

Challenges of Training Personnel for the Tourism Industry in Russia's Far East

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Abstract. The real state of the tourist business in Russia has shown that as virtual reality technologies develop, they have become an important factor for clients, but travel agencies are not able to incorporate them due to the lack of workers with the necessary competencies. In this regard there is a need to research the issues in training bachelors, students that will solve the lack of personnel and improve the quality of training young specialists in the tourism industry in the near future. In this article we discuss the results of a long-term complex study of issues related to training students in the tourism departments of higher education institutions. Data are presented from the surveys concerning the priorities among professional competencies of students, graduates and the needs of employers in the tourist industry for the purpose of looking for the most effective programs of training.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of new technologies is forcing the managers of tourist enterprises to adapt to international requirements and state level regulations. The level of knowledge and skills of the bachelor of tourism must meet the high requirements of the modern employer, which is the purpose of training. Tourism is a dynamic industry, where the trend of reducing the number of intermediaries between the consumer and the desired service is very pronounced. With the development of virtual reality technologies, the expansion of these technologies, such as excursions, games and reconstruction of historical events with the inclusion of augmented reality, is becoming an important factor in attracting and retaining customers. The most significant aspect will be offering a unique experience that allows the tourist to experience certain emotions (ecotourism, gastrotourism, etc.).

2. Topicality of the issue

According to the Atlas of Emerging Jobs project, presented by the Agency for Strategic Initiatives in conjunction with the Moscow School of Management SKOLKOVO, instead of the disappearing professions of tour guides and travel agents, by 2020 professions such as designer of augmented reality of territories, brand manager of spaces and director of individual tours will appear [1]. Accordingly, job seekers should have developed skills in customer service, multilingualism and multiculturalism, sociability and stress resilience, programming and graphic design, as well as skills in project management and artistic creation.

The relevance of a research is caused by need to improve the educational process of training specialists for the tourism industry, bringing it in line with the modern requirements of employers, the

development trends of the tourism industry, the needs of graduates and students, the specifics of organizing tourism activities in the Far Eastern Federal District of the Russian Federation.

Training for the tourism industry in the Far East of Russia becomes a reflection object in connection with activation of tourism development in the Russian Federation over the past two decades. The first research works appeared in the late 1990s mainly in the field of a social and economic thought. The process of formation of personnel potential for the tourism sector was studied by S.V. Barabanov, M.A. Vinokurova, V.I. Kruzhalin, V.Yu. Morozov, etc.

3. Problem statement

Since 2009, Far Eastern State Transport University's Department of International Communications, Service and Tourism has been monitoring the views of applicants, students, graduates and the needs of tourism industry employers in order to identify problems in the training process for the tourism industry in the Far East of Russia, to point out most effective training programs 43.03.01 "Service" and 43.03.02 "Tourism" in order to create concept of the educational program and its components adapted to the needs of graduates and the realities of the modern world.

The results of showed that a specialist in the tourism sector must know how to meet the needs of a potential tourist and make the tour comfortable and interesting for the consumer. All respondents agree that specialists succeed when they have a strong set of professional skills, i.e. are universal [2].

4. Results of experimental studies

The next stage of this study in 2018 involved interviewing representatives of Khabarovsk's tourism sector in the form of a round table and a completion of questionnaires. The round table included—the manager of Patch LLC, the director of Brava LLC, the president of the non-profit partnership Khabarovsk Association of Hoteliers, the manager of Verba LLC, the manager of the "GoldenTime" hotel and entertainment complex, the executive director of Arena Sports Club, the CEO of Valentur Travel Company, the CEO of Luk LLC, the director of the Far Eastern Center for Active Recreation and Travel, the chairman of the board of the Far Eastern regional branch of the Russian Travel Industry Union, and the director of Portal of Seasons LLC.

The results of this survey of industry representatives indicate that the most important professional competencies in the tourism sector are the ability to organize a customer service area, the study of scientific and technical information, domestic and foreign experience planning the production and economic activities of the enterprise, as well as the ability to calculate and analyze the costs of the enterprise and use market-monitoring methods.

During the interview, employers were asked to discuss the following issues: "problems arising in the recruitment process," "requirements for potential employees (knowledge, skills, and experience)," "training and retraining problems", and "offers and recommendations for improving training in the service and tourism sectors."

As a result of the analysis of the responses of the tourism industry representatives, it was noted that the applicants for the position - graduates majoring in tourism - lack knowledge in the field of geography and local studies, legislation, workflow and office management, accounting, ethics and etiquette, psychology and conflict management, time management, graphic and web design, basic and applied software, and foreign languages. Business leaders also pointed to the lack of practical experience among university graduates, reluctance to start professional activities from the lower levels of the career ladder and inflated salary expectations.

The next stage of monitoring involved a survey of graduates of the Department of International Communications, Service and Tourism. The study involved 52 respondents, which was 81% of total graduates. The survey found that 55% of those surveyed have a professional position related to their education, but when asked about if the knowledge, skills and experience needed for their position gained during their studies were adequate, 27% of respondents said "no" and 33% found it difficult to answer. This indicator shows the incomplete competencies provided by the curriculum.

The results of the questionnaire suggest that the priority among the professional competencies received at the university are the ability to manage others, make decisions in the organization, conduct research on the social and psychological characteristics of the consumer, as well as the ability to organize a customer service area, all of which should be formed during the educational program 43.03.02 "Tourism."

As a result of the analysis of respondents' responses, it was found that the most necessary disciplines for study at the university are foreign languages, programming and graphic design, economics and finance, time management, and the basics of legislation.

These disciplines correlate with those called out by representatives of the tourism industry. The most explicit focus of employers and graduates on subjects such as foreign language, time management, graphic and web design, the basics of legislation, which demonstrates the need to increase the educational focus on these areas.

The next component of monitoring the opinions of applicants, students, graduates and the needs of employers of the tourism industry in order to find effective training programs in 43.03.02 "Tourism" is a survey of students of Far Eastern State Transport University's International Communications, Service and Tourism Department from 1st to 4th year full-time students. The study involved 47 respondents - students in the program 43.03.02 "Tourism," which was 83% of the total. According to the responses of participants, 21% firmly believe in the correctness of their choice to pursue this profession, whereas 38% generally approve of their chosen profession.

Leading the way in the expectations of students from the future profession (table 1) is the representation "This is a profession that allows you to establish various useful connections" - 91% of respondents noted these positions as very important. 80% of respondents expect that "This is a profession that allows a person to develop, to realize their own potential," 78% - "This is a profession that involves communicating with different people and helping them solve their problems."

In relatively equal proportions, respondents rated the statement: "This profession is creative, not related to routine" - for 42% this figure is of the highest importance, 44% consider it important, but not very; "This is a profession that benefits both society as a whole and the individual" - for 58% the criterion is important, but not very, and for 55% - important; "This is a profession in which I will be able to manage my own time, work independently, and not have to follow the schedule of a business or a boss" - for 45% the criterion is important, and for 47% - important, but not very.

Only 29% of respondents believe that "This is a profession in which I am not responsible for the life, health, material and other well-being of others" is important and "This is a profession that not everyone can master, it requires a person with special abilities" is less important, noting these criteria as the least priority (45% and 51%).

For most of the respondents, the indicator "This is a profession that will command the respect of my friends and loved ones" is not important (56%) and only 13% of respondents identified this as the main criterion.

The study of respondents' expectations for future careers revealed that upon completion students expect to be competent professionals with the possibility of obtaining a wide range of "useful connections."

As a result of the analysis of students' answers, it was found that the most important and desirable subjects for study at the university are disciplines related to the study of foreign languages, culture of speech and intercultural communication, time-management, and psychology. The least important subjects to them are economics and finance, programming and graphic design, and culture and traditions of the peoples of the world. In considering the common responses of the student and graduate surveys, it can be concluded that the most popular disciplines are foreign languages, programming and graphic design, the basics of legislation, and economics and finance.

Pointing out the weakest points in the organization of the learning process, students noted "insufficient hours for the most significant subjects" (34%) and a "lack of practicality" (40%), which indicates the need to increase the hours in the education curriculum in the most sought-after disciplines, as well as the introduction of internships into the curriculum.

The results of the survey revealed that the most important among the professional competencies obtained at the university are the ability to manage others, make decisions in the organization (36%), the ability to calculate and analyze company costs (16%), and the ability to use market monitoring methods (13%).

Looking at the common priorities of graduates and representatives of the tourism industry, it can be concluded that the top priority of the educational program should be organizational and management skills and secondarily research.

Table 1. Criteria for assessing respondents' expectations for future professional activities

Criteria for assessing expectations	<i>3 points</i>	<i>2 points</i>	<i>1 point</i>
This is a profession in demand by society, it is easy to find a job	62%	55%	11%
This is a profession that benefits both society as a whole and the individual	55%	56%	15%
This is a profession in which work is highly paid	38%	47%	20%
This is a profession that allows a person to develop, to realize their own potential	80%	35%	13%
This is a profession that involves communicating with different people and helping them solve their problems	78%	31%	18%
This is a profession that allows you to establish various useful connections	91%	24%	11%
This is a profession in which you can achieve a high position and make an excellent career	60%	51%	15%
This is a profession that will allow me to reveal my abilities (talent) and personality	53%	45%	27%
This is a profession that will command the respect of my friends and loved ones	13%	55%	56%
This profession is creative, not related to routine	42%	44%	31%
This is a profession in which it is possible to apply various new technologies	35%	60%	29%
This is a profession in which you don't have to sit in the office – you have an opportunity to visit different places, cities, and countries	69%	38%	18%
This is a profession in which I will be able to manage my own time, work independently, and not have to follow the schedule of a business or a boss.	45%	47%	33%
This is a profession in which I am not responsible for the life, health, material and other well-being of others	29%	45%	49%
This is a profession that not everyone can master, it requires a person with special abilities	29%	45%	51%

5. Conclusion

Thus, the results of the study suggest that the prognosis presented in the Atlas of Professions project corresponds to the realities of the modern world reflected in the demands of employers, the opinions of graduates and the needs of students. In order for the curriculum to meet the current requirements and prospects for the development of the industry, it is necessary to raise the number of hours in the program for disciplines that will increase the knowledge of foreign languages, programming, graphic and web design, economics and finance, time management, geography, communication skills, and knowledge of the cultural features of the peoples of Russia and the world [3], as well as to strengthen practical training, offering students the option of additional specialties during their education. This will make Far Eastern State Transport University's graduates of 43.03.02 "Tourism" the most competitive.

Despite the measures taken in the Khabarovsk region to develop the educational system in the tourism sector, the gap between the needs of the tourism industry and the supply from educational institutions remains very significant. There is a focus on academics in higher education that has led to a clear lack of training in practical skills and knowledge. Training is carried out without sufficient consideration of the content of tourism and recreational resources and opportunities, technology and its use for the reception of tourists, and techniques for targeted promotion of regional tourism products.

References

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