Daniel Meyer

Danny Meyer, Founder of Shake Shack and Union Square Hospitality Group

Enlightened Hospitality Under Danny Meyer's leadership, USHG is renowned not only for its acclaimed restaurants but also for its distinctive and celebrated culture of Enlightened Hospitality. This guiding principle of prioritizing employees first and foremost has driven and shaped USHG's ongoing evolution from a small group of restaurants into a multi-faceted hospitality organization. Businesses that prioritize their employee experience see greater returns for all of their stakeholders, from customer experience to community enrichment and beyond.

Service Vs. Hospitality Maya Angelou said: "People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." Danny addresses the critical difference between service—the technical delivery of a product—and hospitality—the way the interaction makes you feel—drawing on examples from the restaurant industry to illustrate the powerful impact that hospitality can have on employee engagement, customer loyalty, and sales. And in any organization, hiring the right people, training them for excellence, and giving them room to grow is of the utmost importance. Danny shares his philosophy of the 51%er, a framework for hiring employees who lead with the emotional intelligence that underlies great hospitality.

Innovation and Leadership—The Hospitality Included Case Study Central to Danny's business philosophy is the question: "Whoever wrote the rule?" Union Square Hospitality Group's innovative spirit has taken the company to new frontiers that transcend the restaurant industry. Danny shares stories from his entrepreneurial roots and case studies from throughout his career (including Hospitality Included, a recent initiative to eliminate tipping) to illuminate the power of risk-taking and the value of a mistake well handled.