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Technology and Talent Management

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Learning objectives

This chapter discusses technology and talent management in hospitality and tourism. By the end of this chapter, you should be able to:

- Explain importance of technology in talent management;
- Identify existing talent management technologies in recruitment, selection, training, performance evaluation and motivating and retaining of employees;
- Explain how talent management technologies are used in recruitment, selection, training, performance evaluation and motivating and retaining; and
- Offer recommendations on how hospitality and tourism businesses can use talent management technologies.

Introduction

Talent management is one of the most critical factors that can assist hospitality and tourism organizations to achieve superior performance and gain competitive advantage (Cappelli and Keller, 2014; Deery and Jago, 2015; Huges and Rog, 2008; Okumus, 2008). As discussed in previous chapters, managing talent is a critical factor for hospitality and tourism organizations. Talent management refers to finding the right people with the right knowledge and expertise for the right positions and right organizations, and supporting them to grow and excel so that the business can grow and prosper (Deery, 2008). Talent management is one of the key sources of competitive advantage for hospitality businesses.

Increasingly, delivery, support and management of talent management practices greatly depend on the use of technology (Johnson and Gueutal, 2011a; Schweyer, 2010). It is evident that human resources technology offers web-based systems to deliver data and service including online recruiting, online application testing, online training, online benefit system and employee self-service (Johnson

and Gueutal, 2011b; Schweyer, 2010; Stone *et al.*, 2015). Overall, talent management research has focused on recruitment, selection, training, development, retention and performance evaluation. This chapter will therefore particularly focus on the use of talent management technologies in these areas.

Technology use in recruitment

One of the main goals of talent management is to attract, recruit, develop, engage and retain the best talent in order to help the organization attain its goals. The goal has remained the same, but the procedures have changed over the past few years, as organizations have embraced the latest technological advances. The process of *recruitment* refers to the organization's efforts to attract a qualified pool of applicants, whereas *selection* entails choosing the best applicant for a given position. The field of recruitment has faced several technological changes in the past few decades. For example, in the past one of the primary means of advertising a job opening was through the local newspapers. As the Internet has evolved, newspaper circulation has decreased dramatically. Job advertisements still exist in print media, but their number has decreased, as more employers opt for electronic recruitment. Electronic recruitment can entail posting a job on a company's proprietary website or using a general job board such as Career Builder (<http://www.careerbuilder.com>) or one that specializes in a particular industry, as in the case of HCareers (<http://www.hcareers.com>).

Job boards may charge a fee for their services, but could potentially return a greater number of applications. On the one hand, online job postings have made it possible for applicants to easily access job information and apply for multiple positions. On the other hand, these electronic recruitment methods have resulted in an increase in applicants for companies, thus increasing their administrative costs (Stone *et al.*, 2015). Another challenge with electronic recruiting arises from the diversity of the applicant pool. Some individuals may be less technically savvy or have limited access to the Internet.

Another tool used in the recruitment of prospective employees is the virtual job fair. A virtual job fair may include webcasts, webinars, chat rooms, simulated environments, and a place to upload a resume (Stone *et al.*, 2015). There are several companies that offer the capability of hosting a virtual job fair. Some examples include the software providers Communique (<http://www.virtualjobfairhosting.com>) and Career eco (<https://www.careereco.com>). Using such software, companies can feature various simulated environments, hold various seminars, and create a branded image of their company online.

Social networking has also been used for recruitment purposes. Whereas some candidates use social media to network with prospective employers, others can go as far as submitting an application directly through the site. LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com>) is an example of a company that has a platform that helps

people create a professional network. While social media offers advantages as a recruitment tool, this technology may also allow employers to gain prior knowledge of the applicant's personal information. More specifically, information on gender, race, religion, weight and disability might become apparent from a personal profile. In light of this, several jurisdictions have created laws to regulate the usage of social media in the recruitment process and several court cases have emerged concerning its utilization for employment purposes (Morgan and Davis, 2013).

In recent years, blogs have also helped applicants gain information about the companies they apply for. For example, Glass door (<https://www.glassdoor.com>) allows individuals that work for a company to post their impression of what it's like to work for them. Similarly, it allows applicants to see what current employees think. Such technology can bring about the benefit of increased information and a realistic job preview, but it can also damage the company's reputation and hurt its chances of obtaining good applicants.

Recruitment efforts, whether electronic or traditional, should be measured for their effectiveness. According to Mathis *et al.* (2014), to determine the effectiveness of a recruitment method, an employer should consider the following:

- The number of applicants received
- The quality of its applicant pool
- The time it takes to fill gaps
- The diversity of its talent pool
- Costs versus benefits, and
- Retention.

A recruiting method may yield many applicants, but it may also generate a lot of unqualified applications, thus increasing the workload of the hiring manager. A method may attract great quality of applicants, but it may not be sufficient to meet the demands in terms of the quantity of applications the company needs to fill its employment vacancies. A third method may be good in terms of quality and quantity, but incur a prohibitive cost for the company. In deciding the combination of recruiting sources, companies should weight several factors and make a decision that helps them attain their recruitment goals in the most effective manner.

Technology use in selection

Once an organization has attained a reasonable applicant pool, the process of selection begins. There are multiple technologies that can aid employers in the selection process. For example, a software category used by many in talent management is that of applicant tracking systems. These systems allow employers to create job openings, set-up several levels of screening, review notes of various

interviewers, track the status of each application, and produce reports on the effectiveness of your recruitment and selection efforts. There are several applicant tracking systems including Recruiter Box (<http://recruiterbox.com>) and Clear Company (<http://info.clearcompany.com>).

Organizations have also taken processes that were performed manually and transferred them to electronically. For example, cognitive abilities testing and personality inventories have been used by firms for decades. Today instead of administering paper and pencil tests, applicants can be given these tests electronically. Employers may even set up the system to prevent applicants from moving forward if they obtained unfavorable scores in these inventories.

You may ask why a company should engage in cognitive abilities and personality testing. Since the 1920s, research has examined the ability of various selection criteria to predict future job performance. Meta analyses by McDaniel *et al.* (1994) and Schmidt and Hunter (1998) demonstrated moderate correlations between structured interviews and work performance. When the interview is completely unstructured, that correlation is even less. In contrast, cognitive abilities testing and personality testing (particular on conscientiousness) have demonstrated better ability to predict long term retention and performance (Johnson and Gueutal, 2011b).

From a practical perspective, companies may also struggle with limited resources to review a large number of applications. In light of this, resume screening software exists. These platforms allow employers to quickly identify resumes with the desired qualification by considering key words. The applicant tracking systems often provide capabilities for resume screening. Some examples are: iCIMS, Recruiterbox, Workable, and Clear Talent (Capterra, n.d.)

Interviews have also undergone a transformation in the past few decades. The traditional modality of an employment interview was face-to-face. Later, employers began experimenting with phone interviews as a way to improve the efficiency of the process. With the advent of the Internet, employers have adopted web-based interviews. These interviews can be either synchronous or asynchronous. In a synchronous interview, the applicant uses his or her computer or mobile device to interview in real-time with the interviewer. Examples of technologies that enable these interactions include Skype (<https://www.skype.com>) and Go To Meeting (<https://www.gotomeeting.com>). As an example of research in this area, Chapman *et al.* (2003) explored the perceptions of justice, interview difficulty, intentions to accept an offer, and perceived interview outcome using three interview modalities: face-to-face, telephone, and videoconferencing. The research findings demonstrated that face-to-face interviews were perceived fairer by applicants as compared to videoconferencing and telephone modalities.

More recently, employers have adopted asynchronous video interviews (AVI) as a way to improve the efficiency of their processes (Milne-Tyte, 2011). Using a variety of proprietary software platforms, employers send a web link to applicants. Prospective employees will then record the interview at a time of