

Hospitality is fundamentally a people business. While technology, systems and processes continue to evolve, the guest experience is still shaped by the energy, judgement and commitment of employees on the ground.

For a growing hospitality group, the challenge is to create enough structure to support consistent execution, without introducing so much control that it slows decision-making, reduces ownership or limits the entrepreneurial spirit of the business.

Our workforce strategy is therefore focused on finding the right balance between discipline and agility.

One of the most important areas is workforce and salary-cost management. Hotels operate in a highly dynamic environment, where occupancy levels, guest demands and operational pressures can change quickly. Without clear workforce planning and approval controls, businesses can easily experience unplanned salary increases, unnecessary appointments or labour costs that are not aligned with operational performance.

Cost discipline, however, cannot be considered in isolation. We must continue to pay employees fairly, recognise performance and remain competitive in the employment market. The objective is not simply to reduce costs, but to make deliberate and equitable workforce decisions supported by reliable information, clear accountability and an understanding of the needs of each hotel.

Effective time and attendance information plays an important role in this process. It gives leaders greater visibility of working hours, overtime, absenteeism, leave patterns and staffing requirements. This allows operational decisions to be based on facts rather than assumptions, while also helping to ensure that employees are treated consistently and paid accurately.

Technology provides the visibility, but leadership ultimately shapes the employee experience.

Culture is the accumulated effect of what leaders tolerate, what the organisation rewards, how decisions are made and how performance is managed. It is reflected in the everyday moments of the business: whether poor performance is addressed, whether strong contributors are recognised, whether managers take ownership and whether employees believe decisions are fair.

My role is to strategically align these mechanisms so that the employee experience and the expectations of the business reinforce one another. When workforce planning, performance management, reward, leadership behaviour and culture are aligned, employees understand what is expected of them and leaders are better equipped to execute.

For hospitality businesses navigating growth, the goal should not be structure for the sake of structure. It should be to build simple, disciplined and transparent people practices that protect speed, encourage ownership and enable the organisation to grow sustainably.