

SERVICE CULTURE : THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Companies are nowadays more and more aware of the importance of service culture. However, they do not always have the internal skills or resources to improve or sustain it. We met **Claire Bonniol**, Managing Director UK and **Alexis Grabar (MBA.02)**, Founding Partner of the “**Académie du Service UK**”, specialised in service culture and Customer engagement.

Created as a branch of the ACCOR Group in 2004, the “Académie du Service” is now an independent company. Can you tell us more about this evolution ?

Claire Bonniol: In 2004, the “Académie du Service” was launched with a start-up and entrepreneurial spirit. The idea was to offer the opportunity to other companies to benefit from the know-how and expertise of the ACCOR group. The entity rapidly gathered 20 employees and developed a portfolio of 250 customers. More than half of our clients are CAC 40 companies and international companies of different size. Following a MBO in 2011, we became a real self-managed company and an independent entity with 30 consultants based in Paris.

How do you distinguish from the traditional consulting or training companies ?

Alexis Grabar: The “Académie du Service” has developed a unique business model focused on consulting, training and research to promote

service culture at all levels. It is a quite rare and innovative business and research approach in the European market. We can rely on our consultants and trainers, who have developed their service marketing, management & HR skills within the ACCOR Group or other service native companies. While strategic management consultants generally start with concepts and then move to the ground, we consider our customers’ service needs and training expectations from an empirical side. We take what makes the success of service oriented companies, such as ACCOR Group and other best-in-class, to provide to our customers the best practices to enhance their service culture.

You help companies to address their transformation focusing on 3 pillars: the human touch, the internationalisation and the digitalisation: can you tell us more ?

CB: With theoretical and practical research, we help our customer develop key service minded skills. Our

motto is “Consideration Symmetry”, a proprietary concept based on an equal attention given both to the employees and the customers for renewed relationships with the customers and within the company. Training and consulting missions are realised all around the world. The strategies we design are global but the training provided is local in order to adapt our strategies to a given market and cultural background. We also help our customers through their digital transformation combining their service strategy with the new digital tools and designing new consistent online and offline customer experience.

The “Académie of Service” is opening in London. What has motivated this choice ?

AG: When I met Claire and the four other founding partners of “Académie du Service”, last June in Paris, we agreed that it was time to internationalize the brand and open a subsidiary in an Anglo-Saxon country. London was a natural choice in terms of location, market opportunities, culture and language.

What are your perspectives ?

AG: We aim at developing a team of 10 consultants/trainers but also reaching a one million pound business revenue in the United Kingdom collaborating with British, French and American clients based in London. We also plan to cover the US in the next 3 to 5 years with a second subsidiary that will probably be located in NYC. ●



BIO EXPRESS

After a 10 year corporate background with Eurocopter, Airbus, Cap Gemini and Netjets, Alexis Grabar (MBA.02) became a serial entrepreneur in the aviation, luxury and service industries creating 4 companies in the United Kingdom, France and Russia including 2 successful ones: Aviamediatech and Avolus. He is the Founding Partner of Académie du Service UK. He is a member of the Automobile Club de France in Paris and a Fellow Member of the Royal Aeronautical Society in London. He is also a member of the French Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain and the Russo British Chamber of Commerce (RBCC).



Claire Bonniol,
Managing
Director UK

ABOUT THE “ACADÉMIE DU SERVICE”

Created in 2004, the “Académie du Service” was part of the ACCOR Group until 2011. The ambition of the company is to improve the service culture, customer engagement and employee motivation. It gathers 30 consultants and 8 partners. It collaborates with 250 customers in France, 30% of them having an international activity, and generates 6 million euros revenue through consulting, training, events and research.