

# RISING TO THE TOP

OCEAN MANAGEMENT OFFER A NEW APPROACH TO SERVICE AND INTERIOR CREW COACHING FOR THE SUPERYACHT INDUSTRY

Recent decades have seen the world's fleet of large yachts grow exponentially, and with it an ever-increasing demand for well-trained, certified and experienced crew members. A few exceptions aside, shore-based training facilities have increasingly focused on the training and certification of deck and engineering staff. However, very little has been available in terms of dedicated training for service and interior staff.

Captain Jason Gilbert, Operations Manager of Ocean Management, the yacht management division of the worldwide leading brokerage company Ocean Independence, says "Luckily we do have experienced yacht interior crew, and we always ensure those recruited come from a sound hospitality background and we look after them well. There is however a great demand for yacht crew and we have many young, enthusiastic and promising people wanting to be employed on mega yachts, yet unfortunately they lack any formal five star hospitality training and experience."

Gilbert continues, "Service training for new crew members coming on board tends to typically be left to the Captain and the Chief Stewardess. This is another important job to be undertaken and managed, alongside numerous other vital tasks, very often shortly before the Owner or the guests arrive."

With almost 40% of Ocean Management's 300 crew members being interior staff, Managing Director, Daniel Küpfer, Master Mariner and former Yacht Captain, has been looking at ways to improve training opportunities for these key personnel. One recent solution Ocean Management has introduced is a partnership with Mr. Hanspeter Vochezer, founder and owner of Swiss Butlers and president of the Swiss Butler Association.

With many years of experience as a butler and professional hotelier, Mr Vochezer is used to serving A-list celebrities and UHNW individuals. Swiss Butlers advises on and teaches aspects of personal branding and image consultancy, providing business etiquette training to personal butlers, as well as to senior executive staff of major worldwide banks and first class service providers.

Hanspeter knows what it means to perform under pressure and unusual conditions, having taken over the management of a hotel resort after it had been almost completely destroyed by the Tsunami disaster in Thailand. He also understands how to provide five-star plus service under the often difficult conditions that yacht crew face - including working under extreme pressure in constrained spaces, serving a multicultural clientele, being in active service or on stand-by 24/7, and with very little or no privacy for months on end.

Ocean Management, alongside Swiss Butlers, have developed a new 'on board' crew coaching service, a dedicated three day yacht training program aimed at service and interior crew with exclusive hands-on training provided by Hanspeter on board a yacht. This crew etiquette training now forms an integral part of the Ocean Management on board crew coaching programme.

"Onboard crew coaching enables us to train interior staff in their real working environment, which we find far more effective than traditional classroom training," says Hanspeter Vochezer. Daniel Küpfer adds "Our yacht owners and charter guests are the most valuable clientele in the world, requiring the highest possible attention and service quality. This is why on board crew training is only carried out by Hanspeter Vochezer himself - and does of course mean that there is a limit to the number of these specialist training programs that can be provided each year."

Ocean Management are currently the only yacht management company to offer 5-star plus on board butler coaching services.

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