

Evaluation of the Academic & Employability Skills required to become a successful hotel manager

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What are Academic & Employability Skills?

ACADEMIC SKILLS:

Academic skills can be defined as “a collective group of abilities that one must have in order to achieve academic excellence.” They include but are not limited to:

- a) Academic Writing b) Presentation Skills c) Referencing & Academic Integrity
- d) Critical Thinking e) Reflective Practice

(Academic Skills Specialists, 2013)

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS:

Employability skills have been defined as “a set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess in order to ensure that they have the capability of being effective in the workplace- to the benefit of themselves, their workplace and the wider economy.” They include but are not limited to:

- a) Communication & Teamwork b) Leadership c) Effective Management & Organisation d) Computer Literacy

(Confederation of British Industry, 2010)

Why are they so important?

The Institute of Directors conducted a survey on employability, whereby directors who are directly involved in recruitment were asked to *rate the importance of employability skills against specific “technical” skills required for a job.*

- 36% said that employability skills are *more* important
- 29% said that employability skills are *marginally more* important
- 23% said that employability skills are *equally* important

From this we can establish that **88%** of directors considered employability skills to be a key indicator of a candidate's potential value to their company.

(www.iod.com “Skills briefing” , 2007)

Employability skills are often described as “transferrable” because they are not specific to any one industry or sector of the economy, instead they are essential for success in any role which further highlights their importance.

Industry Expectations of a Hotel Manager

In order to understand what exactly major recruiters for hotel managers were looking for, I decided to consult leading online recruitment site for the Hospitality industry “*Caterer*”

Based on a range of job adverts, ranging from 5* luxury hotels to neighbourhood bed and breakfasts, I have chosen some qualities that all of them look for in the ideal candidate for a Hotel Manager position.

They are:

- Strong business and financial acumen
- Excellent communication skills
- IT Literacy
- Fluency in English
- Strong organizational skills with ability to meet deadlines
- Ability to coach a team
- Remain calm under pressure

(www.caterer.com)

Using the “SWOT” Analysis Strategy

My Academic Skills Strengths	My Employability Skills Strengths
Academic writing – <i>I was able to develop my academic writing skills through completion of many essays and academic reports</i>	Management & Organisation – <i>I am able to effectively delegate tasks to my team</i>
Reflective practice – <i>I made myself well acquainted with various models of reflection such as the “Gibbs Reflective Cycle”</i>	Problem Solving – <i>I am good at remaining calm in stressful situations in order to find a solution for the problem and give confidence to my team in me as a leader</i>
Note Making – <i>I am able to draw key information and facts from lectures or tutorials in order to streamline my learning and create focus points</i>	Teamwork – <i>I am able to work well in groups as well as alone, in order to achieve a common goal and do my best to avoid conflict and rather find solutions</i>

Using the “SWOT” Analysis Strategy

My Academic Skills Weaknesses	My Employability Skills Weaknesses
Referencing – <i>The concept of referencing is new to me and as such is something that I am not entirely confident in</i>	Computer Literacy – <i>I need to use Microsoft Office more often and struggle with creating formulas in Microsoft Excel</i>
Presentation Skills – <i>Delivering presentations is one of my weaknesses as I have found from previous feedback that I need to remain concise, engaging and confident when speaking.</i>	Communication skills – <i>At times I lack the confidence to express my ideas or suggestions or to ask for help when I am unsure, for fear of seeming inadequate.</i>
	Confidence in English Language – <i>Due to English being my second language, I find myself shy at times to express what I would like to</i>
Opportunities	Threats
Take an IELTS course to improve my fluency in English	Balancing time for work and study
Ask my tutors for regular feedback on my academic work	High levels of competition from other candidates
Participate in online courses for computer proficiency	Financial costs of multiple online courses

Personal Development Plan

In order to develop and improve my skillset, I have prioritised three key elements that I think are most important in terms of their urgency for me to focus on.

How can I improve my fluency in English?

- Take an IELTS course
- Listen to audiobooks to learn perfect pronunciation
- Be proactive in participation of group presentations to get more comfortable with speaking

How can I improve my computer literacy?

- Use technology more often to complete tasks
- Search for an online course to master important features of Microsoft Office such as Excel

How can I improve my presentation skills?

- Watch presentations online from highly reputable sources such as “TEDtalks” to visualise what an engaging presentation is
- Ask my tutor for feedback on the comprehensiveness, clarity and conciseness of my presentations

Conclusion

To conclude, from the above analysis, it can be established that in order for me to achieve my intended goal of becoming a hotel manager, experience within the industry and hospitality related qualifications are not enough to impress future employers.

More often than not, recruiters are favouring those candidates who possess and importantly, demonstrate a variety of academic & employability skills that are crucial for success in their role.

Through my analysis of myself using the “SWOT” strategy, first developed by Albert Humphrey of Stanford University in the 1960’s and through research - some of which has been shown in this presentation, I have been able to lay out my strengths and weaknesses to make myself more aware of my current situation. This has enabled me to create an action plan for myself, to ensure that I remain competitive in what is a fierce and dynamic labour market.

Referencing

- *Academic Skills Specialists, 2013*
- *Confederation of British Industry, “Survey on Employability”, 2010*
- *Institute of Directors, “Skills Briefing”, 2007*
- *“Hotel Manager” Job search, Caterer*