

South Seattle Community College Bachelor of Applied Science: Hospitality Management

Structured Interviews

INTRODUCTION

During the months of October through December of 2005, the staff of the Seattle Community Colleges conducted a series of 13 structured interviews with community leaders and industry experts as part of the market research in preparation for South Seattle Community College's proposed Bachelor's of Applied Science degree in Hospitality Management. The interviews were used to assess the need for the program, the content of the curriculum, employment demand and industry support.

Consisting of a series of 21 questions, each interview required 45 minutes to an hour to complete. The interviews were held at the participants' places of work, and each was conducted by two college staff members. Most but not all interviewees were members of the Advisory Committee for the program and had participated in one or both of the focus groups conducted with that body.

The pairs of interviewers conducting each session were drawn from the following group of staff members:

- Malcolm Grothe, Dean for Technical Education;
- Betsy Hale, Associate Dean for WorkSource;
- Joseph Hauth, Director of Research for the Seattle Community Colleges;
- Paul Magnant, Dean for Hospitality Programs;
- Richard Penny, Director of Development

Abbreviated transcripts of all interviews are included at the end of this report. A summary analysis appears beginning on Page Two.

SUMMARY

1. Name:

A total of 13 interviews were conducted with the following opinion leaders:

Name	Title	Affiliation
John Blackman	Owner (Former Vice President for Sales and Marketing, Delta Airlines)	Argosy Cruise Lines
Richard Boustead	General manager	Radisson Hotel, Seattle Tacoma Airport
Wayne Byers	Vice President for Human Resources	Holland America Line
Larry and Linda Granat	Owners / founders since 1978.	Seattle Hospitality, a meeting and convention planning firm
Roberta Greer	Senior Vice President and COO	Tillicum Village and Tours
Anthony Horton	Senior Catering and Sales Manager	Sheraton Seattle
Sylva Leduc	Principal	Leadership Central, a consulting firm specializing in organizational development, leadership training and executive coach services
Lori Main	General Manager	The Roosevelt Hotel, part of Coast Hotel and Resort, a six-hotel chain
Patti Mullen	Executive Director	West Seattle Chamber of Commerce
Carla Murray	Vice President of Operations Northwest Region	Starwood Hotels and Resort Worldwide, INC.
Ed Parks	Retired Manager of International Relations; now Principal of consulting firm	Retired from the Port of Seattle. Was manager of international relations at retirement. Now has own consulting PR firm specializing in major events, especially with international components.
Terry Quick	President	ENTCO, a meeting and special events planning company
Dan Thiessen	Corporate Executive Chef	Salty's on Alki, Part of a three-restaurant chain called Happy Guest Intl. owned by Jerry and Kathy Kingen.

2. Company/Organization:

Most participants were drawn from the hospitality industry and represented hotels, restaurants, cruise lines, tourist venues, and event-planning firms. One participant represented a consulting firm and one a chamber of commerce.

3. Position:

Most respondents were members of senior management. With few exceptions they held titles such as owner, CEO, general manager or equivalent for the organization they represented.

4. Years of Experience Working in Hospitality Industry:

Most interviewees had 20 to 30 years of relevant experience.

5. Tell us a little about your company and areas where you see high demand for skilled workers.

The interviewees consistently indicated that skilled managers and supervisors are needed both in their businesses and in more generally in the industry. They tended to identify line supervision and middle management as the areas where they had the greatest need. Comments with regard to specific attributes and job skills will be summarized under Questions 7 and 8 below.

6. In your words, please describe a typical career pathway for someone progressing in your industry.

Responses to this question varied; the answers on exact career pathways depended on the particular industry and facility. However, there are two themes that can be extracted. First, interviewees indicated that hospitality can be a flexible career, with substantial opportunities for change and redirection within the overall umbrella of the industry. Second, hospitality is one of those rare industries where the entire career ladder is open to an individual who has the requisite skills and motivation. As one respondent stated, "Often the point of entry is serving tables or working back office. This is an industry where the complete career ladder is there. You can go from server to floor manager, general manager and then into larger organizations."

7. Based on your experience with employees who have successfully advanced through your company, please describe what you want to see in new employees in terms of characteristics, skill sets, and educational preparation.

The responses to this question were interesting. Comments can be readily divided into two categories. About three quarters of the participants emphasized soft skills, using words such as "attitude," "professionalism, and "engagement." A minority were concerned with hard skills, such as hotel operations, contract law, and critical thinking.

8. Which skills are most lacking?

As in Question 7 above, once again the responses reveal a divide between soft skills and hard skills. But in this case, as interviewees talked about absent skills, they tended to be more concrete and placed more emphasis on specific hard skills such as cost control, math, computer skills, technical skills and technology. Even in the general realm of soft skills, the respondents assigned less significance to personal attributes per se, and commented more on business leadership skills as they relate to operating within the realm of a complex, fast-paced business environment.

9. How is your industry changing? Are there emerging skill sets or areas of knowledge that are becoming essential for employees to possess?

Respondents were quick to answer this question, and speaking almost in a single voice, they asserted that the hospitality industry (including all its individual sectors) has undergone rapid change and that the pace of change will continue or accelerate. Information technology and accounting were perceived as areas of particularly rapid transformation; indeed many thought the two fields were merging.

Another common thread emerged regarding hospitality as a career. As one respondent stated, “It used to be that these were just transition jobs, but no longer. The expectation is that people are in a career, and that is what is happening. Also there is an overall increase in educational levels across the board.”

A third theme dealt with emerging tastes and the sophistication of customers. Respondents saw their business opportunities expanding as baby boomers become empty-nesters. But these clients were also more discriminating in their choices and sophisticated in their tastes. This is true especially in the foods arena. Some respondents indicated that restaurant and food training is becoming increasingly important for success in more general areas of hospitality and tourism, such as the hotel industry.

Fourth, respondents also commented on the increasing amount of international trade and tourism in the Seattle area. They saw a link between the diversity of the student body at South and the ability of these students to speak other languages (especially Pacific Rim languages) and relate to other cultures.

10. Do you currently employ people with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Hospitality Management?

Although most respondents said that their businesses do not currently have management employees with a specialized bachelor’s degree, four companies did have employees with degrees in hospitality or hotel management. These managers matriculated from programs at a variety of colleges and universities including Washington State University, Oklahoma State, Denver University, Florida State, Cornell, Michigan State, and the Western Culinary Institute.

11. What positions in your company would a graduate of SSCC’s new BAS degree program qualify for?

Respondents verified their support for the program and indicated they would hire graduates. They identified many of the same departmental and middle-management positions as in Question 5.

For example, an operator of a downtown Seattle hotel stated that she could think of a dozen department manager positions, including bookkeeping, front desk, office manager, food and beverage, banquet, catering, bar, housekeeping, sales/marketing, and engineering.

Another typical response was from catering and sales director at a second large downtown Seattle hotel, who reported that he would most likely hire a recent graduate as an entry-level supervisor or manager with a great deal of exposure to multiple operations, rotating through different departments to gain experience. His expectation would be that the person would start in relatively junior position but advance quickly.

12. Based on your experience, please estimate a starting salary for a new employee with a BAS in Hospitality Management.

Most of those interviewed responded with a range of salaries. Setting aside the responses dealing with commission-based sales positions (which were more highly compensated), the average salary range given for positions appropriate for a graduate of the Hospitality Program was \$36,000 to \$49,000.

13. Based on the positions you identified, how much more would a person with the bachelor's degree make than a comparably skilled person with an associate degree?

Respondents were unanimous in refusing to answer this question with specificity. For example, a general manager of a hotel stated, "It is difficult to say. It depends on experience and abilities." The career ladder concept came up more than once, with respondents pointing out that hospitality is a field where qualified and motivated people can climb all the way up to the CEO chair, with advancement depending more on skills than on badges and credentials. Put another way, although the interviewees saw the value of a hospitality management program, to them the value of the degree would lie more in the skills and polish it would offer an ambitious and motivated person than in the credential itself. Indeed, the inclusion of a particular degree or qualification in a formal statement of minimum or preferred job qualification – so common to community colleges and other governmental institutions – is very foreign to the hospitality industry.

14. How much of the degree do you think should involve working directly with industry through internships and other applied learning opportunities and how much should be classroom-based?

Participants were unanimous in their opinion that formal internships would be a critically important part of the degree program. On the average, participants suggested that a quarter to a third of the learning experience be accomplished in the internship setting. Some suggested as much as 40% or 50%.

15. What sort of activities would you like to see the internships accomplish?

The majority of interviewees had worked with interns and expressed commitment to helping them achieve positive learning experiences. Most suggested a model that involved having the intern rotate through most of the functional divisions of the organization. For example, a respondent reported that she had worked with over 100 interns. She suggested a rotation that would progress through the following areas: “Front desk or front of house, cashier, wait person, inventory, customer service on the phones, back of house, and accounting.” Some thought that the intern should have an opportunity to complete an independent project, such as a marketing plan for a new business venture. A few pointed out that not all internship tasks involve glitz and glamour; sometimes tasks such as assembling mailings or doing data entry should be included.

16. We will be designing a new curriculum for the BAS degree. What classes / skills / learning outcomes would you recommend that we include?

Participants were able to clearly identify areas that they saw as important to the curriculum; many of the responses were common to many interviewees. A typical comment came from one respondent, who called for training in “accounting, cost analysis, English, some liberal arts, culinary arts – inventory – buying – what to serve— how to serve, housekeeping, hotel operations, front of house, and back of house.” The soft skills got attention as well, with comments such as “communication skills,” “interpersonal stuff,” “values,” “customer service skills” being representative.

Another respondent expanded on this point, talking about the concept of “emotional intelligence,” and pointing out that she felt that there were forms of training and personal development exercises that allow this form of intelligence to be enhanced or learned. She felt that there were ways to incorporate this into a curriculum.

Some respondents noted the rich variety of languages spoken by South’s diverse student body. They saw this as an asset, both in restaurant and hotel management (where Spanish is almost the official second language) and in working with international visitors.

17. What sort of support do you think is most important for students in the BAS degree program? [prompts: financial aid, scheduling, child care, EBB, etc.]

Flexibility was emphasized by most participants. Interviewees uniformly were of the opinion that students would work part-time in the industry while in school. Creating a curriculum that could accommodate working adult students was seen as most important. In a related observation, South’s location near most of the hospitality jobs in the state was acknowledged as significant – students could work and go to school at the same time.

Participants also noted that the hospitality industry may be the most student-friendly of any, with work opportunities available 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Most students should be able to accommodate both from the point of view of schedule. More difficult would be the simultaneous stresses of college, career and family.

18. What do you think are the greatest challenges faced by students who may want to undertake a bachelor's degree program in hospitality management at South Seattle Community College? [prompts: overall cost, time to complete the degree, level of preparation, transportation, scheduling]

The most common response dealt with the cost of the program in time and money, including the tuition cost and the opportunity cost in hours not worked. Other points mentioned include "party atmosphere" and "scheduling."

19. Does your company offer tuition reimbursement?

20. If not, would your company revisit tuition reimbursement policy if South offers a bachelor's degree in hospitality management?

Summary for Questions 19 and 20: Three participants reported that their companies currently offer reimbursement programs. Several others would be willing to consider tuition reimbursement or scholarship contributions if an employee enrolled in the hospitality management program.

21. Do you have any questions for us at this point? Is there anything else you would like to add?

A variety of statements came forward in response to the closing query. One respondent suggested that we "focus on [training] people who can run a hotel or resort operation. If you can manage a 250-room hotel you can do anything in hospitality management. Hotel management is a complex operation."

Another respondent stated that, "You are going about this the right way, just like a smart professional would do it if he or she were opening a new business or restaurant. I've taught in other culinary schools, and I have never seen anyone else do a professional market assessment. So many programs are just based on what they want to teach – not what the employers demand."

MOST NOTABLE COMMENTS

"You are going about this the right way. Just like a smart professional would do it if he or she were opening a new business or restaurant. I've taught in other colleges, and I have never seen anyone else do a professional market assessment. So many programs are just based on what they want to teach – not what the employers demand. "

"My organization would like to support the new BAS degree program. This will be a beautiful partnership."

"This is an industry where the complete career ladder is there. You can go from server to floor manager, general manager, and then into larger organizations. Therefore you can progress from a customer-facing staff

person into high level leadership if the education, experience and skills are there.”

“We would consider sponsoring a student or two with a scholarship if the degree program is offered. ”

“We could support students in the BAS program [through scholarships].”

“Yes, [we would support the program] through sponsorships.”

“There is a huge skill set missing – languages. If you work in a kitchen, you need Spanish. In a hotel, a second language is a huge asset. In Seattle, Japanese, Chinese and Spanish are critical... You also need to have an appreciation of cultural issues... The situation is perfect for South Seattle’s students to excel.”

“Managers could earn \$50,000 to \$76,000 per year, and supervisors would receive \$35,000 to \$40,000.”

“People are more sophisticated in their reactions and choices of cuisine. There is a more international perspective. We have to know the emerging trends and be able to spot them early. We have to be aware of change, respond, and be flexible.”

“Our need is for new leaders who understand the soft side of management.”

“High demand areas include front office, housekeeping supervision and accounting.”

“We have had a sales manager position open for months.”

ABBREVIATED TRANSCRIPTS

Introductory comment: *“As you know South Seattle Community College will submit a proposal to the State towards the end of 2005 to pilot a Baccalaureate of Applied Science Degree in Hospitality Management. If selected, South Seattle Community*

College would be one of four community colleges statewide to offer a bachelors degree. We want to shape our proposal and the curriculum to reflect employer needs. We appreciate you taking the time to help us become more familiar with your industry and to gather some important information that we will summarize in the proposal."

1. Name, 2. Company, and 3. Position:

Specific responses deleted to maintain anonymity.

4. Years of Experience Working in Hospitality Industry:

AA — Worked as a general manager for 24 years, in addition to technical college education, 11 years with Westin, and apprenticeships.

BB — Managed a restaurant for three years. Now a leadership consultant and coach. Many corporate clients including hospitality industry. Consulted on a life skills training for baker's helpers.

CC — 18 years at Tillicum, before that seven years as President of the Seattle Convention and Tourism Bureau.

DD — 18 years. Started 1987 as dishwasher, then Culinary Institute of America in NYC. Now an executive chef.

EE — 26 years.

FF — 32 years with United Airlines. 15 years with Argosy. Came to Seattle to work for Holland America. Bought the business (Seattle Harbor Cruises).

GG — 20 years. ITT Sheraton / Starwood. Five years before that began with sales and marketing in a small hotel in Wyoming.

HH — 35 years.

II — In present position for two years. Has kept her eye on regional marketing and looking for ways to support local businesses.

KK — Have been with Sheraton for 11 years, with previous experience. Started working in restaurant at age of 14 and pursued the career after college.

LL — 30 plus years.

Let's talk about your general needs for skilled employees.

5. Tell us a little about your company and areas where you see high demand for skilled workers.

AA — Middle management. Department heads, front office, housekeeping, kitchen, executive chef, HR, marketing, banquet, and controller. Common skill sets are needed: fundamental management skills (how to supervise and motivate).

BB — I'll talk about the hospitality industry in general here. They need employees with high degrees of interpersonal skills. They need to think about the needs of clients, address and then meet the needs, and stay proactive.

DD — Employ 50 culinary staff at Alki. Four kitchens with eight sous chefs. Biggest need is for line chefs. Need to be able to promote people to supervision. Identify leadership ability, ope have to prove themselves. What is their level of commitment? Need to know about costs, markup, cost control, and margins.

EE — High demand areas include front office, housekeeping supervision and accounting.

FF — Need skilled maintenance engineers and a wide variety of other positions, including wait persons, customer service, and deckhands on boat. Some knowledge of marine, people skills and attitude are all necessary.

GG – Starwood is one of the world's largest hotel and leisure companies. We conduct our hotel and leisure business both directly and through our subsidiaries. Our brand names include St. Regis®, The Luxury Collection, Sheraton, Westin, and Four Points by Sheraton. Our hotel business emphasizes the global operation of hotels and resorts primarily in the luxury and upscale segment of the lodging industry. Our hotel portfolio includes owned, leased, managed and franchised hotels totaling 733 hotels with approximately 231,000 rooms in 80 countries, and is comprised of 140 hotels that we own or lease or in which Starwood has a majority equity interest, 283 hotels managed by us on behalf of third – party owners (including entities in which we have a minority equity interest) and 310 hotels for which we receive franchise fees.

Our need is for new leaders who understand the soft side of management. It is harder to find people skilled in this area than the technical (IT, inventory control, culinary, finance, engineering); our company has a new branding "hire for attitude, train for skill."

Respondent is struck by lack of interpersonal skills among front and back of the house personnel. Hospitality business is interdependent system. Managers need to know how to influence staff across the organization. HH — Does meeting and special events planning, conference services, and destination management. He travels with client, does international event planning. Had to learn business by rote. Believes that hospitality management encompasses a huge amount of skills. High demand for skilled workers needed in marketing, website development, graphic design, understanding contracts.

Three people currently in the company — difficult to find qualified employees

II — Chamber would like to build West Seattle as high-end tourist destination. Governor's office supports tourism as a growing industry in which revenues could be much higher for Washington State. Exciting opportunities to build West Seattle as a tourist destination.

JJ — Company does meeting and events management. Has 22 employees. Worked with national and international conventions. Did all non- technical parts of meetings. Was local supplier of all services. Began working with clients five years out to plan events. Largest event was 48,000 people (AA). Company creates proposal, manages logistics and planning. Staffing includes sales, operations, and events (on call). In charge of planning Microsoft Holiday party for many years.

KK — In food and beverage, it is increasingly harder to find culinary workers — restaurant and banquet workers. Have to be patient. We have had a sales manager position open for months. We see a lot of skill deficits, verbal and especially written. Hard to find someone with a strong sense of self. Also lacking: computer skills, ability to prioritize, ability to multitask, and phone skills.

LL — Need for customer relations and technical business operations. In special event business get lots of well-intentioned people who lack the training necessary to do things they would like. Need more information and ability to communicate. Now, for back of house operations, need ability to stay within budget and create a timeline. Example – respondent did a project with a group of animal lovers who wanted to organize tours. Lots of heart but no business ability. So the whole thing folded.

6. In your words, please describe a typical career pathway for someone progressing in your industry.

AA — College attendance, interview at career day. Solid understanding of how a hotel operates, realistic expectations upon entry. Four-year degree is the current expectation for entry-level management; however, many four-year degree students have unrealistic expectations about job placement.

BB — Often the point of entry is serving tables or working back office. This is an industry where the complete career ladder is there. You can go from server to floor manager, general manager, and then into larger organizations. Therefore you can progress from a customer-facing staff person into high level leadership if the education, experience and skills are there.

DD — Culinary school, then three years at three different restaurants. Then focus on an end goal. Is it exec chef, or open B&B or what. So path is two years school, three years as line chef, then sous chef am and pm, then executive sous chef, then executive chef.

EE — Start in the front office work audit and front desk, and must have a personality that fits. Note that the respondent's hotel contracts for all food, bar and catering service. So ours is a limited service hotel. A hotel with all this stuff as well would have additional career tracks.

FF — Our marketing director came from outside the company. Came from Denver University. We also have a VP Sales and six sales managers responsible for \$5 million in revenue. Some started out as customers. Compensation is highly commission driven. All of our vessel division managers worked their way up. Most everyone we have worked their way up. Our employment varies widely, 75 in winter and up to 500 in summer. Most are college kids (seasonal employment). Accounting and bookkeeping require additional skills.

HH — There is no typical career pathway. Respondent was an entertainer, then he managed talent, managed the stage, did theme parties, managed transportation, started doing international events. His career progressed by default.

II — Not applicable. Does see opportunities for internships. Interns should learn customer service skills, categorize visitor information, marketing projects, develop kiosk by the water taxi. Well-educated travelers come to West Seattle to have unique experience.

JJ — From proposal writing to operations to sales was the most typical career pathway.

KK — There are multiple pathways in hotel industry, most of which require entry-level experience before moving on. In catering and sales, a person could start in an administrative support position and move into convention services. In banquets a person could become a captain, then take on increasing responsibilities in coordinating events. Another step would be to the Sheraton one-stop or Star Meeting Concierge). Not at all unusual for staff to progress from lower level positions into higher management, or go across organizational lines (from food and beverage to hotel operations, for instance).

LL — Well, in the hospitality business, you need to learn the ropes on your hands and knees. Restaurant or lodging, it doesn't matter. Restaurant, maybe start waiting tables or washing dishes. Learn to work with people. Then move up, maybe line cook, prep chef, then sous chef. Get education and training. Learn shopping, menus, skills to know how to supervise a kitchen. Same with lodging. Learn to manage people, teach and learn. Manage. Develop a public façade. Presentation skills. Then go from there. Management, accounting, sales, higher management. You have to move up the chain in these businesses, can't come in at the top.

7. Based on your experience with employees who have successfully advanced through your company, please describe what you want to see in new employees in terms of characteristics, skill sets, and educational preparation.

AA — I assume we're talking about someone with four-year degree training plus some four or five years of hotel experience. Generally a four-year degree includes a nine-month apprenticeship. Would expect new hire to go through a rotation throughout the hotel operations and learn all aspects of hotel operations.

BB — I look to see if people are serious about their commitment to professionalism. I used to have people show up for interviews in tank tops. I would send them home to be dressed appropriately. I need to be impressed that people are prepared, taking things seriously.

DD — Demonstrated leadership, professionalism, respect, and care level with the products. Not entitled to advancement based on education. Need to be determined, not in it just for the paycheck, not the party scene, and have a balanced personal life.

EE — "The engagement factor" must be there. They have to have buy-in to corporate goals, and willingness to take action on their own. They must have good listening skills and able to give clear directions. They must have good

writing and grammar skills. They must have critical thinking skill to analyze complex issues, and good thought processes. Concrete thought. Most especially the ability to take action on their own without waiting for direction.

FF — Attitude, attitude, attitude. Vast majority bring in new customers by their customer skills.

HH — Employees who understand contracts, contract law and its implications are needed. Good to have a working knowledge of catering, price points, logistics, industry standards, and contract negotiation. “There are a huge number of skills needed.” Also liability issues, legalese, math because everything in the industry is based on percentages. Should understand something about sound, acoustics, and busing. Students need to gain understanding of the industry.

JJ — “Service oriented, focused, people friendly, detail oriented.” Almost always hired staff with bachelor’s degrees. Personality is key. “Bottom line: How does the person react under pressure?”

KK — Want self-starter, energy, passion, desire to acquire knowledge, enthusiasm, sense of joy. We have employees doing this for the past 20 years, and you have to enjoy working in this industry.

LL — Communication skills and management skills. Need the ability to work with people, even those you may not like. You need customer service and a sense of detail. And then in management activities, you need a sense of longer-term vision. How do we fit into the bigger picture of the hospitality industry? Generalized view of how your business fits in the tourism picture. So you should be participating in things that benefit the larger community.

8. Which skills are most lacking?

AA — Lack of general business savvy. Too many have unrealistic expectations of what a four-year degree should “buy” in terms of what they still need to learn on the job. New hires need a good concept of what leadership is all about. Clear understanding of how business operates — new skill sets.

BB — Self-awareness, hygiene, grooming, interpersonal skills, language – reading, writing and speaking, customer service, and etiquette

DD — Cost control. Understanding this is business, not just party and glamour.

EE — Math/computer skills such as spreadsheets, basic accounting, and cost of goods sold. Need to familiarly with opportunity cost. Critical thinking.

FF — We touch a half million people in our business. Sometimes there can be difficult situations (if someone has had too much to drink, for instance). State-required health and bartending skills. Graduation and prom nights. Need to be sensitive to developing situations.

GG — New Skills: Technical skills are critical but new hires need to know how to multitask using technology. Human Resources as well, must understand worker's comp. Handling hazardous materials is a whole new area, environmental safety related information, health considerations, and high customer expectations.

HH — See above.

II — Excellent social skills, high level communication skills.

JJ — They admitted to being away from the industry for three years. And not having current information. But then said strong computer skills including graphics and Photoshop. Understanding what they had to sell and deliver. Product knowledge. Project management, ability to juggle and multitask.

LL — Sense of the larger picture. A generalized look at how their business fits into the big picture.

9. How is your industry changing? Are there emerging skill sets or areas of knowledge that are becoming essential for employees to possess?

AA — Information technology — understanding of Excel, ability to maximize use of information technology on the job. Accounting principles and software. Understanding of how systems work. Skills should be addressed in internship.

BB — The way these jobs are seen, both by the employer and the employee is changing rapidly. It used to be that these were just transition jobs, but no longer. The expectation is that people are in a career, and that is what is happening. Also there is an overall increase in educational levels across the board.

CC — We used to do outside sales. We would hire salespeople who would have

a car, would travel and do cold-calls. No longer. Now all Internet, email and phone. Quick use of time. Computer skills, ability to write, keep track of details on the fly, follow through, be professional.

The culinary arts have changed. Style of food, lots of competition. People are more sophisticated in their reactions and choices of cuisine. There is a more international perspective. We have to know the emerging trends and be able to spot them early. We have to be aware of change, respond, and be flexible.

Accounting. Rapid change here. Software, trends, cost analysis. Much more powerful tools, let you dig deeper, faster. But also need numerical intuition. What are the numbers telling you? How do you respond from a business perspective? So 85% of a manager's job here is very analytic. The other 15% is the soft skills – the public face you put on it.

Emerging skills sets are in the technology and POS systems realm, including integrated back of house, ability to access everything remotely – orders for food, menus, accounting, payroll, etc.

DD – When the economy is good, used to be hard to hire people. But now more people are seeing the business as a lifelong career. Can still hire even in upswing.

EE – At least 60% of decisions are made over the Internet now. Price Models and merchandising are also changing.

FF – Internet a bit of a challenge. Explosion of business via Internet. Is our business displayed properly?

GG – Baby boomers with disposable income creates much higher customer expectations. There are 59 languages spoken in housekeeping. Very challenging management issues. They teach EBB on site.

HH – Technology. Changing technology demands different set of rules.

II – Segment of tourist customers have highly discretionary income, have very discriminating tastes and are looking for an experience.

JJ – Industry is becoming more demanding. Customers have higher expectations. There is more competition and turn-around time is less. Cost is a greater concern. Industry is employing more contract workers, fewer full-time.

KK — For myself, my food knowledge has helped tremendously in sales and catering. Restaurant experience a big plus. Never associated restaurants with catering. Increasingly turning to prepared workers from accredited schools who know how the operations work.

LL — There is a huge skill set missing – languages. If you work in a kitchen, you need Spanish. In a hotel, a second language is a huge asset. In Seattle, Japanese, Chinese and Spanish are critical. In NYC, maybe French and German. Also, need to have an appreciation of cultural issues. Easy to offend a Japanese visitor. Maybe also middle eastern visitors. The situation is perfect for South Seattle’s students to excel.

Comment: Now let’s take a few minutes to discuss more specifically the Bachelors of Applied Science degree that South is developing. Are you familiar with the proposal underway or would you like us to tell you a bit more about it? OK, let’s talk briefly about the degree.

10. Do you currently employ people with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Hospitality Management?

AA — Yes, we have a director of sales and a controller with a BA in hospitality management. Other staff have various bachelor’s degrees.

BB — No.

CC — No. Respondent has BA in finance. But do have people with culinary arts degrees.

DD — No.

EE — The front office person has a baccalaureate degree in hospitality.

FF — Our general manager with Royal Argosy came from WSU’s program. Not sure of others. We team with Consolidated Restaurants and I’m sure they have some hospitality management degree graduates.

GG — Yes.

HH — No, used to have 22 employed, now down to three. Does a lot of contracting.

JJ — They used to employ people with Bachelor’s degrees, not necessarily with degrees in hospitality management. They employed several interns after they graduated.

KK — Yes (very few).

LL — No, most people at the Port are self-trained in hospitality. Most have master's degrees in something — MBA, communications, marketing, etc.

a. **If so, where did they earn their degree?**

AA — Not sure.

EE — WSU.

GG — Oklahoma State, Denver University, Florida State, Cornell and Michigan State (are both considered a step above) Johnson and Wales.

KK — I know of one from the Western Culinary Institute.

11. What positions in your company would a graduate of SSCC's new BAS degree program qualify for?

AA — Assuming a nine-month internship in program, I would hire them as an assistant department head. That would be ideal. From there (if successful) they could elevate themselves so quickly. Training and academic background would qualify them for many opportunities worldwide. [Much of this discussion focused on someone who has had prior experience, has undertaken the internships successfully, and has proven herself academically and professionally.]

BB — You know, I think there would be one. This degree could clearly be a path to consulting. Also the event planning side.

CC — We would hire people with your diploma. Sales, accounting, and culinary management. Also launching into the special events biz, need a lead.

DD — Supervisor, front or back of house. Needs to be oriented to culinary and hospitality. lead or supervisor. But would not hire as sous chef right away. Sees degree as developing well qualified candidates for entry-level positions, potential to move ahead faster. But have to prove based on experience.

EE — She named about a dozen positions in her 150-room hotel, Book keeper, front desk, office mgr, food & beverage, banquet, catering, bar, housekeeping, sales/marketing, and engineering

FF — Would hire in sales. Assume midlevel employee. Assume previously worked their way up from a deckhand to a boatswain position (supervisory

position, maybe management). *[Note: sales positions are considered senior and are the most highly remunerated at this company].*

GG — Previous experience always taken into consider. BAS degree grad could start in front office management. If they weren't promoted within the year they should consider that the industry is not a good fit. Jobs are really about hospitality and details.

HH — Looks for well-rounded individuals. Background in sales is helpful.

II — General Manager, Director of Operations, Lodging Management, Event Planning / Special Events Planning.

JJ — Any of the positions. Normal route in the door was through internship.

KK — Difficult to answer due to the complexity of our operations. Depends on what you want to do. Most likely an entry-level supervisor or manager with a great deal of exposure to multiple operations (rotating through different departments to gain experience). Expectation that person would start relatively junior but advance quickly.

LL — Lots of positions at the Port where folks with this degree could be qualified to start. International tourism development would be a good area. Bring journalists to the city, take around the state for a week to show the things the state has to offer.

12. Based on your experience, please estimate a starting salary for a new employee with a BAS in Hospitality Management.

AA — Assistant restaurant manager. \$29,000 with benefits. High 20's, low 30's. Department head. \$36,000 within 10 or 18 months.

BB — My knowledge of this would not be current.

CC — Our line staff start at \$8 per hour. We have used a lot of SSCC people from the culinary. Also internships for the running start students. We do want to see a demonstration of ability – we won't pay for the degree per say. But respondent would guess that the positions our grads would qualify for at her firm would pay about \$45k per year.

DD — Line cook \$12 to \$15 per hour; lead cook \$16 –18/hr; Sous Chef \$32,000 to \$55,000 per year, averages \$41,000 or \$42000; Education is important, but more important is professionalism and vision. Not an entitlement. Must be highly motivated.

EE — \$40,000 to \$50,000. This breaks down as follows: \$40,000 at the front desk, \$45,000 in accounting, \$50,000 plus 25% bonus for the directors of sales and marketing.

FF — Managers could earn \$50,000 to \$76,000 per year, and supervisors would receive \$35,000 to \$40,000.

GG — \$25,000 to \$30,000.

HH — Degree or no degree. Annual starting salary: \$24,000 to \$35,000
Doesn't hire "one trick ponies."

JJ — Do not have current information. Employees in sales made over \$100,000 3 years ago. Base salary + commission. All employees were incentivized.

KK — Supervisor: \$25,000 to \$35,000; manager: \$45,000 to \$50,000.

LL — \$40,000 to \$50,000.

13. Based on the positions you identified, how much more would a person with the bachelor's degree make than a comparably skilled person with an associate degree?

AA — Difficult to say. Depends on experience and abilities.

BB — I don't know.

DD — This doesn't really apply. We are going to pay and promote based on skill. So it is important to realize that salary is based on the person and his or her skills. Not on formal credentials. So the value of a degree comes in when it enhances the skills of a smart, highly motivated employee.

EE — People need to prove themselves. We aren't going to pay for the degree itself – the question is, does the person have added job skills?

FF — Hard to say. Depends on experience.

JJ — Salaries based on incentives other than degrees.

KK — We are not increasing our educational requirements. In fact, due to labor shortages we are going the opposite direction because it's harder to find good people.

LL — Well, hard to say. Depends on the defined minimums. At the respondent's workplace because it is operationally based, lots of folks move up because of experience. Can get pretty senior without lots of formal education at a college or university.

14. How much of the degree do you think should involve working directly with industry through internships and other applied learning opportunities and how much should be classroom — based?

AA — I would try to get them into an internship immediately after the first year. Would like to see at least one year of the program in internships (three quarters)

BB — Maybe a 10 to 25% internship component.

CC — Internships are very valuable. These require a minimum of one quarter. But three quarters would be good. Maybe one quarter internship in year one, then two in the senior year.

DD — I think that an equal balance is about right here. But don't forget that a lot of folks in the program will already be working parttime.

EE — About 20% to 30% should be industry-based, and 70% to 80% classroom based. Need to recognize that there are hard skills that must be taught in the classroom. Hotels can't teach accounting.

FF — We hire marketing interns, accounting interns, and customer service reps. I would recommend a %60/40 split or a 70/30 split between classroom and internship.

GG — 60% classroom / 40% internship. The respondent's workplace recruits interns and management trainees every year. The more practical experience someone has, the better.

HH — 50%. There is nothing like hands-on experience in a variety of areas. Respondent would structure internship experiences in: sound and light, entertainment, special events and decorating, food and beverage, graphic arts and acoustics.

II — There are no hotels in West Seattle, only two B&B's. Great opportunity to learn customer service and to develop lodging.

JJ — Internships should go hand in hand with classroom. Practical work experience should be woven throughout program. Look at the Canadian model.

KK — At least three months.

LL — 25% internship.

15. What sort of activities would you like to see the internships accomplish?

AA — Early in the degree program — basic duties (start from the ground up, get entry level or firsthand experience). Later years — more advanced responsibilities. Cooperative internships should be pursued similar to how Ontario delivered programs.

BB — Event planning, back office, profit & loss, profitability, house management, marketing & advertising, database, promotion, front of house.

CC — Front desk or front of house, cashier, wait person, inventory, customer service on the phones, back of house, accounting. Respondent has worked with over 100 interns; they have a good program. Intern should do a final report in a binder – she gave us a copy.

DD — Cost control, leadership, career development, work-life balance and professionalism, human resources

EE — Sales, data entry, sales letters, front desk, housekeeping, all places... Also want to test whether the personality is right. How do you feel when you help someone – is a service – oriented occupation right for you?

FF — People skills and oral/verbal skills.

GG — “Interns don’t do sexy work. They do what’s needed and what other employees don’t want to do.” E.g. direct mailings, data entry.

II — Develop kiosk at the Water Taxi, marketing.

JJ — Learn essence of the job / industry. Hands-on opportunities. How to manage an event, how to book staffing, how to evaluate vendor proposals, update information about company services, Interns should be given a project to manage.

KK — Make interns aware that this is a phenomenal industry that can be very rewarding. Want someone who is well rounded. They would get

experience in every facet of hotel operations. Work would include front end as well as other operations to make sure they are well rounded.

LL — Not folding sheets. Needs to be an internship that prepares people for moving into management. So give projects that are meaningful. Prepare a budget, do research. New menus, plan trips, plan a business expansion. Look at entering a new market. Needs to be a real, tangible project.

16. We will be designing a new curriculum for the BAS degree. What classes / skills / learning outcomes would you recommend that we include?

AA — broad based management skills with an emphasis in separate areas of interest. Need to demonstrate substantive knowledge, skills, and values. Need to demonstrate “horse sense, maze haze, confabulation, elbow grease.

BB — Start with accounting. A lot of the other skills may be more natural to people who self-select for this career. Also inventory management, computers, POS operations, chemistry & food service, interpersonal stuff, marketing, and sales.

CC — Accounting, cost analysis, English, some liberal arts, culinary arts – inventory – buy –what to serve – how to serve, housekeeping, and then the hotel side too. Front of house vs. back of house.

EE — Personality test, naturally want to help people, “how do you feel when you help some one?” Very strong on values.

FF — Sales and marketing; we are driven by this. Customer service skills are especially critical.

GG — Classes should involved simulations and training in real situations: e.g. giving technical presentations, write papers about customer service, practice leading people through a crisis situation, (e.g. WTO). Train students to manage entertainment as well as safety of customers. Students need to have job search skills, i.e. practice doing behavioral interviews. We need to teach students manners, essential for this industry.

Areas to Cover: 1.) Understand concept of service 2.) financial drivers 3.) communication 4.) Technicalities of labor law.

Need great communication skills and to be able to lead effectively.

HH — People skills: how to negotiate, business ethics, salesmanship, general accounting, proposal writing, travel, tourism, exchange rates, and contracting.

II — Restaurant segment. Meeting / Special Events Planning. Lodging Management. Wine Industry is a catalyst.

JJ — Language skills, American business culture, etiquette and business protocol.

KK — Would suggest meeting with HR director to discuss curriculum development and desired outcomes.

LL — 1. Communications. 2. Learning how the community works, 3. See the big picture.

17. What sort of support do you think is most important for students in the BAS degree program? [prompts: financial aid, scheduling, child care, ESL, etc.]

AA — Not sure.

BB — The internship should have dollars attached. Enable part time students if can create continuity. There should be a career management component as part of the core curriculum. Also assistance with the transition to employment.

CC — Look at ESL and language training. Other languages are very valuable – customers speak Japanese, German French. Internships. Plenty of orientation to hotels. Scholarships and financial aid – get the employers to help.

DD — Flexibility of classes. Allow people to work while in school. Biggest selling point. Realize that a lot of students may want to make this a three- or four-year program rather than a two-year.

EE — The ability to offer online classes, counseling on how the industry works, to see if the person will fit.

FF — We have employees in winter time who make a conscious effort to go back to school. Curriculum should be heavy in the off-season; fall, winter.

HH — Most event planning jobs are nine to five until execution which may last one week or 10 days. This is a very intense period, employees may get little sleep.

JJ — Not sure.

KK — Language skills development, child care, financial aid, appropriate scheduling (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday offer best scheduling).

LL — Maybe childcare. Or support during the internship. Interns should be paid. Maybe we could also look to the Chamber and Tourism bureau for scholarship money.

18. What do you think are the greatest challenges faced by students who may want to undertake a bachelor's degree program in hospitality management at South Seattle Community College? *[Prompts: overall cost, time to complete the degree, level of preparation, transportation, scheduling]*

AA — Not sure. The profiles of people will be different.

BB — Some parts of the industry can have a party atmosphere, especially in the off-hours. If the students are in school while working, this can be very exhausting. Tough to have work/life balance. So there needs to be understanding management for these folks. Allow time off.

CC — Location, you have this covered. Tuition, possible need to work part time.

DD — Scheduling.

EE — Financing, offer online classes.

FF — Our folks work a lot of hours in summer. They can use the money for school in the off-season.

HH — Native language can work for or against employee. Sometimes other languages helpful for work. English is international language for contracts.

II — My organization would like to support the new BAS degree program. This will be a beautiful partnership.

JJ — Not sure.

KK — Time and cost. How long until I burn out trying to educate myself and work (often multiple jobs)?

LL — Well, in the hospitality industry, work can be very flexible. So as long as you give the student some predictability, they can find times to work outside of class. Not a big deal. Learning to dress, having the right types of clothes might be a barrier. So maybe help with this.

19. Does your company offer tuition reimbursement?

AA — In some of the larger hotels we do. We also provide some sponsorships to attend Carlson School of Management at University of Minnesota.

BB — This does not apply.

CC — No.

DD — No, but considering for future.

EE — No.

FF — Not at present. We would consider sponsoring a student or two with a scholarship if the degree program is offered.

GG — Yes, but not many people take advantage of it.

JJ — Paid for certification for meeting planning and some individual courses.

KK — Yes.

LL — Yes, respondent's organization does this. Often even will pay the educational institution directly.

20. If not, would your company revisit tuition reimbursement policy if South offers a bachelor's degree in hospitality management?

AA — We can pay for courses at our hotel. We could support students in the BAS program.

BB — Does not apply.

CC — Yes, might reconsider for this program.

FF — Yes, through sponsorships.

JJ — Yes if they could guarantee that employee would commit to staying with the company.

21. Do you have any questions for us at this point? Is there anything else you would like to add?

AA — Focus on people who can run a hotel or resort operation. If you can manage a 250-room hotel you can do anything in hospitality management. Hotel management is a complex operation.

BB — There should be ways that employers could subsidize students' tuition.

DD — You are going about this the right way. Just like a smart professional would do it if he or she were opening a new business or restaurant. I've taught in other colleges, and I have never seen anyone else do a professional market assessment. So many programs are just based on what they want to teach – not what the employers demand.

EE — Makes sure it has Food and Beverage and talk with the Hotel Association.

GG — Get endorsement and support from Seattle Hotel Association.

HH — This is a very tough business. Employees must be very detail oriented. Meeting planning is relatively new. So far no educational institute provides good preparation."

II — West Seattle was featured in *Costal Living* 6/05, *Sunset* 9/03, *Seattle Travel West* 9/04, recent section in *CRAVE SEATTLE*. Governor's Summit on Tourism concerned with economic development. Other industries to consider: Retirement home food operations and recreation planning for seniors in places such as Merrill Gardens (West Seattle).