Hospitality and communication skills more important than ever

During the lifetimes of our founders, Roy and Estelle Kelley, all of our company’s operations were located in Waikīkī and my father, in particular, practiced MBWA (Management By Walking Around). He would walk in to most of our Waikīkī hotels almost every day to find out what was going on and greet the members of our ‘ohana. He did not need a computer or spreadsheet to tell him what was happening.

Modern technology has made an unbelievable amount of information instantly available and transportable in terms of both time and geography. As a result, almost anything we do has to be considered in terms of both local and international impact. What we do in the Maldives this morning might be reported by Hawai‘i newspapers in afternoon online posts or on the Honolulu evening television news.

As a result, social skills have become more important than ever in Travel & Tourism. Whether you are interacting with guests, fellow hosts, outside vendors or the media, how you present yourself, the way you communicate and how you make the other party feel are more important than ever. That is the conclusion of Claire Cain Miller in a recent article in The New York Times. She reports that even though technology may eliminate jobs, particularly those that are repetitive and manual, it is, at the same time, opening up vast opportunities in positions that require both socializing and thinking. That means great new opportunities in the hospitality industry where virtually every position involves some form of socializing and thinking. If you are not socializing with our guests, you are probably socializing with other hosts in a team effort to get the job done.

That is where The Outrigger Way comes in. Whether it is called Ke ‘Ano Wa’a in Hawai‘i and Denver, Bula Spirit in Fiji, Mittrapab (Friendship) in Thailand, Enasame (Together) in Mauritius, Inafa’maolek (Making It Good for Others) on Guam or Ekuveriya (Deep Connection) in the Maldives, it all comes down to “working as a family in harmony with the culture and environment of the places where we do business.”

So, as we continue to use more and more technology in every phase of our operations, think of it as an opportunity. As Hannah Foote, my maternal grandmother, used to tell me, “The glass is not half empty, it is really half full and getting better all the time!”

“EKUVERIYA” in the Maldivian language is a word for a very deep friendship/deep connection