

Human Resources Development in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry

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According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, some 10.5 million American, or 8% of the total labor force, currently hold jobs in the hospitality and tourism industry. More importantly, the hospitality and tourism industry, along with other services industries, is expected to experience substantial growth in the coming years.

Unfortunately, few managers in the hospitality and tourism industry have professional training and experience that are increasingly being required to successfully lead and manage organization in today's competitive economy. Moreover, resources currently exist for helping these managers develop the skills they need to deal effectively with human resource issues in their organization.

In recent years, organizations in the hospitality and tourism industry have experienced a great deal of turmoil as the competitive forces within their industry have shifted under the weight of globalization.

To survive, many companies must now build competitive advantage by relying on their employees to implement improved services delivery processes.

Shifting travel markets, world class competition, and escalating operating costs are forcing hospitality and tourism organizations to pay more attention than ever before to needs and desires of their customers. This means that companies have to find ways to become more responsive and create greater value for their customers.

In other words, they are having to devise systems to facilitate the delivery of improved customers

service.

The quality of an organization's services delivery hinges in part upon its people. How frontline personnel act has a determining influence on customers' perceptions of services quality and, in turn, on the overall level of customer satisfaction. However, even employees who are not directly involved in serving the customer have an indirect impact on customer satisfaction by means of the backup support they provided to frontline staff.

Despite the important role

employees play in the success of a service organization, human resource development has traditionally been a weak link in the hospitality and tourism industry. It is ironic that the same frontline personnel who are so vital to customer satisfaction tend to be undervalued within hospitality and tourism organizations, where many senior managers view frontline representatives as replaceable, entry level employees and attach little importance to the management of human resources.

This report was written in response





to the recognition that more effective human resource development practices are prerequisites to improved service quality in the hospitality and tourism industry. It is based on two key premises:

1. Service in the hospitality and tourism industry involves an interpersonal transaction that takes place between a customer and a complex human delivery system.
2. The management of human resources is the responsibility of

all managers and not just the concern of human resource specialists. All managers work with people in their departments and have responsibility for a wide range of human resource concerns in their day to day roles.

In keeping with this theme that human resource development is critical to success in the hospitality and tourism industry, the overriding purpose of this report is to develop the “People management!” skills of current and prospective managers in this field .