

The certified way to be a spa manager

Cosmoprof provides training for those who aspire to be in management roles in the spa industry

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IF ANYBODY thinks managing a spa is a piece of cake, Mr Peter Sng begs to differ.

"It is not just general management. It is the ability to provide an experience," says the president of the Spa Association Singapore. "Only a manager or supervisor able to pre-empt clients' needs is able to provide this experience."

That is why he does not think anyone can just walk off the street and open a spa of quality. And that is why his school, Cosmoprof School of Beauty Therapy & Make-up, is now offering the Certified Spa Supervisor Course, to provide training for those who aspire to be in or are already in management roles in the industry.

He feels that the present state of the industry leaves much to be desired. "Many start-ups are by entrepreneurs who have no experience at all in spa management," he says.

And among those who

started off as therapists and rose to supervisory positions, many are not trained in management skills. "Everything was by trial and error. There was no structured training," he says.

Cosmoprof's course, which was developed by the International Spa Association (ISPA) United States and the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute, will cover areas such as motivation and team-building, communication improvement and the conducting of orientation and training programmes, with case studies from the spa industry.

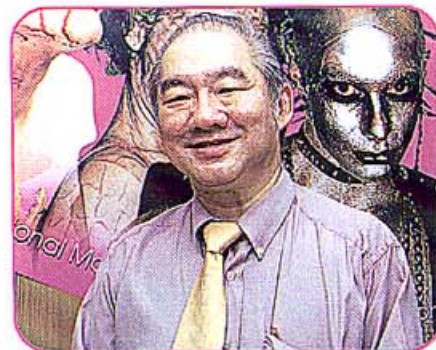
The ISPA represents more than 2,000 spas in 63 countries. Mr Sng is on its board of directors.

The course is targeted at entrepreneurs who want to set up their own spa, those seeking a career in spa management, and spa managers who have not had formal training.

The first class, scheduled to start on May 27, will take in about 20 students. It will be

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— Peter Sng, president of the Spa Association of Singapore



DAVID YEO

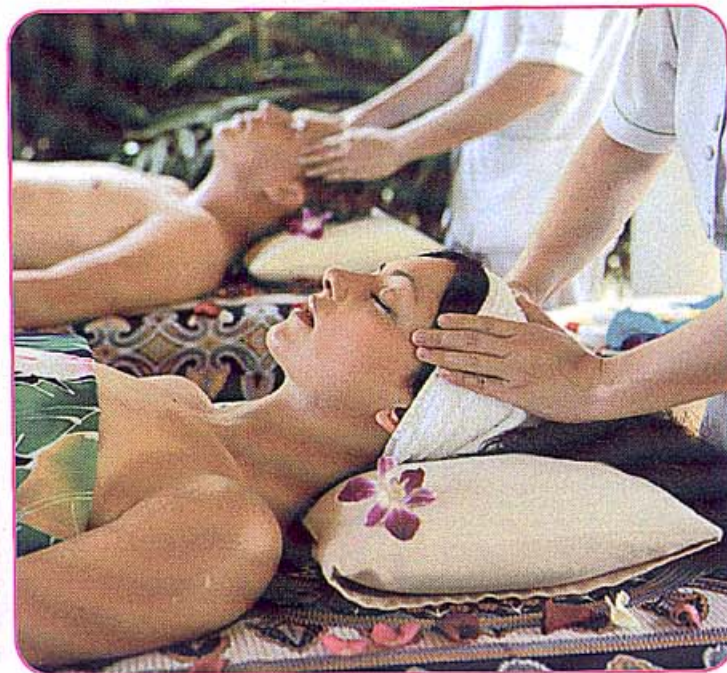
held three nights a week over nine weeks and costs \$1,850.

The only academic prerequisites needed are a secondary school education and a command of English as the course is conducted in English. A Chi-

nese version of the course is in the pipeline.

"We should not be too academically-inclined here. We want to look at experience also," says Mr Sng.

In fact, experience will stand



will give students the necessary exposure through its subsidiary, SpaCare International – which provides spa management services in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and China, and owns the premier spa brand, The Aspara.

On passing the exam, the student will be certified by the ISPA as a Certified Spa Supervisor.

Mr Sng believes this will give them an edge over their untrained counterparts and enable them to command a premium.

Demand for these trained supervisors in the booming spa industry is expected to be high. Mr Sng estimates that there are now more than 100 spas in Singapore, a quarter of which are members of Spa Association Singapore. In addition, there are another 100 or so beauty salons which offer spa services. Just 10 years ago, there were only two spas in Singapore.

And the industry is still growing. "Our consumers are well-heeled, well-travelled and well-read. There is more recognition of the benefits of spas," says Mr Sng.

The availability of certified spa supervisors will be a further boost to the industry, which has so far certified only therapist skills. "With more focused training, spas will be managed better," says Mr Sng.

the student in good stead as the final exam in the course will test the student not just on course content but also on supervisory knowledge gained on the job.

However, students without the required experience need not worry. Mr Sng gives the assurance that, if needed, Cosmoprof