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Institut for Economic  
Promotion,  
Austrian Economic  
Chamber,  
Vienna, Austria



T.E.I. Thessaloniki  
Greece



Department of Tourism  
Management

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## LIFELONG LEARNING IN RESTAURANT BUSINESS

**Gabriela Rakicevik**  
**Sofronija Miladinovski**  
**Jagoda Strezoska**

University St.Kliment Ohridski – Bitola, Macedonia<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** Lifelong learning is the reality in all successful service industries. In the field of the hotel and tourism industry, it is very important to implement this concept. That will assure to achieve high level of quality - to be competitive on the market, and as feedback to get a big number of satisfied guests. There are different issues to discuss for the concept of lifelong learning. One of the most important thing is the need and interest for permanent education from both sides: employee and employer. The other issue is: according to law who is competent to organize and offer different forms of lifelong learning; who will recognize the certificate and/or diploma! Financial aspect has big influence as well: who will cover the expences for any kind of education for already employed people. Methods and techniques for lifelong learning vary according to target group, topic, time, department in the hospitality property etc. Training is very popular method for permanent education. In general there are two basic types of training: the one-on-one training method and group training. Much of the training in restaurant business is done individually. Most one-on-one training is conducted by implementation of the following techniques: buddy system, cross-training, computer training and video. There are many different techniques that can be used in group training: classroom, lecture, demonstration, role-playing, games, professional trainers. In some countries, very popular is the concept of service learning.

*Key words:* lifelong learning, training, restaurant business, training method and techniques.

<sup>1</sup> **Gabriela Rakicevik**, Ph.D., Associate Professor, **Sofronija Miladinovski**, Ph.D., Full Professor, **Jagoda Strezoska**, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality – Ohrid, University St.Kliment Ohridski – Bitola, Macedonia.

## INTRODUCTION

To set the human resources in development focus, not only in the company but the country in overall, quality development and rational use is needed.

Based on the numbers from The Institute for Statistics in RM, for the period 1999-2019, estimates that the numbers of the population will raise from 1.936,9 thousands to 2.218.7 (for 14.5%), and that the number of the workforce will raise for 200 thousand.

Knowing that fact, there is the need of a strategy for increasing the use of the human resources. That could be accomplished with a good economic strategy oriented towards third party services, including the segments of hospitality (accommodations, food industry, transport, travel agencies, companies for animations, fun, recreation etc.).

Taking into consideration the fact that there are no strictly determined quantity measures and relations, we need generally a balance between the size and the structure of the human resources in order to define the strategy and the politics of socio-economic development. In the process of balancing the needs for educated human resources the starting point will be the need of the society and the economy. The Management (on a micro and macro level) in team work should use authority of the knowledge and capability, which will bring increasing of the knowledge. In that way the strategy and the politics of future development will be based on the needs for numerous educated professionals on a high quality level. Also the balance of the needs in that field is very important.

The profession comes from the education or from practice (with qualification and pre-qualification for specific work position). Taking into consideration that the direct contacts, (between educational institutions and the companies and other institutions from another side), are limited, so the task to balance the needs based on profession is very complicated. Talking about this matter under these conditions, one can not make a model, even in some lower quantity proportions.

That's why, for the needs of the socio-economic development in the XXI century, the educated professionals are expected to have the ability for permanent professional training and upgrade of the knowledge.

### 1. PERMANENT EDUCATION IN HOSPITALITY

The Education is a lifetime dynamic process. The education takes place in adequate educational institutions and at the certain companies where employees work on a daily basis. At their work place employees gain practical experience which they can not get by regular education. The company's ability to keep up with the competition, at very least, it depends on how much their experts learn from its own experience and on how much they utilize the new knowledge, because every company, at one point, without doubt will transform into "educational institution".

The Human Resource Education is necessary during one human lifetime work period for all employees (on different managerial and non-managerial levels). The Human resource development has primary importance for the company and represents big responsibility for all successful managers. The employees' skills development is very useful and appreciative. Therefore, it is essential to use systematic approach, to be able to determine the work activities which use specific training programs. Employees analyze to identify the training needs and proceed them as a request to the management. The management determines the connection between development projects and training in specific areas which helps them to assign the priority projects. All expenses made for the realization of the training projects have to be self-explanatory.

The successful training programs need to be practical and planned in advance to offer the capacity to overcome the process of developing the necessary skills on a most effective and easy way. By monitoring of the training process the employees need to empower them self with each skill.

The choice of the trainer represents very important part for successful realization of the training program. The potential trainers have to believe in the value of the training process, they have to have ability to communicate with people and to be energetic to be able to implement their knowledge on a right way, while using high work standards and hopefully with their own example will be motivation for other co-workers, professionally and responsibly will do their job. In that case, the trainer's experience will play special role and it is very important. The work experience let the trainer "revive" the training, by giving instructions through exact practical examples. Trainer's practical experience increases his rating and reputation.

The effective trainers have energy on a higher level and possess more personal attribute in the area of the human resource development. The trainers have the ability for understanding the needs of their "students" in the right sense, have patience to listen and respond to the questions given. They are the visionary, have the managerial skills, control the group activity, learn on their own mistakes and so they use the knowledge to improve their students work.

The success in the conducting of the hospitality business depends on the quality of its workers and on the quality level in which they do their job on a daily basis. The best way to get quality service from the employees is to put the right employees on a right place. The employees need to be trained in these areas: company duties and the philosophy of the services, for the technical aspects in their work and for their part in the whole area.

The monitoring personnel's training is necessary in order to be able to make estimate. In that way, the employees of the monitoring group are responsible to monitor and to do evaluation to the employees work obligations. If they determine that there is deviation from the regular standards, they need to make corrections to those deviations and they need to enforce positive behavior. With estimate they need to determine the areas where there is a need for development and training. The manager, who knows how to do this part of the working process right, will have better approach

towards the management. Based on the result from the monitoring, the managers can plan the change in managing the human resources in the form of promotion, transfer and firing of the employees.

According to Nikolic (Nikolic, et. al. 1997), investing into employee's education in average is five times better than investing into equipment. According to that:

- All employees can take learn, but not all of them will be learn the same, because they differ from their previous level of knowledge, capacity, speed and level to remember.
- The individual need to be motivated to learn (to be aware that there is need for education, to have desire to learn and to be introduced with what ever needs to learn).
- Taking into consideration that the studying represents active process, need as many more senses included in that particular process.
- The biggest success in studying is possible when there is under mentor surveillance, because leading the candidate speeds up the learning process and let get the return information (is the studying way and volume in order)
- Is it possible to learn with help of hand book, literature, computers with programs software etc.
- There is a time needed to assimilate whatever is learned, accepting and gaining self-confidence in applying.
- The learning methods need to be as much different to avoid the monotony. In that sense even the computer simulation becomes boring with time, if it does not change and if it doesn't imply with new methods.
- The individual need to see the advantage of permanent improving (for ex., promotion, recognition, raise etc.)
- There is a need to determine the standards and criteria for the speed and the quality of learning.
- The learning methods need to be adjusted according to the candidate educational level, age, and the type of the working place.

Basic classification in creation programs for training is possible to make based on the fact if there is taking place training of managerial personnel or training of non-managerial personnel.

## **2. TRAINING AS TOOL FOR PERMANENT EDUCATION IN RESTAURANT BUSINESS**

Training is essential to a successful implementation of quality improvement. Training should be an ongoing process. Developing and maintaining the training program does involve costs. In long term, with staff that is properly trained, managers could achieve increased profit. Reducing accidents at the work place and fluctuation, waste, poor service, poor quality food, will guide to quality improvement and guest satisfaction. The ongoing training should consist of several elements: daily (weekly) training, general training, departmental training and specialized training.

The group of *daily* (weekly) *training* includes the staff meetings. The staff meetings should be places to introduce new creative ideas for improving the quality of job performance from both sides: managers and non-managers. At the same time, that is the excellent moment for all employees to exchange experiences and learn from each other. Encouraging employees to share the thoughts about work will enable to create the learning atmosphere during the meeting.

*General training* is training that all employees should receive regardless of their job or position in organizational structure. It doesn't mean that all employees should get the training at the same time. According to the topic (guest relations, sales/marketing, safety, sanitation, personal hygiene etc), the general training could be conducted by certain manager or outside consultant.

*Departmental training* in most cases concerns actual job responsibilities. The manager of the certain department is in charge for training the employees within the department.

*Specialized training* concerns specialized skills: computer training, first aid, fire safety, point-of-sales equipment training etc. Usually for this type of training the outside consultant is being hired.

The training methods of non-managerial personnel are applied to train employees. In general there are two basic types of training: *the one-on-one training method* and *group training*. Some delivery methods are better for individual training and others to group learning. Most one-on-one training is conducted by implementation of the following techniques: *buddy system, cross-training, computer training* and *video*. There are many different techniques that can be used in group training: *classroom, lecture, demonstration, role-playing, games, professional trainers*. The choice of training method will depend on the costs, number of people that should be trained and their ability to learn the best.

Much of the training in restaurant business is done *individually*. The purpose for this type of training is to show the employee how to do something and then let the employee to try to do the task on his/her own. The individual training gives closer contact between the trainers and the employee. When we talk about the individual training, the style and the dynamics of the studying is adjusted according to the preference of the employee. Beside that, the trainer can pay more attention to the employee and will respond to all questions. Often the individual training takes place at the work.

According to Baskette (Baskette, 2001), a plan to train employees on-the-job includes:

- A fully executed job description for the position, including an organizational chart;
- Pairing new employees with experienced employees during the training period;
- Developing a training schedule that allows new employees to learn different aspects of the operation

- Reviewing training schedules and goals with the new employee, to partnered experienced employee, and the supervising chef
- Reviewing progress on a daily basis.

For this type of training, job lists and job performance standards can be used as guidelines. *The buddy system* is one of the most widely used methods of **individual training**. The new employee will be paired with experienced employee. According to the job list, the trainee should learn how to perform each task. The trainer should speak in simple terms and encourage the trainee to ask questions. The trainee should be able to focus on each segment. At the end, trainee should repeat the procedure and if necessary take any corrective actions.

The *cross training* it's an excellent training technique especially good for training more employees at the time. The use of this method gives chance to the employees to face with their co-worker's difficulties and the problems at the work place. Actually, that is a work place which is in direct correlation for execution of specific service. In that contest the waiters /waitresses need to spend some time with the cooks, buss persons and hosts/hostesses. In that way, with relatively small expenses we are accomplishing higher work efficacy and the guests will get better quality service.

*Computer training* is a technique which gives individual training for each employee with a use of a computer. In that case the employee chooses the time (during the day) for realization of the training. The training can be done online or with the use of a CD.

*Video* represents very practical training method. With the use of the video method the employee has the opportunity to be acquainted with different subjects. In that contest, training for waiters/waitresses with a help of the video can show situations in practice like: hosting, taking orders (beverage and food), suggestive selling, table manners, tips etc. The trainer, instead of talking all the time, using the video could present the needed situation on more efficient and original way.

**Group training** is very effective for getting all employees trained at the same time. The best way to accomplish it is through practice. Classroom-seminar is a training method which we use for training a group of employees. Even this method it's not specialized for restaurant industry it can be used for getting some useful information. For this training we need a separate room. Often this is a method which we practice when we invite trainers outside the company, and when the training is established in a cooperation with some different professional education institutions. In that case it is possible the employees to go to fulfill the educational institution's program.

*Lecture* - represents prepared presentation for contents transfer to a group of employees. Beside oral presentation, it can be used various audio-visual equipment, in order to engage the discussion participants and to help in answering to the questions. In order to be more effective, the trainers can start with interesting statement or question, to use humor when appropriate, to present interesting examples, anecdotes and

information, to ask questions, to engage the group and to create condition for discussion. It is very important to mention, that more than 60% of the time should be spent allowing the trainers to give feedback, about what has been learned.

*Demonstration* - is one of the best training methods in restaurant business. With the use of this training method, the participants engage more senses. To make the demonstration successful the trainer needs a good preparation. Before the demonstrations starts the participant need to know which task and skills will be demonstrated. The trainer should allocate himself so all participants can clearly watch him what he does. The demonstration should go step by step so the participants know exactly which step is presented at the time. First he needs to demonstrate slowly so the participants can see what exactly is going on and than to repeat the same with a normal speed. Before he gives the opportunity to the participants to repeat the same he needs to explain what exactly they intend to do and how to plan to do it.

*Role playing* represents a training method where certain situation is simulated so the participants can show their skills and ability to exercise what they have learned. Often the roles are already prepared by the trainer and the participants need to answer some others participant's questions and to manage exact situation or problem, to assure guest satisfaction, to resolve the complaint etc. For this method to be successful the roles need to be simple-clearly defined and the participants need to know what exactly they are expected to do.

*"Games"* represent a very interesting training method for the employees. According to the place they are using also depends the time and the content of the "game". Finally, this is a method which the employees almost always accept.

*Professional trainers* are the training experts in some specific area. In the restaurant business area there is Professional trainers' Association. They help to the restaurant owners to improve the service quality and to improve their business by educating the employees.

### 3. TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR RESTAURANT BUSINESS

In this part of the paper follow some examples of training programs for restaurant business. These are some training programs according to topic: Serve safe and NACCP, Nutrition, Management, Orientation training, Training the trainer, Serving alcohol responsibly, Workplace safety, Basics of food preparation, Purchasing, Managing the guest experience etc.

According to work place here are some examples of diversity training programs.

*Training for managers:* Developing a training policy (guests being dissatisfied, employees disorganized or confused about their jobs, low morale, low sales, low productivity, high waste, sanitation issues, high employee turnover, low number of repeat guests, employee theft, substandard products or services, high level of

employee in-fighting); determining training needs; establishing training needs; creating job descriptions and job lists (example or writing); job breakdowns; designing the plan, coaching and class evaluation form.

**Orientation training:** Orientation checklist (sample), orientation materials, pre-opening training, ongoing training, daily/weekly training, possible format for a 10-15 pre-shift meeting, effective staff meetings, general training, departmental training, specialized training and developing a training schedule.

**Bartender** - serving beverages: Greeting customers, Taking orders, set up the drinks & bar terminology.

**Server** - guest food service/drinks: Cooking terminology, approaching the table, getting guests settled, Taking meal order, taking drinks orders, serving drinks, Picking up the food, Server side work, Telling about specials & Checking back for second drink order and appetizer order. *Taking meal order* would include: Taking food order, Meeting special requests, Delivering salads and appetizers and Pre-ringing food order and place order with kitchen. *Picking up the food* as training program might include: Picking up the food, loading the tray, cleaning dishes and preparing table for serving, Delivering food and Dessert service, cleaning the table and paying the check. *Server side work:* Setting up coffee station, setting up bread baskets, setting up stations, Setting up side station and Closing duties.

**Host/hostess:** Introduction to job, inspecting the dining room, receiving customers (greeting, seating), Providing excellent service, Dealing with problems iff there is a wait, Handling (difficult customers, customer complaints), Handling large parties, Making arrangements for and serving special parties, Performing clerical work.

**Bus person:** Checking and cleaning front of house, cleaning tables and chairs, setting tables and clearing and resetting tables.

**Pizza cook's** - preparing food: Stocking cold table, taking order from server, using scale and other equipment, cooking pizzas, cutting pizzas and restocking ingredients.

**Cook:** Putting food away, storing food items at proper temperatures, restocking for next shift, turning off equipment, wiping down counters, cleaning grill, cleaning fryer oil, taking dirty dishes to dishwasher and storing clean dishes, filling out paperwork, removing garbage sweeping and mopping floor and develop clean-up sheet.

**Dishwasher:** Preparing dishes for putting into dish machine, taking items out of dish machine and maintaining the dish machine.

The presented list of training programs could be changed and adapted according to the needs of the business.



## RESUME

With implementation of different educational programs and professional improvement of the employees need to achieve more positive effects:

- Improving of the service quality
- Increase of collegiality and sense for team work and cooperation
- Downsizing the conflicts between the employees
- Reliving the stress and releasing the tension
- Downsizing of employees fluctuations and missing from work
- Work promotion which will bring lower costs
- Preparation of employees for promotions
- Increasing the employees self confidence
- Straightens to the professionalism
- Improving to interpersonal relations in general and especially between the management and other employees
- Decreasing the numbers of accident at the work place
- Increasing the productivity
- Improving the health care and hygiene
- Decreasing of tiredness
- Increasing the feeling for safety at work
- Decreasing the need of surveillance and control
- Better work environment (relaxed work environment)
- Decreasing the waste
- Increasing the employees level of ethics and responsibility

The present situation in restaurant business in Republic of Macedonia in the field of education it can be resumed as follows:

- Lack in law regulations in the field of tourism and hospitality concerning the employment of professionals
- High rate of unemployment of professionally trained and educated individuals
- Total lack of financial resources for training and education of employees in the companies of tourism and hospitality business.

Base on the fact that the standard education can not satisfy in full the needs of the market economy, it is necessary that every bigger company has its own center for education and training. Because it is not always possible independently to produce, it can be realized in cooperation with specialized educational institution. In that way the employees will have opportunity for continuous education in specialized programs, and that is based under previously determined needs.

Obtained standard education should to be rebuilt all the time. The best results for that purpose could be gotten in association with specialized educational institutions. Instructions and training are the main preconditions for implementation of standards which are in a process of continuing changes.

It is possible to conclude that the continuous education, in all its forms, represents one of the most important company's activities in the field of the hospitality. That's why, the essential part of the management represent the human resource training. In that way, directly they will influence on the work quality, actually quality offer to top service. Good trained employees have confidence in their self and their skills, they stay longer in the company, they fulfill their obligation with bigger enthusiasm, and the clients are more satisfied.

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