



A STUDY ON TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN 4 STAR HOTELS WITH REFERENCE TO A MOUNTAINOUS STATE OF UTTARAKHAND

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Abstract

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a management function that helps managers to recruit, select, train and develop members for an organisation. It is concerned with the peoples dimension in the organisations. One major area of the Human Resource Management function of particular relevance to the effective use of human resources is training and development. The importance of training as a central role of management has long been recognized by leading hotels. Training is necessary to ensure an adequate supply of staff that is technically and socially competent and capable of career development into specialist departments or management position. Employees are a crucial, but expensive resource. This research paper aims to understand the employee's training & development practices in 4 star category hotels of the region. Results from this study show that adequate training is not often provided by the hoteliers to develop employees' operational skills.

Keywords: HRM, training & development, employee

Introduction

In India, the concept of HRD was introduced for the first time by Larson & Turbo in private sector. In 1978, the concept was adopted by, Bank of Baroda, & in 1979, it was adopted by State Bank of India. Linda Maund (2001) has stated that the real need is the identification of training need. The Author has reported the use of role analysis in identification of training needs which helps the organization to increase its training effectiveness and the role of employees for effective performance. In the process of staff development, training fulfills an important part of this process.

Development of human resources (HR) remains the most crucial and significant factor for the success of the hospitality industry regardless of the country. Implementing HR policies that are intended to promote business is a real challenge, as employees often resist change and prefer to adhere to the traditional values and practices. It is more often true in tourism destinations located in under developed mountainous regions. Thus, there is a challenge to develop effective HR practices that can bring forth change in the mountainous tourism destinations of India. Many organizations have come forward, and are doing remarkably well in the development of human resources to meet international standards in the hospitality field. But these changes are not reaching the geographically challenged parts of the country. Human resources in the hospitality sector require not just a human touch and “service with smile” but also yearn for individuals who are multi skilled, cross-trained, forward looking in terms of perspective and mind set and embodies strategic

According to Cole, G. A. (2002), in his book Personnel and Human Resource Management, training is a learning activity directed towards the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills for the purpose of an occupation or task. Training is the planned and systematic modification of behaviour through learning events, activities and programs which results in the participants achieving the levels of knowledge, skills, competencies and abilities to carry out their work effectively (Gordon 1992:235). Most of the organizations have long recognized the importance of training to its development. As new technology progresses, making certain jobs and skills redundant, an increasing emphasis is being placed on the need for a skilled and highly trained workforce. According to Armstrong (1996:11), expressing an understanding of training emphasizes that training should be developed and operated within an organization by appreciating learning theories and approaches if the training is to be well understood. Training and development is the tonic employees need to enhance their performance and potentials that will in turn enhance organization effectiveness.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the existing Training & development practices in the selected star hotels.
- To understand the relation between performance appraisal and training practices.
- To assess the attitude of hotel employees towards training.
- To understand the corporate view on the need for training.

Review of literature

Hospitality industry, from which hotels are the main part, is service intensive, and consequentially depends heavily on its human resources. In each subsector, the highest investments, the most modern equipment and luxurious

buildings will fail if the personnel aspect of the organization is not carefully taken care of (Catarina Antonia Martins et al, 2005). Companies began to realize that human resource is an important asset and started developing their employees particularly to improve their performance and develop or enhance their skills to increase productivity. Fiorito, Bozeman, Young, and Meurs (2007) classify HRBP's into ten categories i.e. Internal labour markets, hiring selectivity, training, grievance resolution mechanisms, benefits, employee involvement, incentive pay, union pressure, compensation cuts, and downsizing. Training was also a tool for improving the skills in need, the productivity and effectiveness of employees (Glaveli and Kufidu, 2005). Training and development enhances job satisfaction and productivity for organizations because the employees know what is expected of them as they are also equipped with the knowledge and tools to perform their jobs efficiently (Qasim Saleem et. al. 2011).

Training and Development, On the Job Training and Training Design and Delivery style have significant effect on Organizational Performance and all these have positively affect the Organizational Performance (Raja Abdul Ghafoor Khan, and et. Al, 2011). It is very necessary for the organization to design the training very carefully (Michael Armstrong, 2000). The design of the training should be according to the needs of the employees (Ginsberg, 1997). Those organizations which develop a good training design according to the need of the employees as well as to the organization always get good results (Partlow, 1996; Tihanyi et al., 2000; Boudreau et al., 2001). It seems that Training design plays a very vital role in the employee as well as organizational performance. A bad training design is nothing but the loss of time and money (Tsaor and Lin, 2004). Hamlin (1974) advocated that until control measures are taken to correct any deficiencies after the training, evaluation has not been completed and thereby ineffective. Evaluation is an integral feature of training, but it could be difficult because it is often hard to set measurable objectives.

A system of assessing training requirements through frequent staff appraisal is found at establishments where staff development is taken seriously. Where training is less formalized, on the other hand, it is done by managers or supervisors who are not training specialists; there may be no budget set aside for it in spite of a declared willingness to offer training to staff. In such cases, training is often reactive rather than proactive, i.e. restricted to induction training for newly recruited staff and statutory (compulsory) safety and health training. It is also common for scheduled training sessions to be cancelled when employees are not replaced at their workplaces and therefore fail to turn up. Major hotel chains rely largely on their own internal training systems. The Accor Group employs about 140,000 people in 132 countries. Five per cent of staff-related expenditure goes on training in three main areas: initial training for basic qualifications or as an introduction for new employees (delivered in-house); continuous training for director-level employees (department chiefs and others), covering areas such as sales, leadership, customer contacts and so on; and inter-cultural education. Accor's training is delivered by the group's own Paris-based academy which has training centres in various locations and countries. The Accor academy receives 14,000 trainees each year. Employers use training as a means of curbing staff turnover and of encouraging staff loyalty to the enterprise so as to maintain a core staff. In some cases, training is also given to casual but frequently employed staffs who do not want a permanent contract. Training may also be used as a means to make up for difficult working conditions and low remuneration. However, it should be noted that although most workers have received induction training and safety and health training, specific career-building training was generally provided only for a minority of staff, such as those in the upper hierarchy ("Human resources

development, employment and globalization in the hotel, catering and tourism sector” a report discussed at ILO in Geneva, 2001)

Research Methodology

The study is based on the primary and the secondary data both. The primary data was collected on the basis of questionnaires administered to various respondents like hotel employees, Supervisors & HR managers. The researcher first met the various participants from where the primary data should have come out. For this study, data was collected from the cities like Almora, Kasar Devi, Binsar and Ranikhet. According to the state government tourism reports, these cities are typically considered as the primary places where tourists stay before dispersing into various outdoor activities. Collectively these four cities form the unofficial gateway to the popular tourist attractions of the state; thus they were selected for this study. A set of pre-tested structured questionnaires containing mostly close-ended and one open-ended question were given to hotel employees (lower level) from these four cities. Participation in this study is voluntary and resources were not available for any incentives. Prior permission was sought from the hotel managers to contact the hotel employees. Data was analysed and presented in tables below. The secondary data is collected through various relevant journals, magazines etc.

Uttarakhand Accommodation sector

Hotels in Uttarakhand encompass varied types of accommodation units catering all sects of tourists. However the distribution of those accommodation units were not evenly scattered and the composition of the different accommodation units are not even and the existence of unorganized hotels is higher than the organized starred properties. Other supplementary accommodations are found more in Uttarakhand as the purchasing power of the tourists visiting tourist places is less. In order to cater the high spending and elite tourists Uttarakhand enjoys one 5 star hotel duly in Mussoorie and few 4 and 3 star hotels. However the distribution of properties is concerned the improper planning and development cause hassle for effective promotion of the industry. Though the diversified accommodation units are intended to offer accommodation to the targeted people, the search for upper class accommodation is on the trend leaving the concerned accommodation units to worrisome situation. The unorganized properties in Uttarakhand encompass the maximum share creating a blur on Uttarakhand hotel industry from development as these unorganized accommodation providers neither develop their properties nor leave the potential service provider to extend services.

Classification of hotels in Uttarakhand is found to be in the infant stage as the State hold only one 5 star hotel and few other star category hotels in less numbers. While going through the nature and profile of the tourists visiting Uttarakhand, it is clear that the need for such star hotels is highly voiced by the tourists. As the main target market for Uttarakhand remains to be from Delhi, Punjab, Haryana and these tourists are the potential tourists in terms of expenditure in terms of domestic tourist category. On the other hand analyzing the reason for the absence of high spending tourist is due to the nonexistence of such properties.

Position of employees in hotels

Employees are mere considered as a workforce and no interest of employees are taken care by the employers of the hotel property, simultaneously the maximum work is been extracted

from the employee provided with less salary. However while analyzing from the other way employees do not possess any necessary qualifications to work in the hospitality sector.

Support to employees Education and Training

Support to employees education and training is very less in any of the hotels in Uttarakhand. As no employer is interested to get their employee trained to deliver proper service, the fault also lies within the employee in not showing interest in attending the same. Most of the employers feel it as an extra burden and expenditure in training their employee whereas the employees in few star hotels were given training; however the number of employees attending or showing interest in attending the same is very less.

Relation between performance appraisal and Training Practices

According to Dulewicz (1989), "A basic human tendency to make judgments about those one is working with, as well as about oneself." Appraisal, it seems, is both inevitable and universal. In the absence of a carefully structured system of appraisal, people will tend to judge the work performance of others, including subordinates, naturally, informally and arbitrarily. The human inclination to judge can create serious motivational, ethical and legal problems in the workplace. Without a structured appraisal system, there is little chance of ensuring that the judgements made will be lawful, fair, defensive and accurate. Effective performance appraisal systems contain two basic systems operating in conjunction: an evaluation system and a feedback system. The main aim of the evaluation system is to identify the performance gap. This gap is the shortfall that occurs when performance does not meet the standard set by the organization as acceptable. The main aim of the feedback system is to inform the employee about the quality of his or her performance.

Performance appraisal offers an excellent opportunity - perhaps the best that will ever occur - for a supervisor and subordinate to recognize and agree upon individual training and development needs. During the discussion of an employee's work performance, the presence or absence of work skills can become very obvious - even to those who habitually reject the idea of training for them. Training & development increase the employee performance. Development helps the individuals use the training to meet their individual needs and ambitions. By training & developing its staff well, organizations are in a position to develop a competitive advantage over their competitors. *Robert T. Rosti Jr, Frank shipper,(1998)* opines that training increase or develops the managerial skills. Despite focusing on efficiency and cost control the spending on training should increase because organization get more efficiency, effectiveness out of the training and development.

Employee Viewpoint

From the employee viewpoint, the purpose of performance appraisal is four-fold:

- a) What you want me to do?
- b) How well I have done it?
- c) Help me improve my performance

d) Reward me for doing well.

Organizational Viewpoint

From the organization's viewpoint, one of the most important reasons for having a system of performance appraisal is to establish and uphold the principle of accountability. For decades it has been known to researchers that one of the chief causes of organizational failure is "non-alignment of responsibility and accountability." Non-alignment occurs where employees are given responsibilities and duties, but are not held accountable for the way in which those responsibilities and duties are performed.

Analysis & Discussion

Education qualification of the employee:

Education has become an important factor for getting jobs in increasingly competitive job markets. Hotels often look for qualified employees with good education and job related skills. Thus, data were collected to assess the educational qualifications of employees working in hotels in this area. From the obtained data, it is very clear that majority of employees (50%) working in hotels have just completed high school, followed by intermediate coursework 30% (2 years of schooling after high school before joining college level education) and only 20% have earned a college degree.

Employees' Views on Training

Training is an integral part of human resource development in any industry and more so in service industries. Most organizations are spending increasingly more resources in providing training to their employees irrespective of employees' tenure with the employer. But most of the hotel employees often attend training programs without any serious commitment, and only little care is taken to learn and to improve their skills. Hotels often send employees to different training programs to develop their skills so that they may offer better service upon completion of the training. Thus, an attempt has been made to identify the employees' attitude towards training and its role in their overall development. The Table 2 clearly shows that a majority of employees are interested and prefer to receive more training in their current jobs. Interestingly 36% of employees do not see any need for further training which explains the lack of desire to advance in career noted by the managers.

Table 1: Employee's view on training

S.No.	View on Training	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Need Training	32	64%
2.	Don't need Training	18	36%
	Total	50	100%

Top level's Opinion about Providing Training

Providing training is considered as the basic duty of all organizations, and many hotel organizations spend significant resources in providing training to its employees. But certain organizations may or may not be offering any on-going training to its employees. Unlike other industries, on-going training is vital for hotels to ensure quality service. Unfortunately, some of the hotels may not be concerned about this factor. Thus, data were collected to assess employers' perspective on the need for providing on-going training to its staff. From the Table 2, it is very clear that a significant percentage (70%) of managers do not believe that there is a need for on-going training for their staff. It is a surprising finding. It can be explained by the fact that most low level employees are not interested in participating in on-going training programs. Only 30% of the managers believe in providing some form of on-going training to their staff.

Table 2: Top level's Opinion about Providing Training

S.No	Training Offered by Hotel	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Yes	15	30%
2.	No	35	70%
	Total	50	100%

Conclusion

In this paper an attempt has been made to understand the training & development practices in the hotel industry of a mountainous state of India i.e. Uttarakhand. It is inferred from the analysis that employers are not investing adequately in employees training. The hotel organizations should do train their employees periodically to achieve an optimum level of productivity. Training practices can help in reducing employee turnover rates. It is clear that hotels in this region often hire employees with only high school education who have no interest in learning new things, taking part in employee training, advancing their careers or pursuing higher education. In addition, hotels in this region are not recruiting high quality employees with better education so that they could be trained for better positions. Most hotels in this region lack a dedicated Human Resource department to train the employees. There is a need to have independent HR departments which may help in motivating staffs to participate in training programs for skill

development.

Training and Development has positive effect on Organizational and employee performance. Training is important for the employee's development and the employee development encourages self-fulfilling skills and ability of employee. It is recommended that all organizations should provide Training to their employees. It is already discussed that Training and Development have advantages not only for employee but the ultimate benefit is for the organization itself. If the performance of the employee is not good it will affect the whole organization.

The government should also encourage the service providers and develop the infrastructure by framing a pierce policy. With this statement the state government should take initiatives to develop world class hospitality institutions to produce quality human resource.

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