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UDK 37.018.4::338.48

DOI 10.5937/turpos0-54268

ULOGA I ZNAČAJ ZNANJA, OBRAZOVANJA I OBUKE U ORGANIZACIJAMA TURISTIČKE PRIVREDE

THE ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF KNOWLEDGE, EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN ORGANIZATIONS OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Apstrakt: Na globalnom tržištu rada, pa i u onom delu koji se odnosi na turističku privredu, dešavaju se krupne i brze promene, koje kao rezultat imaju nastajanje velikog broja novih poslova, kao i značajne promene ili pak nestajanja postojećih. Stoga se nameće neophodnost permanentnog celoživotnog obrazovanja i obučavanja zaposlenih, u cilju unapređivanja postojećih znanja ili pak nužnih prekvalifikacija.

Predmet analize u ovom radu su faktori koji determinišu ulogu i značaj obrazovanja i obuke u organizacijama turističke privrede, ciljevi obrazovanja i obuke u organizacijama turističke privrede, faze, karakteristike i koristi od obrazovanja i obuke, kao i teorije i principi učenja odraslih.

Ključne reči: zaposleni, obrazovanje, obuka, organizacije turističke privrede.

Abstract: In the global labor market, seen in the part that refers to tourism industry, big and fast changes are happening, which result in the creation of a large number of new jobs, as well as significant changes or the disappearance of existing jobs. Therefore, the necessity of permanent lifelong education and training of employees is imposed, in order to improve existing knowledge (upskilling) or necessary reskilling.

The subject of the analysis in this paper are factors which determine role and significance of education and training in organizations of the tourism industry, goals of education and training in organizations of the tourism industry, phases, characteristics and benefits of education and training, as well as adults learning theory and principles.

Keywords: employees, education, training, organizations of the tourism industry.

Introduction

Based on the latest report of the World Economic Forum for the year 2023 on the jobs of the future, several concrete conclusions have been reached. Namely, it is expected that, by 2027, about a quarter (23%) of existing jobs

will change (as work tasks will be divided between people, machines and artificial intelligence algorithms), while at the same time 69 million new jobs will appear, and 83 million jobs will disappear. The estimated existing number of jobs is 673 million, so it can be concluded that the net decrease in the number of jobs will amount to 14 million or 2%.

In addition to completely new occupations that will exist in the future, those that exist today will be transformed in accordance with the needs of the market, so it will be necessary to redesign existing and design new jobs.

All these new jobs will have different requirements and tasks than the previous ones, and will stimulate *the demand for new knowledge and skills.*

Based on the previously mentioned World Economic Forum 2023 report, by 2027 the skills needed to perform most jobs will change significantly. It is expected that by 2027, employees will use 58% of existing skills, and that it will be necessary for them to learn as many as 44% of new skills to perform their current jobs. *Highlighted skills needed include analytical and creative thinking and active lifelong learning, followed by skills such as technology design, highlighting the growing demand for various forms of technology-related competencies. However, knowledge of new technologies is only one part of the required skills for 2027 and beyond.*

Creativity, originality, initiative, critical thinking, persuasion and negotiation skills, motivation and self-awareness, empathy and active listening, quality control, will also retain or increase their value, as will attention to detail, flexibility and complex problem solving and interdisciplinarity.

Emotional and social intelligence or interpersonal skills, leadership and social influence, as well as service orientation, will also be much more needed in future jobs (new or redesigned existing ones) compared to their current importance today.

A large number of new professions will be focused primarily on problems that humanity has not yet been able to solve, and new branches in the field of medicine will be developed, as well as jobs that can contribute to preventing climate change or neutralizing terrorism. However, due to the increasingly rapid development of new technologies, new jobs will appear quickly, but also disappear quickly. In that process, *the key role will be primarily education and training.*

The report points out that both the economy and the state must invest in changes towards future job requirements, through investment in education, various forms of training (in order to improve existing knowledge - upskilling or retraining - reskilling) and social support structures, to ensure that employees remain at the heart of future business. It is stated that before 2027, training will be necessary for six out of 10 workers, but that in 2023, only half of the employees will have access to adequate training opportunities. (The World Economic Forum - Future of Jobs Report 2023: Up to a Quarter of Jobs Expected to Change in Next Five Years <https://weforum.org/press/2023/04/future-of-jobs-report-2023-up-to-a-quarter-of-jobs-expected-to-change-in-next-five-years/> (October 2023)).

It is necessary to point out that the *aforementioned forecasts refer, with certain specificities, to the future requirements of jobs within the tourism industry.* The dynamic development of international *tourism*, which began in 1950, contributed to its becoming a *significant source of employment at the global level.* Data from The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) for the year 2019 (before the COVID-19 virus pandemic) show that the number of employees in tourism was 333 million or about 10% of the total number of employees (which means one employee in the tourism industry per 10 employees).¹ From the beginning of the pandemic to the end of 2020, 62 million people employed in tourism lost their jobs (a drop of 18.6%) and the number of people employed in tourism was 271 million. Employees who lost their

¹ The data refer to full-time employees, but it should be borne in mind that tourism creates a very wide area for employment of "part-time" workers (so-called part-time jobs), i.e. workers whose work in tourism, primarily in hospitality, is an additional source of income, as well as the so-called seasonal workers. It is about direct employment in activities and organizations of the tourism industry that directly make up its complex (heterogeneous) structure (hotels, restaurants, travel agencies and tour operators, cruise companies - cruise lines, airlines, etc.). On the other hand, the indirect impact of the tourism industry on employment is reflected in increasing the number of employees in many other industries and activities for which the tourism market is the so-called "secondary" market for the placement of own products and services (industry, construction, agriculture, etc.)

jobs looked for opportunities in other economic activities, and many of them stayed there, both because of better working conditions and because of the fear of possible new upheavals in the tourism market, caused by economic or non-economic factors. Therefore, a certain lack of qualified and professional labor has appeared, so the tourism industry has to compete with other sectors in order to attract new workers. Expectations are that in 2024, the number of employees in the tourism industry will reach the level of 2019, because the recovery of the tourism industry is noticeable and encouraging. It is also expected that in the next decade, the tourism industry will create 126 million new jobs worldwide, i.e. one in three new jobs, which points to the fact that the tourism sector will be among the leading forces of the global economic recovery. (The World Travel & Tourism Council's (WTTC) latest Economic Impact Report (EIR) reveals the Travel & Tourism sector Travel & Tourism sector expected to create nearly 126 million new jobs within the next decade <https://eu.docs.wps.com/1/sIDXfisiJAdjQ86kG?st=t&v=v2> (October 2023)).

Organizations of the tourism industry, whose business activity is aimed at meeting the needs of tourists as consumers, appear as the bearers of business policy on the tourism market. First of all, those are hospitality companies, travel agencies and tour operators and transport companies (in the part where they provide services to tourists), cruise companies, car rental companies, etc.

Activities of the tourism industry are characterized by the predominant participation of people (*labor-intensive activities*) in the realization of service and production activities, that is, in all essential components of work processes. People are the bearers of the largest part of work operations and factors of cost and overall business results in organizations of the tourism industry. Therefore, human resources management is extremely important for achieving the overall business results of a specific company in tourism.

Although the activities of the tourism industry are still highly labor-intensive, *technology replaces labor in many activities*, and technological changes play a significant role in the structural changes of these activities and branches. Computer technology is extremely efficient and applicable not only for the sale of tourist services (*automation of the so-called front-office jobs*), but also for other business functions or work operations that make up the *so-called back-office system* (purchasing, accounting, marketing, management - e.g., programs aimed at monitoring employee productivity, identifying the most profitable products in the service program, complete communication between the kitchen and restaurants, etc.).

Investments in technology, equipment and process changes are very important, but these inputs do not ensure business growth and competitive advantage without appropriate investment in people. People are the initiators and carriers of all activities. *Education and training, knowledge and skills of employees in tourism organizations are among the key determinants of the quality of tourism services*, so special attention must be paid to them. At the same time, they are the *subject of this paper*.

Concept and definition of knowledge, education and training

A study by Stanford University (USA) points to the conclusion that the total human knowledge created by 1900 doubled by 1950, and since then the total human knowledge has been doubling every 2-3 years to "keep up with the changes". (Pržulj, Ž. 2002: 61).

Knowledge should not be treated as an abstract category, but as knowledge necessary for work (everything that an individual or a group of employees knows or knows how to do - the so-called human knowledge and their knowledge of organizational norms, processes and procedures, means and routines - the so-called structured knowl-

edge). In this regard, the category of *functional knowledge* can be singled out, which refers to the possibility of applying available knowledge when performing work. The basic components of functional knowledge are *theoretical knowledge, practical knowledge and work experience*. (Bogićević, B. 2006: 75).

Many tourism companies today believe that the key to gaining a competitive advantage in the tourism market is the *development of intellectual capital*, which includes cognitive knowledge (knowing what), advanced skills (knowing how), systematic understanding and creativity (knowing why) and individually motivated creativity (understanding the importance). The focus of the training is shifting from the first two elements - acquisition of knowledge and skills - to creating conditions for employees to understand the connections and reasons why something is done and to be motivated for innovative thinking and continuous quality improvement. (Bogićević, B. 2006: 153).

Bearing in mind that knowledge and information have become strategic resources not only for development, but also for the transformation of society, Peter Drucker calls modern society a knowledge society, and points out that continuous education and training of employees will be the area with the fastest growth. The well-known and recognized in theory and practice "Porter's Diamond Model" also integrates constant learning, education and training. In addition, the knowledge management, as well as the application of the idea and concept of the learning organization, are more and more present. (Bogićević, B. 2006: 175).

Constant technological innovations, rapid changes in the tourism market, imperatives of quality and satisfaction of consumers/tourists and other changes, put a new emphasis on learning as one of the basic determinants of successful management of the entire business of an organization in tourism. *Learning* can be defined as the process by which expertise, knowledge and attitudes are acquired and then translated into habit-

ual forms of behavior and performance. A key role in human resources development is played by education and training. *Education* usually means activities aimed at spreading overall knowledge, developing potential and changing values and culture. Education refers to the development of analytical thinking and understanding of conceptual issues for the purpose of professional and intellectual development of a person. It is considered that education is primarily focused on the future, i.e. future job requirements. *Training*, however, is a term that is usually used when referring to an organization's planned effort to improve the performance of employees in their workplace or in a related workplace, with the aim of acquiring specific knowledge, abilities and skills necessary to master specific work tasks and denotes the time dimension of the present. In other words, the training is oriented to the existing requirements of the workplace, i.e. jobs, and is aimed at developing those skills and abilities that should be immediately applied at work, i.e. implies rapid changes in employees' skills, way of working and attitudes, i.e. behavior. However, it is important to emphasize that training also develops working potential, which can be used in future jobs. Therefore, it can be considered a part of education. (Vučković, J. 2013: 64).

Training in tourism has deep roots and was created with the development of tourism. In the beginning, the training was related to the work of intermediaries, especially in the field of ticket sales as well as some other jobs related to hospitality and tourism. Today, the training includes various and numerous business operations in tourism, which is a consequence of the great professional and technological development of the tourism industry and the increase in the demand for high standards of experts. Education in tourism is a recent activity, the beginnings of which are linked to the middle of the 50s of the 20th century, and the largest number of educational courses were created in the 80s and 90s of the 20th century. (Cooper, C. 2004: 756-757).

This instrument of human resources development in the organization of the tourism industry includes various forms of professional development, retraining, additional training, etc. Encouraging mobility implies various measures of physical and intellectual mobility, such as transfers, rotations, promotions, changing the place of work, but also expanding knowledge, acquiring broader qualifications and other measures that ensure that employees move more easily from one workplace to another. Encouraging mobility is directly related to motivational instruments. (Vučković, J. 2013: 65).

Education and training in tourism includes the transfer of knowledge, concepts and techniques specific to tourism, characterized by interdisciplinarity, as well as social, multicultural and communication skills.

The need for high-quality and flexible staff is well understood in many travel companies, such as “Thai Airways International“, hotel “Sandals Dunn’s River, Jamaica“, international hotel chains and many others.

It must be borne in mind that “changes are the only constant in the tourism market”, and precisely, the almost unpredictable pace of further changes in the development and application of modern technology, emphasizes the importance of constantly innovating the employees’ knowledge.

It is necessary to understand the importance of knowledge, creativity and innovation, as key factors that influence the achievement of flexibility, i.e. the possibility of constant adaptation of employees to constant and rapid changes in the internal and external environment, with the aim of achieving organizational and individual success.

Factors that determine the role and significance of education and training in organizations of tourism industry

The factors that determine the role and importance of education and training in tourism companies can be summarized as follows: (Vučković, J. 2013: 104-106).

1. The application of marketing, as a **market-oriented business concept**, requires the constant adaptation of organizations of the tourism industry to new conditions and trends. In other words, a high level of flexibility of the tourist company is necessary, which also means the flexibility of the people who work in it. Through constant education and training, employees master current knowledge and skills, which enables them to **quickly adapt to changes, as well as create (encourage) changes**, and also encourage professional and physical mobility, as well as geographic mobility.

2. In the conditions of increasing **competition on the global market**, a market-oriented tourism company is constantly faced with the problem of costs and the problem of innovation. In solving these problems, knowledge becomes a key factor, which conditions the need for a higher degree of employee ability in order for the organization to survive in tourism. In other words, competitive advantage is created by people with their knowledge and abilities, which are an inexhaustible source of energy and innovation without the possibility of copying. Globalization requires from tourism companies an increased ability and willingness to learn, to cooperate and coordinate, to successfully overcome complexity and uncertainty. Large tourism companies that internationalize their operations try to solve the problems of lack of quality workforce through various education and training programs for employees and by investing significant funds in their permanent professional development, as well as by creating appropriate management, adapted to the specificities of each country.

3. **The increase in the educational and cultural level of tourists** (i.e. qualitative changes on the side of tourism demand) require a different structure, scope and quality of tourism services. By expanding the range of tourists’ demands, pressure is exerted on expanding the knowledge and profile of employees in tourism and finding new solutions and offers of tourism services, i.e. creativity and innovation are emphasized.

4. Implementation of the total quality management system (TQM) in the organization of the tourism industry presupposes constant learning and improvement of employees. *Continuous education and training of all employees and their effective inclusion, i.e. individual responsibility and respect for personality*, stands out as one of the key characteristics of the concept of total quality management in tourism (reduction of hierarchical levels, so-called downsizing, decentralization and participation, which increases the responsibility of each individual and requires his greater independence and a wider range of knowledge and skills, which enable him to connect work processes). Namely, education and training are fundamental for achieving overall quality, because it is the best way to permanently improve employees.

Therefore, organized learning is an integral part of total quality management - because if new techniques and methods are not learned, it is not possible to progress and develop. Also, overall quality management is based on teamwork and only with the necessary knowledge everyone can be creative and efficient, and contribute to increasing work quality and work results of the organization in tourism. The great American hotelier E. Statler (1863-1928), who knew this and used it in his hotels, is known for his motto: "He who gives a little more and a little better service prospers", and that is only the one who is constantly learning and that's why he has developed personnel standards and continuously encouraged staff training and education. Deming W. E. in his program "14 points for quality management" stated in point 6: to introduce training in every workplace, and in point 13: to introduce an intensive program of education and self-improvement.

5. The rapid development of technology (especially information and communication, and lately also the so-called artificial intelligence) conditions rapid obsolescence of knowledge. The increasing application of computer technology (computerized systems that allow organizations in tourism to

profitably manage capacities and facilitate the distribution of tourism products - centralized reservation systems - CRS and global distribution systems - GDS) and the spread of computer networks around the world (especially the Internet, the so-called "network over networks", in the use of which there is a sudden expansion, which threatens to imperil the dominance of global distribution systems as primary intermediaries between sellers of travel-related services and clients) started a "new age" - The Information Age. These processes are particularly significant considering the fact that the heterogeneous structure of tourism consists of information-intensive activities. In that information era, a professional and qualified workforce, involved in programs of permanent professional development, with the aim of constantly innovating existing and acquiring new knowledge, becomes the primary source of value added to the organization, and not just a factor of production that needs to be optimized, minimized or eliminated. It should also be borne in mind that knowledge is one of the factors that drives technological innovation, so there is interdependence in both directions.

Also, the transfer of technology and knowledge is one of the basic elements of both direct investment and contractual arrangements, as a way of growth and development of tourism organizations. It is provided through various education and training programs. In this sense, the example of McDonald's is interesting. In the McDonald's handbook, intended for its franchisees, is said (regarding employee training) that training is one of the top priorities at McDonald's, because the success of the company depends on knowledgeable, well-trained people and uniform information in all restaurants. It is also said that constant attention to the most modern training is in the focus of McDonald's and that McDonald's goal is to have the best trained teams in all restaurants. Such program orientation is also applied in the training of those who, as prospective McDonald's franchisees, will manage their facilities in this large restaurant chain. The

condition for obtaining a McDonald's franchise is program training, lasting one to two years, and an assessment that should "open the door" for entry into this large business system. The training program for owners, future managers of franchised facilities in the McDonald's system, is designed to train them in all aspects of managing a McDonald's restaurant, thus recommend them to the corporation's management as potential franchisees. An organization can become a candidate for a McDonald's franchise only after successfully completing the training.

Technological progress in the activities of the tourism industry will influence the process of providing tourism services to be far more sophisticated and complex, with the need to use equipment of a high technological level and complex operating systems. Therefore, the technical-technological equipment of tourism companies (which includes the automation of so-called front-office jobs, back-office jobs and middle-office jobs) will increasingly reflect on the composition and training of employees to make maximum use of the benefits of modern technology.

6. The growing **gap between school (formal education) and job requirements** leads to the impossibility of providing appropriate skills and knowledge in the labor market. During schooling, a certain amount of knowledge is accumulated in certain areas. The formal school system, by its very nature, must have a certain stability and cycle length. That's why school education today is only the basis for upgrading a series of educational activities during the entire working life, whose goal is to adapt existing knowledge and abilities to new work requirements. Therefore, in modern tourism companies, innovation and expanding the knowledge of employees through flexible forms of education and on-the-job training, which must take into account pragmatic goals in terms of overcoming the knowledge deficit, developing the skills needed to perform certain tasks and solving specific work and business problems, are increasingly prevalent. In conditions where money and time become

very important and limiting factors, tourism company cannot take risks with educational activities that do not serve their needs, that is, which do not achieve concrete goals. The understanding of the role of participants in educational activities is also changing. They are no longer passive recipients of information, but active participants in the process of exchange and creation of new knowledge. Methodical concepts, as well as the contents of education and training in a tourism company, must be adapted to such conditions. In this way, education and training become one of the basic factors of the flexibility of companies in tourism and key levers of human resources development.

Objectives of education and training in tourism organizations

The general goals of education and training in a tourism company are aimed at achieving greater work efficiency and overall flexibility for changes in the market and in the environment, i.e. *adaptation and training of employees for monitoring and applying achievements and knowledge that appear in the field of tourism business.*

The tourism company must continuously undertake actions to encourage and support learning, thereby creating employees who accept the necessity of adopting the habit of *permanent professional education and training and lifelong learning.* Such employees see demands for developing and improving knowledge, skills and abilities as opportunities for advancement, better earnings, greater job security, more respect and appreciation, and not as threats.

Recognizing the fact that *employees are a critical success factor*, especially employees with accumulated knowledge which need to be constantly improved, contributed to a kind of boom in the creation of various employee training programs.

Investing in the human resources development is considered a profitable investment, which pays off many times over in the long term, and therefore more and more

funds are allocated for the education and training of employees.

In addition to the above, it should be mentioned that training today has *other goals* besides preparing employees to successfully perform their jobs. Training for special purposes, e.g. in relation to AIDS and in general the health care of employees (e.g. hotel employees' training in relation to health protection - both their own and that of guests – the so-called Clean and safe tourism, in relation to the pandemic of the virus COVID 19) or diversity, is also needed. As the workforce becomes more diverse, more and more companies are implementing diversity training programs. Diversity training refers to the development of employees' and supervisors' awareness of cultural differences with the aim of achieving more harmonious relations between workers in the company. For example, Adams Mark Hotel & Resorts organized a diversity training seminar attended by approximately 11,000 employees. The combination of lectures, video materials and exercises in which employees exchange roles aimed to build awareness about different races and religions. In addition, there are a number of different training programs aimed at preventing potential problems arising from workforce diversity. These include programs for improving interpersonal skills, understanding/appreciating cultural differences, adapting to corporate culture, reducing stress, instilling ethical principles about work², etc. (Dessler, G. 2007: 161-162, Vučković, J. 2013: 106-107). Beside this, a very actual social topic of the gender equality has been a recent subject of training programs in tourism industry.

Needs for education and training, apart from the need to acquire general and specialized knowledge, technical knowledge (skills), abilities and positive attitudes, ap-

pear at different times during the working life of both individuals and organizations in tourism, hence determining the goals and contents of specific educational activities. For example, training needs are different for new and existing employees, or in organizations where certain changes happened (organizational, managerial, technological, etc.) or certain problems in business that need to be overcome. (Boella, M. Goss-Turner, S. 2005: 339) Therefore, training organization cannot be a routine job.

Phases, characteristics and benefits of education and training

In order to achieve the desired effects of education and training at the level of a tourism company, it is necessary that this process takes place through certain interrelated *phases*, which form the *educational cycle*. The mentioned phases include: (Dessler, G. 2007: 153, Jaszay, C. 2003: 16)

- determination (assessment and analysis) of the needs and goals of education and training;
- planning the implementation of the training:
 - determination of content, programs and training plans;
 - choice of types and methods of training;
 - selection and training of instructors.
- implementation of training;
- evaluation of the success and results of the training.

It is extremely important to ensure a certain degree of *standardization of training*, which enables each new employee to be trained according to an already prepared plan and program and receive the same quality of training as the previous employee who attended it. Designing formal training is a process that requires initial investments of time and money, and requires specific knowledge and skills. Very often, tourism companies employ experts to design training programs for each individual sector or hire

² First of all, these are issues related to drug and alcohol abuse, theft by employees, conflict of interest, bribery and corruption, consumer protection in tourism, inaccurate (false) propaganda, misuse of the tourism organization's property, etc. In short, ethical issues include relationships with consumers/tourists, workers and managers, suppliers and other business partners, financial sources and society.

external consultants.³ The goal is to create a useful model with the help of which the desired results will be reached. It is important to point out the fact that organizing training cannot be a routine job. There are only principles and examples of successful concepts that can serve as an orientation. However, it should be emphasized that any once well-designed training must be regularly updated, in accordance with the changes in the internal and external environment. In other words, the process of *constant improvement of the training programs itself* is of great importance. (Vučković, J. 2013: 116).

The necessary knowledge, skills, abilities and appropriate behavior must be the basic catalyst of educational activities in the organization in the field of tourism. Education must be “tailored”, because everything else is a waste of time and money. In order for some concept of education and training to be “tailor-made” for a specific organization in tourism, it must be created in response to the request of a specific organization to solve the problem of employee qualification. At the same time, it is important that the education organizer has appropriate pedagogical, didactic and methodical knowledge. In addition to conventional concepts of education, the organizer must know new trends, so that he can give optimal advice in a specific situation. (Pržulj, Ž. 2002: 210).

However, it should be borne in mind that there are no “ready-made solutions” and that the experiences of successful tourism companies from developed countries cannot be copied. They should serve as inspiration for finding own models, but at the same time as a basis for quick and efficient design and implementation of concrete solutions.

The majority of *successful training programs* in tourism organizations have the following *characteristics*: (Goetch, D., Davis,

³ In that case, the active participation of the tourist company itself (the “customer” of the educational program) and joint work with the organizer in all phases, from the diagnosis of educational needs and goals, the development of the entire concept, to the evaluation and control of the effects of education and training are necessary. The organizer assumes the role of initiator and advisor, who, bringing in his professional pedagogical knowledge, systematizes and structures the entire process.

S. 2005: 405, Vučković, J. 2013: 104)

- top management is very committed to the permanent development of employees, so training is part of the corporate culture; Education and training for employees means change. As every environment is resistant to changes, including changes in knowledge, employees usually provide the so-called “soft” resistance to these changes. Fear of the unknown, uncertainty and fear of failure are the biggest obstacles to training. Training of employees is often a consequence of the necessity imposed by the changes. Only management aware of the importance of permanent training can decisively implement the program of introducing new knowledge into the organization of the tourism industry. Still, employees become more aware of the role and importance of knowledge for the tourism company and for themselves.

- training is directly related to business goals and strategies;

- training programs are comprehensive, systematic, permanent and follow changes in the internal and external environment;

- there is a commitment to invest necessary time and money in training.

The absence of these characteristics is why some training programs experience failure.

Jobs (sector or department) of training can be organized in different ways, depending on the organizational structure of the tourism company itself, as well as the importance it attaches to the education and training of employees.

The benefits that an organization in tourism has *from the education and training* of employees determine the importance of this instrument, and can be summarized as follows: (Bogićević, B. 2006: 152)

- impact on improvement of employees’ attitudes, their job satisfaction, productivity and work quality;

- impact on improvement of the overall perception of the tourism company by consumers/tourists (because they influence the quality of tourism products and services);

- impact on increase of profits, by reduc-

ing the fluctuation of employees and accompanying costs;

- lead to innovation of existing and acquisition of new knowledge, and hence, quick adaptation to changes and strengthening of the organization's competitive position in tourism, etc.

Employees must see in education their chance for advancement, better earnings, greater job security, more respect and appreciation, whereas the organization in tourism must see a chance for greater work efficiency and overall flexibility for changes in the market and in the environment.

In order to achieve the aforementioned benefits, tourism organizations must invest both time and money in the education and training of their employees.

The change in attitudes towards education and training of employees is highlighted by the fact that the human factor is the main resource that contributes to the growth and development of organizations in tourism. However, despite this, there are still *prejudices about training*, which are expressed in different ways: training is expensive; training is for young professionals; it is not worth training those who will leave the company; training is not worth it - we tried and failed; knowledge development should focus primarily on technical matters and the like.

Therefore, although the role of workers is essential for the efficient operation of organizations, in many organizations of the tourism industry they are considered a necessary evil and an additional cost. That is why millions of dollars are spent on equipment, decorating rooms, lawns and gardens, marble floors, etc., and not on training and improving staff. The stated claims do not have adequate argumentation. A worker is not a cost, but a useful person whose efficiency increases through education and training.

In other words, investment in technology, equipment and process changes are very important, but these inputs do not ensure business growth and competitive advantage without appropriate investment in people. People are the initiators and carriers of all

activities. The organization of the tourism industry must continuously undertake actions to encourage and support learning, thereby creating employees who accept the necessity of adopting the habit of permanent professional education and training and life-long learning. Such employees see demands for skill development as opportunities rather than threats.

Theories and principles of adult learning

Effective training programs in tourism are created as a result of the interweaving of two technologies: teaching technology and tourism company business technology.

To master teaching technology, knowledge of learning theories and techniques, motivational theories and techniques, as well as successful communication techniques is necessary. There are a large number of learning theories that have implications for understanding the learning process, motivation for learning, as well as the organization of education and training of employees in tourism organizations. These include: theories of needs, theory of operant conditioning, theories of social learning, theory of goals, theories of expectations, theories of information processing, theory of adult learning. (Vučković, J. 2013: 122)

Without going into the analysis of all the mentioned theories, this paper will mention the *adults learning theory*, which developed as a result of the need to approach the learning process of adults in a different way compared to the learning of children. The creator of the theory of adult learning, and one of the most important names in the development of andragogy, Malcom Knowles, highlighted five basic assumptions on which this theory is based: (Bogićević, B. 2006: 160-161)

1. Adults want to know why they are learning something;
2. Adults have a desire to learn independently;
3. Adults bring more work experience to learning;

4. Adult learning is problem-oriented;
5. Adults are motivated to learn both internally and externally.

This theory is important for designing training programs, because the training participants are exclusively adults. The theory suggests that when designing a training program it is necessary to consult the participants about the content of the training program, find out as much as possible about their previous experiences and include them through examples in the training program, develop programs that are adapted to the interests and competencies of the participants and focus on a specific problem in the learning process.

In order to design effective training programs, one should know the following *learning principles*: (Vučković, J. 2013: 122)

- Training can be successful if it is understood that learning is a voluntary choice of the individual, that the individual has a desire to learn something and is motivated in the right way.

- People acquire knowledge at different speeds, especially when it comes to adults. They are not at the same level of knowledge, experience, ability, learning capacity and have different motives and attitudes.

- Learning is negatively affected by feelings of nervousness, fear, inferiority and lack of self-confidence.

- Attendees prefer an informal atmosphere where they are treated as professionals and not as students.

- The training should be conducted in several shorter stages (it is better to conduct ten classes lasting 45 minutes each, than one class that would last seven hours).

- Participants must actively participate in the training. During the lectures, the participants are passive, while through discussions, real and “tangible” examples and practical work they become active.

- Training must include different methods and all senses. Adults learn best when material is presented to them in multiple ways. When they hear, see, and then do something, they are more likely to remember it. The re-

sults of one of the studies indicate the fact that a person remembers as follows: 10% of what he reads; 20% of what he hears; 30% of what he sees; 50% of what he sees and hears; 80% of what he says and sees (what he talks about/participates in the discussion and what he sees); 90% of what he says and does, simultaneously. These indicators are important for the selection of adequate training methods, which can achieve the most favorable effects, and it is exactly the knowledge that is used by large international hotel and restaurant organizations.

- Clear goals should be set for the participants, and their progress should be checked frequently.

- Self-confidence is built through praise.

- The acquisition of knowledge and skills includes several stages: development, stagnation and decline, after which development follows again. Instructors must be aware of the existence of this phenomenon, because it can cause disappointment and frustration in many students.⁴

Conclusion

Tourism is such an activity in which the employees are the ones who make the difference, who “mark” the tourism service and differentiate it from the competition, that is, they create comparative advantages and are the only resource that cannot be copied.

Knowledge is the factor that makes the difference between successful and unsuccessful, whether it is about countries, companies or employees within a company. Therefore, modern organizations of the tourism industry allocate more and more funds

⁴ The general idea of the learning curve is that there is a tendency for an individual to learn faster at the beginning of new tasks, so that the learning curve moves straight up, and then gradually moves into a stagnation phase, after a certain amount of experience is gained. Ideally, each individual’s learning should follow an upward trajectory, gradually increasing all the time. In reality, however, learning is usually a combination of progress and regression. Although abilities gradually increase with persistence, in a shorter period one can experience their decline. Such declines are demoralizing, but they are an indispensable part of learning. Realizing that sometimes things have to get worse before they get better helps to get through the lows. (Torrington, D. 2004: 426.)

for the education and training of employees, with the belief that it is a well-invested investment, which gives great results in terms of efficiency and effectiveness of business, and significantly contributes to achieving a competitive advantage in the tourism market.

For today's tourism companies, the only way to survive is an imperative: to learn faster than the competition! This requires a new qualification profile, new knowledge and abilities and new relationships between the tourism organization and employees.

By itself, education and training cannot produce the desired effects, but only as part of a system, in which all elements, phases, functions and instruments of human resources management are coordinated.

Constant technological innovations, rapid changes in the tourism market, imperatives of quality and satisfaction of consumers/tourists and other changes, place a new emphasis on learning as one of the basic determinants of successful management of the entire business of tourism organizations.

The need to introduce the concept and practice of permanent professional education and training of employees (from the completion of some degree of formal education to the end of the working life) arises from major technological, economic and social changes in the modern world and economy, and the rapid obsolescence of acquired knowledge, which should be continuously updated. Therefore, it is necessary to use stimulating measures to encourage the acquisition of learning habits throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and abilities, which is especially important for personnel in tourism.

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