

Ability to leave, but the desire to stay..

Case study: Sonas Collection Hotels
Recruitment and retention

By Danny Docherty



Who are we?

The Sonas Collection is a family-owned business based on the Isle of Skye.

We operate a group of boutique hotels with three on Skye and one in Oban (2024).

This year we will need circa 150 employees....





Number is in thousands

Source: ONS Vacancies by industry

What are the challenges we've had to deal with?

Lack of accommodation on Skye.

The difficulty of adapting to "Skye" life.

Loss of experience – Brexit and...
"the great resignation".

Perception of hospitality – not viewed
as a potential career.



What are the actions we've taken?

Real living wage early adopter - 2018.

Enhanced our colleague benefits and wellbeing initiatives.

Invested in accommodation.

Expanded our training platform.

Built a people dept to support.



What are the results of our actions?

Less recruitment going into the season.

Better attraction stage – total rewards.

Career opportunities – paradigm shifting.

Wellbeing services adding value.

Next stage: innovation and difference
(culture & values).



Lessons learned

&

Top tips



- Hygiene factors.
- Recruit for personality.
- Invest in your people.
- Listen, act then listen.

Thank you!

