Need Assessment of the Tourism Industry in Puerto Rico

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Colegio Tecnológico de San Juan

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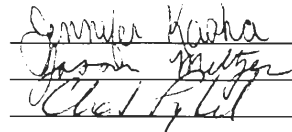
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Abstract

There is currently a mismatch between the skills taught at the tourism-related educational institutions in Puerto Rico and the needs of the tourism industry. This situation makes it difficult for the tourism industry to fill its open positions with qualified candidates. The objectives of this project were to examine the current situation and to make appropriate recommendations for a remedy to this problem. This project identified four major problem areas in the four-star hotel industry of Puerto Rico: lack of English skills, internship operation problems, poor customer service skills, and an overall lack of communication between the industry and educational institutions. The tourism industry of Puerto Rico has had a substantial growth over the past decade, and the resolution of the problems identified in this report will help maintain that growth.

Authorship

This report was prepared by Jennifer Kaska, Jason Meltzer, and Chad Pytel. Each participant contributed equally to the writing and editing of its contents.

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

Year after year, the tourism industry of Puerto Rico searches for qualified candidates to fill its openings. However, despite the fact that many students graduate with degrees in tourism-related fields from the educational institutions in Puerto Rico, the industry continues to find it hard to fill the available openings with qualified individuals. Our project investigated the nature of the mismatch between the skills students are provided with at the educational institutions and the skills required of them by the tourism industry. This project focused on four-star hotels and educational institutions offering certificates, two-year associate's degree, and four-year bachelor's degree programs in the San Juan metropolitan area.

The tourism industry in Puerto Rico employed 59,000 people in 1998, generated 2.4 billion dollars in 2000, and contributed to 3.8 percent of Puerto Rico's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2000. A lack of qualified workers to fill necessary positions could potentially hurt the entire economy. Thus, by commissioning such a project, Colegio Tecnológico del Municipio de San Juan can share the findings with both the educational institutions as well as with the industry and further promote the success of tourism in Puerto Rico. The Colegio Tecnológico may also consider developing tourism-related programs based on the findings in this report.

The main objective of the project was to develop recommendations for the tourism-related education programs and the tourism industry at large. Tourism-related refers to the educational programs of hospitality management, culinary arts, and travel and tourism. The knowledge required to make these recommendations was gained through interviewing tourism industry professionals, and alumni from tourism-related educational programs who work at the four-star hotels in the metropolitan San Juan area of Puerto Rico. These interviews allowed us to identify the skills the industry needed in the graduates they hire and the skills these industry professionals believe the programs at the educational institutions are not addressing.

In addition, we also conducted interviews at educational institutions in San Juan and Carolina. These interviews allowed us to examine the structure of a particular curriculum and gave us the ability to compare what it offers to what the industry is looking for in terms of skills. Additionally, we organized focus group discussions with students studying tourism-related majors at local educational institutions. These focus groups identified the factors that are important to students graduating from these programs and entering the industry.

Through our research we found that both the educational institutions and the tourism industry believed that there is a severe lack of English skills among those graduating from the hospitality and tourism educational institutions. However, this problem is fostered by the K-12 educational system of Puerto Rico, rather than the fault of the post-secondary educational institutions. We recommend that institutions increase programs that immerse students in the English language as well as increase participation in exchange and internship programs in the United States.

We found that the industry believed that the graduates they receive are lacking the customer-service skills, which are essential to the industry. On this point, we recommend

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an increased emphasis on customer-service skills utilizing case studies as well as role-playing in the classroom to increase emphasis.

In addition, both educational institutions and the tourism industry agree that the internship programs operated by the schools are in need of improvement, but they disagree on how the internship programs should be run. Therefore, we recommend better evaluation and organization of the internship programs at the educational institutions along with more cooperation with the industry when conducting the internships.

Finally, the overall communication between the tourism industry and the educational institutions must be increased. We feel that this increase in communication could be facilitated by an existing organization that has both ties and interest in the success of the tourism industry as a whole, as well as through the support of the Puerto Rican government. The government can do more to support the needs of the tourism industry by accurately assessing the importance of tourism to the Puerto Rican economy, as well as providing funding for the endeavors of the hospitality and tourism educational institutions and the tourism industry.

While the tourism industry in Puerto Rico has continued to grow over the past decade and is expected to continue to grow, with an estimated 7,000 new jobs opening in the tourism industry of Puerto Rico over the next three years, if all the needs of the tourism industry of Puerto Rico are not met, this continued growth cannot be sustained. We believe that through increased communication the problems existent in bilingual education, customer service skills, and internship programs can be remedied, making it possible to maintain the tourism industry growth existent today.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Year after year, the tourism industry of Puerto Rico searches for qualified candidates to fill its openings. However, despite the fact that many students graduate with degrees in the tourism-related fields from the educational institutions in Puerto Rico, the industry continues to find it hard to fill the available openings with qualified individuals. Our project investigated the nature of the mismatch between the skills students are provided with at the educational institutions and the skills required of them by the tourism industry. This project focused on four-star hotels and educational institutions offering tourism-related programs in the San Juan metropolitan area.

The tourism industry in Puerto Rico employed 59,291 people in 1998 and generated 2.4 billion dollars in 2000. The tourism industry in 2000 contributed to 3.8 percent of Puerto Rico's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with 2 percent generated by hotels alone and is an integral part of the overall economy of the island (Puerto Rico Planning Board Economic Report, 2000).

A lack of qualified workers to fill necessary positions could potentially hurt the entire economy. Thus, by commissioning such a project, Colegio Tecnológico del Municipio de San Juan can share the findings with both the educational institutions as well as with the industry and further promote the success of tourism on the island. This report presents recommendations that will facilitate them in improving their overall educational process.

Our goal was to formulate a proposal indicating the most effective process for improving and developing stronger tourism-related education environment. Tourism-related refers to the educational programs of hospitality management, culinary arts, and travel and tourism. These recommendations will enable the educational institutions to develop courses that will allow their graduates to learn the skills that are currently needed in the industry, but are not being taught or emphasized at the educational institutions. Also, these recommendations will help to increase the communication between the educational institutions and the industry.

The main objective of the project, to develop a proposal for the tourism-related education programs, required an understanding of the tourism environment of Puerto Rico. This understanding was gained through interviewing seven out of the twelve hotel managers and executives at the four-star hotels in the metropolitan San Juan area of Puerto Rico including the Wyndham El San Juan hotel, the Inter-Continental San Juan Resort & Casino, the Ritz Carlton, Caribe Hilton, Condado Plaza, the Marriott Resort and Stellaris Casino, and the Normandie Hotel, and four alumni of tourism-related programs who are currently working at these four-star hotels. These interviews allowed us to identify the skills the industry looks for in the graduates they hire and the skills these industry professionals feel the programs at the educational institutions are not addressing.

We also conducted interviews with the educational directors and professors of tourism-related programs at the local educational institutions in Puerto Rico that offered certificate programs, two-year associate's degree, and four-year bachelor's degree programs. We interviewed at five out of the ten schools in the San Juan and Carolina areas that offer these programs. These were the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) in Carolina, Colegio Universitario del Este (CUE) in Carolina, Universidad del Sagrado Corazón in Carolina, MBTI Business Training Institute in Santurce, and Universal Career

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Counseling Center, Inc. in Santurce. These interviews allowed us to examine the structure of a particular curriculum and gave us the ability to compare what it offers to what the industry is looking for in terms of skills and discuss their opinions on the mismatch. Additionally, we organized focus group discussions with students studying tourism-related majors at local educational institutions. These focus groups identified the factors that are important to students graduating from these programs and entering the industry.

While the tourism industry in Puerto Rico has continued to grow over the past decade and is expected to continue to grow, with an estimated 7,000 new jobs opening in the tourism industry of Puerto Rico over the next three years, if all the needs of the tourism industry of Puerto Rico are not met, this continued growth cannot be sustained. We believe that our findings can help the educational institutions improve the training of their graduates and hence improve the industry and maintain or increase the growth of the industry.

An Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP) is a project that relates issues of technology and society together. This project addressed the educational and social aspects of the tourism environment of Puerto Rico. The educational aspect of the project addressed the reform of the curriculum of the educational institutions and the overall tourism environment of Puerto Rico to better suit the needs of the future of the tourism industry. The societal aspect of this project was that implementation of the recommendations will not only result in a higher retention level of graduates that stay on the Island, but as more qualified candidates enter the work-force, the tourism industry itself will improve. The IQP is a degree requirement at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and is part of the WPI plan, a series of projects designed to combine learning and experience in higher education.

This report was prepared by members of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute Puerto Rico Project Center. The relationship of the Center to the Colegio Tecnológico del Municipio de San Juan and the relevance of the topic to the Colegio Tecnológico del Municipio de San Juan are presented in Appendix A.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review is to examine the current state of the tourism industry in Puerto Rico and tourism-related educational approaches throughout the world. There exists a gap between the needs of the tourism industry and the skills taught by educational facilities. The tourism environment in Puerto Rico is examined first. It is important to clearly understand tourism in Puerto Rico, including its history and current state. Directly following this section are sections outlining the nature of the tourism industry in general terms, identified industry needs, and the importance of service quality. Various educational approaches being used around the world are then discussed to indicate how different educational facilities are trying to solve similar problems. The weaknesses of tourism education as a whole are reviewed in order to give a better understanding of the current situation. Also, the tourism policies in other countries are reviewed in order to present possible solutions for the problem in Puerto Rico. Finally, we present background information regarding the methodology portion of this report.

2.1 Tourism in Puerto Rico

In an attempt to understand the history of tourism in Puerto Rico, including what factors have influenced it, as well as where it is going; this section of the literature review presents background information about the tourism industry of Puerto Rico.

2.1.1 History of Tourism in Puerto Rico

According to the *History and Organization Manual by the Puerto Rico Tourism Company* (Manual de Historia y Organización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, August 1999), the history of tourism in Puerto Rico can be divided into seven stages; historical growth, origin, growth, crisis, lack of growth, recovery and expansion. A detailed account of the seven stages of the history of tourism in Puerto Rico can be found in Appendix B.

2.1.2 Current Tourism Environment of Puerto Rico

According to the Puerto Rico Economic Report (Puerto Rico Planning Board, 1998), tourism is not considered an industry, but rather an economic activity that influences and is influenced by different sectors of the economy. In order to calculate the impact of tourism on the different parts of the economy within Puerto Rico, the Planning Board (Junta de Planificación) takes into account the relationship between visitor spending and the Gross Domestic Product.

Tourism has many repercussions in other sectors of the economy of Puerto Rico, both directly and indirectly. The demand of goods and services from tourists stimulates more production and distribution of the same types of goods and services. This promotes the generation of employment, both directly and indirectly with the tourism industry. Figure 2.1 illustrates the growth in numbers of those employed by the tourism sector over the past decade. The buying and selling of merchandise and services between the different sectors of the economy stimulates the investment of machines, equipment, and

buildings. It also has the effect of improving the standard of living on the Island and increases personal income. The original net income in tourist activity is an important indicator of the contribution of tourism in the Puerto Rico economy (Puerto Rico's Planning Board's economic report, 1998). Figure 2.2 lists the number of visitors to Puerto Rico and their expenditures, showing an increase over the past decade. Figure 2.3 also supports the fact that there has been an increase in tourism by clearly indicating that the number of hotels rooms and the occupancy numbers have risen over the last decade. In conjunction with this fact, it is important to remember that the tourism industry is seasonal as illustrated in Figure 2.4. Today, the tourism sector contributes to 3.8% of the GDP of Puerto Rico with 2% of the GDP generated from hotels alone, as shown in Figure 2.5.

2.1.2.1 Caribbean statistical comparison

Puerto Rico's position in the tourism market compared to other countries in the Caribbean is important in understanding the importance of tourism in the Caribbean and the need for Puerto Rico to maintain it's position as the most popular island to visit. Puerto Rico not only receives visitors from the United States but also from other countries in the Caribbean and Latin America. Puerto Rico is an important destination for people in the Caribbean because many visit the island to shop or receive medical service. Within the Caribbean market, Puerto Rico has maintained the most visitors since 1993. This can be seen in Table 2.1 (Puerto Rico Planning Board Economic Report, 1998).

Table 2.1: Number of Visitors in Puerto Rico and Other Caribbean Countries
(In thousands of people-Fiscal years)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Puerto Rico	**3,869.0**	**4,022.6**	**4,086.6**	**4,110.2**	**4,349.7**
Dominican Republic	1,587.6	1,653.9	1,753.9	1,876.8	2,041.9
Bahamas	1,447.4	1,528.6	1,551.7	1,660.2	1,604.3
Jamaica	1,092.3	1,111.6	1,115.6	1,185.5	1,168.2
Cuba	502.0	610.2	618.4	905.4	1,082.7
Virgin Islands	715.0	711.0	677.6	438.8	478.3

Source: Puerto Rico Tourism Company, Office of Statistics and Economic Studies,
    Selected Statistics of the Tourism Industry in Puerto Rico, 1996-97 Edition.

Figure 2.1: Number Employed By Tourism and Hotel Industry from 1982 to 1998
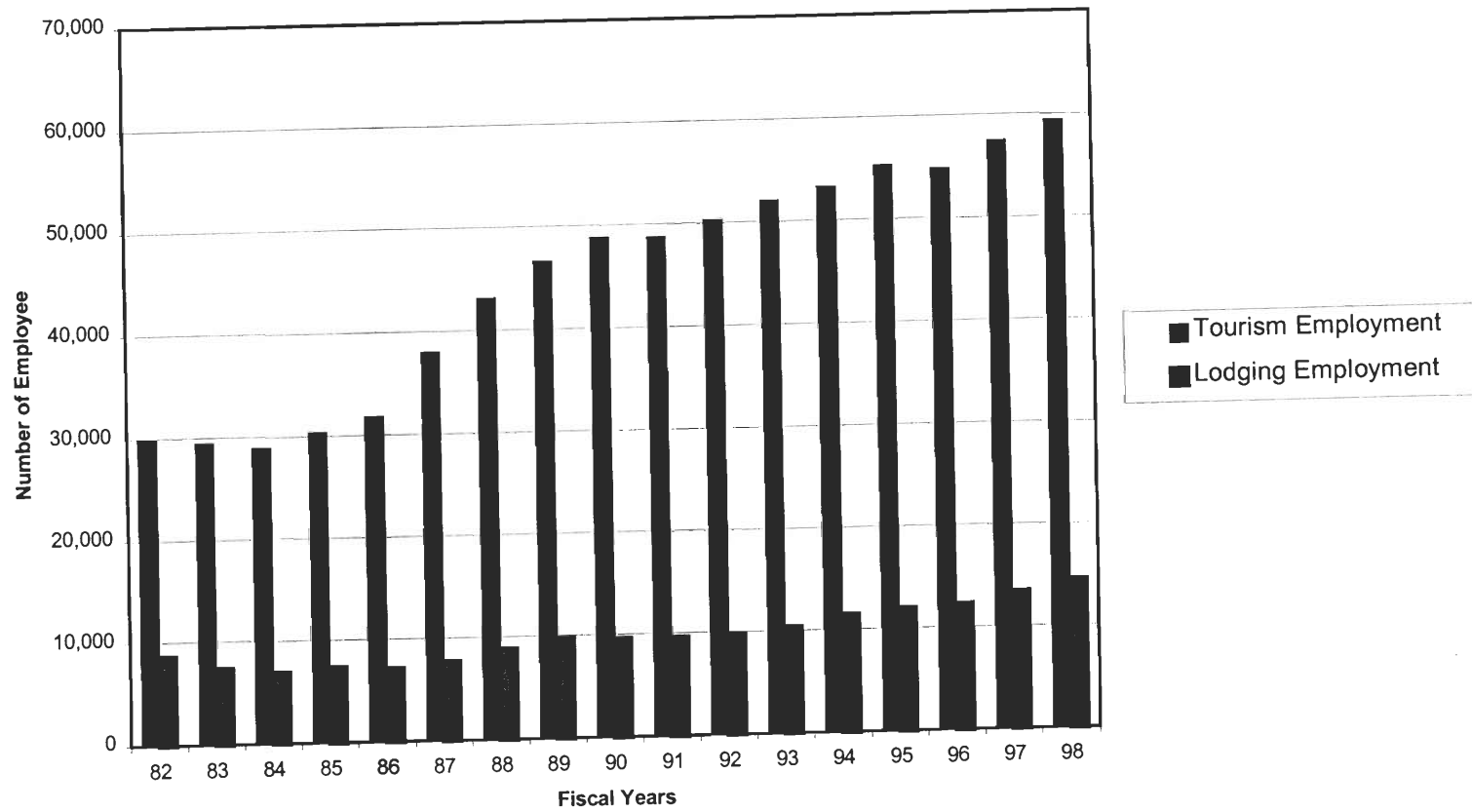
Source:Adapted from Puerto Rico Planning Board (1998)

Figure 2.2: Number of Visitors and Their Expenditures from 1990 to 1999
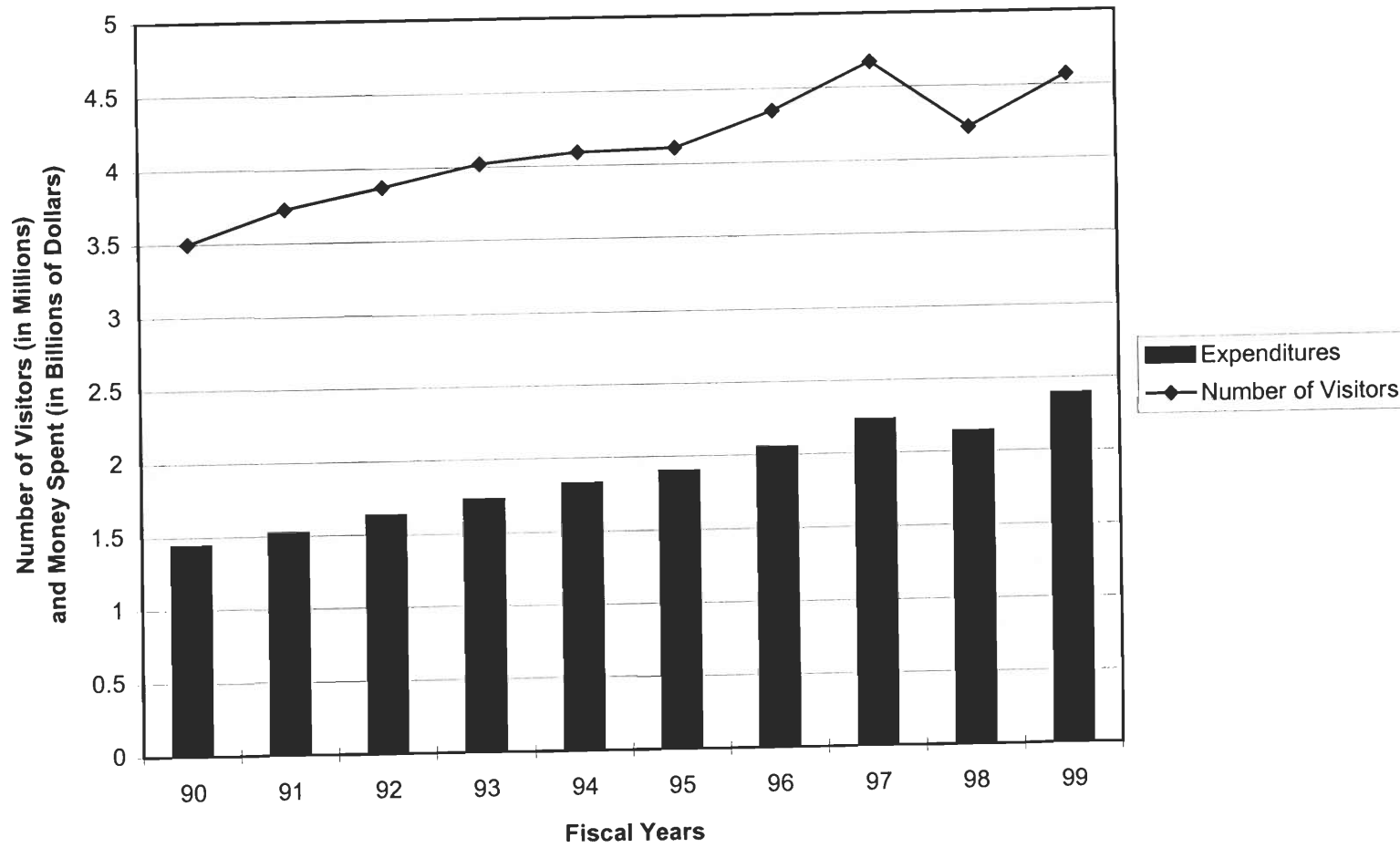
Source: Adapted from Puerto Rico Planning Board (2000)

Figure 2.3: Hotel Rooms and Occupancy from 1990 to 1999
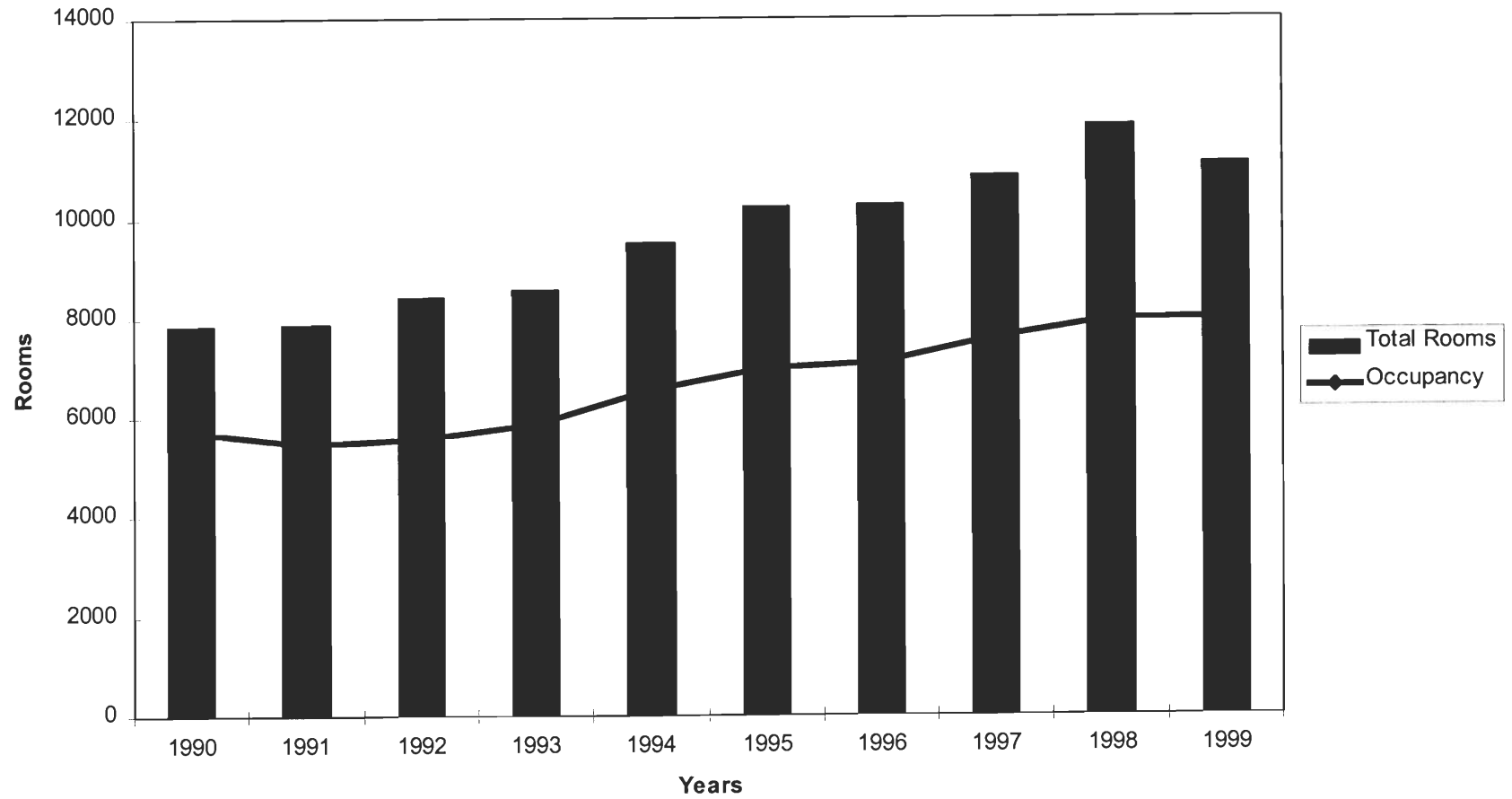
Figure 2.4: Hotel Occupancy By Month for 1998
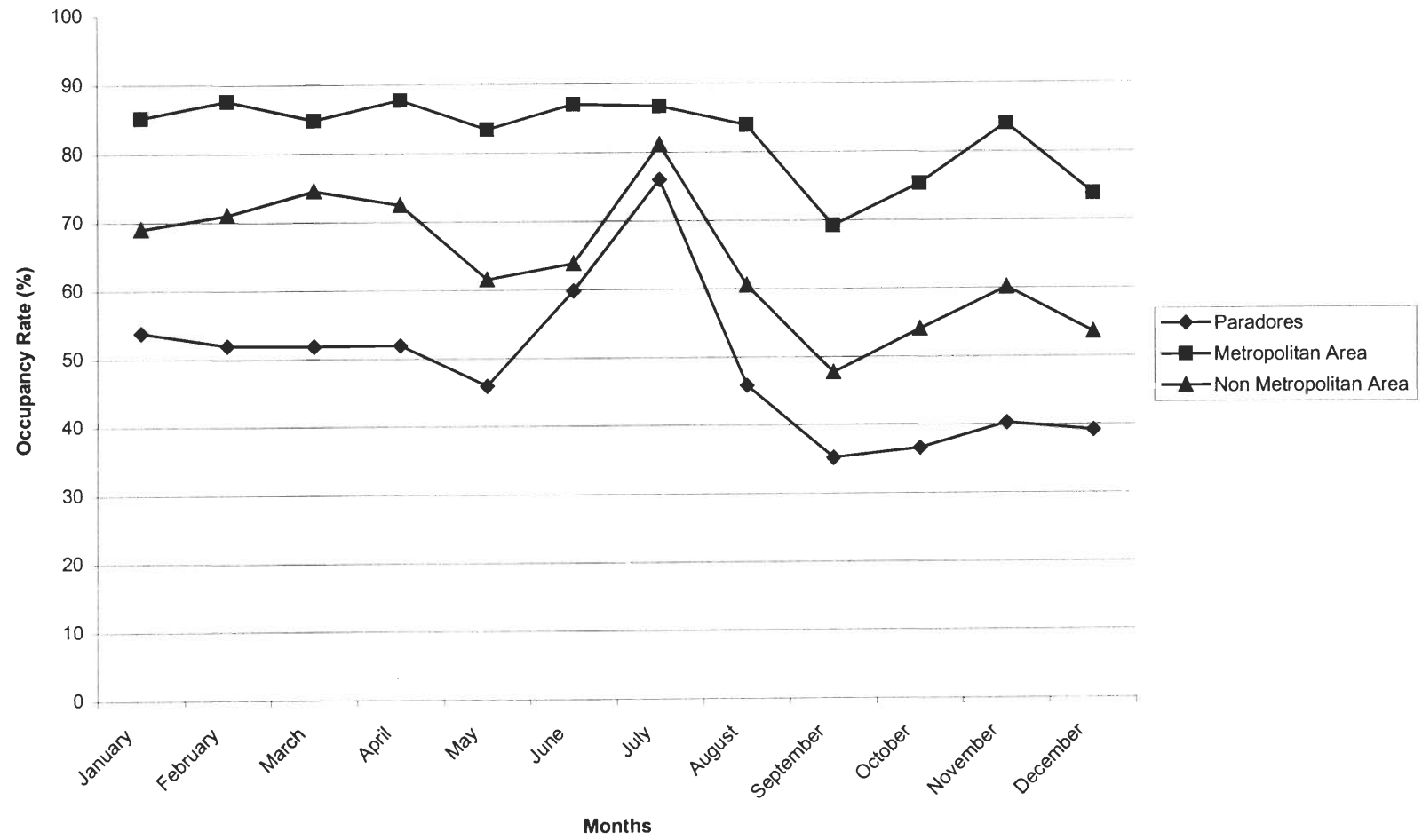
Source: Adapted From Puerto Rico Planning Board (1998)

Figure 2.5: Puerto Rico's GDP By Sector in 2000
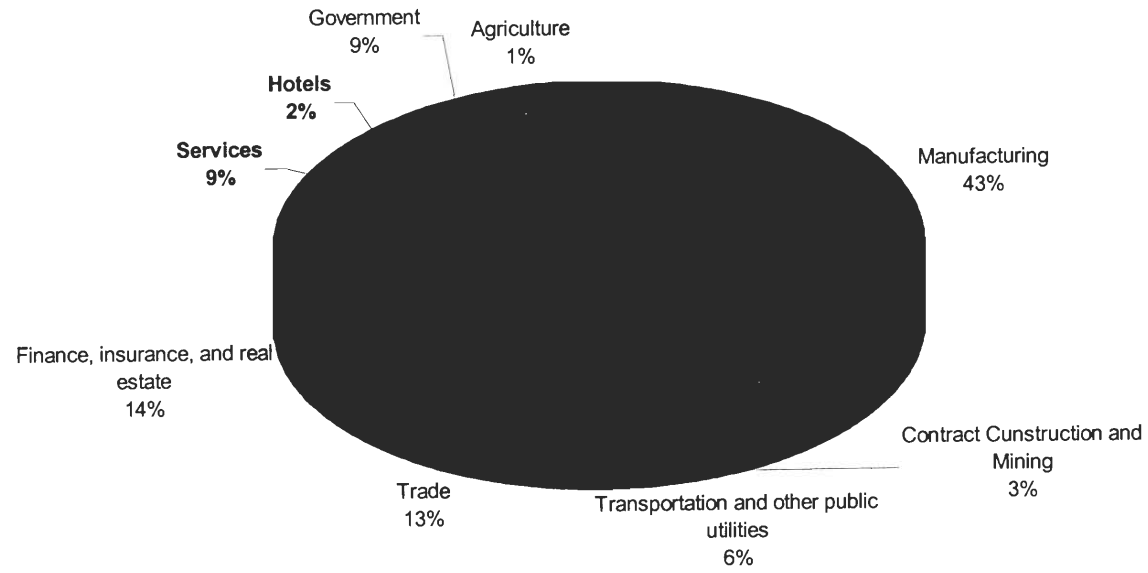
Source: Adapted from Puerto Rico Planning Board (2000)

2.1.2.2 Legislation of tourism in Puerto Rico

The Puerto Rico Tourism Development Act of 1993 and amendments to the income tax act have provided incentives for the growth and expansion of tourism related businesses. These incentives include tax exemptions, tax credits, and venture capital funds.

The tax exemptions that tourism-related businesses benefit from include income taxes, property taxes, excise taxes, municipal license taxes, and construction taxes. The income earned by businesses located outside of Vieques and Culebra are entitled to 90% exemption from income tax while those located inside these regions are relieved of 100% of the tax. All tourism businesses are exempt from paying 90% of the normal property tax rate and are totally exempt from paying excise taxes on imported items. In regards to municipal license taxes, all businesses that utilized new facilities, or facilities that have not been used for three years, are 100% exempt while all other facilities that will be substantially renovated or expanded upon are relieved of 90% of the normal taxation. Lastly, all tourism businesses are entitled to 100% relief from municipal construction tax imposed by any municipality in Puerto Rico.

Tax credits are another means of promoting the expansion of the tourism industry and are available to tourism-activity investors. Any person who acquires equity interest in a tourism-related business is entitled to a tax credit up to 50% of the cash paid for that equity. This percentage is paid out over two installments, 25% is paid in the first year of the investment and 25% in the second year. The tax credit may not exceed 10% of the total project cost, otherwise, the investors, considered developers of the project, are liable for any excess tax credits paid out to investors. In addition to the previously mentioned tax exemptions and credits, the Tourism Venture Capital Fund was created in order to help stimulate the growth of the tourism economy. The money in the fund is invested into various tourism projects with the only restriction being that it cannot exceed 20% of the total project cost.

2.1.2.3 Puerto Rico Hotel & Tourism Association

According to the Puerto Rico Hotel & Tourism Association website (January 16, 2001), they are a trade association that encompasses all segments of the tourism industry including hotels, restaurants, airlines, tour companies, cruise lines, educational institutions and suppliers of goods and services to Puerto Rico's tourism industry. Its current membership includes numerous businesses with over 460 corporate professionals and through them over 45,000 tourism employees. The association performs several important tasks for these businesses and people. It seeks to represent, protect, promote, educate and inform its members whenever possible in order to aid each in reaching their key objectives.

The Puerto Rico Hotel & Tourism Association (January 16, 2001) was originally created with the goal of improving the overall tourism business environment in Puerto Rico. It does this by performing several important tasks. It lobbies government agencies and the legislature to support and pass laws that will have a positive impact upon the tourism industry. In addition, it seeks to increase the level of professionalism found in

the industry by promoting education and training (Puerto Rico Hotel & Tourism Association website, January 16, 2001).

2.2 Tourism Industry Information

According to Amoah and Baum (1997), the tourism industry is a service industry, largely dependent on labor-intensive work. Some examples include hotel managers, tour guides and front-desk clerks. The success of such an industry relies on the availability of qualified personnel to deliver and manage the tourist product. The communication and interaction between the tourist and the tourism industry personnel is one measure of the success of the total tourism experience. The authors point out that the industry is linked to many different products, services and regulations from other sectors of the economy.

2.2.1 Industry Needs

In the industry, job expectations are often discussed in terms of a competency model. Competencies are specific traits, skills, and abilities that are common to a specific group of people. When these traits, skills, and abilities are viewed as a desired set of behaviors for such a group, most commonly a job position or level, this is known as a competency model. Perdue, Ninemeier, and Woods (2000) state that an increasing number of private businesses and organizations in the government-sector have focused on competency modeling as the means to ensuring that employees have the abilities and skills necessary to execute corporate strategies.

Many studies have found that among the most important skills to have are human relation skills. Chung (2000) cites several studies that were done over the years that specifically identified human relations as one of the most important skills to have in the hotel industry as well as in the food and beverage industry. Employee relations and managerial skills were specifically found in all of the studies to be important for students graduating from hospitality-management programs.

Kay and Russette's (2000) findings agree with Chung's (2000) that interpersonal and leadership skills are the essential competencies needed to achieve success in the hospitality industry. The essential competencies within the leadership skills grouping were determined to be the ability to operate in an effective manner during an extraordinarily difficult situation, to maintain a high level of ethical behavior in a work environment, possession of a professional look, the ability to develop a strong rapport with customers, to work hard at achieving strong relationships with employees, and finally, the ability to strongly motivate individuals.

According to Kay and Russette (2000) the core essential competencies fall under four major categories. These are: leadership, technical, interpersonal, and conceptual-creative. The leadership category is further divided by competencies that associated with customers, such as recognizing customer satisfaction and solving customer problems, role-playing, such as portraying enthusiasm and confidence, ethics, such as maintaining professional and ethical standards in the work environment, and trust. Technical competencies refer to the idea of having a working knowledge of product-service, while interpersonal refers to communication skills and conceptual-creativity refers to the ability to adapt creatively to change. A complete listing of the breakdown can be found in table

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2.2. All of these competencies are important to entry level and middle management persons in food and beverage, front desk, and sales positions (Kay & Russette, 2000).

Table 2.2: Core Essential Competencies

	Ethical
Customer-centered	Maintaining professional and ethical standards in the work environment
Recognizing customer satisfaction	**Trust**
Maintaining customer satisfaction understanding and sensitivity	Cultivating climate of trust
Developing positive customer relations	
Solving customer problems	Working knowledge of product-service
Role-modeling	
Portraying enthusiasm	Listening skills
Portraying competence and confidence	Face-to-face communication
Portraying work commitment	Oral communication skills
Demonstrating professional appearance and poise	Resolving conflicts with a win-win-resolution approach
Portraying diligence and initiative	
	Adapting creatively to change

Source: Adapted From Kay, C. & Russette, J. (2000). Hospitality-management competencies: Identifying Managers' Essential Skills. <u>Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly, 41</u> (2), 52-63.

2.3 Service Quality

Service quality is one of the most important determinants of a visitor's satisfaction with a tourism experience; it is an integral part of what makes a tourism business successful (Smith, 1999). The quality of the work environment, including the terms and conditions of employment, training and education for employees, and the quality of management are also important factors of success (Smith, 1999).

According to Barrows (2000), the fundamental asset of any tourism-related organization is the people who collectively make up that organization, or in another sense the quality of the staff reflects the quality of the organization. Therefore, Leslie and Richardson (2000) state, it is important for a tourism organization to find and retain the right quality of staff. Barrows (2000) also suggests that in the food and beverage industry, training the employees is essential for success. Debates in training focus around the minimum level of training that is required. This is due to the fact that it is unclear when the costs of training outweigh the benefits associated with it. Most managers, especially in the high-pressure hospitality industry, do not have the time or resources to properly train employees for a long period of time. Therefore, if a graduate comes out of an educational institution already prepared to work, needing only minimal training, then the cost/benefit to the employer would be tremendous (Barrows, 2000).

Leslie and Richardson (2000) suggest that an organization may assess the quality of their potential employees by investigating the level of the person's development, educational background, and expertise. Leslie and Richardson (2000) argue that the fact a potential employee has undertaken a program of studies at an educational institution

may not mean that they understand an organization's operations. This has lead to an increase in cooperative education involving the development of partnerships with external organizations to attempt to make the educational programs a better fit with the industries needs.

Work experience is an integral part of the education process, argue Leslie and Richardson (2000). The benefits to students working in the industry through a program at their educational institution can be helpful for the student, employer, and educational institute. The benefits to the student range from an increased awareness of the diversity of the industry, to a potential of a reduced period of graduate training. Leslie and Richardson (2000) believe that the industry would gain from the availability of a higher quality level of potential employees having more commitment, a lower turnover rate, and the savings associated with employee retention. In addition, there is the possibility that upon graduation a student applying for a position in the industry will be much more knowledgeable about a company for which he has previously worked. Also, the increased communication between educational institutions and the industry should lead to better course programs and more knowledgeable, competent, and industry aware graduates (Leslie & Richardson, 2000).

2.4 Tourism Education

In exploring the mismatch between the needs of the industry and the skills provided by educational institutions, it is important to examine the definition of tourism education and the ways in which it is taught. The following sections give an overview of several approaches to hospitality education that are utilized in many education programs today.

2.4.1 Definition of Tourism Education

According to Christou (1998), tourism education is made up of both education and training. The common view is that educational institutions provide education, while training is provided by employers with on the job experience. However, this view has changed with the demands of a new business world where it is essential for continuing higher levels of education in order to keep up-to-date with changing technology. Thus, Christou (1998) states, when examining the educational system, the element of training must be taken into consideration.

2.4.2 Definition of Hospitality-Hotel Management

Specific definitions of hospitality management vary among educational institutions. However, all programs center on a fundamental core. Most hospitality management programs can encompass international hotel operations, food service management, sports, recreation and events management, and international travel and tourism. The degree programs are often entitled hospitality management, hotel management, or international hotel and tourism management. Graduates can obtain positions as sales and marketing managers, personnel directors, reservations managers, general managers and executive meeting planners (Prabhu, 1996).

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2.4.3 Definition of Restaurant Management and the Culinary Arts

Culinary arts can be sub-divided into several categories. Restaurant and food service operations are the largest of these. The focus areas in those types of tourism services include marketing strategy and segmentation, which is the allocation of company resources towards promotions and advertising with the objective of increasing their customer base by focusing on certain customer demographics, restaurant development and technology, and customer satisfaction and service. Typically there are three categories that this type of major can fall under, food & beverage management, food service management and restaurant management (Prabhu, 1996).

2.4.4 Definition of Travel and Tourism

Travel and tourism management focuses on market strategy and segmentation, disaster planning and sustainable tourism (Prabhu, 1996). Most programs are designed to provide the student with the skills needed to guide tours, personalize travel arrangements, and fill the needs of destination management or book travel for corporate executives. The aim is to make travel enjoyable for others. Jobs like destinations manager, director of tourism, international tour guide, travel agency owner, cruise ship excursion coordinator, and corporate travel agent are just a few examples of the types of jobs graduates can receive.

2.4.5 Pedagogies of Tourism-related Education

To examine mismatches between the industry's needs and the skills tourism-related educational programs provide students, it is necessary to explore several of the educational approaches previously researched and in use in other countries. The following is a description of the traditional approach to tourism-related education, and the customer-based approach, and the Just-In-Time approach. The existence of these different approaches illustrates the fact that many researchers and educational institutions have realized a necessity exists and have attempted to adapt to the needs of the industry.

2.4.5.1 Traditional approach to tourism-related education

The element of training has been incorporated into educational establishments by developing undergraduate courses that incorporate a period of industrial placement. The most popular form of this is as an internship. The aim is to blend theory with practice. However, these programs do not always satisfy all of the expectations of the educators and the industry (Christou, 1998).

Lefever and Witham (1998) found that most professionals believe that students were generally well prepared for the tourism industry and that most seem "excited and energetic". The professionals they surveyed also commented that they believe educators succeeded in motivating students while giving them a "solid, broad view of the industry." The respondents were also very supportive of internship programs. In regards to internships, the respondents were not so concerned with the actual work position, but

were more interested in the quality of the experience. Lefever and Withiam (1998) found that the majority of practitioners responding to the study felt that internships should expose students to as many areas of the organization as possible. They also felt that an internship with the length of one year would reflect favorably upon a student's overall educational experience.

Currently, there are interactive training programs that are now being utilized to train employees and to test and identify their areas of weakness or lack of knowledge. In response to this, some tourism-related educational institutions are using these interactive technologies to train students in such areas as front-desk operations, or marketing strategy. Prabhu (1996) describes a successful training program as encompassing a multimedia training in peer-group sessions, supervisor training, and take home lessons from textbooks and workbooks.

2.4.5.2 Customer-based approach to tourism-related education

The customer-based approach was designed by the hospitality department at the University of Central Florida in order to respond to the ever-changing needs of the tourism industry. The principal idea of this approach is that the customers of the university are hospitality employers. Their "product," namely students, should be consistent with the needs and demands of the consumer. The University enlisted the help of top executives in the hospitality industry to help them develop a curriculum that correlated with the industry needs (Ashley et al., 1995).

The curriculum that was developed for the University of Central Florida is based upon a six-course core curriculum, three elective courses, and a background of standard business college's core requirements (Ashley et al., 1995). The focus of the study by Ashely et al. (1995) was on the special six-course core and three-course elective curriculum specific to hospitality management majors. According to the authors, the core and elective courses were chosen to provide the skills deemed necessary by industry professionals that were not covered in the standard business curriculum (Ashley et al., 1995). These courses were developed based on the authors' research into methods to provide the competencies needed by the industry. The authors present this program as an example of how the industry's needs can be satisfied by an educational curriculum. These courses are designed to encompass human-resources management and the strategies used in the hospitality industry, as well as how the use of information systems helps to promote effective decision making (Ashley et al., 1995). Beyond the standard curriculum are elective classes that allow the student to go farther in-depth into the topics in hospitality management that interest them (Ashley et al., 1995).

2.4.5.3 Just-In-Time approach to tourism-related education

The term Just-In-Time (JIT) originates from the use of Just-In-Time in manufacturing, which refers to the idea of obtaining parts or inventory "just-in-time" to build a product. For Cho and Schmelzer (2000), JIT has a different meaning, but similar connotations. The heart of this approach is an Internet-based system that students can access at any time and from anywhere. This system provides a forum for the teacher to introduce information and relevant materials to students as needed or "just-in-time" in

order to create a smooth transition from theory to practice and to reinforce ideas. According to Cho and Schmelzer (2000), this promotes a better overall understanding of the information provided. Due to the relatively inexpensive nature of the Internet and related technology, it does so in a cost-effective manner, they say.

The basis for this approach to learning, outlined by Cho and Schmelzer (2000), is that the ability to think critically and collaborate effectively are skills vital to any person in a managerial position. The model discussed here emphasizes a student-based experience as opposed to a traditional teacher-based approach. Unlike the traditional approach, Cho and Schmelzer (2000) state that a teacher does not provide information to the students via a lecture. In the JIT approach, the students are actively involved in the process of information gathering and analysis.

Beyond simply providing extra learning materials, explain Cho and Schmelzer (2000), the JIT approach builds upon the idea of group discussions referred to earlier in the collaborative approach. Using the Internet and virtual communities, group learning can take place twenty-four hours a day and is accessible to participants from their homes or places of comfort. Additionally, the lack of geographical boundaries provided by the Internet allows participants to view information from an even wider range of perspectives (Cho & Schmelzer, 2000).

The advantages of the JIT approach, as stated by the same authors, are similar to those of the collaborative learning approach. Cho and Schmelzer (2000) contend that, through the need to communicate with people from different geographical locations, the communication skills of students are improved. The increased ability to think critically and analyze information is still applicable because of the use of group discussions. The overall knowledge base of a student is also increased through the use of supporting materials at relevant times. Additionally, beyond what the collaborative learning approach accomplishes, is the increased ability of the student to use computers and the latest telecommunication technology (Cho & Schmelzer, 2000).

2.5 Identified Weaknesses of Tourism Education

The lack of consistency between tourism-related curriculums is a big problem. In order to understand the need for curriculums to be similar, a background about the current state of tourism-related education allows the educators a better understanding of the problems that face the tourism industry when searching for qualified candidates to fill their open positions. In addition, this section serves to explain why the employer hires non-tourism majors, thus restricting the job opportunities for tourism graduates.

There are several basic schools of thought regarding the current state of tourism-related education. According to Powell (1999), the deficiencies are due to an overall lack of practical skills training. This leads, he argues, many in the industry to question the overall value of a degree.

Another school of thought, as described by Ashley et al. (1995), contends that current programs have not focused on general managerial skills enough, choosing instead to focus on more practical skills. It is more important, according to the authors perspective, for tourism majors to have critical thinking skills and have the ability to collaborate effectively. Cho and Schmelzer (2000) deem these skills essential for a manager to be an effective decision maker and problem solver. In addition, Prabhu

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(1996) found that due to the expanding role of the service industries across the world, many schools, like business and tourism-related educational programs, have begun to frame their programs around the needs of the tourism industry. Tourism-related programs have begun to stray from the strict hospitality management orientation, to try and move towards a more general business orientation in order to be more successful.

Airey and Johnson (1999) discuss an alternative viewpoint saying that by attempting to legitimize tourism and make it into a discipline, problems will arise. In this view, tourism is a "field" in which it is important to concentrate on particular skills. The authors argue that one field contains the "business interdisciplinary approach", which focuses on general managerial skills. The other field contains the non-business element that varies according to what part of the tourism industry the student wants to study. The core body of knowledge is lacking the specialized focus and concentrating primarily on the business part.

Amoah and Baum (1997) identify another concern to be non-uniformity of the curriculum, both in tourism-related education and in the industry. This creates confusion within the industry in regards to an understanding of what a tourism degree encompasses. The principal concern of the tourism industry is that tourism-related educational programs lack strong, well-defined operating frameworks. Therefore, tourism is often not recognized as a legitimate field of study. The lack of common agreement makes it difficult to receive professional recognition. Professionalism demands standardization, and if the curriculum is diverse, there is no guideline for a student or an employee to follow in order to know the difference between programs.

Dale and Robinson (2001) found several reasons that employment opportunities are restricted for tourism graduates. Tourism employees often hire non-tourism graduates who have the general skills required for a job in the tourism industry, instead of hiring graduates from tourism-related educational institutions. Employers often are uncertain about what the content and nature of the tourism degree encompasses. There is a lack of homogeniality, according to Dale and Robinson (2001), in the titles of the various degrees, which leads to confusion and a lack of common understanding of what constitutes a tourism degree and how it may vary from other programs. The student needs to be able to demonstrate competency in completion of their degree. However, Dale and Robinson (2001) conclude that due to the recruitment of non-tourism graduates, the tourism industry is plagued with a high drop out rate or movement to other career areas within a short period of time.

2.5.1 Key Outcomes Expected from Tourism-related Education

In order to be able to change and improve the tourism-related curriculum at the educational institutions, it is necessary to identify where the problems lie in regards to not being able to meet the industries needs, and then to identify what should be expected by the curriculum. Studies have been conducted to identify the weaknesses, and through the findings, hypotheses have been made about ways to improve the educational programs and make the educational institutions curriculum stronger.

Lefever and Withiam (1998) conducted a curriculum review in which they analyzed the responses of forty-six hospitality professionals to a survey asking them various questions about their perception of tourism-related education. The most common

response indicated that matriculating students' have overly high expectations for their first jobs, and that the students frequently overestimate their abilities, instead of any widespread technical deficiencies.

The hospitality practitioners also stated that they believe that many students lack a strong commitment to the tourism industry. Locating and retaining capable managers appears to be the central human-resources concern for the tourism business, and this seems to have its roots in the unrealistic expectations of students. The responses to the survey stressed that the industry needs students who have specific skills necessary to the tourism industry. These students are more apt to remain in the industry. Furthermore, respondents to the Lefever and Withiam (1998) survey indicated that practitioners believe that tourism instructors who have a lack of experience in the industry may be another reason for students leaving the tourism industry.

Levefer and Withiam (1998) state that because academic credentials have taken on more importance in considerations of hiring and tenure, the extent of instructors' direct experience within the industry has lessened. The survey respondents indicated that the directors should work to locate instructors who have direct industry experience. For example, in the United States, Airey and Johnson (1999) conclude that many of the tourism courses were designed by the educators, who are often influenced by their own opinions, with little or no representation of the tourism industry.

The respondents, state Lefever and Withiam (1998), also suggested that the admissions departments of tourism-related programs should do their best to go beyond SAT scores and high school grades and focus on a process which is motivated by finding and accepting students with attributes which lend themselves to long-term success in the tourism industry. Prior job experience and internships, the respondents suggested, were perhaps the most effective way in demonstrating that commitment, and they represent an effective way to aid a student in transitioning from school to industry. However, many practitioners who responded commented on the "simple fact" that a way "to enter the work world is to get a job and start working."

Prabhu (1996) found that the success of the graduates depends on the communication between industry and schools, so that the educators will have a better idea as to what to train the graduates, and the graduates' expectations will be met more effectively. In the current programs, students must be prepared for active participation through continual learning.

Christou (1998) cites a number of key outcomes that are expected through tourism education:

- Quality service
- Well-educated staff at every level
- Cooperation and teamwork between both educational institutes and the industry
- More credibility and recognition

2.6 Tourism Policies

According to Amoah and Baum (1997), tourism policy acts as a set of guidelines to identify what actions should be taken and what objectives should be specified in order

to meet the needs of a particular destination area under consideration. It is important for the policies and their objectives to be clearly defined, reflecting the wishes of the constituents. Policies are made to regulate both the government, private, and non-profit sections of the area under consideration. Amoah and Baum (1997) state that policy makers should work to prevent problems that may arise in policy management and communication for overburdened bureaucracies. Amoah and Baum (1997) believe that policy change ought to be implemented only when deemed necessary, so there is less confusion and more standardization. The key to a successful policy implementation, state Amoah and Baum (1997), is to take into consideration the history, tradition, and bureaucratic convenience.

2.6.1 Goals and Formation of Tourism Policy

According to Amoah and Baum (1997), the aim of most tourism policies is to raise the quality of the tourism product and service in order to attract individuals that are higher spenders and who do not need extensive attention. In the development of tourism policy, the first phase, described by Fayos-Sola (1996), is to develop an economic policy, which encompasses increasing the number of visitors to maximize the profits, and to increase the number of employees. Once this has been done, and tourism has been established, the focus switches to creating and maintaining competitiveness within the industry. Fayos-Sola (1996) defines competitiveness as the ability to create profits in such a way that they can be maintained.

Amoah and Baum (1997) further describe ways the above can be accomplished by tourism policy. Enhancing the image of tourism can be achieved by increasing the level of tourism instruction and improving the necessary skills by extending the range of educational categories. The policy can offer incentives in order to fully realize the objectives set out in a country's tourism policy. In addition, collaboration between the private and public sectors leads to a policy containing aspects of both sectors, giving rise to better quality.

According to Amoah and Baum (1997), the general focuses of national tourism policies are on legislation, financing, developing, and planning for all levels of education. This can encompass how and which subjects are taught, and guidelines on issuing certification. The policies have three main areas of concentration. The first issue concerns the community, which includes the public's perception and employment opportunities. Installation issues include availability of teachers as well as costs, support framework and school atmosphere. The last issue, conceptual problems, refers to goals, questions of importance that need to be addressed, and the exact needs of the tourism industry at the time.

Consultation between tourism and education policy, Amoah and Baum (1997) contend, results in tourism education policies. The resulting policy is then formulated into tourism education. That is why, they say, once the tourism education policy is developed, consultation between national tourism policy and the education policy makers is essential for the policy to be effective (Amoah & Baum, 1997). A poor relation may lead to miscommunication and misrepresentation. Tourism education policy helps to create a balance between the demands and needs of the industry and the supply and

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demand of tourism education. Amoah and Baum (1997) summarize that tourism policy can provide direction for the future of tourism education.

Government plays a critical role in the making of policy, explain Amoah and Baum (1997). It has a central planning and coordinating role in encouraging input from various groups in order to attempt to unite them. Given the tourism environment's weak framework, Amoah & Baum (1997) conclude that this is not a very simple task.

Dale and Robinson (1997) believe there is a trend that has been emerging over the years to standardize the nature and scope of tourism, with the goal of being able to identify a core body of knowledge. Dale and Robinson (1997) state that tourism is often perceived as a subject that lacks academic credibility in comparison with traditional subjects like mathematics. Pemberton (1994) believes that a standardized curriculum would ensure the highest-level quality of education. Therefore, Dale and Robinson (1997) believe credibility will increase with the recognition of a standard policy. It can range from the need to develop a standard policy within a country, to a global core curriculum. The reasons for such a policy, according to Amoah and Baum (1997), vary from the ability to facilitate comparability between programs that would allow for effective quality assurance, and the ability to allow the student to distinguish between tourism degree alternatives.

2.6.2 Policy in Practice

There are several groups around the world that have attempted to implement such a policy of consultation between the tourism industry and educators. The National Liaison Group for Higher Education in Tourism is one such group that was formed in the United Kingdom in December of 1993 (Amoah & Baum, 1997). The purpose of this organization is to promote dialogue between universities and the industry on such aspects as the nature, purpose, and scope of research being done in both sectors to produce a synergy between the two. One of its activities is an annual meeting for all of its member organizations. The central government plays an important part in the success of such an organization. The government has the role of assessing the importance of the tourism research in universities and provides a large amount of the funding for the research. This can be a problem if the government gives tourism research a low status, therefore not granting much funding (Botterill 1998).

One of the biggest accomplishments of the National Liaison Group has been to develop and refine a document outlining the core body of knowledge that the universities in the UK would use as a guideline for their tourism programs. These are outlined, along with two previous core bodies of knowledge, in Table 2.3. The academic institutions unanimously endorsed these headings. The point of developing a core curriculum for tourism, state Airey and Johnson (1999), is to define a series of headings that serve to identify the topics of tourism.

Table 2.3: Core Body of Knowledge (headings from three initiatives)

Burkart and Medlick (1974)	Tourism Society (1981)	National Liaison Group (1995)
Historical development	What is tourism	The meaning and nature of tourism
Anatomy of tourism	Historical development of tourism	The structure of the industry
Statistics of tourism	Determinants and motivations in tourism	The dimensions of tourism and issues of measurement
Passenger Transport	Statistical measurement and dimensions	The significance and impact of tourism
Accommodation	Significance of tourism	The marketing of tourism
Tours and agencies	Component sectors	Tourism planning and management
Marketing in tourism	Marketing	Policy and management in tourism
Planning and development	Physical planning and development	
Organization and finance	Organization	
Future of tourism	Finance	

Source: Airey and Johnson (1999).

Airey and Johnson (1999) state that the universities are by no means restrained to only the topics of the headings. The core headings represent only twenty percent of the total content of a degree course. One of the reasons that the core curriculum has been so welcomed in the UK is because the matters of designing the courses are left completely up to the universities themselves. The core curriculum aids communication and transferability, provides a sounder basis for subject development, and most importantly encourages a greater recognition.

Critics argue that the core body of knowledge will hinder the creativity of curriculum that makes tourism such a unique study. They say that it will reduce variety and flexibility, and thus weaken the ability of courses to meet the employment requirements. Table 2.4 highlights the different views.

Table 2.4: The Case For and Against A Core Body of Knowledge

For
Facilitate the definition of course and teaching objectives
Assist in communicating what is offered
Facilitate courses validation and quality assurance
Assist teachers to focus their research and to develop and enhance...the academic integrity
Facilitate the development of understanding and development and progression
Facilitate the transferability of credits
Facilitate communication, liaison and ease of progression
Against
Make tourism education too homogeneous for a heterogeneous industry
Stifle innovation and creativity
Reduce popularity of programs for students
Reduce flexibility of programs to meet needs of industry

Source: Airey and Johnson (1999).

2.7 Background For Methodology

This section of the literature review provides background information, which will be used in the methodology of this research.

2.7.1 Focus Groups

A focus group is a qualitative market research technique in which a group of six to ten participants of common demographics, attitudes, or purchase patterns are led through a one to two hour discussion of a particular topic by a trained moderator. When used appropriately, focus groups can be extremely effective in generating meaningful information towards a variety of topics (Krueger, 1998).

2.7.1.1 Questions designed for focus groups

Useful information is gathered from focus groups only if the questions are well designed. Focus group questions can be categorized into five categories: opening, introductory, transition, key, and ending questions (Krueger, 1998). The opening questions are made to be answered by everyone in the group within ten to twenty seconds. They identify characteristics the participants have in common and are factual in nature, as opposed to opinion-based. Introductory questions introduce the general topic of the discussion. They provide an opportunity for the participants to reflect on their connection with the overall topic. These questions are intended to begin the conversation among participants and are not critical to the topic analysis (Krueger, 1998). The transition questions move the conversation into key questions that drive the study. They help the participants envision the topic in a wider scope and serve as the logical link

between the introductory questions and the key questions. Key questions are the first questions to be developed. The focus group includes two to five questions of this category. These questions drive require the greatest attention in the analysis (Krueger, 1998)

There are three types of ending questions (Krueger, 1998). The first type considers everything, and is used to have the participants state their final position on the critical areas of concern. These questions are used for participants to clarify their positions at the conclusion of the discussion. Summary questions are the second type. The moderator asks these immediately after the two to three minute oral summary of the key questions. These questions play a critical role in the analysis. The third type, final questions, are standardized questions that require sufficient time at the conclusion of the group. Their purpose is to ensure that critical aspects have not been overlooked (Krueger, 1998).

2.7.1.2 Analysis of focus group results

The analysis of the focus groups is done directly from the transcripts of the procedures through comparisons. This needs to be a careful process in order to accurately report the information. Focus group analysis begins with processing the transcripts for easy organization (Krueger, 1998). Once all the transcripts are organized, they are grouped together by question. This allows the person who is preparing the report to compare answers from different focus groups in the series. These comparisons are used to find similarities and differences in opinions among the participants. The next step in the analysis is to decide on the representation of the report. The analysis is complete when the feelings of the participants are accurately and justifiably represented in the report (Krueger, 1998).

2.7.2 Educational Institutions in Puerto Rico

There are numerous educational institutions in the metropolitan area of San Juan, Puerto Rico that offer programs of study in tourism-related fields. These programs range from four-year Bachelor's of Arts degrees to seven-month tourism-related certificates or diplomas. The following are schools that were selected for use in our methodology.

2.7.2.1 Colegio Universitario del Este

Colegio Universitario del Este is a private non-profit institution of higher learning and a component of the Ana G. Méndez University System. Its main campus is located in Carolina, and it has five other off-campus sites across the Island. The Colegio Universitario del Este (CUE) offers twenty-two baccalaureate programs and fourteen associate degrees, including programs in business, education, liberal arts, and sciences. It was founded in 1949, as Puerto Rico Junior College, and continued to grow into a four-year institution in the 1990's. CUE's student population consist mostly of commuting young adults (there are no dorms available), and has a student body of 6,976, of which 4,665 are undergraduates at the Carolina campus, and 2,311 are from other off-campus sites. The academic staff consists of more than 65 full time faculty and 175 part-time

professors. CUE receives accreditation from the Middle States Association of Colleges, Puerto Rico Council of Higher Education, Puerto Rico Council of General Education, Council on Education of the American, and Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) (Colegio Universitario del Este Catalog, 2000-2002).

The admissions policy at CUE requires that the students have finished high school or have an approved equivalency exam from the Department of Education in Puerto Rico. In addition, a GPA of 2.00 or above for admission into a bachelor degree program or a 1.2 for an associate degree program is also required for eligibility into CUE (Colegio Universitario del Este Catalog, 2000-2002).

2.7.2.2 MBTI Business Training Institute

MBTI Business Training Institute is located in Santurce, Puerto Rico, was founded by Manpower, Inc. in 1969 and has been operating since that time. The Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools accredits MBTI as a Business School. Graduation from high school or its equivalent is the minimum requirement for admission. Each program currently offered at MBTI has a specified number of quarter-credit hours required for completion. One class hour is equal to 50 minutes. A diploma is awarded to students in good standing who have met all financial obligations, satisfactorily completed their course of study, have attained the minimum requirement of passing all subjects and have a 2.0 GPA (MBTI Business Training Institute Catalog, 2001-2002).

MBTI offers the following certificates in these programs: secretarial science, secretarial science and medical billing, administrative assistant, data entry, accounting clerk, business administration, travel and tourism with conversational English and intensive conversational English. In respect to MBTI's travel and tourism program, a total number of 39-quarter credit hours are required to graduate. Classes are offered in the day and evening times. The program's duration for daytime students is 30 weeks, and for evening classes it is 57 weeks. The program offers various job alternatives in the industry. Upon graduation, the students have the skills needed to work in different departments of the airlines, travel agencies, hotels, tourist information centers, cruise ships, and as tour guides (MBTI Business Training Institute Catalog, 2001-2002).

2.7.2.3 Universal Career Counseling Centers, Inc.

Universal Career Counseling Centers, Inc. is located in the center of Santurce, Puerto Rico and was founded in 1978. They receive accreditation from the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology (ACCSCT), located in Arlington, Virginia. Graduation from high school or its equivalent is the minimum requirement for admission. Each program at Universal Career consists of 1,200 credit hours. A diploma/certificate is awarded to the student upon graduation (Universal Career Counseling Centers, Inc. General Catalog, 2000-2002).

Universal Career offers the following diplomas in these programs: Bilingual Secretarial Sciences with Word Processing, Medical Secretary, Distribution, Sales and Customer Service Agent, Health and Gerontologist (elderly care) Technician, Hotel and Tourism Services Technician, Real Estate agent, and Casino Technician. The Hotel and

Tourism Service Technician program allows the student to receive an entry-level position in the tourism industry, with the capacity to progress to supervising and management positions once experience is gained. These positions include housekeeping, front desk and food and beverage services (Universal Career Counseling Centers, Inc. General Catalog, 2000-2002).

2.7.2.4 Universidad de Puerto Rico, Carolina

The University of Puerto Rico (UPR) in Carolina was founded on September 23, 1974 under the Regional College Administration (la Administración de Colegio Regionales). The university has an academic calendar broken down into quarter semesters, which is divided into three consecutive academic periods each twelve weeks long. This school is the only one with quarter semesters of all the UPR campuses. It is accredited by the Middle State Association for Colleges and Schools, and received its most recent accreditation in 1991, and will be re-evaluated in 2001. The entire university has 200 professors and around 232 administrative employees. The university has six bachelors programs, which are Business Administration with a concentration in either management or finances, Hotel and Restaurant Administration, Graphic Arts, Criminal Justice, Advertising Technology and Office Systems. In addition, the university offers eleven associate degree programs, including programs in Hotel and Restaurant Administration, Industrial Automation, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Interior Decorating, Education, Physical Education, Humanities, Mechanical Engineering, Office Systems, and Automotive Technology. Students applying to the university need to have a high school degree or an equivalent and have taken the College Entrance Examination Board of Puerto Rico exam (Universidad de Puerto Rico en Carolina Catálogo, 2000-2004).

2.7.2.5 Universidad del Sagrado Corazón

The Universidad del Sagrado Corazón is a catholic, independent institution located in Santurce, Puerto Rico. The university originated from the high school called La Religiosas del Sagrado Corazón, which was established in 1880. The university (la Colegio Universitario del Sagrado Corazón) was created in 1935 and was originally an all girls' university. In February 1972, it was changed to a coeducational institute. In 1985, the university established it's first three graduate programs, a Masters in Business, Communication and Education. The Universidad del Sagrado Corazón is accredited by the following institutions: Consejo de Educacion Superior de Puerto Rico, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation (Programa de Tecnología Médica), Council on Social Work Education (Programa de Trabajo Social) and National League for Nursing (Programa de Enfermería) (Universidad del Sagrado Corazón website, 2001).
The Universidad del Sagrado Corazón's department of business administration offers bachelor's degrees in General Business Administration with concentrations in Accounting, Management, Marketing, Computer Information Systems, Office Administration, and Tourism. It offers associate's degree programs in secretarial

science, and a master's degree in Business Administration (MBA) with a concentration in Management Information Systems (Universidad del Sagrado Corazón website, 2001).

2.7.3 Accreditations for Educational Programs

The value of a degree or diploma is highly dependent upon the accreditation that the educational institution or education program receives. Accreditation of an institution or program implies that it abides by some level of standardization and that it is continually changing in order to maintain a high level of excellence.

2.7.3.1 Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology

The Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology is an independent, nonprofit, educational organization, which provides institutional accreditation for private, postsecondary career schools and colleges. ACCSCT is nationally recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as an accrediting agency under the provisions of Chapter 33, Title 38, U.S. Code, and subsequent legislation (ACCST website, 2001).

The Commission has 13 members. Six are public members representing government, industry or the higher education community, and seven members represent the private career school sector. School members are elected by ACCSCT institutions, and public members are selected by the Commission after being recommended by ACCSCT's nominating committee. Both the public and school Commissioners may serve one four-year term (ACCST website, 2001).

According to the ACCSCT's mission statement found on the website (2001) its goal is to accredit career schools and colleges in the United States, its territories and abroad. ACCSCT fosters, verifies and recognizes ongoing educational quality and integrity in institutions offering programs of a vocational and career-oriented nature. ACCSCT's mission has two primary objectives: to assure students and the general public of the quality of educational training provided by institutions and their programs; and to assist institutions in continuously improving themselves and the training they provide students (ACCST website, 2001).

Accreditation allows institutions the opportunity of introspective analysis and constructive change. ACCSCT evaluates the infrastructure of the programs. Infrastructure refers to those factors contributing to the students' educational experience at the institution. They include the institution's faculty, admissions practices, facilities and equipment, library, financial and administrative capability and student services including advising and job placement (ACCST website, 2001).

Effectiveness of educational programs (ACCST website, 2001) includes favorable completion and job placement rates, state licensing examinations and success with employer and student satisfaction. These factors are evaluated within the framework of an institution's stated mission. An institution can then compare its programs to established standards and then identify areas of comparable strength and needed improvement. The results of the evaluation are verified by a team of evaluators and, subsequently, by the Commission. An institution must demonstrate that it has met all accrediting standards before accreditation may be conferred.

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To be eligible for ACCSCT accreditation (ACCST website, 2001) an institution must be legally established, licensed by the appropriate state agency and in compliance with state, federal and local government requirements. The school must have been in continuous operation for a minimum of two years prior to application for accreditation and have graduated at least one class of students from its longest program. The primary scope of the training offered by the institution must be vocational in nature.

2.7.3.2 Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools

The Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) is a nongovernmental organization located in Virginia with other offices in the District of Columbia. It is an independent, national, institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and a member of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). ACICS, which was formed in 1912 and is a nonprofit corporation, has been recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education since 1956 (just four years after the recognition process was introduced) as a national accrediting body for post-secondary institutions offering primarily business and business-related programs of study at non-degree, associate's, bachelor's, and master's degree levels (ACICS, 2001).

The stated mission of ACICS is to advance educational excellence at independent, nonpublic career schools, colleges, and organizations in the United States and abroad. This is achieved through a deliberate and thorough accreditation process of quality assessment and enhancement as well as ethical business and educational practices. ACICS attempts to maintain minimum standards, policies, and procedures leading to institutional effectiveness. ACICS accredits 625 institutions in the U.S. and abroad, which last year enrolled over 302,000 students. Sixty-five percent of these ACICS-accredited institutions are degree-granting colleges (ACICS, 2001).

The ACICS outlines their guidelines for accreditation for a tourism-related program. An Associate's Degree of Science in the tourism-related curriculum needs to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in a wide range of positions in lodging, food service, and tourism. The program outlined by the ACICS includes classroom instruction, laboratory practice, and required industry internships to prepare students for entry-level positions and for advancement with additional appropriate work experience. Success in the tourism industry requires individuals with a strong work ethic and human relation skills. A range of 1000 to 1500 study hours are necessary to complete the program and is outlined on the ACICS website (ACICS, 2001).

2.7.3.3 Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS) is, according to their website (December 15, 2000), a voluntary, non-governmental, nonprofit, peer administered organization that consists of numerous private and public colleges and universities throughout the United States, American territories in the Caribbean, and international universities in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. It has been in existence for over seventy-five years and is one of six regional accreditation associations that together serve the entire United States. The mission of this association, according to their

website (December 15, 2000), is to foster the growth and continuous improvement of educational institutions and aid in the achievement of quality education.

The accreditation process of MSACS certifies that a school has met a predetermined set of criteria as set by MSACS and that their curriculums follow their own stated philosophy and mission. The process consists of conducting an evaluation of the school's programs and total operations on a periodic basis. The schools themselves also conduct periodic self-evaluations. The purpose of both external and internal evaluations is to determine the inadequacies of the programs and to possibly propose remedies for those shortcomings.

There are numerous benefits to becoming accredited by MSACS. According to their website (December 15, 2000), the greatest benefits are:

- Greater clarity of purpose
- Stronger internal relationships
- Wider professional participation
- More effective methods of planning for school improvement
- Improved consistency between educational purpose and practice

2.7.4 Four-Star Hotels in Puerto Rico

Star rating for hotels range from one to five, five being the best. These stars symbolize overall quality, level of service, food standard and range of facilities available. We examined four-star hotels in the metropolitan San Juan area of Puerto Rico. In order to understand the quality of a four-star rated hotel the definitions of standards for these level hotels are listed. In order to fully understand the definitions provided it is important to note how hotel ratings are created.

2.7.4.1 Methodology of hotel star ratings

According to the Mobil Travel Guide website (2001) evaluating different hotels across North America and the Caribbean requires a set of criteria that is flexible enough to accommodate for regional differences, but strict enough to produce results that are fair assessments of the properties. At the same time, it is vital that a customer at a four-star hotel experience the same level of quality and comfort as they do at other four-star hotels. It is this level of standardization that makes the rating system useful.

The actual ratings for hotels, according to the Mobil Travel Guide website (2001), are created in a very distinct manner. Not anyone can inspect a hotel and grant it a rating. It is extremely important that the inspector or rater has a strong understanding of the tourism industry and all that it entails. This means that they must have an extensive educational background in hospitality management as well as extensive experience in all facets of the industry. Upon entering the hotel the inspectors are not given a specific checklist of details that would systematically rate a hotel. Instead the inspectors focus their attention on the overall quality with respect to the cultural and regional diversity. An example of this would be the use of tablecloths in a restaurant. A fine French restaurant would be expected to have extremely fine tablecloths while a fine Japanese restaurant would not have tablecloths at all. In this case neither would be penalized for

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their obvious cultural differences. While it is clear that the process is subjective in nature, the overall system does provide ratings with enough standardization so that customers can be sure of the experience they will receive.

2.7.4.2 Criteria of hotel star ratings

The expectations for a four-star hotel includes the same services found at a lower level hotel rating, but it also has a degree of luxury as well as quality in furnishings, décor, and equipment in every part of the hotel (Hotel Finder Website, 2000). Housekeeping and maintenance are superb, with a well-groomed staff, uniformed doorman, and bellmen. The entire operation of the hotel is characterized as being very efficient with a feeling that guest comfort and convenience are the prevailing concern of the staff. The staff should be outstanding in every aspect: courteous, professional, and knowledgeable. Bedrooms will usually offer more space then lower levels, and well-designed, co-coordinated décor. Bathrooms in the rooms will have both a bath and a fixed shower. Services usually available in the hotel include portage, twenty-four hour room service, laundry, and dry cleaning.

In addition, the restaurant will demonstrate a serious approach to cuisine. This includes excellent restaurant facilities, with at least one fine dining room. There should be carefully landscaped grounds (Hotel Finder Website, 2000). Most four-star hotels will offer most of these services: transportation to and from the airport, concierge, shops: barber, beauty, clothing, health club or privileges nearby, recreation facilities on premises, poolside services, beverage and food, complimentary shoeshine, and complementary newspaper. Also, many of the four star hotels offer business services and meeting rooms.

2.7.4.3 Caribe Hilton Resort Hotel & Casino

The Caribe Hilton is located in San Juan, Puerto Rico on seventeen acres. Recently, this hotel had a $60 million renovation, expanding to 645 deluxe rooms (Caribe Hilton website, 2001).

2.7.4.4 Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino

The Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino is located in San Juan, Puerto Rico. It recently underwent a $40 million renovation. This hotel has 570 guest rooms and suites in two separate wings, a modern business center with 2,700 sq. ft. of meeting and conference facilities. It boasts the largest casino in Puerto Rico, three bars, La Fiesta Lounge for live entertainment and dancing, two tennis courts, complete water sports complex and more (Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino website, 2001).

2.7.4.5 Inter-Continental Hotel & Casino

The Inter-Continental Resort & Casino is located in Isla Verde, Puerto Rico. It contains 400 rooms including nineteen suites. Four of the rooms are for the disabled, 223 are non-smoking rooms and connecting rooms are available. In addition, there is a

business center for business rooms and services. The Inter-Continental Resort & Casino has five restaurants and 24-hour room service available. It offers an outdoor pool, jacuzzi, whirlpool, sauna, gym, and a health club to name a few of the services (Inter-Continental website, 2001).

2.7.4.6 Normandie Hotel

The Normandie Hotel is located in San Juan, Puerto Rico. It was originally built in 1939 and was remodeled in 2000, due to severe damages received from Hurricane George in 1998. It is seven stories built on one acre. Its accommodations include a governor suite, an admiral suite, a normandie suite, and 115 junior suites, all with superior spacious rooms. It has a club normandie corporate floor with concierge lounge. It has 15,000 square feet of space that is distributed among three main meeting rooms. It's special features include beachside pool and grill, gift shop, unisex beauty salon and two restaurants, and brand new parking facilities to name a few features. The Normandie is a historic art deco landmark and is known as the "Pride of Puerto Rico" (Normandie website, 2001).

2.7.4.7 Ritz Carlton Hotel & Casino

The Ritz-Carlton, San Juan Hotel, Spa & Casino is located in Isla Verde, Puerto Rico on eight acres of prime beachfront property. It won the Travel and Leisure Magazine's 1999 "World's Best Awards" Poll, "Bets Hotel in the Caribbean, Bermuda and the Bahamas", and was ranked #21 in the 100 Best Hotels in the World. In addition, it has won the Conde Nast Traveler "Twelfth Annual 1999 Reader's Choice Awards Best Hotel in Latin America and the Caribbean. Its accommodations include 414 guestrooms, including a two-bedroom Ritz-Carlton Suite, six one-bedroom Executive Suites, 34 Deluxe King-bedded rooms and four Garden View Suites (The Ritz-Carlton website, 2001).

2.7.4.8 San Juan Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino

The San Juan Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino is located in Condado, Puerto Rico. It was given a four star rating by both the Mobil Travel Guide Stars and the AAA Diamonds. The hotel has 21 floors, 525 rooms and 13 suites. It has one outdoor pool, a full spa (onsite), a hair salon/barber, and a health club with a whirlpool and sauna. It offers concierge services, a gift shop/newsstand, a full business center and secretarial services are available, to name a few of their services. In addition, it has four restaurants and lounges (Marriot Resorts website, 2001).

2.7.4.9 Wyndham El San Juan Hotel & Casino

The Wyndham El San Juan Hotel & Casino is located in Isla Verde, Puerto Rico. The hotel has the following accommodations; 389 guest rooms including 57 suites, fifteen bars and lounges, eight award winning restaurants, a large casino with more than 350 slot machines and more (Wyndham website, 2000).

Chapter 3 Methodology

In this chapter, we describe the methodology we adopted in order to determine the mismatch between the skills provided by the educational institutions offering certificate, associate's degrees, and bachelor's degrees in tourism-related programs and the industry needs, covering the four star hotels, in the metropolitan San Juan area.

We used three techniques for gathering our data about the educational institutions programs and the hotel industry. These were interviews at the hotels with industry professionals and alumni, interviews at the educational institutions, focus groups with students at the educational institutions, and collection of statistical information. These three techniques will be described after discussion of the choice of educational institutions and hotels under examination.

3.1 Sample Selection

Our objectives were to determine the precise reasons for the mismatch in skills provided by the tourism related educational programs in Puerto Rico and those needed by the hotel industry. This project examined the four-star hotels in the metropolitan San Juan area. The metropolitan San Juan area comprises the San Juan urban areas classified by the Puerto Rico Planning Board to include the following municipalities: San Juan, Bayamon, Guaynabo, Cataño, Trujillio Alto and Carolina. The non-metropolitan area includes the urban and rural areas other than the San Juan metropolitan area. These hotels were found to employ the greatest number of tourism graduates as well as having a high number of vacant positions. According to the Puerto Rico Tourism Company (Puerto Rico Tourism Company Website, 2001) there are a total of fourteen four-star hotels in Puerto Rico. In addition, with the construction of the Puerto Rico Convention Center, which is predicted to generate a significant demand for hotel room inventory within the San Juan metropolitan area, the construction of the additional hotels in the following years will increase the job opportunities in this area. Due to the time constraint of the project and the fact that many of the four-star hotels we chose to study were contacted through a third party, we were only able to contact and examine a total of seven hotels out of the twelve in the metropolitan San Juan area. There are only three four-star hotels in the eastern part of the Island and therefore we did not focus on this area. The hotels we examined were the Caribe Hilton, Condado Plaza, San Juan Marriot Resort & Stellaris Casino, the Wyndham El San Juan Resort & Casino, The Normandie Hotel, The Ritz-Carlton, and the Inter-Continental San Juan Resort & Casino.

This project also examined educational institutions in Puerto Rico offering certificates, associate's degrees, and bachelor's degrees. There are twelve institutions in Puerto Rico that are members of the Puerto Rico Hotel & Tourism Association. Ten of these schools are located in the metropolitan San Juan area. Due to the time constraints of the project and the fact that many of the educational institutions we chose to study were contacted through a third party, we were only able to select and contact five of these schools in San Juan and Carolina for examination. The University of Puerto Rico (UPR) in Carolina, Colegio Universitario del Este (CUE) in Carolina, and the Universidad de Sagrado Corazón in Santurce were the institutions we examined that offered an

associate's and/or bachelor's degree. MBTI Business Training Institute in Santurce and Universal Career Counseling Center, Inc. in Santurce were the institutions we examined that offered only certificate programs. After we had gathered our data, recommendations were made about how tourism-related programs in Puerto Rico may better suit the needs of the industry and better prepare students for the industry upon graduation.

3.2 Focus Groups

There were numerous reasons why we decided to use focus groups as a research tool for this project. Focus groups were a realistic way to get the most input from students at the educational institutions in Puerto Rico. Individual interviews can be time consuming. Given the large student population we felt that this technique was the fastest, most efficient, and cost effective way of getting feedback from a large number of students. Due to the fact that we were unsure about the exact cause of the gap between the industry and the educational institutes, focus groups provided us with a way to explore and examine this issue. According to Krueger (1998), focus groups have been found to work best when the members have a vested interest in the topic area being investigated. We felt that this topic would generate interest among the students because it would affect them upon graduation.

The target population of our focus groups was senior level students at educational institutions that offered either a certificate program, two-year associates degree, or a four-year degree in hospitality management or travel and tourism that required participation in an internship program to graduate. A listing of the schools at which we conducted focus groups is available in Appendix C.

The students had the background information and knowledge about the industry and the skills that are necessary for success in the tourism industry. Also, we were able to obtain valuable feedback from the students and identify skills that they needed but were not taught. This information was analyzed, making it possible to offer recommendations as to how they may change their curriculum to better meet these needs.

We conducted three focus groups: one at CUE, one at UPR, and another at MBTI, consisting of four to six students. The groups were a mixture of students who wanted to stay in Puerto Rico and ones that wanted to leave to work for cruise lines or move to the United States after graduation. These groups were able to give us feedback on their expectations for their jobs and if the industry had met them. Also, we determined if they had already identified the skills they lack that will make it difficult for them to succeed in the industry. In addition, we asked them about the jobs they planned to acquire upon graduation and their criteria in choosing these jobs. Appendix D is a listing of the specific questions we used as a guideline for the focus groups.

A single moderator conducted the focus groups with two assistants transcribing the discussion. A space in which to conduct the focus group and the students for the group were supplied by the educational institution. Professors or the educational directors at the educational institutions we examined organized the focus groups.

Our goals with regard to focus group interviews were to provide us with the basic knowledge of the gap that exists between the industry and the curriculum from the students who are entering the workforce that were attending educational institutions for travel and tourism in Puerto Rico. We tried to get a specific feel for what skills are

needed in the industry that the educational institutions they are attending are teaching them and the ones they are not. Also, we sought to find out if what the students learned at the educational institutions had helped them gain an advantage in the industry. Finally, we identified what skills may be needed that they are not getting at their educational institute.

3.3 Interviews

Interviews were used to determine whether the causes for the gap between education and industry were the same as in other areas of the world and to gain important background information about the tourism-related education programs and the tourism industry of Puerto Rico. It was necessary to meet face to face with individuals from both sides of the issue: education and industry. We did this through interviews. Tere Escondon, the Public Relations Director at the Puerto Rico Hotel & Tourism Association, aided in the set up the interviews with industry professionals at hotels. At those interviews we asked to speak to alumni that are available at the hotels. In addition, Professor Elsie Candelaria at the Colegio Tecnologico and Amelia Jimenez at the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, provided us with the information we needed to set up the interviews with professors and educational directors at the educational institutions. From these interviews, the focus groups were organized. Refer to the Flow Chart in Figure 3.1 for specifics.

We had a specific set of objectives, and met the people we interviewed in comfortable environments that allowed the interviewee to speak freely about the topic. We were interested in not only the specific needs of the industry, but also the interviewee's perception of the topic. The interviews were semi-standardized in nature. The questions were predetermined with the possibility for unscheduled questions to probe the interviewee for more information about a particular topic (Berg, 2000).

We conducted semi-standardized interviews over the course of four weeks. We interviewed educational directors at the educational institutions in Puerto Rico offering certificate, and two and four-year programs in tourism-related programs listed in Appendix C. In addition, we interviewed industry professionals over a period of four weeks in order to obtain their opinion on the problems in the industry, and through these initial interviews we were able to contact alumni of local tourism programs who are currently working in Puerto Rico. The educational professionals provided us with their perspective on the status of the industry and education, as well as provided valuable information about the schools' programs. Alumni were in the unique position of presently working in the industry, while having gone through the educational programs of Puerto Rico. They were able to discuss the needs of the industry as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the tourism-related programs. The questions that were asked in the interviews are listed in Appendices E. In addition, a list of the industry professional and people at the educational institutions we interviewed are listed in Appendix F.

3.4 Collection of Data

The information that we collected from the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, the Puerto Rico Planning Board, the Department of Education and the Puerto Rico Department of Labor includes statistics and information that are relevant to the tourism industry and its growth.

Some of the information collected was the percentage of population employed by the tourism industry, the percentage of the GDP supported by tourism, occupancy rates in the economy and tourism educational programs offered at local schools. The educational

institutions provided us with profiles information including graduation rates, placement rates, number of students in each program, and number of professors.

This data allowed us to better understand the current situation in Puerto Rico and create more concrete conclusions. Once we arrived, we contacted Lourdes Diaz, the Director of Product Development at the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, to obtain statistical information. She then arranged for us to meet with Gerardo Sanchez at the Planning Board and Vivian Acevado at the Department of Education to obtain more relevant information.

Figure 3.1: Project Flow Chart

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│ Company and Hotel     │   │ Diaz of the Puerto    │   │ heads and professors. │
│ and Tourism           │   │ Rico Tourism          │   │ Used interviews to    │
│ Association to obtain │   │ Company. Provided     │   │ setup focus groups    │
│ interviews with       │   │ us with statistical data│ └──────────────────────┘
│ industry professionals│   │ and setup interviews at│
│ and alumni.           │   │ the Puerto Rico       │
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┌──────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Conducted interviews  │   │ Visited Puerto Rico   │   │ Conducted 3 Focus     │
│ with 10 industry      │   │ Planning Board and    │   │ Groups with 19        │
│ professionals and 4   │   │ Department of         │   │ students              │
│ alumni                │   │ Education to obtain   │   └──────────────────────┘
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                        │ Analyzed all data     │
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                        │ conclusions           │
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                        │ Created               │
                        │ recommendations       │
                        │ and presented         │
                        │ findings              │
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Chapter 4 Results

This chapter includes all of the results of our research. It presents detailed accounts of all of the interviews and focus groups we conducted as well as an in-depth look at the data we collected. For a summary and analysis of the results skip to Chapter 5 Analysis.

4.1 Results of Interviews with Industry Professionals

The following interviews with the industry professionals found in Appendix I were conducted with individuals who are currently working in the tourism industry. They are all in managerial or supervisory positions and have some role in the employment and termination of employees at their organization. The major findings of the interviews with these professionals are summarized in the following thirteen subsections.

4.1.1 Desired Qualities of Employees

It was found that employees at the Wyndham El San Juan must have at least a high school diploma and be bilingual. Also, they should be able to maintain a flexible schedule. The Wyndham El Sand Juan finds that many applicants and new hires have good potential, but are not willing to work a hotel's unusual hours. The Wyndham El San Juan would like to hire individuals with hospitality degrees, but there are simply not enough available in Puerto Rico. Señora Otero explained that many of her colleagues feel experience is the most important part of a person's resume. However, she personally felt that a student with a degree and little experience can come "fresh and ready to be developed," while someone with lots of experience has already been developed by another company and might not adapt easily to the Wyndham way. At the Wyndham, they look for both a degree and experience in their managerial candidates.

The Inter-Continental's potential employees must be able to handle the job. For example, most housekeepers clean fifteen rooms a day. Therefore, a person must be able to do that labor-intensive job on any shift. To address this issue at the Inter-Continental, they ask if the applicants can picture themselves working on New Year's Eve with no family or friends. Finally, the ability to speak English is a very important skill for any applicant. Señora Palli personally felt that a person's bachelor's degree means the person can learn; therefore, a manager at the Inter-Continental must have at least a bachelor's degree.

The casino portion of the Inter-Continental is completely different from the rest of the hotel, in that you do not need a bachelor's degree to be a dealer. However, Señor Tapia felt that school is important to those looking for advancement. In the casino, knowledge of the labor laws of Puerto Rico is important. Señor Tapia felt that many students are only taught the labor laws specific to the United States, which are, he believed, different than the ones applicable to Puerto Rico. Also, Señor Tapia stated his belief that management and supervision skills are important to the casino. Overall, he concluded, basic management skills combined with the specific knowledge of the

industry are a very powerful combination, and that teamwork is the key to success in the industry.

The three things the Marriott looks for in an applicant, in order of importance, are attitude, appearance, and experience. However, the Marriott felt that in certain circumstances new employees with little experience are sometimes advantageous to the hotel, because they come fresh, with no bad habits from other hotels. Therefore, experience is not a major requirement for employment. At the Marriott, Señor Alvarado stated that no matter how good a student is, if they do not have a good attitude they will not be hired. In addition, the Marriott conducts all of its interviews completely in English and the ability to speak English fluently is a requirement for anyone who has direct interaction with customers. However, Señor Alvarado stated that in some areas, such as housekeeping, they sometimes must break their own requirement because they cannot find enough people who are bilingual.

Employees at the Normandie Hotel must be fluent in both languages, although in housekeeping they may only know the basics. In addition, applicants must have good customer service skills and some knowledge of the area where they will be working. For managerial candidates, the Normandie's general manager must have worked in all areas of a hotel, and all managers must also have excellent people skills, not only with customers, but also with all other employees.

The Caribe Hilton felt that there are different skills needed and looked for in employees applying for different departments of the hotel. However, the main skills required of all employees are the ability to speak both English and Spanish and, because hotel and tourism is a service-oriented industry, being service-oriented is important. Also, employees at the Caribe Hilton need to have flexible schedules and have a professional appearance. In managerial candidates, the Caribe Hilton believes experience is the strongest asset of an applicant, especially if the experience is from another Hilton hotel. Also, Caribe Hilton managerial candidates need to be familiar with the laws and possess leadership skills.

The Ritz Carlton believes customer service is a vital skill for anyone working in a hotel. In addition, applicants must pass the Quality Selection Process, which is a structured interview that evaluates a person's innate abilities. That interview looks for competitiveness, caring, service, and other aspects of a person's personality that are well suited for the industry. However, beyond that, the Ritz looks for someone who is fluent in English. At the entry-level, neither experience nor a degree is a requirement for employment. In regards to leadership or management positions, the Ritz Carlton felt that a degree is not absolutely necessary, but that experience is very important.

Finally, the Condado Plaza stated that the basic skills looked for are customer service, being people-oriented and a good person with good characteristics. At least a high school diploma, as well as being able to speak at least two languages in the front of the house and knowing basic English skills in the back house are also very important. English is very important; some managers only know how to speak English.

4.1.2 Strengths and Weaknesses of Hospitality Graduates

At the Wyndham El San Juan, Señora Otero believed the greatest strength of those with hospitality degrees are their willingness to learn, and the greatest weakness is

a lack of understanding of what the hotel and tourism industry is all about. She expressed her belief that it is essential that the industry work with educational institutions to make sure students are aware of the realities and are not surprised upon entering their first jobs. Señora Otero also stated that, in her experience, many students graduate, get jobs, and then realize that the hospitality industry is not where they want to be.

At the Inter-Continental, Señora Palli felt that one of the greatest weaknesses of hospitality graduates is their lack of customer service skills. She felt that the educational institutions could do a lot to improve their teaching in this area. She explained that the Inter-Continental is implementing a standard for its employees. They will bring that standard to high schools and universities in the area where they will be opening a new hotel.

Señor Alvarado, at the Marriott, explained that one thing he has often seen is a lack of leadership skills in nearly all applicants. He felt that many of the new hires at the Marriott often look to their supervisors for orders. Right now, in an attempt to remedy this situation, leadership is the number one skill that Señor Alvarado looks for in an employee.

At the Normandie, Señora Jesus identified people skills as the greatest strength of a hospitality graduate, and lack of fluency in English as the greatest weakness. She felt that a person with a hospitality degree is customer service oriented, and they speak the language of hospitality. She commented that people who desire to work in the tourism industry are often people oriented, perhaps more than people with a general management degree or other degrees.

Señora Figueroa from the Caribe Hilton stated that she believed the greatest strength is the internships that students must complete to graduate from their program. Also, graduates have the general knowledge of the industry. In contrast, she felt that the greatest weakness of a hospitality graduate was that most are not experienced in one specific area of the hotel because the internships often rotate the students.

The Ritz Carlton felt that a hospitality degree would give the applicant an advantage. This is because they probably would have a better chance of passing the initial interview. Maria Cassidy at the Ritz felt that the students are more service oriented which is very important in the industry and they also have a better understanding of the industry and have some financial knowledge. She felt that a weakness is that they do not possess enough financial knowledge.

Lastly, the Condado Plaza felt that a strength of a graduate of a tourism-related program is their general knowledge of the industry, and the greatest weakness is that many graduates start off with a superior attitude over others in the industry that do not have a degree.

4.1.3 Achievements of Educational Institutions

Señora Otero, at the Wyndham El San Juan, felt that the technical skills training offered by the educational institutions is diversified and complete. She added that the schools also have excellent teachers, and resolution to many problems is "just a matter of fine tuning." Señora Otero also stated that English skills are very important to the hospitality industry and that most schools do a good job of preparing students with adequate English skills.

Señora Palli of the Inter-Continental stated that she felt adequate skills are being provided at educational institutions for those seeking entry-level positions, but not for those graduating with bachelor's degrees because many are not bilingual. In addition, Señora Jesus from the Normandie felt that nearly all students of hospitality programs have the basic skills needed to be able to develop into more qualified individuals.

At the Caribe Hilton, Señora Figueroa stated that she believed that the educational institutions are providing the students with the general knowledge they need about the industry. She also felt that the educational institutions are doing a good job preparing students with computer skills.

The Ritz Carlton they felt the educational institutions prepare the students with knowledge of Puerto Rico as far as its culture and history. Finally, at the Condado Plaza, Waldemar Flores felt that the educational institutions are trying to improve, especially since it is such a young program on the Island. He stated that they are listening more to the hotels and getting more feedback.

4.1.4 Needed Changes at Educational Institutions

At the Wyndham El San Juan, Señora Otera felt that the educational institutions need to be more proactive. She felt they should talk to the hotels more, and that professors could play a more active role in the placement of students. Señora Otero also felt students need to be more committed to the industry. She commented that genuine commitment is rare and "if you show commitment, I'll make sure you get a job." Overall, she felt the schools should place more emphasis on leadership and people interaction skills. She stated that when she started in the industry it was essential that she "be nice" to everyone: both customers and employees. However, she felt this is somewhat lacking nowadays. Personally, Señora Otero added, she did not have much formal instruction in leadership and interpersonal skills from the Universidad del Sagrado Corazón, but rather gained those skills by watching the people around her and essentially through experience.

Señora Diaz, from the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, thought that internships should start earlier. She felt this would help show future graduates what the industry is really like. She also suggested that students take more conversational English language instruction since it is such a vital skill in the industry. In addition, she thought that it is important to increase people's understanding of the industry and to emphasize the overall importance of tourism to the economy of Puerto Rico. Señora Diaz felt that tourism should be viewed as another industry in Puerto Rico, equivalent to manufacturing or agriculture.

Señora Palli, at the Inter-Continental, felt that a person in the hospitality industry really needs to know how to handle employees, customers, and difficult situations, and that these skills are being taught in-house because the schools are not doing it adequately. Señora Palli also believed that many managers do not know how to deal properly with employees. She felt that public speaking to both small and large groups needs to be improved, as many of the applicants the Inter-Continental receives are not prepared for this in any way. Overall, Señora Palli felt that from day one, educational institutions should emphasize the importance of service, and that everyone in the hotel has to have good customer service skills.

The Caribe Hilton felt that a student should have specific knowledge of a particular area of the hotel. In their opinion, the educational institutions tell the students that it is good to cover all areas, but they find an overall lack of expertise in graduates. Señora Figueroa stated her belief that the local educational institutions need to have more internships, or more hours in the existing internships. She commented that the Caribe Hilton finds that the students are not aware of the realities of the industry and come in unprepared. The Caribe Hilton stressed that the instruction of English must be emphasized much more, perhaps even making it a requirement for graduation. Señora Figueroa felt that overall, the people who are teaching at the universities are not in touch with the industry and need to fix this problem by working in the industry. In addition, she believed that the educational institutions need to stress the fact that you can be the smartest student, but if you believe you know everything, you are not aware of the industry. Finally, Señora Figueroa felt that the universities say that they are teaching their students everything they need to know and making them industry aware, but she felt that the graduates were not prepared as well as they should be.

Finally, Señor Waldemar Flores at the Condado Plaza believed that the educational institutions need to improve their internship programs and have more professor involvement. He felt that the schools could improve their English programs. Also, he stated that the educational institutions should make it harder to be accepted into a tourism-related program because many students only apply because they see it as a glamorous job. However, this is not the case and the schools need to present the realities of the industry better to the students. He suggested having industry professionals talk to the students at the educational institutions about the realities of the industry. The schools need to find the best-qualified students for their programs, and he felt that this is something schools currently may not be doing.

4.1.5 Expectations of Graduates

At the Wyndham El San Juan, it is generally felt that many students need to start at the bottom and work their way up, and that experience is very important for the upper level positions of the hotel. Señora Otero stated that she does not suggest "becoming a manager as soon as you start." She said that technically it can happen, but it is rare. In addition, she indicated that an overall lack of respect from those working under a new graduate, as well as the graduate's overall lack of experience, would make it difficult to manage successfully. In addition, Señora Diaz at the Puerto Rico Tourism Company stated that in her experience many graduates do not understand the industry and after graduation decide to not enter the tourism workforce.

At the Marriott, Señor Alvarado believed people with bachelor's degrees expect lots of money and an assistant manager position for their first job. However, Señor Alvarado stated that most graduates are aware of the realities of the industry. He believed that the internships and the educational institutions were properly preparing the students. However, both Señor Alvarado and Señor Littke agreed that many people either do not anticipate the long hours that the hotel industry demands or cannot commit to working them.

At the Normandie, Señora Jesus felt that students do overestimate their abilities upon graduation and expect to get high paying jobs. However, in reality the hotel industry pay does not fulfill those expectations.

Señora Palli, at the Inter-Continental believed that at least two to three years of experience are needed to understand the realities of the tourism industry, and therefore most students do not fully understand the tourism industry.

At the Caribe Hilton, Señora Figueroa found that many people expect higher salaries. She stated that people who graduate with a bachelor's degree have the highest expectations of all, and expect to get a supervisor or management position upon graduation. However, she stated her belief that this is very unrealistic. The Caribe Hilton has 600 employees, and only 150 of those are management; therefore, there are not a lot of available management openings. She explained that there is not much the industry can do to meet the higher expectations of graduates, because the salaries are the same at all the hotels and they cannot raise the salaries. Señora Figueroa felt that the only thing the hotels could do to help employees is to offer corporate classes to improve the employee's education. In addition, Señora Figueroa mentioned that in Puerto Rico they have a tradition where you need to work your way up the ladder in order to make it to a managerial position.

At the Ritz Carlton Señora Maria Cassidy felt that the graduates sometimes think they will start at the management level and this simply is not the case. In addition, she felt that a lot of applicants do not understand that the hotel needs its employees to be able to work flexible hours.

Señor Waldemar Flores from the Condado Plaza believed that the students do have overly high expectations, identifying the graduates of the bachelors' degree programs in particular. He felt that they immediately want a supervisor position, but without experience this is impossible. He also felt that students are not aware of the realities of the industry and that this is an area that needs to be improved.

4.1.6 Role of Fcaulty

Another question that was asked regarded the role the professors have in the industry and how should they keep in touch with the changing needs in order to prepare their students for the realities of the work world. The Wyndham El San Juan would like to see more professors visiting the hotel. Señora Otero believed that most of the professors at the hospitality and tourism educational institutions come from the tourism industry, but not all of them. She emphasized that professors should visit the hotel on a regular basis.

The Inter-Continental felt that it was important for professors to visit the hotel and keep up to date with the changes of the industry. They said they would be willing to host professors in the hotel to keep them up to date with the changes in the hotel industry. Señora Palli emphasized the fact that professors must know the industry or else they cannot convey it to the students. She also commented that it is not good enough to just come and stay in the hotel, because it is not as glamorous as it may appear. In addition, Señora Palli stated that employees must work hard and give good service so the guests leave happy. She felt the students must know that this is very important.

The Marriott mentioned that it has been visited by at least one professor in the past from CUE, who comes both alone and with students to tour the hotel. However, they felt that it would be more helpful to have additional professors come to observe actual hotel operations. They believed that many professors seem to be teaching old-fashioned ways of doing things in the hotel.

At the Normandie, professors come for meetings and luncheons, but do not come to the hotel and observe its operations. The hotel thought it would be a good idea and believed that most hotels would be willing to cooperate by having professors come in to observe operations. Señora Jesus believed that many professors have had experience in the industry and that it is important that professors know the industry. In addition, Señora Jesus at the Normandie felt that often universities hire temporary professors with no benefits and lower pay. She believed that this situation should be remedied because it eventually hurts the universities as well as the students.

Professors have come to the Caribe Hilton to give students an orientation of the hotel, and at other times the employees of the Caribe Hilton have gone to the educational institutions to talk with the students about the hotel and the job requirements. Señora Figueroa believed that while some professors have worked a long time in the industry, overall, they should have more contact with the tourism industry. She felt that manager job-shadowing for the professors would be a good idea, but only if the professors came to the hotel with a good attitude and were willing to learn. She explained that the professors cannot come to the hotel thinking they already know everything. Also, Señora Figueroa felt it would need to be made clear that a few minutes in each part of the hotel will not get them up to date, but that the professors need to spend more time in the hotel to really see the changes.

Señora Cassidy at the Ritz Carlton was not aware of any professors that came to the hotel, but felt that professors coming to the hotel would be helpful in keeping them up-to-date with the industry. In addition, the professors could get professionals to visit their classes and tell the class what the industry is really like. The Ritz Carlton would be willing to host such a professor because it would benefit the tourism industry.

The Condado Plaza only had contact with the professors at the universities that offer internships, at the start of the internship, but at no other time. They too would be willing to host professors.

4.1.7 Internships: Industry Perspective

At the Wyndham El San Juan, Señora Otero felt that the internships of students are last minute and unprepared. She explained that, in her experience, students contact the hotel and expect to walk in the next day to their internship, while the hotels want the students' experience to be "real." Particularly, they would like the students to go through an interview process and visit the hotel for a day or half-day before their internship begins. The kitchen is one of the most active areas of the Wyndham El San Juan for student internships. However, the Wyndham has found that many culinary arts students are unqualified. Señora Otero felt that the most likely reason for the unprepared culinary arts students was that the programs at the schools are mostly certificate programs and the courses they take are too short in length.

At the Normandie, the Human Resources Department organizes the internships and the interns rotate through the different areas of the hotel, and evaluations are conducted to ensure that the student is learning. However, Señora Jesus stated that often times she only has one contact with the school or professor at the start of the internship. She felt that the professors should call and visit with her to keep track of the students and that they should work with her to develop an accurate evaluation of the interns.

The Inter-Continental receives proposals for internships from all over the world, but because they do not pay their interns most students they have on staff are from Puerto Rico. Job-shadowing and hands-on training are done during these internships and each area of the hotel needs a different amount of training time.

The Marriott hosts many international internships, each of which lasts 18 months. However, they do occasionally host local students. The student interns at the Marriott do not move around during their internships. Señor Avarado felt that when students move around between different areas of the hotel they do not learn enough about any one area. He prefers to have a student pinpoint an area that he would like to learn more about and the Marriott will place the student in that area.

The Caribe Hilton sponsors internships, many of which are in the culinary arts, because the students need the hands-on experience. Often interns who demonstrate that they are a good employee are offered a full-time position at the Caribe Hilton upon graduation. The Caribe Hilton runs two internship programs, the first of which is called the "elevator program." This is directed more toward recruiting from different countries. The Caribe Hilton not only pays the interns in this program salaries, but also pays for the interns' visa and living expenses. Internships in the elevator program usually last about nine months, in which the student is prepared for the position of general manager. The second internship program at the Caribe Hilton is the internal internship program. This internal internship program consists of local students who wish to complete their practice hours necessary to graduate. It is not paid and they receive an evaluation at the end. Señora Figueroa felt that the internal program is more easily run than the external internship program because they do not have to obtain the visas and arrange for living expenses. However, Señora Figueroa sees many students in the internal internships with a lack of commitment and who do not take it as seriously as they should. Often times, since they are not paid, the students will not work on holidays.

Overall, Señora Figueroa felt that the smaller certificate program only schools do a good job preparing their students for the internship, because they are specialized in one area and allow their students to focus on their area of specialization during the internship. Unfortunately, because of the fast pace of these programs, the students are only interns for a short amount of time. In contrast, students from the universities come to the hotels and want to work in all of the departments. Señora Figueroa expressed her wish that the universities would follow the lead of certificate programs and require that the students to do their internships in only one area. This would allow the students to gain some level of expertise in that area. At the Caribe Hilton, Señora Figueroa has found that when the internship is composed of different areas of the hotel, the student never actually spends enough time in one area to gain enough expertise. Overall, the Caribe Hilton felt the local educational institutions must have more internships, or more hours in the existing internships.

Maria Cassidy at the Ritz Carlton said that they have had a few interns that had come to the Ritz seeking an internship. However, the Ritz Carlton does not recruit from local institutions.

At the Condado Plaza, Señor Flores stated that the internship programs could and need to be improved. He felt that the programs should be more intense or more hours need to be added, and that this practice should be the main focus of the degree, more so then the theory. In addition, he believed that the educational institutions need to supervise the students more and that the professors need to visit the properties and "surprise" the student once in a while. He felt the educational institutions should test the students more on what they have learned and not just at the end, there needs to be more continuous feedback. Finally, he believed that there should be more scholarships awarded to students so that they may do their internships and not have to work another job.

4.1.8 Needs: Hotel Opportunities

All of the hotels indicated that the positions in which they have high turnover rates are due to the long hours, low pay, and difficulty of the position. In particular, the Wyndham El San Juan has the greatest number of job vacancies in all areas within their kitchen department, especially chefs. Señora Otero felt this was due to a high turnover rate because of a large job market. People who are qualified to work in the kitchen can easily move to restaurants or many other sectors. Also, she felt that guest services, which has a high turnover rate because of the extremely intense atmosphere, is also prone to many job vacancies. Finally, she said that cashiers in the casino, because of the delicate, precise nature of the work, either leave or are terminated due to problems with procedure.

The most job vacancies at the Normandie Hotel are in the food and beverage areas. Señora Jesus explained that this is not because of high turnover, but because they just have a hard time finding enough skilled employees. She felt that many of the applicants they receive do not know English well enough and are not customer service oriented. She also explained that housekeeping also has many vacancies, but this is because of high turnover.

At the Inter-Continental, the position of front-desk has the highest turnover rate in the hotel. Señora Palli explained that the front-desk staff should be bilingual, with no accent. However, she stated that it is hard to find this quality in potential employees. Señora Palli felt that applicants need to have a certain professional image. Finally, she explained that people with computer skills are also hard to find.

The Marriott has the most vacancies in housekeeping and the casino. Señor Alvarado explained that people tire of these positions and the pressures put on the employees are high. The Marriott has about 28% turnover in a 12-month period in these areas, and 50% of the terminations are due to theft.

The Caribe Hilton stated that housekeeping has the most vacancies due to the fact that the job is very hard and it is difficult to find employees who have a strong commitment to it. Also, the Caribe Hilton felt it is hard to find completely qualified candidates to fill all of the available positions in the hotel, stating that many times they must accept candidates with only the minimum requirements in order keep the hotel operating.

At the Ritz Carlton, the most job vacancies are in the casino portion and in the food and beverage portion of the hotel. The Ritz Carlton holds its casino workers to very high English and customer service standards.

The Condado Plaza finds that they have trouble finding enough qualified candidates in the food and beverage area.

4.1.9 Puerto Ricans Leaving the Island

At the Wyndham El San Juan, Señora Otero felt that most people do not have the urge to leave the Island, and of those who do leave, most come back. For example, Señora Otero spoke of one employee who transferred to a Wyndham on the mainland and returned before a month had elapsed.

At the Inter-Continental Hotel, Señora Palli felt that a lot of employees do leave the Island for the mainland, citing four or five employees leaving in the current month.

In addition, at the Normandie hotel, Señora Jesus believed that most Puerto Ricans would like to stay in Puerto Rico, but pay is better on the mainland. Therefore, many who know English well will leave to work for better pay.

At the Ritz Carlton, they felt that a lot of their employees leave to go to the mainland. In fact, two Ritz Carlton Hotels are opening up in Florida and several employees wished to be transferred.

4.1.10 Legal: Hotel law

Other findings from our interview questions concerned the importance of the knowledge of workplace and hotel laws for the employees in the hotel industry. In particular, at the Inter-Continental Señora Palli explained that she was part of a committee that evaluated the curriculum of Colegio Universitario del Este. The findings of this committee were that the students needed to know, but were not being taught labor laws at CUE. In order to teach these laws the professors needed to know them, and they did not. Señora Palli stated that it can cost hotels large amounts of money if the employees are not fully aware of the laws governing their actions. Señora Palli expressed her concern over several laws recently passed in Puerto Rico, such as the Family Medical Leave Act of 2000, which are expensive to all employers and specifically to the hospitality industry.

At the Normandie, Señora Jesus explained that UPR Carolina teaches hotel law, but only in the associate's degree program. She believed that it should be also be taught in the bachelor's degree program. Speaking further on the issue of hotel law, Señor Jesus felt that knowledge of these laws is something that the Normandie looks for in potential employees, especially in managerial candidates. However, if employees do not have this knowledge then they can learn it in a training course run by Señora Jesus. This is something that she felt most other hotels do not do.

4.1.11 Current Status of Industry

We asked industry professionals their opinions concerning the current status of the Puerto Rican environment. At the Wyndham El San Juan, Señora Otero expressed the fact that the number of visitors to Puerto Rico is increasing, and therefore the number of rooms and the number of hotels is also increasing. However, she was concerned that there are not enough qualified people to fill the increasing number of available positions.

Señora Otero also commented on the "Hello Tourism" program of the Puerto Rico education system. She felt that the program is good because it makes students at a young age aware of the industry both in general and as a career, but it may not introduce them to the reality of the industry because they are too young to understand. She stated that she wished it took place in high schools and at the universities.

At the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, Señora Diaz felt that there might be a number of different reasons for the vacancies that exist in the hotel industry in Puerto Rico. She thought that higher salaries on the mainland might attract the better, more qualified applicants. She believed that English is a vital skill that all who enter the industry must possess, and for many graduates this is a problem. In addition, she felt that the government is not aware of the importance of the tourism industry and that it is not doing enough to support its growth and prosperity.

Señor Tapia, at the Inter-Continental, believed that the education in Puerto Rico is not adequate. He believed that there are not enough schools training qualified people for the expanding tourism industry. He added that with all the laws in Puerto Rico, the labor costs are too much.

4.1.12 On-Campus Hotel

One topic explored in our interviews was the possibility and feasibility of a hotel school for the educational institutions or a partnership with hotels. Señora Otero at the Wyndham El San Juan stated that the idea of a school having an on-campus hotel was her dream. She stated her belief that this could help to improve the hospitality programs in Puerto Rico. However, she felt that it would most likely not be feasible for a hotel school in Puerto Rico to do this because it would be too expensive for the property and upkeep of the hotel. Señora Otero felt that, for the most part, a good alternative to this would be to have a partnership with a hotel and a hospitality school. She added that a school in Puerto Rico had recently asked Wyndham about this possibility.

Additionally, Señora Palli at the Inter-Continental felt that a hotel school with an on-campus hotel would be beneficial to students in hospitality programs. However, She felt that this would most likely not be feasible in Puerto Rico because of limited resources. Additionally, she felt that a partnership between a hotel and school would be a good idea and added that the Inter-Continental Hotel had recently been approached by Interamerican University in regards to a similar arrangement.

4.1.13 Hotel Employee Training Programs

All Wyndham El San Juan hotel employees must go through a core set of training programs, which consist of three modules that are referred to as: Customer Service 1,

which teaches how to deal with different types of customers and provides the employee with the skills to provide overall customer satisfaction, Customer Service 2, which teaches employees how to handle difficult customers, and Employee Empowerment, which teaches employees how to take responsibility when a manager is not present. These training programs provide employees with the information necessary for employees to take the initiative and make quality decisions when dealing with dissatisfied customers.

The Wyndham El San Juan provides extensive technical skills training in kitchen, laundry, even wine handling and bodily fluid handling. In addition, Wyndham El San Juan provides additional training for employees:

"Be the Brand" – reinforcing customer service skills with more of a focus on interaction, specifically with body language and attitude.

Manager Training – provides managers with the skills needed to conduct interviews, performance evaluations, and a technique Wyndham calls "Coaching, Counseling, Discipline". This technique guides managers into coaching employees on errors, counseling them if they are continued, and then discipline if the inappropriate actions continue.

At the Inter-Continental all employees take part in a general orientation and attend information sessions on such topics as sexual harassment.

The Marriott believes they must "train to retain." Each employee must undergo forty hours of training per year, as well as the initial employee orientation. This training includes customer service training specific to the Marriott way of doing things. Managerial employees also take training courses in basic managerial skills such as interviewing, hiring, and employee interaction.

The Normandie provides training for its employees in essentially all areas of the hotel such as: PBX systems, front-desk, food and beverage, supervisor training for managers, sales, and kitchen training.

At the Caribe Hilton, most of their training programs are from manuals and deal with topics such as law, security, and service skills. In addition, the hotel provides special training for holidays such as Secretaries Day and Earth Day.

At the Ritz Carlton all new employees must go through an orientation period that lasts two full eight-hour days. This introduces employees to the philosophy of the company. After orientation employees undergo a 21-day certification process, in which employees are taught by someone in their specific department. Beyond those programs the Ritz Carlton has training programs for employee empowerment, the risks of alcohol to patrons, and the skills involved with caring for food. Finally, the Ritz Carlton offers numerous other programs that address virtually every skill needed in the hotel.

The Condado Plaza has training programs designed especially for customer service skills, being assertive, courteous and efficient. Also, they are having an English seminar for the back house employees who want to improve their English communication skills. The Condado Plaza tries to identify the needs of all the departments and design special programs for each to fit those needs.

4.2 Results of Interviews with Alumni

The following interviews with alumni found listed in Appendix I were conducted with alumni who have graduated from certificate, associate, or bachelor's degree programs in Puerto Rico.

4.2.1 Internships

Ester participated in an internship at a restaurant in the Wyndham El San Juan. Her school helped to setup the internship by making the initial contact with the hotel and by setting up the interview for her. She then interviewed and received a position. Upon entering the internship she felt she was very unprepared. Ester stated that her school provided her with a lot of theory-based learning. However, she was given recipes to cook and studied out of books. She was not given the opportunity to learn hands-on and had no real experience upon entering the internship.

Joel, on the other hand, felt he had the necessary skills upon entering the internship. He said that he was well prepared for the experience and that upon finishing his first internship he was even more qualified for his position because of all the hands-on experience he had acquired. He indicated that his schooling had taught him how to work in a team atmosphere as well as specific skills of the culinary arts such as meat cutting. He felt that these were important aspects of his schooling that helped prepare him for his internship.

Sylvia Figueroa and Annette Cintron both participated in internships programs, but felt that the internship programs would have been more beneficial if they were focused on one area of the hotel. They felt if the internship is composed of different areas of the hotel, the student never actually spends enough time to gain expertise in one area.

4.2.2 Greatest Strength and Weakness of a Hospitality Graduate

When asked about her greatest strength as compared to someone who did not go through an educational program, Ester stated that her greatest strength was her increased understanding of what the job entailed. When asked about any weaknesses compared to a non-graduate she did not feel that she had any. In addition, Joel thought his greatest strength was that he was more qualified in the skills of food preparation and dish serving.

Both felt that they did not have overly high expectations for their first job. Joel, in particular, felt that CUE had provided him with a realistic image of restaurants. He stated that the professors made him very aware of the real world environment. They let him know what to expect in the restaurant and what the atmosphere would be like.

Sylvia Figueroa and Annette Cintron felt that their greatest strength was the fact that the internships gave them a general knowledge of the industry. Sylvia Figueroa felt that the educational institutions did not prepare her well in regards to the realities of the industry, such as the long hours and low pay. She felt that her school did not tell her of the realities until her third year. Both also felt that hers was a specific problem of the bachelor's degree program. They also thought the degree should concentrate on one area. For example, they said that after four years at UPR the student knows a piece of

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everything but that they do not have a comprehensive knowledge of one area. They liked the fact that at CUE the student specializes in one area. They said that they felt that no universities in Puerto Rico are able to provide the graduates with the expertise. They said that they felt it was smart to obtain an associate's degree and then go into the work force and obtain experience.

4.2.3 English

An important question that was posed to the alumni was if they felt the classes they took at the educational institutions they graduated from prepared them to speak and communicate in English. Joel said that he was required to take several English classes, but that because of the large size and fast pace of the program he felt he had been rushed through it. He said that he simply did not have enough time to learn English.

All of the alumni felt that English is an important and vital skill that is needed to be successful in the industry. However, some felt that the pre-university levels could do a better job of emphasizing the importance of it and preparing the students.

4.2.4 Mismatch

We ended the interview by asking the alumni if they felt there is a mismatch between the skills taught or learned at the educational institutions and the needs of the industry. Ester responded by stating that the only mismatch she saw is that when she went to school she was not provided with a realistic picture of the work place and the fast paced nature of the hotel restaurant. She indicated that educational institutions could help improve the situation by including more internship hours in their programs. She proposed having two sets of internships, one half way through the program and one at the end of the program.

In contrast, Joel did not feel there is a mismatch. He felt his school had done a good job of teaching him relevant skills and had given him a good understanding of what the industry would expect from him. He thought that he would have been very confused and worse off had he just attempted to enter the workforce rather than going to school for food preparation.

Sylvia Figueroa and Annette Cintron felt that the internship programs need to be more focused and that the programs should be set up so that the students gain more expertise in the area they want to study. Also, English skills should be more strongly emphasized.

4.3 Results of Interviews with Educational Professionals

The following interviews with educational institutions listed in Appendix F were conducted with people who are currently working in tourism-related educational institutions or departments. They all have extensive tourism-related educational backgrounds and have worked in the tourism industry. This section summarizes the results from these interviews, broken down into five categories.

4.3.1 Strengths of Educational Programs

There were several strengths that each educational institution identified. MBTI Business Training Institute felt that their strength was a diverse program where the students take courses in different areas of tourism, such as airlines, hotels, and travel agencies. Also, MBTI models its atmosphere as a real work environment, in that the students must dress professionally and have a positive attitude. MBTI also offers human relations classes that teach the students the importance of having a personable attitude and being cordial. The strength of the CUE program was identified to be the quality of their professors and the fact that the professors are all active within the tourism industry. At the UPR Carolina, the fact that they are able to accept the best students, and the fact that it is relatively inexpensive to attend UPR Carolina was identified to be their greatest strengths. Finally, the Universidad del Sagrado Corazón felt its greatest strength was their faculty because many of them are either working or have worked in the industry.

4.3.2 Weaknesses of the Educational Programs

In contrast to the previous question concerning what strengths the educational institutions believed made their school successful, we asked what they felt the weaknesses of their programs were. All of the educational institutions examined, except for CUE where all of the professional courses are taught in English, identified English to be a weakness of their program and the area that could use improvement.

In the case of MBTI and UCC, the two certificate only institutions examined, this was also identified to be the greatest weakness of their programs. At MBTI and at UCC the students are not required to speak and communicate fluently in English upon graduation. It was felt that most of the students do not see the importance of English while they are in school, and that they do not get enough practice.

There were also other factors that were mentioned and identified as weaknesses. UCC and CUE stated that the type of student they attract and accept was a weakness of their program. UCC stated that the low socio-economic background of the students makes it harder for the students to succeed. While, CUE's major weakness was identified to be the fact that the university attracts and has to accept anyone with a 2.0 or higher Grade Point Average (GPA). Many of the students at CUE come from the public school system of Puerto Rico, which does not, in the Dean's opinion, prepare the students with a strong background in mathematics and English.

UPR Carolina indicated that the organization of their internships was an area of weakness. The university felt that the tracking of students within the internship program could be improved as well as communication with the hosting company. Funding was identified to be the problem because they are a state-run institution. UPR Carolina felt that the major could be separated into concentrations in restaurant and hospitality. With this division, students who particularly favor a particular aspect of the hospitality industry could gain more expertise in one area.

Universidad del Sagrado Corazón felt that the attitude of the students was their greatest weakness. CUE has a hard time making the students aware of the importance of tourism to Puerto Rico. Also, the lack of full-time professors is something that CUE felt could be improved.

4.3.3 Overly High Expectations

MBTI and UCC, the certificate institutions, felt that they make it very clear to the students that they will obtain entry-level jobs upon graduation. All of the professors have or had jobs in the areas they teach, and continue their education. At MBTI, the evening professors have jobs during the day in the tourism industry. Therefore, MBTI uses the professors to attempt to meet the needs and receive input from the industry. In addition, out of the two professors at UCC who teach in the tourism program, one works part-time in the industry and the other has just come from working in the industry. UCC also encourages the professors to attend conferences and keep up to date with the needs of the industry.

CUE has an applied curriculum in which they try to bring the real world into the classroom. As part of this applied curriculum, CUE requires students to partake in internships and uses labs and field trips to expose its students to the realities of the industry. Like UCC, CUE tries to support professors as much as possible and to keep them as up to date with the industry as possible; therefore, the school is attempting to set up summer "externships" for its professors.

UPR Carolina tries to motivate the students to reach as high as they can, and the school feels that the students who finish the program generally have a good understanding of how the industry works. The internship classes are set up to inform the students about the realities of the industry, making them aware that they will not get managerial positions directly upon graduation. The faculty also tells the students that they will need to start from the bottom, but that promotion can be very quick if you show that you are good. In addition, all of the professors have been in the industry at one time or another.

4.3.4 Skills Identified to be Essential to the Industry

MBTI specifically stated that having a positive and personable attitude are important for a graduate to possess in order to be successful in the industry. UCC also thought that computer skills and technical skills were essential skills needed for a graduate of a tourism program.

CUE felt that hospitality management curriculum should place a lot of emphasis on skills dealing with customer service. CUE emphasized a strong focus on service and distinguishing it from servitude. The school offers classes that discuss tourism and the numerous sectors it encompasses. CUE also emphasized English because the previous Dean did several studies on curriculum planning and received much industry input. All of the information from these studies indicated that graduates should be bilingual. The findings were integrated into the CUE program by making all professional courses taught in English.

UPR Carolina felt that English is the most essential skill to the tourism industry of Puerto Rico. Therefore, they have several "English immersion" programs: Walt Disney, Valencia Community College, and a local English department run immersion program. UPR Carolina felt the emersion programs give the students practice and confidence in English. UPR Carolina was the first university to take part in the Walt Disney program,

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and Puerto Rico has the most students hired by Walt Disney in all of the United States: about 300. Each year about fifteen to twenty students from UPR Carolina work at Disney. UPR Carolina felt that service and attitude are also very important. UPR Carolina stated that it tells the students that they must love to work with people or else they cannot survive in the tourism industry.

Finally, Universidad del Sagrado Corazón felt a person has to know English in order to make it in the industry and that it is the universal language spoken around the world. In addition, Bolivar Roman felt that technical skills are not important for a management degree, but that computer skills are important.

4.3.5 Mismatch

At MBTI, they felt that there could be more communication with the industry. Also, they could do a better job of preparing their students with English and with human relations skills, even though they have a class that includes interviewing skills, resume development and communication, one specific class for attitudes and communication would be better.

At UCC, it was felt that there were a few things the industry could do and that it is not a one-sided mismatch. They felt the industry could remedy the high turnover rate due to low pay, long hours, and difficult shifts by improving pay and giving more benefits to motivate employees. It was also felt that the Puerto Rico Tourism Company (PRTC) needs to take a more proactive role in the education of the hospitality industry. She explained that in the past the Puerto Rico Tourism Company had run and managed a Hotel School, which used to offer an onsite-retraining program for Quality of Service and language instruction under Law 10. UCC felt that the PRTC Hotel School was very beneficial to the Puerto Rico tourism industry, but it unfortunately no longer exists. A previous director of the Puerto Rico Tourism Company transferred ownership of the school to a private university because he viewed the Puerto Rico Tourism Company as a marketing organization. Señora Fontaine felt that that was a very bad decision, which created a gap in the education of Puerto Ricans for the hospitality industry.

UCC thought that this mismatch could be solved with more exchange programs to the United States, which would immerse the students in the language and force them to learn English and would help to solve that problem.

At CUE, the Dean felt that the curriculum of hospitality schools would always lag behind the industry because the technology being used and the industry itself are always changing. In order to stay current, Dean Holleran felt that the professors and students need access to the latest technology, such as new computer systems that the hotels are using for front-desk guest registration and laptops for the majority of students, so they can feel more comfortable with using computers. However, this simply is not feasible for most universities. CUE felt that the biggest problem facing most universities is a lack of financial support.

In addition to the technological aspect, CUE felt that there exists a small misunderstanding about what general managers at the local hotels are looking for in graduates. UPR believes that sometimes in the Puerto Rico tourism industry, hiring someone from abroad is viewed as a "better business decision." Most hotel general managers are not from Puerto Rico and while the Dean at CUE felt they admire the

educational system here, he felt they still look to hire people from offshore. He stated his belief that the gap between the educational programs in the United States and those in Puerto Rico is getting smaller every day. CUE felt that the industry does not value education as much as they value experience, and that the tourism industry of Puerto Rico needs to start to value a degree in hospitality more. UPR Carolina felt the same way and believed that as time goes by, the attitude towards Puerto Rico's universities will change.

In addition, CUE felt that the public schools of Puerto Rico do not prepare the students well, especially with English language skills. UPR agreed with this in saying that they felt the department of education must do more in elementary and high school to improve Puerto Rican's ability to communicate in English. The students are taught English from the first grade until they graduate high school, and through the twelve years of their pre-university education, still cannot communicate in English. Therefore, UPR Carolina felt that the lack of fluency in English is not entirely a problem at the university level.

Finally, Professor Bolivar Roman from the Universidad del Sagrado Corazón felt that if there is a mismatch it is because of the industry. He stated that industry representatives do not take the time to come to the Universidad del Sagrado Corazón and that they do not tell them what they need as far as skills or what they would like taught in the classroom. Sagrado Corazón has not seen the industry (mainly hotels) coming to the school to recruit and interview students. Professor Roman felt that if the industry came to the school and there was more open dialogue between them and Sagrado Corazón, then the school would know how to rearrange the courses. Also, he felt that each sector of tourism: airlines, hotels, and travel agencies all have different needs and all the various parts think they encompass and are the most important part of tourism, and he stated his belief that the mentality needs to change. In regards to the educational institutions, Professor Roman felt that many students believe that they can learn English in a tourism program at a university. He believed that in trying to do both, the student will be spread so thin they will not learn either. When he became the tourism director, he recommended that English language skills be a prerequisite for acceptance to the tourism program at Sagrado Corazón. However, there was no way that this could be feasible, but he still believed it should be done.

4.3.6 The Tour Guide Program at the Colegio Tecnológico

On April 5, 2001 we interviewed Señora Mercy Falero at the Colegio Technológico del Municipio de San Juan. She developed the upcoming tour guide training program at the Colegio Technológico. During the discussion she informed us of the need for this program, how it was developed, and what skills it teaches.

Señora Falero stated that the Colegio Technológico is attempting to develop the tour guide program because it is something that the municipality needs. She explained that the prospective tour guides in the program will be taught history and other knowledge about the island and that there is an English proficiency test that the tour guides must pass; therefore, the program that was developed stresses English and includes courses in conversational English that stress tourism vocabulary. Also, the tour guides must know basic math for conversion between different currencies and distances, and these skills will be addressed in the program. Señora Falero added that in the future

the Colegio Technológico might look at the feasibility of adding a program for hospitality administration to the programs offered.

To develop the program Señora Falero researched the needs of the tourism industry in the area of tour guides and with that information she based the curriculum around the state test for tour guides. Señora Falero explained that there is a large need for tour guides in Puerto Rico, especially in San Juan because many people come to the Island and would like a tour of the area, but there are a limited number of qualified people to give it to them. The program that will be offered at the Colegio Technológico hopes to address this problem.

Finally, Señora Falero stated that if the Colegio Technológico were to expand their program to include hospitality they would want to know the industry needs and current deficiencies, so that the Colegio Technológico's program could effectively address them. She also recommended that when developing a new program one should be looking at the textbooks that will be used by the program and talking to the bookmakers to get their insight on effective curriculums.

4.4 Results of Focus Groups

The following focus groups were conducted with students who are currently studying at tourism-related educational institutions. They have all taken numerous courses and are familiar with the tourism industry.

4.4.1 Focus Group at MBTI Business Training Institute

On March 21, 2001 we conducted a focus group consisting of four students at MBTI. The focus group was organized by the educational director Lydia Collazo and was performed in a meeting room at MBTI.

After beginning the focus group with introductions and several background questions, we asked the group to tell us a little about their work experience. Two of the respondents had no real work experience while one had worked in a hotel casino doing surveillance work. None of them had done an internship and it is not a requirement of their program.

The consensus of the students was that all of the courses they took were in some way beneficial to their future employment, but that the computer, human relations, and ticketing classes are particularly useful. All of the students who took part in this focus group were fluent in English; therefore, they found the English classes at MBTI to be quite boring and uninteresting. The students felt that more advanced math or accounting courses would be beneficial to their learning. The students all had different opinions on what skills should be emphasized in a tourism-related program, ranging from computer skills, to leadership skills, to oral communication skills.

Finally, the MBTI students all believed that they are very well prepared to obtain entry-level positions in a four-star hotel and feel that they have an edge on those who have not furthered their education.

4.4.2 Focus Group at Universidad de Puerto Rico in Carolina

On April 24th, 2001 we do conducted a focus group at the Universidad de Puerto Rico in Carolina. The focus group consisted of five students who currently enrolled in the Hospitality Management bachelor's program. Three of the students had already completed their internships while the other two were preparing to begin their internships soon.

We began the focus group be inquiring as to why they had chosen the field of hospitality management. They all agreed that the field is interesting and all but one clearly indicated that they liked working with people. After getting a general feel for why they entered the program, we questioned them about their internship experiences as well as whether they felt more interaction between the industry and education was needed.

All of the students that had completed their internships indicated that they themselves had to set up the actual internship and that at no time did the professors actually check up on them at the hotels. They were all provided with an official document from the university indicating that they were students and that the hotels were not responsible for them.

In regards to where they worked in the hotels they responded that they could work anywhere they wanted, as long as they had some experience in both the rooms division and the food and beverage division of the hotel. One of the participants stated that she had chosen to rotate through all parts of the hotel so that she could get a better feel of what she really want to do. All explained that they did have some interaction with the tourism industry at UPR Carolina, as some companies do recruit and job fairs do take place at the university.

The participants that had previously completed their internship indicated that the courses of rooms division, cost control, and sales and marketing were beneficial to them during their internships. The consensus among the same students also was that the human resources class was not very helpful and that there are too many accounting and math classes. In addition, one participant questioned why they had to take sciences such as biology as she found it be non-relevant to her major, and another student found the required nutrition class to be not very useful. Along the same lines, all the students agreed that more management classes were needed as the current ones only teach basic skills. Additionally, one participant would like to see a consumer psychology class as well as foreign language courses.

All of the participants believed that managing skills should be emphasized in a hospitality management curriculum while one person believed that people skills are important, and another thought that communication skills should be emphasized.

When asked about the specific skills they had been taught, the students said that they had been taught customer problem solving and satisfaction, and role-modeling. However, the students said that they were not taught interpersonal skills, adapting to change, ethical standards, and leadership skills. Most of the students agreed that role-playing in the classroom would be of at least some help. However, one participant noted that it is difficult to truly re-create the real world environment, especially for the front-desk position because of the use of so many different types of computer check-in

systems. Another student noted that if the role-playing were not done correctly then it would just be a waste of time.

All of the students in our focus group had learned English prior to entering UPR, although they all felt that the English program had strengthened their abilities. They all particularly liked the English immersion program, with one student saying that without it she would not have been comfortable enough to even speak with us. However, the students also noted that the conversational English classes were not nearly as helpful. Two students believed that English should be a requirement to graduate, with one believing that all courses should be taught in English.

Finally, the students felt that they were definitely prepared to work in a four-star hotel and feel they are quite capable of working in one right now. Overall, all the students said that they felt that while the university is doing a good job there is still room for improvement, specifically in the area of managerial skills.

4.4.3 Focus Group at Colegio Universitario del Este

The focus group at the Colegio Universitario del Este was conducted on April 24, 2001 and was set up by Dean Holleran and by Professor Medina. The group consisted of six seniors all graduating with a bachelor's degree in hospitality management.

We began the focus group by inquiring as to why they chose the field of hospitality management. Three out of the six chose to study hospitality because they already had previous job experience in the industry or grew up in the business. The other three saw it as an opportunity, not only because they all enjoy working with people but because they felt that the tourism industry itself offers lots of job opportunities in Puerto Rico and around the world.

All of the students had completed their 250 hours for their internships or are currently working towards finishing them. Three students did not move throughout the different areas of the hotel during their internship, but had worked in two different areas. The other three students rotated to different areas of the hotel. All of the students also identified that there were areas that they would have liked to get to work in, such as the casino, but do to logistics or time constraints they were unable.

All the students agreed that there was no contact or much help from the university in the set up and running of their internships. They also agreed that the professors did not realize the workload of the students and expected them to be "supermen", and do everything, school, work and their internships. Because of this, the students said that there should be more coordination of the internships by the school. Finally, one of the students said that he wanted to use his work experience as part of his internship and the school had a problem with that, but it was very hard for him to give up experience that he was getting paid for.

One of the students in the group felt that a lot of the courses were a waste of time, and that there are a lot of courses at that they do not offer at CUE that they should. Many of the classes give the student a general idea of the industry, but the student needs the experience because the hotels end up training you all over again once you graduate and do the internship. Overall, the rest of the students in the group agreed on this point.

Most of the students in the group agreed that the most beneficial classes have been cost control as well as hospitality law. Some said that housekeeping was good but it

is different at all the hotels. Finally, all of the students in the group agreed that experience is the best way to learn the specifics of the industry.

The classes that the students felt should be added were a separate class just for Puerto Rico law, other foreign language classes, marketing, basic food and beverage with at least one food production lab. The professor also agreed that beverage management and even wine classes would be beneficial to offer to the students as electives so that they can learn all aspects of the industry, especially with more hands-on experience. Classes with a wider concentration, not only in the hotel area but classes on cruise lines and other aspects of the tourism industry were also identified desired by the students. Also, the students agreed that a class on employee relations specific to the hotel industry, not just in general would be beneficial.

When asked about specific skills that were taught in their classes, the students all said that there were no specific classes just on leadership skills. The students also commented that they had classes on customer service skills, but it was too general a class. The students also did not identify having any classes on work commitment, and stated that hotel law was the only course, which came close to teaching about ethics in the workplace. In addition, the students stated that CUE does have a class on interpersonal skills, but most of the students felt it was ineffective because it only dealt with guests and not employees. The students stated that the interpersonal skills course utilized case studies, but there was no role-playing, which they felt would be a beneficial and interesting addition to the course. Finally, when asked if they have a class they teaches them to adapt to change, they said that the basic management class addresses it, but not from a hotel's point of view.

Some of the students felt that the classes should be split into advanced and basic so that the more advanced students will not be slowed down. The majority of the students also expressed displeasure at the fact that freshman and sophomores would often wind up in classrooms with seniors. They students felt the prerequisites were not often enforced, causing students to become discouraged when they fail classes for which they are not prepared. The students also felt that CUE needs to raise it's standards so that it is harder to get into the tourism program, stating that this type of industry needs people who really want to work in it.

The students in the group believed that more professors are needed in the hospitality department at CUE. They felt that the teachers should come from all areas of the tourism industry, and they felt that the introductory courses should be taught in Spanish in an attempt to gradually introduce the students to the English-only professional courses at CUE. The students felt that if this could not be done, CUE should at least have professors that speak Spanish teach the English courses so that if the student cannot communicate all of their ideas in English then they can try to in Spanish to fully understand the topic.

Most of the students felt that they were prepared work at a four-star hotel at an entry-level position, but not as a manager right away. Many felt and understood they need to start at the bottom and work their way up, and that experience is essential to get a managerial position. However, many students said that the university did not make them aware of the realities of the industry right away, thinking they already know this. They felt it would be better to have an introductory seminar on the realities of the industry to

first-year students. The students felt that this would also "weed out" the students who are not serious about working in the industry.

Two of the students would like to obtain their masters after they graduate from CUE. However, they said that they would have to go to school an extra year to get all of the classes that are required to be accepted into the programs elsewhere. They felt that CUE had not done a good job in preparing them for a master's degree.

All of the students wanted to stay in the industry when they graduated. Four out of the six said that they were probably going to go the United States because of better pay, better opportunities, and to study for their master's.

All of the students in the focus group had attended private school, and many of the students in the group learned English either at home or they had the willingness and individual desire to learn, understanding the importance of being bilingual.

Finally, most of the students felt that the internships could be better organized, with more help from the school. They also felt that it would be beneficial if the hotels held job fairs at the university.

4.5 Data Collection

We collected data regarding the tourism-related programs at the educational institutions in our sample. Information regarding their programs can be found below. The course offerings can be found in Appendix G.

4.5.1 Program at MBTI Business Training Institute

MBTI Business Training Institute's program ranges in length from 30 weeks for students who study during the day to 57 weeks for those who choose to study during the evening. Upon completion of 20 courses, equivalent to 39 credit hours, the student is granted a diploma. MBTI offers no internship program.

The have a total of 30 day and 27 evening professors at the school and three professors for their travel and tourism program, with two more that teach only the English courses. MBTI averages 40-50 students in their travel and tourism program, and have an 83% overall placement rate and a 76.4% placement rate in the travel and tourism program.

4.5.2 Program at Universal Career Counseling Centers, Inc.

The entire program at Universal Career Counseling Centers, Inc. (UCC) spans over the course of one year and entails completing thirteen courses and one 280-hour internship equaling 1200 credit hours. Upon graduation the student receives a diploma.

UCC averages 100 students enrolled in their program. They currently have two professors in their hotel and tourism program. They have about an 80% placement rate of all their graduates.

4.5.3 Program at Universidad del Sagrado Corazón in Santurce, Puerto Rico

The Universidad del Sagrado Corazón offers a bachelor's degree in business administration with a concentration in tourism. The tourism concentration attempts to incorporate human resources with relation to the tourism industry in Puerto Rico and other Caribbean communities. This program's purpose is to prepare the student to work in operating trips and tourism.

The program requires 60 credits of general requisites, 34 credits of departmental requisites, 12 credits worth of concentration requirements, 18 or 19 direct electives depending on if the student wants a concentration in tourism and travel or hotel administration and 6 free electives, a total of 130 or 131 credits needed to graduate the program. Sagrado Corazón requires one internship that totals 180 hours and is completed the last semester of senior year. The Universidad del Sagrado Corazón has approximately 250 students enrolled in their tourism program.

4.5.4 Programs at the University of Puerto Rico

The University of Puerto Rico offers a bachelor's degree in Hotel and Restaurant Administration at its Carolina campus. According to the course catalog for the University of Puerto Rico Carolina, they created this bachelor's degree program in response to the growing demand of the tourism industry. UPR believes that tourism is very important to the economy of Puerto Rico. The employment opportunities that the degree can offer upon graduation are in hotels, restaurants, paradores (guesthouses), and other tourist businesses.

The objectives of both of the degree programs for hotel and restaurant administration are to give students the knowledge and ability to occupy supervisor and entry-level management positions in the hotel, restaurant, and tourism industries.

The UPR Carolina program is broken down into eight quarters. With a total of 137 credits needed to graduate. In addition to the Bachelor of Arts degree offered, UPR Carolina offers an associate's degree in a tourism-related field. A total of 69 credits are needed to complete the program. UPR has six full time faculty members teaching approximately 450 students enrolled in their tourism-related professional program. In addition, it has a retention and placement rates of approximately 85-90%. Most of the students are placed upon graduation and completion of the program.

4.5.5 Programs at the Colegio Universitario del Este

The International School of Tourism and Hospitality Management at the Colegio Universitario del Este currently offers a certificate program with concentrations in Travel Agency Operations and Hotel Operations, as well as certificate programs in the Culinary Arts and Bartending. CUE also offers associate's and bachelor's degree programs with concentrations in Lodging Management and Destination Marketing and Sales. CUE averages 630 students enrolled in all their programs. The program has been in existence for four years, and will graduate its first four bachelor's students this fall. Three students with associate's degrees have already graduated and were all placed in positions in the industry.

Chapter 5 Analysis of Results

The following chapter contains the analyzed results of our interviews with industry professionals, alumni, and educational institutions, as well as the analysis of our focus groups and data collection. The collected results provided us a large amount of information relevant to the mismatch of the skills the educational institutions provide their graduates and the needs of the four-star hotels in the metropolitan San Juan area in Puerto Rico.

5.1 Analysis of Results of Interviews with Industry Professionals

The interviews with industry professional provided us with a large amount of information from many varying viewpoints within the industry. By carefully analyzing the responses we received we were able to detect several apparent trends in the data. We feel these trends represent the viewpoints of the industry professionals at the four-star hotels in the metropolitan San Juan, Puerto Rico area.

One of the most apparent trends that we analyzed throughout our interviews with industry professionals was in regards to the basic requirements for a new applicant in a hotel. Each of the hotels had different perspectives on what qualities they felt were important in an applicant and placed different levels of emphasis on different skills. However, many of the qualities they mentioned do fall under the same categories. For comparison purposes, all of the qualities mentioned and the level of emphasis placed on each those qualities has been compiled into Table 5.1. By viewing this table it is clear that certain qualities are emphasized more than others. Therefore, the desired qualities in common at each hotel are valued highly by the industry and are important for applicants to possess. The highest valued qualities are the ability to speak English fluently (English Skills) and the ability to work well with customers (Customer Service Skills). In addition, it is viewed as important, but not absolutely necessary that applicants have strong leadership skills. It was mentioned at three of the hotels that leadership skills are something they want in an applicant, but not always something they can find; therefore, they cannot require it of applicants.

All of the hotels emphasized how important experience is in an applicant. However, three hotels placed strong emphasis on experience for all applicants while somewhat less emphasis was placed on it at the other hotels. Every hotel interviewed believed that experience is a must for managerial positions. Similarly, a bachelor's degree of any type is desired for any type of job applicant at all of the hotels, but not an absolute necessity unless the person it applying for a managerial position. A hospitality degree can be advantageous for an applicant, but is not a specific requirement of employment at any of the hotels. Lastly, a strong understanding of the relevant laws was mentioned as being important by three hotels.

There was no major consensus amongst industry professionals as to the greatest strength or weakness of a tourism-related graduate. However, the hotels' responses centered on the same qualities that they felt were the most desired qualities of applicants. The lack of commonality in responses may be due to misinterpretations of the question. Some professionals may have referred to the greatest weakness as the areas that need

improvement in the programs rather than to mean the innate weaknesses of any tourism-related graduate.

Table 5.1: Desired Qualities of Applicants by the Hospitality Industry

	English Skills	Customer Service Skills	Leadership Skills	Experience	Degree (any)	Hospitality Degree (specifically)	Knowledge of Laws
Hotel							
Caribe Hilton	✓✓	✓✓		✓✓	✓		
Condado Plaza	✓✓	✓✓		✓	✓		
Inter-continental	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓		✓
Marriott	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Normandie	✓✓	✓✓		✓	✓		✓✓
Ritz-Carlton	✓✓	✓✓		✓	✓		
Wyndham El San Juan	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓		

- A blank box indicates that a point was either not mentioned or little to no emphasis was placed on it.
- The use of ✓ indicates that a point was mentioned and that some emphasis was place on it.
- The use of ✓✓ indicates that a point was mentioned and that there was strong emphasis placed on it.

Each of the hotels had diverse perspectives on what areas are in need of improvement at the educational institutions in Puerto Rico. They all placed different levels of emphasis on different aspects of the programs. The results of this question are displayed in Table 5.2. It is clear that many of those interviewed saw English language skills and customer service skills as areas that are in need of improvement. In addition, four hotels felt very strongly that the internship programs at the local institutions were in need of serious improvement. The hotels that viewed internships as being in need of serious improvement also saw the need for an increase in the presentation of the realities of the industry as well as the Ritz Carlton, who did not have many local interns but stated that the graduates are not always industry aware when they are hired. The Wyndham El San Juan and Condado Plaza specifically mentioned the need for an increase in proactive professors or professors who visit hotels and keep up-to-date with the needs of the industry. Other hotels agreed that the idea of professors visiting hotels to observe operations would be beneficial to the education of students. This was mentioned in conjunction with the need for internships in order to better present the realities of the industry to students.

Table 5.2: Educational Areas Needing Improvement According to the Industry

	English Skills	Customer Service Skills	Leadership Skills	Presentation of Realities of the Industry	Proactive Professors	Internship Programs	Knowledge of Laws
Hotel							
Caribe Hilton	✓✓	✓		✓✓	✓	✓✓	
Condado Plaza	✓✓	✓		✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	
Inter-Continental	✓✓	✓✓		✓	✓	✓✓	✓
Marriott	✓✓	✓✓	✓		✓		✓
Normandie	✓✓				✓		✓
Ritz-Carlton	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Wyndham El San Juan	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	

- A blank box indicates that a point was either not mentioned or little to no emphasis was placed on it.
- The use of ✓ indicates that a point was mentioned and that some emphasis was place on it.
- The use of ✓✓ indicates that a point was mentioned and that there was strong.

Finally, throughout all of the interviews it was apparent which skills are truly valued and are a necessity for anyone looking to work in the industry. At the same time, it was found that these are the same skills that are lacking in most applicants. These are: the ability to speak English fluently, customer service skills, and leadership skills were identified for managerial positions. In addition, hotels felt that the presentation of the realities of the industry, professor's interactions with the industry, internship programs, and the instruction of laws needed to be improved.

5.2 Analysis of Results of Interviews with Alumni

Our interviews with alumni in the tourism industry that have graduated from programs in Puerto Rico provided us with information from the vantage point of the graduate. This perspective is different from others in the industry and it is important to note their feelings on the situation. Throughout the course of the interviews, a few patterns arose in their responses. The following Table 5.3 is a summary of the five main points that were addressed in the interviews. These points revolved around: if the educational institutions provided them with the necessary English language and communication preparation, if the programs provided them with general knowledge of the industry and/or specific knowledge, if they had overly high expectations, if they participated in an internship program and if they thought the program was successful in preparing them for the industry, and finally if they believed a mismatch in the skills provided by the local educational institutions and the needs of the industry existed.

Table 5.3: Aspects of Educational Programs that Prepared Alumni

	Good English Skill Preparation	Program provided general knowledge needed	Program provided specific knowledge needed	Overly high expectations	Participated in internship program	Thought internship program was successful	Believed there was a mismatch
Joel – Certificate degree		✓	✓		✓	✓	
Ester – BA degree		✓			✓	✓	✓
Sylvia – BA degree		✓		✓	✓		✓✓
Annette – Associate's degree		✓			✓		✓✓

- A blank box indicates that a point was either not mentioned or little to no emphasis was placed on it.
- The use of ✓ indicates that a point was mentioned and that some emphasis was place on it.
- The use of ✓✓ indicates that a point was mentioned and that there was strong emphasis placed on it.

All of the alumni agreed that the greatest strength of a graduate is their increased understanding and general knowledge of what that actual job entails. All had participated in some form of an internship program and felt that through internships students are able to see first hand the realities of a real work environment.

There was also a split as to whether the internships were successful. Half thought they were run smoothly and the other half felt only internships that specifically focus on one area of the hotel or restaurant are successful.

All the alumni felt that English language skills are very important for students to be successful in the industry, but all agreed that the educational institutions did not prepare them for the communication skills needed and that this is an area that needs improvement. The fast pace of the certificate and diploma programs made it very difficult for the alumni to learn to speak the language fluently. Upon most students' graduation there was not a sense of overly high expectations, as the institutions had made it clear to those alumni that they would start at an entry-level position.

5.3 Analysis of Results of Interviews with Educational Institutions

The interviews with educational institutions provided us with a large amount of information from a variety of differing viewpoints within the educational institutions that offer certificate, associate's, and bachelor's degree programs in the metropolitan San Juan area of Puerto Rico. By carefully analyzing the responses, we were able to detect several apparent trends in the data.

We felt that these trends on the six major topic areas that we focused on during all of the interviews represent the views of many of the educational institutions in the metropolitan San Juan area.

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The educational institutions examined indicated that there were five traits that they felt made their programs strong. Strength refers to the fact that the educational institution recognizes that this area is an asset to their program and does not need improvement. A double check means that the area is thought to be the main strength of the program, a single check mark means the institution feels this area is a moderate strength, but could still be improved upon, and no check mark means that it was not identified to be a strength of the program, unless otherwise noted in the text. The following are explanations of the six strengths that were identified by at least one of the educational institutions examined as seen in Table 5.4.

Quality of student refers to the fact that many of the students who apply and are accepted into the program have graduated highest in their class, have Grade Point Average's from high school ranging from 3.0 - 4.0, and received high scores on the College Board entrance exam. A university is able to have a high level of quality students if their applicant pool is large and if they have a selective admissions process. The University of Puerto Rico in Carolina identified this to be an asset of their program. By being able to chose and accept the best students to their program, they are able to have more advanced courses and teach at a more rapid pace.

English skill development refers to the fact that the students leave the program able to communicate comfortably in English, both orally and written. Colegio Universitario del Este (CUE) was the only educational institution that we examined that thought their students graduating from the bachelor's and associate's degree programs graduated with this skill. It is important to note that all of the professional courses at CUE are currently being taught in English.

For the internship program category, a check mark means that the educational institution has an internship program, and if there are two checks that indicates that internship programs are available to the United States and abroad. All of the educational institutions examined required an internship to graduate except MBTI Business Training Institute. These educational institutions feel that this is an important strength of their program because it makes the students more industry aware and gives them the experience and hands-on training they need.

Quality of professors was also mentioned as the strength of some of the programs. A check mark indicated that the professors who are teaching the courses at the educational institutions are all either currently in the industry or have had a lot of experience in the industry. A double check means that all of the professors at the school are still currently working in the industry. Most of the certificate programs and some universities have part-time professors that are able to work in the industry.

Another identified strength was the wide focus and diversity of the program. This means that the program does not concentrate on one specific area, but gives the student a wide variety of knowledge in all areas of hospitality and tourism. This includes programs that contain classes in both areas of tourism ranging from programs including food and beverage and hotel, or programs that include classes on all entry-level areas such as travel agencies, cruise lines, airlines and hotel. MBTI identified this to be one of their greatest strengths. The University of Puerto Rico in Carolina specified that the students in the associate's and bachelor's degree programs take classes in both the areas of hotels and food and beverage. In addition, Universidad del Sagrado Corazón believed the fact that since their program is designed to offer the graduate a bachelor's degree in business

administration with a concentration in tourism, the graduate has a wide area of general business knowledge.

Table 5.4: Strength of Programs at Educational Institutions

School	Quality of Student	English Skill Development	Internship Program	Quality of Professors	Wide Focus of Program
MBTI Business Training Institute				✓✓	✓
Universal Career Counseling Centers Inc. (UCC)			✓	✓✓	
Colegio Universitario del Este (CUE)					
Bachelor and Associate degrees		✓✓	✓	✓	
Certificate Programs			✓	✓	
Universidad de Puerto Rico en Carolina (UPR)					
Bachelor and Associate degrees	✓✓		✓✓	✓	✓✓
Certificate Programs	✓		✓	✓	
Universidad de Sagrado Corazón			✓	✓✓	✓

(Note: Descriptions of check marks can be found in the paragraphs above)

In contrast, the educational institutions examined indicated that there were five areas that they felt led to the weaknesses of their programs. Weakness refers the fact that the educational institution recognizes that this area needs improvement. The following is an explanation of the five identified weaknesses mentioned by at least one educational institution examined in Table 5.5.

Quality of student refers to the fact that many of the students in these programs come from low-socioeconomic backgrounds, and have low grade point averages, low scores on the college board entrance exam, and may not have graduated from high school. A double check mark indicates that the educational institution feels that this is a great weakness of the program, and a single check mark means that it is a weakness was identified but not stressed.

For the English skill development category, a double check indicates that the educational institution realized that the students are not prepared upon graduation with the necessary communication skills they will need in order to be successful in the industry. These educational institutions felt that here is not enough time in their program to fully allow them to develop the students' English skills. In addition, a single check mark indicates that the educational institution felt that some but not all of their students are graduating with the essential communication skills in English.

Lack of funding refers to the fact that the educational institution felt that due to the lack of funding they receive they are unable to meet all of the industries changing needs, such as computer and technical needs, and feel that if they were to have more funding they would able to do a better job at meeting the industry's needs.

The internship program category is checked if the universities examined identified a need to improve the way its internship programs are set up and run. Two of the universities identified this as a weakness, citing a possible reason for this weakness to be lack of funding and resources.

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The only areas where the educational institutions felt that the students had overly high expectations were in the bachelor and associate degree programs. However, it is important to note that all of the educational institutions felt that the students only had overly high expectations upon entering the program, and through internships and the instruction of the professors the students gained a more realistic perspective upon graduation.

Finally, many of the certificate programs felt that due to the length of time of each program, which ranges from seven and one-half months to one year, the students did not have enough time to perfect all of the essential skills, such as English communication.

Table 5.5: Weaknesses of the Programs at Educational Institutions

	Quality of Student	English Skill Development	Lack of Funding	Internship Program	Students have Overly High Expectations	Length of Program
School						
MBTI Business Training Institute		✓✓				✓
Universal Career Counseling Centers Inc. (UCC)	✓	✓✓				✓
Colegio Universitario del Este (CUE) – program overall			✓✓	✓		
Bachelor and Associate degrees	✓✓				✓	
Certificate Programs	✓	✓✓				✓
Universidad de Puerto Rico en Carolina (UPR) – program overall			✓✓	✓		
Bachelor and Associate degrees		✓			✓	
Certificate Programs		✓✓				✓
Universidad de Sagrado Corazón		✓		✓	✓✓	

- A blank box indicates that a point was either not mentioned or little to no emphasis was placed on it as being a weakness of the program.
- The use of ✓ indicates that a point was mentioned and that some emphasis was place on it as being a weakness of the program.
- The use of ✓✓ indicates that a point was mentioned and that there was strong emphasis placed on it as being a weakness of the program.

There were six essential skills that the educational institutions examined believed the industry looks for in a qualified candidate. A comparison of the responses we received appears in Table 5.6. The two skills emphasized by all of the educational institutions examined were English, being able to communicate both orally and written, and customer service skills. Attitude, being personable and positive, was mentioned several times as being important as well. Experience was said to be essential in order to advance within the tourism industry. This was particularly emphasized at the educational institutions that required an internship to be completed upon graduation.

Technical skills, defined as the skills needed to perform the job, such as meat cutting and serving and preparation, were identified to be important, especially at the educational institutions where there was an increased emphasis on internships and hands-on experience.

Lastly, computer skills were identified by all of the educational institutions to be an important skill needed by a graduate to be qualified in today's high technology hotels. Universal Career Counseling Centers, Inc. specifically stated that they believe computer skills are a very important trait that should be emphasized at more of the educational institutions in Puerto Rico. Colegio Universitario del Este also emphasized that they felt that computer skills are very important to learn in order to be successful in the industry and stressed that if they had more funding they would be able to provide more computer skills to their graduates.

When educational institutions were asked to identify the mismatch in the skills provided by the education institutions and the skills needed by the industry, offering either a certificate, associate's or bachelor's degree in a tourism-related program, we received overlapping responses. Table 5.7 outlines the six areas that the educational institutions examined felt encompass or are factors of the mismatch.

English was indicated to be a contributing factor to this mismatch and was unanimously agreed upon by all the educational institutions to be the greatest area of the mismatch.

Table 5.6: Essential Skills Needed as Identified by Educational Institutions

	English	Customer Service Skills	Experience	Personable Attitude	Technical Skills	Computer Skills
School						
MBTI Business Training Institute	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓		✓
Universal Career Counseling Centers Inc. (UCC)	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓
Colegio Universitario del Este (CUE)	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓
Universidad de Puerto Rico en Carolina (UPR)	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓
Universidad de Sagrado Corazón	✓✓	✓		✓✓		✓

- A blank box indicates that a skill or trait was either not mentioned or little to no emphasis was placed on it as being essential.
- The use of ✓ indicates that a skill or trait was mentioned and that some emphasis was place on it as being essential.
- The use of ✓✓ indicates that a skill or trait was mentioned and that there was strong emphasis placed on it as being essential.

In addition, two out of the three universities examined specifically mentioned that the lack of funding and governmental support were also a factor in the mismatch. They felt that the government should work more closely with the educational institutions, especially in the passing of laws. Universal Career Counseling Centers, Inc. mentioned that the Puerto Rico Tourism Company should have more involvement in the educational aspect of the tourism industry. Under Law 10, the Puerto Rico Tourism Company ran

and operated a Hotel School several years ago, but in 1997 they sold their programs to a private educational institution. Universal Career Counseling Centers, Inc. felt that this created a gap because there was no longer a direct link between the industry and the government. MBTI Business Training School indicated that they felt their program could benefit from an increased level of communication with the industry and its changing needs. In addition, Universidad del Sagrado Corazón mentioned that the industry should come to the educational institutions and recruit more of their graduates.

In order to try and solve the problem of the mismatch in English skills, two educational institutions felt that it would be beneficial to their programs to offer more exchange programs, especially with the United States, in order to fully immerse the students in an environment where they must speak English. The University of Puerto Rico in Carolina already has these types of programs established, including exchange programs to Disney World, Valencia, Sea World, and a European exchange program. It is important to note that the director of the Hotel and Restaurant Administration at the Universidad de Puerto Rico in Carolina said that the culture in Puerto Rico promotes strong family ties, therefore many students from Puerto Rico are reluctant to leave home, and also the financial costs of such a program are the main reasons for the lack of involvement in these programs.

Finally, a large part of the mismatch, according to educational institutions offering bachelor's degree programs, lied in the fact that they felt the industry does not value a tourism-related degree from Puerto Rico. They felt that the industry looks for outside people to fill their open positions. They also felt that the industry values experience over a tourism-related degree.

Table 5.7: Areas of the Mismatch Identified by Educational Institutions

	English	Lack of Financial and Governmental Support	More Communication Needed with Industry	More Exchange Programs Needed	PRTC Needs to be More Involved	Industry's Lack of Value of a tourism-related Degree from Puerto Rico
School						
MBTI Business Training Institute	✓		✓			
Universal Career Counseling Centers Inc. (UCC)	✓			✓	✓	
Colegio Universitario del Este (CUE)	✓	✓		✓		✓✓
Universidad de Puerto Rico en Carolina (UPR)	✓	✓				✓✓
Universidad de Sagrado Corazón	✓		✓	✓		✓

- A blank box indicates that the area was either not mentioned or little to no emphasis was placed on it.
- The use of ✓ indicates that the area was mentioned and that some emphasis was place on it.
- The use of ✓✓ indicates that the area was mentioned and that there was strong emphasis placed on it.

5.4 Analysis of Results of Focus Groups

The following is our analysis of the three focus groups that were conducted with students at one certificate only program for travel and tourism, MBTI Business Training Program, and two universities with Hospitality Management students who were working towards obtaining a bachelors' degree from either Colegio Universitario del Este or the University of Puerto Rico in Carolina.

5.4.1 Courses Offered

All of the students in the certificate program thought that the program's classes were all beneficial. However, they felt more advanced classes should be given in accounting and math, while at the universities the students felt that those were some of the classes that were unnecessary. The university's students thought that there were some courses that were very important like cost-control, hospitality law, computer, and sales and marketing, and that these courses helped them in their internships. At the universities, the students felt that classes more specific to the hotel industry and classes addressing how to be a manager, not just what a manger does are lacking. They also felt that other language classes besides English should be offered. In addition, classes in the food and beverage industry with labs for hands-on experience are necessary to add to the curriculum so that the student graduates with a wide range of knowledge of all parts of the hospitality industry. Overall, all felt that more emphasis should be placed on interpersonal skills, ethical standards, leadership, adapting to change, and communication skills.

5.4.2 English Language Instruction

English competency skills were identified by all of the students in the focus groups to be an essential skill needed by the industry. Most said that the English classes that were offered need to be more interesting and that immersion classes that deal with recent issues and force the students to speak in class and use a more complex vocabulary are the most beneficial. Some of the students at the universities felt that English communication skills should be a requirement of graduation. They felt that because it is a required skill needed by the industry, after spending four years at the university, the student should be able to walk away with excellent English competency skills, just as any other skill that is required of the industry. The students felt that the success of the program depends on the professor: the way they teach the class and the emphasis they put on it.

5.4.3 Future Plans of Students

All of the students at the three educational institutions stated that after graduation they would most likely receive entry-level positions, and that they need to work their way up the ladder to a managerial position. However, many students felt there was a need to emphasize this and other facts about the realities of the industry to incoming students

with seminars and information sessions. All of the students stated that they feel they are better off then a person who does not have a hospitality degree or a travel and tourism certificate. In addition, the students at the universities stated that they would most likely be able to move more quickly up the ladder due to their managerial background.

5.4.4 Internship Programs

MBTI did not require an internship to graduate. However, the universities both required for graduation. All of the students stated that they had to set up the internship on their own and that there was little, if no, professor intervention or assistance. The general consensus was that it was beneficial to complete a rotating internship as the first internship and then choose specific areas to gain expertise in to work for the rest of the internship hours. All said that job fairs and more communication between the industry and the educational institutions is needed to better organize the internships and allow for feedback.

5.5 Analysis of Collected Data

The tourism-related programs at the different educational institutions in Puerto Rico differ in regards to their course offerings and exact areas of study. We analyzed eight certificate, associate's and bachelor's degree programs at the five educational institutions examined. All, except one certificate program, followed the traditional approach, which was cited in our literature review, in which the educational institutions developed undergraduate courses that incorporate a period of industrial placement (internships). In addition, most of the educational institutions programs felt that they somewhat paralleled the customer-based approach, where the principal idea of this approach is that the customers of the institution are tourism employers. Their "product" or students should be consistent with the needs and demands of the consumer. However, we found that this consistently needs to be improved.

We also have found that while all of the programs at least touch upon the vital skills necessary to be successful in the industry, not all of the schools have programs that are comprehensive enough. At the same time each institution is accredited by different bodies and is therefore limited in flexibility with regards to their course offerings and curriculums.

The skills that are considered to be important to the industry, as noted in earlier analyzes, are: English skills, customer service skills, leadership skills, knowledge of laws, technical skills, and computer skills. In addition, it is important to note that many of the educators, alumni, and industry professionals felt that a comprehensive internship program can expand a student's knowledge of all of the skills mentioned.

The course offerings at the institutions we investigated are summarized in Table 5.8. This table indicates that most of the programs available are addressing the needs of the industry, but that some areas are in need of improvement. English is one of the areas that most programs strongly emphasize. All of the institutions require that students take at least two English classes as part of their graduation requirement, with Universidad de Puerto Rico in Carolina requiring five courses in their bachelor's degree program, the most of any institution. This statistic indicates that educational institutions as a whole

have recognized the importance of English as a skill, as noted in the interviews, and have addressed the issue by requiring a significant number of English classes.

Five out of eight programs require that students take at least one class that is either directly related to customer service skills or is a specific section of a class that does not singularly deal with customer service. Four programs require its students to take at least two courses that somehow deal with customer service. These numbers show that the institutions have acknowledged the need for this skill in its graduates but that they have not placed a strong emphasis on it.

It can be seen in Table 5.8 that both leadership skills and knowledge of laws have little to no emphasis placed upon them. However, many industry professionals said that these were the areas that need to be addressed by the educational institutions, and they are not doing it. Only three programs have classes that deal specifically with relevant laws and legislation, with an additional program addressing the laws within a different course. None of the programs we examined had leadership courses or specifically taught leadership skills within a different course. It is important to note that leadership skills are sometimes taught in conjunction with other skills, such as interpersonal, and may actually be a part of an institution's curriculum. However, do to the fact that there is a minimal number of classes regarding laws and no apparent classes regarding leadership we have concluded that the institutions do not see these skills as truly relevant to a graduate.

In addition to the skills mentioned above, all of the institutions examined placed a strong emphasis upon learning the technical skills associated with the industry. Many of the industry professionals interviewed agreed that this was an area in which the educational institutions were strong. Seven out of eight of the programs we investigated have three or more classes that deal specifically with learning a particular technical skill.

As far as computer skills are concerned, seven out of eight programs required students to take at least one course regarding the use of a computer. However, only two programs required either three classes or six credits in this area to graduate. This is important to note because it indicates that the institutions understand the need for graduates to understand computers but that they do not generally believe that it is a vital skill.

Finally, seven out of eight programs we investigated require an internship to graduate. As previously noted, internships were identified by the students in the focus groups, the educational professionals, alumni, and the industry professionals to be a vital part of the educational process. Out of these seven programs, two require greater than 300 hours of internship time for graduation. This demonstrates that most programs understand the need for internships but that some do not place an overly strong emphasis upon it.

Table 5.8: Course Offerings at Institutions

	English Skills	Customer Service Skills	Leadership Skills	Knowledge of Laws	Technical Skills	Computer Skills	Internship Program
School							
MBTI Business Training Institute	3 / 9 credit hours	1 / 3 credit hours	0	0	5 / 13 credit hours	3 / 3 credit hours	None
Universal Career Counseling Centers Inc. (UCC)	2 / 120 hours	2 / 220 hours *	0	2 / 120 hours *	3 / 180 hours	2 / 120 hours	280 hours
Colegio Universitario del Este (CUE) – Certificate Program (Top Number is concentration in Travel Agency Operations, bottom number is concentration in Hotel Operations)	2 / 6 credits	1 / 3 credits 2 / 6 credits	0	0	3 / 9 credits 4 / 12 credits	1 / 3 credits	~ 140 hours
CUE – Associate's Program (Top Number is concentration in Travel Agency Operations, bottom number is concentration in Lodging Operations)	2 / 6 credits	2 / 6 credits	0	0	4 / 12 credits 6 / 18 credits	1 / 3 credits	~ 140 hours
CUE – Bachelor's Program (Top Number is concentration in Destination Marketing and Sales, bottom number is concentration in Lodging Operations)	2 / 6 credits	2 / 6 credits	0	1 / 3 credits	6 / 18 credits 8 / 24 credits	2 / 6 credits	~ 280 hours
Universidad de Puerto Rico en Carolina (UPR) – Associate's Program	2 (with 2 labs) / 6 credits	0	0	1 / 2 credits	4 / 12 credits	1 / 3 credits	320 hours
UPR – Bachelor's Program	5 (with 2 labs) / 15 credits	0	0	0	6 / 18 credits	1 / 3 credits	800 hours
Universidad de Sagrado Corazon (Top Number is concentration in Hotel Administration and Sales, bottom number is concentration in Travel and Tourism)	2 / 6 credits	0	0	1 / 3 credits	2 / 4 credit 2 / 6 credits	0	180 hours

Courses / credits or hours associated with class(es)
* Indicates that the skill does not have a distinct class associated with it but is specifically mentioned as being included in a different class

Chapter 6 Conclusions and Recommendations

Our project has revealed that there exists a mismatch between the skills provided by the educational institutions and the needs of the tourism industry in Puerto Rico. From the interviews, focus groups, and data collection we were able to formulate conclusions and recommendations on the current tourism environment in the metropolitan area of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

6.1 Conclusions

There are four areas that we identified to be the major factors in the mismatch: English language skills, customer service skills, the internship programs, and communication between educational institutions and industry.

6.1.1 English Language Competency

It is clear that the English language is one of the biggest problem areas for the tourism industry of Puerto Rico. Everyone we interviewed made it clear that there is a great need for stronger English skills in the industry. It is an absolute necessity for managers and is considered a vital skill for every other position. At the same time it is also clear that there are not enough people who are fluent in English to fill all of the job vacancies.

The institutions in Puerto Rico all understand the importance of English and have focused a significant portion of their curriculums around teaching the language. However, it is apparent that a large portion of those who graduate from high school still cannot communicate in English well. Therefore, the source of the problem is not necessarily the educational institutions and universities examined, each of which only has between one and four years to teach English in addition to the tourism-related curriculum.

6.1.2 Customer Service Skills Competency

The importance of customer service skills in the hospitality industry was apparent throughout our entire project. It was mentioned numerous times that this is a skill that is vital to anyone working in the tourism industry and is one of the skills which is lacking in most graduating students. The educational institutions in Puerto Rico have acknowledged the need for this skill but have not placed enough emphasis on it in their curriculums, therefore many of the training programs in hotels focus on teaching customer service to graduates upon placement in their position.

6.1.3 Internship Programs

There is some disagreement as to how internships should be set up and run. Some in the industry believe that the educational institutions are not involved enough with the creation of internship programs and that some internships are unorganized. In contrast, some educational institutions say that they help out their students as much as possible and provide them with the tools necessary to get an internship, while others say there could be

improvement. There is also disagreement as to how the internships should be run. Some industry professionals and educational institutions believe that students should work in every sector of the hotel in order to gain a greater appreciation for every facet of the industry. In addition, the students felt that this was a good way to start out their first internships. In contrast, others believe that students should only work in one sector of a hotel, as it is impossible to understand any facet of the hotel without being there for an extended period of time. Students said this is very beneficial in the latter internships. Therefore, it is impossible to conclude who is correct in the matter. Both make strong arguments and have strong opinions concerning the way internships should be setup and run.

6.1.4 Increased Communication

It is clear that there is an overall lack of communication between the educational institutions and the industry. Many of the educational institutions agreed that there could be some kind of increased communication between them and the industry. The students agreed stating that there should be more industry involvement on campus, with such things as job fairs. Some felt that this was already being done through their professors who have either worked in the industry in the past or who continue to work in the industry. While this may be true for the professors who keep in touch with the industry and continue to work part-time, many of the industry professionals interviewed believed that this was not the case with the universities who employ full-time professors who do not have time to work in the industry now, but have had previous experience. The industry felt that these professors need to keep in touch with the industry and it's rapid changes.

6.2 Recommendations: Four-Point Plan

We have organized our recommendations into a four-point plan to help alleviate the current problems. Throughout our study, we found that there were four common problems identified by both the educational institutions as well as the industry. These were English language skills, customer service skills, internship programs, and communication between educational institutions and industry.

6.2.1 Point One: Need for English Language Competency

There are several things that the educational institutions can do that can improve their students' opportunities to become fluent in English. Many of the industry professionals, alumni, and educational institutions agreed that one of the best ways for a student to learn a language is to be immersed in it and be forced to speak it. The two and four year programs should offer increased opportunities to study abroad in the United States. In addition, the educational institutions should try to increase the number of students involved in these exchange and internship programs to the United States by placing greater emphasis on it.

We believe that it would be possible to increase the number of students who enroll in such programs by conducting information sessions (seminars) once a semester

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that stress the importance of English to the Puerto Rico tourism industry as well as the benefits of the exchange and internship programs. These seminars could increase interest in the programs.

Since many students on the Island are not in a financial position to study abroad, and without proper funding from the government, it is important that local English immersion programs within the existing educational institutions either be created or lengthened depending on the educational program. This means that students need to be put in classroom situations where they are forced to speak English. Qualified professors, those that are fluent in English, challenge the student, and show them the importance of English, are needed to run these programs. The students must be forced to give presentations in English, read English, and hold conversations in English as part of the experience. The idea is to recreate an English-speaking environment in the classroom for as long as possible.

6.2.2 Point Two: Need for Stronger Customer Relationship Skills

The educational institutions in Puerto Rico need to increase their emphasis on customer service training as well as demonstrate its importance to the industry. Our recommendations are to increase the emphasis of customer service skills within the existing internships and within the classroom. This includes adding more classes that focus on service skills and placing extra emphasis upon the fact that experience is needed to teach this skill by including it as an integral portion of the internship evaluation process.

In addition, an increased use of both case studies and role-playing in the classroom would be beneficial for the students. Case studies are in essence short stories that deal with real world situations and problems. They are read by students and then become the focus of an in-depth conversation and analysis led by a professor. Additionally, the use of role-playing in the classroom would be an effective way to illustrate the importance of and the skills associated with customer service. The idea is to recreate real world situations using students as both the customers and workers. The situation is then played out and analyzed by a group discussion lead by a professor.

In regards to the educational institutions that offer internship programs, customer service skills should be a category on the evaluation form the supervisor of the student fills out upon completion of the internship. Each educational institution should define and make clear to the supervisor what they are looking for in regards to customer service skills. We believe that this should be the ability to properly handle problematic situations as well as interacting in a personable and courteous fashion with all customers.

6.2.3 Point Three: Need for Improved Communication in Internship Programs

We propose that the educational institutions organize and prepare their students for internships much like Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts prepares their students for their co-ops. We choose this model to use as a guideline because the success of this educational model has distinguished Northeastern University from other institutions of higher education and cooperative education has become the university's signature program. We recommend that the educational institutions introduce internships

to the freshmen or first year students in individual and group meetings or through seminars. Through these information sessions, the students can assess their skills and interests, and learn the basics of the internship. These seminars should show the students how the internship is organized, how to interview and write a resume, how to be a responsible employee, everything that is expected of them during their internships as well as information about specific career paths. As a result of these seminars, the students should consider themselves - and behave like - professionals, both in the internship and in the classroom.

We believe that there is a need for an improvement in the internship communication, set up and more organization in the way they are run. To address a lack of communication between the professors and the human resources departments at the hotels in regards to the coordination of the internships programs, we propose a system in which the school forms partnerships with local area hotels willing to host interns from their programs. The student will then have options as to where to find their desired internship and the educational institution will know what areas the hotels need interns in as well as how many positions are available. The partnerships consist of both hotels that believe the student should explore all areas of the hotel while doing the internship and hotels that feel the intern should focus on one specific area. Therefore, the student, in the case of the certificate program institutes and those offering associate's degrees where the internships are short, can chose if they want to explore one area or all the different areas of a hotel. In the case of the bachelor's degree, we feel that the student would benefit by conducting the first internship as a rotation, exploring the different areas of the hotel learning how each of the areas work and why must be interdependent for the hotel to be successful. Once the student has gone through the first internship, the proceeding internship can be more focused; therefore, the student gains the experience and expertise that the industry looks for in candidates.

Another recommendation concerns the fact that most of the hotels stated that there is not enough communication between the educational institution and them once the student starts the internship. Therefore, we propose that the educational institutions work with the industry to create a "universal" evaluation form so that the student is evaluated and finishes the internship with the appropriate skills and knowledge. In addition, both the hotel and school will have a mutual understanding as to what is expected of the student upon entering the internship. The students will also have a greater understanding of what the school and the place of the internship expects from them and what they needs to learn from the internship in order for it to be a valuable experience.

In addition, we recommend that the faculty member who coordinates the internship should be able to offer a wide range of expertise - helping the student define the responsibilities of the internship, set up interviews, or solve a problem that arises during a student's employment. There should be weekly meetings of the student and the faculty member to evaluate the experience and to set goals that should be met for the next meeting. Throughout the internship program, the faculty member and the student should consider how the experience furthered academic, career, and personal goals - and what the next step should be. In addition, monthly meetings between the faculty member, student and the organization should be coordinated to ensure that the internship experience is worthwhile. All employers should be assigned an internship faculty member. Employers will quickly come to appreciate having a dependable contact at the

educational institution, especially one that brings so much field-specific and student-specific knowledge to the table.

6.2.4 Point Four: Need for Improved Communication Between Educational Institutions and Industry

We believe that there needs to be an increased level of communication between the education institutions and the industry. This has been accomplished in other countries with the creation of an organization whose purpose is to promote dialogue between educational institutions and the industry on such aspects as the nature, purpose, and scope of research being done in both sectors to produce a synergy between the two.

We feel that there is the potential for such an organization to be made or that this type of communication between the educational institutions and the industry can be facilitated by an existing organization that has both ties and interest in the success of the tourism industry as a whole. One such organization, which currently exists in Puerto Rico, is the Puerto Rico Hotel and Tourism Association. The Puerto Rico Hotel and Tourism Association currently holds industry and educational meetings and acts as a liaison between the tourism industry and the education institutions. By working more closely with the government of Puerto Rico as well as all of its member organizations, the reach and influence of the Puerto Rico Hotel and Tourism Association could be extended and it could fill this needed role in the tourism policy.

We recommend that the tourism policy organization work with its members to find a concrete conclusion as to how internships should be set up and run, and have as a long term goal the development of a standardized curriculum for the hospitality and tourism-related educational institutions. This information could then be dispersed by the organization facilitating discussion to all of the educational institutions and hotels in the area. If all the educational institutions and hotels accepted the idea, then standardization could occur and hotels could better accommodate the needs of local students.

In addition, we feel that the tourism policy organization should explore ways to continue the expansion of communication between the industry and educational institutions. The creation of a special Internet site, with discussion boards, is one such method that could be utilized to facilitate this communication. On this Internet site the industry can post their concerns or ideas and upcoming changes, and the educational institutions can ask questions and inquire about the rapid changes of the industry. This Internet-based contact could be less time consuming and inexpensive compared to actual meetings and can take place twenty-four hours a day from any location.

We also recommend that an advisory committee composed of local industry professionals and educators meet at least once a year to review and discuss the curriculum to make recommendations, and to keep in touch with the needs of the industry. This has already been done at the University of Puerto Rico in Carolina (UPR), but it has been inactive for seven years. We feel that the use of an advisory committee, if utilized often, could be a very effective communication tool to be used by the educational institutions and the industry.

Finally, the industry feels that many of the full-time professors at the educational institutions are not fully aware of the operations of the Puerto Rican hotels; therefore, we suggest that the educational institutions and the human resources departments at the four-

star hotels in the metropolitan San Juan area partner to develop a "shadowing" program. This program will allow the professor to come into the hotel and spend time "shadowing" or following a manager around for the day so that he can be reintroduced to the changes of the industry and observe first-hand how the hotel is run. If this is not possible for the professors to do during the school year, another program suggested by Dean Holleran at Colegio Universitario del Este (CUE) is an "externship" program for professors who want to get back in touch with the industry by participating in a summer program run much like an internship, where the professor works in the industry part-time during the summer.

6.3 Recommendations for the Colegio Tecnológico del Municipio de San Juan

Currently, the Colegio Tecnológico del Municipio de San Juan is developing a tourism program for tour guides in the municipality. Tourism, according to the Puerto Rico Hotel & Tourism Association, is the fastest growing industry worldwide, and the opportunity is great for employment in the tourism industry. Therefore, the Colegio Tecnológico may, at a future date, want to expand its program to meet these growing needs. If the Colegio Tecnológico wished to expand their program into a certificate program for travel and tourism, and eventually an associate's and bachelor's degree program, the conclusions made in this study found in section 6.2 can be used to address the problems and facilitate the creation of a competent travel and tourism program. The following is an summary of additional recommendations for a future tourism program specifically for the Colegio Tecnológico del Municipio de San Juan.

6.3.1 Point One: Areas to Develop Programs

From our study, we recommend that the Colegio Tecnológico, in parallel with developing and starting the tour guide program, create certificate programs that train students for entry-level positions in the areas of:

a) Housekeeping
b) Front-desk
c) Casino.

These were the areas that were identified by the four-star hotels in the municipality to have the greatest number of vacancies.

In the certificate programs for travel and tourism that we studied there are an average of ten courses that deal directly with the specific area of travel and tourism that the student chooses. Also, in a program with approximately 50 to 100 students, the average number of full-time faculty members required to support each area of concentration is two. These professors should have extensive experience in the tourism industry of Puerto Rico.

6.3.2 Point Two: English Language Competency Skills

Regardless of the hotel area focus, it is important to develop an English language program that emphasizes communication and the importance of English in the tourism industry. The Colegio Tecnológico currently requires all 600 students to complete Basic English I and Basic English II. Two full-time professors and one part-time professor teach these classes. In addition, the Colegio Tecnológico offers courses in English for Technical Reports and English for Business. To make a successful travel and tourism program, the Colegio Tecnológico must go beyond simply adding a course on English for the Tourism Industry, and strive to create an English immersion program in which students are faced with an English speaking environment. This is so that when the students graduate they are able to not only write English, but more importantly to communicate in English orally as well. This may require additional English instructors, the number of which is dependant on the number of students enrolled in the Colegio Tecnológico's travel and tourism program.

6.3.3 Point Three: Strong Customer Service Relationship Skills

Separate courses in customer service skills should be included in the curriculum of the Colegio Tecnológico's because it is a very important skill that the industry seeks in qualified candidates. The curriculum should include case studies and role-playing to demonstrate real life situations.

6.3.4 Point Four: Internship Program Development

In addition, the Colegio Tecnológico's program should require all students to complete an internship before graduation. To be successful, the internship programs must be well organized and faculty members are needed to facilitate the internship program with the industry professionals. We also recommend that the internships be area specific. The area of the hotel that the student is studying is the only area of the hotel in which they work. In this way, they will gain more expertise in their area of study.

If the Colegio Technológico were to follow all of the recommendations for internships outlined in section 6.2.3 when developing their travel and tourism curriculum, we believe that the Colegio's internships would develop into the hallmark of its travel and tourism program and be responsible for generating truly qualified graduates. Students searching for a truly effective travel and tourism program would end their search with the Colegio Technológico.

6.3.5 Point Five: Increased Communication with the Industry

It would be ideal to develop an advisory committee with the local organizations from the industry that seek to employ the graduates of the program and hire the interns. This committee should meet before the program is created so that the needs of the industry, along with the current changes to the industry can be addressed. It should also be called upon at least once a year to re-evaluate the curriculum.

6.3.6 Point Six: Casino Program

Our discussions with industry professionals have also identified the fact that there are many vacancies in the casino area of many hotels, and there is currently only one school in Puerto Rico offering instruction in the skills required by casinos. Therefore we recommend for the Colegio Tecnológico to expand its course offerings to include a program to train casino professionals. Casino employees not only must have the technical skills of their position but also a strong grasp of the English language and customer service skills. Therefore, it may be possible and worthwhile for the Colegio Tecnológico to invest in the creation of such a program. Such an investment would require the addition of:

- English courses tailored specifically to the needs of the casino in addition to intense English immersion programs.
- Courses that teach customer service skills tailored to the needs of the casino.
- Strong links to the hotels with casinos. These links would foster capable internship programs and direct placement of graduates in the industry.
- Professors who are qualified to teach the skills of the casino.
- A mock casino in which students would gain the practice needed to be successful in their desired position.

While the investment in such a casino training program would be substantial, the need for such a program in Puerto Rico does exist, and therefore it could be a worthwhile venture for the Colegio Tecnológico to pursue. However, we feel that further study is needed in this area to determine the feasibility and exact cost of such a program.

6.4 Impact

According to the Puerto Rico Hotel & Tourism Association, tourism is the fastest growing industry worldwide and the surface of tourism potential of Puerto Rico has only been scratched; therefore, the opportunity is great for employment in the tourism industry of Puerto Rico. While the tourism industry in Puerto Rico has continued to grow over the past decade and is expected to continue to grow, with an estimated 7,000 new jobs opening in the tourism industry of Puerto Rico over the next three years, if all the needs of the tourism industry of Puerto Rico are not met, this continued growth cannot be sustained. Therefore, it is essential that the problems of communication, bilingual education, customer service skills, and internship programs be remedied in order for tourism industry of Puerto Rico to continue to thrive for decades to come.

Appendix A: Information about The Colegio Tecnológico del Municipio de San Juan

The information presented in this appendix was obtained from Professor Elsie Candelaria, former Dean of the Colegio Tecnológico's Department of Academic Affairs. She provided us with the strategic plan, mission statement, and historical background of this institution.

Mission Statement

"The Colegio Tecnológico's Mission is to offer post-secondary education and innovative educational programs geared toward promoting a holistic development of its students and the community, insuring access to residents of socio-economically disadvantaged sectors of the Municipality of San Juan. Our commitment is to the development of an educated individual that is competent on a personal, social and professional level." The previous statement was taken directly from the Colegio Tecnológico's strategic plan, which was last revised in 1999.

Philosophy

The Colegio Tecnológico is an institution of higher education that integrates technological and humanistic movements. This institution strives to investigate alternatives and discover new possibilities. Their community is based on problem solving, self-improvement, and teamwork.

Autonomy

The Colegio Tecnológico has been relatively successful in achieving administrative autonomy, but remains attached to the Municipality of San Juan in financial and procedural matters.

Historical Background

As the necessity for technically experienced personnel increased in the city of San Juan, a need and a means for training new people who would be entering the workforce became clear. Consequently, the City of San Juan established the Colegio Tecnológico del Municipio de San Juan in January, 1972. The Colegio Tecnológico was authorized by Ordinance #45 of the Municipal Assembly, Series 1971-72, under the name, "Colegio Tecnológico de la Comunidad." The "Colegio Tecnológico" is the first post-secondary institution developed by a municipality in Puerto Rico. The name of the Colegio Tecnológico was then changed to "Colegio Tecnológico del Municipio de San Juan" under Ordinance, Number 37 of the Municipal Assembly, Series 1981-82. The Colegio Tecnológico grants certificates and associate degrees in many fields of study, such as Electronics, Information Systems, Secretarial Sciences, Accounting Instrumentation, and Nursing.

The school has gained many accreditations. In June of 1978, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools accredited the institution. It was reaccredited in 1983 and again in 1997. Later, the Council of Higher Education extended accreditation. The institution received an additional accreditation by the National League for Nursing in June of 1990 and was reaccredited by the league in May 1996.

Current Layout and Enrollment

The size of the Colegio Tecnológico's campus is approximately one and a half acres. The campus is comprised of three main buildings. Two larger buildings are used for academics and administration. The third building is primarily used for administrative purposes. Besides the main buildings at the Colegio Tecnológico, there is a gymnasium and a theater with a capacity of approximately 500 people. Another building contains the library and the cafeteria. Since 1990, the number of students attending the Colegio Tecnológico has fluctuated between 900 and 1100.

Goals and Objectives

The Colegio Technológico del Municipio de San Juan has three goals, each with its respective objectives. These goals and objectives are taken directly from the Colegio Tecnológico's Strategic Plan (1998):

Goal 1:   To promote a holistic development of students.

               Objectives:

               1.   To cultivate in the student self-esteem, self-assurance, and self-determination.

               2.   To develop a person with communication skills.

               3.   To develop a person that establishes positive interpersonal relationships in their daily life.

               4.   To develop a person with logical and quantitative reasoning skills.

               5.   To enable the student to make value judgment, make decisions and adapt to society's changes.

               6.   To develop in the learner appreciation for their cultural and historical heritage.

               7.   To cultivate the appreciation, preservation, and improvement of the environment, natural world and personal health.

8. To develop a person that assumes leadership, fulfills their civic duties and responsibilities, and contributes to the economy of their country.

9. To develop in the student technological knowledge and its applications.

Goal 2: To provide varied, flexible and updated programs that respond to the needs of the community.

Objectives:

1. To facilitate access to study programs to students coming from socioeconomically disadvantaged areas.

2. To offer interdisciplinary education based on competencies in both regular and evening sessions.

3. To offer special programs dedicated to reinforce knowledge that allows the student to improve their background and complete a study program.

4. To offer academic programs in the areas of General Education, Business Administration, Health Related Sciences, Industry and Technology and others that may arise as a result of needs assessment.

5. To offer re-training opportunities to the Institution's personnel, graduate and members of the community, preferably from San Juan, through the Continued Education Program and professional development activities.

6. To direct investigations leading to improvement in the teaching quality of the institution.

7. To promote the evaluation and continuous review of academic programs and administrative processes.

8. To maintain the standards of excellence required by higher education accrediting agencies.

Goal 3: To maintain an academic and professional climate that stimulates a constant desire to improve among the members of the Colegio Tecnológico community.

Objectives:

1. To propitiate dialogue between members of the Colegio Tecnológico and the external community.

2. To promote positive attitudes that guarantee respect to divergent opinions and the rights of others.

3. To recognize excellence in performance of members of the institution.

4. To sponsor extracurricular and cultural events for both the collegiate and external communities.

5. To provide institutional security to members of the Colegio Tecnológico community.

Organizational Structure

The governing structure is a Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees appoints the Chancellor. The Chancellor assures that the Colegio Tecnológico is striving towards the goals and objectives of the Colegio Tecnológico. Nine members make up the Board of Trustees. These members represent the faculty, student body, and public interests. The function of the board is to guide the development of the Colegio Tecnológico.

Appendix B: History of Tourism in Puerto Rico

According to the *History and Organization Manual by the Puerto Rico Tourism Company* (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico in August 1999), the history of tourism in Puerto Rico can be divided into seven stages; historical growth, origin, growth, crisis, lack of growth, recovery and expansion.

Historical Growth

In the years before World War II, the Caribbean was not generally considered a popular tourist area, or as a place to develop this industry and make it profitable. Nonetheless, most of the countries in this area depended the tourism industry to supply the needs of the growing population (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999)

In 1934, with the money collected from the tax on salt, the first Office of Tourism was established. Three years later in 1937, the governor of Puerto Rico, Blanton Winship, passed law 138 that created the Puerto Rico Tourism Institute (El Instituto de Turismo de Puerto Rico). The purpose of this organization was to present a publicity campaign about Puerto Rico in the United States. In 1941, law 165 established the Office of Publicity and Tourism Promotion (La Oficina de Publicidad y Fomento Tursitico), which was appointed by the executive branch. On March 11, 1942, law 188 created the Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company (CFI or La Compañia de Fomento Industrial de Puerto Rico), and in 1958 this company was turned into a pubic corporation its functions of investigation and industrial promotion were transferred to the Economic Development Administration (la Administración de Fomento Economico). In 1945, law 225 created the Information Office of Puerto Rico (la Oficina de Information de Puerto Rico). The purpose of this office was to inform people in Puerto Rico, the United States, and abroad about the work of the government in relation to social and economic problems in Puerto Rico. Nonetheless, this office did not consider the tourism industry as one of its priorities or a main objective (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

In the years following World War II, and as a consequence of the triumph of the allied forces, the United States economy had begun to grow and the Americans began to search for places in the world where they could not only invest, but also enjoy themselves. Many of the tourism attractions in Europe were left in shambles, and for many years that area did not attract people for tourism due to the effects of the war. New destinations, like Central America, Western Africa, Pacific countries and the Caribbean became the new tourist areas of the world (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

With a tropical climate and beauty, Puerto Rico was thought to be an attractive area to establish tourism. Recognizing these attributes, Puerto Rico decided to develop this tourist industry as a way to improve the economy. With this objective in mind, the government started to create different organizations that would facilitate tourism planning efforts, and at the same time, develop the necessary legislation in order to protect public and private interests that are involved in the industry. In 1946, law 283 was passed to create the Office of Puerto Rico (la Oficina de Puerto Rico) in Washington. This law was

established to create a government office for Puerto Rico in Washington DC, which would be under the jurisdiction and supervision of a board of directors. As a result of this law, the Puerto Rico Office of Information (la Oficina de Información de Puerto Rico) and the Office of Puerto Rico (la Oficina de Puerto Rico) in Washington merged its activities. The government of Puerto Rico then controlled what information was distributed to federal agencies. The Puerto Rico Office of Information (la Oficina de Información de Puerto Rico) was responsible for the local tourism industry and served as an information center and government contact in the Washington D.C. (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

Between 1944 and 1947, the Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company (CFI) started to administrate a small-scale program to develop tourism. In this fashion, the CFI increased its intervention in the tourism industry of the country, while the Puerto Rico Office of Information (la Oficina de Información de Puerto Rico) and the Puerto Rico office (la Oficina de Puerto Rico) in Washington D.C reduced their activities. These factors were evidence of the lack of attention the government entities were giving the tourism industry at that time (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

On May 15, 1948, law 221 was approved to regulate casinos in Puerto Rico; this law required that casinos be placed inside hotels (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

Since 1947, the CFI was in charge of the responsibility to plan and promote tourist projects, and to coordinate strategies to stimulate the development of the tourism industry. In 1948, the tourism consulting board of CFI changed its name to the "Puerto Rico Visitors Bureau". Months later, the Puerto Rico Government Development Bank (BFG or el Banco Gubernamental de Fomento de Puerto Rico) was established by law 17. This entity had the responsibility to lend money to any person, firm or organization whose purposes were to promote the government's desire to develop the economy of Puerto Rico, especially in terms of making it an industrialized nation. Although BGF did not provide total financing for any project, it did facilitate and make investments in the hotel industry more attractive to investors (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

Origin

In 1947, the government of Puerto Rico and the Hilton hotel chain started negotiations concerning the construction of a 300-room luxury hotel in San Juan for $7 million. The government of Puerto Rico lent funds to the CFI for the construction of the hotel. The agreement stated that the Hilton chain would operate the hotel but the operational gains would be distributed in such a matter that two-thirds would go to CFI and one-third would go to the Hilton chain. The decision to spend this amount of limited public funds on a luxury hotel in order to develop the economy of Puerto Rico contradicted the public's political views at that time. The political view at that time consisted of not investing capital to industrial businesses but instead to use this money to attract investors to Puerto Rico through a series of incentives (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

In 1949, the opening of the hotel Caribe Hilton, the first hotel invested in by the government of Puerto Rico, was believed to be the start of the tourist industry in Puerto Rico. In addition to the success of the hotel, it served as a catalyst to stimulate other businesses to invest in additional tourist projects in Puerto Rico. The development of the hotel area served as a starting point for the further development of the tourist industry and supplied adequate lodging and accommodations for the business visitors and developers to Puerto Rico that were invited by the CFI in order to study the possibility of investment in the manufacturing industry. Before 1947, there were only 600 hotel rooms in San Juan (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

Growth

After the development of the Caribe Hilton, the government began to have a more active role in the development of the tourist industry. Utilizing the strategy of offering incentives to entice the manufacturing business from abroad to come to Puerto Rico, the government achieved growth rates that were steady during the 1950's.

In 1950, the government of Puerto Rico restructured the executive branch and created a plan that outlined the Governmental Reorganization law of 1949. This governmental reorganization plan would follow an economic development model based on the following policy:

- To specialize in the manufacturing industry, especially to those involving the exportation of goods.
- Importation of capital and natural resources.
- Local and federal tax exemptions to stimulate capital investment.
- Maximum use of human resources available for production.
- A certain degree of protection from the US market.

The reorganization included the establishment of an Economic Development Administration to promote the economy (la Administración de Fomento Economico, or AFE). The administrator of this agency reported to the governor and the legislative assembly about all of the types of industrial promotions and advertising campaigns that related to bringing industries to Puerto Rico. The AFE took over all of the industrial investigation and promotional activity that was then done by the CFI. The Puerto Rico Visitors Bureau was changed to the Tourism Department of the AFE, and the CFI was eliminated. The implementation of this plan altered the organization of CFI and other organizations related to tourism. Article III, part A of the governmental reorganization plan stated that the AFE would take over the responsibilities of the transportation authority of Puerto Rico, and would still remain a public corporation. Years later, the AFE turned into the Port authority (la Autoridad de los Puertos), which was dealt with the transportation authority (la Autoridad de Transporte). In addition, the AFE inherited the functions of the Planning Board (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

During the first five years of the decade between 1960-1964, the economy experienced a rise in the tourist industry. There were also a series of outside factors that affected the industry, not only in Puerto Rico but also in other countries around the

world. Factors that led to an increase in tourist activity in Puerto Rico included the eventual disappearance of Cuba from the North American market, more efficient and faster types of travel, the economic boost after World War II, the reduced cost of travel, and the increase in the amount of business trips to Puerto Rico (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

The increase can be seen through several measures. In fiscal year, 1960-61, the passenger movement at the Luis Munoz Marin International Airport was estimated to be 1.3 million people. There was more than a million person increase compared to the previous decade. The number of visitors increased from 64,507 in 1949-1950 to 837,309 in 1963-1964, an increase of 772,800 visitors or 20%. As a result of this increase in the number of visitors, there was an increase in visitor spending from $6.8 million in 1949-50 to $97.5 million in 1963-64. Tourist spending contributed to an increase from 1% to 5% between the years 1949-50 to 1963-64, in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Puerto Rico. At the end of the fiscal year 1961-62, there were 4,106 hotel rooms in Puerto Rico, and increase of 210% compared to the 1,323 rooms that existed in 1949-50. In the years between 1962-63 and 1965-66 there were the construction and opening of twenty-one hotels that contained 3,210 rooms, which increased the hotel room inventory to about 7,000 (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

Crisis

Although at the beginning of the 60's the tourism activity boomed, by the end of that decade the tourist industry experienced a decrease of tourist growth. In the decade of 1970, an economic crisis in the tourism industry in Puerto Rico started. The hotels believed the economic crisis led to an increase in operational costs due to new labor laws that set minimum wage and forced Christmas bonuses. Other factors that led to the crisis were a decrease of visitors from the United States to Puerto Rico due to the drop in group rates that was established as incentives to travel to Europe and the lack of interest in the industry from the local government of Puerto Rico (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

According to the government, the factors that generated the crisis included higher hotel prices and a lack of adequate facilities to attract conventions. The government also said that this crisis was not exclusive to Puerto Rico but that all of the countries in the Caribbean experienced the same drop in tourist activity, with approximately a 3% reduction of visitor spending in the fiscal year 1969-1970. Another factor that adversely affected the number of visitors to Puerto Rico was the recession caused by the rising price of oil. This caused an increase in operational costs and a reduction of the profits in the tourist industry (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

In a "Survey of Puerto Rico Hotel Needs 1964-1970" done by the consulting firm, Booz-Allen and Hamilton, under a contract agreement with the AFE, recommendations were made to postpone the construction of additional hotels in order to wait and see if the occupancy rate at the existing hotel rooms increased (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

Following the recommendations of this study, the BGF (Banco Gubernamental de Fomento de Puerto Rico), restricted its funding and would only partially finance projects, especially the construction of luxury hotels (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

During the first few years of the 1970's the hotel industry's stagnation peaked. In fiscal year 1970-71, the number of visitors to the Island was estimated to be 1.3 million. This was the third consecutive year in which there was a reduction in travelers from fiscal year 1968-69. The reduction was 23% compared to the previous fiscal year. The last time there was such a reduction was in 1955-56 (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

In the year of 1970-71, visitor spending was $233.8 million, a reduction of $1.8 (-0.7%) million compared to the previous year. The luxury hotels sector was the most affected. The occupancy in these hotels diminished from 78% in 1968-69 to 70% in the fiscal year 1969-1970. From 1948-49 to 1968-69, the occupancy rate of hotels endorsed by the Tourist Company, remained at an average rate of 85%. In addition, in the year 1969-70, the number of people registered in hotels was reduced by 1% and visitor spending decreased by 6%. The drop in the hotel occupancy rate was caused by the increase in the number of people registered in guesthouses (paradores) and in renting apartment buildings not endorsed by the Tourism Company (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

In 1968, the Industrial Commission of the Senate of Puerto Rico instructed the AFE to hire the Stanford Research Institute (SRI) to do a study of the potential development of tourist activity in Puerto Rico. Some of the recommendations offered by SRI included creating a political government that was well defined and favored the development of tourist activity and to move the development of hotels to places outside the metropolitan area.

The situation lasted for the next few years, and included the closing of several hotels like the Miramar and the Condado Beach hotel, which provoked the total collapse of hotel registrations and visitor spending. At the end of the fiscal year 1970-71, the number of registered guests in hotels endorsed by the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, dropped by 8%, and visitor spending dropped more than 11% compared to the previous year (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

Lack of Growth

The effects of the recession and the Middle East lasted until the mid 1980's, and then once again with another recession in the United States that lasted until 1983. These developments led to a reduction in the rate of investment in hotels and in the amount of rooms endorsed by the Tourism Company. For example, in 1982-83 the amount of visitors diminished by 3%. Overall there was an annual decrease in growth of −3% during this period. These factors, combined with a decrease in the annual growth of the amount of registered guests at hotels endorsed by the Tourism Company, showed the reduction in the total demand of tourism services in Puerto Rico at the time. The annual growth rate in the total amount of visitors remained negative in the period between 1981-1983 (Manual de Historia y Orgainización de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

Recovery

Factors that led to a recovery and growth in the tourism industry were the reduction in oil prices and the increase in the value of the US dollar, which improved the investment environment in the local hotel industry. A recovery in tourist activity began to appear for that period. In the fiscal year 1984-85 the Island had a very limited amount of rooms that were endorsed by the Tourism Company. However, at the beginning of fiscal year 1985-86, the amount of rooms started to grow at a moderate rate. During the period between 1984-85 until 1991-92, the total amount of rooms increased from 7,702 to 8,415, a modest increase of 713 rooms or 9%. Other indicators showed a more dynamic growth for the local tourism industry. For example, the number of visitors that came to the island in the fiscal year 1984-85 until 1991-92 increased from 2.1 million to 3.1 million, a 1 million visitor increase (Manual de Historia y Organization de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

Between 1986-1990, the Gross National Product (GNP) had an annual increase percentage growth of four while the economy of the United States had the average growth rates of 3% annually. The number of regular visitors, mainly those coming from the United States, had grown substantially as a result of the rise of personal income, while the rise of excursionists, or people that remain on the island for less than twenty-four hours, responded to the improvement of the ports in Old San Juan (Manual de Historia y Organization de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

In the fiscal year 1991-92, the number of registered residents and non-residents that stayed in a hotel endorsed by the Tourism Company reached one million guests for the first time in 1991-92. In fiscal year 1984-85 there were 708,315 thousand people, which represented an increase of 293 thousand people (41%) during this period. At the same time, the occupancy rate, another indicator that can be used to measure the demand for tourist services, increased by 15 percent, from 59% in the fiscal year 1982-83 to 74% in fiscal year 1987-88. In fiscal years proceeding this time period, the occupancy levels were lower as a consequence of the openings of new hotels, which increased the amount of rooms available in Puerto Rico (Manual de Historia y Organization de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

Expansion

Since 1993, several factors in the United States economy led to an increase in tourist activity in Puerto Rico. These factors included an increase in personal income, reduction of unemployment levels, and an increase in the US dollar value when compared to other international currency. These elements combined with the globalization of businesses, the elimination of international tariff commercial barriers, the rapid increase of the stock market with the advent of new communication technologies and the rapid access to the rest of the world via the Internet to further expand the industry. This economic boom increased the number of visitors and visitor spending, especially from the United States (Manual de Historia y Organization de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

Increased investment in hotels can be observed in the increased inventory of hotel rooms, which reached 10,299 during fiscal year 1995-96, and an increase of 1,884 visitors (22%), compared to fiscal year 1991-92. According to the Planning Board, the direct, indirect, or induced employment generated by the tourism activity has increased more than 100% in the fourteen-year period between 1982-96, with an annual growth rate of 5%. In addition, the registered and non-registered guests in hotels and guesthouses endorsed by the Tourism Company, reached 1.4 million people during the fiscal year 1995-96, an increase of 400 thousand people (40%), compared to the 1991-92 report. It is important to point out that the registry of guests that are not residents experienced an increase from 219,000 people (76%) compared to fiscal year 1991-92 (Manual de Historia y Organization de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

Although there has been improvements in the investment in new hotels in Puerto Rico, the increase in the number of hotel rooms available and guests registered has not affected the occupancy rate since the beginning of the 90's. During the fiscal year 1995-96, the occupancy in hotels and guesthouses (paradores), endorsed by the Tourism Company, reached 69%, a 3% increase compared to the 1991-92 report. Meanwhile, the occupancy rate in hotels within the metropolitan area of San Juan during the fiscal year 1995-96 was 75%, a six percent increase compared to the 69% in fiscal year 1991-91 (Manual de Historia y Organization de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

The total number of visitors during this time period reached 4.1 million during the fiscal year 1995-96, which compared to 3.7 million in fiscal year 1991-92, and represents a increase of 10%. Visitor spending, at current prices, reflected a 25% increase with a reported estimated 1,898,000 upon conclusion of fiscal year 1991-92. According to the Planning Board, at the end of fiscal year 1995-96, the total movement of passengers traveling through the airport reached 9.8 million, an increase of 11% compared to the total reported in fiscal year 1991-92 (Manual de Historia y Organization Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999).

More recently, according to the Puerto Rico Planning Board's economic report (1999), in the fiscal year of 1999, various events destabilized tourist activity. The two events that had the greatest impact were Hurricane George and the strike by the pilots of American Airlines that happened between the seventh and seventeenth of February in 1999. The American Airline strike alone cancelled 167 flights to Puerto Rico. Hurricane George had the greatest impact out of the two events. The ruin caused by the hurricane included hotel damage and damage on tourist attractions all across the island, such as El Yunque. The lack of electricity and running water were the main problems for the hotels. Most of the hotels affected by the hurricane had to close permanently or for some amount of time to fix the damages. The metropolitan area of San Juan suffered the most damages, especially in Condado where it affected hotels like the Condado Plaza, the Normandie, the Ramada Inn, the Atlantic Beach, the Diamond Palace, and the Holiday Inn Crown Plaza. The Puerto Rico Planning Board's economic report (1999) estimated the damages from Hurricane George were at $157.1 million.

In 1998-99 the visitors to hotels and paradores totaled 1,637,800 people. The months that were effected most by the hurricane were October of 1998 with a low of 7,700 visitors and in November of the same year with only 7,100 visitors. However, in December, it began to get better with an increase to 13,600 visitors (Puerto Rico Planning Board's Economic Report, 1999).

The World Tourism Organization projects that in the Caribbean, the industry should continue it's ascending growth rate of 4% per year during the next thirteen years up to 2010 (Manual de Historia y Organization de la Compañia de Turismo de Puerto Rico, 1999)

Appendix C: Educational Institutions and Four-Star Hotels

Educational Institutions Interviewed

Name	Address	Phone #
Colegio Universitario del Este (CUE)	PO Box 2010 Carolina, PR	257-7373
MBTI Business Training Institute	1256 Ave. Ponce de Leon Pda 18 ½ Santurce, PR	723-9403
Universal Carreer Counseling Centers, Inc.	Ave. Fernandez Juncos #1902 San Juan, PR	728-7299
Universidad de Puerto Rico (UPR) in Carolina	Apartado 4800 Colegio Regional de Carolina Carolina, PR	257-0000
Universidad del Sagrado Corazón	Rosales, Pda. 26 ½, Santurce, PR	728-1515

Four –Star Hotels Interviewed

Caribe Hilton	San Geronimo Grounds, Los Rosales St. San Juan, Puerto Rico 00901 Telephone: (787) 721- 0303
Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino	999 Ashford Avenue San Juan, Puerto Rico 00907 Telephone: (787) 721-1000
Inter-Continental San Juan Resort & Casino	5961 Isla Verde Avenue Isla Verde, Puerto Rico 00979 Telephone: (787) 791-6100
Normandie Hotel	Call Box 50059 Avenida Munoz-Rivera San Juan, Puerto Rico 00902 Telephone: (787) 729-2929
San Juan Marriott Resort and Casino	1309 Ashford Avenue San Juan, Puerto Rico 00907 Telephone: (787) 722-7000
The Ritz-Carlton	6961 Avenue of the Governors Isla Verde, Puerto Rico 00979 Telephone: (787) 253-1700
Wyndham EL San Juan Resort & Casino	6063 East Isla Verde Avenue San Juan, Puerto Rico 00902 Telephone: (787) 791-1000

Appendix D: Questions For Student Focus Groups

This section outlines the questions which were asked of students of tourism-related educational programs in the Carolina and Santurce area of Puerto Rico.

What persuaded you to study hospitality management?

Tell us a little bit about your work experience, or internship program.
 How it was set up.
 How it was run.

All of you have had some experience in the industry. What courses do you feel have been the most helpful in your internships?

Have you taken courses that have not been helpful?

What courses would you like to see added to your hospitality program?

What skills do you think should be emphasized?

What classes have you taken concerning the following topics, and if the class was taken

was it a separate class or combined with other skills. And what specific areas did you

learn?

Leadership
Recognizing customer problems
Maintaining customer satisfaction
Managing customer problems with understanding and creativity
Developing positive customer relations
Solving customer problems
Role Modeling
Portraying enthusiasm
Portraying competence and confidence
Portraying work commitment
Demonstrating professional appearance and poise
Portraying diligence and initiative
Ethical
Maintaining professional and ethical standards in the work environment
Trust
Cultivating climate of trust
Technical
Working knowledge of product service
Interpersonal

Listening skills
Face-to-face communication
Oral communication skills
Resolving conflicts with a win-win approach
Conceptual-creative
Adapting creativity to change
English Communication skills

Do you feel you are prepared to work in a four-star hotel? Why or Why not?

What are your plans for after graduation?

Are you planning on staying or leaving Puerto Rico and why?

Do you feel there is a mismatch, and if so why?

Appendix E: General Interview Questions

Interview Questions for Alumni

This section outlines the questions that were asked of alumni of tourism-related educational programs in Puerto Rico. Standard questions are listed with relevant probes indented.

What is your official title?

What are your job responsibilities?

What is your educational background?

Are you responsible for hiring employees at your organization?

      If yes, what types of job positions are most commonly available?

      Can you describe these jobs?

      What are the technical skills you look for in a potential employee?

      What qualities beyond the technical skills do you look for in a potential employee?

Did you participate in an internship before graduating?

      What was the internship?

Can you identify specific courses you took while getting you're degree which helped you once you entered the work force?

As a graduate of a tourism-related program, what do you feel is your greatest strength compared to others who haven't graduated from that type of program?

What do you feel is your greatest weakness?

What advantages or disadvantages do you see from graduating from a tourism-related program?

Did you feel that you had overly high expectations for your first job?

Did you overestimate your abilities upon graduation and entering the job market?

Overall, do you feel there is a significant mismatch between the skills taught or learned at educational institutions and the needs of the industry?

Do you feel it was beneficial to have attended a tourism-related program, rather than obtaining a general management degree?

Did we miss anything in the interview?

Interview Questions Educational Professionals

This section outlines the questions, that were asked of educators in Puerto Rico. Standard questions are listed with relevant probes indented.
What is your official title?

What are your job responsibilities?

Can you provide with some background about your travel and tourism program or hospitality management program that the school offers?
What are the requirements to get into the school?

What types of degrees do the students get upon graduation?

Does your tourism-related program include an internship as a degree requirement?

What types of skills does your program emphasis in order to prepare the graduate to be successful in the industry?

What technical skills should someone graduating from your program posses?

What do you feel is the greatest strength of your educational institution's tourism-related curriculum?

Are there any weaknesses of your program or the graduate?

Do you feel that students overestimate their abilities upon graduation?

How does the program make the students more industry aware?

Do many of the professors here stay in contact with the industry?

Can you identify any areas where you feel tourism-related education at your educational institution could be better?

In what ways does the educational institution prepare the students for communicating in English?

Overall, do you feel there is a significant mismatch between the skills taught or learned at educational institutions and the needs of the tourism industry?

We are also interested in some statistical information in regards to:
    Graduate rates (success)
    Placement records
    Student profile

Did we miss anything in the interview?

Interview Questions for Industry Professionals

This section outlines the questions, that were asked of industry professional at the four-star hotels in Puerto Rico. Standard questions are listed with relevant probes indented.

What is your official title?

What are your job responsibilities?

What type of education do you have?

What type of training programs does the (hotel name) have?

Does the (hotel name) have any internship students?
    If so, where are they studying?

What do they do as part of the internship?
    How is the program run?

What are the requirements for a potential employee?

What do you look for in someone applying for a management position?
Do you look for someone with a hospitality degree?

Do many of the people who are in the managerial positions at the hotel come from Puerto Rico?
If so what type of educational background do they have?

What types of skills do you feel are important for a successful employee to have?

Do you feel that the educational institutions are addressing these skills?
    If not, in what ways could they address them?

What areas of the hotel have the most vacancies?

Does the hotel experience a high turnover rate with some positions?
        If so what positions and what could be done to try to change it?

Do you find that a lot of graduates leave Puerto Rico?

What do you feel is the greatest strength of a tourism-related graduate?
        The greatest weakness?

Do you think that the students that come from the tourism educational institutions have high expectations when they first get into the industry?

Are they aware of the reality of the industry?
If students are not aware of the reality, what is something the educational institutions can do to fix this problem?

What tourism-related program doing right?

Do any of the professors from the educational institutions come to the industry to find out what is going on?

Would the (hotel name) be willing to have professors from the educational institutions from Puerto Rico come in and spend a day to keep updated with the industry?

Do you feel there is a mismatch between the skills taught and the skills needed by the industry and if so what do you feel it consists?

Appendix F: Educational, Industry, and Alumni Interviewees

Name	Position	Date of Interview
Educational Interviews		
Lydia M. Collazo	Educational Director MBTI	March 21, 2001
Luz LaFontaine	Academic Associate Dean UCC	March 29, 2001
James Holleran	Dean of International School of Hotel and Tourism Admin. CUE	April 5, 2001
Jonathan Ramos	Head of Hotel and Restaurant Administration UPR, Carolina	April 6, 2001
Bolivar Roman	Professor of Tourism Univ. Sagrado Corazon	April 19, 2001
Industry Professional Interviews		
Waleska Otero	Human Resources Director Wyndham El San Juan Resort Hotel & Casino	March 20, 2001
Tere Escandon	Public Relations Director Puerto Rico Hotel and Tourism Association	March 20, 2001
Lourdes Diaz	Director of Product Development Puerto Rico Tourism Company	March 22, 2001
Luisa Palli	Human Resources Director Intercontinental Resort Hotel & Casino	March 29, 2001
Stanley Tapia	Casino Administrator Intercontinental Resort Hotel & Casino	March 29, 2001
Jose Alvarado	Human Resources Director Marriott Resort Hotel and Stellaris Casino	April 9, 2001
Phillip Littke	Training Manager Marriott Resort Hotel and Stellaris Casino	April 9, 2001
Carmen de Jesus	Human Resources Director Normandie Hotel	April 10, 2001
Sylvia Figuera	Personnel Manager Caribe Hilton	April 11, 2001
Annette Cintron	Training Manager Caribe Hilton	April 11, 2001
Maria Cassidy	Asst. Human Resources Director Ritz Carlton Hotel and Casino	April 20, 2001
Waldemar Flores	Human Resources Director Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino	April 26, 2001
Alumni Interviews		
Waleska Otero	Human Resources Director Wyndham El San Juan Resort	March 22, 2001

	Hotel & Casino	
Joel	Prep Cook Wyndham El San Juan Resort Hotel & Casino	March 23, 2001
Ester	Prep Cook Wyndham El San Juan Resort Hotel & Casino	March 23, 2001
Sylvia Feguerao	Personnel Manager Caribe Hilton	April 11, 2001
Annette Cintron	Training Manager Caribe Hilton	April 11, 2001

Appendix G: Course Offerings at Local Educational Institutions

The following is a list of the course offerings at the educational institutions examined in this project.

MBTI Business Training Institute's and Universal Career Counseling Centers, Inc. course listings:

MBTI's Courses	Universal Career Counseling Center, Inc.'s Courses
Introduction to Travel and Tourism	Spanish Communication Skills
Geography and Tour Destinations of the Old World	English Communication Skills
Geography and Tour Destinations of the New World	Fundamentals of the Hospitality and Tourism Industry
Flight Itinerary Preparations	Introduction to Hotel Operations I
Tariffs and Ticketing	Introduction to Food and Beverage Operations I
Computerized Ticketing I	Seminar on Hotel Applications I
Computerized Ticketing II	Conversational English I
Tour areas of Puerto Rico	Introduction to Computer Science I
Tour Guide with First Aid	Introduction to Hotel Operations II
Hotels, Cruises and Excursion Preparation	Introduction to Food and Beverage Operations II
Sales Techniques in the Tourism Industry	Seminar on Hotel Applications II
Conversational English for Travel and Tourism I	Introduction to Computer Science II
Oral and Written Communication, Spanish	Administrative Services in the Hotel Industry
Human Relations and Refinement	Hotel and Tourism Internship
Conversational English for Travel and Tourism II	
Conversational English for Travel and Tourism III	
Word Processing	
Electronic Spreadsheet	
Keyboarding	
Business Mathematics	

Universidad del Sagrado Corazón's Program:

General Requirements
The general requirements for the concentration in tourism are listed in the academic curriculum section in the course catalog and is the same for all majors in business administration, with the exception of one additional math course, MCO 250

Department Requirements (34 credits)

Organization Dynamics
Tourist Legislation
Management Accounting Principals I and II
Microeconomics and Macroeconomic Principals
Mercantile Finance
Marketing Principals
Quantitative Methods in Management Enterprises
Management Statistics

Concentration Requirement (12 credits)

Techniques and Fundamentals of Tourism
Tourism Destinations I
Tourism Destinations II
Internship (3 credits)

Direct Electives – Travel and Tourism
Travel and Tourism (18 credits)

Travel Agency Operations
- Computerized Reservation Systems
- Techniques in Trade in Tourist Services
- Ecotourism
- Language (6 credits)

Direct Electives – Hotel Administration (19 credits)

- Tourism Planning and Development
- Hotel Administration
- Receptionist Department Operation
- Food and Beverage Operations
- Languages (6 credits)

Free Electives (6 credits)

Universidad de Puerto Rico in Carolina Bachelor's Degree Program:

First Quarter:
- Basic English I
- Basic English Lab I
- Basic Spanish I
- Western culture I
- Analysis of General Mathematical Sciences I
- International Food and Beverage Operations
- Hotel and Restaurant administration

Second Quarter:
- Basic English II
- Basic English Lab II
- Basic Spanish II
- Western culture II
- Analysis of General Mathematical Sciences II
- Principals of Food Production

- Food Production Lab
- Room Division Management

Third Quarter:
- Social Sciences I
- Basic Accounting Principals I
- Nutrition
- Personnel Management
- Food and Beverage Cost Control
- Hotel Internship I

Fourth Quarter:
- Social Sciences II
- Basic Accounting Principals II
- Economic Principals I
- Purchasing for Hotels
- Sales and Marketing for Hotels
- Boss (Patron) and Labor relations
- Continuation of Hotel Internship I

Fifth Quarter:
- Fundamental Biology I
- Comprehensive History of Puerto Rico
- Economic Principals II
- Advanced Food Production
- Advanced Food Production Lab
- Principals of Tourism
- Hotel Accounting

Sixth Quarter:
- Fundamental Biology II
- General Psychology
- Conversational English
- Introduction to Hotel Information Systems
- Hotel Internship II
- Elective

Seventh Quarter:
- Commercial Spanish I
- Commercial English I
- Commercial Statistics
- Hotel Engineering Administration
- Continuation of the Hotel Internship II
- Elective

Eighth Quarter:
- Commercial Spanish II
- Commercial English II
- Marketing of Meetings and Conventions
- Managerial Accounting for Hotels

University of Puerto Rico, Carolina Associate's Degree Program:

First Quarter:
- Basic English I
- Basic English Lab I
- Commercial Mathematics
- History of Puerto Rico
- Restaurant and Hotel Administration
- Introduction to Food and Beverage Operations

Second Quarter:
- Basic English II
- Basic English Lab II
- Elementary Accounting I
- Professional Ethics
- Room Division Management
- Principals of Food Production
- Food Production Lab
- Purchasing for Hotels

Third Quarter:
- Hotel Internship
- Basic Spanish I
- Food and Beverage Cost Control
- Hotel Personnel Administration
- Hotel Law
- Economic Principals
- Hotel Accounting

Fourth Quarter:
- Basic Spanish II
- Labor Relations in Hotels
- Sales and Marketing for Hotels
- Introduction to Hotel Information Systems
- Hotel Engineering Administration
- Managerial Accounting for Hotels

Colegio Universitario del Este's programs and course offerings:

Certificate in International Tourism and Hospitality Management

General Education
Basic Course in English
Introduction to Information Science

Professional Courses
Introduction to International Tourism and Hotel Management
Computer Systems in Travel Operations
Travel Geography
Interpersonal Workplace Skills

Practicum
Internship I

Concentration in Travel Agency Operations (34 Credits)
Concentration Courses
Domestic and International Destination
Group and Corporate Travel Management
Travel Agency Operations and Procedures

Concentration in Hotel Operations (37 Credits)
Concentration Courses
Front Office and Reservations Operations
Housekeeping and Concierge Operations
Purchasing and Inventory

Associate of Science in International Tourism and Hospitality Management:
General Education
Basic Course in English
Advanced Tourism and Hotel English
Basic Course in Spanish
Introduction to the Study of Social Science
Intermediate Algebra I
Introduction to Information Science
History of Puerto Rico
Formative Integral Development

Professional Courses
Consumer Behavior
Introduction to International Tourism and Hospitality Management
Computer Systems in Travel Operations
Travel Geography
International Tourism and Cross-Cultural Behavior
Interpersonal Workplace Skills
Guest Services

Practicum
Internship I

Concentration in Travel Agency Operations (73 Credits)
Concentration Courses
Domestic and International Destinations
Group and Corporate Travel Management
Travel Distribution and Information Systems
Travel Agency Operations and Procedures

Concentration in Lodging Operations (76 Credits)
Concentration Courses
Front Office and Reservation Operations
Housekeeping and Concierge Operations
Purchasing and Inventory
Conventions and Group Sales
Food and Beverage Operations

Batchelor of Science in International Travel and Hospitality Management
General Education
Basic Course in English
Advanced Tourism and Hotel English
Basic Course in Spanish
Introduction to Literary Genres

Introduction to the Study of Social Sciences
Introduction to the Study of Western Civilization
Introduction to the Study of Biological Sciences
Intermediate Algebra I
History of Puerto Rico
Contemporary History
Introduction to Information Science
Formative Integral Development

Professional Courses
Consumer Behavior
Quantitative Aspects of Accounting
Personnel Administrations
Labor Relations
Introduction to International Tourism and Hotel Management
Computer Systems in Travel Operations
Travel Geography
Domestic and International Destinations
International Tourism and Cross-Cultural Behavior
Interpersonal Workplace Skills
Guest Service
Applied Spreadsheet and Database Applications
Tourism and Hotel Finance and Cost Controls
Tourism and Hospitality Accounting
Tourism and Hotel Law

Practicum
Internship I
Internship II

Concentration in Destination Marketing and Sales (133 Credits)
Concentration Courses
Group and Corporate Travel Management
Travel Distribution and Information Systems
Travel Agency Operations and Procedures
Tourism and Hotel Promotion and Public Relations
Concentration and Group Sales
Development of Media and Print Campaigns
Selling to the Leisure Market

Concentration in Lodging Operations (130 Credits)
Concentration Courses
Front Office and Reservation Operations
Housekeeping and Concierge Operations
Purchasing and Inventory
Convention and Group Sales
Food and Beverage Operations
Facilities Layout and Design

Practicum
Internship I
Internship II

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