

IMPORTANT SKILLS FOR TAIWANESE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM  
GRADUATES AS PERCEIVED BY HOSPITALITY EDUCATORS  
AND HUMAN RESORCE MANAGERS

by

Ying-Wei Lu

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Assistant Professor Bob Davies  
Thesis Advisor

Thesis Committee Members:

---

Dr. Christine J. Clements

---

Dr. Judy Annette Jax

The Graduate College  
University of Wisconsin-Stout  
December, 1999

The Graduate College  
University of Wisconsin-Stout  
Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751

ABSTRACT

Lu	Ying-Wei	L.Y.	
(Writer)	(Last Name)	(Initial)	
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Keywords: hospitality and tourism industry, hospitality education, human resource managers, educator, curriculum, skills learning, perception, and Taiwan.

The rapid growth of the hospitality and tourism industry in Taiwan has created an increasing demand for hospitality labor. In response to the increased demand of employees, the hospitality and tourism programs in Taiwan R.O.C. are racing to keep pace with the industry. As a result, issues regarding the quality of graduates and their value to Taiwan hospitality industry have emerged.

The primary focus of this descriptive study was to identify the competencies needed by university and college students from hospitality and tourism programs. The study utilized hospitality educators and hotel human resource managers in Taiwan to analyze the required competencies and measure potential differences between the two populations. The target population included 15 hospitality program directors and 55 human resource managers of international tourist hotels in Taiwan. A total of 53 questionnaires were returned with a 75.7% response rate.

The findings of this study revealed that both human resource managers and hospitality program directors perceived that people skills were more important and conceptual skills and operational skills were less important. The hospitality educators emphasized conceptual skills over human resource managers. It seems that educators and hotel human resource managers with different educational backgrounds had similar perceptions of what was regarded as important skills. Those respondents that had a higher educational background perceived that managerial skills and personal characteristics were more important overall.

It is urgent to forge the gap between hospitality educators and hotel human resource staff in Taiwan. Hospitality education should always keep a relevant curriculum in order to meet the needs of this industry and the hospitality industry needs to share their experiences with educational institutions in the form of advisory boards, co-op field experience for students as well as intern programs. This study was representative of the phenomena of hospitality education and industry in Taiwan. Based on the differences of culture and the educational system, the study may not be generalized to other areas but could be replicated to areas with similar educational systems or cultural backgrounds.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

“The hospitality industry is the largest or second largest industry on the planet depending upon how one counts the dollars. By the year 2005 it will generate a projected gross output of \$5.5 million and employ over 150 million persons globally” (Stutts, 1999, p. 32). As the hospitality and tourism industry moves into the next century, its future success depends on whether each country can upgrade the level of training for those already engaged in this field, and design new training approaches for those entering this employment sector. Education has become more highly valued. Therefore, hospitality and tourism programs throughout the world are racing to keep pace with the demands of a rapidly changing and highly dynamic industry.

Educational programs prepare students to be managers in the hospitality industry. Hospitality education has been around in the United States since the first hotel school, Cornell, was established. In the United States, hospitality management programs have existed in colleges and universities for 75 years since 1922. By 1997, about 75 universities had four-year hospitality management programs, and nearly 200 community colleges had two-year programs (Zuber, 1997). During this time, the hospitality education in the United States has developed itself into a legitimate academic area. On the contrary, the first hospitality and tourism program in Taiwan was established in 1966. By 1998, only five universities and eight two-year colleges have hospitality and tourism programs. With the growing demand of employees, many educational institutions have established this field in their institutions. As a result, the future of hospitality education in Taiwan will be vigorous.

## The hospitality and tourism industry in Taiwan

The Six-Year National Development Plan was implemented from 1991 to 1996. A part of the plan was to provide modern, innovative, and a high quality service sector in order to meet the production and productivity goals and to satisfy the increasingly sophisticated consumers. Moreover, in 1992 the Taiwan Tourism Bureau pointed out that the future of the hospitality and tourism industry would need to rely on (a) guidance and administration of tourism and hotels industry, (b) well-rounded facilities planning in the hospitality and tourism industry, and (c) training of hospitality and tourism professionals (Chen, 1996).

With the plan implemented, the GDP (gross domestic product) growth rose from 5.0% to 6.1% during 1990 to 1994 (Bailey, 1996). Continuously, the GDP growth rate in 1997 was 6.8%. The expanding economic environment has stimulated the growth of the hospitality and tourism industry in Taiwan. The number of outbound departures has been increasing along with the increasing income. From 1993 to 1997, the local residents in Taiwan traveling abroad were from 4.7 to 6.1 million. In 1996, 5.71 million (Hsieh, 1998) Taiwanese traveled abroad spending a total of US \$8.15 billion, an amount equal to 46% of what Taiwan earned from trade in that year.

In the view of Wise (1993), countries with economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region have been major contributors to the growth of tourism in the region. According to the tourism report 1997 from the Tourism Bureau, the major destination of departures was the area of Asia, and most visitor arrivals were also from the Asian area. In 1997, Taiwanese travelers to the Asian area made up the largest portion of outbound departures, amounting to 75.11% of the total. Only 11.45% of outbound departures were to the

American area. And 3.04% of outbound departures was to Europe and 1.37% of outbound was to the Oceanian area. From the view of arrivals, 75.90% of visitors were from the Asian area, and 24.10% of visitors were from the American, European, and other areas (Annual Report on Tourism 1997, Republic of China).

Wise (p.56, 1993) further stated that “the growth in the number of outbound intra-regional travelers brings into sharper focus the future importance of domestic tourism to each country.” Domestic tourism is certainly exploding in Taiwan. The number of vacation trips within Taiwan per person was 2.99 times by 1996, and the number increased to 3.2 times by 1997. The number of domestic trips per person would rise because of the new policy of public holidays (Hsieh, 1998).

In January 1998, the government of Taiwan implemented a five-day workweek on the second and fourth week of each month and cut down the number of public holidays to compensate for lost man-hours. The impact of the five-day workweek resulted in changes in the leisure consumption habits of Taiwanese people. Previously extended holiday periods allowed many Taiwanese to travel abroad. However, Taiwanese now having fewer long holidays and more two-day weekends will have less opportunity for foreign travel but choose to consume the local tourist products more than before. Consequently, a greater use of local hospitality and tourism facilities is predicted.

For the purpose of meeting the increased demand for domestic tourism facilities, the Taiwan Tourism Bureau has plans for a wide range of projects that are coordinated with private enterprise to provide profitable and innovative leisure based resorts designed around international standards. In addition, the Taiwan Tourism Bureau has developed

many local and regional tour packages to provide a richer diversity of leisure experiences for Taiwanese residents.

On the other hand, from international perspectives, Taiwan's report on tourism found that the number of visitor arrivals that include foreigners and overseas Chinese increased from 1993 to 1997. Moreover, in 1997 the visitor expenditures was 3.4 billion, the average daily spending per visitor amounted to US \$193.56 and spending in hotels made up 49.42% or US \$95.66 of the daily total (Table 1).

Table 1 The number of visitor arrivals and growth rate, 1993-1997

Year	Number of visitors	Growth rate (comparing with the previous year)
1993	1,850,214	- 1.2%
1994	2,127,249	+ 14.97%
1995	2,331,934	+ 9.62%
1996	2,358,221	+ 1.13%
1997	2,372,232	+ 0.6%

Note. From Annual Report on Tourism, Republic of China. p. 62, 1997. Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications: Author.

Unfortunately, although the number of visitor arrivals has increased, the growth rate of visitors has been shrinking. For this reason, the Taiwan Tourism Bureau has started to strengthen international advertising which included printing promotional brochures in eight different languages, Mandarin, English, Korean, Japanese, German, Spanish, French, and Dutch. Also the Taiwan Tourism Bureau is constantly updating Internet travel information, producing promotional videos to put more emphasis on international tourism marketing. Besides, the Bureau has participated as a member in international liaison and cooperation, such as EATA (East Asia Travel Association), ASTA (American Society of Travel Agents), APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) group. The Bureau participates in the annual general meetings, promotional conferences, and

working group meetings of these international organizations, and sends personnel to major international trade fairs as well. These activities also coincide with Taiwan preparing to enter the World Trade Organization.

With the frequent usage of hospitality facilities by local people and by arrivals, the data in table 2 shows that between 1993 and 1997 the overall average hotel occupancy rate increased from 53.47% to 63.50%.

Table 2 The overall average occupancy rates in Taiwan, 1993-1997

Year	Occupancy rates (%)
1993	53.47
1994	58.48
1995	61.53
1996	62.25
1997	63.50

Note. From Annual Report on Tourism, Republic of China. p. 66, 1997.  
Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications: Author.

In response to regional competition increases in international visitors and increasing demand for domestic tourism, the Taiwanese government has encouraged private enterprises to invest in developing accommodation facilities to meet the needs of the growing hospitality and tourism industry. The Taiwan Tourism Bureau reported that by May of 1998, a total of 19,941 rooms had been built, with 21 new hotels and more than 6,000 rooms to be opened by 2004 (Taiwan Tourism Bureau, July 1998).

The rapid growth of the hospitality and tourism industry has created an increasing demand for hospitality labor. Based on research conducted by CIER (Chung-Hwa Institution for Economic Research) in 1991, the demand of manpower of the hospitality industry in 2001 will be 52, 571 (Table 3).

Table 3 Human resource demand for the hospitality industry in Taiwan

Year	2001	2006	2011
Department			
Management level	3,742	3,840	4,019
Front desk office	11,253	11,546	12,086
House keeping	12,287	12,608	13,196
F & B service	13,558	13,912	14,561
Management department	7,270	7,459	7,808
Others	4,461	4,577	4,792
Total employees	52,571	53,944	56,461

Note. From “The research of manpower demand of the hospitality industry in Taiwan with in the next two decades,” p.99, 1991. Chung-Hwa Institution for Economic Research: Author.

In Liu’s study (1991) he noted that chronic manpower shortages are not an unusual phenomenon in Taiwan. These shortages affect the collective hospitality industry. In Wise’s article (1993), he mentioned that the surveys of WTO (World Tourism Organization) reported that many Asian countries are lacking adequately trained professionals. The reason is that education and training often suffer from a lack of financial resources, in-house training programs and manpower planning, training institutions, programs and instructors to satisfy training needs. Furthermore, the findings of surveys conducted by WTO correlated with a study by Juan (1993), in which manpower shortages were attributed to the lack of educational institutions that can generate a large number of well-trained graduates in hospitality management (Hsu & Gregory, 1995). In addition, hospitality industry insiders attributed the phenomenon to a prevalent attitude problem of Taiwanese people, and the so-called “Chinese bed syndrome.” In the minds of many Chinese, there is a definite relationship between beds and impropriety. Since a hotel certainly contains large numbers of beds and positions, being waiters in the hotel industry is not viewed as a respectable career in Chinese culture (Liu, 1991 & Zhao, 1991). To overcome this regional social stigma, it becomes necessary

to educate the Taiwanese public regarding the legitimacy of the hotel industry and its desirability and acceptability as a career field (Liu, 1991; Juan, 1993).

The shortage of skilled workers in the Taiwanese hotel sector has been recognized at Government level and efforts are currently being made, via various agencies, to supply, co-ordinate and upgrade on a continuing basis the hospitality of training facilities (Annual Report on Tourism 1997 Republic of China). Also, as a direct result of the growth demand for domestic hospitality services, the Ministry of Education has been assisting many Taiwanese educational institutions to develop various hospitality management programs throughout the country.

#### Statement of problem

With the large increase in the number of hospitality graduates from colleges and universities in Taiwan, questions have emerged regarding the quality of the graduates and their value to industry. Also, questions regarding how practical the courses are as offered by Taiwanese educational institutions. The purpose of this study is to model the competencies required by university and college students from hospitality programs as perceived by educators and hospitality human resource managers. It is deemed that by surveying both educators and hospitality recruiters, a model of “gap” will be an effort to identify and further to utilize in the development or modification of hospitality programs to meet the needs of a rapid growth industry.



### Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify human resource managers' expected skills of hospitality students for entry level positions in international tourist hotels in Taiwan
2. To identify hospitality skills which educators perceive as necessary for students to gain entry level positions in international tourist hotels in Taiwan
3. To compare and analyze gaps between perceptions of educators and human resource managers of international tourist hotels in Taiwan
4. To analyze the relationship of the educational level of respondents and their perceptions of important skills needed by hospitality graduates in Taiwan
5. To analyze the relationship of the major in the last formal education of respondents and their perceptions of important skills needed by hospitality graduates in Taiwan.

### Limitations of the study

Due to the study related to hospitality education in Taiwan, the limitations of this particular study would be the following:

1. The translation of the questionnaire from English into Chinese may create transition or interpretative error.
2. The industry population surveyed represents only the human resource managers of international tourist hotels and not tourist hotels in Taiwan.
3. The educator population represents only the program directors of four-year universities and two-year colleges offering hospitality programs but excludes five-year colleges and vocational high schools.

### Definition of terms

Regarding the hospitality education in Taiwan, certain terms were frequently used. For the purpose of clarification in this study, the following terms are defined for better understanding hospitality education in Taiwan:

Hospitality industry: “Use interchangeable with tourism and tourism industry but focusing attention on the responsibility of industry personnel to be hospitable hosts. Sometimes used to refer to category of the hotels, motels and other accommodations which comprise a significant part of tourism” (Metelka, 1990, p.73).

University and College in Taiwan: “Admission to a school may be obtained by passing an entrance examination or passage of a qualification test specialized in mathematics, natural sciences, languages, and art/skills and the recommendation based on outstanding performance (Ministry of Education, 1995, p. 18)”. In this particular study, “university and college” refers to “four-year university and two-year college.”

International tourist hotel: “The hotel is approved by the government according to the environment, bedroom space, and other facilities” (Cheng, 1995, p.3).

“Is defined as the hotel which is awarded five or four plum blossoms, which corresponds to the stars or diamonds in the West” (Cheng, 1995, p. 5).

Skills: “Skills mean abilities that an individual acquires through learning and training; skills are dimensions of ability to behave effectively in situations of action” (Clark, p. 2 & p. 10, 1995).

## CHAPTER TWO

### Review of Literature

This chapter provides a review of literature regarding the research. The first section of this preview pertains to hospitality education, including the role of hospitality education, changes in hospitality education, competitions from Business schools, and the relationships with practitioners. Secondly, this study will discuss curriculum, in which the basic curriculum and current issues of curriculum in hospitality education will be discussed. Thirdly, more detail of the development of hospitality in Taiwan and foreign professionals' view of the industry will be discussed. Finally, hospitality education in Taiwan will be discussed.

#### Foundation of hospitality education

This section covers concepts relating to the foundation of hospitality education. It includes (1) the role of hospitality education, (2) changes in hospitality education, (3) competition from Business schools, and (4) practitioner view hospitality education.

The role of hospitality education. In Ladki's study (1993) he mentioned the questions of "What is hospitality education?" and "Is hospitality an applied discipline or a professional discipline?" An applied discipline is designed for exploring the solution of a specific industry problem. However, in this aspect, hospitality education would be restricted itself to the existing knowledge. A professional discipline is an environment where educators and industry practitioners work together to formalize the task of professionals in the field. In this aspect, it helps to close the hospitality educators-practitioners gap.

Many researchers have different views of the discipline, essence, and fundamental nature of hospitality education. Referring to the view of Pavesic's (1990), "Hospitality is a field of study that is slowly beginning to receive the respect it deserves from business and liberal art colleagues." In addition, Casado (1992) and Defranco (1992) defined hospitality education as a field that should offer a balance of courses comprising professional concepts, general business principles, and liberal studies.

Some researchers have formulated a structural view of hospitality education. Khan and Chon (1991), Powers (1992) and Haywood (1992) all believed that "hospitality is a discipline that has the responsibility to produce knowledge that can be applied by hospitality professionals." They further subscribed to hospitality as a professional discipline by encouraging hospitality educators to focus on consulting research and problem oriented research (Lakdi, 1993). Riegel (1995) clearly defined hospitality as "a field of multidisciplinary study which brings the perspectives of many disciplines, especially those found in the social sciences, to bear on particular areas of application and practice in the hospitality and tourism industry."

Compared to other professional fields, such as business and engineering, the field of hospitality education is relatively young. Wisch (1991) stated that hospitality is an emerging field of study in its developmental stages (Ladki, 1993). Although hospitality is just a young field of study, an evaluation of the study is imperative to keep parallel with the growth of industry.

The location of hospitality programs makes it reasonable to evaluate the missions of the programs. In terms of the location in a university, Pizam & Milman (1992) considered that hospitality programs are within colleges of Home Economics, Agriculture, or

Business department. Even earlier, in Fuller's article, he stated that:

Some hospitality programmes were, and are, conducted by school of home economics. Today's USA trend stresses business administration applied to hotels and restaurants and, especially when hotel courses are within university colleges of business, common aspects of business management are emphasized, such as finance, marketing, quantitative analysis, management principles and law ... (p. 96, 1979).

Moreover, Davies's study of hospitality programs (1994) noted that:

Power (1991), Lewis (1993), and Pavesic (1993) found that the origins of the majority of today's hospitality programs began as department or topical additions to home economic schools with few hospitality programs linked to business or self-sustaining schools (p.18).

In short, no matter where hospitality programs are either in home economics or in business schools, the purpose of hospitality education is the same - meeting the industry's needs. Hospitality education is not only an applied discipline but also a professional discipline that offers skill-oriented training, general business principles, and the professional concepts to students in order to lead the industry rather than follow the industry (Laesecke, 1991 & Ladki, 1993). Simply, hospitality education is a field devoted to preparing students for management positions in the hospitality industry.

Changes in hospitality education. According to Powers (1992), he believes that the new technology, the dynamic consumer environment, the concern for costs, delivery systems, competition, managerial and structural changes has affected the changes of organizations and working environment. As the size, complexity, and diversity of the hospitality industry has grown, there has become an increasing need for individuals who

have the basic skill knowledge and business foundation necessary to operate and manage the large companies and organizations (Fletcher, 1991). Also, “the educational system supporting the hospitality industry with entry level management candidates has been faced with numerous systematic demands and industrial changes which directly affect the methods utilized to prepare well educated and highly qualified students for the demands of hospitality management” noted by Davies (1994, p. 1). As a result, with the needs of well-rounded hospitality graduates, and the constant changes in the hospitality curricula, it is necessary to evaluate hospitality education and to define this discipline.

The growth of the industry along with the need for hospitality professionals has fostered an environment enabling universities to offer specialized hospitality education. From an educational perspective, the education system should adapt itself and its role in order to retain its effectiveness and to meet the social needs. In the 50’s and 60’s in the United States, the increasing need for better educated individuals was responded to the expansion of the industry, and the educational effort focused on the associate degrees which provide students with business skills in addition to knowledge in operations. In the 70’s and 80’s, the tremendous growth in baccalaureate degrees was reflected upon the further preparation of the industry.

The 90’s continue with the burgeoning demand for broadly educated, highly skilled graduates who are prepared to manage in a highly technical hospitality industry. Thus, Master and Doctoral programs are widely established. From high schools, vocational schools, culinary programs, two-year and four-year program, even to the level of Masters and Doctoral degree, the educational system has been dramatically changed.

Competition from Business schools. Currently, the hospitality education has been facing the competition that rises from business schools. Apparently, “many business schools have begun to turn their attention to the serious study...institutions such as the Harvard Business schools, Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania...” noted by Barrows and Hobson (1993). In Zuber’s interview (1997), Jan Tatum, a human resource manager for Fennigan’s, also said that:

In going to the schools of business, I have found people who know how to run a business. I certainly think it is worthwhile to take a look at business school graduates. So many of them work in restaurants while they are going through school (pp. 2).

However, in contrast with Jan Tatum, Pavesic (1991) believed that business schools will not ultimately absorb hospitality programs or that the discipline of hospitality administration will not suffer the fate of programs in insurance, banking, and transportation. Further support for this view can be found in a personal conversation. Doug Nichols, vice president of recruiting for Houston’s, said that “if someone does invest their time and money to go through and declare a major in hospitality management, that usually indicates that they are serious about this as a career” (Zuber, 1997). Beside, Pavesic (1991) manifested that:

Post-graduation studies show that hospitality majors stay in the industry longer than non-hospitality majors, for the basic reason that they know what to expect from the industry. They are aware that the hospitality work ethic requires long hours and personal sacrifice, and they are mentally prepared for it (pp. 8).

He also explained that those hotels such Hyatt and Marriott are hiring graduates with business and liberal arts degrees simply because the industry is broadening beyond its traditional emphasis on hotels and restaurants. Hence, Pavesic stated “hospitality students are well advised to minor in business disciplines to gain the specialization that the industry desires today” (1991, p. 8). Consequently, hospitality education would need to focus on the future needs of recruiters. The recruiters will seek out the graduates with the ability to deal with relevant industry issues.

Relationships with practitioners. At about the same time, while educators review their programs, the industry also started to make suggestions to the hospitality programs which produce the next generation for the industry. From the industry perspective, Purcell (1993) mentioned that campus recruiters view that many university educators are out of touch with the industry, unaware of current needs of the industry, and continue solving educational problems based on the past experiences, but not for the new century (Davies, 1994). A hospitality educational program should aim to educate graduates who can reflect the practitioners, possessing a wide range of transferable skills, exercising personal initiative, and who are analytical in their approach to situations (Ladki, 1993). Briefly, a hospitality educational program requires graduates to stay with both academe and industry, and then to translate knowledge from specific courses into problem solving tools.

The professional orientation is one of the unique characteristics of hospitality management. For this reason, hospitality programs need to develop and capitalize upon associations with professionals in the industry. In Foucar-Szocki & Bolsing’s article



(1999), they indicated three ways to develop and maintain the relations with industry, advisory councils, professional affiliations, and internship programs.

An internship program is a vital part of the learning experience. Referring to Sneed & Heiman (1995), hospitality programs are inextricably linked to the industry because they provide opportunities for both internships and graduates. Foucar-Szocki & Bolsing stated that “it is intended to contribute meaningfully to the overall preparation of the student by providing an opportunity for the practical application of skills and concepts learned in the classroom (1999, p. 39).

To the extent that meeting the needs of industry is the ultimate goal of hospitality programs, there is a consideration of cognizing the voice of industry. Consequently, the most important issue to address is that hospitality education must forge a closer interaction with industry for the purpose of preparing management for the globalization of the hospitality industry.

### Curriculum

Several educational concerns regarding hospitality education will be reviewed in this section. The review will center on: (1) the heart of the educational system, (2) curriculum relevancy in hospitality education, and (3) generalist or specialist in the curriculum.

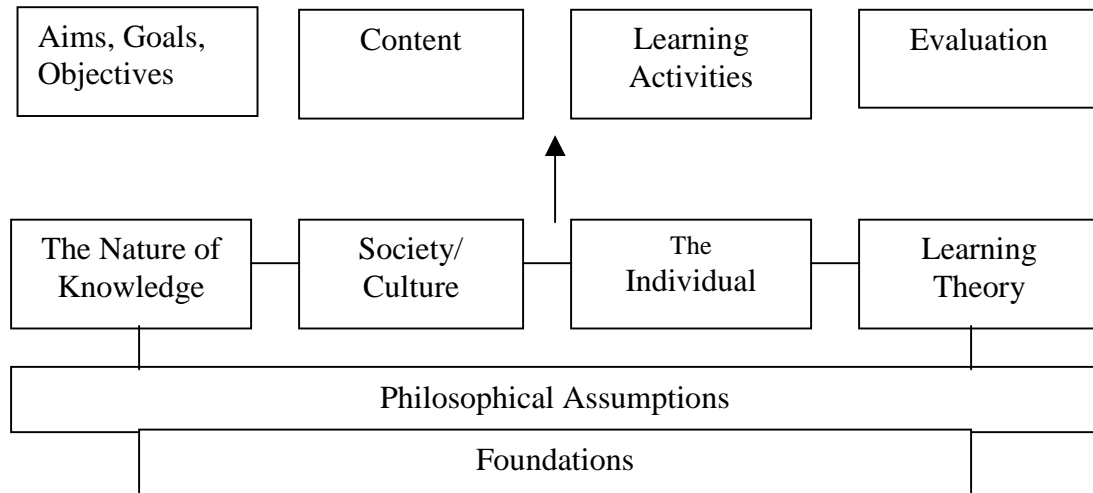
The heart of educational system. Curriculum is the heart of the educational system. Saylor, Alexander, and Lewis (1982) defined curriculum as “a plan for providing sets of learning opportunities for persons to be educated” (Oliva, 1992, p6). Erickson defined curriculum as:

... an educational response to the needs of the society and the individual, and requires that the learner construct knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills through

a complex interplay of mind, materials, and social interactions (p. 33, 1995).

In Tyler's concept, he deemed that when constructing a curriculum, the first step is to think about educational aims and objectives, and secondly about the kind of subject matter or experiences that will most likely help students achieve those objectives. These two views then need to be put together programmatically and, finally, the results of using the curriculum need to be evaluated in some way (Walker, 1997). In Oliva's words (1992), a curriculum should contain statements with educational aims and specific objectives, and should indicate some selection and organization of content. A curriculum either implies or manifests certain patterns of learning and teaching, and then, finally, it includes a program of evaluation of the outcomes.

Many researchers emphasized the importance of curriculum in hospitality education. Sim & Sands (1989) proposed a curriculum model for planning and evaluating hospitality management. They distinguished between four phases of such educational programs: mission, program goals, competency based objectives and learning activities (Bach & Milman, 1996). The model consisted of the Zais Curriculum Building Model recommended by Gunn (1984). Gunn believe that this Zais model comprises aims, goals, and objectives, which are important in tourism and commercial recreation curricula (Chen, 1996).



Notes. From “the study of four-year hospitality and tourism management programs students’ career choices and program’s curriculum design in Taiwan” by Cheng, Hung-Bin, p. 19, 1996.

Figure 1. Zais Curriculum Building Model

Hospitality educators are responsible for developing a well-rounded curriculum with the potential to influence the total development of students toward becoming socially responsible and ethical citizens and managers. (Pavesic, 1993). A well-planned curriculum is critical to an educational institution. Glatthorn (1994) suggested that there are 12 steps in developing a mastery curriculum (Table 4).

Table 4 Twelve Steps in Developing a Mastery Curriculum

<u>Sequence of Developing Mastery Curriculum</u>
1. Identify the subject mastery goals
2. Analyze state frameworks
3. Refine subject mastery goals
4. Develop a report on the knowledge base
5. Develop the hallmarks of excellence
6. Develop the curriculum framework
7. Identify the strands of the curriculum
8. Develop the scope-and-sequence chart
9. Identify available curriculum materials
10. Develop the curriculum guide
11. Evaluate the guide
12. Determine how the guide will be distributed

Notes. From “Developing a quality curriculum”, by Galtthorn, 1994.

Curriculum relevancy in hospitality education. The issue of curriculum relevancy in hospitality education has been discussed. The purpose of curriculum is to indicate what students learn and how well they are prepared for their postgraduate careers, in terms of the content of required courses. Many hospitality educators focus on the subject of curriculum, from curriculum goals, design and content, and suggestions, to continuously evolve to best achieve educational objectives (Bartlett, Upneja, & Lubetkin, 1998; Breiter & Clements, 1996; Lefever & Withiam, 1998; Lewis, 1993; Pavesic, 1993).

Common curriculum requirements in hospitality provide students with good understanding of the formal techniques associated with the specifications of a product, designing and costing of a menu, rules of safety and sanitation, concepts of business marketing, quality management, etc. (Feinstein & Mann, 1998). Most of the management skills needed to operate a hotel in 1920 were also needed in 1950 and virtually all are still needed today (Dittman, 1997). Traditionally, the emphasis in many hospitality education programs has not changed significantly for years – teach students basic skills needed to perform specialized job functions, supplement coursework with a quick internship for a taste of the ‘real world’ and then graduate them.

However, most four-year hospitality management programs simply have not kept up with the dramatic change. In the work of Haywood (1989), he noted that:

...the aims of professional education are no longer clear, faculty are unprofessional; educational programs aren't rigorous; integration among programs is lacking : physical facilities are inadequate or unavailable; appropriate educational materials are out-of-date or not provided.... (p. 259)

Okeiyi, Finley, & Postel (1994) mentioned that hospitality students “inadequately” prepared in some of the managerial skills which are needed to succeed in hospitality (Feinstein & Mann, 1996). Lewis (1993) stated that “most programs today are ill-

equipped structurally and culturally to be sensitive and adaptive to environmental change.” Lewis also reported that curricula are only based on what the industry has needed in the past, but not what it needs today or will need in the future. In fact, Pavesic (1991) noted that “ the perfect curriculum has not yet been designed” and further stated that “a consensus from industry and academe on a single one is unlikely.” Hospitality educators have the responsibilities to develop the new curriculum for the industry needs of the next century.

In the area of curriculum, the Handbook of Accreditation for Two-Year Programs in Hospitality Management 1991 states concepts and principles that should be taught. For instance: a historical overview of the hospitality industry, marketing of hospitality goods and services, accounting procedures/practice; and the legal environment of organizations (Sakiey, 1995). In regarding the accomplishment of the ultimate goal of hospitality education, many educators have started to reconsider their current curriculum.

In Walker’s survey, 1992, among 40 educators, only 15% answered that their curriculums were “very relevant”; besides, 16 %, 3 out of 19 industry recruiters rated the curriculum as “very relevant” (Pavesic, 1993). Similarly, in the work of Lefever & Withiam (1998), when asked how relevant the hospitality curriculum is to the industry’s need, the respondents, including hotels, restaurants, convention and meeting planners, equipment suppliers, private clubs...etc., focused on the importance of keeping the curriculum as current, relevant and rigorous as possible. Such responses are as following:

Denise Coll said “Relatively, but needs to change with the times.”

Craig Hunt and Deanne Gipson said “Approximately 60-percent relevance. As the industry changes, so should textbooks and training media, professors’ experience

levels, and curriculum content.”

G. Mead Grady noted “The curriculum needs to be constantly evaluated to determine the relevance of the program.”

Umbreit (1992) argued those hospitality educators must take the lead in providing their students with a relevant curriculum for the next century. He believed that changing the curriculum is imperative so that the graduates can be successful in the industry facing a wide range of changes, such as impact of mergers and acquisitions, deregulation, layoffs, the recession, and the declining service productivity. Both Lewis (1993) and Umbreit (1992) agree that a more relevant hospitality curriculum is necessary. Lewis further stated that hospitality educators may need retraining to teach those new content areas, and hospitality programs themselves will also need to redefine their existing culture so as to bring about those necessary changes.

Evans described that “the development of a relevant curriculum for an industry based program is an ongoing concern, since curriculum review must be a continuous process in a changing environment” (p.137, 1987). While the industry has caught up with the level of knowledge possessed by graduates, curriculum review and development in hospitality programs has to be an ongoing process. Hence, the curriculum planners must plan carefully for any need that students and industry will utilize in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Generalist or specialist in the curriculum. Ashley, et al noted that “the academic literature reflects a debate regarding whether the most appropriate educational program in hospitality management today should be focused more on specific skills or on general management” (p. 75, August 1995).

Based on the statement made by the Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration (ACPHA) 1992, the purpose of hospitality curricula is to provide sufficient areas of specialization to make efforts in developing individuals talents

and interests (Gustafson & Partlow, 1998). As a result, complying with particular markets and student interests, some specialized courses serve a useful purpose for advance students who have a developed interest in those specific areas, such as gaming industry, club management, and meeting/convention planning, etc. (Powers & Riegel, 1993). Moreover, Davies (1994) noted that the stress of a staff specialty and the recognition of those specialty will more benefit the hospitality programs instead of having students with a broad background in service management but with little applied skills training.

In addition, Pavesic also stated that “the hospitality umbrella continues to broaden, encompassing such industries as special event management, casino management, trade-show management, fair management, and convention and meeting planning” (p. 291, 1993). He believed that no single curriculum model could adequately cover all industry segment specialists. Therefore, students should selectively choose electives and vary their work experience to an industry segment (such as hotel, restaurant, or meetings) to achieve some specialization. Hospitality education cannot fully address each segment in an undergraduate curriculum. That is another reason why hospitality programs should take more of a generalist approach and teach concepts and principles that have universal application across all industry segments.

However, Riegel (1997) mentioned that one warning signal in hospitality education is currently occurring. The debate over curriculum revision and problems associated with the specialized nature of hospitality programs has been discussed (Gustafson & Partlow, 1998). The same accounting, marketing, and management principles are taught by hospitality education, as those in schools of business. But hospitality education teaches only with a hospitality industry perspective (Dittman, 1997). In fact, Goodman and

Sprague (1991) also suggested that curriculum revision is essential because the subjects taught by business schools may be more pertinent to hospitality operations and, consequently, may impend the survival of hospitality programs. Later in the articles of Umbreit (1992), Pavesic (1992), and Walle (1997), they indicated that overemphasizing the specialization in hospitality education will lose the advantage in competing with other academic units. Pavesic (1991) noted that most undergraduate hospitality programs are specialized but not general, and their courses lack a general business perspective. As a result, students will not get that perspective in general-business courses.

Despite the fact that the discussion of generalist or specialist in hospitality programs is still going on, many researchers concluded that hospitality education should provide a balanced curriculum between general courses and special courses. Walle (1997) pointed out two emerging orientations regarding the hospitality curriculum. He believed that a hospitality program should perceive itself as a business discipline, and also should be aware of the uniqueness of the hospitality and tourism industry from other business industry. He further recommended that hospitality education should transcend mainstream business theory and embrace the specialized orientation of its discipline (Gustafson & Partlow, 1998). Again, Gustafson and Partlow (1998) believed that hospitality institutions should provide curricula with more balance between technical-skills and business-skills courses.

Consequently, Samenfink (1992) suggested that hospitality curricula today provide the student with the larger picture and interaction with the social world in which the hospitality industry functions. While offering specialized courses, it will allow students to pursue individual career goals with a specific segment of the industry. The general business courses will also allow students to better understand the dramatic changes of the environment.



### Important skills required by graduates

The following section will focus on the important skills discussed by both academe and industry. It covers (1) skills learning in the curriculum, (2) skills needed from the industry perspective, and (3) hands-on experience.

Skills learning in curriculum. According to Ladki (1993), he stated that the responsibilities of hospitality education are:

...to customers, for providing skilled individuals capable of recognizing customers needs, monitoring expectations and delivering superior service; to graduates, for providing an education that will enable them to get on the socio-economic ladder and prepare them for their roles as competent, responsible marketers and citizens; to hospitality professionals, for providing a continuing supply of competent, responsible entrants to the hospitality profession and for providing new knowledge and to society, for providing objective knowledge and technically competent (p. 250, 1993).

The function of hospitality education is to provide students with both operational and managerial skills so as to apply to the real world. A skill means an ability that one acquires through learning and training; skills are dimensions of ability to behave effectively in situations of action (Clark, p. 2, p. 10, 1995). Tas (1988) also defines competencies as “those activities and skills judged essential to perform the duties of a specific position” and is based on “one’s ability to accomplish specific job-related tasks and assume the role connected to the position” (Baum, 1991).

Several researchers discussed the issue concerning the relevance and appropriate skills, which graduates exhibit on their entry to the workforce. Employers filling entry-

level positions value applicants' skills and personal traits more than college grade point average, college reputations, or membership in professional associations (Geissler & Martin, 1998). In the review of literature, three studies indicated ten skills are needed upon graduation as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5 Important skills generated from the three studies

Skills needed by hospitality students	UCF perspective	Su, etl, and Bentley	LeBruto & Ford
People skills	X	X	X
Creative thinking abilities	X	X	X
Financial skills	X	X	X
Communication skills	X	X	X
Developing a service orientation	X		
Total quality management	X	X	
Problem identification/solving	X		
Customer-feedback	X		
Individual and system-wide computer skills	X		
Leadership		X	
The ability to adapt to chance and manager stress		X	
Time management		X	
Ability to train		X	
Basic management principles			X

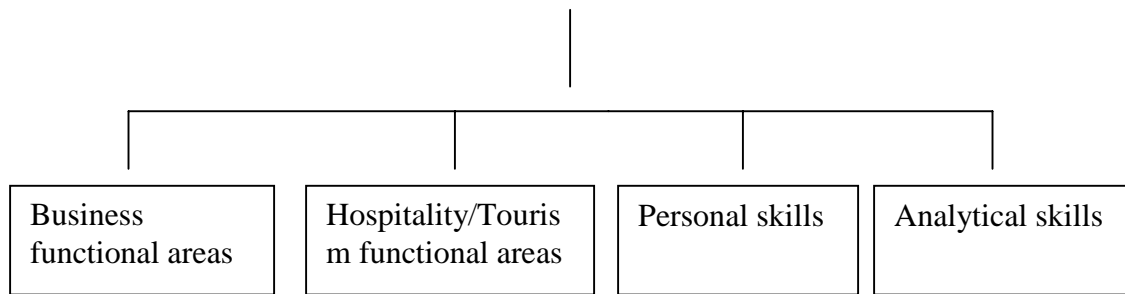
Professional standards	X
Knowledge ethics	X
Professional appearance and poise	X

Notes. From “Are we staying current in the preparation of our hospitality management graduates?” by Geissler & Martin, 1998; from “ Specialization in the hospitality curriculum: a club management model” by Gustafson & Partlow, 1998; and “ How much practical hotel management education is necessary?” by Ford & LeBruto, 1995.

In general, the skills needed by hospitality students are approximately the same from the results of the three studies, and those skills can be clustered into many different areas. Barrows & Hobson (1993) pointed out that hospitality education should teach students skills in five broad areas, while Umbreit (1992) emphasized six areas should be taught. Barrow & Hobson (1993) indicated that five areas are marketing orientation, service delivery systems, human resources, physical assets, and management structures and policies. Similarly, Umbreit (1992) indicated that the future of hospitality curriculum will have six major skills areas for preparing professional graduates, the areas include leadership, human resources, service marketing, financial analysis, total quality management, and written and oral communication skills. Most of the same areas were already mentioned in an earlier study conducted by Brymer & Pavesic (1989). They described that hospitality education emphasizes coursework related to some areas such as finance/accounting, human/employee relations, sales and marketing; and also emphasize work/experience/internships, of Umbreit did not point out (Sneed & Heiman, 1995).

Moreover, from the study of Bach and Milman (1996), four clusters of skills were provided. Each area demonstrated the importance of people in the hospitality industry through comments about both customer and employee oriented skills, which is so-called “soft skill” viewed as a necessity of skill in the industry (Figure 2).

Four clusters of skills
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Notes. From “a novel technique for reviewing a hospitality management curriculum” by Bach, S.A., & Milman, A., p. 40, 1996.

Figure 2. Four clusters of skills needed by students

Bach & Milman concluded the four clusters from faculty, students, and industry leaders as the following:

- (1) Skills pertinent to business functional areas (e.g. accounting, finance, marketing, etc.)
- (2) Skills pertinent to hospitality/tourism functional areas (e.g. accommodation, foodservice, conference and convention, tourism and travel)
- (3) Personal skills pertinent to the individual characteristics or traits of an effective manager or executive
- (4) Analytical skills, or the ability to master various types of information through computer literacy, reports, research, etc (p. 39, 1996).

In another view, in the study of Breiter and Clements (1996), they described the concept of management process from Hersey and Blanchard (1988). According to Hersey & Blanchard, three distinct areas are hospitality management process, technical skills, human resource skills, and conceptual skills.

“Conceptual skill involves an individual’s ability to see beyond the technical aspects of his position” (Woods & King, p.14, 1995). It includes recognizing the interdependence of various departments and functional areas within the organization as well as seeing the bigger picture of how the organization fits into the structure of the industry, the community, and the wider world at large. The introductory classes, such as Introduction

to the Hospitality Industry, Introduction to Tourism, are being taught to expand the interconnectedness of the social and global environments (Samenfink, 1992). Rather than focusing only on the technical skills required in the hospitality industry, the conceptual skills could be a much broader perspective. Many authors noted that hospitality educators should develop the ability of conceptual skills in order to meet the challenge of a changing customer base and business environment.

However, the study conducted by Breiter & Clements (1996) showed that the conceptual skills have not received as much attention in hospitality curricula and research as either technical or human skills. Human resource skill is the ability of an individual to work effectively with people at every level in the organization, and also enable to relate to guests. Human resource skill was rated as a very important skill in many studies.

Umbreit (1992) mentioned that human resources management should be given much emphasis in hospitality programs. From the study conducted by William & Hunter (1991), human resource skills compass coaching, training, negotiating, disciplining, and handling difficult people (Breiter & Clements, 1996). In Baum's (1991) study, he concluded that human relations associated competencies as the most significant within the top rated grouping. These involve areas such as guest care, employee relations, professionalism and communication. Again, Bach and Milman (1996) surveyed the three stakeholders, faculty, students, and advisory board, and each group implied that the necessity of customer and employee orientation is critical in hospitality education. They further suggest "an expectation of a more employee-orientated management approach to be incorporated into a contemporary hospitality curriculum" (p. 39). Lately, the result of the study conducted by Leferer and Withiam (1998) showed that those issues relating to

human resources particularly, recruitment and retention, were the top concern of the panel members.

Some authors discussed about technical skills. Technical skill involves specialized knowledge of tools, techniques, methods, procedures, or processes associated with a specific type of activity. Executive chefs, chief engineers, marketing specialists, controllers, and other types of hospitality professionals apply a unique set of technical skills to their particular jobs (Woods & King, p. 14, 1995). For instance, Nies (1993) thinks that hospitality students can gain greater technical knowledge by operating a student-run-restaurant and also need to learn business writing in their hospitality courses (Breiter & Clements, 1996).

Skills needed from industry perspective. It has become obvious that specific skills are particularly being discussed. In Sneed & Heiman's study (1995), they surveyed 74 recruiters about what student characteristics are considered most important during the hiring process. Leadership is the most important attribute. They also identified decision making/critical thinking, communication skill (interpersonal verbal, writing, and listening skills), and financial skills as very important to students. The results were consistent with the later study from Breiter & Clements (1996). This study was to identify the specific management skills that hotel and restaurant managers in the U.S. perceive as important for success in the hospitality industry. In their study, leadership was also viewed as the most important of all skills, and communication was the second most important skill, followed by employee relations, training, and organization. While leadership and communication were ranked to be the first two important skills early in both studies, Geissler & Martin (1998) surveyed hospitality alumni, and further ranked communication and leadership skills as second and fourth, respectively.

Leadership and communication skills are the critical measures of success in the service industry today. Umbreit (1992) noted that leadership should be one subject area of

future hospitality education. Instruction in leadership should comprise the cornerstone of future hospitality curriculum. The emphasis in future management courses should shift to the development and understanding of leadership since many managers and support staff members have been laid off and organization structures have been flattened. Thus, managers in the future will be in the role of manage and lead. Umbreit also noted that communication is an important subject. As many studies showed that communication skills are viewed as very important criteria for the hiring process, the lack of good communication skills of entry-level college graduates is often mentioned by business people and educators as an area that needs addressing (Geissler & Martin, 1998). Communication skills are used in every important managerial activity, such as recruiting, interviewing, training, employees evaluating, interacting with guests, and many other managerial responsibilities that require communications skills.

Hands-on experience. The result of the case study in Beer-Sheva Hilton showed that “there is a common problem with novice college graduates in the field who study about the hospitality industry in colleges but do not interact intensively with the industry until their studies are over” (Israeli & Reichel, p. 57, 1998). Frod & LeBruto (p. i, 1995) noted that “a major issue in hotel management education is the continuing debate as to how desirable ‘hands-on’ experiences are for effective application of classroom learning to actual managerial situations.” Both the two statements showed that hands-on experience is vital to the learning process.

In view of this point, many researchers believed that working experience is viewed as important factor upon graduation. Goldberg (1986, p. 43) noted that “there is universal expectation that you cannot expect to tell people to clean up a mess unless you have done it in the past yourself” (Lennon, 1989, p. 112). Jones (1991) stated that “the hands-on operations focus of our industry has developed a pool of very good first-line and second level hospitality managers” (Sakiey, 1995). In Casado’s study (1991), he concluded that

providing an internship or some equivalent practical hands-on experience to hotel management students is a proper way for preparing the successful career in the industry.

The industry wants people who are knowledgeable in business skills and industry practice. Sciarini & Gardner (1994) showed work experience was rated the most important factor of the prescreening decision by recruiters. Again, in the article of Breiter & Clements (1996), more than half of the respondents agree and indicated that an individual with both a college degree and work experience was important when recruiting entry-level managers. In DiMinicelli's (1998) research, he founded some academicians did not view a hands-on course as appropriate or a necessary course within a bachelor's degree. He still concluded that "a strong, hands-on approach to learning which evaluates, supports, and implements theoretical principles, is a necessary component for success in the increasingly competitive world students encounter upon graduation" (p. 32).

Hospitality management programs should develop learning experiences that allow students to have positive interactions with practitioners through some form of practical work experience. Lefever & Withiam (1998) asked how hospitality education prepares graduates from the industry perspective. The respondents were strongly supportive of internships. Most of those respondents believe that an internship program should expose the student to every area of the sponsoring organization, whether to be a hotel, restaurant, or other facility. Prior job experience and internships are also the answers in many of the responses to the question about the effective way to help students make the transition from academe to industry. In an effort to close the gap between hospitality education and practitioners, the practical reinforcement is a necessary supplement to theoretical materials.

#### Hotel industry profile in Taiwan

In this section, it will discuss two topics. First the study will discuss the



development of the hotel industry in Taiwan. Secondly, it will discuss foreign professionals in Taiwan.

The development of the hospitality industry in Taiwan. The history of the hospitality industry in Taiwan can be traced back to around 1915. Many businessmen from the province of Fu-Chien in Mainland China were provided a room with only one wooden bed and chair for the purpose of visiting Taiwan for one or two nights. Hardly anyone in Taiwan knew the meaning of “hotel”; the better equipped were not established until 1926 (Yu, 1991).

According to Yu (1991) and Su (1993), there are seven major stages in the development of hotels in Taiwan.

1. The era of the traditional hotels (1945-1955)

The traditional hostels were primarily lodging houses, only a few provided food and beverage. Out of the 483 hostels, Grand Hotel, which began operations in 1947, was one of the few that provided lodging for foreigners.

2. The era of the tourist hotels (1956-1963)

This stage was the beginning of the tourist hotel. In 1956, since the Taiwan Tourism Bureau was established, the government had enforced a wide range of incentive programs to facilitate the development of Taiwanese international tourist hotels. During this stage, Hotel Holiday Garden and Kaohsiung Grand Hotel were both officially endorsed by the government and, along with 24 other hotels were built.

3. The era of the international tourist hotel (1964-1976)

The opening of 95 hotels signaled the internationalization of the industry. Both the Ambassador Hotel and President Hotel hired foreigners as general managers. In 1973, the Hilton Taipei, the first franchise hotel signed a management contract

era and the owners realized that by using systematic management could attract more guests.

4. The era of the large scale international tourist hotels (1977-1981)

Stimulated by the reawakening of the economy, the increasing number of foreign visitors to Taiwan, as well as new government regulations, local investors went in a building frenzy. Within four years, 45 new hotels with 10 thousand rooms opened.

5. The restructuring era (1981-1983)

The industry was seriously hit by the Second Energy crisis at this era. The economic downturn, nonexistent growth of foreign visitors, new entries in the industry, high labor costs, increased taxation, and fierce competition all forced the older and less competitive hotels to restructure or shut down the business.

6. The era of food and beverage service (1984-1990)

The limited number of foreign visitors in this stage resulted in the decline of occupancy rates. Since rooms no longer represented the primary operating objectives; the hoteliers started to change the marketing strategy by simply placing the emphasis on food and beverage to bring in revenues.

7. Extreme competition (1990-Current)

During this time, the hotel provided more and more amenities and facilities to satisfy customers, not only just a place to stay overnight. New international franchised hotels were landed such as the Grand Hyatt, Formosa Regent Taipei, the Sherwood, and the Shangri-La Taipei.

Currently, according to Taiwan Tourism Bureau, there are 54 international tourist hotels with a total of 16, 843 rooms, and 23 tourist hotels with 2, 598 rooms, respectively (May 1998). Beside, 21 new hotels with more than 6,000 rooms will be opened in the following five years (Taiwan Tourism Bureau, July 1998).

Foreign professionals' experience in Taiwan. Previously, the literature showed that the first franchise hotel, Hilton Taipei, signed in 1973. Since then many distinguished hospitality leaders continually landed in Taiwan. In 1990, the dramatic change in the hospitality industry happened in Taipei. The Grand Hyatt Taipei, Regent Taipei, and Sherwood Taipei opened, which suddenly increased the demand of manpower in this industry. However, the local manpower cannot supply this labor-intensive industry, and the criticism of the lack of service quality is overwhelmingly raised from travelers (Liu, 1991).

In response to raise the professional standards and to meet the needs for managerial-level, some hotels hired foreign professionals or overseas Chinese to operate the facilities so as to keep or upgrade the service quality. Generally, those foreign or overseas Chinese have hospitality industry expertise, capabilities in several Western languages, and familiarity with international standards of service.

The increasing number of those professionals is infusing new blood into the island's hotel industry. From those foreign professionals, they discussed some stigmas in this industry in Taipei (Liu, 1991).

Rolf Phisterer, the German general manager of the Sherwood Taipei, stated that: it was not easy to recruit the right people. Image wise. A position in service is regarded as a lowly job in Chinese culture. It's very difficult to find the right

people. Often the original quality of the staff is not good. You have to train and retrain them continuously.

Herman Ehrlich was executive assistant manager in charge of food and beverage at the Taipei Hilton. He stated that: Today, labor costs in Taiwan are quite high. In order to maintain our profit margin without sacrificing the quality of our services, the only solution is to enhance our productivity. In Europe, waiters and chefs take great pride in their profession. In Taiwan, people gain no face by being a waiter. But without enthusiasm and pride, one can't do anything right.

Japanese national Yutake Ogawa was F&B director at the Howard Plaza hotel. He stated that: In general, hospitality staffs in the U.S. and Europe are friendly to their customers. The staffs in Japan regard their customers as masters; while the staffs in Taiwan like to treat their customers as their equals..."

Obviously, the issues of labor and the poor image are the fatality of the industry in Taiwan. Despite the foreign professionals helping to change the stigmas by transferring their knowledge and skills to the local employees, the solutions are to change the negative image of this industry and to educate the next generation involved in this service sector.

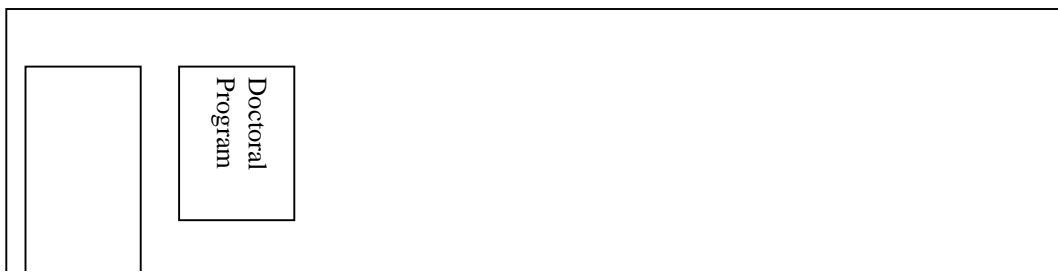
### Hospitality education in Taiwan

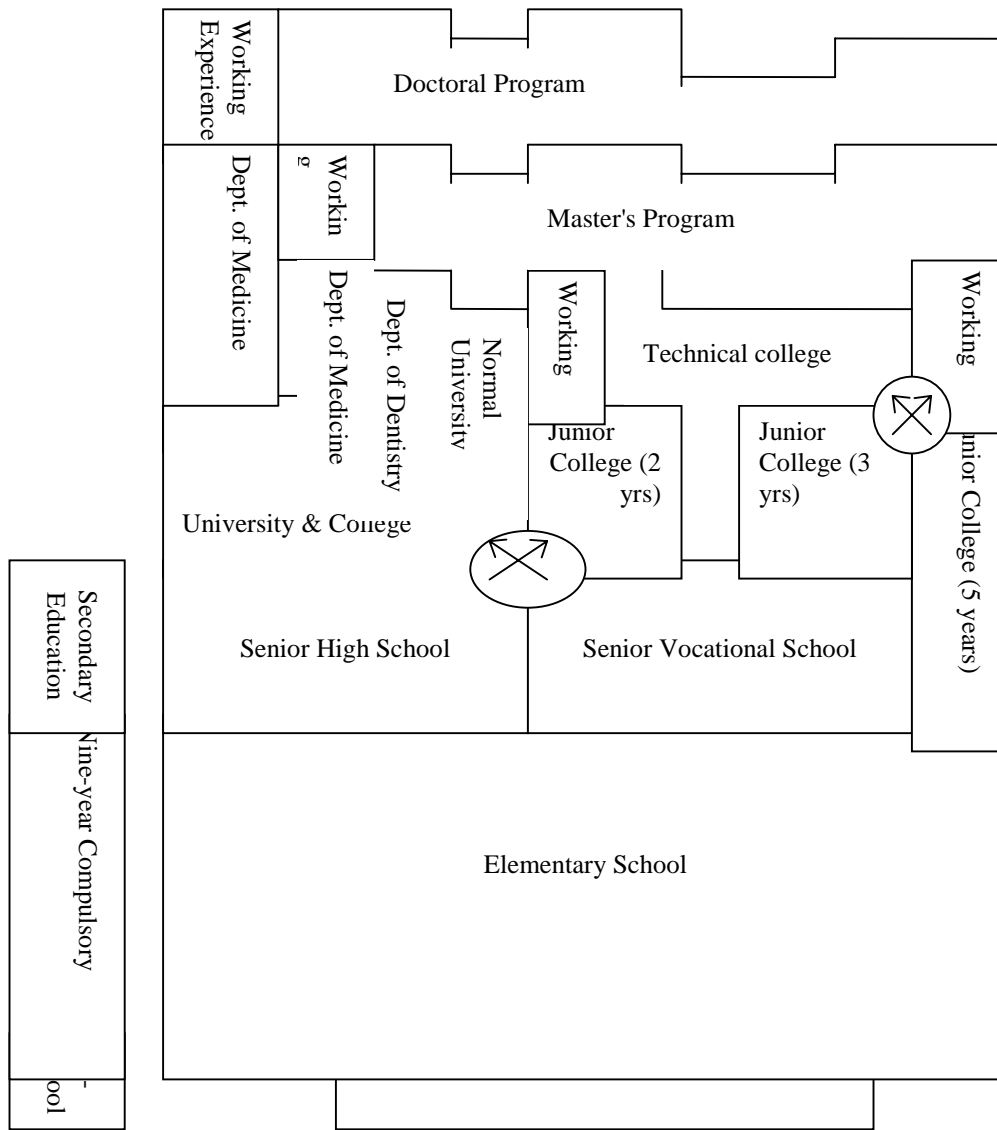
This section will discuss the basic education system in Taiwan and hospitality and tourism programs in Taiwan.

The educational system in Taiwan. The basic educational track model in Taiwan is pre-school education, nine-year compulsory education, secondary education, and higher education. A nine-year mandatory school system is implemented in Taiwan, while in the

United States is a twelve-year system. The free education system ends after ninth grade. Most of the students continue their education beyond the nine-year compulsory education. After the nine-year compulsory education, students need to take entrance examinations for further study in the secondary education. The level of secondary education is similar to grade 10 in the U. S.

Junior high school graduates have three options in secondary education. First, senior high school is usually the first choice for students planning to continue on to college or university based on the reason that the scholar has traditionally been revered in Chinese culture. Senior high school studies heavily focus on preparing students to take the highly competitive Joint University Entrance Examination. Due to the limited space in senior high schools, the senior vocational high schools are recommended to students so as to meet the demand for skilled workers in the work force. The subjects offered at senior vocational schools aim to prepare students for the working world, however, many graduates in this level go on to college or junior college. The model of the educational system in Taiwan is illustrated as figure 3.





Notes. From Annual Report Republic Of China, p. 337, 1995.

Figure 3 The educational tracks in Taiwan

Two types of junior colleges are in Taiwan. One admits junior high school graduates for a five-year study program; the other one takes one finishing vocational school level and may take an exam for entering institutes of technology for advanced studies, or may take an exam for admission to a university as sophomores or juniors. The institutes of technology offer vocational school and junior college graduates advanced technical

training with the length of two-year studies. Higher education includes general universities and colleges, Department of Medicine, technical college, and Master's and Doctoral programs. In 1997, a total of 856,186 population was in the higher education level (Republic of China Yearbook, 1997).

Hospitality and tourism programs in Taiwan. The hospitality and tourism programs in Taiwan spread to vocational high schools, five-year colleges, and universities/colleges. Currently, there are 43 vocational high schools and 13 schools in the higher education level offering hospitality and tourism programs throughout Taiwan. Thirteen schools in the higher education level include five universities and eight two-year technical colleges (Ministry of Education, November, 1998).

Most of the programs are named as "Department of Tourism" or "Tourism Industry Management." In vocational high schools, the programs include two concentrations: hotel/restaurant management and travel administration. In the higher education level, most of the programs include three concentrations: leisure studies, hotel and restaurant management, and travel administration. However, two two-year colleges have made three concentration areas as separate programs with the names of hotel management, restaurant management, and tourism management. Besides, two universities also offer graduate programs.

To provide for the cultivation of hospitality and tourism personnel, the Tourism Bureau offers scholarships to outstanding students at universities, colleges, and vocational high schools with tourism or food and beverage management. Even more, seeing the need to develop and upgrade the domestic tourist industry, the Ministry of Education decided to establish the first public and professional educational institution.

The mission of Kaohsiung Hospitality College is to train future managers for hospitality service and travel related industries and to promote the development of those industries. The first entrance examination for entering the college was set in December 1995 and two hundred new students were enrolled. The practical curriculum reflects the college's ideal and incorporates many important breakthroughs. Students may apply to enter this college in the spring term as well as in the fall term, the academic style of instruction rotates one term of classes with one of practical experience, pregraduation overseas observation and practice. All of these breakthroughs were intended to create the best conditions for developing the domestic tourist, hotel and food service industries (Kaohsiung Hospitality College, 1997).

It is notable that hospitality education is growing in Taiwan. According to Wu, many universities are continually setting hospitality and tourism programs and planning the graduate program in the near future. As a result, it is imperative to hospitality educators in Taiwan to consider the quality of the hospitality and tourism students and to seek the future needs of the industry.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Methodology

The intention of this chapter is to discuss the methodology of this study. The research design and procedures utilized for this descriptive study includes collecting data by the use of a questionnaire to answer questions concerning the objectives of this study.



To explain methodology in detail, this chapter contains the following sections: research design, research instrument, population and sample, pilot test, data collection, and data analysis.

### Research design

The purpose of this study is to research how education prepares the graduates of the hospitality industry in Taiwan from both the industry and education perspectives. According to Wu (April 21,1999), the program director in the vocational high school, the respondents would be more willing to answer the questionnaire if the study was entrusted to the educational institution. In order to get a higher response rate, the researcher entrusted the study to the hospitality and tourism program in the Private Lin-Tung Vocational High School.

The researcher sent the whole research package to the consignee on May 3, 1999, and the research assistant sent all documents to the potential respondents after receiving the whole package. In the whole package, a cover letter to the administrator of the Private Lin-Tung Vocational High School and 70 envelopes were included. The cover letter with the University of Wisconsin-Stout letterhead, both English and Chinese versions, was sent to explain the study. Seventy envelopes were with the printed-addresses of respondents. In each envelope, an introductory letter with University of Wisconsin-Stout letterhead, an invitation form, and a questionnaire, with both English and Chinese versions, and a non-stamped return envelope addressed to the research assistant were all included. The research assistant assisted in stamping the return envelope. The procedure was complete, and the research assistant sent the 70 envelopes out to respondents. After the research assistant had collected data, the research assistant would identify the respondents by tracing the number of the questionnaire, and would make calls to the non-respondents for a follow-up study.

### Populations

The populations in this study were both industry and educators. According to the list provided from the Taiwan Tourism Bureau, December 21, 1998, a total of 79 hotels were identified. Among them, 55 hotels were named as international tourist hotels and 24 were named as tourist hotels. International tourist hotels have a higher reputation in Taiwan, thus, this particular study will only focus on the international tourist hotels. Since the human resource manager is the person who played an important role in charge of the hiring process, the human resource managers of each international tourist hotel were the subject of this study.

Currently, five universities offer a four-year program in the hospitality and tourism major, and eight colleges offer a two-year hospitality and tourism program. For the reason that Gin-Wen Technical College and National Kao-Hsiung Hospitality College have hotel management program and restaurant management program, respectively, a total of 15 questionnaires were sent to the program directors.

### Research instrument

The research instrument used in this study was based on literature review. The questionnaire contained one page on both sides. An introductory and directional paragraph was placed at the beginning of the questionnaire. Since there are two populations in this study, the two similar questionnaires were developed. The instrument consisted of two sections, the necessity of skills, demographics, and comments. There were ten questions with 43 items in the questionnaire provided to educators, while there are nine questions with 42 items for the human resource managers.

The first section, question 1 asked about the necessity of skills. The Likert scale was employed in this question to accomplish objectives 1 and 2. The scale was from “0” to “5”, where “0” equals “Not Important” and “5” equals “Most Important.” Based on the

review of literature, the researcher factored thirty-four skills into four categories: conceptual skills, hospitality operations, human resource skills, and personal skills. In order to obtain more specific skills that are not listed by the researcher, the option of “Other” was listed to enlist more respondents’ opinions.

The second section is based on demographic information using multiple choice questions. The primary purpose of this section was to collect basic information from each respondent. From question 2 to question 7, both two questionnaires are the same. Question 4 stated “Please indicate the formal education that you have completed” and Question 5: Please indicate your major of the last formal education applied to objectives 4 and 5.

There were another three questions of the questionnaire for educators. Question 8, “Please indicate the concentration of your program if possible,” was to indicate the trend of the hospitality programs. The answers for Question 9 “Does your program require internship upon graduation?” and Question 10 “Does your institution coordinate interns with hospitality industry?” would be used for suggesting the relationship with industry.

There were another two questions following Question 7 in the questionnaire for human resource managers. Question 8: “Does your company coordinate interns with hospitality education institutions?” was concerned with the coordination of interns. Question 9 “Does your company recruit on campus?” asked about recruitment on campus. Both of these two questions would be to describe the relationship with educational institutions. The last part of the questionnaire is “comments.” With the blank section, all respondents could comment on the hospitality industry and the educational institution.

### Pilot Test

The purpose of the pilot test was to evaluate the instrument for reliability and validity. For purposes of clarification of the questionnaires, the pilot test was conducted from April 15 to 28 by using E-mails. The questionnaires with both Chinese and English

versions were E-mailed to two research assistants; one is in an educational institution and the other one is in the hospitality industry.

The research assistant in the educational institution was in the vocational high school. The director and three instructors of the hospitality program reviewed the skills and questions listed in the questionnaire. In this study, there were two different versions so that the translation was also emphasized. Besides, regarding the knowledge level, the questionnaire was also sent to a hospitality professor in a university in order to gain more validity. The other research assistant in the industry was in a tourist hotel. The questionnaire was reviewed by the general manager, human resource manager, and housekeeping manager. Again, the translation was emphasized.

From the pilot of both educators and the industry, the questionnaires were made to correspond with the study and there are necessary changes. Indeed, one unclear point was mentioned from the program director. The program director pointed out that it is hard to answer question 8 “ please indicate the concentration of your program as possible.” However, the director still suggested that it is good to keep the question in order to know the future trend of the hospitality program. Besides, the general manager indicated that those skills are important to graduates, but he would be willing to hire anyone who is enthusiastic.

### Data Collection

As previously indicated, the researcher sent the research package to the research assistant on May 3, 1999. On May 12, the research assistant received the whole package and stamped all the return envelopes, and sent all survey packages to all potential respondents on May 14, 1999. The deadline of the first mailing survey was on May 26, unfortunately, only 5 responses were received during that period. The follow-up survey was mailed to all respondents again on May 31, and the deadline of the follow-up study was June 10. The purposes of the follow-up survey were for reminding those non-responses and for appreciating those who had already responded. After the follow-up

study, another 15 respondents were received by June 15. In order to get a higher response rate, the postcard reminders were sent to the non-respondents on June 16, and the final deadline was June 26. Continually, the other 15 respondents were received not until July 10. In short, 20 respondents were from the first, and the follow-up survey; in addition, 15 respondents were received after the postcard reminders. As a result, a total of 35 respondents were received from mailing, including 25 human resource managers and 10 program directors.

For the purpose of obtaining a more valid study, phone calls were made to the rest of the 35 non-respondents beginning on July 15. The research assistant called the non-respondents and further asked them to fill out the questionnaires by fax. Among those calls, sixteen respondents were received from fax and one respondent was answered by phone interview.

Still, with five program directors and 14 human resource managers, a total of 19 respondents were not received. Since the researcher had used the list provided on December 1998, one hotel has been out of business within the past half year. Four human resource managers described that their businesses do not have any contact with educational institutions so that they have no knowledge about the questions and they are not willing to do the study. The other three human resource managers stated that they do not want to do the survey without giving any reason. The other six human resource managers did not response although they stated they would do the study.

For the respondents from program directors, one program director claimed she sent the response back, unfortunately, the research assistant did not receive it. However, while the research assistant asked the program director to redo the survey, she stated that she did not want to fill it out again. The other four program directors could not be contacted. However, two professionals in hospitality programs were collected as valid data. As a result, a total of 12 educators and 41 human resource managers participated in this study.

### Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences program (SPSS) was used for analyzing the data. Descriptive statistics was applied for computing means, standard deviations, the t test, ANOVA, and Mann-Whitney test were tabulated and analyzed.

After analyzing the survey results, certain interpretations of the data helped to draw conclusions about the findings of this study. Those conclusions were related to the objectives of the study and were formulated based upon the statistical applications that were employed.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Results

This study was conducted to model the important skills required by university and college students from hospitality programs in Taiwan as perceived by educators and hospitality human resource managers. This chapter will present the results and findings regarding the necessity of skills and the relationship between educators and human resource managers while they perceive the important skills. Data and information found in the study were analyzed and discussed in accordance with the five objectives.

#### Response rate

In this study, 15 hospitality program directors and 55 human resource managers were the population. The overall response rate was 75.7%. In the responses of the educational population, 10 were current program directors and all of the returned questionnaires were usable. The other two responses, one used to be the director of both undergraduate and graduate programs, and another response was a representative recommended by the program director. In a consideration of the response rate, the two respondents were perceived as qualified and valid. As a result, 12 out of 15 responses were from hospitality and tourism program directors. In the response of industrial population, 40 human resource managers answered the questionnaire through mailing or fax. Besides, one respondent was interviewed by phone. A total of 41 human resource managers participated in this study (Table 6).

Table 6 Response rate of the study

Population Number	70
Total responses	53
Population of program directors	
Mailing survey.....	10
Fax survey.....	2
Total	12
Population of human resource managers	
Mailing survey.....	25
Fax survey.....	15
Phone interview.....	1
Total	41
Overall response rate (53/70)	75.7%

The results of this study were statistically analyzed. The cross-tabulation was used to describe the demography of all respondents. The questions relating to demography were listed from question 2 to question 10 in the questionnaires. A frequency distribution, mean, and standard deviation (SD) were used to examine the first objective and second objective. Objective one was to evaluate the important skills required by hospitality and tourism students as perceived by human resource managers. Objective two was to identify the important skills required by hospitality and tourism students as perceived by program directors.

The third objective was to evaluate any distinguishable gaps between program directors and human resource managers while they perceive important skills required by hospitality and tourism graduates in Taiwan. A Mann-Whitney test, one of the nonparametric tests, was used to examine this objective. In examining the fourth objective of this study, a one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to identify any meaningful difference between the respondents' perceptions of important skills and their various levels of educational attainment. For the last objective, a t test was used to evaluate whether the major of the last formal educational level affected the respondents' perceptions of important skills.



### Respondents' profiles

Among 53 respondents, two subjects did not fill out the demography questions. The results showed 47.1% of the respondents were male, and 52.9% of respondents were female. Then, over half of the respondents (52.9%) indicated they were in the category of 35-44 years old; 23.5% of respondents were in the category of 25-34 years old; 21.6% of respondents were in the category of 45-54 years old; only one respondent was in the category of 55 years old or older.

When the question was asked about the last formal educational level, one-third of the majority indicated they had a master's or doctorate degree; only 7.8% of all respondents had a high school or less degree. Analysis found that all the program directors had a master's or doctorate degree, and only 12.8% of respondents from human resource managers had a master's or doctorate degree. Forty-one percent of human resource managers had a university/college degree, and 35.9% of human resource managers had a technical college degree (Table 7).

Table 7 Percentage of last formal educational level of respondents

N= 53	n	Last formal educational level			
		Master/ Doctorate	University/ College	Technical College	High school or less
Program directors	12	100%			
HR managers	39	12.8%	41.0%	35.9%	10.3%
Total	51	33.3%	31.4%	27.5%	7.8%

The result in table 8 showed that over sixty percent (60.4%) of respondents indicated the major of their last formal educational level was not in the hospitality and tourism field, and 39.6% of respondents indicated the major of their last formal educational level

was from the hospitality and tourism field. Those respondents who were not in the hospitality and tourism field had degrees in various fields, such as Electronic Engineer, French, Computer Science, Education, Business, etc. In fact, one program director majored in Park and Recreation, and one human resource manager majored in Human Resource Management.

Table 8 Percentage of major in last formal education level of respondents

N=53	n	Major	
		H&T	Non-H&T
Program directors	12	83.3%	16.7%
HR managers	36	25.0%	75.0%
Total	48	39.6%	60.4%

The question regarding working experience in the hospitality field was asked. More than half of the respondents (52.9%) had working experience in the hospitality field for over 7 years; only 2.0% of respondents had working experience in this field under one year (Table 9). When the question was asked about years worked in their current position, slightly over thirty-one percent (31.4%) of respondents were in their current position for 1-3 years, and 27.5% of respondents were in their current position for over 7 years (Table 9).

Table 9 Percentage of working years in the field of respondents

N=53	n	Years				
		Under 1	1-3	3-5	5-7	Above 7
Experience in the field						
Program Directors	12		16.7%	25.0%	8.3%	50.0%
HR Managers	39	2.6%	7.7%	15.4%	20.5%	53.8%
Total	51	2.0%	9.8%	17.6%	17.6%	52.9%
In current position						
Program Directors	12	25.0%	33.3%	8.3%	16.7%	16.7%

HR Managers	39	12.8%	30.8%	12.8%	12.8%	30.8%
Total	51	15.7%	31.4%	11.8%	13.7%	27.5%

When the question was asked about program concentration, 41.7% of program directors indicated their program concentration was in the hospitality area. Seventeen percent of program directors stated their program concentration was only in the tourism area, and 17% of program directors stated that their program concentration was in all three areas: hospitality, tourism, and leisure (Table 10).

Table 10 Percentages of program directors concerning the concentration of programs

Concentration of program	Frequency Counts	Percentage
Hospitality area	5	41.7%
Tourism area	2	16.7%
Hospitality and Tourism	2	16.7%
Hospitality and Leisure	1	8.3%
Hospitality, Tourism, Leisure	2	16.7%

Regarding the question about internship requirement, 83.3% of program directors indicated their programs had an internship requirement before graduation, and 16.7% of program directors stated there was no internship requirement. The question of an internship hours requirement was further answered in a variety of ways. Among those programs with internship requirements, the minimum hours of internship was 160 hours (10%), and the maximum was 1,800 hours (10%). Forty percent of the programs with internship requirements had students complete 400 internship hours. Twenty percent of the programs with internship requirements asked for 200 internship hours. And 10% of the programs with the requirement asked for 500 internship hours, another 10% of the program with the requirement requested 1,600 internship hours.

When the question was asked about whether the institution coordinated interns, all the program directors indicated that the institutions conducted coordination services for interns. And, slightly over eighty-four percent (84.2%) of human resource managers indicated their companies had coordination services for interns (Table 11).

Table 11 Percentage of coordination service for interns

N= 53	n	Coordinate service for interns	
		Yes	No
Program directors	12	100%	
HR managers	38	84.2%	15.8%
Total	50	88.0%	12.0%

An additional question was asked of human resource managers about campus recruitment, most of the human resource managers indicated that their companies have participated in the campus recruitment activity. Only 15.4% of human resource managers indicated they did not recruit on campus. Over 50% of the respondents with campus recruitment indicated they recruit both intern and permanent positions (Table 12).

Table 12 Percentage of campus recruitment

Recruit on campus	Counts	Percentage
Only intern position	6	15.4%
Only permanent position	2	5.1%
Both intern and permanent	21	53.8%
No indication of recruitment position	4	10.3%
No campus recruitment	6	15.4%

In summary, 33.3% of all respondents had at least a master's or doctoral degree, especially for the population of program directors. The majority of human resource managers had at least a university/college degree. However, some human resource

managers from regional hotels with a small property or from obsolete hotels had a degree in high school or lower.

In the educational environment, the four-year programs' emphasis was on a general concept of the whole hospitality and tourism industry; however, most of the two-year programs' emphasis was on one specific area, such as hospitality area or tourism area. The area of leisure was seldom mentioned. In fact, some educational institutions established a new program named "leisure management" instead of having a concentration under the hospitality and tourism program.

Although different program concentrations had been answered, all the schools had coordination services for students who are willing to experience the real work of the industry. The educational institutions viewed the working experience as very important as well as theories. While the schools taught the general concepts of hospitality industry, the majority of the programs also requested the internship for their students. Besides, in order to meet the next generation for the hospitality industry, most international tourist hotels in Taiwan also provide coordinate services for students to experience the real world before they devote their efforts. Indeed, many hotels recruit students from campus during the graduation season.

#### The perception of important skills required by graduates

This section will correspond with the overall perception, and, respectively, objective one (perception of human resource managers), and objective two (perception of program directors).

The top ten important skills were ranked by mean score (Table 13). When the respondents perceived the important skills required by hospitality and tourism students,

the top ten skills were stated as the follow: cooperative team building, communication skill, multilingual skills, harmonious guest relations, problem solving/identification, professionalism, lodging administration, handling difficult people, hands-on experience, and leadership.

The skill of cooperative team building was the top one important skill; slightly over seventy percent (71.7%) of respondents rated “cooperative team building” as “most important.” Secondly, sixty-two percent (62.3%) of respondents rated “communication” as “most important.” “Cooperative team building” had a higher mean score than “communication,” but “communication” had a higher response (90.3%) above “4-point important” than “cooperative team building” (88.7%). In fact, responses in communication had more consensus than cooperative team building (Table 13).

The third important skill was multilingual skills, which also had 90% of responses rated important above “4-point important.” In addition, this skill had the most consensus among respondents. Fourth, “harmonious guest relations” had nearly 60% of respondents rated as “most important” (Table 13).

Although the skills of professionalism and problem solving/identification were both ranked 5, nearly fifty percent (49.1%) of respondents viewed “professionalism” as most important; forty-seven of respondents viewed “problem solving/identification” as most important. Slightly over forty-three percent (43.4%) of respondents rated “lodging administration” as “most important” and it was ranked 7. “Hands-on experience” and “handling difficult people” were both ranked 8. Forty-five of the respondents rated “hands-on experience” as “most important”, 41.5% of respondents viewed “handling difficult people” as “4-point important” instead of “most important.” The last one skill of

the top ten was leadership, in which 43.4% of the respondents rated as “most important” (Table 13).

Table 13 The rank order of important skills as perceived by overall respondents

	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	Level of importance					Rank	
			0	1	2	3	4		5
Cooperative Team Building	4.55	0.85			5.7	5.7	17.0	71.7	1
Communication	4.47	0.82			5.7	3.8	28.3	62.3	2
Multilingual Skills	4.45	0.72			1.9	7.5	34.0	56.6	3
Harmonious Guest Relations	4.44	0.78			1.9	11.5	26.9	59.6	4
Problem Solving/Identification	4.28	0.84			5.7	7.5	39.6	47.2	5
Professionalism	4.28	0.84			3.8	13.2	34.0	49.1	5
Lodging Administration	4.21	0.84			3.8	15.1	37.7	43.4	7
Handling Difficult People	4.17	0.83			3.8	15.1	41.5	39.6	8
Hands-on Experience	4.17	0.91			5.7	17.0	32.1	45.3	8
Leadership	4.15	0.93			7.5	13.2	35.8	43.4	10
Restaurant Management	4.11	0.82				3.8	17.0	43.4	35.8
F&B Management	4.11	0.89		1.9	1.9	17.0	41.5	37.7	
Analytical Skills	4.11	0.87			5.7	15.1	41.5	37.7	
Critical Thinking Ability	4.09	0.84			3.8	18.9	41.5	35.8	
Total Quality Management	4.08	0.85			3.8	20.8	39.6	35.8	
Computer Applications	4.08	0.73				22.6	47.2	30.2	
Principles of Marketing	3.96	0.73			1.9	22.6	52.8	22.6	
Front Office Operational Ability	3.96	0.94			5.7	28.3	30.2	35.8	
Housekeeping Ability	3.96	0.94			5.9	27.5	31.4	35.3	
Marketing in Hospitality	3.91	1.02		1.9	5.7	28.3	28.3	35.8	
Public Relation Skills	3.91	0.88			5.7	26.4	39.6	28.3	
Negotiating Skills	3.87	0.92			9.4	20.8	43.4	26.4	
Professional Analysis	3.87	0.86			5.7	26.4	43.4	24.5	
Decision Making Skills	3.87	0.90			5.7	30.2	35.8	28.3	
Employee Relations	3.83	0.85			9.4	17.0	54.7	18.9	
Human Resource Management	3.81	0.81			3.8	32.1	43.4	20.8	
Interrelationships	3.66	0.94		1.9	5.7	37.7	34.0	20.8	
Hospitality Facility Planning	3.66	1.07	1.9		7.5	37.7	26.4	26.4	
Strategic Planning	3.64	1.00		1.9	13.2	22.6	43.4	18.9	
Org. Structure & Policies	3.62	1.15	1.9	1.9	11.3	26.4	34.0	24.5	
Research Skills	3.52	0.92		1.9	11.5	30.8	44.2	11.5	
Hospitality Law & Regulations	3.51	1.03	1.9		30.2	39.6	39.6	15.1	

Finance & Accounting	3.51	1.01	1.9	13.2	35.8	30.2	18.9
Hospitality Finance/Accounting	3.43	1.10	1.9	17.0	34.0	28.3	18.9

Note. Judgement of importance was made on 6-point scale (0 = Not important, 5 = Most important). M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.

Besides the top ten important skills, there were still some skills with a mean score higher than 4.0, such as total quality management, restaurant operation management, F&B management, critical thinking ability, analytical skills, and computer applications. The skill of computer applications, with a higher consensus, was the only one skill that all respondents rated at least as 3-point important, while most of the skills had some responses in “2-point important”

In contrast with those top ten skills, the least five important skills were hospitality finance/accounting, finance/accounting, hospitality law & regulations, research skills, and organizational structure & policies. Although these five skills were the least important, the mean scores were still higher than 3.0. In fact, among these five skills, at least 1.9% of respondents viewed the skills as “not important” (where 0 = not important) or “1-point important.” Besides, these five skills had a higher response in the less important points (0 to 2-point), especially for the skill of hospitality law & regulation, which had 32% of respondents rated important under “2-point important” (Table 13).

Human resource managers’ perceptions. Cooperative team building was the most important skill as perceived by human resource managers. The top ten skills rated by human resource managers were ranked by mean score as follows: cooperative team building, harmonious guest relations, communication, multilingual skills, professionalism, problem solving/identification, lodging administration, hands-on experience, leadership, and handling difficult people (Table 14).



Excluding “lodging administration” with the same percentage of 4-point important and most important, the other 9 skills were all rated as most important. The top one was the skill of cooperative team building, in which over seventy percent (73.2%) of the human resource managers rated as most important. Secondly, harmonious guest relations had 65% of human resource managers in the category of most important. Communication, which was placed third, had a little over sixty percent (61.0%) of responses as most important. Indeed, the skills of cooperative team building and communication had 90% of human resource managers rated above 4-point important but a little lower percentage in “harmonious guest relations” (85.0%) above 4-point important (Table 14).

In spite of the fact that “multilingual skills” was placed in fourth, slightly over ninety-percent (90.2%) of human resource managers viewed it above 4-point important. Interestingly, the fact was that the skill of multilingual had more consensus than the top three important skills (Table 14). Both “problem solving/identification” and “professionalism” were placed in fifth. Nearly 49% of human resource managers rated “professionalism” as most important; slightly over forty-six percent (46.3%) of human resource managers rated “problem solving/identification” as most important. However, responses above 4-point important of “problem solving/identification” had nearly five percentage higher than that of “professionalism” (Table 14). As illustrated in table 14, the rest of the important skills of the top ten (lodging administration, leadership, handling difficult people, and hands-on experience) were also with at least 75.0% responses above 4-point important.

The least five important skills were research skills, hospitality law & regulations, hospitality finance/accounting, and finance & accounting, and organizational structure & policies. Although they were rated as not quite important, they still had mean scores higher than 3.0 (Table 14).

Table 14 The rank order of important skills as perceived by HR managers

Important skills	M	SD	Level of importance					Rank	
			0	1	2	3	4		5
Cooperative Team Building	4.56	0.87			7.3	2.4	17.1	73.2	1
Harmonious Guest Relations	4.47	0.82			2.5	12.5	20.0	65.0	2
Communication	4.44	0.87			7.3	2.4	29.3	61.0	3
Multilingual Skills	4.34	0.73			2.4	7.3	43.9	46.3	4
Problem Solving/Identification	4.24	0.89			7.3	7.3	39.0	46.3	5
Professionalism	4.24	0.89			4.9	14.6	31.7	48.8	5
Lodging Administration	4.20	0.84			4.9	12.2	41.5	41.5	7
Leadership	4.17	0.95			9.8	7.3	39.0	43.9	8
Handling Difficult People	4.17	0.86			4.9	14.6	39.0	41.5	8
Hands-on Experience	4.17	0.97			7.3	17.1	26.8	48.8	8
Total Quality Management	4.12	0.87			4.9	17.1	39.0	39.0	
Restaurant Management	4.07	0.82			4.9	14.6	48.8	31.7	
F&B Management	4.07	0.91	2.4		2.4	14.6	46.3	34.1	
Analytical Skills	4.07	0.91			7.3	14.6	41.5	36.6	
Critical Thinking Ability	4.00	0.87			4.9	22.0	41.5	31.7	
Front Office Ability	3.98	0.99			7.3	26.8	26.8	39.0	
Housekeeping Ability	3.97	0.99			7.7	25.6	28.2	38.5	
Computer Applications	3.95	0.71				26.8	51.2	22.0	
Decision Making Skills	3.90	0.94			7.3	26.8	34.1	31.7	
Principles of Marketing	3.85	0.73			2.4	26.8	53.7	17.1	
Human Resource Management	3.85	0.82			4.9	26.8	46.3	22.0	
Negotiating Skills	3.85	0.99			12.2	19.5	39.0	29.3	
Marketing in Hospitality	3.83	1.05	2.4		4.9	34.1	24.4	34.1	
Employee Relations	3.80	0.90			12.2	14.6	53.7	19.5	
Public Relation Skills	3.80	0.90			7.3	29.3	39.0	24.4	
Professional Analysis	3.80	0.87			7.3	26.8	43.9	22.0	
Strategic Planning	3.66	1.04		2.4	14.6	17.1	46.3	19.5	
Hospitality Facility Planning	3.66	1.09		2.4	7.3	34.1	31.7	24.4	
Org. Structure & Policies	3.61	1.18	2.4	2.4	9.8	26.8	34.1	24.4	
Interrelationships	3.61	0.95		2.4	4.9	41.5	31.7	19.5	

Finance & Accounting	3.54	0.98	2.4	9.8	36.6	34.1	17.1
Hospitality Finance/Accounting	3.44	1.12	2.4	17.1	29.3	34.1	17.1
Hospitality Law & Regulations	3.41	1.02	2.4	14.6	29.3	43.9	9.8
Research Skills	3.40	0.93	2.5	15.0	30.0	45.0	7.5

Note. Judgement of importance was made on 6-point scale (0 = Not Important, 5 = Most important). M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.

Program directors' perceptions. The most important skill perceived by program directors was multilingual skills. A little over ninety percent (91.7%) of program directors rated “multilingual skills” as most important, while only 8.3% of directors rated it as 3-point important. Communication skill was placed second, in which 66.7% of program directors rated as most important. Third, cooperative team building had 66.7% of directors rated as most important but with a lower percentage than “communication” in 4-point important and with more consensus of the responses (Table 15).

The next important skills were professionalism, critical thinking ability, and problem solving/identification, where 50% of program directors rated the three skills as most important and three skills had the same mean scores. The skills of principles of marketing and harmonious guest relations were the following rank: 50% of directors rated both of them as 4-point important instead of most important (Table 15).

Following the rank, skills of lodging administration, restaurant operation management, F&B management, and public relations had the same mean scores (M = 4.25). The public relations skills had a higher response (83.4%) above “4-point important” than the other three skills, and it had a lower standard deviation, which meant program directors had more consensus in this skill than the other three skills (Table 15).

The five least important skills rated by program directors were finance & accounting, hospitality finance/accounting, strategic planning, organizational structure &

policies, and hospitality facility planning. Again, they still had mean scores higher than 3.0 (Table 15).

Table 15 The rank order of important skills as perceived by program directors

	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	Level of importance				Rank
			2	3	4	5	
Multilingual Skills	4.83	0.58		8.3		91.7	1
Communication	4.58	0.67		8.3	25.0	66.7	2
Cooperative Team Building	4.50	0.80		16.7	16.7	66.7	3
Computer Applications	4.50	0.67		8.3	33.3	58.3	3
Critical Thinking Ability	4.42	0.67		8.3	41.7	50.0	5
Problem Solving/Identification	4.42	0.67		8.3	41.7	50.0	5
Professionalism	4.42	0.67		8.3	41.7	50.0	5
Principles of Marketing	4.33	0.65		8.3	50.0	41.7	8
Harmonious Guest Relations	4.33	0.65		8.3	50.0	41.7	8
Lodging Administration	4.25	0.87		25.0	25.0	50.0	10
Restaurant Management	4.25	0.87		25.0	25.0	50.0	10
F&B Management	4.25	0.87		25.0	25.0	50.0	10
Public Relation Skills	4.25	0.75		16.7	41.7	41.7	
Analytical Skills	4.25	0.75		16.7	41.7	41.7	
Marketing in Hospitality	4.17	0.94	8.3	8.3	41.7	41.7	
Handling Difficult People	4.17	0.72		16.7	50.0	33.3	
Hands-on Experience	4.17	0.72		16.7	50.0	33.3	
Leadership	4.08	0.90		33.3	25.0	41.7	
Professional Analysis	4.08	0.79		25.5	41.7	33.3	
Total Quality Management	3.92	0.79		33.3	41.7	23.0	
Front Office Operational Ability	3.92	0.79		33.3	41.7	25.0	
Housekeeping Operational Ability	3.92	0.79		33.3	41.7	25.0	
Negotiating Skills	3.92	0.67		25.0	58.3	16.7	
Employee Relations	3.92	0.67		25.0	58.3	16.7	
Research Skills	3.92	0.79		33.3	41.7	25.0	
Hospitality Law & Regulations	3.83	1.03	8.3	33.3	25.0	33.3	
Interrelationships	3.83	0.94	8.3	25.0	41.7	25.0	
Decision Making Skills	3.75	0.73		41.7	41.7	16.7	
Orga. Structure & Policies	3.67	1.07	16.7	25.0	33.3	25.0	
Human Resource Management	3.67	0.78	4.9	26.8	46.3	22.0	
Hospitality Facility Planning	3.67	1.07	8.3	50.0	8.3	33.3	
Strategic Planning	3.58	0.90	8.3	41.7	33.3	16.7	

Finance & Accounting	3.42	1.16	25.0	33.3	16.7	25.0
Hospitality Finance/Accounting	3.42	1.08	16.7	50.0	8.3	25.0

Note. Judgement of importance is made on 6-point scale (0 = Not Important, 5 = Most important. M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation. “0” and “1” were not in the table since no response in the two levels.

By categorizing, the respondents perceived that people skills are more important and conceptual and operational skills are less important (Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C). The program directors perceived those skills related to people as important, such as communication, and harmonious guest relations. In fact, the top ten important skills perceived by program directors were similar to the top ten as perceived by human resource managers (Table 16).

Table 16 The top ten important skills ranked by two groups

Rank	Human resource managers n=41	M	Rank	Program directors n=12	M
1	Cooperative team building	4.56	1	Multilingual skills	4.83
2	Harmonious guest relations	4.47	2	Communication	4.58
3	Communication skill	4.44	3	Computer applications	4.50
			3	Cooperative team building	4.50
4	Multilingual skills	4.34	4	-----	
5	Problem	4.24	5	Critical thinking ability	4.42
5	solving/identification	4.24	5	Problem solving/identification	4.42
	Professionalism		5	Professionalism	4.42
6	-----		6	-----	
7	Lodging administration	4.20	7	-----	
8	Handling difficult people	4.17	8	Principles of marketing	4.33
8	Hands-on experience	4.17	8	Harmonious guest relations	4.33
8	Leadership	4.17			
9	-----		9	-----	
10	-----		10	Lodging administration	4.25
			10	Restaurant management	4.25
			10	F&B management	4.25

Note. Judgement of importance was made on 6-point scale (0 = Not Important, 5 = Most Important).

Although most of the skills were mentioned by both human resource managers and program directors, some skills were ranked by only one group. The skill of computer application was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> of the response from program directors, but it was out of the top ten rated by human resource managers. It had a little lower mean score (3.95) in the

human resource managers' responses. Another skill, critical thinking ability, was also in the rank of program directors, but it was just placed 14<sup>th</sup> in human resource managers' perceptions. The skill of leadership was in 8<sup>th</sup> place of the human resource managers' responses, however, it was placed 16<sup>th</sup> in the rank of program directors. While human resource managers viewed hands-on experience as very important, program directors viewed hands-on experience as less important (13<sup>th</sup>). A notable skill was principles of marketing. Program directors viewed this skill as very important, however, this skill had a lower mean score (3.85) from human resource managers' responses. The further compare between human resource managers and program directors to each skill will be the next objective, which will be represented next.

#### Gaps between perceptions of two groups

In further examining whether or not the difference exists between human resource managers and program directors, the researcher compared the two groups to each skill while they perceived the skills required by hospitality and tourism students in Taiwan. The Mann-Whitney test was employed, to satisfy the third objective.

The results showed that most of the perceptions between program directors and human resource managers were the same (Table 17). The statistical results showed that there were only three significant differences between human resource managers and program directors ( $p \leq .05$ ). The three skills were principles of marketing, communication, and multilingual skills. In fact, these three skills had been ranked differently between two groups. As previously indicated in table 16, the skill of principles of marketing was placed 8<sup>th</sup> by program directors but it was placed off the top ten by human resource managers. Communication was ranked as a second important skill by

program directors, and it was placed 8<sup>th</sup> by human resource managers.

Multilingual skill was the first important skills placed by program directors, and it was ranked as 4<sup>th</sup> by human resource managers.

Table 17 Statistical difference between human resource managers and program directors

	Mean rank		Z value	Sig. (2 tailed)
	HR managers	Directors		
Org. Structure & Policies	26.99	27.04	-.001	.991
Hospitality Law & Regulations	25.78	31.17	-1.117	.264
Principles of Marketing	24.90	34.17	-2.007	<b>.045*</b>
Finance & Accounting	27.50	25.29	-.455	.649
Human Resource Management	27.93	23.83	-.863	.388
Total Quality Management	27.98	23.67	-.905	.366
Interrelationships	26.17	29.83	-.762	.446
Strategic Planning	27.52	25.21	-.482	.630
Lodging Administration	26.78	27.75	-.206	.837
Restaurant Management	26.27	29.50	-.685	.494
F&B Management	26.38	29.13	-.581	.461
Hospitality Facility Planning	27.22	26.25	-.201	.841
Hospitality Finance/Accounting	27.33	25.88	-.298	.766
Marketing in Hospitality	25.88	30.83	-1.026	.305
Front Office Operational Ability	27.38	25.71	-.346	.729
Housekeeping Operational Ability	26.38	24.75	-.350	.726
Leadership	27.46	25.42	-.433	.665
Communication	26.62	28.29	-.384	.701
Cooperative Team Building	27.39	25.67	-.430	.667
Negotiating Skills	27.05	26.83	-.045	.964
Harmonious Guest Relations	27.54	23.04	-1.029	.304
Handling Difficult People	27.24	26.17	-.229	.819
Employee Relations	26.85	27.50	-.140	.888
Public Relation Skills	25.37	32.58	-1.504	.133
Professional Analysis	26.01	30.38	-.915	.360
Critical Thinking Ability	25.41	32.42	<b><u>-1.476</u></b>	.140
Problem Solving/Identification	26.57	28.46	-.408	.684
Decision Making Skills	27.72	24.54	-.659	.510
Analytical Skills	26.49	28.75	-.478	.633
Computer Applications	24.54	35.42	-2.320	<b>.020*</b>
Multilingual Skills	24.49	35.42	-2.480	<b>.013*</b>
Research Skills	24.81	35.58	-1.561	.118
Professionalism	26.57	28.46	-.406	.685
Hands-on Experience	27.39	25.67	-.365	.715

Notes. \* - Indicated statistically significant difference. Significant difference level  $\leq .05$

First, in the skill of principles of marketing, the small difference was exited ( $p = .045$ ). The highest percentage of responses from human resource managers was 53.7% in “4-point important” and, similarly, half of program directors rated this specific skill as “4-point important.” About forty-two percent (41.7%) of program directors viewed this skill most important, however, only 17.1% of human resource managers in this level of importance were comparable. Slightly over eight percent (8.3%) of program directors rated this skill as “3-point important” and 26.8% of human resource managers were in this level; no response from program directors in the “2-point important” but 2.4% of human resource managers were in this level (Figure 4).

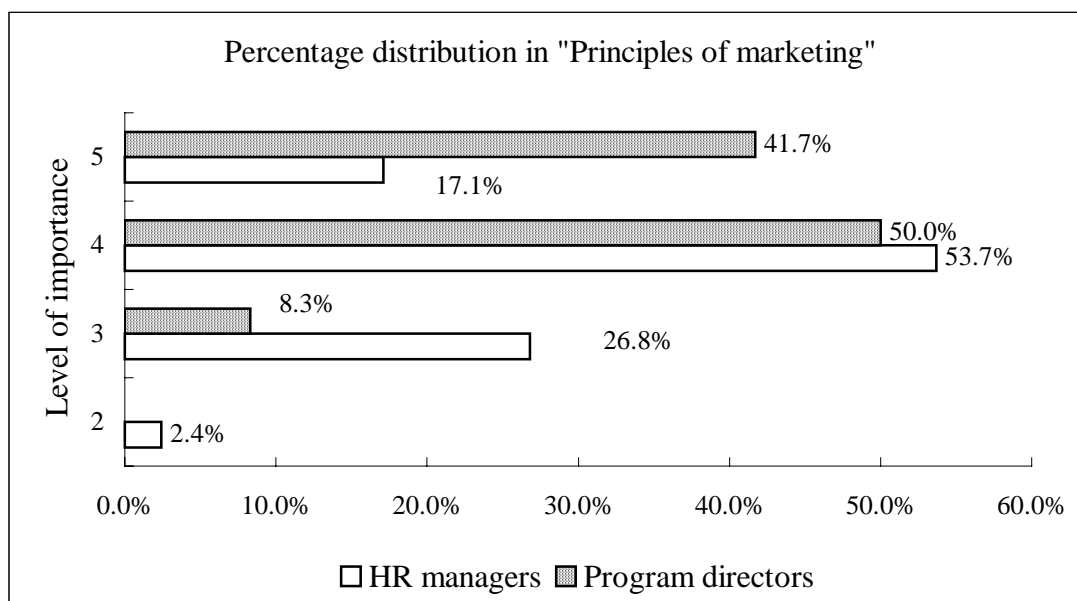
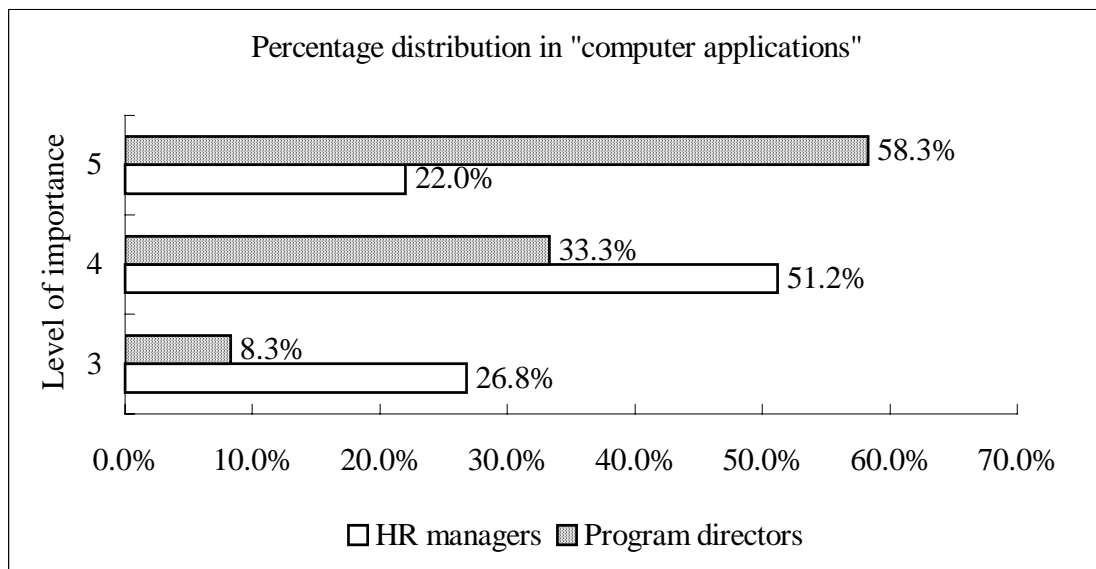


Figure 4. Percentage distribution in the skill of principles of marketing

Secondly, the skill of computer applications had more than a 10-point difference in the mean rank and showed a significant difference ( $p = 0.020$ ). The highest percentage of responses from human resource managers was 51.2% in the level of “4-point important”,

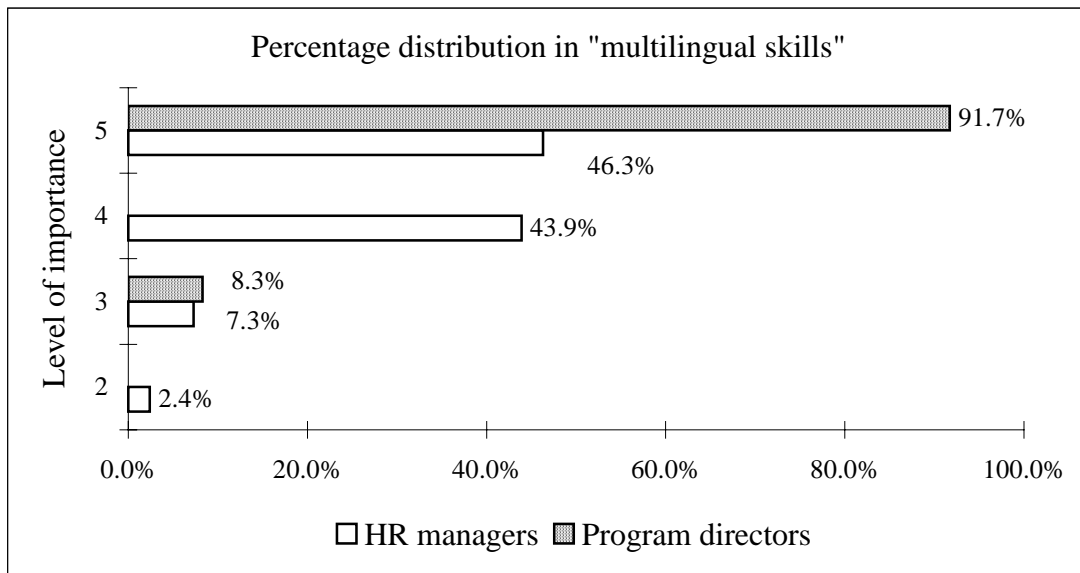


but 58 % of program directors were in the level of “most important.” The second highest percentage, respectively, 26.8% of human resource managers were of “3-point important” and one-third of program directors (33.3%) were of “4-point important.” The lowest percentage of human resource managers was 22.0% in “most important” and that of program directors was in “3-point important” with only 8.3% (Figure 5).



**Figure 5.** Percentage distribution in the skill of computer applications

The last one was multilingual skill with the most statistically significant difference ( $p = 0.013$ ). In this skill, the two groups rated it as “most important,” with 91.7% of program directors and 46.3% of human resource managers. But in the groups of human resource managers, there was only about a 3% difference between “most important” (46.3%) and “4-point important” (43.9%). Slightly over eight percent (8.3%) of program directors and 7.3% of human resource managers rated it as “3-point important”; there was no response from program directors but 2.4% from human resource managers rated it as “2-point important” (Figure 6).



**Figure 6.** Percentage distribution in the skill of multilingual skills

#### Educational level vs. perceptions of important skills

In order to examine whether or not the educational levels affected the respondents' perceptions, the researcher compared the respondents' last formal educational level to each skill while they perceived the important skills required by graduates. A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if a relationship existed between these variables.

Table 18 utilized a 6 point Likert scale with "0" representing "not important" and "5" representing "most important." Means and standard deviations (SD) were calculated for purposes of making the comparison.

Table 18 Last formal educational level vs. perceptions of important skills

	Master or Doctorate		University or College		Technical College		High school or less		Total	
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Org. structure & policy	3.53	1.18	2.35	1.34	4.14	3.50	3.50	0.58	3.61	1.1
Hospitality Law & regulation	3.88	0.93	3.06	1.24	3.71	0.83	3.50	0.58	3.55	1.0
Principles of marketing	4.35	0.61	3.69	0.60	4.00	0.88	3.25	0.50	3.96	.7
Finance & Accounting	3.53	1.07	3.19	0.98	3.93	1.00	3.25	0.96	3.51	1.0
Human resource mgmt.	3.76	0.83	3.56	0.73	4.21	0.89	3.50	0.58	3.80	.8
Total quality mgmt.	4.06	0.75	4.00	0.97	4.29	0.91	3.50	0.58	4.06	.8
Interrelationships	3.94	0.97	3.38	1.02	3.79	0.89	3.25	0.50	3.67	.9
Strategic planning	3.71	0.92	3.25	1.13	4.00	1.04	3.50	0.58	3.63	1.0
Lodging administration	4.35	0.79	3.75	0.77	4.57	0.85	4.00	0.82	4.20	0.8
Restaurant operation management	4.35	0.79	3.63	0.72	4.43	0.85	4.00	0.00	4.12	0.8
F&B management	4.35	0.79	3.75	0.93	4.36	0.93	4.00	0.82	4.14	0.8
Hospitality facility planning	3.71	0.99	3.13	1.20	4.14	0.95	4.00	0.82	3.67	1.0
Hospitality finance/accounting	3.47	1.07	2.81	0.98	3.86	1.17	4.00	0.82	3.41	1.1
Marketing in hospitality	4.24	0.90	3.31	0.95	4.36	1.08	3.50	0.58	3.92	1.0
Front office operational ability	4.06	0.83	3.88	1.09	4.14	0.95	3.50	1.00	3.98	0.9
Housekeeping ability	4.00	0.79	3.88	1.09	4.15	0.99	3.67	1.15	3.98	0.9

Note. \* - Indicated statistically significant difference. M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation;  $p \leq .05$ .

Table 18 Last formal educational level vs. perceptions of important skills (cont.)

	Master or Doctorate		University or College		Technical College		High school or less		Total	
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Leadership	4.12	0.86	3.81	1.05	4.50	0.94	4.25	0.50	4.14	0.9
Communication	<b>4.65</b>	0.61	<b>4.31</b>	1.01	<b>4.57</b>	0.85	<b>4.00</b>	0.82	<b>4.47</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Co-team building	<b>4.59</b>	0.71	<b>4.44</b>	1.03	<b>4.71</b>	0.83	<b>4.00</b>	0.82	<b>4.53</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Negotiating skills	4.06	0.75	3.56	1.03	3.93	1.07	4.00	0.82	3.86	0.9
Guest relations	<b>4.41</b>	0.62	<b>4.38</b>	0.96	<b>4.54</b>	0.78	<b>4.50</b>	1.00	<b>4.44</b>	<b>0.7</b>
Handling difficult people	4.29	0.69	3.94	0.93	4.29	0.91	4.00	0.82	4.16	0.8
Employee relations	4.06	0.66	3.56	0.96	4.07	0.83	3.00	0.82	3.82	0.8
Public relation skills	4.24	0.75	3.69	0.79	3.86	1.10	3.25	0.50	3.88	0.8
Professional analysis	4.18	0.73	3.50	0.89	4.00	0.88	3.25	0.50	3.84	0.8
Critical thinking ability	4.29	0.77	3.94	0.77	4.29	0.91	3.25	0.50	4.10	0.8
Problem solve/identify	4.53	0.62	3.88	0.89	4.57	0.85	3.75	0.96	4.27	0.8
Decision making skills	3.82	0.73	3.56	0.89	4.21	0.97	3.50	1.00	3.82	0.8
Analytical skills	4.35	0.70	3.81	0.91	4.36	0.93	3.25	0.50	4.10	0.8
Computer applications	4.35	0.79	3.94	0.77	4.00	0.55	3.75	0.96	4.08	0.7
Multilingual skills	<b>4.71</b>	0.59	<b>4.25</b>	0.68	<b>4.36</b>	0.93	<b>4.75</b>	0.50	<b>4.47</b>	<b>0.7</b>
Research skills	3.82	0.81	3.06	0.93	3.64	1.01	3.33	0.58	3.50	0.9
Professionalism	4.41	0.71	3.94	0.93	4.43	0.94	4.50	0.58	4.27	0.8
Hands-on experience	4.29	0.69	3.94	1.12	4.29	0.99	4.00	0.82	4.16	0.9

Note. \* - Indicated statistically significant difference. M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation;  $p \leq .05$ .

Referring to table 18, across the four different educational levels, four specific skills (communication skills, cooperative team building, harmonious guest relations, and multilingual skills) gained a consensus to reach above 4.0 (where 5 = most important) in the mean scores. Especially, relating to multilingual skills, the standard deviations of the four different educational levels were less than 1.00. Respondents with a university/college degree had the lowest mean of the four different educational levels in multilingual skill, but respondents with a high school degree had the highest mean. Besides, respondents with technical college degrees viewed the skills of cooperative team building and harmonious guest relations more important than the other three groups did.

Among all the important skills, only seven specific skills illustrated in Figure 7 reached the statistically significant different variation level ( $p \leq .05$ ). There were stated as follows:

The statistically significant difference in “principles of marketing” ( $p = .011 \leq .05$ ) almost reached the .01 level. The respondents with master/doctorate degrees viewed this skill as much more important than did the respondents with high school degrees (Figure 7). In fact, 41.2% of respondents with a master/doctoral degree viewed principles of marketing as most important. Only 6.3% of respondents with university/college degrees rated it as most important. On the contrary, none of the respondents with a high school degree rated it as most important, but 75% of responses with a high school degree rated it as 3-point important (Appendix D).

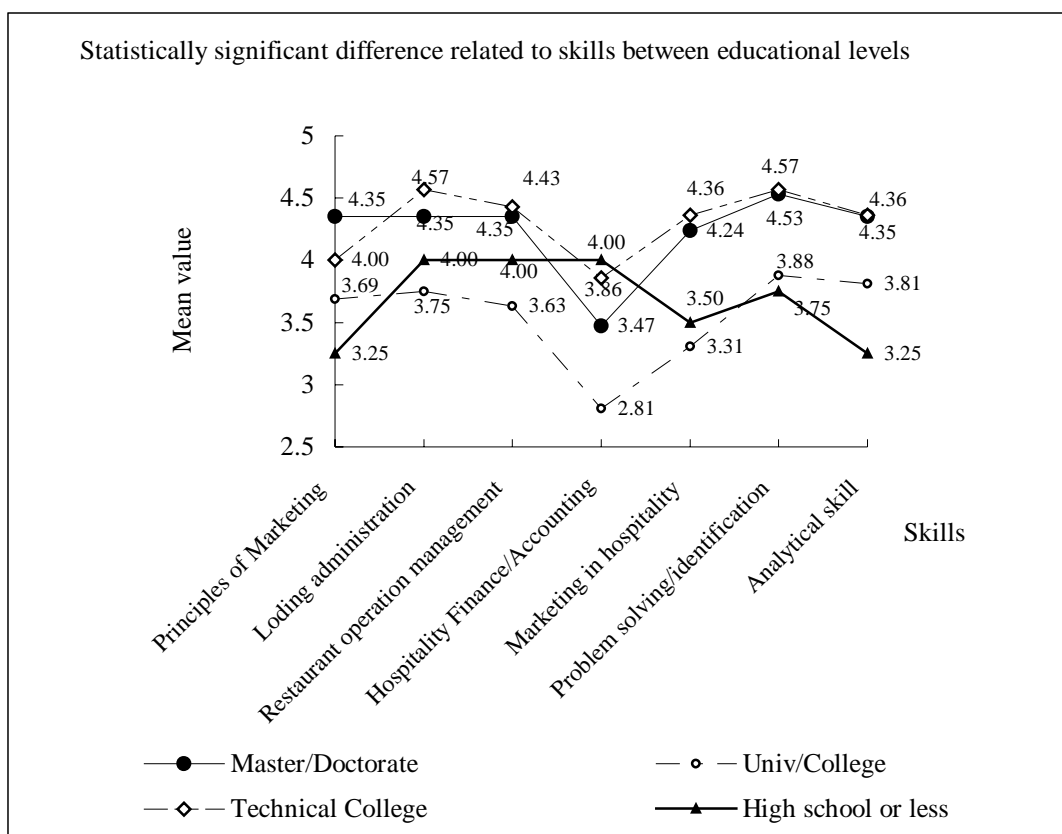


Figure 7. Significant difference in specific skills by educational levels

A small significant difference ( $p = .042$ ) occurred in “lodging administration.” As illustrated in Figure 7, the respondents with a technical college degree had the highest perception of this skill,  $M=4.57$ , and those respondents with a university/college degree had the lowest perception,  $M=3.75$ . As a matter of fact, 71.4% of respondents with a technical college degree rated this skill as most important, but only 12.5% of respondents with a university/college degree rated it as most important (Appendix D).

A statistically significant difference ( $p = .020$ ) also occurred in “restaurant operational management.” Again, the respondents with a technical college degree had the highest perception of importance (Figure 7). By viewing the percentage distribution, 57.1% of the respondents with technical college degrees rated it as most

important, but only 6.3% of the respondents with university/college degrees did in that category (Appendix D).

In regards to “hospitality finance/accounting,” a small significant difference ( $p = .041$ ) has been found. The lowest perception was found with the respondents with university/college degrees ( $M = 2.81$ ), and the highest perception were with “high school or less,”  $M = 4.00$ . Besides, most of the respondents with master/doctoral degrees also viewed this as a less important skill when compared with the respondents with a technical college degree (Figure 7). By viewing the percentage, 75% of the respondents with a high school degree and 71.4% of the respondents with a technical college degree viewed this skill as at least 4-point important. But, only 18.8% of the respondents with university/college degrees rated it as 4-point important, and 41.1% of the respondents with master/doctoral degrees rated it as most important (Appendix D).

Next, “marketing in hospitality” had a statistically significant difference ( $p = .013 \leq .05$ ), nearly reaching the .01 level. The respondents with technical college degrees viewed this skill as more important than did other groups,  $M = 4.36$ . The respondents with university/college degrees had the lowest important perception of this skill,  $M = 3.31$  (Figure 7). Indeed, slightly over seventy percent (71.4%) of the respondents with technical college degrees rated this skill as most important, but only 6.3% of the respondents with university/college degrees rated it as most important (Appendix D).

The last two statistically significant differences had been found in “problem solving/identification” ( $p = .035$ ) and in “analytical skills” ( $p = .039$ ). In “problem solving/identification,” the respondents with technical college degrees viewed it as more

important than did three groups. In the view of percentage distribution, 71.4% of the respondents with technical college degrees rated “problem solving/identification” as most important, but only 19% of the respondents with a university/college degree noted this level of importance.

In “analytical skills,” the respondents with technical college degrees still had the highest mean of four different educational levels, and the respondents with a high school degree had the lowest perception (Figure 7). For the skill of analytical skills, 57.1% of the respondents with a technical college degree rated it as most important. But, only about 19% of the respondents with university/college degrees rate it as most important and none of the respondents with a high school degree viewed analytical skills as most important (Appendix D).

#### Majors vs. perceptions of important skills

One wants to know whether the respondents’ major of their last formal educational level affected their perception of important skills required by hospitality and tourism students, a t test was conducted to satisfy this objective.

The most notable observation was the lack of a statistically significant variation ( $p \leq .05$ ) between two groups (H&T major and non-H&T major). Hence, across the two different groups, all of the respondents with different majors seemed to have similar perceptions for the important skills required by hospitality and tourism students (Appendix E).

#### Comments from questionnaires

In the first part of the questionnaire, blanks relating to important skills required by students were provided for the respondents. Only two responses from program directors



listed other skills that were not in the questions. One skill was activity planning, which was rated as four in importance. The other one was related to the tourism area, tourism environmentalism, and it was rated as most important.

The last part of the questionnaire was provided for suggestions for the hospitality industry and the hospitality education. To the industry, program directors suggested that the hospitality industry should always keep contact with educational institutions in discussing the internship/co-op programs (such as, courses, salary, and the shifts, etc.) so as to optimize the internship programs. Besides, a program director also suggested that industry should completely implement the Standard Operating Procedure through the working environment so that students can exactly follow the procedure.

Most of the comments from human resource managers indicated the educational institutions pay more attention in the principles or theories instead of working experience. In fact, in order to realize the hospitality environment, one human resource manager further suggested the 4-year programs should extend the length of internship programs instead of having an internship program during only summer or winter break of the school year.

Human resource managers frequently mentioned another notable comment - the lack of specialization. Human resource managers indicated graduates had lower knowledge in specific areas; they further suggested that sufficient courses of specialization should be offered to make efforts in developing different students' interests and in compromising the specific positions.

Although the hospitality programs are increasing, hotel recruiters stated that they did not have many new recruits even though they hold the campus recruitment activity. As a

result, they proposed the educational institutions not only teach basic knowledge but also need to entirely deliver the concept of service and social ethic in order to improve the lower image of this industry and further encourage students choose this industry as their career.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Summary

This chapter provides a summary of the major research findings and discussions, conclusions, recommendations for hospitality education and recruiters, and some final recommendations for further research.

With the growing number of hospitality graduates in Taiwan, a consideration of competencies required by students has emerged. As a result, the purpose of this study was to identify the important skills required by hospitality and tourism students in Taiwan as perceived by hospitality program directors and hospitality industry recruiters. Furthermore, the study was also to identify the gap between perceptions of educators and hospitality recruiters in order to suggest a better interaction between academia and industry.

### Findings and discussions

Objective one was to identify the important skills perceived by human resource managers. Generally speaking, a majority of human resource managers perceived those skills related to people as more important and those general knowledge skills and operational skills as less important. Those people skills such as cooperative team building, communication, and harmonious guest relations were the top three. Besides, the other two people skills, handling difficult people and leadership, were also within the top ten important skills. In this study, recruiter messages also showed that interpersonal skills were very important. Recruiters had higher perceptions in personal characteristics or

skills, such as the ability of problem solving and identification, professionalism, and multilingual skills. Recruiters also considered hands-on experience as very important. Only lodging administration, which related to functional skills, was in the top ten. On the other hand, the least important skills were research skill, hospitality law & regulations, and hospitality finance/accounting.

Obviously, the results showed that it is important for students to develop harmonious people relationships so as to work in this team environment industry. In fact, the results were consistent with those studies conducted by Baum (1991), Sneed and Heiman (1995), Bach and Milman (1996), Breiter and Clements (1996), and Withiam (1998). In their studies, the issues relating to human resources were the top concern. The findings of this study particularly confirm the study of Breiter and Clements (1996). In their study, hotel and restaurant managers scored human relations skills higher than planning and technical skills. Indeed, research skill was also found as the least important skill of their study.

However, a notable observation was found in the statistics. Some skills were out of the top ten but still had mean scores higher than 4.0 on a scale of importance. Those skills included total quality management, restaurant operation management, F&B management, critical thinking, and analytical skills.

Another finding was that over half of human resource managers rated some specific skills in a certain level of importance. Those skills included principles of marketing, employee relations and computer applications (Table 14). This result showed that many recruiters believed that technical skills and the basic concept skills are still the essence of the industry. But, once students have critical thinking ability and analytical skills, they can be more adequate to approach the new challenge of the hospitality industry. Again, human resource managers also focused on employee relations, which is related to people

skills.

Objective two of this study was to identify the important skills perceived by educators. The top ten skills perceived by educators were similar to recruiters. Educators still heavily weighed people skills as important such as cooperative team building, communication, and harmonious guest relations. Once again, this can be confirmed by those studies mentioned in literature. In fact, multilingual skills and computer applications were perceived as very important. This point was consistent with the study of Sciarini, Woods, and Gardner (1995). In their study, the result showed that faculty placed more emphasis on computer skills and language skills as necessary characteristics for employment prescreening.

Educators also weighed those interpersonal characteristics or skills such as professionalism, critical thinking ability, and problem solving/identification as important. Although hands-on experience was not in the top ten, the majority of program directors still believed it is important (Table 15). Besides, skills of lodging administration, restaurant operation management, F&B management, and principles of marketing were listed in the top ten important skills. In fact, this result could be referred to the view of Samenfink (1992). In his article, he strongly recommended educators should give the mix of technical skill and critical thinking skills so students can be successful in this competitive industry.

By viewing those skills out of the top ten, some were still very important based on program directors' perceptions. Not surprisingly, people skills such as handling difficult people, public relations, and leadership were perceived highly. Besides, interpersonal skills such as analytical skills and hands-on experience still had mean scores higher than

4.0. The lowest perceptions of important skills were finance & accounting, hospitality finance/accounting, and strategic planning.

Referring to Umbreit (1992), he suggested that financial analysis would be an important ingredient in hospitality curriculum. In order to prepare future managers, a substantial financial knowledge would be required by management positions.

Nevertheless, in this study, both educators and recruiters perceived financial skills as not very important. The possible explanation can be that financial skill is much more important to a managerial position but not so important for college students when they are in entry-level positions.

Objective three was to compare and analyze gaps between perceptions of program directors and human resource managers. Results showed that the overall perception of important skills based on the mean score did indicate a high degree of similarity between educators and recruiters. However, the statistical results demonstrated some differences between hospitality and tourism program directors and hospitality recruiters (Table 17). Significant differences were found in three skills, principles of marketing, computer applications, and multilingual skills.

Human resource managers weighed principles of marketing lower than did program directors. The possible interpretation is that human resource managers believed that hospitality students should acquire practical skills within those principles instead of only learning by the educational process. In the study of Israeli and Reichel (1998), they found that students were able to identify solutions and accomplish projects but were not able to implement those complex solutions. They further stated that hospitality students lacked specific experience in hotel operations, especially in marketing and pricing. Another

explanation could be that the hospitality industry not only hires the hospitality graduates but also hires specialists such as accountants or marketing specialists who major in the business area. As a result, such financial or marketing skills are not as important as other skills.

Another two statistically significant differences were found in multilingual skills and computer applications. In this study, educators placed more emphasis on multilingual skills and computer skills than did human resource managers. Not surprisingly, the educators put more attention on academic work than did human resource managers. A similar result can be found in Sciarini, Woods, and Gardner (1995). When they surveyed the important employment prescreening characteristics, faculty did place more emphasis on computer skills and language skills than did recruiters. Recruiters perceived personal characteristics more important during the hiring process.

In Zhou's article (p. 42, 1998), he stated that "the travel and hospitality industry has always been among the first to capitalize on new technology" and "travel and hospitality is put in the spotlight of the technological innovation of the Internet." Differently, in this study, the industry in Taiwan did not perceive computer skills as important, which may be a loss to a new way of distributing marketing information. The possible reason could be that educational institutions have been aware of the growing usage of Internet and further train students with those skills, but the technology of the hospitality industry in Taiwan is still far behind the academic. Another explanation is the hospitality industry viewed the computer skill as a tool, and it can be trained in-house.

Objective four was to compare the relationships between respondents' educational level and perceptions of important skills. Regarding the educational profiles of

respondents, the program directors had at least a master's or a doctoral degree. The majority of human resource managers had a bachelor's degree or a technical college degree. In general, respondents with technical college degrees and with master's or doctoral degrees rated skills higher than did respondents with university/college degrees (Table 18). Statistically, significant differences were found in seven skills among the four different educational levels (Figure 7). Among those seven skills, most of them were conceptual and operational skills, and only two skills were involved in interpersonal aspects.

Generally speaking, respondents with technical college degrees perceived the conceptual skill (principles of marketing) and the functional skills (lodging administration, restaurant operational management, hospitality finance/accounting, and marketing in hospitality) higher than did respondents with a university/college degree. The possible explanation of this phenomenon is that technical colleges make a success of "practical skills" but fail in delivering the concepts of the hospitality industry. Hence, those respondents with technical college degrees perceived conceptual skills more important than did respondents with a bachelor's degree. In view of respondents with a master's or doctoral degree, they showed that those skills relating to management and personal characteristics were more important. However, respondents with a high school degree or less showed the operational skill (hospitality finance/accounting) was very important but interpersonal skills (problem solving/identification and analytical skills) were less important. This phenomenon can possibly be explained by the fact that respondents with lower educational levels perceived operational or practical skills as more important.

Regarding respondents' major of their last formal education, there was not a significant difference. It seems that educators and recruiters with different majors had similar perceptions of important skills required by hospitality students. Indeed, recruiters indicated that not only they aim at hospitality students but more importantly, they would like to employ people with desire and motivation in the industry.

### Conclusion

To conclude, the results in this study indicated that people skills are the essential for future success in the hospitality industry. Hospitality recruiters confirmed that hospitality graduates need to acquire the functional skills but with a strong ability to communicate effectively with customers and colleagues. Hospitality recruiters further emphasized that hospitality educators need to enhance students' practical skills. In the view of hospitality educators, again, people skills are the top concern among those important competencies. In the mean time, hospitality educators emphasized the large picture of the industry and prepare well-rounded hospitality students with excellent multi-skills for future managers.

The intimate relationship between academia and industry is the substantial factor for the future success of hospitality education. The hospitality educators must understand the missions of hospitality programs in order to ensure the industry's success. They also need to recognize the reality of the industry and radically adapt curriculum to this fast changing industry. On the other hand, industry leaders share this responsibility and work with educators to close the gap between classroom and working environment. In addition, the hospitality industry needs to discipline itself as professionals in order to persuade hospitality students to view hospitality as a career.



### Recommendation for educators and recruiters in Taiwan

Based on the study results and literature review, some implications can be made to hospitality education and industry. According to recruiters, educational institutions teach skills that can only be used in management positions but not for entry-level positions. Besides, recruiters also stated that educational institutions needed to teach the philosophy of this industry, spirit of service, as a core curriculum. Therefore, how hospitality educational institutions design adequate curriculum becomes a very important issue. Hospitality education should design curriculum based on the objectives of the program so as to focus on different segments of the industry.

However, there is a lack of professionals to evaluate the relevance of curriculum in Taiwan. Hence, an advisory council is recommended to educational institutions. An advisory council could effectively provide advice, insight, and vision to the curriculum of the hospitality programs. A strong council will also explore a new way of hospitality management education and develop the potential possibility for the future goal.

On the other hand, keeping good quality hospitality students is not only an educator's job but also a recruiter's responsibility. Hospitality recruiters need to be supportive for the academic work and further supply the real environment experience. Currently, the hospitality industry in Taiwan interacts with hospitality education by internship programs/coordination service. What we have to consider is whether the internship program is sufficient for hospitality students.

The internship should be designed to complement the course work taken so that the students' background of education and experience are enhanced. However, the majority of interns' positions are as servers or housekeepers but without any relocating. As a

result, hospitality students are not willing to return to the hospitality environment. Indeed, without a good promotional system, students do not view hospitality as a life career. The stigma of poor image is still in the society in Taiwan; a professional image has to be built by the hospitality industry so as to have new recruits for the industry.

#### Recommendations for further research

This study was based on perceptions of human resource managers and program directors in Taiwan. Analysis of the data and the literature review form the basis for the following recommendations.

1. One of the data analyses was that the majority of human resource managers and program directors indicated they have coordinate service. And 83% of programs have internship requirement. As a result, the researcher encourages further study can be conducted on the evaluation of internship programs.
2. In this particular study, the researcher did not focus on specific positions, which made it difficult for respondents to answer some specific skills. As a result, a similar study can be conducted with a focus on a functional area such as room services or food services.
3. A similar study was conducted by Chen (1996), and students were the only population. Therefore, a comparison study could also be conducted to examine the different perceptions among three groups: faculty, students, and recruiters.
4. During the survey period, one phone interview was conducted. Indeed, the recruiter stated more opinions than did others. In addition, many recruiters and program directors made critical comments in the questionnaires. Therefore, further researchers can conduct a qualitative study with an interview technique.

5. The hospitality programs in Taiwan can be found among vocational high schools, four-year and two-year technical colleges, four-year university/colleges, and graduate programs. For further research, the study could be conducted by focusing on different levels of the hospitality educational system in Taiwan.
6. The literature review of this study was based on hospitality education in the Western world. The researcher encourages a similar study to be conducted based on the educational system and cultural background of the Asian world.

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## Appendix A

Unranked overall respondents' perceptions of important skills

	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	Level of importance						Rank
			0	1	2	3	4	5	
<b><u>Conceptual Skills</u></b>									
Orga. Structure & Policies	3.62	1.15	1.9	1.9	11.3	26.4	34.0	24.5	
Hospitality Law & Regulations	3.51	1.03	1.9		30.2	39.6	39.6	15.1	
Principles of Marketing	3.96	0.73			1.9	22.6	52.8	22.6	
Finance & Accounting	3.51	1.01		1.9	13.2	35.8	30.2	18.9	
Human Resource Management	3.81	0.81			3.8	32.1	43.4	20.8	
Total Quality Management	4.08	0.85			3.8	20.8	39.6	35.8	
Interrelationships	3.66	0.94		1.9	5.7	37.7	34.0	20.8	
Strategic Planning	3.64	1.00		1.9	13.2	22.6	43.4	18.9	
<b><u>Hospitality Operations</u></b>									
Lodging Administration	4.21	0.84			3.8	15.1	37.7	43.4	7
Restaurant Management	4.11	0.82			3.8	17.0	43.4	35.8	
F&B Management	4.11	0.89		1.9	1.9	17.0	41.5	37.7	
Hospitality Facility Planning	3.66	1.07	1.9		7.5	37.7	26.4	26.4	
Hospitality Finance/Accounting	3.43	1.10	1.9		17.0	34.0	28.3	18.9	
Marketing in Hospitality	3.91	1.02		1.9	5.7	28.3	28.3	35.8	
Front Office Operational Ability	3.96	0.94			5.7	28.3	30.2	35.8	
Housekeeping Operation Ability	3.96	0.94			5.9	27.5	31.4	35.3	
<b><u>Human Resource Skills</u></b>									
Leadership	4.15	0.93			7.5	13.2	35.8	43.4	10
Communication	4.47	0.82			5.7	3.8	28.3	62.3	2
Cooperative Team Building	4.55	0.85			5.7	5.7	17.0	71.7	1

Negotiating Skills	3.87	0.92	9.4	20.8	43.4	26.4		
Harmonious Guest Relations	4.44	0.78	1.9	11.5	26.9	59.6	4	
Handling Difficult People	4.17	0.83	3.8	15.1	41.5	39.6	8	
Employee Relations	3.83	0.85	9.4	17.0	54.7	18.9		
Public Relation Skills	3.91	0.88	5.7	26.4	39.6	28.3		
Professional Analysis	3.87	0.86	5.7	26.4	43.4	24.5		
<b>Personal Skills</b>								
Critical Thinking Ability	4.09	0.84	3.8	18.9	41.5	35.8		
Problem Solving/Identification	4.28	0.84	5.7	7.5	39.6	47.2	5	
Decision Making Skills	3.87	0.90	5.7	30.2	35.8	28.3		
Analytical Skills	4.11	0.87	5.7	15.1	41.5	37.7		
Computer Applications	4.08	0.73		22.6	47.2	30.2		
Multilingual Skills	4.45	0.72	1.9	7.5	34.0	56.6	3	
Research Skills	3.52	0.92	1.9	11.5	30.8	44.2	11.5	
Professionalism	4.28	0.84	3.8	13.2	34.0	49.1	5	
Hands-on Experience	4.17	0.91	5.7	17.0	32.1	45.3	8	

Note. Judgement of importance was made on 6-point scale (0 = Not important, 5 = Most important). M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.

## Appendix B

### Unranked HR managers' perceptions of important skills

Important skills	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	Level of importance						Rank
			0	1	2	3	4	5	
<b><u>Conceptual Skills</u></b>									
Org. Structure & Policies	3.61	1.18	2.4	2.4	9.8	26.8	34.1	24.4	
Hospitality Law & Regulations	3.41	1.02	2.4		14.6	29.3	43.9	9.8	
Principles of Marketing	3.85	0.73			2.4	26.8	53.7	17.1	
Finance & Accounting	3.54	0.98		2.4	9.8	36.6	34.1	17.1	
Human Resource Management	3.85	0.82			4.9	26.8	46.3	22.0	
Total Quality Management	4.12	0.87			4.9	17.1	39.0	39.0	
Interrelationships	3.61	0.95		2.4	4.9	41.5	31.7	19.5	
Strategic Planning	3.66	1.04		2.4	14.6	17.1	46.3	19.5	
<b><u>Hospitality Operations</u></b>									
Lodging Administration	4.20	0.84			4.9	12.2	41.5	41.5	7
Restaurant Management	4.07	0.82			4.9	14.6	48.8	31.7	
F&B Management	4.07	0.91		2.4	2.4	14.6	46.3	34.1	
Hospitality Facility Planning	3.66	1.09		2.4	7.3	34.1	31.7	24.4	
Hospitality Finance/Accounting	3.44	1.12	2.4		17.1	29.3	34.1	17.1	
Marketing in Hospitality	3.83	1.05		2.4	4.9	34.1	24.4	34.1	
Front Office Ability	3.98	0.99			7.3	26.8	26.8	39.0	
Housekeeping Ability	3.97	0.99			7.7	25.6	28.2	38.5	

<u>Human Resource Skills</u>								
Leadership	4.17	0.95		9.8	7.3	39.0	43.9	8
Communication	4.44	0.87		7.3	2.4	29.3	61.0	3
Cooperative Team Building	4.56	0.87		7.3	2.4	17.1	73.2	1
Negotiating Skills	3.85	0.99		12.2	19.5	39.0	29.3	
Harmonious Guest Relations	4.47	0.82		2.5	12.5	20.0	65.0	2
Handling Difficult People	4.17	0.86		4.9	14.6	39.0	41.5	8
Employee Relations	3.80	0.90		12.2	14.6	53.7	19.5	
Public Relation Skills	3.80	0.90		7.3	29.3	39.0	24.4	
Professional Analysis	3.80	0.87		7.3	26.8	43.9	22.0	
<b>Personal Skills</b>								
Critical Thinking Ability	4.00	0.87		4.9	22.0	41.5	31.7	
Problem Solving/Identification	4.24	0.89		7.3	7.3	39.0	46.3	5
Decision Making Skills	3.90	0.94		7.3	26.8	34.1	31.7	
Analytical Skills	4.07	0.91		7.3	14.6	41.5	36.6	
Computer Applications	3.95	0.71			26.8	51.2	22.0	
Multilingual Skills	4.34	0.73		2.4	7.3	43.9	46.3	4
Research Skills	3.40	0.93	2.5	15.0	30.0	45.0	7.5	
Professionalism	4.24	0.89		4.9	14.6	31.7	48.8	5
Hands-on Experience	4.17	0.97		7.3	17.1	26.8	48.8	8

Note. Judgement of importance was made on 6-point scale (0 = Not Important, 5 = Most important). M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.

## Appendix C

### Unranked program directors' perceptions of important skills

	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	Level of importance				Rank
			2	3	4	5	
<u>Conceptual Skills</u>							
Orga. Structure & Policies	3.67	1.07	16.7	25.0	33.3	25.0	
Hospitality Law & Regulations	3.83	1.03	8.3	33.3	25.0	33.3	
Principles of Marketing	4.33	0.65		8.3	50.0	41.7	8
Finance & Accounting	3.42	1.16	25.0	33.3	16.7	25.0	
Human Resource Management	3.67	0.78	4.9	26.8	46.3	22.0	
Total Quality Management	3.92	0.79		33.3	41.7	23.0	
Interrelationships	3.83	0.94	8.3	25.0	41.7	25.0	
Strategic Planning	3.58	0.90	8.3	41.7	33.3	16.7	
<b>Hospitality Operations</b>							
Lodging Administration	4.25	0.87		25.0	25.0	50.0	10
Restaurant Management	4.25	0.87		25.0	25.0	50.0	10
F&B Management	4.25	0.87		25.0	25.0	50.0	10
Hospitality Facility Planning	3.67	1.07	8.3	50.0	8.3	33.3	
Hospitality Finance/Accounting	3.42	1.08	16.7	50.0	8.3	25.0	
Marketing in Hospitality	4.17	0.94	8.3	8.3	41.7	41.7	

Front Office Operational Ability	3.92	0.79	33.3	41.7	25.0	
Housekeeping Operational Ability	3.92	0.79	33.3	41.7	25.0	
<u>Human Resource Skills</u>						
Leadership	4.08	0.90	33.3	25.0	41.7	
Communication	4.58	0.67	8.3	25.0	66.7	2
Cooperative Team Building	4.50	0.80	16.7	16.7	66.7	3
Negotiating Skills	3.92	0.67	25.0	58.3	16.7	
Harmonious Guest Relations	4.33	0.65	8.3	50.0	41.7	8
Handling Difficult People	4.17	0.72	16.7	50.0	33.3	
Employee Relations	3.92	0.67	25.0	58.3	16.7	
Public Relation Skills	4.25	0.75	16.7	41.7	41.7	
Professional Analysis	4.08	0.79	25.5	41.7	33.3	
<u>Personal Skills</u>						
Critical Thinking Ability	4.42	0.67	8.3	41.7	50.0	5
Problem Solving/Identification	4.42	0.67	8.3	41.7	50.0	5
Decision Making Skills	3.75	0.73	41.7	41.7	16.7	
Analytical Skills	4.25	0.75	16.7	41.7	41.7	
Computer Applications	4.50	0.67	8.3	33.3	58.3	3
Multilingual Skills	4.83	0.58	8.3		91.7	1
Research Skills	3.92	0.79	33.3	41.7	25.0	
Professionalism	4.42	0.67	8.3	41.7	50.0	5
Hands-on Experience	4.17	0.72	16.7	50.0	33.3	

Note. Judgement of importance is made on 6-point scale (0 = Not Important, 5 = Most important. M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation. “0” and “1” were not in the table since no response in the two levels.

#### Appendix D

#### Percentage of significant difference in important skills by educational levels

##### **Significant difference in principles of marketing**

	Principles of Marketing			
	2	3	4	Most Important
Master/Doctorate		5.9%	52.9%	41.2%
Univ./College		37.5%	56.3%	6.3%
Technical College	7.1%	14.3%	50.0%	28.6%
High school or less		75.0%	25.0%	
Total	2.0%	23.5%	51.0%	23.5%

##### **Significant difference in lodging administration**

	Lodging Administration			
	2	3	4	Most Important
Master/Doctorate		17.6%	29.4%	52.9%
Univ./College	6.3%	25.0%	56.3%	12.5%
Technical College	7.1%		21.4%	71.4%
High school or less		25.0%	75.0%	

Total	3.9%	15.7%	37.3%	43.1%
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### **Significant difference in restaurant operational management**

	Restaurant Operational Management			
	2	3	4	Most Important
Master/Doctorate		17.6%	29.4%	52.9%
Univ./College	6.3%	31.3%	56.3%	6.3%
Technical College	7.1%		35.7%	57.1%
High school or less			100.0%	
Total	3.9%	15.7%	45.1%	35.3%

### **Significant difference in hospitality finance/accounting**

	Hospitality Finance/Accounting				
	Not Important	2	3	4	Most Important
Master/Doctorate		17.6%	41.2%	17.6%	23.5%
Univ./College	6.3%	18.8%	56.3%	18.8%	
Technical College		21.4%	7.1%	35.7%	35.7%
High school or less			25.0%	50.0%	25.0%
Total	2.0%	17.6%	35.3%	25.5%	19.6%

Appendix D (Cont.)

Percentage of significant difference in important skills by educational levels

### **Significant difference in marketing in hospitality**

	Marketing in Hospitality				
	1	2	3	4	Most Important
Master/Doctorate		5.9%	11.8%	35.3%	47.1%
Univ./College	6.3%	6.3%	43.8%	37.5%	6.3%
Technical College		7.1%	21.4%		71.4%
High school or less			50.0%	50.0%	
Total	2.0%	5.9%	27.5%	27.5%	37.3%

### **Significant difference in problem solving/identification**

	Problem Solving/Identification			
	2	3	4	Most Important
Master/Doctorate		5.9%	35.3%	58.8%
Univ./College	12.5%	6.3%	62.5%	18.8%

Technical College	7.1%		21.4%	71.4%
High school or less		50.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Total	5.9%	7.8%	39.2%	47.1%

**Significant difference in analytical skills**

	Analytical skills			
	2	3	4	Most Important
Master/Doctorate		11.8%	41.2%	47.1%
Univ./College	12.5%	12.5%	56.3%	18.8%
Technical College	7.1%	7.1%	28.6%	57.1%
High school or less		75.0%	25.0%	
Total	5.9%	15.7%	41.2%	37.3%

Appendix E

Major of last formal educational level vs. perceptions of important skills

	H&T Major		Non-H&T		t value	Sig.
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>		
Organization Structure /Policies	3.37	1.42	3.72	1.00	-1.020	.313
Hospitality Law & Regulations	3.74	0.99	3.38	1.05	1.180	.244
Principles of Marketing	4.16	0.69	3.93	0.76	1.528	.133
Finance & Accounting	3.37	1.07	3.55	1.02	-0.598	.553
Human Resource Management	3.74	0.81	3.83	0.85	-0.370	.713
Total Quality Management	4.16	0.69	4.00	0.96	0.617	.540
Interrelationships	3.79	0.92	3.55	0.99	0.840	.405
Strategic Planning	3.47	1.02	3.69	1.04	-0.709	.482
Lodging Administration	4.21	0.92	4.17	0.85	0.147	.883
Restaurant Management	4.05	0.97	4.14	0.74	-0.344	.732
F&B Management	4.11	1.10	4.14	0.79	-0.120	.905
Hospitality Facility Planning	3.63	1.07	3.59	1.12	0.140	.889



Hospitality Fin/Accounting	3.32	1.06	3.34	1.14	-0.089	.930
Marketing in Hospitality	4.05	0.97	3.83	1.10	0.724	.473
Front Office Operational Ability	3.89	0.94	4.04	0.96	-0.620	.538
Housekeeping Ability	3.89	0.99	4.28	0.92	-0.498	.621
Leadership	3.89	0.99	4.28	0.92	-1.358	.181
Communication	4.37	0.83	4.52	0.87	-0.589	.558
Cooperative Team Building	4.37	0.90	4.62	0.86	-0.976	.334
Negotiating Skills	3.84	0.96	3.79	0.94	0.175	.862
Harmonious Guest Relations	4.32	0.82	4.46	0.79	-0.622	.537
Handling Difficult People	3.95	0.85	4.24	0.83	-1.190	.240
Employee Relations	3.79	0.98	3.83	0.80	-0.147	.883
Public Relation Skills	4.00	0.88	3.79	0.90	0.784	.437
Professional Analysis	3.79	0.98	3.86	0.79	-0.284	.778
Critical Thinking Ability	4.00	0.88	4.17	0.80	0.699	.488
Problem Solving/Identification	4.21	0.85	4.34	0.86	-0.532	.598
Decision Making Skills	3.68	0.82	3.86	0.92	-0.685	.497
Analytical Skills	4.11	0.81	4.10	0.94	0.007	.995
Computer Applications	4.16	0.76	4.00	0.71	0.733	.468
Multilingual Skills	4.53	0.70	4.38	0.78	0.668	.507
Research Skills	3.63	1.07	3.36	0.83	0.994	.326
Professionalism	4.26	0.73	4.24	0.95	0.085	.933
Hands-on Experience	4.11	0.88	4.14	0.99	-0.117	.907

Note. Judgement was made on 6-point Likert scale: 0= not important, 5= most important  
M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.

## Appendix F

### Important Skills Needed by Hospitality and Tourism Graduates Questionnaire

The purpose of this study is to understand what industry needs from education and how education is accomplishing its objectives to prepare qualified graduates for the changing hospitality industry in Taiwan.

#### **Skills needed by hospitality and tourism graduates**

1. Direction: Please rate the following skills needed by hospitality and tourism graduates by using the following scale.

Not Important						Most Important		
0	1	2	3	4	5			
<b><i>Conceptual Skills</i></b>								
Organizational Structure and Policies			0	1	2	3	4	5
Hospitality Law and Regulations			0	1	2	3	4	5
Principles of Marketing			0	1	2	3	4	5
Finance and Accounting			0	1	2	3	4	5
Human Resource Management			0	1	2	3	4	5
Total Quality Management			0	1	2	3	4	5
Interrelationships			0	1	2	3	4	5
Strategic Planning			0	1	2	3	4	5





25 - 34  
 45 - 54

35 - 44  
 55 or older

4. Please indicate the formal education that you have completed  
 Masters/Doctorate  University/College  
 Technical College  High school or less than

5. Please indicate your major of the last formal education  
 Hospitality and Tourism major  
 Non-Hospitality and Tourism major, \_\_\_\_\_ (please indicate)

6. How many years have you been in the hospitality industry?  
 under 1 year  1~3 years  3~5 years  
 5~7 years  above 7 years

7. How many years have you been in this position?  
 under 1 year  1~3 years  3~5 years  
 5~7 years  above 7 years

8. Does your company coordinate interns with hospitality education institution?  
 Yes  No

9. Does your company recruit on campus?  
 Yes  
 Internship positions  Permanent positions  Both internship and permanent  
 No

Other comments to hospitality education:

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Thank you for your help

## Appendix G

### Invitation

Ying-Wei Lu, a graduate student in the Department of Hospitality and Tourism, College of Human Development, University of Wisconsin-Stout, under the advisement of Bob Davies, Assistant Professor, is researching the skills needed by hospitality and tourism graduates in Taiwan. We would like to invite you to participate in our study.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and you may discontinue your participation at any time without any adverse consequences. Confidentiality will be maintained by using a code number rather than your name on all forms. It is not anticipated that this study will present any risk to you.

You may direct any questions to the researcher Ying-Wei Lu, 715-235-2830, [luy@post.uwstout.edu](mailto:luy@post.uwstout.edu), or research advisor, Assistant Professor Bob Davies, 715-232-1480, [DaviesB@uwstout.edu](mailto:DaviesB@uwstout.edu), Department of Hospitality and Tourism, or Dr. Ted Knous, 715-232-1126, Chair, UW-Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, 11 HH, UW-Stout, Menomonie, WI 54751.

Thank You For Your Participation

Appendix H

April 29, 1999

Dear Administrator:

Ying-Wei Lu, a graduate student in the Department of Hospitality and Tourism, College of Human Development, University of Wisconsin-Stout, under the advisement of Bob Davies, Assistant Professor, is researching the skills needed by hospitality and tourism graduates in Taiwan.

This study is about Hospitality and Tourism education in Taiwan. With the increasing number of hospitality graduates from colleges and universities in Taiwan, the industry recruiters and educators are concerned about the quality of graduates and how practical courses offered in the educational institutions. The purpose of this study is to find the competencies required for university and two-year college students at hospitality program as perceived by both educators and industry recruiters.

The objectives of this study are

1. To identify human resource managers' expected skills of hospitality students for entry level positions in international tourist hotels in Taiwan
2. To identify hospitality skills educators' perceive as necessary for students to gain entry level positions in international tourist hotels in Taiwan

As your institution has a high reputation in this field, we would like to entrust this study to your Tourism Department as a great honor. We believe that with your enthusiastic help, the results of this study will be effectively useful in developing or adjusting hospitality programs and will be a reference for the hiring process of international tourist hotels in Taiwan.

Again, thank you for your kind help!

Sincerely yours,

Bob Davies, Assistant Professor, Graduate Program Director  
Ying-Wei Lu, Graduate student  
Hospitality and Tourism,  
University of Wisconsin-Stout

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[luy@post.uwstout.edu](mailto:luy@post.uwstout.edu)  
715-235-2830  
420 18<sup>th</sup> St. N.  
Menomonie, WI 54751

April 29, 1999

Dear Human resource manager/ Hospitality and Tourism Program Director:

I am conducting a study of hospitality and tourism education in Taiwan. This study is advised by the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Graduate Program, University of Wisconsin-Stout. The researcher entrusts the study to the Tourism Department of Ling-Tung Vocational High School in order to get the best response rate. The enclosed questionnaire is designed to research the skills needed by hospitality and tourism graduates in Taiwan. The results will provide much valuable information about the skills needed by Hospitality and Tourism graduates in Taiwan.

The objectives of this study are

1. To identify human resource managers' expected skills of hospitality students for entry level positions in international tourist hotels in Taiwan
2. To identify hospitality skills educators' perceive as necessary for students to gain entry level positions in international tourist hotels in Taiwan

It would be greatly appreciated if you would take this opportunity to advise me of the skills that you think graduates need to have upon graduation. I especially welcome your participation and shall be happy to share the results with you upon the conclusion.

Please use the enclosed envelope to return your completed questionnaire to the research assistant by **May 25, 1999**. If you have any question regarding the study, please contact me at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your time and cooperation in completing this questionnaire.

Sincerely yours,

Ying-Wei Lu  
Graduate Student, Hospitality and Tourism  
University of Wisconsin-Stout

Encl. Research Questionnaire

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[luy@post.uwstout.edu](mailto:luy@post.uwstout.edu)  
715-235-2830  
420 18<sup>Th</sup> St. N.  
Menomonie, WI 54751