

# **SU GIBSON**

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## **Hospitality educator specializing in spa management, service quality evaluation, workforce training and luxury hospitality.**

### **EXPERIENCE**

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA BEAUFORT Hilton Head Island & Bluffton, SC USA  
Instructor, Hospitality Department .....August 2016 - current  
Instructing courses as part of the Hospitality Management bachelor's program including face-to-face and online courses for the traditional and Palmetto College programs. Courses include:

- Destination Marketing
- Food and Beverage Cost Controls (Hospitality Accounting II)
- Hospitality Management
- Hospitality Management Strategies
- Introduction to the Hospitality Industry
- Introduction to Spa Management
- Managerial Accounting for Hospitality (Hospitality Accounting I)
- Professional Development for Hospitality Management
- Revenue and Financial Management for Hospitality
- Quality Evaluation and Management for Hospitality
- Wellness Trends in Hospitality

### **USCB'S CENTER FOR EVENT MANAGEMENT AND HOSPITALITY TRAINING**

Assistant Director.....May 2018 – current  
Providing quality management programs and customized support for Hilton Head Island hospitality businesses. Projects include development of service standards, training and organizing secret shoppers, analyzing shopper reports, presentations to management and training for staff members on elevating the guest experience.

Conducting workshops as part of the Island Ambassador and Bluffton Ambassador programs, as well as providing support for these programs as needed.

### **FORBES TRAVEL GUIDE**

National and international travel

Field Evaluator (Incognito Inspector) .....May 2015 – February 2018  
Conducted detailed on-site inspections of assigned hotels, resorts, restaurants and spas. Provided more than 100 comprehensive reports based on the company's standards for service and quality to be used by the consulting, training and ratings divisions.

### **UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON**

Bluffton, SC and Houston, TX USA

Adjunct Lecturer at the Conrad N. Hilton College (online from SC) .....June 2013 – May 2017  
Lecturer at the Conrad N. Hilton College (full time on campus in Houston).....August 2010 – May 2013  
Instructed courses as part of the Hotel and Restaurant Management bachelor's program including

- Introduction to Spa Management

- Managing in a Service Environment
- Wellness Trends in Hospitality
- Spa Concept and Design
- Hospitality Technology
- Practicum (I and II)
- Management Training Work Experience Program (I and II)

Assisted students with special projects and independent study within the *Spa Management* emphasis.

OMNI HOUSTON HOTEL Houston, TX USA  
 Spa Director, Mokara Spa.....June 2009 – July 2010  
 Created and implemented overall business strategies, including client sourcing, marketing, brand building to drive revenue while ensuring guest satisfaction, operations procedures, treatment protocols, spa policies, and overall SOP's.

ABSOLUTE ESSENTIALS Hilton Head Island, SC USA  
 Director.....February 2008 – June 2009  
 From concept to development of national wholesale distribution company for aromatherapy products. Created and implemented overall business strategies, including importation of goods, marketing, sales strategies, staff and client training, as well as plans for future development of business operations.

THE EUROPEAN SPA Hilton Head Island, SC USA  
 Spa Director.....October 2006 – June 2009  
 Created and implemented operational systems for all divisions within the company including treatments, reception, maintenance, back stock procurement, budgeting, accounting and financial management.

**EDUCATION**

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA Columbia, SC USA  
 PhD in Hospitality Management.....August 2021 – May 2027 (expected)

MOORE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, University of South Carolina Columbia, SC USA  
 International Master of Business Administration (MBA).....July 2004 - June 2006  
 Global Track with a Specialization in Marketing

WHU - OTTO BEISHEIM GRADUATE SCHOOL Koblenz, GERMANY  
 Advanced Course in Strategic Business Issues in the European Union.....March 2005

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA Columbia, SC USA  
 Bachelor of Experimental Psychology, magna cum laude .....August 1997 - May 2001

UNIVERSITY OF HULL Hull, ENGLAND  
 Full Academic Year Study Abroad Program.....September 1998 – June 1999

**ADDITIONAL WORKSHOPS & CLASSES TAUGHT**

*Bluffton History, Culture and Ecology*

Bluffton Ambassador Program, Bluffton, SC (2020 – Ongoing)

*Island Knowledge, Island Culture, and Island Ecology*

Island Ambassador Program, Hilton Head Island, SC (2019 - Ongoing)

*From Skeptic to Believer: 5 Reasons Why I Changed My Mind About Online Education*

Annual SCTEA Convention, Myrtle Beach, SC (February 2018)  
*Complete Aromatherapy*, 12 CE online course  
BrainCert (Created early 2015, currently available)  
*Aromatherapy Basics*, online course  
Udemy (Created spring 2014, currently available)  
*Basic Aromatherapy*, 12 hr CE class  
Myotherapy Institute, Inc, NE (May 2013)  
The Houston Spa Association, TX (March 2011)  
*Spa Boot Camp*, 1.5 hr CE class created for Hospitality Finance and Technology Professionals (*HFTP*)  
Texas Regional Group, Westin Galleria, TX (April 2013)  
Houston meeting, St. Regis Hotel, TX (Nov. 2012)  
Annual HFTP Convention, FL (2012)  
*Business Building for the CMT*, 8 hr. workshop created for Phoenix School of Holistic Technology, TX  
(Dec. 2012, June 2012, Dec. 2011)  
*Sports Massage*, 18 hr. massage workshop created for Phoenix School of Holistic Technology, TX  
(Oct. 2012, Feb. 2012, Aug. 2011)  
*Spa Management for Chinese Hotel Executives*, 3 hr class, Global Unisource Inc. in conjunction with the  
UH Hobby Center for Public Policy, Hilton College, TX (Oct. 2011)

## **ORGANIZATIONS, AWARDS, AND SERVICE**

Contact and program advisor for the UofSC Palmetto College degree-completion program in hospitality management at USCB (2020 – current)  
Editor of the USCB Hospitality Management department newsletter (2019 – current)  
Faculty Advisor of the Hospitality Student Association (2018 – current)  
Member of the Mary Tabacchi Scholarship Selection Committee (2013 – current)  
Recipient of the 2013 Faculty Service Award, Conrad N. Hilton College (2013)  
Organizer of the Houston Spa Association (2010 – 2013)  
Library Director of the Massad Family Library and Research Center (2010 – 2013)  
Faculty Advisor of the Houston Spa Association ~ Student Chapter (2011 – 2013)  
Member of the San Jacinto College Massage Therapy Program Advisory Committee (2011 – 2013)  
Task Force Member for International Spa Education Standards Group formed at the 2012 Global Spa and Wellness Summit (2012 –2013)  
Moderator for Wellness Trends in Hospitality (2011), Organic Farm to Table (2012), and *Spa Careers, How to Get your Start* (2012) think tank sessions as part of Hilton College “Hall of Honor” events  
Faculty Advisor of the Hilton College Global Spa Summit Student Competition Team for the 2012 Global Spa and Wellness Summit in Aspen, CO (2011 – 2012)  
Panelist for *Spa Management Workforce and Education: Addressing Marketing Gaps* at the 2012 Global Spa and Wellness Summit in Aspen, CO (June 2012)  
Volunteer for the Rawfully Organic Co-op in Houston (2012)  
Guest Speaker for the Pasadena Rotary Club (March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012)  
Manager of the Quarter, Omni Houston Hotel (1<sup>st</sup> Qtr 2010)

## **PUBLICATIONS**

- Gibson, S. (2021) in press. Technology for Spas, Salons and Wellness Centers. In *Hospitality and Tourism Information Technology*. M3 Center, University of South Florida
- Gibson, S., Calvert, C. Olivetti, K. & Abraham, A. (2020, February). Measuring Excellence: Development of an evaluation tool for perceived quality in the restaurant experience. In L. Thomas, Jr. (Ed.) 5<sup>th</sup> Annual ICHRIE-SECSA Federation Conference. *Innovations in SECSA Hospitality and Tourism Research*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 128-131  
[https://www.chrie.org/files/ConferenceProceedings\\_2020.pdf](https://www.chrie.org/files/ConferenceProceedings_2020.pdf)
- Engeldinger, B. and Gibson, S. (2019). Spas and Fitness Centers. In Brymer and Moll (17<sup>th</sup> Ed.), *Hospitality: An Introduction*. Kendall Hunt.
- Gibson, S. (2014, August 22). Using Data in Decision Making. *A Blog from the International Spa Association*. International Spa Association.  
[http://internationalspaassociation.blogspot.com/2014/08/using-data-in-decision-making\\_22.html](http://internationalspaassociation.blogspot.com/2014/08/using-data-in-decision-making_22.html)
- Gibson, S. (2014, January). Spa Economics for 2014: KPIs for your spa. *Les Nouvelles Esthetiques & Spa*.
- Gibson, S. (2014). Staffing in a Seasonal Environment. In M. S. and L. Puczko (Ed.), *Health Tourism and Hospitality: Wellness, Spas and Medical Travel* (2nd Ed.). Routledge.
- Gibson, S. (2013, September). A Happy Culture: A Happy and Fit Work Environment. *Les Nouvelles Esthetiques & Spa*, 105–107.
- Gibson, S. (2012, October). Spa Students Secret-Shop Their Way to Knowledge and Relaxation. *Massage Magazine Online*. Retrieved from <http://www.massagemag.com/News/message-news.php?id=13263>
- Gibson, S. (2012). The Americas: The United States. *Global Spa & Wellness Industry Briefing Papers 2012*. (p. 77). <https://globalwellnesssummit.com/wp-content/uploads/Industry-Briefing-Papers/PDFs/2012-Industry-Briefing-Papers.pdf>
- Gibson, S. (2010, March). Purifying Aromatherapy for the Spring. *Health Tourism Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.healthtourismmagazine.com/article/purifying-aromatherapy-for-the-spring.html>
- Gibson, S. (2009). Why Quality of Essential Oils Matters. *Massage Magazine*, 153 (February), 42–44.

## **CERTIFICATIONS**

- Certified Hospitality Educator (CHE), AH&LA Educational Institute
- Beaufort Online Learning & Teaching (BOLT), USCB
- Certified Massage Therapist (CMT), Dovestar Institute of Holistic Technology
- Certified Reiki Master Therapist, Dovestar Institute of Holistic Technology
- Certified Yoga Instructor, The Yoga Institute with Lex Gillan

## **CONSULTING PROJECTS**

### **SEA PINES RESORT**

Hilton Head Is., SC

Trained secret shoppers to evaluate several restaurants and pro-shops at the resort. Evaluated reports and facilitated presentations to management. (2021 - ongoing)

### **PALMETTO DUNES RESORT**

Hilton Head Is., SC

Trained secret shoppers to evaluate the main golf grill (Big Jim's) at the resort. Evaluated reports and facilitated presentations to management. (2021 - ongoing)

#### SERG RESTAURANT GROUP

Hilton Head and Bluffton, SC

Developed list of service standards using industry best practices and interviews with management. Trained secret shoppers to evaluate 17 restaurants over several rounds of visits. Evaluated reports and facilitated presentations to management. More than 170 written reports and 20 presentations completed. (2018 - 2020)

#### SONESTA RESORT

Hilton Head Is., SC

Conducted quarterly visits to F&B outlets to evaluate integrity issues and consistency in service. Produced 14 written reports. (2018 - 2019)

#### MONTAGE PALMETTO BLUFF

Bluffton, SC

Trained secret shoppers to conduct detailed evaluations based on Montage service standards. Assisted with Montage Palmetto Bluff Standards Cup Challenge and produced more than 50 written reports based on secret shopper visits. Personally conducted two multi-day visits and evaluated the full resort guest experience with detailed written reports and a presentation to management. \*Note: the resort earned their fifth star from the Forbes Travel Guide the following year! (2019)

#### HEAVENLY SPA, WESTIN HH RESORT

Hilton Head Is., SC

Refined service standards list for secret shopping based on company policies and industry standards. Personally conducted multiple evaluations and trained another secret shopper to do evaluations. Produced three written reports and two presentations to management. Also presented to spa staff on elevating the guest experience during a monthly staff meeting. (2019)

#### HEALTHY HABIT RESTAURANTS

Hilton Head Is., SC

Developed list of service standards based on industry best practices and adapted for the Healthy Habit quick-service model. Conducted multiple visits to two locations and trained secret shoppers to evaluate the guest experience. Produced 11 written reports and facilitated one presentation to ownership. (2019)

#### SERENE DESTINATION SPA

Woodlands, TX

Created full business plan and assisted with preparation for presentation to potential investors for a new spa concept. (2015)

#### INTERNATIONAL SPA INSTITUTE

Bluffton, SC

Launched new site for online continuing education courses using Moodle LMS. Also created 1<sup>st</sup> online course for the school in Hot Stone Massage safety. (2013)

#### AMAZING LASH STUDIO

Houston, TX

Evaluated product lines and private label labs to identify possible vendors for the new franchise company. Created overall retail strategy for pre- and post-opening and presented to owners. (2012 - 2013)

#### MESSAGE HEIGHTS HOUSTON

Houston, TX

Developed secret shopper program to track consistency and quality of service throughout the Houston region for 16 locations. Analyzed results and presented recommendations. (2011 - 2013)

#### PHOENIX SCHOOL OF HOLISTIC HEALTH

Houston, TX

Provided recommendations to improve spa and special program revenues. Facilitated internships for social media development and branding. (2011 - 2012)

#### MESSAGE HEIGHTS (corporate office)

San Antonio, TX

Created aromatherapy essence prototypes for new product line and provided training for research of customer scent preferences. Analyzed results for management. (2010) Assisted with survey research in topical analgesic prototype testing and provided recommendations for adoption. (2011)

OMNI BEDFORD SPRINGS RESORT

Bedford, PA

Ensured smooth operations of large spa during busy spring season as part of rotating guest spa director effort from within the company during director vacancy. Put inventory management systems in place, managed staff and staffing levels hiring where appropriate. (2010)