THE LEVEL OF TECHNICAL SKILLS AND MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY
DEMANDED BY THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY AS PERCEIVED BY
HOSPITALITY RECRUITERS 1998

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ABSTRACT

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This study examined the hospitality recruiter's perception of hospitality education training in relation to industry-site based training programs.  This study investigated the recruiter's perception of where and when the selected topic areas were best learned.

A questionnaire was given to eighty three hospitality recruiters that attended the 1998 Career Conference at the University of Wisconsin-Stout in Menomonie, Wisconsin. All of the subjects were hospitality recruiters who have experience recruiting on college campuses.  The population for this study was selected by using cluster sampling, based on the recruiter's understanding of what colleges should offer in terms of training and what industry should provide in terms of training for the college graduates.

The questionnaire about hospitality recruiters was divided into four sections: demographic data, training and education, skills best learned in college or industry, and skills needed by graduates when entering the industry.

It was found that five of the most important skills needed by college graduates as ranked by hospitality recruiters are: employee relations, leadership, guest services, staffing, and conflict management. Also the study found that industry should play an instrumental role in developing contemporary and applicable curriculum.

It is recommended that education focus the curricular content to meet the contemporary needs of industry, and industry should assist education to develop educational programming that could in turn limit training costs and operational costs. Education and industry should consider the following:

- Hospitality educators need to evaluate their curriculum to assume that their graduates are introduced to the theories, concepts and technical aspects of their profession. This review and curriculum modification will enable the graduate to meet the expectations of industry.

- The hospitality industry must work with education to deliver the curriculum content that needs the current and future needs of the firm, industry and individual career of their employees.

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I wish to thank Bob Davies for his guidance, time, support, and dedication in assisting me complete this important study as part of my academic requirements.

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**CHAPTER 1**

**Introduction**

The educational system supporting the hospitality industry by creating entry level managers have been faced with many changes that affect the methods used to prepare highly educated and qualified students to fit the demands of the hospitality industry (Davies, 1995). Hospitality managers today need to work harder in handling new areas of specialization and in processing information at a more sophisticated level than did their predecessors. The hospitality industry's external and internal organizational structures have shifted significantly from their historical foundation as noted by Purcell and demands more competencies for management (Purcell, 1993).

Lecours (1993) determined that "Today, hospitality employees need to work harder with less support and to accomplish more without sacrificing quality". We have a better-educated work force and a consumer who has become highly aware, thus expecting superior service and product quality. The perceived benefit of a more enabled work force is that its management systems should operate smarter to meet the customer's perceived needs. Wolff, (1997) found that one of the best ways for the education system to keep up with the industry's demand is specialized internships. The internships enable learned concepts while exposing students to response based work environments and industry methods. Education also needs to address the rapid technical change in the hospitality workplace. Higher levels of technology must be introduced in the hospitality classrooms. Technology is a method to enable management to achieve productivity demands.

Powers (1991) found that the impact of new technology and the concern for costs, delivery systems, competition, changes in management and structural changes, will be directed by the target population's served and the work force needed to operate and manage future demands. Technology has changed the perception of the professor, now the professor becomes a facilitator, a guide (Wolff, 1997). Wolff also adds "Not only does technology suggest a continuous improvement mode, it frees educators from the demands of so-called expertise to spend time investigating and suggesting solutions for the industry's challenges". With the use of technology hospitality administration will be able to serve customers quicker and more effectively.

The hospitality industry had undergone a systematic administrative change in the past 20 years creating a flattened administrative structure that operates under the premise of efficiency while changing the responsibility of line and administrative management. The reorganized structure allow unit and upper management to service the customer quicker and more efficiently, but now requires unit management conduct additional daily and corporate administrative changes (Lecours, 1993). Hospitality administrators now have to focus on the service side of the industry as well as attracting the most able employees in order to keep up with the industry growing demand.

Carey and Franklin (1993) found that service-based industries will collectively create the newest jobs and will account for virtually all increases in employment scenarios between 1990 and 2005. This growing demand for employees will result in intra-service industry competition to attract the most able employee to produce the demanded quality services and products the consumer expects.

Zuber (1997) determined that the hospitality industry is changing it's perception of recruiting employees, industry is looking for college graduates that have served an internship while in school and have the necessary skills needed by the hospitality industry.  This is typically a standard found in many countries around the world.  The American hospitality educational system may now have to focus on creating specialized internship programs in their curriculum in order to meet industry demands.

From an educational perspective, the existing four-year educational system directed towards meeting industry needs in the past has been met with forced change. The hospitality industry recognizes that technology, societal changes and issues surrounding profitability and product viability are challenged on a daily basis.  In response, a change in hospitality recruiting is occurring.  Recruitment is now focusing away from what was required in the ability to carry out entry-level management positions, to designing employee hire criteria that include elevated requirements employment for entry-level management, in addition to identifying key elements for internal progression beyond one or two steps within a hospitality organization (Cousins, 1992).  In the late 90's hospitality recruitment was focusing towards experiential professional training and continuing education programs, as well as creating more scholarships for hospitality students (Andorka, 1996).  The hospitality educational system in the United States needs to focus on meeting the rapid evolutionary industry needs, as well as campus recruiters perceptions and constructs to hire new management personnel.

In 1999 the demand for management staff has increased while enrollment in two and four year hospitality programs has begun to fall. Strong economic conditions at the end of the century has impacted hospitality enrollment while limiting the pool of hospitality educated applicants to industry. Hospitality education must now redefine their curricular focus to meet the perceived needs of industry (Davies, 1995). Purcell found that hospitality recruiters on campus focus on various curricular aspects of education and valid work experiences as a form of employment hire criteria (cited in Davies, 1995). Lecours (1993) found that the hospitality industry in the early 90's wanted managers with a strong education foundation based on a meeting industries expectations serving both short and long term needs (cited in Davies, 1995). But (Wolff, 1997) found that in the late 90's the hospitality industry wants managers driven by excitement, willing to sell their products, while being a risk taker. With higher or changing work expectations the industry and education must work together to enable graduates to meet workplace expectations. The hospitality industry linked to the educational campus through recruiters seem to now keep in closer contact with hospitality educators, in order for the educators to be aware of the constant changes in the industry and provide solutions for future problems while enabling hospitality education to keep up with those changes.

Purcell in 1993 indicated that campus recruiters view that many university educators are out of touch with the industry, unaware of its evolving needs, and continued providing educational solutions for problems that are passe.

Pavesic in his futures study of hospitality education noted that hospitality education has made some curricular changes to meet industry's perceived evolving needs, yet he also underscores an important issue that education by design cannot adapt as rapidly to change as the industry it serves. Some changes include the addition of master's degree programs at the masters of science and masters in business administration level (cited in Davies, 1995). Many of these programs focus toward specific segments of the hospitality industry, but enrollment is generally low. Other changes in the hospitality educational system are directed towards adding internet courses into hospitality curriculum programs, certificate programs and entire master level programs on-line as found at the university of Wisconsin stout and their five university consortium officially a masters of science in global hospitality management.

Wolff in 1997 determined that the future of the curriculum for hospitality education is on-line besides the university of Wisconsin stout curriculum, which students can access to from a computer at any time. More and more universities are starting to include on-line courses into their curriculum, cornell, Michigan and some technical schools have impressive course offerings to traditional and non traditional students. Online education has enabled those who work in the industry to keep up with their education and workable needs.

The hospitality industry change in the past 10 years has caused significant changes in the way hospitality manages its day-to-day operations. Hospitality education needs to research and then formalize a curricular response to the dynamic nature of today's hospitality industry.

**<u>The level of technical skills and management competency demanded by the</u>**

**<u>hospitality industry as perceived by hospitality recruiters 1998</u>**

**Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of this study was to examine the hospitality recruiter's perception of hospitality education training in relation to industry-site based training programs. This study investigated the recruiter's perception of where and when the selected topic areas were best learned for industry. Also a comparison was investigated between the length of employment as a recruiter to perception of where the topics were best learned.

A questionnaire was given to hospitality recruiters attending the 1998 Career Conference at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The questionnaire focused on three areas which were demographics, hospitality recruiter perception toward skills needed by graduates in the Hospitality and Tourism major, and perceptions about the skills that graduates should have when entering the industry.

The four major objectives of this study were to assess:

1. Model selected topics best learned in educational environments.

2. Model selected topics best learned in work environments.

3. Profile demographics of Industry recruiters.

4. Compare length of service as a recruiter to the perception where selected topics are best learned.

# TERMS

**Hospitality Program:**

The Hospitality Program is comprised of a planned curriculum structure that is focused towards its overall educational objectives both short and long term entirely in time.

**Curriculum:**

The written text/medium in which individual and educational programs are founded and focus upon meeting educational objectives.

**Unit Manager:**

The unit manager is responsible for one specific site and in given authority to act and respond to that specific sites ongoing needs.

**Line Management:**

Line Management is defined as the level of management at entry or immediately above entry level positions.  Line management is not part of the Middle Management but now substitutes for it in its absence.

**Hospitality Education:**

The educational structure comprised of curriculum design that focuses towards introducing students to an industry.

**Hospitality Industry:**

The collective individual and corporate identities that provide food, lodging, entertainment, and all associated goods and services to the consuming public.

**CHAPTER 2**

**Literature Review**

The literature review for this study indicates the relationship between the hospitality industry and hospitality education.  The study also deals with a comparison between two-year and four year college, campus recruiting, and hospitality curriculum. In 1993 Enz, Renaghan and Geller noted that hospitality education should maintain a leadership role, providing industry with graduates that are capable of conducting the affairs of business and maintaining a readiness to approach future management issues without reservation.

**Hospitality Design**

Curriculum consists of a varying scope that delineates the desired learning experiences.  Curriculum, therefore may be a unit, a sequence of courses, or the school's entire program of studies which may take place outside of class or school when directed by the personnel of the school (Peter, 1992)

In Hospitality Education, the term curriculum encompasses the total opportunities for learning provided by the educational institution.  Doll defined the curriculum of a school as the formal and informal content and processes through which learners gain knowledge and understanding, develop skills and attitudes, appreciation, and values under the auspices of the school (Arafin, 1998).

One of the most basic needs of Hospitality Education is to provide a sound curriculum, which not only provides for the well being of each individual, but also provides a curriculum, which makes a unique contribution to the total education program. When designing curriculum hospitality educators need to provide students with experiences in which students will acquire the skills needed to perform the job.

Curriculum appears to be a perennial issue. What is taught, to whom, when, where and why are questions, which have not always been carefully posed or resolved in education (Arafin, 1998). If hospitality education is to provide students with meaningful and lasting experiences, the curriculum must provide students with learning experiences which give them the opportunity to acquire the necessary skill, attitudes and insights, thereby enabling them to meet the problems they are likely to face in their lives.

Curriculum must be an ongoing process, always adjusting to change. Often teachers and courses, instead of leading the changes, are not up-to-date with the newest happenings and changes (Farkas, 1993). Existing curriculum has to be reviewed periodically to keep abreast of the trends, otherwise old and outdated knowledge and processes will be passed onto the students without realizing that they are outdated. Purcell, 1993) advocated that curriculum should be written with the realization of the changes that have taken place in the past and the changes that are likely to take place in the foreseeable future. With careful planning, the hospitality curriculum can provide such experience, which can contribute to personal growth, innovative leadership, and self-confidence.

**Hospitality Curriculum**

Farkas, (1993) in his research has found that hospitality education has changed from being concerned about it's customers and business oriented in the 1980's to not meeting customer needs and poor service in the early 90's.  Wolff in his research found that hospitality education in the late 90's addresses the fast changes in the industry by accommodating dynamic changes in the academics as quickly as the industry changes.  In turn, Purcell, (1993) found that the hospitality industry now has started to perceived that generic business management skills and general business degrees are becoming more important than the hospitality specialist undergraduate degree.  The issue seemingly raised for hospitality educators is to review what curriculum elements are now passe or not meeting the needs of their students and industry (Lewis, 1993) states: "Hospitality educators should be leading the industry and discipline it serves and not well following behind it".

Today researchers note that existing hospitality educational programs are directed towards the hospitality educational system's past history of producing technically orientated students with marginal management skills that filled a demand for entry level management (Davies, 1995).  Research of Dittman, (1993) and Devau, (1991) both note that hospitality education has spent the majority of the past ten years focusing on meeting the rapidly growing demand for entry level management without regards to future upper management needs.

**Two Year Versus Four Year Degree**

Powers noted that the four-year hospitality degree is based on the basic foundations used in business degree programs but applied to the hospitality industry. The two-year hospitality degree focuses on getting the students ready to work in the industry whereas the four-year degree focuses on training the students to be good managers (Davies, 1995). Research completed by Powers & Riegel, (1992) and Casado, (1993) noted that education should now investigate why some recruiters feel that hospitality graduates won't be able to meet the industry management needs in the future.

Lewis, (1993) noted that the four-year hospitality programs have traditionally regarded the two-year programs such as culinary degrees and hospitality degrees as unable to serve hospitality's ongoing management and developmental needs. Yet, Cousins, (1992) noted that two-year educational institutions have positioned themselves and their hospitality educational products where the student and industry market demands currently are and most likely will remain in the near future. The two-year hospitality student has become a growing population seeking a four-year educational program in order to complete advanced degrees and advance their carrier.

As more service and hospitality businesses have embraced college education as a criteria for employment, hospitality management schools have proliferated around the country and world wide. Today about 75 universities have four-year programs, and nearly 200 community colleges have two-year programs in the United States (Zuber, 1997).

Umbreit proposed that the future will dictate that six specific areas of expertise will be required to adequately prepare graduates for successful careers in hotel and restaurant management. The six areas of expertise needed for future hospitality managers are Leadership Skills, Human Resource Management, Service Marketing, Financial Analysis, Total Quality Management and Written and Oral Communication (cited in Davies, 1995).

This view was supported by Zuber that the demands for new managers has grown consistently, and higher expectations are now in place for most new hires. Those with formal education are expected to perform with these higher expectations. Generally results as mandates by a given organization. Education must ensure that graduates are enabled to respond in the new hospitality workplace into the turn of the new century.

**Campus Recruiting**

In the United States, students have the choice to attend a two-year college where they will be trained to go out and work for the industry or the four-year degree which will train them to perform managerial duties and become well-trained managers. From a recruiter stand point; graduates from either 2 or 4 years programs most likely will obtain the same jobs (Brenner, 1993). This is a very important and serious issue for hospitality education, and more so for the four year programs. This issue raises questions about how enabling is the four year program and what it has to offer, to industry. Another question is can hospitality recruiters identify differences between the two year and the four year hospitality programs.

This also combines the fact that the hospitality industry does not just hire graduates with a hospitality degree but also hires and trains new managers with other type of degrees (Umbreit, 1992; Lewis, 1993; Powers, 1992).

Fiertag, (1998) found that in the late 90's corporations are implementing extensive and competitive on-campus recruiting programs to counter a growing skills shortage and attract qualified candidates. He also found that corporate recruitment programs are more extensive with many companies developing a year-round presence on campuses. He also found that companies are holding more elaborate career fairs to secure graduating talent, as well as outsourcing on-campus recruiting to professional consultants to ensure their organizations can effectively compete to attract top graduates. Nationwide, most medium to large college placement offices host an average of 348 companies annually, and 56 percent of graduating seniors register with college /university placement officers (Fiertag, 1998).

The hospitality industry understands that the hospitality degree is a valuable degree, but in the past many hospitality graduates found themselves with jobs that do not require a hospitality degree and do not pay much after graduation. Hospitality recruiters are now looking for college graduates that possess good industry skills upon graduation (Carey, 1991). Professional as well as academic qualifications have become progressively more important in the hospitality industry and at the same time operational experience is viewed as less important than specific or generic business management skills for hospitality graduates (Farkas, 1992) (Fiertag, 1998).

Research from the early 90's by Purcell, (1993) and Farkas, (1992) indicated that it is likely in the near future that generic business credentials will become a prerequisite to midlevel and senior-level hospitality management jobs. With the constant restructuring of hospitality firms, new jobs and added responsibilities have emerged from this continuous organizational change. This research is proven to be true considering the current demands by hospitality recruiters.

In order to determine needed competencies by industry, one approach is to address the hospitality recruiter's perceived recruitment needs in hospitality graduates on a continuous basis.

**Hospitality Work Environment**

The hospitality manager of the new millennium will be faced with higher expectations in individual responsibility and overall productivity by industry (Lewis, 1993; Powers, 1993; Brenner, 1993; Umbreit, 1992). Research has determined that staff members of a given hospitality situation need to work harder with less support and still obtain performance objectives (Umbreit, 1992).

DeVrye found that hospitality industries are collectively struggling to achieve a higher organizational order and efficiency have now found that the consumer has become highly educated as to what service is and what is to be expected as a part of providing good service (cited in Davies, 1995). Increasingly, Pavesic, (1993) found that during the past decade the hospitality industry has become more aware of the consumer's wants and needs.

Now that consumers are more educated on what service is, the hospitality industry has to spend more time looking for the right candidates and at the same time offer a competitive wage.

In general terms Davies learned that hospitality industry employment has become highly stigmatized because of its associations with personal servitude, low pay and little potential as a career. Wood (1992) also provided evidences that "service industries are increasingly relying upon a smaller peripheral workforce consisting of individuals seeking part time employment, disadvantaged and unskilled workers, women, ethnic minority employees, and transient workers with few other options for employment".

Brenner, (1991) reinforces the human resource issue and stated: "Operators are more aware of the one factor that is critical to long-term financial strength: reducing turnover to obtain financial objectives". Carey and Franklin, (1991) noted that training professionals have argued that the only way to limit attrition is through continuing in service training and education that produces well-trained, motivated and satisfied employees. This applies to both hourly and salary positions.

With recent industry change Umbreit feels that there are six specific areas of expertise needed to be considered "able" as a hospitality manager. Thus this forms foundation could be the model from which hospitality education can reformulate existing curriculum (Davies, 1995). By the early 90's research in hospitality education found that most programs did meet the needs of the existing industry.

Brenner, (1993) and Powers & Riegel, (1992) indicated that the hospitality industry had given some guidance to hospitality education. Industry did provide input that a systematic modification of existing hospitality programs was needed to strengthen the core competencies of future hospitality-management. The overall hospitality industry's criticism of hospitality education may have its foundation on the uncertainty of their individual firm viability and administrative direction of each hospitality product and segment. With so many social, political, organizational, economical and administrative changes, hospitality education has been challenged to meet the needs for the industry it serves. The hospitality industry has stated that hospitality education must be blamed for not producing enabled management and shares any error with education. Yet Stone, (1991) noted that many corporations state that education is vital with only a few companies actually investing funds in their workers initial and continuing education and training. The many issues raised by researchers underscore an important finding that the hospitality industry wants more from education than what industry will provide to their own employees, while in marginal terms assisting education to meet their current and future administrative needs.

Hospitality education working with industry needs to develop relationships to enable the formation of contemporary and effective curriculum to meet industry expectations.

**CHAPTER 3**

**Methodology**

This chapter discusses the methods and procedures utilized in this study including the population, research design and procedures, data analysis procedures and the limitations of the methodology. The purpose of this study was to examine the hospitality recruiter's perception of hospitality education training in relation to industry-site based training programs. This study investigated the recruiter's perception of where and when the selected topic areas were best learned for industry. A questionnaire was utilized to collect the data from the population. The data utilized for this study was secondary data and the researcher did not have the opportunity to participate in the survey development or survey process.

**Subjects**

The population of this study was eighty three hospitality recruiters that attended the 1998 Career Conference at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. All of the subjects were hospitality recruiters who have experience recruiting on college campuses.

**Survey Instrument**

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed in 1997 by the Department of Hospitality and Tourism at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The questionnaire was used in 1997 for a study similar to this one.

The format for this study is the same as the 1997 study, but with some formal changes for the 1998 study. The questionnaire about hospitality recruiters was divided into four sections: demographic data (5 questions), training and education (6 questions), skills best learned in college or industry (21 questions), and skills needed by graduates when entering the industry (21 questions).

The demographic information included sex, age, educational level, years in the hospitality industry, and years recruiting college graduates. The training and education questions related to what the recruiter thought the amount of training should be provided in college and industry. The skills best learned in college or industry questions asked recruiters to select where the skills were best learned. The skills needed by graduates when entering the industry asked recruiters to rank the importance of each skill by using a 5 point likert scale.

**Survey Procedures**

The questionnaires were distributed at the three day 1998 Career Conference at the University of Wisconsin-Stout by the graduate program director for the Department of Hospitality and Tourism. The questionnaires included a cover letter on the first page, which advised the participants of their anonymous response and the importance of the research. The questionnaires also included the researcher's phone number and e-mail address in case the participants had questions regarding the questionnaire. The questionnaires were returned in person by the end of the conference or by mail by December 1998.

**Limitations**

The respondents in this study were strictly limited to hotel, restaurant, tourism, and other regional and national recruiters who attended the October1998 Career Conference held at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The background information and the data collected relied on the self-reporting of the participants and it is not know if the data can be generalized to any other group of recruiters other than regional or specific national hospitality recruiters. This research is also limited because the responses apply only to the hospitality and tourism department at the University of Wisconsin Stout and can only help hospitality and tourism educators better develop their curriculum. The research is also limited because the researcher used secondary data, which was given to him by the department of hospitality and tourism at the University of Wisconsin Stout and he had no part on developing.

**CHAPTER 4**

**Results**

The purpose of this study was to examine the hospitality recruiter's perception of hospitality education training in relation to industry-site based training programs. This chapter will present the results with background information first, followed by demographic data. The next sections will discuss training and education, skills best learned in college or industry, and skills needed by graduates when entering the industry. Finally the relationships between independent variables will be reported. The results were examined and analyzed by using SPSS (Statistical Program for the Social Sciences).

Frequencies and percentages were run on all the background data of the 120 questionnaires given to the hospitality recruiters previously mentioned. The return rate was 83% out of 120 surveys. The respondents of this survey were asked to identify their gender. Of the 83 respondents 36% were males, 49% were females and 14% were omits. Respondents were asked to indicate their age grouping. Of the 83 respondents 65% were between the ages of 18-34, 25% were between the ages of 35-64 and 10% were omits. With regard to the respondents level of education, 13% had some college education, 61% were college graduates, 10% had post graduate education, 10% had a Masters/Doctorate Degree, and 6% were omits.

The respondents of this survey were asked to indicate the number of years they have been in the hospitality industry. Of the 83 respondents 53% were between 1-11 years in hospitality, 39% were between 12-27 years in hospitality, and 8% were omits. Respondents were asked to indicate the number of years they have been recruiting college graduates. Of the 83 respondents 43% were between 0-2 years recruiting college graduates, 47% were between 3-15 years recruiting college graduates, and 10% were omits.

| Items 1-5 | Mean | Std. Dev | 1 (n) | 2 (n) | 3 (n) | 4 (n) | 5 (n) | Omits (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Hospitality Law | 3.0 | 1.077 | 9 | 13 | 33 | 21 | 6 | 1 |
| 2 Guest Services | 4.5 | .864 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 19 | 55 | 1 |
| 3 Strategic Planning | 3.5 | 1.00 | 4 | 7 | 29 | 31 | 12 | 0 |
| 4 Employee Relations | 4.7 | .535 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 19 | 61 | 0 |
| 5 Leadership | 4.7 | .537 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 19 | 60 | 1 |

1=least important, 2=somewhat important, 3=moderate important, 4=important, 5=most important

In item 1, 10% of the respondents thought hospitality law was least important in the skills needed by college graduates when entering the industry, 16% thought it was somewhat important, 40% thought it was moderate important, 25% thought it was important, 8% thought it was most important, and 1% were omits. In item 2, 2% of the respondents thought guest services was least important in the skills needed by college graduates when entering the industry, 1% thought it was somewhat important, 6% thought it was moderate important, 23% thought it was important, 67% thought it was most important, and 1% were omits.

In item 3, 5% of the respondents thought strategic planning was least important in the skills needed by college graduates when entering the industry, 8% thought it was somewhat important, 35% thought it was moderate important, 38% thought it was important, and 14% thought it was most important.  In item 4, 4% of the respondents thought employee relations was moderate important in the skills needed by college graduates when entering the industry, 23% thought it was important, and 73% thought it was most important.  In item 5, 4% of the respondents thought leadership was moderate important, 23% thought it was important, 72% thought it was most important, and 1% were omit.

| Items 6-10 | Mean | Std. Dev | 1 (n) | 2 (n) | 3 (n) | 4 (n) | 5 (n) | Omits (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 Research Skills | 2.8 | .933 | 7 | 18 | 42 | 10 | 4 | 2 |
| 7 Tourism Promotion | 2.7 | 1.14 | 15 | 16 | 33 | 13 | 6 | 0 |
| 8 Marketing | 3.4 | 1.00 | 3 | 11 | 27 | 31 | 11 | 0 |
| 9 Staffing | 4.5 | .789 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 21 | 53 | 1 |
| 10 Food and beverage management | 4.0 | 1.17 | 4 | 5 | 18 | 18 | 36 | 2 |

1=least important, 2=somewhat important, 3=moderate important, 4=important, 5=most important

In item 6, 8% of the respondents thought research skills was least important, 22% thought it was somewhat important, 50% thought it was moderate important, 12% thought it was important, 5% thought it was most important, and 3% were omit.  In item 7, 18% of the respondents thought tourism promotion was least important in the skills needed by college graduates when entering the industry, 19% thought it was somewhat important, 40%

thought it was moderate important, 16% thought it was important, and 7% thought it was most important.  In item 8, 4% of the respondents thought marketing was least important, 13% thought it was somewhat important, 33% thought it was moderate important, 37% thought it was important, and 13% thought it was most important.  In item 9, 1% of the respondents thought staffing was least important in the skills needed by college graduates when entering the industry, 1% thought it was somewhat important, 7% thought it was moderate important, 25% thought it was important, 65% thought it was most important, and 1% were omits.  In item 10, 3% of the respondents thought food and beverage management was least important, 6% thought it was somewhat important, 22% thought it was moderate important, 22% thought it was important, 44% thought it was most important, and 3% were omits.

| Items 11-15 | Mean | Std. Dev | 1 (n) | 2 (n) | 3 (n) | 4 (n) | 5 (n) | Omits (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11 Rooms Division Management | 3.1 | 1.40 | 15 | 8 | 22 | 16 | 18 | 4 |
| 12 Computer Applications | 3.7 | 1.03 | 3 | 5 | 24 | 29 | 22 | 0 |
| 13 Employee Training | 4.4 | .762 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 30 | 42 | 1 |
| 14 Development Planning | 2.6 | 1.04 | 16 | 17 | 37 | 9 | 3 | 1 |
| 15 Managerial Communication | 4.3 | .764 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 27 | 41 | 0 |

1=least important, 2=somewhat important, 3=moderate important, 4=important, 5=most important

In item 11, 18% of the respondents thought rooms division management was least important in the skills needed by college graduates when entering the industry, 10% thought it was somewhat important, 27% thought it was moderate important, 19% thought it was important, 23% thought it was most important, and 3% were omits. In item 12, 4% of the respondents thought computer applications was least important, 6% thought it was somewhat important, 29% thought it was moderate important, 34% thought it was important, and 27% thought it was most important. In item 13, 3% of the respondents thought employee training was somewhat important, 10% thought it was moderate important, 36% thought it was important, 50% thought it was most important, and 1% were omits. In item 14, 19% of the respondents thought development planning was less important, 20% thought it was somewhat important, 45% thought it was moderate important, 11% thought it was important, 4% thought it was most important, and 1% were omits.

In item 15, 18% of the respondents thought managerial communication was moderate

important, 33% thought it was important, and 49% thought it was most important.

| Items 16-21 | Mean | Std. Dev | 1 (n) | 2 (n) | 3 (n) | 4 (n) | 5 (n) | Omits (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 Forecasting and Budgeting | 3.9 | .927 | 2 | 2 | 21 | 34 | 24 | 0 |
| 17 Sales Techniques | 3.8 | 1.01 | 2 | 5 | 24 | 27 | 24 | 1 |
| 18 Operational Controls | 4.0 | .915 | 1 | 2 | 20 | 28 | 32 | 0 |
| 19 Other/Conflict Management | 4.5 | .763 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 20 | 51 | 3 |
| 20 Other/Supervision Techniques | 4.4 | .854 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 19 | 49 | 3 |
| 21 Other/Field Experience | 3.6 | .125 | 6 | 7 | 26 | 13 | 27 | 4 |

1=least important, 2=somewhat important, 3=moderate important, 4=important, 5=most important

In item 16, 3% of the respondents thought forecasting and budgeting was least

important, 3% thought it was somewhat important, 25% thought it was moderate

important, 40% thought it was important, and 29% thought it was most important.  In

item 17, 3% of the respondents thought sales techniques was least important, 6% thought

it was somewhat important, 29% thought it was moderate important, 32% thought it was

important, 29% thought it was most important, and 1% were omits.  In item 18, 1% of the

respondents thought operational controls was least important, 3% thought it was

somewhat important, 24% thought it was moderate important, 34% thought it was

important, and 38% thought it was most important.  In item 19, 3% of the respondents

thought conflict management was somewhat important, 8% thought it was moderate

important, 24% thought it was important, 61% thought it

was most important, and 4% were omits.  In item 20, 1% of the respondents thought

supervision techniques was least important, 1% thought it was somewhat important, 12%

thought it was moderate important, 23% thought it was important, 59% thought it was

important, and 4% were omits.  In item 21, 7% of the respondents thought field

experience was least important, 8% thought it was somewhat important, 31% thought it

was moderate important, 16% thought it was important, 33% thought it was most

important, and 5% were omits.

| Items 1-5 | Educational Setting (n) | On the Job (n) | Both Educ / On the Job (n) | Omits (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Hospitality Law | 74 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| 2 Guest Services | 13 | 56 | 13 | 1 |
| 3 Strategic Planning | 56 | 21 | 5 | 1 |
| 4 Employee Relations | 13 | 58 | 12 | 0 |
| 5 Leadership | 17 | 54 | 12 | 0 |

In item 1, 90% of the respondents thought hospitality law was best learned on the

educational setting, 8% thought it was best learned on the job, 1% thought it was best

learned in both settings, and 1% were omits.  In item 2, 16% of the respondents thought

guest services was best learned on the educational setting, 67% thought it was best

learned on the job, 16% thought it was best learned in both settings, and 1% were omits.

In item 3, 67% of the respondents thought strategic planning was best learned on the

educational setting, 25% thought it was best learned on the job setting, 6% thought it was

best learned in both settings, and 1% were omits.

In item 4, 16% of the respondents thought employee relations was best learned on the educational setting, 71% thought it was best learned on the job, and 14% thought it was best learned in both settings.  In item 5, 21% of the respondents thought leadership was best learned on the educational setting, 65% thought it was best learned on the job setting, and 14% thought it was best learned in both settings.

| Items 6-10 | Educational Setting (n) | On the Job (n) | Both Educ / On the Job (n) | Omits (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 Research Skills | 73 | 6 | 2 | 2 |
| 7 Tourism Promotion | 59 | 17 | 4 | 3 |
| 8 Marketing | 49 | 17 | 16 | 1 |
| 9 Staffing | 9 | 59 | 13 | 2 |
| 10 Food and beverage management | 26 | 40 | 13 | 4 |

In item 6, 88% thought research skills were best learned on the educational setting, 8% thought it was best learned on the job setting, 2% thought it was best learned in both settings, and 2% were omits.  In item 7, 71% of the respondents thought tourism promotion was best learned on the educational setting, 20% thought it was best learned on the job setting, 5% thought it was best learned in both settings, and 4% were omits.  In item 8, 60% of the respondents thought marketing was best learned on the educational setting, 20% thought it was best learned on the job setting, 19% thought it was best learned in both settings, and 1% were omits.  In item 9, 11% of the respondents thought staffing was best learned on the educational setting, 71% thought it was best learned on the job setting, 16% thought it was best learned in both settings, and

2% were omits.  In item 10, 31% of the respondents thought food and beverage

management was best learned on the educational setting, 48% thought it

was best learned on the job setting, 16% thought it was best learned in both settings, and

5% were omits.

| Items 11-15 | Educational Setting (n) | On the Job (n) | Both Educ / On the Job (n) | Omits (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11 Rooms Division Management | 31 | 36 | 9 | 7 |
| 12 Computer Applications | 66 | 11 | 5 | 1 |
| 13 Employee Training | 34 | 37 | 12 | 0 |
| 14 Development Planning | 66 | 10 | 4 | 3 |
| 15 Managerial Communication | 23 | 48 | 12 | 0 |

In item 11, 38% of the respondents thought rooms division management was best

learned on the educational setting, 43% thought it was best learned on the job, 11%

thought it was best learned in both settings, and 8% were omits.  In item 12, 80% of the

respondents thought computer applications was best learned on the educational setting,

13% thought it was best learned on the job setting, 6% thought it was best learned in both

settings, and 1% were omits.  In item 13, 41% of the respondents thought employee

training was best learned on the educational setting, 45% thought it was best learned on

the job setting, and 14% thought it was best learned in both settings.  In item 14, 80% of

the respondents thought development planning was best learned on the educational

setting, 11% thought it was best learned on the job setting, 5% thought it was best learned

on both settings, and 4% were omits.

In item 15, 28% of the respondents thought managerial communication was best learned on the educational setting, 58% thought it was best learned on the job setting, and 14% thought it was best learned in both settings.

| Items 16-21 | Educational Setting (n) | On the Job (n) | Both Educ / On the Job (n) | Omits (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 Forecasting and Budgeting | 44 | 28 | 9 | 2 |
| 17 Sales Techniques | 33 | 36 | 14 | 0 |
| 18 Operational Controls | 39 | 34 | 10 | 0 |
| 19 Other/Conflict Management | 23 | 46 | 11 | 3 |
| 20 Other/Supervision Techniques | 15 | 54 | 11 | 3 |
| 21 Other/Field Experience | 17 | 56 | 7 | 3 |

In item 16, 54% of the respondents thought forecasting and budgeting was best learned on the educational setting, 33% thought it was best learned on the job setting, 11% thought it was best learned in both settings, and 2% were omits.

In item 17, 40% of the respondents thought sales techniques was best learned on the educational setting, 43% thought it was best learned on the job setting, and 17% thought it was best learned in both settings.  In item 18, 47% of the respondents thought operational control was best learned on the educational setting, 41% thought it was best learned on the job setting, and12% thought it was best learned in both settings.  In item 19, 28% of the respondents though conflict management was best learned on the educational setting, 55% thought it was best learned on the job setting, 13% thought it was best learned in both settings, and 4% were omits.  In item 20, 18% of the respondents thought supervision techniques was best learned on the educational setting, 65% thought it was best

learned on the job setting, 13% thought it was best learned in both settings, and 4% were

omits.  In item 21, 20% of the respondents thought field experience was best learned on

the educational setting, 68% thought it was best learned on the job setting, 13% thought it

was best learned in both settings, and 4% were omits.

| Item # | Agree (n) | Disagree (n) | Omits (n) |
|---|---|---|---|
| (#3) College students upon graduation need intensive training in general. | 46 | 30 | 7 |
| (#4) All of our new hires require additional training. | 78 | 5 | 0 |
| (#5) The training we provide requires foundation knowledge to enable trainees to complete the training program. | 71 | 4 | 8 |
| (#6) Four-year degree programs are equal to two-year degree programs. | 11 | 65 | 7 |
| (#7) Industry should assist education in developing curriculum content. | 75 | 2 | 6 |

In item 3, 56% of the respondents agreed on the statement college students upon

graduation need intensive training in general, 36% disagreed, and 8% were omits.  In

item 4, 94% of the respondents agreed on the statement all of our new hires require

additional training, and 6% disagreed.  In item 5, 85% of the respondents agreed on the

statement the training we provide requires foundation knowledge to enable trainees to

complete the training program, 5% disagreed, and 10% were omits.  In item 6, 14% of the

respondents agreed on the statement four-year degree programs are equal to two-year

degree programs, 78% disagreed, and 8% were omits.

In item 7, 90% of the respondents agreed on the statement industry should assist education in developing curriculum content, 3% disagreed, and 7% were omits.

Question eight of the questionnaire asked the recruiter what does training for new employees consist of? The responses were divided into three areas: number of days, number of weeks, and number of months. The first area was number of days. Of the 83 respondents 1% answered training consist of 3 days, 2% answered training consist of 5 days, 96% answered training consist of 14 days, and 1% were omits. The second area was number of weeks. Of the 83 respondents 13% answered training consist of 1 week, 12% answered training consist of 5 weeks, 7% answered training consist of 10 weeks, and 68% answered training consist of 13 weeks. The third area was number of months. Of the 83 respondents 7% answered training consist of 2 months, 3% answered training consist of 4 Months, 4% answered training consist of 6 months, 78% answered training consist of 12 months, and 6% were omits.

## CHAPTER 5

## Summary and Conclusions

**Summary**

The purpose of this study was to examine the hospitality recruiter's perception of hospitality education training in relation to industry-site based training programs. This study investigated the recruiter's perception of where and when the selected topic areas were best learned for industry. Also a comparison was investigated between the length of employment as a recruiter to perception of where the topics were best learned. The four major objectives of this study were to assess:

1. Model selected topics best learned in educational environments.

2. Model selected topics best learned in work environments.

3. Profile demographics of Industry recruiters.

4. Compare length of service as a recruiter to the perception where selected topics are best learned.

The literature review provided an overview of the issues surrounding hospitality management. Through the review of literature, the following hospitality management curricular areas where examined: hospitality curriculum, campus recruiting, hospitality work environment, and two-year versus four-year degree. The literature exposed the systematic changes found in hospitality industries in regards to management and its need to be responsive to rapid change.

The population of this study was eighty three hospitality recruiters that attended the 1998 Career Conference at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. All of the subjects were hospitality recruiters who have experience recruiting on college campuses.

The questionnaire about hospitality recruiters was divided into four sections: demographic data (5 questions), training and education (6 questions), skills best learned in college or industry (21 questions), and skills needed by graduates when entering the industry (21 questions).

The demographic information included sex, age, educational level, years in the hospitality industry, and years recruiting college graduates. The training and education questions related to what the recruiter thought the amount of training should be provided in college and industry. The skills best learned in college or industry questions asked recruiters to select where the skills were best learned. The skills needed by graduates when entering the industry asked recruiters to rank the importance of each skill by using a 5 point likert scale. The results were examined and analyzed by using SPSS (Statistical Program for the Social Sciences).

**Conclusion**

After examination of the data results, the following conclusions can be derived based on the demographic data. It was found that the majority of the respondents (49%) were females and more than half of the respondents (65%) were between the ages of eighteen to thirty four years of age.

The majority of the respondents (61%) had some college education, and (53%) of them indicated they were employed between one to eleven years in the hospitality industry.  It was also learned that the majority of the respondents (47%) had recruited college graduates ranging from three to fifteen years.

After examination of the data results, the following conclusions can be derived based on the training and education data.  In this section the highest scores came from items 4,7,and 8.  In item 4 it was found that the majority of the recruiters (94%) responded that all of their new hires into management required additional training. Survey item 7 determined that the majority of the recruiters (90%) indicated that the industry should assist hospitality education in developing purposeful curriculum content. In item 8 the recruiters were asked how long does their typical training program for new management last, the majority of the recruiters (96%) indicated that their new management training program consists of only 14 days.

The data analysis, yields information on curriculum areas.  The following conclusions can be derived about the skills best learned in college or industry data.  Out of the 21 questions in this section there were 4 questions that ranked the highest.  Two of the highest scores came from items 1 and 6 pertaining education, and the other two from items 4 and 9 pertaining industry.  In item 1 it was found that the majority of the recruiters (90%) responded that hospitality law was best learned on the educational setting.

In item 6 it was found that the majority of the recruiters (88%) responded that research skills were best learned on the educational setting. In item 4 it was found that the majority of the recruiters (71%) responded that employee relations was best learned on the job setting. In item 9 it was found that the majority of the recruiters (71%) responded that staffing was best learned on the job setting.

Further examination of the data, additional conclusions can be derived based on the skills needed by graduates when entering the industry data. The five most important skills needed by graduates when entering the industry as ranked by hospitality recruiters are: employee relations, leadership, guest services, staffing, and conflict management. The scores for each of the items was as follows: employee relations (73%), leadership (72%), guest services (67%), staffing (65%), and conflict management (61%).

**Recommendations**

This study attempted to find out what recruiters thought hospitality students needed in order to be prepared when entering the industry. The study focused on four different aspects. These are: demographics, training and education, skills best learned in college or industry, and skills needed by graduates when entering the industry. The study asked recruiters where these skills were best learned and if they were best taught by the industry or university. The study found that the majority of the courses stated in the survey were of importance to the recruiters.

The study also found that most of the recruiters thought that most of the skills were best learned on the job setting. Most of the recruiters surveyed in this study agreed that college students need training when entering the industry, and that the industry should assist education in developing curriculum content. Education and industry should consider the following:

- Hospitality educators need to evaluate their curriculum to assume that their graduates are introduced to the theories, concepts and technical aspects of their profession. This review and curriculum modification will enable the graduate to meet the expectations of industry.

- The hospitality industry must work with education to deliver the curriculum content that needs the current and future needs of the firm, industry and individual career of their employees.

It is strongly recommended that education focus the curricular content to meet the contemporary needs of industry, and industry should assist education to develop educational programming that could in turn limit training costs and operational costs. It is also recommended that education focus more on human resources and people skills as part of their curriculum development. These skills are needed by graduates when entering the industry and are much needed as part of the educational experience being that right now there are not many classes that deal with these very important skills. These curricular issues become problematic for graduates, as entrant training programs for new managers become shorter.

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**APPENDICES**

Table 1
Skills needed by Graduates when entering the Industry

| All items in section 1 | Mean | Std. Dev | 1 (n) | 2 (n) | 3 (n) | 4 (n) | 5 (n) | Omits (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Hospitality Law | 3.0 | 1.077 | 9 | 13 | 33 | 21 | 6 | 1 |
| 2 Guest Services | 4.5 | .864 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 19 | 55 | 1 |
| 3 Strategic Planning | 3.5 | 1.00 | 4 | 7 | 29 | 31 | 12 | 0 |
| 4 Employee Relations | 4.7 | .535 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 19 | 61 | 0 |
| 5 Leadership | 4.7 | .537 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 19 | 60 | 1 |
| 6 Research Skills | 2.8 | .933 | 7 | 18 | 42 | 10 | 4 | 2 |
| 7 Tourism Promotion | 2.7 | 1.14 | 15 | 16 | 33 | 13 | 6 | 0 |
| 8 Marketing | 3.4 | 1.00 | 3 | 11 | 27 | 31 | 11 | 0 |
| 9 Staffing | 4.5 | .789 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 21 | 53 | 1 |
| 10 Food and beverage management | 4.0 | 1.17 | 4 | 5 | 18 | 18 | 36 | 2 |
| 11 Rooms Division Management | 3.1 | 1.40 | 15 | 8 | 22 | 16 | 18 | 4 |
| 12 Computer Applications | 3.7 | 1.03 | 3 | 5 | 24 | 29 | 22 | 0 |
| 13 Employee Training | 4.4 | .762 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 30 | 42 | 1 |
| 14 Development Planning | 2.6 | 1.04 | 16 | 17 | 37 | 9 | 3 | 1 |
| 15 Managerial Communication | 4.3 | .764 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 27 | 41 | 0 |
| 16 Forecasting and Budgeting | 3.9 | .927 | 2 | 2 | 21 | 34 | 24 | 0 |
| 17 Sales Techniques | 3.8 | 1.01 | 2 | 5 | 24 | 27 | 24 | 1 |
| 18 Operational Controls | 4.0 | .915 | 1 | 2 | 20 | 28 | 32 | 0 |
| 19 Other/Conflict Management | 4.5 | .763 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 20 | 51 | 3 |
| 20 Other/Supervision Techniques | 4.4 | .854 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 19 | 49 | 3 |
| 21 Other/Field Experience | 3.6 | .125 | 6 | 7 | 26 | 13 | 27 | 4 |

1=least important, 2=somewhat important, 3=moderate important, 4=important, 5=most important

Table 2
Skills best learned in College or Industry

| All items in section 2 | Educational Setting (n) | On the Job (n) | Both Educ / On the Job (n) | Omits (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Hospitality Law | 74 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| 2 Guest Services | 13 | 56 | 13 | 1 |
| 3 Strategic Planning | 56 | 21 | 5 | 1 |
| 4 Employee Relations | 13 | 58 | 12 | 0 |
| 5 Leadership | 17 | 54 | 12 | 0 |
| 6 Research Skills | 73 | 6 | 2 | 2 |
| 7 Tourism Promotion | 59 | 17 | 4 | 3 |
| 8 Marketing | 49 | 17 | 16 | 1 |
| 9 Staffing | 9 | 59 | 13 | 2 |
| 10 Food and beverage management | 26 | 40 | 13 | 4 |
| 11 Rooms Division Management | 31 | 36 | 9 | 7 |
| 12 Computer Applications | 66 | 11 | 5 | 1 |
| 13 Employee Training | 34 | 37 | 12 | 0 |
| 14 Development Planning | 66 | 10 | 4 | 3 |
| 15 Managerial Communication | 23 | 48 | 12 | 0 |
| 16 Forecasting and Budgeting | 44 | 28 | 9 | 2 |
| 17 Sales Techniques | 33 | 36 | 14 | 0 |
| 18 Operational Controls | 39 | 34 | 10 | 0 |
| 19 Other/Conflict Management | 23 | 46 | 11 | 3 |
| 20 Other/Supervision Techniques | 15 | 54 | 11 | 3 |
| 21 Other/Field Experience | 17 | 56 | 7 | 3 |

Table 3

Training and Education

| Item # | Agree (n) | Disagree (n) | Omits (n) |
|---|---|---|---|
| (#3) College students upon graduation need intensive training in general. | 46 | 30 | 7 |
| (#4) All of our new hires require additional training. | 78 | 5 | 0 |
| (#5) The training we provide requires foundation knowledge to enable trainees to complete the training program. | 71 | 4 | 8 |
| (#6) Four-year degree programs are equal to two-year degree programs. | 11 | 65 | 7 |
| (#7) Industry should assist education in developing curriculum content. | 75 | 2 | 6 |