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Education in Information Technology as a tool for tourism development

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Abstract

Each employee has a unique potential, which needs to be stimulated in order to be productive as much as possible. Education is an important factor for this stimulation because only well educated employees represent a real competitive advantage for the company. The research survey of educational needs within tourism organisations in the Kosice region was implemented. It was focused on the identification of factors which are necessary for real development of tourism. The study has uncovered areas, in which human resources need to be strengthened. The following article presents results of the study.

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1. Introduction

Modern corporations are aware of the need and begin to associate their performance and competitiveness with the formation of such working potential that is characterized by a high level of talent, knowledge, skills and motivation. Activities oriented at forming the working potential are derived from strategic objectives of the company, assuming a complex, sophisticated and continuous system of education and development of prospective employees.

Each corporation, striving to produce quality products, needs qualitative and also well-educated workers. It is important that workers not only want to study and learn, but also desire to be able to use acquired knowledge and skills in their work. It is, therefore, essential that they widen and deepen their knowledge and skills. If they work in an environment that allows them to do so, they will be sufficiently motivated. Education of people belongs to basic targets as well as implications of modern corporations. There are many reasons why the company has to pay attention to the education and development of its employees, such as:

1. variability of human needs influences variability of goods and services on the market, it requires flexible responses of corporations and flexibility of their employees,
2. strong focus on quality of products and customer service,
3. volatility of the business environment increases; if the corporation wants to succeed, it must flexibly respond to changes

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* intense technological development brings new discoveries, new technologies; techniques and technologies in companies often change, i.e. initial knowledge and skills of people quickly become obsolete,

4. people have to cope with frequent organizational changes in companies (business growth, increasing volume of production),
5. development of information technologies and their application in the company,
6. globalization and internationalization of economic activities and thus the resulting need to move, communicate and undertake activities in an international environment,
7. and so on.

Considering the subject of the survey, we issued from the cycle of education, which consists of four basic phases. The first step in the effective learning process is to identify needs within the company under which the company organizes the training of employees. Next step in the learning process is implementation of the educational process based on prepared schedule. Final step in the whole process is the feedback in terms of evaluating effectiveness of the training and the used methods.

Nowadays tourism is a dynamically developing sector and due to its quick development it represents a significant part of economic benefits for the country. Even though this industry is not characterized by production and its businesses do not export their products to other countries, provision of services in tourism and appreciation of the beauty of the country represent a continuous process of improvement and development. However, the potential of this sector has not been fully exploited yet. One reason for this deficiency is, to some extent, educational extemporaneousness of employees in tourism corporations.

2. Methodology

Based on these facts, we implemented research to identify the training and educational needs of tourism subjects in the Košice region. The survey was conducted by using questionnaires. The total number of questionnaires was 400, where 98 were completed, representing 24.5% of return.

The priority of the survey was to assess the needs of additional training for employees of organizations in the field of tourism in order to improve services provided to clients by their fully trained staff. Improving services of organizations contributes to the overall efficiency of tourism activities throughout the Košice region.

The selection of tourism organizations was aimed at provision of services by entities providing secondary conditions for the development of tourism in the form of a variety of accommodation, catering and transport companies. Another area of selection was aimed at various statutory, information, cultural and social facilities which are represented by information centres, travel agencies, government authorities' offices responsible for the regional development, sports and relaxation, cultural and social organizations. Among tourism organizations, there were also companies providing services within the tourism industry, such as: car rental, shopping centres and handicraft. Responses from returned questionnaires were divided into three categories according to the general target area:

- **Category 1** provides generalized information about the organization which sent the questionnaire as well as information about a particular respondent who had the competence to fill in the questionnaire.
- **Category 2** provides information on the subject of education.
- **Category 3** includes basic information about technical and organizational provision of the educational course.

2.1 CATEGORY 1: Basic information about the respondent and tourism organisation

The purpose of creating this category was to generate groups of tourism enterprises by the number of employees, length of operating on the market, education and gender of respondents.

As shown by the results of the survey, the largest group of enterprises in tourism consists of organizations comprised of maximum five employees (Figure 1) and the length of operating on the market up to three years. The other two equivalent groups are organizations that have 5 to 10 and 10 to 50 employees. In the interval of 10%, there are organizations with more than 50 employees. Therefore, they belong to the category of small and medium-sized enterprises.

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