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JOB REQUIREMENTS OF FOOD CHAIN BUSINESSES IN BATANGAS CITY, PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to identify the current job requirements in different food chain businesses in Batangas City in terms of the profile of food chain businesses and their job requirements. It also intended to propose a plan of action to sustain the Hotel and Restaurant administration program in meeting the job requirements of the hospitality industry. Descriptive type of research was utilized in the study. Findings revealed that Food chain businesses are highly patronized by the local people due to their fast service, exceptional quality of foods and facilities are well established. Food chain businesses in Batangas City highly value applicants, who have shown perceived personalities, experience in work and intelligence during job interviews. A plan of action was created to maintain the Hotel and Restaurant Administration Programs in meeting the job requirements of the Hospitality industries.

KEYWORDS: Educational Preparation, Employability, Job Requirements, Food Chain Business, Batangas City

INTRODUCTION

One of the problems of every higher education is absorption of its graduates in local and international labor market. Colleges and universities have been criticized for turning out graduates who could land a job that is not aligned to their educational preparation and orientation. This is because there seemed to have a wide gap between number of graduates and absorption rates. And the usual cause, as claimed, is the apparent weak preparation of graduates with job requirements of the government and private organizations. Truth of matter is that jobs are available, but it seems that very few qualify for the available jobs.

Furthermore, one of the present problems of fresh graduate students in getting employed is meeting the job requirements that an organization requires of applicants for a job. However, job requirements vary from company to company. In private companies, personal or political interventions are not usually given attention or consideration. Every company has its own sets of criteria in human resource procurement and development. It is not easy therefore to look for jobs especially for students who have not yet to acquire impressive credentials.

Studies shows that employers highly value their interviews with applicants because these are one of the most important hiring tools available to employers, used extensively to judge how appropriate a prospective candidate to fill a role with an organization. It helps to evaluate a person's skills, capabilities and personality trait. Interviews provide tremendous insight into a candidate's confidence level and ability to handle a pressure situation. This is also the chance to communicate the company's policies, beliefs, work culture and expectations from the prospective employee. (Abaja et. al, 2010)

According to Hawkins (2009), work history is a major importance to an employer. By work history, applicants are discussing things such as promptness, dedication and hard work. An employer loves to see that the person they may hire has done well in other positions along the way. Nothing will grab an employer's attention like a great history with similar work experience. If the applicants have an experience working in a similar position, they will get the first look. Experience means they won't have trouble falling into their new role at their company. It means less training time and a quicker entry into their position. Employers love to see college education on a resume. Going to college shows several traits. It shows a willingness to learn, commitment and more knowledge. The college education doesn't necessarily have to be in the same field of work as the job they are seeking. Many employers want to see the dedication of an employee to learning and the ability to commit.

The common fast food chains in the Philippines are the Jollibee, McDonalds, Greenwich, KFC, Pizza Hut and Chowking. They are the fast growing company in the Philippines because most Filipinos patronized their products.

In Food Chain businesses, they obtain additional workers to perform a certain task or series of task within the organization. There are requirements to be considered in applying in food industry. The first thing to consider is the job qualification; this is the criteria of an establishment in finding applicants. A person who wants to apply

may find in the job qualification the personal characteristics, experiences, skills, a person who can provide customer service in a courteous manner, a person's flexibility to work effectively in a changing environment and others.

It's important to know exactly what employers look for when hiring full-time employees. In addition to relevant skills, employers seek employees who have the personal values, characteristics, and personality traits that spell success. Good personal values are what make the foundation for a good employee. Internships are an excellent time to show employers the personal traits that they value in their employees. An internship is an opportunity to learn the skills and behaviors along with the work values that are required for success in the workplace (Loretto, 2009)

A good employee must always have a positive attitude and should always believe in "can do" for everything. If something goes wrong he should not be broken and should come back with the same attitude he had while doing the same work first time (Vijayarani, 2010). According to Pitts (2008), positive attitude are people who are happy to be working and demonstrate it outwardly. Often, these are the people with a ready and sincere smile. They keep the mood on the positive side even when things go badly. Usually these people have a good sense of humor that adds an enjoyable tone to the work place. They have that elusive "spark" that draws others to them.

Employers are looking for loyalty at both the supervisor level and overall corporate level. Employers want and need to be able to trust their employees to work professionally to meet the employer's best interests. Employers do not want to hire people who require close scrutiny or who can't be trusted to represent the company in public.(Dykeman,2007) According to Hansen (2011) professionalism, deals with acting in a responsible and fair manner in all his/her personal and work activities, which is seen as a sign of maturity and self-confidence; avoid being petty.

The modern world today, calls for high scale effective communication skills in order to win the heavy competition in all spheres of life. Importance of communication skills can never be ignored or neglected (Windle, 2008). Almost all jobs now require some basic understanding of computer hardware and software, especially word processing, spreadsheets, and email. Hansen (2010) stressed that employability skills and personal values are the critical tools and traits an applicant/employee needs to succeed in the workplace -- and they are all elements that they can learn, cultivate, develop, and maintain over their lifetime. Resume and application letter are also a requirement that needs to consider. Young applicants are

expected to be more productive and competent compared to those aged ones and possessing certain qualities can mean the difference between landing that dream job and losing the chance to ever work for the company (Abaja et al., 2010).

Some food chain businesses required training program first before hiring applicants. As stated by Brown et al.(2005), getting employees to do things right means taking the time to train them properly from the start so that they understand what needs to be done, how to do it and why it should be done that way. The good qualities and work habits that are found in reliable fast food workers reflect the professional attitude that managers and franchise owners strive for in their restaurants (Loretto, 2009)

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study is to identify the current job requirements in different food chain businesses. Specifically, it aims to know the profile of Food chain businesses in Batangas City, to determine the Job Requirements in Food Chain in Batangas City and to propose a plan of action to sustain the Hotel and Restaurant administration program in meeting the Job Requirements of the Hospitality Industry.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The study used a descriptive research method. In this study, the researchers probe on the job requirements of select Food Chain Businesses in Batangas City. The study is possible by interpreting the responses of company representatives on job requirements that the forms or companies expect of applicants to possess. Furthermore, the data that had been gathered serve as baseline information in developing the pre-employment interventions for Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management students of College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management, Lyceum of the Philippines University, Batangas.

The research respondents of the study include managers/ supervisors of Food Chain Businesses in Batangas City. The sample of the study composed of 50 managers/ supervisors of Food chain businesses. The particular questionnaire was adopted from the research of Custom students entitled “Job Requirements of Customs Brokerage Firms and Freight Forwarding Industries: Basis for Sustainable Development Program. The researchers made some changes on the questionnaire to make it more suitable for the present study.

The questionnaire was divided into 3 parts. The first part tackles on the profile of food chain businesses in Batangas City. Second part is about usual requirements

that food chain businesses consider in recruiting and selecting applicants while the third part is about the potentialities or specific skills requirements that food chain businesses would like their applicants to possess.

The researchers searched for questionnaires of previous studies in relation to their title and made some changes on the questionnaire to make it more suitable for the present study. The adapted questionnaire was validated by the Dean of the College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management. After the validation of questionnaire, the researchers distributed to managers/supervisors of different food chain businesses in Batangas City.

All data had been encoded and tallied using SPSS version 17. Different statistical tool had been used such as frequency distribution and weighted. All had been treated according to the objectives of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Food Chain Businesses in Batangas City

The profile of food chain businesses in Batangas City in terms of number of years in the business, most of the food chains are operating for almost 3 years, while others are operating within 4 to 6 years. As to number of employees, majority have 21 and above employees working in the different section in the business. Most of the food chain management wants to have a lot of staff employee depending on the operating hours of the business, the capacity of customers and the size of the facilities.

Table 1 Job Requirements of Food Chain Businesses

Job Requirements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Age	3.50	Very Important	6
2. Marital Status	2.76	Important	12
3. Place of Residence	3.24	Important	10
4. Ethics/Regional/Origin	2.66	Important	13
5. School Graduated from	2.84	Important	11
6. Educational attainment	3.28	Important	9
7. Religion	2.30	Less Important	14
8. Character References	3.38	Important	8
9. Personality Traits	3.74	Very Important	2
10. Work Experience	3.52	Very Important	5
11. Mental Ability Test Result	3.68	Very Important	3
12. Perceived Personalities	3.60	Very Important	4
13. Previous Employers	3.42	Important	7
14. Interview	3.84	Very Important	1
Composite Mean	3.27	Important	

As seen from the table, different food chain businesses needs specific requirement which are very important for them to accept applicant in their company.

Those very important job requirements include interview, personality traits, mental ability test, perceived personalities, work experience and age. A good personality goes a long way. When applicants go for an interview, putting on their best face is of utmost importance. An employer wants to see someone who is upbeat and has a smile on their face. If an applicant wants to be serious about the job that they want, they must also show that they aren't a drab person. Interesting people will always win out.

Table 2 Employability Skill Requirements in terms of Communication Skills

Communication Skills	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Can speak different language like Mandarin and French	1.52	Moderate Extent	3
2. Exceptional listener and communicator who clearly, effectively conveys verbal and written information	3.26	Great Extent	2
3. Can answer telephone calls and take order deliveries	3.62	Very Great Extent	1
Composite Mean	2.80	Great Extent	

It can be gleaned from the table that in terms of communication skills requirement, item such as can answer telephone calls and take order deliveries was the most needed requirement for a certain applicant to be hired in the company. This was revealed by the obtained weighted mean of 3.62.

In fast food industry, it is important for an employee to possess a good communication skill especially in taking orders of food on counter even on telephone since it is the main reason for the business to run. Order taking service can play a supporting role in accurately recording and delivering the important messages that make the business run. Telephone order taking naturally is a key part of operating a retail or wholesale business, a service business, a restaurant take-out and delivery service or catering company (Ritchard, 2008).

It was followed by exceptional listener and communicator who clearly, effectively conveys verbal and written information which was rated to a great extent while can speak different languages like Mandarin and French got the lowest value of 1.52 and least among the requirement. The most successful in the hospitality business are those with excellent communication skills. They can communicate effectively both orally and in writing. Continue to improve on the skills through purposeful practice, enhancement, and perfection. Good communication skills breed and build

rapport and trust with the employer, and with your co-workers, friends, and peers. Bear in mind that an employee who cannot articulate dampens the interest of the employer. According to Pitts (2008), a good verbal and written skill is being able to communicate verbally and in writing is an enabler in almost every job situation. Without these skills, a person's abilities may be hindered because they can't effectively communicate the results of their work.

Stated by Goessl (2008), communication is a valuable skill and in many ways is an art form. If the applicant possesses strong linguistic skills, this will go far in effectively helping them communicate in both their personal and professional lives. Being able to successfully communicate in business is a prime qualification many employers actively look for when hiring new staff. Restaurants around the world are constantly looking for English-speaking staff to work at the reservations desk, in the restaurants, and other facilities offered at the hotel. Even smaller establishments such as fast foods are eager to have English speakers on staff. Many people who wish to work in the hospitality industry will study English as a foreign language or as a second language classes in order to improve their English to advance their career. They should be able to speak English well and have a good written standard for standard tasks like billing, giving directions, and general business correspondence. (Trimborn, 2010) However, speaking Mandarin and French languages in the Philippines are less needed because most of the foreigners are English speaker. And a lot of the customers in food chain businesses are local Filipinos.

Table 3 Employability Skill Requirements in terms of Human Relations Skills

Human Relations Skills	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Can relate to supervisors and managers	3.62	Very Great Extent	3
2. Can get along with co-workers and superiors	3.52	Very Great Extent	4
3. Show respect to customers and clients	3.76	Very Great Extent	1.5
4. Show willingness to work with other personnel	3.76	Very Great Extent	1.5
Composite Mean	3.67	Very Great Extent	

As seen from the table, item such as show respect to customers and clients and showing willingness to work with other personnel got the highest rank and verbally interpreted to a very great extent. According to some managers, showing willingness to work and a good work ethic are something that most of them wants their

applicants/employees to acquire in workplace. The item can relate to supervisors and managers and can get along with co-workers and superiors got the lowest rank with weighted average of 3.62 and 3.52. Because so many jobs involve working in one or more work-groups, a person must have the ability to work with others in a professional manner while attempting to achieve a common goal.

Hansen (2009) stated that each person possesses their own set or strengths and adapting personal behaviors to accommodate others is part of what it takes to work effectively as a team. By viewing change as an opportunity to complete work assignments in a more efficient manner, adapting to change can be a positive experience. New strategies, ideas, priorities, and work habits can foster a belief among workers that management and staff are both committed to make the workplace a better place to work.

Table 4 Employability Skill Requirements in terms of Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal Skills	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Can exhibit Filipino Hospitality	3.70	Very Great Extent	2
2. Can work well with co-workers	3.72	Very Great Extent	1
3. Considerate of the feelings of the rank and file	3.32	Great Extent	5
4. Possesses quality for public relation works	3.58	Very Great Extent	4
5. Can motivate, mobilize and mentor others in the pursuit and attainment of high performance standards	3.60	Very Great Extent	3
Composite Mean	3.58	Very Great Extent	

The result show that the items can work well with co-workers (3.72) , can exhibit Filipino Hospitality (3.70), can motivate, mobilize and mentor others in the pursuit and attainment of high performance standards (3.60) and possesses quality for public relation works (3.52) were verbally interpreted to a very great extent. It is important to establish a good working relationship with the co-workers. A long-term relationship requires a diverse balance of skills on the employee's part, as well as their co-workers. Respect for each other is the key to maintaining a good working relationship. The item considerate of the feelings of the rank and file got the lowest rank which is verbally interpreted as great extent.

Table 5 Employability Skill Requirements in terms of Analytical and Thinking Skills

Analytical and Thinking Skills	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Can handle customers complains	3.64	Very Great Extent	1
2. Seeking and utilizing opportunities for continuous learning and self development	3.56	Very Great Extent	4
3. Generating alternative solutions to problem	3.62	Very Great Extent	2
4. Can think creatively in order to develop unique marketing campaigns and selling techniques	3.60	Very Great Extent	3
Composite Mean	3.61	Very Great Extent	

Based on the table, the two items that got the highest rank are can handle customers complains and generating alternative solutions to problem which have weighted mean of 3.64 and 3.62.

Today, businesses are facing an aggressive competition and they have to make efforts to survive in a competitive and uncertain market place. People have realized that managing customer relationship is a very important factor for their success especially in handling customer complains. Customer relation is a strategy that helps them to build long-lasting relationships with their customers and increase their profits through the right management system and the application of customer-focused strategies.

Can think creatively in order to develop unique marketing campaigns and selling techniques and seeking and utilizing opportunities for continuous learning and self development have the weighted mean of 3.60 and 3.56.

Willingness to learn is an attitude. New ideas can lighten the present burden and also serve as a trial. After all a trial costs nothing. A person can always discard if the new ideas are not as effective as the old ones. This ability to try new methods, willingness to learn does not arise out of mere curiosity. It comes from a genuine desire to improve the system in which they work and their own attitude towards what could be effectively be adopted as a change for the better.

Table 6 Employability Skill Requirements in terms of Computer Skills

Computer Skills	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Have knowledge in using MS Opera and other Hospitality/Tourism computer related software/application	2.60	Great Extent	4
2. Know how to use computer machine in ordering foods	3.06	Great Extent	1
3. Can create presentations and documents through PowerPoint and MS Word	2.98	Great Extent	2
4. Know how to use MS Excel in calculating and in inventorying products	2.94	Great Extent	3
Composite Mean	2.90	Great Extent	

As indicated from the results, the over-all rating of the respondents on the computer skills was 2.90 and verbally interpreted as great extent. Among the items mentioned, know how to use computer machine in ordering foods and can create presentations and documents through PowerPoint and MS Word obtained the highest weighted mean of 3.06 and 2.98.

Table 7 Employability Skill Requirements in terms of Other Skills

Other Skills	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Practice personal hygiene and sanitation	3.84	Very Great Extent	1
2. Can adopt new way of fast food cooking	3.66	Very Great Extent	3.5
3. Good knowledge of fast food preparation methods	3.68	Very Great Extent	2
4. Have a knowledge on how to use different machines for cooking fast foods	3.62	Very Great Extent	5
5. Responsible to handle fast food delivery	3.66	Very Great Extent	3.5
Composite Mean	3.69	Very Great Extent	

It is noted from the table that with regards to requirement in terms of other skills, all items were verbally interpreted as very great extent. Practice personal hygiene and sanitation ranked first with a weighted mean value of 3.84, followed by good knowledge of fast food preparation methods with a 3.68 weighted mean value.

Food chain employees should be neat in appearance as well as have good work habits. Some fast food restaurants require that their employees wear uniforms or

follow a dress code. They also may dictate specific rules of behavior. Because such guidelines are important for both safety reasons and the atmosphere of the restaurant, employees must respect and follow them.

Stated by the Department of Health, an important way to prevent food contamination is to maintain a high standard of personal hygiene and sanitation. Good personal hygiene also makes good business sense. Customers like to see food handling staff that take hygiene seriously and practice safe food handling. Can adopt new way of fast food cooking and responsible to handle fast food delivery have the same lowest weighted mean of 3.66, followed by have a knowledge on how to use different machines for cooking fast foods with a 3.62 weighted mean.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Food chain businesses may include healthy food but with same quality. The College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management should provide training program on communication skills to be able to possess the said requirements. The proposed plan of actions may be tried and evaluated by the Dean of the College. This study may be applied for further researches using other variables.

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