A STUDY OF THE HOTEL SUPERVISOR'S PERCEPTION TOWARD

COLLEGE STUDENTS' WORK EXPERIENCES

by

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<u>ABSTRACT</u>

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The purpose of this study was to examine what hotel supervisors expect from college students in relation to their college work experiences. This study investigated the concepts, techniques, skills and personal qualifications of college students needed by hotel supervisors' perception. The objectives of this study were; to identify the college students' skills and qualifications needed for the hotel industry by the perception of the hotel supervisors, to develop a model of the working relationship between supervisors and college interns or management trainees, and to help the hotel industry and hospitality education better understand the student in the hospitality workplace.

One hundred-twenty survey questionnaires were distributed to supervisors in Minneapolis and Milwaukee hotels through their human resources department. Forty-nine survey questionnaires for the study were returned. All of the subjects were hotel supervisors who currently supervise college students or interns, or have had similar supervisory experiences in the past. The questionnaire regarding supervisors' perception was divided into four sections: demographic data, supervisor's experience with college students, workplace preparedness, and personal preparedness. Descriptive statistics and ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) were applied to the survey results.

It was found that industry supervisor's valued applied education but emphasized that the complexity of the hotel industry requires those seeking a specialized education to also work within industry before graduation. The supervisors feel that one must be prepared for the dynamics of the workplace, and collectively indicate that college students need to acquire extensive experiences in operations and management before graduation. They ranked customer service skills, hotel operations awareness, and supervision techniques as keys to their future success in the hotel industry. They also indicated that safety and security were very important to the college student. The results of the study also indicated that there were some statistical differences regarding the importance of the listed skills. This was expected as some departments have definite and specific needs. The differences were found between the hotel and restaurant divisions.

This study determined the skills and competencies that management expects students to have to be prepared to enter hotel industry employment. Also the study determined that personal preparedness such as attitude, ability to communicate with co-workers and maintaining a customer service focus is necessary for the industry.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview

Hospitality management is a kind of people management. In the aspect of company success, management comes from employee contribution and creativity with high quality service to guests. In the world of the 21st century, even though technology will provide "high speed", it is people who will continue to offer "high touch" services, the human interaction that is the key to customer satisfaction (Cline, Rach, Landry, & Davidson, 1997).

Human resources management is very important to an operation's overall hiring strategy. Although the human resources department carries out the recruitment function in order to provide suitable choices of candidates for management the actual hiring decision is made by managers who will be working with that employee (Jerris, 1999). According to Ditter and Griffin (1997), employers consider many aspects of applicants, trying to match them to the requirements of a particular job because the specific job depends on an individual's qualifications. Therefore, they should attempt to assess all of an applicant's attributes. Ditter and Griffin point out some factors considered when assessing potential candidates: grades, outside interests, participation in organizations, past employment record, ability to communicate effectively, attitudes, and interpersonal skills. Each supervisor will have a different perception toward college student candidates with the factors emphasized.

The researcher was interested in supervisors' perception during an internship program in the 2001 fall semester. The concerns are what the hotel supervisors look for and the quality and skills they prefer in interns.

The importance of the internship program has been long recognized by universities. According to the Cooperative Education Annual Report of the Placement and Co-op Service at University of Wisconsin Stout, 465 students were enrolled in the Co-op program and more than 200 employers provided job sites during 1999-2000. In the year 2000-2001, 557 students and over 300 employers also provided support (Placement and Co-op Services, UW-Stout). The Annual Report shows that the university has realized the value of a practical work experience to strengthen university programs. The university also indicates that this integration of practical experience and academics results in a win-win situation for employers, students, and the university.

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to examine what hotel supervisors expect when recruiting college students, and to analyze the skills and qualifications needed. This study will help college students who look for a job in the hospitality industry and encourage hospitality managers to hire the right person for the job. It also will benefit hospitality education.

Research Objectives

The major objectives were:

- To identify college students' skills and qualifications needed for the hotel industry as perceived by the hotel supervisors.

- To develop a model of working relationship between supervisors and college interns or management trainees.

- To help the hotel industry and hospitality education better understand the student in the hospitality workplace.

Definition of Terms

The following key terms will be used for this study. The definition of these terms was obtained by Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (2000) and UW-Stout's Placement and Co-op Services (2001).

College: a part of a university offering a specialized group of courses.

Cooperative Education (Co-op): a part of nationwide college/university program that integrated career-related work experience with academic course work (UW-Stout's Placement and Co-op Services, 2001, http://www.uwstout.edu/place/).

Experience: practical knowledge, skill, or practice derived from direct observation of or participation in events or in a particular activity.

Field -work: work done in the field (as by students) to gain practical experience and knowledge through firsthand observation.

Hotel: an establishment that provides lodging and usu. meals, entertainment, and various personal services for the public.

Perception: physical sensation interpreted in the light of experience

Recruitment: the process of identifying qualified employees and encouraging them to apply for positions in an organization.

Supervisor: an administrative officer in charge of a business, government, or school unit or operation.

Training: the skill, knowledge, or experience acquired by one that trains

Intern: an advanced student or graduate usu. In a professional field gaining supervised practical experience.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the definition and the role of the supervisor will be introduced. The review of literature deals with the hospitality curriculum in relation to students' work experience. Furthermore, it will discuss internship and its effects on students, companies, and hospitality education. This study also deals with field experience requirements and campus recruiting as one recruiting method. Finally, training needs and its benefits will be discussed.

What is the Supervisor?

A supervisor is defined as any person who manages people who are making products and/or performing services (Miller, Porter, & Drummond, 1998). Management personnel often have the title of manager, director, or supervisor. Otherwise, it is impossible to identify every manager by title alone because there are managers without management titles in every department: floor inspector (housekeeping), chef (kitchen), chief operator (telephone switchboard), controller (accounting) (Vallen & Abbey, 1987).

The Supervisors' Role

Hotel supervisors have obligations to the owner, the customers, and the people they supervise in the middle of the action (Miller, Porter, & Drummond, 1998). The authors explain that supervisors are the link between the workers and the work to be done for the owners: productivity, food cost, labor cost, quality control, and customer service. As well, supervisors represent management to their employees: authority, direction, discipline, time off, more money, and advancement. They also represent their employees' needs and desires. To the customers,

supervisors' output and their employees represent the enterprise. Finally, it means that their employees provide quality service to the customers.

Iverson (1989) emphasizes supervisors' role as experts at selecting employees because of the high turnover rate in the hospitality industry. According to Iverson, choosing the right person for the job is one of the most important decisions a supervisor should make.

Wagen and Davies (1999) also mention that the supervisor's role is to recruit employees with the right skills to staff the business adequately, and involves advertising for employees, interviewing them and selecting the most suitable candidates.

Hospitality Curriculum

Nelson and Dopson (2001) mentioned three key elements of hospitality education. They are substantive knowledge, skills, and values. Substantive knowledge is an essential element for the practice of the profession, the skill component provides the ability to apply knowledge to practice, and the values component supports career values necessary for success. Nelson and Dopson stated that hospitality educators developed courses that integrated the general education curricula with the specialization of hospitality curricula. Finally, hospitality curricula has to be designed to satisfy the needs of the industry as well as the needs of the students because industry needs is one of strategic concerns in hospitality education.

The importance of working experience in hospitality education has been proved through many researches. In the Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education, Stalcup (2002) mentioned that hospitality educators as well as hospitality employers agreed that internships were an important tool of hospitality programs in preparing students for careers in the industry. In addition, Petrillose and Montgomery (1997/1998) stated that experiential learning is an

integral part of a hospitality program's curriculum. According to their research, 98% of the survey participants answered that their curriculum included an internship and 89% of the respondents indicated that an internship was a curriculum requirement and only 8.2% indicated that it was an elective.

For successful internships, Petrillose and Montgomery (1997/1998) mentioned that the internship needs to be administered by academic departments, strong corporate support, and academic requirements closely monitored by university faculties. In addition, industry recruiters provided the following reasons why they considered some universities and colleges to have the best internship programs in Petrillose and Montgomery's research. They were strong faculty support, variety of internship opportunities, contact with industry, and preparation of students for the internship experience.

Field Experience Requirement

Ditter and Griffin (1997) mentioned that field experience is important to many students. They found that work experience gained while attending classes has been instrumental in finding better jobs upon graduation. It is widely known that entry level management positions are typically not filled solely on the basis of educational background.

Two professors at the University of New Hampshire examined "What qualities and characteristics do corporate recruiters look for when they interview seniors enrolled in college-level hospitality programs?" (Ley & Sandler, 1982) In this research, ability to respond, display of interest and enthusiasm, work experience, personal appearance, and willingness to relocate were ranked the top five as of great importance. Another study about what recruiters consider during interviewing college students indicated that they were interested in work experience,

willing to relocate, and extra activities more than their GPA (Sciarini, Woods, & Gardner, 1995). Recruiters were interested in college students' personality and their work experiences in considering them for employment.

Internships

According to Woods and King (1995), most college hospitality management programs require their students to have industry experience through internships or field experiences. They mention that these experiences give many benefits to both the student interns and the organizations. Employers can gain an enthusiastic employee and the chance to evaluate the employee in a realistic work environment. Also, internships are good opportunities for the students to learn what it is really like in the work world. Kavanaugh and Ninemeier (1990) explain internship programs as educational work programs. Many colleges allow students to acquire practical work experience while earning school credit at the same time.

Daugherty (2001) divides internship assignments into two types. They are academic and non-academic. For academic internships, schools offer students standardized practical training and help them select the best internships based on how relevant the training will be to their studies. Schools also give academic credit, which is awarded based on the number of work hours, duties, or performances. Non-academic internships are sought by the student and usually arranged between the student and the employer. If students cannot arrange an internship through the school and they are hoping to work for a particular company after graduation, non-academic related internships are another option even though they cannot get any pay or academic credit.

Internship has a lot of benefits. According to Daugherty (2001), cooperative education like an internship or co-op program offers benefits that student can use not only to get the job they want, but also test their strengths and weaknesses in the workplace. Barrows and Bosselman

(1999) indicated that an internship program contributes to the overall preparation of the student by providing an opportunity for the practical application of skills and concepts learned in the classroom. In addition, internship programs can be an economic opportunity for any company to find temporary employees who may choose to join the company at a later date. It is also known that as satisfied student interns report to their schools, a career pool of candidates may be available to companies in the future (Kavanaugh & Ninemeier, 1990). Wildes and Mount (1997/1998) noted that the college students who completed an internship before graduation worked in the field with less anxiety, higher perceived self-efficacy, and increased general and specific skills. In addition to college students, the workplace supervisors who took an active role in developing students had their professional satisfaction increased.

Daugherty (2001) reports that an employer when he hires an intern will look for not only the student's classroom understanding, but also his/her performance as an employee. The researcher lists some of the characteristics employers expect in their interns. They are the intern's understanding of the industry based on classroom theory, interpersonal skills, work ethic, and their interest. Interpersonal skills include how well interns work in teams, handle problems, communicate with co-workers, and so on. Through evaluation based on these trait and others, employers can invite the intern back for another internship assignment or for permanent employment after graduation (Daugherty, 2001). Therefore, internships require careful planning, coordination, and supervision so that the student is doing worthwhile work and the manager is getting the job done. Student internships are a very effective recruiting strategy (Jerris, 1999).

Recruiting on Campus

Recruiting is defined as the process of locating qualified applicants to fill available jobs in the hospitality operation (Jerris, 1999). Riley (1996) mentioned that knowing exactly what a company is looking for is very important for recruiting and hiring specifications can help recruiting with essential attainments, preferred experience, and preferred education and training. In addition, hiring specifications provides a balance between the technical aspects of the jobs and the personality traits required. Riley (1996) also indicated that the job description given to the applicant is very important because it includes required knowledge, skills and abilities for each duty or responsibility.

Many companies adopt various recruiting methods to find the most suitable candidate in their organization. Internal recruiting as modeled by Woods, means to hire from within the organization, for example, summer interns can be hired after they complete their experience (Woods, 1997). External recruiting means to hire people from outside sources. Woods (1997) mentioned that recruiters acquire information by talking with applicants from both direct and indirect competitors. External recruiting brings new ideas into the company and gives motivation to current employees. Even though it is more expensive in cost than internal recruiting, it is in effect advertising for the company. External recruiting includes employee agencies, newsletters, college job fairs, American Hotel & Motel Associations, and some other organizations or social groups.

According to Jerris (1999), companies interested in recruiting new college graduates will also send recruiters to campuses to attend career fairs and prescreen potential applicants, in addition to sending notices of future job openings to college placement offices. In the survey about recruitment tools (Cline, Rach, Landry, & Davidson, 1997), job fairs, employee referrals,

and print advertising were identified as popular means of recruiting general staff and supervisory staff, in comparison with recruiting senior management staff. With high turnover rates, the hospitality industry needs a faster recruitment process at a lower cost (Cline, Rach, Landry, & Davidson, 1997). The use of the Internet is gaining popularity to disseminate information to prospective applicants. Resume posting and job interviews as well as job posting and advertising are widely used by the hospitality industry and prospective employees.

Training

Wagen and Davies (1999) indicated that there is a "gap" between the job requirements and the person recruited for the role. So training is necessary where such a gap exists. The researchers report that employees with "multiskilling" are now able to perform a range of tasks, and such employees are valuable because they are flexible and generally more responsive to customer needs. For this reason, further training is increasingly required to develop a multiskilled workforce.

The supervisors have to identify training needs first. Wagen and Davies (1999) say that it can be possible by looking at the job position and analyzing the skill, knowledge and attitude requirements. However, supervisors have to consider other reasons in special workplace situations such as understaffing, lack of essential resources, or group conflicts before concluding that training is the only solution to the workplace problem.

Kavanaugh and Ninemeier (1990) stated training benefits in four ways: the employee, the guest, the property, and the supervisor. First, training benefits the employee who does not know how to do the job. It can help the employee prepare for promotion within the property and realize the full potential because it encourages self-development and enhances self-confidence. In

addition, training can help employees develop decision-making, problem-solving, and communication skills. Secondly, training benefits guests, who expect to receive consistently good products and services. Well-trained employees help the guest have an enjoyable experience at the property. Third, training gives the property benefits by helping it increase sales and profitability, reduce costs, and build a better image. Furthermore, good training can increase repeat business because satisfied guests return again. Satisfied guests also can tell other people their good experiences at the property. In the long run, a good training program shows the property is people-oriented and is a quality useful in recruiting efforts because it offers employees future and career opportunities, not "just a job". Finally, Kavanaugh and Ninemeier state the supervisor benefits because training directly affects employee performance. Training helps employees improve morale and decrease turnover. Moreover, it helps build trust and respect between supervisors and their employees. Supervisors have opportunities for their own professional development as much as skilled and knowledgeable employees offer high quality products and services to their customers.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methods and procedures used for this study including the population, research design and procedures, data analysis and procedures, and the limitations of the methodology. The purpose of this study was to examine what hotel supervisors expect when recruiting college students, and to analyze the skills and qualifications needed. This study investigated the hotel supervisors' perception about work experiences of college students in relation to hospitality internships and what preparation the college students need. A questionnaire was given to supervisors who have supervised college students or interns at hotels in the Milwaukee and Minneapolis downtown areas.

Subjects

The subjects of this study were forty-nine supervisors who work in Minneapolis and Milwaukee hotels. All of the subjects were hotel supervisors who currently supervise college students or interns, or have had similar supervisory experiences in the past.

Survey Instrument

The survey questionnaires were developed with the help of the research of Ley, David and Sandler, Mel at Cornell H & R Administration in 1982, the research of Pablo Miranda at UW-Stout in 1999, and the research of Ying-Wei Lu at UW-Stout in 1999.

The questionnaire about supervisors' perception was divided into four sections: demographic data (5 questions), supervisor's experience with college students (4 questions), workplace preparedness (8 questions), and personal preparedness (8 questions).

The demographic information included gender, age, level of education, years in hospitality industry, and current department. The second section was questions about their supervisory experience, the students' value, and necessity of hospitality students' work experiences in the field. It required a simple "yes" or "no" answer. This section also included the training hours for the intern students and supervisors' opinion about the necessity of the work experiences with blanks. For the third and fourth sections of the survey, supervisors were asked to mark the importance of the techniques and skills needed by college interns when working in their department. They were also asked to mark personal qualifications and attitudes by using a scale of 1 to 3 level of importance.

Survey Procedures

Two methods were used for the questionnaire distribution in this study. For hotels in the Milwaukee area, a human resource director was contacted by email and then by telephone. The human resource director distributed the questionnaires to human resource directors at other corporation hotels as well as to other managers at the regular supervisors' meeting. The questionnaires were returned by email attachment and mail. For hotels in the Minneapolis area, human resource directors were contacted by telephone first, and email or fax. A letter with a questionnaire was used to ask their cooperation. The letter and email also mentioned the importance of this research. After being accepted, questionnaires with sealed envelopes were delivered directly to the human resource directors by the researcher. The questionnaires were returned in the sealed envelopes over one month.

The questionnaire assured the participants of their anonymous response by including the researcher's phone number, address, and email address in case the participants had any

question regarding this survey. The survey process took over two months from original contact to survey return. The most difficult part was to sustain contact with human resource managers. Ultimately, forty-nine useful questionnaires were returned by July 22, 2002.

Limitation

The respondents of this research were limited to select hotels, which were likely to have student interns in downtown Milwaukee and Minneapolis. There were some limitations in this study because the questionnaires were distributed and collected by human resource directors. Even though this method was effective in collecting data, it depended on human resource directors, which may have led to uneven distribution of surveys. For example, there was no way to verify if the chef supervised college interns, or even received the questionnaire from the manager of human resources. Another limitation was the survey design that allowed some answers to be reported in a manner that led to some confusion, thus omitting details. Question #8 would need to be rewritten to have more detail regarding days, weeks, and months.

CHAPTER 4

REPORT OF THE FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine what hotel supervisors expect when recruiting college students, and to analyze the skills and qualifications needed. This chapter will present the results of survey questionnaires. It will include demographic information using frequencies and percentages. It will also discuss the concepts, techniques, and skills needed by college students when working in the field. Finally, the relationships between independent variables will be reported. The results were examined and analyzed by using SPSS (Statistical Program for the Social Sciences).

One hundred twenty (120) survey questionnaires were given to hotel supervisors through human resource supervisors. The return rate was 45.8% out of 120 surveys, and 6 out of 55 survey questionnaires were omitted because some of them did not supervise college students, and some surveys did not complete the second page. Only 49 questionnaires were available for this study.

Table 1. Demographic Information

	Frequency (N=49)	Percentage
Gender		
Male	27	55.1%
Female	22	44.9%
Total	49	100%
Age		
18-24	6	12.2%
25-34	20	40.8%
35-44	15	30.6%
45-54	8	16.3%
Total	49	100%
Level of education		
High school	4	8.2%
Certificate	5	10.2%
Two year degree	10	20.4%
Four year degree	27	55.1%
Masters	2	4.1%
Other	1	2.0%
Total	49	100%
Hospitality experiences		
1-5years	10	20.4%
6-10years	11	22.4%
11-15years	16	32.7%
16-20years	3	6.1%
Over 20years	9	18.4%
Total	49	100%
Departments		
Room Division	19	38.8%
Food & Beverage	9	18.4%
Human Resources	5	10.2%
Sales	6	12.2%
Adm. Management	6	12.2%
Accounting	3	6.1%
Culinary	1	2.0%
Total	49	100%

As shown in table 1, of the 49 respondents, 55.1% were males and 44.9% were females.

With regard to the respondents' age groups, 12.2% out of 49 respondents were between the ages

of 18-24, 40.8% were between 25 and 34, 30.6% were between 35 and 44, 16.3% were between

45 and 54, and there was no respondent in the age group 55-64 and over 65. For the level of

education, 8.2% of 49 respondents had a high school degree, 10.2% had a certificate, 20.4% had

a two-year college degree, 55.1% had a four-year college degree, 4.1% had a master degree, and

one of the respondents (2.0%) marked "other" without any other information. Respondents were

asked to identify their years of work experience in the hospitality industry. 20.4% were between

1 and 5 years, 22.4% were between 6 and 10 years, 32.7% were between 11 and 15 years, 6.1%

were between 16 and 20, and 18.4% were over 20 years. With regard to the current department

of respondents, 38.8% were in the room division including front desk, reservation, housekeeping,

guest service, etc. Eighteen percent (18.4%) were in the food and beverage, 10.2% were in the

human resources, 12.2% were in the sales department including the catering, 12.2% were

administrative management levels like general managers, 6.1% were in the accounting

department, and only one respondent (2.0%) was in the culinary.

Table 2. College Students' Value

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	48	98.0%
No	0	0
Missing	1	2.0%
Total	49	100%

The respondents who have supervised college students were asked if the college students

add value to their workplace. In table 2, most of the respondents (98%) indicated "yes" and the

rest (2.0%) was missing data.

Graph 1. Amount of Training
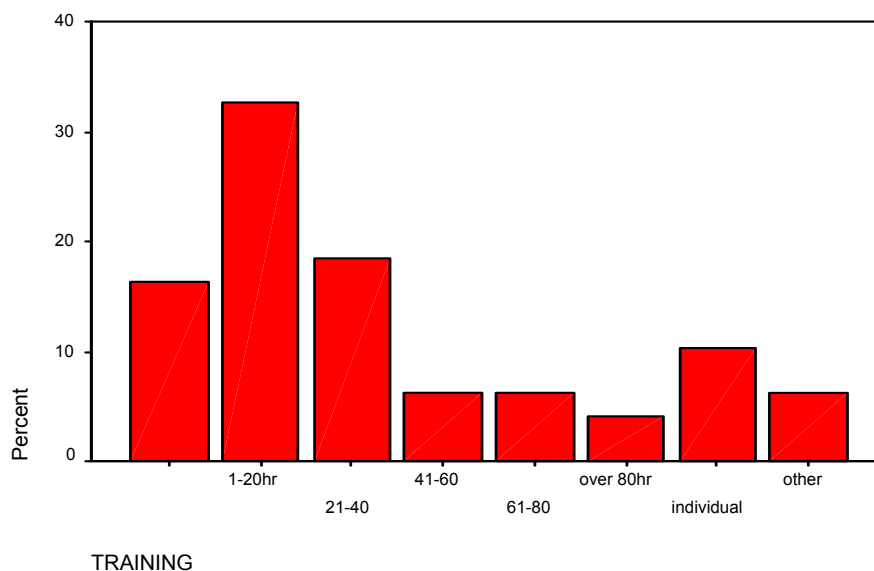
Respondents were asked how much time they spend training intern students. In graph 1, 32.7% of 49 respondents spent between 1-20 hours, 18.4% spent between 21-40 hours, 6.1% spent between 41-60 hours, 6.1% spent between 61-80 hours, 4.1% spent over 80 hours, and 10.2% indicated that it depends on individuals. 6.1% of respondents answered that they have three months or 18 months internship programs. The remaining (16.3%) was omitted data.

Table 3. Importance of students' work experience

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	47	95.9%
No	2	4.1%
Total	49	100%

With regard to the necessity of hospitality students' work experiences, 95.9% out of 49 respondents indicated "Yes" and only two respondents at 4.1% indicated "No". In addition, the respondents were asked to explain why the respondents think hospitality students need work

experiences in the field. Forty-two of forty-seven respondents explained that. A variety of subjective answers were presented. The summaries are cited below.

- To realize that education is a small part of the industry.

- To apply education in the field.

- To have an opportunity to interact with guests and team members through hands-on experience.

- To develop realistic expectations of the hospitality industry and customer service.

- Reality (real world) is very different from book knowledge.

- To understand how to handle many different situations.

- The more hands-on experience, the better especially in reference to guest relations.

- To add value to a graduating hospitality student.

- Work experience tells an employer that the hospitality student has actually worked in the industry and knows what to expect.

- To understand that while the industry is a lot of fun it is also a lot of work.

- A lot of experiences are good to be acquainted with the systems and processes of different hotels.

- To load up the "tool box" of the students for problem solving.

- Day to day operations management varies widely and is best introduced in a hands-on training environment.

- To have a chance to consider the better quality of hotel companies if they have field experiences in more than one.

Table 4. Workplace Preparedness

Items (1-8)	Mean	SD	1 (n)	2 (n)	3 (n)	Min	Max
1. Hotel Operation Awareness	2.73	.53	2	9	38	1	3
2. Restaurant Operation Awareness	2.27	.73	8	20	21	1	3
3. Supervision Techniques	2.49	.62	3	19	27	1	3
4. Financial/Accounting Foundation	2.20	.58	4	31	14	1	3
5. Safety Awareness	2.41	.70	6	17	26	1	3
6. Security Awareness	2.37	.70	6	19	24	1	3
7. Cleaning/Sanitation Awareness	2.33	.72	7	19	23	1	3
8. Customer Service Skills	2.94	.24	0	3	46	2	3

1 = not important, 2 = important, 3 = very important, SD = Standard Deviation.

These items of table 4 were to assess concepts and skills prepared by college students in a working area. Thirty-eight of 49 respondents, 77.6%, thought that hotel operation awareness was very important, 18.4% thought it was important, and 4.1% thought it was not important. In item 2, 42.9% of the respondents thought that restaurant operation awareness was very important, 40.8% thought it was important, and 16.3% thought it was not important. With regard to supervision techniques, 55.1% thought they were very important, 38.8% thought they were important, and 6.1% thought they were not important. In item 4, 28.6% of the respondents thought that a financial or accounting foundation was very important, 63.3% thought it was important, and 8.2% thought it was not important. In item 5, 53.1% of the respondents thought that safety awareness was very important, 34.7% thought it was important, and 12.2% thought it was not important. In item 6, 49.0% of the respondents thought that security awareness was very important, 38.8% thought it was important, and 12.2% thought it was not important. In item 7, 46.9% of the respondents thought that cleaning or sanitation awareness was very important, 38.8% thought it was important, and 14.3% thought it was not important. With regard to customer service skills, most of respondents (93.9%) thought they were very important, the rest of them (6.1%) thought they were important, and nobody thought they were not important. The

minimum score was 2 for the only customer service skills among items as shown in table 4.

There were no missing data in these items

Graph 2. Workplace Preparedness
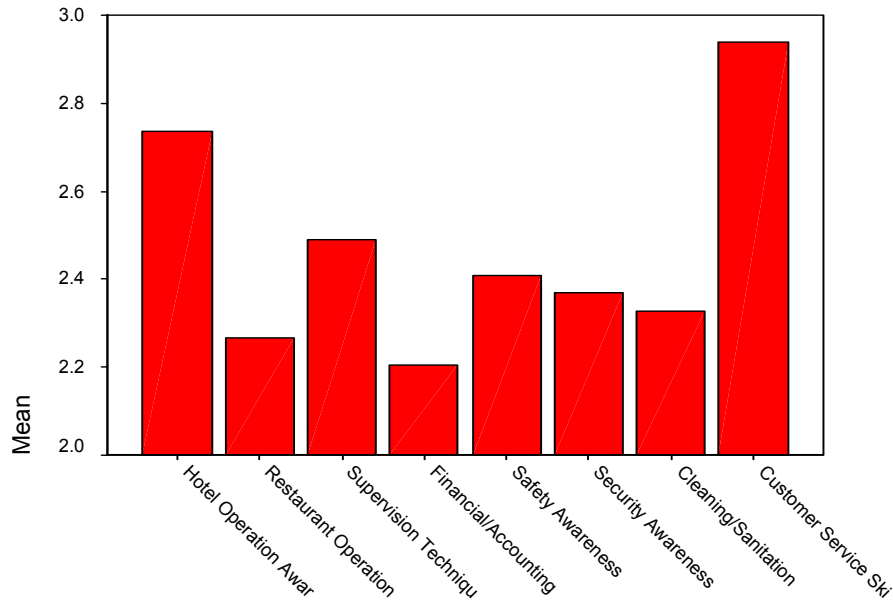
According to the mean scores of graph 2, the customer service skills were the highest at 2.94, hotel operation awareness was the second at 2.73, and supervision techniques were the third at 2.49. Safety awareness was 2.41, security awareness was 2.37, cleaning/sanitation awareness was 2.33, and restaurant operation awareness was 2.27. Finally, financial/accounting foundation was 2.20.

Table 5. Personal Preparedness.

Items (9-16)	Mean	SD	1 (n)	2 (n)	3 (n)	Min	Max
9. Professional Appearance	2.80	.46	1	8	40	1	3
10. Ability to work as a team member	2.94	.32	1	1	47	1	3
11. Time Management Skills	2.78	.42	0	11	38	2	3
12. Honesty/ Integrity	2.94	.24	0	3	46	2	3
13. Willing to learn	2.94	.24	0	3	46	2	3
14. Ability to work w/out supervision	2.65	.56	2	13	34	1	3
15. Communication Skills	2.88	.33	0	6	43	2	3
16. Work Flexibility	2.78	.47	1	9	39	1	3

1 = not important, 2 = important, 3 = very important, SD = Standard Deviation

In table 5, these eight items were to assess personal skills and attitudes needed by hospitality college students. Eighteen percent (81.6%) of 49 respondents thought that professional appearance was very important, 16.3% thought it was important, and 2.0% thought it was not important. With regard to ability to work as a team member, 47 of 49 respondents (95.9%) indicated "very important", one (2.0%) for "important" and one (2.0%) for "not important". In item 11, 77.6% of the respondents thought that time management skills were very important, 22.4% thought they were important, and there was no one in "not important". As shown in items 12 and 13, honesty/integrity and willing to learn had the same results. Most of the respondents (93.9%) indicated "very important", 6.1% indicated "important" in each of them, and nobody indicated "not important for them. In item 14, 69.4% of the respondents thought that the ability to work without supervision was very important, 26.5% thought it was important, and 4.1% thought it was not important. In item 15, 87.8% of the respondents thought that communication skills were very important, 12.2% thought they were important, and nobody thought they were not important. Finally, 79.6% thought that work flexibility of item 16 was very important, 18.4% thought it was important, and 2.0% thought it was not important.

Graph 3. Personal Preparedness
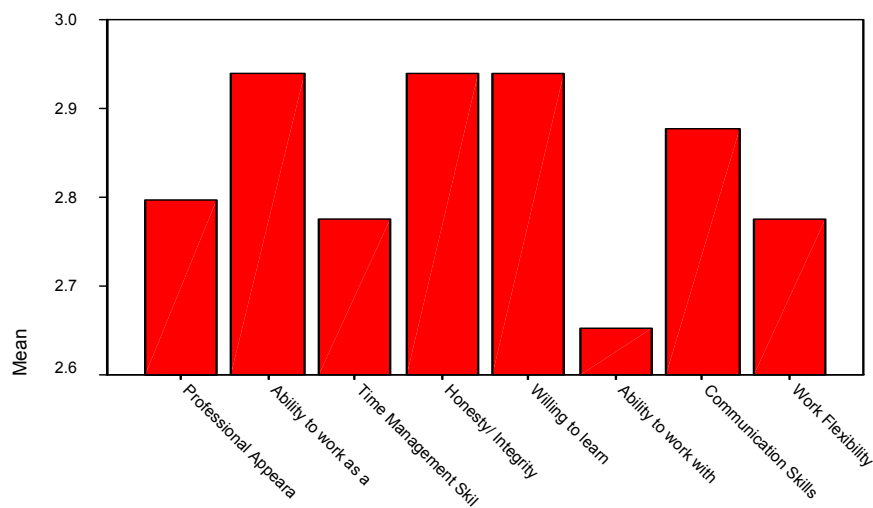
In graph 5, the high mean scores were "ability to work as a team", "honesty/integrity", and "willing to learn" at 2.94. The next was "communication skills" at 2.88 and "professional appearance" at 2.80. Time management skills and work flexibility were 2.78, and ability to work without supervision was 2.65

Table 6. Ranking of concepts and skills by the room division.

Room Division (N=19)			
Items	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.
Customer Service Skills	1	2.89	.32
Hotel Operation Awareness	2	2.79	.54
Security Awareness	3	2.53	.61
Supervision Techniques	4	2.47	.51
Safety Awareness	5	2.42	.69
Financial/Accounting Foundation	6	2.16	.60
Cleaning/Sanitation Awareness	7	2.00	.75
Restaurant Operation Awareness	8	1.84	.76

Table 7. Ranking of concepts and skills by the food and beverage.

Food and Beverage (N=9)			
Items	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.
Customer Service Skills	1	3.00	.00
Restaurant Operation Awareness	2	2.89	.33
Cleaning/Sanitation Awareness	2	2.89	.33
Hotel Operation Awareness	4	2.78	.44
Supervision Techniques	4	2.78	.44
Safety Awareness	6	2.67	.50
Financial/Accounting Foundation	7	2.33	.50
Security Awareness	7	2.33	.50

Table 8. Ranking of concepts and skills by the human resources.

Human Resources (N=5)			
Items	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.
Customer Service Skills	1	3.00	.00
Hotel Operation Awareness	2	2.80	.45
Supervision Techniques	2	2.80	.45
Cleaning/Sanitation Awareness	4	2.60	.55
Restaurant Operation Awareness	5	2.40	.55
Safety Awareness	5	2.40	.89
Security Awareness	5	2.40	.89
Financial/Accounting Foundation	8	1.80	.45

Table 9. Ranking of concepts and skills by the sales.

Sales (N=6)			
Items	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.
Customer Service Skills	1	3.00	.00
Hotel Operation Awareness	1	3.00	.00
Restaurant Operation Awareness	3	2.67	.52
Supervision Techniques	3	2.67	.52
Cleaning/Sanitation Awareness	5	2.50	.55
Financial/Accounting Foundation	6	2.33	.52
Safety Awareness	6	2.33	.82
Security Awareness	8	2.17	.98

Table 10. Ranking of concepts and skills by the administrative management.

Administrative Management (N=6)			
Items	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.
Customer Service Skills	1	3.00	.00
Hotel Operation Awareness	2	2.50	.84
Supervision Techniques	3	2.33	.82
Safety Awareness	3	2.33	.82
Security Awareness	3	2.33	.82
Cleaning/Sanitation Awareness	6	2.17	.75
Financial/Accounting Foundation	7	2.00	.63
Restaurant Operation Awareness	7	2.00	.63

Table 11. Ranking of concepts and skills by the accounting.

Accounting (N=3)			
Items	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.
Financial/Accounting Foundation	1	3.00	.00
Customer Service Skills	2	2.67	.58
Hotel Operation Awareness	3	2.33	.58
Restaurant Operation Awareness	3	2.33	.58
Cleaning/Sanitation Awareness	5	2.00	1.00
Supervision Techniques	6	1.67	.58
Safety Awareness	6	1.67	.58
Security Awareness	6	1.67	.58

Table 12. Ranking of concepts and skills by the culinary.

Culinary (N=1)			
Items	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.
Customer Service Skills	1	3.00	.00
Restaurant Operation Awareness	1	3.00	.00
Safety Awareness	1	3.00	.00
Security Awareness	1	3.00	.00
Cleaning/Sanitation Awareness	1	3.00	.00
Hotel Operation Awareness	6	2.00	.00
Financial/Accounting Foundation	6	2.00	.00
Supervision Techniques	8	1.00	.00

Tables 6 through 12 were to understand what respondents think important in their departments as ranked by the mean score. Table 6 shows the importance as reported by 19 respondents of the room division group, table 7 by 9 of the food & beverage department, table 8 by 5 of the human resources department, table 9 by 6 of the sales, table 10 by 6 of the administrative management, table 11 by 3 of the accounting department, and table 12 by 1 of the culinary department. As shown in table 6, customer service skills were first in importance to respondents of the room division department, according to mean score at 2.89. Hotel operation awareness was second at 2.79, and security awareness was third at 2.53. Also, in table 7, customer service skills were ranked first with a 3.00 mean score by respondents of the food and

beverage department, and restaurant operation awareness and cleaning/sanitation awareness was second at 2.89 with the same mean score. In table 8, customer service skills also were first with a 3.00 mean score by respondents in the human resources department. They also indicated that hotel operation awareness and supervision techniques were ranked both second at 2.80. As ranked the sales department, customer service skills and hotel operation awareness were both first at 3.00, and restaurant operation awareness and supervision techniques were next with a 2.67 mean score. By the administrative management department, customer service skills also were first at 3.00, hotel operation awareness was second at 2.50, and the third ranking was supervision techniques, safety awareness, and security awareness at 2.33 with the same mean score. In table 11, the first ranking by respondents of the accounting department was financial/accounting foundation with a 3.00 mean score, the second was customer service skills at a 2.67 mean score, and the third was hotel operation awareness and restaurant operation awareness both with a 2.33 mean score. In table 12, five items were ranked first with a 3.00 mean score by the culinary department. They were customer service skills, restaurant operation awareness, cleaning/sanitation awareness, safety awareness, and security awareness. The standard deviation did not show up for the culinary department due to only one respondent in this category. In tables 6 through 12, customer service skills were commonly ranked first by all departments but the accounting department.

Table 13. Workplace Preparedness by departments

Items (1-8)	Frequency	Sig.
1. Hotel Operation Awareness	1.121	.367
2. Restaurant Operation Awareness	3.765	.004
3. Supervision Techniques	3.278	.010
4. Financial/Accounting Foundation	1.824	.117
5. Safety Awareness	.884	.515
6. Security Awareness	.882	.516
7. Cleaning/Sanitation Awareness	2.414	.043
8. Customer Service Skills	1.027	.422

Table 14. Personal Preparedness by departments

Items (9-16)	Frequency	Sig.
9. Professional Appearance	.202	.974
10. Ability to work as a team member	.449	.842
11. Time Management Skills	.553	.765
12. Honesty/ Integrity	.361	.900
13. Willing to learn	1.027	.422
14. Ability to work without supervision	1.557	.184
15. Communication Skills	1.940	.097
16. Work Flexibility	.441	.847

Table 13 and table 14 were to identify the level of difference between departments and items of workplace preparedness, and between departments and items of personal preparedness. To test the significant differences between them, ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) was used. As shown in table 13, items 2, 3, and 7 were lower than $\alpha = .05$. Therefore, there was a statistically significant difference between the various departments and restaurant operation awareness, between the various departments and supervision techniques, and between the various departments and cleaning/sanitation awareness. Otherwise, all levels of significant p were higher than $\alpha = .05$ in items 9 through 16. So, there were no other statistically significant differences between the selected departments and personal preparedness.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine what hotel supervisors desire of college students in relation to work experiences. This study investigated the concepts, techniques, skills and personal qualifications of college students needed by hotel supervisors' perception in relation to hospitality internships. The objectives of this study were:

- To identify the college students' skills and qualifications needed for the hotel industry by the perception of the hotel supervisors.

- To develop a model of the working relationship between supervisors and college interns or management trainees.

- To help the hotel industry and hospitality education better understand the student in the hospitality workplace.

The review of literature provided the definition and the role of the supervisor. It deals with a hospitality curriculum in relation to students' work experience. Furthermore, the literature review discussed internship and its effects on students, companies, and hospitality education. This study also dealt with field experience requirements and campus recruiting as one recruiting method. Finally, training needs and its benefits were discussed.

One hundred-twenty survey questionnaires were distributed to hotel supervisors in Minneapolis and Milwaukee hotels through the human resources department. Forty-nine of usable survey questionnaires were collected at the end of the survey window. All of the subjects

were hotel supervisors who currently supervise college students or interns, or have had past experience supervising interns.

The questionnaire about supervisors' perception was divided into four sections: demographic data (5 questions), supervisor's experience with college students (4 questions), workplace preparedness (8 questions), and personal preparedness (8 questions). The demographic information included gender, age, level of education, years in the hospitality industry, and current department. The second section was questions about their supervisory experience, the students' value, the amount of training for interns, and necessity of hospitality students' work experiences in the field. For the third and fourth sections, supervisors were asked to mark the importance using the 1 to 3 scale, of the workplace techniques and skills needed by college interns in their specific departments, and personal qualifications and attitudes. The findings were analyzed by using descriptive statistics (frequency, means, and standard deviations) and ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) of SPSS (Statistical Program for the Social Sciences).

Conclusions

After examination of the demographic data, the following conclusions can be stated. It was found that the majority of the respondents (55.1%) were males, and 40.8% of the respondents were between the ages of 25-34 years old. The majority of the respondents (55.1%) had a four-year college degree, and 32.7% of respondents had hospitality experiences of 11-15 years. With regard to departments, the majority of the respondents (38.8%) were involved in the room division department.

As for the results of the second section of the questionnaires, the following conclusions were derived based on the supervisors' experiences with college students. Most respondents (98%) agreed that the college students add value to their workplace, and most respondents (95.9%) thought that hospitality students need work experiences in the field. Of the respondents who thought so, forty-two respondents explained why the students needed work experiences with a variety of subjective answers. Four key comments were: "To develop realistic expectations of the hospitality industry and customer service", "To add value to a graduating hospitality student", "To load up a "tool box" of the students for problem solving", and "Day to day operations management varies widely and is best introduced in a hands-on training environment".

Through the data analysis, the following conclusions can be derived about workplace preparedness. The majority of the respondents (93.9%) thought that customer service skills were very important. The next very important items were hotel operation awareness at 77.6%, supervision techniques at 55.1%, safety awareness at 53.1%, security awareness at 49.0%, cleaning/sanitation awareness at 46.9%, and restaurant operation awareness at 42.9 %. Contrary to the other items, the majority of the respondents (63.3%) thought the financial/accounting foundation was important, which was much more than respondents (28.6%) who thought it was very important. In review of the data about personal preparedness, the majority of the respondents thought that items such as ability to work as a team member (95.9%), honesty/integrity (93.9%), and willing to learn (93.9%) were very important. And it found that communication skills were 87.8%, professional appearance was 81.6%, work flexibility was 79.6%, time management skills were 77.6%, and ability to work without supervision was 69.4%. As a whole, the items of personal preparedness had mean scores higher than those of workplace

preparedness. The average mean score of personal preparedness was 2.84 and workplace preparedness was 2.47.

After examining the ranking by departments, the following conclusions can be derived about concepts and skills developed by college students in the working place. According to the mean scores, customer service skills (2.89), hotel operation awareness (2.79), and security awareness (2.53) were ranked high by supervisors of the room division department. Supervisors of the food and beverage department indicated the importance of customer service skills (3.00), restaurant operation awareness (2.89), and cleaning/sanitation awareness (2.89). To the supervisors of the human resources department, customer service skills (3.00), hotel operation awareness (2.80), and supervision techniques (2.80) were ranked high. The six supervisors of the sales department indicated customer service skills (3.00) and hotel operation awareness (3.00) were very important, and restaurant operation awareness (2.67) and supervision techniques (2.67) were ranked high. The administrative management group also indicated that customer service skills (3.00) were also the most important, hotel operation awareness (2.50) was second, and supervision techniques, safety awareness, and security awareness all had the same mean scores of 2.33. Supervisors of the accounting department thought that financial/accounting foundation (3.00) was the most important thing in their department, customer service skills (2.67) was next, and hotel operation awareness and restaurant operation awareness were both 2.33. The supervisor of the culinary department indicated that the importance of such items as customer service skills, restaurant operation awareness, cleaning/sanitation awareness, safety awareness, and security awareness at 3.00 each. Overall, it was found that supervisors of every department thought customer service skills were the most important attribute a college student should possess.

After examining the level of difference between the various departments and items of workplace preparedness, and between departments and items of personal preparedness, it was found that there was a statistically significant difference between the department and restaurant operation awareness, between the department and supervision techniques, and between the department and cleaning/sanitation awareness. Otherwise, there were no other statistically significant differences between departments and items listed in personal preparedness. Therefore, all items listed in "Personal Preparedness" were commonly required by every department with the surveyed hotels.

Recommendations

This study attempted to find out what hotel supervisors desire of college students when entering the hospitality industry. This research focused on demographic data, supervisors' experiences with college students, workplace preparedness, and personal preparedness in order to assess supervisors' perception toward college students' work experiences. This study found the skills, concepts, techniques, and personal qualifications and attitudes needed by college students in the hotel industry as well as the importance of the college students' work experiences. In addition, skills and concepts required by each department were little different. However, customer service skills were strongly required by supervisors of every department. With regard to personal preparedness, personal qualifications and attitudes are very important for a good relationship with team members to effect better customer services in the hospitality industry, because human interaction is the key to customer satisfaction (Cline, Rach, Landry, & Davidson, 1997).

The findings of this study result in recommendations for hospitality education, the hospitality industry, and college student hospitality candidates. It is strongly recommended that:

- Hospitality educators should encourage the students to have work experience in the field and evaluate internship programs while contacting with hotel supervisors. In addition, hospitality curriculum can be examined and redesigned to the needs of the industry and the students.

- The hospitality industry must give college students opportunities to learn hospitality management skills required in the working place for the industry and the individual careers of the students. In addition, supervisors should help interns apply their academic knowledge and skills to the hospitality industry with training programs. Furthermore, supervisors should consider the supervisory aspect of the college interns for students' next career as well as their own career.

- College students should realize the importance of work experiences in the hospitality industry and prepare knowledge and skills related to their areas of interest. They can improve their competencies, which are not found at school through internship programs. However, they should know that some personal qualifications and attitudes are more important than knowledge and skills in hotel industry.

This study was intended to examine hotel supervisors' perception of student's work experiences, but future studies can focus on students' perception of their own work experiences to evaluate and build them a better quality of internship. In addition, this study was reluctant to examine the ranking by departments because there were small populations. The same number of supervisors in each department can be conducted for comparative research for future study. It

will encourage college students to prepare skills, concepts, and techniques needed for particular areas according to their career path.

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    Motel Association.

APPENDICES

A. Initial Letter

June 12, 2002
Human Resources Director of Hilton Minneapolis.
Address: 1001 Marquette Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Dear Ms/Mr.

I am a graduate student in the Hospitality and Tourism program at the University of Wisconsin Stout. As a part of the research requirement, I am conducting a study of the hotel supervisors' perception towards college students' work experiences, under the advisement of Bob Davies, an assistant professor. The purpose of this study is to know what hotel supervisors desire of college students in relation to work experiences.

As Hilton Corporations have a high reputation in this field, we would like to entrust this study to your hotel as a great honor. We believe that with your help, this study will contribute to college students who look for a job in the hospitality industry and encourage hospitality managers to hire the right candidate for the job. It also will benefit hospitality education.

I am asking you help managers, who have supervised college students or interns, to complete the questionnaire. I enclose the questionnaire to look at. If you give a positive answer to me by email, I will send the questionnaire with prepaid envelopes for your convenience to return the completed questionnaire. Your participation in this study is due to your supervisory position. It will take approximately three minutes of their time.

Thank you very much.
I am looking forward to your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Bong-Ran Kwon   Bob Davies
Master's Candidate   Graduate Program Director.
University of Wisconsin-Stout   University of Wisconsin-Stout
Dep. Of Hospitality & Tourism   Dep. Of Hospitality & Tourism
kbr_stout@hotmail.com   daviesb@uwstout.edu

B. Hotel Supervisor Questionnaire

Survey of hotel supervisors' perception
to college students' work experiences

I understand that by returning this questionnaire, I am giving my informed consent and choose to participate voluntarily in this study. I understand the basic nature of this study and agree that any potential risks are small. I am aware that information is being sought in a specific manner and no identifiers are used and my confidentiality is guaranteed. I realize I have the right to refuse to participate in this study and maintain the right to withdraw from participation at any time.

Questions regarding this survey maybe directed to:
Researcher: Bong-Ran Kwon, 1709 11th Street East, Menomonie, WI 54751, phone (715)235-9884, email kbr_stout@hotmail.com **Advisor:** Bob Davies, Graduate Program Director, Department of Hospitality & Tourism (715)232-1480, daviesb@uwstout.edu **Research Promotions Office:** Sue Foxwell, UW Stout Institutional Review Board. 11 HH. UW Stout, WI, 54751, phone (715)232-2477

1. Your gender is ◘ Male ◘ Female

2. Your age grouping is ◘ 18-24 ◘ 25-34 ◘ 35-44 ◘ 45-54
◘ 55-64 ◘ Over 65

3. Your highest level of education is ◘ high school ◘ certificate
◘ two year degree ◘ four year degree
◘ masters ◘ other _____

4. How many years have you been in the hospitality industry? _____ years

5. Which department are you in currently? _____

♥ Please indicate the most appropriate answer.

6. Have you supervised college students? ◘ Yes ◘ No
(If no, please stop here)

7. Do they add value to your department? ◘ Yes ◘ No

8. How many hours do you spend to train intern students? _____ hours

9. Do you think hospitality students need work experiences in the field?
◘ Yes ◘ No

⇒ If yes, please explain.
_____

♥ Please rate the following concepts, techniques, and skills that students should have to work in your department area.

   1 = not important   2 = important   3 = very important (circle your answer)

10. Workplace Preparedness

(a) Hotel Operation Awareness	1	2	3
(b) Restaurant Operation Awareness	1	2	3
(c) Supervision Techniques	1	2	3
(d) Financial/ Accounting Foundation	1	2	3
(e) Safety Awareness	1	2	3
(f) Security Awareness	1	2	3
(g) Cleaning/ Sanitation Awareness	1	2	3
(h) Customer Service Skills	1	2	3

11. Personal Preparedness

(a) Professional Appearance	1	2	3
(b) Ability to work as team member	1	2	3
(c) Time management skills	1	2	3
(d) Honesty/ integrity	1	2	3
(e) Willing to learn	1	2	3
(f) Ability to work without supervision	1	2	3
(g) Communication Skills	1	2	3
(h) Work Flexibility	1	2	3

Thank you so much for your participation