

## CONTEMPORARY ISSUES OF PERMANENT EDUCATION IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY IN F.Y.R. OF MACEDONIA

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### ABSTRACT

The training of HR is necessary during career engagement for all employees. Skills, knowledge and abilities of employees influence the quality of services in hospitality. Contemporary education is a dynamic process which happens throughout your life. All the employees have the capability of learning except that they have a different level of absorbing the information. The creation of training program depends on the target group. The training methods for employees depend on the work place. The research about the contemporary training needs has been carried on. The aim of this scientific paper is to present the results of the research.

**Key words:** human resources, permanent education, training, hospitality

### INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry today is undoubtedly world's largest industry. In the most of the industrial countries the fastest growing part of the economy is services sector. The tourism and hospitality are the largest segments of this service industry. Travel and tourism are complex totality which spreads over different industries, creating huge constructions with great impacts. This global industry moved 980 million people to travel internationally in 2011 (UNWTO WTB, 2012). The predictions are that this industry will grow significantly in the future with 1.6 billion international arrivals in 2020 (UNWTO TH 2011:11).

This global industry unavoidably is connected with education and training of the human resources as one of the crucial factor for delivery quality service and maintaining productivity. The changing of tourists' demand and interests can't be followed without permanent education which produces human resource competences in continuity.

The first part of this paper is about meaning, scope, importance and necessity of the permanent education and its lifelong dimension.

In the second part we argue about education and quality. Quality concept realization is only possible through permanent education and training forms. All types of standards, as an outsourcing, companies can adopt through adequate human resource training.

The third part of the paper exposes some aspects of the training programs, their phases of creation as well as the training goals according to the job authority and responsibility level. Also in this part we emphasize the importance of the human resource willing for learning through whole life.

And the fourth, the last part of the paper presents the research about needs for education and training in the hospitality industry in FYROM.

### 1. PERMANENT EDUCATION

Individual consumers choose to buy different tourist products for different reasons at different times. The tourist demand is very changeable in short periods, sometime from season to season. The drivers of demand are different and it can be categorized under three broad headings: socio-cultural influences, individual differences and contextual circumstances (Bowie and Buttle, 2006:54). Tourists always seek for something new: new exotic destinations, new experiences, new atmosphere and ambient, new entertainment, new food and beverages ... This result in changing of tourists' expectations and needs. According to this always changing pressure of

tourists demand, the creation of appropriate tourist offer is necessary. To follow this consumers' expectations and needs variation, means to possess always new skills and knowledge. In this way the concept of permanent education or lifelong learning finds its real place in tourism and hospitality industry.

To meet the diverse skills and knowledge needs of the industry, different programs have been developed over the years. They can be categorized into: formal programs and courses like vocational programs and academic courses of study and employer-based training such as management training programs (Gee, 1999:350). The first one represents the formal education in tourism and hospitality and the second on-the-job-training developed as a reflection of the human resources planning and management in the companies. Vocational programs are focused on practical skills that lead to immediate employment, while universities programs usually offer management and business studies as well as specific skills training in hospitality industry.

In the evolution of education the consciousness for permanent education emerge as a dynamic process which happens during the whole human life. The formal education is prolonged with always new refreshing programs and courses which hold managers and employees in permanent good condition.

The European Commission has defined life-long learning as all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences, within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective (Lifelong learning, 2007). According to "Memorandum for lifelong learning", the term lifelong learning is broadened into new term – the life wide which brings complementarities of formal, non formal and informal learning into sharper focus (CEUC, 2000:3).

Approaches to training and development of both managerial and non-managerial staff are numerous. Some of the more popular methods used in the industry are: sitting by Nellie (demonstration); coaching (improved version of demonstration); mentoring (method of on-the-job training); job rotation and moving people around on a systematic basis in order to broaden their experiences); job enlargement (expands a job on a horizontal basis); job enrichment (expands a job on a vertical basis); formal training (it can take place off the job and it performs through methods like lectures and discussions, case studies, role playing, simulation and programmed learning); self-development; outdoor courses.

New way of training represents also innovation for the hospitality operations. Innovations can incorporate new products' design, new production process, new market approach, or a new way of training (Попреп, 2009). Permanent education programs and courses as an innovation process increase competitiveness.

## 1. EDUCATION AND QUALITY

Tourism as a major global industry unavoidably is directed towards adoption of quality concept. In this concept, the level of the consumers' satisfaction is a measurement for successfully delivered products and services quality. Usually today quality is designed as total products features which have to satisfy specific consumers' needs and expectations. In some contemporary systematic approaches toward quality, like TQM, quality is to fulfill and to excel consumers' expectations.

Standards as an agreed level of service or organizational performance which have to be fulfilled are criteria for quality realization. The standardization is an activity of creation and practicing of standards to achieve order and success in some area with optimal costs and by taking care of functionality and safety. This activity is voluntary process of developing technical specifications based on consensus among all interested parties (industry including small and medium enterprises, consumers, trade unions), environmental non-governmental organizations, public authorities, etc. Standards are sets of voluntary technical and quality criteria for products, services and production processes (EUC, 2011). Standards can refer to competence, health and safety, consumer protection, innovation, licensing of business etc.

Most quality standards originated in manufacturing industries, but they can be applied to some extent in service industries, such as tourism, hospitality and leisure. With the globalization of the marketplace, some standard system become worldwide standards or global standards for global market (like ISO standards). The ISO is in charge of developing and maintaining the portfolio of technical international standards. For example the ISO 9000 (Quality Management) and ISO 14000 (Environmental Management) are services of standards that have to be adopted in many sectors including tourism to improve quality of service delivery. In tourism sector also eco-labels have increasingly been established, like Tour Operators Initiative (TOI), Blue Flag etc. (EUP, 2007:4).

In this systematic approaches toward quality, education and training are crucial factors for their introduction, adoption and practicing in the companies. For example: the HACCP (Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points), which is consisted of methods for food, safety and preservation, can't be realized without education and training of the staff. The education and training are key factors for the implementation of the HACCP system. The system has to be integrated in every activities of the personal for production and servicing the food and beverages. The content of the training program has to enable the personnel to have total view of the safety system, how does the system function to assure food safety, the essence of critical control points and critical limits. The primary training goal is to gain knowledge for the employees to perform specific activities in the frame of the system. This can be achieved through the process of outsourcing which mean getting outside knowledge and operational experts. For this purpose adequate training programs are developed which end with gaining food safety certification.

## 2. THE TRAINING PROGRAM

The training program is a process which consist four main steps: Determination of the training need, Designing the training program, Managing the training and Evaluating of training.

The first step – Determination of the training need is information for necessity of individual or group skills and knowledge improvement. If the training is focused on these needs, the productivity of an individual or group will be increased.

Designing of the training program is based on the stated needs for training. The program content is tightly connected with the type of the working place.

Managing of the training program is performed through implementation of the program which means program participant training. The techniques for information transfer and skills development are different (as we discussed previously).

The training evaluation face is conducted after the program implementation and means to estimate the success of the program.

The successful training program is practical and planned in order to gain necessary skills for the employees through the most effective and the simplest way of learning.

Very important element for successful program realization is the choice of the trainer. Potential trainers have to believe in the value of the training program, they have to have communication skills, to practice high standards in the training process and to activate the employees. The trainer practical experience increases his authority and rating.

The effective trainer possesses energy on the higher level and more personal attributes in the field of interpersonal communications. They have ability to understand the training program participants. They are patient and willing to all questions. They are visionaries with organizational abilities; they control the group activities, learn from mistakes and in that way acquire knowledge for employees' working activities advancement.

The human resource hospitality training is usually concentrated on technical skills which are necessary in order to perform the activities in a better manner. Management training goals are different according to the job authority and responsibility level (Scanlon, 1993:181).

On the worker level skills for product and service quality are necessary, so the training is primarily task oriented. Staff level position often requires a leadership role. In addition to the job task orientation, this level has to learn management skills.

For the middle management, training is on-going process and has to increase their effectiveness as leaders and coworkers. Always refreshment programs have to keep this level informed about techniques development and advancements in their area of business.

Upper level management training has to follow the same orientation pattern as middle – level managers. How much they will be introduced in the company goals and policies depends on the impact that their decisions have on the future success of the business.

But, what is also essential for educational and training providers is the motivation of people for learning during their whole life. They have to be motivated for this mission. It is essential to raise the demand for learning as well as its supply. According to Memorandum for lifelong learning, people don't want to learn mostly because of these reasons (CEUC, 2000:8):

- Their experiences of learning in early life have been unsuccessful and personally negative;
- Appropriate learning opportunities are not practically accessible as far as timing, pace, location and affordability are concerned;
- The content and methods do not take proper account of their cultural perspectives and life experiences;
- Knowledge, skills and experiences they have already acquired are not recognized in tangible ways, whether for personal reasons or for getting ahead at work.

The same document marks individual motivation to learn and the variety of learning opportunities as an ultimate case to implementing lifelong learning successfully. This opens another aspect of the training programs creation. All previously mentioned characteristics of the programs have to be supplemented with the adaptation to the needs, demands and expectations of the prospective participants in order to motivate them for learning and devotion.

### **3. THE NEEDS FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN F.Y.R.O.M**

The subject of this research was the needs for education and training in the hospitality industry in F.Y.R.O.M. The aim of this research was the determination of the needs for education and training through the managers and non managerial employees' opinion.

The research was conducted in 70 hospitality facilities while 145 employees were questioned.

The research results:

- The shortage of educated staff in the hospitality industry. According to the conducted research 2/3 of the questioned staff find that this industry have shortage of educated staff
- As far as their opinion for their own education and training necessity is concerned vast majority (2/3), think that they don't have need for additional education and training.
- In regard of the manager's attitude toward their employees' necessity for education for education and training, 58,17% answered that their employees need additional education and training.
- About the location of the prospect education and training, managers are not fond of education in house. Namely, 67,59% answered that they have negative attitude toward education in the hospitality facilities.
- The most of the hospitality staff would like to attend seminars with the appropriate training and education, outside their working environment. The majority of them – 90,34% are willing to attend this education and training form.
- About willingness for study traveling and stay in other countries – 77,93% would like to attend education and training courses abroad.

### **CONCLUSION**

The tourist demand is a category with high changeability. This result, cause the necessity of human resource education and training implementation as a lifelong learning process. For this reasons numerous programs and methods have been developed during the years. The introduction of the new ways of training represents innovation for the industry which increases the competitiveness.

Tourism and hospitality are directed towards adoption of the quality concept. The realization of this concept in the most of the cases is performed through introduction of various standards which established criteria for products, services and production processes. The education and training are crucial for standard implementation as a form of outsourcing.



The training program as a process is performed through four main stages. The successfulness of the program depends on the trainer energy and skills. Management training goals have to be adjusted according the management levels on which they refer.

But in spite of all these efforts, the successful education and training is condition by human resource motivation for learning which can be over passed through adoption to the trainings participants needs.

The investigation in the hospitality industry shows:

1. The shortage for adequate educated staff on one side and lack of motivation for self education on the other side;
2. Need for additional education and training and negative attitude about on-job training;
3. The staff motivation for outdoor courses;
4. The wish for skills improvement and new knowledge gaining, in a different environment, out of the country borders.

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