

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ASSIGNMENT

(amended)



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The Authors' Contributions

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Introduction

Dalata Hotel Group Plc., founded in 2007, is an Irish hotel group owning and/or operating hotels throughout Ireland and the United Kingdom. According to its 2017 Annual Report, it operates 38 hotels, of which twenty-eight are wholly owned, nine are leased and three are operated under management contracts. Shares in DHG Plc. are currently traded on both the Dublin and London Stock Exchanges (following flotation in March 2014 and February 2015 respectively). By the end of 2017, DHG employed approximately 4,300 full-time and casual employees. With the planned expansion in both the Irish and UK markets, this figure will continue to increase year on year.

DHG owns and operates the Clayton and Maldron hotel brands, which are Ireland's two largest hotel brands / chains. Both these brands are increasingly found in the larger cities of the United Kingdom.

DHG operates a decentralised model of human resource management with local level HR managers in each hotel supported by a central group HR function in head office in Dublin under the steerage of Group HR manager and in accordance with its HR Policy. As a result, each in-house HR manager is intimately familiar with the micro situation within each individual hotel, whilst having the added support of the central human resource department in head office which oversees the macro group HR situation.

In this paper, a study has been undertaken of the human resource management aspect of the DHG operation. An understanding will be gleaned of the meaning of human resource management and how DHG deals with the issues of recruitment, selection, training and development. To this end, an integral part of this study was the organisation of an interview with a Dalata Hotel Group human resource manager to assist in applying the theory of human resource management to the reality of the DHG human resource practice. Following on from our investigations, recommendations will be made as to how DHG Plc. can improve on their human resource function.

What is Human Resource Management (also known as HRM) and what are its objectives?

Human resource management is concerned with all aspects of how people are employed and managed in organisations (Armstrong, 2014). It is a process used to ensure that people are managed in such a way as to achieve success for the organisation. The Dalata Hotel Group, on its website, states 'The group operates a decentralised human resource model with local level HR managers supported by a central Group HR function'. It goes on to say that Dalata Hotel Group hold onto important and crucial staff by upskilling and developing present staff through training and development programmes. This would ensure that the Group will always have future generation managers available to it. It also stated 'The Group HR team are very experienced in change management, restructuring as well as managing employee relations'.

Explicit Model

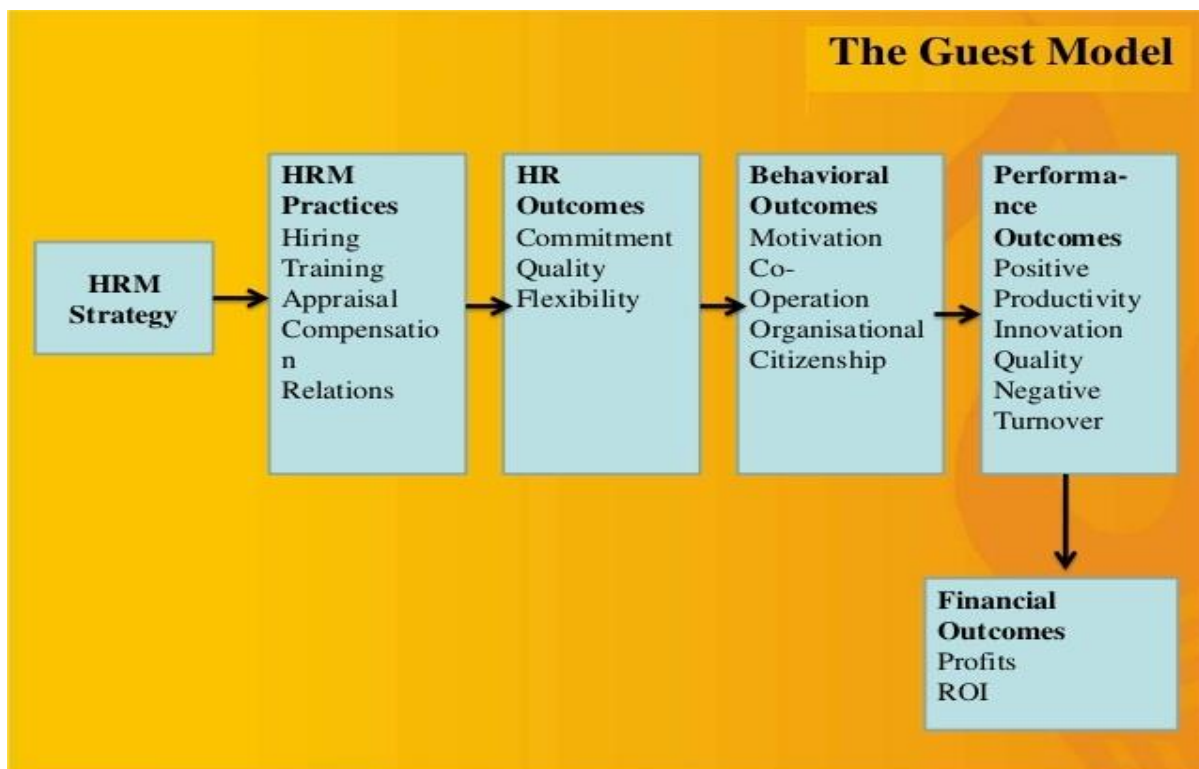


Figure 1: sourced from Google Images

The above strategy by David Guest, one of the leading experts on human resource management, is an explicit model. The dictionary definition for explicit is ‘fully or clearly expressed or demonstrated (dictionary.com)’. The following are Guest’s policy goals or components:

1. HR Strategy
2. HR Practices
3. HR Outcomes
4. Behavioural Outcomes
5. Performance Outcomes
6. Financial Outcomes

Figure 2 : Guest’s Policy Goals or Components

Guest believed that with an organised and planned HRM practice in place with line managers delivering on the company’s strategic plans and ensuring that the HRM practice is adhered to, this will result in staff being co-operative and having increased output regarding effort and organisational citizenship. Bratton and Gold (2003) stated about the Guest Model that “A core set of integrated HRM practices can achieve superior individual and organisational performance”. (Equal Ireland, 2018). The Dalata group operate an explicit model as they implement the above policies. As Guest’s model suggests its emphasis is on strategic management and focuses on all the employees collectively and its relationship with the organisation which the management of Dalata do. This is explained in more detail below with Guest’s list of ‘Best Practices’.

1. Selection and selection tests to identify those with potential to make a contribution.
2. Ongoing training.
3. Job design, for staff to use their skills and knowledge with the insurance of flexibility, commitment and motivation.
4. A two-way communication process so both employer and employee are kept up to date with everything.
5. Employee share ownership programmes. This makes the employee aware of the implications of their actions on the financial performance of the firm.

Figure 3 : Guest’s list of ‘Best Practices’.

The Best Practice Approach

The Dalata group implements this best practice by showing this in their strategies for recruitment, selection and training as explained below. However, there is an element of 'Best Fit' in this organisation. Following a conversation with a Dalata Hotel Group HR Manager, this element was prominent after the interview process was explained. The HR Manager elaborated that occasionally when an applicant applies for a certain role, the interviewee may see that person working in a different role or position than he/she applied for, making this a 'best fit' practice.

Reality versus Rhetoric

Although the HRM model seems to be workable within the hotel group in most ways, the reality can be a little different. There is a high turnover of staff, 52%, which shows a lack of commitment, especially by lower skilled employees who move on for better pay in other local businesses operating near the hotels. Recently, the Dalata group has introduced aptitude and psychometric testing into its recruitment process. Up to this point in time recruitment has been by means of face to face interview(s). This testing in reality may not be a good practice. The company is a hospitality organisation and consequently Dalata HR personnel have always used their intuition as well as work skills to employ staff. With front of office positions, such as reception, porters, bar and café staff, personality plays a massive part of their job description and an aptitude test cannot show this.

Human Resource Management (HRM) versus Personnel Management (PM)

As previously stated, the Dalata Group operates a decentralised human resource model and is a more superior type of management than that of Personnel Management for that type of organisation. Listed here, and more extensively shown in Table 1 below, are some of the characteristics of PM and HRM and the difference between each model.

Strategic nature - The nature of the strategy, is that PM has a short-term perspective and HRM is long-term and has a strategic view of human resources.

Psychological Contract - Its Psychological contract means that PM is based on compliance from the employee whereas HRM is based on seeking willing commitment of the employee.

Characteristics	Personnel Management (PM)		Human Resource Management (HRM)	
Strategic nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly dealing with day-to-day issues. Ad-hoc and reactive in nature: a short-term perspective rather than strategic 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with day-to-day issues; but proactive in nature and integrated with other management functions A deliberately long-term, strategic view of human resources 	 
Psychological contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on compliance on the part of the employee. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on seeking willing commitment of the employee 	
Job design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically, Taylorist/Fordist 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically, team-based 	
Organizational structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hierarchical Tendency to vertical integration. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible with core of key employees surrounded by peripheral shells. High degree of outsourcing 	
Remuneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collective base rates 'Pay by position' Any additional bonuses linked to Taylorist work systems. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market-based Individual and/or team performance 'Pay for contribution' 	 
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sophisticated recruitment practices for senior staff only Strong reliance on external local labour market for most recruitment 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sophisticated recruitment for all employees Strong internal labour market for core employees. Greater reliance on external labour market for non-core 	 
Training/development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited and usually restricted to training non-managerial employees. Narrowly job-related. Management development limited to top executives and fast track candidates 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformed into a learning and development philosophy transcending job-related training. An ongoing developmental role for all core employees including non-management. Strong emphasis on management and leadership development A learning organisation culture 	 
Employee relations perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pluralist: collectivist; low trust 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unitarist: individualistic; high trust 	
Organisation of the function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist/professional Separated from line management Bureaucratic and centralised 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Largely integrated into line management for day-to-day HR issues. Specialist HR group to advise and create HR policy. 	 
Welfare role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residual expectations 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No explicit welfare role 	
Criteria for success of the function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimising cost of human resources 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Control of HR costs, but also maximum utilisation of human resources over the long term. 	

**Table 1 : 'Ideal types' of personnel management and human resource management
Adapted and developed from Guest Model (1987) Equal Ireland (2018)**

Recruitment – The PM model has a refined recruitment practice for senior staff only and relies on external local labour market for most recruitment. HRM, on the other hand, is a more sophisticated method of recruitment for all employees. There is a strong internal labour market for core employees.

Training/development – The PM model is limited and restricted to training non-managerial employees, narrowly job-related and management development is limited to top executives and fast-track candidates. The HRM model is a job-related training plan and an ongoing developmental role for all employees, core and non-management. It is a learning culture.

Taking only those four listed above, the Dalata group has worked well using its HRM model when compared with the PM model. The PM model is quite restricted and if a company like Dalata were to use this model, there would be a shortfall going across the company regarding staff as this organisation has a constant need for staff. Motivation would be low as promotion would be difficult for junior staff and there would be lack of upskilled people due to lack of training and development.

Having analysed the 'Ideal Types' model above, it would appear that DHG tick all the boxes of a company operating within the HRM framework. This will become more evident in the following sections: recruitment, selection, and training and development.

Recruitment



The literature on Human Resource Management (HRM) consistently highlights that the profitability and even the survival of an organisation depends upon the calibre of the workforce and that, the human capital, can be a means of achieving competitive advantage (Gunnigle, Hearty & Morley 2011). This is particularly true for Dalata Hotel Group Plc. It relies on the unique attributes of its people for success. As John Hennessy, Non-Executive Chairman of Dalata Hotel Group Plc., said: *"We are a people business, our culture is people centred, people are the heart and soul of the business"* (Dalata Hotel Group PLC Annual Report & Accounts 2017).

Armstrong (2012) defines recruitment as *"the process of finding and engaging the people the organisation needs"*. Heery and Noon (2001) elaborate on that by saying recruitment assists *"in generating a pool of candidates from which to select the appropriate person to fill a job vacancy"*.

Recruitment is a dynamic, constant process especially in the hotel industry which experiences high levels of staff turnover. This is true for the Dalata Hotel Group with, as previously stated, a turnover rate of 52%. Having the right person in the right place at the right time is crucial to the group's performance. As DHG continues to grow and expand it is important for the group to have the right people on board. In the near future the group plan on opening new hotels creating a further 400 jobs in Ireland and it has a very clear vision of what type of people they are looking for when recruiting (see Appendix 1).

Recruitment is, therefore, a critical activity not just for the human resource team but also for the line managers or heads of departments, who are increasingly more involved in the process. At DHG the heads of departments have quarterly recruitment planning meetings and monthly meetings with the Human Resource (HR) manager to discuss staffing issues and recruitment needs. A request is put in for a new member of staff e.g. a receptionist by the Front Office Manager. It is from these meetings that the recruitment process begins as per figure 4 below.

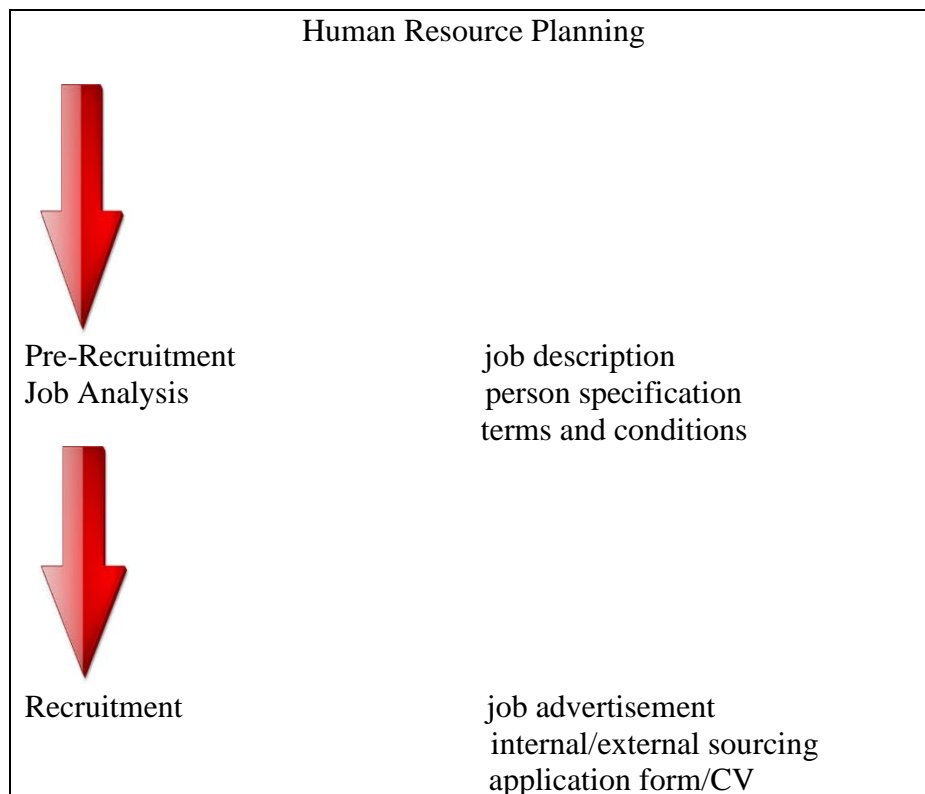


Figure 4: The Recruitment Process
(Gunnigle, P. et al, (2011))

Once the decision to recruit a receptionist has been made, the first stage of the recruitment process is to consult the job analysis. Gunnigle et al (2011) describe job analysis *“as a process of identifying not only the knowledge and skills that are required for a particular job, but also the types of attitude and behaviour that are needed”*.

While a number of different methods of job analysis have been developed over the years, it has been found that DHG use the checklist method as well as observation interviews. Figure 5 below

outlines nine of the most common methods that are used by organisations, both methods used by DHG appear on this list of best practice.

1. Questionnaire method
2. Checklist method
3. Individual interviews
4. Observation interviews
5. Group interviews
6. Expert analysis
7. Diary method
8. Work participation method
9. Critical incident method

Figure 5 : Recruitment Methods
(Gunnigle, P. et al, (2011))

It is from the job analysis that the job description, the person specification and the terms and conditions of employment are formed. It also indicates where that job fits into the overall organisational structure.

While job descriptions vary according to the different jobs, they typically conform to a relatively set framework. It can be seen from the sample Job Description for a receptionist (Appendix 2) that DHG includes all elements of a job description as shown in Figure 6 below.

- Job Title
- Department
- Location
- Reports to
- Purpose
- Main tasks
- Liaison and main contacts
- Staff responsibilities
- Special features
- Rewards and conditions

Figure 6 : Elements of a Job Description
(Gunnigle, P. et al, (2011))

The person specification essentially describes the ideal person, the personal skills and characteristics required to fill the vacancy, usually listed as ‘essential’ and ‘desirable’ criteria. The essential criteria form the minimum standard expected by DHG for the vacancy and will also form the basis for potentially rejecting applicants. Please see Appendix 3 for a sample of a person specification for a receptionist within the DHG.

The introduction of the Terms of Employment (Information) Acts 1994/2001 require all employers to furnish their employees with written details of the terms and conditions pertaining to their employment. It should be noted at this juncture that DHG is an equal opportunities employer and operates recruitment and selection within all legislative requirements.

The next stage of the recruitment process is the creation of the job advertisement and the decision whether to recruit internally or externally. Please see Appendix 4 for an online job advertisement for a receptionist.

Data from the Cranet Ireland 2010 national survey of HRM policies and practices, as cited in Tiernan & Morley (2013), highlights that responding organisations are using a combination of recruitment methods to fill positions. However, it would appear from table 1 below that recruiting internally is the most common method in Ireland.

Recruitment Methods	Management	Professional/Technical	Clerical	Manual
Internally	77.0	73.8	68.9	69.8
Recruitment agencies/Consultants	68.9	69.9	42.7	32.8
Advertisement	62.1	56.3	53.4	69.2
Word of Mouth	41.7	53.4	53.4	71.4
Vacancy page on company website	60.2	61.2	52.4	54.1
Vacancies on Commercial job websites	49.5	50.5	58.1	34.5
Direct from educational institution	10.7	45.6	34.8	19.2
Speculative applications/walk -ins	13.6	26.2	57.7	67.7
Job centres/public recruitment agencies	9.7	17.5	41.1	45.9

**Table 1 : Methods of Filling Vacancies in Ireland (%)
(Tiernan & Morley 2013)**

DHG advertise and recruit from within the group for all managerial positions. For non-managerial positions the vacancy is advertised both internally within the hotel, on the staff intranet and externally. Figure 7, below outlines the recruitment methods utilised by DHG for non-managerial positions.

Company Website http://dalatahotelgroup.com/careers
Local Newspaper e.g. The Galway Advertiser
Recruitment Fairs and Open Days/Walk Ins
Recruitment Websites e.g. Indeed.ie and Jobs.ie
Affiliation Programme with Hotel School in local College GMIT
Employee Referral Scheme
Word of Mouth

Figure 7 : Dalata’s Recruitment Methods

Appendix 5 illustrates an advertisement for a Recruitment Fair which was posted on the company website, together with an advertisement from the Galway Advertiser dated 6th September 2018.

A more recent survey by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) in 2011 highlighted the main sources of recruitment used by its respondents were own corporate website 59% and recruitment agencies 54%. Please see Table 2 below for full breakdown. Recruitment agencies are only used by the Dalata group when large numbers of staff are required e.g. 800 staff for large events like the Galway Races. On these occasions the agency will have the job description and person specifications to follow so as to ensure all agency staff will be competent in skills and fit in with the hotels image.

Recruitment Methods	%
Own corporate website	59%
Recruitment agencies	54%
Local newspaper advertisements	36%
Commercial job boards	33%
Specialist journals	27%
Jobcentres	25%
Search consultants	15%
Links with educational establishments	13%
National newspaper advertisements	11%
Social networking sites	4%

**Table 2 : Recruitment Methods used by Employers in a CIPD Survey in 2011
Armstrong (2012)**

Application forms are DHG’s preferred method of application as all information is presented in a standard form which aids assessing candidates against the same parameters. Armstrong (2012) also favours the application form as a recruitment tool when he says “it ensures all applicants are considered on the same basis – it can be difficult to plough through a pile of letters or CVs that are badly organised or ill written”. It can, therefore, be said that it is a more efficient means of shortlisting potential candidates.

The following is a SWOT analysis of DHG’s recruitment process:-



Figure 8

Conclusion

DHG is a people centred business, whose focus is on recruiting from a pool of applicants that share its beliefs. As competition increases for businesses and for applicants, recruitment has become a very important and challenging function for HRM. Both the Human Resource manager and the head of department are involved in the complete recruitment process from the HR planning stage. Whilst there are many methods of recruitment DHG rely on the methods that work best for them which include advertising and e-recruitment both internally and externally.

Selection



Armstrong (2012) defines selection as “*deciding which applicants or candidates should be appointed to the jobs*”. The selection process effectively begins when applications are received. Gunnigle et al (2011) express that one of the key functions of selection is predicting which candidate will be the best match for the job. DHG recognise selection as the most important aspect of HRM, as new hires are expected to become effective immediately or “hit the ground running” as the HR manager put it.

At this stage the person specification becomes an invaluable tool for the HR manager and head of department in identifying suitable and unsuitable applicants, hence a short list is formed. They generally seek to find six candidates to interview. This is positive as it is recommended that numbers on the shortlist should be between four and eight (Armstrong, 2012).

The aim of selection is to assess the suitability of candidates by predicting the extent to which they will be able to carry out the job successfully. Employers are advised not to rely on one selection method but to adopt what suits the organisation in achieving its desired outcome. There are a number of selection methods available to employers, these include the interview, aptitude and psychometric testing, work samples, assessment centres and finally reference checks, Figure 9 below depicts the selection process.

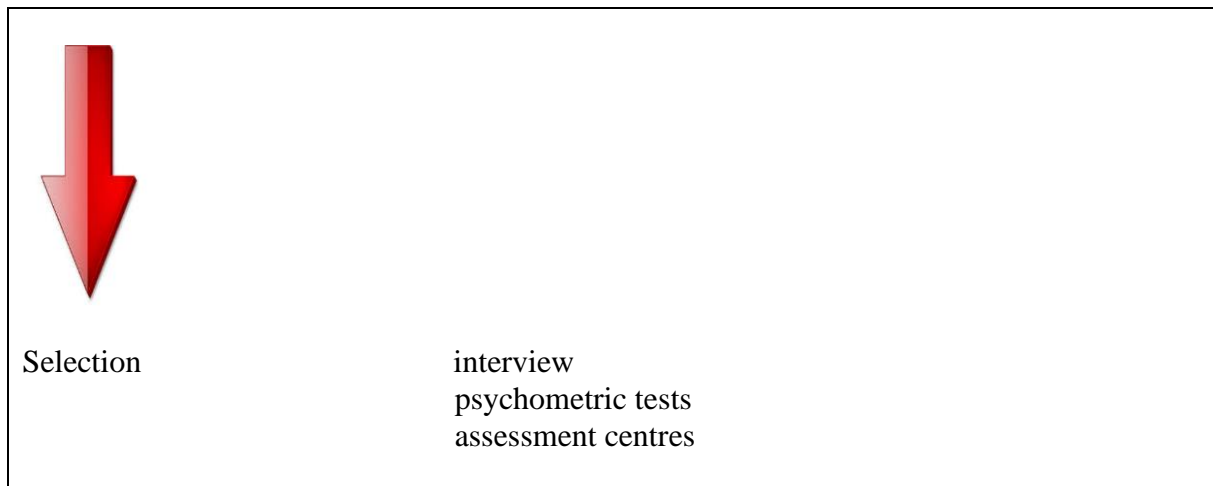


Figure 9 : The Selection Process
Gunnigle, P. et al (2011)

The 'classic trio' of selection methods are predominately used in the hospitality industry, i.e., the application form, the interview and reference checks. Table 3 below shows that DHG are using the same most popular methods of selection as other organisations in Ireland, according to data from the Cranet Ireland 2010 national survey. Both the HR manager and the HOD interview the candidates; this helps to reduce the potential for subjectivity and bias, however it can be time consuming and costly. A set list of questions is adhered to for each structured interview, also known as a conversation with a purpose. The HR manager believes *"a well-structured interview provides valuable information on the applicant's job experiences, job knowledge, cognitive abilities, and social skills that when combined with other selection methods can be used to determine the person-hotel fit"*. Whilst interviews have been criticised as a selection method in the literature, it appears that DHG ensure all HODs have completed a training course on interviewing techniques and tips and are updated on a regular basis.

Online aptitude testing has recently been implemented by DHG for non-managerial staff whilst assessment centres are used for senior management roles. The HR manager was not very complimentary of the online testing methods but on further investigation it would appear that this was more due to a lack of knowledge and resistance to change rather than a criticism of the selection method.

Selection Methods	Management	Professional/Technical	Clerical	Manual
Interview panel	88.4	80.6	64.1	56.1
One to one interview	56.3	59.2	61.2	75.4
Application forms	43.7	47.6	53.4	68.8
Psychometric test	49.5	37.9	19.4	12.5
Assessment centre	20.4	14.6	5.8	1.9
Graphology	1.0	1.9	1.9	1.8
References	89.3	88.3	83.5	95.7
Ability tests	28.2	36.9	32.0	36.7
Technical tests	20.4	36.9	18.4	26.7

Table 3 : Selection methods most commonly used in Ireland (%)
Source: Tiernan & Morley (2013:196)

DHG recognises that the selection is a two-way process because people have the option to withdraw from the process or decline the job offer. This is particularly evident in cases where salary is mentioned. DHG is up against tough competition from the retail sector - companies such as Dunnes Stores and Lidl are offering a higher rate per hour than the group can offer. In these situations, the HR manager and HOD have to sell the perks of the job e.g. paid meals on duty, cheap overnight stays in group hotels, full uniform provided, training courses, voucher incentives for any member of staff complemented on TripAdvisor, free parking and a sports and social club.

Another aspect of selection DHG deem extremely important is finding the candidate who will fit in with: the job requirements, the person specification, departmental colleagues and with DHG's culture. Chan and Coleman (2004) have noted that employers in the hospitality industry are seeking to recruit employees with the "right" attitude and appearance. They view the right attitude as one which encompasses aspects such as social and interpersonal skills and that they can demonstrate emotional labour. DHG are looking for staff that will be proud to work for DHG, who will share the same passion for excellence in service and dedication to the customer.

During our interview with a DHG HR manager it became apparent that often a candidate can apply for an advertised vacancy, be called for an interview and during the course of the interview the HR manager may decide that a different role is more suited or a "better fit" for the candidate. In this situation the HR manager said "I would then have to sell this job to the candidate". This would appear to be an ad hoc and informal approach to selection, not an approach that would display best practices.

Reference checking after the interview helps to validate information obtained at the interview and to help gain a picture of the applicant's previous performance. DHG conduct two telephone reference checks using a standardised reference check form.

Following the making of a selection decision, a formal job offer is made to the chosen candidate and the successful applicant is notified. DHG also inform the unsuccessful applicants as standard practice. The process of recruitment and selection within DHG can take between 3-4 weeks for most staff.

When the offer has been accepted, DHG offer an induction programme to the new employee who assists with a smooth transition to working in the hotel and within the group.

Please see below a SWOT analysis of the selection process in DHG:



STRENGTH

- A systematic approach to the process
- Application Form and Person Specification used to shortlist
- Six Applicants short listed
- 'Classic Trio' selection methods utilised, Application Form, Interview and Reference Checks
- Aptitude testing introduced
- HR manager and HOD involved in the complete process
- Interview training provided for HODs
- A structured pre-set list of question used at interview
- Induction Programme offered to all new hires
- All applicants are contacted – successful and unsuccessful



WEAKNESS

- New hires are expected to be effective immediately
- Time Consuming for management
- Resistance to change
- Lack of knowledge of new selection techniques
- A hard sell – having to sell the business and its benefits
- Ad hoc approach unplanned – side stepping an applicant to a 'better fit' position at interview stage
- Duration of the process 3-4 weeks



OPPORTUNITY

- New aptitude testing can be utilised to improve candidate selection process



THREAT

- Retail Sector offering a higher rate of pay
- It's an Employees marketplace



Figure 10

Conclusion

Selection is a very important function within DHG, hence both the HR manager and the HOD are involved in the complete process. DHG use three methods of selection in a bid to find the 'best fit' for the group as new hires are expected to be effective immediately. The three methods used include the application form, the interview and reference checks. The group have recently introduced aptitude testing which has come up against some resistance. It would appear that while DHG have a very systematic approach to selection there is still room for improvement as was disclosed by the HR manager.

To conclude, the final chart below summarises DHG's recruitment and selection processes

The Recruitment and Selection Process

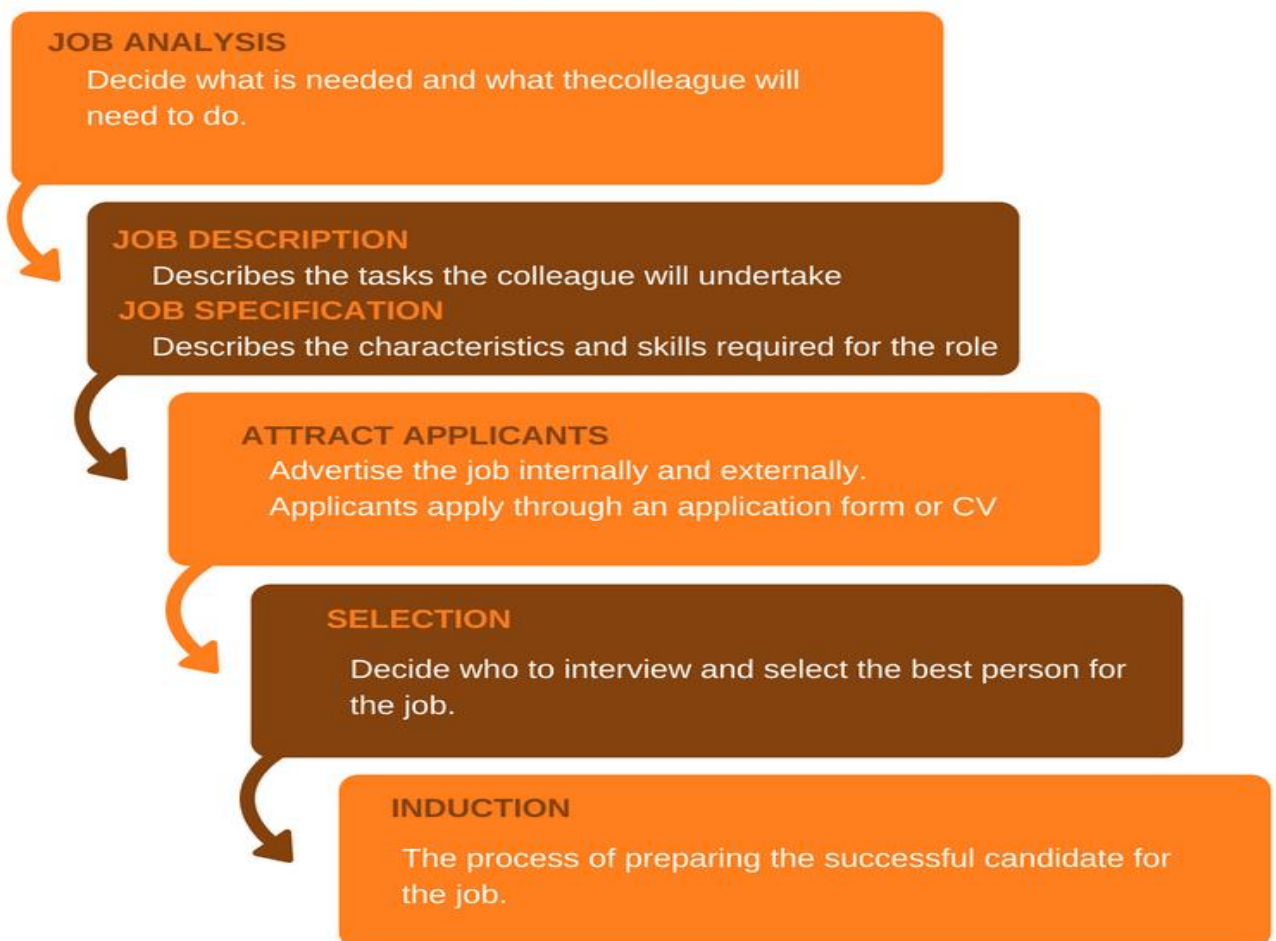


Figure 11

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

In order for employees to carry out their roles effectively and productively and thus to achieve the goals set by their organisation, it is essential training and development (T&D) opportunities are provided.

Research has shown that, by adhering to best practices, a systematic approach to T&D should be available for employees both in their current roles but also offering the opportunity for the development of any future roles that may be occupied by the individual.

This case study will examine and evaluate the T&D opportunities currently available within the Dalata Group.



Figure 12 : Quotation from Dalata Hotel Group Plc Annual Report & Accounts 2017

Training and Development Programmes

The Dalata Group have twelve bespoke structured programmes. Careers can begin directly from school or a graduate programme. In addition there are specialist programmes, i.e., Leisure Centre

Staff, Head Chef. Dalata also have a suite of personal and skills modules/workshops with content ranging from management and recruitment to health and safety.



The opportunity to work within the Dalata Hotel Group and attend third level education.



Newly graduated students have the opportunity to fast-track over an 18 month period. They will experience the various roles within the Hotel group across all departments.



The Heads of Department and Assistant Managers can gain further experience and knowledge. Focusing on team management with a special emphasis on functions such as purchasing, sales and HR.



Aimed at those wishing to progress to the position of General Manager. The programme will ensure a well-rounded understanding of all the areas of responsibility required in this role.



General Managers can continue the development of their skills and knowledge. Allowing them to network with peers will ensure that the current trends and best practices within the industry are understood and adapted.

Evaluation of Programmes

The training available offers a blended approach with very structured learning as well as on the job training. Armstrong (2009) suggests the effectiveness is increased by using different methods of learning and development and also self-directed learning should be encouraged. It would appear that the training opportunities available within the group offer all of these various methods to ensure that employees have the skills, knowledge and the required attitude for the future development of the individual and also the Dalata Group.

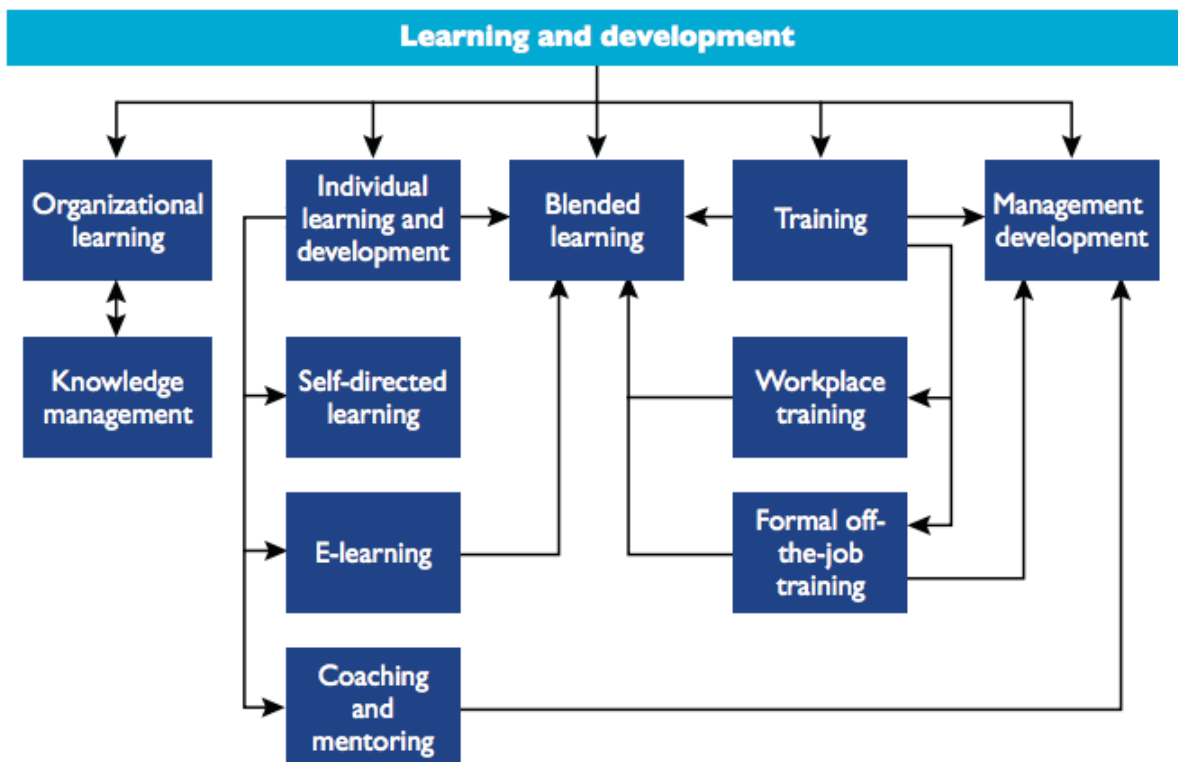


Figure 13 : Elements of Learning and Development
(Armstrong, M., 2009, p. 666)

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

4 STEP PROCESS



Figure 14

Training Need Analysis

Dalata regularly evaluates its employees' performance to identify and anticipate any skills shortage. Employees have regular discussions with management regarding training needs analysis (TNA), to allow them to identify and apply for the training suited to their need.

Training Design

There are twelve bespoke structured programmes allowing for the development and career growth of employees at all levels in place across the Dalata Group. Dalata also have a suite of personal and skills modules and workshops which can be delivered both face to face and by webinar.

Training Delivery

There are already solid and proven programmes in place within the Dalata Group. The training plan can be a single course or a series of modules or a lengthy programme. The opportunity for on-site and off-site training and also working within difference departments and venues may be possible for some programmes.

Training Evaluation

Following completion of the training an evaluation is carried out between the employee and HR department to ensure the objectives have been met. A training evaluation questionnaire is completed by the employee and also followed up with discussion on the quality of the training, the resulting increase of knowledge and a general overview of the training.

Overview of the process

2017 Progress

160

Structured programme
participants in 2017

4

2017 Altitude Programme
promotions to General Manager

2,600

Workshop and webinar
participants in 2017

A training needs assessment (TNA) of each new employee takes place within 6 weeks. However, identifying and implementing the shorter courses/modules can be time consuming. Management

delays in approving the courses are due to the considerations of budget, facilities and time constraints. A dedicated line manager for T&D could resolve this issue.

The training delivery is very efficient. Having a solid foundation already in place is critical to its success and the availability of different training approaches to ensure all learners' preferences are considered is a further bonus. As discussed in the Applied HRM course manual, Honey & Mumford have identified four learning styles called activist, pragmatist, reflector and theorist. The Dalata Group cater for these styles by offering theory, practical application, individual and group activity and video etc. as part of their delivery.

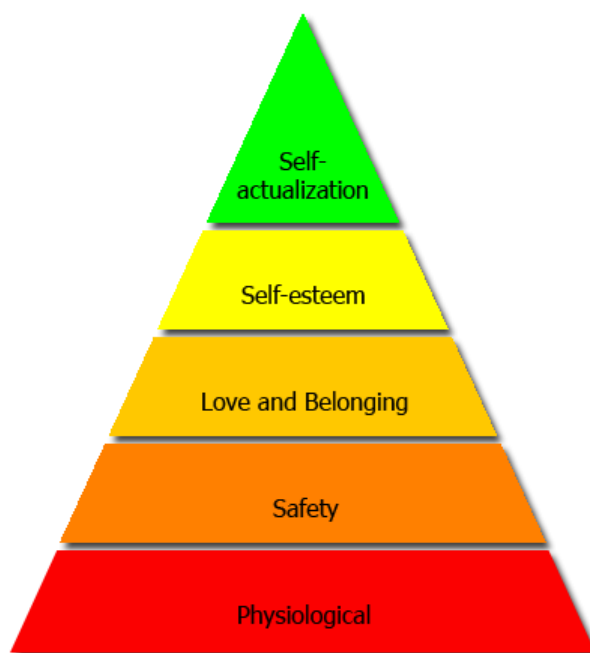


Figure 15 : Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
Maslow, A. (1943)

Following the evaluation stage the benefits for employees and the business can be monitored. The theorist Maslow (1943) suggests that allowing people to develop their skills and grow their abilities leads to more effective, motivated and productive employees. This, in turn, ensures that the next generation of leaders and managers are available to take up the real career development and promotion opportunities on offer.



Figure 16

CONCLUSION

The Dalata Group has recognised that increasing the knowledge and skills of their employees will lead to improved job satisfaction. This is a vital part of the continued growth of the company as there is fierce competition within the industry. As highlighted in, The Times 100, case study of Enterprise-Rent-a-Car, a service oriented business must deliver perfect service in order to keep customers satisfied and ensure they come back. Dalata Group is experts in recruiting people with the right skills. By providing continuous T&D as they progress along a long-term career path within the group this ensures a high staff retention which in turn will guarantee the achievement of the

aims and objectives of the business. As a result of these programmes over 100 internal promotions took place in 2017 which enhanced the 'grown your own' strategy. The success of the programmes has led to the Dalata Group being recognised as Ireland's '*Best Organisation in Learning and Development*' in 2017.

Recommendations

There are a number of recommendations which can be made in respect of the recruitment, selection and training and development processes within the Dalata Hotel Group Plc. These include, but are not restricted to, the following:-

Recruitment:

- Competitive terms and conditions of employment (including rates of remuneration) – not just competitive within the hospitality industry but also with other industries in the geographical catchment area (e.g., Clayton/Maldron rates of pay vs. retail, shift patterns, work/life balance, childcare considerations, etc.). An improvement in this regard may be the impetus required in bringing the staff turnover rate of 52% under control.
- The HR plan does not stand in isolation from the general operation of the business. It is an integral part of operations, together with the business plan, and thus should drive and support the business plan more effectively (Marchington and Wilkinson (2005) in course manual). Integration of both strategies can help in an organisation fostering a competitive advantage.
- A committed, respected, professional team will work well together, give a better impression of the Group and thus increase performance, productivity and profitability. So attracting and retaining not just key employees but employees across all departments should be considered of paramount strategic importance to the future development of the group.
- The Galway city hotels (Maldron and Clayton) should pool their resources (including staffing), thus reducing the time and costs involved in constantly recruiting and selecting.
- Introduce a recruitment survey to determine the effectiveness of the methods used and to determine any further improvements that can be made to the process.

Selection:

- 'Best Fit' should be a two-way process within the group. It is recommended that new employees who are 'side-stepped' into a different role should be given a trial period in the

side-step position and, if they are not happy with the new role within a two week period, then they should be reassigned to the original position of application. It is further recommended that the group adopts a 'Best Fit' strategy for the individual and not just for the business.

- Aptitude testing and other testing methods of selection should be introduced at local level. Whilst this may lead to resistance to change, the introduction of training may alleviate any such fear of and resistance to change.

Training and Development:

- Whilst DHG offers a significant training and development program for employees at all levels, this should be seen as a continuous process throughout the period of employment and should start with the identification of training needs, the design of such training and the delivery thereof, with the subsequent evaluation of the training which, in turn, feeds back into the identification and provision of further ongoing training (Equal Ireland, course manual, 2018).
- Better internal advertising of training and development programmes, thus reinforcing that the group's intention is to invest long-term in its work force – aids in fostering commitment from all levels of the workforce. Should focus not just on development of the Group but also on development of the individual.
- Delegate a Head of Department with responsibility for approving, implementing and evaluating all courses in a bid to streamline the training and development process.

Whilst appreciating that some of the above recommendations will incur a financial and time management cost to the Group, their implementation may result in returns that far outweigh the initial investment of both time and money.

Conclusion

As we have seen, Dalata Hotel Group Plc. operates a decentralised model of human resource management with local level HR managers in each hotel supported by a central group HR function in head office in Dublin under the steerage of Group HR manager.

The continued growth of the Group is testament to the business model and HRM model employed within the group. So whilst DHG may not always adhere to the explicit recruitment model generally evidenced by this study, the melding of the explicit model with the intuitive experience of the HRM team appears to serve the Group well.

Having examined the recruitment, selection, and training and development aspects of the HRM function employed by DHG, it is evident that DHG generally employ best practice. However, findings from this study suggest that there is room for improvement within these human resource practices.

The above recommendations could present implications for DHG in terms of costs / finance, management time, resistance to change and the need for both hotel chains within the group in Galway City to work together and pool resources rather than operating in isolation and in competition with each other.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 : WHAT DHG ARE LOOKING FOR IN THEIR STAFF

WHAT TYPE OF PEOPLE ARE DALATA HOTEL GROUP LOOKING FOR?

Here in Dalata it is busy, fast paced but also fun and no two days are ever the same. Everyday everyone in Dalata lives our values:



OUR PEOPLE

Dalata is the place where you can do great things – individually and as a team. You will have the opportunity to develop your talent, be recognised and rewarded for your commitment and pursue a fulfilling career.

OUR FAIRNESS

We pride ourselves on creating an objective, supportive and fair working environment for our employees, the people we deal with and the communities we work within. We are fair, consistent and balanced in everything we do.



OUR SERVICE

We ensure our service standards are consistently high at every opportunity. We strive for success, are enthusiastic about what we do and take responsibility for getting things right.

OUR INDIVIDUALITY

Our people are as individual as our hotels. They bring their own personality, character and enthusiasm ensuring the experience we provide is always warm, welcoming, genuine and friendly.

Source: <http://dalatahotelgroup.com/careers/workingwithdalata/> Accessed 04/09/2018

APPENDIX 2 : HOTEL RECEPTIONIST JOB DESCRIPTION



Hotel Receptionist Job Description

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Hotel Receptionist is responsible for providing a friendly, welcoming and efficient service to all hotel guests, in line with the hotel's vision and values on customer satisfaction. The main purposes of the hotel reception area's staff are to respond courteously to guests' requests, play a part in the general running of the reception desk and help the General Manager to maintain a smooth room bookings service.

MAIN TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To undertake front of house duties, including meeting, greeting and attending to the needs of guests, to ensure a superb customer service experience.
2. To build a good rapport with all guests and resolve any complaints/issues quickly to maintain high quality customer service.
3. To deal with guest requests to ensure a comfortable and pleasant stay.
4. To assist in dealing with customer complaints in an effective and courteous manner, providing or seeking solutions as quickly as possible.
5. To be responsible for accurate and efficient accounts and guest billing processes.
6. To assist in keeping the hotel reception area clean and tidy at all times.
7. To undertake general office duties, including correspondence, emails, filing and switchboard, to ensure the smooth running of the reception area.
8. To administer all routes of reservations to ensure that room bookings are made and recorded accurately.



9. To ensure that all reservations and cancellations are processed efficiently.
10. To keep up to date with room prices and special offers to provide accurate information to guests.
11. To report any maintenance, breakage or cleanliness problems to the relevant manager.
12. To administer the general petty cash system and float in an accurate manner.
13. To undertake all training as required (e.g., first aid, health and safety, customer service).
14. To adhere to all fire safety test procedures and to assist in the evacuation process in the event of fire.
15. To undertake any other ad-hoc duties (bar and restaurant work) relevant to the post as and when required.

APPENDIX 3 : PERSON SPECIFICATION FOR HOTEL RECEPTIONIST



PERSON SPECIFICATION FOR HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written
- Strong organisational/prioritising skills
- Strong multi-tasking skills
- Efficient and competent administrative skills
- Computer literate and experience in Fidelio Bookings package

DESIRABLE SKILLS

- Language skills

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

- Working with the general public, face to face and on the telephone
- Working within a team
- Coping with multiple tasks and prioritising own workload
- Working with computers
- Filing and record keeping

DESIRABLE EXPERIENCE

- Previous reception experience
- Experience of working within social / healthcare service
- Use of computerised booking systems or database



PERSON SPECIFICATION FOR HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

ESSENTIAL ATTITUDE

- An ability to express tolerance, patience and a caring attitude
- Ability to work with initiative and flexibility
- Ability to work well under pressure
- An understanding of the importance of good confidentiality practice
- An ability to apply equal opportunities to service delivery

APPENDIX 4 : COMPANY WEBSITE ADVERTISEMENT FOR PART-TIME RECEPTIONIST

Part Time Receptionist

- Maldron Hotel Galway, Oranmore
- Permanent

Receptionist – Maldron Hotel Galway Oranmore

We have a fantastic new vacancy for a part time Receptionist in the excellent Maldron Hotel Galway

This role will provide excellent career progression opportunities to the right candidate within Irelands Largest Hotel Group

Objective of the Role

Reporting to the Front Office Manager, the Receptionist is the first person that a guest meets on arrival to the Hotel, therefore it is of utmost importance that all staff present a friendly and professional image to our guests at all times.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

- Greet and welcome our guests to the Hotel.
- Register the guests and take payment.
- Answer any queries the guest may have on in house facilities and tourist information.
- Take responsibility for the security of the keys.
- Update all guest information in the computer.
- Take and confirm reservations to our guests.

Requirements:

- Excellent customer care skills.
- Be able to work on your own initiative.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Be able to cope well under pressure.

About Dalata:

Dalata Hotel Group – Ireland’s largest hotel group. As Dalata continues to grow and expand it’s more important than ever to have the right team alongside us, in the near future we will be opening the doors of new hotels creating over 400 jobs and investing over €110m in the Irish economy.

We lead through our Dalata values of “Our People, Our Fairness, Our Service and Our Individuality”. If you have the right attitude and energy you will have great opportunities to progress within the group. Our company is a place where you can do great things – individually and as a team. You will have the opportunity to develop your talent, be recognised and rewarded for your commitment and pursue a fulfilling career. We also have a number of unique and recognised training programmes to aid your professional and personal development and pride ourselves on creating an objective, supportive and fair working environment for our employees.

A full job description can be sent, later in the process, or on request.

Dalata Hotel Group Plc is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

APPLY FOR THIS JOB

As advertised on <http://dalatahotelgroup.com/careers/> accessed 06/09/2018

APPENDIX 5 : RECRUITMENT FAIR AND NEWSPAPER JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

Career Opportunities with **Clayton Hotel Galway**

Recruitment Fair
Tuesday 19th June 2018
from 12.00pm - 5.00pm



We want our staff to be proud to work in Clayton Hotel and share our passion for excellence in service and dedication to the customer. In return, we offer a fantastic place to work and career development opportunities.

We have opportunities in operational for:

- Chefs of all levels**
- Housekeeping Assistants**
- Food & Beverage Assistants**

One week fixed term contracts for race week (Saturday 28th July to Sunday 5th August 2018):

- Food & Beverage Assistants**
- Bar Staff**
- Chefs of all levels**

To apply for our roles, mail lhanahoe@dalatahotelgroup.com



Source: <http://dalatahotelgroup.com/careers/>



We're Hiring
Recruitment Fair
Maldron Hotel Oranmore Galway
Tuesday 11th September 2018
from 5.00pm - 8.00pm

Maldron Hotel Oranmore Galway
Want to join our team?
Recruiting for the following roles:

- Food & beverage assistants *full & part time*
- Accommodation assistants
- Leisure Centre assistants
- Trained baristas
- Kitchen porters
- All general applications
- Experienced bartender

Also seeking Hotel Receptionists

Cannot attend on the day? Send your CV to
gwalsh@maldronhotels.com

+353 91 792 244
gwalsh@maldronhotels.com
maldronhotelgalway.com

maldron
HOTEL
ORANMORE · GALWAY

APPENDIX 6

The following are some of the pre-prepared questions submitted to the Regional HR Manager of the Dalata Hotel Group Plc together with contemporaneous notes taken during and immediately following the said interview.

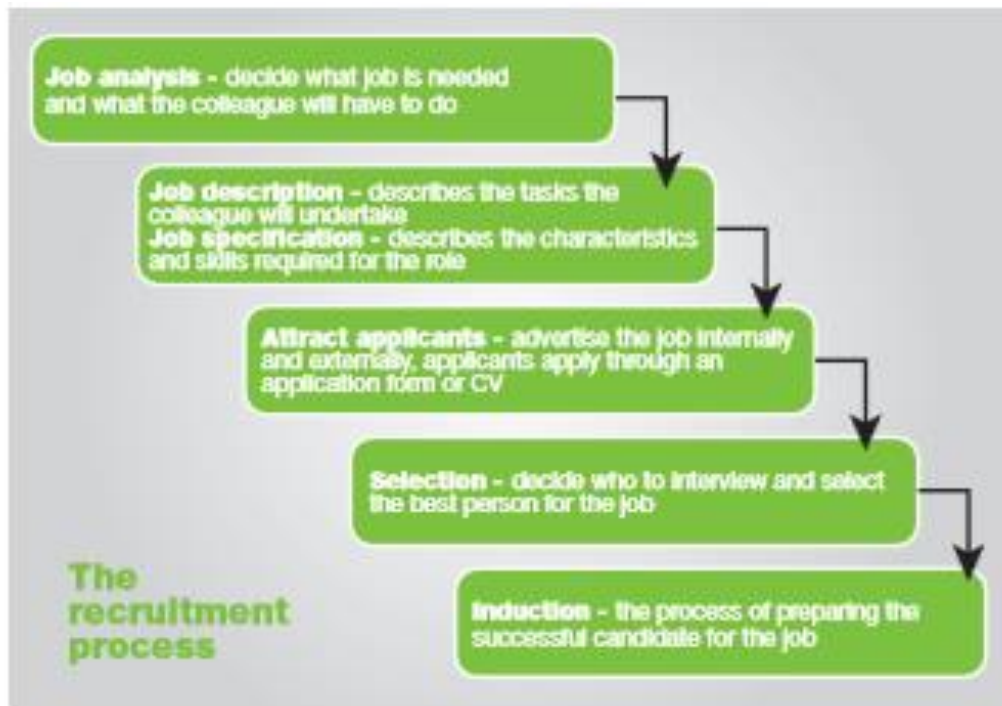
Questions based on 2 HRM Practices, Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment

1. How do Dalata Hotels carry out Human Resource Planning? How do they decide that they need to recruit more staff e.g. Receptionists, what process/tools do they use? Is this carried out at Hotel level/ Head Office level?
2. Turnover in the hospitality industry is generally pretty high and recruitment and selection is a frequent activity, would that be the same for Dalata Hotels? and could we ask what your staff turnover % is. Would this lead to increased need for recruitment and Selection?
3. How does recruitment take place in Dalata Hotels? See note below,

My part looks at the best practices such as the table below;

Starting off by identifying a vacancy exists, creating a job analysis for this vacancy, from which the job description and person specification, terms and conditions are created, Does Dalata follow this practice for all vacancies? And would you know what techniques are used for creating the job analysis, is this done at Head Office level?



4. How do Dalata hotels decide to recruit, Internally or externally? Does it depend on the level of skill for the position or is there a standard practice in place?
5. Where do Dalata advertise Vacancies? Do you use different sources for different calibre of staff e.g. Accommodation Assistant versus a Conference and Banqueting Manager? Is any one particular method best for Dalata Hotels? Refer a friend ..
6. If recruitment agencies are used what are the advantages to Dalata of using these?
7. Do you have an alliance or network formed with GMIT or Shannon College of Hotel Management in a bid to increase the talent pool for recruitment?
8. Would it be possible to get an organisational chart for any hotel in the group?
9. Do Dalata Hotels have a HR Policy and would it be possible to see this?
10. Is there a recruitment survey or evaluation process in place, either at local or Head office level?
11. Do Dalata use a standard application form or a Curriculum Vitae for job applications?

Selection

1. Who is responsible for shortlisting the applicants, HR or Line Manager or both or an administrator?

2. What selection methods are used by Dalata Hotels and who is involved in this process?
3. Are Assessment Centres or other selection techniques used, ability tests, personality/ aptitude tests?
4. Are Reference Checks used?
5. How long on average would you say it takes from identifying the need to fill a vacancy to actually filling it? This would probably vary with different positions?
6. Have you noticed any changes in how recruitment and selection has changed or evolved over the years? Does the new Data protection legislation change the old way of working? E.g. Keeping people's data on file
7. Could you identify what unique strengths Dalata's Recruitment and Selection Practices has and on the other side can you identify any areas for improvement in the process?

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