

**Nobody Asked Me, But... No. 19**  
**International Society of Hospitality Consultants, Great Miami Hotels,**  
**Reduce Carbon Monoxide Emissions, Turn Gray Into Gold**

**By Stanley Turkel, MHS, ISHC**

1. Once a year, the prestigious International Society of Hospitality Consultants holds a conference for its 200 worldwide members (of which I am one). Last month, the conference took place in Miami Beach at the Loews Miami Beach Hotel at South Beach. This 700 room hotel is well-designed and well-operated with a spectacular location on the beach within walking distance of the Miami Beach Convention Center and the heart of South Beach. The conference program covered a wide variety of important subjects including generational training and customer service, the next wave of food and beverage concepts, global destination tourism trends, alternative lodging products, franchise and management contract strategies and the selection of the famous ISHC top ten global hotel industry issues. You can learn more about the ISHC at their website: [www.ishc.com](http://www.ishc.com).

2. Before attending the ISHC conference, my wife and I took a hotelman's holiday and visited four wonderful hotels in the greater Miami area:

- The Standard Miami, Belle Isle (Venetian Causeway). Owner Andre Balazs has made the most of the 1950's motel rooms (Lido Spa Hotel) by placing the bathtubs outside on patios surrounded by gauzy drapes offering peek-a-boo views of bathers. Guestrooms have been updated with imagination and comfort and at the swimming pool, Biscayne Bay is a bathers' spectacular backdrop. The spa and restaurant are first rate.
- The Hotel in the heart of South Beach has a AAA Four Diamond rating in the restored Tiffany art-deco hotel, the award-winning Wish restaurant and a roof-top pool.
- The Setai, a serene tropical paradise, is an art-deco replica of the former Dempsey Vanderbilt Hotel. The 5 star Setai is elegant and beautifully designed. Its parent

company, GHM Hotels, operates hotels in Kuala Lumpur, Bali, Myanmar, Goa, Vietnam, Muscat, Phuket among others.

- The Biltmore Coral Gables, built in 1926, is a national historic landmark hotel with 76,000 sq. ft. of meeting space, an 18 hole golf course and the largest hotel swimming pool in the continental United States. It was designed by Schultz & Weaver who were also the architects of the Breakers (Palm Beach), the Waldorf-Astoria (New York), Biltmore (Los Angeles), Biltmore (Atlanta), Sevilla-Biltmore (Havana), Roney Plaza (Miami Beach), Freedom Tower (Miami), Sherry Netherland (New York), Pierre (New York), etc.

3. Ray Burger, President, Pineapple Hospitality reports: “Already this year, Pineapple Hospitality’s lodging clients have replaced 75,000 incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents- saving 6.8 million kilowatt hours. This is the equivalent of planting 1,332 acres of forests and reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 10 million pounds.”

What are you waiting for?

4. As reported recently, the population of the United States surpassed 300 million. Here’s an interesting breakdown of their ages (at the end of 2005):

	<u>Birth Date</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Population</u>
Seniors	1920-1942	65-87	42 million
Baby Boomers	1943-1963	43-64	82 million
Gen. X	1964-1980	26-42	68 million
Gen. Y	1981-2000	6-25	80 million

These demographics indicate an extraordinary opportunity for the hospitality industry. There is, apparently, a large market out there that is growing at a phenomenal rate. However, to reach this market, hotels must understand the needs and requirements of the older traveler and provide services and amenities that appeal to them. Even in a hotel marketplace that is projected to

operate at 64% occupancy, there are still 36% of all guestrooms (or 900,000 rooms) that are vacant every night. Therefore, whatever can be done to attract the mature market is worth the effort. After all, there is nothing more perishable than an unsold guestroom.

In order to turn gray into gold, guestroom design for senior citizens must take into account the realities of hearing loss, diminished vision, lessened color perception, poorer short-term memory and weakened upper body strength. While experts agree that hotel facilities for seniors should be designed to offset these difficulties, I believe that, in fact, all hotel guests would benefit from the following improvements:

### In Guest Rooms

1. Better lighting at the desk, at bedside, in the closet, at the TV set and at room entry.
2. Master electrical switch at bedside to control all room lights.
3. TV, radio and internet operating instructions that are easy to read, clear in direction, simple to operate and well lit.
4. Free high speed internet access
5. Blackout drapes and/or shades that actually keep light out.
6. Clear instructions on how to use the telephone.
7. An alarm clock that is easy to program and read.
8. Lamp switches at the base of the lamp where they can be easily seen and reached.
9. Real clothes hangers in the closet along with irons and ironing boards.
10. Make sure that all descriptive printed materials are well written, clearly printed, and large enough to read easily.
11. Provide a refrigerator and a microwave oven.
12. Provide a reliable in-room safe that is:
  - Easy to use with large legible keypads and LED displays
  - Adaptable to guest needs and use either a personal credit card or guest-configured PIN number.
  - Large enough to meet guest requirements

### In Bathrooms

1. Apply good non-skid material to both the bathtub floor and the bathroom floor.
2. Install well-placed and secure hand holds and grab bars in bathtub/shower area.
3. Make sure the adjustable shower head is easy to adjust and does the job.
4. Eliminate hot water surges and provide scald-proof hot water.
5. Make sure all shower curtains are long enough to reach well below the bathtub top and hung on a curved shower rod.
6. Provide good lighting over the mirror.
7. Install a magnifying mirror on an accordion bracket.
8. Provide a UL-approved hair dryer on a wall-hung bracket.
9. Supply better-quality, more absorbent towels in color.
10. Provide bathroom amenities (shampoo, lotion, etc.) in containers which are easy to identify (with large print) and which have raised surfaces on the cap for easy turning when hands are wet.
11. Install night lights which won't disturb sleeping but will provide safe night trips to bathroom.

### In Corridors And Elevators

1. Make certain that corridors are well illuminated, especially over guestroom doors to expedite the use of electronic door lock cards.
2. Provide easy to read, well-designed directional signs to guestrooms.
3. Elevators should have clear and well-lit floor buttons with "Door Open" buttons easily located.
4. Elevator door bumpers should retract readily when touched.
5. Elevator signs describing restaurant facilities should be colorful, simple in design with clear directions.
6. Corridor exit signs should be installed close to the corridor floor so that they won't be hidden by rising smoke in the event of fire.

### Security And Safety Considerations

1. Convert to an all-smoke-free format
2. Voice activated fire emergency alert systems.
3. Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
4. Sprinklers
5. Medical service availability with provision for emergency illness.
6. Valet parking
7. Well-lit parking areas with shuttle to and from the front of the hotel.
8. Uniformed security guards on duty at critical times.
9. Train your employees to be considerate, thoughtful and helpful.

Stanley Turkel, MHS, ISHC operates his hotel consulting office as a sole practitioner specializing in franchising issues, asset management and litigation support services. Turkel's clients are hotel owners and franchisees, investors and lending institutions. Turkel serves on the Board of Advisors and lectures at the NYU Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism and Sports Management. He is a member of the prestigious International Society of Hospitality Consultants. His provocative articles on various hotel subjects have been published in the Cornell Quarterly, Lodging Hospitality, Hotel Interactive, Hotel Online, AAHOA Lodging Business, Bottomline, New York Times, Wall Street Journal, etc. If you need help with a hotel operations or franchising problem such as encroachment/impact, termination/liquidated damages or litigation support, don't hesitate to call 917-628-8549 or email [stanturkel@aol.com](mailto:stanturkel@aol.com).