HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN FARM AGRITOURISM

MANAGEMENTUL RESURSELOR UMANE ÎN AGROTURISMUL DE FERMĂ

CORNELIA SOUCA [1], I. PETROMAN[1], CORNELIA PETROMAN[1], SNEJAŽNA TOLIĆ[2] , DIANA MARIN[1] , A. DUMITRESCU[1], ANDREEA STAN [1], DELIA RAMONA GABRIS[3]

[1] Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Timişoara, Agricultural Management Faculty, Timisoara, Romania; laviniasouca@yahoo.com
[2] Juraj Strossmayer University, Osijek, Croatia
[3]SC INTEROPTIK SRL

Abstract: *The human resource department plays an important role in the tourism industry since tourism activities are characterised by an intense involvement of human capital to ensure high quality services [6]; from this perspective, human resource management quality is crucial for success or failure of tourism businesses.*

Key words: *human resources, tourism industry, human resource management, quality services, tourism business*

INTRODUCTION

The main elements of the strategic management of human resources in tourism are based on the following key elements:

- the features of tourism activities and their impact on human resource management:
  - the place where tourism services are available is crucial for the business success: tourism market offer should meet consumers' demands;
  - tourism services include a significant intangible component;
  - tourism services cannot be inventoried: sale and marketing services should meet short-term sale demands;

  - relationship marketing: all the employees of a tourism firm should contribute, directly or indirectly, to marketing activities;
  - human factor in tourism services involve a certain degree of uncertainty and unpredictability;
- job quality in the tourism sector;
- professional training in the tourism sector;
- innovation and flexibility in human resource management: there is a tendency to make the staff responsible since they play an important role in relationship marketing and in ensuring customer satisfaction;
- recruiting trained personnel;
- reaching high-quality standards through human resource features and capabilities:
  - professionalism;
  - aptitudes;
  - behaviour;
  - transparency;
  - flexibility;
  - correctness;
  - credibility
- the effects of political and economic globalisation on human resources in tourism;
- the effects of interactions in a multicultural environment: tourism locations receive guests from different countries, which carry cultural differences;
- the importance of IT and of communications.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

To carry out the present research, we have studied literature concerning human resource management, human resource management in the tourism industry, small and medium enterprises management in tourism and services, and aspects concerning human resource management in educational tourism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Human resource development plays a crucial role in human resource management in tourism due to the investment of human capital with a view to increase quality standards of services supplied and to contribute to the improvement of the employees' working conditions. This process is the main essence of investments in human capital and, as such, it can contribute significantly to the improvement of performance, productivity, and profitability.

Human resource development is a process both formal and informal:

- a formal process from the perspective of organisation (training courses or training methods publicly accredited);
- an informal process from the perspective of professional training with no public accreditation (a process going on both within the firm and in other training centres).

Within the company, we can organise the following types of activities in order to develop human resources:

- training on the spot;
- training courses within the company.

Large size tourism companies leave the training process of human resources to specialised departments allowing the planning and organising of professional training in a strategic way, based on criteria of training and education identified as necessary for the company and developed as to meet individual development aspirations and company needs. In small-size companies, such as travel agencies or agri-tourism

pensions, there are no such situations, but this function is attributed, together with other responsibilities, to human resource management.

Professional training programmes have an important impact on the company's staff: they play an important role in inductive training (i.e., through technical training for future jobs). Frequently recruit based on the potential contribution of each person apart but reaching the potential needs significant, well-structured investment for the training of skills and for the complex moulding of the person. Optimising the employees' potential is done through either programmes or specific training, or through working in different departments of the organisation for shorter or longer periods of time, depending on situation. Individuals can also be promoted through the planning of the succession within the company, after a previous training for the future activities.

Within tourism companies, the training of human resources plays a key-role in supporting innovation, no matter the field. Changes on the tourism market need the training of human resources in order to prepare the employees for such changes (for instance, the learning of foreign languages and the application of information technology programmes [7].

Unlike the traditional model of human resource training, in tourism, where there is little flexibility in the changes of trained personnel functions (for instance, an employee, once trained, has little chances to change his/her career), the model we have in mind is characterised by major flexibility since it is based on continuous training. The diversity characteristic of each sector apart is one of the factors limiting this principle since it asks different technical skills enforced by the complexity of the structure and by the size of the business figures (which can range from a family agri-tourism pension to multinational company).

In most countries practicing large-scale tourism, small size family companies rank first in the field; in this case, we need to train the staff informally, except for the cases in which the regulations stipulate the necessity of hiring diploma owners in the field. Professional training of

human resources in tourism plays an important role in tourism sustainable development; this is why we need to plan strategic policies in the field of tourism at macro- level, thus implementing human resource development and professional training in specialised high-schools and in universities [4].

CONCLUSIONS

Hiring and training employees, no matter the level, are successful tools in the competition with other companies, which makes the difference on the free market of tourism business.

Human resource management in tourism in Romania is approached through complex academic courses [1, 3, and 5] and/or through research programmes [8]; it is also the core of textbooks destined to the training of non-specialists working in the tourism industry [2].

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. EMILIAN, R., ȚIGU, GABRIELA, STATE, OLIMPIA & ȚUCLEA, CLAUDIA. (2004). *Managementul resurselor umane*. Bucureşti: Editura Academiei de Studii Economice.

2. MUSTEREȚ, CORINA-PETRONELA. (2008). *Managementul resurselor umane în turism*. Iaşi.

3. NISTOREANU, P. (2005). *Managementul în turism servicii*. Bucureşti: Editura Academiei de Studii Economice.

4. Sustainable Tourism Management Planning in Biosphere Reserves. A Methodological Guide. (2007). Ecological Tourism in Europe and UNESCO MaB.

5. TUCLEA, ELENA. (2009). *Managementul întreprinderilor mici şi mijlocii din turism şi servicii*. Bucureşti: ASE.

6. BAUM, T. & KOKKRANIKAL, J. (2005). Human Resource Management in Tourism. In Pender, L. & Sharpley, R. (Eds.). *The*

Management of Tourism. London – Thousand Oaks – New Delhi: SAGE Publications. 85-101.

6. **MITCHELL, R.** (2006). *A Reconceptualisation of Destination Tourism Management: Focussing on Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsability*. Otago Business PhD Collouium. 1-11.
7. **POPESCU, C.** (2005). Aspecte ale managementului resurselor umane definitorii turismului şcolar. *Annals of the Oradea University. Fascicle of Management and Technological Engineering*. 877-882.