



## **Competency–Based Management Education For Hospitality**

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### **Abstract:**

The working environment around hospitality organizations is highly turbulent, because of rapid change in organizational ethos and activities. Training provision to meet such ambiguous and complex needs have also to shift from the conventional style. The impact of training and the measurement of skill acquisition in such cases would become questionable.

Organization needs to develop in their managers and offices for “quick responses” and “flexibility” to appropriately deal with situation in today context. This could probably be better called as “resourcefulness” in managers.

In analysing the characteristics of resourceful managers, particularly significant qualities appeared to be – Flexible intelligence, Social abilities, Technical expertise, emotional resilience, Drive for continued effectiveness, Effective judgment, In situation of uncertainty, Commitment to fundamental values This paper describes competency, Sources of competencies and about the identification of competencies including some competence statements required for the development. The demonstration of required competencies needs a very high degree of professional skills from the trainer and intense dedication from the trainees.

Keywords: - Competency, Hospitality, and Education

### **Introduction**

In constructing a relevant set of training needs for hospitality industry, both the current reality and the demands of the future have to be taken into consideration. While job descriptions and job analysis provide a fairly clear picture of the current reality it becomes difficult to anticipate future scenarios for a particular occupant. In the rapidly changing set of requirements in the field of hospitality, and a high degree of uncertainty make future scenario conception complex it would be preferable to equip people to deal with ambiguous and uncertain situations rather than attempt to predict them and make a provision for each of them in the training process.

Skills which enables a manager to cope up with uncertainty, rapid change and multiplicity of events are far more difficult to analyse and determine and consequently to develop through normal or traditional patterns of hotel industry. Some form of clustering is called for and a generalization would help in devising training program.

Training provision to meet such ambiguous and complex needs have also to shift from the conventional style. The impact of training and the measurement of skill acquisition in such cases would become questionable.

Under the circumstances competency – based approach would be far more appropriate. It contains generalization and clustering of skills. It also demands that at the end of the training program the trainees demonstrate in real – life situations the skills they were expected to acquire.

To prepare a trainee to cope with current job demands and future uncertainty a set of generic skills can be identified for his development these generic skills would be broad based all, develop in him the ability to learn the context in which he would be placed in brief, the trainee acquire competency to meet real life challenges effectively.

The environment around hospitality organizations is highly turbulent, leading to rapidly changing organizational ethos and activities. Organization needs to develop in their managers and offices for “quick responses” and “flexibility” to appropriately deal with situation in this context. This could probably be better called as “resourcefulness” in managers. Resource managers are those who can among their needs:

- a. Cope decisively with new situation with the requirement degree of skills and self-confidence.
- b. Use whatever information is obtainable in order to develop practical plans with plenty of room for contingencies.
- c. Operate with and thorough other people, rather than as individuals.

In analysing the characteristics of resourceful managers, particularly significant qualities appeared to be –

- Flexible intelligence
- Social abilities
- Technical expertise
- Emotional resilience
- Drive for continued effectiveness
- Effective judgment
- In situation of uncertainty
- Commitment to fundamental values

### **Flexible intelligences**

This is linked with information handling abilities. It relates to the rapid assessment of changing events and activities, recognizing emerging patterns, focusing on promising issues to gain deeper understanding, gathering new information whenever appropriate. These qualities stretch beyond normal problems – solving abilities. They help in dealing with a discontinuous set of events and rapid changes.

### **Technical abilities**

Resourceful managers need to do more than merely handled information. They need to cope with physical world – like ability to serve and use equipments, machines materials. One of the great attractions of the physical world, for the practitioner, is that it lends self-reliance to experiments and manipulation. The result of successful practice can be effectively standardized and communicated to others.

### **Social abilities**

Much of the job of the manager consists of working with and through other people. Resourceful managers, who are working in consistently changing situation of hotel operations, particularly need to develop sensitivity to changing relationships with guests and staff. By no means all these relationships will be co-operative many will be competitive, and event hostile.

The requirements of a resourceful manager to match the patterns of social relations include such diverse skills as negotiating, bargaining, collaborating, competing, influencing, persuading, exhorting, and many other modes of social activities. It is becoming increasingly clear that people can develop far greater flexibility in their social relationships by focusing on their own social behaviour, and practicing new ways of behaving in experimental settings

### **Emotional resilience**

The first three qualities of resourcefulness are all forms of ability, and can be judged as more or less effective, but they need the support of a deep sincere feeling. Emotional resilience is closely linked with openness to ones feeling and to other inner lives of others. But without some of self-control, openness can become over sensitivity and lead to emotional breakdown.

### **Drive for continued effectiveness**

This tendency could be called 'initiative' or 'ambition'. This is an ongoing commitment to keep this running smoothly under stable conditions. Like other qualities discussed here, drive is continuously variable, at its most intense, it can take a characteristics of an obsession, such as compelling drive to perfection.

### **Effective judgement in situations of uncertainty**

If drive is very intense, it may threaten emotional resilience and effective judgment. A sound judgment, in general terms, is one of that reflects the realities of the situation and needs the interests of the subordinates and the guests accurately and fairly.

### **Commitment to fundamental values**

A hotel manager who is highly resourceful, but lacks grounding in fundamental values, could well be a social menace. Entrepreneurs are resourceful almost by definition but often use their flexibility and energy to undermine the security and welfare of others the entrepreneurial approach is therefore not only celebrated but also notorious. The qualities of character that links the manager with deeper values can, however, be threat to resourcefulness, since they often emphasize stability. There seems to be a continuous tension between commitment to such values as sincerity, integrity and loyalty .In short, resourcefulness and fundamental values are often difficult to go along side by side

All these qualities can be reflected in the form of number of relevant competencies once developed by a manager; these competencies would assist him in coping up with job demands of hotel industry develop at various levels over a long period of time.

Considering this view, competence-based education in the field of hospitality is related to the development of the individuals. It will equip him with qualities demanded by different job situations during hotel operations. It lays the foundations for future development.

### **What is competency?**

It is difficult to define competency comprehensively. it would be ability to perform a particular activity to a prescribed standard . The activity may involve the development of a variety of skills. However it can be said to process the following feature

- It consists of set of skills
- It is performance oriented
- It is a specific
- It is measurable
- It has to be demonstrated

### **Source of competencies**

A hotel with people working at different levels needs competencies so that the role of organisations is performed satisfactorily. The sources of required competencies are

- 1.) Job description
- 2.) Performance feedback, appraisal
- 3.) Perceived needs expressed by seniors, subordinates, guests etc
- 4.) Task analysis

### **Identification of competencies**

Steps in identifying competencies are as follows:

The following steps are involved in this activity

- 1.) Generating current and future job needs
- 2.) Identifying skills related to job to be carried out currently and in future
- 3.) Clustering skills into sets
- 4.) Preparing competency statements
- 5.) Structuring/ sequencing competency based on dependency condition

### **Identifying competency.**

The competencies are best identified a group of trainers both within and outside the organization. The senior managers of the hotel need to be inducted into this group. The members of the group need to be trained so that they acquire the skills required to carry out various steps involved in identifying competencies. Once they are trained they would be able to generate a structured list of competency statements, which would be demonstrable.

The competencies can be identified after job analysis and interviews within the various constituents of the role occupant. Validation of competencies is an important activity and must be carried out by the group.

One integrated approach to identify competencies is to link the role of employees to the organizational deficiencies. In this approach organizational deficiencies are identified by a group of functionaries who also derive the role of various functionaries and then relate the organizational deficiencies to various role components either underplayed or need to be developed. In this process the validation is also inbuilt. Identifying competencies confirms to training need identification. Except that the nature of training needs diagnosed would be generate and applicable to set of jobs and positions.

Whilst identification of competencies can be done through a process similar to job analysis, the development of competencies and consequent demonstration requirements demand a very high degree of professional skills from the trainer and intense dedication from the trainees. It is time consuming. The criteria of judging demonstrations especially in behavioural areas are complex and defy consensus among those exercising judgment.

### **Examples of Competencies**

- a) Sample competencies in management education.
1. Demonstrate empathy towards the respond suitability to demands and expectations from persons located in his hotel environment like guests and staff (both internal and external guest).
  2. Derive and utilize norms of ethical behaviour.
  3. Employ a rational process in decision-making.
  4. Demonstrate effective decision making under conditions of uncertainty and risk.
  5. Come up with solutions to problems.
  6. Obtain acceptance from crucial others for problem solutions and decisions.
  7. Perform a detailed diagnosis of the current state of department/section.
  8. Formulate a detailed plan of the project.
  9. Formulate a detailed annual plan for his department/section, taking into consideration long term prospective, an uncertain and turbulent environment, and resource limitations.
  10. Develop alternative strategies to introduce major reforms in department and sections.
  11. Ensure commitment from a group of subordinates who are likely to continue towards the set of activities.
  12. Given individual differences between subordinates, design motivation approaches for each subordinate.
  13. Select and employ an appropriate leadership style in a given situation.
  14. Given varied expectations from a work related person, demonstrate how role shall be derived or altered
  15. Manage a conflict with a work related persons.
  16. Suggest ways and means to cope with certain crisis (crisis due to natural causes, organizational crisis).
  17. Determine the financial viability for a project proposal.
  18. Formulate a proposal for bringing about a major change.
  19. Select subordinates for staff development.
  20. Devise a staff development plan for department/section.
  21. Organize a meeting, conference, and seminar.
  22. Communicate effectively (verbal or written) with others

23. Appraise the performance of the subordinate.
24. Develop a work team to undertake a specialized task.
25. Develop and employ model of subordinate participation in decision-making, strategy design.

B) Sample competencies in trainer education.

1. Use a systematic approach to training for planning and managing learning activities.
2. Formulate behavioural objectives in terms of knowledge and skills.
3. Select instructional media, equipment and aids.
4. Design and prepare instructional material (in print and non-print).
5. Sequence learning experience in a number of ways.
7. Use correct verbal and non-verbal communication.
8. Present information thorough lecture.
9. Conduct group discussion.
10. Use role-playing and simulation.
11. Direct trainees in applying problem solving techniques.
12. Communicate effectively using appropriate multimedia equipment and materials like chalkboard, white board, magnetic board, films, slides, OHP and other training aids.
13. Direct students to learn through library and other resources.
14. Work effectively in a team.
15. Use techniques of giving and receiving feedback for improvement.