Competencies and Qualifications of Staff and Management in Hospitality Establishments.

Bachelor dissertation

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Oath

I swear that the bachelor dissertation titled Competencies and Qualifications of Staff and Management in Hospitality Establishment was written by me independently, and that all literature and additional material used are cited in the bibliography and that this version is exactly the same as the work submitted electronically.

In accordance with §47b law no. 111/1998 coll. on higher education institutions, I agree to my dissertation being published in its complete form in the publicly accessible electronic database of the Institute of Hospitality Management in Prague.

Signature

...........................................

First and last name of the author

In Prague on 24.04.2014
Aknowledgements

Having this opportunity I would like to thank my supervisor Donna Dvorak, M.A. for her great help, patience, time and willingness to help me.

I would also like to thank my parents, who made my education possible and were always there to support me when needed.

Further, I would like to thank everyone who somehow took part in creation of this dissertation work. Special thanks to my teachers and classmates.

My best regards.
Abstract


The aim of this study is to identify what are the competencies and qualifications of a top level employee and determine which of these qualifications and competencies will help the hospitality establishments in Prague to build a loyal team with growing career path. The competencies used in the survey were based on two competency models: leadership competency model of Chung-Herrera, Enz and Lankau (2003) – for employees holding non-managerial positions and competency model for hospitality industry created by Monica Brophy and Tony Kiely (2002) – for managers. As competency model of Herrera, Enz and Lankau has total of 99 lodging competencies only 14 of them were chosen and used for this particular research. Total of 31 hotel and hostel managers and 42 hostel and hotel employees participated in this study. The results that will be carried out from this research will help the hotels and hostels in Prague to understand the job qualifications needed in order to keep the best qualified employees and lower the employee flow process in the very best possible outcome for the company as well as and the development of career promotion system.

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Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Background

Worldwide development of the tourism industry nowadays brought us to the fact that the actual contribution of tourism to the world economy is very vital. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2013), the receipts from international tourism in destinations around the world grew by 4% in 2012 reaching US$ 1075 billion. This growth is equal to the 4% increase in international tourist arrivals which reached 1035 million in 2012.

As the hospitality industry plays the biggest role in the international tourism, developing and innovating the industry is one of the crucial aspects these days. Regardless of the fact that hospitality industry can be developed in many ways, the most efficient and effective way of the development will be always the progress of the employees of the hospitality establishment.

In hospitality industry, the true measure of any company’s success lies in an organization’s ability to continuously satisfy and to gain a competitive edge by acknowledging and managing customers of different cultural backgrounds (Kandampully et al, 2001). Next to that, setting the competencies and qualification of every employee in the company to the highest level, should be the main goal of the hospitality establishment. This study shows that people employed in the hospitality industry must meet particular business standards to be able to be efficient in the position. These standards include indicating the ability to communicate in the most effectual manner and characterize a high degree of professionalism. The employees working within the hospitality industry should also have specific personality traits, such as friendliness, honesty and dependability. This study and research will go further into the subject to find the significant factors and qualities of competent employees and describe ways in which these factors can affect the overall performance of the companies focused on providing hospitality services in Prague.

1.2 Aim and importance of the study
Every hospitality establishment is an actual company, thus, it has many aspects to focus on not only externally but also internally. Providing the best customer service and the best guest experience, gaining the loyal customers and at the same time remaining a profitable company is a very complicated matter. The cores of all the processes that are being run in a hotel are dependent on employees. Employees remain to be the most efficient and valuable engine of the all company. Therefore building highly qualified and productive team should be the main goal of the company, as well as ability to keep the workers with significant knowledge within the company as long as possible. The aim of this study is to identify what are the competencies and qualifications of a top level employee and determine which of these qualifications and competencies will help the hospitality establishments in Prague to build a loyal team with growing career path. The importance of this study is very crucial as it is well known how much money and time is being spent on training new employees and general process of qualification boost. Thus, the results that will be carried out from this research will help the hotels and hostels in Prague to understand the job qualifications needed in order to keep the best qualified employees and lower the employee flow process in the very best possible outcome for the company as well as and the development of career promotion system.

1.3 Research Objectives and Questions

Throughout the study the purpose of the thesis topic will be investigated by focusing on research objectives and research questions. Therefore the following research questions have been set in order to achieve the aim of the study:

1. What should the main skills, competencies, abilities and qualifications of the top level employees working in Prague hotels and hostels be?
2. How should hotels and hostels in Prague develop their employee retainability program among knowledgeable and successful workers?
3. What are the working conditions that will lead to creating most motivating, inspiring, innovating and comforting atmosphere for the existing employees?

In order to achieve the aim of this thesis number of objectives needs to be met to answer the research questions:
1. Identify the demographics of hospitality establishment manages and employees, their gender and age.
2. Identify the past work experience of the employees that have been accepted to the job position and their educational background.
3. Determine whether employees with degree in tourism and hospitality are being more competent and qualified rather than their colleagues of non hospitality educational background after gaining the necessary experience.
4. Find if hotels and hostels in Prague offer any qualification development trainings and how efficiently they effect in overall performance of the employee within the company.
5. Determine whether hotels and hostels in Prague offer real career growth opportunities.
6. Highlight and analyze the main reasons employees are being fired for or quit.
7. Identify what top 5 qualities of the employee do the hospitality establishments in Prague usually looking for.
8. Identify the main qualities, competencies and skills for the best performance at work, from the employer and employee point of view.

1.2 Definition of Key terms of the study

Key terms in every research paper highlight the commonly used words and define their meaning to the reader. While most of the words are nearly basic, they will be used to define the outcome of the study.

Competency: An underlying characteristic of an individual that is causally related to criterion-referenced effective and/or superior performance in a job or situation (Spencer 1993). There was also another similar definition made by Dubois (1993) which states that: competency is a characteristic and measurable pattern of behaviors, knowledge and skill that contributes to superior job performance. On the other hand Business Dictionary (2008), defines competency as an ability that a company acquires from its founders or develops and that cannot be easily imitated. Core competencies are what give a company one or more competitive advantages, in creating and delivering value to its customers in its chosen field. It is also called core
capabilities or distinctive competencies. Therefore, in this research paper, competency will be used and understood mainly as a skill, expertise, ability and capability.

*Hospitality establishments*: any kind of physical property that provides hospitality and tourism based services. In the following thesis the term will be used to replace words: hotel and hostel.

*Employee retainability*: retainability, according to Business Dictionary (2008), has a meaning of holding, perceiving or keeping. Retainable employees in this study will refer to employees that work in the company for a long term and have a gradual career development in appropriate period of time. High level of employee retainability will be considered as main aim of the employer and the employee by itself.

*Career path*: As it states in Mba School, career path refers to the growth of the employee in an organization, to the various positions an employee moves to as he grows in an organization. The employee may move vertically most of the time but also move laterally or cross functionally to move to a different type of job role. Career path is used interchangeably with career ladder. Career path in this study will be used as one of the elements that need the development, thus will be one of the main aims of the study.
2.1 Introduction

As the main aim of this study is to identify what are the skills and competencies of the successful employees in the existing hotels of Prague, the research will also help to set the right way of keeping outstandingly performing employees within the company as long as possible. But looking back at the previous studies it can be seen that the significance of hospitality and tourism management development has been acknowledged globally. Christou (1999) believes that the responsibility of developing tourism and hospitality management lies within the hospitality organizations and the education system of the country. The basis of everything starts with education, and it is well known that a basic set of skills and knowledge is usually received during the studies. Moreover, it is proved that hospitality management education creates significantly skilled employees; however the work place provides an employee with specific knowledge that is crucial for the future development. However, according to Nelson and Dopson (2001) hospitality education itself was born out of a need to supply the hospitality industry with competent managers and is often driven by industry standards. They (Nelson and Dopson) also stated that the main determinants of success in the hospitality education are the quality of graduates and retention of those graduates in the industry (2001). Most undergraduate hospitality programs are specialized rather than general, and their courses lack a general business perspective (Pavesic, 1991). As a result of this the criticism that higher education programs were, in fact, becoming out of touch with the direct needs of the industry increased (Chung, 2000). Therefore as time has passed the importance of the experience gained at work started playing a bigger role, rather than education. Nevertheless education still remained as the crucial aspect of the career path of any qualified hospitality industry employee.

2.2 Previous findings about competencies of employees

Education system plays one of the vital roles in careers of the future hospitality area employees. It is very crucial to distinguish the differences between the education and training,
therefore, in order to help to have a different view of the nature of tourism and hospitality management, Baum (1995) noted that, universities provide education and educational system of the country while training is generally provided by the industry. Nevertheless, education has been defined as a field of multidisciplinary study, which brings the perspectives of many disciplines, especially those found in the social sciences, to bear on particular areas of application and practice in hospitality and tourism industry (Riegel, 1995). Further, Partlow and Gregorie (1994) state that due to the complexity of the tourism industry in relation to continuous tourism management needs, it is imperative that industry executives develop their knowledge skills.

Since Buergermeister’s 1983 landmark competency study outlining the skill sets demanded by the industry, two more very interesting key studies have been published in the hospitality literature. Tas (1988) formed the first comparison study by publishing eight essential competencies for management trainees:

1. Manages guest problems with understanding and sensitivity
2. Maintains professional and ethical standards in the work environment
3. Communicates effectively both written and orally
4. Demonstrates professional appearance and poise
5. Develops positive customer relations
6. Strives to achieve positive working relationships with employees
7. Possesses needed leadership qualities to achieve organizational objectives
8. Motivates employees to achieve desired performance

In a ten year period after Tas (1988) first publication, Nelson and Dopson (2001) exposed the top significant skills and abilities the industry expected as extremely significant and essential for future leaders. Those competencies were also found in the competency model that was created by Herrera, Enz and Lankau (2003). The following model has been used in this study to identify the essential competencies of employees:
1. Act in ethical manner
2. Manage time to ensure productivity
3. Follow continual learning and development
4. Be able to adapt to changing circumstances
5. Consider customer needs when making decisions
6. Promote quality of the company’s goods and services
7. Consider a broad range of factors, when solving problems and making decisions
8. Know the strengths and weaknesses of competitors
9. Take risks when appropriate
10. Present ideas in convincing manner
11. Encourage others to express their views and opinions
12. Listen carefully to others
13. Address and work through conflicts
14. Promote respect among employees

Next to that researchers as Hersey and Blanchard (1988), as well as Van Dyke and Strick (1990), include technical, social, and conceptual and demonstration of organization skills, people skills, and leadership as important competencies. It is considered that leadership is an ability of someone to generate a vision for the future; nevertheless some authors tend to believe leadership as a human skill. Leadership as a competency was explained by Sandwith (1993) based on the Katz's three dimensions model and expounded the competency-domain model with the five elements to include:

- Conceptual-creative, which known as the cognitive;
- Leadership, that is the ability to turn ideas into productive action;
- Interpersonal, referred to those skills for elective interaction with others;
- Administrative, regarding personnel and financial management of the business;
- Technical, concerning the knowledge and skills essential to producing the product or service.

Cotton (2002) identified people management, influence, communication, developing relationships, planning, analyzing information, decision-making and resilience as
competencies which every employee should possess. In addition, Glmore and Gregor (2001) established characteristics such as honesty, code of ethics, appropriate appearance, fairness, respect and good working relationships.

Hence, all above mentioned competencies and qualifications will be a guide to identify what the requirements are in current hospitality industry.

2.3 Work experience based competencies

According to the ICHRIE (International Council of Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education) 2010. Johanson et al.: Revealing Key Competencies of Hospitality Graduates Demanded by Industry. Massachusetts, USA. July 31st. USA: University of Massachusetts, there are some basic skills required nowadays in hospitality oriented job positions such as: Communication skills: highlighting of communication skills whether as a category or more precisely as oral and written communications is common throughout this study. The capability to speak confidently to customers, suppliers, managers, employees, and partnering agencies is a skill needed and used on a daily basis. Next to that, being able to communicate ideas, to lead, motivate, instruct, train, and coordinate often involves writing skills. Valid communication skills continue to be important for positions in hotel for daily operations specialists.

Also a big role plays the ability to focus on customer relations, as several previous studies reviled the importance of customer-focused skills. This kind of skill sets as the capability to resolve customer problems, manage guest problems with understanding and sensitivity.

Another skill that is being widely used y hospitality establishments are computer-related skills. While looking back in the history it is clear that some areas of the computer-related skills were ignored to a great extent. These skills are considered to be one of the mainly required and presented lines in everyone’s curriculum vitae, although they are not mentioned in the list of knowledge and skills that was desired by hospitality industry professionals. Taking into consideration the fact that this is probably the area with the most powerful growth and advances affecting all hospitality industry, it is most probably that its influence will spread and hospitality managers within all fields would expect higher levels of competency. Many years
ago curricula were based computer skills and on how to use word processing programs, for example, Microsoft Word and spreadsheets such as Excel. It is reasonable that the boost of social media and general development entitled companies to the need for the development in computer related skills.

Work values that employee have may play even a bigger role in their performance rather than skills. According to the previous studies that have been carried out by Ros, Schwartz & Surkiss, (1999); Wollack, Goodale, Wijting & Smith, (1971), work values largely consist of intrinsic work values and extrinsic work values. Intrinsic work values contain the pursuit of individual independence, interest, opportunity for growth or creativity in work to use any specific knowledge or ability, while extrinsic work values are closely linked to the job security or income provided, with the requirements needed for general security and maintenance in life.

2.4 Competency Management and Modeling

Competency modeling is the process of identifying a set of success factors including the key behaviors required for excellent performance in a particular role (Kochanski, 1997). The possibility to recognize competencies and skills required for tomorrow’s hospitality and tourism industry leaders is very important for the companies that wish to remain competitive. The concept of competency has broadly been viewed in two different ways; one is the strategic perspective at the organizational level and the other is central to the domains of human resources at the individual level (Hoffman, 1999; Chen & Naquin, 2008). According to Kochanski, 1997, competencies can be regarded as a firm's competitive advantage that competitors can never copy, including functions, processes and routines, which is taken from a strategic point of view. As a competency model provides the whole package of needed skills and abilities, it helps to select or recruit the employees most suited to a certain job position (Chung-Herrera et al., 2003).

Monica Brophy and Tony Kiely (2002) came up with the competencies list for hospitality industry – Hotels. Competencies and behavioral indicators are the followings:

- Teamwork: working effectively with others to achieve shared objectives. Contributing to the sense of camaraderie and straightening collaboration across departments.
• Leading for results: Getting the best from staff. Encouraging them to take responsibility for own work. Providing regular feedback. Dealing with any staff issues effectively. Being aware of personal impact on other members of staff and being able to manage that appropriately. Productively striving to retain effective staff.

• Effective communication: Appreciating the need for communication to achieve results and maintain motivation. Conveying messages persuasively, in ways that are acceptable to others. Listening attentively to what people have to say to get a true and accurate understanding.

• Customer service focus: Aiming to exceed customers’ expectations. Demonstrating a high level of concern that they have enjoyed their visit. Not losing sight of business needs when trying to ensure customer satisfaction. Making a strong, positive impression on customers.

• Planning and organizing: Planning effectively to ensure that things happen on time. Thinking ahead to pre-empt issues that can arise and ensuring those are dealt with in advance. Prioritizes own workload to reflect the needs of the business.

• Problem solving: Dealing effectively and calmly with difficult or unforeseen situations. Readily identifying solutions that can be satisfactory for those that are concerned.

• Financial awareness: Remaining aware of the financial impact of its and others’ actions. Actively striving to meet targets for own area and finding ways of improving the business.

• Enthusiasm: Committing to their role, the staff and the property. Showing interest in the hotel and contributing positively to shape it. Adapting easily to change and challenging the way things are done. Being responsible and trustworthy.

• Strategic thinking: Having a vision for the future of the department/property and effectively communicating that with others, ensuring that the hotel continuously working towards the new vision. Identifying and implementing ways of improving the business.

The above mentioned competencies are the most required in the present hospitality industry and during this study will be used as a guideline for managerial competencies.
Presented list of competencies is more manager-related than the list of competencies created by Herrera, Enz and Lankau (2003), that is being used in this study as competency list for employees.

In fact all above mentioned competency models are linking the needs of the customer nowadays as well as navigating hotel employees to the best possible customer service. As Mirabile (1997) advises, competency models provide potentially valuable information, but they are useless if there is no coherent and systematic implementation strategy for leveraging the information. He also says that it is necessary to have the right content, processes and support structures in place.

2.5 Hospitality industry expectations

Hospitality Industry criticized tourism education for not adequately preparing people for employment in the industry (Airey, 1988). An understanding of how best to educate and develop human capital would benefit tourism industry as a whole (Landkin, 2005). Thus, hospitality industry should improve its standards and expectations. The hospitality industry expectations is complex and dynamic and so its definition remains open to ongoing debate and research (Brotherton, 2004; William, 2004; Jones, 2004 in Hemmington, 2007). As expectations drive to change from day to day, the business developing variables driving change in competency requirements as well. According to Gill Rowley et al., (2000).

Employers Skill Survey: Case study – Hospitality sector, skills required by employers were grouped into three categories: industry-specific or vocational skills (mainly technical skills such as food production and preparation, stock management, cost control); generic skills (e.g. managerial skills, communication, problem-solving, selling skills, literacy and foreign language competence) and competence deriving from attitude to work (e.g. enthusiasm, commitment, the will to learn). The same study stated that while nearly all employers reported a willingness to train staff in most technical skills and, to an increasing extent, in generic skills, it was the third category which they found the most critical in terms of recruitment, hardest to address, and which they were most likely to see as a problem outside their remit and beyond their means to remedy. Therefore to develop the missing work values and skills,
employees should extend their personal competencies in performing tasks. If for any reason, some essential competencies or qualifications are missing, by participation in workshops, seminars and trainings employees will be able to increase and broaden their knowledge. By doing this they result individual development and according to (Lee, Kahn & Ko, 2008), employees' high job satisfaction in the work place can bring an improved quality of service to customers and rule out negative factors such as spending much time on handling customers' complaints, an irreparable reputation for the hotel, and low levels of motivation of employees to work. Thus development of employee’s skills, competencies and knowledge has a very direct effect to the quality of service and the output of the hotel. Moreover well trained employee will satisfy customers with a high quality service, which will surely increase customers repeat visit as it is considered to be a good investment and will play a positive role on increasing hospitality establishment’s profit. Tracey and Nathan (2003) have proved that the total amount of time spent on employees' job training to improve skills for restaurant services leads to a low turnover as well as increased sales revenue. Above all previously stated, a hotel also should identify the level of proficiency and types of skills required for a certain position and train employees to be competent in skills and abilities (Chapmann & Loveall, 2006).

On the other hand, hiring the right employees also plays a vital role in building the perfect team. In case of the complete incompetency of the new employee, trainings and other type of skill developing activities may simply be unnecessary and useless. In order to avoid situations with wrong employee choice, company should develop its human resources department. A number of studies have attempted to explore the importance of human resources in an organization (Quinn, 1990; Swanson, 1994) which indicated that employees of human resources departments are knowledgeable, capable and are the experts of their field. In future studies the importance of the human resources will be brought up closely. Further, the connection between the new expectations and requirements of the hotel industry and human resources will be made in order to see what innovations can be made in order to reach the set aim.
Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The following chapter identifies the aim of the study and what makes the following study important for the hospitality industry. It also points out what needs to be researched and which questions need to be answered in order to get a better understanding of the study that is being held. Following that, chapter will explain what has been done in order to get the appropriate information, which steps were taken in order to collect the data. Further, as the literature review gave the rich background history on what has already been done and why, the main goal of the methodology part is to examine research and explain the main points of the study, in addition to that follow each objective of the study with step by step explanation of how the data was gathered.

As it was already stated in the introduction chapter, the aim of this study is to identify what are the competencies and qualifications of a top level employee and determine which of these qualifications and competencies will help the hospitality establishments in Prague to build a loyal team with growing career path. In order to reach that, deductive research approach has been used, which included quantitative surveys that were conducted and distributed to people working in the hospitality industry. Next to that, existing leadership competency model of Chung-Herrera, Enz and Lankau and competency model for hospitality industry created by Monica Brophy and Tony Kiely (2002) was used in order to create questionnaires for employees in non-managerial positions and managers.

As a research strategy 80 questionnaires were created and sent via email or personally asked to 35 hotel managers and 45 hospitality workers of non-managerial positions. The main reason of this particular research being based on surveying system, was because of the ability to obtain a precise answer to all specific questions as well as being able to receive in a short period of time as many responses as possible. Some of the surveys were conducted personally, as there were obstacles to conduct a survey any other way.
3.2 Sampling strategy and Response Rate

The target groups for this research were hospitality establishments in Prague, such as hotels and hostels. In order to avoid the mixture with hotels that have more developed strategy for employee sustainability and career path development, the hotels of international chain such as Hilton, Marriott, Four Seasons, Sheraton, Kempinsky and Radisson Blu were not included in the research. Next to that, as research was based on competencies and qualifications and not on services provided by hospitality establishment, combining five and four star hotels with highly ranked hostels was completely acceptable. The main aim of this research was to identify how local five and four star hotels, as well as local hostels, identify competencies and develop staff retainability together with career growth opportunities. In order to identify which hotels and hostels are meeting the requirements of the set target group, websites such as Booking.com, Expedia, Hostelbookets and hostelworld were used in the research process. As soon as the appropriate hotels and hostels were identified, through official websites of the hotels and hostels, contact details of managers were gathered. The target group for the first part of the research was managers of different departments as: Room Division Operations, Human Recourses, Business Development Department, Reservations Office, Finance and Accounting. In fact, after emails with surveys were sent, only 15% (5) of respondents got back with completed surveys in 10 days period. In order to get more data, phone calls were made to the different departments of hotels and hostels, where 40% (14) of the respondents actually agreed to spend 10 minutes to compete the phone poll. 35% of the respondents were surveyed through a second party involvement, i.e., some of the friends and acquaintances that agreed to pass on surveys to managers of the hotels and hostels they were working.

As a final result, 90% of surveys were responded to, which involved 31 managers to complete the survey. The remaining 10% of the surveys were never answered. The goal of this part of the research was to identify what are the competencies that are considered to be highly important to the hotel managers, as well as the identification of the career path growth role in the overall development of the employees.

Second target group of this research were employees of non-managerial positions, such as front office operations, concierge, bellman as well as food and beverage department employees as bar tenders and waitresses. Using the existing hospitality establishments that
have been used in order to conduct the survey for managers, 45 employees of different educational backgrounds and work experience were asked to complete another questionnaire. As it was very important to gather broad data, in order to investigate competencies, knowledge and retainability of the employees, employees with different range of experience was surveyed. Out of 45 respondents 27 of them were asked through a personal questioning and 27 surveys were collected from this group of respondents, to the rest 18 respondents surveys were sent via email and only 15 of the surveyed employees out of 18 responded back with compted surveys. The importance of this part of research was to identify what are the main competencies from the employee point of view, as well as how employees considered themselves involved in overall performance of the company and to identify why employees would stay long term with the company.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

In order to achieve the aim of the study, the main tool used to gather the information was a questionnaire. Surveys were prepared in a setup of multiple choice questions, following with a broad question where answer ranks from the most important to the least important. Some of the multiple choice questions gave possibility to the respondent to add its own answer if it was not found in answer options (see Appendix A and B, 3rd question).

Two different surveys were prepared with some crossing questions for managers and employees (see Appendix A and B). Each survey consisted of the part that identified the demographic profile of the respondent as well as past work experience and educational background. Next to that, surveys were more concentrated on work related questions and identification of main competencies and qualifications of a top level employee.

First half of the surveys was sampling demographic profile of hotel managers and front office employees, such as: gender, age and educational background of the respondent. As well as the current position of the employee within the company and past work experience. The questionnaire based on demographics, revealed some useful information on how hospitality establishments identify competent employees, what are the steps taken in order to develop career path growth for employees and what employees consider as important characteristics.
for a successful relationship between hospitality establishment team members. At the same time it will be a helpful tool to give an employee a clear view on company’s vision and needs.

Second part of the surveys was more consisting on ranking appropriate competencies that are considered to be essential in hospitality industry. The competencies used in the survey were based on two competency models: leadership competency model of Chung-Herrera, Enz and Lankau (2003) – for employees holding non-managerial positions and competency model for hospitality industry created by Monica Brophy and Tony Kiely (2002) – for managers. As competency model of Herrera, Enz and Lankau has total of 99 lodging competencies only 14 of them were chosen and used for this particular research. The main reason of shortening the competency list was made in order to make the questionnaire more precise and accustomed for the research topic. Next to that, it was done in order to give the employees holding non-managerial positions ability to identify the most essential lodging competencies. On the other hand full competency list created by Monica Brophy and Tony Kiely and consisting of 9 competencies was used in the second part of the research for managers in order to identify the needs of current hospitality industry from a managerial point of view.

In order to make answers more clear and precise, both of the competency models were presented in a scale, where managers and employees had to rank competencies from the most important ones to the least important ones on a likert scale of 1 to 5. Where:

1 = to least important
2 = to neither important nor unimportant
3 = to somewhat important
4 = to important
5 = to mostly important

Table 1

**List of Competencies Used in the Survey for Employees**

<p>| Essential Competencies |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Competency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Act in ethical manner</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Manage time to ensure productivity</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Promote respect among employees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above list of competencies was based on lodging competency modeling of Herrera, Enz and Lankau.

Table 2

List of Competencies Used in the Survey for Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Competency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Teamwork: working effectively with others to achieve shared objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Leading for results: Getting the best from staff. Encouraging them to take responsibility for own work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Effective communication: Appreciating the need for communication to achieve results and maintain motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Customer service focus: Aiming to exceed customers’ expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Planning and organizing: Planning effectively to ensure that things happen on time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Problem solving: Dealing effectively and calmly with difficult or unforeseen situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Financial awareness: Remaining aware of the financial impact of its and others’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Enthusiasm: Committing to their role, the staff and the property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Strategic thinking: Having a vision for the future of the department/property.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above list of competencies was based on the competency model for hospitality industry created by Monica Brophy and Tony Kiely (2002).

### 3.4 Data Analysis

In order to conduct the survey and get the results, quantitative research method has been used. Moreover in order to have the most precise answers actual number of completed surveys was taken as the total of the gathered data. Further, in order to get as many responses questions as possible – “answer to the question is mandatory” was indicated in every questionnaire. In addition to that weight average method was used, as this was the one of the most precise ways to get the results of the survey. Using arithmetic average also would be possible, but as arithmetic average considers that each return is independent of each other, it makes this method completely inaccurate measure. In order to create the questionnaire surveymonkey.com surveying website was used as the main tool. These surveying systems, gave the possibility to create, design, distribute the surveys and helped to analyze the data collected from the surveys that were completed via email, online. Surveys that were conducted personally or via phone, were not sent via this surveying system, but still were created and organized by it.
Chapter 4

Findings and Results

4.1 Introduction

The aim of the following research was based on identifying competencies and qualifications of employees in hospitality establishments of Prague, which are excluding all international chain hotels, are local four and five star hotels as well as high ranked hostels. The study was conducted in order to help managers of the hospitality establishments raise employee retainability and create or develop career path opportunities for employees, as well as help employees to identify competencies needed to be a top level employee and motivation to further development. As it is well known that hotels and hostels in Prague may lack ability to keep top level employees and properly motivate and train them, this research will help to find where are the gaps and what can be done in order to develop successful and long term relationship between hospitality establishment team.

4.2 Findings Associated with Objective One.

First objective of this research was to identify the demographics of hospitality establishment managers and employees, their gender, age and origin. This research was done in order to identify what is the average age of a top level manager as well as front office employee, their gender and origin, as cultural influence plays a big role in development of the hospitality industry and personal representation. This objective has been demonstrated as a table and a pie chart in order to make answers more visual and readable.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Distribution</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers Male</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>70.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers Female</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees Male</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>40.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees Female</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>59.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pie Chart 1

Distribution of Hotel and Hostel Managers by Sex (N = 31) and Distribution of Employees holding non-managerial positions by Sex (N = 42)

Table 4

Distribution of Hotel and Hostel Managers and Employees by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Managers</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Age of Employees</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.90%</td>
<td>21-29</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>54.82%</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22.58%</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.67%</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or more</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>60 or more</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In pie chart 1 and table 3, which indicates the gender of employees and managers, it is clear that the majority of managerial positions are taken by males (70.96%), while females occupy thins position only by (29.04%). What comes to employees, majority of front office operations employees were female (59.52%), and only (40.48%) indicates male employees. From the general observation it was clearly seen that most of the receptionists in hotels and hostels were females, when concierge and doormen were males most of the time. It is also important to say that as most of the time in hotels and hostels night receptions are being taken by men, only 4
night receptionist have filled the survey, thus lowering the results of male front office employees in general overview. Table 4, on the other hand indicates the age range of participants holding managerial and front office operations’ positions. It was interesting to observe that 17 out of 32 managers were in the age range of 30-39 (54.82%), next to that 7 (22.58%) managers were in the age range of 40-49. The least amount of managers was in the age range of 21-29 and 50-59, which is 12.90% and 9.67% accordingly. However the research results for staff members showed that people usually working front office operations are people between the age ranges of 21-29 (30.95%) and 18-20 (26.19%). Next to that it was really interesting to discover that people in the age range of 30-39 (19.04%) and 40-49 (23.80%) were still holding the entry-level positions.

To summarize the findings associated with objective one, it can be said that most of the hotel managers are around 30-39 years old with a majority of them being male. What comes to the employees, most of them are females within the age range 18 to 29.

4.3 Findings Associated with Objective Two and Three.

In this study the second very important set objective was to identify the past work experience of managers and employees of non-managerial job positions and their educational background. This factor is highly important to distinguish what backgrounds do hospitality workers are usually had and how important the hospitality based education is in the job position that they are currently holding. The third objective was to determine whether employees with degree in tourism and hospitality are being more competent and qualified rather than their colleagues of non hospitality educational background after gaining the necessary experience.

Table 5

Educational level and past work experience of managers and non-managerial employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level of Managers</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>54.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Level of Employees</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Education</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism and Hospitality</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Tourism and Hospitality       | 4 | 12.9 |
| Management                    |   |      |
| Other                         | 1 | 3.22 |

Table 6.

Past work experience of managers and employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past experience of Managers</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>70.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostel</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>51.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 was demonstrating educational background of managers and employees of non-managerial position. It was interesting to find that slightly more than a half of the managers running hotels and hostels were owners of a Bachelor's Degree - 17 respondents (54.83%). Nevertheless, there were managers who had Bachelor's or Master's Degree in Tourism and Hospitality sphere - 4 (12.9%). It was also surprising to see that 3 managers (9.67%) had only secondary education. 6 managers (19.35 %) had Master's Degree and only 1 person (3.22%) chose the field "other" and was completing his PhD (Doctor of Philosophy). In general results of educational background of managers were somewhat predictable, however the only questionable aspect of the findings were 3 managers with only secondary educational background. These results create questions on how these managers were hired and what competencies and qualifications were they hired for.

As for the employees with non-managerial positions it is enough to say that most of the employees had Bachelor's (33.33%) or Master's (23.80%) Degree. However some of the workers had just secondary education - 7 (16.66), which would be understandable, as some of the front office operation's staff were still in the process to apply for universities. Past
graduates or present students of Tourism and Hospitality Management were presented as 11 employees (26.19), which was the second result after the Bachelor's Degree graduates.

Table 6, on the other hand, indicate the past work experience of the managers and employees. It is important to note that this question has been followed by answers like: hotel, hostel, restaurant, bar and other, where more than one answer could be indicated. Therefore overall percentage for each work experience type is being taken from total amount of managers. Therefore, by looking at the past experience table of managers, it is clearly seen that 22 (70.96%) of all managers have worked in a hotel previously. 17 managers (54.83%) out of 32 have worked in the bar in previous years. Almost half of the managers - 16 (51.61) had a previous experience of working in the hostel and only 11 managers (35.48%) have worked in the restaurant before.

When looking at the same chart for employees of non-managerial positions, it is possible to see that most of the employees used to work before in Bars (24 employees - 57.14%) and hostels (21 employee - 50%). Experience of a hotel had only 17 people (40.47%) and the experience of restaurant work was familiar to 9 respondents (21.42%). It also was not a surprise that 11 out of 42 respondents had no experience in hospitality industry at all - 26.19%.

It is important to say that past work experience has a big influence on manager’s or employees overall performance. The significance of this objective was to identify whether hospitality establishment employees and managers try to follow career path and develop within hospitality industry or not. Results showed that most of the workers were somehow engaged with hospitality services before getting their present positions.

In order to support the conclusion of the objective two, objective three was created and was covering one of the questions of the survey for managers. In response to whether employees with degree in tourism and hospitality after gaining the necessary experience are being more competent and qualified rather than their colleagues of non hospitality educational background 76% of managers replied “yes” and 24 – “no”, which indicated that educational background together with good previous experience, is considered an indicator of a successful employee for managers.
4.4 Findings Associated with Objective Four and Five

The main aim of the objective four was to identify if hotels and hostels in Prague offer any qualification development trainings and how efficiently they affect in overall performance of the employee within the company. This objective led us to the objective five, which basically was created in order to determine whether hotels in Prague offer real career growth opportunities. In order to get the results, chosen questions were asked from the managers of hospitality establishments. As in total there were total of 14 hotels and 7 hostel staff members answering the survey, in this section total number of hospitality establishments i.e., 21 will be taken as 100%.

As it is been surveyed (see Appendix B, question 11, 12, 13, 14, 15), out of 21 hospitality establishments only 16 (76.19%) offer qualification development trainings; 13 out of 16 establishments are hotels and 3 are hostels. In fact 14 (87.5%) out of 16 hospitality establishments that provide trainings, completely cover all expenses that are required for training, such as payment for the training time, training materials and travel expenses. Remaining 2 (12.5%) hospitality establishments partially cover some expenses, as for example, paying employee half of the regular wage during the training hours. The frequency of trainings is stable for all 16 hospitality establishments, as nearly 100% managers indicated that qualification trainings take place only once a year. This does not relate to entry-level trainings as they take place every time when a new employee is hired.

Further, as it has been found in this study, development of the career path depends not only on the employee, but more on the hospitality establishment. As it is been revealed from the survey, not all hospitality establishments offer career path development plans. In fact career path development opportunity will be offered in 19 out of 21 hospitality establishments if hospitality establishment has:

- Enough qualified employees
- Confidence that employee will stay within the company for a long time

And will be rejected if:

- Hospitality establishment prefers hiring new people for the vacant positions in order to avoid extra expenses
• Hospitality establishment generally has low retainability of employees and prefers to keep it that way.

In fact, while trying to identify main steps that 19 (90.47%) hospitality establishments are willing to take in order to keep competent and qualified employees, the following offers were identified from most effective to the least effective. As more than one answer could be given to this question in the survey, amount of managers surveyed (31) is being taken as 100%.

Table 7.

Offers made by a company in order to have high retainability of employees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Offers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To offer a rice in salary if necessary</td>
<td>90.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>To maximum involve employees in decision making process</td>
<td>77.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To develop career path opportunity</td>
<td>65.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>To offer different discounts to employees and their family members</td>
<td>64.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>To offer good bonus programs</td>
<td>45.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>To offer free trainings, workshops and paid internships</td>
<td>35.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>To create good and pleasant working conditions</td>
<td>29.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>To give employees some space for self development and creativity</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>To offer high level of responsibility and pressure</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 7, managers identified very important step to keep employee within the company as the salary raise. Almost 90.32% of managers, believe that rise in salary will keep the employee within the company. Next to that, involving employees in decision making process gathered 77.41 percents. Ability to develop career path and discount offers to employees and their families have gathered almost same percentage (65.62% and 64.51% accordingly). 45.16% of managers prefer offering good bonus programs to keep top level employees within the company, when 35.48% managers believes that free workshops, trainings and paid internships will motivate employee to work more for the company. 29.03% of managers chose to create a pleasant working conditions and only 12.9% of managers believe that by giving employees more space for self development and creativity, will rise the
percentage of retainability of employees. In fact, there were no points gathered for offering high level of responsibility and pressure from manager's side.

However, as small survey has been given to the employees of non-managerial positions to identify how helpful is the current company and position in stimulation their professional growth. Pie chart 2, shows that out of 42 employees 24 of them believe that the position that they are holding at present time will be moderately helpful in their future career in hospitality industry. 6 people see their position as extremely helpful. 3 employees believe that the position that they are holding now not at all helpful for their future career and 9 employees indicated that their present job is quite helpful for a professional growth.

Pie Chart 2

The significance of current positions held by employees.

As the result, of objectives for and five, most of the managers believe that rise of the salary and bonuses will help to keep top level employees with the company for a long time, however, according to the Pie Chart 2, not all employees are happy with the position they are currently holding.

4.5 Findings Associated with Objective Six.
The aim of this objective was to highlight and analyze the main reasons employees are being fired for or quit. The reason why this considered to be an important issue lays, once more in the ability of the company to keep top level employees as long as possible with the company. By identifying why staff members are being let go or quit, hospitality establishments in Prague will be able to raise employee retainability level and avoid hire of incompetent employees.

Most of the survey questions were asked from employees holding non-managerial positions, however, there were two questions that were completely identical for the managers and employees. Table 8 will identify what the main reasons are for managers to discharge the employees and what are the main reasons for employees to quit their position. As there was possibility to mark up to three answers, managers (31) will equal to 100% and employees (42) will equal to 100%.

Table 8

Reasons employees are being discharged or quit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Managers %</th>
<th>Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doesn't fulfill responsibilities</td>
<td>80.64</td>
<td>33.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low level of customer service</td>
<td>61.29</td>
<td>47.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad relationship with colleagues</td>
<td>32.25</td>
<td>59.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No development</td>
<td>65.62</td>
<td>69.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company found a better candidate</td>
<td>46.87</td>
<td>54.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a retainable worker</td>
<td>35.48</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first three reasons why would manager discharge an employee were: inability of employee to fulfill the responsibilities (80.64%), no development after some period of time (65.62%) and low level of customer service (61.29%). Next to that is the fact that company might actually find a better candidate for the same position (46.87%). Also managers would discharge an employee if he is not planning to stay with company for a long period of time (35.48%). The last aspect is the bad relationship with colleagues (32.25%). According to the results, managers demand high customer service but have lower expectations for colleagues to create a good atmosphere at work.
However, in the questionnaire for the employees, first three reasons to quit are no career growth opportunity (69.04%), unfriendly supervisor/CEO (59.52%) and after come problems with low salary (54.76%). In cast Unfriendly colleagues (47.61%) and bad position in the company (33.33%) come at the last order.

The second question, that was identical in those two surveys, was about contribution of employees in the company, and how often these contributions and opinions are recognized. Pie Chart 3 clearly shows what the responses of the managers and of the employees were. There was only one possible answer.

According to the Pie Chart 3, it is possible to see that 4 (13%) out of 31 managers believe that they always take into consideration opinion of employees. 14 (45%) managers say that they listen to their employees most of the time, when 11 (36%) managers state that they take into consideration opinion of employee just once in a while. Nevertheless, only 2 (6%) managers state that they never listen to opinion of their employees.

In fact employees by themselves suppose that their contributions are barely recognized, as only 3 employees (7%) out of 42, believe that their opinion is always heard. 16 (38%) employees say that their opinion is heard most of the time and 13 (31%) state that it happens once in a while. In fact, very interesting to observe, how 10 (24%) of employees consider that
their contribution and opinion is never heard, which is really interesting in comparison to results received from managers. Considering the fact that most some of the managers and employees work for the same hospitality establishment, this brings the research to the very important part of it.

4.5 Findings Associated with Objective Seven and Eight.

The goal of the objective seven is to identify top 5 qualities of the employee that hospitality establishments in Prague usually looking for. In addition to the previous objective, objective eight aims to identify the main qualities, competencies and skills for the best performance at work, from the employer and employee point of view. In order to achieve that there were two competency models used. Model of leadership competency created by Chung-Herrera, Enz and Lankau (2003) and competency model for hospitality industry created by Monica Brophy and Tony Kiely (2002). In fact the first model was used in surveys for non-managerial position employees. The second model was used in survey for managers. The reason why there were two competency models used, was because, one of the surveys has more managerial competencies and qualifications, and asking about those from employees would not be precise for this particular research. The competency model for employees, on the other hand, would be possible to apply for managers as well, but in that case, it wouldn’t be possible to get precise data about managerial competencies and qualifications. Therefore, two models that have been applied for two different target groups, suppose to give the most explicit data. In Table 9, managers have chosen the aspects that are being taken into consideration while hiring new employee to the company. As there were options to give more than one answer, total amount of managers (31) will be taken as 100%. The table will be organized from most important to least important aspects.

Table 9.

Important details for managers, when reviewing the new candidates.
The table shows that importance of hiring someone recommended by family, friends or workers, plays a vital role in selection process for 27 (87.09%) out of 31 managers. In fact, if an employee had an internship in the same company, the chances to be hired will boost as well, as 22 (70.96%) managers would also favor the applicant. Employees with experience and employees with no education or experience, but successful interview process have same change to be accepted to the position – 19 (61.29%) would accept them. Last two options refer to those, who have bad recommendations or no experience but good educational background. However the fact that these two aspects have got the same amount of points – 6 (19.35%) managers, might seem very interesting to investigate for this particular research.

Finally, the last part of the survey consisted of two competency models that will be shown on Table 10 and 11, will give the clear idea on what are the essential competencies and qualifications of a top level manager and employee in the hospitality establishment.

Table 10.

Model of leadership competency created by Chung-Herrera, Enz and Lankau (2003)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Top ranked competencies by managers</th>
<th>WA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Strategic thinking: Having a vision for the future of the department/property.</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Leading for results: Getting the best from staff. Encouraging them to take responsibility for own work.</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Planning and organizing: Planning effectively to ensure that things happen on time.</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Problem solving: Dealing effectively and calmly with difficult or unforeseen situations.</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Effective communication: Appreciating the need for communication to achieve results and maintain motivation.</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Customer service focus: Aiming to exceed customers’ expectations.</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competency</td>
<td>Weighted Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Financial awareness: Remaining aware of the financial impact of its and others’ actions.</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Enthusiasm: Committing to their role, the staff and the property.</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Team working: effectively with others to achieve shared objectives.</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 10, competencies ranked by employees were very outstanding and different from previous studies in the literature review. The first very important competency was ranked the competency to follow continual learning and development with (WA = 4.9), “promote quality of the company’s goods and services “ (WA = 4.8), “consider customer needs when making decisions” (WA = 4.8), “be able to adapt to changing circumstances” (WA = 4.4), “manage time to ensure productivity “ (WA = 4.3), “act in ethical manner” (WA = 4.3), “consider a broad range of factors, when solving problems and making decisions” (WA = 4.3), “Listen carefully to others” (WA = 4.2), “promote respect among employees” (WA = 4.2), “encourage others to express their views and opinions”( WA = 4.2), “know the strengths and weaknesses of competitors” (WA = 4.1), ”address and work through conflicts” (WA = 4.0), “present ideas in convincing manner” (WA = 4.0), “take risks when appropriate” (WA = 3.8). All above mentioned competencies were somehow important to the employees.

On the other hand managers have identified competencies that are seemed somewhat important to them. The very first aspect that almost every managed identified was “strategic thinking” (WA = 5.0), competencies with the same amount if weighted average are “leading for results” and “planning and organizing”. With (WA = 4.8) managers chose “problem solving”. Nevertheless, “effective communication”, “customer service focus” and financial awareness” all had Weighted average of 4.7. “Enthusiasm” was ranked with (WA = 4.6) and the last one was “team working” with (WA = 4.5).

By providing managers and employees with different competency models, it was possible to identify what are the real competencies and qualifications that each target group was aiming for. Ranking strategic thinking or “planning and organizing” for an employee of non-managerial position would not be effective.
Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

The aim of this study was to identify what are the competencies and qualifications of a top level employee and determine which of these qualifications and competencies will help the hospitality establishments in Prague to build a loyal team with growing career path. The results that have been carried out from this research will help the hotels and hostels in Prague to understand the job qualifications needed in order to keep the best qualified employees and lower the employee flow process in the very best possible outcome for the company as well as and the development of career promotion system. In order to collect the data, two surveys based on multiple choice questions were created: for managers and for employees. Difference between surveys were not only the existing questions but also the competency models, that has been used to identify what are the essential qualifications and competencies of managers and employees with non-managerial positions. This chapter will summarize all the findings, results and provide possible recommendations.

5.1.1 Research Questions and Objectives.

Research questions were created in order to help in achieving the aim of the study:

1. What should the main skills, competencies, abilities and qualifications of the top level employees working in Prague hotels and hostels be?
2. How should hotels and hostels in Prague develop their employee retainability program among knowledgeable and successful workers?
3. What are the working conditions that will lead to creating most motivating, inspiring, innovating and comforting atmosphere for the existing employees?

In order to answer the above stated questions, number of objectives were created:
1. Identify the demographics of hospitality establishment manages and employees, their gender and age.
2. Identify the past work experience of the employees that have been accepted to the job position and their educational background.
3. Determine whether employees with degree in tourism and hospitality are being more competent and qualified rather than their colleagues of non hospitality educational background after gaining the necessary experience.
4. Find if hotels and hostels in Prague offer any qualification development trainings and how efficiently they effect in overall performance of the employee within the company.
5. Determine whether hotels and hostels in Prague offer real career growth opportunities.
6. Highlight and analyze the main reasons employees are being fired for or quit.
7. Identify what top 5 qualities of the employee do the hospitality establishments in Prague usually looking for.
8. Identify the main qualities, competencies and skills for the best performance at work, from the employer and employee point of view.

5.1.2 Limitations of the study.

The main focus of this research was hospitality establishments in Prague, such as five and four star hotels and highly ranked hostels. In order to avoid the mixture with hotels that have more developed strategy for employee sustainability and career path development, the hotels of international chain such as Hilton, Marriott, Four Seasons, Sheraton, Kempinsky and Radisson Blu were not included in the from of research. Next to that, as research was based on competencies and qualifications and not on services provided by hospitality establishment. Therefore, combining five and four star hotels with highly ranked hostels was completely acceptable.

5.1.3 Literature Review.

The point of the literature review was to explain what has been found and done before on the same research topic. In general, literature review revealed some very important competency
models that are still applicable to use in the current hospitality industry system, which were adjusted to the needs of this particular research topic and assisted in gaining necessary results.

5.1.4 Methodology.

Methodology part points out what needs to be researched and which questions need to be answered in order to get a better understanding of the study that is being held. Methodology chapter explains what has been done in order to get the appropriate information, which steps were taken in order to collect the data. In order to collect the data, first of all, the group of hotels and hostels was established that was appropriate for this particular research. This was done through the websites such as Booking.com, Expedia, Hostelbookets and Hostelworld. Next to that, two types of surveys were created. Surveys were based on multiple choices with last question being designed as a likert scale (from 1 to 5, where 5 is the highest point). One survey type was specially designed for managers of hostels and hostels, with competency model for hospitality industry created by Monica Brophy and Tony Kiely (2002). The second survey was specifically designed for employees of non-managerial positions and a completely different competency model (of Chung-Herrera, Enz and Lankau) was used in that survey to identify what are the essential competencies of employees in hospitality establishments. Total of 31 manager and 42 employees were surveyed in order to get the required results. Results of the surveys were analyzed by surveymonkey.com (Survey Software) that provided percentage representation of all the data. Further, the results to some questions were processed by the author and weighted averages were found as important statistical information that helped to complete the results and findings.

5.2 Conclusions and Findings.

The first objective of this study was to identify the demographics of hospitality establishment manages and employees, their gender and age. The objective was met by study that identified that as for managers, 22 out of 31 managers surveyed were males which are almost 71% of the whole target group. Most of the managers were in between the age range of 30-39 years
When it comes to the results of employees, 60% of employees were females, which sist 25 out of 42 people surveyed. In fact the most common age range of employees is broader than managers as total of 24 people were in the age range of 18 to 29. The results are represented in the Pie Chart 1 and Tables 3 and 4 of this study.

The second objective was to identify the past work experience of the employees that have been accepted to the job position and their educational background. The research showed that most of the managers (54.83%) had a Bachelor’s Degree. In fact it was interesting to observe that only 4 (12.9%) managers had specifically Tourism and Hospitality background education. There were also 3 managers indicated with just secondary education. As it comes to the past work experience, most of the managers (70%) used to work in hostels, slightly a bit than a half also had hotel experience. Interestingly, there was no manager indicated with no past experience in hospitality industry. When it comes to the results of employees, as being a younger target group, had more people (16) with just secondary education background. 24 people out of 42 had either Bachelor’s or Master’s Degree, which is a high indicator. Also 11 people out of 42 had Tourism and Hospitality Education background. Which is more than managers did. The most frequent past work experience appeared to be working in the bar (57.14%), followed by that 50% of the employees also had a hostel experience. The results of this objective are represented in Tables 5 and 6. Also, it is important to remember, that as some questions had possibility to mark more than one right answer - the results are taken from total amount of people surveyed.

Third objective was to determine whether employees with degree in tourism and hospitality are being more competent and qualified rather than their colleagues of non hospitality educational background after gaining the necessary experience. A the results of the survey showed 76% of managers confirmed that employees with appropriate educational background after gaining some experience are more competent and qualified rather than their colleagues of non hospitality educational background.

Fourth objective was set to find if hotels and hostels in Prague offer any qualification development trainings and how efficiently they effect in overall performance of the employee within the company. This question was related only to managers, therefore as it is been surveyed (see Appendix B, question 11, 12, 13, 14, 15), out of 21 hospitality establishments
only 16 (76.19%) offer qualification development trainings; 13 out of 16 establishments are hotels and 3 are hostels. In fact 14 (87.5%) out of 16 hospitality establishments that provide trainings, completely cover all expenses that are required for training, such as payment for the training time, training materials and travel expenses. Remaining 2 (12.5%) hospitality establishments partially cover some expenses, as for example, paying employee half of the regular wage during the training hours. The frequency of trainings is stable for all 16 hospitality establishments, as nearly 100% managers indicated that qualification trainings take place only once a year. This does not relate to entry-level trainings as they take place every time when a new employee is hired.

The fifth objective was to determine whether hotels and hostels in Prague offer real career growth opportunities. Question related to this objective was also directed only to managers of hostels and hostels. In fact not all hospitality establishments offer career path development plans. The career path development opportunity will be offered in 19 out of 21 hospitality establishments if hospitality establishment has: enough qualified employees and confidence that employee will stay within the company for a long time. In cases if hospitality establishment prefers hiring new people for the vacant positions in order to avoid extra expenses or generally has low retainability of employees, the career path development will not take place. For more detailed explanation see Table 7.

The objective six was set to highlight and analyze the main reasons employees are being fired for or quit. This question was addressed both managers and employees and results showed that the first three reasons why an employee might get fired by manager are: inability to fulfill the responsibilities, low level of customer service and bad relationship with colleagues. On the other hand, employees named three main reasons what would make them quit the job, which are: bad or not developing position in the company, unfriendly colleagues and unfriendly supervisor or CEO. As it was clear from the survey for employees the atmosphere at work play a bigger role than to the managers, in fact 2 out of 3 reasons were regarding colleagues at work. Detailed breakdown of the results can be found in Table 8.

The seventh objective was set to identify what top 5 qualities of the employee do the hospitality establishments in Prague usually looking for. The answer to this objective was given through the competency model of Chung-Herrera, Enz and Lankau (2003) that was
presented to employees. They were asked to rank the competencies from the most important to the least important on 1 to 5 scales. The results for this objective can be found in the Table 10.

The eight objective was to identify the main qualities, competencies and skills for the best performance at work, from the employer and employee point of view. In order to meet this objective, results of two competency modeling tables were combined together to represent opinions of managers and employees. Findings for this objective can be found in Tables 10 and 11.

5.3 Recommendations.

The results obtained from this study will be really helpful for hotel managers in order to see what are expectations and priorities of the employees. Moreover it will also help employees to better communicate with managers and know what are the expectations and how they are set. This part of the research showed that in some of the hospitality establishments staff members are holding same positions for years without getting any promotion or career path development. On the other hand, some really young employees are being accepted to the entry level managerial positions while the hospitality establishment has really well experienced candidates within the company waiting for the promotion, but are not being taken into consideration. This was the very first problem that occurred after analyzing the results. The fact that managers would mostly hire a person who has no appropriate background but has been recommended by a friend or a colleague basically is the core problem. In fact it would be more important to hire someone with appropriate educational background and past work experience in hospitality area. Being competent in making the right choice while hiring a new employee has a big role in overall performance of the company.

The second problem that occurred from the research was the problem of companies not being able to keep productive employees within the company for a long time. While only some of the hotels offer development programs and career path opportunities, other hotels are losing well trained employees, as they lack ability to retain employees. It is possible to see that it is being done from the desire to hire more students, which for the employer are low cost expenses rather than keep within the company top level employees, but in fact, hotels are
losing more money from recruiting new people and training them, rather than keeping the team they have and developing it. Therefore, hospitality establishments in Prague should develop employee retainability programs. Most of the hotels had bonus programs for employees, they were also motivating staff by providing free training and paid internships. But as the results of employee’s surveys show, managers do not take into the consideration the opinions of employee and most of the time, this leads to lack of communication and misunderstanding within team members.

To support all said above it is important for hospitality establishments and particularly to managers to: clarify the expectations and the standards that expected to be met. Also to define the company’s culture, goal, vision. Explain and communicate the change that is happening. Also it is important to carry out activities that train, develop and enable the stuff members to perform well. As for the competencies it is important to get feedback on how the company is performing and contribute to performance-related pay/reward/bonus systems.
Reference:


Cotton B (2002). Industry and Education in partnership in Graduate employability.


Appendix A

Survey for employees:

1. What is your gender?
   - Female
   - Male

2. Which category below includes your age?
   - 17 or younger
   - 18-20
   - 21-29
   - 30-39
   - 40-49
   - 50-59
   - 60 or older

3. What department do you work in?
   - Accounting and Finance
   - Front Office Operations
   - Food and Beverage
   - Marketing
   - Housekeeping

4. What is your educational background?
   - Bachelor’s Degree
   - Master’s Degree
   - Tourism and Hospitality Management
   - Other

5. Did you have previous experience in tourism/hospitality industry?
6. If you have answered "Yes" to the previous question, where did you previously work?
   - [ ] Hotel
   - [ ] Hostel
   - [ ] Restaurant
   - [ ] Bar
   - [ ] Other (please specify)

7. How helpful is your position in the current company in stimulating your professional growth?
   - [ ] Extremely helpful
   - [ ] Quite helpful
   - [ ] Moderately helpful
   - [ ] Not at all helpful

8. How often did you feel your contributions and opinion were recognized?
   - [ ] Always
   - [ ] Most of the time
   - [ ] Once in a while
   - [ ] Never

10. What would be the main reason to quit? (can be more than one)
    - [ ] You don't like your position
    - [ ] You don't like your colleagues
    - [ ] You don't like your supervisor/CEO
    - [ ] There is no real career growth opportunity
☐ Low Salary
☐ Other (please specify)

11. Please rank following competencies from most important to least important. Where 1 is least important and 5 is most important. How important are these competencies for hospitality establishment staff members?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Act in ethical manner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manage time to ensure productivity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow continual learning and development</td>
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<td>Be able to adapt to changing circumstances</td>
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<td>Consider customer needs when making decisions</td>
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<td>Promote quality of the company’s goods and services</td>
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<td>Consider a broad range of factors, when solving problems and making decisions</td>
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<td>Know the strengths and</td>
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<td>weaknesses of competitors</td>
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<td>Take risks when appropriate</td>
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<td>Present ideas in convincing</td>
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<td>manner</td>
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<td>Encourage others to express</td>
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<td>their views and opinions</td>
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<td>Listen carefully to others</td>
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<td>Address and work through</td>
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<td>conflicts</td>
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<td>Promote respect among</td>
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<td>employees</td>
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Appendix B

Survey for managers only:

1. What is your gender?
   - Female
   - Male

2. Which category below includes your age?
   - 17 or younger
   - 18-20
   - 21-29
   - 30-39
   - 40-49
   - 50-59
   - 60 or older

3. What department do you work in?
   - Administrative (Executive Office)
   - Manager
   - Human Resources

4. What is your educational background?
   - Bachelor’s Degree
   - Master’s Degree
   - Tourism and Hospitality Management
   - Other

5. Did you have previous experience in tourism/hospitality industry?
   - Yes
6. If you have answered "Yes" to the previous question, where did you previously work?
☐ Hotel
☐ Hostel
☐ Restaurant
☐ Bar
☐ Other (please specify)

7. How often do you take into consideration opinions of your employees?
☐ Always
☐ Most of the time
☐ Once in a while
☐ Never

8. While hiring process what candidates have the best chance to get the job position? (can be more than 1)
☐ Those who had some experience
☐ Those who had no experience but appropriate educational background
☐ Those who had experience and appropriate educational background but were fired from the previous work place
☐ Those who have no educational background and no experience but passes the interview successfully
☐ Those who have been recommended by family/friends/existing employees
☐ Those who went through the internship process in the company

9. Are the employees with degree in tourism and hospitality after gaining the necessary experience are being more competent and qualified rather than their colleagues of non hospitality educational background
10. Do you (the company) offer any qualification development trainings?

☐ Yes
☐ No

11. If you replied "Yes" to the previous question, how often do those trainings take place?

☐ Every 1-3 month
☐ Every 3-6 month
☐ Every 6-9 month
☐ Every year
☐ Every 2 years and more

12. Are those training paid by the company?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Paid by the employee only in case when: (please specify)

13. Do the employees have a real opportunity of the career path development?

☐ Yes - if they are qualified enough
☐ Yes - if we believe that employee will stay within the company for a long term
☐ No - we prefer hiring new people for the vacant positions
☐ No - our staff has low retainability percentage

14. What does company do in order to retain top level employees? (can be more than 1)

☐ Try to create good working conditions
☐ Have a good bonus program
☐ Develop career path opportunity
☐ Have different discounts offered to the employees and their families
☐ Maximum involving employee in decision making process of the company
☐ High level of pressure and responsibility
☐ Give opportunities for employees self development and creativity
☐ Offer a rise in salary if necessary
☐ Offer free trainings, workshops and paid internships

15. **What would be the main reason to let go an employee? (can be more than 1)**
☐ Employee doesn't fulfill its responsibilities
☐ Low level of customer service
☐ Disagreements and misunderstandings with colleagues and top managers
☐ No development after some period of time
☐ A better candidate applied for the same position
☐ Not a retainable worker

16. Please rank following competencies from most important to least important.
*Where 1 is least important and 5 is most important.*

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<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
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<th>Number of respondents</th>
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<td>Teamwork</td>
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<td>Leading for results</td>
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<td>Effective communication</td>
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<td>Customer service focus</td>
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<td>Planning and Organizing</td>
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<td>Problem solving</td>
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<td>Financial awareness</td>
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<td>Enthusiasm</td>
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<td>Strategic thinking</td>
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