

**The Tortuga Bay Hotel is situated in the Puntacana Resort in the Dominican Republic. The hotel comprises 15 five star villas with full butler service.**

### **The Business Challenge**

In a challenging and competitive market, the Puntacana directors were keen to win *The Leading Small Hotels of the World Award*, and to be the first *Leading Hotel of the World* in the Dominican Republic employing local staff. The directors asked Hunter Roberts to work with them to support them in the opening of the hotel, assisting particularly in staff development and helping the leadership team create the culture and conditions required to achieve this prestigious award.

### **The Solution**

We worked closely with the leadership team and staff at all levels throughout the opening of the hotel. It was clear that many staff already had a real and positive impact on the levels of service excellence which guests were receiving. As a newly established operation, however, the structures and cultural 'norms' which guide staff and paint a clear picture for them of what is required and how to achieve it, were undeveloped.

Following an initial research period, Hunter Roberts identified that staff all needed a clearer understanding and definition of the service standards required, together with documented standards and detailed instructions to help them achieve them. Luxury customer service was not fully understood by the local staff employed at Tortuga Bay as they had no benchmark property in the Dominican Republic.

We suggested an approach which included leadership workshops, 'being the best' practical training sessions and one-to-one coaching of the executive team. In addition we created the service standards and operating procedures for the hotel.

The Executive Team and Heads of Department learnt how to develop their leadership style as required by The Leading Hotels of The World Quality Assurance standards. Hunter Roberts developed their understanding both of what differentiates luxury customer service in a 5 star hotel, and how to manage their team's performance to achieve these quality standards.

Key groups within Tortuga Bay including Front and Back of House Staff, Villa Supervisors and Managers, Housekeeping, Reservations and Luxury Teams took part in specific practical workshops. The workshops developed each group's understanding of the quality standards

required, and provided practical training on delivering luxury customer service and dealing with challenging situations.

The Hunter Roberts team worked individually with the Executive Management Team and Managers of key outlets including spa, golf club, ranch and fine dining restaurants to help them build their skills to manage their teams of local employees.

### **Measuring Success**

Throughout our work at Tortuga Bay the Hunter Roberts team built close and lasting relationships with the Leadership team and with staff at all levels. This led to an enthusiasm and commitment at Tortuga Bay to deliver the highest levels of customer service and a real feeling within the team that they were now 'set up for success' to enable them to do so.

Since the completion of the Hunter Roberts programme, Tortuga Bay have achieved their goal and been accepted as one of the *Leading Small Hotels of the World*. On being accepted, the General Manager at Tortuga Bay told us *"we have been accepted, Alleluia!!! Thank you very very much for everything. We could not have achieved this if it wasn't for your assistance, persistence, trust and support. You cannot imagine how happy I am!"*