
Training the Trainers: A Strategic Blue-Print for the Front Office Instructors in Hospitality Sector

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ABSTRACT:

There is always a need of faculty development programmes in today's competitive world, where trainees have a large number of doubts in their manipulative minds. Gone are the days where lectures were given on white board and students used to grab all the content, now the training methodology has to also includes case studies, group discussion, games and simulation exercise, field visits .The FDPs provide inputs on process and practice of communication, inter-personal skills, creativity, problem solving, achievement motivation training, and inputs on resource and knowledge industries. A questionnaire was prepared and was filled by faculties of various colleges of hospitality. The instrument consisted of 10 questions divided into 2 categories. The purpose was to identify and explore the perspectives of FDP's for training hospitality trainers. With the growing dissatisfaction of graduates' knowledge, skills, and values, the survey proved, FDP's to be the best development programme for faculties. It also focuses on the trainers contributions to improving the quality of their institutions' educational processes: curricula, courses, and advising and assessment programs. Institutions are continuously adopting new measures to improve the quality of their programmes and invite professionals from other institutes at subsidized prize.

Key Words: *Hospitality, Instructors, Trainers FDPs.*

INTRODUCTION

Hospitality education in India is challenged with the practical teaching of students because of the gap between Industry innovation and Hospitality institutions imparting education. The growing number of blended, online, and distance education courses, programs, and degrees offered by institutions of higher education offers challenging opportunities to re-examine teaching and learning. Whereas Hospitality education is incomplete without practical exposure and Industrial training in hotels. Now days, various hotel management institutes have started vocational training of 1 year to make the student more acceptable to the hotels. A student learns from his/her faculty, institutes must think about training their faculty as the same will go to the students directly.

UNDERSTANDING FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Faculty development (FD) is a *planned programme* meant to achieve the following objectives:

1. To improve an individual's knowledge and skills in teaching, educational research and educational administration and
2. To prepare institution and faculty members for their various roles.

In hospitality education, faculty development deals with the sensitization and training of teachers in carrying out their professional tasks, which lead to improvement in the quality of teaching and learning that contributes to the competence of professionals. Faculty development has assumed a lot of significance, because of its role in capacity building. The development is to enrich teachers of hospitality with new ideas, concepts and methodology of teaching.

For example. FDP on "Case Writing & Method of Teaching" a two week AICTE sponsored Faculty Development Programme on "Case Writing and Method of Teaching" conducted by JIMS for around 25 faculty members. Lectures and speeches by Distinguished academicians and industry managers was conducted in the various sessions. The informative and enriching talk and analyses on different case studies were shared with their industry and research experiences which provoked immense interest and interaction amongst participating faculty members.

SIGNIFICANCE OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT IN HOSPITALITY EDUCATION

Teaching is a demanding and complex task. George Miller observed, "It is curious that so many of our most important responsibilities are undertaken without significant preparation. Marriage, parenthood and teaching are probably most ubiquitous illustrations".

1. It is necessary for the present day teacher to be aware of and become part of far reaching changes that are taking place in hospitality education.
2. The changes are: shift from conventional role of teacher, changes in learning styles, innovative practicals and changes in assessment philosophy, methods and tools (*i.e Situation handling, Case study, Role plays etc.*)

Additional roles of Teachers:

Conventionally, the role of a teacher was confined to 'information giver', viz., passing on information, Standard Operating procedures, Methods, etc to the students assuming that the students would be able to do their jobs well, once placed in a situation. The teacher in the present scenario is expected to play multiple roles such as:

1. Facilitator (of learning).
2. Curriculum and course planner.
3. Resource material creator.
4. Student assessor.
5. Mentor.
6. Program evaluator

Changing Learning styles: Students need to be effective lifelong learners in order to continue to develop personally and professionally. This demands encouragement of diverse learning styles. Application of adult learning principles, student autonomy, self-learning, experiential learning, reflective learning, computer assisted learning, distance learning, e-learning, use of skill learning exposure are some of the areas requiring expertise, which are not readily available with most teachers.

Innovative curriculum models: While many hospitality schools abroad are offering innovative curriculum such as 'Problem based curriculum (PBL)', 'Competency based curriculum' and 'Knowledge curriculum'. In India, we are still following traditional subject based curriculum, which is chapter to chapter and topic to topic. Shifting to a new curriculum requires skills and competence that cannot be taken for granted.

New Assessment methods and tools: The traditional methods of assessment have been challenged. Dissatisfaction has been expressed over their validity and reliability. Several new methods can be followed which can be on the basis of Attendance, grooming, Problem Handling skills and overall performance in the whole semester and the previous one as well. The focus of student assessment has shifted to the use of multiple-methods for testing a wide gamut of learning outcomes, such as situation handling abilities, communication skills, IT skills and professionalism including ethical behavior.

LITERATURE HIGHLIGHTS

Employers have indicated that students are often not prepared for the workplace and call on universities to produce more employable graduates (**Barrie, 2006; Kember & Leung, 2005**) by providing transferable skills that can be taken into the workplace (**Smith, Clegg, Lawrence & Todd, 2007**). Students' subject matter knowledge is usually satisfactory (**Crebert, Bates, Bell, Patrick & Cragnolini, 2004; Hind, Moss & McKellan, 2007**) but by improving and developing their competencies such as interpersonal skills, teamwork, communication and problem solving skills, value will be added to their intellectual capabilities making them more employable (**Hind et al., 2007; Maher & Graves, 2007**). Employers are expecting graduates to be work-ready and demanding a range of competencies and qualities of them (**Yorke & Harvey, 2005**). Educational institutions should be critical of their programme offerings and question if they are nurturing the appropriate competencies and consider how best to ensure these are developed (**Kember & Leung, 2005**).

Faculty isolation and the impact on the organization

According to Smith and Smith (1993), commonly cited concerns among teaching staff at colleges and universities include a sense of isolation, lack of community, and lack of belonging. They contend that if left unattended, such concerns may progress toward exasperation, disillusionment, and the eventual alienation of faculty. "This isolation, tolerable at age thirty, becomes deadening by age fifty," assert Smith and Smith (1993, p. 82). In response to the isolation felt by teachers and faculty members, Palmer (1999) strongly supports collegial socialization as a core component of professional development programs and refers to the

increasing isolation of faculty, their research agendas, and teaching activities as the “privatization of teaching.”

Privatization creates more than individual pain; it creates institutional incompetence as well. By privatizing teaching, we make it next to impossible for the academy to become more adept at its teaching mission. The growth of any skill depends heavily on honest dialogue among those who are doing it. Some of us grow by private trial and error, but our willingness to try and fail is severely limited when we are not supported by a community that encourages such risks. The most likely outcome when any function is privatized is that people will perform the function conservatively, refusing to stray far from the silent consensus on what ‘works’ – even when it clearly does not. That I am afraid, too often describes the state of teaching in the privatized academy (Palmer, 1999, p. 1).

Professional development and collaboration

In line with Palmer’s emphasis on addressing the “privatization of teaching,” Smith and Smith (1993) outline two programs that they assess as particularly effective in promoting a sense of belonging and in providing opportunities and challenges for faculty to experience incremental, long-term professional growth: the New Jersey Department of Higher Education and the New Jersey Institute for Collegiate Teaching and Learning Partners in Learning Program. They identified strengths of the collaborative process used in these two programs, including their ongoing nature, faculty empowerment and ownership, and their potential for transformation. They found potential in these programs to encourage revitalization, re-energization, and reinvestigation among participants.

The academics in Zuber-Skerritt’s (1992) study who experienced various methods of professional development indicated a preference for an inquiry type approach to professional development: “The best way to learn about teaching in higher education is not to be given information and advice by outside experts who determine what academics need to know. Rather . . . academics can and should try to learn about teaching as they do in their discipline or particular subject area, that is, as personal scientists” (p. 75). Those who view knowledge building from a Vygotsky’s (1978) social constructivism framework would put this inquiry process in a social context. Learning about teaching within a social constructivist framework is more of a social process involving formulation of knowledge through sharing and comparing learnings and understandings with others. This fits well with the collegial model Palmer (1999) argues for and is represented in the programs described in Smith and Smith (1993). It is also in line with the collegial aspects of the “Process” and “Discipline” approaches to faculty development described in the review of literature on professional development completed by Amundsen and colleagues (2005). Collaborative work in collegial groups to enable individuals to examine their thinking about teaching is one of the characteristics of the “Process” approach. The “Discipline” approach is characterized by small groups of colleagues from the same discipline making explicit their understanding of knowledge development or learning in their discipline to develop their teaching and critique the perspectives and understandings of their colleagues. Both approaches emphasize the important role of colleagues in professional development to support reflection on, and

development of, knowledge and skills required for effective teaching (Amundsen, Abrai, McAlpine, Weston, 2005).

Learning communities/ communities of practice

The focus on collegiality and creating a sense of belonging, as well as formulation of knowledge as a social process, is not new. Rather, it can be found throughout the ongoing development of the metaphor of learning community. Schön (1973) argues for the development of institutions that are capable of bringing about their own continuing evolution by functioning as “learning systems.” Senge (1990) introduces the concept of the learning organization to explain and justify strategies to enhance the capacity of all members of an organization to collaborate in the achievement of agreed-upon goals. Hord, Hall, Rutherford, and Huling-Austin (1998) propose that learning communities are distinguished by: supportive and shared leadership, collective learning, shared values and vision, supportive conditions, and shared personal practice. Sergiovanni (2000) describes the learning community as an organization whose members are committed to thinking, growing, and inquiry, and as a place where “learning is an attitude as well as an activity, a way of life as well as a process” (p. 59). Many authors write about the power and usefulness of learning communities in colleges and universities (Barab, Kling, and Gray, 2004; Lenning and Ebbers, 2000; Na Ubon and Kimble, 2003; Palloff and Pratt, 1999; Shapiro and Levine, 1999). Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002), who are often credited with the contemporary development of the metaphor of communities of practice, state that within a community of practice “learning requires an atmosphere of openness . . . the key is to build an atmosphere of collective inquiry” (p. 37).

Researchers that work in the area of professional faculty or teacher development and discuss elements of learning communities in their models include: Palmer (1999) explicitly describes a social constructivist process of faculty development during which faculty are encouraged to reflect upon and write about teaching incidents: Duffy (1996) asserts that “knowledge is something people do together,” and proposes collegial, collaborative, and team-oriented initiatives aimed at increasing teaching effectiveness. Stahl’s (1996) “open systems dialogue” model of teacher development at the tertiary level includes ongoing discussion to support mutual growth among the participants. Schwier (1997) has articulated the conditions necessary for a learning community within the context of describing what is necessary for virtual learning communities – i.e., allow for participants to have their interests and needs represented (negotiation), intimacy, commitment, and engagement.

Carefully designed faculty development approaches can create a culture that supports thoughtful focus on teaching, while nurturing the sense of connectedness and collegiality that is vital to continuous innovation and improvement in post-secondary institutions.

Simply working in the proximity of others does not ensure a motivating environment that enhances professional collegiality. All educational institutions and the sub-groups that operate within them should attend to the development of dynamic and nurturing interactions among faculty that support excellence in instruction and the scholarship of teaching. Such conditions, in

turn, will promote a collective sense of mutual benefit and reciprocal responsibility among faculty.

Described in this paper is a faculty development program is designed to reduce feelings of isolation among faculty, while building a community of learners, improving teaching, and building organizational capacity.

“A culture that supports learning, nurtures collegiality, and encourages the co-creation, sharing, and use of teaching knowledge and skills is a critical ingredient in a successful professional development effort”.

OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH:

1. The find out the need of strengthening faculty development as a vehicle for capacity building in hospitality education and to explore the perspectives of FDP’s for training hospitality trainers.
2. To point out new measures adopted by trainers of hospitality at various institutes.
3. To find out the key concern areas of Hospitality in which the trainers want to be trained.

METHODOLOGY

Work-integrated learning is considered an educational strategy where learning in the classroom alternates with learning in the workplace (Jones & Quick, 2007) and allows for the competencies of students to be developed and nurtured by the mentors. The survey was done on the basis of Primary data and Secondary data collection:

Primary Data

- Questionnaire was prepared and filled by faculties of various colleges of hospitality in India.

(The instrument consisted of 10 questions divided into 2 categories. One category has basic information of the participants and other has questions related to FDP programmes).

- Interviews with faculty of various colleges of Hospitality Education.

As per the questionnaire and interviews, the results were analysed.

Secondary Data was collected by Reference Researches, Journals and Websites

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Faculty Development as Community Building

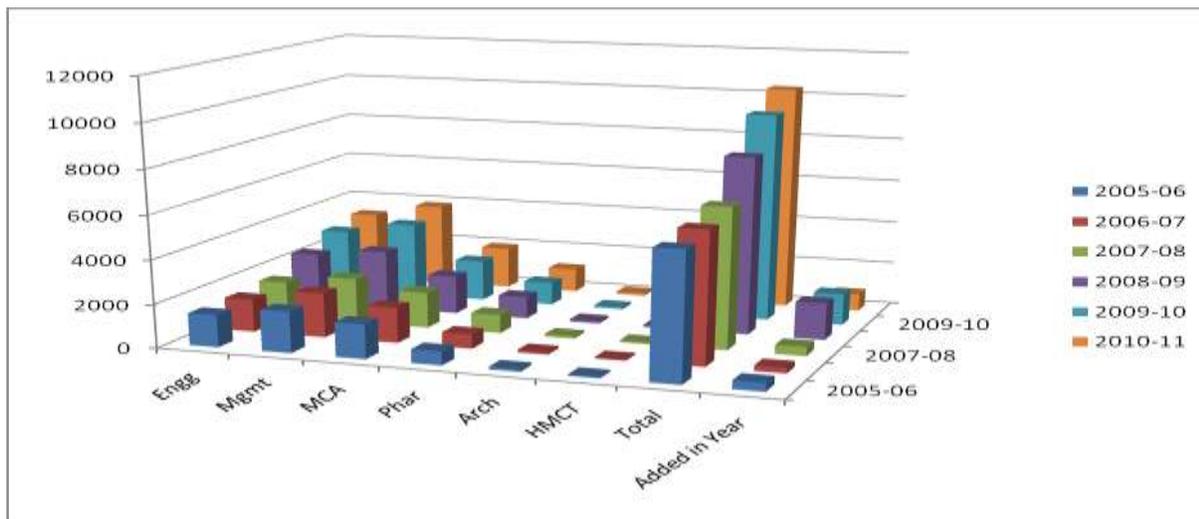
When faculty development is viewed as an ongoing need and when we approach faculty development as a long-term, continuous effort, community building becomes a part of the process. Carefully designed faculty development approaches can facilitate and create a culture that supports a thoughtful focus on teaching, while at the same time, nurture a sense of

connectedness and collegiality across the organization that is vital to continuous innovation and improvement. This paper reports to improve the collegial culture at hospitality institutes and its findings includes:

1. AICTE Approved Colleges:

The growth of Technical Education before independence in the Country has been very slow. Due to efforts and initiatives taken during successive Five Year Plans and particularly due to policy changes in the eighties to allow participation of Private and Voluntary Organizations in the setting up of Technical Institutions on self-financing basis, the growth of Technical Education has been phenomenal.

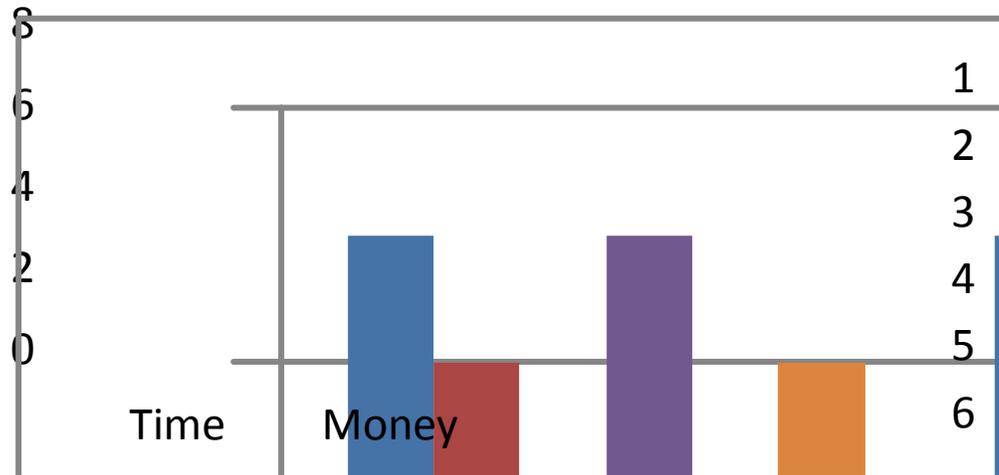
| Growth in Technical Institutions | |
|----------------------------------|------|
| Year | HMCT |
| 2005-06 | 70 |
| 2006-07 | 64 |
| 2007-08 | 81 |
| 2008-09 | 87 |
| 2009-10 | 93 |
| 2010-11 | 101 |



Source: AICTE Approval Process Book Page no.4

- No formal policy on faculty development:** Whereas, elementary, primary and secondary school teachers have to undergo training in formal schools or colleges of education to be eligible for appointment as well as promotion, there is such requirement for appointment of teachers in hospitality colleges in India. This makes the faculty more inattentive toward FDP programmes.
- Faculties claimed they do not get time to attend FDP organized by various institutes, due to work load on them at the start and middle of sessions, nor is the fee for attending FDP's are feasible for them to be a part of it. The table below shows the **time and money**

constraints of 6 HOD's of Front office department of 6 respective Hotel Management colleges.



4. Faculty Development Topics by Faculty Roles.

| Faculty Development Topics | Professional Academic | Administrator | Researcher | Communicator | Leader |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------|--------------|--------|
| Curriculum | ☺ | ☺ | | | ☺ |
| Teaching Methods | ☺ | ☺ | ☺ | ☺ | ☺ |
| Evaluating performance | ☺ | ☺ | | | |
| Entrepreneurship | ☺ | ☺ | | | |
| Leadership | ☺ | | | ☺ | |
| Career Planning | | ☺ | ☺ | | ☺ |

As a Professional Academic, almost all faculties want Faculty development to be in the above mentioned topics except career planning and also everybody want the topics as an administrator. It shows that faculty development program me is more beneficial to the faculty members as Professional Academic and Administrators rather than researchers, Communicators and a Leader.

5. Sample Progress and Program Evaluation Plan for Evaluating a Faculty Development Initiative.

| Objectives of FDP's: | Better Mentorship | Use of Teaching methods(Case study, Role play etc) | Practical Workshops | Ease in Teaching |
|---|-------------------|--|---------------------|------------------|
| To increase use of Modern Technology in teaching interactions | ☺ | ☺ | ☺ | ☺ |
| To use strategies to increase efficiency as teachers. | | ☺ | ☺ | ☺ |
| To accurately rate learners. | ☺ | ☺ | ☺ | |
| Improve overall effectiveness as a teacher. | ☺ | ☺ | ☺ | |

As hospitality is more about practical scenarios, faculties find FDP's to be more specific on workshops to be conducted in hotels. The teacher efficiency will be proved when a student performs well. Usage of various teaching methods ie. Case study, Role plays, etc are proved to be more beneficial as it helps to manipulate students mind and they come with more better ideas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Faculty members need unique professional development, especially in the area of teaching and learning.

1. **Support for Faculty Development:** Faculty development is constrained by lack of commitment by the management of the institutions. Teachers should be encouraged to attend faculty development programmes by offering leave of absence travel grants or such other facilities for attending workshops and conferences.
2. To support and also leverage the talents of these faculty members, many of whom are early technology adopters or innovators, institutions should want to **develop collaborative support programs**. Supporting a diverse set of instructional technology options can be expensive and challenging, especially in fiscally restrictive environments. To the extent possible, explore ways to engage and enlist the aid of new faculty in collaborating with and helping to lead faculty development.
3. **Incorporate assessment into faculty development programs**, which need to align with institutional strategic initiatives. Anticipated outcomes should be clearly defined and measured. Assessment results can become the driver for the ongoing refinement of current faculty development programs and for the creation of new programs.
4. **Secure administrative support for the process**, including the consideration of resources and incentives to participate. Many instructors may be intrinsically motivated to

participate, but if the current culture does not place a high value on professional growth and community, and does not reward or recognize excellence in teaching, the incentives may have to be extrinsic to start (i.e., stipends, travel to conferences, resources, etc.).

5. Care must be taken to invite participation in a way that is part marketing, part welcoming and encouraging, part challenging and yet honest and transparent. There should be no hidden agendas, no unrevealed requirements or expectations. Invitations to join the community should set the tone and be issued in many formats. While emails and hardcopies offer one way, taking the opportunity to connect in more personal ways should be mostly used. Where possible or practical, phone calls and personal visits can also be made. Using a brief audiographic presentation (e.g., *Breeze* or *Captivate*) or an audioconference recording (e.g., *Elluminate* or *Horizon Live*) or video (podcast) will add a human touch.
6. **Recognition and Encouragement:** Teachers who have introduced innovations or contributed to improvement in hospitality education should be duly recognized and rewarded. There should be a mechanism for periodic review of performance of teachers. Teachers should become accountable.

Implementing these recommendations will require an investment of both time and money. The investment will prove to be justified only when the faculty development deliver on the promise of improved learning outcomes for students.

CONCLUSION

Colleges and universities need to consider faculty development programs in the same way that they view other academic programs. In other words, successful faculty development programs should include mentoring, delivery in a variety of on-campus and off-campus formats (face-to-face, blended, online, self-initiated/self-paced), and anyplace/anytime programming to accommodate just-in-time needs. Faculty members are learners with needs and constraints similar to those of students. Support programs must be valuable, relevant, current, and engaging. They should also demonstrate best practices in providing a participatory, facilitated learning environment. In addition, faculty development programs should address the multiple roles and needs of the faculty member as facilitator, teacher, advisor, mentor, and researcher

- a. Institutions should also consider that offering a dynamic faculty development program will serve not only full-time, but also part-time faculty—relied on heavily by some institutions. Finally, faculty development can occur outside official programs: internal opportunities can include serving on and/or leading committees, writing and administering grants, and designing and facilitating official faculty development programs; external development opportunities can include attending conferences, furthering academic studies, conducting research projects, and collaborating with colleagues from other institutions.

- b. Implementing and sustaining successful faculty development initiatives continues to be both an opportunity and a challenge, especially with the anticipated severe budget cuts that many institutions are facing. As noted earlier, encouraging faculty adoption and innovation in teaching and learning with IT" as one of the top-five teaching and learning challenges of 2009. Thus it is critical that institutions continue to seek systemic ways to support teaching and learning innovation and to connect to successful programs. A critical component of an innovative teaching and learning environment continues to be sustainability: the process of faculty development must begin before students enter the academic profession and must continue at all subsequent levels of the 21st-century faculty member's career.

Conclusively given below are seven principles to evoke aliveness as suggested by Wenger and colleagues (2002):

1. Design for evolution: Combine design elements in a way that catalyzes community development. Attend to physical, social and organizational structures.
2. Provide for open dialogue between inside and outside perspectives.
3. Invite different levels of participation.
4. Develop for both public and private community spaces. Nurture interconnected relationships between community members, including day-to-day, one-on-one exchanges. Support a community coordinator to drop in on members, call or email to discuss problems, link to resources, etc.
5. Focus on value.
6. Combine familiarity and excitement.
7. Create a rhythm for the community (Wenger, et al., 2002, p. 51).

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