

Training to Enhance the Attitude and Productivity of the Hospitality and Tourism Personnel

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Abstract: *The global competition and drive to increase market shares and profitability by major tourism organization has necessitated the need for training of the staff to enhance their knowledge, attitude and capacity thereby optimizing the ability to reach the level of performance expected by the organization and deliver acceptable quality product and service to their discerning customers who are knowledgeable and sensitive to the quality of service being delivered to them. Developing the employees using adequate training methods is necessary to increase their productivity and job satisfaction and hence the organizational goal is inevitable.*

Keywords: Training Methods, Tourism, Hospitality, Attitude, Productivity

INTRODUCTION

Defining Training and Tourism

According to Blanchard and Thacker (2004), training is a continuous process of improvement targeted on the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude that help workers to perform better in an organization.

Se Martin et al (2004) also defined training as a set of orderly schemes and programs designed to enhance the participants' knowledge, skills and attitudes as fundamental target areas for improvement.

However, Blanchard and Thacker (2003) maintained that training must be a continuous process that is focused on enhancing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of employees in the hospitality and tourism industry (Manij 2013, Denby, 2010). The tourism industry has different forms of business such as hotels operations, airline and other forms of transport, restaurant, entertainment industries, amusement and parks, travel agencies and tour operations. This is heavily labor intensive and therefore need well trained qualified staff to administer them, operate the tourist product and have competitive advantage in an ever-increasing global tourist industry.

The training objective is to optimize the ability of the employer to reach the level of performance expected by the organization. It develops knowledge and skills to increase competency in the work place and motivate the employee. It benefits both the organization through increase output and performance. The employees acquire greater skill and optimism in the job which ultimately leads to job satisfaction, reduce truancy and can increase the technological ability of the employees. According to Blanchard and Thacker (2003), the outcome of the training process is influenced by design and implementation of the training process, vis a vis how the trainees are challenged,

encourage learning method implemented the environment at the organization. The objective of the training program should also be developed to specify the expected skill the training program should achieve.

Training and Tourism need Analysis

Several researchers and proactive business managers have seen the importance of training need analysis in conducting effective training program and making other strategic business decisions.

Harris and Bonn (2000), this is because it helps the company to equip the employees to be ready for new business methods, work patterns and make them adaptable to opportunity in changes in technology, structure and exposes non-training needs for strategic management decisions Harris and Cannon (1995).

TNA is the comprehensive x-ray of the organization based on its objectives, resources and operational environment and then process of identifying discrepancies among the organizational expected performance and actual performance. The intervention stage identifies the cause of the discrepancies and decision is then taken by the management based on the result of the analysis to use training or non-training approach or both to deal with the issue (Anderson 1994; Blanchard and Thacker 2003). TNA is the gap between current and desired results, what is and what should be. An effort that analyzes the organizational task and still positions to determine if cure is needed and what cure is most likely to produce the desired result (Goldstein 1956). However, without a thorough training need analysis, valuable investment is wasted. This may lead the organization to wrong training and focus which may not deliver the expected solution (Chartered Management Institute, 2006). This is because TNA helps the organization to identify a specific need of the organization and design appropriate training intervention. The process involves gathering qualitative and quantitative information from

different resources: such as cost of labor, inventories, existing skill matrices, organizational goals and structure.

Furthermore, training need analysis involves a process review, that is, a review of the system and process currently being used which is critically analyzed. Another key factor in TNA is observation and it involves the examination of those individual occupying different positions so as to measure their performance, working style and aptitude. While observation in TNA might also involve personal or group interviews, TNA is a total diagnostic aspect of various area of the organization to ascertain their training needs.

The Importance of Training Need Analysis

The TNA exposes training need and helps the organization to factor it on their planning and budget, the plan will then highlight areas of future analysis and training (Denby, 2010). The situation is examined to know whether the corrective measure requires training or not such that if the employee lacks the necessary KSA to do the task training would be conducted to arrest the situation (Blanchard and Thacker, 2004). This exposes the current and future potential need and enables research to be carried to determine training category. In addition, valuable information is collected to inform appropriate decisions. Again, TNA helps the employee career development because it reveals the areas of weaknesses or deficiencies that require training and upgrading (Brown, 2002). This truth is captured by the following statement of this researcher “TNA is a means of determining the training and development system and program needed by the organization, employee groups or individual employee to make the organization, competitive in its industry, improve productivity, build employee morale and job satisfaction, improve promotional potential and faster career development”. Need assessment further identifies gaps in capabilities and on the job results (performances) and places the identified need in priority order for assessment (Tracy, 2004).

Training Methods

There is a need to keep the customers satisfied by providing quality products and services in the hospitality industry or any vibrant organization. This is done to attract, motivate and keep key personnel. It is important to point out that for this to fall in place it requires careful thought out, planned and continuous training program that would be implemented in the company and should cut across the various levels of the organization (Harris and Cannon, 1995) Hanqin et al 2001; Denby, 2010). This is because global competition is on the increase that involves constant change in technology for service deliveries. Therefore, organizations need to be innovative to remain profitable, retain their market share and maintain their leadership position hence the importance of adequately trained manpower (Harris and Bonn 2000, Okonkwo and Jacinta 2013; Manji, 2013) When the proper need assessment is conducted to identify the problem areas that may require training solution, the training program is then developed to counter the problem.

(Denby, 2010). The method and tools that will deliver effective result becomes paramount to the individual or organization conducting the training (Martin, Kolomiro & Lam 2014). According to Cage (2011) training aids or tools are instruments used to enhance the learning process in order to drive home the Skills, Knowledge and abilities (SKA) effectively to the trainee. They may include flip charts, printed materials, films and videos that are capable of demonstrating various tasks. The training programs must meet the need and the level of the audience and the trainer must understand them in order to apply the appropriate training method (Harris and Bonn, 2000).

The Learning Modality

This refers to the way in which the learning content is delivered to the learners. It could either be; through visuals’ hearing and acting or doing. However, according to Lujan and DiCarlo (2006). It is necessary to ascertain the best mode of learning that is appropriate or suitable for individuals or groups in assimilating new information. For example, learning by doing is in agreement with the educational philosophy that is known as the experimental education. This suggests that learning is acquired by transformational experience as the trainee performs the tasks in the training content (Roger, 1996; Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

Training Environment

The training environment refers to the place where the training is conducted. It is categorized into three environments; the natural, contrived and simulated environment. The natural is the real work environment where all on the job training are performed. The contrived environment does not look like a work environment but it is a special that has been designed for training purposes like some training schools. Lastly, the simulated environment is contrived but is aimed to replicate the work environment’ Normally all off-the-job training are conducted in simulated or contrived environment.

Trainer Presence

The training presence refers to whether the training methods require the physical presence of the trainer or if the training would be transmitted through mediums like the computer. The presence of a trainer is a major determinant of the training method to apply in the training process since most training can be delivered without the presence of a trainer by using emerging technologies (Klein, et al 2006).

Proximity

This criterion entails the locality of the training and the trainers. Learning can now be delivered face to face or can be conducted at a distance. Technology and globalization have changed the methods of knowledge sharing and impartation in most training and professional development. Furthermore, video conferencing and other new technology is enabling long distance learning to be a social experience as if one is interacting face to face in a class room lecture (Illoord & Peterson 2010).

Interaction Level

The interactive level refers to the association between the trainer and the trainees or the cooperation amongst and or within the trainees like in group discussions. A training method that encourages interaction is preferable since learning is a social cultural phenomenon and is made.

Effective through social interaction during training (Webster-Wright, 2009).

Time Demand

Time demand is very important in considering the training methods because duration can affect organizational decisions and trainee participations. The flexibility of the training method should be put into consideration as well as answer whether the methods require an ongoing participation. The time factor is then analyzed before the training decision are taken by the organization. In general, when all these criteria are put in place, a training method has taken place.

Internship Training

The Internship training enables an employer to train an employee at a fraction of or no cost at all. It gives the employee the opportunity to get first-hand knowledge of the role that they are being trained in especially when they are not sure of which profession they want to go into. It not only gives the trainee opportunities to acquire practical skills that would be useful in the future job requirements but also the trainees get the chance to explore different areas of interest.

Game-Based Training

This type of training methods, offers a low cost and effective training as it is competitive and offers motivation for the learners. The contents are applied since the training games are designed to stimulate processes or situations and circumstances that occurs in a real job. They also simulate situations that would bring the trainee in a controlled setting care which will enable them to develop skills or discover concepts that will improve their job performance. The games are designed to develop the skills of the trainees while they participate in the game.

Mentoring and Apprenticeship

Mentorship allows the trainee to understudy the mentor on a one to one basis. Normally interpersonal relationships are developed and they provide psychological support to the trainee and help to facilitate the trainee's career.

Mentorship is more appropriate in a situation where a company wants to groom its trainees to climb within the company's ladder. Additionally, it requires senior employees to develop the junior ones and this is often times done in the management level' on the other hand, apprenticeship involves skill acquisition by serving in a particular trade or condition for an extended period of time till the skill and competency to perform the task is acquired. Apprenticeship, in other words give trainees a chance to learn and get paid on the job unlike internships where the trainee only gets a chance to learn. Although over the years, paid internships have been on the rise. Moreover, of recent most apprentice programs are partnerships between the labor unions, employees, schools and the government aimed at empowering the youth for employment'.

Programmed Instruction

Programmed instruction as a training method is flexible and its instructions can be repeated. The consistent delivery of this method makes the learning experience standardized and also has the ability to appeal to sensory features such as color, sound, text animation, graphic and special effects (Martin, et al, 2013).

Conclusion

The quality of the service product is determined by the value of the relationship between the tourist and the employee's, hence, the need for adequate training for all staff to deliver quality service experience for all the tourist consumers.

Recommendations

- The importance of hospitality industry cannot be over emphasized if the actions must achieve the necessary demand.
- The need for training and motivation of staff in order to render quality service is of utmost importance.
- The need for tourist satisfaction in order to increase repeat visit and word of mouth promotion for Nigerian destination.
- There is need for public-private partnership to thrive for maximum benefit.
- Also, the Nigerian Tourist development cooperation should constantly, monitor tourist establishment in order to maintain high quality standard, consequently, making Nigerian tourist destination to have competitive advantage in the global tourist market.

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