you need?What would you like to have?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Because I mean also right now I'm in room service and have been since the beginning. Before this hotel, I never working in room service. So it was very exciting at the beginning to like learn and everything. But now I've been for one year and a half in room service. Of course I can still improve my department but I fell like is always the same like basically in the last six months I never learn anything else in service. So I'm someone who need to learn new things. And I know that a lot of things I could learn but like a new system like this Opera system I never I know is there and asked about that is a lot of things that could be trained, but so far, I just Oh, yeah. Sorry. You need to we need you in your department. Like we need to find more people to support you. And so yeah, one day we'll help you like since six has been also like your more six months that I've been Yeah, you we will have a good future. Like we believe in you. You're very good. Like just be patient, but I do I am someone when when I say something, I do it and I've been disappointed in all these talking and so far, nothing happening. And I fell like it is just peoples say hey, we help you in advance. I'm just doing the thing. So it's been disappointed about people talking and don't do it where they

**Benjamin Saunders**

Of course. And so, thinking ahead about how let's say that some people could better help you what what would and how would you be better supported with your career growth? What could people give you to support you better you know, our

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Like more training like so like training I've been asking to train on the opera system because I have no idea. I would like to learn about opera system. Micros, so I know how the system is to order the food in a system but even in my department it is like so many mistakes on Micros who make all work more difficult and I would like to be able to fix like learn about micros, so I could work more efficiently. So a lot of things. A lot of training make me more choice that I could learn like, here is a lot of possibility for me to see that on my department and like just working with at the restaurant or in banquet. There's a lot of work in this hotel. So far, I've always been told now for moment will happen but no, you just stay on your department. We need you on your department and ask a few times he's not like us once, I just feel like they have other priorities and moreimportant thing to do than us.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And this logic of you know, as you said, staying in your own department. Do you feel like this is slowing you down?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Like I still slowly tried, I'm improving like we still improving little bit the department that I've ended up I feel I'm complaining all day because I always liked everything to be perfect on my team I've been asked for also more support with some more personel. And I always feel they give me like people being rejected or the department end up in my department. Is very hard to work with. I could be better supervisor for sure.



Maybe it's also my fault. I think the responsibility that maybe I could do better because it's also my kind of my party the department is not as best I feel the people like so I don't know if he's some people say because he's Australia, a lot of people work in my department don't really care to work here. And he's very sad because they were like, I work a lot of places or people was happy to work there. And he I don't even know why we keep people who don't want work here and we don't care. They just show up sometime or not any is as well frustrating. Now you try to do your best and someone is like why are you here? Like why we keep these kind of people like

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, so the combination of all of those factors is is making you feel like there's maybe something better elsewhere. And in that sense, you could be finding a better opportunity and somewhere where you would feel more valued

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Yeah

**Benjamin Saunders**

People would value their work more so something that would fit more your personality as well

**Florian Marriott Employee**

And he's also that the contradiction about we do a lot of training at the Ritz to say we are to be the best we are the best and between what we've been told and what's happening is a big difference so and actually this has been for it's not only me like when we talk about the other people a lot of people saying this

**Benjamin Saunders**

The difference between...?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

What we've been told to do. Oh we are ritz-Carlton, we have to be the best we deal with everything we do have to be the best and when we do it and when sometime we missing something to do our job properly you're missing some stuff or this was like yeah this is like hearing as a difference the big gap between what we should be and what we are so of course it's a challenge is not everyone's fault and we all try to work on him to get better but still fill the gap is even my is sad to say I did my standard have dropped to be there like even if I tried not I realise it is still happening like you have no time you do your thing is like yeah but I was expecting way more that the standard would be higher. I also it is my fault like I blame the other one it's I should not be like keep pushing but sometime when these small things a lot of smaller thing you try to fix some of them but at some point is like I still have to do my job because if I want everything to be perfect is

**Benjamin Saunders**

So with you telling me all of this and then when you said for example that you wanted to work for maybe Marriott but actually you wanted to work for something else is it because you're experiencing all of those things here at the Ritz-Carlton for example that you're convinced of trying something else?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

He just to see, I'm curious to see if the other hotels if they're working. The thing is because little thing is kind of challenging because you can improve and I like improving the field also it will be good to work in the hotel and see how they do differently. Maybe we like to see Oh, that's interesting. Maybe we don't like yeah, they will and see how i can improve because i really like to go anywhere i've been working to see how i could improve the efficiency the quality and everything, everyone in some way i got to experience

**Benjamin Saunders**

It has been amazing, an insightful interview about the points you mentioned but just just to conclude kind of talking about you know you mentioned a lot about your experience about moving around an how you have experienced this and now you've talked about also you know the challenges here and why you would go somewhere else and what you would consider do you think there would be anything you would want to add on these points

**Florian Marriott Employee**

No for me it's always I need to learn and I need a challenge to grow if no like i know it's been one year so we could, some people who saw you could say have to be more patient but i feel i've been patient enough like yeah that's right i'm just turning around, going in circles, so sometimes i feel okay at least i got good hours but this is actually bad this is actually sad to say you stay in one company because when you have good hours so sometime i feel I convince myself that I am happy and that this is a good job and nice hours bur still I have the feeling that I could be doing more with my life and more in this hotel, to have a change of job

**Benjamin Saunders**

Or a change in general?

**Florian Marriott Employee**

Yeah to change and to like yeah i just need to have a new thing in my life

**Benjamin Saunders**

Absolutely! Florian thank you very much for your time today during this interview. I will be transcribing the interview and will send you a copy for you to review and possibly add anything should you wish to do so!

## Interview with Joan

### **Benjamin Saunders**

All right, Joan thank you very much for doing this interview with me. First question I have for you is how long have you been working in the hospitality industry?

### **Joan Marriott Employee**

For Hospitality industry, I would say I've been working for the last six years. So I would say hospitality as its official hospitality. I mean, always working with my father because he has been running a restaurant for very long, but mostly unofficial, I never had a contract. I was working to help support the family, but never like I thinking that it could be my career in the future. I think thinking that it could be my career in a future was since I moved to London. That was about five years ago, more or less. Yeah.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

And who did you work for in London?

### **Joan Marriott Employee**

London, I start working for Corinthia Hotel. It's a European, it's a Maltese brand company. And they have very high quality hotels, in few capitals in around Europe. Not overseas. They got they got overseas, some in Lebanon, and now they start to go into Qatar and New York. But that's still not official that they need to to set it up not contracts. But yeah, it's a nice European base company.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Yeah. So you've been working for a different hotel companies since?

### **Joan Marriott Employee**

Since then, I started working for different companies, when I arrived to Australia. My idea was to start working for Marriott Hotels, back in London. But by the time I wanted to make a change, we knew we were coming to Australia. So I didn't want to just leave my Corinthia hotel, go to Marriott for few months, and then come to Australia. So the first Marriott Hotel I worked for here in Australia was Sheraton, which is I think, the second tier of the luxury brand. And then I moved to Hamilton Island working for Qualia or Hamilton Island enterprises, which is like company just owning the island. And then here at Ritz-Carlton again, okay.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. So, when you move to Sheraton, what was your responsibilities?

### **Joan Marriott Employee**

I was in Sheraton, I started working for the room dining department. That was on the contract on the interview, they said, I will be focusing more on room service, then. When the time was, I would say two weeks past.

One of the coordinators during the night time during the night shift was about to quit. And then they offer me if I will take over his role not officially not by contract, but at least to do this to develop and get me more speed with the paperwork and everything. So I was a nighttime coordinator from for room service

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you because you said you wanted to start working for Marriott? Why did you have this wish?

**Joan Marriott Employee**

I wanted to start working for Marriott, because when I realised working for big companies, hotel wise, you've got a lot of benefits as well, a lot of opportunities to work while you travel is something that with my partner have been doing for a while I moved to UK, she moved to UK, eight years, nine years ago, then we decided to come to Australia. And our main point is to go to United States in the future. So I know Marriott is a big company. And it's an American company and is very big in US. So I wanted to start working for them prior going to United States and I think either Europe or here in Australia would be a nice chance to get involved in the company in early stage.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. So you have this desire to use Marriott as a point of network to go about...

**Joan Marriott Employee**

um, at the beginning was more about travelling and getting easy access to a nice employment like because Marriott employs people in a very good conditions. But then I realised I could even develop my career for the future in a Marriott property because I've, I've seen inside of the company, they, they like to promote people, rather than hiring people from outside. Even if you have to change from one country to another. I think Dario (GM of Ritz-Carlton) is one of the examples that he came from overseas as a hotel manager and he came back to Perth to work as a general manager and the company allow you to travel around the country. So like transferring your, your role from one outlet when others so I think it's a good chance for me to learn in different countries as I'm travelling and then when I'm going to be focusing in one country actually, for the rest of my life. I can just develop my career in that place.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you mentioned starting from a Marriott perspective with Sheraton.

**Joan Marriott Employee**

Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And then you went to took a pause. You went down to Hamilton island and then you came back to Perth at the Ritz-Carlton.

**Joan Marriott Employee**

Yeah correct

**Benjamin Saunders**

So how did you experience this transfer process?

**Joan Marriott Employee**

The transfer process was good since the very beginning, we knew about Ritz-Carlton in Perth. It was something that we really wanted to come here to work. So one of our ideas was just do a road trip and pass by Perth, all the way back to the east coast. But when Daniel, our colleague was talking about the Perth Ritz-Carlton, we started taking seriously to stop in Perth and just work at the hotel. For me the transfer, transferring terms of difference in between Sheraton and Ritz-Carlton are quite different as well, because of the part of the country you are, I think, maybe do Queensland and Western Australia, hospitality wise, they work kind of different. It's not the same atmosphere. The transferring between Sheraton and then stopping in Hamilton Island allowed me to work in a high end resort in a private island, which not many people do. And it's a very good experience to learn a couple of things that you'll know even about yourself how you can handle to live in Island. So I enjoy quite a lot. And I don't think there is much difference Marriott wise in between Sheraton and Ritz-Carlton.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So there's no difference in what sense?

**Joan Marriott Employee**

In what sense is, I would say about expectations. I think Marriott is a big company and it doesn't matter. If you are in a Sheraton, in an AC hotel, or in a Ritz-Carlton, the guests expect the best of the best. For the category for the start for whatever, the much the more you can do the better. In terms of budget in terms of resources, obviously, I could see a big difference in between Sheraton and Ritz-Carlton. Sheraton trying to be the best they didn't have the biggest budget, or the biggest resources to allow you to be the best. In Ritz-Carlton, you ask for something and the next day, you might get what you asked for in terms of objects, resources or glassware. Or if you want to change the menu for the cocktails. They have a little bit more range with budgets. They do work with that

**Benjamin Saunders**

In terms of how you as an employee felt working for Sheraton and now Ritz-Carlton, have you seen a difference?

**Joan Marriott Employee**

I did. I did because back with Sheraton. For me in that moment. Sheraton was like a high end hotel for Marriott as well, especially on the places in the Gold Coast located. It's a kind of family resort. But then they have different.

I'm gonna call them gold standards, because we call them in Ritz-Carlton models, but they don't have that many, or they don't really have guidelines, as detailed as they have in Ritz-Carlton. And it's something that for me, brings a big point, like having a workplace with very detailed guidelines, allows you to work much easier. And for me that freedom, that we could have probably in Sheraton and that you could do whatever you wanted, because there were no rules that is strict, you are limited to something than here that you really have something on a paper that you have to focus to. It's a big difference.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, and so which one do you prefer? Are you more, did you identify more to the processes of the Ritz-Carlton or the ones at the Sheraton?

### **Joan Marriott Employee**

With the Ritz Carlton 100%! I think I like to have more things on the paper than then you can get recognised with like the golden standard. So the three steps of the service or the motto for example, there was no moto, well there was a moto back in Sheraton but no one really use it. They didn't make that much stress as they do here for example.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So when you transferred from Sheraton to, you went somewhere else but you wanted to stay with Marriott, talking about the whole change process, the support that you got, were you supported or helped in your decisions to move?

### **Joan Marriott Employee**

100%, 100% when I moved when I was about to move out from from Sheraton, I had a word with the HR manager. And I asked her like, Look, we might be moving to Perth, we might be moving to Sydney, just in the future. I would like to know especially in my kind of contract, which is the temporary contract for a working holiday visa, if I could get support from you guys to start in a new place. And they 100% said they will help us with that. Then a week after we arrived to Perth, I sent her an email like Hello, we are in Perth, we would like to start negotiations I would say with the Ritz- Carlton. And then pretty much without even answering the email. I got the call from Ritz-Carlton to start the interviews. And then later I found out they received an email from Sheraton human resources that they should highly, highly recommend to hire us for for the Ritz-Carlton. So even even almost even without asking. They contacted human resources here to start those hiring process. I would say yeah,

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. And so talking about this new hiring process, because of course, you will used something different working for Sheraton and how have you experienced the whole process of working for another brand and Marriott?

### **Joan Marriott Employee**

In terms of the hiring process was kind of the same in terms of all the questions we were asked was exactly the same for Sheraton, then for Marriott, for Ritz-Carlton.

That's why probably when I say Marriott wise, both hotels are pretty much the same. Because of the recruitment process for the same for Sheraton and for Ritz-Carlton, I had to go to two interviews in Sheraton was with both supervisor and manager at the same time, he had awards with three managers in three different times. But at the very end, the questions they asked, were pretty much the same. But I found much, much faster and easier, the processing time here in Ritz-Carlton, perhaps because we were helped by Sheraton human resources to get this process done faster.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you felt like there was a lot there was a lot of support...

**Joan Marriott Employee**

Yeah, Yeah. 100%.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And, and because you're talking about how you really noticed there was a difference in the values and the standards at both hotels you had worked in, when you joined Ritz-Carlton, did you get enough support to get used to these standards to these processes? To get used to everything?

**Joan Marriott Employee**

Yes, I would say like 50/50, I know, we have been in the challenging times, and all the standards and these kinds of priorities has been little bit left on the side. I always like to get involved in those kinds of things. And I'd like to learn by myself as well. If I asked for something they definitely provided right away. Sometimes I would have liked them to provide it without asking, or by understand the situations we are right now. And that might not happen. I might start happening again in the future. But yeah, every time I wanted to know something about standards, brand values, or I just asked for them and provide them. I would have liked them to help a little more at the start of the process, when we joined the hotel to get used to everything.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And focusing, I just want to talk about, you know, your experience when you were working at the Sheraton. And when you made the decision to move because you wanted to do a switch. Were there things that you were considering when moving things that were either like going to help you move or things that were keeping you back from moving perhaps, what what was on your mind

**Joan Marriott Employee**

For my situation is a bit special because we got a six months contract like cap that we cannot work more than six months at the same venue. So that in a way forced me 100% to leave from Sheraton if I would have had the chance to stay in Sheraton much much longer, I would have taken for sure I would have stayed at Sheraton especially because of the lifestyle I was having

back in the Gold Coast. At some point hospitality sector we're having stable schedules which is kind of hard because you always don't have the same day off etc. And in the Gold Coast is something that I had an I was valuing that much, much higher than perhaps leaving the place and go for a new adventure to Perth. But then when we definitely knew we had to leave, coming to Perth and stop here because of the Ritz-Carlton was kind of must do. So yeah, I think one of the things, on a daily basis, I would have stayed in Sheraton because of the lifestyle on the way of wanting to work for the high end brand. The Ritz-Carlton, move me a little bit more to come here to Perth. Yeah.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. And what would what would be things that you would be considering when making a decision to move.

### **Joan Marriott Employee**

I would say now after trying, for example, the living in Island, on a high end resort, I would say the location of the venue where you are going to work obviously, if it's in a city, I think it's much likely that I would accept it especially because there is much more things going on in the city what you can do on a daily basis. I like to go for climbing and I'd like to go to the mountain as well. So a little bit of is not going to be isolated like what happened to me back in the islands, even though he was in the Marriott resort. They got a fair salary. I would say I know there are you, for example back in Sheraton. We didn't get paid penalties. Don't ask me why I have no idea about here in Perth. Daniel, our colleague told me that they were getting paid penalties on a weekend that perhaps was a challenge because I like to work every day of the week. And I'd like to work on the weekends because when you get a day off on the weekend and you go somewhere and it's overcrowded of people. So if I like to work on weekends, and they're gonna value that and they pay a little bit extra, I will take it as well. And and I think it's about as well. The, I would say the volume of guests that you've got if you go to a place that you know it's gonna be kind of dead and you don't have a guest to to come on a daily basis and you're gonna be like a boring year. I won't do it if you come to a city. So vibrant city, plenty of guests coming every day in and out, and you've got plenty of things to do. I love that kind of thing and choose that

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So those are the things definitely to consider.

### **Joan Marriott Employee**

Yeah.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Um, when you were, when you learned about, your first point of contact with Marriott was Sheraton.



**Joan Marriott Employee**

Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

When you learned about at least all of the processes, at least, most of the things you said were the same. When you moved to Ritz- Carlton, did you consider having all of this with you as an advantage? Or did you also think that maybe you were also trained in a way just for one type of brand...

**Joan Marriott Employee**

No, no, no, no, I think, as I said, they are inside of the Marriott company, and they share many equal things are knowing them in advance, perhaps allowed me to learn a little bit faster from Ritz- Carlton. Obviously, working for two different kinds of high end, hotels, Sheraton was more like a family resort. And Ritz-Carlton is more like a business place. There are few things you need to adapt, you need to change. But obviously, having pre experience in a Marriott brand helps you 100%. Yeah, more than not even working for them before. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yep. And it's good. So now that you're with the Ritz-Carlton, you're obviously discovering a new type of brand and a new type of service. One that you said perhaps you've identified more with, because you said the gold standard, I think, so moving ahead. Is that what you're looking for now to be able to identify to all these things mentioned when you're going to be moving?

**Joan Marriott Employee**

Yes, I would say definitely, because I've been having already a chat with Lauren (F&B Director) in this case, and she knows that at some point, we're gonna have to leave the property because of the six months cap. And I asked her like, Look, if we move to the States, at some point, I would like to keep attached to the Ritz-Carlton, not just the Marriott company. If I could be working for Ritz-Carlton in the future, I would 100% do it rather than going to another because from Ritz-Carlton, you cannot move to anything as luxurious as they are, you can go to W which are kind of brand new, our little you started few years ago, and they are a bit more modern, perhaps in the way they do the things they might not have those Gold the standards and that kind of guidelines. Yeah, 100% that will go to Ritz-Carlton again, if I would have to consider moving somewhere else in another city.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so I think you've answered this already. But I want to understand so you say that you would stick to the Ritz-Carlton.

**Joan Marriott Employee**

Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And why is that exactly?

**Joan Marriott Employee**

Because I feel recognised on the way they do the things. As I said, how they put everything on paper, they and they make the stress on learning their values and their steps and how things should be done. Especially the way they they, they allow you to walk with a guest they got these, how they call it a \$2,000. empowerment. I never seen that in my life like no, in any place. I've been told you got at some point \$2,000 to invest in a guest if you want to do it and really give them like a wow moment. That is how they call it in here. That just blew my mind. At some point when they in the induction they mentioned it I could not believe it is something that...

**Benjamin Saunders**

so that identification now that you have to Ritz-Carlton you want to follow so if you move again with Marriott, you will only look to go to a Ritz-Carlton?

**Joan Marriott Employee**

I'll try my best to do that. Yeah. Obviously, I'll need to put everything on the table. And as I said before, I need to see how the city I'm moving is if they got a Ritz-Carlton, if I would have to choose in between two cities, let's say lifestyle is gonna be the same. One of them has Ritz-Carlton and the other does not have Ritz-Carlton. I tried to move to the Ritz-Carlton one.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. And so because we're talking about you've already addressed this, with, obviously, management about you being able to move what kind of support have you been getting?

**Joan Marriott Employee**

If not the same, even better than what I got back in Sheraton. I was speaking with Lauren, our food and beverage manager and she was more than happy. She said, whenever I'm moving to a new place, just let her know in advance, and she can arrange a transfer to a new place. Obviously, if I'm moving to a city that he does not have a Ritz -Carlton, she will try the best to get me into another Marriott property. If I move to a place where they have a Ritz-Carlton, it would be probably even easier because she has been working for other Ritz-Carlton's in the world. So yeah, so yeah. 100% support from the manager, of course.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So it seems like the support is obviously clear, like you're getting support for transferring people are helping you but there, if I understand correctly, you were saying that you were missing maybe a little bit of that onboarding process where you know, people could help you more and getting used to the standards, the values helping you in that direction. What exactly were you looking for? What exactly would you need from these people to help you?

### Joan Marriott Employee

I would say that, as I said, the values and the gold the standards probably to put them in practises on daily basis. I know it's something that they sometimes stress a lot that we should know them and we should be involved with them. But then on a daily basis, and I say again, it might be because of the circumstances we live right now in the world, they don't really put that much stress and I cannot see that reflected on the entire property. I know it's everywhere hanging on the walls. It's everywhere on the tables on the on the daily run sheet we got every day a different gold standard. But then I see things at the hotel that sometimes don't match with the gold standard we have and no one does anything to to fix them. And I said probably because there is no enough people working at the hotel. No, not enough colleagues not enough time to do that. Or because now right now they are focusing on a different way more trying to survive on these weird times we've got than if we would be in a normal circumstances. Yeah.

### Benjamin Saunders

And would you need any specific help from specific support from HR that sense? Or from your management teams?

### Joan Marriott Employee

Probably a little bit more of an initiative from them. Like other come on a daily basis to the department to see how things are going. Where are we missing some things or try to get involved. Not just we are at the office come to visit us if you need anything more about, see them around the hotel, giving a handle just asking if we need anything else? Because obviously if I'm going to HR and I ask them for something, they provide it right away? Yeah. But the fact that they have to go to HR to ask for it makes me wonder why they don't come to my outlet to see if everything is fine. In therms of those standards, I think that especially at the start, during introduction and the first few weeks, we could have a lot more help from management about how we are doing, how we are adjusting and following the new standards. For me, I was trying to understand all these new processes and if I ask HR they will help 100% but If they could also follow us and make sure we are well adjusting this would be better.

### Benjamin Saunders

Of course yes I understand. And in terms of, you know, obviously, you have to move soon. So you've approached management for that. Have you actually been approached by management? Or have you? Did you know that there was a possibility for you to transfer before it was that open?

### Joan Marriott Employee

I had a chat. very brief with Lauren, and Robin, which was our ex manager about when the time comes and I have to leave, we will see if there is anything they can do. For us. There are many, many other cases the same as me that we got the six months limited. They know there might be nothing they can do so on a transfer wise, yeah, they might just give me a hand, probably I'm just thinking he might not be 100% of transfer because it will be a different outlet and a

different contract. I finished with Sheraton, I took a little break, and then I started a new outlet with the support of the previous hotel. So I guess that's what they meant here. It won't be 100% a transfer, I believe but it would be the same if I need to go to another property, they will support me and help me as much as they can.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And I know you said that you've dedicated yourself to wanting to stay with Ritz-Carlton because now that you're in this process, you've trained you're fully aware of all the processes, you want to stay with them. Would you reinvest perhaps time and energy into going to a different brand again? Or are you set on staying with what you identify with?

**Joan Marriott Employee**

I think I could try my best in terms of brand. As Marriott corporate or do you mean moving to another group?

**Benjamin Saunders**

No, sorry in terms of staying with Marriott..

**Joan Marriott Employee**

I will try my best to stay. Because I I wouldn't mind to try something different if the scenario allowed me like, for example, if I'm moving to Sydney, I know they don't have Ritz-Carlton I tried to go to a W because I still I know it's a high end resort and I will help me to understand how another venue, another sub brand of Marriott works in the same kind of luxury level. If I would have to do it, I'll do it. If I could stick to Ritz-Carlton for a little bit longer. I wouldn't mind to do it. Yeah. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, that makes sense. Absolutely. I mean, the question I had for you and you said that it's it, it might not be relevant because you have your heart set on moving to the States soon, but you know, like, now Marriott are obviously expanding a lot of projects today in Australia, are those opportunities that you're considering as well?

**Joan Marriott Employee**

I know, on Australia is not more about what I want it is more what I can do. I know we serve purposes, they are quite strict. If at some point, sticking with certain management, they could allow me to stay with some kind of a sponsor visa. I will put on the table and I'll see the charges obviously Australia is a country I like a lot. The States is a country that I've been couple of times but I never lived permanently and I would like to do it as well. I might take a break, go to States work for Marriott overthere and then come back to Australia and work again for Marriott sure why not

**Benjamin Saunders**

But now now that you're with Marriott, you're set on saying...

**Joan Marriott Employee**

yes, yes, yes. Because I think that's where the company started and is what it has the most history from. And I would like to experience how this company in another side of the world works, because I think even though being the same company, and even though being Ritz-Carlton, and they say they have the same gold standards in every single hotel, I'm pretty sure the guest experience is much different from one side to another over the world. And I would like to experience that service how it is.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And no matter where in the world staying for Marriott, is this something that ultimately, you've decided, like you wanted to stay with one company? Or have you been convinced to stay?

**Joan Marriott Employee**

No, just I from one, one moment, I wanted to start with Marriott. Because once I started working for Sheraton, I realise about service they do the values and the benefits they offer as well around the world like worldwide.

And, and yeah, I just like it I completely 100% like the idea of being able to travel around the world and not just travel like, willingly travel, like they can even transfer you obviously, if you want to go somewhere else in the world, like most of the managers know, they have been in Asia Pacific, they have been in the States they have been in Europe, and they move around the world travelling not just for the sake of travelling, but for the sake of working in another outlet somewhere else in the world. And I think that's something really cool that not many of the companies out of hospitality world can offer when you work for a marketing company. They are based in one city and you have to stay in that in that city. And it's something that I like but I'm not convinced that 100% for me, I would like to stay with the company

**Benjamin Saunders**

Perfect. Joan, thank you very much for your time today...

**Joan Marriott Employee**

Of course, anytime

**Benjamin Saunders**

I will be transcribing this interview and I will send you a copy afterwards if that is ok, for you to review and possibly add anything if you wish.

## Interview with Fabrice

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Fabrice, thank you very much for being with me. The first question I had was how long have you been working in the hospitality trade?

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

I need to count now. On and off. I've been in hospitality for six years now. Okay, six, six years. I started. Well, my first hotel job was at 16. And I did, it was a summer internship, Well, not really internship, but summer two summer seasons in a Greek island, in Santorini. So I did more boutique hotel as my beginning of hospitality. And then I did that for like, two years. And then I came to the University and all sorts and it's only the last five years, I actually went back into hospitality. So yeah, I think Yeah, six years in total.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And so in the last five years, more or less, where have you been working

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

More so I because originally, I wasn't supposed to do or wanted to be in hospitality. My background is actually economics and digital background. That was my job. Like, I worked in a PR company after uni when I went back to London. And then it was only when I came back to Australia where I decided because my father was in hospitality. I decided to follow his footsteps, the change of career, lots of hospitality, like hotels that I used to work as some of the clients or my clients in London, kind of persuaded me that more hotels might be a good thing for me. So when I came back here to Australia, because I wanted to come back to Australia, because it's closer to the family and all sorts. So I decided, let me start my career in hospitality. And I think when I started, that's when I joined I joined Marriott. So I was at Four Points, Four Points, and Hyatt were my first hotels. When I joined back in 2015, or 2016. Yeah. So sometime that and that's when I met Francois, who, you know, now at Ritz, and that's when we kept in touch afterwards. And we managed to, to move around and follow each other wherever we went afterwards. Yeah. Okay.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So in terms of the Marriott network, that was Four Points was the first property you were at. And then...

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Four Points was my first point of my first hotel, Marriott Hotel that I've worked. And the longest that I've stayed, I did two and a half years over there. And then, and then I left and I joined Westin. I mean, I did so many. I mean, in terms of just Marriott, I went from Four Points to Westin and then Westin to Ritz-Carlton. So three of them I worked, I helped to be at Aloft during the opening, but just as a taskforce, so I'm not sure how you call it where you go and help out. Yeah. So yeah

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. Yeah. Okay. And so, when you started up Four Points, and then what made you decide to move to the Westin.

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

It's funny, because I've always had an eye for Westin when it was being built.

And I remember having a conversation with Francois was talking about like, it was appraisal, and we're talking about the future. And I was telling him well, the Westin is opening soon, there's something I've always wanted. And he kind of persuaded me to stay. I think there was only one year in, that was my first year Four Points. And then I stayed along. And then after two and a half years, I think I don't know, I think I decided it was time. It was time to go. I don't know, I felt that I had been at Four Points enough that it was a point where I needed to do something different and go up a bit the ladder of the star rating. So from a four star to a five star I try that out.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. So when that decision came about, how did the transfer happened? How did you experience the transition?

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

It was I mean, it wasn't really actually resigned, and then and then applied separately at Westin. It wasn't really an internal transfer. I think it was easier to do that way because I took a break from work for like a month, and which gave me the time to kind of like take a break, recharge my batteries and then start again, at my own pace. And I mean, when I applied for the Westin position, it was a club lounge position in I went I applied I got a call within the next two days and within within the week I got the job already because when I went and spoke to them about my qualifications what I did at Four Points there were already on board because apart from Aloft, they trusted anyone who worked at Marriott already inside to join. So it was easy for them to accept me already, given that I was already kind of familiar with the Marriott brand training and all the systems in place that we needed to learn as well at Westin, which was the same at Four Points. Yeah, so

**Benjamin Saunders**

That was definitely an advantage in your transition period from the Four Points to the Westin?

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

yes, definitely. I mean, the fact that all our E learnings and all that are literally the same, and basically the way, I mean, I think that a lot of people think that there's a big difference between service between Four Points, like Star, like between different star ratings were like Four Points and a Westin, for example, but it's quite similar. I mean, they all say, you know, customers priority, if the employee takes care of the employees, employees will take care of the guests, and is the same message everyone has. So it wasn't really a big difference.

When I moved from Four points to Westin it was just more luxury in terms of the surroundings and I guess the clientele, but the core message that t they wanted to you communicate between the employer to the employee was kind of the same. Yeah if I'm honest. Yeah.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And in terms of like, just thinking of your process from moving from Four Points, and what you knew over there to the Westin, were there any difference in the values and the norms that you had learned at Four Points and then when you move to Westin?

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Okay, well, yes, I mean, the difference was that Westin being a bigger hotel and a more with more facilities and more segregation of like, of departments.

So like at Four Points is, I mean, for Four Points is it kind of like a family, it's a smaller team, you only had your one food and beverage team, which took care of both the morning eatery, we call it the eatery. So the the morning restaurant and the bar, whereas the Westin, you had your own team for the lounge, your own team for the other lounge, the lounge where the lobby is and then their own team for the main restaurant and their own team for in room dining. So it was all everyone had their own team. Whereas like I said, Four Points was more, everyone did everything. So I could be doing the bar, and then the next day doing the breakfast, and then the next day doing room service, or just shuffle around throughout the day. So that was the difference, the main difference between Four Points, I think

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So yeah, so in terms of like, what the company actually stands for in terms of their, and everything, you didn't have much of an issue with moving from one to the other.

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Well, the thing is about what I liked about moving from Four Points to Westin is, like I said, the family value Four Points created, because it made you more aware of one another as a colleague, so that kind of helped me into going into Westin into caring more about my colleagues that I'm working with, and that you know, teamwork is important. Because at Four Points, you have to trust one another because we're such a small team, and you had to try and multitask and do all sorts. So it kind of gave you this, how you call it this strength in terms of being able to be more stretched in terms of your abilities to help within each department. And I think when I went to Westin, they saw that and that's when they kind of used me in terms of like helping around the hotel. So I wasn't just in club lounge, sometimes I was at Front Office, sometimes I helped out at the restaurant as well. So they kind of really appreciated that. I had this mindset of being very helpful and willing to help and not always stick to my own department like some were may be used to. Because it was that environment in that hotel in those type of hotels where you had so many while you didn't need to move because you were busy already doing your own thing with let's say room service, just stick to room service the whole day and then lounge the whole lounge so having someone finally come in knowing



already what to do like having experience in different sort of sections help them quite a bit going forward. Yeah.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

In terms of the values you mentioned. You said for example, the Four Points being a small team you obviously probably knew a lot of people there a lot of colleagues and you said it was this the family feeling. How much did that impact your decision and leaving that behind when going to the Westin?

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Well, I mean, for me, it was more. Wanting a fresh challenge. I mean, family they're there, I know that. I mean Perth is small. Like I mentioned, I knew Francois from Four Points. And then I knew that maybe one day, I would always work with one of them, which I did. He ended up moving to Ritz-Carlton in the end. And then I moved from Westin to Ritz-Carlton. So I guess, how can I say I mean, in a sense for me was also it wasn't really like sad, because I'm leaving family and then I will never have it again. I mean, like I said, Everyone has their own, you always build a family wherever you everywhere you go. But I knew that was Four Points.

Given that a lot of them like there is more Marriott's opening, I knew that one day, I'll be able to see them somewhere else.

Because I mean, not everyone stays. I mean, yes, maybe before but nowadays, not everyone stays in the company for a long time. There's always opportunities for them to try out that. I mean, I think that's the beauty of Marriott, they have so many hotels, and so many portfolio of different styles of hotels, which gives the opportunity for you to try and try out different different ones and, and just expand your knowledge of what you can. What you can learn from the different styles of hotels that you have. Like, I think there's another one being built. I think it's an, I don't know if it's a Marriott being built, or another one I forgot, or Courtyard, but there's couples, there's another one or some opening in the future, which you see, just see it's going to be 1,2,3,4,5, hotels soon. So yeah, there's always chance of movements all the time.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, of course. Okay, so then. So then you were at Westin, and talk to me about your transition process from the Westin brand to the Ritz-Carlton brand?

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

It all occurred, I mean I was very comfortable at Westin actually I wasn't really leaving wasn't really something in my mind, there was more the persuasion from old colleagues. So Francois being one of them, I had my sister, I have a twin sister, who was also in hospitality. She was at the Ritz-Carlton as well. And I had, I had quite a few colleagues. I had another old Westin colleague who moved to Ritz-Carlton, so it was a lot of influence from other people, that kind of changed my mind to go and try it out. And I mean, you never know when the time is, right. So I just decided then, when the pressure was on to push me to join, I said fine I'll join and see how it goes.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. And Was this the same as when you transferred to the Westin? Did you resign? And then apply again? Or did you do this at the transfer this time?

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

No, no, for this, this time, it was more of a transfer, it was more because I was actually was a full on. During my time at Westin I was, at the time I got employee of the quarter, **I had more responsibilities, and, you know, things were going well.** And I think it came at a time it was a little bit of friction, I think during that transfer, because I don't think Westin were prepared for me to go or ready to let me go because they, they wanted to I mean, I think it took one month for me to actually move from Westin to the Ritz. But end of the day, they they accepted my will of going and accepted that fine I did a lot for them and out of goodwill they will do it for me and **I mean, I didnt want to leave,** and I never leave on a sour note. I mean, I'm still in touch with them and in touch with a lot of my all employees and all of them are very happy and all of them always, always asking me if you know if ever in the future, I need a job, I will always come back. So as long as for me, it wasn't really, when I transfer I wanted to do the right thing this time because I wasn't at the point of time where I needed a rest or I needed to take a break or resign. So this time, I wanted to follow the process. So the process of transferring and going through the right channels, like HR and managers so that I don't show like an ulterior motive. I was very upfront with them saying that, you know, Ritz-Carlton, there's something I'm thinking about and so and so forth. I got the interview and all sorts and yeah, it took a month for them to finally allow me to leave.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

In terms of what you've just been saying about you being upfront with, I guess management and the people helping, how much support did you actually receive from your decision to move to the Ritz- Carlton?

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

The support from Westin or the support from the Ritz?

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Well both but to start with Westin?

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

**I mean, they were both positive.** I mean, Francois, I mean, he was already set to having me even before. Because I joined Ritz-Carlton A few months after opening. And Francois already was chasing me before to for the opening. But at this stage, I wasn't, I wasn't ready to go because I had, I think I was not promoted. **But my, my role became more of a supervisor role at Westin unofficially, and it was more I was kind of doing like, I kind of felt that it was it was too early to leave.** And I still have more had more to give to that company. So I think because like I said, I've worked in so many places I had, I gave Francois, like the option I say, Look, I know other people that can fill in for me, if you want, they're very good take them.

And so they, he actually employed like my sister and my other friend from another workplace to join him. And he always said that the missing key was to have me on board, and then there will be a complete team. So for the months that came, even from opening to then when I joined, there was about four months, we've always kept in touch, he was very supportive of the time that it took for it to become, you know, like accepted between Westin and Ritz. And I think Westin slowly realised that because it was not just an influence, just on my decision, it was decision because of how I knew other people. **And it was a decision, it wasn't an easy decision.** I think they are kind of they I think they respected, especially knowing that it was more also a fact that I wanted to go work with my sister at Ritz-Carlton that they decided, Okay, it's worth it. I think we'll leave you to go there and try it out. So they respected my decision here

### **Benjamin Saunders**

In terms of how you settled into the Ritz-Carlton way of doing things, how did that happen?

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Sorry could you just repeat that, you kind of cracked sorry...

### **Benjamin Saunders**

sorry, in terms of, you know, the way Ritz-Carlton approached things, how did you settled into their philosophy of work and their norms and their values?

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

**At first, I mean, I, I kind of knew what I was getting into, not because I was in touch with most of them telling me how things were. But because I already knew what a Ritz-Carlton was from before.** Like, I visited a few Ritz-Carlton like I visited the one in Japan, the one in Europe as well. **And so I kind of knew what I was getting into in terms of how they perceive themselves as a hotel,** how they perceive themselves as being beyond a even a star rating, like for them. It was I think for them is something that they kind of say that you can't really describe Ritz-Carlton, it's a Ritz-Carlton.

It's a unique working environment with ways of serving guests, which I mean, I was up for I mean, I've I've had so many experience in working in different hotels. I wasn't really scared to go into the unknown. **But yeah, I mean, I had the support, as well of all people and all colleagues and managers.** So it was fun and something

### **Benjamin Saunders**

And that really helped you... in your transition process?

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Oh, yes, definitely. I mean, of course, it helps when you know, people like this, it kind of eases you off. Knowing that you have that other person you can lean on and ask for help. Because when when you go to a new job and you don't know anyone, you're kind of like scared to ask for help or scared to make a mistake or?

Yeah, I mean to push boundaries, you don't want to hurt other people's feeling or annoy them or disturb them so and so forth. So yes, it was pretty, it was pretty comfortable. I settled in within the first week when I moved in the hotel.

**Benjamin Saunders**

With regards to possibly your transition period, when you move to the Westin from Four Points, then when you move to the Ritz-Carlton from Westin, could there have been things done differently? Would you have liked to see things been done differently to help you better in that moving period?

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

I think the communication between Yes. HR and everyone involved could have been a bit better. I must admit, sometimes we would not hear I would not hear anything for a couple of days. And one minute I would hear that it's Westin taking a long time and the next minute is Westin saying Ritz-Carlton is taking a long time and dealing with so and so forth. So yes, communication between the parties involved and the actual applicants so that I can know what is happening if it stalled or not. If there's a reason behind And then yeah it kind of makes you not worry unnecessarily, because then you would think, is it my fault? Or?

**Benjamin Saunders**

No, of course, yeah. So you want it to be maybe more involved in that transition period? To know exactly where things were. And then...

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Yeah, so I mean, if, if HR or being like, if HR communicates between each other, like, let at least let the person know, the update of whatever was being communicated, like what paperwork they need, or what information or source they need to, to proceed with the transfer. So overall I just wanted to be involved more in the new start.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, that makes sense...

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Instead of waiting itself, me asking, so what's the deal? What's happening? And? Yeah,

**Benjamin Saunders**

No, of course. Yeah. And then so, because then you stayed sometime in Ritz-Carlton. And I think I know that you're not working there anymore, because I would have seen you. So where have you been since?

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Yes, I left in end of October, I think.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, makes sense why I wouldn't have seen you!

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Yeah. And end of October beginning, man, my it's been, for me time is now so different now with COVID. That it is hard to pinpoint when exactly. But I think it was end of October. That's when I left officially Ritz-Carlton.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And why did you leave?

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

So I'm now at the DoubleTree by Hilton, the new one just across the road. So I mean, I think it was I mean, personally, it wasn't that was more of a personal decision, because and more of a safe decision. Because with COVID that happened, you know, everything was up in the air, you don't know, job security wise was what was going to happen and with what was at stake in my personal life as well. And I felt that being a new hotel that was opening and what was being offered was better for myself. So this time, the decision to leave was purely my own decision with no other influence, because I was joining Hilton, which I've never worked before, joining people, which I've never worked with before who I don't don't know, because they will hold now. It's a whole different network as a Hilton network. So yeah, I decided to take the risk and jumping into that just for my sake.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah. And thinking of your past experiences working for three previous Marriott properties. Did you feel like it was different moving into the Hilton process? Did you feel like Marriott had perhaps, trained you in a specific way?

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

I was the same, honestly. I mean, I think now, I think a lot of the companies follow what what each other does, in a sense. It was the same process you apply, you get the interview, there was no paperwork needed to to transfer, just the references. And that's about it. So it wasn't really there was no extra paperwork to do, to ask for Ritz-Carlton for a move. Yeah, it was just again, from one company to another with the reference, like as if you're applying for another job. Yeah, references and all that. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And with regard to the way you had been trained, and what you had incorporated in terms of, you know, norms and values, did you feel like bringing all of this to the Hilton was something similar was something different?

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

The core message, I mean, the core way of how they try and build themselves as this is the same. I mean, end of the day, everyone says that, you know, that the guest satisfaction is number one. And I think it's just different words that they put to convey that message on how you should serve the guests, that is all very similar, just again, different wordings and different ways of like, trying to, to, I guess make each other more different than one another. So a lot of like some of the words they would use in Hilton will be the same but different at Marriott but is all the same. There wasn't really much. I mean, I think I think coming in from a Marriott as well to a Hilton, I don't think should be a problem. It was more. I think the only difference would be if you had to learn, let's say a Front Office where you have to learn the actual system. That is a different system, about food and beverage, for example, like I've seen as the same, they use the same Micros machine to take their orders and everything. So for that shouldn't be a problem. And I think it all depends. Every manager has their own way of managing in their own ways of how they want to so but the core ways is always the same. I think it's just who is in charge and how they want things to be done. Yep, for sure.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And so you know you at the beginning of this this conversation you mentioned how Marriott are opening more projects in Perth, of course, but not just in Perth, you know, in Australia in general? Are those opportunities that you're looking into or having worked for Marriott previously or something?

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

No, I'm I always keep, always keep an open mind. I mean, I worked at round I worked in like at the Hyatt I worked at the Fraser suites and Marriott, and now with the Hilton, so it just shows you that it's not just one company I'm willing to stick to. What's good about it is that I kind of now know what's it like working with different brands, and I can now make a sound decision into it all depends on the project honestly, so how they sell it. And then if I think when I see the building being built, and when I see the actual read more about it, if I think it's something I will like, so that's one factor. And of course, you never know, it depends on if with Marriott and keeping, even though it's like now so many hotels is a bigger portfolio than Hilton, you will always find a feel someone especially in Perth, you will always find I think someone that you know that will go there. It also also depends on the network of people as well, that might then influence your decision like it did with the previous like with Ritz-Carlton.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you wouldn't necessarily stick to one company per se, you wouldn't stick just with Marriott or just with Hilton now.

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Well, loyalty is something that's always been like, like something that's spoken to myself and my dad. He says, you know, if a company treats you well stay, then you know and continue that bond you have between one another but I think now is all depending on the environment you're

in. We are in COVID-19 right now and everything is up in the air. Everything is you never know what's going to happen next day. I mean, look what happened with lockdown and everything. So I think for now it's more not about it's more about security more than anything. So if I can, if I can get job security, then yes, I will stay. And maybe that will be my loyalty towards them. But it all depends again, on what what where are we at in the current situation?

Yeah, I mean, in if we were, I mean, I mean pre lockdown last year, I wouldn't have told you I was going to leave Ritz-Carlton because the aim was to move here to help the team finally move forward in trying to build their reputation in Perth and try and, and finally compete with, well, there's not many with like the Crown Towers (biggest competitor in Perth) and all that and make a name for themselves in Perth. So that was the whole plan. But of course you never know. So then COVID happened, things change. So I mean, even going back on, I even when I left Ritz-Carlton, I told them that is not the end. You never know what's in the future. Maybe I will see you again. So yeah.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, at the time. Those were those were factors that actually encouraged you to move rather than just stay within the position like that insecurity.

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Yeah, yeah. Yeah,

### **Benjamin Saunders**

That's interesting. I was just trying to pick your mind before when you were talking about, you know, the evidence towards the support you had when you were trying to move because you've experienced moving from different brands and every time, at least for Marriott, you've stayed within the same company. And you've said that at times you've received support from the HR, sometimes you haven't, you've been missed out of communications, and so on. Yeah. Thinking at how this could have been done better and how your onboarding process at both the Westin and the Ritz\_Carlton could have been better. What are your feelings and thought process towards this? How do you think that this could be improved?

### **Fabrice Marriott Employee**

I think the thing is, I think it was more because Westin, I think, not feelings, but I say kind of pride. It kind of hits it with when because of course I mean, technically one should be happy if if another company is interested, especially if it's the same in the same company, if another hotel is keen on taking someone else, but then I think because things like maybe Ritz-Carlton being a new hotel and Westin only being also a new hotel, and the talent pool, I think maybe in Perth being very small compared to maybe the East. I think that maybe added a little bit of friction. I should say that I which caused the sharing of information being a bit slow and cut off at times. I think it was...

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So they were not willing to share talent, perhaps?

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

I think so. Yeah, I think it was, I think it was more. I think if Ritz-Carlton we'll gain someone that's good, let's say from Westin, but then how would then Westin, maybe we'll find a hard time replacing that person or it will be very like up in the air? Like, will we ever find someone because then, you know, then they have to go through that process. And you never know if if they or how long it will take for them. It might take even longer maybe for them to find someone suitable again for that role. I think is I think it's more the talent pool. That's kind of influencing the decisions for companies to accept one company taking resources, staff...

**Benjamin Saunders**

So there was reluctance maybe a little bit?

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Yeah, yes. Okay.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So with that said, with regards to yourself, when you were interested in making the move, if you had noticed this reluctance to, you know, towards letting you go? What could have been done better? What would you think would have solved the issue?

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Well, the thing is, sometimes I don't want to be like too much involved in it. Because I mean, my decision, like, if I say, I want to leave, that's my only decision is like, okay, now it's between whatever, you know, department that is that job that tasked to do, to do the job that's needed to be done, right. So I mean, there's so much influence I can give but I would trust my then department to take care of things to make sure that everything works well. So I mean, if there's fine if there was friction between one and another, I mean, it's a really like, I was really torn actually like leaving and it was only after, you know, consulting with Francois and everyone else where I was like, and then thinking about it, after a while that I was like, Okay, I want to move. And it was more honesty, I think after honest talking as well to Westin and just sharing the truth and not holding back and, and actually telling your honest opinions that, you know, you're not hiding anything, and now it's out in the open. That's it. That's what I want. And hopefully you can accept it. And now, please do what's needed to be done to make it happen? So yeah maybe in that process having more open talks with whomever managers or HR would have helped that process of communication. Yeah you know, I was willing, I was more than willing to do what was needed for Westin like, let's say, the time taken for me to move. They wanted me to stay. Like they said, Okay, we'll keep you another two weeks, instead of you leaving two weeks that Ritz-Carlton wanted and I was like, fine, we'll, I'm happy to do as many as much shifts as you want before you want me to leave and so that I don't like disorientate the roster, or make it more difficult on them to try and then cover my position and all that and try and give them time then to start looking and advertising and try and find maybe a replacement maybe internally and all sorts so yeah,



**Benjamin Saunders**

yeah, no, that makes sense. Yeah. All right. I in terms of my questions, I think I have everything.

**Fabrice Marriott Employee**

Good Okay

**Benjamin Saunders**

I want to thank you for your time this afternoon for the interview and your insights. I will be transcribing the interview and will send you a copy this evening for review if thats ok, so that you can possibly add anything to your asnwars given!

## Interview with Megan

**Benjamin Saunders**

Megan, thank you very much for doing this interview with me. Um, the first question I had was, how long have you been working in the hospitality industry?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Hospitality, going on five years, prior to that I was specifically in the travel industry. And prior to this, I was actually a travel agent. So sort of is a bit of crossover. But working within hotels, five years.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And so along the five years, where exactly have you been working?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

So prior to starting in a hotel, I was working in travel and travel wholesale for the previous 13,14 years. Okay.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So what type of how long have you been working for Marriott?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Five years

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And then what brands have you been working for?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

So I started at four points by Sheraton. And I'm now currently at the Aloft.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So when you started a Four Points, what exactly what your roles and duties?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

So I started as a guest service agent, and moved to a solutions agents. As part of solutions, I also did some work within the reservations team as well.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And then you moved to Aloft and you've been doing reservations as well.

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Correct.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Yeah. So how long did you spend that the the Four Points?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

I was there, and that would be three and a half years.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And I imagined the rest of the time has been spent at Aloft.

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Correct. I transferred from there to here.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So what made you transfer from Four Points to Aloft?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Just the opportunity of a different role that came on. So it was a position that was not available at the time at the hotel where I was. So it was a chance to move to a different role and still stay within Marriott, which was the attractive

**Benjamin Saunders**

So was was that a desire for you to stay within Marriott?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Yes, actually, yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And why is that?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Because at least I had experience within Marriott infrastructure. So using the system, understanding the loyalty programme, understanding how's the Marriott way of doing things, so it was kind of at least I had that background that would have facilitated a smooth transition, while also taking advantage of the opportunity of a different role, albeit at a different hotel.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so for you was more about, as you said, the familiarity sorry, with the processes or the loyalty in place, those kind of things

**Megan Marriott Employee**

like all the older systems that we use, exactly. So because I was very familiar with those To able to move to a different position, or even in a different hotel, because I had that experience with me, that was definitely a selling point in assisting me to move, at least I had that advantage of knowing what I was doing.

**Benjamin Saunders**

That was that an was that an advantage for you was that important to have those those those systems already in place when when considering a new role?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

I think it just made the role, made me understand what I was walking into, at least. Because if that role I'd been available at the property I was at, I would have taken that but because it wasn't, it was sort of a similar role, but just different properties. So it kind of felt like a smoother transition, as opposed to a completely different job that I felt it felt more like an internal transfer that felt like that, you know, it wasn't completely new. And it wasn't even that wasn't the role.

I didn't feel, you know, when you start a new job, you don't feel you don't even have that sort of brand new feeling like I had some familiarity about what I was doing. Because it was crossover between what I was doing previously so it just made the experience and the transition really smooth.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, no, absolutely. And did you experience that transition being smooth even though you were moving to essentially a different brand?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Yes I did. Because all like my login systems and things that all followed me. So being able to have familiarity like with all the HR processes, with all the HR systems with all the selling system, that you know, I was essentially using, you know, all the details to, to look into the systems was exactly the same. So it was it was very smooth

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, yeah, and so then moving on. So from the systems you knew in place to, from Four Points to moving to Aloft. Did you notice any differences? Any things that that were not quite the same that threw you off perhaps a little bit at first?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Yes, definitely sort of the brand's values and the way that the brand, the individual brand, had a different service approach. That was probably the main difference is sort of the service approach from the brand as opposed to procedurally how they did things with a little bit different as well, probably more front of house and back of house. So it was just understanding sort of the Aloft way as opposed to the Four Points way, and just sort of applying that to my new role. And also just understanding, I guess it was easier than going from within Marriott, a select select service brand to a selective brand, you know, it wasn't going from select service to a premium brand. I was actually staying within the Select service brands. So that made it a little bit easier as well.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And was that something that you wish to do to stay within the same kind of tier of brand? Or did you not expect that?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

That just solely based, it was just solely what was on offer at the time based on opportunities available to me at the time? So he was obviously with Perth at the moment, there's only four Marriott brands. I kinda worked for the both, the two select service, so it was just more about what was available at the time. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So talking about that transition process, and how did it go? Well, what what exactly were the steps involved?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

So the internal application process, I guess, you had to apply for the job through an online portal, still had to provide a full resume and CV, still had to do a full interview, that sort of thing. So from that respect, it was still very full a formal application process, I guess that they had the intention of reference checking and things like that, I guess that was a little bit easier, because they were able to check directly with my current employer a little bit easier. But, and then obviously, with transfer paperwork between the two hotels that was done HR to HR between the two hotels. So from that perspective, I wasn't really involved too much in that. But in terms of that application process, it was all through the Marriott portal, and then still had, you know, a formal interview.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So did you find this process easier than applying for a job say externally?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

I think it was probably about the same because it's still obviously require a requires still the, you know, the online questionnaire. Marriott is pretty standard, the application process, I still had to provide a resume and things like that, to went through the interview process. So from that perspective, it was actually almost same, I guess, as doing an external application. But I guess that I felt that I had, I guess, some familiarity and a better understanding of the job role itself, because I've had some exposure to it at a different property. So I get in my understanding of the role and what the job was about. That was easier because I have had some exposure to almost an identical role and a different property.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, that makes sense. And so you talked about this whole, there was obviously HR to HR communication about you and about trying to move properties. How did that go about? What was that experience like?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

So it was a form that I completed at Four Points that was submitted to OnProperty HR, and then was, I believe, transferred. and then was processed by the Aloft. Yeah, so I really didn't have to do much, which makes the transition really easy.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And did you feel like there was a lot of support from the HR at Four Points with regards to you moving to Aloft?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Definitely. It was very encouraging, supportive understanding that it was great to keep in the Marriott family, and that it was about, sort of progressing to a new role. And, you know, they were happy that the kids still be kept within the same parent company. So that was, that was really.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you felt that support and that encouragement to be able to move around when you were at the Four Points.

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Exactly, yeah, definitely. Internal internal roles, like within Marriott, it was very heavily advertised, but they're made known that, you know, these are the roles available within the Marriott family.

So it was about understanding that people, yes, people aren't going to work in the same hotel forever. And it's about trying to keep, let people know the opportunities that are available with Marriott not necessarily mean that hotel, external Marriott opportunities for ways, I guess. Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Of course. And so that was at Four Points, then when you arrived at Aloft. We talked about, you know, how much of trainings, you'd receive that Four Points, and obviously, you know, the loyalty, the skill set, taking that all on to a new brand. Did you see that as an advantage having all of those skill set before?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

I think because I was going from select service to select service, I sort of saw it as an advantage, because and it was just about applying different, slightly different approach to what I was already doing. So just sort of modifying to the Aloft way. So I actually saw that as an advantage, instead of knowing because there's always some policies that are kind of blanket, and then some that are sort of modified, seemingly on property. So it was just learning which one the way that I felt that I was able to transfer my knowledge and just adapted to the new environment very, very easily.

**Benjamin Saunders**

I just want to focus a moment on, you've mentioned that this was perhaps a huge advantage for you, because you were moving from a select brand to another select brand. Would you have seen perhaps a challenge or discrepancies? Had you been moving from a different tier brand in Marriott?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Oh, yeah, definitely, I think having to understand a different service approach, which would have required further changes, sort of going from like a select service to like a five star brand would be I imagined very different. I think that would require further training and modification of processes and things. So I think that would have been a bigger change, would have required more adaptability and bigger adjustment, I think would have been going from, you know, select service to like a premium brand.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So based on this? Would you feel like when you've been working at the Four Points for quite some time, and obviously getting used to all of their processes? Do you feel like you're keeping yourself, you know, you feel like you're restricting your opportunities to work for other brands? So do you feel like it's just keeping you within that same tier?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

I think it's, it's, I sort of view it as just an exposure to different brands that at the time, the best opportunity was to stay within a different sort of within that select service brand. Obviously, had an earlier opportunity really came up to move to a different tier property. I would, I would definitely jump at that. I think it's just based on what's available at the time. And I think having a portfolio in the city, that it's growing, I think that's a good thing. It's good more opportunities for transfer if we if we add more brands and more properties in Perth. Yeah, I think it was it was more for me just about what was available. to me at the time.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, of course. And so talking about the challenges that you think you would have faced going to a another tier brand. What would those have been you think?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

I think the biggest is just the difference in the service models sort of and the way that the hotel itself would operate. So I think it's particularly going from a smaller hotel to a big hotel as well, when you've got, I guess more a different staffing setup, I think, of understanding and sort of a different way of providing the service. So I think it's understanding how that difference in services applies on a general bases, and obviously then sort of adapting yourself to that.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, and so what do you think you would have needed? Had you made that switch? Was there anything that you would have required to be able to comfortably adapt to that new tier brand?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

I think in terms of, I guess, it would depend what the onsite's onboarding training actually is, what their induction processes and how much information is provided at that stage. And I think that would really rely on sort of your new manager, making sure that the service requirements are understood and explained. And I guess having a really good introduction to what the brand is all about. I know, like, hear at Aloft. We've had, like an introduction training, where they explained sort of the philosophy of the brand, the target market, what our guest expects, what the hotel's expecting in terms of the service that we provide. So I did get some training on that. And then I guess you have the online Marriott programme, training programmes to explain about branding and the values behind the brand as well. So I think, depending on what you actually receive, through onboarding, I think as long as sort of the service expectations are explained, from my point of view. And then if it's not, then I guess I would have to make some further queries and make sure I understood it for myself. But I think it's about understanding through the onboarding process. So yeah I would have really liked maybe a closer follow up from HR or Manager for peoples like us who have tranfered from other brands that dont know yet exactly what the brand expectations are and the values, etc

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you place quite a high value on the onboarding process? If I understand so it would be about your introduction to the new brand. And then how could you adapt to those new standards values?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Yes absolutely definitely that's it

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, yeah? And so talking about that process, having mentionned this just before , what would you need, what exactly would you need from say, the staff already in place at the hotel? Would that just be more following up more trainings? Would it be one on ones? What exactly would you would you as a person think you would need?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Yeah, I think, like, for example, at Aloft we did, like a one day onboarding induction session with recent new employees in regards to not only an Aloft introduction, but also Marriott introduction, understanding the brand, within Marriott as well. So definitely, that sort of introduction was really helpful. But yeah, just on the job training managers, to my colleagues in understanding the service expectations.



**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay.

**Megan Marriott Employee**

And obviously what I mentioned above as well

**Benjamin Saunders**

Talking about this, because obviously, usually, you've now experienced the change, at least once you've experienced from going from Four Points to Aloft having spent a significant amount of time already Four Points. When making that decision of deciding to switch. What did you take into consideration when making such an important decision? What were the factors that you were incorporating?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Whether I thought that the actual role was suitable for myself based on my experience, and just my general interests. The fact that it was within Marriott and sort of gave me the opportunity to stay within the Marriott group, I think what's attractive definitely. And to be able to, I guess, gain experience, sort of within the same ecosystem, that was really, I saw that as a plus. And yeah, just the opportunity for a further transfer, you know, going back to the Westin, or perhaps the Ritz or any other future hotel. I thought there was an attractive thing. Okay. Yep.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And would that perhaps factors are things that you took into consideration that would have discouraged you from taking such a position? Were there things that might have kept you back perhaps?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

I think this was just the general opportunities that were available at the time, this seems like weighing up all factors, this seems like a good opportunity. With those advantages. It was it was probably just more about thinking about my own career goals and sort of what I wanted to achieve. In terms of the transfer seems like it would facilitate that.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And because I'm trying to, I'm trying to understand if there were, would there perhaps any disadvantages to such a decision to move?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

I really seem to be at the time, I mean, probably the only disadvantage was that the opportunity wasn't available at the current hotel that I was at. But the fact that I would still be within the group was definitely a plus.

But the thing that springs to mind apart from that was yeah the missed opportunity at saying somewhere I was already familiar with, and obviously all the people I already knew on the job.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So regardless of I don't know, I was perhaps thinking maybe of you, having spent so much time within one company, perhaps the connections that you had made in that company, the possible colleagues that you had met, if any of those things, were perhaps weighing on your decision? Or was, were those personal goals that you had outweighing any way?

### **Megan Marriott Employee**

What's I guess yeah as I said there were the peoples I was leaving behind but at the same time, because it was sort of felt still like, even though it's not the same hotel, because it's part of the same group, I sort of didn't really see it as leaving as such, it felt more like a transfer. But I didn't feel like I like, for example, I still, you know, in my work, I still have contacts with colleagues from the other hotels. So it's kind of I don't feel that I really actually 100% left, do you know what I mean? So I still felt that we were still colleagues, that I wasn't actually moving to completely a new job more felt more like transfer to another department. That was actually to a different hotel. So as much as I understand what you mean, like leaving the colleague behind, yeah for sure there was the feeling of comfort and familiarity but the transfer made that gap less like that.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Yeah, that's interesting. Um, so thinking about looking ahead of where you are now, because because you said that, if that opportunity has that opportunity come at Four Points, you would have stayed there, do you see yourself trying to stay within one particular property or still embellishing the chance and moving?

### **Megan Marriott Employee**

No, I think if that if that had been available at the same property, I would have stayed there. Definitely. So it was more about the actual new, moving to a more challenging role, as opposed to the actual leaving the hotel is that it was more about the job description, rather than the actual hotel. So it's more about giving myself a new challenge. I would have stayed at the same hotel, I was only looking at moving based on the job descriptions and not necessarily the brand per say. Yeah.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So I mean, looking at ahead to what, because Marriott has announced a lot of exciting projects coming up within Australia in the next few years. As I'm sure you're aware, what did those mean to you? And in terms of what we've been talking about, how do you view this expansion?

### **Megan Marriott Employee**

I view that as an opportunity to move further and just sort of get by experience in different brands, while still maintaining the knowledge that I've gained at the same time, so I sort of view it as a positive thing. That has some familiarity with the idea to be able to have transferable skills that I could use if wanting to move to another property.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And when so in terms of you mentioning those opportunities, do they represent opportunities within the same tier that you're in right now? Or do are you broadening your horizons towards any Marriott brand?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

To any I don't really see. For me, it's about the opportunity that's available at the time. So I don't necessarily want to stay in a select brand. But that was all that was available to me at the time. I would the fact that, you know, Marriott has different types of brands, I don't see that as a limiting thing. I think that opportunity to expand into different areas. Definitely, I would not hesitate to apply for a position that challenged me to different brands.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So if a position right now in Perth, arose at the Ritz Carlton or Westin, they would be things that you there would be positions that you would be considering to apply for?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Absolutely, yeah. As long as I felt that they were something that I could contribute to that I would challenge me in that within my skill set. Absolutely.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Yeah. So yeah, before, anything, your desire to move will always come from that career goal that you have of being able to grow and learn and develop and not necessarily loom at the brand first hand.

**Megan Marriott Employee**

Yeah, and I think because being in a large company like the one were in Marriott and being challenged from a skill set point of view, for me to then go to a Ritz-Carlton would, would be an amazing opportunity, and to be able to expand my skill set further in a different environment. So I see that as an absolute advantage, because you've given people the opportunity to grow into different areas.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, absolutely lastly, the last question, perhaps I have for you is, now that you're Aloft what's, what's the next step for you in the next few years? Where do you do you see yourself doing? Obviously, I guess you see yourself staying with Marriott. But are you are you content with where you are right now? Are you curious to be able to move again soon and take on a new job?

**Megan Marriott Employee**

I would love to be able to stay with Aloft, as said I am happy here and the job, responsibilities etc... but if I could also gain more experience with the different brands at the moment, sort of looking into different sort of expanding my skill set in the revenue management area. And sales, things like that. So yeah, definitely learning on the job and seeing where it takes me.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, wonderful. Megan, I think I have everything. I want to thank you so much for all of this. And obviously thank you for your time as well.

**Megan Marriott Employee**

No problem at all, good luck with everything and with graduation soon hopefully

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yes thank you! I will be transcribing this interview and will send you a copy if that's ok for you to review and to possibly comment and add anything else you might want.

## Interview with Daniel

### **Benjamin Saunders**

All right, Daniel, thank you very much for doing this interview with me. So my first question is just getting into the interview here. So when have you started working in the hospitality industry?

### **Daniel Marriott Employee**

When I was 21, I applied to work in a cruise ship. And I had a little experience in food and beverage. But this company took me anyway, they flew me to Los Angeles, and then I got on board for six months. I worked seven days, 11 hours a day, for six months. And that was my first experience in hospitality.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

And when was your first time working in a hotel?

### **Daniel Marriott Employee**

Okay, when I was 23, I started working at the front desk, in a big hotel in my city, back in Argentina. And that was very, very nice. And I really enjoyed it. It's something I would like to be doing eventually.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so you want to stay working in hotels?

### **Daniel Marriott Employee**

Yeah, I love hotels. I see myself working in hotels for probably my entire life. I really enjoy it.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

And do you think do you see yourself working for one same company?

Or would you see yourself just working for different companies in general?

### **Daniel Marriott Employee**

I will see myself working for one company. Yes, for sure.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So why is that?

### **Daniel Marriott Employee**

Because if you stay in one company you can grow. And that's the thing. You don't want to be doing the same thing all the time. You just want to grow and get more responsibilities and learn more about the industry. And that's the reason why I would like to stay longer in our company.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so when did you join the Marriott company?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Just after pre opening in December 2019. I moved, I moved to Perth, and I applied for a job and I got it.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so you joined the Ritz-Carlton?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Yes, I did.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And that was your first time with a Ritz-Carlton and first time with Marriott.

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Exactly.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And then, so you said you joined? And have you been working at the Ritz-Carlton ever since?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Well, I worked since December 2019. But then we had to stop at the end of March. Because of COVID. All of the food and beverage outlets had to shut down. So we kind of all lost our jobs. I ended up being jobless for three or four months. And then I ended up moving to Queensland because I got an offer in Hamilton Island. And I took it, I needed a job so bad. So I took the job in Hamilton Island and I moved there. But then I came back to Perth in December, and I came back to the Ritz.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Why did you come back?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Because The Ritz-Carlton feels like like family. It feels like the place where I belong. And I miss it so much when I left.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, interesting. So why is that? What is that feeling of family that connects you to your job?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

The work environment, people I work with, they make me feel very comfortable at work. They make me feel like I belong in somewhere, you know, like I belong in a family.

Yeah, the people I work with. The team in the Ritz-Carlton is very multicultural. There's people from all over with different backgrounds. And it's very interesting to meet my co-workers and you know, listen to their stories and their backgrounds. And also, the other thing that made me come back is the management. When I was in Queensland, I was working under a lot of pressure, the management was very tough. And all I wanted to do all the time was come back to Perth because the management here is more relaxed, and they let you work, they let you improvise at work. As long as you give a good service, they literally improvise. And that's the other reason why I come back, the management here is great.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

So in a way, you would say that all of those factors you just listed, kind of convinced you to come back and stay within one place instead of moving on to somewhere else, for example.

### **Daniel Marriott Employee**

Sure.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so talking about you know, your experience, you mentioned that you wanted to stay within one company to grow. So would you consider moving around with Ritz-Carlton or with the Marriott?

### **Daniel Marriott Employee**

if they given me the chance to do that, I would love to do that.

Yes, of course.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

When you say gives you the chance, Have you felt like you're given the opportunity to move around?

### **Daniel Marriott Employee**

I haven't tried yet. Eventually I will have to move around because my visa in Australia is gonna run out. And, and that's gonna be the time for me to like, try to move around. Then go somewhere else. But I haven't really tried to do that yet because I don't need it. But I feel like if I want to move around, it wouldn't be too hard.

### **Benjamin Saunders**

And do you feel like you would get the support that you need to be able to achieve this?

### **Daniel Marriott Employee**

Well, I found the HR management in the hotel very helpful. So I feel like if I need help in something like this, they will they will back me up.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And do you feel like you've been encouraged to move around? Or do you feel like it has to come from you?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

It has to come from me 100%, Yes. I don't think they're going to lose any staff. So I'm not going to be encouraged to move around.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yeah, so talking about what you said, moving around, opportunity to grow?  
Why would you see that opportunity to grow, if you move around?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

To be honest, If I see that there is a new hotel opening, Like, I've heard, there was a new Ritz-Carlton opening in Melbourne. And as soon as I heard about it, I thought I would want to try and apply over there, but not as a waiter, maybe as a team leader or a supervisor, because I feel like the Ritz-Carlton in Perth is giving me the chance to get ready for a different position. So if I do move around, it will be because they would offer me a better job and an opportunity to grow.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you would consider applying for that position over East in Melbourne, on the basis of a different position going like better position. Team Leader, for example.

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Yeah, like I want to say in the same company, but I would like to get a different position. You know, the chance to grow? Like I said before, yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

When you were talking about Marriott, and obviously it has Ritz-Carlton, but it has different brands as well. Have you considered, for example, working for a different Marriott brand?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

I haven't. But I feel like if I work for Marriott, I want to work for the best, I want to work for the Ritz. I feel like once you get used to this kind of hotels, five stars, you don't want to go lower than that. Because you're just used to something you don't want to change it.

**Benjamin Saunders**

When you say you're used to something, what do you mean, what are usually used to?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

You just use to this fancy places with this kind of kind of test, like here, and the whole environment and how everything works.



And I feel like if you work at the Ritz-Carlton, you get to use to give a fine. Like a fine service, if you know what I mean, like a high quality service, where in other places that service wouldn't be required? And I don't know, I feel like I'm used to given this kind of service.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Do you think it has something to do with the values of the Ritz-Carlton, the brand norms and the values.

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Yeah, totally, totally. Okay. You just want to be serving, you know, giving the best services you can and I wouldn't want to change that.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And for example, you know, if I was looking at another luxury brand for Marriott, would that be the same logic that you apply? Or would that be?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

If there is a different luxury brand? I would apply for that, yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you understand, you wouldn't see yourself going back to a lower...

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

like, I wouldn't go to a three star hotel or four star...

**Benjamin Saunders**

Even if it was within Marriott?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Even if it was within Marriott

**Benjamin Saunders**

But you would consider going to another luxury like, for example, St. Regis or JW. Marriott

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

All good yes, of course. Totally.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And that's, and that's because you said that once you get used to that service, you don't want to like change the skills that you have maybe. Where does this come from? this familiarity with apply service?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

It comes from my experience, because before I started working here at the Ritz-Carlton. I used to work for cruise ships, and I used to work in fancy hotels in the US, like it is in the middle of a ski resorts. And so because of my experience, I like working in luxury places giving high quality service. And that's the reason why I ended up applying for the Ritz-Carlton as well. Yeah, yes, they're training me a bit more here. But I also it also comes from my background.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you've been trained serving this particular guests making you want to stay within that region. And do you think that this is an advantage for you in looking for another position?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Now, I think this is an advantage. Every time I moved to a new city, and I applied for a job, I get it right away because of my background. So this is an advantage for me, for sure. And I've been travelling for a while, like, I work in the USA before I'm working in Australia now. And when my visa runs out, I'm planning to move to Canada maybe. And I'm very sure that getting a job is not gonna be hard for me, because it's never been hard. And so yeah, it's totally an advantage to have this background and this all this experience.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So just taking your example, if you said you were going to Canada, would you be looking at going to Canada and looking for a Ritz-Carlton, or a Marriott property?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Yes or a St Regis or Ritz-Carlton...

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you would be looking at that network?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Yes. even Sheraton Yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. And so, you know, I'm just bouncing back on what you were saying earlier, when you were talking about how the Ritz-Carlton meant for you being a family, you know, you said you were connecting with your job? You said you went to Queensland, you came back because of that sense of family that you had, because of that sense of connection to your job. Do you think that that would be something that keeps you from taking another job? Or do you think that ultimately, you would still go for the growth and the opportunity.

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

So the job here, obviously makes me feel very comfortable, you know, working with all these colleagues, that make me feel like family, I know, all this amazing management. But if I have the opportunity to grow somewhere else, I will go somewhere else, because growing is more important. And I guess I can make a family in a new place. So yeah, I would choose moving somewhere else.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So you have this desire of mobility, you know, moving around

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Of course

**Benjamin Saunders**

And you also have this desire if I understand correctly of moving around within one particular place, because you felt like that's going to be easier for you and your career.

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Yeah, that's, it's, it's interesting, you know, and I just wanted to ask you a few questions, you know, on the future. You know, you were talking about that the project of maybe going over East with the Ritz-Carlton. Why wouldn't you apply for that, for example?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

You mean to the Ritz-Carlton in Melbourne?

**Benjamin Saunders**

Yes why not?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Because it hasn't opened yet. He was on my plans, but then it didn't open because of COVID. So we were just waiting to see what happens with that. The project is in stand-by

**Benjamin Saunders**

But once it once it goes back on track, and it opens, is that something that you would see yourself applying for?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

If I get selected for better job position? Like if they choose me to be a supervisor, or something like that? I would consider.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Would it be in your interest of looking at that kind of project?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Yeah, yes. But if they want to hire me as a waiter, which is what I do now, I wouldn't go. Because I'm already doing it. And I'm enjoying it.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So it would also have something to do with the position that you're taking.

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Exactly.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So, for example, talking about the opportunities that you have to move around in your job. How important is that for you?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

The opportunity to be able to move around properties, well, is very, very important. Because I'm growing old, like everyone else, I'm hitting my 30s soon. And I feel like it's time for me to take more responsibility and grow. You know, like get a better salary in order for me to make plans in the future. Like important plans and yeah, I'm very, very far from my family right now. And for me, I feel like if I'm, if I'm going to be this far, I need to at least have a job that makes me happy. And yes, growing is going to make me happy.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, so yeah, you weigh that, quite importantly because of the opportunity that it has for you to grow.

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Yeah.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Do you see other opportunities?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

The benefit I see would be just meeting more people and get into some new places.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay, and have you considered moving around, maybe in a different network?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

As in?

**Benjamin Saunders**

As in maybe in a different network than Marriott, for example, moving to another brand, like a Hyatt or Accor.

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Well, I haven't thought about it. But I haven't thought about it, to be honest.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And why haven't you thought about it?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Just because I feel like Marriott, just the name gives me prestige.

And I enjoy that.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So yes, at the end of the day, you associate your movement with your growth, and within that company as the right combination for you.

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Yes.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Have you been encouraged in your job to consider moving around?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

You know, it has always come from me. I haven't yet been told or offered the specific chance to go some place else.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And why do you think that is? Is there a reason?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

I feel like in Perth, there's not a lot of hospitality workers. I don't feel like people here want to lose their employees. So they will never suggest them to move around, go new places.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So that's because of the lack of employees that they prefer to keep you within one space than to let you go?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Of course, they totally need us here. There's not that many people in Perth as we think, especially in the hospitality industry.

**Benjamin Saunders**

So how does this make you feel this type of situation?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Well, kinda, it gives me an advantage, I think, because we keep hiring people with no experience, because there is no one else to do the job. And I feel like having experience gives me the advantage to be on top of everything and train people. And eventually, that can open opportunities for me to become a leader. But at the same time, I would say limiting.

**Benjamin Saunders**

In what way?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

I guess so. Yes. This is confusing, I want to do things. I want to grow in my position, advance, travel. But in the other hand, I want to stay in this company. I want to stay in this city. But then if I don't see that I can grow, I will have to move around, even though I don't want to. But, yeah, it's just I have mixed feelings about this.

**Benjamin Saunders**

I understand. It's mixed feelings between your desire to stay within one place and grow because you said you get responsibilities, you're training, you're in a family that really respects you that, values you, but at the same time, you're seeing the benefits of growing, you're seeing the benefits of moving around for a better position. It's interesting what you said about you think that the management here because there's not enough people, they want to keep you instead of giving you that opportunity to really flourish and, you know, move around to other cities.

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Yes of course, I feel like they're really appreciate the work that we do, and I don't think they want to lose us. Perth is very isolated. And we don't have that many people in the industry. And I didn't know that until I moved here. And I noticed things all the time. The management are very scared of us leaving because that means that they would have to recruit more and spend money. And it is resources that they do not have at the moment. So it is difficult, because they want to keep us but maybe also not promote us. But you know, I would like to stay, I'm very happy here. I would love to say, but I'm looking forward to grow. And if I don't see that happening here because there is no promotion then I will move in, in a heartbeat.

**Benjamin Saunders**

I think just the last few questions I have are on your future outlook and when the day comes for you to, for example, to leave, How would you approach trying to find another job within Marriott, for example?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Well, I will go into the website and try to find job openings in different cities, see what they offer, see what they have available. And if I see something that catches my eye, I would just apply for and see what happens.

**Benjamin Saunders**

And if you apply for this job, do you feel like you would have the support from your management team and from HR?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

Totally, totally. They always make me feel like they want to help.

And they will just help me anytime I need help.

**Benjamin Saunders**

They will be supporting you with this.

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

True. Yeah. Sure. But if they know that you need to move somewhere else for better opportunities, that will totally support me. I can totally see that.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Okay. Sounds interesting. All right. I mean, is there anything you think you want to add on this whole topic of, you know, we've covered movement, we've covered your desires to grow. We've covered the reasons why you would leave or why you wouldn't leave, is there anything that you think you'd like to add?

**Daniel Marriott Employee**

I just want to add, that I love working in hotels, working in hotels feels like a really big family. And we all have the same goal, you know, to make people happy. So there's people making beds, there's people making food, there's people serving food, there's people working in the checking, checking out people. And I feel like we're all working towards this end goal. And that's what makes me feel like I work in a big family, where we all have just one goal, you know, make people happy and make them come back. And I feel like that's wonderful. Like what we do in the industry is just wonderful. It feels like art, and that's a reason why I want to keep doing this. I want to stay in the industry. But I want to move in the industry and like I said when I came to Australia, I did not realise the whole isolation and the stress for finding peoples. I am happy to be at the Ritz-Carlton but at the same time, I understand why some people feel like they would not be able to leave so easily, they want to keep the staff as much as possible. But in the end, as I said I just find that what I do and where I do it is wonderful.

**Benjamin Saunders**

Fantastic thank you very much, Daniel. I really appreciate the time you took for the interview. I will be transcribing this and will send you a copy so that you can read, review or add anything else!



## Appendix 2: Presentation notes Ritz-Carlton

### **Presentation of research – HR Director Angela Wong – 10/05/21**

Please note, the **following data constitutes notes based on memory** written by the researcher directly following the event. Please see detail in Methodology chapter. For corporate policy reasons, the presentation and feedback session could not be recorded, implying the following notes below.

Angela was very impressed with the work done by the researcher and the time it must have taken to cover all topics. Angela thanked the researcher for his time and effort. She was very interested in the variables used for the research questions and had never heard of JE theory. She asked for more clarification about the Link and Fit and the on- and off-the-job application. The researcher then answered questions on the solution recommended and on his thoughts. The Critical Conversations was suggested as part of the DBR third step of the cycle, solution design.

Angela expressed the following: Currently there is a training program that is dedicated towards finalising the onboarding process with the Ladies and Gentlemen of the Ritz-Carlton. This follows a specific training structure. The Day-21 training is an event taking place three weeks after the start of the onboarding process. The leadership committee, managers, HR representatives and learning coaches are present during the training day. The Day-21 training is meant to cover the brand standards and values and appropriately apply them in the context of the working department. Furthermore, the training day features a feedback session where employees are asked to share concerns, tips, and suggestions on what could be improved from the onboarding process. This is done within the same group as the onboarding orientation day. The researcher did ask the question about support, diving deeper into the types of assistance employees have at their disposal during onboarding.

Angela mentioned that employees have access to the Marriott Assistance Program where they are able to reach out to professional help with regards to factors that might be of concern to them and receive guidance. It was also mentioned that HR currently follow an open-door policy where employees are welcome to join and share thoughts and discuss any pressing matters directly with managers, leaders and HR representatives.

Angela then mentioned that the Ritz-Carlton are currently developing and improve the learning coach system. These coaches are volunteers of each department and selected to embody the culture and brand standards and reinforce them on a daily basis within the department. The learning coaches are there to train employees on the standards, and to cover all their learnings during the three weeks. Additionally, these learning coaches are responsible during the first 21 days (approximatively) for the development and adjustment of new employees joining the relevant department. Lastly, the Ritz-Carlton are currently developing a new system, to be implemented shortly, called the buddy system. HR representatives have acknowledged the need for additional supporting staff to be available “on the floor” in each department.

The buddy system would assign two senior employees that have been with the company long enough to feel confident in supporting and following others. These buddies would be available to employees on a daily basis, assisting them with additional questions instead of them talking to a manager, helping with value application and extra queries.

The researcher then asked about the necessity and relevance of the solution recommended. Angela was very happy and very excited at the prospect of using the solution in the 21 days leading up to the training event.

For scheduling reasons, the Day-21 event does not necessarily happen exactly 21 days after onboarding, but more like two months afterwards. Until then, Angela sees the Critical Conversations as an integral step to be added to the learning coaches' program, and to be scheduled every week until the onboarding process is complete. Following every week's conversation during onboarding, both employees and coaches can work on follow through issues at hand and creating tasks to help overcome such issues. Following Critical Conversation three, Angela and the researcher agreed that it could be a good idea to incorporate some of the points in a specific learning set up, with goals and actionable points to follow through. Angela was very enthusiastic about the idea to implement Critical Conversations within the current learning coaches scheduling and clearly saw the benefits for the development of employees onboarding.

Finally, having covered the when, what, who and how of the solution implementation, the researcher asked about the evaluation process and how Angela would see this being feasible. It was shared that the current situation, in terms of measurement, turnover, guest voice and employees completing 180-days is being looked at. This includes turnover in terms of how many people are moving on, when they started and what was the reason for the resignation, and Guest voice to identify specific feedback left by guests concerning experiences and their stay. Lastly the number of people that have completed the 180 (6 months) review and the comments that were left during the performance review.

Both Angela and the researcher agreed that there is need for evaluation and objectives that need to be implemented and evaluated regularly. The objectives (Chapter solution design) need to be reviewed during Day-90 review by the learning coach or leader. Furthermore, it was suggested that during the Day-90 review, learning coaches or leaders and employees can touch base on the goals set during the initial 21 days and evaluate together on the progress towards the goals. The employee survey could also be redesigned to feature questions on the onboarding experience and specifically on the one-on-one Critical Conversation with the learning coaches, the potential added value and if it was beneficial.

The researcher would like to thank Angela and her team for their time during the presentation, for her valuable feedback, insights, and thoughts on the subject. More importantly, for the interesting and exciting prospect of implementing the researcher's solution within the next few months in the learning coaches onboarding system.

## Appendix 3: Solution design detail

During the conversations, Talent can receive the appropriate resources and necessary help from HR and executives. The importance of this discussion for Talent is to share and reflect, but also to evaluate in a collective dual manner (Epstein, Becker, Coase, Miller and Posner, 1997). As stated by Perkins, organisations are made of interactions, which are virtual neurons keeping the company together. One-on-one dialogues are effective ways of evolving progressive conversation in this area, resolving values and brand culture integration and stressful transitioning's (Perkins, 2003). The purpose of these one-on-one sessions is to engage in progressive interactions which are both people and process smart. Process smart focuses on the exchange of information, fostering astute decisions, reflecting of past situations and good decisions making forward looking (Perkins, 2003). People smart implies that this effort be done collectively, both by the Talent and executive feeling good of one another and wanting to progress forward together. This is critical considering the fit of employees within the new brand. The conversation between executives using TM need to make use of process smart conversation to facilitate Talent sharing their stresses, concerns regarding the way they experiences mobility and joining the brand. Furthermore, by strengthening conversation with process smart theory, there can be a real focus on generating new decisions, addressing the misfit of values and culture assimilation new Talent is experiencing in their new hotel brand.

According to the Harvard Business Review, there are a few steps to make these conversations more productive and more beneficial for employees (Knight, 2016):

- Start positive. Radiate positivity and open dialogue
- Be fully present. Engage fully in the dialogue and show open signs of selective and non-selective listening skills
- Problem solve. Find the right balance between asking questions and listening
- Ask additional questions. Make sure all points are clarified to have a solid base to build on
- Express gratitude. End on a high note, thankful for the conversation

Knight's model offers valuable steps towards engaging in the conversations. On the other hand, 'Crucial conversations' developed in a study for the nursing field give a more secure and personal approach to having difficult one-on-one conversations. The model suggests adding the 'stay with heart' category, focusing on the problem at hand, not deviating from the pathway and exploring all concerns and queries surrounding the issue (Major, Abderrahman and Sweeney, 2013). 'Learn to look' is also suggested as setting the right time for when these conversations are needed. 'Make it safe' ensures safety and confidentiality in the conversation, allowing the person to share freely and feel validated and opinion valued. Finally the model suggests moving into action, taking ownership of decisions moving into action points, and documenting all future steps (Major, Abderrahman and Sweeney, 2013).

The crucial conversation model focuses on the broader conversation, making it a safe and secure sharing space, and channelling collective efforts towards a solution.

The University of Texas suggest using the STATE approach when conducting a one-on-one conversation: *Share your facts*, *Tell your story*, *Ask for view*, *Talk tentatively*, *Encourage testing* (The University of Texas, 2021; Harris, 2017). *Share your facts* focuses on the specifics, giving details on the factual and focusing on the core of the issue at hand. *Tell your story* implies sharing the experience and showing empathy and reflection of feelings towards the narrator (employee). *Ask for view* required open ended questions, diving deeper into the issues, leaving no stone unturned and seeking for root causes. The last two steps encourage the how to do it, how to engage in sharing. The STATE methodology allows both participants in the conversation to understand sharing and the make it most effective.

Lastly, Hotelschool The Hague take an approach towards empathy and reflection of feelings in a one-on-one conversation in their progress interview description (MO Leadership Skills Team, 2021). The interview setting welcomes the use of selective and non-selective listening skills. Selective listening skills exercise paraphrasing, summarising and reflection of feeling. The effects of paraphrasing show the other person interest and understanding and stimulate continuous talking. Summarising check for understanding, making sure the other party clearly comprehends the problem. Reflection of feelings show the other person the understanding of EQ, empathy, interest and regulation of emotions (MO Leadership Skills Team, 2021). Finally nonselective listening skills encapsulates body language, posture and tone of voice, all important markers towards approaching a reflective conversation.

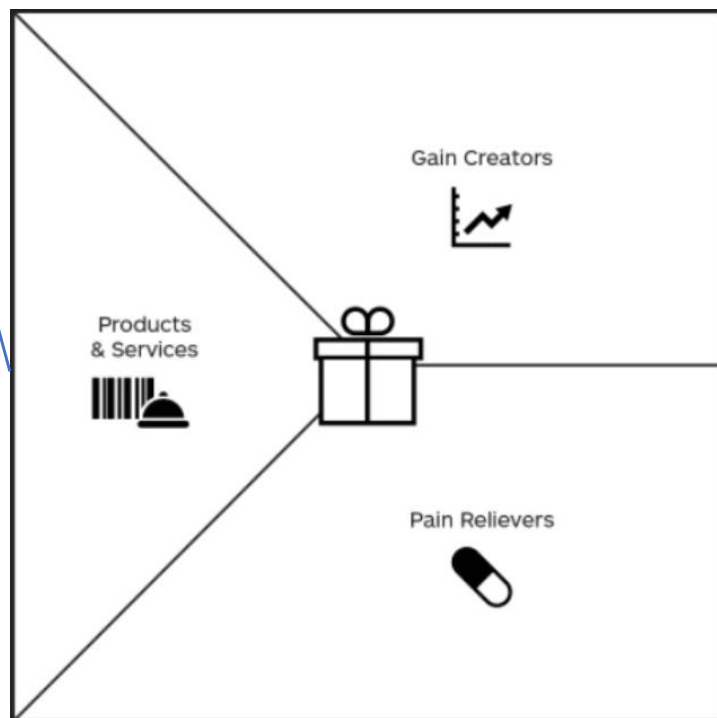
### **Literature Model**

All literature models above advance positive and constructive ways of developing a conversation addressing possible issues. The Harvard model is missing an actionable step, to allow both participants to make concrete decisions towards solving the issue at hand. The Critical conversation model does not include conversational engaging steps such as asking open ended questions or diving deeper into a particular subject. Lastly the STATE methodology offers a detailed step-by-step process on how to facilitate dialogue but not how to advance and follow through. Therefore, it was decided to combine all three approaches into one formatted model. The main model is to be found in the Solution design chapter.

## Appendix 4: Proposition Value Canvas – Critical Conversations

- Critical Conversations
- One-on-one dialogue between Talent and Learning Coaches
- Feedback moment
- Discussion include brand and value integration, mobility desires etc

- Blow off steam on recent move
- Clearly express needs and wants with new work environment
- Express concerns regarding JE sacrifice of move, new links and fit within the brand
- Create ownership of problem and find common solution
- Create dialogue between staff and leadership executives




- Underlying issues with new work environment:
- Link -> no connections and feeling of loneliness
- Sacrifice -> Difficulty of adjusting to new work, financial constraints
- Fit -> Trouble integrating new values, brand cultures
- Alleviates frustrations and confusion towards possible miss

## Appendix 5: Commissioner research evaluation

### ***Evaluation Form Company Project/Research***

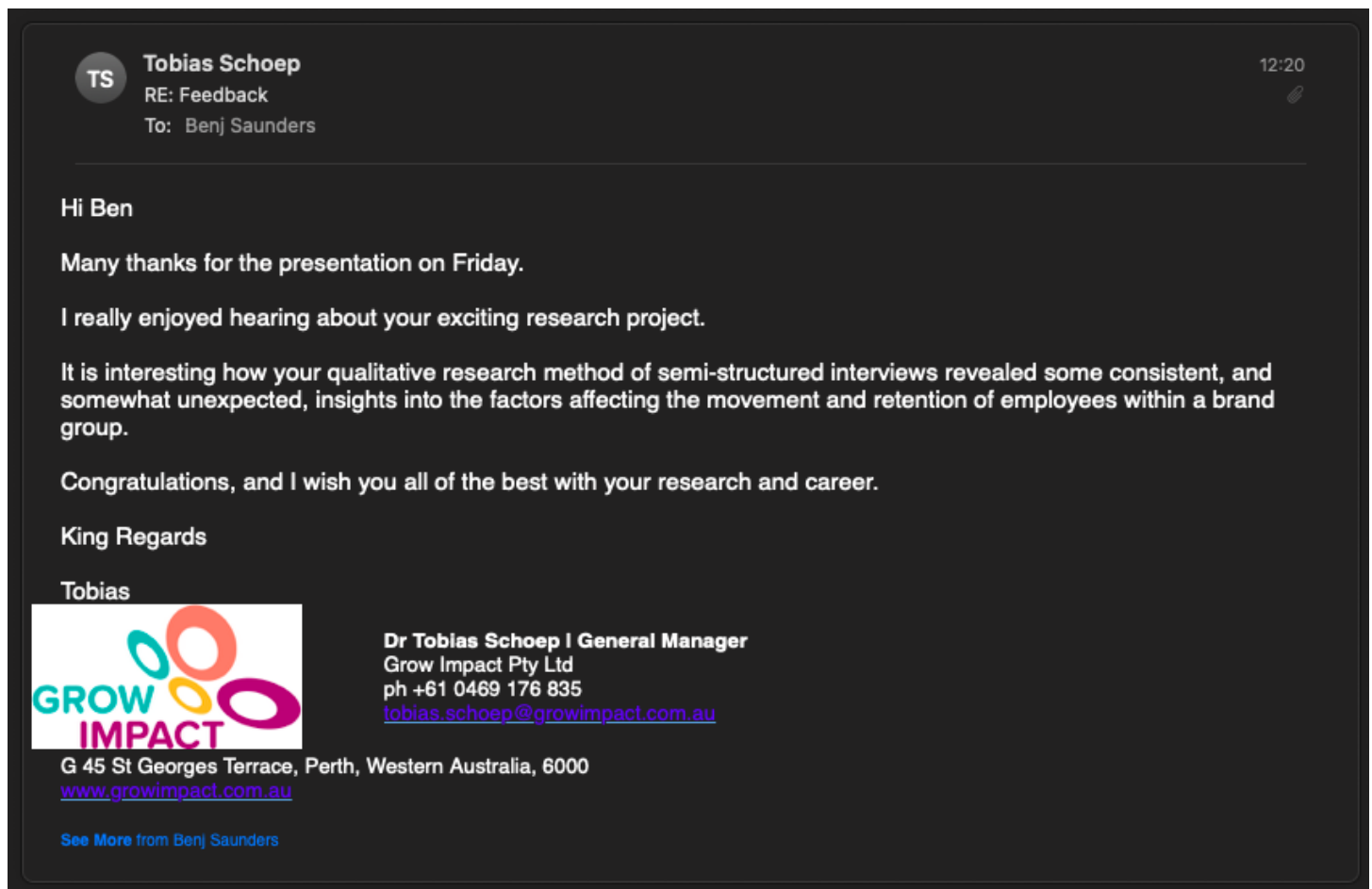
**(EVALUATION FORM OF ALL CLIENTS AND ON ALL DELIVERABLES IS COMPULSORY, FORMAT IS NOT)**

<b>Name of student:</b>	Benjamin Saunders	<b>Student number:</b>	671040	
<b>Name of company:</b>	Hotelschool The Hague	<b>Department:</b>	Research Center	
<b>Name of company tutor:</b>	Dr Dekker	<b>Position of company tutor:</b>	Research Professor	
<b>Project/Deliverable: (please specify)</b>	Research paper "A study on Talent Management approaches to Talent mobility across brands portfolios with regards to Job Embeddedness" + Interview Transcripts + Infographic on solution proposed.			
During the first evaluation the proposal for the project and end deliverable is discussed. For this final evaluation the project is evaluated. This is taken into consideration for the final assessment of the student.				
<b>CATEGORY 1: EXPERTISE/KNOWLEDGE OF THE FIELD</b>				
<b>Rating</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Room for improvement</b>	<b>Comments</b>
	In-depth use of relevant literature and knowledge of the field. The deliverable shows excellent thinking capacity of the student (taking into account all significant factors and looking from all different perspectives).	Use of relevant literature and knowledge of the field. The deliverable shows mostly intellectual depth (taking into account significant factors and looking from different perspectives).	No or incorrect use of literature and knowledge of the field. The deliverable lacks intellectual depth.	Well done. Interesting and relevant topic.
<b>CATEGORY 2: KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION/SOLVING PROBLEMS</b>				
<b>Rating</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Room for improvement</b>	<b>Comments</b>
	The theories and models are skillfully applied and the student can translate this in a unique solution action. The student can relate situations to concepts that results into a solution that adds great value to the company's overall strategy. The creative solution is/can be implemented and evaluated and is solving the problem.	The student uses theory and models and shows understanding of the issues at hand. The solution is realistic and implementable for the company. The solution is/can be implemented and evaluated.	Mentioning theory and models, but not using them in the correct way. The student cannot convince of the possibilities to implement and evaluate. It is not solving the problem.	

CATEGORY 3: INFORMED JUDGEMENTS				
Rating	Excellent	Good	Room for improvement	Comments
	The research process is done and explained in an excellent way. All statements, conclusions and recommendations are underpinned with the data collected by the students and/or referencing. The analysis is very substantial.	The research process is done and explained well. Most statements, conclusions and recommendations are underpinned with the data collected by the student and/or referencing. The analysis is substantial.	Weak problem analysis, research question not clear enough. Data collection and/or methodology is insufficient. Weak analysis, use of data from one dimension and not backed up.	
CATEGORY 4: COMMUNICATION AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE				
Rating	Excellent	Good	Room for improvement	Comments
	Excellent ability to communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to all stakeholders involved. The deliverable adds great value to the main stakeholders. Initial and creative channels have been actively used to share outputs and knowledge.	Good ability to communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to stakeholders. The deliverable adds value to the company. Existing channels have been used to share knowledge	The deliverable could have been better delivered to the stakeholders. The deliverable could have added more value, if better delivered. No active communication of outputs and knowledge.	
CATEGORY 5: INTERCULTURAL HOSPITALITY LEADERSHIP				
Rating	Excellent	Good	Room for improvement	Comments
	Student is able to lead the project by themselves. Student is self-critical towards improvement and takes feedback to heart. Student deals with a diversity of stakeholders in an intercultural competent way. Hospitality mindset is seen in project or work in a very distinct way.	Student is able to lead the project with little help. Student is critical towards improvement and listens to feedback. Student deals with different stakeholders. Hospitality mindset can be seen.	Tasks performed are described and not critically analyzed. Student is not too critical towards own learning and can listen better to feedback. Student does not know how to deal with differences in stakeholders. Hospitality can be improved.	
OVERALL COMMENTS:				
Well done. Interesting piece of research that is very relevant to various hotel brands. I like how you acknowledge the importance of culture of organizations. I am curious who you would select to be learning coaches. Would this be senior people, people at the same level or people who have successfully transferred from one to another premise.				
STUDENTS' COMMENTS:				
Comments on evaluation:				
DATE & STUDENT'S SIGNATURE:			COMPANY TUTOR'S SIGNATURE:	
				

THE COMPLETED FORMS (ON ALL DELIVERABLES AND PERFORMANCE) NEED TO BE EMAILED TO THE LYCAR COACH AND PUT IN THE APPENDICES OF THE CAREER PORTFOLIO

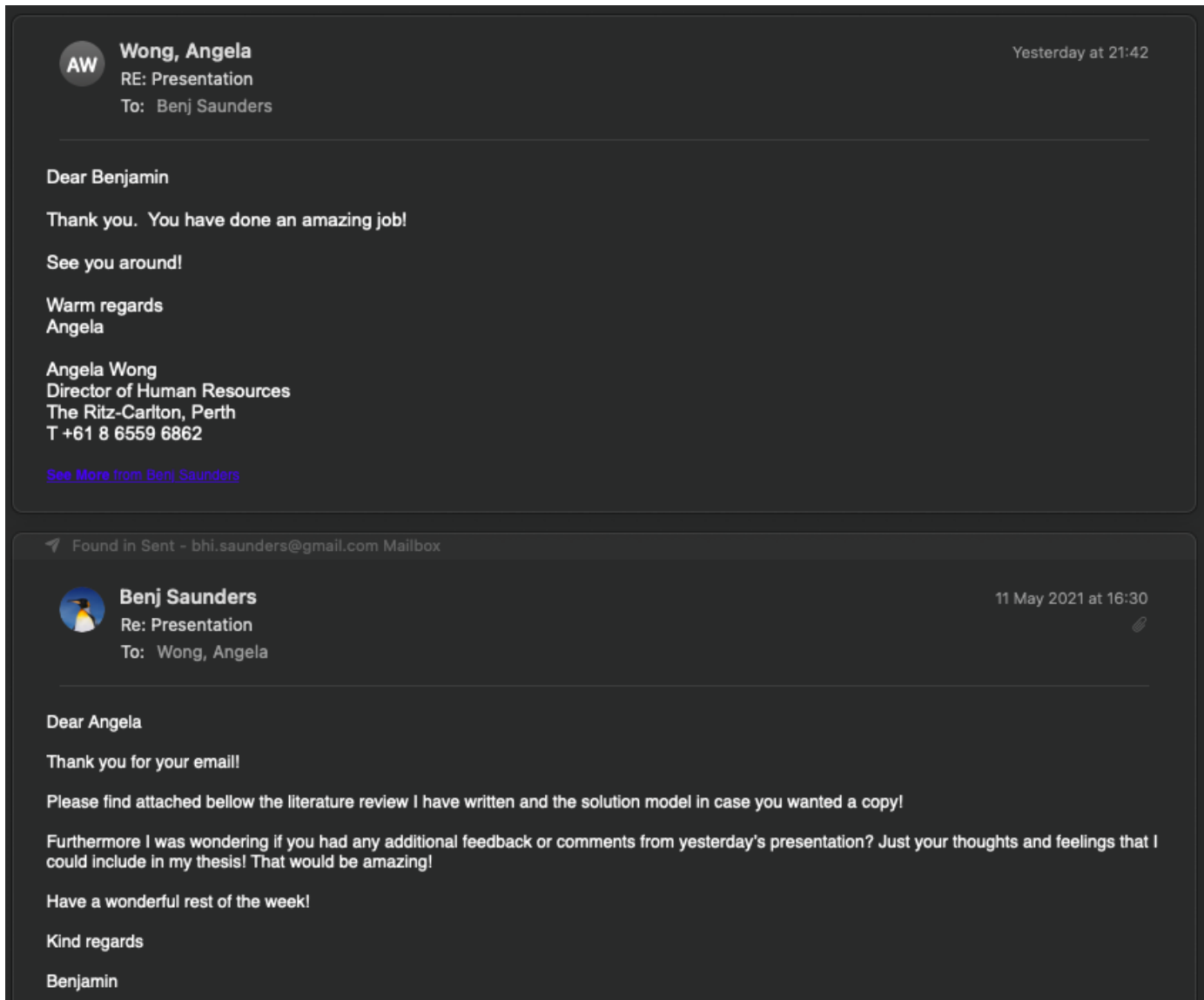
## Appendix 6: Dissemination - Grow Impact





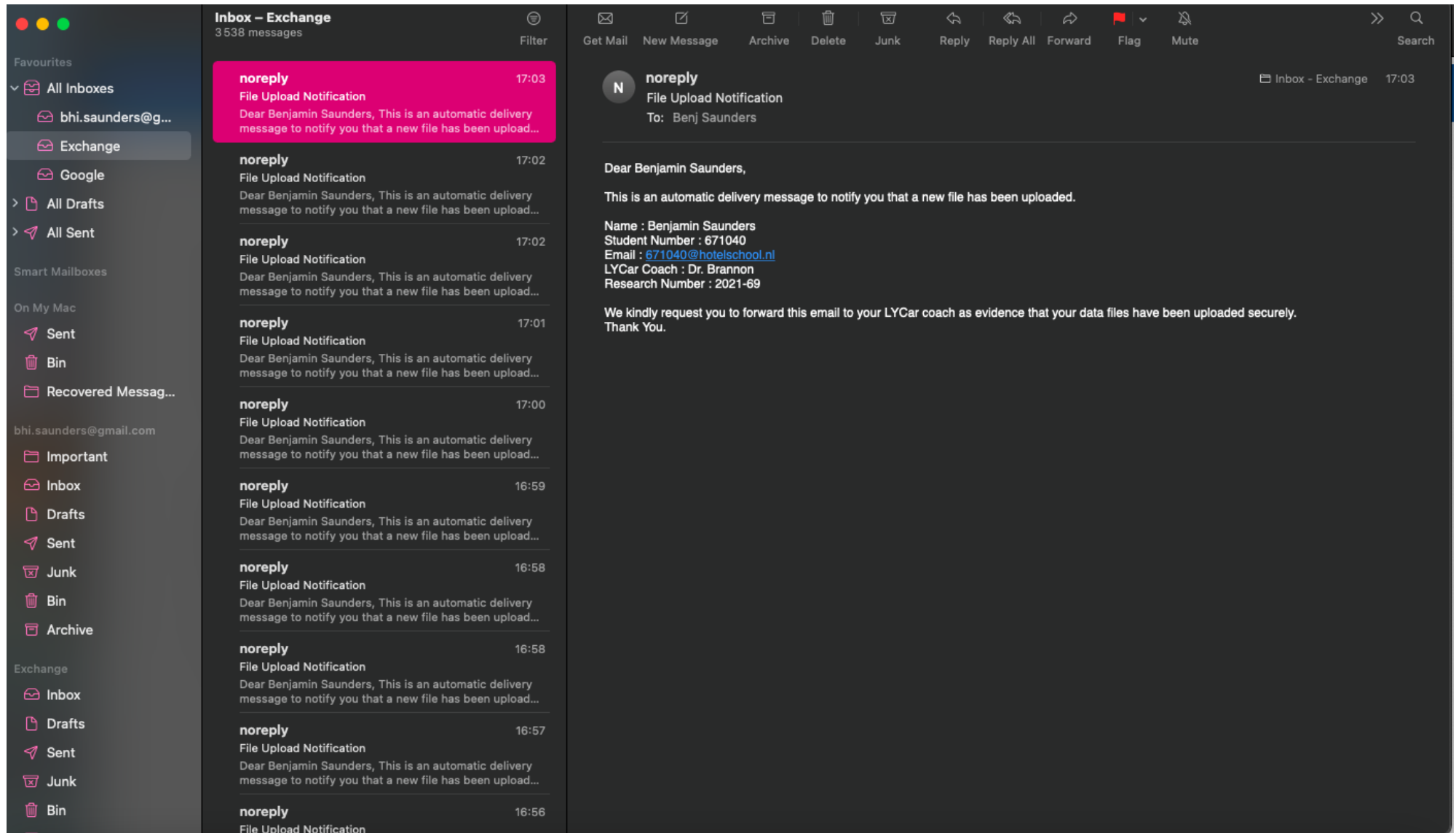
## Appendix 7: Dissemination - Ritz-Carlton

Please find below a screenshot of an email shared following the presentation.



## Appendix 8: Data management delivery

Please find below two screenshot copies of the researcher's email inbox with the proof of data upload.



Favourites

All Inboxes

bhi.saunders@g...

Exchange

Google

All Drafts

All Sent

Smart Mailboxes

On My Mac

Sent

Bin

Recovered Messag...

bhi.saunders@gmail.com

Important

Inbox

Drafts

Sent

Junk

Bin

Archive

Exchange

Inbox

Drafts

Sent

Junk

Bin

Inbox – Exchange

3538 messages

Filter

noreply

16:56

File Upload Notification

Dear Benjamin Saunders, This is an automatic delivery message to notify you that a new file has been upload...

noreply

16:55

File Upload Notification

Dear Benjamin Saunders, This is an automatic delivery message to notify you that a new file has been upload...

noreply

16:55

File Upload Notification

Dear Benjamin Saunders, This is an automatic delivery message to notify you that a new file has been upload...

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16:53

File Upload Notification

Dear Benjamin Saunders, This is an automatic delivery message to notify you that a new file has been upload...

noreply

16:52

File Upload Notification

Dear Benjamin Saunders, This is an automatic delivery message to notify you that a new file has been upload...

noreply

16:52

File Upload Notification

Dear Benjamin Saunders, This is an automatic delivery message to notify you that a new file has been upload...

Get Mail

New Message

Archive

Delete

Junk

Reply

Reply All

Forward

Flag

Mute

Search

N

noreply

File Upload Notification

To: Benj Saunders

Inbox - Exchange 16:56

Dear Benjamin Saunders,

This is an automatic delivery message to notify you that a new file has been uploaded.

Name : Benjamin Saunders

Student Number : 671040

Email : [671040@hotelschool.nl](mailto:671040@hotelschool.nl)

LYCar Coach : Dr. Brannon

Research Number : 2021-69

We kindly request you to forward this email to your LYCar coach as evidence that your data files have been uploaded securely. Thank You.

Appendix 9: Research number

**DATA MANAGEMENT: RESEARCH NUMBER**

<div><div>Student Number</div><div>671040</div></div>	<div><div>Student Name</div><div>Benjamin Saunders</div></div>	<div><div>Research Number</div><div>2021-69</div></div>
---	--	---

Please enter your student number here

## Appendix 10: LArchive report email sent

## Appendix 11: Research confidentiality contract



### **Declaration relating to confidentiality concerning research data in Launching Your CAREer (LYCar) programme**

The undersigned, **Benjamin Saunders** (hereinafter referred to as: the Student), residing in **Perth, Australia**

Conducting a (research) project for the company **Hotelschool The Hague Research Centre**

(hereinafter referred to as: the Client), residing in: **The Hague, Netherlands**

Whereas:

- the Student shall, in the context of his or her LYCAR research, gain access to confidential information.
- the Client shall, where appropriate, demand a signed declaration relating to secrecy and confidentiality concerning the information provided in this context.
- this non-disclosure agreement shall, in the event of any discrepancies, take precedence over other contracts or agreements which have been or will be concluded or made between the Student and the Client.

Declares as follows:

1. The Student shall keep confidential any information which the Client or any other party involved in the LYCAR research provides under this contract, and shall not further disclose such information in any way, except insofar as the Student is obliged to disclose it by virtue of any legal requirement or irrevocable decision of a judge.
2. Information, as referred to under 1, refers to all information, including written, verbal, graphic and digital information, or information in any other form, which comes to the knowledge of the Student during the research period and which the Student knows, or can reasonably be expected to know, is of a confidential nature.
3. The Student shall not, without the prior written consent of the Client, disclose any confidential information to third parties or contribute to the publication of confidential information. The Student shall submit the thesis to the supervisor for approval from the Client in respect of confidential information, before making such information available to his examiner(s) at Hotelschool The Hague.
4. This non-disclosure agreement shall be in force for an indefinite period / The Student shall be bound to this obligation of secrecy for five (5) years after signing this declaration.

CHOOSE IN CONSULTATION WITH CLIENT)

Thus, declared and signed by:

Name: Benjamin Saunders Date: 23/11/2020

Place: Perth, Australia Student number 671040

Signature: *Benjamin Saunders*

## Appendix 12: PLO change confirmation

FocusedOther

Last Week

N

noreply

File Upload Notif... 15/05/2021


Dear Benjamin Saunders, This is...

M

MO 2020D

[ MO 2020D - A... 15/05/2021


An announcement has been upd...



Brannon, DW, Dr.

Performance Ev... 14/05/2021

Dear LYCar 2020 PGC cohort A...



Brannon, DW, Dr.

PLO 14/05/2021

Brannon, DW, Dr.

Dear Benjamin Than... 14/05/2021

Benjamin Saunders

Dear Dr. Brannon J... Sent Items

HT

Hotelschool The Hague (...

Confirmation reg... 14/05/2021

This is a confirmation of a regist...


HT


Hotelschool The Hague (...

Confirmation reg... 14/05/2021

This is a confirmation of a regist...

RE: PLO

 Brannon, DW, Dr. <D.Brannon... Friday 14 May 2021 at 15:43

To:  Benjamin Saunders

Dear Benjamin

Thank you, this is approved

Kind regards David

---

From: Benjamin Saunders <671040@hotelschool.nl>

Sent: Friday, 14 May 2021 09:42

To: Brannon, DW, Dr. <D.Brannon@hotelschool.nl>

Subject: PLO

Dear Dr. Brannon

Just the email to confirm that my primary PLO is PLO 8 and the secondary PLO which has changed since LYCAR POA is PLO 5 relating to my placement in operations management.

Thank you very much!

Kind regards

Benjamin

186

## Appendix 13: Research proposal Osiris pass

B.H.I. Saunders

**Subject:** Transcript of records - 671040

**Date:** 27-05-2021 14:29

Degree programme	Degree	Full time/part time	Degrees	Specialisation
B Hospitality Management	B	F	D 04-02-2019 Graduated	

### Grades Post-Propaedeutic

EC

Course	Name	Date	Grade	Credits	Honorary credits	Category
LYCAR1-20	LYCAR 1 Proposal	28-02-2021	P	15.0		
TEST-1	Final Product	Weight 100 28-02-2021	P			



## Appendix 14: LYCAR last exam

Propaedeutic Year 1: 60 EC

B.H.I. Saunders

### Study Progress Overview

Student number	671040	
Date	20 May 2021	
Degree programme	B Hospitality Management - Full-time	Exam Date: 04-02-2019
Cohort	2017	Distinction: Graduated
Study programme	P-HTH-C08-17 - Propaedeutic curr.2008 version 2017	

### European Credits (EC)

Study programme	Minimum credits to be obtained	Credits obtained
Basic Programme	60.0	60.0
Others		0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60.0</b>	<b>60.0</b>

Post Propaedeutic Year 2-4: 150 EC

B.H.I. Saunders

### Study Progress Overview

Student number	671040
Date	20 May 2021
Degree programme	B Hospitality Management - Full-time
Cohort	2017
Study programme	PP-HTH-C08-17 - Post-Propedeutic curr.2008 version 2015

### European Credits (EC)

Study programme	Minimum credits to be obtained	Credits obtained	Passed
Basic Programme	180.0	150.0	No
Others		0.0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>180.0</b>	<b>150.0</b>	<b>No</b>

LYCAR POA: Pass

**Total EC's: 60+150= 210**

Appendix 15: Word count

