THE HOTEL AS A COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE: EVIDENCE FROM THE LIVES AND CAREERS OF HOTEL EMPLOYEES

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ABSTRACT

The identification of alternative venues of learning that provide people with life and professional skills is valuable in societies where educational resources are constrained. To better understand paths of learning not found in the traditional educational system, and the incidental benefits that accrue from those types of learning, this thesis examines the lives and careers of five-star hotel employees. The high-class hotel industry was chosen as an appropriate place in which to locate personal and professional benefits due to the sophisticated training programs offered in the industry and the multi-faceted nature of hotel work, which could potentially provide employees opportunities to gain a diversity of skills. By presenting one case in the hotel industry of a learning process that may be taking place more widely in other industries, the thesis seeks to provide evidence that could help governments more effectively reallocate educational resources.

Based on criteria that included hotel type, hotel location, existence of training programs, and cooperation level of hotel employees, two hotels in Seoul, South Korea were selected for the study. Interviews were conducted in both hotels with employees from various departments and levels. Surveys were also distributed to a larger set of employees in both hotels. The findings from the interview responses were categorized into thirteen themes, each of which helped to uncover and pinpoint the life skills, professional skills, and benefits gained by employees as a result of the informal and formal education they received in the hotel. The themes are: 1) Educational background, 2) Hospitality industry entry motivations, 3) Job requirements, 4) Training programs, 5) Computer abilities, 6) Foreign language abilities, 7) Job function, 8) Cultural awareness, 9) Communities and networks, 10) Hotel environment and architecture, 11) Influences and impacts on: behavior, speaking manners, house design, image, and eating habits, 12) Future ambitions, and 13) Perceived benefits of training programs and hotel work. Survey responses were also categorized into corresponding themes, where appropriate. Both sets of responses were then analyzed.

The analysis reveals that the benefits experienced by hotel employees include the acquisition of a number of life skills and professional skills applicable both within and outside the hotel. This thesis provides evidence that both training programs and informal on-the-job experiences are worthy of attention from governments, especially those seeking a new yet effective way of distributing their resources, because of the latent contributions and effects of hotel employment on the lives and careers of hotel employees. This thesis advocates that governments factor in unconventional sources of learning when formulating educational policies, so that they may be able to receive more value out of the resources spent on education.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Though traditional education is associated with life betterment and seen as the way to progress in the world, there may exist unacknowledged sources of education, specifically within industries, that can serve as alternative means of progress for people. These sources are important in areas where resources for education are constrained, such as in societies in economic transition. Industries that have the potential to provide a comprehensive and complementary education to that provided in the public school and university system could prompt governments to reconfigure their priorities when it comes to education and training, allowing them to better reallocate their resources in the educational sector. Further, industries that allow employees to gain new skills and opportunities deserve attention in the formulation of policies concerning skill development and productivity.

To better understand these complementary paths of learning, and the incidental benefits that such learning can have on the lives and careers of employees, the tourism industry was selected for examination. This industry was thought to be an appropriate sector in which to hunt for these benefits because it has already been found that "the earnings differential between the high paid class and the low paid class in tourism is not as great as in other industries." Thus, tourism generally "distributes more earnings to the low income class than do secondary and tertiary industries," such as the electricity, social services, and finance industries, which implies that the tourism industry is more likely [than those industries] to improve living standards for the lower income class.

Within the tourism industry, five-star hotels were selected as the venues in which to study latent benefits because of their extensive, sophisticated training programs and the customer-focused, highly competitive nature of the hotel industry. Industries with demanding customers who have high expectations must take full advantage of opportunities to educate its employees about proper servicing techniques, especially because the profiles of hotel guests have changed over recent years, heavily influencing the pace and direction of changes in the tourism industry. These "new tourists" are more experienced travelers who demand better quality and more value for money. They reflect the ageing population, the decreasing household sizes, and the increasing disposable incomes of households. The International Labour Organization states, "A number of lifestyle segments - families, single parent

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2 Lee and Kang 347, 341.
4 International Labour Office 17.
5 International Labour Office 18.
households, empty nesters, double income couples without children - will become prevalent in tourism, signaling the advent of a much more differentiated approach to tourism marketing.” 6

Since hotels in the global economy now cater to guests who are more international, well-traveled, and wealthy, it has become more and more important for hotels to offer exceptional service to these increasingly sophisticated customers - this is the only way they will keep ahead of other hotels in the vicinity. The customization of the services of hotels plays a crucial role in the industry because hotel companies benefit greatly from “genuine attempts to identify, interpret and respond” to the feelings and needs of their customers. 7 A hotel that fails to understand and meet its customers’ service standards will likely be out of business in seven to nine years. 8

As hotels strive to prepare their employees to meet guests’ expectations, it is possible that hotel work provides latent contributions to the lives and careers of employees beyond the contribution needed for the job. If this is the case, hotel work and training may be a valuable source of education and betterment for people, especially because the tourism industry “tends to absorb unskilled and semi-skilled workers” due to the labor-intensive nature of the work. 9

Thus, this thesis examines the processes by which hotel employees are formally and informally prepared to serve the interests of hotels, in terms of ensuring their efficiency and attractiveness for guests. This thesis identifies how these processes, and indirectly related factors, constitute an educational - and therefore beneficial - function for hotel employees, both at the immediate work level and in broader personal terms. In this context, learning is understood to be both direct, relative to specific training programs and their intended benefits, and indirect, relative to the incidental effects of factors ranging from employee interaction to the physical environment in which hotel employees operate.

In order to examine the effects on and benefits to hotel employees of formal and informal hotel processes, this thesis focuses on the four questions below. A discussion of each question and its purpose immediately follows.

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6 International Labour Office 18.
8 Salomon, Alan. “Focus on quality or fail.” Hotel and Motel Management 209.13 (1994): 3-4. [qtd. in Min, Min, and Chung.]
9 Lee and Kang 346.
1. What appears to be the range of effects of hotel training programs on hotel employees?
2. Does hotel work provide hotel employees with skills that are both useful within the work setting and in everyday life, outside of the work environment? In other words, does hotel work provide hotel employees with both professional skills and life skills?
3. What behavioral differences can be detected in hotel employees that are related to the physical environment of the hotel?
4. Once educated through hotel employment, are hotel employees potentially better equipped to advance both within the hotel industry and in arenas outside of the hotel industry?

In order to keep pace with the high expectations of today's travelers, hotels offer formal training programs to teach their employees servicing skills. The first question asks: What appears to be the range of effects of hotel training programs on hotel employees? The top-tier hotels that provide training programs often divide their programs into three categories - mandatory training, departmental training, and supplementary training. An example of a mandatory training course is Orientation, where new employees gain general background knowledge about the hotel and about customer service. In departmental training, new employees learn about specific processes relevant to the department in which they work. Supplementary courses, such as language programs, are similar to electives. Employees either choose to take or are nominated by a superior to take these courses.

This first question serves to clarify the types of training offered by hotels, and to pinpoint the diversity of benefits received by employees, if any, from the formal processes employees undergo in training programs. An understanding of the range of effects of training programs helps uncover whether the content covered in training programs is relevant to current needs, and whether training programs have a wide enough scope so that the skills learned can be used by employees not only on-the-job, but towards the betterment of their lives and careers. If training programs are able to do this, a strong case can be made in support of hotels as valid alternative educational institutions.

While the first question focuses on the formal education provided by hotels, the second question seeks to pinpoint and categorize the actual set of skills acquired through both the formal and informal processes by which employees are prepared to work in the hotel. The second question asks: Does hotel work provide hotel employees with both professional skills and life skills? This question is asked

10 It is important to clarify what is meant when the terms “life skills” and “professional skills” are used in this thesis. According to UNICEF, the term “life skills” can be defined as the following: “A large group of psycho-social and interpersonal skills which can help people make informed decisions, communicate effectively, and develop coping and self-management skills that may help them lead a healthy and productive life. Life skills may be directed toward personal actions and actions toward others, as well as actions to change the surrounding environment to make it conducive to health.” When this thesis uses the term “life skills,” it includes those skills described in this definition. UNICEF also defines “livelihood skills” as the following: “Capabilities, resources and opportunities to pursue individual and household economic goals. Livelihood skills relate to income generation and may include technical/vocational skills [carpentry, sewing, computer programming], job seeking skills such as
because the hotel itself can be seen as a valuable setting of learning for employees. It is a place that is intended to be hospitable to every aspect of life - a guest can sleep, eat, meet, and work within a single building. Since a hotel’s employees are responsible for ensuring that all those areas function properly, they not only learn the specific tasks of their departments, but also about matters which will affect their lives when they leave work at the end of the day. As a result, hotel work is multifaceted - it supports a wide range of life activities and serves as a reflection of ordinary life. Employees learn not only from training programs, but also on-the-job, from their superiors, from peers, through observation, through interactions with other departments, and simply through experience.

This second question allows for the identification of the types of skills employees learn in the hotel, and for an understanding of whether they are useful in the global economy, and on par, at least, with those skills learned in traditional education. If it is found that employees acquired life skills, in addition to professional skills, further evidence would be provided in support of the hotel industry as a place in which employees receive significant incidental benefits. Such evidence strengthens the case for hotels as valuable places of learning.

In addition to the benefits and skills gained from the formal and informal processes by which employees learn in the hotel, the residual effects of factors such as the physical environment of the hotel and employee interaction have the potential to further impact and educate employees. The third and fourth questions, discussed below, stem from this idea.

In order to examine the incidental benefits experienced by employees as a result of the physical environment of the hotel, the third question is: What behavioral differences can be detected in hotel employees that are related to the physical environment of the hotel? Hotels attempt to look trendy and architecturally stylish in order to gain worldwide prestige and notice, and employees spend their days maintaining and working in this type of environment. The detection of behavioral differences is one means of gathering data that supports the idea that hotel environments can positively impact hotel employees. Examples of behavioral differences include employees selecting more sophisticated furniture for their homes or redesigning their bedrooms to resemble the design of the hotel’s rooms. On a larger scale, the detection of differences would provide evidence of the distinct yet valuable education employees receive in the hotel. Further, the concept of the hotel as a place of learning can be reinforced if employees are able to pinpoint what they perceive to be the positive and negative aspects of the physical environment of the hotel.

interviewing, business management skills, entrepreneurial skills, and skills to manage money.” When this thesis uses the term “professional skills,” it refers to those skills described in the definition of “livelihood skills.” [From “Life Skills.” UNICEF. 2 Dec. 2006 <http://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index_7308.html>.]
The last question ties together the two modes of learning - direct and indirect - that hotel employees experience in the hotel. The residual effects of employee interaction, combined with the education gained from formal and informal learning processes experienced in the hotel, have the potential to provide incidental benefits to hotel employees of value in gaining future career opportunities. To identify those benefits, the fourth question is: Once educated through hotel employment, are hotel employees potentially better equipped to advance both within the hotel industry and in arenas outside of the hotel industry? If they are armed with new skills and ideas applicable outside of their immediate hotel jobs, employees may be offered a greater range or quantity of opportunities in other industries because they would be able to handle more robust or demanding jobs. Further, since training sessions include employees of various levels, employees familiarize themselves with each other and learn to relate to and appreciate each other. Department functions are by nature interconnected. If it is found, for example, that hotel work helps employees create valuable professional and personal networks not only in the hotel, but throughout the hospitality industry, they might more easily find opportunities for advancement.

The fourth question examines how one facet of hotel work, interaction and networking, helps employees turn the skills they’ve gained through their hotel education into advantageous tools they can use towards their futures. The first three questions reveal the extent and depth of life skills, professional skills, and benefits employees gain from a hotel education. Altogether, positive findings in respect to these four questions would support a case that governments recognize the value of a hotel education and reallocate their resources on education more efficiently. It is possible that government spending on educational programs should be enhanced in one skill area and reduced in another. Positive findings would strongly suggest that the identification of specific programs and policies in existence in South Korea today that could be changed due to the evidence presented in this thesis is a topic worthy of future research.

To address the four thesis questions, fieldwork was conducted from June to August 2006 in two 500 to 650 room, five-star hotels in Seoul, South Korea. Hotels in South Korea were studied because interesting questions pertaining to language and culture could be specifically explored. Conducting the study in South Korea also provided me with the opportunity to gain further exposure to a foreign working environment, and to approach my thesis topic with an entirely fresh, new perspective, which elevated my own interest in the subject. In Seoul, a total of forty-six interviews with hotel employees in both hotels from all levels and departments were conducted, and just over 250 surveys were distributed and collected from employees. The findings are largely qualitative and based on the background research I conducted, on readings, on the interview and survey responses I received from hotel employees, as well as from my own experiences and observations as a researcher in the hotels.
All findings and conclusions about hotels and hotel employees stated in this thesis pertain solely to five-star hotels in South Korea.¹¹

The next chapter provides background on general training programs provided by top hotels. The background focuses on training because it provides a base of knowledge concerning the more formal education that employees receive in the hotel. The informal education that employees receive is far more personal and specific to each employee. These experiences are revealed in Chapters III and IV. Chapter III presents the interview findings of both hotels. The findings are presented in thirteen themes. Chapter IV presents the survey findings of both hotels, which are also categorized into the same themes, where appropriate. Organizing the findings in this way allowed for the findings of both the interviews and surveys to be analyzed together. A discussion of the two groups of findings as they relate to each of the four thesis questions is presented in Chapter V. Chapter VI presents my conclusion and Chapter VII presents recommendations for future topics of exploration that would supplement and/or confirm the findings of this thesis.

¹¹ It is not possible to make claims beyond the scope of the study that would be valid regarding other classes of hotels and hotels in other countries that may not offer the same programs and environments as the two hotels examined.
CHAPTER II: BACKGROUND

Based on the literature in the field, this chapter discusses the content and style of training programs - the formal part of the learning process that employees undergo in hotels - in order to get an idea of which of the skills and ideas learned by employees could help them advance within and outside the hospitality industry. By reviewing these programs, it is possible to understand the differences between formal and informal training.

2.1 What is training?
The hotel business is a labor-intensive industry that relies heavily on employees satisfying the needs of guests. The definition of training can differ significantly from context to context. In the hospitality industry, according to Curran et al., training can include:12

1. Formal on-the-job training where instruction takes place at the hotel with the intention of raising skill levels.
2. Informal on-the-job training where employees engage in activities that improve skills and knowledge relating to their tasks, but which involve few organizational inputs.
3. Formal off-the-job training where instruction takes place outside the workplace but is designed to enhance the job-related skills and knowledge of employees.
4. Informal off-the-job training where employees engage in activities that improve skills and knowledge but do not lead to formal accreditation or are not part of a systematic program.13

In this thesis, formal training refers exclusively to hotel-wide and departmental training instruction that an employee has received. Informal training and informal experiences refer to the skills, ideas, and information an employee has learned within the hotel outside of training courses, either while performing the functions of his or her job or otherwise.

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13 All four points above from Lashley 105.
2.2 How do hotels know what customers really want?

Hotels train to meet customer satisfaction - but how do hotels determine what will satisfy those guests? There is no simple formula to determining these drivers, but what sets the best hotels apart from the rest is that these hotels understand that they must study the needs of guests to truly understand the “key drivers of customer satisfaction.”

Top hotels often find to their surprise that the customer’s point of view differs from their own. This difference is called the “service gap,” and it keeps hospitality organizations on their toes - they must continually identify and monitor those drivers that satisfy their guests and adjust their training programs accordingly.

Hotels use many techniques to identify these key drivers, especially because they understand that “the drivers of customer satisfaction today may not work or may be too commonplace tomorrow.” Guests are asked to complete surveys after each stay, and all frontside employees are trained to “check with guests about their experience every chance they can.” Mystery shoppers act as pretend guests and offer feedback in a “structured, systematic way.” Hotels put in so much effort into finding the drivers because they, like any organization, want to put their resources into providing experiences that matter most to customers.

2.3 What are the key training needs and skills?

Once hotels have discovered the key drivers of customer satisfaction, they pinpoint the skills that employees will need to successfully respond to those indicators and offer guests high levels of service. Hotels, especially those in Europe, are turning more towards teaching “generic competencies,” and shifting away from specific skills. In 2001, the International Labour Organization stated that the general training needs which need to be acquired by line-level employees include: 1) deeper and more up-to-date knowledge of materials and production processes, 2) knowledge of computer programs and other new technologies, 3) awareness of safety and health issues, 4) understanding of house business culture, and 5) ability to impart an increasingly broad range of information onto customers. Language proficiency and inter-cultural sensitivity are also key skills for customer-contact employees.

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15 Ford and Heaton 32.
16 Ford and Heaton 34.
17 Ford and Heaton 32.
18 Ford and Heaton 32.
19 Ford and Heaton 33.
20 International Labour Office 86.
21 International Labour Office 91.
22 International Labour Office 91.
Training places much focus on personal and social skills, often referred to as soft skills, because hotel employees are “always on stage.” Frontside employees must be capable of “producing the service experience” while guests are talking to them, distracting them, and watching their every move. In addition, they must fix mistakes on the spot in a polite and gracious manner. On top of possessing good social and problem-solving skills, they must be capable of serving “a multitude of very individual people, each of whom expects something a little bit different.” Ford and Heaton note, “The hospitality product cannot be packaged and put on a shelf for purchase because it is ever changing and defined anew in the mind of each guest every time it is experienced.” Even those people who have learned soft skills during their upbringing must be “tweaked” through training so that all employees can offer consistent service across the board.

All employees, especially those who interact with guests, should be well-versed in the company culture and philosophy because they will “frequently face problems and decisions not covered by their formal training.” In these cases, it is imperative that the employee be able to “translate the cultural principles of guest service into the appropriate behavior in each situation where they are responsible for making the customer experience work well.” Employees must be well-versed in organizational culture that fills in the gaps between “1) what the organization can anticipate and train its people to deal with, and 2) the opportunities and problems that arise in daily encounters with a wide variety of customers.” The power of the culture to guide and direct employees to do the “right thing” for the customer becomes vital in “unplanned and un-anticipated situations” that are not discussed in training manuals.

To perform this crucial role, hotels understand that their success depends on the types of employees they hire. Positive guest-contact employee attitudes and positive guest experiences go hand-in-hand. Thus, they seek people “who fit the culture” and “have a desire to serve” - “people who love people and enjoy helping people.” Hotels want people “who typically start the day with a smile on their faces and stay that way regardless of the vagaries of human nature they encounter that might enjoy, anger, or provoke less guest-oriented people.” While these employees can be trained “well and

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23 Ford and Heaton 36.
24 Ford and Heaton 36.
25 Ford and Heaton 37.
26 Ford and Heaton 37.
27 Regional Director of Training. Personal Interview. 28 April 2006.
28 Ford and Heaton 36.
29 Ford and Heaton 36.
30 Ford and Heaton 36.
31 Ford and Heaton 36.
32 Ford and Heaton 43.
33 Ford and Heaton 43.
continuously” in their job skills, those with an inherent ability to interact positively with guests will bring the hotel the most success.\(^{34}\)

Hotels also seek employees with not only the skills to use computers, but “a capacity to learn and develop activities and to assimilate all elements of a complex process.”\(^{35}\) Even with the spread of technology into hotels, companies recognize that quality service can only be delivered with human input. Hotel labor was once considered an “inevitable cost in the production of goods and services,” but it is now valued not only in terms of physical assistance but also in the creative contribution of the employee to enhance the value of a hotel’s services.\(^{36}\) The technological competency of employees and their ability to adapt IT into new insights and effective strategies are crucial.\(^{37}\) Since “IT facilitates an employee’s capacity for effectiveness,” training must offer opportunities to learn these new technologies.\(^{38}\)

2.4 How do hotels provide training?

Given the training skills most important in hospitality today, many hotels have turned to internal training systems. Large hotel chains, in particular, take staff development very seriously. Continuous training for management-level employees of these hotel chains is common.

Training programs that are developed in the headquarters of international companies in one country may be transferred and used by branch companies in other countries.\(^{39}\) Three types of transfers occur: 1) training programs are used as is, especially when the “cultural and legal environments” of both countries are similar, 2) training programs are modified for local needs, which occurs most often due to the expansion of companies into the global marketplace, and 3) the capacity of employees in the receiving country are developed.\(^{40}\) In a 1998 study of training programs in eight deluxe hotels in South Korea, Lim and Wentling found that training programs brought over from other countries were modified most due to cultural reasons related to interpersonal relationships, verbal expressions, body language, and service etiquette.\(^{41}\) In addition to cultural factors, the level of modifications to training programs was also influenced by other factors, such as differences in procedures, the organizational cultures and policies of Korean hotels, and the level of expertise of modifiers [often trainers].\(^{42}\)

\(^{34}\) Ford and Heaton 44.  
\(^{35}\) International Labour Office 91.  
\(^{37}\) Kandampully and Duddy 70.  
\(^{38}\) Kandampully and Duddy 70.  
\(^{40}\) Lim and Wentling 18.  
\(^{41}\) Lim and Wentling 23.  
\(^{42}\) Lim and Wentling 23.
In top hotels, training is often broken up into three categories: orientation training, departmental training, and optional course training. Courses within each category equip an employee with skills and knowledge that make him or her a more well-rounded, complete professional. Four types of skills and ideas employees may learn in the hotel through formal training are described below.\(^\text{43}\)

**Language Skills**

The learning of a second language is crucial in countries where the majority of hotel staff do not speak English or the native language of the country in which the hotel is located. Language training is also important in countries where a large number of guests come from particular areas. Driven by the desire to provide the highest levels of service, hotels have implemented language programs to improve communication between guests and employees.

**Cultural Sensitivity**

Hotel employees should be aware of and sensitive to the cultures of their guests, since total customer satisfaction is one of the most important “strategic weapons” of hotels.\(^\text{44}\) At the same time, a hotel employee must be knowledgeable in the culture and etiquette of his or her own country, which can consist of a complicated set of detailed rules. To be knowledgeable in both areas requires formal learning. Training is meant to address the paradox in which clients “seek out uniformity tied to standardized comfort,” while “simultaneously seeking replicas of home and a measure of exoticism.”\(^\text{45}\) Weiermair states, “The key to quality service in international markets is an appropriate blending of global, national, and local cultures, and of globally and locally valid service qualities.”\(^\text{46}\)

In light of the increasing diversity of travelers, hotels have adjusted their training programs to teach employees proper methods of interaction with foreign guests. As luxury hotels have become social as well as public centers, Asian hotels have had to adapt to “shifting forms of politeness, formality, and distance encoded in the cultural encounters at the heart of a luxury hotel.”\(^\text{47}\)

\(^{43}\) The inclusion of these skills in this section does not mean that all hotels offer these programs, or that employees only learn these skills through formal means. The order in which they are presented is not significant.


\(^{47}\) Jennings 766.
Technological Skills
The introduction of information technology systems into the hotel sector has called for a different range of skills from employees. Employees are required to possess knowledge of computers and the capability to quickly learn new systems. Often, the technology changes so quickly that continuous training of new software is needed. More and more, technology has shifted not only what material is taught in training, but also how training is taught. Hotels are transferring their training materials onto the computer and online. Education and training are often delivered through interactive online connections and cd-rom. Some training programs have even found themselves in competition with “cyberschools,” where teachers help students tap into electronic sources of knowledge.48

Image and Grooming
Hotel staff are expected to “maintain high standards of personal appearance and cleanliness.”49 They are expected to understand, from grooming to attitude, what the hotel’s “image should be and how to convey it.”50 The image associates project reflects directly on the hotel. Meeting the expected standards is especially important because hotel designs have become more and more specialized to target certain customers. Employees must match the image projected by hotels through appearance, style, and clothing. If one employee does not dress appropriately or does not participate in upholding the image of the hotel, the desired effect can be lost on customers.

2.5 What are the known benefits to training?
The background thus far has shown that hotels believe training equips employees with the skills to offer the highest possible level of customer service, but what are the actual benefits of training for the associates and for the hotel?

The theory behind the training of hotel staff lies in the belief that training can increase profit for hotels. Training of hotel staff is expected to result in improved productivity, reduced labor turnover, reduced waste, greater organizational commitment, fewer accidents, greater flexibility, and improved ability to accept change.51 Training is also expected to help hotels retain employees, which is important because the cost of an employee leaving is far more costly than training a new employee.

48 International Labour Organization 99.
50 Marriott Jr. 4.
51 Lashley 110.
A Director of Training in one hotel believes training brings both developmental and financial rewards: “For the hotel, training increases and enforces commitment and loyalty to the company. You ‘Train to Retain.’ Training is necessary because it shows that you are taking care of the assets of the company. The more you train your associates, the more they value where they are and the more they feel valued. Training reinforces the message: Someone cares about you. They will join in the profit sharing, and respect the assets of the hotel. They gain listening skills and they learn to respond faster to people’s needs. They learn to think clearly in terms of process, to understand diversity, and to understand the needs of different people at different times. They gain people skills - they learn to pay attention to behaviors, to read people better, and to get attuned to what guests appear to need.”

To quantitatively measure customer reaction to service, hotels implement yearly performance evaluations and hand out guest comment cards and guest satisfaction surveys. Hotels have found a direct positive correlation between training and guest satisfaction scores [GSS]. They see a return of investment [ROI] through increased GSS. The benefits of training are easily proven because they are tied directly to “tangible results” like increase in retirement participation and decrease in turnover.

While all Orientation and supplementary training may be targeted at teaching employees information and skills, the act of training alone also helps hotels create a more unified community within hotels. Training allows the hotel to “hone in” on helping employees relate to each other. Through training, all groups work, communicate, and identify with each other, eventually learning to appreciate generational differences. Hotels hope the message they are sending is one of respect for human beings and the need for teamwork. They try to emphasize the basic elements of working together - having a common goal and assisting each other to reach those goals.

Lastly, study after study has shown that fair-process training can make a big difference. Employees under trained managers are significantly less likely to steal and resign, and are more willing to “go the extra mile - aiding coworkers who have been absent, helping orient new employees, assisting supervisors with their duties, and working overtime.” The studies even showed that trained managers suffered less insomnia than their untrained counterparts.

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52 Regional Director of Training.
53 Regional Director of Training.
54 Director of Human Resources. Personal Interview. 24 April 2006.
56 Higley, Jeff. 36.
59 Brockner 128.
Until the late 1980's, "Don't teach the employees anything" remained the prevalent attitude in the hotel industry. It was assumed that trained employees would migrate to other jobs and that other hotels would steal these workers. Hotels were reluctant to offer formal training programs, especially when their budgets were so tight, because they believed it was "difficult to isolate training as the key independent variable in managing a business unit which leads to specific gains in business performance." Some believed that benefits were difficult to gauge due to variations in the quality of training provision, the capabilities of trainees, and the durations of training programs.

Today, due to the tangible evidence that points to the benefits of training programs, no one argues that training is not the "right thing to do" in a hotel. Hotels acknowledge that without training, employees would require an "extended period of learning to be competent" and that the hotel would experience "increased accidents and unsafe practices, loss of new recruits, high staff turnover, reduced service quality, low staff morale, reduced output, and additional waste and damage." In light of these problems, training has now become the "moral thing to do," because it develops people to become better contributors, giving them a chance to become involved in the organization. One executive of a major international hotel chain argues, "Why are you even asking if training benefits the hotel? Of course training produces benefits in business performance. You don't need to prove it - it's the way you do business. It's an act of faith. It's like why you send your child to university. You know the benefits will out-weigh the costs."

The background reveals that hotel training programs already provide known benefits to the hotel in terms of the bottom line. However, the residual benefits of training - how training helps employees in all other facets of their lives - have yet to be discovered. Further, more learning also takes place outside of the training classroom. Skills and ideas absorbed by the employee through informal training and informal experiences may benefit the lives and careers of employees just as much as formal training.

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60 Galagan 44.
62 Lashley 110.
63 Galagan 44.
64 Lashey 107.
65 Galagan 44.
66 Lashley 106.
CHAPTER III: INTERVIEW FINDINGS

3.1 Methodology

Interviews with hotel employees were conducted from June to August 2006 in two five-star hotels located in Seoul, South Korea. Employees from nearly every department within the hotels were interviewed. The positions of the employees ranged from rank-and-file to executive.

The selection of hotels in which to conduct the studies was based on the following criteria:

- Location [in Seoul]
- Type and quality of hotel [five-star]
- Existence of training programs
- Cooperation level of hotel General Managers to allow a study to be completed in the hotel
- Cooperation level of hotel employees to be interviewed and surveyed
- Accessibility of hotels by public transportation [for personal access]

Four hotels in Seoul that fit all of the criteria were contacted, and I received permission from two of those hotels to move forward with the interviews. The two hotels in which the fieldwork was completed will be called “Hotel A” and “Hotel B” throughout this thesis. The order of the lettering does not have any significance; they have been assigned only to protect the identities of the hotels and the employees. Hotel A currently has 453 employees and 220 outsourced employees, while Hotel B has 513 employees and 305 outsourced employees.67

Twenty-six employees from Hotel A were interviewed, and twenty employees from Hotel B were interviewed. I worked in conjunction with one staff member in each hotel who helped me schedule interviews. To both staff members, I provided my preferences as to the types of departments and position levels of employees that I wanted to interview. I also provided the staff members with a preferred number of interviews, which was based on suggestions from upper management, as well as on the amount of time I had to complete the interviews. The final list of interviewees was based on these preferences and on the availabilities of various employees to give interviews.

Interviews in Hotel A lasted between forty minutes to one hour and forty-five minutes. Interviews in Hotel B lasted thirty minutes. The lengths of the interviews in Hotel A depended on the amount of

67 The total number of outsourced employees in the hotels changes often and is controlled by the outsourcing companies. Interviews with outsourced employees were not conducted. Outsourced employees do not partake in hotel training activities, so they would not have been appropriate subjects to interview for this study. Hotel A did not provide any data about the departments in which outsourced employees worked. In Hotel B, outsourced employees worked in the following departments: Engineering, Front Office, Spa and Fitness, Kitchen, Loss and Prevention, and Housekeeping.
time the employees had available to sit for the interview and on the lengths of employee responses to the questions. The lengths of the interviews in Hotel B were determined based on suggestions by the staff with whom I worked to set up the interviews, as well as on the amount of time the employees had available to sit for the interview. There was only one noticeable difference in the content of interview responses relative to the lengths of the interviews. During interviews in Hotel A, I was able to ask more follow-up questions to responses - thus, Hotel A interviews were often more detailed.

All interviews were conducted primarily in Korean, with the exception of three interviews, which were fully conducted in English. All interviews were conducted within the hotel in a closed office or room. All interviews followed the same basic structure. Questions regarding the employee's educational background, job background, training background, job function, computer ability, foreign language ability, future ambitions, and perceived influences from hotel work were asked. For the most part, similar questions were asked to all employees. The interview questions varied slightly depending on the types of responses given and on the amount of time available for the interview. Refer to Appendix A for a list of the interview questions asked to interviewees.

The interview responses for each hotel were translated, coded, and categorized into themes. Each of the themes relates to one or more of the thesis questions posed in the introduction. Within each theme, responses were further categorized and the most interesting, illuminating, or noteworthy quotes and points, from my perspective, were extracted and included in the appropriate sections. Each of the employees allowed different levels of permission regarding the release of their names, titles, and departments. Where helpful or appropriate, certain characteristics of the employees have been included. Overall, special care has been taken to protect the identities of the hotel employees as much as possible.

The interview findings section consists of the following themes:

1. Educational Background
2. Hospitality Industry Entry Motivations
3. Job Requirements
4. Training Programs
5. Concrete Skill - Computer Abilities
6. Concrete Skill - Foreign Language Abilities
7. Job Function

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68 It should be noted that there was no way to control whether interviewees mingled with other employees who would be interviewed in the future. While it would have been ideal if all interviewees never interacted or spoke with each other about the interview itself, circumstances did not allow for this to be prevented. If such interactions did occur, it is reasonable to assume that there would not have been a great impact on the responses, as the questions were overall tame and not provocative.
8. Cultural Awareness
9. Communities and Networks
10. Hotel Environment and Architecture
11. Influences and Impacts on: Behavior, Speaking Manners, House Design, Image, Eating Habits
12. Future Ambitions
13. Perceived Benefits of Hotel Training Programs and Hotel Work

The themes are presented in the above order because they relate to the order in which a hotel employee might progress through the learning process while working in a hotel. Themes 1 to 3 “occur” before the employee enters into the industry. The employee experiences or may experience Themes 4 to 10 while working in the hotel. Themes 11 to 13 relate to the perceived effects, benefits, and influences of hotel work on an employee.

3.2 The Interviewees

Twenty-six hotel employees from Hotel A were interviewed in June of 2006. Ten males and sixteen females were interviewed. The below table shows the departments and levels of the employees.

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69 The differences between the two hotels in terms of the number of employees interviewed and the types of employees interviewed are due to the following factors. In Hotel A, I submitted a preference sheet to an employee in the hotel who was assigned by upper management to help me set up the interviews. On the sheet, I indicated the number of employees from each department that I wanted to interview, as well as the number of rank-and-file and superior-level and above employees that I wanted to interview. The departments were called and department heads were informed about my background and about the study I was conducting in the hotel. After this process was completed, employees in the departments were asked if they could sit for an interview. The final list of interviewees was based on both my preferences and on the availabilities of various employees to give interviews. The total number of interviews conducted was based on the total amount of time I had to spend in Hotel A to interview employees [approximately three weeks] and on the number of interviews that could be scheduled per week. In Hotel B, an employee was assigned by upper management to help me set up the interviews. During our initial meeting, I expressed to her that I wanted to interview a cross-section of the hotel employees of different positions in different departments. After the conversation, several departments in the hotel were called and interviews were scheduled if employees were available to sit for interviews. I conducted a total of twenty interviews in this hotel - this number was chosen based on suggestions given to me by upper management level employees and also because I believed twenty interviews was a comparable number to the twenty-six interviews conducted in Hotel A. The two staff members in the two hotels that helped me set up the interviews were given a document containing a paragraph explaining my background, the purpose of my study, and the rights of the interviewees. In neither hotel did I give a preference as to the gender of the interviewees.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>NO. INTERVIEWED</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>SUPERVISOR LEVEL AND ABOVE</th>
<th>BELOW SUPERVISOR LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banquet Sales</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Office</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twenty hotel employees from Hotel B were interviewed in August of 2006. Seven males and thirteen females were interviewed. The below table shows the departments and levels of the employees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>NO. INTERVIEWED</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>SUPERVISOR LEVEL AND ABOVE</th>
<th>BELOW SUPERVISOR LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Accounting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banquet</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Office</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and Marketing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Presentation of Themes

Results from the interviews in both hotels have been presented separately under each of the themes, and the responses from both hotels were analyzed as a whole in relation to the relevant thesis questions. All quotes were footnoted using a code I assigned to each interviewee.

**THEME 1: Educational Background**

To assess the contributions of hotel work on the lives and careers of hotel employees, it was necessary to determine the educational background of the employees interviewed for this study. The responses
enabled a baseline to be drawn representing the level of learning with which interviewees tended to enter into their hotel careers.

Hotel A
All interviewees form Hotel A graduated from high school, and all but one employee pursued higher education beyond high school. Twenty out of twenty-six interviewees graduated either from university or graduate school and five interviewees graduated from technical or junior college. In addition, ten interviewees studied overseas at some point during high school or college.

Thirteen out of twenty-five interviewees majored in a subject related to the hospitality industry, including hotel management, tourism management, and tourism-related English. Interviewees studied the hospitality industry at four-year Korean and American universities, in specialized hotel schools in Singapore and Switzerland with two-year programs, and in specialized hotel schools in Korea. Three of the interviewees studied hotel management after graduating from university with a degree outside the field. The original majors of those three interviewees were Food and Nutrition, Secretarial work, and Computers, all of which could be useful in the service industry.

Six out of twenty-five interviewees majored in a subject directly related to their current jobs in the hotel. These employees came from departments that require specific professional skills. Two employees from the Kitchen department attended culinary institutes. A high-ranking Chef in the hotel notes, “After attending four years of apprenticeship training in [his country of origin], you can call yourself a fully qualified Chef instead of a Cook.” An Engineering employee received his degree in Mechanical Engineering, while a female employee in the Human Resources department majored in Computers in the 1980’s because they “started to rise in popularity.” She was able to break into the hotel industry in the late 1980’s because of her computer skills.

Six out of twenty-five interviewees majored in subjects seemingly unrelated to both the hotel industry and to their jobs. One Waitress majored in Economics, and a Front Office Supervisor majored in Chemistry. Other majors included German Language and Literature and French Language and Literature.

Hotel B
All interviewees from Hotel B graduated from high school, and nineteen out of twenty employees graduated from university or graduate school. The remaining interviewee graduated from a two-year junior college. Sixteen interviewees also studied overseas at some point during high school or university.

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70 A13
71 A09
Fourteen interviewees majored in or studied hotel management, and ten of those interviewees studied hotel management overseas in Switzerland, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, the Philippines, Brazil, or the United States. Those who traveled to other countries did so either for the purpose of education or because their parents moved to that country. Three interviewees who graduated from university in the United States also graduated from high school in that country. One Front Office employee decided to receive his diploma in hotel management from New Zealand because he felt he could also improve his English there since not many Koreans live in the area. Similarly, a restaurant Receptionist decided to study hotel management in Switzerland because “learning foreign languages is very important in the service industry.”

Three out of nineteen interviewees majored in a subject applicable to their current jobs in the hotel. For example, two employees, a Sales Reservation Agent and a Front Desk Manager, majored in Business Administration because they believe it would be helpful in a variety of areas.

Three out of nineteen interviewees majored in subjects unrelated to their jobs. One Front Office Supervisor majored in Industrial Psychology out of curiosity, and an employee in the Human Resources department majored in French Literature.

Findings

Table 3. Educational Backgrounds of Hotel A and Hotel B Interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOTEL</th>
<th>Total No.</th>
<th>Graduated From</th>
<th>Majored In</th>
<th>Studied Overseas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>Technical/Junior College</td>
<td>University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOTEL A</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOTEL B</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PERCENT</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the exception of one employee, all interviewees pursued higher education after graduating from high school. The majority of interviewees also majored in a field related to the hospitality industry, or in a field related to their specific jobs within the hotel. It is fair to conclude that the interviewees are
very highly educated and learned skills in school that, in theory, may have equipped them for at least entry-level positions within the hospitality industry.

These results are not very surprising given South Korea’s emphasis on education. South Korea has a high school graduation rate of 96% and a literacy rate of 98%. According to Lee and Brinton, the economic benefits associated with higher education, especially four-year universities, motivate South Koreans to advance to higher education. In their article, they include results from a 1994 survey from the National Statistics Office: 86% of parents surveyed desired at least a four-year education for their sons and 75% of parents desired the same for their daughters.

It seems curious, then, that interviewees who graduated from university work in rank-and-file positions. Due to the large number of university graduates in Korea at this time, it is possible that the competition for jobs is fierce. A “Korea Times” article released in February of 2006 notes that 36% of male graduates and 43% of female graduates are unemployed. The article states, “Intensifying competition among college graduates for limited white-collar jobs has also aggravated the job market.”

While employees may enter into the hotel with a set of skills obtained from university education, there may be life skills or additional professional skills that they are able to learn in the hotel.

**THEME 2: Hospitality Industry Entry Motivations**

An understanding of employees’ perceived motivations for entering into the hospitality industry helps uncover part of the answer to a following question: How did the employees believe hotel work could benefit their lives or careers? This question is relevant because this thesis partly aims to illuminate the opportunities employees potentially have to advance within and outside the hotel industry once equipped with a hotel education.

**Hotel A**

The majority of interviewees in Hotel A, over 95%, entered into the hospitality industry for one of five reported reasons, which can be grouped under the following categories:

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76 Lee and Brinton 181.


78 Lee.
1. The employee had a positive perception of hotel work.
2. The employee’s personality fit with hotel work.
3. The employee thought hotel work would provide job security.
4. The employee wanted to meet diverse people.
5. The employee thought hotel work seemed like a good job for women.

Seven out of twenty-six interviewees reported that they entered into hospitality because they had a positive image of hotel work. To them, hotel work looked appealing, glamorous, and appropriate for young people. One employee remembers watching a television show about hospitality management during high school. She was immediately attracted to the profession and decided to enter into the industry. Another employee did so because “it was a high quality type of job at the time [she entered the job market] because of the Olympic Games.”

Five interviewees reported that they entered into hospitality because they believed their personalities fit well with hotel work. One Banquet Sales employee states, “The hotel industry fits my personality - I like to meet people, I’m proactive, and I’m outgoing.” Another employee in Banquet Sales says, “To work here, you need to have a sense of flair, and you need to be able to show someone that he or she is special. You should show off a modern image.”

Four interviewees, three of whom work in the Kitchen and one in Food and Beverage, believed working in the hotel would provide more job security than working in a private restaurant. A Chef notes, “I chose to work in the hotel because it would provide more job security. I knew that I’d have a much better chance at life.” His colleague entered into the industry because “Cooks in Korea still prefer to work in hotels. The mindset is that working in restaurants is not as good. If a Cook works in a hotel and builds up experience - even if he goes to work in a regular restaurant later - he will have still learned about hospitality.”

Four interviewees entered into hospitality because they wanted to meet and interact with diverse people, especially foreigners, or because they had an interest in foreign countries. The wish to interact with diverse people looked attractive because it would provide opportunities to practice English.

79 A23
80 A20
81 A19
82 A13
83 A24
Five of the female interviewees also mentioned that they chose to work in the hotel industry because they thought it would be a wise career choice for women. One Business Center employee believes that “the management respects our personal abilities - they highlight staff knowledge. There is no discrimination between men and women, or due to age.” Similarly, a Waitress notes, “Women are able to have some power here. I think the hotel business is good for women. They are treated equally. In Korea, there are a lot of businesses where the benefits may not be split as equally between men and women.”

Hotel B
The responses given by interviewees in Hotel B fall into similar categories as those described in the Hotel A section. Approximately one-third of the interviewees reported that they entered into the hospitality industry because they had a positive perception of hotel work, especially service-oriented work, although for different reasons. One employee in Food and Beverage wanted a job where she could provide service to others. Her interest in service grew due to the 1988 Seoul Olympic Summer Games, when “Korea became more service-oriented.” Others perceived the hotel as a prestigious place to work. An employee notes, “This hotel has a lot of chains and it’s an excellent brand.”

Three interviewees reported that they entered into the industry because it would be stable for women. A female Engineering employee decided to work in the hotel and not in the construction industry because work there “is not too stable for women.” A Banquet department female employee likes this industry because she believes hotels are good for people with families, and that this hotel accommodates those employees.

The remaining interviewees reported that they entered into the industry because:
1. The employee wanted to learn about a variety of areas.
2. The employee wanted to meet diverse people.
3. The employee’s personality fit with hotel work.
4. The employee thought it would be easy to get a good job in the industry.
5. The employee’s family’s background was in the hotel business.

Findings
In summary, interviewees were motivated to enter into hospitality for one or more of the following reported reasons:

84 A12
85 A15
86 B16
87 B18
88 B11
1. The employee had a positive perception of hotel work.
2. The employee’s personality fit with hotel work.
3. The employee wanted job security.
4. The employee wanted to meet diverse people.
5. The employee thought hotel work seemed like a good job for women.
6. The employee wanted to learn about a variety of areas.
7. The employee thought it would be easy to get a good job in the industry.
8. The employee’s family’s background was in the hotel business.

From these reported motivations, it is possible to conclude that interviewees entered into the industry with the intent to remain in the hotel for some time [because the job is stable], and to perhaps advance within the industry. Job security and stability would provide employees with at least the opportunity to build a certain level of experience before pursuing any future ambitions.

The responses showed that interviewees were proud of the hotel’s image and very aware of how the status of a job is transmitted to others. This result is surprising - in a 1998 study by Lee and Kang about earnings in the tourism industry in South Korea, they stated, “Tourism has a low reputation in [Korean] society. Confucian traditions tend to lower the status of workers in this industry as Confucianism tends to look down on work related to leisure activities.”

The set of responses in this section, as well as in Theme 13 of this chapter, showed that interviewees believed hotel work had, in contrast to the article, a very high reputation, partly due to the prestige of hotels in Seoul. Perhaps these responses reveal that, as Lee and Kang hoped in 1998, the “negative social perception attached to tourism by Confucian tradition” is on its way towards elimination.

Female interviewees also believed that hotel work was well-suited for women. In their 1998 article, Lee and Kang stated that “jobs in the tourism industry are easily identified as female jobs, since providing service and comfort to people is considered the work of women in a patriarchal social system.”

The authors also found that for women, “tourism generated the third largest median earnings next to finance and social services in 1995,” as well as “the third most equal distribution of earnings” among nine primary, secondary, and tertiary industries they studied. They believed this data was significant because in 1995, 44% of all workers in the tourism industry were female, the highest proportion compared to all other industries, and the proportion of female workers in all industries was a comparatively low 29.

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89 Lee and Kang 347.
90 Lee and Kang 348.
91 Lee and Kang 348.
92 Lee and Kang 347, 348.
93 Lee and Kang 347.
Interviewees also seemed motivated to expand their knowledge about hotel work and their abilities in languages. It also seemed like those who entered into the industry were outgoing and social, making them well-suited to handle social situations with foreigners.

**THEME 3: Job Requirements**

An examination of the job requirements of hotels provides a means to understand the basic skills that all employees in the hotel must possess in order to be hired into the hospitality industry. This section helps to reveal the differences between what a hotel might value in an employee, and what an employee believes is most valuable for entry into hospitality.

Note that this section focuses on the job requirements and interview responses of employees in Hotel A. Specific information regarding the job requirements of Hotel B could not be obtained. However, both hotels are considered top-tier business hotels in Seoul, and the departmental structure in both hotels are nearly identical. As a result, it is reasonable to assume that the job requirements of Hotel A and B may be similar.

Hotel A

Applicants to the hotel first submit a resume to the Human Resources office, either via internet, mail, or in person. After submitting a resume, applicants take an English language test, an aptitude test, a physical test [or health exam], and sit for an interview.⁹⁴

The English language exam tests basic English language skills that Korean students learn in grade school.⁹⁵ In lieu of taking the English exam, the applicant may submit a TOEIC [Test of English for International Communication] score. The TOEIC exam measures the ability of non-native English speakers to use English in everyday work activities.⁹⁶ Based on one’s position and department, each employee is required to meet a specific English competency level. For example, Department heads should achieve the highest level of scores on English exams administered by the hotel, while rank-and-file employees in backside departments are held to the lowest standard of English competency. The TOEIC exam is administered regularly. If an employee fails to reach his or her required score, the score reflects negatively on his or her evaluation.

After the English test, applicants take an aptitude and problem-solving test that consists of a series of logic and mathematical problems. If they are able to pass both parts, they are scheduled for an interview. The health exam is administered to all applicants, and again after one is hired.

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⁹⁴ A09
⁹⁵ A09
When asked what they believed were the most important aspects of an interview, eight of the interviewees stated that their employers seemed to look most for a service mind, a desire to work in hospitality, and a bright personality, with some English speaking ability as a given. In order to check whether she had a service mind, an interviewer asked one employee whether she would still enjoy her job and work as hard if she were sent to a department that was not her first choice. One Waitress believes, “More so than checking if I had any concrete skills, they wanted to see if I was hardworking, if I would come on time, and if I smiled and laughed a lot. They wanted to see if I had a service mind. This is important because I hang my name on my uniform - I should be knowledgeable about my products and be able to serve foreigners well...Having a good image was very important during the interview. Although I may not be pretty, they wanted to make sure I could fit into the hotel well. So, I guess they hire by faith.”

Interestingly, one employee thinks that it has become more and more difficult to find service-minded people, especially among the younger generation. She is sometimes disappointed with the hotel’s service.

Some positions, such as those in the Health, Engineering, Security, or Kitchen departments, require applicants to possess skills that one cannot learn entirely in the hotel. The Security department prefers to hire people who know Tae Kwon Do and who have been to the military or a police academy. Some interviewees in the Kitchen and the Food and Beverage departments obtained cooking licenses before entering into the industry. When asked if these licenses provided any advantage in the application process, one Cook states, “These are the basics. It doesn’t really matter because almost everyone in the department has food licenses.”

Findings
Though possessing specific skills is important in specialized departments, the hotel seems to focus more on hiring people who are both healthy and capable of learning and thinking, as revealed by the administration of health and aptitude exams. The emphasis on English shows that hotel employees should be somewhat knowledgeable in the language in order to maintain employment. While it may be difficult to examine a person’s “service mind” before he or she has started working, it seems that this is as important as any other job requirement. By hiring people who fit all of these qualities, it is possible that hotel employees as a group absorb information better than a group of employees in other industries.
THEME 4: Training Programs

Hotels spend a part of their own revenue on training programs. The money is spent primarily on training materials, such as hand-outs, food, and stationary, and on the fees required by outside training courses, such as online English courses and workshops. All employees in the two hotels take at least one training course, and many take far more. Hotels may also employ trainers, or employees whose job function it is to create, administer, and teach training programs to other employees in the hotel. The trainer is often a part of the Human Resources department.

One of the main questions this thesis attempts to answer is: What appears to be the range of effects of hotel training programs on hotel employees? In order to address this question, it is important to examine the specific training programs of both hotels. This section not only describes the two programs, but it also examines the courses interviewees most remember taking, and those they believe they found most important at the time of the interview. Hotel A’s section also includes valuable insights regarding the role of training in the hotel from a trainer’s perspective. An additional thesis question can also be partially addressed by the examination of training programs: Does hotel work provide hotel employees with both professional skills and life skills?

Hotel A
The Training Program

The training courses in Hotel A were created by both the corporate office of the hotel and by the local Korean office. The types of courses that employees take depend on department and rank.

All managers must take training classes focused on management and interviewing skills. They must also take an Orientation class reserved for managers. Supervisors are required to take a leadership class. All rank-and-file employees must take Orientation training within the first month, and a review of Orientation [which includes testing] within the first three months of employment. Orientation is a two-day course that covers the following topics: hotel vision and goals, hotel history and awards, hotel organization, human resources issues, health care, rewards programs, hygiene and sanitation, product knowledge, image and grooming, courtesy, telephone etiquette, sexual harassment, environmental issues, fire and safety, and Security. Refer to Appendix B for a first-hand account of an Orientation training session. Rank-and-file employees must also take classes where they learn how to handle guest complaints and how to provide quality customer service to both internal customers, such as colleagues, and external customers, such as guests.
All employees are required to take a fire and safety course, a sexual harassment prevention course, as well as an English proficiency exam. Frontside, or “guest facing,” employees, such as those in the Fitness department or the Front Desk, must learn CPR and First Aid.

A number of departments require employees to take specific classes. Front Office employees must take classes about membership, revenue maximization, and hotel-specific software used in the Front Office. Sales and Marketing employees must take strategic selling classes. Food and Beverage and Kitchen employees must take a wine class, a beverage class, a sales class, and a hygiene class. Kitchen employees also take a culinary skills class. The Human Resources department also offers optional classes. Optional classes include a course for employees who would like to train others in their departments, as well as overseas training.

Employees who would like to take optional courses must eventually receive approval from department heads. The approval is needed because there are limited slots available, which means that the number of candidates must be controlled.  

In order to improve the employees’ English levels, the staff implemented an incentive program. If an employee’s English level was lower than the required level and he or she was able to pass the required level after training and an exam, the employee was given money. The hotel also decided to offer the online English class this year to improve English levels. A Human Resources employee notes, “This class was effective, and the employees were satisfied with the training.”

The hotel also creates its own classes, which are separate from classes brought down from the corporate office. Courses include a specialized service ownership course created by all the trainers in the hotel. The staff also created a Japanese Cultural Awareness program, where they invited a salesperson knowledgeable about the Japanese market to come in and conduct sessions.

Some classes are offered much more often than others. For example, Orientation is offered monthly while a class such as guest handling is offered once a year. Other programs, such as sales or overseas training, are administered only if requested. Class lengths also vary from one hour to several weeks.

**Interviewee Responses to Training**

Twenty-one of the twenty-six interviewees had previous experience working in a hotel, either through full-time or part-time jobs and internships, before gaining employment at Hotel A. As a result, some of the interviewees may have been exposed to formal hotel training programs before arriving at Hotel A.
Interviewees in Hotel A worked on average for twelve years in the hospitality industry, and for five years in this hotel.

When asked what training courses they took at the hotel, interviewees either mentioned all or a small set of the courses they have taken at the hotel. Some interviewees could not remember the names of all the courses, or thought it would take too long to recount them all. Others just wanted to speak about the most recent courses they had taken, or those that stuck out most in their minds.

Thirteen interviewees spoke about courses geared towards new hires, such as Orientation and basic service training. One employee notes, “I loved the two day Orientation. I thought it was great. I met everyone in the relevant departments. I learned what was expected, and a lot about the hotel in general. That’s the idea of the program. Though I learned about grooming and image as well, that’s all general knowledge - the standards are similar in every hotel, in every country.” An employee new to the industry found Orientation especially helpful because she “didn’t know anything about hotels” when she first came in.

Eleven interviewees spoke about department-specific training they received at the hotel. One Front Office employee received one month of Front Office training, where she learned how to check in and check out guests, how to make keys, and handle groups. She notes, “Seven months have passed, and now I can do all the functions properly. It took me three months to really learn everything.”

One Waitress learned about sales skills. She recalls, “The most important thing I learned in the selling class is how to catch what guests want before they ask for it. For example, if the coffeeshop does a strawberry promotion, I learned that I should suggest to our guests, ‘Why don’t you try our strawberry juice?’ and I should also describe our menu to the guest.” Another Waitress learned about upselling in the bakery. Upselling consists of “describing different breads to guests who may not know about our products, and describing them very accurately and deliciously, letting them know quickly what a bread is like.” She continues, “Upselling also consists of recommending breads, knowing what the guests want before they do and suggesting those items to them. If the guests feel good, and our breads sell well, then we’ve made a profit and that’s good for the hotel and for the employees. Upselling is about having guests buy more things, and more expensive things.”

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\[^{107}A17\]
Six interviewees spoke about hygiene training. One Food and Beverage employee believes hygiene is a popular topic in South Korea, especially since there was a food problem in June 2006 in Korean schools that made thousands of students sick.\(^{108}\) He notes, “In training, I learned how to handle food, from the time I receive it to when it goes out to guests. I’ve learned about expiration dates and about separating your poultry, meat, and vegetable knives. It’s not easy to make everything so clean, and it’s very hard for employees to do it all. We’re almost like cleaning men.”\(^{109}\)

Three interviewees spoke about the management and leadership training they have received in the hotel. A Senior-level employee learned about the hotel business, the company vision and goals, how to manage employees, and how to make budgets. An Assistant Director believes the interviewing skills he learned help him when he speaks to other employees. He gives an example: “When I do an evaluation, I need to interview the employees. The training taught me how the employee and I can speak comfortably with each other. We sit together at one table, so we’re not in an awkward position. I listen a lot and don’t talk that much. When I ask a question, I speak very clearly, and make clear outlines. If you ask them something too difficult, they get awkward and nervous.”\(^{110}\)

Three interviewees spoke about language training courses they have taken at the hotel. One Food and Beverage employee who took an online English course notes, “I went on the computer and did the program when I had time. I took the program during breaks, or even after dinner. It took me three to four months to complete the listening and reading sections. I learned things I didn’t know before.”\(^{111}\) A Business Center employee learned about Japanese expressions in a Japanese culture and language class.

One interviewee in the hotel mentioned that she trains other employees about health. She teaches First Aid and CPR two times a year. She recently trained employees about Muscular Skeletal Disorder. She initiated training about the disorder when she saw that employees’ bone densities, even those of young employees, were low after an annual health check-up. She speculates that the scores were low due to smoking, bad diets, and irregular eating habits. She notes, “When I teach employees about MSD, I tell them what it is, why it occurs, how to prevent it, and how to treat it. The disorder occurs when one’s posture is bad, or when people carry a lot of heavy things at once. When I came into the hotel, I bought the employees trolleys so they wouldn’t have to carry heavy things.” She initiated a bone density improvement campaign and, in partnership with the cafeteria staff, planned menus with

\(^{108}\) In June 2006, forty schools were struck by a massive outbreak of food poisoning. More than 3,000 students were sickened. Refer to Jin, Hyun-Joo. “Authorities fail to find root of food poisoning.” The Korea Herald 20 June 2006.

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foods that would help increase the bone density of employees. She is now planning her next campaign, which will most likely be about the heart.

Interviewees were also asked what they believed was the most important skill or process they learned in training. They mentioned: teaching skills, people skills, cross training, management skills, hygiene, and service.

One Business Center employee liked cross training because she now knows how to complete tasks in other Front Office sections. She notes, “We have to help other sections in order to offer guests speedy service.” One Waitress believes the service training she received is most important because “it’s what I do everyday.” She recalls that employees role-played during the training programs - for instance, they learned how to solve situations so that guests would not be left feeling embarrassed or confused. She notes, “Since we practiced in training, it’s easier to handle situations on-the-job.”

A Trainer’s Perspective on Training
One interviewee who trains other employees made several insightful comments about the role of trainers and about training programs in the hotel.

The employee believes that the most effective techniques used in training sessions are games, role-playing, video clips, and activities in which other employees can actively participate. She looks for cues in the employees’ reflections while she is teaching to see if employees understand her well. She notes, “If they don’t understand me, they don’t say anything, and there’s no expression on their faces.”

The employee believes that trainers should be able to come up with many ideas, have good presentation and computer skills, good relationships with others, and be very active. The employee also believes trainers should be passionate, intelligent, talented, teacher-oriented, and have a good image. Trainers are responsible for coming up with ways of making training programs, which are based on manuals, effective and fun. The employee notes, “If I have no passion about the job, then I would just follow the manual and show the employees a PowerPoint presentation. If I’m passionate about being a trainer, then I would look for music and fun things for the employees to do during breaks.”

One new idea the employee has come up with is showing employees clips from dramas and movies that emphasize positive and negative types of communication.
The employee believes the hardest part of being a trainer is that she must not only develop herself, but also all other hotel employees. The employee notes, “Of course, I’m not the only one that’s responsible for developing our colleagues, but I do have to stimulate them. In order to do that, I have to be developed personally. Teaching is not everything. After we teach trainees, we have to give them a means to think about themselves and what they’ve learned. During training, they are satisfied because they’ve learned something new. But the effectiveness might not last for a long time, especially when they go back to their outlets. They can easily forget what they’ve learned from training. So, helping them maintain what they’ve learned is most important. That is the role of the manager and supervisor - if they can encourage their people, then the staff can maintain what they’ve learned.”

Hotel B

The Training Programs

Training courses in Hotel B are split into the following categories: leadership training, hospitality training, job skills training, and basic training.

A number of training courses are offered to managers. The basic managerial courses teach managers how to: lead, handle conflicts, manage their careers, develop personally, and adopt habits of effective people. Supervisors take a management development program where they learn about managing human resources and about leadership. The program also includes both Orientation and cross training. Both managers and supervisors receive training in essential management skills. The class teaches employees how to: communicate effectively, hire employees, develop, train, and coach junior colleagues, work in teams, evaluate performance, and manage time and priorities.

Hospitality courses are geared specifically towards new hires. The courses teach employees how to respond to guests and how to serve guests and fellow colleagues. Hospitality training also includes topics such as telephone etiquette, smiling, and manners.

Job skills training focuses on department-specific tasks, as well as languages. Course topics include upselling, beverages, sanitation, and hotel-based software. Employees may also receive training in the English or Japanese languages, although the hotel itself may not offer these classes.

A number of classes are mandatory for all new employees. These include courses that cover First Aid, sexual harassment prevention, local standards, job safety, fire safety, health safety, and new hire Orientation.

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Interviewee Responses to Training

Sixteen out of twenty interviewees had previous experience working in a hotel, either through full-time or part-time jobs and internships, before gaining employment at Hotel B. As in Hotel A, some of these interviewees may have been exposed to formal hotel training before arriving at Hotel B. Interviewees in Hotel B have worked on average for nine years in the hospitality industry, and for six years in this hotel.

Like interviewees in Hotel A, interviewees in Hotel B either mentioned all or a small set of the courses they have taken at the hotel. Ten employees spoke about management and leadership training. One Front Office Manager learned how to manage time, coach colleagues, and recognize colleagues. In career development classes, she notes, “We made a tree out of our positive traits, and then pinpointed those areas where we can improve.”

Eight interviewees spoke about department-specific training they received at the hotel. They received training in areas such as accounting, hotel software, table settings, and labor and law issues. One Food and Beverage employee mentioned that new hires are given one-to-one training with a senior employee. The new hires learn the menu, how to set the table, and how to make suggestions to guests. A Banquet employee believes the hotel’s job skills training is well programmed because it consists of several levels. As employees go through the levels, they learn more and more detailed functions of their department.

Four interviewees spoke about safety training. According to one interviewee, employees must satisfy a certain number of hours of safety and health training per year. The hotel’s Safety Coordinator teaches employees general safety rules regarding electricity, elevators, and the fire extinguisher.

Interviewees were also asked what they believed was the most important skill or process they learned in training. They mentioned: job skills, management skills, Orientation, guest handling, and safety.

One employee believes job skills training is most important when combined with service training. She notes, “In Food and Beverage, we need to know how to interact with guests and also how to handle our jobs. We deal with a lot of foods and products, but we also meet a lot of people. So we use both types of training a lot.”

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A Sales employee most uses the people management skills he has learned, and finds the leadership classes helpful as well. He notes, “The classes teach you about the hotel culture and it emphasizes the important points. For example, I learned how to interview people and appraise performances. There are a lot of diverse, in-depth training programs here, and they match the level of the employees so we can develop personally.”

A Front Office employee believes Orientation is most important because it “covers the basic areas.” Since guests do not come to the hotel knowing much about the hotel, she is able to help them by teaching them the information she learned in Orientation.

One Supervisor chose not to pinpoint a specific skill he learned in training. Instead, he believes that the most important aspect of any training system is that employees take courses continuously so that they can progress forward and update their knowledge about the hotel.

Findings
The review of training programs in both hotels shows that they offer both compulsory and optional courses. The courses that employees take depend on their departments and position levels. Courses tend to focus on developing management and leadership skills, department-specific job skills, and basic service skills [especially for new hires]. Information concerning hotel background, hygiene, safety, sexual harassment prevention, and all topics covered in Orientation, such as grooming, guest handling, and courtesy, are taught to new employees. Management and leadership skills are taught to managers, supervisors, and employees on the way up the ladder. Employees also have the option of taking language courses, but spots are limited, and classes may only be offered by an outside institution.

Among these classes, when asked which training programs they had taken, interviewees mentioned most, in order: Orientation and service training, departmental training, management training, safety training, and language training. Among the training they received, they found the following most useful or most important: cross training, hygiene training, people/guest handling training, service training, job skills training, safety training, and Orientation.

There were overlaps in the topics interviewees learned in formal and on-the-job informal training. However, several courses taught interviewees material that they could not have absorbed by on-the-job experience. Since employees receive materials and take part in activities such as role-playing during training sessions, formal training seemed to have provided interviewees with specific, tangible

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references they could use while working. Informal training is accumulated over a period of time, and the knowledge employees gain may depend on the various, unpredictable situations that occur within the hotel. Formal training, on the other hand, is completed within an allotted time period, and the content of the training course is determined beforehand. Ideally, employees exit a program assured of having learned a new topic or a new skill.

The skills and contents of the courses that interviewees most mentioned or found important can most likely be learned, at some level, through job experience alone. However, training programs seemed to have provided interviewees with an assurance of sorts that what they are doing while working is correct and up to standard. Interviewees were able to apply what they learned in formal training to their jobs. The training course taught interviewees both life and professional skills. For example, while interviewing skills fall under the “professional” category, interviewees also found life skills such as people interaction skills important. As hotel employees accumulate their knowledge and proficiencies in various skills through training, as they would informally while working, they may become more and more valuable in the job market. Interviewees also displayed a high level of enthusiasm and willingness to take training courses. As highly motivated learners, it is possible that they were better able to absorb the material.

**THEME 5: Concrete Skill - Computer Abilities**

The ability to use a computer is a concrete skill that is useful in many industries. Computer proficiency is also a transferable skill. Through either formal or informal means, it is possible that employees learn to use the computer in the hotel. An examination of the computer abilities of interviewees sheds light on the following thesis questions: Does hotel work provide hotel employees with both professional skills and life skills? Once educated through hotel employment, are hotel employees potentially better equipped to advance both within the hotel industry and in arenas outside of the hotel industry?

**Hotel A**

At least twenty-one out of twenty-six interviewees reported that they knew how to use the computer before starting work at Hotel A. It makes sense then that only five interviewees recalled taking training courses where they learned basic computer functions. All interviewees who worked in departments that use specific, hotel-based programs received specialized training in the software. For example, Front Office interviewees learned how to use Opera, a program that integrates Front Office management functions.

Of the interviewees who already knew how to use the computer, at least eleven learned to use the computer in school. The programs they use most on the computer are the internet and Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. A Business Center employee notes, “I learned computers during school,
not after gaining employment at this hotel. I had to be qualified to use computers in advance in order to get hired for this position.”\textsuperscript{122} Of these eleven interviewees, two even attended a private educational institute to improve their computer skills.

Five interviewees remembered taking computer training courses at the hotel, where they learned Microsoft Office software. All of these interviewees were over thirty years old, and all entered the hotel industry in the late 1980’s or early 1990’s.

Three interviewees learned how to use the computer on their own after beginning work in the hotel. They used books, studied with friends, and consulted family members.

**Hotel B**

Seventeen out of twenty interviewees reported that they knew how to use the computer, at least at a basic level, before starting work in this hotel. These interviewees learned how to use the computer at school, alone using a book, or at a private educational institution.

Seven of the seventeen interviewees learned how to use the computer in high school or college. They learned Microsoft Office and the internet. Five of the seventeen interviewees read books and taught themselves at home. They all knew the same Office programs as the school-taught interviewees. Two more interviewees attended private educational institutions, where they learned the basic programs. A Finance and Accounting employee learned how to use Excel’s finance functions through an outside course supported by the hotel.

Like Hotel A, this hotel trained interviewees on how to use programs needed for department functions. Manager-level Front Office interviewees recently received e-learning training on a new Front Desk system the hotel will implement. Those managers then taught the employees under them.

**Findings**

The majority of interviewees knew how to use the computer before entering into the hotel. While the most popular means of learning computers was at university, interviewees also took the initiative to read books or enroll in private educational institutions. The small sample reveals that older interviewees seemed generally less proficient in computers than younger interviewees. Interviewees who worked with computer systems as a part of their job, such as Front Office workers, received specific departmental training to learn the necessary software.

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As the first section on educational background revealed, all interviewees graduated from high school and all but one interviewee graduated from a higher educational institute. Thus, it is fitting that such a high percentage of interviewees could use basic programs on the computer before coming to the hotel. Though the hotels do not offer training on basic computer functions, it seems that such programs are unnecessary.

Though hotel work did not directly teach most interviewees how to use the computer, job functions may certainly require employees to use the computer daily. Such interaction with computers most likely keeps employees updated about new technical functions, and makes them practice, at the very least, typing. As can be seen in Hotel B, hotels switch older programs with new programs. Thus, hotel employees may be well-versed in the newest hotel software, which is valuable if employees plan to advance within the industry.

**THEME 6: Concrete Skill - Foreign Language Abilities**

Like computer skills, foreign language skills are useful in many industries. Foreign language proficiency is a transferable skill that employees would find useful in overseas positions or in positions within international companies. The ability to speak foreign languages as a result of hotel work would likely contribute to the improvement of an employee’s career. It should be noted that both Hotel A and B belong to international chains of hotels.

When employees attend Orientation in Hotel A, a high-ranking employee gives a speech in which he emphasizes the importance of learning new languages: “I speak four languages. It is very, very important that you learn English. You must know it for your future success. Let’s say you want to work in China, or anywhere else in Asia. Not everyone can speak Korean.”

The foreign language abilities of the interviewees were examined in order to answer the same questions noted in the previous section: Does hotel work provide hotel employees with both professional skills and life skills? Once educated through hotel employment, are hotel employees potentially better equipped to advance both within the hotel industry and in arenas outside of the hotel industry?

**Hotel A**

**English**

All twenty-six interviewees could speak at least basic English. This result is not surprising since all interviewees had to pass an English exam before they were hired. English was the native language of

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only one interviewee. The remaining twenty-five interviewees reported that they learned the most English at one of these four places:

1. Only at school.
2. At a private educational institute.
3. Overseas.
4. Through hotel training programs.

Six interviewees reported that they learned English only at school, meaning they did not take any form of supplementary training. Currently, Koreans learn English for at least ten years— they start in third grade and continue through to the end of high school. Interviewees who learned English only in school were all over the age of thirty, mainly in backside departments, and overall could not speak English with much confidence.

Six interviewees attended private educational institutes in Korea. Both young and older interviewees attended these institutes. One employee used to attend a language institute every morning before work, but now only attends on Saturdays and Sundays because classes can be expensive. Interviewees also attended specialized classes that focused on the TOEIC exam, which every hotel employee must take during the summer.

Seven interviewees reported that they learned the most English overseas. Three of these interviewees learned English while studying hotel management in Canada, Switzerland, or Singapore. Two others came to the United States during high school, and one for college. One of them could not speak English at all when she came to America. Though she could read and write English, she was too afraid to speak in front of Americans. Both she and another employee that attended college in the United States now speak near fluent English.

Six interviewees reported that they received English training during their time at Hotel A. One employee took a six-week intensive course taught by a Canadian teacher. He learned general English, and phrases such as “Where are you from?” and “How long are you staying in Korea?”124 A new employee took a course implemented through the internet. The program, which takes approximately four months to complete, allows employees to listen, read, and test themselves in English.125

Given the large number of foreigners that stay as guests in the hotel, it might seem peculiar that the hotel does not offer more rigorous language classes other than the internet class described above. When asked why this was the case, one interviewee said that the hotel had previously offered English

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classes. When they saw that employees attended private institutions on their own to study English and the TOEIC, the hotel decided to offer an alternative class. However, the English levels of employees did not improve very much. The hotel also found that employees preferred learning English on their own, as they had been doing. As a result, the class was not offered again.126

The incredible pressure to learn English was also evident through my own observations during my time at the hotel. Interviewees expressed much anxiety over the upcoming TOEIC exam. One employee expressed disappointment about her language skills: “I had to conduct a session in English yesterday. It was awful, because I couldn’t remember how to say anything. I was so ashamed.” Another employee regrets not having learned more English: “I really can’t speak English well. If I went to a hotel school instead of [learning computers in] university, my English might have improved more. I never had the drive to learn English before I started working in the hotel. You have to speak English well in order to get a promotion or a transfer. So now, I regret not knowing English better.”127

**Other Foreign Languages**

Nineteen out of twenty-six interviewees reported that they could speak a third language. Fifteen of these interviewees spoke Japanese. The level of fluency ranged from basic to native. Those who spoke basic Japanese could say general courtesy phrases, and knew vocabulary relevant to their jobs. A Human Resources employee explained that so many employees could speak Japanese because the hotel receives many Japanese guests that do not speak English very well. Though “the hotel wanted English speaking employees before, it is now concentrating on hiring people who can also speak Japanese well.”128

Interviewees reported that they learned Japanese through self-study, from superiors, overseas, by taking a class at private educational institutions, or by taking Japanese culture and language classes offered by the hotel. Those who could speak Japanese well wore a special pin on their clothing so Japanese guests could recognize them easily.

One employee who began her hospitality career in America feels pressure to learn Japanese: “After working in Korea, I feel I must learn more languages. I didn’t feel this pressure in America because English is a worldwide language. Here, I see we have so many Japanese customers, and now I’m waiting for an opportunity to learn Japanese. Though the hotel offers a course, it is reserved only for intermediate speakers.” The hotel’s one Japanese employee teaches the intermediate class.
The remaining interviewees reported that they picked up a third language in high school, university, or by working in various countries before coming to Hotel A. Third languages included French and German. One employee who has worked in hotels located in Dubai and Oman could speak a few words each in Hindi, Indian, Tagalog, and Indonesian. He is currently learning Korean.

Hotel B

English

All twenty interviewees could speak at least basic English, and two interviewees were nearly fluent in English. The majority of interviewees, or 90%, reported that they learned the most English at one of these three places:

1. Overseas.
2. Only at school.
3. At a private educational institute.

Eleven interviewees reported that they earned English when they studied overseas in countries such as the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Indonesia, Switzerland, and the Philippines. The lengths of stay ranged from one to fifteen years overseas, and the employees' English abilities seemed to correlate with the lengths of stay. Three interviewees attended high school and university in the United States, and one also attended middle school in the states. They seemed to speak the highest level of English among the employees interviewed.

Four interviewees reported that they improved their English most by attending a private educational institute. One employee mentioned that the hotel subsidized the cost of her institute tuition. Another employee who attended a private institute has a “guilty conscience” because her English is “not perfect.”

Three interviewees reported that they learned English only at school. One Food and Beverage employee is “very stressed about English,” and believes “everyone is stressed.” He notes, “English is not a language I can speak with much confidence. I want to speak English well, but it just doesn’t seem to work out. I’ve tried learning English at home, but it goes very slowly.” His position does not help him a great deal as 80% to 90% of the guests he interacts with are Korean.

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While the hotel does not offer any formal language training classes, it does subsidize the cost of English or Japanese classes employees take at private educational institutes. Like Hotel A, this hotel conducts regular English testing through the TOEIC exam.

Other Foreign Languages
Fifteen interviewees reported that they could speak a third language. Approximately half of those interviewees could speak basic to fluent Japanese. The remaining interviewees spoke German, French, Spanish, Portuguese, or Chinese at varying levels.

One interviewee could speak Japanese nearly fluently, while most of the remaining interviewees could speak intermediate-level Japanese. Interviewees learned Japanese in university, on-the-job, or by attending a private educational institute. Two interviewees each were able to speak German, French, and Spanish. Two interviewees could speak basic Chinese, and one was fluent in Chinese. One Senior-level employee began to learn Chinese on his own because he believes he needs to prepare for his future.

Due to her unique background, one employee spoke the highest number of languages at the highest skill level among all the interviewees in both hotels. Since the employee was born and raised in Sao Paulo, Brazil, her native language is Portuguese. While in Brazil, she grew up learning English, and learned Korean by attending Korean school, a Korean church, and watching Korean shows. When asked if she is fluent in Korean, she responds, "When I first came here, I thought I was but learned I wasn't. I decided to enter the hotel workforce to improve my Korean." She now speaks Korean fluently. She also spent two years as a Spanish language major at a university in Brazil before switching to hotel management, and attended a private language institute in Korea to learn Japanese.

Interviewees reported that they use English and Korean more often than other languages when working in the hotel. The percentage of English used varied among interviewees based on whether they worked in the front or backside and on whether their bosses were foreigners or Korean. For example, one Sales and Marketing employee reported that he uses English 60% to 70% of the time because he participates in many meetings with the General Manager and the Director of Marketing, both of whom are expatriates. A Food and Beverage Manager speaks Korean only with local people, Japanese with Japanese guests, and English with all foreign businessmen and Europeans.

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Findings
Hotel employees in both hotels must know at least basic English to work in the hotel. The majority of interviewees could speak at least one other foreign language in addition to English, usually Japanese.

Though many interviewees reported that they did not learn the bulk of their English through hotel training programs, it did not mean they were not seeking out other means of learning English. Further, it seemed that hotel work drove interviewees to constantly improve their English language abilities. Many interviewees in Hotel A took the initiative to study in advance for the yearly English exam. The hotel environment itself, with its foreign guests and younger generation of employees who can speak English, seems to motivate employees to learn, or at least feel the pressure to learn, foreign languages.

The English-heavy environment of the hotel may prove to be very useful to Korean employees because some Korean jobseekers who wish to work overseas hit language barriers. A 2004 news article from “Asia Pulse” reported that while “an increasing number of South Korean job seekers, mostly university graduates, are searching for work overseas, their lack of language and job skills lead to poor results.” By working in a business where English is used regularly, employees may leave the industry equipped with the tools necessary to overcome language barriers.

The results also show that it has become more and more important for employees to learn Japanese due to the high number of Japanese businessmen and tour groups that stay in Seoul hotels. The interviewee responses suggest that employees were motivated to learn Japanese solely as a result of hotel work.

Hotels seem to drill into the minds of employees the importance of improving language skills. In this respect, employees may benefit from working in a place where they are in constant contact with foreigners and where foreign language abilities are highly valued. Thus, hotel work may indirectly contribute to the betterment of the lives of employees by increasing their chances of advancing both within the industry and/or in other industries that require strong foreign language abilities.

THEME 7: Job Function
By examining the job functions of hotel employees, it is possible to pinpoint several tasks they perform that could help them improve their own lives, either at home or when they seek future opportunities. This section helps provide partial answers to the following questions: Can the skills gained by on-the-job experiences unique to hotels help employees improve their lives? Does hotel work provide hotel employees with both professional skills and life skills?

In order to pinpoint specific tasks completed by the interviewees, they were asked to describe a typical day at their jobs, as well as what they thought was the most important skill they used in their jobs.

**Hotel A**

The skills that interviewees reported they gained through on-the-job experience in Hotel A can be grouped into the following four categories:

1. Creative and craft skills.
2. Speaking skills.
3. Guest interaction skills.
4. Problem-solving skills.

Two interviewees in the Banquet Sales department and two in the Food and Beverage department learned how to use their creativity effectively for their jobs. One employee in Banquet Sales who works with weddings notes, “Every event should be unique, so I learned how to arrange flowers differently for every event. In one month, we might have approximately twenty weddings to plan. I now know how to pick flowers appropriate for the season.”

His colleague who works in the Food and Beverage section of Banquets notes, “Creating an event is like designing a new restaurant. When we have to set up an event, we start with an empty hall. Then, we try to match today’s trends to the theme of the event. We can dream of how we want the event to look, and then we make it happen.”

Interviewees who constantly interact with foreigners believed their speaking skills and foreign language skills improved. One Front Office employee speaks with guests all day long. Her boss stands next to her and corrects her intonation when she speaks with guests. She learned to describe information accurately because guests complain to her if she makes any mistakes. Two more interviewees improved their language skills through translation work. One employee who works under an expatriate boss helps other colleagues communicate with him. She notes, “It is a bit difficult for the Korean employees who didn’t learn English well to communicate with him. They encounter some difficulties when trying to communicate with foreigners in general.”

She has been told that her English has noticeably improved.

Another Front Office employee reports that she now enjoys meeting foreigners since she has better “people skills.” She notes, “Koreans often get nervous around foreigners. After having seen foreign
people everyday now because of my job, I’m more comfortable with people from other cultures. If I
don’t know something about a culture, I’m now motivated to go ahead and learn as much as I can.
When I’m on the phone with a foreign guest and I can help them, I feel very satisfied.  

By interacting with more and more people, one Food and Beverage employee has even learned how to
pinpoint the subtle differences between people, a skill which ultimately helps her provide better
service. She is able to “see the difference between people - rich and poor, educated and uneducated,
those who are picky and those who won’t complain.” As a result, she understands she must provide
a lot of help to those customers who complain more than others.

Hotel B

The skills that interviewees reported that they gained through on-the-job experience in Hotel B can be
grouped into the following five categories:

1. Concrete skills.
2. Stress handling skills.
3. People interaction skills.
4. Collaboration and teamwork skills.
5. Presentation skills.

In some cases, interviewees reported that they gained multiple skills. Each skill was counted into the
appropriate category.

Six interviewees believed they learned concrete skills, such as interviewing and teaching, or gained
professional knowledge about the industry. A Human Resources employee reported learning
interviewing skills, which are essential for her job, by taking a training course in the hotel. She is now
an alumni interviewer for her university. An employee who never taught others before now trains
other employees about safety techniques. She believes she has developed solid teaching skills in the
hotel. A Finance and Accounting Manager learned finance skills during his time in the hotel. Since
finance is relevant to the work of many departments, he quickly learned how a hotel functions.

Five interviewees reported that they learned how to handle stressful situations. One Front Office
employee interacts with guests exclusively via telephone. The guests feel free to speak harshly to her
because to them she is a faceless voice on the other end. One employee felt very stressed during the
first month of her job in the Front Office because she had been abroad for several years and didn’t

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know or understand the Korean hierarchy system. She was “very cautious at first,” but has since adjusted to her boss’ style of management.  

Nine interviewees reported that they now enjoy interacting with people. One Front Office employee finds her job “dynamic and attractive” because she gets to meet a lot of people. She feels most satisfied and proud when she is able to make a guest comfortable. She notes, “When someone from a foreign country comes to Korea for the first time, and I help them with a seemingly trivial issue, they are very thankful. I feel most satisfied about my job at those times because the guests’ responses reaffirm my service mind.” A Food and Beverage employee likes her job because the “same guests don’t come everyday.” She acknowledges that “the diversity is hard sometimes,” but believes it keeps her job very interesting.

Five interviewees believed they learned the importance of teamwork, and they feel very satisfied upon seeing the results of collaborative efforts. A Housekeeping employee notes that teamplay is significant in the department because two people work together as one team. If the relationship between them is not good, it is hard to be productive. One employee finds the hiring process stressful, attractive, and interesting all at the same time. She feels very satisfied when she and her colleagues are able to correctly find a suitable person for a position.

Two interviewees reported that they improved their presentation skills. Both a Front Office Supervisor and a Housekeeping Supervisor believe they are now more meticulous and better at “making things clean and simple.”

Findings

By performing job functions fundamental to the service and hospitality industry, interviewees reported they gained or improved one or more of the following skills:

1. Creative and craft skills.
2. Speaking skills.
3. People interaction skills.
4. Problem-solving skills.
5. Concrete skills.
6. Stress handling skills.
7. Collaboration and teamwork skills.

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8. Presentation skills.

The skills interviewees reported to have gained are a mixture of both soft and hard skills, or life skills and professional skills - while some skills are useful in everyday situations, others are much more relevant in the working world. Both sets of skills have the potential to contribute to the lives and careers of employees, and may even be equally useful. Training programs also cover some of the skills listed above, such as speaking skills. Thus, interviewee responses show that employees seem to learn from a mixture of sources. Skills gained due to job functions are not always exclusive of skills learned in training programs. It is possible that the two types of learning support each other. Since the skills above were extracted from descriptions interviewees gave of their job functions, it seems that interviewees have been effectively applying the knowledge gained from training programs in the intended ways.

**THEME 8: Cultural Awareness**

The opportunity hotels provide to hotel employees to gain insight into various cultures within one building is a unique aspect of hospitality. This thesis examines how hotel work contributes to the betterment of the lives and careers of employees - thus, knowledge learned about other cultures may be as valuable to employees as professional skills they have learned.

In order to assess if hotel work exposes employees to diverse groups of people, interviewees were asked what types of guests they most interacted with in the hotel. They were then asked to elaborate on what they perceived they learned about cultures from interacting with people of other countries. The purpose of asking interviewees these questions was to examine the exposure to other cultures, languages, and people that hotel work offered to hotel employees. This section explores the following thesis question: Does hotel work provide hotel employees with both professional skills and life skills?

**Hotel A**

The interviews revealed that frontside interviewees interacted most with guests, while backside interviewees interacted with guests only in special situations, such as when there were complaints to address.

The interviewees reported they interacted most with guests from the following nations, excluding Korea: Japan, China, France, and the United States. Nearly every interviewee who was asked this question mentioned that they interacted with Japanese guests regularly. Interviewees in the Food and Beverage restaurants reported that they interacted most with Koreans, as restaurant guests include city residents.
Interviewees were also asked to elaborate on what they thought they learned about cultures by interacting with people of other countries. Seventeen interviewees responded to the question.

A few interviewees believed they learned about differences that run across all ethnicities. For example, one Waitress learned: “My service changes based on what I can read about a guest’s personality. If they are elderly, I know that I should take care of them and help them. I stand by and sometimes bring their food to them, if it’s a buffet. If they are businessmen who have no time, I serve them as quickly as possible. I also adjust my service according to the tempo at which the guests eat.” Another Waitress states, “Businessmen often come to eat alone. In these cases, I am more friendly and talk to them a lot.”

Fifteen interviewees commented on general differences they learned among cultures. The first group of differences is service-oriented. A Business Center employee acts friendlier to Asian businessmen, especially females, because “they’re a little picky.” She has observed that “Asian women, and women in general, are the most difficult. They expect more from us.” One Front Office employee who is well-versed in both the Japanese and Korean cultures reports: “When there is a complaint from a Korean guest, you should apologize and smile at them. With Japanese guests, if you smile at them, they get very angry. You have to bow and apologize. I think the service quality in Japan is a little higher, but they can overdo it sometimes.”

Another Front Office employee learned about smoking norms in various countries: “When you check in an American or European person, making sure the room is smoking or non-smoking matters a lot. It matters much less for Japanese people because it seems that everyone smokes anyways.”

Differences in speed of service were also reported by interviewees. A Waitress believes that Westerners tend to eat more slowly, with “more room to spare,” while Asians tend to always be in a hurry and “want servers to do everything quickly.” One Housekeeping employee observed: “In Korea, the hotel likes to have things done in a short amount of time, so the quality may be a little lower. Since productivity is very important here, they might give us only thirty-five minutes to clean one room. In Japan, a cleaning person may take one hour to clean a room, but at the end, it will look like a completely new room.”
The third set of differences reported by interviewees deals with conversation and speech patterns. Interviewees generally seemed to believe it was easier to have light conversations with Western guests rather than Asian guests. One Front Office employee cannot speak with Japanese or Korean guests as casually as she does with Americans. She feels more comfortable speaking with Americans because she can use big gestures and sometimes even joke with them, which one can never do with Japanese guests. One Waitress observed that French people seemed to enjoy talking amongst each other. She believes that gaining exposure to such differences will help her if she works at another place because she can “easily understand all guests.”

Interviewees who have worked under foreign bosses, either in Korea or overseas, expressed several benefits they felt they gained through their experiences in the hotel. The most obvious benefit noted by employees was the opportunity to speak English. One employee who works under an expatriate calls herself “lucky” to work with a foreigner because she would never otherwise be able to speak English in Korea. Her colleague who has the same boss also prefers working under an expatriate because “he accepts a lot of opinions.” He notes, “If I have a suggestion for a menu or a dish, a foreign chef will usually accept my ideas. In Korea, it would seem rude if you offered your opinion to a senior chef. This attitude is just a part of Korean custom.”

Hotel B
While frontside interviewees reported that they interacted most with guests, usually businessmen, interviewees in the Food and Beverage and Banquet departments reported they also interacted with Korean families, representatives of Korean and foreign companies, and non-room guests that come to enjoy the hotel’s facilities.

The interviewees reported that they interacted most with guests from the United States, Japan, and China. They believe many Americans come to stay in this hotel because it is an American brand.

When asked to elaborate on what they thought they learned about cultures from interacting with people of other countries, approximately half the interviewees responded with at least one lesson they learned.

Three interviewees commented on adjustments they have made in their service to guests from foreign countries. One upper-level employee finds that employees in her department tend to serve guests from Japan and English-speaking countries such as Canada and the United States “better and faster, so
they don’t have to wait,” because the employees do not want to make it seem as if the guests are being ignored in any way. One Food and Beverage employee is more comfortable interacting with foreign guests because “even if it’s the first time we’re meeting each other, there’s something friendly about the interaction.” With Korean people, she believes there is an established formality, or a “fixed rule” resembling a hierarchy. A restaurant Manager finds that American and European guests tend to order fancy food, so he matches his service style with the food type. Local guests “are still not used to the other types of food,” so he provides them with “local [Koreanized] service.”

Three interviewees reported that they learned about communication differences between Korean people and foreigners. One employee finds it easier to speak with English-speaking Asian guests rather than Korean guests because Koreans “tend to show their emotions more.” Another employee believes that foreigners can be both demanding and reasonable at the same time. She finds them generally more understanding about why certain requests cannot be granted. In these situations, she finds it difficult to communicate with Koreans, who “tend to be more stubborn.”

Two interviewees in the Food and Beverage department reported that they observed different food preferences among guests. A restaurant employee has observed that foreigners who go to his restaurant usually only eat foods they have already tried since Chinese food isn’t “as close to them as it is to Koreans.” He finds this very understandable, since he would try to find a Korean or Chinese restaurant if he went to a foreign country.

Findings
Interviewees reported to have found noticeable differences among cultures regarding:

1. Service.
2. Communication.
4. Food preferences.

While the observed differences do not apply to all people from a particular country, it was clear that interviewees were constantly aware of their guests and the characteristics that subtly made each person unique. It was impressive that interviewees could adjust how they performed their jobs based on the quick initial assessment they made about guests and their cultures.

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Cultural learning is one aspect of hotel work that interviewees have absorbed through experience, even if they did not set out to purposely “learn” cultural differences. Heightened cultural awareness is similar to a life skill - it can contribute to the betterment of the lives of hotel employees because it exposes them to other groups of people and ideas that they may have never encountered before. Employees may be more savvy when traveling and when working overseas. Such knowledge can possibly help employees form new types of professional relations in future work. The benefits of cultural knowledge to employees may be as large as benefits gained from training programs.

**THEME 9: Communities and Networks**

Departments within hotels work together to provide guests with exceptional experiences. Since work functions are interconnected, it is possible that hotels provide employees with opportunities to build communities within or across departments that may be helpful to both the professional and personal lives of employees. Since the skill set of each department is very diverse, and many of the skills are important in everyday life, employees that connect to colleagues in other departments have an opportunity to learn about areas that can be useful outside of work.

In order to examine if interviewees perceived that hotel work provided them with community-building or networking opportunities, they were asked how they came to know colleagues, whether they interacted with colleagues outside of work, and how they felt such interactions helped them. They were also asked if they kept in touch with colleagues from previous jobs. The results provide partial answers to the following thesis questions: What appears to be the range of effects of hotel training programs on hotel employees? Once educated through hotel employment, are hotel employees potentially better equipped to advance both within the hotel industry and in arenas outside of the hotel industry?

**Hotel A**

Orientation sessions are made up of employees that start work during the same month. As a result, interviewees noted that employees who begin work at a similar time are friendly with each other. Other types of training sessions combine people of many departments, and provide employees with opportunities to interact with colleagues in other areas. Some programs even take participants away on retreats for a few days.

Interviewees reported that they became friendly with others by spending time together in common employee-only areas. For example, since many employees wear uniforms, they go to the locker room to change before and after work. Interviewees mentioned that such areas were popular places to hold conversations. They also mentioned that they eat together in a cafeteria located in the basement. One employee noted that he talks to people “all the time” in the staff cafeteria, and believes it is very
important to “show genuine interest in colleagues - the least one can do is say ‘Hello’ or ‘Good Morning.’”165

Interaction with other departments during working hours also provided interviewees with opportunities to meet colleagues. One Front Office employee has met people in other departments because “Front Desk work is connected to the minibar, to Housekeeping, and to Banquets. We’re always in communication, so it’s easy to get to know people.”166

Fifteen out of twenty-six interviewees reported that they meet with other hotel employees outside of work. Interviewees eat, drink, and watch movies when they meet up after work. They also meet each other through clubs formed in the hotel based on shared interests in particular sports, such as tennis and soccer, and they play those sports together.

Those interviewees who reported meeting colleagues outside of work were asked if and how they believed such interactions helped them. In general, interviewees believed the outside activities eased work stress.

While partaking in activities together, interviewees reported that they share information with each other about work and worries related to work. One employee believes that such outings are “very important to improve communication and hotel business.”167 During dinner, interviewees talk to each other freely, sharing “sad stories.”168 One Human Resources employee notes that colleagues are more easily able to tell her what changes they’d like to see in the hotel when she goes out to dinner with them. She believes, “When colleagues become closer to each other, they are able to work together better. Everything becomes easier.”169

Socializing also helped interviewees during work because they could more easily ask their friends in other areas for favors, which shortens procedure times. One employee notes, “Korean people are willing to help you if you have an emotional connection with them.”170

Interviewees were also asked about any networking opportunities they experienced while working in the industry. Fourteen interviewees still communicated with employees they met at previous hotel jobs. Though the figure is not completely indicative of whether professional networking takes place

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between those colleagues, it does signal that interviewees have resources within the industry and in other countries.

One employee reported that she was able to network within the hotel after meeting a very highly-ranked employee during a training session. Since everybody ate together during the session, the two spoke a lot to each other. Later, when the highly-ranked employee wanted to find a Japanese snack for his mini-bar, he asked her directly for ideas since she had formed a professional connection with him. She believes that connecting face-to-face with others is very important in hospitality.

Another employee reported that she is part of a professional network in Korea, which consists of other employees in the same position. They meet monthly at various hotels around Seoul. They share information with each other and note good qualities they see in other hotels. She was able to contact a woman in the same position at a famous electronics company and visited their Human Resources office to examine the types of machines and software the office used. She remembers, “They all had laptop notebooks, and used the best products.” The hotel plans to upgrade its software to the program used in the other office.

By sharing information with other professionals who work in hotels, some interviewees believed they were able to gain a broader understanding of the entire industry. One employee notes, “Even though there are only a few top hotels in Seoul, each one functions very differently. When I contact people in those other hotels, I learn about various systems.”

Hotel B
In this hotel, interviewees reported that they first met other hotel employees while working with other departments or during training sessions.

At least nine interviewees reported that they meet with colleagues after work or on days off. Interviewees reported eating, drinking, and watching movies together. One employee is a member of hotel “circles,” which are groups composed of employees with similar interests. He is in the wine and soccer circles. The group goes out and eats together, and the hotel pays for the outing. He notes that it would be hard to meet employees otherwise. Another employee mentioned that she also goes on team building outings with her department once every three months, and with the entire hotel once a year. The outings take place in the countryside, and include recreational games.

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Those interviewees who reported meeting informally believed that the deeper bonds formed and increased camaraderie were helpful at work. One employee notes, “We can understand each other better. We know each other’s personalities and characters.”\textsuperscript{174} Another employee believes such outings are “stress relievers, because everyone complains about their bosses.”\textsuperscript{175}

At least eight interviewees reported that they still communicate with employees they met at previous jobs for both personal and professional reasons. One employee believes such communication is important, even if hotels cater to different types of guests, because “service means the same thing in all first tier hotels.”\textsuperscript{176}

Interviewees found it helpful knowing people in other hotels for information-sharing purposes. One restaurant Manager calls others he knows in the business when a guest who is staying at another hotel eats at his hotel. He is able to provide better service if he can connect to the other hotel and receive the guest’s information. Another employee adds, “Knowing people in other hotels is helpful because we all lead the same kinds of lives.”\textsuperscript{177}

\textbf{Findings}

More than half the interviewees meet with colleagues outside of work. The results showed that interviewees seemed to maintain relationships with each other that were not just strictly professional. While many of the outings seemed to be initiated amongst colleagues, the hotel also supported community-building by planning specific outings for the employees. Interviewees who still kept in contact with colleagues from past jobs showed that they were well-connected within the industry.

The interview responses suggest that community-building and networking are facilitated by training programs and on-the-job experiences. While training programs helped introduce interviewees to one another, interviewees reported that the bulk of the relationships were strengthened during work and on the interviewee’s own time. Thus, through both formal and informal means, interviewees built communities and contacts within the industry. Communities seemed to have been beneficial for both professional and personal reasons - interviewees enjoyed being able to speak with others who understood their problems and points of view. By speaking with each other, they were also exposed to various areas of the hotel.
These communities and networks may prove helpful to hotel employees once they want to leave their current positions. Having connections to people with diverse skills can be useful when employees pursue other interests, especially within the industry.

**THEME 10: Hotel Environment and Architecture**

Employees spend their days in an environment that tries to cater to the tastes of upper-class clients. Since employees clean, maintain, and work in a structure that gives off a seemingly flawless image, they may be equipped to voice their own thoughts about the realities of the working environment and about the hotel’s architecture as it relates to their job functions. The ability of an employee to articulate and pinpoint what he or she perceives to be the positive and negative aspects of the hotel environment is a skill that is not learned in training but more absorbed through on-the-job experience in the hotel.

This section aims to provide evidence that could eventually help answer the following thesis question: What behavioral differences can be detected in hotel employees that are related to the physical environment of the hotel?

In order to examine the influence of the hotel environment on the interviewees, they were first asked to describe, in their own words, the architecture and interior design of the hotel, and in some cases, of the outlet in which they worked. The interviewees seemed to be very savvy about the architecture, as they could often identify why they did or did not like some aspect of the structure. In some cases, interviewees also articulated what they would like to change in terms of the hotel’s architecture, if possible.

**Hotel A**

All twenty-six interviewees responded to the question. Fifteen interviewees described the hotel using generally positive terms, though eight of them supplemented their responses with suggestions on how to improve the facilities. Eleven interviewees described the architecture using neutral or negative terms.

Among those interviewees that liked the hotel’s architecture and interior design, the words they used most to describe the facility included: simple, casual, light, young, modern, clean, and bright. Interviewees believed the hotel was more suitable for young rather than older people, and for businessmen rather than families. One employee reported that she likes the hotel for its “comfortable
and casual atmosphere," which she prefers over the "harder, more cold feeling" one might feel at an older, luxury hotel.\textsuperscript{178}

Interviewees also liked the hotel because the facilities were not as old as those of other hotels in the city. A Housekeeping employee notes, "Facilities-wise, the hotel opened late, so the place is clean. Though it's not new, the atmosphere is modern."\textsuperscript{179}

Those who generally liked the hotel's architecture were quick to point out that the hotel is neither elegant nor sophisticated. One employee who has worked in "palatial, extravagant, and stunning properties" in the Middle East described Hotel A as "very minimalist, quiet, clean, open, and fresh, with simple fixtures and fitting."\textsuperscript{180} He believed that working in a structure that is positively regarded "affects the pride you have within your establishment. It certainly helps to work in a hotel that you're proud of - if somebody says, 'Oh, the hotel you work in is a bit old,' then I wouldn't feel very good. But everyone tells me, '[Hotel A] is a beautiful new hotel.'"\textsuperscript{181}

Interviewees who did not like the architectural environment describe it as "lacking elegance." Some believed the hotel's time of construction was partly to blame. The hotel was constructed in the late 1990's, when the IMF situation occurred in Korea. One employee joined the hotel's construction team at that time. He elaborated on the situation: "Though this hotel is only a few years old, during the time of construction, the Korean economy was very bad. Since it was during the IMF situation, the Korean won was very weak to the dollar. So, construction prices were very high. We could not spend very much money on the interior. This building may be worse than other luxury hotels in terms of architectural effect. The building is very strong and very good, however. But as far as the interior goes - well, there is no interior design. None. It's not very pretty. It's just sturdy and simple - this is, of course, nice for those of us who have to maintain it."\textsuperscript{182}

Interviewees who reported that they disliked the hotel were very specific about what changes they thought would improve the hotel. Even those who liked the hotel wished to see changes. The changes were categorized according to the departments in which the interviewees worked.

\textit{Food and Beverage}. One Waitress expressed that her outlet is too small. She thinks this is a disadvantage because "it gets really crazy, for the guests and for us, when a lot of people are crowded

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in a small space.” The outlet offers only two tables, which is a lower number than most of the other outlets she has visited. She also notes, “Sometimes, we miss serving guests because of the limited space. There’s nowhere for us to wrap [our products], and even though we’d like to lay everything out nicely, we can’t place a lot of the items. I guess this situation teaches me about patience.”

Another restaurant employee reported that she dislikes how the tables are set up in rows, making the length of the outlet seem very long. She believes this makes the restaurant “a good place for kids to run around, which ruins the image of the restaurant.” She also believes that laying the buffet plates on a black tablecloth “makes the food look dead.”

Front Office. Two Front Office interviewees disliked the setup of the check-in areas. One employee believes the architecture of the front desk is a horrible part of the hotel because it makes the check-in time longer. Another employee believes that the hotel’s weakness is the second-floor location of the group check-in area, since the entire group has to proceed upstairs.

Banquet Sales and Banquet Kitchen. These interviewees believed the facilities needed improvement. One employee thinks that wedding halls need to be romantic and pretty, not like a seminar room. Another employee would like to see more renovations, since the ballroom is “too small” and the ceiling “too low” for big events. She believes a new lighting system would also be helpful.

Human Resources. Interviewees who worked in the back offices wished that the spaces were less tight and small. One employee in this office expressed that she believes it is tiring and difficult for employees to work in a line in a tight space. Since guests like to use large areas, she believes the hotel designers designated most of the space to guests and only a small amount to employees. Further, since backside offices are located in the basement, she believes that the air may not be so good for employees. She believes that from the outside, the hotel may look good, but for the employees, the facilities are not always so good.

Hotel B
Three out of twenty interviewees reported that they liked the hotel’s architecture, and seventeen interviewees were neutral about or disliked the architecture, pinpointing which parts they thought should be changed.
Those who liked the hotel’s architecture described it as “good, bright, and modern,” with an “open view.”\textsuperscript{189} Two of the three employees thought the architecture was both luxurious and modern. One Front Office employee notes, “I’ve heard from a lot of people that this hotel seems luxurious.”\textsuperscript{190}

Seventeen interviewees expressed that they disliked or were neutral about the hotel’s architecture, describing the building and interior as plain and simple. Some reported that they were dissatisfied with the construction. One employee was disappointed with the hotel’s facilities when he first arrived. He notes, “Though this hotel opened only a few years ago, I thought the builders would have considered both the guests and employees and made things more comfortable. However, when I came here, I noticed the backside and elevator were uncomfortable, even compared to the twenty-year old hotel I worked in before. The design also doesn’t seem like great architecture - it doesn’t show off this brand too well.”\textsuperscript{191}

Several interviewees articulated which parts of the hotel they found most uncomfortable. When asked what changes they’d like to see, the interviewees often focused on the same features.

Five interviewees thought there were not enough elevators in the hotel, especially for the employees. One employee believes, “It would have been better if more attention was paid to the building during construction. The service elevators are too small. If people who knew about hotels built it, they wouldn’t have made the elevators so small. The system is okay for guests, but the Kitchen employees have to go back and forth a lot, so it’s quite inconvenient for them. When there’s an event, employees have to manually operate the elevator, and this means other employees can’t ride them, and there are only three elevators to begin with.”\textsuperscript{192} Another employee thinks the lack of elevators makes it more difficult for the employees to conduct business well.

The lack of a shooter, a slide that brings sheets down to the basement for sorting, is inconvenient for Housekeeping staff. Housekeeping staff members have to come down the elevator, sometimes for more than twenty-five floors, with the sheets, which can get very difficult on days with many check-out guests.

Four interviewees expressed concern about the hotel’s utility and pipe systems. When asked about the facilities, one employee responded, “It worries me. When it rains, water drips. There’s a rumor that the hotel was not built very well.”\textsuperscript{193} Another employee finds the air-conditioning and heating system

\textsuperscript{189} B20
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"strange."\textsuperscript{194} She dislikes how the system is not divided by section, so that when guest rooms are heated, the employee areas also become very hot.

One restaurant interviewee found the heating and cooling problems inconvenient for the guests: "Guests complain often that they are too cold or too hot. This is unfortunate because guests complain about temperature and hardware more so than about service or food. We can't fix those problems on our own. If the food was too spicy, we could just remake it. Sometimes, guests come knowing that they will encounter problems - that the restaurant will be too cold, hot, or noisy. It's hard to know that complaints are coming our way. I'd like to make the complaints go away - to make it as comfortable as possible for our guests. However, I also know that the hotel has to save energy and money. Sometimes, guests just don't understand the limits. They just know that they're paying a lot of money for the room and food, and that they're not always satisfied."\textsuperscript{195}

Two interviewees found the specific designs of the outlets in which they worked uncomfortable for employees and for guests. A restaurant employee expressed that she does not like the hard marble floor and the long length of the outlet since employees always have to walk around the entire setup. She notes, "It's so easy to get tired. Our feet and waists hurt."\textsuperscript{196}

Findings
The results showed that interviewees were very observant about their environment. As both hotels are business hotels and fairly new, the adjectives employees used to describe both hotels were appropriately similar. While both hotels may seem stylish and "perfect" from the outside, the interviewees who spent their time in the backside had a different perception of the hotel.

The reported negative aspects of the hotel and desired changes of interviewees revealed that they were highly aware of how they thought spaces should work and how they failed to work. What was most interesting about all the comments was that interviewees related discomforts back to the comfort of guests or to the success of the hotel business rather than to their own comfort. For example, a Front Office employee believed the Front Desk setup was inconvenient for the guest and thus bad for hotel business. Such comments showed that interviewees had a service mind and were able to provide thoughtful comments about how to improve conditions for the guest and for the hotel. The responses also showed that many interviewees were very business-oriented.

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The ability of hotel employees to describe the physical environment of the hotel, and to identify spaces that they felt did not function correctly, are skills most likely gained through on-the-job experience. The sharp eye displayed by employees could contribute positively to the lives of hotel employees, though not in a conventional way.

**THEME 11: Influences and Impacts on - Behavior, Speaking Skills, House Design, Image, Eating Habits**

Interviewees were asked if and how they perceive themselves to have changed their behavior, speaking manners, house design, image, and eating habits as result of working in the hotel and in the service industry. These five categories were chosen because they relate to non-technical skills that employees may be able to learn in the hotel. Skills or knowledge gained within these categories are important in everyday life, and can also be useful in professional situations. It is possible that any influences or changes simply elevate an employee's standard of living. 197

This section attempts to shed light on the following thesis question: Does hotel work provide hotel employees with both professional skills and life skills? For the “house design” sections below, the following question is also relevant: What behavioral differences can be detected in hotel employees that are related to the physical environment of the hotel?

**Hotel A**

**Behavior**

Twenty-two interviewees believed that they positively changed some aspect of their behavior as a result of working in the hotel. The most common changes included:

1. Increased willingness to help others.
2. Improved mannerisms and temperament.
3. Increased smiling outside of the hotel.

Approximately one-third of those interviewees, or 36%, reported that they are now more willing to either approach or help others when not working in the hotel, in areas such as parks, subways, and on the street. One employee often engages in “light, practical conversation” with foreigners while at church, and also helps to translate for them. 198 Another employee used to “just pass by foreigners” but now, she goes up to them and asks, “May I help you?” She believes she is “progressing in a positive way.” 199

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197 It should be clarified that these five categories do not represent the entire range of influences or impacts that employees can experience while working in the hotel. These categories were specifically chosen before the interviews were performed. The responses of the interviewees reflect their own perceptions and thoughts at the time of the interview, and the responses represent the first thoughts that came to their minds.

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Another employee believes she has overcome her shyness as a result of working in the hotel. She states, “When I started working in the hotel, I had to approach guests, and I had to learn to talk to them before they spoke to me. That was a huge change. Now, I am more considerate and no longer selfish.”

Nine interviewees have noticed distinct changes in their mannerisms and temperament. One employee notes, “If someone disturbs me, now, I don’t get too angry. I’ve learned not to show anger so much to others.” Interestingly, another employee believes he has picked up mannerisms that have become “habits which are part of my body,” but thinks that sometimes his gestures may look like overkill to others who don’t work in the hotel.

Some interviewees found themselves smiling all the time. One employee believes her constant smiling is a big change. She smiles at everybody everywhere, so much so that one of her coworkers even told her to stop smiling so much because it seemed as though she had some other motive for doing so. She calls smiling a part of her personality.

Others believed they changed their behaviors because they now feel like representatives of the hotel even when not working. One employee, who was a “wild, off-the-rails guy” when he was younger, now half-jokingly calls himself a “complete gentleman.” He states, “I’ve changed my behavior because no matter where I go, I’m always a representative of the hotel. Since I’m a foreigner, people always want to know where I work, or whether I’m an English teacher. Once I tell them I work at this hotel, I should be on my best behavior all the time. That’s just the way it is, especially as an expat - I’m always under a spotlight.”

**Speaking Skills**

Twenty interviewees perceived that one or more aspects of their speaking skills improved as a result of working in the hotel.

Three interviewees believed they had better telephone speaking etiquette. The remaining interviewees reported that they speak more logically, politely, cautiously, persuasively, articulately, or confidently. One Banquet Sales employee learned negotiation and persuasion skills because she has “dealt with
people for four years.” Another credits training programs with teaching him how to speak with his children more “logically, reasonably, and calmly.”

Interviewees who reported that they now speak more politely than before find themselves saying “sorry” and “thanks” even “for the little things.” One employee in her thirties believes, “People my age that don’t go to work or work in other industries speak very differently than I do. More so than others, I speak courteously, prettily, I always use formal language, and I never cut anyone off.”

**House Design**

Fifteen interviewees reported that they changed or would like to change at least one aspect of the design of their homes as a result of working in the hotel. One employee completely renovated the interior of his house and others added new fixtures or furnishings or rearranged the interiors. Others believed their design senses improved, expressed in Korean as, “The eye with which I see has gotten higher.” For those who wanted to change their homes but did not end up doing so, cost was the biggest obstacle.

One employee remodeled the interior of his home to resemble the hotel [and even provided me with a drawing]. His new “modern and pretty” apartment resembles the interior of a cabin. His ceiling is no longer flat but sloped and high. He covered the interior with wood. Another employee whose “aesthetic sense has increased” states, “My curtains are very cool. When other people look at my curtains, they think the design is fashionable. I changed them because I started noticing curtains more and more as I benchmarked at other hotels. My walls are now white - I used to dislike white because it reminded me of a hospital. After working in the hotel for a long time, I’ve come to think that white walls look very nice.”

One employee believes her current room is too old-fashioned, and thinks that the exposure to hotel amenities and architecture has changed her perspective. She would like to purchase a popular bedding set sold by a hotel chain but cannot yet do so because it is too expensive.

Interviewees explicitly reported that they copied the hotel and made their homes more simple and spacious. One Housekeeping employee used to keep her home cluttered and messy. Once she started
work, however, she “made things simple” and kept only a few large pieces of furniture after seeing how the hotel designed its rooms.211

One employee reported that she hears people say to her, “You have a good ability to pick fashionable items.”212 When shopping, she often wants to buy high-quality, fashionable furniture - “I want what I see at the hotel.”213

Interestingly, one Banquet Sales employee believes it is also important for him to find inspiration from the outside and incorporate new ideas into his own work planning weddings for the hotel.

**Image**

The grooming standards in the hotel are strict, which is evident when looking at the list of rules they give to employees during Orientation about what they can and cannot wear in the hotel. According to one employee, “Your image is very important in the hotel, especially the image you show to guests. There is a grooming checker from the Human Resources department that comes by and checks us. On days she doesn’t come, our supervisors tell us if our uniform is dirty, if our hair is messy, or if our makeup is too strong.”214 Another employee who once worked in America finds it stressful to follow the Korean standards of grooming. Here, the spot checker comments on her hair, her nails, her earrings, and her shoes. She believes there are too many restrictions, and thinks staff are sometimes treated as “kindergarteners.”

Twenty-two interviewees believed they changed one or more aspects of the image they portray to others when not working as a result of constantly following the hotel’s grooming standards. While the majority of those interviewees reported that they changed their image to resemble the one they have during work, eight of them reported that they experienced a reverse effect, whereby they started to dress even looser because they felt confined by the hotel’s rules.

Interviewees that improved their images now dress more neatly and pay more attention to their appearances. One employee who regularly meets VIP guests has started taking pilates and yoga at a fitness club. She realized that “exercise, appearance, and body shape are important, as is health,” and she works out to “appear healthier and brighter” to others.215

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One employee, who by my own observation was perhaps the best-dressed employee in the hotel, finds that she is more properly dressed than others most of the time, and that she can match her clothes to the occasion. She notes, “The employees in [this office] are like the ‘don’t’ people - we’re the ones that tell people what they can’t wear. Now, even outside the hotel, if someone’s hair looks messy, I want to tell him or her. When I go to restaurants, I always check people’s uniforms. I’m always seeing how people present themselves.”

One employee believes that the hotel should change its grooming standards to match today’s trends, and hopes to see rules such as “No red lipstick” and “No big earrings” modified.

**Eating Habits**

Eleven interviewees reported that they changed their eating habits or eating style as a result of working in the hotel. Of those, seven interviewees reported that they experienced a positive change, while the rest now have to eat more quickly and at odd times due to shift work.

Interviewees who perceived that they made positive changes were able to learn about new foods due to frequenting hotel restaurants and food-oriented training sessions. They reported that they have a bigger interest in learning about foods from other countries. Some interviewees benefited by receiving discounts at restaurants as a result of working at a hotel. Others learned how to eat foods properly and have overcome any nervousness about eating in fancy restaurants. One employee even learned to match her speed of eating with that of guests in order to make them feel more comfortable.

One employee stated that he now eats out with his family at hotels. He points out, “If I didn’t work in the hotel, I would never have come to eat here because eating in hotels once seemed difficult and unusual. But since I’m here at the hotel, I like the opportunities it has given me.”

A Waitress has been able to try new foods in the hotel due to new training programs, and has grown fond of foods she never used to like. She has many opportunities to eat steak in the hotel because employees need to test new foods in order to sell them well. When Food and Beverage employees undergo table manners training, they get to try new dishes because “when learning how to use spoons, knives, and forks, it would be strange of the hotel not to give us any food.”

One Food and Beverage employee’s eating style has become more sophisticated. When at a buffet, she finds that someone “with no knowledge” will bring back a lot of food on his or her first plate, while she

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has learned to eat salad or soup first. She notes, “There are a lot of times when working in the hotel has helped my outside life.”

One interesting case should be noted - one employee reported that her own eating habits, as well as that of her children, improved. The hotel offered a program that allowed employees to bring their children to the hotel to learn table manners. Though young, the children now have a lot of pride in their eating skills and “try very hard” to eat properly.

Hotel B

Behavior

Approximately ten interviewees perceived that they changed their everyday behavior in one or more ways as a result of working in the hotel. The most common changes included:

1. Increased service mind.
2. Increased caution.
3. Increased laughing and smiling.
4. Increased use of hand motions/gestures.

One Front Office employee believes she can read other people quickly and tries to think of the other side when dealing with people. She has gotten into the habit of trying to take care of the needs of the other person first. One employee now lets people go ahead of him through doorways and holds the door for people behind him, whereas before he would have just closed the door. A male employee notes that he uses his hands to accentuate whatever he may be saying, especially directions.

Speaking Manners

Twelve interviewees reported that their everyday speaking styles or manners have changed as a result of working in the hotel.

Nearly half of those interviewees picked up the habit of using formal language with others. One Reservation employee has started to use the “empathizing and sympathizing” words she says to guests even when she is not in the hotel. One female employee once impressed her friend’s father by greeting him with very formal language. She often hears that she “sounds like a hotelier” when she speaks outside the hotel. One restaurant employee notes, “I can’t get myself to drop formal

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language even with younger people because speaking this way has become a habit. If I worked in another industry, I would not be like this.”

Three interviewees believed they now speak more smoothly, politely, and slowly. One Banquet employee now uses a lot of Korean slang. When she worked in a bar and restaurant, 70% of the employees were outsourced workers, usually college or part-time students. She picked up certain terms as she interacted with those young students.

**House Design**

Nine interviewees reported that they changed, or are planning to change, the design of their homes as a result of working in the hotel environment. Using the hotel’s design as a “reference,” interviewees reported that they changed their interiors to make their homes look more modern, clean, tidy, and simple like the hotel.

One employee believes her design sense has elevated. She notes, “When I move, I will change the design of my home. I plan on buying white sheets and cushions for my bed because the hotel uses white in the rooms.” Four interviewees designed or rearranged their homes to give off a modern atmosphere. After one male employee got married, he paid much attention to the interior of his new home. He notes, “I saw very good and clean interiors while working in the hotel. I put a lot of effort into making a similar atmosphere in my home. For example, I chose the chinaware, and fixed the lighting.” Another employee who reported that she has “come to like simple things,” has “one or two big points” in every room. She now uses a high-quality bedspread, and though she never used to care about her rugs and mats, she now buys pieces she likes for her home.

A Housekeeping employee transferred concrete skills he learned in the hotel to his home. He now uses the bed-making method used in the hotel when making his own bed.

**Image**

Fourteen interviewees believed working in the hotel prompted them to change one or more aspects of their image and presentation.

Six of those interviewees believed they now have a more clean, polished, and appropriate [for the occasion] look. One employee tries to dress cleanly, and likes to look tidy. He calls his image “more
sophisticated and modern.”\textsuperscript{228} One young interviewee that started work recently pays a lot more attention to her clothes and appearance. She notes, “My image is not that of a student anymore. I’ve changed and cleaned up into another person.”\textsuperscript{229} Another employee reported that she now pays more attention to her image because she works in a brand name hotel and wants to look good to match the prestige of the name. A female employee learned how to make herself look more sophisticated - for example, she uses light makeup instead of dark colors.

Interviewees also felt that they paid much more attention to their images due to the location of the hotel in fashion-conscious Korea. One employee reported that she changed her image because she works in a “rich neighborhood.”\textsuperscript{230}

\textit{Eating Habits}

Twelve interviewees reported that they changed their eating habits as a result of working in the hotel. While some of those interviewees have been able to try new foods or gain more food-based knowledge, at least half of those interviewees reported that they picked up irregular eating habits due to hotel work.

Interviewees believed they learned about new foods and food-based techniques as a result of working in the hotel. One employee has been able to eat foods he never had the opportunity to try before. He gives an example: “I never ate sundried tomatoes or olives before starting to work in the hotel. Now, they come out in my salads. I would have never eaten those foods in normal conditions.”\textsuperscript{231} He learned about new foods while he worked in the hotel food store and in the purchasing department.

One restaurant employee now goes to other hotel restaurants much more often than he did before. He believes he has picked up the “strange habit” of comparing his eatery with other hotel eateries.\textsuperscript{232} He notes, “I look at how the employees smile and their guest contact manners. I usually order food that my restaurant serves and compare the two dishes. Since I work in a Chinese restaurant, I also go to a lot of Chinese restaurants - I find restaurants that are related to my own work. When I visit other restaurants, I learn new processes and think, ‘Oh, it’s possible to serve food like this [in a certain way].’”\textsuperscript{233}
Findings
More than half the interviewees reported that they changed their behavior, speaking manners, house design, image, or eating habits as a result of working in the hotel. While changes within the behavior, speaking, and image categories may be attributed in part to training programs, changes in house design and eating habits should be attributed to informal experiences and indirect learning.

The reported changes were mainly positive. These changes seem to be most useful in the everyday lives of employees at home and in public. Some of the changes could be valuable professionally as well. For example, improved image, manners, temperament, and speaking skills are most likely useful in the work setting.

The benefits to hotel interviewees due to the physical environment of the hotel can be seen in the way in which employees copied the hotel when they redesigned their homes. In an earlier section, most interviewees called the hotels modern and simple. Many of the interviewees reported that they also made their own homes more modern and simple as well to resemble the hotel, showing some beneficial impact of hotel architecture on the interviewees.

Overall, the changes interviewees made seemed to have elevated their lifestyles. The changes support the idea that hotel work supports a wide range of life activities and serves as a reflection of ordinary life. Perceived changes in behavior, speaking manners, house design, image, and eating habits cannot be attributed to one source - rather, they seem to be the culmination of the multi-faceted learning processes interviewees experience in the hotel.

**THEME 12: Future Ambitions**

Given the educational background of the interviewees, it seemed possible that interviewees envisioned a future for themselves different or greater than what they had at the time of the interview. One thesis questions asks: Once educated through hotel employment, are hotel employees potentially better equipped to advance both within the hotel industry and in arenas outside of the hotel industry?

In order to examine the futures employees envisioned for themselves, interviewees were asked: Do you want to stay in the hotel industry? Do you want to stay in South Korea?

The responses to these questions not only illuminated the career goals of interviewees, but also how interviewees felt they might reach those goals. The responses also revealed the possible paths interviewees felt like they could take after having received a hotel-based education. It was possible to see if and how working in the hotel was, in any way, helping employees fulfill those ambitions. The
responses also revealed whether interviewees were satisfied in the industry and whether they had any desire to switch into other industries.

Hotel A

*Staying in the Hotel Industry*

Approximately twenty-two out of twenty-six interviewees reported that they wanted to stay in the hotel industry. Of those who wanted to stay, interviewees often cited one of two reasons. Firstly, interviewees felt they had much more to learn in the hospitality industry, and they wanted to try switching to other departments. Secondly, interviewees simply enjoyed hotel work and had never given any thought to moving to another industry.

Of the interviewees who wanted to stay in the industry, nine mentioned departments or positions they would like to switch into. One young employee expressed why he wanted to try other positions: “If a person stays in one place all the time, his mannerisms can decrease. So, even if it’s difficult to switch, I think I am at the age where I should learn a lot, and transferring to another outlet would be a good way to learn more.” 234 Four female interviewees from the Front Office, Banquet, and Food and Beverage departments wanted to transfer into the Sales and Marketing department. A particularly ambitious Waitress wants to learn business by working in that area. She mentions, however, that she would not mind staying in Food and Beverage because “there’s a lot to learn.” 235 She notes, “I’m not perfect at what I do. I still make mistakes. There’s so much knowledge that I still need to gain about foods, beverages, and languages. I want to learn Japanese and Chinese, and more about wine. I think it’s very hard to learn about wine.” 236

The second group of interviewees reported that they would like to stay in this industry because they enjoy the work and think it fits them best. One Front Office Manager is satisfied with his job because he has much confidence in his abilities after having worked [in this position] for more than eleven years. A Waitress confesses, “Working in Food and Beverage is not easy. I get tired meeting people, and I don’t think it’ll get any easier. I think my strength and power will decrease because I am moving around and carrying trays all the time. However, I think this kind of work suits me. It is what I can do best. If something difficult has happened at home, I am able to come to work, put on a smile, and act as though nothing is wrong.” 237 Another employee also believes that hotel work is what she can do best because she has received “so much training in the hotel, an exceptional amount - more than I would have received in other industries.” 238
Staying in Korea

Eleven out of twenty-six interviewees reported that they wanted to stay in Korea. These interviewees expressed that they either did not have the confidence to leave the country, enjoyed working in Korea, or did not provide a reason. One employee who does not plan to leave, states, “If I am working in a beautiful hotel with the right product, I am very happy. As a result, I am not thinking about leaving Korea right now, to be honest.”

Approximately twelve interviewees reported that they wanted to work in or move to another country. These interviewees most wanted to go to one or two of the following countries/continents: Asia, United States, Europe, and Australia. Asia was a popular choice in part due to fear of experiencing racism in non-Asian countries. Interviewees that expressed an interest in moving to Australia or the United States liked the modern and progressive image of those countries.

Ambitions

Though interviewees were never asked specifically about whether they believed hotel work made them more ambitious or future-oriented, their responses to various other questions showed that hotel work instilled in them new ambitions.

Four interviewees were pursuing independent studies on their own time at the time of the interviews. One rank-and-file employee attends a private educational institution to learn computer algorithms, and he intends on learning Chinese after his current class ends. One Business Center employee reported that she learns from the “highly qualified” people she meets at work. She states, “After I see what they do, I try it myself. Since I have been exposed to these business people and the types of work they do, I have become more and more curious about other fields.”

Another restaurant employee revealed a similar drive to learn more. When a new product is served in the hotel, she makes an effort to talk to the chefs, to whom she asks, “What is this? Why does it have that name?” Like the Business Center employee, this employee was also exposed to people in high positions when she worked in the Fitness Center. She spoke daily to a President of a company, and realized that he is in such a high position because of the way he thinks about business.

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Interviewees also exhibited confidence about finding success in the future. A young female employee in the Front Office expressed that she would like to be a CEO and run a hotel. A Kitchen employee notes, “One day, I could still open a restaurant - I think there’s no doubt I would be successful at it.”

Another Banquet employee expressed confidence about any future work he may pursue: “I didn’t know anything about events at first, but I believed that I shouldn’t make nothing of my life, so I took on the attitude that I could learn a lot from other people. So, even if I go to another hotel, as long as I work hard, I don’t think there’s a reason why I shouldn’t be able to do something. I have talents that others don’t have, and others the same. As long as one has the courage to do something, it can go well. If one doesn’t have courage or doesn’t at least try, then it’s impossible to do something well.”

**Hotel B**

*Staying in the Hotel Industry*

Fourteen out of twenty interviewees expressed that they wanted to remain in the hotel industry. Of the interviewees who wanted to remain, five interviewees expressed they would like to switch into another department. For the most part, frontside employees wanted to try backside positions, and vice versa.

Three interviewees reported that they would like to advance to the top of the departments in which they work. One Food and Beverage Manager would like to become the Food and Beverage Director, while a Housekeeping employee dreams of becoming the Executive Housekeeper. Similarly, one Front Office Manager would like to move up and become the Chief Concierge or Executive Floor Manager “since all [her] experience is in the hotel industry.”

Two interviewees wanted to stay in this industry because they like its stability. Another two interviewees wanted to stay simply because they enjoy their current jobs. One employee believes, “My job is fun and I never have to stay in one place all the time - I tour all the departments and get to know the employees.” A Finance and Accounting employee also notes, “I am very satisfied with my job and I’m very attracted to my financial work.” He even took finance classes at a private institution and is attending Business School for Hotel Management.
One employee expressed that he would like to switch into hospital management. He believes his hotel background will be helpful in the hospital because in both cases, employees “meet and service guests.” He is “preparing little by little” by taking management and administration classes.

**Staying in Korea**

Seven out of twenty interviewees reported that they wanted to remain in Korea. One employee who has spent fifteen years in foreign countries would like to settle in Korea after so many years abroad. A restaurant employee thinks he should continue working in Korea even though all his friends have gone abroad for work. He would like to stay in Korea and use his efforts to “improve the image of Korea and convey Korea’s service mind to foreign guests.”

Interviewees who wanted to leave Korea most wanted to move to the United States, Canada, or Australia. One employee mentioned that she will leave for Canada soon. She has already secured a job at a Canadian hotel with the help of a connection. She notes, “The Canadian people who hired me considered it a plus that I worked in another country. They liked that I have interacted regularly with international people.” Another employee plans to move to a foreign country, possibly in Europe, in five years - he calls this his “game plan.”

**Findings**

In both hotels, the majority of interviewees reported that they wanted stay in the hospitality industry and work in a country other than Korea. The results suggest that interviewees are more interested in advancing within the industry rather than in another industry. Interviewees are career-minded, since they would like to advance in an industry in which they are accumulating experience, and open to overseas opportunities. Hotel work seemed to prompt interviewees to think realistically about their goals for the future.

Interviewees who wanted to stay in the hotel industry also had ambitions to transfer to different areas in the hotel. It is difficult to predict whether interviewees would have had those ambitions if they worked in other industries - they may have never been exposed to such a diverse array of departments as can be found in hotels. Such transfers would not only expose employees to new types of work, but it would also diversify the set of professional skills possessed by employees. Interviewees also absorbed information from the high-level guests with whom they regularly interacted, and some were motivated to accumulate more knowledge and information. Since employees interact with guests from

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249 B05  
250 B05  
251 B14  
252 B10  
253 B20  

81
other countries, they may be well-equipped to handle work overseas and adjust quickly to foreign situations.

**THEME 13: Perceived Benefits of Hotel Training Programs and Hotel Work**

This thesis set out to explore the education received by hotel employees, and to identify how the latent benefits of this education, if any, could better the lives and careers of hotel employees. To address this larger question, interviewees were asked what they perceived to be the biggest personal benefit they gained from either taking training programs offered by the hotel or from working in the hotel. 254

**Hotel A**

All but three out of twenty-six interviewees responded to the question. The reported responses could be grouped into seven categories. The numbers in brackets after each category represent the number of interviewees that provided that specific response.

1. Increased self-esteem and pride [6]
2. Acquired professional skills [5]
3. Improved manners and control of emotions [4]
4. Increased ability to travel [4]
5. Increased opportunities to meet people [2]
6. Improved personal life [1]
7. Increased opportunities for self-study [1]

According to the interviewees, hotels have a very positive and luxurious image in Korea, especially five-star hotels such as Hotel A. Interviewees believed this reflected well on them. One employee calls her career her “biggest and best” benefit due to Hotel A’s reputation. She notes, “When I tell other people that I work in this hotel, they immediately think well of me.” 255 Another employee believes that “since hotels appear deluxe, employees also feel deluxe and have much pride.” 256 When he started working at Hotel A, it was the “most famous hotel in Korea, and the name value was very large.” 257 He states, “When I told people I worked at this hotel, everyone knew its location, a key area in Seoul. The hotel’s prestige reflected well on me, and this gave me a lot of confidence. If a person wants to work in a hotel, they should work in the best hotels. My hotel work helps me even when I

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254 This section will be qualified with the following note: it is possible that each of the interviewees interpreted the term “benefit” differently. Further, the responses represent those benefits that interviewees perceived they gained at a certain point in their lives. While their responses may fit under any one of the preceding results sections, these responses represent those benefits that the interviewees, at the time of the interview, viewed as most noteworthy or important to their own lives and careers.
255 A22
256 A04
257 A04
leave work, whenever I’m outside. If I said I worked at a no-name, three-star hotel, and people asked me, ‘Is that a hotel?’ I would not feel very proud.”

Interviewees also reported that they learned transferable skills useful in many industries. These included leadership skills, presentation skills, management skills, cross-training skills, and of course, language skills.

One employee believes the presentation skills she learned in training have been most beneficial. In a presentation class, she learned how to make a systematic presentation that connects with the audience. She not only learned PowerPoint, but also how to communicate and control employees.

A Cook reported that his biggest benefit has been the food management skills he learned by watching a high-ranking Chef in his department. He has been heavily influenced by the Chef’s “passion for food and many ideas.” The Cook provides one example: “The Chef taught us that measuring working time is very important when working in the banquet. Though it’s good if main dishes are fancy, we need to make sure recipes aren’t too complicated because we have to serve 600 dishes of the same quality, all at the same time. The Chef considers all these factors.”

Since employees constantly deal with people, often those who complain a lot, interviewees reported that they learned to handle situations with better manners and more emotional control. One employee has more “personal and mind control” when meeting people, and she refrains from always saying what she’s thinking. A Waitress has learned that “manners are an important and basic part of life.”

Interviewees also reported that they have been able to travel more, either for work purposes or for vacation. One employee is much more comfortable going to other hotels because he knows how they function from the inside out. Another employee believes, “Everybody dreams of traveling. When I was a kid, everyone talked about wanting to go overseas. It’s one thing to travel, for a week or two, but it’s another to be able to live in another country. I’ve had great experiences - I don’t regret any of it for a second.”

One employee believes she has benefited from hotel work because it “deals with everything that has to do with the realities of life.” She feels that what she experiences at work and at home are closely

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258 A04
259 A24
260 A24
261 A10
262 A15
263 A13
264 A09

83
connected. Her colleague believes the hotel makes it convenient and easy for her to pursue independent studies. She will soon get certified from an institution for the medical subject she is learning. The department motivated and encouraged her to receive the certificate.

Hotel B

All but three out of twenty interviewees responded to the question. Ten interviewees responded with the biggest benefit they believed they received from hotel training programs, while the remaining interviewees responded with the biggest benefit they believed they received from hotel work alone.

Five of the interviewees that benefited most from the training programs believed they were better equipped for the future. One employee mentioned that taking training programs is similar to "collecting the knowledge I will need for the future."265 He believes that he will be able to use what he has learned in training to help him succeed if he decides to go to another hotel or open his own restaurant later on. He notes, "I could not have received training elsewhere. All the service training, and the food, wine, and beverage training - it's all helpful for the future."266

One Front Office interviewee believes that training programs help employees develop even if they remain in one position. She notes, "If you do the same work all the time, it's difficult to progress. But if you take training courses, you can learn different things. So, the hotel enables employees to become qualified for new positions through training."267 She also enjoys training because she can "learn about subjects for free that were never taught in school."268

Another employee believes he has become more systematic about planning for his future as a result of training. In one class, he learned how to prepare for what he would like to do five to ten years from now. He notes, "This class taught me how to find a turning point if I am not satisfied with my job right now. It taught me how to go forward instead of backwards. It was like a status check for my own life."269 He believes training is helpful not only for his professional career, but also for his personal life. He learned how to manage time, his schedule, and how to pick his priorities. He learned that life "is not just about work" and that one's "everyday life is important too."270

A Housekeeping employee believes her problem-solving skills have improved due to training. She finds this very important because these skills are needed even outside of work in her personal life, when dealing with friends and family. She notes, "Even though training sessions are short - at most a few
days - they make you think about the issue. When I have a problem now, I’m able to refer back to training and think about what steps I can take.”²⁷¹

The benefits interviewees reported to have gained as a result of hotel work could be grouped into the following six categories:

1. Increased self-esteem and pride [2]
2. Increased opportunities to meet diverse people [2]
3. Increased opportunities for networking [1]
4. Improved image [1]
5. Acquired professional skills [1]
6. Increased ability to traveling or accumulated travel-related knowledge [5]

Two interviewees felt they benefited most from the pride they now feel as a result of their work. One employee is proud of working at Hotel B because she feels that senior employees there treat junior employees with respect. She notes, “I like this hotel because of the equal treatment I’ve experienced. There have been very strong hierarchy systems at other hotels in which I’ve worked in Korea. Supervisors managed in a ‘You have to obey me’ style. I don’t like that kind of atmosphere - it’s not for me. This hotel has given the employees a lot of training about how to work with the ‘equal treatment’ mindset.”²⁷² Another employee believes brand image is very important, and the hotel’s five-star rating and its high quality status mean a lot to her.²⁷³

Two interviewees believed the biggest benefit has been the opportunities provided by hotel work to meet diverse people. By constantly meeting the requests of foreign guests, one employee has been exposed to new personalities. For example, when she hears a complaint, she often thinks, “Oh, there are people that can be like this.”²⁷⁴ As a result, she feels she better understands others.

When asked directly if they were able to travel to other countries more often as a result of working in the hotel, five interviewees answered affirmatively. One employee goes on vacation to foreign countries because of the hotel discount. Another employee believes that working in the hotel has offered him a unique perspective on traveling since “information about the hotel culture, the restaurant culture, and the room culture is not available to normal people.”²⁷⁵ Since he understands how hotels function, he is very knowledgeable when he goes to other countries.

²⁷¹ B01
²⁷² B11
²⁷³ B15
²⁷⁴ B03
²⁷⁵ B20
Findings
The largest benefits interviewees perceived they gained either from training programs or from hotel work fall into one of the following categories:

1. Developed for the future.
2. Received free education on company time.
3. Increased self-esteem and pride.
4. Acquired professional skills.
5. Improved manners and control of emotions.
6. Increased ability to traveling or accumulated travel-related knowledge.
7. Increased opportunities to meet diverse people.
8. Improved personal life.
9. Increased opportunities for self-study.
10. Increased opportunities for networking.
11. Improved image.

The responses provide even further evidence that the direct and indirect learning experienced by employees in the hotel result in a number of intended and incidental benefits. These perceived benefits can contribute positively to both the professional and personal lives of hotel employees, and some are useful in both areas. While some interviewees found the life skills they’ve gained more significant, others found professional skills more important. The result puts both types of skills on a level field - both should be considered valuable in the overall contribution of hotel work and hotel training programs to the betterment of the lives and careers of hotel employees.
CHAPTER IV: SURVEY FINDINGS

4.1 Methodology

Surveys were distributed to employees in both hotels during the summer of 2006. Surveys included English and a Korean translation of all questions on the same page. Participation in the survey was entirely voluntary. Employees could decline to answer any or all of the questions, and they were given a choice to write their answers either in English or Korean. Refer to Appendix C to view an English-only version of the survey.

The one page survey was essentially a highly condensed version of an interview. To reflect the questions asked to interviewees, the survey included questions regarding:

1. Educational background
2. Previous professional experience, if any
3. Motivations for joining the hospitality industry
4. Job functions
5. Training program background
6. Most useful skill learned in training [as perceived by the employees]
7. Applications of skills and ideas learned in the hotel [as perceived by the employees]
8. Opinion of the hotel’s architecture and environment
9. Influences and impacts of hotel work [as perceived by the employees]
10. Gender, age, department, rank

In Hotel A, surveys were distributed to the department heads of all departments in June 2006. Employees in each department were asked to fill out a survey. Out of 453 employees in the hotel, 172 completed and returned their surveys. In Hotel B, five to ten surveys were distributed to nearly every department in August 2006. Surveys were handed to department heads or representatives present at the time when I went around the hotel and handed out the surveys. The representatives agreed to hand out the surveys to other employees in the department. This slightly different method of distribution as compared to Hotel A was based on a suggestion given by an employee in the Human Resources department. The Front Office and the Food and Beverage departments have several sections. Five to ten surveys were distributed to each of those sections, depending on their size [more surveys to larger outlets, fewer to smaller outlets]. Out of a total of 100 surveys distributed, 79 employees returned their surveys.
Once all the surveys were collected, the responses for each hotel were translated and categorized, allowing for survey findings to be determined and a comparison between interview and survey responses to be made. Refer to Appendix D for a qualification of the survey findings.
4.2 Quantitative Survey Responses

Responses regarding education, age, rank, gender, and previous experience in the hotel industry were tallied. The results for each of the hotels are displayed in the two tables below. All averages and percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number.

### Table 4. Hotel A Quantitative Survey Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPT.</th>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>GRADUATED FROM</th>
<th>SUPERVISOR OR ABOVE</th>
<th>PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KITCHEN</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRONT OFFICE</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGINEERING</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOUSEKEEPING</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BANQUET SALES</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOOD &amp; BEVERAGE</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERCENT</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td></td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5. Hotel B Quantitative Survey Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPT.</th>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>GRADUATED FROM</th>
<th>SUPERVISOR OR ABOVE</th>
<th>PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KITCHEN</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRONT OFFICE</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINANCE</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FITNESS</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOSS &amp; PREVENTION</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOOD &amp; BEVERAGE</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERCENT</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

In Hotel A, surveys from Kitchen employees made up half of the responses. Forty more males than females responded to the survey. Sixty-five percent of the males were Cooks who work in the Kitchen department. In Hotel B, approximately half of the responses came from Food and Beverage employees. Forty surveys, out of 100 total surveys, were distributed to various Food and Beverage restaurants in Hotel B, which may account for the high number of responses. In the other departments, there were a minimum of five surveys and a maximum of fifteen surveys [to two sections in the Front Office] distributed to the employees. Eleven more females than males responded to the surveys. In both hotels, there were more employees below supervisor-level who responded to the survey rather than supervisor-level or above.  

The departments from which employees responded were similar, with only slight differences between the two hotels. Common departments included the Kitchen, Front Office, and Food and Beverage departments. Hotel A also had respondents from the Engineering, Housekeeping, and Banquet Sales departments, while Hotel B had respondents from the Finance, Fitness, and Loss and Prevention departments. Since the decision to respond to the survey depended entirely on the employees, the differences in departmental representation were largely due to a lack of employees from specific departments returning surveys.

The table shows that like the interviewees, the majority of the survey respondents graduated from university. The number of university graduates was slightly higher in Hotel B than in Hotel A, which reflects the same trend seen in the interview findings education section. Hotel A respondents had less previous job experience than respondents in Hotel B, but respondents worked in the hotel industry and in Hotel A longer, on average, than employees in Hotel B. These discrepancies may have occurred because a larger number respondents in Hotel A, which has been in operation slightly longer than Hotel B, may have began their careers in this hotel. This would account partly for the smaller percentage of employees with previous job experience [since they stayed in one place longer], and the longer numbers of years of employment in the industry and in the hotel displayed by Hotel A respondents.

When looking at the survey results collectively, two points should be made. Firstly, respondents were highly educated. Secondly, respondents have worked both in the industry and in the hotel for at least, on average, four years. Thus, they have had ample time to adjust to the hospitality industry, making them appropriate subjects to be answering questions about the direct and indirect learning they’ve experienced in the hotel, as well as the perceived influences of hotel work on their lives and careers.

276 It is important to note that all employees who responded to the survey did not necessarily respond to all eleven questions. Therefore, the totals and percentages represent minimums. For example, the table of results above shows that at least 51% of the respondents in Hotel A were male.
4.3 Qualitative Survey Responses

Since the survey questions reflected the interview questions, each of the qualitative-response questions have been placed under an appropriate theme heading that corresponds to those used in the previous chapter. These headings were assigned because both sets of results will be analyzed together in the next chapter. As described under each heading in the interview findings, each of the themes provides answers relevant to one or more of the four thesis questions presented in the introduction. Those four questions, in turn, collectively help to gather evidence making the case for governments to view the hotel industry as a complementary source of education.

Survey responses provided data largely supporting the interview findings. Excerpts from respondents that were particularly interesting or unique follow the tables that display the total counts of respondents to each question. Employees who responded with answers that fit into more than one category were counted for each category.

**THEME 2: Hospitality Industry Entry Motivations**

Question: Why did you decide to work in hospitality?

Hotel A

In Hotel A, 122 out of 176 respondents answered the question. Respondents reported that they entered into the hospitality industry for one of the following reasons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>REASONS</th>
<th>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I had an aptitude for hotel work.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I majored in Hotel Management or Tourism Management.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I wanted to meet and interact with people.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I wanted to work in a high-quality business.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I dreamed of working in the hotel/specific position.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I was interested in and curious about hotel work.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I wanted to develop personally for the future.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I wanted to serve others.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I received a recommendation/suggestion from parents or friends.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I wanted a flexible schedule.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I wanted job stability.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I enjoy dynamic, active work.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I wanted to experience international food and be inspired to create recipes.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I had an aptitude for hotel work. In Korean, the majority of these respondents wrote, “Hotel work matches my aptitude.” The Oxford English Dictionary defines aptitude as a “natural capacity, endowment, or ability; talent for any pursuit.” Respondents in this category also believed their outgoing character and personality were well-suited for hotel work.

I wanted to meet and interact with people. Seven of the respondents in this category specifically mentioned that they wanted to meet people who were foreigners, which would provide them opportunities to improve language skills. One employee notes, “I wish to meet diverse people and have various cultural experiences in order to learn languages. This is connected to my personal improvement.”

I wanted to work in a high-quality business. One respondent called hospitality a “high value industry in the 21st century.” Many respondents were very proud that they worked in a five-star hotel. A Cook believes, “This hotel provides the best food in the hotel business.” Respondents were also attracted to the overall good working conditions one can find in high-quality businesses, calling the “fixed regulations” and management styles of of the Executive Chef and General Manager “attractive.” Respondents in this category believed that they could learn how to provide quality service by working in the hotel. One employee notes, “I wanted to learn how to provide dignified, graceful service at a top hotel.”

I wanted to develop personally for the future. These respondents were very clear and focused about their future ambitions. A Cook notes, “The hotel is the right place to develop my abilities.” A Banquet Sales employee “wants to become a leader in the service industry.”

I wanted to serve others. These respondents seemed to derive much satisfaction by satisfying others. They feel ownership in their work because the guest’s satisfaction is directly related to the type of service provided. A Cook notes, “I feel very worthwhile and very satisfied after I am able to serve guests food that I’ve made.”
Hotel B

In Hotel B, 52 out of 79 respondents answered the question. Respondents reported that they entered into the hospitality industry for one of the following reasons:

Table 7. Motivations for Entering into Hospitality as Reported by Hotel B Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>REASONS</th>
<th>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I majored in Hotel Management or Tourism Management.</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I had an aptitude for hotel work.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I dreamed of working in the hotel / specific position.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I wanted to serve others.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I wanted to meet and interact with people.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I liked hotel work.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I enjoy/love cooking.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I wanted a job attractive for women.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I received a recommendation/suggestion from parents or friends.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THEME 4, Part 1: Training Programs Taken**

Question: Please list the training courses [including optional courses] you have taken at this hotel, and the new skills and ideas you learned in each of the courses.

Hotel A

In Hotel A, 132 out of 172 employees answered the question. The majority of employees did not list all the training courses they have taken at the hotel - instead, they listed only a small number of classes they have taken. It is possible that they simply took too many courses to list, they could not remember the classes, they did not want to list all the courses, or they felt it was most important to list only the most memorable or recent classes. Further, many responses did not include an explanation of the new skills and ideas learned in the classes.

If an employee listed more than one course, each course was counted separately in the total count for each category. The classes respondents reported taking are as follows:

Table 8. Training Classes Taken in Hotel A as Reported by Hotel A Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>TRAINING CLASSES</th>
<th>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Service. Service training encompasses classes where employees learn how to provide proper service to guests, handle guest complaints, work with colleagues to provide the best service possible, and take ownership of guests and their needs. One employee reported that he “learned how to provide service in the modern style, which is active, creative, and open, compared to the traditional style, which is motionless and conservative.” A Front Office employee notes, “I recognize my bad habits regarding service, and I try to reverse them and change positively.”

Hygiene. It is important to understand the context surrounding this very high response. Fifty percent of respondents work in the Kitchen and regularly deal with foods. Further, at the time of the survey, the hotel was awarded the highest score out of all the luxury hotels in the region for its food safety management system. The company that evaluated the hotel tests hygiene standards in hotels in major, international destinations. Employees were fully aware of the honor, and Kitchen and Food and Beverage employees were receiving regular Hygiene training at the time of the survey. Both these facts may have contributed to high number of respondents that wrote “Hygiene training” as a response to the question. The class promotes good hygiene habits regarding the cleaning, storing, and labeling
of foods, and covers how to react to the bird flu. It also covers personal hygiene - one employee wrote that he learned to “wash hands in medium temperature water for twenty seconds.”

**Leadership.** This category includes self-leadership, service leadership, and management, where employees learn how to oversee a group of employees and evaluate junior colleagues. An employee likes how “the course helps employees become excellent leaders in today’s changing modern society.”

**Wine and Beverage.** These respondents came from the Food and Beverage department. According to the respondents, the course covers “all types of beverages, methods of service, the specific characteristics of each wine, and the wines of each nation.”

**Colleague Teaching and Coaching.** These classes teach senior-level employees how to look over and relate to junior employees. They emphasize communication among colleagues. One class is specifically tailored to employees who receive training and then teach what they have learned to their colleagues in the department.

**Hotel B**

In Hotel B, 74 out of 79 employees answered the question. The classes respondents reported taking are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>TRAINING CLASSES</th>
<th>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Management, both How to Manage, and Development of Managers</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Safety, including Fire, Health, and First Aid</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Wine and Beverage</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Leadership, including Foundations of Leadership, Habits of Successful People, and Handling Change</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Departmental Training</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strategic Selling Techniques, Upselling</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Computer, including Hotel Software</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sexual Harassment Prevention</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Service.** Classes within this category include the service courses that all new hires must take. Employees learn how to serve guests, serve colleagues, speak with guests, and handle guest
complaints. A Front Office employee believes, “The class taught that if I put myself in another person’s shoes, I can clearly understand what he/she wants.” Another employee believes, “The service classes always motivate me to go out and try more.”

**Safety, including Fire, Health, and First Aid.** In these classes, employees learn: job safety analysis, disaster prevention, how to keep a safe environment, and food hygiene.

**THEME 4, Part 2: Useful Skills and Ideas Learned in Hotel Training Programs**

Question: Which skills and ideas that you learned in training programs do you find most useful for your job? Why?

**Hotel A**

In Hotel A, 122 out of 172 respondents answered the question. The most useful skills and ideas respondents perceived they learned are as follows:

**Table 10. Most Useful Skills and Ideas Learned in the Hotel as Perceived by Hotel A Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>MOST USEFUL/IMPORTANT SKILLS AND IDEAS</th>
<th>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Job-related skills, specifically cooking skills.</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Foreign language skills.</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Service and guest handling skills.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hygiene skills.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Communication skills.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Job-related skills - other than cooking.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Design skills, using creativity effectively.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Safety skills.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Wine and Beverage skills.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Product knowledge.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Teamwork skills, working under experienced employees.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Courtesy and etiquette skills.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Computer skills.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Leadership skills.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Job-related skills, specifically cooking skills.** The large number of Kitchen Cooks and Chefs that responded to the questionnaire may have contributed to the large number of respondents that found cooking skills most useful. They learned how to: slice beef, prepare fusion style food, handle fish and poultry, cut and trim ingredients, correct deformities in baked goods, mass produce foods, make sushi,
make unique sauces, make Western foods, and control cooking speed. A Chef notes, “I’ve been able to update my food style. Now I know how to cook foods that match the tastes of Asians and Europeans.”

Foreign language skills. A Front Office employee believes, “English language ability is a very valuable tool here, and very much in demand. If I were fluent in English, I would have no problems communicating with guests.” Another Front Office employee notes, “Foreign language skills enable us to understand the customer’s heart.”

Hygiene skills. A Butcher applies his hygiene education to “everything” because “it’s so practical for everyday life.” Another Kitchen employee notes, “I’m more conscious about hygiene. I always check the expiration date. I learned new handwashing techniques. I know I should use a food very quickly after I defrost it.”

Job-related skills - other than cooking. One Engineering employee learned “architectural renovation,” while another learned “energy reduction, countermeasures, and lighting reduction.” A Housekeeping employee learned how to inspect linens and downsize costs. A Sales and Marketing employee learned “the Objective, Benefits, Features process”, which he believes is a “crucial process in business.”

Design skills, using creativity effectively. A Cook has learned how “to make food attractive to guests even before they eat it.” Another Cook notes, “I can put together my knowledge of Korean traditional foods and new foods and make new dishes.”

Product knowledge. A Service Center employee notes, “When I use other hotels as a guest, my hotel knowledge is very helpful. Since I know hotel systems so well, I can easily make reservations or use other rooms and facilities.”

Teamwork, working under experienced employees. A Cook likes “learning techniques and ideas from elder colleagues in meetings”. He notes, “This is very helpful. I am in a never-ending pursuit to improve my cooking.” His colleague also believes, “Teamwork is very useful. We can divide all the work to be done, and we learn to be considerate of other colleagues. It facilitates connections.”
Hotel B

In Hotel B, 72 out of 79 respondents answered the question. The most useful skills and ideas respondents perceived they learned in the hotel are as follows:

Table 11. Most Useful Skills and Ideas Learned in the Hotel as Perceived by Hotel B Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>MOST USEFUL/IMPORTANT SKILLS AND IDEAS</th>
<th>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Service and guest handling skills.</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Job-related skills.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wine and Beverage skills.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Communication skills.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Foreign language skills.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Upselling skills.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Management skills.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Design skills, using creativity effectively.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Computer skills.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Health and safety skills.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Service and guest handling skills.** A Waitress believes, “As time goes by, the skills we need for our jobs may change. However, taking care of our guests is always the most useful skill. If we give guests the best service possible, we can get good feedback.”

**Job-related skills.** Skills reported include: accounting, finance, therapy techniques and theories, aquatic exercise skills, and systematic cooking.

**Design skills, using creativity effectively.** A Chef notes, “When I see magazines and internet sites related to cooking, I apply what I see and develop new menus for the guests.” Another Chef writes, “Cooking is always changing and there are new trends. I look at a lot of cooking books and learn the new trends.”
THEME 11, Part 1: Applications of Skills and Ideas

Question: In what kinds of situations or locations outside of the hotel do you apply the skills and ideas you have learned through working in the hotel?

Hotel A

In Hotel A, 118 out of 172 respondents answered the question. Respondents perceived they applied the skills and ideas they learned by working in the hotel in the following situations and locations:

Table 12. Applications of Skills and Ideas Learned in the Hotel as Perceived by Hotel A Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>APPLICATION</th>
<th>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>At home, especially when cooking or doing housework.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>At restaurants.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>In everyday life.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>When meeting new people or guests.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>At private gatherings and meetings, such as picnics and birthdays.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>General service-oriented venues.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>When traveling.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>For future ambitions.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>When giving advice to others, especially those that work in the same area.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>At school, when teaching classes.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>For hobbies.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>At church.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At home, especially when cooking or doing housework. A Chef believes, “The skills are useful for personal and household events. I can make rare dishes for my family.” His colleague finds, “Hygiene training is helpful at home when I teach my children what I’ve learned.”

At restaurants. When one Cook goes to restaurants, she “always looks for clean places” due to hygiene training. Another employee in Food and Beverage notes, “When I eat out, my knowledge about foods and beverages is better than others. I enjoy my food more than them.”

For future ambitions. One employee now knows “how to give good impressions to people.” He believes, “This will help me if I start a business.” A Cook notes, “In the future, if I go into the food industry, I will already know how to sell and purchase materials.”
When giving advice to others, especially those that work in the same area. One Butcher notes, “When I go on the internet and use popular sites like Cyworld, sometimes I see that businesses want to change their menus. I can offer information and ideas, and I often consult people who need help.”

For hobbies. One Food and Beverage employee's hobby is collecting wine corks. He notes, “If I want to collect corks, I have to know about wines. So the hotel's education was very useful for me.”

Hotel B
In Hotel B, 65 out of 79 respondents answered the question. Respondents perceived they applied the skills and ideas they learned by working in the hotel in the following situations and locations:

Table 13. Applications of Skills and Ideas Learned in the Hotel as Perceived by Hotel B Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>APPLICATION</th>
<th>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>When meeting people.</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>At restaurants.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>At home.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>At private gatherings with friends and family.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>In everyday life.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>When traveling.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>In all business fields.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>On the phone.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>When using other service equipment.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When meeting people. One employee notes, “When I speak with others, I listen attentively and respect them. I get closer to them by doing this.” His colleague believes, “My self-confidence, character development, and growth in patience are all helpful when relating to others.”

At home. One Loss and Prevention employee knows how to “take care of emergencies that occur within the family.” Another employee, a Waitress, draws a parallel between hotel work and her personal life: “I can improve sales by catering to the personal preferences of guests and impressing them. Likewise, I can deepen my relationships with friends and family when I am able to help them according to their tastes and preferences.”

When traveling. One Food and Beverage employee notes, “When I go abroad or to other hotels and restaurants, I use the manner skills and food knowledge I’ve learned. I try a lot of things, and try to get new experiences. I’m that type of person.”
THEME 10: Hotel Environment and Architecture

Question: How would you describe this hotel’s general environment [architecture, interior design, atmosphere, image]?

Hotel A

In Hotel A, 147 out of 172 respondents answered the question. Respondents described the hotel in the following ways:

Table 14. Description of the Architectural Environment of Hotel A by Hotel A Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Positively, calling the hotel modern, simple, and clean [see section below].</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Positively, calling the architecture “good.”</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Positively, calling the architecture the “best.”</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Negatively, because of problems in the Kitchen.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Negatively, since the hotel image should be more luxurious.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Negatively, since it needs to be remodeled/upgraded/repaired.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Negatively, because the design is not harmonious.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Negatively, because of hardware problems.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Negatively, because of the image.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Negatively, because the design is boring.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Negatively, because the architecture is too cold and hard.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Positively, calling the hotel modern, simple, and clean, as well as other positive adjectives.

When describing the hotel, respondents most used the adjectives modern, simple, and clean. They also called the hotel: comfortable, bright, business-like, young, casual, elegant, dynamic, polished, fresh, fashionable, luxurious, appealing to guests, convenient, light, classic, neat, and traditional.

One Cook notes, “The outer appearance of the hotel is good for young guests and tourists because of the white color and the modern architecture. The hotel is clean and comfortable.” A Kitchen employee thinks, “The image is simple and matches the idea of the business hotel.” Similarly, a Front Office employee notes, “The employees are lively so the environment feels lively as well.” One employee speculates as to why it has the image it does: “It has a modern and European style. It’s very simple and geared towards young people. It has an international image because it’s part of a worldwide chain.” Another employee notes, “When I compare it with other hotels, it’s not luxurious or exotic. It’s a style that’s proper for business. The hotel has a reputation for getting a lot of benefits [regarding construction] even though it spends only small amounts of money.”
**Negatively, because of problems in the Kitchen.** Respondents in the Kitchen pinpointed many problems they had with the facilities. All the following comments came from Kitchen staff.

- “The kitchen is very narrow - it was designed incorrectly. The food is modern but the image is conservative.”
- “There’s nothing to say in particular about the design - it’s just insufficient.”
- “Improvements are needed. The space is too narrow and the ceiling is too low. The spaces are ineffective.”
- “The kitchen is too hot. I’m asking for an air conditioner.”
- “Even if we change the food we serve in this restaurant, there’s no effect. We need to change the interior too. If we don’t, there will be a lot more hardships. The kitchen is too small, and the freezing and cooling systems are inefficient. We need a working table and we don’t have enough facilities. We have only one steam pot, and it’s not very effective. The kitchen is so narrow and we can’t use carts easily. The kitchen also looks dirty. Repairs are most necessary in the kitchen.”

**Negatively, since the hotel image should be more luxurious.** A Front Office employee compares the hotel to others: “Though the hotel is not a resort, it is not as brilliant as other hotels. In terms of structure and construction, the efficiency and the utility factor are low.” A Food and Beverage also draws comparisons: “I think the architecture is too simple. It doesn’t feel like a hotel. This hotel is not of a high quality. The hotel is inferior to other hotels in terms of architecture.”

**Negatively, because the design is not harmonious.** One employee thinks, “Nothing really fits together.” She doesn’t see “where the money went.” A Sales and Marketing employee comments about the events halls: “According to design experts from the outside, there is no harmony or unity in design. This is a weak point. People always ask, ‘is there a designer here?’”

**Negatively, because of hardware problems.** One Front Office employee notes, “The interior is too compact. At night, it’s as hot as a sauna.” Another Banquet Sales employee believes, “The office is in an inconvenient location, and there is no daylight that comes in. This is not good for the front line of sales.”

**Negatively, because of the image.** One employee believes, “Architecturally, the hotel is okay, but it needs to focus on improving its brand image using the media.” Another employee believes the hotel is not pretty because it does not “show off” any of the “beauty of the Korean image.” She feels like she is “working in an office company.”
Hotel B

In Hotel B, 68 out of 70 respondents answered the question. Respondents described the hotel in the following ways:

Table 15. Description of the Architectural Environment of Hotel B by Hotel B Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Positively, calling the hotel simple, classic, and clean [see section below].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Positively, due to the Asian fusion style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Negatively, due to atmosphere/mood or overall design issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Negatively, due to physical reasons.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Positively, calling the hotel simple, classic, and clean, as well as other positive adjectives. Respondents most used the adjectives simple, classic, clean, elegant, modern, active, energetic, refined, graceful, sleek, vivid, cozy, average, intimate, urban, open, casual, comfortable, young, friendly, formal, relaxed, and pleasant. The same respondents also mentioned they thought the hotel was dull and had no distinct character.

One employee believes, “The hotel pursues the typical business hotel atmosphere, while maintaining an elegant feeling.” Another employee notes, “Since it’s a foreign chain, in any case, the image is good.”

Positively, due to the Asian fusion style. One employee thinks the hotel exhibits “both Korean architecture and a European design.”

Negatively, due to atmosphere/mood or overall design issues. One employee believes “the concept of the hotel is not that clear.” Another employee thinks that “the interior design is monotonous and dull.” Her colleague writes, “The design is too fixed. The atmosphere and image are not fashionable. It’s never luxurious.”

Negatively, due to physical reasons. A Front Desk employee notes that guests confuse the Front Desk with the Concierge Desk. Another employee thinks the employee bathroom is too far.
THEME 11, Part 2: Influences and Impacts on - Behavior, Speaking Skills, House Design, Image, Eating Habits

Question: How has working in a hotel environment influenced you to change the design or your home, your eating style, attitude, habits, personal presentation and image, or lifestyle, if at all? Please give examples.

Hotel A

In Hotel A, 137 out of 172 respondents answered the question. Respondents perceived themselves to have made the following changes:

Table 16. Influences of Hotel Work on Respondents as Perceived by Hotel A Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>CHANGES AND INFLUENCES</th>
<th>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>More hygienic, often at home, and with food.</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Elevated food knowledge and sense of taste.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Improved courtesy, etiquette, and manners.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>More considerate and friendly to other people.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Improved quality of life - positive living.</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Improved speaking manners and communication skills.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Cleaner - personally and in the kitchen.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Changed eating habits - eat quickly, at irregular times.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Improved or changed interior design of homes.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Improved professional image and appearance.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Learned how to complain from guests.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>More knowledgeable when traveling.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>More willing to try new/different things.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More hygienic, often at home, and with food. A Butcher believes, “I know the real meaning of hygiene. It is necessary for daily life.” Another Kitchen employee notes, “I’m very conscious about expiration dates. I throw out leftover and suspicious food without any hesitation. I got this attitude after I accumulated experience in the hotel.”

Elevated food knowledge and sense of taste. Respondents mainly from the Kitchen and Food and Beverage departments saw their food knowledge improve and sense of taste elevate. One Cook notes, “When I see creative and delicious foods, I think about how I can apply new ideas to my own cooking.” Another Kitchen employee thinks about applications: “I always go to nice restaurants. I taste a lot of fine foods, which is good because I can use the ideas I gain in my own cooking.”
**Improved courtesy, etiquette, and manners.** One Chef notes, “My kids also have good manners and better habits now.” Another employee notes this change: “When I get in the elevator, I hold the door for women. This means that I have become more polite, and that my point of view has changed.”

**More considerate and friendly to other people.** A Front Office employee believes he now has “the heart to care for guests.” His colleague notes, “If my eyes meet with those of someone on the street, I’ll greet them with my eyes and nod. Around the hotel, if there are people that seem lost and are hesitant to ask someone, I go and help them.”

**Improved quality of life - positive living.** One employee writes, “I can manage my time better and I am more flexible. I’ve been able to improve a lot.” A Cook notes, “I have taken on greater responsibilities and a more active attitude around my family.”

**Improved speaking manners and communication skills.** One Front Office employee writes, “I unconsciously answer questions very kindly. I can speak without anxiety in restaurants, and I complain freely.” A Cook believes, “When I speak with friends, the fact that I work in the service industry is very apparent.”

**Cleaner - personally and in the kitchen.** One Front Office employee notes, “I know that my appearance should always be clean since I work in a hotel. Since I have a greater interest in cleanliness overall, I always try to keep a clean environment at home too.” A Housekeeping employee follows the hotel room cleaning process at home.

**Improved or changed interior design of homes.** A Cook “creatively designed” his home and “chose harmonious colors.” A Sales and Marketing employee notes, “When I invite guests over to my home, I use the hotel’s flower arrangement on my own table. I watch how the hotel decorates its interior and transfer those ideas to my home.”

**More knowledgeable when traveling.** A Housekeeping employee comments: “I think the most important part of traveling is the hotel - where you stay. Since my job is in housekeeping, I can get used to hotels very easily, and I have confidence in traveling, no matter where I go.”
Hotel B

In Hotel B, 59 out of 79 respondents answered the question. Respondents perceived themselves to have made the following changes:

Table 17. Influences of Hotel Work on Respondents as Perceived by Hotel B Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>CHANGES AND INFLUENCES</th>
<th>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Improved speaking manners.</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Improved or changed interior design of homes.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Elevated food knowledge and sense of taste.</td>
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<td>Improved courtesy, etiquette, and manners.</td>
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<td>Heightened awareness about service received from others.</td>
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<td>More meticulous, cleaner, and detailed.</td>
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<td>Think more positively.</td>
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<td>Broader vision for the future.</td>
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<td>Irregular lifestyle.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Improved quality of life - positive living.</td>
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**Improved speaking manners.** One employee notes, “When I talk with somebody, I always treat him with civility and make sure to smile.” A Front Office employee uses “polite and courteous expressions a lot when working.” As a result, “they have become habits,” and she uses a lot of those expressions and formal language outside of work.

**Improved or changed interior design of homes.** One employee decorated her house to resemble this hotel. She notes, “It is sleek and clean, and of course, I have simple decorations.” One Food and Beverage employee writes, “I set the table so there’s a ‘mood.’ I use the hotel restaurant’s table setting.”

**Elevated food knowledge and sense of taste.** One Kitchen employee had an “open house party” after he got married. He notes, “I made a salad which I make in the hotel. Everyone was very surprised and they all thanked me.” A Waitress notes, “I have a lot of opportunities to eat Japanese food now, and when I do, I compare the food I eat with the hotel’s food. I gain more knowledge by doing this. I am also more interested in Japan. Since I serve a lot of wine, I also have a lot more interest in that too.”
**Heightened awareness about service received from others.** One Front Office employee is “nicer to people who work in the service area.” Another employee in the same section “tries not to complain” when someone is serving her in a restaurant or hotel. One Waitress “almost always” focuses on the server. If their service is good, she tries to learn from them.

**Broader vision for the future.** One employee notes, “The hotel has influenced how I think about everything I want to see and have, especially regarding relationships with people.”

**Refined image and appearance.** One female Fitness employee notes, “I’ve become an elegant woman, even though my original character is more wild and masculine.”
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION OF INTERVIEW AND SURVEY FINDINGS

In this section, results from the interviews and surveys have been analyzed collectively in relation to the four main thesis questions:

1. What appears to be the range of effects of hotel training programs on hotel employees?
2. Does hotel work provide hotel employees with skills that are both useful within the work setting and in everyday life, outside of the work environment? In other words, does hotel work provide hotel employees with both professional skills and life skills?
3. What behavioral differences can be detected in hotel employees that are related to the physical environment of the hotel?
4. Once educated through hotel employment, are hotel employees potentially better equipped to advance both within the hotel industry and in arenas outside of the hotel industry?

The themes covered in the interview section were as follows:

- Theme 1: Educational Background
- Theme 2: Hospitality Industry Entry Motivations
- Theme 3: Job Requirements
- Theme 4: Training Programs
- Theme 5: Concrete Skill - Computer Abilities
- Theme 6: Concrete Skill - Language Abilities
- Theme 7: Job Function
- Theme 8: Cultural Awareness
- Theme 9: Communities and Networks
- Theme 10: Hotel Environment and Architecture
- Theme 11: Influences and Impacts on - Behavior, Speaking Manners, House Design, Image, and Eating Habits
- Theme 12: Future Ambitions
- Theme 13: Perceived Benefits of Hotel Training Programs and Hotel Work

The surveys provided additional data on five of the thirteen themes:

- Theme 1: Educational background
- Theme 2: Hospitality Industry Entry Motivations
- Theme 4: Training Programs
- Theme 10: Hotel Environment and Architecture
- Theme 11: Influences and Impacts on - Behavior, Speaking Manners, House Design, Image, and Eating Habits
The survey results almost always reflected the interview results in all of the themes. Due to the larger number of employees surveyed rather than interviewed, the survey results provided support, and in some cases new, additional data, to the interviews results.

**Thesis Question #1: What appears to be the range of effects of hotel training programs on hotel employees?**

Interviewees and survey respondents believed training programs provided them with an education that falls on a spectrum with two extremes: on one end are the concrete skills needed to perform one's job and on the other end are the skills and knowledge needed to move to upper management. The results of both the interviews and surveys revealed that training programs seemed to support more so than conflict with the skills employees informally learned while performing their job functions.

As shown in the findings under Theme 4 [Training Programs] and Theme 7 [Job Function] of the interviews, interviewees learned both abstract concepts and concrete skills in training programs that they could apply directly to their jobs. For example, some of the employees interviewed and surveyed learned management and leadership concepts they referenced when evaluating junior colleagues in one-on-one meetings, while others learned step-by-step processes they used when serving drinks to guests. Since training programs in both hotels covered department-specific hard and soft skills as well as theory-based concepts about management and service, interviewees and survey respondents gained a base of knowledge that they could constantly build on and reference as they performed their jobs. Three examples provided by interviewees illustrated this idea most clearly.

During Orientation, an interviewee was taught in the etiquette module the steps involved in answering the phone. During working hours, she followed those steps when answering the phone, saying the correct phrases in the correct order. As she gained more and more experience speaking on the phone with guests, she figured out the best tones to use and the best methods of interacting with different types of people. Even while she followed the steps she learned in training, she added her own flair and own style to the process, using the basic telephone rules as a base.

In personal development training, one interviewee learned the steps she would need to take in order to achieve her future goals. While working, she interacted with high-ranking officials and businessmen from whom she was exposed to the business world. While the training program provided the interviewee with the motivation to begin thinking about her future career ambitions, the exposure to business that she gained on-the-job provided her with inspiration about practical, possible paths to take in the future.
Interviewees adapted what they learned on-the-job about other cultures to the service training they received. Interviewees seemed to have gained culture-based knowledge not through any type of formal instruction, but through repeated interactions with guests on-the-job. Interviewees who interacted directly with guests from various countries were very observant. They were able to point out the preferred styles of service of guests from various countries, and they reported adapting their behavior towards guests accordingly, all while staying within the service guidelines provided by the hotel. They devised their own methods for serving foreigners comfortably.

Interviewees and respondents also brought their training program knowledge outside of the hotel and into their personal, everyday lives. They reported that they applied some of the knowledge they learned in the programs at home, at restaurants, and at other public and private venues. The responses of the Kitchen and Food and Beverage employees that went through hygiene training and wine training were most noteworthy - time and time again, they reported either using their newfound hygiene knowledge in their own home kitchens or referencing their wine knowledge in restaurants. The effects thus extended past the hotel walls.

**Thesis Question #2: Does hotel work provide hotel employees with both professional skills and life skills?**

This question helped identify the professional skills that interviewees and survey respondents felt they gained as a result of the direct and indirect learning they received in the hotel. This question also helped pinpoint the life skills gained by those who took part in this study. The latter group of findings is perhaps more important because they represent the less obvious group of skills that employees would gain in a place of business. However, since hotels are distinctive in that they support a wide range of life activities, much evidence of life skills surfaced. The question also helped pinpoint skills that should be placed in both categories - they could be useful to employees both professionally and personally.

Employees interviewed and surveyed felt they gained one of a number of skills as a result of their job functions. A few of the skills they reported learning on-the-job were creative and craft skills, speaking skills, cooking skills, foreign language skills, and service skills. While these skills are clearly very helpful in hospitality, they are also potentially useful for employees during their everyday lives, either at home or outside in public. The survey chapter included a section revealing the situations and locations where employees reported applying the skills and ideas they learned in the hotel. Survey respondents used these skills most at home, when meeting people, at restaurants, and in everyday life. Since survey respondents reported applying the skills they’ve learned in the hotel outside of work, to them, hotel work does seem to be a potential source of life betterment.
The community-building that interviewees reported took place informally within the hotel illustrates the indirect learning opportunities hotels provide employees. Interviewees noted that they met each other outside of work, and also believed that spending time with each other helped them, both professionally and personally.

The foreign language proficiency interviewees and survey respondents reported possessing or learning is both a life skill and professional skill. Interviewees displayed high proficiencies in English and Japanese. If they were not already proficient in languages, interviewees displayed the motivation and initiative to learn languages. While the hotel cannot be credited with introducing and teaching interviewees English, hotel work certainly seemed to push interviewees to increase their foreign language abilities. Hotel employees are constantly surrounded by guests who speak English and colleagues who are trying to learn English. In addition, they must take mandatory English exams every year. In some cases, interviewees were both introduced to and learned Japanese in the hotel. As emphasized in the speech given by a high-ranking employee to new hires, the ability to speak English and other languages is a skill that is not only valued in the professional world, but one that can better a person’s everyday interpersonal and communication skills.

As mentioned in the previous section, interviewees also gained cultural sensitivity as a result of hotel work. Such knowledge can only be acquired through experience, and it is a life skill that will be useful to employees when traveling, when working in other countries, or when interacting with foreigners.

The reported influences and impacts on interviewees and survey respondents of hotel work, hotel training programs, and related factors, such as the environment in which learning takes places, provided further support to the idea that employees benefit from the education they receive in the hotel. As noted in the interview results findings, more than half the interviewees and more than three-quarters of survey respondents perceived themselves to have changed their behavior, speaking manners, house design, or image in a positive way as a result of working in the hotel. Eating habits included both positive and negative changes. The changes mentioned by those surveyed were similar to those mentioned by interviewees. In Hotel A, top changes reported by survey respondents included: more hygienic, elevated food knowledge and sense of taste, improved courtesy, etiquette, and manners, and more considerate and friendly to other people. In Hotel B, top changes reported by survey respondents included: improved speaking manners, improved interior design of homes, elevated food knowledge and sense of taste, and improved courtesy, etiquette, and manners. Each of the changes was derived from one or more of the actual functions that occur inside the hotel, such as eating, sleeping, and taking care of guests.
Interviewees and survey respondents also perceived that hotel work affected more than one aspect of their lives. For example, interviewees who reported that they changed their behavior may also have reported that they were more knowledgeable about foods. The total number of benefits reported in both the interview and survey sections was higher than the total number of employees who interviewed and surveyed. Thus, many interviewees and respondents believed they benefited in more than one way as a result of the direct and indirect learning they experienced in the hotel.

**Thesis Question #3:** What behavioral differences can be detected in hotel employees that are related to the physical environment of the hotel?

Theme 10 of both the interview and survey chapters showed that interviewees and survey respondents were very observant and savvy about the hotel environment. In both sections, they were able to pinpoint the changes they wanted to see in the physical environment of the hotel. They believed these changes would not only increase efficiency of the employees but also improve the guests’ perceptions of the hotel, both of which could eventually increase profit. Both sets of respondents were vocal about how they perceived the spaces and designs of the hotels should work, and how they failed to work based on their own experiences.

Though interviewees and survey respondents wanted to see changes in the layout of the hotel, they still reported that they saw both hotels as modern, simple, and clean spaces. As a result of working in these spaces, approximately half the interviewees in both hotels reported that their design senses elevated or that they would like to change the design of their homes to reflect the design concepts they saw in the hotel. In Hotel B, “improved or changed the interior design of my house” came in second in a list about how survey respondents perceived they had been influenced by hotel work. It is perhaps more correct to write that interviewees and survey respondents were attracted to hotel architecture and thus emulated the style in their own homes, rather than to state that they were influenced by hotel architecture.

The data suggests that the architectural environment of the hotel can have the potential to trigger positive behavioral differences in hotel employees, yet another benefit of working in the hotels. The data also suggests that hotel employees may possess untapped knowledge about how spaces within hotels should function, and about how guest spaces should relate to employee spaces. While architecture is most likely not within a hotel employee’s general orbit of thinking, examining the design of spaces from the perspective of the people that have to use them most, the hotel employees, may be valuable to hotel designers.
Thesis Question #4: Once educated through hotel employment, are hotel employees potentially better equipped to advance both within the hotel industry and in arenas outside of the hotel industry?

This thesis question was approached by first reviewing the future ambitions of interviewees. Did they display any motivation to advance within or outside the industry? The motivations interviewees and survey respondents had for entering into the hospitality industry were reported in both the interview and survey chapters. Not surprisingly, a number of motivations overlapped among interviewees and survey respondents. They believed they had an aptitude and personality for hotel work, they wanted to interact and meet with people, they wanted a stable job, and they were interested in or had a positive perception of hotel work. The interview findings also revealed that the majority of interviewees wanted to stay in the hospitality industry but work in a country outside of Korea. The responses to both sets of questions, when analyzed together, suggest that interviewees entered into the industry with a positive image of hotel work, are satisfied with the work that they ended up doing in the hotel, and would like to stay, or at least believe that their future belongs in the hotel industry. The job requirements section in the survey chapter also showed that hotels tended to hire employees with a service mind and a bright personality. Thus, it makes sense that interviewees would like to remain in an industry to which they believe they are well-suited.

Based on the responses of interviewees and survey respondents, it was apparent that these employees learned a number of skills that could be useful in many industries, including those outside of the service area. Interviewees and survey respondents learned these skills, such as English and Japanese language skills, in training programs, on-the-job, through observation and experience, or by spending time with colleagues in venues in and out of the hotel. It is fair to suggest that hotel employees seem to gain skills they did not know before entering the industry, despite their high levels of education.

Training programs seemed to play a large role in helping interviewees and survey respondents believe they could advance within the industry, specifically within the hotel. Both hotels offer leadership and management programs for employees who are preparing to reach those higher levels, as well as for employees who are already in supervisor-level and managerial positions. In both hotels, leadership and management classes were among the top four classes that survey respondents reported taking in the hotel, indicating that perhaps they were the most memorable, helpful, or noteworthy.

Interviewees also reported that they kept in communication with colleagues from previous hotel and hospitality jobs. Maintaining such connections, regardless of whether they are for professional or personal reasons, show that interviewees have a means of accessing information about potential opportunities in other hotels and countries.
Interviewees were also asked to pinpoint the biggest benefit they felt they gained from hotel work. From the forty-six interviewees, responses included: developed for the future, received free education on company time, increased self-esteem and pride, acquired professional skills, improved manners and control of emotions, increased ability to traveling or accumulated travel-related knowledge, increased opportunities to meet diverse people, improved personal life, increased opportunities for self-study, increased opportunities for networking, and improved image. At least five of these benefits - developed for the future, received a free education, acquired professional skills, increased opportunities for self-study, and increased opportunities for networking, would potentially be very useful in helping employees plan their futures and reach their career ambitions. All of the benefits equip the hotel employee with life skills and professional skills, elevating their value within the job market.

As mentioned above, interviewees expressed that they would like to stay in the industry and try living in a country other than Korea. The results suggest that the direct and indirect learning that takes place in the hotel equips employees best for futures in the service industry, as expected. The additional language and cultural learning that takes place in the hotel seems to equip employees with a foundation of knowledge that could prove very useful overseas.
CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

This study was completed to explore paths of learning not found in traditional educational systems, and the benefits that come from complementary forms of education to that found in universities. Using two five-star hotels as case studies, this thesis examined if and how the direct and indirect learning hotel employees experienced in the hotel bettered their lives and careers. This thesis proposed that hotels were potentially unacknowledged educational institutions that could help employees progress through the world. On a larger scale, the thesis proposed that identifying unconventional yet valuable sources of education could allow governments, especially those in transitional economies, to better allocate their already limited resources, thereby taking full advantage of those resources.

The results suggest that hotels do indeed act as institutions of distinctive learning for hotel employees. Employees clearly gain a set of skills attributable to hotel employment that can elevate their lives and careers. The learning that takes place in the hotel is not strictly academic, as expected, since hotels are professional places of business. Unlike other places of business, however, hotels provide employees with a healthy mix of life skills and professional skills. Employees learn life skills because hotels, as places of eating, meeting, and sleeping, are self-equipped sources of information. More importantly, top hotels offer only high-quality service, rooms, and food. The level of quality most likely surpasses the level of living to which employees are accustomed. As a result, even the most mundane of hotel functions may seem refreshing, new, and worth emulating. Professional skills are learned not only because job functions require them, but also because the quality and diversity of the business that occurs within the hotel building motivates employees to learn these skills. While the education received in the hotel is certainly different from one an employee would receive in a traditional school setting, it is difficult to argue against the idea that the education a hotel has the capability of providing to an employee is valuable.

Since the content of the education employees receive in the hotel is so diverse and well-rounded, it is fair to suggest that many of the skills and benefits employees gain are incidental. Interviewees and survey respondents could immediately think of locations and situations unrelated to their hotel jobs in which the education they received helped them. Certainly, hotels did not intend for employees to go out and emulate their design concepts. Such examples, along with those previously identified, suggest that hotel work provides latent benefits to employees.

Thus far, it has been established that hotels act as educational institutions for hotel employees, in part due to its training programs. Since the value of training programs has been affirmed, it is now possible to assess whether hotels are using their resources on training as effectively as they should. The thesis found evidence suggesting that hotels use their resources on training much more efficiently and
intelligently than expected. When training programs in both hotels were first examined, the small amount or nonexistent offerings of classes teaching language, culture, and computers was troublesome. It was assumed that hotels would have placed a heavy emphasis on providing on-site classes teaching employees English, foreign cultural behaviors, and basic computer skills. The research revealed that such extensive training was largely unnecessary. Most employees already learned languages privately, knew how to use the computer, and picked up cultural differences between guests through observation and on-the-job experience.

The findings revealed that hotels spent their resources on teaching specific topics inaccessible by employees in other businesses and settings. For example, hotels offered management classes and skill-specific classes that employees found highly useful. It would have been difficult for employees to learn many of the concepts taught in the classes on their own. Through training programs, employees learn a number of industry-related topics that make them more knowledgeable, valuable players in the job market. Thus, though the examination of training programs in the hotels was approached skeptically, the hotels proved to be quite intelligent about their offerings. This evidence provides incentive for hotels that do not yet offer training programs, most likely smaller hotels with fewer stars, to mount programs in order to take advantage of the benefits detected in this study of five-star hotel employees.

What I have revealed occurs in the two hotels does not in itself make the case for governments to adopt new educational programs. However, the thesis does provide evidence that governments may benefit from taking into account the explicit advantages of hotel training programs and the overall hotel education. This thesis reveals that both training programs and on-the-job experiences are worthy of attention from governments because of the latent contributions they have on the lives and careers of hotel employees. Hotel employees seem to follow paths of learning in the hotel that cannot be found in universities. The diversity of skills employees learn is impressive and distinct - it is possible that not even hotels and employees are efficiently using the unique mix of accumulated knowledge. As an industry that traditionally attracts low-skilled workers, the incidental benefits of hotel employment, and the ability of those benefits to improve the status of hotel employees, are even more significant.

Thus, the evidence collected from this study makes the case that governments, especially those that seek a new yet effective way of distributing their resources, should pay close attention to the education provided by the hotel. The positive findings support the idea that the specific ways in which those resources should be redistributed, as well as the identification of government programs that would benefit from the results drawn from the hotel industry, deserve to be the subject of future research. In conclusion, this thesis advocates that governments factor in unconventional sources of learning, specifically the one provided by the hotel industry, when formulating educational policies, so that they may be able to receive more value out of the resources they spend on education.
CHAPTER VII: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

This thesis provides evidence supporting the idea that hotels are able to provide an alternative education to that provided in the public school and university system that is beneficial to hotel employees. In a larger context, if governments take this evidence into account, it might allow them to better allocate their resources. Four topics stem from these findings that, if pursued in the future, would supplement and/or confirm the findings of this thesis.

1. **Identify how a government’s education budget could be restructured based on the findings of this thesis.** Also identify specific government programs within the educational sector that could be enhanced, changed, or foregone as a result of the findings.

This thesis provided evidence that employees within the hotel industry learned a number of specific life and professional skills. If the hotel industry is able to provide employees with skills that are also taught in the traditional educational system, it is fair to suggest that a part of the government’s education budget could be reallocated to other skill areas not taught within the hotel industry [or other industries]. The identification of specific government programs and policies that could be changed due to the findings of this thesis is a logical next step.

Relevant questions include: What skills taught in the traditional education system and in the hotel industry overlap? How are government resources currently distributed on educational programs? How should the resources be redistributed, given the overlap of skills [if any]?

2. **Identify other industries and other service sectors that offer a high-quality alternative education to its employees.**

Since this study focused on five-star hotels, it would be worthwhile to examine other industries that offer opportunities for employees to gain the types of skills detected in the two hotels. Taking this topic one step further, it would be interesting to examine whether the service industry as a whole seems to benefit employees more than employees in other industries. If this is the case, pinpointing those traits that make the service industry successful in elevating the lives and careers of its employees could serve as a valuable learning tool for other industries.

Relevant questions include: Can benefits only be detected in sectors where people expect to be catered to [service industries]? What distinguishes hotel work from work in other service industries? Can benefits be detected in entirely different industries, and is there any common link between those
industries and the hotel industry? Can benefits be detected in South Korean hotels that have a rating lower than five-stars?

3. Examine if and how training programs in five-star hotels have changed over the past decade, and how they manage to stay relevant to current issues.

The formal learning that occurs in the hotels studied in this thesis takes place through training programs. To ensure that they remain valid and relevant sources of complementary education, training programs need to offer opportunities for employees to learn up-to-date skills that can be useful in society. Examining how hotels have incorporated new ideas into its programs over the years would provide even stronger support for hotel training programs as valuable sources of education.

Relevant questions include: How have training programs changed over the past decade [or a longer time period] in five-star hotels, if at all? How does this change compare to changes seen in training programs in other classes of hotels? What prompts trainers to update the contents of training programs?

4. Examine if and how the hotel education benefits Korean hotel employees differently than hotel employees who work in a Western country [such as the United States].

The findings of this thesis pertain to five-star employees in South Korea. It would be interesting to see whether the same conclusions can be drawn from an identical study completed in a different location. Further, in Korea, the hotel staff is homogeneous, hotel guests are often foreign, and English is a second language for employees. This may not be the case in Western countries, which would make language and culture related findings particularly interesting.

Relevant questions include: What are the ethnic, racial, and educational backgrounds of hotel employees in Western countries? Does diversity among hotel employees play any role in the influence of hotel work and hotel training programs on the lives and careers of hotel employees? Does the content of training programs in Western hotels differ from that of the hotels presented in this study? Since English is the universal language in Western countries, how does the hotel work experience differ, if at all, for employees whose first language is English versus those whose first language is not English?
APPENDIX A: Interview Questions

PLEASE NOTE: Every interviewee was not asked every question below. Though the general format of the interviews and the types of questions asked were, for the most part, constant, there were slight variations from person to person.

Background
What is your educational background?
If respondent went to college/technical school: Why did you decide to major in [--]?
If respondent studied overseas: Where and why did you study overseas? What did you learn?
What jobs did you have before coming to your current position, if any?
What type of work did you do in those jobs?
When did you come to this hotel?
Why did you come to this hotel?
How did you know there was an opening in this hotel?
Why did you want to work in the position to which you originally applied?
If transferred: Why did you transfer into your current position?
Why did you enter into the hospitality industry? How long have you worked in this industry?
What requirements were needed for your current position?
How have your previous jobs helped you perform the tasks of your current job, if at all?

Training
If respondent worked in other hotels: What training courses did you take in those hotels, if any?
What did you learn in those courses?
How did the training you received in the other hotel differ from the training you’ve received in this hotel, if at all?
What training courses have you taken in this hotel?
Who did you take those courses with?
Where did you take those courses?
Why did you take those courses?
What was the main lesson that you learned in each of the courses you have taken?
What is the most useful idea/skill you learned in training? Why is it useful?
What certifications, if any, have you received from the hotel?

Job Functions
Describe a typical day in your position.
What kinds of customers do you come into contact with, if any?
Do you enjoy your job? Why or why not? What do you enjoy most about your job?
What do you think is most important about your job?
What rewards or recognition from the hotel have you received for your performance, if any?

Computers
Do you know how to use the computer?
If respondent knows how to use the computer: How and where did you learn to use the computer?
In what situations do you use computers now, if at all, when you work in the hotel?
What do you use the computer for, if at all, when you are not in the hotel? Did you use the computer for these reasons before you worked in the hotel?
What software do you use most when working in the hotel? What do you use the software for?

Languages
What foreign languages can you speak and why did you learn them?
How and where did you learn to speak these languages?
Did you take any language courses either at the hotel or at a private language institute or elsewhere?
Where?
What prompted you to take those courses?
If respondent learned language elsewhere: Did the hotel subsidize the cost of outside language courses?
When and with whom do you use foreign languages, if at all, when working in the hotel?
In what instances do you use these languages when you are not working, if at all?

Culture
From what countries do the guests you interact with come from?
Does the hotel offer any cultural awareness training? Did you take those courses? What did you learn?
How does the service you offer differ, if at all, for guests of various countries?
How did you learn to alter your service, if at all, to best fit the type of guests you serve?
What have you learned about guests from various countries while serving them or observing them?
How do you think this knowledge will help you in the future, if at all?

Community
Do you still keep in touch with the people that you worked with in your previous job(s)?
If yes: For what kinds of reasons do you keep in touch with them?
How do you keep in touch with them?
How have these people helped you with your job, if at all?
How did you end up meeting employees, if any, in this hotel in departments other than your own?
Do you ever meet other employees after work or on days you do not work?
Where do you meet them and what do you with them?
How does meeting with them help you during work, if at all?
Influences
Do you visit other hotels more frequently because you now work in a hotel?
If yes: What do you do at those hotels?
How would you describe the working environment of this hotel?
How does the working environment of this hotel compare to the working environment of other hotels in which you have worked, if any?
How would you describe the architecture and interior design of this hotel?
How does the architecture of this hotel compare to the architecture of other hotels in which you have worked?
How does the layout/architecture of the outlet/department in which you work help or hinder you from performing your job?
If you could change something about the hotel [in terms of layout], what would you change?
How have you changed the design of your home as a result of working in the hotel, if at all?
How have your eating habits changed as a result of working in the hotel, if at all?
How has your personal presentation [clothes, image, hair, speaking manners] changed as a result of working in the hotel, if at all?
How has your lifestyle changed as a result of working in the hotel, if at all?
How has working in the hotel benefited your personal life?
What is the biggest benefit you have gained as a result of taking hotel training programs or working in the hotel?

Future
Do you want to keep working in the hotel industry? Why or why not?
If no: In what other industries do you have an interest? Why?
How do you think working in the hotel will help you if you switch into another position/industry?
Do you want to keep working in your current department? Why or why not?
If no: In what other departments do you have an interest? Why?
Do you want to keep working in Korea? Why or why not?
If no: Where would you like to go? Why?
What would you like to be doing in the future [5-10 years]?
APPENDIX B: Orientation Training Program Experience in Hotel A

Introduction
In June 2006, I attended an Orientation training session conducted in Hotel A for all new employees. The session ran from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM for two consecutive days. The fully catered session was held in one of the hotel's small banquet halls. A total of twenty employees attended the Orientation session. There were a total of three tables in the room, with approximately seven employees seated at each table. Each employee received an "Orientation Kit," a bound handbook containing the information to be covered during the two-day session.

I made three observations about the group before and during the session. Firstly, the overall age of the employees seemed to be quite young. The youngest participant was born in 1985. Secondly, the employees seemed to be quite friendly with each other, particularly along gender lines. The female employees gathered together during every break. The friendly relationships among the employees were surprising to see at first, but I soon realized that many had known each other beforehand because they had started work at least a few weeks ago. Lastly, all the employees and trainers were very sharply and formally dressed. Nearly every male employee wore a suit and tie, and all the female employees wore a dress, skirt, or dress pants.

Once the session began, the trainer reviewed the day's agenda and the topics to be covered. Either the hotel's trainers or a manager-level employee within the hotel taught each of the topics on the agenda. The trainers used various teaching techniques during the two-day session. Each topic was first introduced through a PowerPoint slideshow. The concepts were then reiterated through role-playing, interactive board games, and videos. After all the topics were covered, participants filled out a "Training Satisfaction" form where they could evaluate each of the topics covered that day.

Participants
As noted above, twenty employees took part in the training session. The table below details their genders and their backgrounds. The order in which they are listed has no significance.

Table 18. Hotel A Participants in a June 2006 Orientation Session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>BACKGROUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Military. Worked in a bakery at a five-star hotel in Seoul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Worked at a five-star hotel in Seoul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Worked in various departments at a hotel in Seoul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Worked at a five-star hotel in Seoul in Housekeeping and in the Front Office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Military. Worked in a Japanese restaurant as a Cook for 1.5 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Worked in businesses, but they all failed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>First job. Now works as a Cook in Food and Beverage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Worked at a hotel in Seoul for 2 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>First job. Now works in Food and Beverage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>First job. Graduated from University in March 2006.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Worked in the Banquet department of a five-star hotel in Seoul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Worked for an airline company for 1 year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Worked in the Banquet department of a five-star hotel in Seoul for 7 months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Worked in a bar at a five-star hotel in Seoul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>First full-time job. Worked at an amusement park for 3 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>First full-time job. Worked at a local hotel in Seoul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>First job. Recently graduated from University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Worked part-time in the Banquet section of Hotel A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Worked at a hotel in Seoul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Worked at a hotel in Seoul for 1.5 years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training Session Topics

The following topics were covered on the first day:

- Vision and Goals
- Hotel History and Awards
- Hotel Organization
- Human Resources issues: hiring, pay, welfare, rules and regulations, special leave, award programs for employees, and labor management issues.
- Health Care and Stretching Techniques
- Rewards Programs [for repeat/VIP guests]
- Hygiene and Sanitation
- Guest Satisfaction Tracking System
- Product Knowledge: rooms [type, number, amenities, prices], halls, restaurants, transportation.
- Site Tour

The following topics were covered on the second day:

- Making an Image and Grooming
- Courtesy
- Telephone Etiquette
- Sexual Harassment
- Environmental Issues
- Fire and Safety Training
- Security
As can be seen in the above agenda, a wide range of topics was covered during the two-day session. The topics introduced the employees not only to the hotel, but also to the hospitality industry. The below details the contents of those topics that deal most with the behaviors and livelihoods of the employees.

**Health.** The health of employees is especially important in the hotel industry because diseases have the potential to travel quickly from person to person. An outbreak of any kind could cause enormous problems for the hotel, especially because the internet allows information to spread very quickly.

The employees were advised to take good care of their bodies. The employee teaching the session noted, “If you drink a lot the night before, you won’t smile a lot the next day, and you’ll get annoyed easily.” The employee even led a fifteen minute stretching session for the employees during training.

**Telephone Etiquette.** This session was split into three sections: 1) how to take a call, 2) what to do while on a call, and 3) how to end a call. When taking a call, employees must answer within three rings, and apologize if they take longer. They must always say their department name and personal name, and they cannot use short phrases. During a call, employees should be mindful of their talking speed and tone, and should make an effort to stay on the “Fa” note of the musical scale. If a person is not available, the caller should be given the choice of leaving a message or getting transferred. Guests should never have to repeat themselves, and should never be made to feel uncomfortable. For complaint calls, employees should always apologize first and show understanding and empathy. When ending a call, the employee must put the phone down gently. The employee should remember the six points of telephone etiquette, which help to eliminate mistakes:

1. Answer with a pleasant voice using formal language and a bright, friendly voice.
2. Make any effort to help.
3. Listen and repeat important information.
4. Say the caller’s name three times during one phone call, and include formal titles.
5. Take notes.
6. Use easy language and no acronyms.

After the trainer spoke, the participants role-played answering the telephone using Korean and English courtesy phrases, such as “Sorry to have kept you waiting” and “I am afraid Mr. Kim is not here at the moment.”
**Image and Grooming.** The trainers began this session by stating that employees in the service industry must look good from head to feet. In order to emphasize the importance of first impressions, the employees participated in an activity where each person wrote on a piece of paper their first thoughts about each of the other employees at the table. They were told to write very frankly. The trainers noted, “Sometimes your image can be very different from what you think it may be.” After the activity, the participants read aloud what others had written about them. One employee noted, “I have never heard anyone say this [negative trait] about me.”

The employees learned that one’s image is “made” by another person within the first seven minutes. They can present a positive image by paying attention to accessories, hair, expression, makeup, clothes, smile, attitude, and words.

To help employees present a positive image of themselves and of the hotel, the handbook contained a section about hotel grooming standards for men and women. The standards can be viewed in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 19. Grooming Standards for Male and Female Hotel Employees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENDER</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
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</table>

**Courtesy.** The trainers teaching courtesy first emphasized that both back and frontside employees deal with customers. The backside employees interact most with internal customers, other colleagues, while the front side employees interact most with external customers, the guests. Courtesy, which is defined by the hotel as polite behavior and good manners, is important because dissatisfied customers and employees can spread negative information about the hotel through the internet.
According to the hotel, an employee’s facial expression, smiling expression, and greeting [the bow] are the three most important physical aspects of courtesy. Employees are encouraged to practice smiling, so that the “muscles will go in place.” The trainers taught that if employees smile, they could sell more.

The standard hotel greeting is broken down into several smaller steps. Employees should make eye contact with a smile, say a “word of cushion” [and no slang terms] with a smile, bow with a smile, and respond to the greeting with a smile. A fifteen-degree bow acknowledges the presence of the guest, and a forty-five degree bow should be used in the presence of a high-ranking authority, or in times of apology. After the trainer spoke, two employees practiced bowing before the class, and the trainer pointed out mistakes in posture and timing.

**Environmental Awareness.** The trainers taught that the hospitality industry has a responsibility to “protect and enhance the environment for future generations, and to help secure a long-term sustainable tourism industry.” Hotels use a large amount of energy because it exists as a place of living. All the bed sheets must be washed, and guests use an average of thirty-five liters of water per day in their own rooms due to showering, shaving, washing hands, and using the toilet. Employees were taught to adhere to the three R’s of energy conservation: reduce, reuse, and recycle. Further, they learned that energy can be conserved by reducing use of electricity, gas, water, and air conditioning.

**Speeches**

Throughout the session, high-ranking employees of the hotel gave speeches to the new employees. The speeches not only welcomed the employees into the hotel and into the industry, but they also included many words of advice about how to succeed. Two of those employees were foreigners, so they spoke in English and the trainers translated their speeches for the participants. The excerpts below were extracted from the speeches because they relate directly to the many topics I covered in my own interviews with the employees.

**Employee #1**

On learning languages: “I speak four languages. It is very, very important that you learn English. You must know it for your future success. Let’s say you want to work in China, or anywhere else in Asia. Not everyone can speak Korean.”

On courtesy: “You will be working together with many colleagues. Be polite, recognize each other, and say ‘Hello’ and ‘How are you.’ Smile and greet guests. Politeness and smiling are all very important.”
On learning in the hotel: “We are here to teach you, and you should learn our industry. Use three of your five senses [your sight, taste, hearing]. Go through the department with open eyes and ears. If you see or hear something you do not understand, ask someone. This is a fascinating industry because everyday is different. We are not accountants that push the same buttons all the time. We are a wonderful hotel with wonderful people and very challenging guests.”

On employee selection: “You went through a competitive selection process. Out of more than a thousand applicants, there are twenty of you here. You should be very proud. You are special and different. One thing we liked in your interview was your attitude. You smile, you’re open, and you’re the right person to meet and talk to guests. Fit into the team. We’re here to help you.”

Employee #2

On his background: “I started 20 years ago at one of our nation’s top hotels. When I see new employees, I think about when this hotel first opened. Out of 1500 applicants, we picked 600 people to work here. Of those 600 original employees, 286 are still here. They are your bosses now. You guys did not enter into this hotel easily either. Other top hotels opened before ours, and others opened at the same time, but all the newspapers said in the beginning that ours was the best hotel. Why was this? Perhaps it was because of the people that came ahead of you and all their efforts. So learn from the people ahead of you. In ten to fifteen years, you can be like the people before you to all the newcomers.”

On happiness: “Think about all stress we have today. So much can make us unhappy. Do you think the people in Korea with the most money are happiest? When you see parents with their children, don’t they look happy? Think. When you are down on yourself, what makes you happy? Someone cannot make you happy, but you have to make it for yourself. If you are thinking, ‘I am here and I am not happy,’ then leave. If you think that you don’t enjoy being in the hotel industry, you will become sad. If you look at the faces of some older people, you may get a sense of what toll this unhappiness can take on you. You are all here because you were chosen to be here, but if you think you cannot be here anymore, then please go ahead and change what you’re doing. If you don’t find your happiness here, then you should leave and try to find it elsewhere.”

On the employees’ futures: “What do you think your value will be in ten years? What do you want to put in your head during the next ten years? In ten years, you can either be Korea’s best or one of the rest. The deciding factor will be what you put in your head during that time...People who do well are scouted by other companies. I’m not saying that you need to stay here to grow. I’m telling you how to be a manager in Korea, how to be the best in Korea’s hotel industry.”
On health: “Since you’re all young right now, health may not be a big issue. As time passes, however, you’ll finally know how important your health is with regards to your future. Do you think you can be happy if you are in pain? You have to take care of your health.”

On interacting with people: “Hotels are for people. Your expression and your speech matter because you are dealing with people. So think about how you can accept people, how you can help people, and do what they’d like for you to do. If someone smiles at you from afar, you suddenly gain a lot of strength.”

Employee #3
On the relationship between revenue and service: “Delivering a level of performance which makes everyone happy is key. A company can only survive if it makes revenue. If you make revenue, the employees will be happy, and then the guests will be happy. If the guest is happy, they will come back to the hotel, and the owners will be happy. So your role is critical. And our success is your success.”

On quality: “What is quality? It is providing the best service possible. It is about exceeding the guest’s expectations every time. Your role is absolutely critical. Your role is to make sure some gentleman will be happy and extremely satisfied. Take ownership of the issue with which you are dealing, which will make the guest happy. And always remember to smile.”

On teamwork: “You cannot do anything alone. Together, we can be very strong. We want to be the best. We have to make sure everyone’s fully aligned with each other. We need your support. We need your whole involvement, and we need you to embrace our culture. If we all do that together, we will all be successful. We are one team, working together.”

On success: “I hope you learn a lot of things during your time here. I was once in a room like this, taking Orientation as a hotel trainee. I embraced the culture and have progressed over the years. We work in a fascinating and challenging industry. The hotel industry is the fastest growing industry in world. People want to take vacations more than ever, and they want to stay in hotels. I hope that you will get into the spirit and that you will be successful as well.”
APPENDIX C: Survey Distributed to Hotel A and Hotel B Employees

PLEASE NOTE: The actual survey I distributed to the employees included a Korean translation of every question on the same page. Survey respondents were also provided with much more space than shown on this sheet to provide their answers, as the paper size used was A4 format.

Participation in this questionnaire is entirely voluntary. You may decline to answer any or all of the questions, and you may also decline further participation at any time, without adverse consequences. Anonymity is assured. Please feel free to write your responses in English or Korean. Please feel free to continue on the back. Thank you for all your time. It is greatly appreciated.

1. What is your educational background? Please check all that apply.
   Middle School [ ] High School [ ] College [ ] Graduate School [ ] Trade School [ ] Other __________________________

2. If you attended college, graduate, or trade school, what was your major? __________________________

3. Please list your previous jobs and location of each job.

4. How many years have you worked in the hotel industry? At this hotel? Why did you decide to work in hospitality?

5. Please describe a typical day at your job.

6. Please list the training courses [including optional courses] you have taken at this hotel and the new skills and ideas you learned in each of the courses.

7. Which skills and ideas above do you find most useful for your job? Why?

8. In what kinds of situations or locations outside of the hotel do you apply the skills and ideas you have learned through working in the hotel?

9. How would you describe this hotel's general environment [architecture, interior design, atmosphere, image]?

10. How has working in a hotel environment influenced you to change the design of your home, your eating style, attitude, habits, personal presentation and image, or lifestyle, if at all? Please give examples.

11. Gender: M or F | Age: ____ | Dept. & Title: __________________ | Supervisor-Level or above? Y or N
APPENDIX D: Qualification of Survey Findings

It is necessary to qualify the survey findings. I acknowledge that hotel employees who responded to the survey may represent a biased group, as those employees who did not want to complete the survey were not forced to do so. It is not possible to know the motives each employee had in answering the survey. Further, a portion of the employees in both hotels completed the surveys. Thus, this thesis does not, nor did it aim to, represent the voices all those employees in the hotel who could not or did not respond to the survey.

The original purpose of the survey was to act as a support for the interviews. One can see that the survey questions were highly condensed versions of the questions asked in the interview. It was thought that, since a far larger number of people could be surveyed rather than interviewed, survey results might be able to act as a check on interview responses. A few points should be noted about the questions asked.

**Question 7.** I acknowledge that this question may have asked employees to speak about a sensitivity they did not possess. In this question, employees may have found it easier or less time-consuming to think about skills rather than ideas, which are more abstract.

**Question 8.** This question asked employees to describe the situations or locations outside the hotel in which they applied the skills and ideas they learned in the hotel. Responses to this question should be qualified because it may have seemed to employees that they *should* have been applying the skills they learned, though this was not the intent of the question. As expected, some employees did write down that they did not apply any skills. Generally, questions should be phrased in such a way that employees can respond in any way without a loss of respect. Responses to this question indicate the way that employees perceived themselves to have applied the skills and ideas they learned in the hotel. The answers represent the truth to the extent that perception reflects reality.

**Question 9.** The responses employees provided to this question represent only their perceptions of design. It was understood before this survey was distributed that architecture may not be within an employee’s general orbit of thinking.

**Question 10.** The aim to keep the survey restricted to one side of one page necessitated that some questions be condensed more than may have been ideal. For example, it may have been more appropriate to ask employees this question in a series of three or four questions rather than in one question, so as not to give employees the impression that any influence was assumed in the first place. Further, the survey presented the categories of possible influences. Thus, this thesis cannot, nor does
it aim to, speak about any other possible influences experienced by employees. It is simply not possible to know whether employees have been influenced in other ways given the nature of the question. I acknowledge that survey respondents may have provided the answers they thought I wanted to read, and that this may have been the first time they ever thought about the question. It is not possible to know exactly why respondents chose to answer the way they did. However, given that the question was asked as it was, the results represent what respondents were capable of saying at the time the survey was distributed.
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CONFERENCE REPORTS


SPEECHES
