

Chapter 82

Understanding Human Resources Needs in Tourism: A Competitive Advantage

Teresa Dieguez

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4886-1446>

Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave, Portugal

ABSTRACT

As one of the world's largest economic sectors, travel and tourism creates jobs, drives exports, and generates prosperity across the world. Comprising a wide range of industries, it supports one in every ten jobs on the planet, has accounted for one in five of all jobs created across the world over the past five years, and is a dynamic and complex engine of employment opportunities. Its companies are inside a competitive arena and must ensure its sustainability on the basis of its greatest asset: its employees. Nowadays in the workplace there are a great diversity of cultures, ages, and generational differences, and employers have to explore new ways to motivate people to efficiently work. Each generation is unique and usually this variety does not work without supervision. The study will be conducted on two Portuguese Polytechnic Institutes with Masters Students from Hospitality and Tourism. As a methodology, it will be used a quantitative research. Conclusions may help companies to better understand the reasons why employees abandon them or are attracted by them.

INTRODUCTION

As one of the world's largest economic sectors, Travel & Tourism creates jobs, drives exports and generates prosperity across the world. Comprising a wide range of industries, it aims to serve and support domestic, international, business and leisure visitors. Companies, large and small, in industries ranging from accommodation and transportation to food & beverage, retail and culture and sports & recreation, all make every effort to generate products and/or services that bring people together, support communities and celebrate the surprises that our planet can offer. This sector, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council's (WTTC, 2019) accounted for 10.4% of global GDP and 319 million jobs, or 10% of

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total employment in 2018. It supports one in every ten jobs on the planet, has accounted for one in five of all jobs created across the world over the past five years and is a dynamic engine of employment opportunities. Jobs in Travel & Tourism particularly support women, youth and other, often marginalised groups of society (Manzo, 2019). Factors influencing the flow of travellers around the world, such as a destination's attractiveness and its currency strength, will continue to affect traveller behaviour in the coming years. New developments will emerge and Travel & Tourism will become even more critical as an engine of economic development and as a vehicle for sharing cultures and building mutual understanding (UNEDOSC, 2010).

For all these reasons, nowadays the tourism industry is highly competitive and more than ever the literature see it as problematic (Abreu-Novais, Ruhanen & Arcodia, 2016). As a complex phenomenon, tourism is a multi-sectorial, multifaceted business and this in itself creates difficulties when attempting to generalise about the management of tourism businesses (Pender & Sharpley, 2005). In fact, beyond the specific challenges of managing hotel operations, a broader focus on quality management in the provision of accommodation can be justified for a number of reasons, namely: i) quality (Kandampully, 1997; Langer, 1997; Poon, 1993); ii) overall tourist experience (Middleton, 1988) and iii) human aspects of the delivery system (Witt & Mühlemann, 1994).

These reflect that companies must ensure its sustainability on the basis of its greatest asset: its employees (Bilhim, 2007). According to Drucker (1954) the collaborators have a fundamental role on the success of organizations and are their strategic key-resource. More and more organizations have to invest in their Talents through their medium-term development: people will no longer be a problem for organizations but the solution to their problems and reinforce their competitive advantage (Chiavenato, 2000). In this sense, the big challenge will be Talents' retention rather than attracting them, because people are looking for new projects that stimulate and develop their skills helping them to progress in their career (Tulgan, 2001). Nowadays in the workplace there are a great diversity of cultures, ages and generational differences and employers have to explore new ways to motivate people to efficiently work (Zemke, Raines, Filipczak, 2000). Each generation brings a unique culture, perspective and experience to the workplace, and usually this variety does not work without supervision. The problem is accentuated by itself due to the late retirement of Idealists / Baby Boomers and the abundance of Millennials / Y, who are trained but inexperienced, while Individualist Generation / X workers are not currently a bridge between the previous two (Jones, 2016). By 2020 it is estimated that around the world one third of the workforce will be constituted by Millenium Generation / Y (Manpower, 2016). Therefore, it is mandatory to evaluate what this generation privileges in order to be able to attract and retain Talents (Alves, Dieguez & Conceição, 2019).

The study will be conducted on two Portuguese Polytechnic Institutes (Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave - IPCA and Polytechnic Institute of Porto - IPP) with Masters Students from Hospitality Direction and Tourism Management. It also will have contributions from 5 practitioners. As a methodology it will be used a quantitative research. Conclusions may help companies to better understand the reasons why employees abandon them or are attracted by them.

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