

60-SECOND PROFILE

## CULTURE CLUB

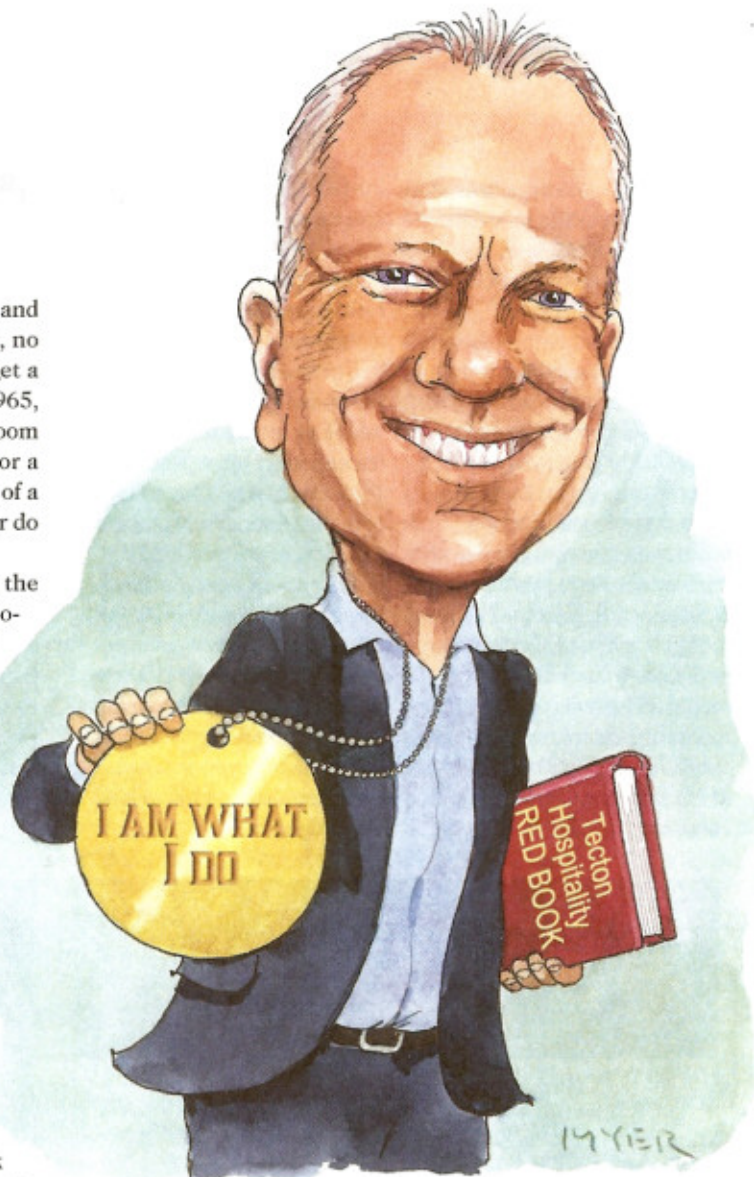
Richard Millard wears his pride from his neck, not on his sleeve.

When he was 17, Richard Millard had the shirt on his back and not much else. As he explains it, when you have no money, no high school degree, no plans, but a whole lot of drive, you get a job in the U.S. hotel industry. Arriving in New York City in 1965, Millard found his first hotel jobs as a bellhop, cook, meetings room set-up person, front-desk attendant and catering manager. For a young and impressionable youth, hotels were the equivalent of a good page turner. "People do things in hotels they would never do anywhere else," he says. "It was fascinating."

While he was seeing it all, Millard was also rising through the ranks and by the 1980s became general manager of several hotels, including the Hyatt Regency in Dallas. Regrouping after divorce, Millard joined a real estate workout firm in Miami that needed a hotel expert to see its hotel portfolio of some 200 properties out of the red. The owners initially had wanted to call their company "Tectonics" (the art of construction), but that trademark was already claimed. So they settled on Tecton Hospitality. With the owners nearing retirement, Millard bought them out and made Tecton a full-fledged, branded hotel management company. Initially, Millard and COO/Partner Raul Leal began operating Marriott, Hilton, IHG and Starwood products into the 2000s. It gradually occurred to them that their Miami address put them in the geographic heart of boutique hotel country. Branded boutiques were just starting. Millard and Leal consolidated management of their boutique clients, added more, and created the internal moniker, Desires Hotels. They operate 14 boutiques in Miami, Puerto Rico, New York and several Midwestern cities. Soon to open in Milwaukee next to the new Harley Davidson Museum is the Iron Horse Hotel, a Desires property devoted to motorcycle riders and aficionados.

### ■ CLOSE UP ■

<b>Title:</b>	Chairman/CEO, Tecton Hospitality
<b>Residence:</b>	Coral Gables, Fla.
<b>Born:</b>	London, England
<b>Family:</b>	Daughter
<b>Philosophy:</b>	Treat people as you would have them treat you and go out and find the very best people and surround yourself with them.
<b>Favorite Movie:</b>	"Four Weddings and a Funeral"
<b>Most Recent Book Read:</b>	<i>Do Not Disturb</i> by Laurence Geller
<b>Activities:</b>	Golf



Never during his long rise in the industry did Millard lose his humility, which plays heavily into Tecton's unique corporate culture. Anybody can visit [tectonhospitality.com](http://tectonhospitality.com) and navigate to the company's 32-page Red Book. "It's fascinating, because we really walk the talk," Millard says. "The folks who work for us always said we had a great culture and I would say, 'But what is it? Tell me.'"

Millard sports a Tecton dog tag from his neck, stamped with the maxim, "I am what I do." "Most of us wear it, even though we don't have to. It's part of our culture. We are what we do is all about execution."

Unlike when he arrived in America 45 years ago, Millard now sees a generation of young people choosing lodging because they want to. In his recent address to the hospitality students at Lynn University, he downplayed his accomplishments in favor of the fundamental importance of education.

During the address, he said to the hospitality students, "Listen: I haven't achieved anything in my life compared to what you've achieved." ■