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# How to Increase Response Rates When Surveying Hospitality Managers for Curriculum-Related Research: Lessons from Past Studies and Interviews with Lodging Professionals

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# How to Increase Response Rates When Surveying Hospitality Managers for Curriculum-Related Research: Lessons from Past Studies and Interviews with Lodging Professionals

## **Abstract**

Continuous industry input is needed to keep hospitality management curricula current, relevant, and applicable. However, barriers including low response rates are reported when surveying hospitality professionals about competencies and skills essential for success. In response, this study sought to identify successful strategies used by researchers when surveying hospitality managers through mail surveys. Interviews conducted with lodging managers indicated potential strategies for increasing response rates when using online surveys. These strategies are currently absent in the literature. Interview results are presented.

## **Keywords**

curriculum, competencies, mail surveys

## **Disciplines**

Curriculum and Instruction | Hospitality Administration and Management

## **Comments**

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## **How to increase response rates when surveying hospitality managers for curriculum-related research: Lessons from past studies and interviews with lodging professionals**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Continuous industry input is needed to keep hospitality management curricula current, relevant, and applicable. However, barriers including low response rates are reported when surveying hospitality professionals about competencies and skills essential for success. In response, this study sought to identify successful strategies used by researchers when surveying hospitality managers through mail surveys. Interviews conducted with lodging managers indicated potential strategies for increasing response rates when using online surveys. These strategies are currently absent in the literature. Interview results are presented.

## INTRODUCTION

To keep curriculum current in order to meet industry needs it is crucial for hospitality educators to maintain a continuous dialog with industry professionals (Kay & Russette, 2000; Lin, 2002). A well-designed and utilized set of hospitality competencies will benefit hospitality employees, employers, and educators (Tsai, Goh, Huffman, & Wu, 2007). Despite best efforts, hospitality curriculum has been criticized for inclusion of irrelevant courses of study and hospitality educators' reluctance to contact industry professionals. Lennon (1989) discussed several difficulties encountered while attempting to determine industry needs including lack of agreement on the part of the industry and ambiguous definition of what the hospitality industry constitutes. However, the author (Lennon, 1989) did not identify low response rates when seeking industry input as a potential obstacle.

More recently, several studies (Cho, Erdem, & Johanson, 2006; Chung-Herrera, Enz, & Lankau, 2003; Dopson, 2004; Gursoy & Swanger, 2005; Hsu, 1995; Moncarz & Kay, 2005; Nelson & Dopson, 2001; Woods, Rutherford, Schmidgall, & Sciarini, 1998) have reported low response rates when surveying hospitality managers to determine knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies expected of hospitality graduates. However, other researchers (Baum, 1991; Brownell, 1992, 1994, 2004; Chung, 2000; Connolly & McGing, 2006; Hsu & Gregory, 1995; Kay & Russette, 2000; Kriegl, 2000; Ladkin, 2000; Peters & Buhalis, 2004) were successful in obtaining a higher response rate (more than 40%) when surveying hospitality managers.

Data were collected through mail surveys in all the above mentioned studies. A literature review revealed no research studies where data were collected from hospitality managers through Internet-based surveys. Several benefits and pitfalls have been associated with using Internet-

based surveys. Decreased costs and improved turn around time are benefits of Internet-based surveys (Shannon & Bradshaw, 2002). Litvin and Kar (2001) pointed out problems of sample bias and logistical problems while Cole (2005) found lower response rates with web surveys as compared to mail surveys. More research needs to be done on the use of e-surveying “to speed the day” when tourism researchers will be able to use this data collection method with confidence (Litvin & Kar, 2001, p. 313).

### **STUDY PURPOSE**

Barriers including low response rates are reported when surveying hospitality professionals about competencies and skills essential for success. Researchers have expressed the need to solicit industry input while establishing hospitality curriculum (Ashley et al., 1995; Lefever & Withiam, 1998). In response, the first objective of this study was to investigate data collection methods employed when surveying hospitality managers through mail, regarding skills and competencies essential for graduates’ success.

Although a literature search did not indicate e-surveying as a data collection method for surveying upper-level managers, it is only a matter of time before such surveying methods become commonplace. Web surveys were posited to replace traditional surveying methods (Couper, 2000); however this has not yet occurred. Potential benefits including low cost, potentially higher response rates, and easy access to lodging managers’ email addresses through professional associations such as the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA) could make e-surveying a preferred data collection method. Roy and Berger (2005) stated that more research needs to be done on how to improve e-survey administration as a stand-alone method and how to integrate e-surveying with traditional survey methods. Therefore, the second

objective of this study was to identify data collection strategies that will help increase response rates when surveying lodging managers.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### Types of online surveys

Dommeyer and Moriarty (1999/2000) differentiated among four kinds of online surveys. The simplest method is when the questions are embedded in an email and sent to potential respondents. A second method involves attaching the survey to the email and sending it to potential respondents. The third strategy is to email an attachment that contains a survey program. The program is executed when the participant opens the attachment. The fourth type of online survey is a web-based survey where participants are instructed to click on a web address.

Cobanoglu and Cobanoglu (2003) distinguished further among three methods of designing web-based surveys. The first method was developing a web-survey using web-publishing software. The second approach involved using web-based survey design software. The final method involved the use of various web-based survey development companies.

### Pros and cons of email and web surveys

Email surveys have several advantages including speed, economy, convenience and simplicity (Sue & Ritter, 2007). Creating email surveys do not require the use of a web survey host or the technical expertise of a web developer as the survey is typically prepared using word-processing programs. The email can be sent almost instantaneously to hundreds or even thousands of respondents. Embedded email surveys are more convenient as opposed to a survey sent as an attachment because respondents don't have to complete the additional steps of filling out the survey and reattaching and replying to the sender.

Email surveys can end up in recipients' inboxes as "spam" email. Graphic elements have to be included with caution in email surveys because the file sizes may be too large and may be blocked by email servers (Sue & Ritter, 2007). Anonymity could become an issue with email surveys because the researcher will have the email address of the respondent and can link responses to the respondent (Sue & Ritter, 2007)

Web surveys have several advantages including economy, added content options, and ability to ask sensitive questions because anonymity is preserved (Sue & Ritter, 2007). Apart from initial setup costs such as web hosting and survey development costs, web surveys don't vary based on sample sizes. Most web surveys are also linked to databases; this eliminates the need for data entry, further reducing costs. Various web development software packages enable inclusion of images, audio, and video files, thus not placing restrictions on creativity.

Anonymity can be preserved in web surveys if responses are not associated with email addresses (Sue & Ritter, 2007).

Web surfers typically belong to a higher socioeconomic status and hence their profiles are not indicative of those of the general population (Sue & Ritter, 2007). Therefore, results may not be generalizable depending on the survey sample. There is a higher likelihood of respondents quitting the survey instrument half-way through the process. As a result, keeping the questionnaire as short as possible is vital. Offering incentives may help prevent survey abandonment (Sue & Ritter, 2007). If using a software survey package, a web developer may be needed. This additional assistance, along with software cost, may make development of web surveys cost prohibitive.

#### Comparison of various survey research methods

Comparing speed of responses, response rates, and cost of data collection for various

methods employed in survey research has been a topic of interest for those in market research. Conflicting results have been obtained while making such comparisons.

Dommeyer and Moriarty (1999/2000) compared embedded email surveys to attached email surveys and found that the embedded email survey yielded a significantly higher response rate (37% compared to 8%). Mehta and Sivadas (1995) compared response rates for mail versus email surveys while surveying Internet users. The researchers concluded that response rate was highest (80%) for the group that received mail surveys along with a pre- and post-notification and a \$1 monetary incentive. International and domestic email surveys with pre-notification generated the next highest response rates (65%). Email surveys were however, significantly faster and less expensive (Mehta & Sivadas, 1995).

Roy and Berger (2005) compared worldwide association executives' response rates on email to mail surveys. Response rates were much higher for mail compared to email surveys. Lottery incentives did not increase response rates for email surveys (Roy & Berger, 2005). Personalized emails generated a marginally significant increase in response rates compared to non-personalized emails. Length of the questionnaire could be a factor contributing to the low response rate from email surveys (Roy & Berger, 2005). Deutskens, Ruyter, Wetzels, and Oosterveld (2004) found that the shorter the questionnaire, the higher the response rate. Jobber and Saunders (1993) noted potential respondents in business-oriented studies were more sensitive to survey length than those in consumer studies. Sheehan (2001) however, concluded that there was no correlation between email questionnaire length and response rate.

Schaefer and Dillman (1998) identified through a review of past studies that email surveys with a single contact had a response rate of 28.5%. This increased to 41% with two contacts and 57% with three or more contacts. The authors used a mixed-mode approach where

Washington State University permanent faculty members were assigned to one of four groups: (a) all paper, (b) all email, (c) paper pre-notice, and (d) paper reminder. Response rate (58%) was highest for the “all email” group. Response quality as measured by total number of questions answered was also highest for the “all email” group. Dillman (2007) advocated using a mixed-mode survey method because a single-mode such as the World Wide Web may eliminate some from being selected for the sample.

Schaefer and Dillman (1998) along with Tse (1998) noted that validity and reliability of data collected through email was as strong as those collected through any other modes. Issue salience, defined as the timeliness and/or importance of survey topic to respondents, has been reported to have more influence on response rate than respondent contact and monetary incentives in mail surveys (Heberlein & Baumgartner, 1978)

Smee and Brennan (2000) made comparisons among mail questionnaire, email questionnaire, single, continuous page, web-based questionnaire, multiple page web-based questionnaire (with adaptive branching but no data verification), and multiple page web-based questionnaire (with adaptive branching and data verification). Results revealed that the single, continuous page, web-based questionnaire generated the highest response rate at 61% followed by mail questionnaire at 50%. Response time was shortest and data quality was highest for the single, continuous page, web-based questionnaire.

#### Research comparing various survey methods in hospitality

Research comparing pros and cons of various surveying methods are sparse in hospitality literature. Surveys targeting hospitality professionals tend to yield lower response rates because of highly dynamic operational procedures and management and potentially sensitive nature of questions (Keegan & Lucas, 2005). When surveying small hospitality firms, the authors

(Keegan & Lucas, 2005) found that direct personal contact with respondents during follow-ups more than doubled the response rate.

Litvin and Kar (2001) compared data obtained in Singapore through the mall-intercept method and e-surveys to analyze differences between the two samples from a tourism perspective. Results revealed that the e-sample was highly educated, had higher incomes, were more likely to be single, and took 50% more vacation trips when compared to the mall-intercept sample. The response rate for the e-surveys was 19%. Cobanoglu, Warde, and Moreo (2001) surveyed 300 hospitality professors randomly selected from the Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (CHRIE) online member directory to compare mail, fax, and web-based surveys in a university setting. Given that majority of this population is technologically savvy, the authors recommended the use of web-based surveys when surveying educators in the U.S. (Cobanoglu et al., 2001). Other benefits include automatic data coding, quicker responses, higher response rate, and lower costs compared to mail surveys (Sills & Song, 2002).

#### Incentives used in survey research

Prepayment of incentives has been shown to increase response rates in survey research. Larger incentives also increase response rates when they are prepaid (Church, 1993). Shank, Darr, and Werner (1990) concluded in a foodservice setting that respondents perceived non-cash incentives to be 2 to 3 times the actual cost. When a mini calculator and 50 cents were given to every respondent, the response rate increased dramatically. When comparing the effectiveness of immediate vs. delayed cash incentives, Shank et al. (1990) found that an immediate cash incentive yielded better results than a delayed cash incentive.

Minimal research has been done on the effectiveness of incentives on response rate, speed of responses, and cost of surveying in Internet-based surveys (Cobanoglu & Cobanoglu,

2003). In a web-based survey involving manager members of the American Management Association, the authors assigned participants randomly to a control group, the luggage tag group (luggage tags were given to all respondents), the prize draw for a personal digital assistant (PDA) group, or the luggage tag and PDA group. Cobanoglu and Cobanoglu (2003) found that offering luggage tags to all respondents and including them in a drawing for a bigger prize yielded the highest response rate. This also was the most expensive. No significant differences with respect to speed of responses were found.

## **METHODOLOGY**

To accomplish the first objective of the study, investigating data collection methods employed when surveying hospitality managers through mail, a literature search was performed to identify past research where individuals who held management/executive positions in the hospitality industry were surveyed. Overall, the objectives of these studies were to determine skills and competencies needed to succeed in the hospitality industry. Results of the literature review are available in Table 1. Research purpose, data collection methods, response time and rates (when available), survey content, and incentives used (if any) also are presented in the table.

To accomplish the second objective of this study, identifying data collection strategies that will help increase response rates when e-surveying lodging managers, interviews were conducted with four industry professionals. One of the researchers, who had previous interviewing experience, conducted the interviews.

Interviews lasted approximately an hour. Three hotel general managers (GMs) and the executive director of Ohio's chapter of a major professional association representing the lodging industry were interviewed. A purposeful sampling approach was used to identify the three hotel

GMs. One GM represented a large independent hotel and conference center, the second represented a national mid-priced hotel chain, and the third represented a national upscale hotel chain. The executive director of the professional association was interviewed because the association surveyed lodging managers periodically. As a result, the director had insights into the response behavior of higher-level lodging managers and executives. This more qualitative approach to data collection was taken to increase the depth and breadth of the information generated. Interview topics included:

1. Time of year to send out online surveys to hotel GMs in the state of Ohio so as to generate a reasonably high response rate.
2. Incentives that can be offered to hotel GMs to encourage them to respond to online surveys.
3. Other strategies that can be adopted to increase response rates such as specific data collection methods and time period given to complete surveys.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### Increasing response rates for mail surveys

The following strategies were used in research that yielded high response rates when the population being surveyed was hospitality managers and executives. Each strategy is based on study outcomes and presented in Table 1.

1. Making initial contact with key corporate representatives, human resources (HR) managers, or participants themselves to personalize surveys.
  - When working with several properties within specific chains, a corporate representative can be contacted from each chain to obtain the names of individual managers that the

surveys would be mailed out to. The cover letters accompanying the surveys can be personalized due to a contact with the corporate representative (Brownell, 2004).

- When working with multiple properties (chain and independent), the HR manager of every property may be contacted to obtain names of key managers for mailings. This helps personalize the letters (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005). Gursoy and Swanger (2005) were however, only able to generate a response rate of 14% despite personalization.
2. Surveying hospitality professionals outside the U.S. generates a higher response rate than sending out mail surveys within the U.S. (Buhalis, 2004; Connolly & McGing, 2006; Ladkin, 2000; Wilson, Murray, & Black, 2000) not counting a few exceptions (Burgess, 1994).
  3. Obtaining the support of the local organizations representing the hospitality industry (such as the Palm Beach County Hotel and Motel Association in Kay and Russette (2000)) to recruit participants yields better results than contacting national organizations such as Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) and AH&LA.
  4. Using a snowball technique increases the number of participants when recruiting for personal interviews. Several studies investigating skills and competencies necessary for the hospitality industry have adopted this approach (see Table 1).
  5. Making the questionnaire attractive in appearance and style, including a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and assuring confidentiality, making reminder phone calls to non-respondents, and including a self-addressed stamped envelope with a “return by” date are common strategies used.

#### Increasing response rates for Internet-based surveys

During interviews, respondents were asked to identify strategies that would help increase response rates of online surveys. The following listing is a summary of their responses.

1. Contacting members of the sample using a recognizable source via email.
  - Interviewees stated unanimously that they would not respond if the email came from an individual researcher within a university. The email may even get stuck in the spam or junk mail filter. Contacting lodging managers via email through professional associations such as the state chapter of AH&LA was suggested as a viable alternative. Through this alternative, contact would be made with lodging managers through a recognizable source.
  - If an active state chapter of the national professional association is not available, respondents suggested that the email should come from an “obviously recognizable” source. For instance, the name of the educational institution that the researcher is associated with should be the sender’s email address as opposed to an individual researcher’s email address.
2. Questioning respondents regarding incentives that would help increase response rates for Internet-based surveys generated several responses as discussed below. However, the respondents agreed that incentives should not be in the same industry as those of the members in the sample. For instance, complementary room nights at a hotel in a tourist town or city would not be an appropriate incentive when the surveying lodging managers.
  - Tickets to sporting events of local teams such as the Cleveland Cavaliers, Cleveland Browns, Cincinnati Bengals, Cleveland Indians etc. through random drawings was suggested as an incentive to fill out the survey by one of the managers. However, this would be a feasible option only if the sample was from a limited geographic region as opposed to a national sample.

- One manager suggested providing gift cards through random drawings for electronics purchases to stores such as Best Buy™ and Circuit City™ as a possible incentive. This manager also suggested providing a token gift for the first specified number of respondents based on the number of responses that the researcher desired. For instance, if the researcher desired 110 responses, then sending a gift certificate to a popular restaurant for the first 110 respondents would be a good incentive. This is consistent with the findings of Cobanoglu and Cobanoglu (2003).
  - One of the respondents suggested providing a Visa® or a Mastercard® gift card. The reasoning that the respondent provided for this incentive was that members of the sample would be able to decide what they wanted to spend their money on, ranging from groceries to electronics. A generic gift card not tied to any particular store would not limit choices of respondents.
3. Including a cover letter explaining that the research was for educational purposes and that a summary of findings would be shared was suggested as a strategy to increase response rates of e-surveys. Respondents also indicated that the question “what’s in it for us?” should be addressed in the cover letter. Given that time is precious for hospitality managers, they would like to know the potential benefits to them before filling out the survey.
  4. Providing a response time of two weeks to complete the survey was considered sufficient by all respondents. Middle of October through early November was agreed upon as the best time to survey respondents in fall. In spring, February through March was identified as the best time to email the survey to generate a higher response rate. When discussing length of online surveys, respondents stated that they would prefer four pages of questions or shorter whether it be paper or online surveys.

## **LIMITATIONS**

Due to the small number of interviewees, their responses should be interpreted with caution. Because all respondents came from a limited geographic region, caution must also be used when generalizing responses. For instance, all four interviewees agreed that the months of October and November would generate a higher response rate in fall. However, October may not be the best for lodging managers located in other geographic regions such as the Northeastern US, where leisure travel could peak during these times with visitors wanting to see the fall foliage.

While extensive search mechanisms were employed for the literature review, the articles listed in Table 1 may not be an exhaustive listing. Other articles may be in print.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH**

Including cash and non-cash incentives has been shown to increase response rates (Cobanoglu et al., 2001). However, review of Table 1 shows that the only research study that offered incentives was Nelson and Dopson (2001). The response rate generated in this study was 13%. More research is needed with respect to whether or not to offer incentives, and types of incentives that will be effective in generating high response rates.

The impact of this work not only relates to receiving industry input into curriculum issues but also a host of other issues for which industry input is vital. The reputation of researchers, their relationships with professional industry organizations, researcher titles, and their areas of research expertise could also influence response rates when surveying industry representatives. These could be topics that deserve further investigation on a larger scale.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

To assure up-to-date curriculum and appropriate skill and competency development in hospitality management students, educators often look to industry professionals. Researchers and educators often seek industry feedback through questionnaires and then use this information to update curriculum. A noted obstacle to obtaining this information is low response rates, particularly when surveying lodging professional. While web-based surveying is gaining popularity due to decreased associated costs and turn around time (Shannon & Bradshaw, 2002), it is not yet well documented in the lodging literature. In addition, it is important to recognize mail and web-based surveys may serve different purposes and use in research is based on many variables including sample, research purposes, and research budget.

In this study, the review of literature distinguished features of survey results with high and low response rates. Personalization, affiliation name, endorsement letter, and prior commitment were features among higher response rate surveys. In addition, obtaining the respondent names from someone inside the organization surveyed was a distinguishing feature. Several common themes for improving response rates with mail and Internet-based surveys were identified through interviews. The incentives and obtaining the support of a local hospitality organization appear important for both types. Some unique aspects to Internet-based surveys were found including time of year to survey (mid October to early November and again February through March), incentive type, and the importance of noting that the study is for educational purposes.

While this study provides only preliminary data, it is a first step in studying and improving response rates with Internet-based surveys. Further research on the topic is needed with larger nationwide samples.

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**Table 1. Research investigating hospitality skills and competencies identified as essential by hospitality managers**

Author, Year	Research purpose	Data collection method and sample	Response rate
Tsai, F.C., Goh, B.K., Huffman, L, & Wu, C.K. (2007)	Determined competencies for entry-level lodging management trainees based on input from industry professionals and hospitality educators in Taiwan.	An initial subset of lodging management personnel was obtained from tourist hotels listed by the Taiwan Tourism Bureau. Names of lodging managers were obtained after the hotels' HR managers were contacted via telephone. Links to web surveys were sent to lodging managers and reminder emails were sent seven days after initial contact. Snowball sampling approach was used to recruit more respondents.	Unable to determine because there was no pre-determined sample size.
Cho, S., Erdem, E., & Johanson, M.M. (2006)	Determined how hospitality graduate education is perceived by graduate students, educators, and employers.	Names of 159 lodging HR managers/directors and contact information of 97 restaurants were obtained from the electronic directory published by the AH&LA and Compact Disclosure, respectively. Mailed questionnaires were personalized for lodging HR managers/directors. Ten days after initial mailing, a thank you card was sent with a reminder note. Ten days after that, another reminder was sent, along with another survey and self-addressed envelope.	13%
Connolly, P., & McGing, G. (2006).	Explored how tertiary education has met the needs of three-, four- and five-star hotels in Dublin, Ireland. Identified factors which the hospitality industry considers important when recruiting managers.	Sample included the manager in-charge of recruiting managers/supervisors at member properties of the Irish Hotel Federation with $\geq$ 50 rooms. Respondents returned the questionnaires in a prepaid stamped envelope by a "return by" date. Non-respondents were called and some provided responses over telephone.	56%

<b>Author, Year</b>	<b>Research purpose</b>	<b>Data collection method and sample</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
Haven-Tang, C. & Jones, C. (2006).	Assessed skill needs of Wales hospitality and tourism sector and identified skill gaps.	Interviews were conducted with 86 senior professionals and industry representatives from the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism sectors in Wales.	Not applicable
Jauhari, V. (2006).	Examined competency needs and current hospitality management education in India.	Structured interviews were conducted with 15 industry professionals including senior managers and heads of professional associations and academics in India.	Not applicable
Velo, V., & Mittaz, C. (2006).	Examined barriers when expanding internationally. Suggested skills graduates needed for internationalization of hotels.	Case study methodology was used to compare international hotel expansion problems of three hotel chains to those of a "base case." Interviews were used.	Not applicable
Gursoy, D., & Swanger, N. (2005).	Examined perceptions of industry professionals regarding course content items important for succeeding in the hospitality industry.	Questionnaires were mailed along with a personalized cover letter individually signed in blue ink to 2,339 hospitality industry professionals selected from a database. A second questionnaire and reminder postcard was mailed to non-respondents one month after the postcard.	14%
Mayo, C.R., & Thomas-Haysbert, C. (2005).	Identified essential competencies needed by hospitality and tourism management graduates.	Questionnaires were mailed to every third person from a list of industry professionals and educators (175) attendees at the 2001 CHRIE conference. A cover letter and self-addressed stamped return envelope were included.	34%

<b>Author, Year</b>	<b>Research purpose</b>	<b>Data collection method and sample</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
Moncarz, E., & Kay, C. (2005).	Gained insight into the relationship between lodging professionals' formal education and lodging management success.	Sample was 525 executives selected from a national database. Survey packets containing three questionnaires (one for GM, the two remaining to a high- and low-performing manager respectively) were mailed.	11%
Raybould, M., & Wilkins, H. (2005).	Investigated hospitality managers' expectations of hospitality management program graduates' skills and compared expectations to students' perceptions of what managers' value.	Sample included 850 GMs, operating managers, and HR managers representing 196 four- and five-star hotels in Australia. Surveys were personalized after calling the HR department of every property to obtain names of key managers. One week after the surveys were mailed, reminder phone calls were made.	44%
Brownell, J. (2004).	Identified skills and personal characteristics perceived as most important to career development. Future requirements were developed.	A corporate representative was contacted for a list of GMs addresses. Surveys were then mailed out. Sample included 187 GMs representing 7 luxury and upscale U.S. hotels.	59%
Dopson, L. (2004).	Determined e-commerce skills hospitality managers expect. Determined dimensions of e-commerce competencies for hospitality curricula.	A random sample of 750 hotel executives and managers from the American membership of national lodging industry database. Questionnaires were mailed and a reminder post card was mailed two weeks later.	11%
Peters, M., & Buhalis, D. (2004).	Investigated management areas such as planning, strategic development and behavior to determine skill and competency gaps.	A random sample of 240 family businesses was taken from a list of hotels and restaurants at two Austrian tourism destinations. The questionnaires were personally distributed to properties and collected after several days.	65%

<b>Author, Year</b>	<b>Research purpose</b>	<b>Data collection method and sample</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
Yeung, S. (2004)	Determine importance of various ethical issues in the hospitality sector from an industry perspective.	Ten questionnaires were sent to the HR managers/directors of 78 hotel companies in Hong Kong. HR managers distributed surveys to staff. Reminder letters were sent and follow-up phone calls were made to non-responding hotels.	39%
Chung-Herrera, B.G., Enz, C.A., & LanKau, M.J. (2003).	Created a hospitality-competency model for the lodging industry.	Sample included 735 senior-level lodging executives worldwide. Surveys were faxed and 137 industry leaders responded by fax or online.	19%
D'Annunzio-Green, N. (2002).	Explored challenges that arise from cross-cultural differences between eastern and western expectations. Identified skills and competencies needed to adapt successfully in varying organizational cultures.	The researcher contacted 25 expatriates via phone, email, or letter to seek their participation in the study. Fourteen agreed to participate. The author used a snowball technique to recruit three additional expatriate managers. In-depth interviews were conducted with 17 expatriate managers working as transitional managers in multinational hotels in Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia. Interviews lasted between 1.5 and 3 hours.	Not applicable
Perdue, J., Ninemeier, J.D., & Woods, R.H. (2002).	Assessed private club managers' perceives of alternate training.	A random sample of 442 members from the CMAA membership list. Surveys were mailed.	28%

<b>Author, Year</b>	<b>Research purpose</b>	<b>Data collection method and sample</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
Nelson, A., & Dopson, L. (2001).	Determine the skills and abilities hospitality graduates need as hotel management trainees.	A questionnaire was mailed to 302 hotel executives, 94 human resource specialists, and 250 alumni. A follow-up post card was sent two weeks later. By completing the questionnaire the respondents were entered into a drawing for a \$250 cash award or one of two weekend getaways.	13%
Chung, K.Y. (2000).	Examined the relationships between offerings of hotel management courses, competencies of hotel employees, and career success.	Approximately 800 questionnaires were distributed to alumni of hospitality management programs, of which 422 were deemed usable.	53%
Kay, C., & Russette, J. (2000).	Identified essential competencies for hospitality professionals and determined the extent to which they are used.	Sixty managers representing 19 properties comprised the sample. An endorsement letter from a hotel and motel association was mailed to GMs. Fifty-two interviews were conducted and 56 surveys were collected over a six-month period.	93%
Kriegel, U. (2000).	Identified skills international managers needed, which training activities fostered development of these skills, and what experiences international managers had with training skills.	Surveys were mailed to 100 hospitality managers, found in the alumni database of Cornell University, outside of the United States.	51%

<b>Author, Year</b>	<b>Research purpose</b>	<b>Data collection method and sample</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
Ladkin, A. (2000).	Examined role of education and food and beverage experience for career development.	A random sample of 800 hotels with $\geq 20$ rooms was taken from a U.K. hotel guide. Managers of the hotels in the sample were mailed questionnaires.	45%
Perdue, J., Ninemeier, J., & Woods, R. (2000).	Assessed the competencies required for club managers and provide information to educators on what is needed in teaching club management.	A survey package, a disc with the survey installed and two pages of instructions, were sent to 446 Club Managers Association of America members. Of these, there were 114 usable responses.	26%
Wilson, M.D.J., Murray, A.E., & Black, M.A. (2000).	Determined essential competencies required by catering managers. Ascertained differences between duties and importance.	Sample included 136 catering managers working for a contract catering company in Northern Ireland. Questionnaires were mailed to managers.	41%
Woods, R.H., Rutherford, D.G., Schmidgall, R., & Sciarini, M. (1998).	Provide updated information on general managers and identify areas needed by the general managers.	There were 460 mail surveys sent to general managers of hotels with 500 or more rooms. Names were selected randomly from AH&MA member database.	17%
Su, A., Miller, J., & Shanklin, C. (1997/1998).	Determined importance of accreditation standards for a curriculum in the work experience section of a Hospitality Administration degree.	Questionnaires were mailed to industry professionals who were also CHRIE members. A cover letter and support letter from the CHRIE president was included with each questionnaire. After one week a reminder postcard was sent and three weeks later a reminder letter and a replacement questionnaire was sent to nonrespondents.	50%

<b>Author, Year</b>	<b>Research purpose</b>	<b>Data collection method and sample</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
Breiter, D., & Clements, C. (1996).	Identified skills essential for U.S. hotel and restaurant managers' success.	One state was selected from each of nine regions. A list of hospitality businesses in those states was obtained. A random sample of 50 hotels and restaurants each was selected. Questionnaires were mailed, a reminder postcard sent after a week and another at two weeks.	33%
Tas, R.F., LaBrecque, S.V., & Clayton, H.R. (1996).	Identified competencies needed for management trainees.	Questionnaires were mailed to 305 hotels, initially 81 responses were received. A second questionnaire was resent to 20% of the remaining hotels, of which 26 more questionnaires were returned for a total of 107 usable questionnaires.	35%
Hsu, C. (1995).	Studied the perceptions of hotel operators with respect to the importance of computer competencies and preparedness of graduates.	A questionnaire with cover letter were sent to the 710 hotel operators listed in the 1992 Directory of Hotel and Motel Companies. The cover letter was addressed to the Director of HR or CEO. Accounting for returned questionnaires due to incorrect addresses (62 questionnaires), a total of 665 questionnaires were delivered. After the deadline, another questionnaire and cover letter were sent to nonrespondents.	18%
Hsu, J., & Gregory, S.R. (1995)	Identified the competencies needed for hotel managers from a managers standpoint.	Questionnaires were distributed to managers of 38 Taipei hotels. A pre- and post-telephone call was made regarding the questionnaires to increase response rate.	79%
Brownell, J. (1994)	Identified the perceived communication skills and job-related activities needed for advancement. Also identified gender differences.	A list of general managers was compiled through communications with the vice president of human resources management of 20 hospitality companies. From this list, surveys were mailed to 124 female general managers, of these 97 responded. There were two follow-up mailings to remind the participants.	78%

<b>Author, Year</b>	<b>Research purpose</b>	<b>Data collection method and sample</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
Burgess, C. (1994).	Identified hotel financial controller's education and training needs to keep up with changes anticipated in the future for the hospitality industry.	Questionnaires were mailed to 487 members of the British Association of Hotel Accountants (BAHA). Following this, 20 controllers and other administrative personnel were interviewed. Questionnaires were mailed in November and reminders were sent in February.	29%
Clark, M. (1993).	Investigated how communication and social skills can be taught through tailor-made courses.	An open-ended process was adapted to interview hotel managers. Sample included GMs and departmental managers of hotels with 60-120 bedrooms in Scotland and England.	Not applicable
Brownell, J. (1992).	Explored how management looks at communication relationships and activities.	Alumni from the School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University who were at the time of the research middle managers or general managers were surveyed. Out of the 133 questionnaires mailed, 91 GMs and 153 middle managers (MM) responded.	GM-68% MM – 78%
Baum, T. (1991).	Examined the differences in expectations of management trainees of U.S. managers and U.K. managers.	Questionnaires were mailed to 223 managers of hotels with a minimum of 150 rooms in the U.K., of which 118 questionnaires were returned.	53%
Tas, R.F. (1988).	Identified competencies essential for hotel GM trainees.	Surveys were mailed to GMs at 229 properties having $\geq$ 400 rooms. Reminder phone calls to 10% of non-respondents did not increase responses.	33%