

CBT in Action

CRANE RESORTS

Tourism Industry Overview

- Many countries have identified the tourism industry as a key component of their developmental and export strategies and in so doing, ensuring that the industry remains intensely competitive;
- Local hotels with high operational costs and relatively modest promotional budgets can neither out shout the competition nor compete on the basis of price;
- A strategy based on high repeat patronage and positive word of mouth communications through enhanced service delivery has long been recognized as a viable one;
- Several studies have found that it costs about five times as much in time, money and resources to attract a new customer as it does to retain an existing one;

Why CBT is necessary

- For some time, most local hotels have been contemplating service improvement initiatives premised on effective and efficient training programmes;
- Some argue that this exists against a background of traditional service mediocrity in local hotels
- Hoteliers may fail to pursue service excellence because of knowledge, leadership, commitment or financial capacity deficiencies.
- This seeming inability or lack of will, results in a management orientation, which is characterized by an emphasis on short-term control or bottom line performance.

American Hotel and Lodging Association – Example of Competency Based Training

- The training platform provided by the American Hotel and Lodging Association can assist in the capacity building exercise.
- The Hospitality Skills Certification programme facilitates the assessment of employees' skills and knowledge at line, supervisory and managerial levels.
- The successful completion of the programme results in employees receiving professional recognition and lapel pins indicating a level of professional excellence.
- To date, the team has executed the programme for Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines in addition to Grenada in the Caribbean. Ministers of Tourism in each of those territories hold the programme in high esteem with respect to its capacity building capabilities.

Brief Description of Training Programmes

- The **Certified Hotel Administrator (CHA)** targets Hotel Owners and General Managers and addresses issues such as Financial Management, Sales and Marketing Management, Food and Beverage Management, Leadership, Human Resource Management and Rooms Management.
- The **Certified Hotel Supervisor (CHS)** provides instruction in areas of Supervision, Leadership, Time Management, Effective Communication, Problem Solving and Conflict Resolution, Orientation and Training, Motivation and Team Building, Staffing and Scheduling, Improving Employee Performance
- **Line Level Certifications.** The programme provides a variety of training resources to prepare employees for the Hospitality Skills Certification exams e.g. Certified Restaurant Server, Certified Room Attendant etc. Hospitality Skills Training Guides outline exactly what front-line employees must know and do for their particular job.

Benefits and Outcomes

- **Reduced turnover.** By highlighting strengths, skill certification built loyalty and encouraged staff to stay with the hotel and grow professionally.
- **Measurable improvements in guest service.** By building confidence, skill certification resulted in higher levels of service delivery by employees.
- **More knowledgeable, competent employees.** As the culmination of job-specific training, skill certification demonstrates that employees have comprehensive knowledge of the job for which they have been certified. Graduation ceremonies recognising their achievements were held.
- **Enhanced Supervisory and Managerial Capacity.** Managers and Supervisors are able to use higher level tools and techniques aimed at increasing levels of operational efficiency, product development and service effectiveness.
- **Improved Competitiveness.** Based on operational improvements Crane has enhanced its competitive profile leading to improved financial performance.

Challenges and Training Goals

- **Training requires commitment from Top Management.** In order for training to be effective, it requires coordination and someone in the organisation who has a full time commitment to drive the agenda.
- **Training has to be ongoing.** Employees redevelop bad habits quickly and require ongoing instruction. This can be both expensive and time consuming.
- **Training requires an audit capacity.** In order to ensure that employees are adhering to documented standards reflecting international best practice, an internal audit capacity is required.
- **Training requires buy-in.** Some employees, particularly more mature and “tenured” employees, may resist change. These are often the most politically powerful employees who have the capacity to derail the training agenda.
- **Training Goals.** We plan to retrain vast majority of own staff (400) at relevant level (Line, Supervisory, Middle Management and Executive). Also plan to offer same programme to Intimate Hotels of Barbados (22 hotels have agreed)