

## Importance of staff training in hotel industry Case Study: Hotel Dukagjini

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### **Abstract**

*In every business, independently of the activity, human resources are the most precious capital. In terms of global competition and rapid change, personnel training are essential. Every manager should be able to attract qualified and capable personnel, in order to use their skills in achieving organizational objectives. In a market economy where uncertainty is rather widespread, obtaining knowledge and information is becoming a source for creating competing advantages.*

*One of the most important aspects in contemporary hotel industry is getting to know the new methods and techniques through training. Staff training is an important part in Human Resource Management, in order to improve employee performance, respectively it helps putting their skills to better use and specialization in their work. Application of an efficient training process has an important impact in increasing employee performance.*

*The aim of this study is to understand the importance of personnel training in hotel industry. The study includes the theoretical part for staff training, importance and benefits. The empirical part is composed by a qualitative method research of Hotel Dukagjini in Peja. The paper's results have shown that management has a relatively good understanding of the importance of personnel training; the hotel may be in a favorable situation if the employees keep taking continuous training.*

*Key words: Human Resource Management, personnel training, hotel industry*

*JEL classification: M53, M54*

## 1. Introduction

Technological changes, especially in information technology, the growing complexity and environment uncertainty require knowledge and several skills. As a result of mass production and diversity of products and services, consumers today are aware and above all very selective on purchasing goods and services. The growing demands of consumers require new solutions and broad knowledge. Due to an increasing competition, the organization needs to constantly revise production and services in order to fulfill the needs and demands of the consumers, by applying managerial methods to increase productivity. Modern conditions, dynamic competition, sophisticated information technology, economic knowledge, market globalization, have changed regarding importance of human resources in the organization. These conditions actualize and favor human capital as a strategic source for the organization. Differences in organizations exist only because of the differences between human resources, methods of management and development.

In a global environment, ever more complex and obscure, knowledge and skills are the sole sources that create competing advantages. And for this reason, training is often considered a tool to achieve organizational objectives. Thus employee training is becoming an optimal response to complex challenges of business. After selecting the employees from management, workers should be trained according to their job, orientation should be organized before their work and other kinds of training will be held later.

Today, the service sector is always growing in the developed countries. Development of tourism has influenced the growth of hotel industry. Hotel industry is becoming more and more competing in regard to quality of service which affects the success or lack of success of hotels. Regarding the growing quality of service, hotel workers play an important role therefore developing employees by giving them continuous training in relevant fields is necessary. Employee training helps the organization to achieve its goal while in the same time enables workers to do a better job.

## 2. Personnel training

Training is systematic planning and modification of behavior through teaching events, programs and instructions that enable individuals achieve levels of knowledge, skill and necessary competences in order to perform effectively. (Armstrong, 2006, p.535)

Training is a process which grants the workers information, skills and enables them to understand the organization and its objectives. In particular, training is designed to help the worker keep giving positive contribution in the form of the best performance. (Ivancevich, 2004, p. 393)

Every organization has need for trained and experienced people in order to effectively perform their activities. Tasks on today's organizations have become complex, and the importance of educating employees has grown. It is estimated, for example, business firms in the United States of America spend billions of dollars every year in formal courses and training programs for developing employee skills. (Decenzo & Robbins, 2007, p. 209). Personnel training is a necessary part of the HRM activities and many organizations have understood how important it is to hold a training in a ever changing and complex work environment.

### 3. Staff training in hotel industry

Rapid development of hotel industry and competition has led to the need for personnel training. The level of quality of service is dependant of the qualities of employees. Employee qualities are linked to knowledge, skills, competences, experience etc. which lead to the development of hotels. Therefore employee training is of vital importance since employee performance and productivity increases as well. They possess professional knowledge, experience and valuable skills that can be used to perform more effectively. Training is important in the motivation and inspiration of workers by securing needed information for the job, and it helps them get to know the important affairs.

Training and development may be seen as key instruments in implementing MBNJ policies and practices. (Nickson, 2007, p.154-155) Successful hotels always include staff training as important developmental strategy.

### 4. Staff training importance

Given today's business climate and the rapid growing of technology and its effect on economy and society, workers are in need of training more than ever. Personnel training is a key function of MBNJ and is very important regarding increasing productivity, but this not only one of the benefits. Training is essential not only to increase productivity, but to motivate and inspire workers by understanding the importance of their jobs and by giving them all the information they need to perform these jobs.

McNamara lists below the general benefits that come from worker training:<sup>1</sup>

- increase of pleasure of work and morale
- increase of motivation

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<sup>1</sup> McNamara, C. Employee Training and Development: Reasons and Benefits. Accessed in September 2011 from web site: [http://www.mapnp.org/library/trng\\_dev/basics/reasons.htm](http://www.mapnp.org/library/trng_dev/basics/reasons.htm)

- increase of efficiency
- increase of capacity to approve new methods and technologies
- Increase in innovative strategies and products
- reducing worker circulation

This is only a partial list of many benefits that result from training. Employee training is a learning experience it requires a change in the worker's job in order to improve performance. Thus training includes altering knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior. (Decenzo & Robbins, 2007, p.209) Managers with the help of MBNJ, decide when the workers need training and when to hold them. Lack of training or poor training leads to high circulation of workers and they tend to offer inferior or below needed standard products and services.(Sommerville,2006, p. 208)

Training is key to maintaining staff and prevents them from looking for another job, by giving them the opportunity to achieve their goals in career within their organization. People tend to feel that they are giving a positive contribution to the company.

#### 5. Staff training benefits

Staff training increases the ability of workers and grants them competing advantages. Effective training will improve personal characters and professional skills. Training will be beneficiary not only for workers, management and the organization, but also for consumers, due to the quality of products and services they consume. In the table presented below are shown some of the benefits resulting from staff training. (Sommerville, 2006, p. 210)

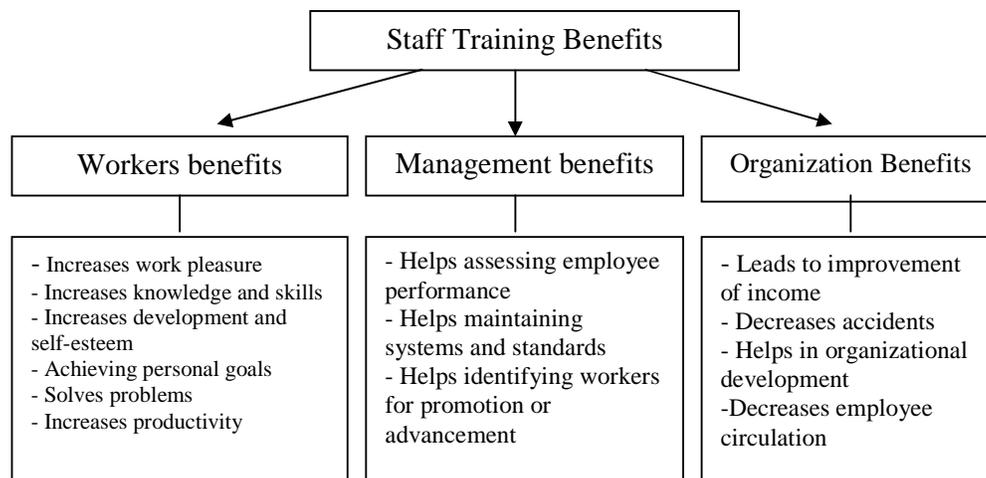


Fig.1. Benefits from staff training

The above table presents the benefits coming from staff training. Workers gain from training, who by increasing the knowledge about their work find pleasure in it. After the training the workers realize the importance of their job and they find themselves competent to perform their job, thus they develop and their self-esteem grows. Training has a positive influence on some workers who have the ambition to advance, so after a while they can get promoted and get higher position and so they achieve their personal goals. Knowledge, practical experience and methods that are taught during training will help employees solve problems effectively and be productive in their job.

Management also gains from training, since they can spot the capable, talented and those who have shown good results. Trainers may also spot workers who are more suitable for other positions and so they help management in their promotion.

Due to growing productivity and offering of quality services after training, hotels will have more incomes. Training will help organizations prevent accidents. It also ensures that the hotel is competitive, since the training leads to high quality, effectiveness and loyal consumers for the hotel. Training is very important in reducing employee circulation, which leads to high expenditure for the organization.

## 6. Types of training

Organizations have a MBNJ investment perspective seeing training as a possibility for increasing productivity. Training is seen as a solution to lots of problems, such as low quality as a result of lack of skills and employee circulation who search for more useful jobs. (Geer, 2003, p. 499-500) Due to these deficiencies in employee skills, when there are short-comings at work, it is necessary for the organization to include employee training.

The systematic model of training is composed by a simple model of four phases, as is illustrated on figure 2: (Armstrong, 2009, p. 677):

1. Identification of needs for training.
2. Deciding what kind of training will be necessary to fulfill these needs.
3. Using experienced trainers trained for the implementation of the training.
4. Monitoring and assessing training in order to ensure that it is effective.

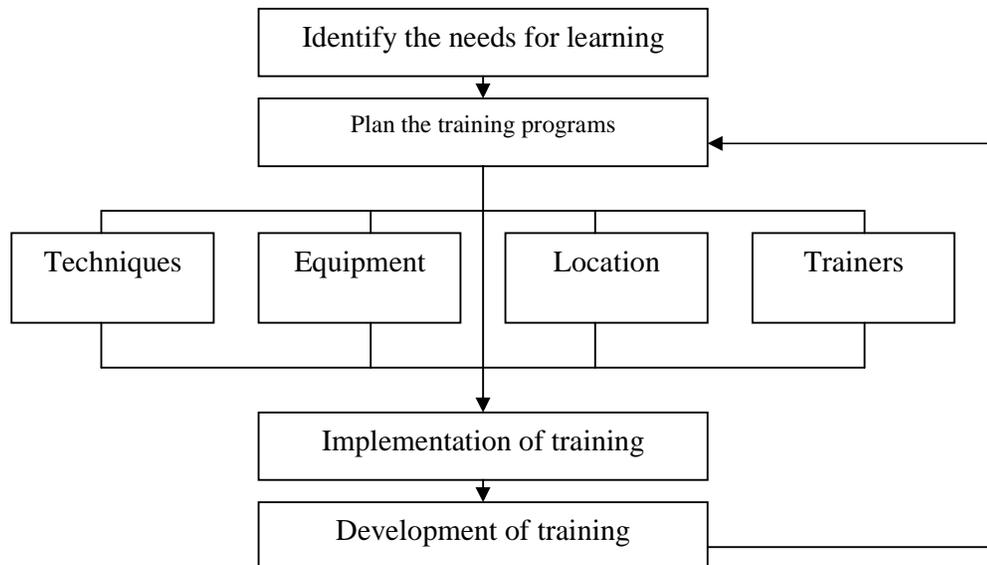


Fig. 2. Systematic model of training

Trainings can be held at the job site and off the job site. Training is organized in hotel premises and is held by each department, monitor, team leader and trainers, experienced workers who are in charge of different trainings. (Dessler, 2006, p. 157)

Meanwhile outside trainings refer to trainings outside of the hotel. The trainees take part in trainings, seminars, organized conferences outside of the hotel or out of the country.

Trainings are held for different purposes that can be divided according to their content: (Walker, 2007, p. 597-598)

- Training for rookie workers - helps novice workers gain general knowledge about the hotel and basic needed skills. Helps establishing relationships between the employees and the managing team.
- Certification of employees after the training - workers get professional certificates after passing theory and practice tests.
- Simulation training - is held with the help of Human Resource Department in order to improve work methods and increase work efficiency by simulating the work environment. This training is applied in everyday jobs, therefore it is long-term.
- On job training - the rules and principles of work are taught, manners, interpersonal relationship treatment techniques. This kind of training

aims to train workers to learn the best way to do their job faster and more efficient.

- Foreign Language training – hotel employees are required to at least learn English which is considered an international language, in order to be able to communicate with the clients.
- Training for hotel and administration services – aims the improvement of services and administration including telephone techniques, guest relationships, sales skills, public relations, general information etc.

## 7. Introduction to the Case Study

Hotel Dukagjini a hotelier enterprise that dates since 1956. It is one of the oldest hotels in the city of Peja. Renovated several time, it still preserves the original architecture, which has a traditional style, known for its high standards. As such it is attractive for tourists inside and outside of the country and in the same time, it serves as a point of reference for Peja citizens and those who visit Peja. Hotel Dukagjini is located in the center of Peja beside the White River bank that permeates the city, and is surrounded by well-kept parks and parking that is located around it and has a small distance from the historical part of the market-place. With a surface around 11.000 m<sup>2</sup>, the hotel disposes a perfect architectural system.

Different kind of services and objects are available at the hotel, including: the Veranda, Banquet Hall, which as a capacity of 450-500 seats, Restaurant 22 is a luxurious restaurant with high standards which offers a reach international an local gastronomy, City Caffe filled with rooms, VIP halls and the conference and meeting hall, equipped with the latest technology of interpreting systems, enabled for video conferences as well. It also has suites for handicaps, deluxe suites and presidential suites.

After the last renovations the hotels disposes with 67 rooms, 50 room (for one person and two persons), and 17 suites including handicap, deluxe and presidential suites. Hotel Dukagjini also possesses a night club, a recreational center that includes a pool, sauna, Turkish bathroom and a fitness gym.

### 7.1. Training system in Hotel “Dukagjini”

Hotel Dukagjini is engaged to make sure that clients are offered professional services and that the client is very satisfied with hotel products and services. Trainings that are organized in Hotel Dukagjini have the purpose the betterment of knowledge and skills of employees in a way that they can offer quality and according to the international standards service.

In Hotel Dukagjini training is applied more with new employees who have just been hired, in order to orient them in work by offering them general

information about the hotel, client services, duties and responsibilities, etc. Besides all this, trainings are held for other employees and those who work part-time or seasonal employees. Management of Hotel Dukagjini considers that if the personnel has a low level of education and has no experience in hotel services, it is necessary for them to be trained. Employees who work in this hotel are mainly graduates, but there are some who only finished high school.

Trainings are held three or four times a year, in order to increase quality of service by including service rules, rules of conduct, dressing code, increasing food quality, increasing communication, where mainly waiters, bartenders, cooks and receptionists are trained. Trainings were held for management staff as well, they consider that the training program has resulted successfully since new knowledge and skills have been learned, which have been later applied and had a positive effect in increasing employee performance and taking optimal decisions by the hotel management. Training, development, and promotion of employees are a strategy of Hotel Dukagjini. They believe that training will help improving employee performance and they try to train and develop their employees in order to fulfill the employees' goals as much as they can fulfill the hotels goals.

All trainings that have been held are considered important since they had the same purpose, improvement of employee performance and to make sure clients get the best services from the hotel some of the advantages of the training system include development of communication, increase of knowledge and skill scope of employees, increase of performance, increase of motivation and above all, success of the hotel. A deficiency was considered the employees who did not consider these trainings as important. Their position towards trainings was not as serious as expected which affects the results of the training, their improvement and development. Thus management plans to hold more satisfying and interesting trainings by adding more diversity in order to get cooperation with employees. Also about 60% of the employees do not possess English language skills, in particular they don't speak, write or read it, a language which is considered an international language and is essential for tourist communication. They see English language knowledge as important and future trainings should be intensive in this aspect.

Since Hotel Dukagjini is part of the Dukagjini Corporation, where financial decision-making authority with the capacity approve training is the Board of Directors of this corporate, while they separate 15-20% of their budget for the implementation of personnel training program. Besides service employees where the held trainings were related to acquiring knowledge related to hospitality and services, understanding of hotel culture, then they got introduced to table serving and food serving procedures, food cooking and knowledge on beverages. Also trainings were held for organizational leaders,

monitors and managers. Trainings for employees were usually held by management, monitors, and trainers or hired outside pedagogues. The training program has helped employees improve skills and qualities in a continuous way, by gaining professional knowledge and has prepared them for future challenges.

#### 8. Conclusions and recommendations

Human Resource Management in hotels plays an important part. One of the activities that is considered to be an essential tool of management that result in many benefits, is training of personnel. These benefits include increase of work efficiency, helping employees broadening their knowledge and improve their skills, motivation and preparing employees for self-development, reduces employee circulation for searching for another job, helps employees and the hotel itself compete in a rapid changing environment.

Based on the results gathered by the quality research we know that trainings are important and they should receive attention and treated carefully by the management, but in Hotel Dukagjini there are some existing problems that relate to trainings. Main problems are that some of the employees are not aware about the importance of trainings or benefits that come from participating in them. A large portion of employees do not know English language, which today is a primary language to communicate with foreign tourists.

Some of the possible recommendations are stated below:

- Human Resource Department should explain the importance of training to employees, objectives and benefits that come from training to them and gained knowledge from trainings to be applied in the future.
- Engagement of experts, trainers and external pedagogues for holding trainings who have experience in hotel industry.
- Organizing of intensive English language and other language courses in order for the employees to be able to communicate with tourists.
- Shipment of managerial and non-managerial staff to conferences, seminars out of the country trainings that are related to hospitality and services.
- To instruct employees in increasing knowledge and skills through training, in order to fulfill their needs for, promotion, advancement and development. This way, they make an effort to offer services of highest quality for clients.

This study is considered helpful for hotel enterprises in order to grasp the importance of personnel training. Taking into account the humans are a valuable asset in every organization, their development and

training plays a key role in achieving its objectives. I hope this study contains some values to help hotels developing human resources.

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