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A Model Training Program to Prepare Candidates for Employment in the Service Occupations

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**A MODEL TRAINING PROGRAM
TO PREPARE CANDIDATES FOR EMPLOYMENT
IN THE SERVICE OCCUPATIONS**

**A Project
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree
Master of Education**

**by
Chang, Shu-Hsin
June, 1997**

**A MODEL TRAINING PROGRAM
TO PREPARE CANDIDATES FOR EMPLOYMENT
IN THE SERVICE OCCUPATIONS**

by

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June, 1997

The purpose of this project was to design and develop a model training program to prepare candidates for employment in the service occupations. To accomplish this purpose, a review of literature regarding service industry trends, employment training criteria and essential service employment skills and knowledge.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
CHAPTER 1	
BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Purpose of the Project.....	2
Limitations of the Project.....	3
Definition of Terms.....	3
CHAPTER 2	
REVIEW OR RELATED LITERATURE.....	6
Introduction.....	6
The Service Industry in Taiwan, Canada, and United States-An Overview.....	7
Service Industry Trends.....	8
Employment in the Service Industry.....	12
Service Industry Job Skills, Knowledge, and Career Development.....	15
Summary.....	17
CHAPTER 3	
PROCEDURES OF THE PROJECT.....	19

Need for the Project.....	19
Development of Support for the Project.....	20
Procedures.....	21
Planned Implementation and Assessment of the Project.....	21

CHAPTER 4

THE PROJECT.....	22
Pre-employment Skills.....	p-4
Quality Service Skills.....	p-10
Information Skills.....	p-17
Human Performance Skills.....	p-21
Communication Skills.....	p-25
Partnership Teamwork Skills.....	p-30

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	23
Summary.....	23
Conclusions.....	23
Recommendations.....	24
REFERENCES.....	25

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

Competing for talent and developing people's service skills and knowledge are mutually reinforcing. Companies with a reputation for investing in employees' development will have a competitive edge in recruiting. And companies recruiting able, motivated people should receive a greater return on their training and education investment than companies less successful in recruiting. Delivering great service involves putting service skills and knowledge to work for customers. Service providers must possess the requisite skills and knowledge and, must possess the desire to use them on behalf of customers. Preparing people to perform the service role contributes to both ends: it builds skills and knowledge and nurtures the desire to serve (Berry, 1995, p.187).

In the above statement, Berry has emphasized that service industry companies that utilize effective employee development practice gain an advantage on their competition.

Providing better customer service should be an on going process. Great service industry companies always invest a lot in their employees' growth.

Connellan and Zemke (1994, p.85) have also concluded that "lasting customer service quality" is based on the training and development of employees. The critical role training should play in employee development has been further alluded to in the following statement:

In service-successful organizations, training and development of employees is a never ending process. It starts on an employees first day on-the-job training, guided experience, effective coaching, targeted performance review, and strong support for learning from the organization as a whole. It is not piecemeal; not on again, off again; not maybe or maybe not. Learning is an integral part of the service system. A company must be unrelenting in development of its human assets: anything less, and employees will be ill prepared to deliver at ever-increasing levels of service quality (Counnellan and Zemke, 1994).

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the project was to design and develop a model training program to prepare candidates for employment in the service occupations. To accomplish this

purpose, a review of literature regarding service industry trends, employment training criteria and essential service employment skills and knowledge.

Limitations of the Project

For purpose of this project, it was necessary to set the following limitations:

1. Research: The preponderance of research and literature reviewed was limited to the past five (5) years.
2. Scope: the model training program was designed for implementation in a selected employment agency in Taiwan.
3. Targer population: The model program has been designed for candidates seeking employment in the service occupations.

Definitions of Terms

Significant terms used in the context of this project have been defined as follows:

1. Co-operative education: The co-operative education field reflects the co-operative relationship between students, schools and employers (Alfred and O'reilly, 1995, p.156).
2. Dynamic services: The dynamic service subsector includes four major industry divisions; two are distribution industries including transportation, communications,

and utilities; and wholesale trade; and, two are producer-service industries which enhance finance, insurance, and real estate; and, business services (Economic Council of Canada, 1991,p.8).

3. Employment agency: Establishment primarily engaged in listing employment vacancies and in selecting, referring and placing applicants in employment on either a permanent or temporary basis (Statistics Canada, 1981, p.1).
4. Nonmarket Services: Nonmarket services includes education, health, social services, and public administration (Economic Council of Canada, 1991, p.10).
5. On-the-job training: This kind of learn-by-doing training has been applied to the personal guidance and instruction an employee receives at the work station, after attending a formal training program at a company training center(Lash, 1989, p.80).
6. Service industry: A more restricted definition of services that includes only the industry group called "services", within the broader services-producing industry designation. This group includes personal, medical, business, and professional services (Kutscher, 1988, p.47).
8. Specific Training: The term "specific training" has a precise meaning that should not be confused with specialized training. Specific training entails the formation of specific human capital yields services of value only in the agency in which knowledge or skill was acquired, usually a firm or a public organization. Rarely does anyone acquire specific human capital (The International Encyclopedia of Education, 1985, p.5287).

9. Trades/ apprenticeship: This system of training incorporates on-the-job learning with short periods of formal or in-school learning, leading to certification or licensing in the trades(Alfred and O'reilly, 1995, p.156).
10. Traditional Services: The traditional service subsector consists of retail trade; accommodation, food, and beverages; amusement and recreation; and personal services (Economic Council of Canada, 1991, p.9).
11. Training Program: A detailed of directions covering the procedures for organizing and conducting an industrial course of training, including information covering the location of classes (Dictionary of Education, 1973, p.449).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The review of research and literature summarized in Chapter 2 has been organized to address:

1. The Service Industry in Taiwan, Canada, and the United States- An Overview
2. Service Industry Trends
3. Employment in the Service Industry
4. Service Industry Job Skills, Knowledge, and Career Development
5. Summary

Data current primarily within the past five (5) years were identified through an Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC) computer search. Additionally, a hand-search of various other sources was also conducted.

The Service Industry in Taiwan, Canada,
and the United States-An overview

Taiwan: Services such as trading companies, import-export operations, banking services for overseas Chinese communities, and product development, have become an integral part of Taiwan's export-led growth strategy. Taiwan is currently repositioning itself to inherit some of the service functions of Hong Kong, after 1997. In order to do so, Taiwan has strengthened its management education system and upgraded its regulations on banking and services so that more non-Taiwanese financial institutions can operate on the island. Taiwan has further legal system to cope with the ongoing problem of the protection of proprietary information (Riddle and Sours, 1986, p.231).

Most important, Taiwan's government has continued to make the island an attractive place for international business to operate. There has been widespread emphasis on the use of English, ongoing development of business service centers to facilitate business interaction, and the publication of general economic data in English, so that the international business community can study the island for business opportunities (Riddle and Sours).

Canada: The industrial makeup of the Canadian economy has undergone significant change. As recently as the 1950s the goods-producing industries including natural resources, manufacturing, and construction accounted for the major share of production

and employment. Canada's economic profile in the 1990s, however, can no longer be accurately sketched out by farms, forests, and factories. While the goods-providing sector remain crucial, service activities have become fundamental to the Canadian economy (Economic Council of Canada, 1991, p.1).

United States: Strategies for improving the performance of the United States economy have accorded particular importance to the distinction between manufacturing activities and the production of services. The continued growth of the services sector has represented a natural progression out of manufacturing into the postindustrial age run by computer-expert information workers (Duchin, 1988, p.76).

Some have criticized the United States perspective that a strong manufacturing base is indispensable for the nation as a whole, has resulted in neglecting development of the service occupations industry. Economists have generally recognized, however, the importance of also investing in at least a small set of "high-tech," labor-intensive consumer services to augment national wealth (Duchin, p.76).

Service Industry Trends

The recent emergence of the service occupations industry, and the development of the global service economy, has been reflected in the state-of-art areas of inquiry and current international trends summarized below (Bressand, 1989, p.xy):

Trend #1: Networks

The service industry label and the networked economy have been viewed as mutually inclusive. Services have constituted the economic dimension of networks, while infrastructures served as delivery channels and infostructures as designed rules for network-based services. This vision has been illustrated by exploring the dynamic forces behind the expansion of four types of networks (Bressand, Distler, and Nicolaidis, p.25):

a. Intracorporate Networks: The main object of intracorporate networks was to better coordinate day-to-day activities by enabling end users with the same company to share information and processing capacities (Bressand, Distler, and Nicolaidis, p.26).

b. Transcorporate Networks: This type of corporate network bringing productivity gains into the realm of relationship management took the form of electronic links between a company and its closest suppliers, customers, and partners (technical connection). Typically, it involved linking specific actors or parts of companies who gain by sharing a specified type of information (Bressand, Distler, and Nicolaidis, p.27).

c. Intercorporate Networks: These systems developed on the basis of corporate alliances of all sorts, were a means of addressing these higher-order information needs, whereby strategic-connection management becomes a central concern. The current wave of corporate alliances testified to the fact that straight forward mergers were not the most efficient way to establish strategic convergence in a highly volatile and risky environment (Bressand, Distler, and Nicolaidis, pp.28-29).

d. Metacorporate Networks: These networks seek to affect the environment in which a group of firms operate. Although associations were a traditional example, such metacorporate networks have multiplied as a response to the need to set and implement common information technology standards (Bressand, Distler, and Nicolaidis, p.29).

Trend #2: Information Processing

The ability to process information has become the major source of comparative advantage for nations around the world, and development strategies can no longer be based on traditional trade specialization patterns (Bressand , p.xvi).

Services are greatly conditioned by cultural characteristics and the nature of the nation-state and the socio-political system. To further complicate the matter, many services are today part of a total package as they require specific goods to deliver them. This was not only true of banking and other information-intensive sectors, but also in fields such as franchising. Contrary to the goods producing industry, the service occupations industry has been characterized by a single distribution system for a growing number of services, namely, the telecommunication infrastructure which is publicly owned in most countries. Services have always been crucial to the development process. The role of services in the economy is not new. It has been enhanced by dramatic changes in information and communication technology to the extent that a rethinking of economic theories and development strategies may be called for (Gibbs, 1989, p.83).

Trend #3: International/Collaboration-

Including the Idea of Using International Statistics

There have been tremendous advances in thinking about and negotiating on trade and service-related issues over the past several years, and the corresponding utilization of international information and statistics needed to support the service-oriented information industry (Aronson, 1989, p.158).

The degree of comparability of international organizations' statistics has been based on the assumption that international statistics could not be more extensive than national statistics (Bonamy and Sapir, 1989, p.253).

Trend #4: Level of Risk Versus Level of Wealth

Mathematical and philosophical objects such as volatility, options, and risk, are the ingredients of esoteric "products" bought and sold by the tens of thousands, and both corporations and government have become more preoccupied with action upon levels of risk than levels of wealth (Bressand, p.xvi). Services are a secondary type of economic good and can only be consumed after the basic needs have satisfied through the so-called essential economic activities (i.e. agricultural products, and industrial manufactured goods). Giarini (1989), explained the concept of risk versus level of wealth as follows(pp.225-226):

Even if we allowed the law to be still valid in some specific cases,
when some types of consumption (including industrial products) only arise

after a certain level of wealth, it completely misrepresents the function of wealth, it completely misrepresents the function of services, which were essential to make even the most basic goods available. We would stress the fact that today many situations of poverty and even hunger in the world were due more to the bad functioning of services than to the mere existence of agriculture produce and manufactured goods per se.

Employment on the Service Industry

A Statement by the Economic Council of Canada (1990), has identified and summarized three service-sector fields of employment and the characteristics which distinguish many industries from the service sector. These includes:

Dynamic Service: The dynamic service subsector includes four major industry divisions: two of these have been distribution-oriented (transportation, communications, and utilities; and wholesale trade), and two have been commercially-oriented (finance, insurance, and real estate; and business services). These industries have shared a number of characteristics that contribute to their dynamic nature, such as the high-value-added industries that, for the most part, have become more and more involved in internationally competitive markets.

Traditional Services: The traditional subsector has consisted of retail trade, accommodation, and food and personal services (which include a variety of activities from haircutting, cleaning, and repairing, to amusement and recreation). These industries were "traditional" in the sense that they represented the old "Main Street" variety of services. It would be a mistake, however, not to recognize the changes that are taking place within this subsector. Most notable, perhaps, has been the emergence of application of mass, standardized production technologies, inventory system, and marketing techniques; and retailing, as evidenced by innovations such as self-service and at-home buying (Economic Council of Canada, p.2).

Nonmarket Services: The third subsector-nonmarket services-includes education, health, social services, and public administration. Nonmarket service have become relevant to economic competitiveness for two reasons. First, the efficiency with which these services were produced would influence the level of public financing that was needed. Second, nonmarket services provided inputs into the activity of all private-sector firms. Those inputs included, for example, infrastructure (such as transportation and communication systems), education and health (which have an important bearing on the quality of the work force), and regulatory services. As a result, the nature of nonmarket services itself has been changing, which more attention now being paid to such matters as productivity growth and technological change (Economic Council of Canada, p.2).

Betcherman (1991, p.10), has delineated four dimensions of the service employment sector and, in the process, explained how these have shaped the labor market, and affected

skills and employment, including the location of that employment and the nature of workers' attachment to the labor market.

1. Technology: These types of indicators have been used to assess technological change in the various service industries. The first indicator included machinery and equipment, and expenditures not only for office machines, telecommunications equipment, and professional and scientific equipment, but also for such item as furniture and transportation equipment. The second indicator included the extent to which industries had been involved in the introduction of computer-based technologies. The third indicator involved spending on research and development by industries (Betcherman, p.10).

2. Trade in Service: This discussion of trade in services has had two purpose. First, it described the nature of service trade which has been undergoing substantial change in recent years; the trend resulting from those changes could have important implications for the size and mature of service trade in the future. The second purpose, which reflected the principal focus of these report, was to identify the employment implications of trade in services (Betcherman, p.15).

3. Location of Services: Service activities have had an affinity for urban locations. Historically, service producers tended to locate close to their customers since service transactions relied heavily on direct contact between customers and suppliers. While computer-based technological change has had a number of major impacts on the service sector, two have been particularly significant. First, the computer allowed the processing of vast amount of information quickly and relatively cheaply, and its importance as a

business management tool has rapidly grown. The demand for, and supply of that information has grown exponentially. One outcome has been rapid growth exponentially. One outcome has been rapid growth in the size of the business-service industry. Second computer-based technological change has relaxed some of constraints that previously tied many service producers to their customers. No longer must information be exchanged on a face-to-face basis. Information is now storable and transferable and its value is often enhanced in the process (Betcherman, p.20).

4. Firm Size: The last of the four service employment sector dimensions examined was the structure of the service sector in terms of firm size. Although it may be expected that firm size will have an important bearing on such things as employment and output growth, and technological change, primary interest has focused on looking at firm size as it relates to the changing nature of employment in the service economy. In this regard, available data have indicated that small firms are particularly characteristic of the service sector (Betcherman, p.27).

Service Industry Job Skills,

Knowledge, and Career Development

Service providers have needed to know the what and why of service delivery (knowledge) as well as learning the how (skills). Learning has typically been a process, not an event; the continuous learning of service providers has contributed to the continuous

improvement of service. Skills and knowledge development is a never-ending journey, examples of which have included the kinds of education and training described below (Berry, 1995, p.206).

University and Colleges: For those who are headed for university or college a thorough investigation has been necessary. Entrance requirements for a particular university program have not always been what they appeared. Another requirement that needs to be checked has been the "recommended" course prerequisites for both universities and colleges. Clients and students should also know that their extra-curricular activities can influence their entrance into some universities and colleges. Volunteers or paid workers in the field of interest can also be a major advantage in many cases. For example, political or social service involvement may be of interest to an institution which places emphasis on trying to raise student interest in school politics. (Alfred and O'reilly, 1995, p.156).

Co-Operative Education: Co-operative education programs typically seek to integrate paid work experience into a student's major field of interest along with academic studies. The term cooperative education itself reflects the co-operative relationships between students, schools and employers. Co-operative education programs provide an opportunity for students to get real experience before they graduate and while providing them with more knowledge of career opportunities (Alfred and O'reilly, 1995, p.156).

Trades / Apprenticeship: One means of entry into the labor market which has been ignored by most students is apprenticeship to the trades. This system of training incorporates on-the-job learning with short periods of formal or in-school learning, leading

to certification or licensing in the trades. Formal exams have been required at several levels throughout the training process (Alfred and O'reilly, 1995, p.159).

On-the-Job Training: This kind of learn-by-doing training has been applied to the personal guidance and instruction an employee receives at the work station, after attending a formal training program at a company training center. Ongoing guidance and development is also provided each day, on the job. Similar to the apprentice system, employees are involved in one-on-one training (Lash, 1989, p.80).

Summary

The research and literature summarized in Chapter 2 supported the following themes:

1. The continued growth of services sector occupations has represented a natural progression out of manufacturing, into the post industrial age run by computer-expert information workers.
2. The recent emergence of the global service economy has been reflected by such current international trends as corporate networks, information processing, utilization of international statistics, and preoccupation with levels of risk rather than levels of wealth.
3. The principal service-sector fields of employment have included: dynamic services (e.g., transportation, communications, wholesale trade); traditional services (e.g., retail trade, food personal services); and, nonmarket services (e.g., education, health, social services).

4. Employee skills and knowledge development is a never ending process in the service occupations industry.

CHAPTER 3

PROCEDURES OF THE PROJECT

The propose of the project was to design and develop a model training program to prepare candidates for employment in the service occupations. To accomplish this purpose, a review current literature regarding service industry trends employment training criteria, and essential service employment skills and knowledge was conducted.

Chapter 3 contains background information describing:

1. Need for the project
2. Development of support for the project
3. Procedures
4. Planned implementation and assessment of the project

Need for the Project

The need for this project was influenced by the following considerations:

1. The writer (Chang Shu-Hsin), as a graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration from Providence University, Taiwan, focused her undergraduate studies on

human resource management, where she gained understanding of the importance of employee development and training.

2. The writer was also employed in a trading company, in Taiwan, for a year following her university graduation. From her period work experience, she realized the service industry occupations were steadily growing and playing an increasingly important role in economic activities, on both national and international agendas.

3. While pursuing graduate studies at Central Washington University, Ellensburg, Washington, the writer conducted extensive research related to the design and development of a model training program for candidate seeking employment in the service occupations.

4. Undertaking this project, coincided with focused graduate studies at Central Washington University.

Development of Support for the Project

From June, 1994, to June, 1995, while employed with a trading company in Taiwan, the writer observed, first-hand, how the Taiwanese economy. Available statistics have indicated that 54.7 percent of Taiwanese workers were initially employed in service related occupation (Services Marketing and Management, Hsieh, p.5). This information, the writer's awareness continuing to increase significantly and, her professional interest in human resource management, combined to encourage the design of the model training

program which service occupations workers could both help fill the demand for greater numbers of service workers, which equipping those workers with the skills and knowledge needed for successful work performance.

Procedures

To obtain background information essential for developing a model training program to prepare candidates for employment in the service occupations, an Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) computer research was conducted. A hand-search of various other resources concerned with service industry occupations and employment was also undertaken.

Planned Implementation and Assessment of the Project

Implementation of the model program in a selected employment agency in Taiwan, has been tentatively scheduled for 1997. Following implementation of the model program, the employment agency manager will plan and design performance-based assessment procedures needed to determine program success. Example of assessment performance; employee interviews; employee demonstration of job skills; and, questionnaire surveys. Assessment data will be used at the discretion of agency management to modify the model training program.

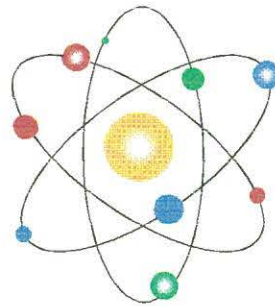
CHAPTER 4

THE PROJECT

The model training program to prepare candidates for employment in the service occupations, which was the subject of this project, has been presented in Chapter 4, in the context of six (6) areas of employee skills, including:

1. Pre-Employment Skills
2. Quality Service Skills
3. Information Skills
4. Human Performance Skills
5. Communication Skills
6. Partnership Teamwork Skills

A MODEL TRAINING PROGRAM
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Employment Skills Area</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Pre-employment Skills	P4
Introduction	P5
Evaluating Yourself	P5
Evaluating Jobs	P7
Ways to Find Job Opening	P7
Presenting Yourself on Paper	P8
Presenting Yourself in an Interview	P9
2. Quality Service Skills	P10
Introduction	P11
Responsibilities for Quality Service	P11
Quality Service Training for Executives	P13
Quality Service Training for Middle Managers	P14
Quality Service Training for Frontline Employees	P15
3. Information Skills	P17
Introduction	P18

EMPLOYEE SKILL AREA # 1

Pre-Employment Skills

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	P5
Evaluating Yourself	P5
Evaluating Jobs	P7
Ways to Find Job Openings	P7
Presenting Yourself on Paper	P8
Presenting Yourself in an Interview	P9

Pre-Employment Skills

Introduction

Finding the right job in the service occupation industry takes planning, perseverance, and patience. However, there are number of things one can do to increase ones chances of finding employment, as suggested below.

Evaluating Yourself

To find a job for which one is best suited, a candidate should give thought to the following suggestions:

- Compile a brief history of yourself in a self-inventory chart. Such a chart will be helpful when deciding which jobs to consider. It will also save time when writing cover letters and resumes, filling out applications, and preparing for job interview.
- Begin your self-inventory chart by listing, for example, all the previous jobs you have held, volunteer work, dates of employment, names and addresses of supervisors and reference.
- To help determine what you do well and what you enjoy doing, develop a list of interests and aptitudes, and then rate yourself above average, or below average for each one. Examples of qualities you might include in your list are administrative

analytic, athletic, clerical, creative, language, leadership, managerial, mathematical, sales, social, and verbal abilities.

--Compile a work characteristic checklist by considering the questions below, and then make a list of those work characteristics that are most important to you. Ask yourself "do you want a job in which you can.."

- * work outdoors?
- * be physically active?
- * work with your hands?
- * be challenged mentally?
- * work with people?
- * work with machines?
- * work independently?
- * work on team?
- * follow clear instructions?
- * earn a lot of money?
- * have a chance for quick promotion?
- * travel in your work?
- * work close to home?
- * work regular hours?
- * have a flexible schedule?
- * have a variety of tasks?

* have supervisory power?

* be a decision maker?

* do detailed work?

(Career Information Center,

Forth Edition, 1990. P.14).

Evaluating Jobs

The next step is to see how different jobs measure up to your abilities and interests. First, list all the service occupation-related jobs that interest you. Then examine the kinds of education and training required for those jobs, and decide whether you qualified or not. As firsthand information is invaluable, talk to someone who has such a job. For more detail information, consult career information materials available in a public library.

Ways to Find Job Openings

Once you have decided what kind of job you are suited for, the next step is to look for available positions. The following list of job-hunting suggestions may provide help:

- * Resume. Decide whether you will need a resume. If so, bring your resume up to date or prepare a new one, Assemble a supply of neatly typed copies.
- * References. Line up your references. Ask permission of the people whose names you would like to use.
- * Contacts. Put the word out to everyone you know that you are looking for a job.

- * Job market. Find out where the jobs are. Make a list of possible employers in your field of interest.
- * Research. A little homework can go a long way. Find out as much as you can about a job, the field, and the company before applying for the job. A well-informed job applicant is a step ahead.
- * Organization. Keep a file on your job-hunting campaign with names and dates of employers contacted, applications and ads answered, results, and follow-up.
- * Appearance. Make sure that the clothes you plan to wear to an interview are neat, clean and appropriate. It may be necessary to dress more formally for an interview than you would on the job, particularly if you are visiting a manager or personnel department. First impressions may sometimes tip the balance.

(Career Information Center, p.15)

Presenting Yourself on Paper

The chance to be given a personal interview is based on the application which you present. It is very important to make your written materials -resume, cover letter, application forms- work to your best advantage.

- Writing an effective resume includes stating your objective, describing what you have done and what you can do, explaining, special skills and having references available. The quality of the writing will make a difference.

- Writing application letters to send with your resume. The cover letter should be more specific to the advertised position and be a lead into your resume.
- Complete the application form neatly and precisely. The application form may be given when you arrive at the interview or sent in advance. A carelessly written application form may convey that you do not really care about the job, that you are incapable of working in a structured setting, or that you cannot express yourself well.

Presenting Yourself in an Interview

A successful interview may lead to getting the position. To interview effectively you should prepare in advance, by giving thought to why you want the job and what you can offer in the job. More information about the organization, reviewing your resume and preparing for some of the questions the interviewers may ask are all important. Be on time, and when the interview begins, remember to be natural, be yourself, give specific answers, be prepared to ask questions and avoid discussing salary until the end of the interview. Following up the interview with a brief thank-you note to the employer.

EMPLOYEE SKILL AREA # 2

Quality Service Skills

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	P11
Responsibilities for Quality Service	P11
Qualities Service Training for Executives	P13
Qualities Service Training for Middle Managers	P14
Qualities Service Training for Frontline Employees	P15

Quality Service Skills

Introduction

Service quality strategy is of value for the particular customer who makes buying decisions based on scheduling frequency, convince, comfort and not price alone. Quality service training has played a major role in the quality-improvement efforts of organizations and have led to reaching targeted levels of performance. Executives must be trained to define the business and market goals of an organization. In addition, all employees should receive training that will help them to understand the goals, familiar with these strategies designed to achieved the goals, and the knowledge and skills to implement the strategies successfully.

Responsibilities for Quality Service

The responsibilities of an organization to aspire to world-class service quality are described as follows:

-- Customer driven qualities. (All product and service qualities valued by the customer).

Customer satisfaction and preference must be addressed appropriately in quality systems. Customer-driven quality is a strategic idea which is directed toward market share gain and customer retention.

- Leadership. An organization's leader must have values and high expectations. They must develop strategies, systems and methods for achieving excellence which will lead all activities and decisions of the organization and encourage participation by all employees. Executives need to be involved in activities and serve as role models to encourage leadership at all levels.
- Continuous improvement. Achieving the highest levels of quality service requires a continuous improvement process. All work and unit activities of an organization needs to be constantly reviewed.
- Long-range goals. Strategies, plans, and resource allocations need to reflect long-term training programs to achieve quality goals.
- Objective management. Organizational management should be based on reliable information, data, and analysis that meets quality and performance goals.
- Partnership development. Organizations should build internal and external partnerships to serve both the internal and external community.
- Public responsibility. An organization's goals should address areas of corporate citizenship and responsibility, business ethics, public health and safety, the environment, and the sharing of quality-related information in the organization's business and geographic communities.

Quality Service Training for Executives

Quality service management plan for an organization should communicate such factors as :

- * Company vision
- * Management values
- * Business objective
- * Market and quality strategies
- * Employee standards of performance
- * Rewards for excellent performance
- * Employee support resources available to employees

(The Service Quality Handbook, 1993, p.283).

Executives should be trained to undertake the following responsibilities:

1. Provide a clear sense of direction and to guide the work efforts of all employees.
2. Ensure that the work processes used to deliver products and services to customers do not set up barriers for employees in serving. Executives must take the responsibility for encouraging critical process management and continuous improvement.
3. Effect organizational and cultural changes by acting as a role model for the global of a green organization.

Quality Service Training for Middle Managers

Middle level managers may be viewed as barriers to effective quality management systems. There is no need for middle managers to be involved in the designing of training efforts. A training program for middle managers should include:

- Knowledge of the organization's strategic business plans. Middle managers should be trained to have a knowledge of marketing, quality, and technology strategies that support the organizations overall goals. They need to analyze the risks and benefits and make appropriate decisions.
- Skill in process management techniques. Middle managers need to have training and skill in process management techniques. They should be involved as team members on process management.
- Familiarity with the key system technologies. Middle managers should be trained to familiar with the key system technologies in their particular business and industry. They should also understand technologies impact in the future of the organization.
- Skill in utilizing fact-based problem-solving methodologies. Middle managers should resolve problems based on objective information.
- Effective team leadership skills. Sustaining and keeping groups focused.
- Skill in coaching employees and providing timely and specific feedback on performance.

Quality Service Training for Frontline Employees

Frontline employees play a highly visible role in an organization. They directly perform and serve the organization. This group of employees includes those employees who design, make, and deliver the products and/or services offered; and those employees who provide support services to their colleagues and who directly interact with external customers. Individual job classifications have their own set of skills and knowledge, but share common factors.

- Strategic knowledge. The frontline employees are those who primarily serve customers. They must understand the organization's service and satisfaction strategies and how their responsibilities fit into the wider picture of the organization.
- Understanding management's performance expectations. Performance standards must be explicit so frontline employees can be supervised and helped to correct their performance.
- Customer requirements impact frontline employees' roles in product or service development and delivery. Frontline employee must thoroughly understand the advantages and the disadvantages of their product and how these service effects customers.
- Proficiency with productivity-enhancing technologies. Managers have the responsibility to ensure that the frontline workers have the skills to use the key system technology and to operate the support systems.

- Communication skills. The training of frontline employees' communication skills is a major part of the training program.
- Problem-solving skills. Frontline employees who serve customers need to acquire the problem-solving skills. Within the limits or constraints of their ability to satisfy customers, they should recognize the differences between individual situation and systemic problems. They should be empowered to make decision and take appropriate actions.

EMPLOYMENT SKILL AREA # 3

Information Skills

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	P18
The Information Professional	P18
Characteristics of Informational Professionals	P20

Information Skills

Introduction

Today, we live in the Information Age. In fact, there is such an abundance of information available, we have to be careful not to drown in it. What is needed, is information management that produces good decisions for those engaged in today's complex and changing service occupations industry. The information professional offers skills in the management of information.

The Information Professional

The information professional, sometimes referred to as an information broker, is an independent information specialist who can help people with an information need, meet that need, and make full use of the information. The information professional, can help a client not only identify what information is required, but how to use it. The information professional might be on the staff of a local public library, the manager of a private library in a major cooperation, or the director of an academic library at a major university. The information professional may also be an independent entrepreneur. Some of the services, an information professional might offer in the growing information market place include:

- * Abstracting
- * Analyzing information
- * Assisting in grant preparation
- * Bibliography collecting
- * Cataloging
- * Computer software design
- * Consulting
- * Current awareness
- * Custom information services
- * Directory compilation
- * Document collection and delivery
- * Editing
- * Education and training
- * Identifying expert
- * Indexing
- * Industry overviews
- * Instant education
- * Library management
- * Library development
- * Needs assessment
- * Online searching
- * Publishing
- * Purchasing reports
- * Records management
- * Seminars
- * Specific subject updates
- * Systems design
- * Thesaurus construction
- * Verifying facts
- * Market research
- * Manual searching

(Everett, 1988, p.p.2-3)

Characteristics of Information Professionals

Individuals may possess the personal characteristics needed to become successful information professionals, while others must be willing to spend time and effort to acquire them. A summary of innate and acquired characteristics needed to succeed as an information professional has been presented below(Everett, p.4):

Innate Characteristics

Logical, analytical mind
Communication skills
Enthusiasm and curiosity
Self-confidence
Decision making

Acquired Characteristics

Information skills
Knowledge of system vendors
Knowledge of database
Typing skills
Subject expertise

EMPLOYMENT SKILL AREA # 4

Human Performance Skills

	<u>page</u>
Introduction	P22
Knowledge of Organizational Culture	P22
Six Attributes of Personal Performance Quality	P23

Human Performance Skills

Introduction

Many organizations search for ways to become less bureaucratic and more responsive to the needs of their clients while expecting high levels of performance from their employees. Even though a service's perceived value or quality is at the point of contact between the customer and the frontline employee, service performance influences all levels of the organization since both have external and internal responsibility. An organization's culture may enhance employee performance to achieve its service quality goals.

Knowledge of Organizational Culture

- The organization and its culture are a function of the kind of people that the organization attracts. Candidates who seek jobs in service occupations appear to view themselves as people-oriented. This self-selection by the organizational culture helps an organization to train employees to high standard of performance.
- For better employee performance, the employee should have knowledge of the organizational culture and be empowered to:
 - * Receive information about organizational performance.
 - * Be rewarded for contributing to organizational performance.

- * Have the knowledge and skills to understand and contribute to organizational performance.
- * Have the power to make decisions that influence organizational direction and performance.

Six Attributes of Personal Performance Quality

During service delivery, the customers directly experience the service skills of an organization's employees. An organization's service quality is evaluated by the way the services are provided. Service employees should be trained to serve customers, and create trust and confidence in the relationship with them. Six attributes of personal performance quality:

1. Treat customers in the way you wish to be treated when you are a customer. It is well known that if we treat people in a polite way, we increase the chance to receive equal treatment. For example:
 - * Respond to a customer's need before being asked.
 - * Listen to the concerns of the customers and offer help.
 - * Share credit for success.
2. Take personal responsibility for meeting customers' needs. For example:
 - * Set clear goals when addressing job tasks.
 - * See that action is taken by others to solve problems.

- * Follow through on commitments and trust other.
3. Constantly seek to improve by service quality learning and training. For example:
- * Ask for and accept suggestions from customers and co-workers.
 - * Do not be embarrassed to seek help.
 - * Constantly improve job knowledge and skills.
4. Share knowledge and skills, and offer help to customers and co-workers. For example:
- * Share information, skills and lessons learned.
 - * Recognize the contributions of others. Treat co-workers equally.
 - * Emphasize customer satisfaction regardless of who receive the credit.
5. Have a positive outlook. For example:
- * Take prompt action.
 - * Rarely complain. See challenges as opportunities.
 - * Focus on being positive.
 - * Work hard to help solve customer problems.
6. Communicate effectively with customers and co-workers. For example:
- * Use language that is easily understood.
 - * Write clearly to avoid misunderstanding.
 - * Listen carefully and respond by showing understanding of what others have said.
 - * Ask questions, and be open to other point of view.

EMPLOYMENT SKILL AREA # 5

Communication Skills

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	P26
Verbal and Nonverbal Messages	P26
Voice Tone and Inflection	P27
Choosing the Right Words	P27
Active Listening	P28
Telephone Communication	P28

Communication Skills

Introduction

Communication involves both mind and body -it is not only words, but also body language. Messages are received through questions, facial expressions, voice tone and inflection. Customers may not hear and understand what you intend them to hear and understand. Training is necessary to use both verbal and nonverbal communication effectively with customers .

Verbal and Nonverbal Messages

Verbal communication is more than just the words you say. It is often more important in the way you say things than what you say. According to the experts, only 20 percent of a message is communicated face-to-face through words; and more than 45 percent is communicated by your voice tone and inflection while 35 percentage is communicated through body language-nonverbal messages.

Nonverbal communication is accompanied by the words you say. The way you sit, stand, the way you use your hands, and the expressions on your face may indicate what you are thinking or feeling and be in direct contrast to what is being said.

Voice Tone and Inflection

The way you speak is very important. Voice tone and inflection can express your attitude and may change the meaning of your words. Inflection refers to emphasizing certain words to make the meaning more clear. For example, a statement may be changed from a statement to a question by putting the emphasize on the end of a sentence. Employees should know how to use the voice tone and inflection to communicate with customers in a most positive way.

Choosing the Right Words

There are thousands of words in the English language. We may use different words to convey the same or similar messages. The use of words can sometimes result in customers reviewing a message that was not intended. It is better to keep it simple and to convey the positive and avoid the negative.

Keep the language use with customers simple, clear, positive, and enthusiastic. Avoid jargon, technological terms, and abbreviations since it will probably have no meaning and may confuse customers.

*Convey the positive and avoid the negative.

*Think before you speak.

*Take responsibility and offer help.

*Use positive substitutes to negative statements.

*Use positive phrases to convey more positive attitude to your customers.

Active Listening

Listening is a positive way to show interest in customers. Customers may feel important if someone is actively listening to them. Active listening means showing involvement in the conversation, demonstrating interest, and paying attention to verbal and nonverbal messages.

Macneill (1994) identified the following active listening skills:

- * Maintain eye contact.
- * Smile.
- * Do not interrupt.
- * Nod in acknowledgment.
- * Repeat important points.
- * Probe for additional information.
- * Take notes.

Telephone Communication

Communication with customers is not only face-to-face, but also over the telephone.

Messages delivered over the telephone rely 90 percent on voice and only 10 percent on actual words. It is important therefore to:

- * Articulate clearly, speak slowly and with enough volume so that the caller can understand you.
- * Ask for and use the name of the caller.
- * Use and project a voice tone that conveys confidence in the customer.
- * Respond visually even though customers can not see you they can hear a great deal in your voice. Facial expression automatically changes the quality of your voice.
- * Eliminate distractions since all customers expect and deserve your complete attention.

EMPLOYMENT SKILL AREA # 6

Partnership Teamwork Skills

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	P31
Six common Characteristics of Partnership	P31
Seven Steps in the Partnership Process	P32
Working with Self-Managed Teams	P32

Partnership Teamwork Skills

Introduction

A self-managed team is a group of people who have total responsibility for a product, service, or a process in a partnership environment. Team members are empowered to work without supervision, manage their own training to improve their skills, set their own training and communicate with management and peer groups. Under the organization and partnership culture, self-managed teams can improve quality, service, and productivity. Self-managed teams redesign the organization to effect lasting, beneficial organizational and cultural change. Better utilization of the skills and experience of people who actually do the work will maximize the success of an organization.

Six Common Characteristics of Partnership

Rider (1993) stated six common characteristics of effective partnership:

1. Clear vision, goals, and overall business plan.
2. Shared information.
3. Processes designed to fit systems and people resources.
4. Self-managed, customer-focused work groups.
5. Continuous improvement of people and process.

6. " Whole" organization approach.

Seven Steps in the Partnership Process

(The Service Quality Handbook, 1993, pp.305-309) describes a seven step partnership process:

Step 1: Develop strategy and leadership.

Step 2: Appoint steering committee and determine direction.

Step 3: Build Organizational awareness and support.

Step 4: Begin organization improvement.

Step 5: Plan for implementation.

Step 6: Implement the plan.

Step 7: Provide evaluation and renewal.

Working with Self-Managed Teams

Identification on managerial skills and responsibilities in a self-managed team environment:

- * The self-managed group needs to have clear goals of the organization and should have open communication and access to managers.
- * Managers should make it clear they are there to help and support the teams.
- * Managers should strive to develop the trust of the self-managed team.

- * Managers should model to employees their commitment to the partnership of the organization.
- * Managers should support an open, accepting environment.
- * Managers should make sure that the team has the knowledge and resources to meet customer requirements.
- * Managers should train team players, believe in their ability and, apply their experience and knowledge to solve problems.
- * Managers should not make all key decisions.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of the project was to design and develop a model training program to prepare candidates for employment in the service occupations. To accomplish this purpose, a review of literature regarding service industry trends employment training criteria and essential service employment skills and knowledge was conducted.

Conclusions

Conclusions reached as a result of this project were:

1. State-of-the-art training programs to prepare candidates for employment in service occupations have recently focused on computer skills and worker information.
2. The recent emergence of the global service economy has been reflected by such current international trends as corporate networks, information processing, utilization of international statistics, and preoccupation with levels of risk rather than levels of wealth.

3. Employee skill and knowledge development is constantly changing and a never ending process in the service occupations industry.

Recommendations

As a result of this project, the following recommendations have been suggested:

1. Those responsible for designing and developing state-of-the-art training programs to prepare candidates for employment in the service occupations should focus on preparation and training of computer and information processing skills.
2. To be competitive in the global service economy, training programs preparing candidates for employment in the service occupations should be aware of current international trends toward corporate networking, information processing, utilization of international statistics, and levels of risks rather than levels of wealth.
3. Those preparing candidates for employment in the service occupations should understand that employee skill and knowledge requirements are constantly changing, and employee development remains in an ongoing, continuous state of evolution.
4. Those seeking to design and develop a model training program to prepare candidates for employment in service occupations, may wish to adapt the model program developed for purposes of the project, or undertake further research on this subject to meet their unique needs.

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