

EVALUATION OF THE NECESSITY OF A COLLEGE LEVEL HOSPITALITY
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM IN SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

By

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ABSTRACT

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Evaluation of the Necessity of a College Level Hospitality Program in Southwest Florida
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The hospitality industry as a whole-including tourism, foodservice, lodging, and related businesses-is one of the world’s largest industries, and is expected to grow even larger despite the loss of tourism revenues in the latter months of 2001 and throughout 2002. As Hospitality and Tourism education programs grow indicates a decided reflection of the growth of the industry. The areas of Lee and Collier Counties in Southwest Florida are growing at a tremendous rate not only in tourism but in permanent residences as well. Hotels, restaurants and attractions are being developed at a staggering rate yet, a college level hospitality program to prepare professionals for positions within the industry remains small with enrollment growing at a slow but steady pace.

This study reviewed the viability of a successful Hospitality Management, college-level program in Southwest Florida. Based on a literature review and relevant findings from the study, there is a need for a hospitality program in the region.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Florida is considered by many to be the hospitality capital of the United States and possibly the world. Prior to the September 11, 2001 attack industry statistics boast:

- Fort-Myers-Cape Coral continue to grow at the rate of 8,000 new residents each year. (Economic Development Office, 2001)
- Hotel room inventory increased by thirty-two percent between 1990-1999. (VCB, 2000)
- People employed in the hospitality and tourism industry rose by thirty-four percent between 1990 and 1999. (VCB, 2000).
- Approximately 33,000 jobs are connected to the hospitality industry in Lee County alone. (Rosa Mae Peron, VCB Personal Communication, 2001)

Despite the loss of tourism revenues in the latter months of 2001 the industry is expected to rebound and become larger than ever. With these favorable statistics, the question should be, why is there not a viable hospitality program available in the Southwest Florida region?

Fort Myers, Florida, a city with population of over 100,000 along the gulf coast, has within its boundaries five, two-year or four-year colleges and universities, yet only one two-year business college has a Hospitality Management Program. This program has less than twenty students with hospitality as a major course of study. Local businesses and newspaper reporters are not even aware of the local program as indicated by a news article. Alison Gerber (2002) states Southwest Florida has an abundance of resorts, hotels and golf courses. But the area has a short supply of people qualified to run the resorts that draw

thousands of tourists every year. Gerber continued in the article that Southwest Florida is the only region of the state without a hospitality management program.(2002) Within the boundaries of Lee County are thirteen growing cities that include Fort Myers and Cape Coral, and tourist areas of Fort Myers Beach, Sanibel and Captiva Islands, and Pine Island. Of the seventeen cities within Collier Country one will find the wealthy tourist areas of Naples, Marco Island, and the Isle of Capri. These two counties are host to over three-hundred hotels, restaurants, and attractions and recreational facilities in the commercial hospitality industry and over fifty non-commercial areas such as schools, college and universities, long-term care and adult and juvenile correctional facilities. Are there enough hospitality oriented businesses and prospective students working within those establishments to support a viable hospitality management college curriculum?

The Situation

Once a sleepy area of retired “snow birds”, the gulf coast in the past ten years has seen the tourism industry prosper. Lee and Collier Counties contain popular and wealthy cities such as Ft. Myers, Cape Coral, Sanibel Island, Naples, and Marco Island. Southwest Florida Regional Airport has begun construction on its new terminal, enlarging the facilities from nineteen gates to sixty-nine gates in order to service the expected growth in the area. Hilton Hotels and The Ritz Carlton (Naples now has two Ritz hotels) are only two of the hotels that have opened in the past year within Lee and Collier County. Land has recently been purchased in northern Cape Coral and plans are being drawn for construction of a Six-Flag Theme Park. The Lee Island Coast Visitor and Convention Bureau received over \$10 billion alone in tax received from hotel bed revenues. Competent hospitality

personnel, including management staff, will be needed to operate these establishments successfully.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study is to determine the viability of a successful Hospitality Management, college-level program in Southwest Florida. This program will encourage the enrollment of domestic as well as international students who are currently working in the hospitality field at local tourism related businesses and encourage local businesses to support the education of their employees and the hospitality program itself.

Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

1. Evaluate the need for a Hospitality Management program in Southwest Florida.
2. To model the local hospitality and tourism industry support for a well designed comprehensive educational program for the hospitality industry.
3. To model if financial support programs are offered by the local hospitality industry to employees and if they would encourage employees to seek advanced education.

Benefits of the Study

Benefits of the study include:

1. Increased enrollment of students who are currently working in the hospitality field at local tourism related businesses.
2. Encouraged local businesses to support the education of their employees and the hospitality program itself.

3. Current hospitality employees receive an academic and applied background of the industry to use toward career advancement.

Definition of Terms

Commercial Foods – relating to food establishments that prepare food for consumption by the populace.

Cooperative learning – engaged in a joint activity for a common end or purpose.

Culinary Arts – pertaining to a kitchen or cookery.

Curriculum – the sum of the learning activities and experiences that a student has under the direction of the school.

Domain – a group of job related titles.

Duty – a major segment of work comprising related tasks.

Entry level employee – a person who is entering the job market for the first time.

Food and beverage service – a component of the hospitality industry that provides food and beverage in a commercial or non-commercial setting.

Functional – capable of performing.

Hospitality and Tourism Network – group of separate and competitive closely interrelated industries

Lodging service – a component of the hospitality industry that provides accommodations to travelers.

Marketing – a continuous, sequential process through which management plans, researches, implements, controls, and evaluates activities designed to satisfy both customers' needs and wants and their own organization's objectives.

Non-commercial foods – providing food for consumption but, not for profit, such as hospital or school food service.

Occupational – an activity that serves as one’s regular source of livelihood, profession or vocation.

Recreation/attraction services – a component of the hospitality industry that provides entertainment, recreation and sports

Transportation services – a component of the hospitality industry comprised of airline ground, and maritime industries.

Travel and Tourism services – a component of the hospitality industry that involves the movement of visitors to and from their destination.

Summary

The hospitality industry in Southwest Florida is consistently strong and growing larger. The demand for competent management personnel will continue to increase. This research paper provided data to determine the need to support a current college level, hospitality management program and the skills entry-level management should possess, encourage current employees within the industry to advance their education and build a Relationship between the hospitality program and local area businesses.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

Introduction

The review of literature as it relates to the hospitality industry and the need for qualified personnel consists of computer searches of resources from research journals, professional journals of the industry, dissertation abstracts, periodicals, personal interviews and relevant newspaper articles.

Literature Review

The hospitality industry as a whole-including tourism, foodservice, lodging, and related businesses-is one of the world's largest industries, and is expected to grow even larger. (Chon and Sparrowe 2000) The growth of Hospitality and Tourism education programs are a reflection of the growth of the industry (Riegel 1999). In 1999, there were approximately one-hundred seventy hospitality programs in existence (Riegel 1999), yet, the hospitality program in Southwest Florida remains small with enrollment growing at a slow but steady pace.

The demand within the hospitality industry for managers whose background includes formal education is growing, and will continue to increase as national, multinational, and global corporations increasingly take over ownership within the industry (Kotler, Bowen, and Makens 1996; Riegel 1999). Hospitality is a booming industry offering many potential career opportunities for trained professionals. (Chon and Sparrowe 2000). Opportunities for hospitality professionals abound in specialized areas such as recreation management, foodservice, casinos, and lodging.

Teresa Beckta, Career Services Coordinator with Southwest Florida College, is well acquainted with local businesses and career opportunities. In a recent conversation, Ms. Beckta related to this author about inquiries from local hotels that are interested in a relationship with the college as cooperative learning sites and also about job opportunities currently available with their organizations. (Personal conversation March 8, 2002.) On March 10, 2002, in the local Fort Myers newspaper alone, classified ads for over sixty hospitality related job opportunities appeared. (The News-Press Classified, 2002)

Management positions listed include Recreation Specialist, hotel management team, long term care Admissions Director, Distribution Coordinator for produce company, Hotel Housekeeping Inspector, Hotel Sales Manager, Hotel Executive Housekeeper, and Front Desk Manager to name a few. Alis Jordan of the Lee Visitor and Convention Bureau reported occupancy rates were off just nine point four percent in September in Lee County. Bookings are picking up....and early 2002 are on par with last year. Jordan attributes part of the boost to Lee County's ongoing aggressive multi-faceted marketing program. September's impact hit much harder in Collier County, where tourism is the No.1 business. (The Bottom Line, 2001)

The area in Collier County known as Classic Florida, an area known for its natural resources and affluent lifestyle is home to a number of hotels and restaurants. The Classic Florida region continues to offer new and expanded opportunities for visitors with significant new hotel openings and numerous property expansions and renovations. (Hotel-online.com) Numerous lodging properties, from a seventeen bed, bed and breakfast to the Marco Island Marriott Resort and Golf Club with a \$43 million renovation are seeing new facilities or renovations to the figure of over 1,122 plus rooms.

Hospitality is a service business. It is critical that employees in hospitality, especially management personnel, become educated specifically in hospitality areas of study so that they may successfully lead employees to be the best that they can be.

Currently, the school district of Lee and Collier Counties provide a high school level culinary arts curriculum. The two vocational schools in Lee County and one vocational school in Collier County offer a two-year culinary arts program to current high school students. Some of these students are low achievers in their home high school and are given the alternative of attending the vocational school. Adult students are also encouraged to enroll in these programs as career changes or for general interest. The course content follows the competencies set forth by the State of Florida Department of Education. The enrollment has generally been under twenty students for each of the culinary programs and has one instructor and an assistant for each of the vocational programs. Evening programs have been discontinued due to low enrollment. Several years ago his author interned as a graduate student in education at one of the vocational schools in the culinary arts program and has first hand knowledge of the complications that arise when including young students who are not very interested in the program with adults who are seeking a career change and are extremely interested in culinary arts. Serious students would benefit from a more structured post-secondary school curriculum.

Also in Lee County are two high schools involved in the National Restaurant Association's Pro Start culinary program. The two-year program is supported by the NRA and state education funds. However, at this writing there is discussion within the school district to eliminate the programs due to cost control measures.

Summary

Through research and development and literature reviews the researcher has found that many opportunities are available for graduates of a hospitality management program. It has been estimated that by the year 2005 there will be one million more foodservice jobs alone than there will be trained people to fill them. (The Culinary Institute of America 1991). This industry growth has expanded opportunities and increased diversification in many areas of the industry yet, lack qualified personal to fill these positions.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of the study is to determine the viability of a successful Hospitality Management program in Southwest Florida. This program will seek the enrollment of domestic as well as international students who are currently working in the hospitality field at local tourism related businesses. Also, the newly proposed program would encourage local businesses to support the education of their employees and help to co-develop this hospitality program itself.

Population and Samples

This study focuses on the educational background requirements of entry-level management personnel particularly within organizations located in Southwest Florida's Lee and Collier Counties and whether a local two-year college would be necessary to supply this personnel. A participation rate of the identified population was sixty-two percent, a total of sixty-two responses received out of one-hundred surveys sent to local hospitality and tourism operators.

The population involved in this study included one-hundred lodging, commercial/non-commercial foods, food management/wholesale foods companies, attractions/recreation, and transportation operations. The survey was directed to the owner, director, manager, or human resource personnel responsible for hiring of employees.

The survey population was distributed in the following manner:

- Eighteen commercial food establishments to include full-service, fast food and country clubs.
- Fifteen non-commercial food establishments to include health-care and school food service.
- Eleven food management or wholesale vendor companies.
- Thirty-seven lodging establishments to include full-service hotels, motels and bed and breakfast operations.
- Eight attraction, entertainment or recreation operations.
- Four travel agencies
- One travel-transportation operation

Instrumentation

An explanatory letter (Appendix A), a questionnaire (Appendix B), and a self-addressed stamped envelop was mailed via United States Postal Services to the one-hundred hospitality operations previously mentioned. The name of every third establishment was selected randomly from published directories and sources available from the local Chambers of Commerce. Respondents consisted of the person responsible for hiring entry-level management personnel in hospitality establishments. Theses establishments are components of the hospitality and tourism network: food service, lodging, attractions, travel and tourism, and transportation in Southwest Florida's Lee and Collier Counties. The aim of the survey is to determine the need of a hospitality management program and whether local establishments would support such a program through referrals and co-op education.

The respondents evaluated the survey questions using the Likert Scale to rate the answer. The scale consisted of five choices of answer: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. The data was tabulated using simple percentages and presented in charts and graphs for each question of the survey and in actual responses received for questions twelve and thirteen, which concern entry-level management positions available and college courses, respectively. The data was broken down by hospitality network component. These classifications will assist in determining whether a specific curriculum would be more beneficial over another. The results of this research assisted in expansion of a hospitality management program at a two-year career college in Southwest Florida. The results benefit both the curriculum developer and the student through knowledge of requirements of education and training needs of students. By examining the areas found to be required by employers, it may be determined what skills to focus on in further development of this curriculum.

Statistical Treatment of the Data

The data was tabulated using simple percentages and presented in charts and graphs for each question of the survey. (Appendix C)

The data was broken down by hospitality network classification. (food service lodging, travel/ tourism, attractions/recreation, transportation). These classifications have assisted in determining whether specific skills or education requirements are necessary for different hospitality operations.

Summary

In summary, the research instrument determined skills and education hospitality

operations find important relative to hiring employees in entry-level management positions.

The conclusions drawn from this study aided the researcher in determining the need for a hospitality management program in Southwest Florida. By examining the areas found to be required by employers, it may be determined what skills and courses to focus on in development and expansion of a hospitality and culinary arts program.

Chapter Four

Analysis of Results

Introduction

The hospitality industry as a whole-including tourism, foodservice, lodging, and related businesses-is one of the world's largest industries, and is expected to grow even larger despite the loss of tourism revenues in the latter months of 2001. As Hospitality and Tourism education programs grow indicates a decided reflection of the growth of the industry. The areas of Lee and Collier Counties in Southwest Florida are growing at a tremendous rate not only in tourism but in permanent residences as well. Hotels, restaurants and attractions are being developed at a staggering rate yet, the area is lacking knowledgeable personnel to fill positions.

In reviewing the data from this study the researcher is able to determine the skills and courses in which to focus in expansion of a Hospitality Management college program in Southwest Florida. Based on a literature review and relevant findings from the study, this program may encourage the enrollment of domestic as well as international students who are currently working in the hospitality field at local tourism related businesses and encourage local businesses to support the education of their employees and the hospitality program itself.

The population involved in the study included one-hundred owners, managers, directors, and human resource personnel in the areas of food service, lodging, travel and tourism, attractions and recreations and the travel industry in Lee and Collier counties of Southwest Florida. The population was selected, at random, from published directories.

During the week of June 1, 2002, a questionnaire (Appendix B) consisting of seventeen questions relating to academic requirements and job opportunities was distributed by United States Postal Services to those selected to participate in the survey.

The survey was directed to the person responsible for hiring of personnel.

Also included in the mailing was an explanatory letter (Appendix A) explaining the reason for and acceptance as a participant in the study. Of the one-hundred surveys distributed sixty-two usable surveys were returned. One from a lodging operation was returned with incomplete data and two from lodging operations were returned from the mail carriers as undeliverable.

Table 4.1

Type of Establishment	Survey Responses	Percent Responding
LODGING		
Full service hotel	15	24
Condo-resort	7	11
Resort	9	15
FOOD SERVICE		
Restaurant	10	16
Banquet Service	1	2
Clubs	4	6
Healthcare	5	8
Schools	2	3
ATTRACTIONS		
Sports Arena	1	2
Convention Center	1	2
Entertainment	2	3
TRAVEL/TOURISM		
Travel Agents	4	6
Tourism and Convention Bureau	1	2
TRANSPORTATION	0	0
TOTAL	62	100

Table 4.1 illustrates the population included in the study. The table shows the type of establishment surveyed and the number of responses received from each area. A total of sixty-two responses were received out of one-hundred distributed.

Table 4.2

	Type of Ownership	Position Held	Number of Employees
	Chain		
	Partnership		
	Sole Proprietor		
	Corporation		
	Government Owned		
	No Response		
	Owner	11	
	Director	12	
	VP Operations	2	
	Manager	17	
	Assistant Manager	3	
	Supervisor	8	
	HR Director	4	
	No Response	5	
			5
			21
			13
			19
			4

Table 4.2 illustrates the type of ownership of the hospitality establishment, the position of the respondent, and the number of employees at the operation. A total of sixty-two responses were received.

Statement #1: A 4-year degree is necessary for entry-level management positions in the hospitality industry.

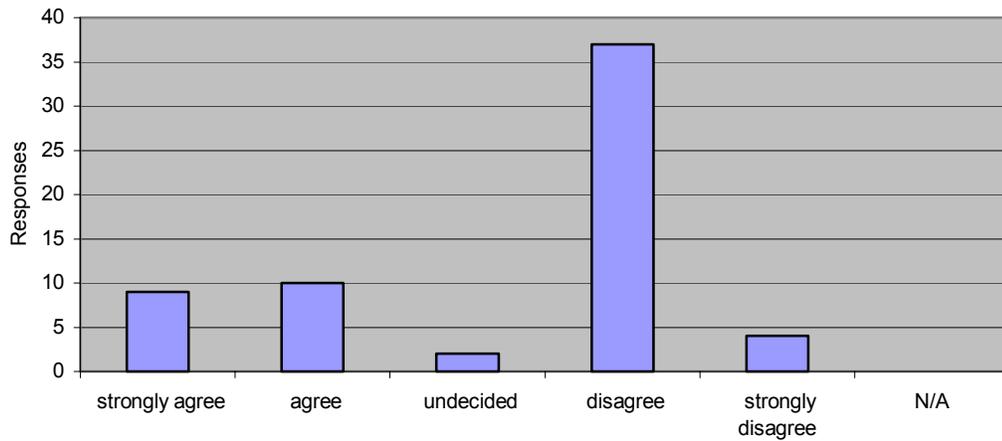


Exhibit 4.1 illustrates the findings for statement #1. Thirty-seven of the respondents, sixty percent, disagreed with the statement that a four-year degree was necessary for an entry-level management position. Only fifteen percent (nine respondents) strongly agreed and sixteen percent, (ten respondents) agreed with this statement. Six percent (four respondents) strongly disagreed while three percent (two respondents) were undecided.

Statement #2: A 2-year degree is necessary for entry-level management positions in the hospitality industry.

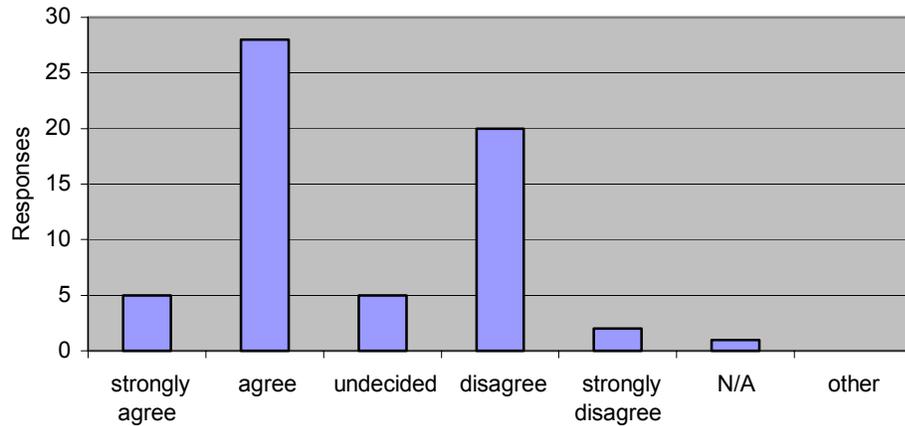


Exhibit 4.2 provides data indicating the response to statement #2. Forty-six percent (twenty-eight) of the respondents indicate agreement that a two-year degree is necessary for entry-level management positions. Thirty-three percent (twenty) of the respondents indicate disagreement with the statement while an equal number, eight percent (five), either strongly agreed or were undecided. Three percent (two) of the survey responses indicated strong disagreement while two percent (one) did not answer the survey question.

Statement #3: A local Hospitality Management Associates Degree program would benefit the Southwest Florida hospitality industry.

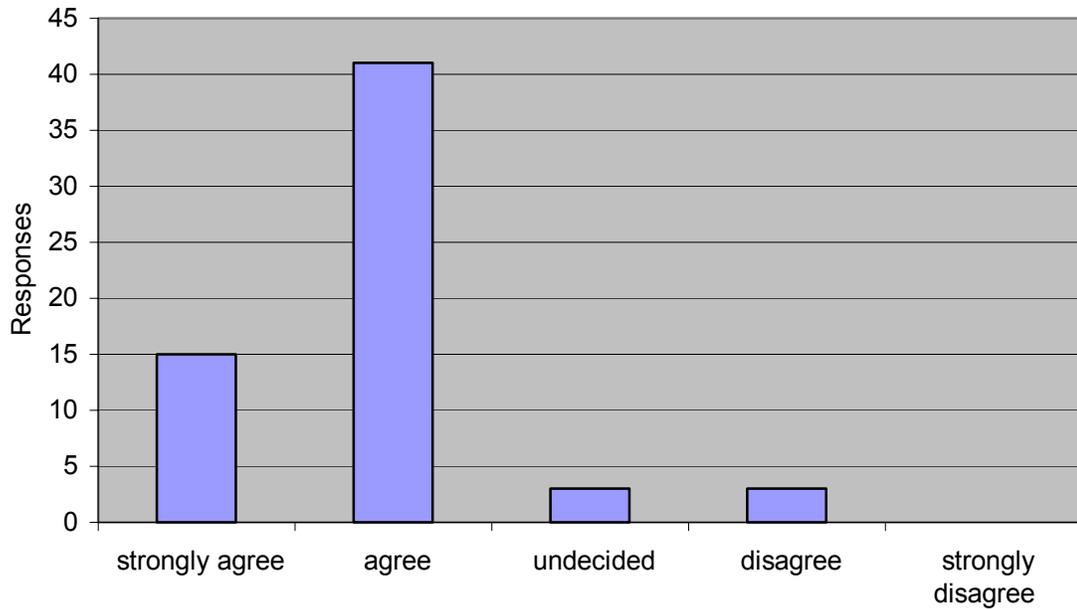


Exhibit 4.3 illustrates the responses for statement #3. Two-thirds (forty-one) of the responses agree that a local hospitality management program would be beneficial to area hospitality operations. Fifteen of the responses, or twenty-four percent strongly agreed with this statement, while an equal number of five percent (three) each disagreed or were undecided.

Statement #4: A graduate of this type of education would benefit your company today or in the future.

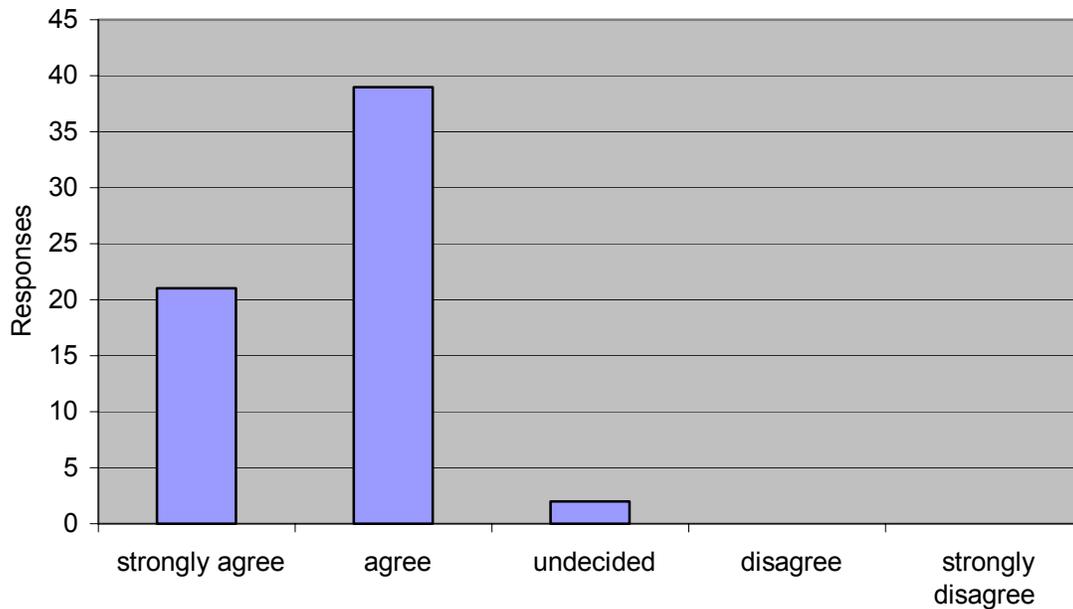


Exhibit 4.4 illustrates the responses to whether a graduate of a hospitality management program would benefit the respondents company. Sixty-three percent, thirty-nine of those responding agreed with the statement. Thirty-four percent (twenty-one responses) strongly agreed and three percent (two responses) were undecided. No respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

Statement #5: Your company currently requires prospective entry level management employees to have an associates degree.

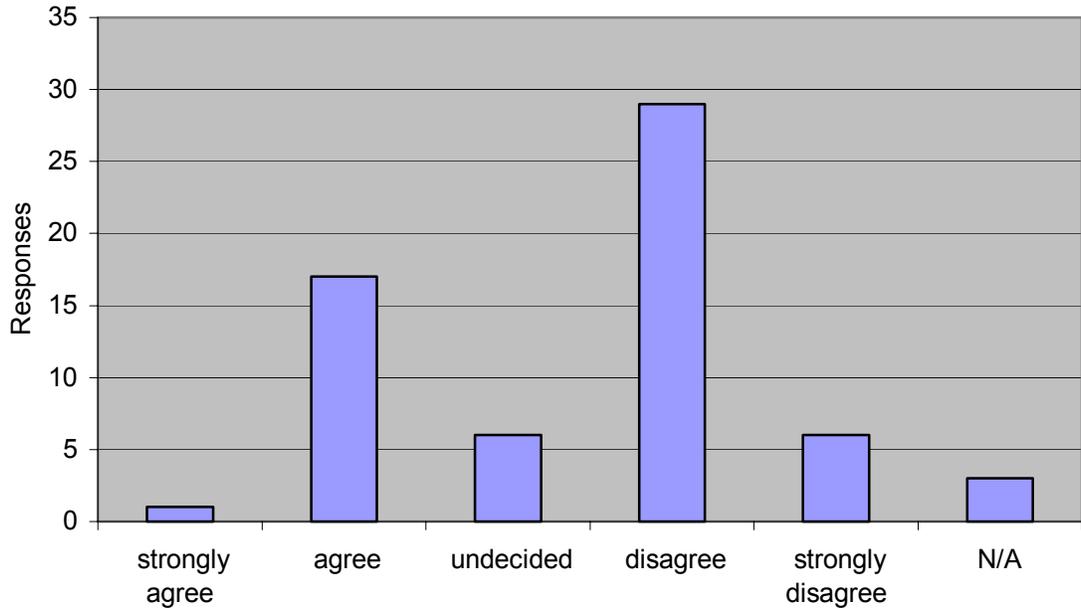


Exhibit 4.5 depicts how the survey respondents rated the importance of an associate degree for entry-level management positions. Almost half of those who responded, forty-six percent, (twenty-nine) disagreed with the statement while twenty-seven percent or seventeen respondents agree with the statement. An equal number of ten percent, six responses, either strongly disagreed or were undecided. Two percent, one response, strongly agreed that an associate degree is important and three of the surveys or five percent did not answer the question.

Statement #6: Your company currently requires prospective entry-level management employees to have a bachelor degree.

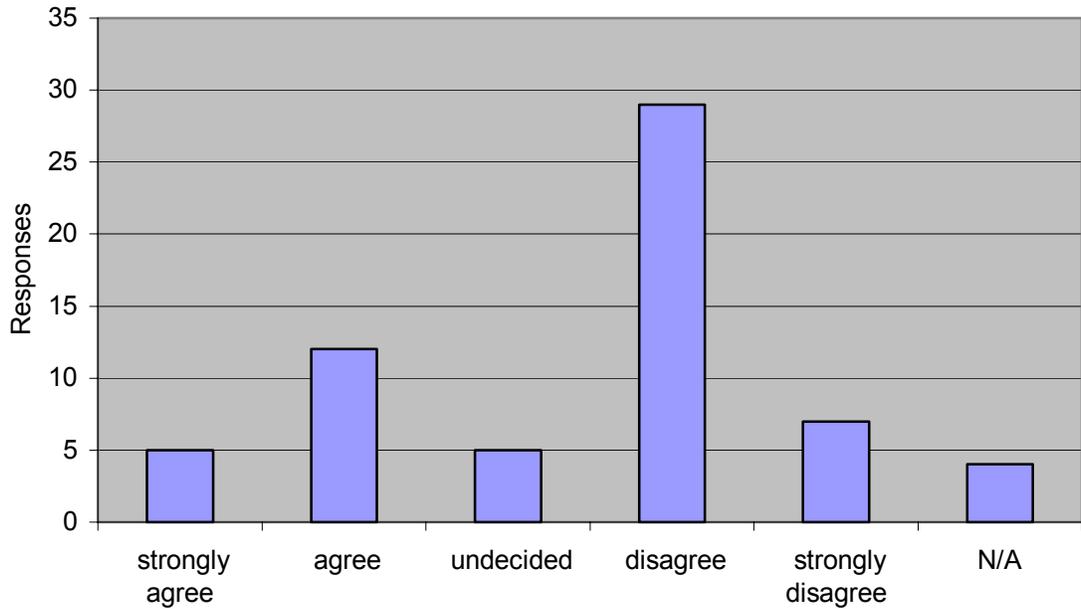


Exhibit 4.6 depicts the importance of a bachelor degree for entry-level management employees. Twenty-nine respondents, or forty-six percent disagreed with the statement and twenty-seven percent, or twelve responses indicated agreement with the statement. Ten percent (five responses) either strongly disagreed or were undecided, 4 participants or five percent did not respond to the statement and two percent, seven responses, strongly agreeing.

Statement #7: Your company encourages current employees to further their education

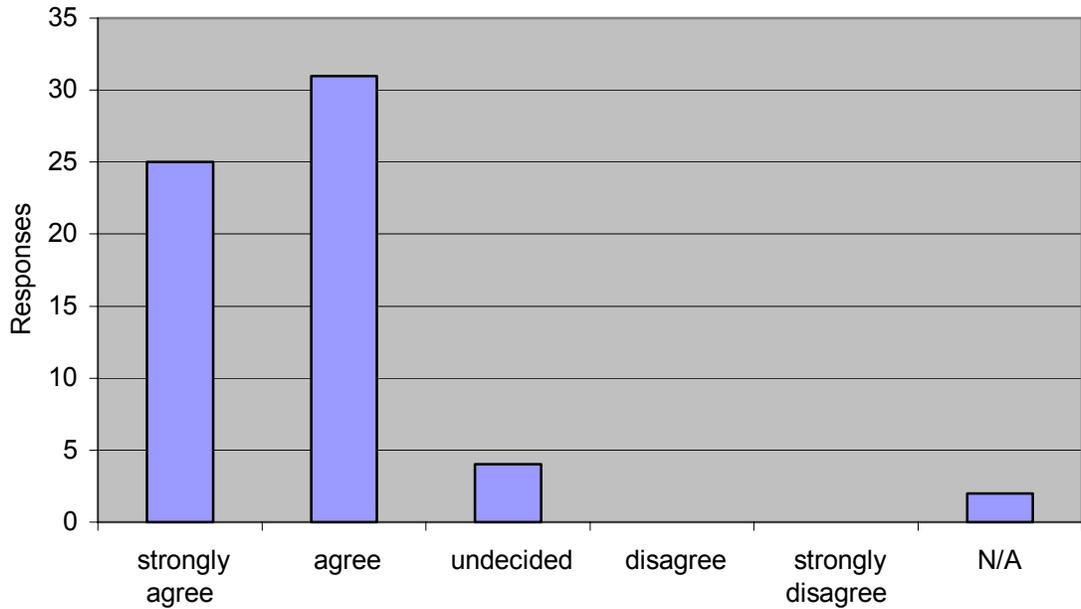


Exhibit 4.7 shows that the majority of responses believe that their company encourages employees to further their education. Fifty-one percent, thirty-one responses, agreed and forty percent, twenty-five responses, strongly agreeing with the statement. Six percent, or four responses were undecided, three percent, two responses, did not respond to the statement and no one disagreed with the statement.

Statement #8: Your company offers tuition reimbursement and/or scholarships as an employee benefit.

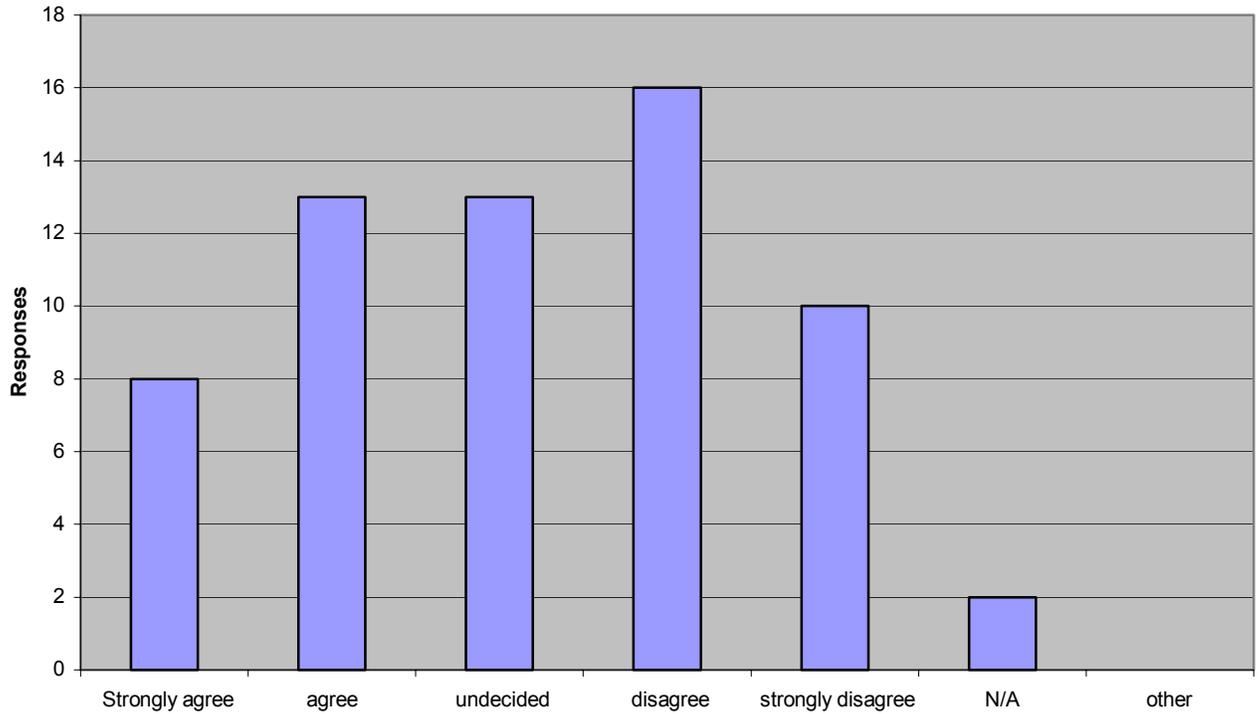


Exhibit 4.8 shows the ratings of tuition or scholarships as an employee benefit. Almost an equal amount strongly agreed, (eight responses) thirteen percent, and agreed, (thirteen responses) twenty-one percent, as did disagreed, twenty-six percent (16 responses) and strongly disagreed sixteen percent or ten responses. Twenty-one percent (thirteen responses) were undecided and three percent (two responses) did not respond to the statement.

Statement #9: Your company perceives the value of education to be important for advancement in the hospitality industry.

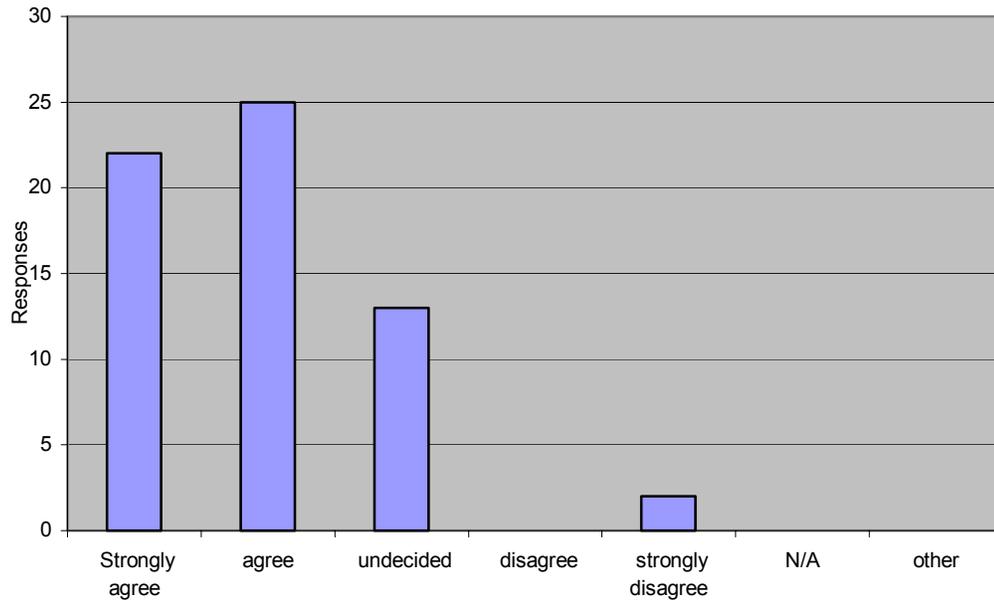


Exhibit 4.9 indicates the importance of an education in order to advance in the hospitality industry. Thirty-five percent (twenty-two responses) strongly agree and forty-one percent or twenty-five responses, agreed with the statement. Thirteen of the respondents, twenty-one percent, were undecided while three percent, or two respondents, strongly disagreed. No responses disagreed with the statement.

Statement #10: Education in human resource skills is important for employees in the hospitality field.

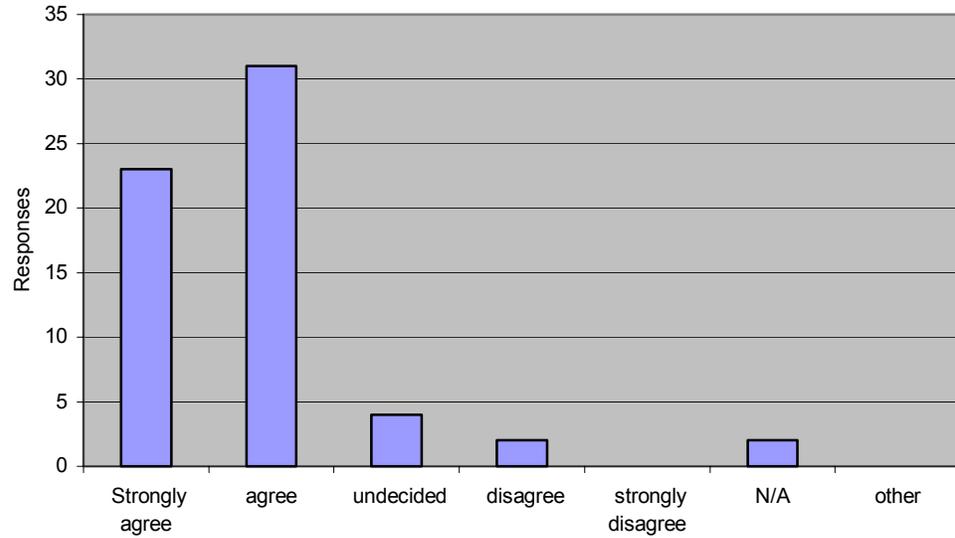


Exhibit 4.10 illustrates the data regarding the importance of human resource skills. Eighty-eight percent, thirty-seven percent agreeing and fifty-one percent strongly agreeing, that human resource skills are important. An equal number of three percent either disagreed or did not respond while four responses, six percent, were undecided. No responses strongly disagreed with the statement.

Statement #11: The hospitality industry in Southwest Florida will grow by twenty-five percent in the next five years.

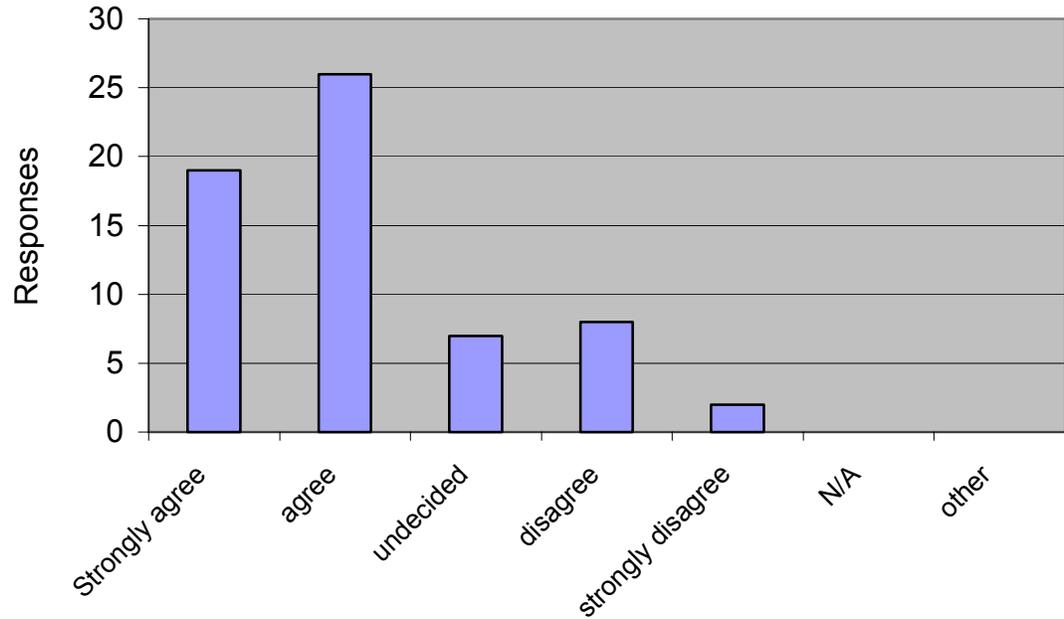
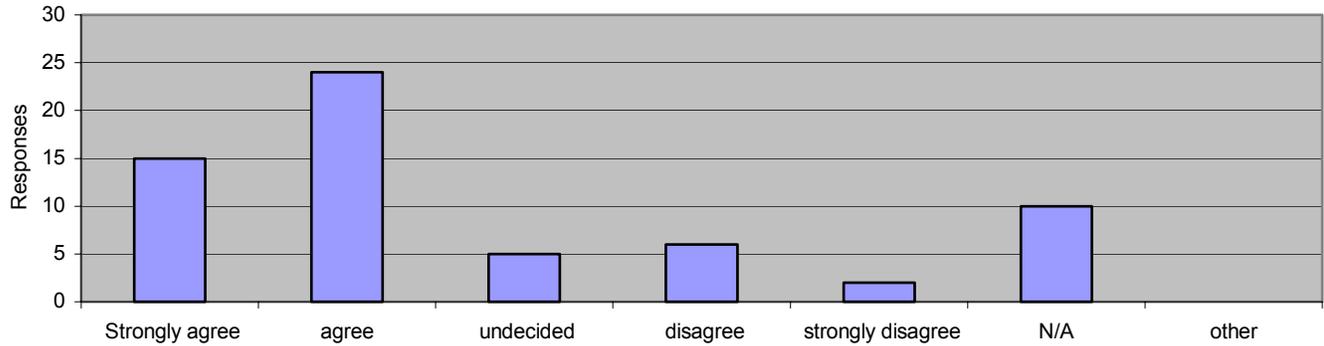


Exhibit 4.11 illustrates the perceived growth of the hospitality industry in Southwest Florida in the next five years. A total of seventy-three percent, thirty-four percent (nineteen responses) strongly agreeing and forty-two percent (twenty-six responses) agree, expect the industry to grow while thirteen percent (eight responses) disagree and only three percent (two responses) strongly disagreeing about the industries growth. Eleven percent, seven respondents, were undecided.

Statement #12: The following entry-level positions would be available to graduates of a two year program.



Position 12a: Accounting Clerk

Exhibit 4.12a: presents the survey results of the availability of an accounting clerk position. Fifteen respondents strongly agreed, twenty-four agreed, six disagreed and two strongly disagreed about the availability of the position. Five responses were undecided and ten did not respond to the statement

Position 12b: Food and Beverage Manager

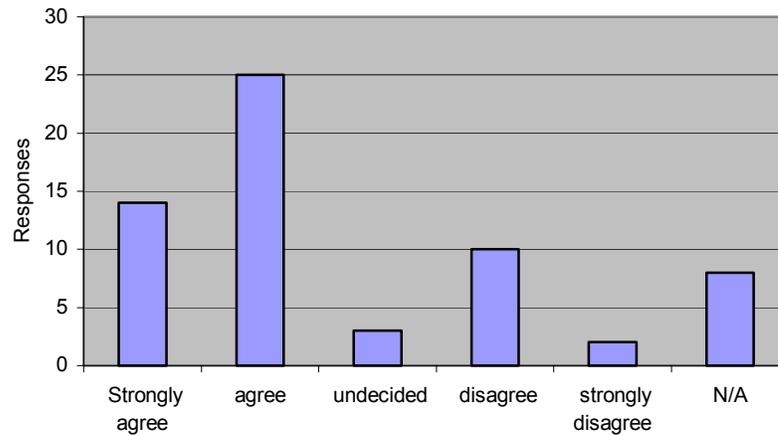


Exhibit 4.12b shows the respondents rating on the availability of Food and Beverage Manager positions. Fourteen responses strongly agreed and twenty-five responses agree while ten responses disagreed and two responses strongly disagreed. Of the responses received three were undecided and eight did not respond to the statement.

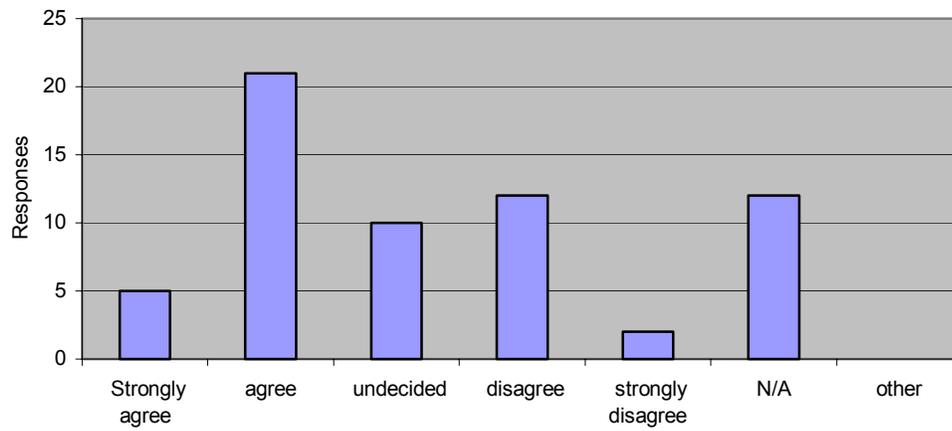
Position 12c: Food Service Director

Exhibit 4.12c depicts the position availability of Food Service Director. Twenty-one responses agree that this position would be available while only five strongly agreed. Twelve of the responses disagreed with only two responses strongly disagreeing. The survey data also indicates that ten responses are undecided and twelve did not respond to the statement.

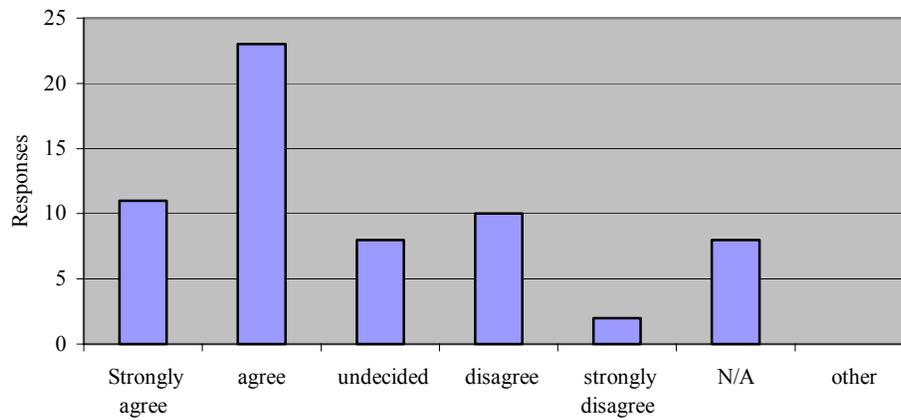
Position 12d: Front Desk Manager

Exhibit 4.12d indicates how the responses rated for the Front Desk Manager position. Eleven strongly agreed and twenty-three agreed there is availability for this position. Ten disagreed and two strongly disagreed while eight responded as undecided and eight also not responding to the statement.

Position 12e: Guests Services Manager

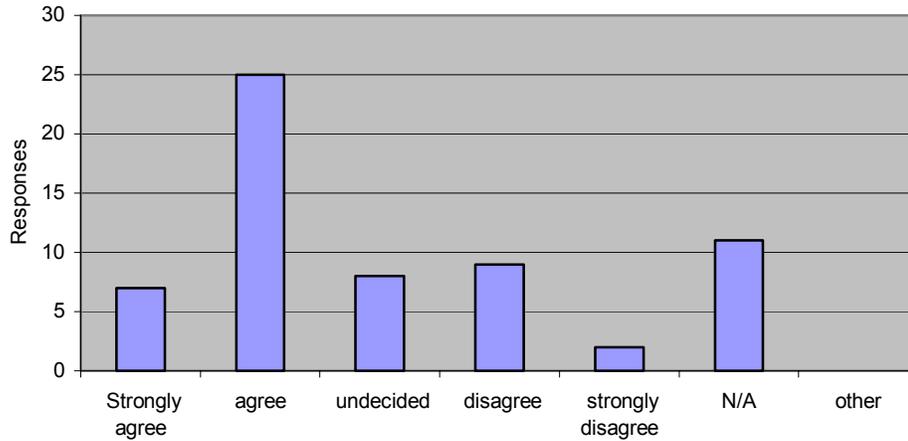


Exhibit 4.12e illustrates the availability of Guest Service Manager positions. Twenty-five responses indicate agreement while only seven strongly agreed. Nine responses disagreed with two strongly disagreeing. Eleven respondents did not respond to the statement and eight indicated indecision.

Position 12f: Reservations Agent

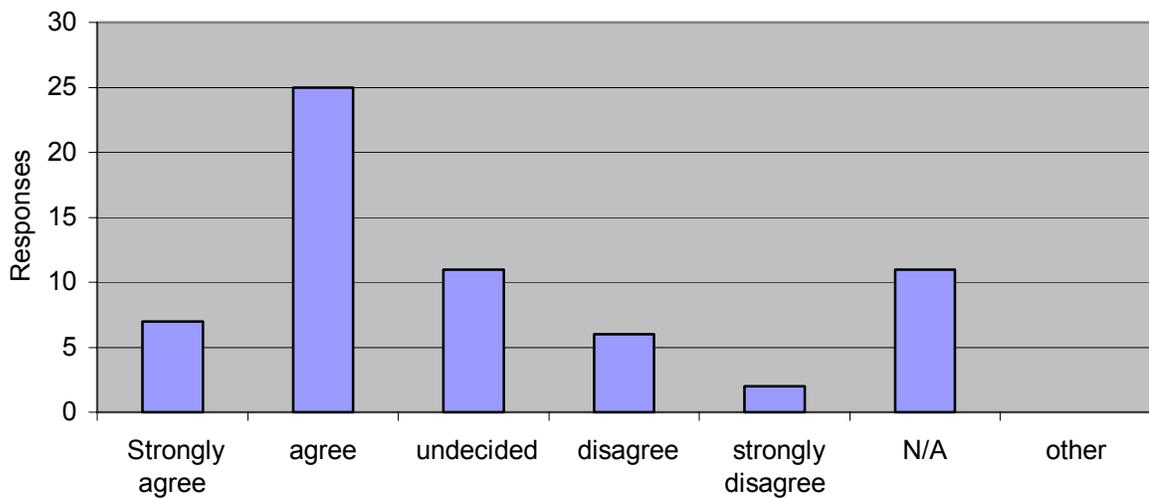


Exhibit 4.12f indicates the availability of a Reservation Agent position. Twenty-five responses indicate availability of this position with seven strongly agreeing to the statement. Six responses disagreed with two strongly disagreeing to the statement. Eleven responses indicated they were undecided with also eleven not responding to the statement.

Position 12g: Sales and Marketing Manager

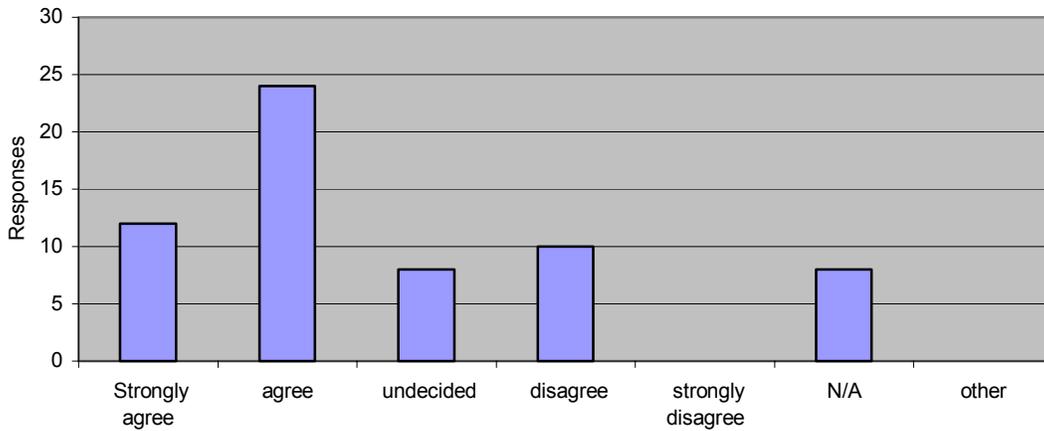


Exhibit 4.12g indicates slightly over one-third of the respondents believe this position would be available; twelve responded strongly agreeing and twenty-four agreeing. Ten responded with disagreement and eight undecided. Eight also did not respond to the statement and no responses showed strong disagreement.

Position 12h: Meeting Planner

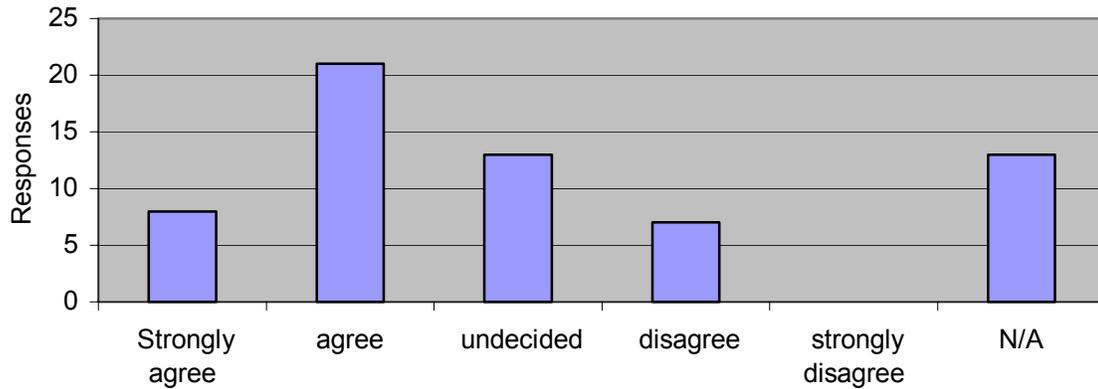


Exhibit 4.12h indicates eight strongly agreeing and twenty-one respondents agreeing that Meeting Planner position to be available. Seven of those responding disagreed with the statement. An equal number of thirteen were undecided or did not respond to the statement.

Position 12i: Housekeeping Manager

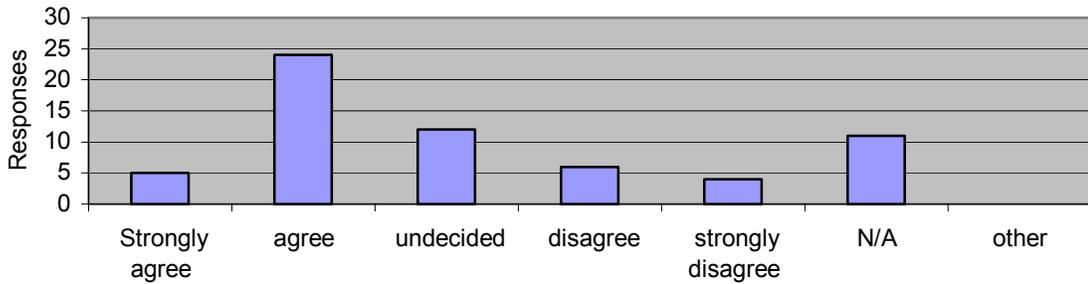


Exhibit 4.12i shows the rating of the availability of Housekeeping Manager positions. Only five responding indicated a strong agreement to the statement while twenty-four agreed. Six responses indicate disagreement and four showing strong disagreement. Twelve of the respondents were undecided and eleven did not respond to the statement.

Position 12j: Training Manager

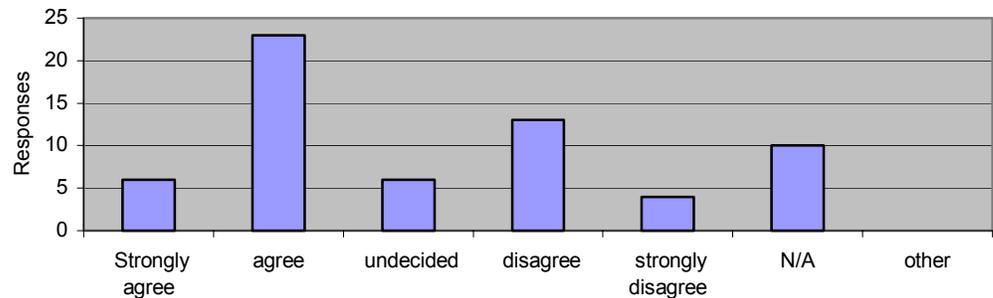


Exhibit 4.12j indicates the responses to the availability of Training Manager positions. Six strongly agreed and twenty-three agreeing about the availability of this position. Thirteen respondents disagreed and four strongly disagreed about the availability of this position. Six of the survey respondents were undecided and ten did not respond to the question.

Position 12k: Tour Guide

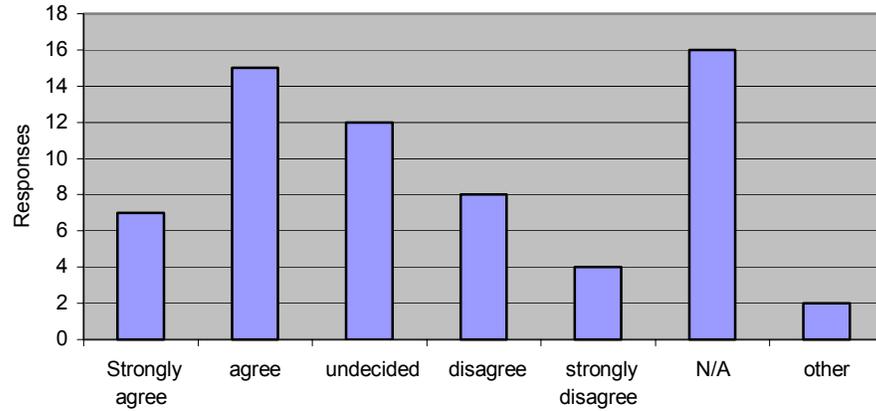


Exhibit 4.12k illustrates the survey responses to the availability of Tour Guide position. Fifteen respondents agreed with seven responses strongly agreeing. Eight responses indicate disagreement with four strongly disagreeing. Eight responses were undecided and sixteen not responding or non-applicable.

Position 12l: (other)

One response indicated a Box Office Manager position would be available and one response indicated a school-based manager position would be available as entry-level management positions.

Statement #13: Knowledge of the following course room subjects would benefit the hospitality student.

Subject 13a: English Communication

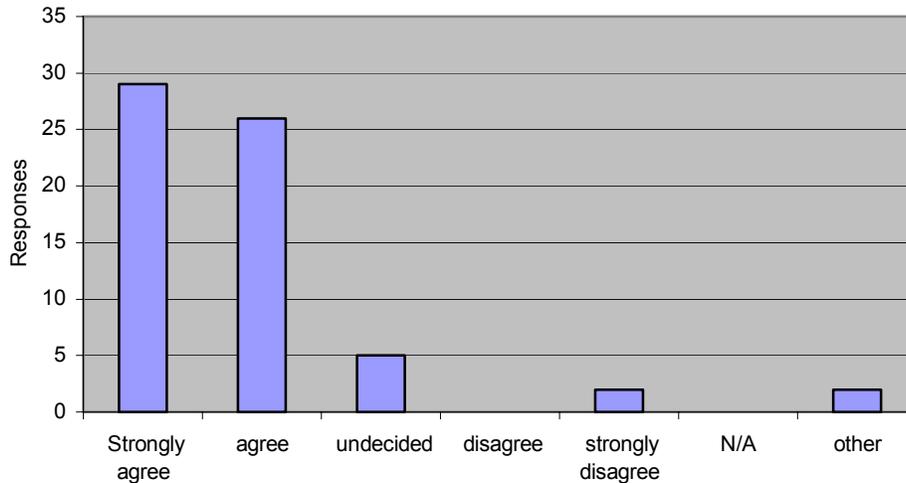


Exhibit 4.13a indicates the importance of English Communication to the hospitality student. Twenty respondents strongly agree and twenty-six agree that being able to speak, read and write in English is important. Five respondents were undecided and two strongly disagree about the importance of this subject.

Subject 13b: Accounting

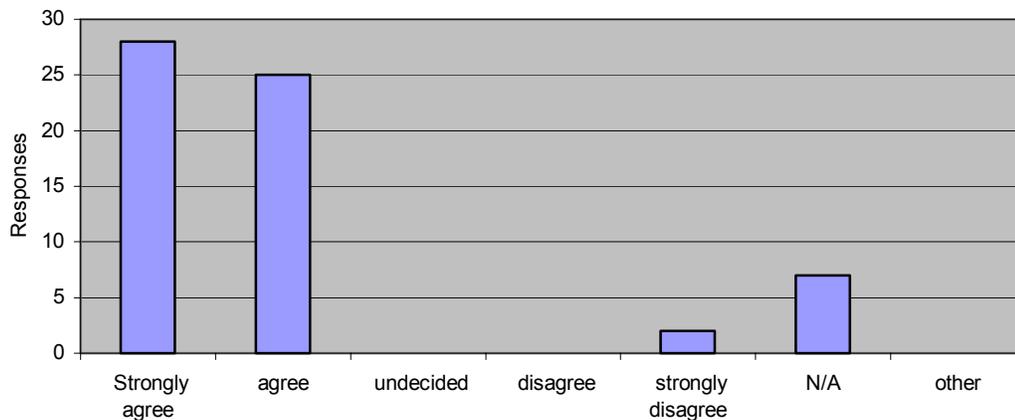


Exhibit 4.13b illustrates the importance of Accounting as a course room subject for the hospitality student. Over fifty percent indicated this subject as important. Twenty-eight respondents strongly agreed and twenty-five agree to its importance. Two responses strongly disagreed and seven did not respond or felt in not applicable to their operation.

Subject 13c: Fundamentals of Math

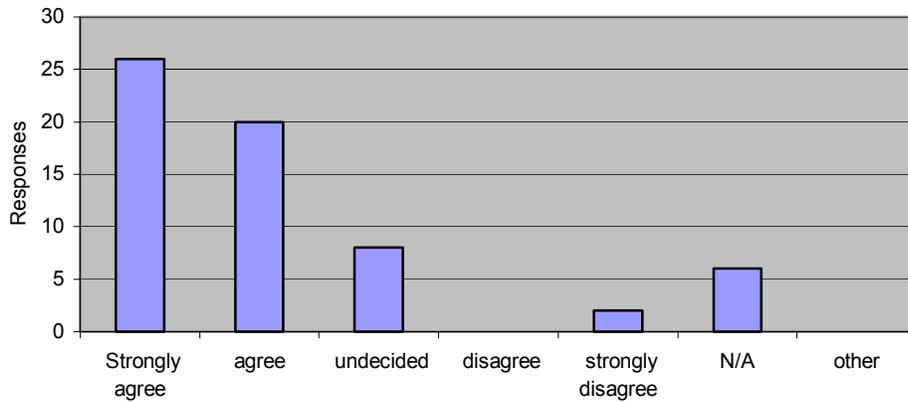


Exhibit 4.13c depicts the importance of math to the hospitality student. Twenty-six responses strongly agree and twenty agreeing to the importance of this subject. Two responses strongly disagree with eight responding as undecided. Six did not respond to the statement.

Subject 13d: Hotel Operations

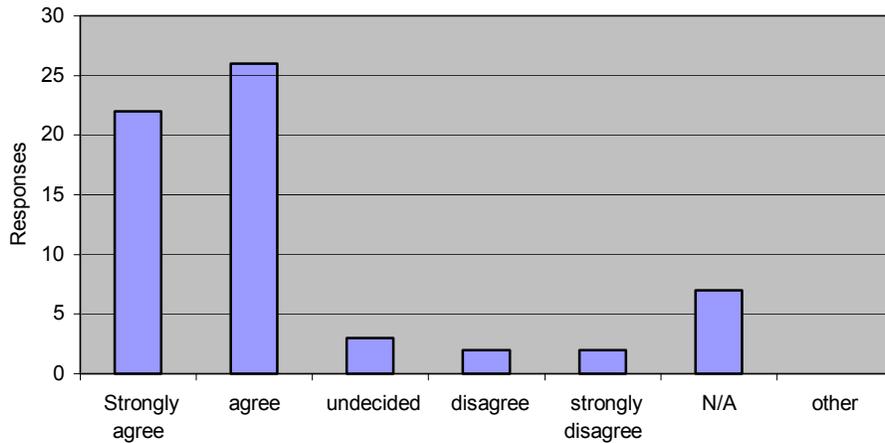


Exhibit 4.13d shows the majority of the respondents indicate this subject to be important to the hospitality student. Twenty-two and twenty-six respectively strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. An equal number of two each disagreed or strongly disagreed. Three survey responses indicate undecided while seven did not respond to the statement.

Subject 13e: Customer Service

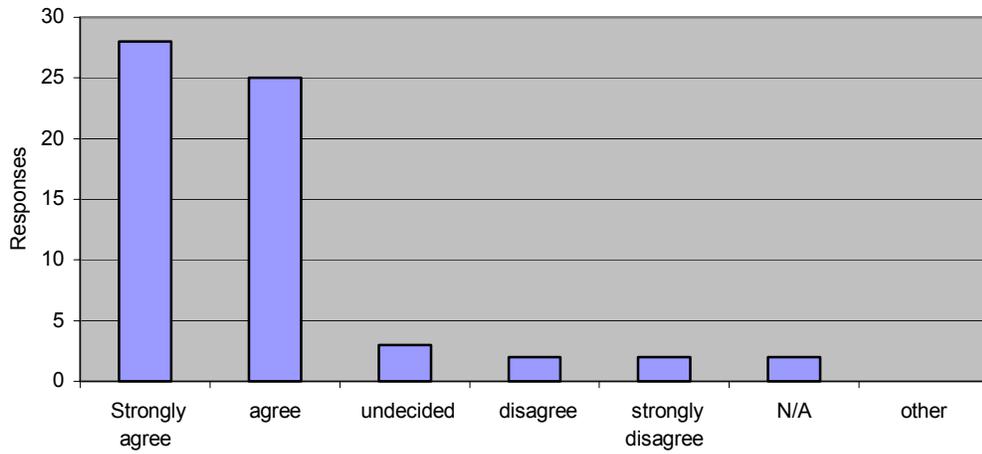


Exhibit 4.13e illustrates the importance of customer service to the hospitality student. Twenty-eight strongly agreed while twenty-five agreed to the importance of customer service. Three responded as undecided with two indicated in each of disagreeing, strongly disagreeing and not responding to the statement.

Subject 13f: Front Desk Procedures

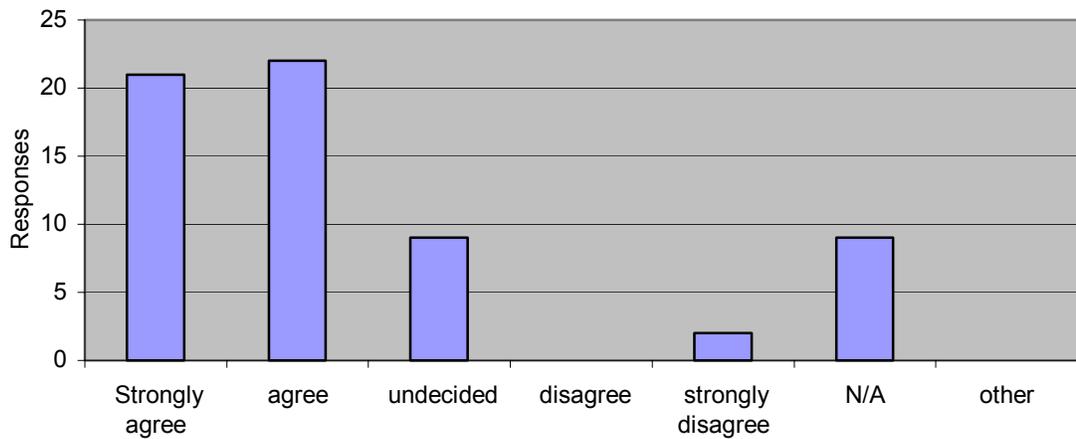


Exhibit 4.13f illustrates the importance of Front Desk Procedures as a course room subject. Twenty-one responded as strongly agreeing while twenty-two agreed with the statement. Two strongly disagreed, nine were either undecided or did not respond to the statement.

Subject 13g: Purchasing

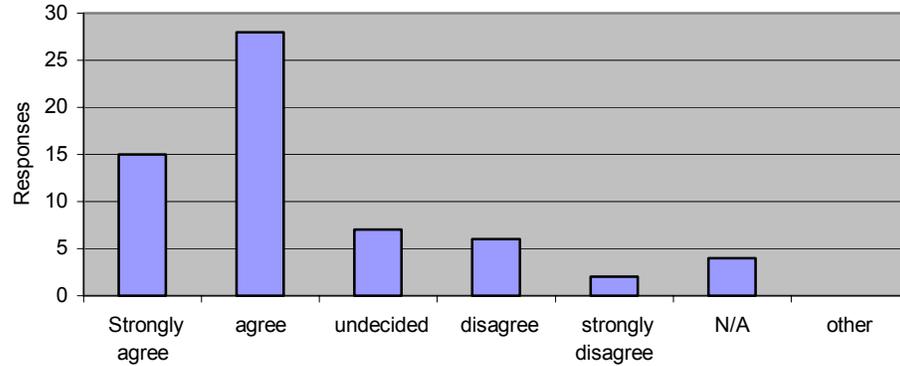


Exhibit 4.13g illustrates the responses regarding Purchasing as an important subject. Fifteen strongly agreed with twenty-eight agreeing to the statement. Six responses indicate disagreement with two strongly disagreeing. Seven were undecided with four not responding to the statement.

Subject 13h: Hospitality Marketing

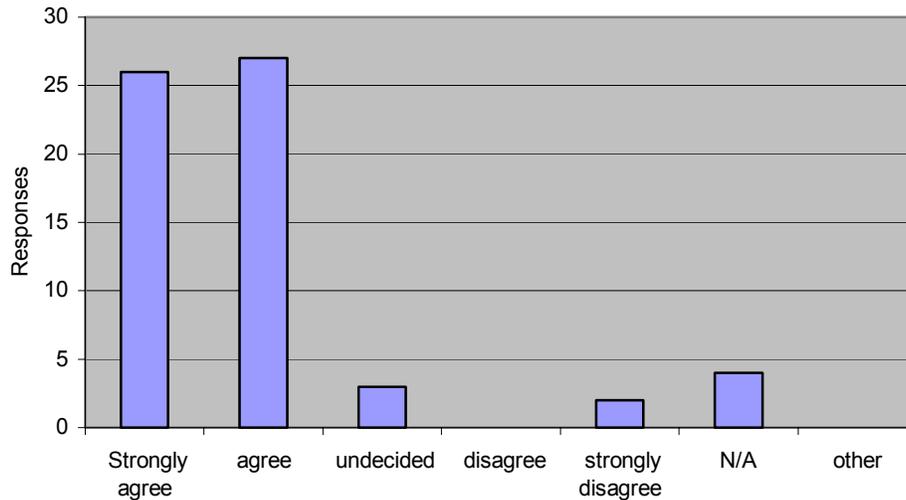


Exhibit 4.13h depicts the responses to Hospitality Marketing as a subject for the student. Over fifty percent, twenty-six and twenty-seven respectively strongly agreeing

and agreeing to this statement. Two strongly disagreed. Three responses were undecided and four did not respond.

Subject 13i: Menu Planning

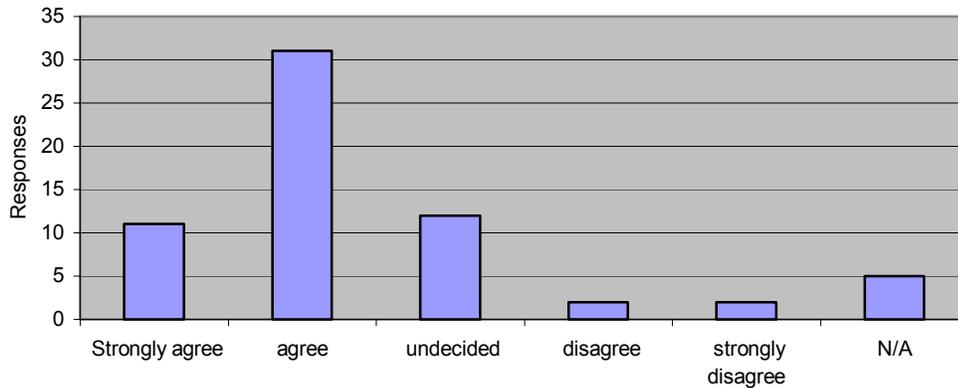


Exhibit 4.13i Illustrates the responses concerning Menu Planning as a hospitality course. Eleven responses strongly agreed and thirty-one agree with the statement. An equal number, two disagreed and strongly disagreed. Twelve respondents were undecided with four not responding to the statement.

Subject 13j: Travel Agency Operations

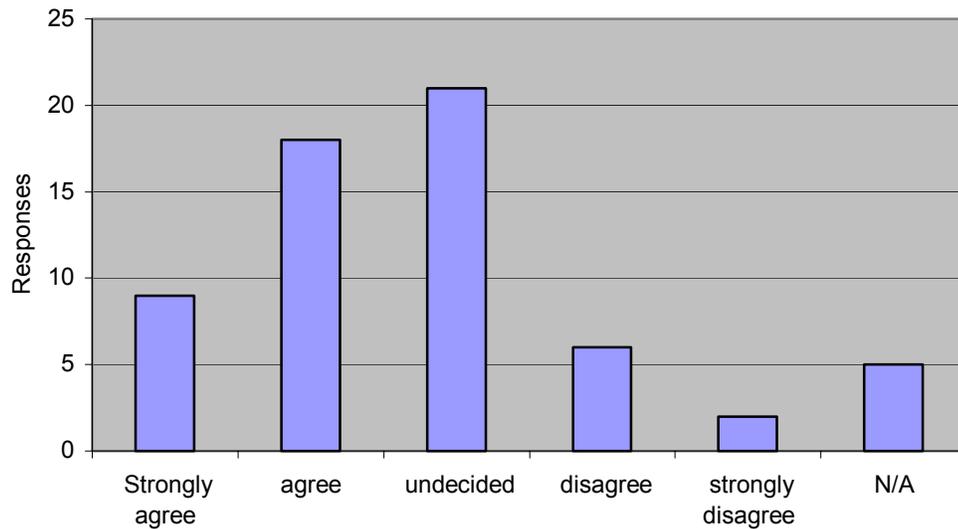


Exhibit 4.13j indicates the importance of a Travel Agent Operations course. Only nine responses strongly agreed with the statement with eighteen agreeing. Six indicate disagreement while two strongly disagreed. Twenty-one respondents were undecided and five not responding to the statement.

Subject 13k: Human Resource Management

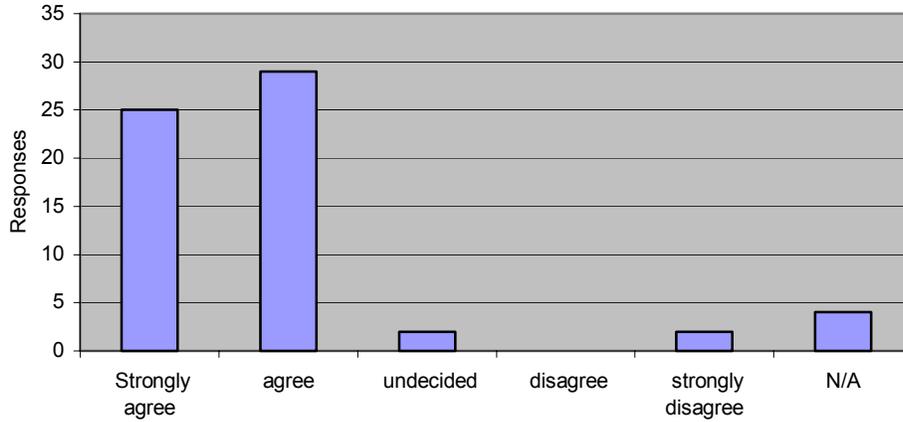


Exhibit 4.13k depicts the importance of Human Resource Management in the hospitality industry. Over fifty percent, twenty-five responded with strongly agreeing and twenty-nine with agreeing with the statement. An equal number of two either strongly disagreed or were undecided. Four did not respond to the statement

Subject 13l: Food and Beverage Cost Control

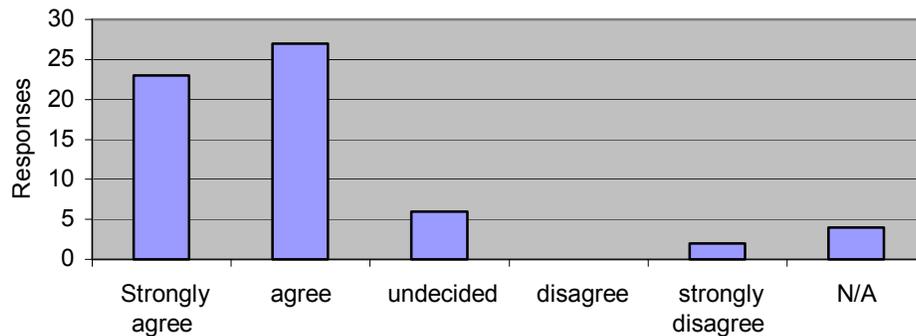


Exhibit 4.13l shows the rating of Food and Beverage Cost Control by the survey participants. Twenty-three responded as strongly agreeing and twenty-seven agreeing to the statement. Two strongly disagreed with six being undecided. Four did not respond to the statement.

Subject 13m: (other) One survey participant indicated Spanish as another course subject important to hospitality students in Southwest Florida.

Statement #14: Graduates of a local, post-secondary school culinary arts program would be beneficial to your operation.

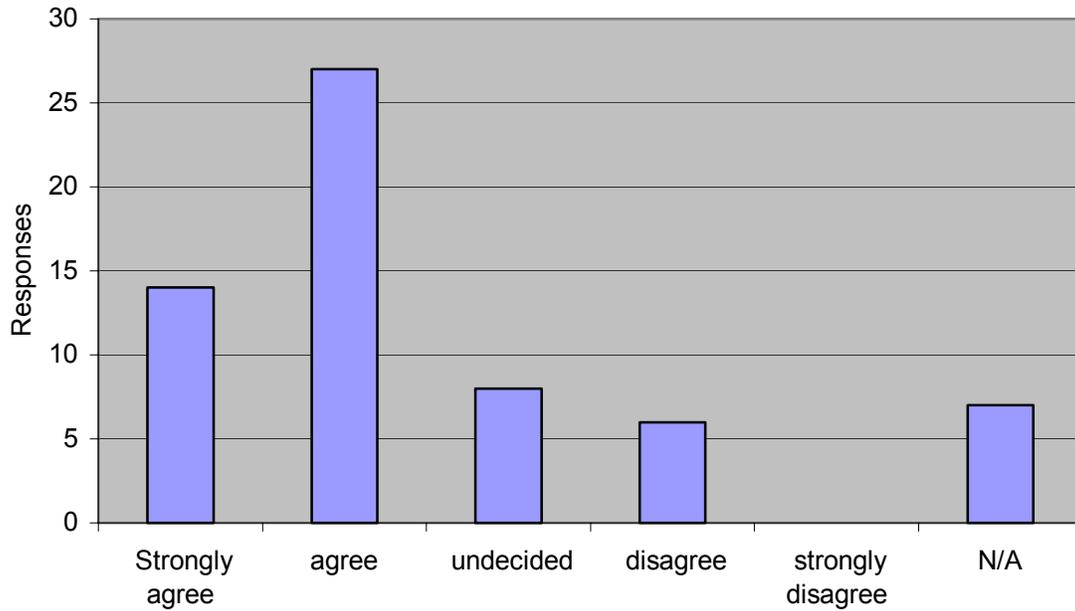


Exhibit 4.14 Shows the rating to the statement number fourteen. Twenty-three percent, fourteen responses, strongly agreed with forty-three percent, twenty-seven responses agreeing to the statement. Ten percent, six responses disagreed with none strongly disagreeing. Thirteen percent or eight responses were undecided with eleven percent or seven, not responding to the statement.

Statement #15: Your company would be interested in any of these courses or other college courses designated for corporate training.

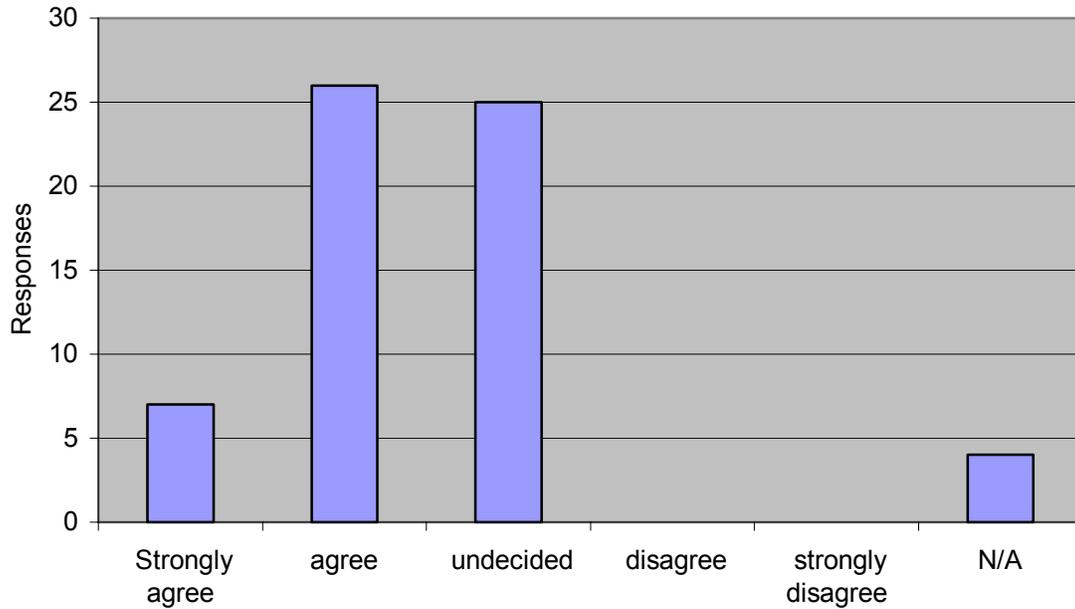


Exhibit 4.15 illustrates the rating for statement fifteen. Forty-three percent, twenty-six of the respondents agreed with the statement while only eleven percent or fourteen, strongly agreed. Almost an equal amount, twenty-five responses or forty percent were undecided. Six percent, four respondents did not respond and no responses showed disagreement.

Statement 16: Your company would be interested in participating in a co-op/work study program with a local two-year hospitality program.

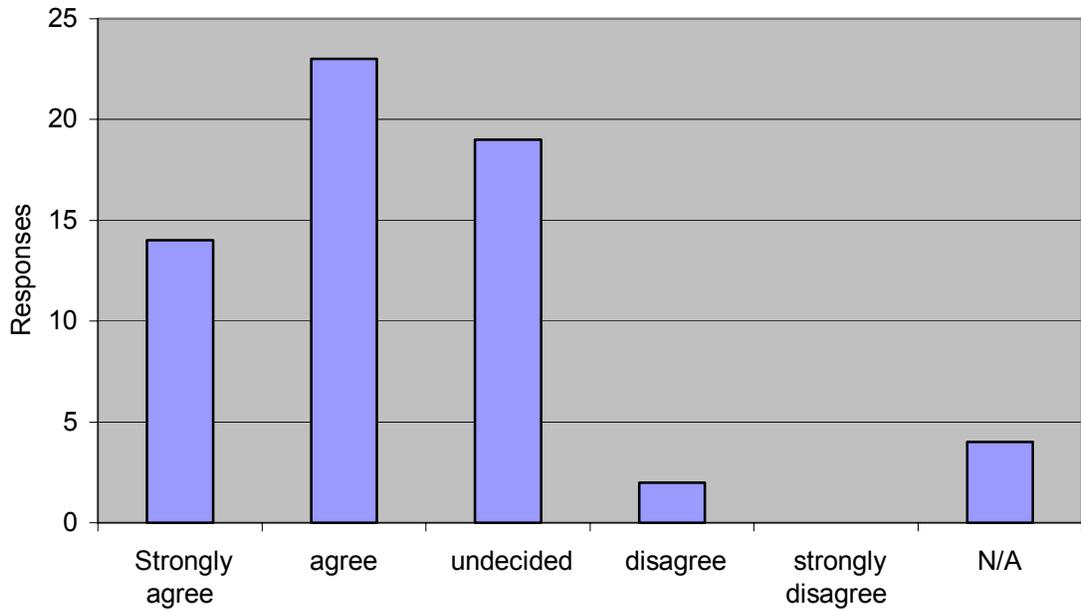


Exhibit 4.16 illustrate the willingness to participate in a co-op program. Fourteen respondents or twenty-three percent strongly agreed with the statement while twenty-three respondents or thirty-seven percent agreed. Three percent, two respondents, disagreed while nineteen respondents or thirty-one percent were undecided. Four respondents or six percent did not respond to the statement.

Statement #17: Your company would be interested in participating as guest speakers or field trip hosts by a local hospitality management program.

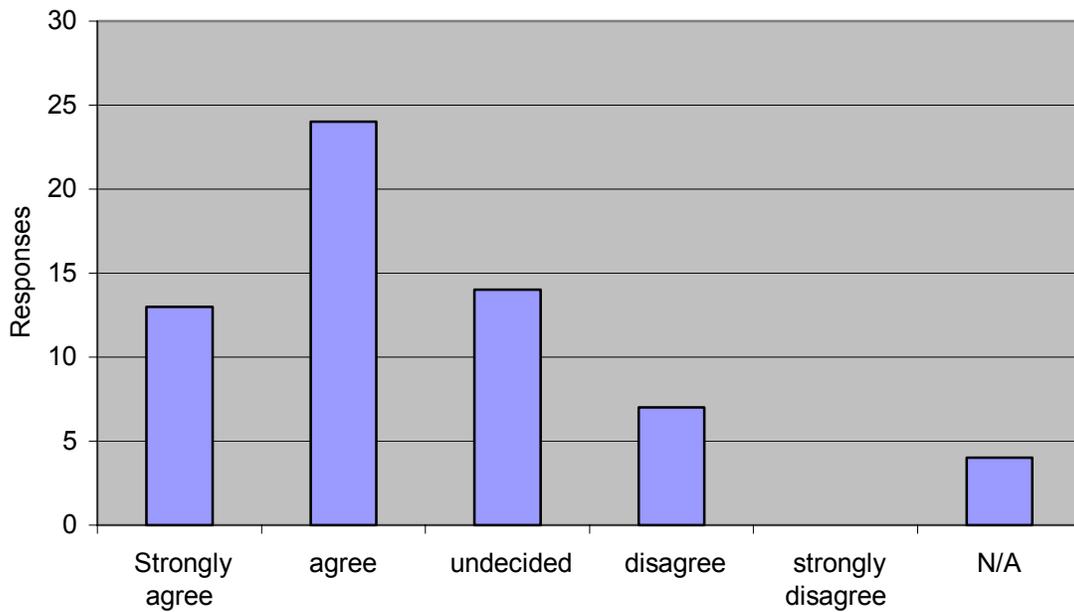


Exhibit 4.17 shows the responses concerning guest speakers from local hospitality operations. Thirteen respondents or twenty-one percent indicate strongly agreeing with the statement while twenty-four respondents agreed. Eleven percent or seven respondents disagreed and fourteen respondents were undecided. Six percent, or four participants did not respond to the statement.

Summary of the Data

As described in chapter one the purpose of the study is to determine the viability of a successful Hospitality Management, college-level program in Southwest Florida. This program encourages the enrollment of domestic as well as international students who are currently working in the hospitality field at local tourism related businesses and encourage local businesses to support the education of their employees and the hospitality program itself.

Through analysis of the data, it was determined that hospitality operations in Southwest Florida believe that a local two-year hospitality program would benefit the industry in this area.

The data indicates favorably that a college level program would be beneficial to local hospitality businesses with ninety percent of the responses demonstrating agreement with the survey question. Sixty-six percent of the respondents also agreed that a post-secondary school culinary arts program would be beneficial to their operations. The survey also shows that local hospitality operations encourage employees to further their education with ninety percent agreement with statement seven. Aggressive recruitment strategies focusing on local operations and the cooperation of the businesses may encourage enrollment in a hospitality program.

The data shows that academic skills such as math and English communications both, oral and written, accounting, and purchasing are very important skills to acquire for entry-level management employees. Also found to be important are human relations skills relating to human resources and customer service. Other skills to acquire are

dependent on the particular operation and its specific needs. Additional results, conclusions, and implications are found in Chapter Five.

Chapter Summary

Career preparation is vital in the form of acquiring basic skills of math and English communication and knowledge of specific skills relating to the hospitality industry such as customer service, accounting, hospitality marketing, purchasing, human resource management and food and beverage cost control.

As the data indicates, a local two-year college level hospitality program would benefit the Southwest Florida region. Also indicative of the study is that local hospitality businesses encourage their employees to advance in their education and often is necessary for career advancement. The data also demonstrates that a culinary arts program would be seen as beneficial to the hospitality operations in the area.

Chapter Five

Findings and Recommendations

Introduction

No longer is on-the-job experience or willingness to work a guarantee to career advancement in the hospitality industry. The results of this study have indicated what employers look for and expect from those persons who have been selected to join their staff. The conclusions, implications, and recommendations based on data from the study follow.

Conclusions

The findings of this study indicate not only do hospitality operations perceive a growth of twenty-five percent in the next five years in this area they also support the statement from chapter one that a two-year college level hospitality program would benefit the Southwest Florida area. Although there are many four-year colleges and universities nation wide with hospitality programs, the sixty percent disagreement response rate indicate that a four-year degree is not necessary for entry-level management positions. Although not included on the survey, this author believes it may be necessary to obtain a four-year degree or beyond if planning to advance into upper management or corporate position but, certainly not necessary for entry level or for the entrepreneur.

As indicated in the results, over ninety percent of the responses were in favor of employees continuing their education as demonstrated through the results of statement seven. However, as an incentive or benefit for furthering of education some employers, as depicted through statement eight, only twenty-one responses believed that their company provided scholarships or tuition reimbursement, while twenty-six responses did not

believe their company provided this benefit. It may be that the larger companies or corporations and government organizations provided this benefit while the smaller or independently owned operation did not have adequate finances to provide this benefit. Unfortunately, three-fourths of the total responses demonstrated that education is important for advancement in the hospitality industry, yet less than one-third of those responding suggested that their company does provide the scholarships or reimbursement for employees as a means to continuing their educations and work towards career advancement. This may be interpreted as companies encouraging further education of staff but not willing or financially able to assist in education of their employees.

Good basic skills and communication are to our benefit no matter what job a person has. (Bechtel 1995). This is particularly crucial to a service industry such as hospitality. In developing academic skills, students will need to be proficient in English communication involving reading, speaking, and writing, and also in basic math. In support of this statement, the data reveals that communication is extremely important. Operative employees and managers will need to be able to read correspondence, recipes, purchase orders, and other forms of written communication. Communicating orally with supervisors, co-workers, suppliers, patients, families and physicians, if in health services, and especially with customers is especially important in order to perform job duties efficiently and effectively. The ability to speak a foreign language was also mentioned by a study participant as being important. Because hospitality is a global industry, speaking a language other than English would be beneficial in communicating with customers as well as employees. The ability to perform simple mathematical calculations can be found in many areas of the hospitality industry. Providing the math necessary to

perform a job properly can be crucial in establishing amounts of food to order and prepare, the number of linens to order for a hotel and a number of other daily functions. The simplest mistake can be detrimental to a businesses' success and could also cost an employee his or her job. Knowledge of accounting and purchasing was found to be an important skill to acquire as these areas are used daily in hospitality operations. Hotel operations and front desk management were found to be another important area of knowledge. The author assumes these responses, over forty percent favorably for each, were from the lodging operations that responded to the survey. Obviously, a person in a management position in the lodging industry would be required to be markedly aware of the functions within the lodging facility itself.

Menu planning received over sixty-seven percent total favorable responses. Again, in the food service industry knowledge of the importance of the menu is crucial to the success of that business. Also, a lodging facility with food service would require management personnel to be knowledgeable of all areas of its operation, including food service.

Hospitality marketing also received a high favorable response with over fifty percent agreeing to the importance of marketing to the hospitality industry. Students of hospitality will have to be aware of the functions and marketing and its effect on the individual operations. Also extremely important to the industry is the area of customer service. Hospitality is a service industry. All involved in the industry should be aware of how exceeding customer expectations through quality service should be the goal for each service encounter.

The results of this study agree with the findings of the Carnegie Corporation Annual Report (1994) which states that interpersonal skills learned during classroom and personal and professional development are the same skills needed to be shown on the job. Human resource skills along with those needed for customer service promote positive interpersonal relations, motivation to learn and to success in job performance.

Entry level management positions receiving the highest favorable response rates that may be available to graduates of a two-year hospitality program would be Food and Beverage Manager, Guest Service Manager, Reservations Agent, Front Desk, and Accounting Clerk. The Sales and Marketing Departments and Housekeeping Departments may also have entry-level management positions available. Although a tour guide received a thirty-five percent favorable response it received more not applicable responses or undecided responses than the other categories. In addition to the survey questions one respondent wrote that a master degree is required for the Director of Food Service for the county school food service program and that there are also different levels of management within the school programs. Another respondent mentioned that the position of Box Office Manager would be applicable for a two-year hospitality degree graduate. This author assumes this respondent was from one of the sports arenas or other attractions involved as a survey participant.

The data demonstrated that a culinary arts graduate would be beneficial to their operations with forty-one respondents of the total sixty-two that responded indicating agreement with statement fourteen. Local foods service operations never seem to have qualified staff and are always recruiting skilled culinary personnel for their operations. There are three vocational schools within Lee and Collier counties and two high schools

that offer culinary programs. It appears that a college offering management and culinary courses culminating in an associate degree would be successful in the area as well.

Half of the respondents indicated by responses to statement fifteen that their company may be interested in offering the courses listed in the survey as training courses for their personnel. This may be an area to look into further as a relationship is formed between the college and local hospitality businesses for professional development training.

Thirty-seven respondents indicated that their company would be interested in establishing a relationship with a local hospitality program, either through a work/study or co-op program or as guest speakers or field trip hosts as indicated through responses to statement sixteen. Although approximately one-third responded as undecided this data demonstrates that there are many companies enthusiastic in working with hospitality students to assist in furthering their careers and providing employment opportunities that would benefit both the student and employer.

Recommendations

The data collected in this study reflect the employment needs of local hospitality businesses in regard to the educational level and skills of entry-level management personnel. The data indicates that with tourism being the number one employer and the perceived growth to increase in the next five years, there is a need for a hospitality program that will graduate people to be employed in a number of different management positions.

As indicated by survey responses to statement number thirteen, students in a hospitality management program must focus on the following course work:

- customer service
- communication skills
- basic math
- accounting
- purchasing
- human resource management.

Other courses specific to the area of hospitality would include:

- hotel operations
- front desk management
- hospitality marketing
- menu planning
- cost control for the food services area.

Development of a post-secondary school culinary arts program would benefit the region by providing quality employees in the food service areas. Developing a relationship with local hospitality businesses would provide students with professionals in the industry who can encourage, motivate and assist in their educational development. Local businesses would also be able to encourage their employees to develop their own careers through enrollment in the program and attending classes that will contribute to their career advancement.

Summary

A well-defined, local two-year hospitality program would benefit the growing industry in the Southwest Florida area. With increasing demand for quality employees aggressive measures should be undertaken to recruit high school graduates and current employees in the industry to enroll in a two-year program enabling them to further their careers. This program will also assist the industry in the supply of qualified management personnel to operate the growing number of hotels, resorts, restaurants, and other businesses expected to develop in the next several years.

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Appendix A
Explanatory Letter

June 1, 2002

Dear Study Participant:

My name is Michelle Goodman. As a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, I am conducting a study on the growing need for professionals in the hospitality industry in Southwest Florida and the need for a successful college level hospitality management program in the area. The study will provide relevant and timely information that can assist Hospitality and Tourism educators to successfully recruit and retain students to their respective programs.

To obtain an accurate picture of the skills and education required it is necessary for me to conduct a brief survey of opinions and attitudes of selected hospitality professionals. I am asking that you take five minutes of your time to assist me with this research endeavor. Your input is essential and invaluable to me. Please complete the enclosed survey and return it to me by **June 15, 2002**. Your completion and return of the questionnaire constitutes your voluntary participation in the study. Neither your name nor the name of the establishment is required and will remain unknown to me. All responses will be confidential, used only by myself for data purposes, and will be destroyed at the completion of the research and thesis. A summary of the results will be sent to you upon request. There are no known risks or benefits to the survey participants in completing the questionnaire.

A self-addressed stamped envelope has been enclosed for your convenience. I greatly appreciate your time and consideration and look forward to hearing from you. Please contact me with any questions or concerns that you may have at (239) 542-2860.

Sincerely,

Joseph Holland
Chair, Hospitality and Tourism Department

Robert Davies
Thesis Advisor, Hospitality and Tourism Department

Michelle Goodman
Graduate Student, Hospitality and Tourism Management Program
Enclosures

Appendix B

HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY QUESTIONNAIRE

TYPE OF HOSPITALITY ESTABLISHMENT (please circle)

Lodging Food Service Attractions/Recreation Travel/Tourism Transportation

Specific Area of the Industry _____
 (ex., Food Service = restaurant, caterer, non-commercial, club; lodging = hotel, B&B, resort, etc.)

TYPE OF OWNERSHIP (please circle) Chain Partnership Sole-Proprietor Corporation

YOUR POSITION (please circle) Owner, Director, Manager, Supervisor, Other _____

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES (please circle) 1-10 11-50 51-100 over 101

QUESTIONS: Please rate in the space provided how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by using the following number system

(1) Strongly Agree (2) Agree (3) Undecided (4) Disagree (5) Strongly Disagree

- _____ 1. A 4-year degree is necessary for entry-level management positions in the hospitality industry.
- _____ 2. A 2- year degree is necessary for entry-level management positions in the hospitality industry.
- _____ 3. A local Hospitality Management Associate Degree program would benefit the Southwest Florida hospitality industry.
- _____ 4. A graduate of this type of education would benefit your company today or in the future.
- _____ 5. Your company currently requires prospective entry-level management employees to have an associates degree.
- _____ 6. Your company currently requires prospective entry-level management employees to have a bachelor degree.
- _____ 7. Your company encourages current employees to further their education.
- _____ 8. Your company offers tuition reimbursement and/or scholarships as an employee benefit. (please indicate) _____
- _____ 9. Your company perceives the value of education to be important for advancement in the hospitality industry.
- _____ 10. Education in human resource skills is important for employees in the hospitality field.
- _____ 11. The hospitality industry in Southwest Florida will grow by 25% in the next 5 years.

12. The following entry-level positions would be available to graduates of a 2-year program:
(please use the same rating scale)

_____ Accounting Clerk	_____ Food & Beverage Manager	_____ Food Service Director
_____ Front Desk	_____ Guest Services	_____ Reservations Agent
_____ Sales & Marketing	_____ Meeting Planner	_____ Housekeeping Manager
_____ Training Manager	_____ Tour Guide	_____ other (please indicate)

13. Knowledge of the following course room subjects would benefit the hospitality industry student: (please use the same rating scale)

_____ English Communication	_____ Accounting	_____ Fundamentals of Math
_____ Hotel Operations	_____ Customer Service	_____ Front Desk Procedures
_____ Purchasing	_____ Hospitality Marketing	_____ Menu Planning
_____ Travel Agency Operations	_____ Human Resource Management	
_____ Food & Beverage Cost Control	Other _____	(please indicate)

_____ 14. Graduates of a local, post-secondary school culinary arts program would be beneficial to your operation.

_____ 15. Your company would be interested in any of these courses or other college courses designated for corporate training.

_____ 16. Your company would be interested in participating in a co-op/work-study program with a local 2-year hospitality program.

_____ 17. Your company would be interested in participating as guest speakers or field trip hosts by a local hospitality management program.

Thank you! Please return this form in the enclosed pre-addressed stamped envelope.

** I understand that by returning this questionnaire, I am giving my informed consent as a participating volunteer in this study. I agree that there are no potential risks, and that the information is being sought in a specific manner so that no identifiers are needed and so that confidentiality is guaranteed. I realize that I have the right to refuse to participate and that my right to withdraw from participation at any time during the study will be respected with no coercion or prejudice. NOTE: Questions or concerns about participation in the research or subsequent complaints should be addressed first to the researcher or research advisor and second to Dr. Ted Knous, Chair, UW-Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, 11 HH, UW-Stout, Menomonie, WI, 54751, phone (715) 232-1126.

Appendix C

Data Tabulation Sheet 1

Questions	1 Strongly agree	2 agree	3 undecided	4 disagree	5 strongly disagree	N/A	other
1	9	10	2	37	4		
2	5	28	5	20	2	1	
3	15	41	3	3			
4	21	39	2				
5	1	17	6	29	6	3	
6	5	12	5	29	7	4	
7	25	31	4			2	
8	8	13	13	16	10	2	
9	22	25	13		2		
10	23	31	4	2		2	
11	19	26	7	8	2		
12							
a	15	24	5	6	2	10	
b	14	25	3	10	2	8	
c	5	21	10	12	2	12	
d	11	23	8	10	2	8	
e	7	25	8	9	2	11	
f	7	25	11	6	2	11	
g	12	24	8	10		8	
h	8	21	13	7		13	
l	5	24	12	6	4	11	
j	6	23	6	13	4	10	
k	7	15	12	8	4	16	2

Data Tabulation Sheet 2

Question	1 strongly agree	2 agree	3 undecided	4 disagree	5 strongly disagree	N/A	other
13							
a	29	26	5		2		
b	28	25			2	7	
c	26	20	8		2	6	
d	22	26	3	2	2	7	
e	28	25	3	2	2	2	
f	21	22	9		2	9	
g	15	28	7	6	2	4	
h	26	27	3		2	4	
i	11	31	12	2	2	4	
j	9	18	21	6	2	5	
k	25	29	2		2	4	
l	23	27	6		2	4	1
14	14	27	8	6		7	
15	7	26	25			4	
16	14	23	19	2		4	
17	13	24	14	7		4	