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TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT:  
MANAGEMENT ATTITUDES  
AND PRACTICES

in the New Zealand Hotel Industry

by

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## ABSTRACT

Economic restructuring and rationalisation in service industries have led to an increased emphasis on the role of human resources in achieving strategic goals. Little attention in the past has been given by senior managers to the role of training in linking human resource needs with strategic needs. Differences in training practices and resource allocations among organisations can be explained to a large degree by senior managers' attitudes toward the training function and wider human resource development.

This study investigates the attitudes and intentions of senior managers in New Zealand hotels towards the training of their management staff. Specifically, the attitudes of senior hotel managers toward training components, training provision responsibility, training benefits and barriers, and training delivery were surveyed. Future training intentions were also investigated along with training behaviours over the last twelve months. Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) 'Theory of Reasoned Action' behavioural model was applied to training decision making to determine the relationship between attitudes and intentions and their links with past behaviour.

Results of this study indicate that senior hotel managers believe that training should include technical, personal and career development opportunities but differentially accept responsibility for provision. Significantly, fewer senior managers accept responsibility for personal development training than technical or career development. Resource allocation behaviours in the last twelve months reflect these responsibility beliefs.

Management of the training function is still underdeveloped. Less than half of the respondents reported having a training policy which details criteria and procedures for training resource allocation, while a similar number have a systematic approach to training resource decision-making.

Application of the Theory of Reasoned Action behavioural model to the training decision making process indicates that there is a relationship between attitudes and intentions. A comparison of attitudes and intentions with past training behaviour also indicates some relationship although full application of the behavioural model would require research into the links between reported intentions and subsequent training behaviour.

*Key Words:* Training and development, senior managers, beliefs, attitudes, intentions, hotel industry, New Zealand, decision making, technical skills, personal development, career development.

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The mountain has finally been conquered!!!!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES .....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES .....	x
 CHAPTER ONE	
INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background to Study .....	1
1.1.1 Training in New Zealand .....	2
1.1.2 Influences on Training Provision .....	2
1.2 Interest in Topic .....	4
1.3 Study Objectives .....	5
1.4 Study Overview .....	5
 CHAPTER TWO	
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	6
2.1 Introduction .....	6
2.2 Human Resource Development .....	7
2.2.1 Human Resource Management .....	7
2.2.2 Human Resource Development .....	7
2.2.3 Training .....	8
2.3 External Pressures for Human Resource Development .....	9
2.3.1 Domestic Economic Policy Changes .....	9
2.3.2 Organisational Changes .....	9
2.3.3 Technological Changes .....	10
2.3.4 Workforce Changes .....	10
2.3.5 Social and Demographic Changes .....	11

2.4	Decision Making Processes and Training Practices	11
2.5	Strategic Contribution of Human Resources	12
2.5.1	Links with Business Strategy	12
2.5.2	Links with Bottom Line Results	14
2.6	Systematic Training Approach	15
2.6.1	Training Policy	15
2.6.2	Steps in Training Approach	15
2.7	Investment Commitment	18
2.7.1	Theories Explaining Investment Decisions	18
2.7.2	Factors Influencing Financial Investment	19
2.7.3	Factors Influencing Time Investments	20
2.8	Support, Commitment and Incorporation	20
2.8.1	Theory of Reasoned Action	21
2.8.2	Attitudes	22
2.8.3	Intentions	23
2.8.4	Behaviour	23
2.9	Components of Training	24
2.9.1	Personal Development	24
2.9.2	Career Development	25
2.9.3	Technical Training	26
2.9.4	Barriers to Training	27
2.10	The Hotel Industry	28
2.10.1	Management Development in the Hotel Industry	29
2.11	Summary	30

## CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY	31	
3.1	Research Aim	31
3.2	Research Questions	31
3.3	Research Subjects	32
3.4	Research Process	32
3.4.1	Preliminary Information Gathering	32
3.4.2	Verification of the Literature	32
3.4.3	Identification of Other Research	33

3.5	Questionnaire Development	33
3.5.1	Pilot Test	34
3.5.2	Distribution	34
3.5.3	Follow Up	34
3.6	Research Design	34
3.6.1	Questionnaire Design	35
3.6.2	Research Questions	35
3.7	Data Analysis	37
3.8	Validity and Reliability of Research	38
3.8.1	Reliability	38
3.8.2	Validity	39
3.9	Summary	40

## CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS		41
4.1	Response Rate	41
4.2	Respondent Characteristics	41
4.2.1	Personal Backgrounds	41
4.2.2	Work Backgrounds	43
4.3	Respondents' Attitudes to Training	44
4.3.1	Training Components	45
4.3.2	Links with Organisational Productivity	45
4.3.3	Past Training Experiences	46
4.3.4	Appropriate Management Background	47
4.3.5	Ability in Managing Training	48
4.3.6	Benefits of Training	48
4.3.7	Barriers to Training	49
4.3.8	Responsibility for Training	51
4.3.9	Training Decisions	52
4.3.10	Training Methods	52
4.4	Past Behaviour	54
4.4.1	Organisational Policies	54
4.4.2	Decision Making	55
4.4.3	Training Process Steps	55



4.4.4	Training Methods Used	58
4.4.5	Percentage of Staff Trained	60
4.4.6	Resource Allocations	61
4.5	Behavioural Intentions	61
4.5.1	Personal Intentions	62
4.5.2	Staff Training Intentions	62
4.6	Relationship between Attitudes, Past Behaviour and Intentions	63
4.6.1	Relationship between Attitudes and Reported Intentions	63
4.6.2	Relationship between Attitudes and Past Training Behaviour	65
4.6.3	Relationship between Past Behaviour and Reported Intentions	66
4.7	Summary of Results	67

## CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	69
5.1 Interpretations and Implications	69
5.1.1 Integration of Business Strategies and Training	70
5.1.2 Organisational Culture	70
5.1.3 Training Resource Accounting	71
5.1.4 Investment Commitment	72
5.1.5 Management of the Training Approach	73
5.1.6 Training Decision Making	74
5.2 Recommendations Arising From The Research	75
5.2.1 Practitioner Recommendations	75
5.2.2 Research Recommendations	77
5.2.3 Methodological Recommendations	78
5.3 Concluding Comments	80

BIBLIOGRAPHY	81
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APPENDICES	86
APPENDIX 1: PILOT LETTER	86
APPENDIX 2: SURVEY LETTER	87
APPENDIX 3: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE	89
APPENDIX 4: FOLLOW UP LETTER	97

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1	Perceived Link Between Training and Organisational Productivity . . . . .	46
Table 4.2	Satisfaction With Past Training Experiences . . . . .	46
Table 4.3	Satisfaction With Past Training of Management Staff . . . . .	47
Table 4.4	Perceived Appropriate Management Background . . . . .	47
Table 4.5	Perceived Benefits of Training . . . . .	49
Table 4.6	Perceived Barriers to Training . . . . .	50
Table 4.7	Attitude to Responsibility for Training Decision-Making . . . . .	52
Table 4.8	Perceived Effectiveness of Training Methods . . . . .	53
Table 4.9	Steps Undertaken in the Training Process . . . . .	57
Table 4.10	Training Methods Used . . . . .	58
Table 4.11	Relationship between Perceptions and Utilisation of Methods . . . . .	59
Table 4.12	Relationship between Hotel Size and Training Expenditures . . . . .	61
Table 4.13	Reported Intentions to Increase Training . . . . .	62
Table 4.14	Relationship between Attitudes (Components) and Intentions . . . . .	63
Table 4.15	Relationship between Attitudes (Benefits and Barriers) and Intentions . . . . .	64
Table 4.16	Relationship between Attitudes (Components) and Past Training . . . . .	65
Table 4.17	Relationship between Attitudes and Past Training . . . . .	66
Table 4.18	Relationship between Past Behaviour and Reported Intentions . . . . .	66

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	The Reasoned Action Model . . . . .	3
Figure 2.1	The Training - Development Continuum . . . . .	8
Figure 2.2	Business and Human Resource Strategy Integration . . . . .	14
Figure 4.1	Years in The Industry . . . . .	41
Figure 4.2	Educational Qualifications . . . . .	42
Figure 4.3	Hours Spent on Management Training . . . . .	43
Figure 4.4	Size of Hotel Represented . . . . .	43
Figure 4.5	Number of Management Staff . . . . .	44
Figure 4.6	Attitudes about Training Components . . . . .	45
Figure 4.7	Attitude to Organisational Responsibility . . . . .	51
Figure 4.8	Organisational Training Policy . . . . .	54
Figure 4.9	Decision Making Practices . . . . .	56
Figure 4.10	Percentage of Staff Receiving Training . . . . .	60

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

*Our tourism workforce is insufficiently skilled to respond fully to the opportunities afforded by our natural advantages in the tourism market. The long term success and growth of the industry is, I would argue, contingent upon the development of a skilled labour force, able to provide our increasingly sophisticated and diverse clientele with the quality of service it expects and deserves. It is worth observing the fate of other industries which for too long relied on natural advantages alone. International competition will set the standard and if we are to compete, it is up to us to meet or exceed that standard" (Dawkins, 1988:3).*

#### 1.1 Background to Study

While Dawkins was referring to Australian tourism, he could easily have been referring to any number of countries and industries. For example, Hussey (1988:58) describes management training in British industry as: "...inadequate resources ineffectively managed, and with most effort being devoted to the wrong things". He attributes the fault to senior management who give little or no attention to training. In New Zealand, a study of management and management development conducted by Hooley and Franko (1990) also reports similar findings of non-existent or under-developed human resource planning. The small size of New Zealand organisations means that time or financial resources for training are rarely available despite the increasing need for training by management staff (Hooley and Franko, 1990; McQueen, 1992).

Recent moves by New Zealand industries and central government to implement a radical new industry training strategy have been fuelled by the growing realisation of both the strategic advantage of a skilled workforce and New Zealand's comparatively poor position in the international market place. The relationship between economic growth and quality of labour inputs is not easily measured. However, an OECD study in 1986 (Haines, 1988) provides evidence that a more qualified labour force improves economic performance.

Successful nations around the world either have or are developing a post-compulsory training structure to meet the demands of the new business environment. In this new environment, the speed of

technological change requires organisations to be more flexible, more responsive and more entrepreneurial. These responses require higher skill levels, a better educated and a more flexible workforce.

### **1.1.1 Training in New Zealand**

Unfortunately, compared to many other OECD countries, New Zealand's pool of skilled and educated workers and managers is very shallow (Haines, 1988). While enrolments for all forms of post-compulsory education are comparable with other countries, New Zealanders' participation in education and training are well below the international standard for 19 year olds. In New Zealand 30.9% of 19 year olds are involved in education compared to 37.4% in Australia, 45.6% in Austria, 30.0% in Canada, 45.9% in Germany and 43.7% in the Netherlands (Haines, 1988:18).

Haines (1988) also provides evidence that New Zealand's output of university graduates is well below that of many other countries. Per 100,000 people, the United Kingdom produces 280 graduates, Australia produces 430, Japan 432, Canada 616, U.S.A. 621, while New Zealand produces just 272 (Haines, 1988:19). In addition, census data comparing the workforces of three other small OECD countries (Austria, Denmark and Switzerland) with that of New Zealand highlights the low levels of post-school formal training particularly at the technical, trade and sub-professional levels (Haines, 1988:19). This low participation is consistent for young people undertaking initial training as well as for older people pursuing continuing education and training.

Changes in technology have meant that people and organisations continually face situations that require new learning. The drive for efficiency is forcing organisations to achieve more with human resources despite reduced financial and material resources. A growing trend toward incorporating human resource planning into corporate strategic planning reflects the elevation of human resources to a key strategic position.

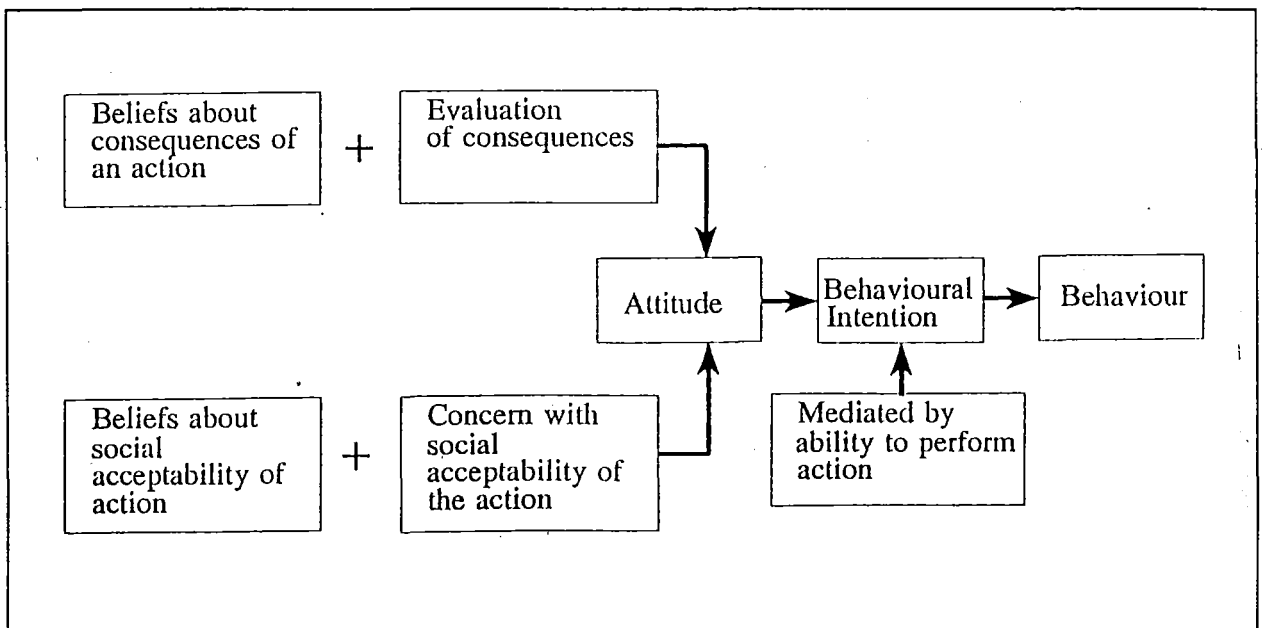
### **1.1.2 Influences on Training Provision**

Hooley and Franko's (1990) study which surveyed 474 managers, provides an overview of the context of recent organisational change in New Zealand, including comments on the impacts and implications for management and management development. They investigated attitudes toward access to training and management development practices in a wide range of organisations, and considered changes needed to meet the demands for quality management in the next decade.

One of the important findings of the study was that the attitude of the senior manager was crucial to the encouragement of training and development and in many cases, was a major barrier to increasing training within the organisation. Unfortunately this relationship between attitude and behaviour was not explored further, but results did suggest that management attitudes may be an important factor in decision making and resource allocation. Other research also points to the importance of the attitudes and involvement of senior management in the successful implementation of training programmes (Sirota et al., 1989; Wood, 1992; Department of Labour, 1989; Hussey, 1988).

Behavioural scientists have for many years attempted to develop a model to explain behaviour and to improve behavioural prediction. Some of the leading work has been that of Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) whose Theory of Reasoned Action attempts to explain the link between attitude and behaviour. According to this theory, patterns of behaviour can be explained and even predicted by intentions, and in turn, intentions can be predicted by attitudes. Further, the theory claims that "...attitudes are a function of beliefs" (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980:7). Beliefs include perceptions that behaviour will lead to desired outcomes and that these actions should be performed. An intermediary determinant between attitude and behaviour is 'intention' which is an indicator of a person's intent to act or perform.

Figure 1.1 The Reasoned Action Model



Thus, according to Ajzen and Fishbein, in order to explain or predict differences in training behaviour between organisations, an understanding of senior managers' attitudes and intentions is required. The model in Figure 1.1 depicts this causal relationship.

To date, no empirical studies have investigated the attitudes of New Zealand senior managers towards training, nor the link between these attitudes and subsequent training resource allocation decisions. Furthermore, managers' beliefs about training components are unknown, as are their beliefs about the benefits of, barriers to, and responsibility for training and their intentions toward future training delivery and related resource allocations. Thus, increased understanding of attitudes held by senior managers and the relationship between intentions and future behaviour could serve as a valuable tool for enhancing the quality and quantity of training in New Zealand in the future.

Given the hierarchical structure of most organisations, the most direct way to measure senior managers' attitudes and intentions in regard to training is to evaluate their management of the training process for their immediate subordinates (i.e., their management staff). While operative staff training is also strongly influenced by senior managers' attitudes and policies, it is to some degree mediated by second level managers. For this reason, the current study focuses on past behaviours, attitudes and intentions of senior managers in relation to the training of their management staff.

## **1.2 Interest in Topic**

My interest in training stems from personal experiences of training processes and decision making in recreation and tourism industries in which differences in training opportunities between and within organisations were apparent. The organisational 'culture' influencing the role and resourcing of training in the organisation was determined to a large extent by the senior manager's beliefs and values. Unlike other investment decisions, training decisions and resource allocations were usually made with little or no cost-benefit analysis.

Later work in developing national training structures and curricula for recreation professionals also highlighted variations in access to, and provision of, training opportunities, particularly at middle management level. As training culture and resource allocation is directed from the top of the management hierarchy, it seemed pertinent to investigate the affect of beliefs and attitudes of these key decision-makers on the training process.

Due to difficulties of survey size, comparability of data and potential for superficial analysis in a broad based study, the scope of this study was limited to one industry. Personal research interests lie in both recreation and tourism, but subject choices were narrowed by difficulties in finding suitably sized, and

relatively homogeneous sub-groups with national representation. Many recreation organisations in particular, are small and fall across the commercial, public and voluntary sectors. They therefore have different philosophical and financial bases, making comparison between them difficult.

The tourism industry with its recent expansion, high profile and diversity of sectors provided more research scope. Within the accommodation industry, the hotel sector has well defined boundaries, categories of size and a diverse human resource base, providing an ideal environment in which to conduct training research. In addition, the hotel sector shares common personnel characteristics with many other sectors in the recreation and tourism industry. Some of these characteristics include the employment of many part-time staff, long and varied hours of work and a predominantly service based focus. More specific characteristics are outlined in Chapter Two.

### **1.3 Study Objectives**

The specific objectives of this study are to investigate the factors influencing the delivery and resourcing of management training in New Zealand. The main focus is on the attitudes of senior hotel managers toward training and the relationship of these attitudes with future intentions and past training behaviour.

### **1.4 Study Overview**

This study begins by introducing a global perspective of environmental changes and the impacts of these changes on human resource development before the focus is narrowed down to human resource development and training in the New Zealand context. The influence of senior managers' attitudes are discussed in light of the Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) behavioural model. An overview of the Theory of Reasoned Action model and an analysis of the training literature is provided in Chapter Two.

The research questions and method of enquiry are outlined in Chapter Three while results and a summary of findings are presented in Chapter Four. Chapter Five considers the implications of this study for future training research and practices in New Zealand.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

*"One of the most important resources possessed by the nation is its managerial skills. Ideas can only be turned into wealth when combined with effective management. Those services which spend wealth must also be well managed to ensure maximum benefit from the resources available." (Constable and McCormick, 1987 cited in Hooley and Franko, 1990:iii).*

#### 2.1 Introduction

The quality of managers and their ability to turn ideas into action and lead others in the achievement of goals is vital for the success of any organisation operating in today's turbulent world. It is especially crucial for a small nation like New Zealand that relies heavily on trading in the competitive international market place (Haines, 1988; Department of Labour, 1989; Hooley and Franko, 1990).

In the past, New Zealand managers have considered themselves economically isolated from the outside world, and adhered to outdated ideologies which are dysfunctional in the prevailing economic environment (Hussey, 1988; Stone, 1991; Hooley and Franko, 1990; Rudman, 1991). In most New Zealand companies, human resource planning and development has been and still is underdeveloped or non-existent and this paucity extends to management development. Some larger companies employ specialist training managers to assess needs and provide training programmes but most provide little or no management training (Hooley and Franko, 1990; Rudman, 1991; McQueen, 1992; Department of Labour, 1989).

The 1986 census showed that 74,000 people in New Zealand were employed in jobs considered administrative or managerial, an increase of nearly 60% since 1981 (Department of Labour, 1989). The lack of planned human resource development across the nation is of concern to industry and government (McQueen, 1992; Haines, 1988; Department of Labour, 1989). The small size of New Zealand organisations means that there is rarely time or sufficient financial resources to engage in adequate management training. Nevertheless, there is a greater need for training to overcome economies of scale and to compete successfully in international markets (Hooley & Franko, 1990; Rudman, 1991).

A number of New Zealand's major competitors and trading partners have studied the contribution of human resource training to organisational success and initiated national human resource training programmes to increase the base skill and knowledge level of their workforces. Managers in New Zealand have also recognised the seriousness of the situation and the failure of many industries in New Zealand to make the required training investment. The 'Skill New Zealand' (Education and Training Support Agency, 1991) initiative is an attempt by government to enter into a partnership with industry to plan and develop human resources nationally in order to improve productivity and international competitiveness.

Small, developed nations like New Zealand are unable to compete with low wage countries in labour intensive industries. New Zealand's competitive advantage will lie in having a workforce able to adopt and adapt new technology quickly and efficiently. Human resource management will require a fundamental change in workplace culture and attitudes toward staff and their development.

## **2.2 Human Resource Development**

### **2.2.1 Human Resource Management**

Human resource management is an 'umbrella' concept which encompasses many aspects of human capital in organisations including personnel systems, information systems, industrial relations, equal opportunities, occupational health and safety as well as training and development. The primary goal being the maximisation of productivity, profits and quality of work environment through the effective management of people and human systems (Cascio, 1992; Mondy and Noe, 1990; McLagan, 1989).

### **2.2.2 Human Resource Development**

As a sub-section of human resource management, human resource development is centred on improving employee competencies and organisational performance (Mondy and Noe, 1990; McLagan, 1989; Cacioppe et al., 1991). A wider concept than training and development, human resource development includes organisational development and changes in human resource systems and inter-organisational relationships to expand work related abilities.

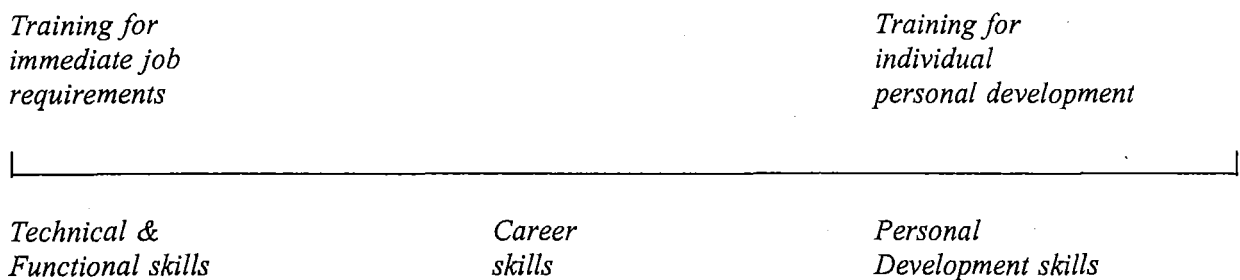
The organisation must have a strategic plan through which it can determine human resource requirements as well as those of capital resources. The plan must identify the staff skills and knowledge required and those held or desired to be developed by current employees (Collins, 1991; McLagan, 1989). Training then becomes the strategy which brings together human resource capabilities with business demands.

### 2.2.3 Training

Training is concerned with changing employee behaviour, knowledge and job performance through planned learning experiences. Although there are significant overlaps, traditionally lower level employees were 'trained' while higher level employees were 'developed' (Cascio 1992; Carrell et al., 1992). This distinction focuses on the learning of technical skills by non-management staff versus the acquisition of a broader range of career and personal development skills by managers or future managers.

Detail about who needs training and the type of training required ideally comes from assessments that compare individual competencies with the requirements of the job they currently perform. Development programmes, however, have tended to be future oriented and designed to look beyond immediate needs to future responsibilities and organisational demands (Nogradi, 1987). Placed on a continuum, technical skill training falls at one end while personal development skills, unrelated to current job requirements, fall at the other (see Figure 2.1 below).

Figure 2.1 The Training - Development Continuum



In reality, however, the distinctions outlined above are not so clear cut. While training emphasises the improvement of present job performance, the benefits may extend throughout an individual's career and assist in future career moves. Moreover, the job related skills required in the service sector are not readily differentiated from personal development skills and in many cases amount to the same thing.

Discussions on training also differentiate between training and education (Cacioppe et al., 1991; Leap and Crino, 1990; Cascio, 1992). When such distinctions are made, 'training' is defined as providing skills which are specific, task-related and not easily transferable. The intent is that the individual will respond to a given situation in a predictable way without hesitation (Leap and Crino, 1990). Education on the other hand, is considered a means by which the individual is exposed to a range of possible responses requiring assessment based on selective decision making. Education provides skills which are both general and readily transferable. Management positions require elements of educational preparation. Lower level

workers in the service industry need similar preparation, as they are increasingly being called upon to exercise judgement and choose from alternative solutions to job problems (Haines 1988).

While these distinctions are interesting, in practice, it is difficult to clearly differentiate between training, development and education. With these limitations in mind training, for the purposes of this study, is defined as:

*the planned development of knowledge and skills at the individual, group and/or organisational level to obtain current or future job, career or personal goals.*

## **2.3 External Pressures for Human Resource Development**

The surge in attention given to human resource development in New Zealand follows the trend in other Western nations. However, any human resource developments that occur in New Zealand must reflect this country's unique blend of external and internal adaptations to wider environmental forces, some of which are considered below.

### **2.3.1 Domestic Economic Policy Changes**

The "post-Rogernomics" era in New Zealand has seen a continuation of the trend away from protection of our industries and toward continued deregulation of the economy. Managers, through their organisations, now have to compete with domestic and international competitors in industries which traditionally have been protected from competition by virtue of their small size and geographically dispersed markets (Hooley and Franko, 1990; Rudman, 1991; McQueen, 1992).

McQueen (1992) even goes as far as to suggest that deregulation, with its resulting emphasis on increased efficiency and international competitiveness, has been the single most significant issue influencing current corporate recruitment and training strategies.

### **2.3.2 Organisational Changes**

Rapid structural change has occurred at the same time as exposure to international competition, changing the demand for workforce skills at all levels. The decline in some sectors of manufacturing and primary industries and a rise in the service industries has led to a change in demand for skilled labour across a spectrum of service related industries. Included in these human resource demands, according to Cacioppe et al. (1991:109) are: "...quality assurance, adaptability, flexibility, service, improvement and innovation."

During the 1980s, many larger organisations were decentralised, forcing the development of semi-autonomous units and the flattening of organisational structures. In this process, many layers of middle management have been removed and authority and power have been pushed down to lower level managers or teams (Sherman and Bohlander, 1992; Cacioppe et al., 1991; Hussey, 1988; Hooley and Franko, 1990). However, the change from autocratic hierarchical structures to participatory systems of decision-making based on team accountability, has been hindered by an internal focus on survival through efficiency improvements.

Fuelled by an economic downturn, the drive for efficiency has caused an escalation in the removal of job positions, requiring those remaining to take on increased functional and technical roles, often without adequate preparation. Inadequate leadership, a short term financial orientation, and limited external perspective have characterised the management of many organisations (Hooley and Franko, 1990; Rudman, 1991; Cacioppe et al., 1991).

### **2.3.3 Technological Changes**

Rapid changes in technology have created an acute need for people with specialised technical skills. New forms of information storage and retrieval and advances in telecommunications technology have dramatically exacerbated this need (Stone, 1991; Cascio, 1992; Taylor, 1993). Computer technologies have had considerable impacts on the traditional functions of accounting, inventory controls and similar processes.

Technological change, as well as drastically reducing the need for labour, has transformed much of the qualitative demand for labour, as innovations have created changes in occupation, the organisation of work and ultimately in the skills required for employment (Haines, 1988; McQueen, 1992). The potential for new technology to increase productivity is dependent on the ability of the workforce to develop and utilise highly technical tools and methods efficiently.

### **2.3.4 Workforce Changes**

The increase in demand for skilled labour occurs across a wide spectrum of industries and occupations, but particularly in the diverse service sector. The last census indicates that over 65 percent of New Zealand's workforce is now in the service sector and this proportion is growing (Hooley and Franko, 1990). Tourism has become one of the major foreign income earners. There has also been a surge in manufacturing output to provide products for growing specialist niche markets. There is evidence that

these new occupations and organisational structures cross traditional skill boundaries and require the possession of multiple skills. It has also been suggested that service sector occupations demand a greater average skill level than that required in other occupations (Haines, 1988; Zawacki, 1988; Anon, 1987).

Business strategies centred on the quality and versatility of human resources will be critical to competitiveness in industries which rely on employee knowledge, attitudes and skills. Human resource development must be continuous and tailored for all levels and categories of staff (McQueen, 1992; Jowsey, 1989; Hilsgen, 1988; Zawacki, 1988).

### **2.3.5 Social and Demographic Changes**

Social and demographic changes have also generated new training needs for managers in areas such as equal employment opportunities and occupational safety and health. They also reinforce the need for training in communication, negotiation, problem solving and decision-making (Cacioppe et al., 1991).

Women, having traditionally been well represented in the service industry, are more prevalent at the management level than in traditional primary production and manufacturing industries (Rudman, 1991; Stone, 1991). A different cultural composition is also evident as the type of work is attracting ethnic groups skilled in specialist sectors of the service industry (Rudman, 1991; Department of Labour, 1989). The growth of service industries has created a new mix of workers and managers.

It is clear that external changes in the global economy impact heavily on human resource requirements. New Zealand's competitiveness will lie in the skills and knowledge of the workforce and the ability of managers to respond strategically and lead staff to accomplish organisational goals. High levels of training and education will be required if service objectives such as responsiveness to customer needs are to be met.

## **2.4 Decision Making Processes and Training Practices**

A number of studies have been conducted to determine how well organisations are responding to the challenges of developing their workforces. Particular attention in this review has been given to studies conducted in Britain, the United States, Canada and Australia, countries which have similar economic policies and structures to New Zealand (e.g., Nogradi, 1986; Gordon, 1986; Boella, 1992; Sirota et al., 1989).

Research by Sirota et al. (1989) investigating the management factors distinguishing organisations with effective training practices identified four common characteristics. The characteristics, which are discussed in more detail below are:

1. *Strong ties to the business strategy and objectives linked to bottom line results.*
2. *A comprehensive and systematic approach to training.*
3. *Commitment to invest resources.*
4. *Support and commitment from senior management and the incorporation of training in the organisational culture.*

## **2.5 Strategic Contribution of Human Resources**

### **2.5.1 Links with Business Strategy**

A strategic approach to human resources views people as central to the planning process. Competitive strategies are the tools by which organisations set about achieving business goals. Strategy development (or formulation) involves choosing strategies that match an organisation's strengths (both capital resources and human competencies) with the opportunities and threats of its chosen environment. The connection between human resources and corporate strategy centres on the identification of the strengths and weaknesses inherent in the organisation's workforce and the identification of external opportunities and threats which may have an impact on personnel practices (Collins, 1987; Collins, 1991; Hussey, 1988; Stone, 1991).

When evaluating strategic alternatives, senior managers often fail to fully consider the human resource requirements associated with strategic initiatives. The study by Hussey (1988) of British companies provides support for this observation. Approximately two-thirds of the organisations surveyed failed to integrate their human resources plan with their business plan.

Strategy implementation is primarily concerned with ensuring that strategic plans are transferred into action by developing appropriate organisational structures and human resource policies and practices.

*"The design of the organisation's structure, its culture, the definition of its mission and objectives, its personnel policies and practices and managerial behaviour all serve to signal to employees how they are expected to behave and what they are expected to contribute" (Collins, 1987:12).*

Clear and consistent direction must come from senior management to ensure that the strategic goals are communicated throughout the organisation. Stone (1991:111) advocates the need for "...greater involvement of senior management in strategic planning, integration of training and development activities, recruitment and remuneration policies, more effective needs analysis, and an accurate evaluation of how effective training is within organisations".

Lack of attention to matching internal human resource requirements with strategic initiatives can cause major implementation problems. Staff in the organisation can place constraints on the implementation of new or existing strategies through industrial action, conflicting values, or through unwillingness to learn or adopt new skills or methods (Collins, 1987).

Human resource problems which impact on strategy implementation are not restricted to lower level employees. Within organisations, senior managers have had to increase their capacity to manage strategy development and implementation. Hussey (1988) notes:

*"... their performance in corporate planning may be inadequate... few directors will admit to knowing little about corporate planning, since part of their jobs is strategy. Yet few have taken the steps to learn about the subject... most executives believe that the knowledge of corporate planning that they have picked up by exposure to the practical issues of management is adequate. It is not" (Hussey, 1988:20).*

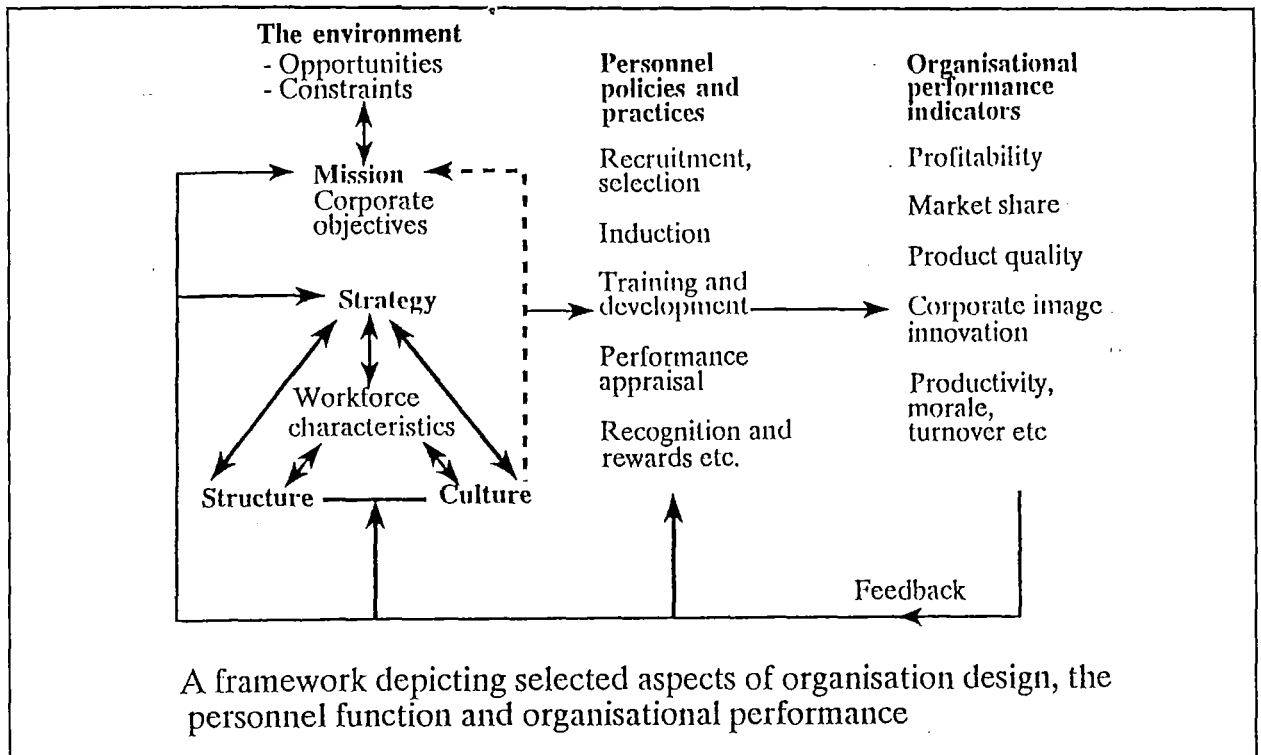
Senior managers may be required to adopt new competencies and a different view of the organisation-environment interface. In a world where the continual bombardment of new information and technologies is common place, the tendency is for individuals to try to stabilise the world around them by sticking to the familiar. Adherence to outdated ideologies and practices is a common form of resistance to change among senior managers as well as lower-level employees.

While the organisation's goals and strategies must guide all business units, different strategies may require different human resource practices (Cascio, 1992). Identification of the key competencies and knowledge required for implementation of current or future strategies can ensure, through planned learning, the development of individuals capable of performing current and future job roles (McLagan, 1989; Douglas, 1990; Wall, 1991; Hussey, 1988).

Training evolves from the integration of business strategies with human resource strategies as represented diagrammatically in Figure 2.2 (Collins, 1987:13).



Figure 2.2 Business and Human Resource Strategy Integration



### 2.5.2 Links with Bottom Line Results

The arguments for linking training with business strategies often do not extend to links with bottom line results. Training is often perceived negatively as a cost to be minimised rather than a tool to increase profitability (Hussey, 1988; Douglas, 1990; Hooley and Franko, 1990; McQueen, 1992).

The link between training and organisational profitability is highlighted by Hussey (1988:690).

*"What is needed in most companies is a mental shift from the common idea that training should be for the improvement of the individual because this will benefit the firm, to the concept that training should be for the benefit of the firm and this will benefit the individual. This change of emphasis is more than a play on words."*

Hussey's strong views may be in response to his 1985 study (Bramley, 1991) in which the majority of managers interviewed believed that training should be tailored to individual rather than to corporate needs. It is managers who must drive the process of defining policy and establishing training plans (Hussey, 1988). Management training becomes critical in tying together corporate and human resource strategies. Senior managers must ensure that management staff have the knowledge and skills to give effect to new policies or strategies.

## 2.6 Systematic Training Approach

Indications are that training is more important for both individuals and organisations than ever before because of the volatile environment and the increased need for the training process to achieve organisational goals. While there has been a growing awareness in many organisations of the need for, and contribution of training, generally the approach to it has been far from systematic.

The effectiveness of training programmes can be increased if a comprehensive training analysis is conducted as part of the process. Information on the skills required and the critical timelines will prevent the "spray and pray" strategies which typify many organisation's approach to training provision (Michaud, 1978:78).

### 2.6.1 Training Policy

The training approach taken will reflect the type of business that the organisation is involved in and the way the operational units are structured (Hussey, 1988). A training policy ensures the establishment of training budgets and communicates to staff the guidelines and procedures for training implementation. While not always successful, a training policy represents an attempt to set standardised training procedures throughout the organisation, thus overcoming problems associated with variations in abilities and attitudes held by authorising managers.

The strategic integration of human resource development with business goals requires the involvement of senior management in training decisions and policies (Leap and Crino, 1990; Hooley and Franko, 1990; Cascio, 1992; Cacioppe et al., 1991; Sloman, 1989). The visible commitment and support of senior management is essential for training funding or resource allocation is likely to fluctuate in response to other internal and external demands.

### 2.6.2 Steps in Training Approach

The training policy sets the framework, but it must be translated into a series of steps which establish the basis for training decision-making. A systematic approach to training provision involves:

1. Assessment of present and future organisational needs;
2. Determination of appropriate training methods; and
3. Evaluation of training outcomes in relation to organisational objectives

(Cascio, 1992; Leap and Crino, 1990; Stone, 1991; Sherman and Bohlander, 1992; Bramley, 1991).

a) Assessment Phase

*"The training needs analysis should attempt to identify problems and opportunities that senior management should solve and exploit with the assistance of appropriate training. The individual's job description, actual performance and potential should be the basis for these discussions together with organisational plans for the future" (Boella, 1992:119).*

There are three steps involved in training assessment. The first is the strategic analysis, which is based on the organisation's mission and goals, and provides answers to questions such as 'what business are we in', 'where do we want to go' and 'how will we get there'.

The second step in training assessment is task analysis, in which the skills required to accomplish the organisation's strategic goals are identified. The focus here is on identifying the 'content' requirements of training. Job descriptions and core competencies are the usual outcomes of such an analysis (Hooley and Franko, 1990; Leap and Crino, 1990).

Matching job performance requirements with skills and knowledge currently held by employees is the final step of training assessment. Performance appraisals provide a regular analysis of actual versus required performance. Good diagnosis is essential. The local expert (senior manager and/or training specialist) should work together with the employee/trainee to determine the skills required and how best to acquire them.

In theory, training assessment should involve a formal review in which superior and subordinate jointly identify training needs and negotiate a training programme based on organisational and individual needs. In many situations, however, the manager's view predominates.

*"There is the danger that managers are all trained to plough the same furrow as their boss, which may not meet the strategic requirements of the organisation" (Hussey, 1988:63).*

In short, the critical first step in a systematic approach to training is to relate the assessment of training needs to the achievement of organisational goals. However, assessing the needs for training does not end here. To evaluate the results of training and to assess what training is needed in the future, needs and objectives must be analysed regularly on an ongoing basis (Cascio, 1992; Stone, 1991; Bramley, 1991).

b) Training Phase

The training process and content are the primary components in the second phase of a systematic approach to training. Considerations include on-the-job versus off-the-job delivery and in-house versus out-of-house

training venues, both of which are dictated by the type of training required and the individuals being targeted. Other considerations include scheduling (during work hours or not, concentrated short-term or disseminated long-term) and leadership (in-house staff or external trainers) (Sherman and Bohlander, 1992; Leap and Crino, 1990).

The methodology that will be employed also requires careful analysis. For example, management is an activity which requires practical application that cannot be taught by lectures alone. Management training should take existing experience and knowledge, challenging and extending it to make practices more efficient and effective. The methodology and content of a training course must be matched with the ability and motivation of the individual to master and use the training.

Training methods used with management staff such as lectures, job rotation, secondment, coaching on and off the job, conferences or distance learning are often distinct from the methods employed for operative staff due to the different content and objectives. Ironically, many managers do not know the range of training methods available and their potential versatility. Traditional methods of training are often maintained despite being ineffective because senior managers lack adequate knowledge on alternative delivery methods (Hooley and Franko, 1990; Hussey, 1988).

#### c) Evaluation Phase

The evaluation process involves a comparison of training outcomes against training needs. Evaluation measures should focus on the transfer of learning, behavioural changes and job productivity measures. Few organisations take the evaluation phase seriously, neglecting also to conduct a cost-benefit analysis. A British study reported by Sloman (1989) found that when it came to evaluation of training fewer than one in five organisations had reviewed the benefit of training against the cost incurred.

The means of evaluation must be sensitive to the type of training conducted and the goals specified. Management training in particular, is often difficult to evaluate because of the type of training and the time lag associated with the transfer of learning (i.e., the adoption of concepts and practices learned in training to practice on the job).

It has long been argued that personal and career development training is difficult to evaluate. However, advances in utility analysis have made it possible to measure financial benefits and costs for most forms of training (Cascio, 1992). Any funds for training should only be allocated when an assessment of projected returns has been completed (Stone, 1991; Hussey, 1988).

## 2.7 Investment Commitment

There are large discrepancies between the organisation's degree of support for and senior management involvement in training (Nogradi, 1986; Hussey, 1988; Cacioppe et al., 1991). While some organisations offer what appears to be unlimited opportunities to staff, a significant number offer little or no support and take little interest in training activities. Such discrepancies raise important questions about why such a diversity of approaches to training occurs among organisations and what patterns exist in training behaviour.

### 2.7.1 Theories Explaining Investment Decisions

A report on Further Education and Training of the Labour Force by the New Zealand Department of Labour (1989) suggests that decisions on investment in human capital are like other investment decisions with variations between organisations and industries. A range of factors were found to have a bearing on the investment decision. The type of product or service provided, the labour requirements and the economic situation of the organisation are significant factors influencing training investment decisions.

If the organisation is expanding, staff productivity expectations will be raised, encouraging a more favourable attitude toward investment in training. Investment may also be influenced by employment strategies such as the degree of casual, contract or part-time staff. Also senior managers in organisations undergoing major structural or technological changes will make different decisions to those operating in a relatively stable environment. The extent to which the organisation is profit driven will also have a bearing on human resource investment.

Differentiation in training investment also occurs in the type of training senior managers are willing to invest in. The Human Capital Theory suggests that skills and knowledge cannot be separated from the person and for this reason the organisation cannot take ownership of training outcomes. Organisational self interest will restrict training investment to organisation-specific skills which are less portable and less transferable outside the organisation, unless other ways to secure their training investment can be found. Whenever a staff member leaves, the organisation loses some or all of its investment in the training which prepared them for advancement. In contrast to employers objectives, employees look for more general, transferable skills which have greater chance of reward on the open market and in personal life.

A further explanation for training investment differences is offered by Leicester (1989), who attributes the low level of training provided to employees in Britain to the level of management skills held by British

senior managers. Those senior managers who are trained in interpersonal skills, and who have explicit responsibility for managing people are more inclined to ensure that their workforce is fully trained. Thus, training encourages training, as trained managers tend to promote and maintain a properly trained workforce (Leicester, 1989).

### 2.7.2 Factors Influencing Financial Investment

Few companies know what they spend on training. Hussey (1988:62) states that:

*"In most companies the inability to look at training expenditure in statistical terms is a measure of disinterest. Few companies approach the problem of controlling training expenditure in an appropriate manner, and as a result often take training decisions on the wrong economic basis".*

Training decisions should be based around evaluation of effectiveness in meeting pre-determined organisational goals. Long term maximisation of returns at the sacrifice of short term opportunity costs should drive training investment decisions. The common response is to minimise out-of-pocket expenses (Hussey, 1988; Wainwright, 1990).

The size of the organisation has often been identified as an influence on training investment. Research in the United States by Holtmann and Idson (1991) and more recently in New Zealand by Hooley and Franko (1990), confirmed that larger organisations invest more per capita in training. The latter study reported that 1.6% of the managerial wage bill was spent on training in large organisations while this dropped to 1.1% in small organisations.

American and British studies clearly show that the employees most likely to participate in a formal training or development programmes are senior and middle managers. However, those likely to get the lion's share of employer-sponsored training are the operative workers (Hussey, 1988; Gordon, 1986).

Several factors influence where training investment is made. Some organisations are able to provide the training in-house while others look to outside training agencies to meet all or part of their training needs (Department of Labour, 1989). In-house training may be cheaper and more effective when factors such as control over the quality, relevance of training content, opportunities for team and morale building and economies of scale are weighed up (Department of Labour, 1989). In isolated cases, there may be no training alternative available outside the organisation.

In some circumstances it may be more effective to provide training off-the-job. Smaller organisations may obtain better economies of scale using outside training agencies and certain types of training (eg., stress management, interpersonal skills) may best be undertaken away from the workplace.

This investment dilemma is highlighted by Boella (1992:128):

*"The value of external courses lies to a great extent in the opportunity to exchange views with managers from other organisations, but this only has value if those attending can bring about organisational changes. This prerogative normally lies only with senior managers and therefore the value of external courses probably increases with the seniority of those attending".*

The Hooley and Franko (1990) study found that 75% of New Zealand managers receiving training were given paid time off work and training was equally distributed between internal and external courses. There was clear preference for short courses of one to five days to minimise the cost and time away from the job.

### **2.7.3 Factors Influencing Time Investments**

Time away from the job, while attending training courses, is a significant investment cost in terms of lost opportunities and reduced productivity (Gordon, 1986). While many organisations provide financial support for training occurring during work time, others find alternative ways to support the training of individual managers such as time off to complete external study and financial support for study undertaken in the employee's own time. Both the individual and the organisation benefit as training increases personal and career opportunities.

Research indicates that managers in New Zealand acknowledge the need for, and are enthusiastic about, further developing their managerial skills (Hooley and Franko, 1990). The current growth in part-time and distance learning MBA programmes geared specifically at those at managerial level is a good indicator of the demand for personal and professional development among managerial staff.

## **2.8 Support, Commitment and Incorporation**

The link between senior management support and training provision has been highlighted several times in this review. For training to be adequately resourced, managed and effectively evaluated it must be made part of the organisation's culture (Stone, 1991; Department of Labour, 1989; Hooley and Franko, 1990; Hussey, 1988; Gordon, 1986; McQueen, 1992).

*"A climate must be created in the company where the commitment of the individual to self development, and of the company to making this happen, is seen as the norm. This requires a value system which places continuous development as essential and a normal part of work" (Hussey 1988:192).*

The adoption of a training culture must be driven from the top implying training is both an organisational and a national responsibility (McQueen, 1992; Department of Labour, 1989; Haines, 1988). Training is seen by most governments as critical to competitive success, yet training remains a low priority when it comes to making resource allocations. In making international comparisons, Haines (1988) points out that Germany, Japan and the U.S.A., all in different ways, place heavy influence on training beyond immediate economic need. Flexibility, the ability to transfer skills and the motivation to undergo further training are seen as important national outcomes.

In most companies, very little top management time is devoted to training. "Few senior managers are actively involved in the implementation or monitoring of the training function" (Hussey, 1988:61). The attitudes toward training held by senior managers are a powerful determinant of training provision and resource allocation.

The link between attitude and behaviour can best be explained by the Theory of Reasoned Action drawn from the behavioural psychology literature.

### **2.8.1 Theory of Reasoned Action**

Developed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), prominent behavioural theorists, the Theory of Reasoned Action accounts for behaviour by reference to a relatively small number of concepts embedded within a single framework. The theory is based on the assumption that humans are rational and make decisions based on careful processing of information, which involves consideration of the implications of actions before the behaviour is undertaken (Pearce, 1988; Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein and Manfredo, 1992). The simplistic nature of the model allows it to be applied in a wide range of contexts.

Central to the Reasoned Action Model (shown in Figure 1.1) is the assumption that attitude is one of the key factors influencing behaviour. Ajzen & Fishbein (1980:27) explain:

*"... according to our approach any behavioral criterion can be predicted from attitude - be it a single action or pattern of behavior - provided that the measure of attitude corresponds to the measure of behavior".*



## 2.8.2 Attitudes

Attitudes are part of a system through which individuals explain and organise their world. Attitudinal systems are known as 'schema' (Pearce, 1988). Attitude schema are built up through experiences, either directly or through other information sources and predispose the individual to respond in a predictable fashion on the basis of a negative or positive evaluation (Pearce, 1988).

There is ongoing debate among psychologists about the nature of attitudes and their relationship to other concepts such as values, beliefs and behaviour (Pearce, 1988; Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Nevertheless, there appears to be general agreement that attitudes determine an individual's predisposition toward an object or issue. Attitudes shape "...one's particular way of thinking about, feeling about, and acting toward" an issue (Neulinger, 1981:96).

There has been considerable pressure from social and behavioural scientists to include demographic variables such as age, sex and educational background in the analyses of behaviour determinants (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein and Manfredo, 1992). The link between demographic variables and behaviour is acknowledged by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) through their influence on belief formation.

According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), the weighted sum of beliefs will predispose a person to a negative or positive attitude about a concept. Thus, attitudes are comprised of:

- a) beliefs that performing a behaviour leads to certain outcomes and
- b) beliefs that the individual holds about how other individuals and groups think he, or she, should behave.

Personal involvement or interest in an issue is likely to encourage greater *attention* and stronger *attitudes* toward it (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Direct experience with an issue, in this case past training, will be a significant factor in the formulation of attitudes currently being expressed.

Based on these concepts, this study investigates the attitudes of senior hotel managers towards various aspects of training through the following research questions:

What attitudes do senior managers have about the outcomes of training?

What attitudes do senior managers have about responsibility for training of management staff?

What attitudes do senior managers have about the benefits of training of management staff?

What attitudes do senior managers have about the barriers to providing training for management staff?

What attitudes do senior managers have about training delivery methods for management staff?

### 2.8.3 Intentions

One of the problems faced in the application of the Theory of Reasoned Action Model to behaviour prediction is the inconsistency between expressed beliefs and attitudes and subsequent actions (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein and Manfredo, 1992; Pearce, 1988). Reasons suggested for reported discrepancies centre around measurement methodologies. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) point out that attitudes can be good predictors of behaviour only when the measures of both attitude and behaviour correspond in regard to action, target, context and time dimensions.

Behavioural intention is proposed as a mediating variable between attitude and behaviour. An intention is a statement indicating one's likelihood of performing a behaviour given current information and conditions. An intention reflects overall attitude based on the weighted evaluation of expectancy that the desired outcomes can be achieved, and affective reactions (satisfaction/dissatisfaction) with past experiences. It will also account for environmental factors which override attitudes such as resource limitations, and organisational policies and culture.

Intentions involve a more complex evaluation of mediating variables and therefore are a more likely predictor of behaviour than attitude. Thus, given the importance of intentions in linking attitudes and behaviour, this study investigates:

What behavioural intentions do senior managers have toward the training of their management staff in the next twelve months?

What relationship exists between attitudes toward training components, benefits and barriers and reported future intentions,

### 2.8.4 Behaviour

The definition and measurement of behaviour has long been the neglected aspect of behavioural research. A common error is the failure to differentiate between behaviour, and outcomes of behaviour. A good example of this type of error is the measurement of productivity in industrial settings which is an outcome of behaviour rather than a behaviour itself. Outcomes, to a large extent are a result of behaviour but are more complicated to predict, as many behaviours can lead to the same outcome (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).

Another danger lies in making inferences from a single behaviour to a generalised category of behaviours. A specific behaviour is a single act performed by an individual. Behavioural categories involve sets of single actions which make up a general behavioural style. The difficulty lies in defining a set of actions deemed relevant to the behavioural category to be measured. A general index of a behavioural style is usually computed by summing the scores for a set of single related actions (such as in a Likert scaled multi-dimensional battery of statements).

Behaviour is a product of individual attitudes and beliefs which are mediated by social expectations, beliefs about the consequences of the behaviour, the value of the consequences and the knowledge of how to perform the behaviour (Pearce, 1988). By tracing the determinants of a behaviour back to underlying beliefs, it is possible to influence behaviour by changing these beliefs. In the case of training, this may involve exposing senior managers to information about the components and benefits of training which will change their beliefs and thereby influence their training resource allocation behaviour.

An analysis of behaviour following intentions, or the predictive ability of attitudes and intentions in future behaviour, is outside the scope of this study. However, past behaviour and experiences and their relationship with attitudes and intentions will be explored. Specific research questions will include:

What training practices involving management staff have occurred in the last twelve months?

What relationship exists between attitudes toward training components, benefits and barriers and reported past behaviours?

What relationship exists between reported intentions and past behaviours?

## **2.9 Components of Training**

This section will examine the literature related to key components of the training function. The components to be reviewed include technical, personal and career development training as well as the barriers, benefits and responsibilities associated with provision of these training opportunities.

### **2.9.1 Personal Development**

Satisfaction with one's life results from a combination of ingredients - physical health, emotional well-being, good personal relationships, freedom from stress and achievement of goals. Individuals at all stages of life require skills and knowledge apart from those specific to their job. These may include personal skills in such areas as time management, assertiveness, stress management, interpersonal relations,

leadership and liberal arts (Stone, 1991). Some skills will be directly transferable to the job context but many skills will simply develop the general personal skills and abilities of the individual.

Individuals cannot be separated from the wider environment in which they live. Satisfaction gained from developing or refining personal skills will inevitably be carried over to the work domain and may be exhibited through increased job satisfaction, confidence and motivation as Sherman and Bohlander (1992:212) suggest:

*"A better educated workforce, which values self development and personal growth, has brought an enormous desire for learning plus a growing need for new forms of participation at work".*

In the work environment, the increased demand for inter-divisional cooperation requires new forms of work participation. Cooperation can be improved through increased interpersonal skills which emphasise teamwork, positive communication and reinforcement, identification and achievement of shared goals. Career development and personal development become mutually interdependent because for many individuals, self concept, identity and satisfaction with job and life are tied closely to career success or failure. Some of the more enlightened senior managers recognise this and accept responsibility for the provision of personal development opportunities in their management development programmes.

## **2.9.2 Career Development**

In the strictest sense,

*"a career is a sequence of positions occupied by a person during the course of a lifetime" (Cascio, 1992:302).*

However, a career can also refer to the changes in values, attitudes and motivation that occur as a person develops in life. Both personal and career development represent the individual's quest for liberation and satisfactory forms of personal growth. Development, whether personal or career,

*"... is about individual empowerment - the development of those skills and attitudes which enhance people's ability to exercise some control over their lives" (Stone, 1991:124).*

This perspective assumes that the individual has control over the degree of satisfaction gained from his/her career and are able to manipulate the environment to maximise these factors (Cascio, 1992).

The major challenge for senior managers is reconciling the individual's need for growth with the organisation's demands for productivity and efficiency. A career development programme formally managed by the organisation will ensure that development experiences, both on and off-the-job, are

coordinated and will meet the needs of both the organisation and the individual (Sherman and Bohlander, 1992; Cacioppe *et al.*, 1991).

Individuals must take some responsibility for initiating their own career planning by identifying their current knowledge, skill base and future goals. The organisation, on the other hand, needs to provide relevant background information on its mission, policies and strategic goals so that a match can be made between the individual and organisational goals (Cacioppe *et al.*, 1991; Cascio, 1992). To make career development decisions, employees need to be kept informed with regard to the organisation's business activities and intentions as these will determine future career opportunities.

The identification of career paths and development of organisational career management systems has become important motivators in large organisations which have an internal labour market (Haines, 1988; Department of Labour, 1989; Stone, 1991). Every individual will have a unique mix of development needs as people bring to their job their own individual package of skills, knowledge and values.

The success of development programmes rests on senior management support, well defined goals, effective communication and compatible human resource policies (Sherman and Bohlander, 1992; Stone, 1991). Support for career development can provide a number of benefits for the organisation including lower staff turnover and greater organisational loyalty. It may also tap individual potential, providing a pool of staff able to take greater delegated responsibility (Cacioppe *et al.*, 1991). Development initiatives also facilitate the attainment of qualifications which will aid future job prospects and earning capacity, raising the skill level of the workforce across the wider industry.

### **2.9.3 Technical Training**

Technical or functional training is generally directed at helping individuals improve their job performance and is the most frequently provided form of training. Technical training provides opportunities for individuals to acquire or learn specific job related behaviours, knowledge or skills that are applicable to the demands of their current position. Once base level competence is attained, further training can provide additional skills and knowledge to enable advancement to positions of higher responsibility.

The 'new' workplace demands functional flexibility. Individuals must be multi-skilled in order to handle a broad range of jobs as the establishment of project teams has expanded the boundaries of jobs and skills. At the same time, "...rapid changes in information and other technologies have created an acute need for people with specialised technical skills" (Sherman and Bohlander, 1992: 212). Information technology,

a vital ingredient in the service industry, is changing so rapidly that continual updating of skills is required to keep pace with new developments and processes.

Supervisory skills fundamental to management positions include basic competencies in planning, leading, organising and controlling. To this base, middle managers must add organisational behaviour understanding and functional skills such as marketing and finance (Rabey, 1980).

Responsibility for technical training is generally accepted by the organisation because clear productivity outputs result. However there are some managers who hold the belief that staff should come to the organisation fully equipped with the knowledge and skills for the job and abdicate all responsibility for further training and development. While employees often come to the job with specific job-related skills and knowledge, many procedures and systems are unique to the organisation. Therefore, management must accept responsibility for orienting and imparting organisation specific knowledge and skills to new recruits (Cacioppe et al., 1991; Cascio, 1991).

Training, whether it be technical, personal or career development, results in benefits at two levels. Individuals gain increased knowledge and skills transferable to both social and work life, while organisations gain staff with interest and pride in the job and improved morale and employee relations, increased efficiency and greater employee stability at all levels in the workplace (Ledgerwood, 1992).

#### **2.9.4 Barriers to Training**

*"Unfortunately there is a tendency for many senior managers to view training as an admission of personal weakness, which is rationalised as being "unable to spare the time". There is also the fact that, given the actual or perceived status of the training function in too many organisations, few companies feel that their senior people can be trained internally" (Hussey, 1988:86).*

Barriers to investment in 'human capital' vary according to the characteristics of the organisation and the products or services it produces (Department of Labour, 1989). One of the greatest problems for service industries operating around-the-clock is the coordination of personnel activities. As well as placing restrictions on team building training, the requirement to repeat sessions increases costs. While financial barriers to training have already been discussed in Section 1.7.2, there are important social-psychological factors which also act as barriers to training investment.

Negative attitudes towards training are likely to occur when past experiences have shown no post-training change in staff performance, or when the outcomes of training are different to those anticipated. An

example of the latter is when the trainee may return with an approach to problem-solving or work methods, acquired during the training programme, which are incompatible with organisational systems or approaches.

Similarly, many senior managers lack competencies in determining training needs or lack the ability to analyse and select the appropriate training. This is in no way a reflection of their potential skill level but reflects the inadequacy of their own professional preparation.

Interest shown by staff toward training opportunities may also strongly influence the enthusiasm of senior managers to provide opportunities. Recipients will be positive toward investment in training if there is a chance to maximise lifetime earnings through promotion or new career opportunities or to gain higher remuneration for new knowledge or skills gained. Uncertainty about likely returns, lack of access to finance and lack of information will reduce the degree of interest. Furthermore, social and attitudinal barriers may limit the desire to acquire new skills (Department of Labour, 1989).

Major obstacles to training provision in New Zealand reflect overseas trends and centre on time away from the workplace, financial constraints, lack of appropriate courses and senior management attitudes (Hooley and Franko, 1990). The final section of this review provides a background to managers and management in the hotel industry and considers influences on training including the affect of senior managers on the process.

## **2.10 The Hotel Industry**

With the exception of two early studies by Nailon in 1968 and the Hotel and Catering Industry Training Board in 1970, research into management development in the hotel industry has only been conducted in recent years. Baum (1989), Wood (1992) and Boella (1992) have all been involved in comparative studies of hotels internationally. Their findings, in the absence of New Zealand based data, provide a profile of human resource management in the hotel industry.

According to Boella (1992) labour accounts for a significant proportion (10-40%) of the running cost of hotels. The industry's workforce has traditionally been drawn from the secondary labour market (i.e., students and part-time workers) although new career structures are changing this trend. The industry has

several human resource problems including a high staff turnover, 'institutionalised pilfering' of staff and in many institutions, low performance standards (Boella, 1992; Baum, 1989).

While employment conditions in the hotel industry have improved in recent years, they are still poor in relation to many other service industries despite the efforts of senior managers of several of the larger organisations to improve conditions and the overall image of the industry.

### **2.10.1 Management Development in the Hotel Industry**

Individuals moving into management careers in the hotel industry enter via three main routes (Baum, 1992). One group of individuals take up management positions after gaining specialist hotel school training either locally or internationally. A second group work their way up into management positions through a succession of positions after joining the organisation at an entry level job. Many owners or managers of small to medium hotels typify the third group who move into the hotel industry from positions in other industry sectors.

Wood (1992) charges managers in the industry with being 'notoriously insular' due to training which separates hotel management with its additional specialist technical skills and knowledge from general management training. This insularity is reinforced by the large number of managers who enter a hotel career at an early age and remain throughout their working lives. In the past, promotional prospects in the industry have not necessarily been improved by the gaining of vocational qualifications (Guerrier, 1987; Baum, 1989) as experience has been regarded more highly.

A high degree of job mobility characterises the work records of many hotel managers. It is common to gain an assistant managers position in one organisation and to then "...move frequently between hotels 'collecting' experience of both specific functions and of different types of hotels" during progression up the management ladder. (Wood, 1992:81). The attainment of a senior management position is not necessarily the final career move unless it is in a prestigious hotel.

Compared to managers in other industries, hotel managers are given a high degree of freedom in operational management. Research by Nailon in 1968, supported by more recent research, (Baum, 1989; Wood, 1992) indicates that hotel managers are involved in a greater number of activities than their counterparts in other industries, see less of their peers and are rarely involved in group situations. They spend considerable time monitoring operations and maintaining personal contacts with staff and customers rather than concentrating on more administrative roles. Managers typically:



*"...saw their jobs very clearly in terms of being out and about in the hotel. This very often involved working long hours - an average of 12-14 hours a day was not seen as unusual and with very few and irregular days off, if any. Rather than seeing this as a potential source of dissatisfaction, they saw it more as perfectly normal for the industry" (Guerrier and Lockwood (1989) cited in Wood, 1992:82).*

While they do have a measure of autonomy, hotel managers receive a relatively poor remuneration package for their work. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that the length of service with any one organisation averages only 4.4 years, nearly half that of managers in other industries (Baum, 1989; Boella, 1992). Women are highly represented in the industry but are notably under-represented at managerial level, tending to be involved in ancillary roles associated with marketing, sales and training.

The pressure of other responsibilities reduces the priority given to personnel matters by many senior managers in the industry (Wood, 1992:93). In organisations which do employ personnel managers, their primary role is recruitment rather than staff development and training. However, the degree of emphasis on training is positively related to the size of the organisation (Boella, 1992).

While more likely to provide training, large organisations incur a different problem (Wood, 1992). In such organisations the human resource development policy bears little resemblance to the actual training activity at the unit level. The physical and communication distance between 'Head Office' and company units, represented by individual hotels, is often such that even when formal personnel philosophies or procedures had been laid down at corporate level, most units followed informal procedures (Wood, 1992).

## **2.11 Summary**

The attitude of senior management has been highlighted as a critical factor in determining training practices and resource allocations. Thus, an increase and improvement in training practices will require the support of senior management who in turn need to be convinced of the positive and relevant outcomes.

The first step in undertaking an education process is understanding current attitudes and behavioural intentions held by senior managers. This study is directed at gaining this information and analysing the relationship between reported current attitudes, future intentions and past behaviours of senior hotel managers in the training of their management staff. The methodology employed in this investigation is set out in Chapter Three.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Aim**

The main aim of this study was to investigate the attitudes, intentions and past training practices of senior hotel managers in New Zealand with regard to the training of their management staff using overseas and New Zealand literature as a guiding framework. The relationships between attitudes, intentions and past training were also an important part of the study. The results of the study are intended to increase understanding about training decision-making and resource allocation in the hotel industry and add to the human resource development research base in New Zealand.

#### **3.2 Research Questions**

To achieve the aims of the study, the research questions outlined in Chapter Two and summarised here, were investigated:

1. What attitudes do senior managers have about the outcomes of training?
2. What attitudes about responsibility for training of management staff do senior managers have?
3. What attitudes do senior managers have about the benefits of training of management staff?
4. What attitudes do senior managers have about the barriers to providing training for management staff?
5. What attitudes do senior managers have about training delivery for management staff?
6. What training practices involving management staff have occurred in the last twelve months?
7. What behavioural intentions do senior managers have toward the training of their management staff in the next twelve months?
8. What relationship exists between attitudes toward training components, benefits and barriers and reported future intentions?

9. What relationship exists between attitudes toward training components, benefits and barriers and reported past behaviours?
10. What relationship exists between reported intentions and past behaviours?

### **3.3 Research Subjects**

The research population were senior managers in New Zealand hotels. As the Hotel Association of New Zealand (HANZ) did not have a comprehensive listing of New Zealand hotels, a commercial publication, *Jasons Hotels, Resorts, Lodges & Conference Venues 1993* was used to draw the study sample. Cross-checking with several telephone directories confirmed that all New Zealand hotels appeared to be included in *Jasons*. Comprehensive details about individual hotels were obtained from this source, including numbers of rooms, facilities, and in many cases, names of senior managers. Where a manager's name was not provided, the researcher contacted the hotel by telephone to obtain this information.

All New Zealand hotels of fifty rooms or more were selected for the research and surveys were sent to the senior manager of each of the 121 hotels.

### **3.4 Research Process**

#### **3.4.1 Preliminary Information Gathering**

Interviews were conducted with industry representatives to gain information on current training practices and to identify any existing research which would complement this study. One representative each from the Hotel and Catering Industry Training Board, the Hotel Association of New Zealand and the New Zealand Tourism Industry Federation were contacted, along with the Human Resource Managers of three large Christchurch hotels. One personal interview was conducted but as the remaining representatives were not Christchurch based, telephone interviews were held. During the 15-20 minute telephone and personal interviews, handwritten notes were taken.

#### **3.4.2 Verification of the Literature**

The relevance of concepts highlighted in the overseas literature to the New Zealand context was confirmed by the following process. A series of questions on the benefits of, and barriers to training were formulated and interviews were carried out with four randomly selected managers of Christchurch hotels. The

managers were asked to identify what they perceived as training benefits and barriers and to confirm whether the variables highlighted in the literature were relevant to New Zealand hotels, using their own organisation as a reference.

Specific terms commonly cited in the literature and used in the questionnaire (e.g., 'technical training', 'personal development' and 'career development') were checked against the definitions provided by members of this pilot group. Since the pilot group was in general agreement on the terms presented, it was considered unnecessary to provide definitions of these concepts in the questionnaire.

### **3.4.3 Identification of Other Research**

Based on the initial interviews with industry representatives, the pilot group, and an extensive literature search, research questions were refined and a questionnaire was developed. Previous New Zealand research (Hooley and Franko, 1990) studied aspects of training delivery in the context of wider management practices but no other studies had investigated training attitudes and their relationship with training practices.

An extensive literature review (e.g., Stone, 1991; Cacioppe, 1991; Hussey, 1988; Gordon 1986) also only identified studies which considered some components of the proposed study. Replication of an existing methodology was therefore not possible.

## **3.5 Questionnaire Development**

### **3.5.1 Pilot Test**

The questionnaire was screened by several academic staff members at Lincoln University and was piloted on ten senior hotel managers in Christchurch, who represented organisations spanning the full range of hotel size categories. A personal request for assistance in piloting the questionnaire was made to each manager. All of the managers approached responded positively. A letter accompanying the questionnaire reminded them to mark any questions which were ambiguous or difficult to answer (see Appendix 1).

Follow up phone calls were made to each of the pilot group participants to discuss any problems or confusion that may have arisen when completing the questionnaire. Apart from a small number of grammatical errors, no significant changes to the pilot questionnaire were considered necessary.

### 3.5.2 Distribution

The final questionnaire, along with a return addressed envelope, were personally addressed and mailed to each of the 121 senior hotel managers. An introductory personalised letter on Lincoln University letterhead was sent with each questionnaire (see Appendices 2 and 3). A three week turnaround was requested with the return date specified. Respondents were assured of confidentiality. While names were requested in the demographic data section, anonymity was an option as the questionnaires were not marked in any identifiable way.

### 3.5.3 Follow Up

Immediately after the due date, a follow-up letter (see Appendix 4) was sent reminding non-returnees of the questionnaire and reiterating the need for their support. Thirteen managers responded to this follow-up letter by requesting another questionnaire.

## 3.6 Research Design

A descriptive research design was chosen due to the type of information sought in this study.

*A descriptive study describes and interprets what is. It is concerned with conditions or relationships which exist, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident, or trends that are developing. It is primarily concerned with the present, although it often considers past events and influences as they relate to current conditions" (Best, 1981:93).*

Surveys are commonly used in descriptive research, particularly for studies dealing with attitudes and behaviours. The advantages of surveys over other research techniques include the standardisation of questions; administration to large groups at the same time (Sellitz et al., 1976); assurance of confidentiality and anonymity for respondents; flexibility in response time provided to respondents and cost effectiveness.

The disadvantages of the survey method on the other hand, can be found in the quality of responses. Limitations include the researcher's inability to access the contexts in which responses are being made; the potential for meaningless results due to respondent disinterest; unreliable responses as a result of inadequate instructions; low response rates; and response categories which prohibit qualification of responses (Ward, 1990).

Despite these limitations, a postal survey was still considered the most appropriate method to obtain the information sought in this study. Specifically, it allowed a nationally based study to be undertaken, while

the methodology allowed respondents the privacy and time to express their views without interviewer pressure.

### 3.6.1 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire (see Appendix 3) comprised of predominantly closed questions requiring scaled responses. Babbie (1973) defined a scale as a composite measure constructed on the basis of an intensity structure among items comprising the measure. The Likert scale, a frequently used social science research technique, was chosen for this study.

Likert scales were used to determine differences in the extent to which senior hotel managers agreed with statements related to training outcomes, benefits, barriers, intentions and past behaviour. The questions were prefaced with the leader "How much do you agree...?" Respondents were presented with a number of positive and negative options from which they could choose the statement which best represented their views. Five choices were given:

(1) strongly agree      (2) agree      (3) neutral      (4) disagree      (5) strongly disagree.

The Likert scale was treated as an interval scale with the assumption that the distances between response categories were equal. Although used frequently in social science research, there are conflicting views over the appropriateness of treating Likert scales as interval rather than ordinal scales. Researchers, particularly social psychologists (Carlsmith et al., 1976), argue for using Likert scales as interval scales citing that the visual scale creates a perception of equi-distance between response categories. Others (Babbie, 1989; Dane, 1990; de Vaus, 1986), argue that the difference between intervals cannot be measured accurately when conducting attitude research. As the results of this study were required only to indicate an overall 'position', the arguments regarding accuracy of measurement could be put aside.

### 3.6.2 Research Questions

The questionnaire (see Appendix 3) was designed around the following sets of research questions:

a) Beliefs about training components and outcomes: Q. 1-7.

This first section attempted to find out the extent to which senior managers agreed or disagreed with statements regarding what training should provide, to whom it should be offered and the outcomes expected from it.

- b) Satisfaction with and beliefs about previous experiences: Q. 8-18.  
Questions were asked to seek respondents' levels of satisfaction with training undertaken by their management staff and satisfaction with their own personal training experiences.
- c) Beliefs about training benefits: Q. 19-28.  
Respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed that the ten listed outcomes were benefits of training.
- d) Beliefs about training barriers: Q. 29-38.  
Ten barriers were listed and respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed that these were reasons for *not* providing training.
- e) Beliefs about responsibility for and delivery of management training: Q. 39-60.  
Responsibility for determining and providing training and respondents' beliefs about the effectiveness of certain methods used for training management staff were investigated in this section.
- f) Reported behavioural intentions: Q. 61-68.  
Respondents' intentions to undertake certain behaviours in training provision and resource allocation were investigated.
- g) Reported training policies, systems and decision making: Q. 69-80.  
A series of closed questions were asked about training policies and resource decision-making by respondents in the last twelve months. A set of Likert scale questions was used to determine the extent of agreement by respondents that their organisation undertook the listed steps of a standard training process.
- h) Reported training methods and resource allocation: Q. 81-99.  
A series of questions were asked to determine training delivery and resource allocation practices in the last twelve months.
- i) Demographic information: Q. 100-112.

Information about the managerial and educational backgrounds of the respondents together with details about their respective organisations (e.g., size, standards and staffing) were gathered in the final section of the questionnaire.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

Manual, numeric coding of questionnaires occurred before the data was analysed using the SPSS statistical package. A numerical value was given to each scaled response and a mean item score was determined for each question. The standard deviation was calculated to indicate the degree of variability about the mean. In this way, a profile of 'position' on a variety of statements related to training beliefs, intentions and previous behaviour is formulated. Scale scores do not give precise evaluations but indicate overall tendencies. Therefore, the closer the group average is to "1" (= highest ranked score) the more positive the respondents felt about a statement.

The descriptive results of this study are presented as tables of frequencies with means and standard deviations, or as bar graphs. Frequencies provide a better indication of variation in response than the mean and standard deviation. However, the mean is able to provide an indication of whether the respondents tend to agree or disagree with a statement. The degree of variability in responses is shown by the standard deviation.

Pearson correlation tests were conducted to analyse the relationship between attitudes, intentions and past training behaviour. For several correlation tests, a composite value for benefits and barriers was calculated. The scores for each question related to barriers and benefits were averaged to determine each respondent's overall score for benefits and barriers (scale score). This scale score was taken to indicate the respondent's 'position' on the abstract dimension which the individual questions were intended to measure.

A high agreement with benefits of training (i.e., a score rating of 1-2) indicates an overall positive attitude toward training, whereas a negative attitude is represented by an average score of 4-5. Conversely, strong beliefs about barriers to training is represented by an average score of 1-2 while a 4-5 score indicates a low perception of barriers to training. These scale scores for benefits and barriers are then correlated with future intentions and past behaviours.



## 3.8 Validity and Reliability of Research

### 3.8.1 Reliability

A reliable measurement is one in which the same results are obtained on repeated occasions (Babbie, 1973). Reliability was tested through the focus group and the pilot questionnaire. Results from these were consistent with results in the main questionnaire. No other reliability tests were conducted.

Every attempt was made to reduce reliability errors. The use of the Likert scale has several advantages including the fact that reliability of the scale increases as the number of possible alternative responses increase. Scales also enable the conversion of results from several indicators of the same belief to a single score. Often one observation can be misleading and it is helpful to see it in the context of other observations. Multiple-item scales can therefore help avoid distortions and mis-classification of responses.

Unfortunately some potential threats to reliability could not be controlled for in this study. For example, the conditions under which respondents answered the questionnaires were not controlled and the degree of attention given to the task may have been affected by environmental conditions, time constraints and/or personal energy levels. Respondents who had plenty of time to complete the questionnaire and were highly motivated to do so may have responded differently than respondents in more stressful work situations. These effects are difficult to control for, apart from administering the questionnaire during industry "down-times" when managers were more likely to have free or sufficient time to complete it.

The questionnaire terminology may have been another factor contributing to unreliable responses. Although the pilot study discounted this factor as a major source of error, the potential still remained for respondents to place individual interpretations on concepts such as technical, personal or career development. This problem could be negated by providing definitions at the beginning of the questionnaire. However, this in itself can cause difficulties in interpretation. Since the likelihood of error arising from terminology interpretation was low, definitions were not considered necessary.

Attitudinal research poses problems of reliability in that an attitude, no matter how it is assessed, is only one of the many factors that influence behaviour. The reliability of the information reported by the senior managers provided the greatest threat. Reports of past behaviour are always subject to perceptual and recall errors which are unintentional. In order to predict behaviour accurately, intervening variables which are independent contributors to behaviour or moderators of the attitude-behaviour relationship must be considered (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Similarly, the relationship between attitudes, intentions and

behaviour can be misrepresented by the non-correspondence of measures of action, target, context and time.

### 3.8.2 Validity

In the social sciences, it can be more difficult to test validity than it is to test reliability (Kraus and Allen, 1987). The validity of an instrument or research procedure refers to its accuracy in measuring what it seeks or claims to measure (Babbie, 1978). Content validity was, to some extent, confirmed by the degree of correspondence in responses between the initial focus group and the pilot group.

The characteristics of the hotel industry and its management staff detailed in Chapter Two were targeted in the design of the questionnaire. For example, the training methods listed in the questionnaire focused on management training techniques for the service industry rather than traditional production training. Similar considerations were made in designing the questions on benefits and barriers to training. The high response rate and full completion of most sections of the returned questionnaires was a reflection of clear, well directed questions. The few questions which suffered low response rates can be explained by the commercial sensitivity of the material requested (i.e., financial details) or the difficulty in accessing the information requested.

Content validity can be improved by measuring the same concept a number of different ways and then checking the correlation between results, since "...high agreement among different scales measuring similar things is a good indication of validity" (Saslow, 1982:200). Content validity can be compromised if several questions measure the same concept when they should be tapping different concepts related to the same item. Multi-component scales must be checked thoroughly to ensure that all questions measure different concepts, not variations of the same concept.

It is generally agreed that concepts such as attitudes, intentions and behaviours create their own problems with validity.

*"Given the disagreement about the 'content' of many social science concepts it is difficult to develop measures which have agreed on validity" (de Vaus, 1986:48).*

The focus group which included one representative (manager or human resource personnel) from four major hotels in Christchurch was used to validate the survey instrument. Only one was also included in the full survey. The focus group responses corresponded with those of the wider research group providing verification of concept understanding.

Significance in the correlations between beliefs and intentions as suggested by the Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) model can provide a validatory role.

*"As a general matter, behaviour may serve as a gauge of criterion validity for the many attitudinal measures we make in social research - for example do 'people who believe highly in the benefits of training provide more training opportunities and resources?'" (Babbie, 1989:125).*

The influence on validity of external factors such as organisational 'culture' and training policies were not ignored. Personal beliefs and intentions held by the senior manager respondents may have been masked by organisational policies which influenced subsequent behaviours. However, the assumption made in this study was that senior managers tend to have significant input into policies and resource allocations and therefore have the means to manipulate these variables.

### **3.9 Summary**

The Likert scale instrument provided a useful methodological tool for ascertaining respondents' attitudes and intentions toward training. Individual responses were able to be analysed separately but also combined to determine respondent's overall 'position' in regard to specific training factors. Pearson correlation tests enabled the relationship between attitudinal and behavioural concepts to be studied and interpreted.

Problems of accurate measurement of the meaning individuals give to certain attitudes and behaviours are difficult to resolve, but they do highlight the importance in behavioural research of using data collection methods which include both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The use of such methodology will significantly increase understanding of behaviour and its determinants.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### 4.1 Response Rate

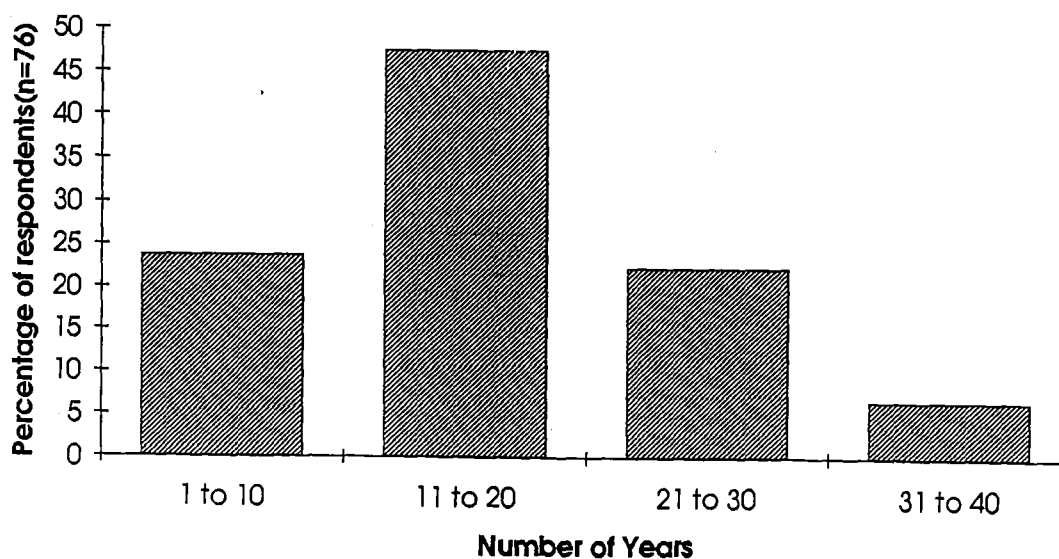
The questionnaire developed was sent to the senior managers of each of the 121 hotels of fifty rooms or more listed in *Jasons Hotels, Resorts, Lodges and Conference Venues 1993*. Eighty senior managers, representing a response rate of 67%, participated in the survey. While the overall response rate was high, some respondents chose not to answer particular questions which asked for what might have been considered commercially sensitive information. Common reasons cited for not returning the questionnaire were that "the information asked for was too confidential", "the senior manager was out of the country during the survey period" or "unwillingness to share the information".

#### 4.2 Respondent Characteristics

##### 4.2.1 Personal Backgrounds

Compared to managers in many other industries the majority of senior hotel managers surveyed tend to be relatively young with 46.5% falling into the 30 - 39 year old age group and 84.5% of the total respondents under 49 years of age.

**Figure 4.1**      **Years in the Industry**



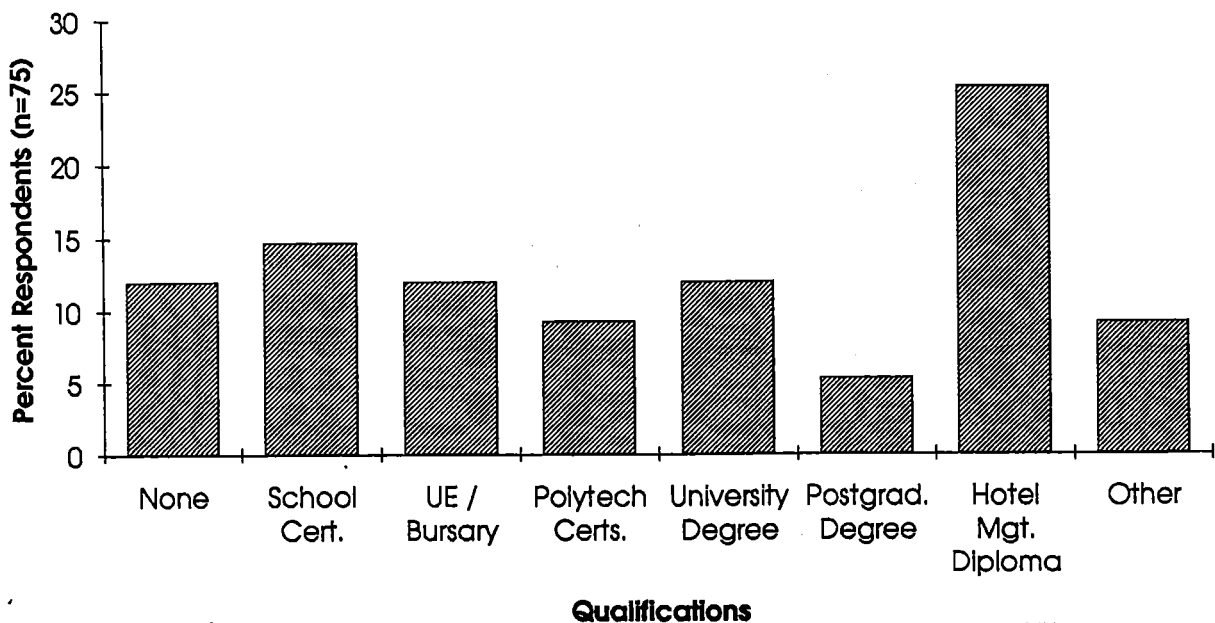
Only 23.7% of respondents have spent less than 10 years in the industry as shown in Figure 4.1. The remaining 76.5% have been employed in the industry for 11 years or more.

Of these managers, 42.3% indicated that they entered the industry at management level while 57.7% worked their way up in the industry into a management position. A high degree of mobility within the industry is evident, 59.0% of respondents have been in their current post for less than three years.

Respondents were asked to list the highest qualification they held. The group is divided into those with tertiary qualifications, including the Hotel Management Diploma, and those with no post-school educational qualifications. Figure 4.2 shows that the qualification held by the greatest number of managers (25.3%) is the Hotel Management Diploma (which can be gained in New Zealand or overseas).

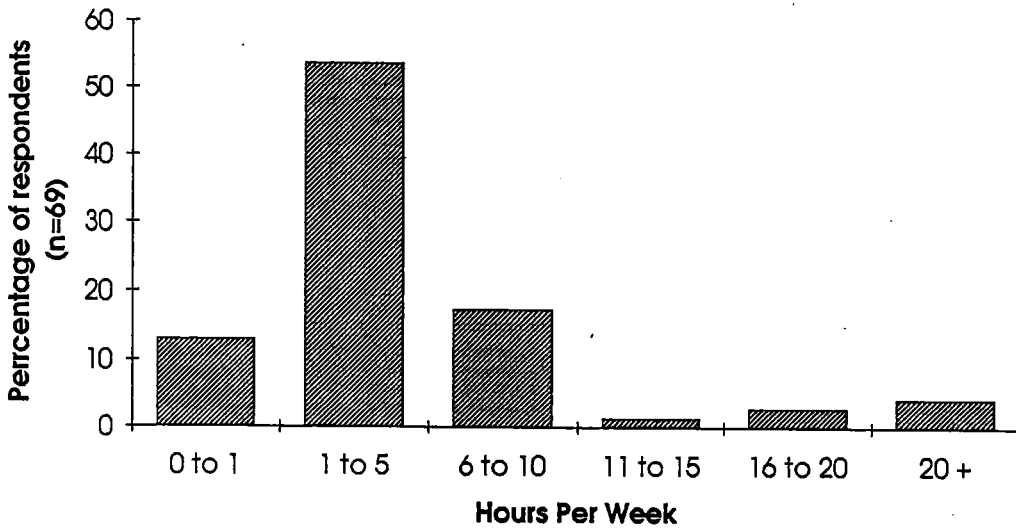
Just over 17% of the remaining managers hold university qualifications while a further 9.3% hold non-industry related diplomas or national certificates. A similar sized group (9.3%) hold non-specified polytechnic certificates while 12.0% reported no educational qualifications.

**Figure 4.2 Educational Qualifications**



Respondents were asked to indicate how many hours per week on average they spend on management staff training matters. Two thirds of respondents indicated that they spend five hours or less a week on management staff training matters, while at the other extreme, 4.3% of respondents spend, on average, over 20 hours a week on this task. The results are shown in Figure 4.3.

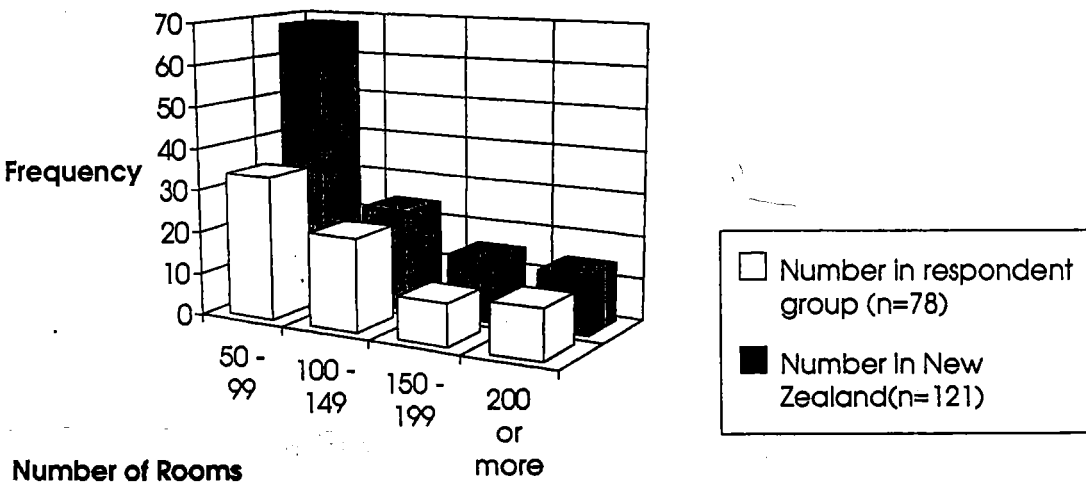
**Figure 4.3 Hours Spent on Management Staff Training**



**4.2.2 Work Background**

The respondents represent a wide range of hotel sizes. Hotels were classified into the following categories; 50-99 rooms (43.6% of responses), 100-149 rooms (28.2%), 150-199 rooms (12.8%) and 200+ rooms (15.4%). The largest hotel included in the research was 407 rooms. Figure 4.4 compares the number of hotels represented in the study with total hotel numbers in New Zealand.

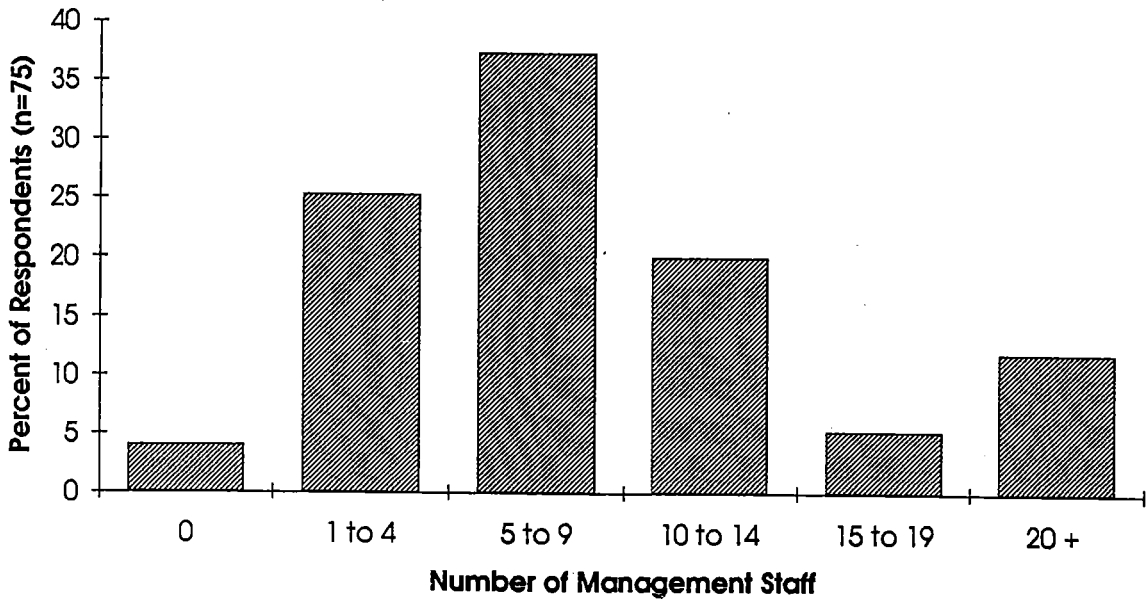
**Figure 4.4 Size of Hotel Represented**



The total number of staff employed in the hotels surveyed, ranged from 10 to 380 staff. Of specific interest to this research was the number of management staff responsible to the senior manager (Figure

4.5). Some senior hotel managers have no management staff while others have more than twenty management staff reporting to them. Forty was the highest reported number of management staff.

**Figure 4.5** Number of Management Staff



The demographic data detailed above provides a profile of respondents and the environment in which they operate. Demographic data provides some insight into the possible factors influencing attitudes, beliefs and future intentions the results of which are detailed below.

### 4.3 Respondents' Attitudes to Training

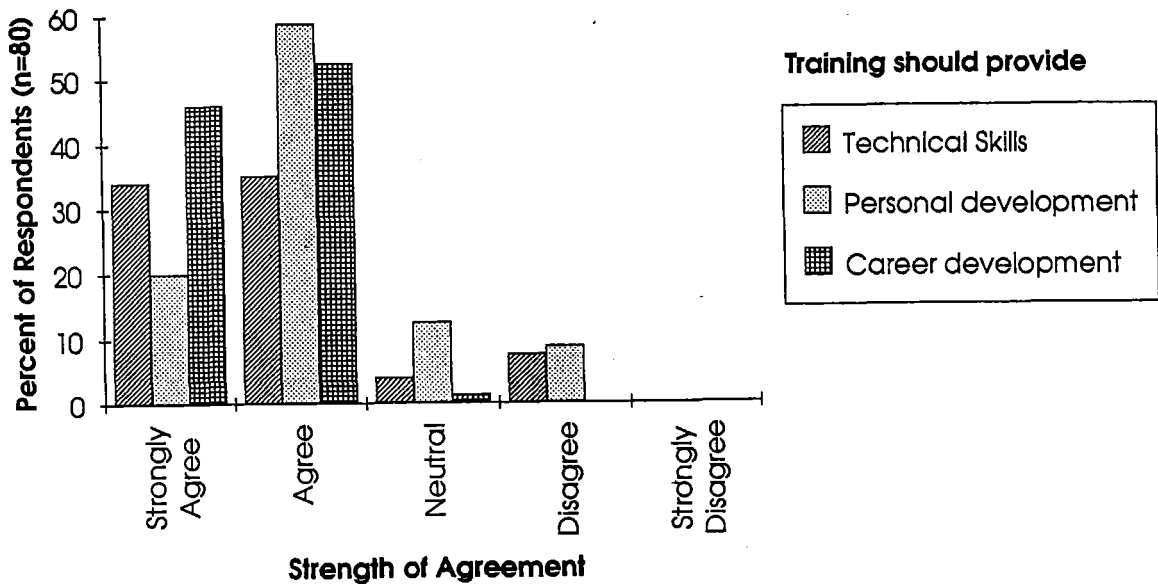
Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with a number of statements representing attitudes to training. The statements sought to determine attitudes on: training components; the link between training and organisational productivity; appropriate training backgrounds for management staff; perceptions of training taken by themselves and their management staff; and perceptions of their own personal abilities in managing training.

Respondents were presented with Likert scales which gave the option of five response categories as explained in Chapter Three. Respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed with statements related to attitude components. Response categories 1 and 2 represented agreement with a statement while responses 4 and 5 represented disagreement with the statement presented. The neutral category was 3.0.

### 4.3.1 Training Components

Respondents were asked in Questions 1-3 how strongly they agreed with the statement that training should provide opportunities for technical, personal and career development. While there was clear support for all three forms of training, career development opportunities ( $\bar{x}=1.55$ ,  $s.d.=0.53$ ) received greatest support, followed by personal development opportunities ( $\bar{x}=2.10$ ,  $s.d.=0.82$ ) and technical skills ( $\bar{x}=1.80$ ,  $s.d.=0.89$ ). Figure 4.6 below illustrates the responses in more detail.

Figure 4.6 Attitudes about Training Components



Follow up questions (Questions 4-6) asking respondents whether they believe that technical ( $\bar{x}=4.26$ ,  $s.d.=0.69$ ), personal ( $\bar{x}=4.72$ ,  $s.d.=0.80$ ) and career ( $\bar{x}=4.44$ ,  $s.d.=0.55$ ) development opportunities should *only* be provided to management staff generally drew strong disagreement. Differentiation between staff levels and type of training opportunities provided was not favoured by the majority of respondents.

### 4.3.2 Links with Organisational Productivity

In an attempt to ascertain the importance of the link between training and organisational productivity, respondents were asked in Question 7 whether they agreed with the statement that training at all levels should only be provided if it increased productivity and profitability.

The results presented in Table 4.1 show a bi-modal distribution ( $\bar{x}=3.06$ ,  $s.d.=1.17$ ) with 34.2% of the respondents agreeing that training should be tied to increasing organisational productivity while a second group, representing 48.1% of respondents, disagreed with linking the two. Almost 18% of respondents gave a neutral response.



Belief that	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	$\bar{x}$	s.d.	n
Training and organisational productivity should be linked	12.7	21.5	17.7	43.0	5.1	3.0	1.17	79

### 4.3.3 Past Training Experiences

Direct experience with an object or issue encourages greater attention and stronger attitudes toward it according to Fishbein and Manfredo (1992). The value of past personal and staff training experiences should therefore, be an important determinant of current attitudes.

Respondents were asked in Questions 8-10 how much they valued the technical, personal and career development training personally experienced in the past. Positive responses (indicated by strongly agree and agree responses) were reported for personal experiences in technical (86.3%), personal (87.0%) and career (82.6%) development training as shown in Table 4.2. Personal development was valued the most highly with none of the respondents assessing this form of training experience negatively.

Table 4.2 Satisfaction With Past Training Experiences (% Respondents)

Training was satisfactory	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	$\bar{x}$	s.d.	n
Technical training	28.8	57.5	11.3	2.5	-	1.87	.70	80
Personal development training	35.0	52.5	12.5	-	-	1.78	.66	80
Career development training	41.3	41.3	12.5	5.0	-	1.81	.84	80

Responses regarding past experiences with training of their management staff were also solicited in Questions 13, 14 and 15 and are shown in Table 4.3. Less than half (45.1%) of the respondents were satisfied with the technical training taken by staff. Satisfaction was higher for training undertaken by management staff in personal development (54.4%) and career development (61.3%). A significant proportion of respondents (37.5, 35.4 and 26.3% respectively) responded neutrally to this question.

Table 4.3 Satisfaction With Past Training of Management Staff (% Respondents)

Training was satisfactory	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	$\bar{x}$	s.d.	n
Technical training	3.8	41.3	37.5	16.3	1.3	2.70	.83	80
Personal development training	3.8	50.6	35.4	7.6	2.5	2.54	.80	79
Career development training	8.8	52.5	26.3	11.3	1.3	2.44	.85	80

#### 4.3.4 Appropriate Management Background

Questions 11 and 12 attempted to gain some understanding of the value senior hotel managers place on qualifications versus extensive industry experience. Respondents were asked how much they agreed that management qualifications were important for those in management positions and how much they agreed that managers should have to work their way up the industry ladder.

The question on desirability of formal management qualifications drew three groups of responses. Just over 44.3% felt that management qualifications were important, 35.4% disagreed, and a further 20.3% were neutral.

Table 4.4 Perceived Appropriate Management Background (% Respondents)

Management staff should have	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	$\bar{x}$	s.d.	n
Educational qualifications	11.4	32.9	20.3	31.6	3.8	2.84	1.11	79
Industry experience	16.5	38.0	31.6	11.4	2.5	1.87	.70	79

The question on whether managers should work their way up the industry ladder showed less diverse opinions (as seen Table 4.4 above) with 54.5% agreeing that industry experience was important, while 31.6% were undecided.

Since personal background has an influence on salient beliefs (Fishbein and Manfredo, 1992), a chi-square test was run between personal educational backgrounds of respondents and their attitudes toward appropriate management backgrounds. The results showed no significant relationship which suggests that attitudes on this subject are unrelated to personal educational background.

### **4.3.5 Ability in Managing Training**

The ability of the senior manager to manage the training function is a significant influence on the quality and quantity of training provided to staff (Hooley and Franko, 1990). Respondents were asked to report in Questions 16-18 how confident they felt in determining present and future training needs of staff and in managing the training process.

Nearly 71% of respondents indicated confidence in their ability to 'determine staff management skills required in the future to meet organisational strategic needs' (70.9%). The degree of confidence in determining the training needs of their staff was lower at nearly 66%, with 20.3% giving a neutral response while 14.0% felt they lacked the expertise to training needs analysis. While overall, the majority felt confident in performing these two preliminary steps in the training process, 51.9% felt they required further skills in managing the training process in their organisation. Only 20.2% felt they had sufficient skills in this area.

### **4.3.6 Benefits of Training**

Questions 19 through 28 asked respondents to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed that each of 10 listed outcomes were benefits of training.

The results show general agreement among respondents that all the listed outcomes are indeed benefits of training. However, closer analysis of the results provided in Table 4.5 below highlight some variations in opinion among the group. Strength of perceived benefits was measured by the number of responses in the combined "strongly agree" and "agree" categories. The greatest perceived training benefits were 'personal self esteem' (97.6%), 'improved job satisfaction' (95.1%) and 'increased career opportunities' (96.3%).

'Increased work quality' (91.3%), 'increased awareness of subordinate training needs' (92.5%) and 'increased transfer of knowledge and skills' (91.3%) were also perceived as strong training benefits although there were a small percent of respondents who disagreed.

A third group of benefits 'improved team relationships' (86.1%), 'increased assumed responsibility' (86.1%) and 'increased qualification levels of staff' (86.3%) were rated highly but a greater percentage of respondents chose the neutral category.

The benefit which showed the least agreement among respondents was 'training lowers staff turnover'. While 75% of respondents perceived this as a benefit of training, a significant percentage of respondents were neutral (21.3%) or disagreed (3.8%).

Table 4.5 Perceived Benefits of Training (% Respondents)

Benefits	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	$\bar{x}$	s.d.	n
Increased self esteem	48.8	48.8	2.5	-	-	1.54	.55	80
Increased job satisfaction	53.8	41.3	5.0	-	-	1.51	.60	80
Increased individual career opportunities	48.8	47.5	3.8	-	-	1.55	.57	80
Increased work quality	37.5	53.8	7.5	1.3	-	1.73	.66	80
Decreased staff turnover	27.5	47.5	21.3	3.8	-	2.01	.80	80
Improved team relationships	32.9	53.2	11.4	2.5	-	1.84	.72	79
Increased assumed responsibility	30.4	55.7	13.9	-	-	1.84	.65	79
Increased qualification levels of staff	26.3	60.0	13.8	-	-	1.87	.62	80
Increased awareness of subordinate training needs	35.0	57.5	5.0	2.5	-	1.75	.67	80
Increased transfer of knowledge and skills	31.3	60.0	3.8	3.8	-	1.80	.69	79

The number of respondents who expressed negative or neutral views to each of the listed benefits requires further investigation.

#### 4.3.7 Barriers to Training

Questions 29 through 38 presented a list of ten potential barriers to training provision. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed that the ten barriers listed were reasons why they *do not* provide training.

The mean for all barriers generally fell in the neutral to disagree range (3.0 - 4.0). The large standard deviations shown in Table 4.6, indicates considerable diversity within the group in perceptions of barriers to training.

Table 4.6 Perceived Barriers to Training (% Respondents)

Barriers	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	$\bar{x}$	s.d.	n
Cost	5.0	23.8	28.8	32.5	10.0	3.19	1.07	80
Time away from the job	1.3	22.5	28.8	40.0	7.5	3.30	.95	80
No change in job performance	-	3.8	10.1	67.1	19.0	4.01	.67	79
No courses available	6.3	3.8	10.1	57.0	22.8	3.86	1.02	79
Staff leave after investment	5.0	22.5	32.5	36.3	3.8	3.11	.97	80
No interest from staff	1.3	5.1	7.6	64.6	21.5	4.00	.78	79
Difficult to determine needs	-	16.3	15.0	55.0	13.8	3.66	.91	80
Bad past experiences	1.3	10.0	18.8	48.8	21.3	3.79	.94	80
Difficult to get staff together for training	3.8	41.3	11.3	35.0	8.8	3.04	1.13	80
Staff do not need training		2.5	8.8	47.5	41.3	4.28	.73	80

Respondents perceived the greatest barriers to providing training for management staff in the hotel industry as 'difficulties in getting management staff together for training' (45.1%), 'training is too expensive' (28.8%) and 'management staff often leave after considerable expenditure on training them' (27.5%). For each barrier listed, the majority of respondents were neutral or disagreed that it was a reason for not providing training.

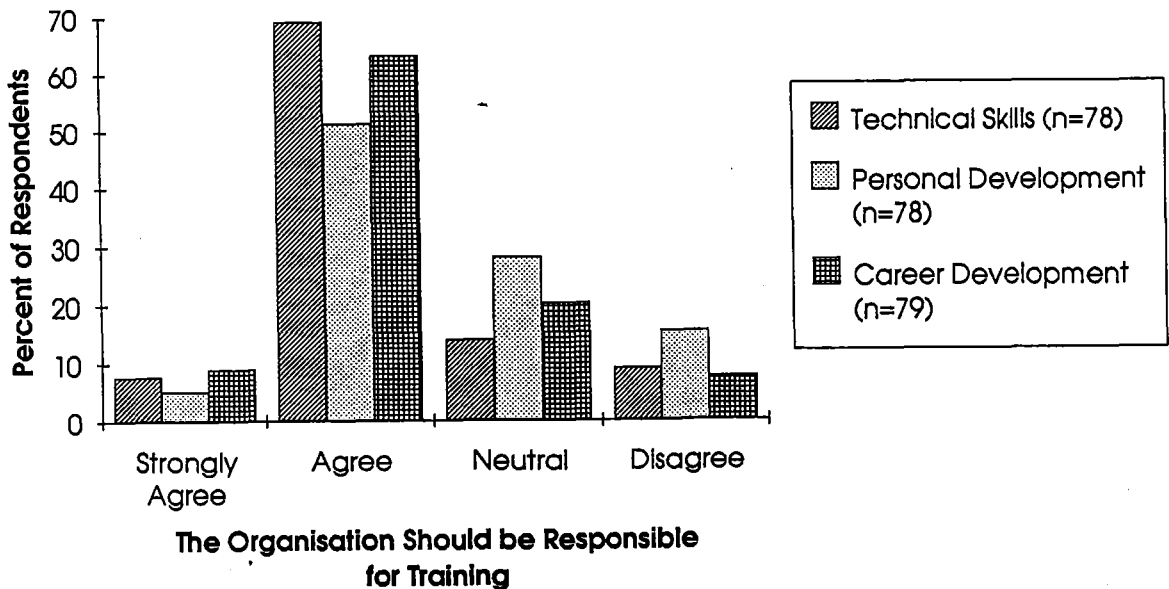
For other barriers listed ('no change in performance', 'no suitable courses', 'no interest by staff', 'difficulty in determining training needs' and 'no need for more skills'), there was high consensus among respondents that these factors did not affect the training of their management staff. The influence of previous training experiences is also interesting with 11.3% of respondents indicating that unsatisfactory

results in the past were a reason for not providing training now. A further 18.8% were neutral about the impact of previous experiences on current training provision. A high degree of indecision (represented by a neutral response) was consistent across all of the listed barriers to training.

#### 4.3.8 Responsibility for Training

The aim of this section (Questions 39-42) of the questionnaire was to determine what components of training senior hotel managers believed were the responsibility of the organisation to provide. While there was clear agreement that the organisation should be responsible for providing technical, personal and career development training opportunities to management staff, the level of agreement varied among the 78 respondents. As shown by Figure 4.7, 76.9% agreed that technical training and 72.2% that career development for management staff was the responsibility of the organisation. However, acceptance of responsibility for personal development training fell to 56.4%.

**Figure 4.7 Attitude to Organisational Responsibility**



A significant proportion of the respondents chose the neutral response category when asked whether the responsibility for technical training (14.1%), personal development training (28.2%) and career development training (20.3%) was that of the organisation. As with benefits, the high level of neutral responses warrants further investigation.

### 4.3.9 Training Decisions

Ninety-two and a half percent of respondents agreed that training provision in all departments of the organisation should be directed by policies set by senior management. The responses in Table 4.7 relate to Questions 44-46 about who should be responsible for making training decisions.

Table 4.7 Attitude to Responsibility for Training Decision-Making

Training Decisions should be made by	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	$\bar{x}$	s.d.	n
General Manager	9.1	49.4	19.5	22.1	-	2.55	.94	77
Human Resource personnel	4.0	24.0	40.0	30.7	1.3	3.01	.88	75
Individuals and General Manager	10.1	49.4	15.2	25.3	-	2.56	.98	79

The statement that the senior manager should be responsible for determining training requirements for management staff resulted in responses distributed relatively evenly across all response categories; 58.4% agreed that senior managers should be responsible, 19.5% remained neutral while 22.1% disagreed. A follow-up statement which questioned whether the responsibility for training decisions should be given to in-house or corporate human resource personnel also elicited divided opinions. As shown in Table 4.7, 28.0% agreed, 32.0% disagreed and a large group (40.0%) chose the neutral response category.

While 59.5% supported training decisions being negotiated between the senior manager and each individual manager (with responsibility placed on the individual to identify their training needs), there was still a group of 25.3% who did not believe that the individual should have input into training decisions.

### 4.3.10 Training Methods

Respondents were also asked questions related to training methods (Questions 50-60) and delivery (Questions 47-49). Attitudes towards the benefits of in-house training were divided. Only 43.6% of respondents agreed that training was best provided in-house, 16.7% disagreed, but a large group of respondents (39.7%) remained neutral on this question. Team training for management staff was not valued particularly highly with only 46.2% supporting team-based training activities.

Based on a review of the training literature eleven training methods, commonly used for management training, were listed. Respondents were asked to indicate their beliefs about the effectiveness of each method in the training of management staff.

The results are shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Perceived Effectiveness of Training Methods

Effective techniques for training managerial staff	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	$\bar{x}$	s.d.	n
Lectures	2.5	41.3	35.0	21.3	-	2.75	.82	80
Conferences / seminars	5.1	70.9	24.1	-	-	2.19	.51	79
Resource packages	1.3	40.0	37.5	18.8	2.5	2.81	.84	80
Videos	10.0	58.8	23.8	5.0	2.5	2.31	.82	80
Visits to other organisations	12.7	62.0	17.7	7.6	-	2.20	.76	79
Apprenticeships	7.7	34.6	34.6	21.8	1.3	2.74	.93	78
Job rotation	13.9	53.2	25.3	7.6	-	2.27	.80	79
Coaching on the job	17.5	75.0	7.5	-	-	1.90	.49	80
Coaching off the job	6.4	56.4	29.5	7.7	-	2.38	.72	78
Institutional courses	6.3	63.8	23.8	6.3	-	2.30	.68	80
Orientation/induction	19.0	62.0	15.2	3.8	-	2.04	.71	79

Methods such as conferences/seminars, visits to other organisations, coaching on-the-job, courses at educational institutions and induction/orientation sessions were perceived by over 70% of respondents to be effective in the training of management staff. The methods which received the greatest support for their effectiveness were coaching on-the-job (92.5%) and induction/orientation sessions (81.0%). Both of these methods are common forms of training for all levels of staff (Stone, 1991; Leap and Crino, 1990).

The results in Table 4.8 highlight the differences in opinion among respondents, particularly on methods such as lectures, written resource packages and apprenticeships. Over 20% of respondents do not believe these training methods are effective. Of note were the high number of neutral responses to all of the methods listed. Lack of experimentation with methods other than the traditional in-house on-the-job coaching and orientation may provide an explanation.

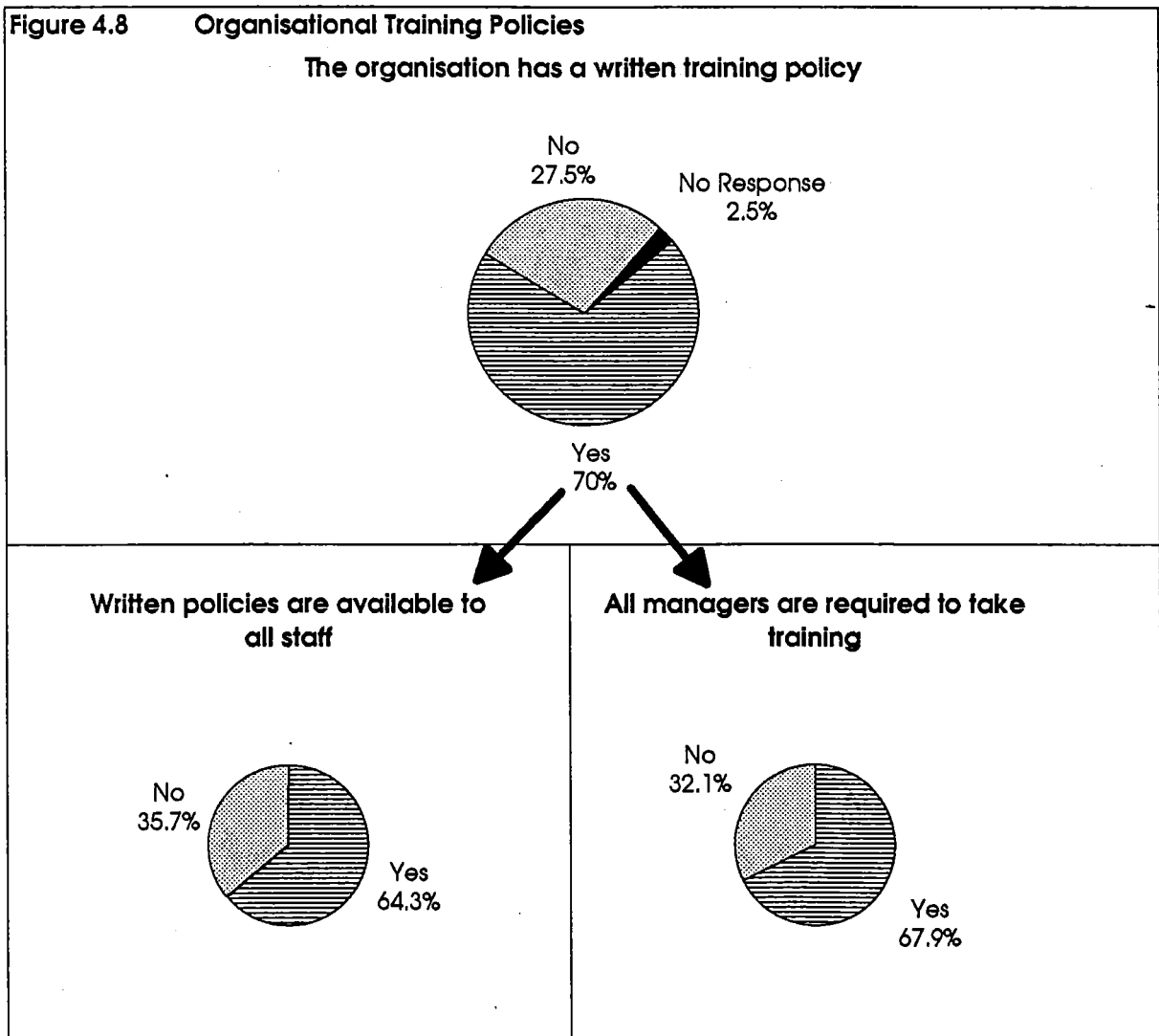


## 4.4 Past Behaviour

Respondents were asked to report on training practices, policies and resource allocation in their organisation during the last twelve months. There was no attempt to determine how much input or responsibility the respondents had in each aspect, although as senior managers their involvement was likely to be significant.

### 4.4.1 Organisational Policies

Respondents were asked to record YES/NO/DON'T KNOW responses to Questions 69-73 related to organisational training policies. The results are shown in Figure 4.8.



Of the 78 responses to the question "Does your organisation have a training policy?", 70.0% stated that their organisation did have a policy. Of the 70.0% with a policy, 64.3% reported that the policy detailed

to all staff the criteria, eligibility and procedures for training. However, this represented only 45.0% of the total group of respondents. Asked whether the policy required all department managers to undertake training, 67.9% (equivalent to 45.0% of total respondents) said that it did.

Follow-up questions on whether there were set allocations of time and money for each manager for training revealed a small number of organisations providing individual time (7.6%) and money (13.9%) allocations. An open ended question requesting details about resource allocations received few responses and provided no further insight into training resource allocation practices.

#### **4.4.2 Decision Making**

Decision making on training varied considerably among the senior managers represented. Decisions made solely by the senior manager comprised the largest category (36.3%) of respondents. A further 16.3% indicated that decisions on management training involved joint negotiation and decision making by the senior manager and the individual manager concerned.

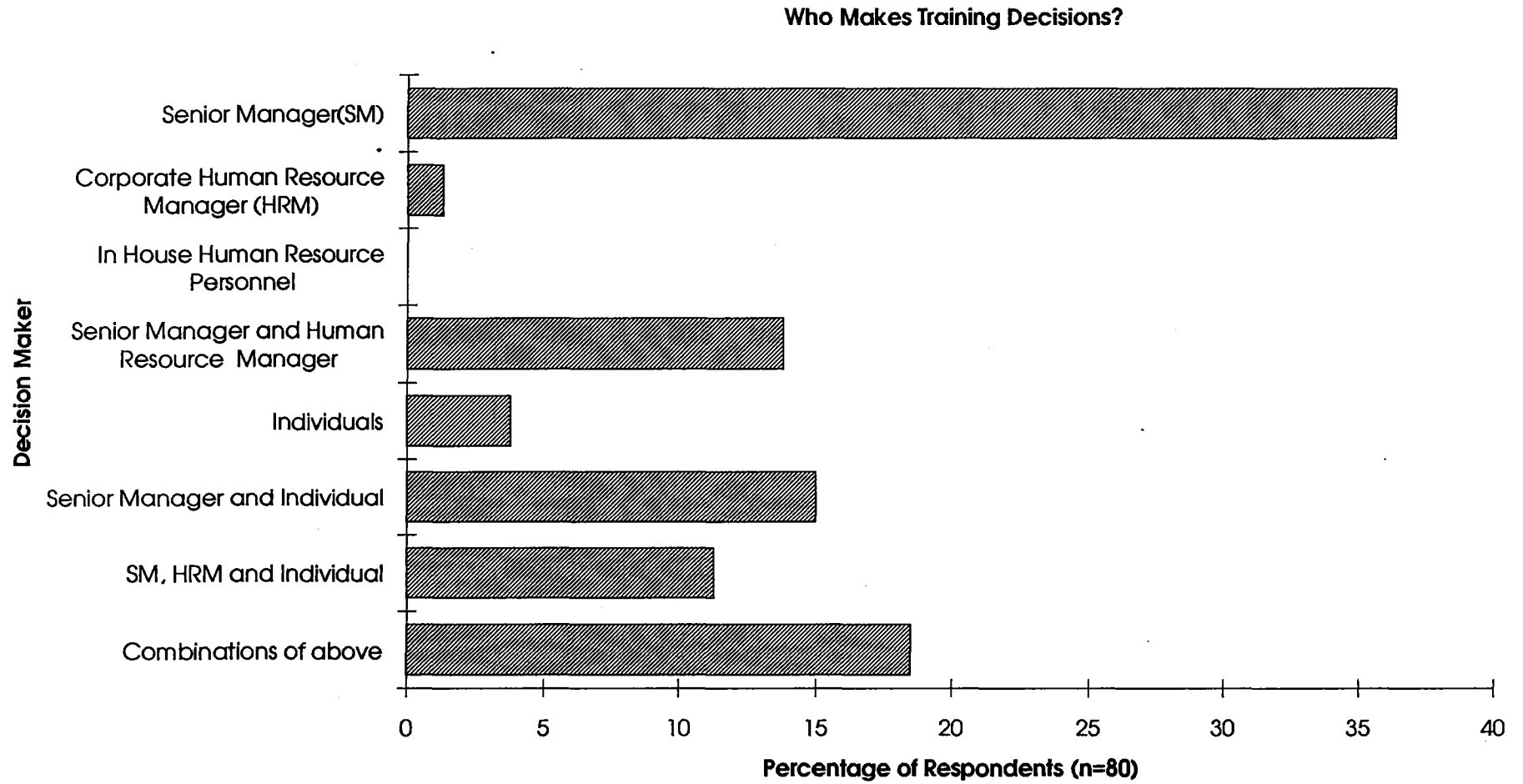
Where corporate and in-house human resource personnel are responsible for training needs analysis, training provision or the organisation of training opportunities, the results indicate that these human resource personnel are involved along with the senior manager and managers in a three way decision process in 11.3% of organisations represented. However, a further 13.8% of organisations with human resource personnel leave out the individual manager in the negotiation process.

Only 3.8% of respondents reported that individual managers themselves were responsible for determining appropriate training courses. While 59% of respondents earlier expressed beliefs that the individual should be included in training decisions with senior management, only 28.8% in practise actually consulted with the individual managers. It would be fair to predict that such a decision making process would ignore the personal and career development needs of the individual. Figure 4.9 on the following page outlines who is involved in the decision making process in hotels in New Zealand as asked in Question 74.

#### **4.4.3 Training Process Steps**

In their methodology Hooley and Franko (1990) identified a sequential set of steps involved in a systematic approach to training delivery. These steps were repeated in this study in Questions 75-80 and respondents were asked to indicate whether they undertook each of the steps. The results are summarised in Table 4.9.

Figure 4.9 Decision Making Practices



Just over 81% (n=79) reported that they have a job description listing core competencies for each management position in their organisation. The number using a performance appraisal system to measure actual versus required job performance was less positive. When it came to the second step, 62.8% stated that they conduct performance appraisals, but 26.9% percent gave a neutral response. Positive responses had dropped to 45.5% by the third step which asked whether they regularly conduct training needs analyses for management staff. Close to 34.0% were undecided, and 20.8% said that they did not perform this step at all.

Table 4.9 Steps Undertaken in the Training Process

Step Undertaken	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	$\bar{x}$	s.d.	n
Provided job descriptions for all positions	30.4	50.6	12.7	6.3		1.95	.83	79
Conduct performance appraisals	28.2	34.6	26.9	9.0	1.3	2.21	1.00	78
Regularly update training needs analysis	14.3	31.2	33.8	18.2	2.6	2.64	1.02	77
Include personal and career development needs analyses	11.7	32.5	35.1	16.9	3.9	2.69	1.02	77
Match courses to needs	11.7	58.4	20.8	6.5	2.6	2.30	.86	77
Evaluate effectiveness of courses	13.0	50.6	28.6	5.2	2.6	2.34	.87	77

The components of a training needs analysis include personal and career development needs assessment yet only 44.2% undertook this step, 20.8% did not perform this step at all while a large group of 35.1% were non committal, choosing the neutral response.

In the sequential process outlined above, the effectiveness of each step is dependent on the execution of previous steps. Despite reporting that they did not perform several of the preceding steps, 70.1% of respondents believe that they match management training courses with identified training needs. Only 9.1% indicated that they did not undertake this step although 20.8% were non-committal (neutral). The evaluation of training against pre-determined objectives, the final step in the process, was carried out by

63.6% of respondents, again despite not completing preceding steps. Only 7.8% said they did not perform an evaluation and a further 28.6% chose the neutral category.

#### 4.4.4 Training Methods Used

Respondents were asked which of the listed training methods they used for management staff training and the frequency of use over the past twelve months. Questions 81-92 asked respondents to indicate whether they: never use, use 1-5 times, or use more than 5 times each specified method with one or more of their staff. As illustrated in Table 4.10, all eleven methods were used to some extent. However, some methods were used more regularly than others. Popularity was calculated by the percentage of respondents who never used the method.

Table 4.10 Training Methods Used

Training methods	Percentage of Times Used			
	Never used	1 - 5 times	More than 5 times	n
Lectures	27.4	63.0	8.2	73
Conferences / seminars	17.1	73.7	9.2	76
Resource packages	36.1	58.4	5.6	72
Videos	31.1	54.0	14.9	74
Visits to other organisations	32.9	61.7	5.5	73
Apprenticeships	59.2	35.2	4.2	71
Job rotation	22.7	66.6	10.7	75
Coaching on-the-job	5.3	49.4	45.3	75
Coaching off-the-job	39.7	51.0	8.2	73
Courses at institutions	23.0	68.9	8.1	74
Orientation/induction sessions	17.6	41.9	40.5	74

Coaching on-the-job was the most popular method with only 5.3% of respondents not using this form of training in the last twelve months while 45.3% reported that they use it more than five times a year. Conferences/seminars were ranked second in popularity. Only 17.1% didn't use this method, and consistent with the infrequent nature of conferences and seminars, the majority (73.7%) of respondents used these methods between 1 and 5 times a year.

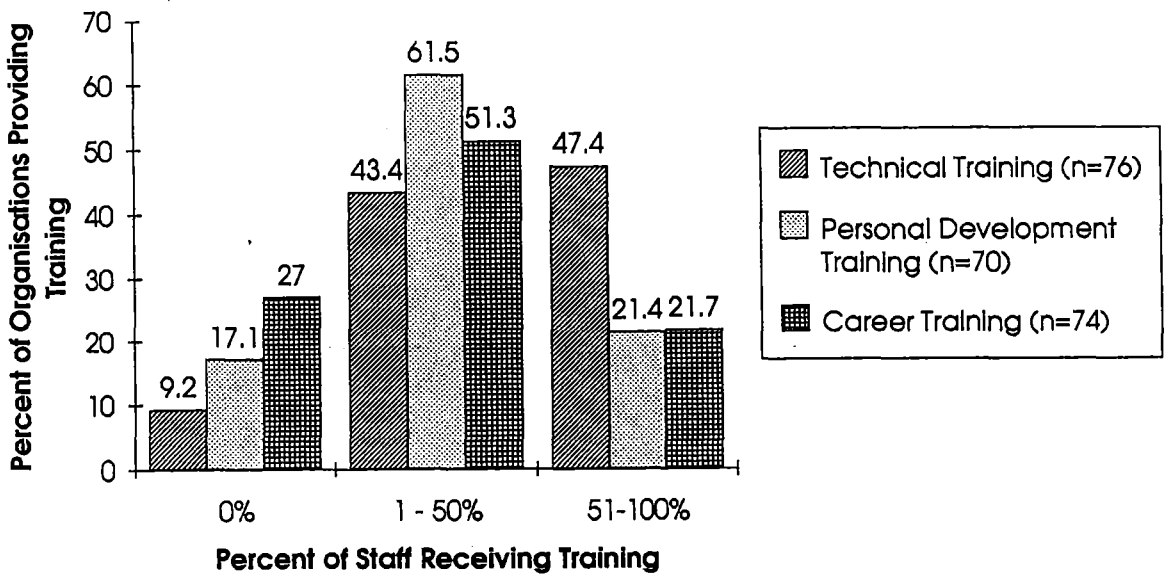
Highest correlations were found between beliefs and actual use of visits to other organisations, coaching on-the-job, apprenticeships and videos. As shown in table 4.11, no relationship was found between beliefs about the effectiveness and actual use of lectures, conferences/seminars, resource packages, courses at institutions and orientation sessions. Clearly for some methods there is a relationship between beliefs (positive and negative) about the effectiveness of the method and the extent of its use in the last twelve months, while for others other factors mediate between beliefs and subsequent use.

**4.4.5 Percentage of Staff Trained**

Respondents were asked to report in Questions 93-96 the percentage of their management staff who had received technical, personal and career development training in the last twelve months on a scale ranging from 0 (no staff) to 100% (all staff). The results shown in Figure 4.10, do not however, give any indication of length, resourcing or quality of training provided.

Fifty-two and a half percent of respondents reported that less than half of their management staff received training in technical skills, and the lack of training was higher for personal development (78.6%) and career development (78.4%). Just over 9% of respondents reported that none of their management staff received technical training and this percentage increased for personal development (17.1%) and career development (27.0%) training. Just over 9.2% of respondents stated that all (100%) of their staff received technical training in the last twelve months, compared with 1.4% for personal development and 4.1% for career development training.

**Figure 4.10 Percentage of Staff Receiving Training**



The results indicate that few organisations are providing training to all of their management staff. However a greater percentage of staff receive technical training than personal or career development training while

training while a significant number of management staff received no personal or career development training in the last twelve months.

#### 4.4.6 Resource Allocations

Despite the sensitivity of the information sought, just over half (46) of the 80 respondents provided information as requested in Questions 97-99. This enabled a calculation of training resource allocations to be made for each management position. An average expenditure per individual was calculated by dividing the reported management staff training expenditure by the number of management staff. The calculations gave an average expenditure of \$1153.00 ranging from a minimum of \$75.00 to a maximum of \$5000.00 per person.

A similar calculation of average training expenditure as a percentage of total management staff salary was based on 42 responses. The percentage of the total salary budget spent on training ranged between 0.24% and 12.55%, with an average of 3.44%.

A correlation was run to determine a possible relationship between training expenditure and hotel size. The results indicated a significant positive relationship with larger hotels spending a larger percentage of total management salary budget on training than smaller organisations. The results support the research by Holtmann and Idson (1991) which suggests that training investment increases with organisation size.

Table 4.12 Relationship between Hotel Size and Training Expenditures

	Size of Hotel	Level of Significance	n
Training expenditure per management staff	r=0.25	no significance	46
% of management budget spent on training	r=0.41	p<0.01	42

## 4.5 Behavioural Intentions

All but one of the respondents answered Questions 61-68 pertaining to their intentions regarding training provision over the next twelve months. A positive position overall was reported for all intentions listed. But as shown in Table 4.13, there was considerable diversity in responses as indicated by the large

standard deviations. The responses represented senior hotel managers' reported intentions and an indication of behaviour, barring the intervention of mediating variables, over the next twelve months.

#### 4.5.1 Personal Intentions

Respondents were more definite and positive in their responses to intentions which involved actions by themselves rather than their management staff, such as "I intend to gain further skills in staff training matters", "I intend to pursue further training myself" and "I intend to give staff training greater priority in my work". The latter two statements recording the highest agreement in intention to perform as shown in Table 4.13.

#### 4.5.2 Staff Training Intentions

Respondents showed greater intent to increase personal development (67.1%) and career development opportunities (64.6%) than technical job-specific training (64.1%). Only a few respondents indicated an intention to provide no technical, personal or career development training opportunities to their management staff.

Table 4.13 Reported Intentions to Increase Training (% Respondents)

Intention to increase	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	$\bar{x}$	s.d.	n
Personal skills in training	12.5	51.3	22.5	13.8		2.37	.88	80
Personal training	18.8	52.5	16.3	12.5		2.22	.90	80
Management staff technical training	14.1	50.0	28.2	7.71		2.29	.81	78
Management staff personal development training	15.2	51.9	26.6	6.30		2.24	.79	79
Management staff career development training	12.7	51.9	29.1	6.3		2.29	.81	78
Increase priority of staff training	16.5	53.2	24.1	6.36		2.20	.79	79
Performance in systematic training approach	12.7	48.1	32.9	6.30		2.33	.78	79
Time and financial support	12.8	46.2	28.2	11.5	1.3	2.42	.90	78



Exactly 59.0% of respondents reported that they intended to increase time and money support for training, while 60.8% indicated intentions to implement a more systematic approach to training. A large number of respondents gave a neutral response to both of these intentions. Nearly 32.9% were neutral about taking a more systematic approach to training while 28.2% chose to give no indication (neutral) about increasing time and financial support for training. Similar levels of neutral response were reported for other intentions as shown in Table 4.13.

## 4.6 Relationship between Attitudes, Past Behaviour and Intentions

Intentions provide some indication of subsequent behaviour and may reflect past actions or experiences and salient beliefs (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). To determine the relationship between attitudes, past behaviour and future intentions, Pearson Correlation tests were conducted. While not a *predictor* of behaviour, a correlation would indicate a relationship between reported attitudes, intentions and past behaviours.

### 4.6.1 Relationship between Attitudes and Reported Intentions

The Ajzen and Fishbein model (1980) states that attitudes are related to intentions. The strength of certain attitudes will influence intentions which in turn indicate future behaviour. The results presented in Table 4.14 represent an attempt to determine the extent of the relationship between senior managers' beliefs (attitudes) that training should include technical, personal and career development training and their reported intentions to increase training in each of these areas in the next twelve months.

Table 4.14 Relationship between Attitudes (Components) and Intentions

Belief that training should include:	Reported Intentions	Level of Signific.	n
Technical training	r=0.17	no signif.	78
Personal development training	r=0.40	p < 0.001	79
Career development training	r=0.30	p < 0.01	79

There was no significant relationship between stated beliefs that training should include technical training opportunities and reported intentions to increase training in this area in the next twelve months ( $r = 0.17$ ;  $n=78$ ).

In comparison, there was a significant positive relationship ( $r = 0.40$ ;  $p < .001$ ;  $n = 79$ ) between senior managers' beliefs that training should provide personal development training and their reported intention to increase personal development training for their managers in the next twelve months. Managers who felt strongly that personal development opportunities should be included in training opportunities also intended to increase training in this component in the future.

The relationship between career development training beliefs and intentions was also positive and significant ( $r = 0.30$ ;  $p < .01$ ;  $n = 79$ ) indicating that those managers who strongly believed training should provide career development opportunities also intended to increase career development training for their management staff in the next twelve months.

An analysis of the relationship between belief in benefits of training (represented by a composite benefit score) and intention to increase technical, personal development and career development training opportunities was conducted and results are presented in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15 Relationship between Attitudes (Benefits and Barriers) and Intentions

	Intention to increase technical skills	Intention to increase personal development training	Intention to increase career development training	Level of Signific.	n
Composite Benefits	$r = 0.25$	$r = 0.36^*$	$r = 0.31^*$	* $p < .01$	78
Composite Barriers	$r = -0.29^*$	$r = -0.32^*$	$r = -0.30^*$	* $p < .01$	77

A significant positive relationship was recorded between perceived benefits and reported intentions to increase both personal development ( $r = 0.36$ ;  $p < .01$ ) and career development training ( $r = 0.31$ ;  $p < .01$ ) in the next twelve months. There was no relationship between perceived benefits and intention to increase technical training ( $r = 0.25$ ) over the next twelve months. The correlation squared gives the degree of variance accounted for in one variable by the second variable (e.g., a correlation of 0.25 indicates that 6.25% of the variance in one variable can be accounted for by the presence of the second variable).

Table 4.15 also presents results of a correlation test between composite barriers and reported intentions to increase technical, personal and career development training over the next twelve months. The relationships were all significant and negative. Those managers who perceived less barriers also reported

intentions to increase technical ( $r=-0.29$ ;  $p<.01$ ), personal development ( $r=-0.32$ ;  $p<.01$ ) and career development ( $r=-0.30$ ;  $p<.01$ ) training opportunities over the next twelve months. As the perception of barriers increased, the intention to increase training decreased.

#### 4.6.2 Relationship between Attitudes and Past Training Behaviour

The relationship between senior managers' attitudes toward technical, personal and career development training and actual training provided in the last twelve months was also investigated. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) state that attitudes are influenced by a number of demographic factors as well as past experiences. However, it is difficult to separate past experiences from current attitudes or to measure the degree of influence past experiences have had on these attitudes. Table 4.16 presents the results of correlation tests between attitudes about training components and past training practices.

Table 4.16 Relationship between Attitudes (Components) and Past Training

Attitude That Training Should Include:	Past Training Provided (% of staff trained)	Level of Significance	n
Technical training	$r=0.02$	No significance	76
Personal development training	$r=0.17$	No significance	70
Career development training	$r=0.18$	No significance	70

Surprisingly, past training practices did not reflect current attitudes. No significant relationship was found between reported past behaviour, measured in percentage of management staff receiving technical ( $r=0.02$ ), personal development ( $r=0.17$ ) and career development ( $r=0.18$ ) training and senior managers' attitudes toward the provision of these components in training.

The relationship between beliefs about benefits of training (represented by a composite value for all ten benefits) and the reported percentage of staff receiving technical, personal and career development training in the last twelve months was also examined and the results are shown in Table 4.17. No significant relationship between perceived benefits and past training provision was evident for technical skills, or personal and career development training.

A similar correlation between perceived barriers and percentage of staff provided with personal and career development training indicated no relationship. There was, however, a significant negative relationship between the percentage of staff receiving technical training and the degree of perceived barriers ( $r=-0.38$

$p < .01$ ). Those managers who provided technical training to a greater number of their management staff over the last twelve months also perceived less barriers to training.

Table 4.17 Relationship between Attitudes and Past Training

	% Staff Provided Technical Skill Training	% Staff Provided Personal Development Training	% Staff Provided Career Development Training	Level of Signific.	n
Composite Benefits	$r=0.13$	$r=0.10$	$r=0.25$	no signific.	70
Composite Barriers	$r=-0.38^*$	$r=-0.23$	$r=-0.29$	* $p < 0.01$	69

#### 4.6.3 Relationship between Past Behaviour and Reported Intentions

The results of this section, presented in Table 4.18, represent the relationship between reported past behaviours and future intentions in the provision of technical, personal and career development training opportunities. Ajzen and Fishbein (1990) in their Theory of Reasoned Action model suggest that no relationship should be expected due to the different time period between training and stated intention.

However, the results showed a strong positive relationship ( $r=0.46$ ;  $p < .001$ ) between the percentage of staff provided personal development training in the last twelve months and the strength of the senior manager's intention to increase personal development training in the future.

Table 4.18 Relationship between Past Behaviour and Reported Intentions

Past Training Provided (% of staff trained)	Reported Intentions	Level of Significance	n
Technical Training	$r=0.21$	No significance	76
Personal Development Training	$r=0.46$	$p < 0.001$	70
Career Development Training	$r=0.45$	$p < 0.001$	74

A strong positive relationship ( $r= 0.45$ ;  $p < .001$ ) was also found between intentions and past behaviour in relation to career development training. There was no relationship between intent to increase technical training opportunities in the next twelve months and percentage of staff provided technical skills in the past twelve months.

## 4.7 Summary of Results

The majority of senior hotel managers believe that training for managers should include technical, personal and career development opportunities. They do not believe that training should necessarily be linked to increased organisational productivity, in spite of reported dissatisfaction with past training undertaken by management staff. This contradiction raises questions about the criteria on which training outcomes are evaluated.

Organisational responsibility for providing all forms of training is differentially accepted by senior hotel managers with significantly fewer accepting responsibility for personal development training. The highest perceived benefits of training are heavily weighted toward individual, personal and career outcomes (increased personal self-esteem, job satisfaction and career opportunities) rather than work related productivity benefits. The study did not investigate whether these outcomes were planned or unexpected benefits.

Opinions on barriers to training are inconsistent with fewer than half the group agreeing on any barrier being a significant reason for not providing training. The greatest factor preventing training is 'the loss of staff after considerable training investment'. This has major implications for future training provision and training policies initiated by central government.

Training practices reflect the influence of senior managers and are characterised by unsystematic approaches. Less than half the respondents reported having a training policy which detailed criteria and procedures for training resource allocation while training decision-making appears to remain autocratic and subjective. Vital steps such as linking human resource needs with staff competencies are neglected by over half of respondents yet they perceive themselves as being effective at evaluating and allocating training.

Little shift from traditional in-house training methods is evident. Only a small percentage of staff receive any training and that provided is often limited to technical training. Those organisations providing details on training budgets appear to spend more on training, on average, than their Australian and British counterparts although the figures may be skewed by responses from training oriented organisations. Respondents had stronger intentions regarding actions which involved their own training than those involving their management staff. Despite this, there was high agreement among the group to increase

personal and career development training opportunities and resources for their management staff over the next twelve months.

The relationship between attitudes, intentions and past behaviours when applied to technical training decision-making was consistently non significant, indicating that further investigation is required. The same behavioural model applied to personal and career development decision-making consistently supported the relationship predicted by the model. Those who had stronger beliefs about benefits and the inclusion of personal and career development in training also tended to have stronger intentions to increase training. At the same time those who perceived greater barriers to training reported less intention to increase technical, personal and career development.

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) state that the ability of the model in explaining relationships is limited when variables do not correspond on time, context or target (e.g., reported future intentions and past behaviour). However, a significant relationship was found between intention to increase personal and career development opportunities and past training behaviour, as measured by the number of staff who received personal and career development training in the last year. A similar relationship between attitudes toward both training components and benefits and past experiences was not found.

In summary, the attitudes held by senior hotel managers in New Zealand are consistent with those reported in the training literature reviewed. Apart from different emphasis placed on some factors, the results detailed in this chapter have validated the applicability of literature sources on training benefits, barriers, outcomes and delivery to the New Zealand context.

The application of the behavioural model to training decision making and resource allocation proved to be useful. While this study only tested the first part of the behavioural model, the significant relationship between attitudes and behavioural intentions supported the application of the model in analysing training behaviour. Chapter Five will provide a more in-depth analysis of the above results, implications for key industry groups and directions for future research.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*If you are planning for one year, grow rice,  
If you are planning for twenty years grow trees,  
If you are planning for centuries, grow men*

*(Chinese proverb cited in Stone 1991;179)*

#### 5.1 Interpretations and Implications

This study set out to build on the current limited research on human resource development in New Zealand through an indepth analysis of the factors influencing training decision-making and resource allocation practices in the hotel industry. Attitudes toward the components of, responsibility for, benefits of and barriers to training were investigated and compared with overseas research outlined in the literature. Future intentions, past behaviours and their relationship with attitude components as outlined in the Theory of Reasoned Action behavioural model (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) were also investigated.

The descriptive results provide a comprehensive profile of senior manager's attitudes and training practices in the New Zealand hotel industry. In this chapter anomalies in the results are highlighted and discussed along with implications for training providers, senior managers and policy makers. Future potential research areas which extend this study or introduce new aspects of human resource development research are also considered.

The issues and problems emerging from the study show a close resemblance to the four themes highlighted earlier by Sirota et al. (1989) as the key ingredients of organisations with successful training processes. These ingredients include:

1. *Strong ties to the business strategy and objectives linked to bottom line results.*
2. *A comprehensive and systematic approach to training.*
3. *Commitment to invest resources.*
4. *Support and commitment from senior management and the incorporation of training in the organisational culture.*

It seems that New Zealand is not dissimilar to other countries in problems and solutions to the management of the training process.

### **5.1.1 Integration of Business Strategies and Training**

Hussey (1988) and Collins (1991) stress the importance of linking training with organisational strategic goals. Over half of the senior managers in the New Zealand hotel industry do not believe that the two dimensions should necessarily be linked, thus supporting the separation of training from other central management functions. Consequently, most training is provided without identification of output measures that will support other desired output goals of the organisation.

Contributing factors to this attitude may be the general lack of strategic goal setting in the organisation, or the lack of ability of the senior manager to identify human resource strategies which will support strategic goals. Infrequent or inadequate training needs analyses also affect the matching of human resource and strategic goals. The extent of the two latter problems was demonstrated by the low confidence level in managing the training process expressed by respondents and the small percentage of senior managers who conduct regular training needs analyses.

It appears that many senior managers in the hotel industry lack fundamental skills in strategic goal setting which form the basis for human resource development strategies. While happy with the results of their own training, most senior hotel managers were not happy with the results of training undertaken by their staff. This suggests that anticipated training or productivity outcomes are not being realised, causing high dissatisfaction with the training process. It appears that in many cases the outcomes have not been predetermined. As an example, technical skills training which recorded highest dissatisfaction, should have been the easiest training component to evaluate against strategic goals or productivity measures.

### **5.1.2 Organisational Culture**

While the importance of linking staff development with strategic planning is highlighted, there is a danger in over-emphasising human resource development without similar attention being paid to changes in power structures and communication relationships. The role of corporate culture in shaping employee behaviour requires senior managers to possess the skills to create the 'right' culture. Few studies have investigated the effect that organisational culture has on transfer of learning, yet the influence of the trainee's supervisor on the successful implementation of new knowledge or skills on-the-job is well documented (Fishbein & Manfredi, 1992).



Trends toward a more qualified workforce mean higher qualified workers who have made investments in their career and who will make demands for greater opportunities to develop personal and career potential. Senior managers must acknowledge the benefits of providing opportunities for increased growth and development not just in productivity terms, but in impacts on the quality of employee work life through increased stability and motivation (Nogradi, 1991).

Motivational compensations are particularly important in organisations which may have limited career progressions to offer staff as a result of restructuring and rationalisation. The skills gained in training by management staff must be tapped for the benefit of the organisation and at the same time, meet career and job challenge needs of individuals in the workplace.

### **5.1.3 Training Resource Accounting**

Organisations operating in the current economic conditions require the best possible productivity from employees in order to gain and retain a competitive edge. Resource allocations are closely scrutinised and decisions are made on demonstrated value and return on investment. Senior hotel managers in the study stated that they believed in the value of technical, personal and career development training, but placed less value on the latter two components, consequently accepting less responsibility for providing training opportunities in these areas. The weighted values inevitably reflect past experiences and perceptions of return on investment. Personal and career development opportunity provision have to be associated with valued outcomes.

Writers in the field of human resource development (McQueen, 1992; Pardon, 1990; Hooley and Franko, 1990) emphasise the importance to the service sector manager of the ability to interact, communicate and relate in team situations, be effective at problem solving, take responsibility and lead others. Guerrier (1991) differentiates between 'threshold competencies' such as motivation, self esteem, generic knowledge and social skills which are essential to management performance but may not be causally related to superior job performance, and 'base competencies' which have more immediate direct results on performance. For 'threshold competencies' different measurement tools and time-frames may be required as productivity results cannot always be measured as immediately and directly as for 'base competencies'.

Training must adopt a business centred transformation, optimising 'people assets' in tandem with other asset development (Wainwright, 1990:4). Increased accountability for organisational outcomes from the training process should encourage senior managers to enter into joint responsibility decision-making on training needs. Changes to the current autocratic decision-making practices in the New Zealand hotel

industry will require increased strategic and training needs analysis skills by not only senior managers, but their recipient staff.

#### **5.1.4 Investment Commitment**

One hurdle to this holistic approach to training is the attitudes held by senior managers toward training benefits and barriers. Increased marketability of individuals through the development of personal and career skills is a threat to workforce stability and productivity. Given that personal and career development improvements appear to be the greatest benefits of training, as suggested by the Human Capital Theory (Department of Labour, 1989) organisations are unlikely to invest in such training portable skills unless the risk of employee turnover can be reduced. Currently in the hotel industry, internal career steps are limited so personal and career improvements, through training, do present a threat to staff stability and loyalty and are a major disincentive to training investment.

Current government initiatives in workforce training, ignore the dilemma facing senior managers. The 'Skill New Zealand' strategy (Education and Training Support Agency, 1991) aims to increase portability and flexibility in the workforce through industry sponsored initiatives. The policy ignores the parsimonious objectives of industry which aim to equip staff with firm specific skills, not transferable skills. Senior managers in most industries are unprepared to accept responsibility for the development of highly skilled individuals for the benefit of the wider industry. Yet innovative strategies could overcome the threat of losing highly qualified staff. The bonding of staff for a period determined by the amount of training invested is a strategy worthy of consideration. Not only would it provide individual job security but also the incentive for individuals to apply knowledge and skills learnt. At the same time the organisation would have their training investment protected and increased incentive to ensure new knowledge is transferred on the job.

Barriers to training do not appear to be as influential as generally argued. No single barrier stood out among the group as a reason for not providing training, although there was strong agreement about the influence of some barriers. The barrier reported by senior hotel managers as the greatest training deterrent was 'difficulty in getting management staff together for training'. This and other highly ranked barriers such as 'cost' and 'time away from the job', challenge the flexibility and diversity of current delivery methods. Further investigation is required into alternative delivery methods and training techniques which improve the learning process, if management preferences for traditional in-house training methods are to be changed.

The low value placed on team training by senior hotel managers was surprising in light of the requirements of service industries for high and consistent customer service across work shifts and between organisational divisions. This anomaly is particularly notable in light of current training trends which base management staff training around team-building techniques.

Dissatisfaction with previous training and reluctance to embrace new training techniques may stem from the quality of past provision. The reluctance of senior managers to involve training providers in in-house needs analyses has been one cause of ineffective training. Trainers, whether internal or external, must share in the responsibility for on-the-job transfer of knowledge and skills and the evaluation of training outcomes. Without this accountability, little attempt will be made by providers to ensure training is adequately matched with required outcomes. Such a system would also encourage senior managers to identify and articulate desired training outcomes and their relationship to strategic goals.

Requiring professional training consultants to make needs analyses a condition of their involvement in training provision in an organisation must be encouraged on a wider scale. Many training providers continue to design and deliver training programmes without clearly defined outcomes identified by the authorising manager.

### **5.1.5 Management of the Training Approach**

The biggest challenge for senior managers is to make training more systematic and more closely integrated with the strategic goals. A systematic training approach incorporates internal policies and procedures including eligibility criteria, negotiation procedures, amount of support available on a year by year basis and evaluation measures. While the majority of respondents in the study indicated that they have training policies, less than half provided any detail to staff on criteria for selection or resource allocation thus creating the potential for 'first in first served' or 'selective' allocation practices.

The training approach used in the study represents a logical sequence of inter-related steps, each conditional on the results of previous steps. Generally, senior hotel managers believed that they were effective in carrying out the final steps of a systematic training approach but nevertheless failed to undertake preceding steps crucial to the selection of appropriate training.

A systematic approach to training would involve making available a variety of training systems capable of accommodating individual development needs. Individual plans should evolve through negotiation and reflect long term learning based on personal, career and organisational goals. Plans should be conditional

on evaluation systems which measure outcomes against predetermined corporate objectives and needs. The integration of learning into the organisational culture is conditional on the support and involvement of senior management.

### 5.1.6 Training Decision Making

The behavioural model developed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) was applied in this study in an attempt to explain the differences in senior management decision-making in relation to human resource development. Intentions reported by senior managers incorporate individual evaluation of the two weighted components of attitude; perceived outcomes (ie. benefits) and their relative importance and perceived social pressure to undertake the behaviour. The significant relationship between attitudes about training outcomes and benefits and reported intent to provide increased personal and career development training was consistent with the Ajzen and Fishbein model.

The low relationship between attitudes toward and future intentions in regard to technical training requires further analysis. The unexpected result may be explained by the terminology used in the question. Respondents were asked whether they intended to *increase* technical training in the next twelve months. At management level, technical skills are less important and it is conceptual and communication skills that managers generally lack and which would be the main targets of training. The results may also reflect the functional nature of this component of training and its limited scope with competencies required at management level.

The significant reverse relationship found between respondents' reported intentions to increase training and the perceived strength of barriers is consistent with the behavioural model. Training accounting practices and productivity evaluations provide evidence negating perceived barriers and justification for training investment. Affective responses to training require closer investigation in order to better understand intentions and subsequent behaviour. As intentions are a function of affective reactions to past experiences. Therefore, every effort has to go into ensuring that future training experiences result in positive experiences.

Past behaviour doesn't correspond in action, time, target or context with current attitudes or intentions. Therefore, it is argued, it cannot be a predictor of future behaviour (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Results of the study support the lack of predictive ability between attitudes about training components and benefits and the amount of training provided to staff in the last twelve months.

There was, however, a positive relationship (ie. potential predictive links) between intentions to increase personal and career development training and the number of staff provided training in these areas in the last twelve months. One explanation is that those senior managers who have provided training in the past are also more likely to continue to provide training in the future either because of beliefs in the positive outcomes or perceived reaction to any resource cuts. However, using the relationship as a justification for future prediction must be treated with caution as factors such as staff, positions and type of training may be quite different over a two year period.

As with the attitude-intention link, no relationship was recorded between intentions and past technical training provision. Future technical training should be unrelated to past training and in fact past allocations should alleviate any future need unless new processes or technology are introduced. Alternatively, the lack of relationship may be a reflection of the high degree of dissatisfaction with past results which was not evident for personal and career development. It could also be argued that inconsistent results for technical training may be due to semantics, such as asking their intention to *increase* technical training, when in fact they may intend to just *maintain* current levels. Due to the emphasis on technical training further research into the rationale behind decision making will be essential if intervening factors are to be identified and modified.

The Theory of Reasoned Action behavioural model provides a framework for explaining and interpreting training decision-making and behaviour. Interpretations considered here have implications for all those involved in training policy, management, provision and research.

## **5.2 Recommendations Arising From The Research**

### **5.2.1 Practitioner Recommendations**

There is an urgent need to further educate senior managers on the fundamentals of strategic planning and its importance and application in service industries. This knowledge should be extended to include skills in strategic goal setting which incorporate physical resource and human resource implications for each strategy. Another target of senior management development relates to skills in developing training plans and policies which emulate from broader strategic goals.

In order for a strategic approach to training to be embraced, senior managers need to be sold the benefits of training including tangible evidence of performance results. The responsibility for the transfer of

learning in the work environment falls on those responsible for training. Therefore the traditional demarcations between these two groups which have separated the training function from business functions must be removed. In-house trainers must be made part of the senior strategic team accepting similar accountability for results as other members of the team. Similarly, external consultants must be given the same access to strategic information as other contract staff involved in business strategy implementation.

The growth of a more demanding and qualified workforce also places demands on senior managers to develop the skills to tap individual strengths for organisational goal attainment. A major problem identified in this study of the hotel industry, is the suspicion and resentment held by managers who graduated from the 'university of hard knocks' towards formal management qualifications. Rather than using skills and knowledge held by these qualified staff for the organisational benefit, many restrict opportunities which may highlight deficiencies in their own skills and those of other staff.

Increasingly, training and education are critical for progression up the industry hierarchy as managers are required to have strategic and conceptual knowledge which does not necessarily come through on-the-job experience. Mechanisms to induce senior managers to undertake personal training and increase training opportunities for their staff will be required to raise the qualification levels and standards in the industry. New innovations and methods developed in one organisation in the industry, quickly disseminate throughout the wider industry with benefits for all. This point alone should induce senior managers to support industry training.

The importance of the right organisational culture for the effective transfer of learning, places responsibility on senior management to provide the environment and processes for on-the-job application of new skills and knowledge. A concept that has gained popularity is the 'training contract' (Wainwright, 1990) where individuals, in negotiation with their manager, identify their personal training needs, how training will meet needs identified, how the training will increase productivity or change behaviour on-the-job and what measures will evaluate this change in performance. Responsibility falls on the manager to identify organisational goals and related human resource needs and allocate training based on these.

Past versions of training contracts have existed with limited effectiveness due to vague criteria, evaluation and accountability measures. Without jointly agreed to accountability measures, a contract can become a punitive rather than a developmental instrument. In the version proposed, both the individual and the authorising manager are charged with linking training with strategic goals and determining measurable

outputs. The training contract can also incorporate clauses which include performance criteria for the training provider.

The changing environment of service industries places demands on training providers to meet industry needs for more flexible delivery techniques. There is scope for experimentation by providers in training methods, particularly in investigating the relative effectiveness of two or more techniques in facilitating a desired outcome and in identifying the technique most appropriate for improving specific skills.

Implications for government policies have also been raised in this study. Those involved in setting government policies and initiatives need to assess the implications of the Human Capital Theory (Dept. of Labour, 1989) on the implementation of training policies and strategies. At present, it appears that government training strategies, designed to increase the job mobility of individuals, are in conflict with training objectives held by senior managers who wish to reduce the marketability of the individual through firm specific training initiatives. A variety of strategies may be required to encourage industry wide training initiatives which compensate for portability risks as a result of training.

### **5.2.2 Research Recommendations**

As this study has highlighted, the depth of research in the field of human resource development in New Zealand is very shallow. Overseas experiences are frequently referenced to provide answers to local problems. There is an urgent need for further research to establish a profile of current training practices in New Zealand suitable for reference by researchers and practitioners.

The current study was limited to one sector of the tourism industry and tested the attitude-intention part of the behavioural model. Future research should include a longitudinal study to test the relevance of the behavioural model in predicting training behaviour. Such a study would provide a picture of the decision making process and the intervening variables which mediate between training attitudes and behaviour associated with the allocation of training resources. A comprehensive longitudinal study would, however, require some modifications to the original methodology. Specifically, quantitative data on training resource allocation would need to be solicited. This information could be commercially sensitive and therefore difficult to access.

Related follow-up to this research could include a study in twelve months time which collected data on the training which occurred following stated intentions and analysis of the relationship between the two. While the results lend support to the relevance of the model to the New Zealand context, repetition of this

study in other sectors of this industry and other industries in the service sector would provide greater understanding of training attitudes and practices in New Zealand organisations. The size of this study does not permit generalisation of results to a wider population.

While there is overseas evidence that a systematic approach to training will achieve better results, this evidence needs to be backed by evidence of productivity improvements by organisations in the New Zealand environment. New Zealand managers tend to discard research conducted overseas claiming that reported results are not relevant in the smaller New Zealand environment. Research involving pre-test and post-test experimentation would provide comparative results.

Judging from reports on the implementation of strategic planning in organisations of various sizes and across many industries in the U.S.A. and England (Hussey, 1988; McQueen, 1992; Sirota et al., 1989), New Zealand is lagging behind. Strategic planning which incorporates human resource development is a management adaptation to a turbulent environment. Training provides a key mechanism to 'add value' to the product in a service environment. Applied research into the integration of strategic and human resource planning with relevant case studies is urgently required to provide models for industry.

At a lower level, conclusive information on the short and long term costs and benefits for the organisation must be related to strategic goals. Senior managers will not support training if it does not lead to benefits either short or long term, or if these benefits do not contribute to organisational goals. Hard evidence of value added return on investment will be critical to encouraging managerial commitment.

Behavioural change requires a good understanding of the determinants of attitudes and beliefs which are involved in intention formation and allow behavioural prediction. Such a knowledge base would assist further research into attitudinal change and modification. Preliminary research on cognitive processes and persuasive communication could then be applied to management decision-making (Fishbein and Manfredo, 1992). As attitudes tend to be relatively stable over time, research into possible links and the predictive ability of past experiences and current beliefs and attitudes would provide new insights into behaviour.

### **5.2.3 Methodological Recommendations**

The greatest challenge posed by the study centred around attitudinal research and the difficulties of developing indices able to tap all attitudinal and behavioural components represented in the Theory of Reasoned Action model. Qualitative research would have provided more insight into the rationale for and



context of beliefs and attitudes than a quantitative study was able to do. Qualitative research may have also reduced the risk of inaccuracy in reported past behaviour. Past experience and behaviour reports are subject to perceptual and recall problems which are difficult to alleviate.

One of the methodological problems experienced in the study was the unexpectedly high number of neutral responses to almost all questions. First impressions were that many senior managers were undecided on whether they agreed or disagreed with statements presented. However, it may be that insufficient response categories were provided, particularly for those senior managers who did not have any management staff responsible to them, or who did not provide any training for their management staff. Respondents were given the option of agreeing, disagreeing or choosing a neutral response to statements. A category of 'don't know' or 'not relevant' could have been included to give a more appropriate response option. It may also have been useful to provide a definition of 'neutral' to reduce wrongly categorised responses.

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) argue that a single question can tap a belief or attitude as long as the subject corresponds directly in time, target, action and context. The validity and reliability of this study and future research would be improved by using a series of questions rather than single-item indicators to tap the same behavioural concept (de Vaus, 1986). The risk of bias from inaccurate answers could also be minimised through the use of multi-component scores. The greatest potential for this problem was in reported intentions where the addition of several questions which measured the same behavioural intent would have provided a check on consistency of responses.

A further limitation of this study was the lack of quantitative data collected on training attitudes and practices. Questions requiring statistical information on actual financial and time investments and commitments may have ensured more factual responses. Longitudinal studies measuring the relationship between reported intentions and subsequent behaviour, would require this type of statistical data rather than the more general percentage figures collected for the past behaviour component of this study.

Assumptions were made in the study that the normative component of attitude and subjective component of intentions were less relevant in the formation of both attitudes and intentions in an industrial context. It would be useful in any replication of the study in other industries to include additional questions related to these concepts. A clear differentiation between the two weighted components of attitudes and intentions could facilitate an analysis of the different value ratings placed on each in behaviour patterns.

Despite these minor recommendations, the chosen methodology was successful in meeting the objectives of the research and appeared to provide valid and reliable measures of the behavioural components and their relationships.

### **5.3 Concluding Comments**

This study attempted to add to the shallow pool of research and knowledge on human resource development in New Zealand. A profile of training practices and management attitudes toward training in the hotel industry have been presented, extending the base of knowledge and introducing a methodological tool for future research.

Futurists predict that the success of organisations in the next decade will depend more and more on the quality of staff, their management and development. However many organisations in the hotel industry still fail to align business strategies, structures, workplace culture and human competencies. Senior managers must adopt different attitudes to their human resources and the contribution they make to organisational goals. The linkage of strategic goals and human resource development strategies will begin to provide the framework for true cost-benefit analysis and evaluation measures which are consistent with other investment decisions. Clearly defined training plans and expected benefits to the individual and the organisation should promote increased training resource allocations.

Part of the Theory of Reasoned Action Behavioural model has been successfully applied in this study to training decision-making and resource allocation. The model provides a useful tool for explaining the important role of senior managers' attitudes in training decision-making. However, the extension of the model for measuring behaviour and its relationship with reported intentions will require further research and the development and testing of a methodological tool. Research which supports the relevance of the model to the full training decision-making process will allow behavioural prediction and the manipulation of factors involved in behaviour determination.

The study also highlighted the urgent need for better management of the training function. The application of management principles used in other strategic decision-making would lead to more rational decisions and resource allocations which meet both individual and organisational goals.

Assumptions that training involves adding extra bits of knowledge or skill randomly as required loses sight of the whole individual development and the wider strategic development goals of the organisation. The building of human resources should be no different to other structures of the organisation.

*"Skills are important bricks but a pile of bricks are no building"* (Guerrier, 1991:172)

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## APPENDICES

### 5.4 APPENDIX 1: PILOT LETTER

Dear (insert)

Thank you for agreeing to assist with my research. As I explained, you are one of a small group who I have asked to pilot the questionnaire which is part of a wider study I am conducting on the views and practices of general managers of N.Z. hotels in regard to the training of their management staff.

The questionnaire should be quick to answer requiring you to only circle answers which you agree with. No detailed written answers are required. From the pilot I hope to be able to identify if there are ambiguous or problem questions.

The success of the study relies on you giving your personal and honest response to questions on your views on training and training practices in your organisation. The information will be totally confidential and individual respondents will at no stage be identified.

The research is being conducted as part of a thesis for a Master of Commerce and Management degree. The information gained will be shared with the industry, through magazine and journal articles, and should provide a profile of the differences in views about and practices in the training of middle managers in the hotel industry in New Zealand.

I appreciate your assistance in helping with the pilot and hope that you can also assist by completing it within the next few days. This will allow me to make changes before it is sent out to the wider survey group throughout New Zealand.

I would appreciate it if you could complete the questionnaire for me by 27 May. I will contact you to check any problems you have identified or suggestions you may have.

Once again I appreciate your time and assistance which will be of tremendous help with my research. Thank you!!

Yours sincerely,

Anne Hindson,  
Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.

## 5.5 APPENDIX 2: SURVEY LETTER

Dear (insert)

### A Request to Share Your Views

I would like to request your support for research I am conducting among general managers of hotels in New Zealand, looking at their views and practices in regard to the training of their **management** staff. This questionnaire has been sent to general managers of all hotels of fifty rooms or more in the country.

The questionnaire should not take long to answer, requiring you to only circle answers which reflect your views and/or practices. No detailed written answers are required.

It is important to the success of the study that the answers you give are your personal views on training and are an accurate account of training practices received by management staff in your organisation. The information will be **totally confidential** and individual respondents **will at no stage be identified**.

The research is being conducted as part of a thesis for a Master of Commerce and Management degree. I hope to be able to share the information gained with you and the industry, through a magazine or journal article early next year. The results should provide a profile of the differences in views about, and practices in, the training of middle managers in the hotel industry in New Zealand. It is my intention to conduct the same research in several other industry groups in the future.

I have had wonderful support from General Managers of Christchurch hotels who piloted the questionnaire for me. I hope you will give the same support as the validity of the study relies on a high return rate.

As the research and results must be written up by October my schedule is very tight and I have to ask for your assistance in completing and returning this questionnaire in the freepost envelope provided **by 18 June 1993.**

Once again, I appreciate your time and assistance in completing the questionnaire and helping my research. If you should have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me (ph 03 3252-811). Thank you!!

Yours sincerely,

Anne Hindson,  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism,  
P.O. Box 84,  
Lincoln University,  
CANTERBURY.

# APPENDIX 3: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

## QUESTIONNAIRE ON TRAINING VIEWS AND PRACTICES

### SECTION A

The following statements have been made by individuals about training. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

Remember: Your responses should be your personal views and are totally confidential.

How much do you agree with ...? (Please circle appropriate no. for each question)

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Training should provide individuals with the <b>skills</b> and <b>knowledge</b> required for the <b>job</b> they currently perform	1	2	3	4	5
2	Training should provide opportunities for individual <b>personal development</b> , not necessarily related to the job	1	2	3	4	5
3	Training should provide learning opportunities aimed at the individual's future <b>professional</b> or <b>career growth</b>	1	2	3	4	5
4	The organisation should only give technical on the job training to staff in <b>management</b> positions	1	2	3	4	5
5	Only management and supervisory staff should receive <b>personal</b> development opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
6	Only management staff should receive <b>career</b> development opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
7	Training at all levels should only be provided if it increases <b>organisational productivity</b> and <b>profitability</b>	1	2	3	4	5
8	I value the training I have received in the past for the <b>career</b> opportunities it has provided	1	2	3	4	5
9	I value the training I have received in the past for the <b>personal development</b> opportunities gained	1	2	3	4	5
10	I value the training I have received in the past for the <b>technical job specific</b> skills and knowledge gained	1	2	3	4	5
11	I believe formal management qualifications are important for management positions in this industry	1	2	3	4	5
12	I believe managers in this industry should work their way up the industry ladder	1	2	3	4	5
13	I am happy with the results of <b>technical job specific</b> training which my management staff have undertaken in the past year	1	2	3	4	5

How much do you agree with ...? (Please circle appropriate no. for each question.)

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14	I am happy with the results of <b>personal development</b> training which my management staff have undertaken in the past year	1	2	3	4	5
15	I am happy with the <b>career related skills/knowledge</b> which my management staff have obtained over the past year	1	2	3	4	5
16	I feel I have the expertise to confidently determine the training needs of my management staff	1	2	3	4	5
17	I feel I have the expertise to confidently determine the staff management skills required in the future to meet organisational strategic needs	1	2	3	4	5
18	I feel I require further skills in managing the training process in my organisation	1	2	3	4	5

The following reasons have been given as **the benefits** of training staff. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree that these are the benefits of training.

How much do you agree with ...? (Please circle appropriate no. for each question)

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19	Training increases personal self esteem and confidence	1	2	3	4	5
20	Training improves individual job satisfaction and therefore motivation	1	2	3	4	5
21	Training increases individual career and promotion opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
22	Training improves quality of the individual's work	1	2	3	4	5
23	Training lowers staff turnover	1	2	3	4	5
24	Training improves team relationships on-the-job	1	2	3	4	5
25	Training improves individual ability to take more delegated responsibility	1	2	3	4	5
26	Training raises the qualification levels of individuals	1	2	3	4	5
27	Training of management staff improves their awareness of training needs of operational staff	1	2	3	4	5
28	Training increases the ability to transfer knowledge and skills	1	2	3	4	5

The following statements are frequently given as reasons why managers **DO NOT** provide training. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement as it relates to your experiences.

How much do you agree with ...? (Please circle appropriate number for each question)

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29	Training is too expensive	1	2	3	4	5
30	Training requires too much time away from the job	1	2	3	4	5
31	There are no changes in performance back on-the-job as a result of training	1	2	3	4	5
32	There are no suitable training courses available	1	2	3	4	5
33	Management staff often leave after considerable expenditure on training them	1	2	3	4	5
34	There is no interest from management staff for training	1	2	3	4	5
35	It is difficult to determine the appropriate training needs of management staff	1	2	3	4	5
36	Past experiences with management training have been bad	1	2	3	4	5
37	It is difficult to get management staff together for training because of shift work	1	2	3	4	5
38	Most management staff have all the skills and knowledge required and do not need further training	1	2	3	4	5

## SECTION B

The following statements refer to the responsibility for and delivery of management staff training. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

How much do you agree with ...? (Please circle appropriate no. for each question)

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39	Responsibility for obtaining skills necessary for the job belongs solely to the <u>individual</u>	1	2	3	4	5
40	The <u>organisation</u> should have responsibility for providing training in the <b>technical job</b> specific skills required by management staff	1	2	3	4	5
41	The <u>organisation</u> should have the responsibility for providing <b>personal development</b> opportunities to management staff	1	2	3	4	5
42	The <u>organisation</u> should have the responsibility for providing <b>career development</b> opportunities to management staff	1	2	3	4	5

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
43	<b>Senior management</b> should put policies in place to ensure training is undertaken in all departments of the organisation	1	2	3	4	5
44	The <b>general manager</b> should be responsible for determining training requirements for all management staff positions	1	2	3	4	5
45	The <b>In house/corporate human resource personnel</b> should be responsible for determining the training needs and requirements of management staff	1	2	3	4	5
46	The <b>Individual</b> should be responsible for determining their own training needs in negotiation with their senior manager	1	2	3	4	5
47	Training is best provided <b>In house</b> where application can be focused on the organisation needs	1	2	3	4	5
48	With new individuals, training is best offered <b>off-the-job</b> .	1	2	3	4	5
49	Training is best offered in a <b>team situation</b> so all acquire the new skills or knowledge together	1	2	3	4	5

	<b>I believe the following training methods are effective for the training of management staff:</b>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
50	a) Lectures	1	2	3	4	5
51	b) Conferences/seminars	1	2	3	4	5
52	c) Written resource packages	1	2	3	4	5
53	d) Videos	1	2	3	4	5
54	e) Visits to other organisations	1	2	3	4	5
55	f) Apprenticeships	1	2	3	4	5
56	g) Job rotation	1	2	3	4	5
57	h) Coaching on the job	1	2	3	4	5
58	i) Coaching off the job (simulated situation)	1	2	3	4	5
59	j) Courses at educational institutions	1	2	3	4	5
60	k) Induction/orientation sessions	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION C**

The following statements concern your intentions in the next 12 months. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

How much do you agree with ...? (Please circle appropriate number for each question)

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
61	I intend to gain further skills in the management of <b>staff training</b> in the next twelve months	1	2	3	4	5
62	I intend to pursue further <b>training for myself</b> in the next twelve months	1	2	3	4	5
63	I intend to increase the number of <b>technical job specific</b> training opportunities available to my management staff in the next twelve months	1	2	3	4	5
64	I intend to increase the number of <b>personal development</b> training opportunities available to my management staff in the next twelve months	1	2	3	4	5
65	I intend to increase the number of <b>career development</b> training opportunities available to my management staff in the next twelve months	1	2	3	4	5
66	I intend to give <b>staff training</b> greater priority among my job responsibilities over the next twelve months	1	2	3	4	5
67	I intend to implement a more <b>systematic approach</b> to making training decisions in the next twelve months	1	2	3	4	5
68	I intend to give <b>financial and time off</b> support to staff wishing to further their personal/career in the next twelve months skill at their own initiative	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION D (Please circle appropriate response for each question)**

69	Does your organisation have a training policy? If <b>NO</b> , go to question 72	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
70	Are there written policies available to all staff detailing the criteria, eligibility and procedures for training opportunities?	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
71	Does this policy require all department managers to undertake training?	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW

72	Is there a set limit on the amount of <b>time</b> spent on each individual manager for training? (If yes, please explain) _____	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
73	Is there a set limit on the amount of <b>money</b> spent on each individual manager for training. (If yes, please explain) _____	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW