Australian Trade Commission.

Tourism and Hospitality Careers.

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1. Executive summary.

1.1. Introduction

Colmar Brunton Social Research (CBSR) was approached by Austrade to conduct research into attitudes towards careers in tourism and hospitality among students, parents, mature-aged workers and those that have left the sector. The research also included interviews with hospitality and tourism small and medium-sized business operators to understand their requirements for employees and insights into the challenges of recruiting and retaining staff.

Background

Australia’s tourism industry is expected to be a major contributor to the country’s future economic growth. The industry contributes around $40 billion annually, a figure set to increase due to a steadily growing economy, lower fuel prices and the failing Australian dollar\(^1\).

Despite the positive outlook for the industry, many tourism and hospitality businesses already report difficulty in finding and retaining skilled employees to service current demand. The Tourism Labour Force Report 2015-16 (the Report) estimates a current labour shortage of approximately 38,000\(^2\). The report also estimates that 123,000 new workers (including roughly 59,000 skilled workers) will be needed by 2020 to meet rising demand. Alleviating the issue is threefold: encouraging more people to take up training in tourism and hospitality fields, ensuring training is aligned with industry needs, and offering career development opportunities for those in the field to increase staff retention\(^5\).

According to the Report, the primary reason given for difficulty in recruiting was lack of required skills, due to lack of experience and misalignment of training to job-readiness. Perceptions that employees see their roles as too difficult, and view them only as short-term options, make it difficult for industry to retain staff. A report by Service Skills Australia notes a negative perception among young people that the tourism and hospitality industry does not offer long-term careers\(^3\).

Research was required to understand why commitment rates are low, and what drives views of tourism and hospitality roles as lacking desirable, long-term career prospects. Austrade commissioned Colmar Brunton to conduct research to identify perceptions of tourism and hospitality careers held by young people (and their parents) in order to inform future work promoting these careers to young people. The research also sought to understand mature workers’ perceptions of tourism careers, and assess their willingness to re-skill.

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Research Objectives

The objectives of the research project were to:

- Identify perceptions of tourism and hospitality careers among young people, parents, mature-age workers and those that have left the sector;
- Identify views of young people and parents on the quality and desirability of industry-related training and factors influencing these views;
- Identify tourism and hospitality businesses’ views on how industry careers are perceived and potential solutions to negative perceptions; and
- Identify views of tourism and hospitality businesses on the quality and desirability of industry-related training.

The research involved 22 90-minute focus groups and 20, 1-hour depth interviews. The research was conducted between February 2 and February 11, 2016.

This report presents the findings of this research.

1.2. Students in Year 10/11/12

Most students were reasonably positive towards career opportunities in the tourism & hospitality sector, with words such as “dynamic”, “fun”, and “sociable” used to describe opportunities in the sector. It was commonly noted that the sector was well suited to those who enjoy meeting and interacting with a diverse range of people.

The key benefits of pursuing a career in the sector included the diversity of roles, opportunities for travel and the perception of many entry level roles across the sector (including those that require minimal training or qualifications). Key negatives of potentially working in the sector were identified by students as long and unsociable hours; having to deal with difficult/rude/demanding customers; low pay (relative to other sectors); and lack of opportunity for advancement in a reasonable timeframe. For the majority of students, career opportunities in this sector were simply not on their radar.

Among students, knowledge of career pathways in the sector is quite low – while many could identify ‘jobs’ in the sector, far fewer were able to identify what a ‘career’ in the sector might look like (apart from roles such a chef, which has a much more clearly defined training pathway through the apprenticeship system). There was also very limited awareness that the sector was on a strong growth trajectory and the forecast employee shortage across the sector.

Students indicated that parents do play a significantly influential role in career/course selection. This was evident not in terms of directing which course or career pathway a child should embark on, but rather in terms of ensuring options are considered in appropriate depth and have been considered from a range of perspectives (such as job security, opportunities for career progression, etc.). However, it was evident that for some of the higher performing students, parents would be trying to guide their children toward higher status / higher paying careers such as law and medicine.

Career and study expos were a commonly referenced point of influence in terms of career interest. Interestingly, across all student groups few could recall the tourism or hospitality sector having much
of a presence at these events. School career counsellors can play a very influential role in terms of career guidance and suggesting career and study pathways. Similarly to the career expos, few students with interaction with school counsellors could recall any discussion of tourism or hospitality career pathways.

Overall, the majority of students across the groups indicated they had not yet made up their mind in relation to possible career pathways. As such, most students appeared open to influencing this decision – and at least getting tourism and hospitality in their consideration set – as opposed to already seeking out specific information on one or two pathways of interest.

Knowledge of formal training pathways in the tourism & hospitality sector was generally quite low across the student groups. A minority mentioned that there were perhaps more university pathway options open to those seeking a tourism-related career as opposed to hospitality career, but knowledge of actual courses was low.

While not on the radar for most students, the key questions they have about potential careers in the sector included:

- Information about expected type of work / work activities (and ideally don’t just tell me, get other young people already working in the sector to tell me to add credibility and relatability e.g. YouTube videos);
- Information about job opportunities / ability to find work in the sector;
- Information about enjoyment / self-fulfilment that careers in the sector may offer;
- Information about expected salary (and if starting salaries are low, how they can work their way up the ladder and be earning in the future);
- Information about and promotion of possible alternative career pathways or gaining exposure to the industry such as pre-apprenticeships (one day a week apprenticeship while continuing high school) or work experience;
- Information about qualifications acquired (through education) and how these can ‘get them ahead’ in the sector; and
- Information about requirements, costs and location of education pathways required for careers in the sector.

### 1.3. Parents of students in Year 10/11/12

Across the parent groups, the common perception was that while the tourism & hospitality sector offers plenty of entry level jobs, it doesn’t appear to offer identifiable careers where hard work, training and dedication can be rewarded with promotion and advancement. Low pay, hard work and long hours were the key points of concern with the sector for most parents.

While many parents indicated a degree of concern about their children pursuing a longer term career in the sector, they would be happy for their children to work in the sector while supporting themselves through study or training, suggesting such roles offer great life skills including dealing with people, resilience and responsibility.
There was also a degree of concern expressed by a number of parents that the lack of professionalism in the sector (or at least their perceived lack of professionalism) means that hard work may not be sufficiently recognised and valued through formal recognition. This could be a barrier to career progression or advancement within the sector.

While all parents said they would support whatever career choice their children made, they clearly identified their role as ensuring their children investigated any option properly and were making an informed decision.

Parents suggested they would be concerned if their child wanted to pursue a career in the tourism & hospitality sector or the following reasons:

- Perceptions that while there are multiple entry level jobs, there are far fewer ways to build a career in the sector;
- A fear that they would need to work hard at a low level for a long time to progress anywhere;
- A view that even if there were limited pathways (of which they were generally unaware), there would be significant competition for these limited places;
- The perceived poor pay means that it may be difficult to support themselves (and potentially their own family) into the future;
- The industry does not provide roles suited to changing life stages (e.g. raising a family, getting a mortgage);
- The perception that the sector can be tenuous (e.g. many small business operators) and that other pathways offer greater job security;
- Some noted that there is often a drinking/drugs culture in the hospitality sector and wanted their children to steer clear of this.

Similarly to students, parents were generally aware that those wanting to pursue hospitality pathways would likely attend TAFE rather than University courses, but knowledge of actual courses on offer was very limited.

1.4. Those aged 25-35 who have left the sector in the past 3 years

Encouragingly, despite having left the sector to pursue alternate career pathways, these participants were still able to readily identify a number of positive aspects of working in the sector. These included interaction with a diverse range of interesting people; flexible work hours; development of portable skills that can facilitate domestic and overseas travel; the sector being a fun and social industry in which to work; and that it’s relatively easy to find work and enter the sector.

However, these positives were outweighed by negative aspects of working in sector. These included low pay; long shifts & unsociable working hours; limited career development opportunities; rude and difficult customers; and perceived poor management practices.

Across these groups, participants reported leaving the sector for one or a combination of the aforementioned negative aspects of the sector. Many participants had found careers in other fields linked to their own personal interests and no longer had a ‘passion’ for the tourism & hospitality industry based on their past experience. These participants described a potential return to the industry as a ‘step back’ in their career, most likely
requiring a reduction in pay and a decrease in job security.

A few participants were open to returning to the sector, albeit that this would depend on the type of role, hours of work and the rate of pay. These participants were after roles which allowed for career progression, more sociable working hours, better conditions and higher job security.

1.5. Mature aged workers (50+) working in the sector

A common theme amongst mature people working in tourism and hospitality is the desire to meet and interact with people and give them a good experience. This gives them a sense of pride and job satisfaction.

Only a minority of participants across these groups viewed their current employment as a career or had any aspiration for, or expectation of, career advancement or progression. Rather than being attracted to work in the sector by choice, many indicated staying in their jobs for long periods of time for fear that they won’t be able to get another job if they were to leave.

Almost all had undertaken some form of training in relation to their roles. TAFE / VET courses were the most commonly mentioned, but also university as well as some private training providers. For the majority, all training and education was conducted a long time ago. There was little perceived value in pursuing further training and education at this point in their lives.

Participants reported that most of the tourism and hospitality businesses they had worked for experienced quite high levels of staff turnover. This was commonly attributed to employers not valuing staff, and treating them like a number or commodity. Many felt the seasonal and highly casualised nature of the industry isn’t conducive to loyalty from either the employer or the employee.

Mature aged workers across the groups argued that employers in the sector wanted to hire complicit, younger, casuals that are happy to work shifts. It was noted that the younger people that fit this criteria aren’t doing the job because they love it - they’re doing it to support themselves through university studies or to pay for planned travel.

In order to address the high levels of turnover observed across the sector, mature aged workers argued that employers need to treat staff with more respect. They also need to hire people that have a customer service mentality and are appropriately motivated to provide a good service experience, not just people that are young and want a job.

1.6. Mature age workers (50+) who are unemployed or underemployed

Many mature age workers feel that age discrimination is a major problem in terms of trying to find work. Several participants reported having applied for many jobs and never even being offered an interview. This led to a degree of pessimism about being able to secure meaningful and sustainable employment into the future – despite a sense they still had a lot to offer in terms of transferable skills and life experience to a potential employer.

Unfortunately, these mature aged workers also perceived that the hospitality and tourism sector has a strong bias towards employing young people only. Given the perception of age discrimination
occurring across the general labour market, this poses a further challenge in terms of encouraging mature workers to apply for opportunities within the sector.

If these perceived barriers were adequately addressed, most mature age workers indicated they would be quite interested in taking up a role within the tourism and hospitality sector. The type of role was identified as somewhat important, with a number of participants indicating they may struggle if the work involves heavy physical work or long periods of time spent on their feet.

The perceived low rates of pay were identified as of concern to some participants. Some have greater flexibility to take up a lower-paying role than others depending on their personal situation. For the majority, this concern can be addressed if people know there are opportunities for advancement or pay increases within a reasonable timeframe.

Encouragingly, most mature age workers indicated they would be willing to undertake training or re-skilling in order to take up a role in the sector. However, a key question was raised as to who pays for this training. On-the-job or employer sponsored training was viewed as highly preferable, with most either unable or unwilling to self-fund additional training unless they were guaranteed of a job at completion.

1.7. Employers in the tourism & hospitality sector

Employers believe young people recognise some of the benefits the industry offers, in particular the opportunity to travel and fun working environment. However, these benefits do not reinforce the view that the industry offers long term career opportunities. Employers believe young people are discouraged from considering or remaining in the industry because the industry is perceived to involve hard work, high pressure, unsociable working hours, lower pay rates, a lack of prestige, and limited career paths.

There is a view that pay rates could discourage some young people even if they are otherwise interested in and well suited to the industry. However, those in the industry have mixed views about whether pay rates are lower than comparable roles. Some feel that compared to trades and mining in particular, tourism and hospitality do not pay well. However, this did not necessarily mean they feel that hospitality roles are underpaid or that the industry can pay more.

Employers in the tourism and hospitality industry generally feel they have the skills to train employees because they have worked their way through the industry to their current position and therefore know the job requirements at entry level. Many do not have formal industry qualifications and have worked their way up or bought into or started a business based on a hobby or passion. Consequently, they place less value on a formal qualification and more on industry experience and consider it necessary for new entrants to also start from the bottom.

While having a qualification is not necessarily a barrier to employment, those embarking on a career with a qualification but no industry experience will do better if they understand and acknowledge their lack of experience and are willing to start at the bottom.

Continuous training and a career path are both acknowledged by employers to be important to young people considering a career in tourism and hospitality. However, many small businesses - and even some larger businesses with relatively flat structures - feel they are not able to offer this. For those entering the industry to earn money while training for a different career, this is not a problem and these people also meet the needs of businesses that have casual roles to fill. However, those who have an
industry related qualification are likely to have career aspirations in the industry – and it was acknowledged that well defined career paths are relatively scarce across the sector.

Employers identified the following concerns about current tourism & hospitality training and education:

- Courses that are not necessarily based on specific workplace needs;
- Trainers who lack practical industry experience;
- Training being too theoretical and not equipping people with key practical skills (e.g. RSA does not cover dealing with an inebriated person);
- Hospitality courses that do not dedicate sufficient time to industry placements;
- Insufficient focus on computer/IT skills; and
- At TAFE, a perception of students having the attitude that you need to attend but not necessarily learn.

1.8. Conclusions

- The projected growth trajectory for the tourism and hospitality sector in Australia – and the scale of employment opportunities this growth will provide for – is not well known to the key audiences of interest.

- However, even if awareness of the opportunities is raised, there are a number of potential barriers to uptake of these roles. While roles within the sector are seen to offer a number of positive benefits (including offering fun & dynamic work, the ability to meet and interact with a diverse range of people and cultures, and the portability of skills both domestically and overseas), these tended to be outweighed by negative perceptions or risks of the sector (including poor pay, unsociable hours, difficult/rude customers, lack of job security and lack of defined career pathways).

- The key perception of ‘lots of entry level jobs, but very few careers’ tended to shape an overall perception of the sector as lacking professionalism and primarily the domain of unskilled workers.

- Parents are a critical influencer in relation to guiding their children through study and career pathway choices. At this point, the findings suggest that although parents would encourage their children to seek work in the sector to support them through study or other life goals, there is more reluctance to support a career in the sector given its perceived lack of sustainability and opportunity for growth and career advancement.

- Among small to medium employers across the sector, the ability to define and articulate defined career pathways is challenging from a number of perspectives:
  - Very few smaller employers have formalised HR policies or practices – with the size of their operations not seen to warrant any greater investment in this regard;
  - The preference for maximum flexibility in minimising labour costs (or at least aligning this with business demand) leads most staff to be engaged on a casual basis only;
  - There are actually very few avenues for promotion within small to medium businesses, with a competent worker in this field most likely needing to start their own business in terms of career progression.
Mature age workers (unemployed and underemployed) are willing to take up roles within the sector (and undertake training or re-skilling to do so), but are very cynical that employers in the sector would be genuine in offering them roles or invest in training & developing them.

People of prime working age (25 to 35) are leaving the sector due to unsociable hours, low pay, perceived exploitative practices by some managers, and frustration at a lack of opportunities for career progression.
2. Introduction

2.1. Background

Australia’s tourism industry is expected to be a major contributor to the country’s future economic growth. The industry contributes around $40 billion annually, a figure set to increase due to a steadily growing economy, lower fuel prices and the failing Australian dollar\(^4\). Internal tourism consumption totalled $113 billion in 2013-14\(^5\), with an aim to increase spending to $140 billion by 2020\(^6\). The industry employs almost 930,000 people, or 8.1 per cent of Australia’s total employment\(^7\).

Despite the positive outlook for the industry, many tourism and hospitality businesses already report a difficulty to find and retain skilled employees to service current demand. The Tourism Labour Force Report 2015-16 (the Report) estimates a current labour shortage of approximately 38,000 positions, with a gap of 123,000 (including roughly 59,000 skilled) employees projected by 2020\(^8\). Such shortages have the potential to constrain industry growth, hinder productivity, and prevent Australia from fully realising the economic benefits of rising domestic and international demand\(^6\).

There is a need for government and industry to work together to ensure the industry can meet this demand, particularly as Australia comes out of the mining boom and the focus shifts to service exports. Currently, vacancies are being filled using unskilled workers coming out of other sectors such as mining; however the Report recommends reversing this trend and increasing skilled worker employment, to ensure the sector remains competitive. Alleviating the issue is threefold: encouraging more people to take up training in tourism and hospitality fields, ensuring training is aligned with industry needs, and offering career development opportunities for those in the field to increase staff retention\(^5\).

According to the Report, the primary reason given for difficulty in recruiting was lack of required skills, due to lack of experience and misalignment of training to job-readiness. Perceptions that employees see their roles as too difficult, and view them only as short-term options, make it difficult for industry to retain staff and make use of built experience, with a lack of commitment named as the main reason for difficulty in retaining staff in the Report. These results are similar to those found in a study by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), which also reported that only 29 per cent of tourism and hospitality graduates remained employed in the field, despite 90 per cent rating the quality of their training as satisfactory (higher than all graduates at 87 per cent).

A report by Service Skills Australia notes a negative perception among young people that the tourism and hospitality industry does not offer long-term careers, underpinned by a lack of clear, limited entry-

\(^7\) According to the Austrade Request for Quotation
points (e.g. a university degree), and recommends the use of effective communications with young people, parents and school career advisers\(^9\).

The Government has taken action to address the issue, such as by pairing up with Tourism Australia to launch Tourism 2020, a long-term national tourism strategy designed to maximise the industry’s potential\(^9\) by increasing its competitiveness and improving tourism labour and skills\(^10\). It has also since begun rolling out Tourism Employment Plans (TEPs) in key regions in Australia as targeted action to alleviate shortages in key areas\(^11\). The previous research indicates that more needs to be done to encourage a wider pool of talented individuals to commit to this growing sector.

As such, research was required to understand why commitment rates are low, and what drives views of tourism and hospitality roles as lacking desirable, long-term career prospects. Austrade commissioned Colmar Brunton to conduct research to identify perceptions of tourism and hospitality careers held by young people in order to inform future work promoting these careers to young people, including encouraging the uptake of industry specific training.

The research focussed on young people, but also looked at parents’ views on careers in tourism and hospitality as they can influence young people’s career decisions. In addition, research with businesses was also undertaken to identify what they are looking for in employees and their views on providing career development opportunities.

Mature aged workers have been identified as a key source of labour in reducing the shortage, as the industry is well suited to people seeking fewer/flexible hours or seasonal work\(^6\). As such, the research sought to understand mature workers’ perceptions of tourism careers, and assess their willingness to re-skill. The information gathered from these populations will be used as a foundation on which to build a targeted and effective strategy to drive greater take-up of career and training opportunities available in the sector.

2.2. Research objectives

The objectives of the research were to:

- Identify perceptions of tourism and hospitality careers among young people, parents and mature-age workers;
- Identify tourism and hospitality businesses’ views on how industry careers are perceived and potential solutions to negative perceptions;
- Identify views of young people and parents on the quality and desirability of industry-related training and factors influencing these views; and
- Identify views of tourism and hospitality businesses on the quality and desirability of industry-related training.


3. Methodology

3.1. Qualitative research methodology

To allow sufficient exploration of the topics of interest, a qualitative methodology was used incorporating a series of face to face focus groups, online groups, face to face depth interviews and phone depth interviews.

To achieve the objectives of the study, a number of key target audiences were identified for inclusion in the research:

- **Students currently in Year 10, 11 or 12 who indicated a willingness to consider a career in the tourism and hospitality sector** (to explore their perceptions of the sector, awareness of opportunities in the sector and the training and career pathways open to those wanting to pursue a tourism and hospitality career);

- **Parents of students currently in Year 10, 11 and 12 who similarly indicated their children were open to a career in the tourism and hospitality sector** (to explore their role as influencers in the career consideration and decision pathway, whether tourism & hospitality pathways are considered in this process and their views on their children potentially pursuing a career in the sector);

- **People aged 25-35 who had left a career in the tourism & hospitality sector within the past 3 years** (to explore factors behind leaving the sector and whether they would consider re-entering the sector into the future);

- **Mature aged workers (50+) currently working in the tourism & hospitality sector** (to explore perceptions of the sector, why they choose to work in the sector, and their future career aspirations);

- **Mature age workers (50+) currently unemployed or underemployed** (to explore perceptions of the sector, interest in working in the sector and willingness to undertake training or re-skilling to join the sector); and

- **Small to medium employers in the tourism & hospitality sector** (to probe their views on labour supply in the sector, whether sector training matches the needs of industry and what the sector can offer new entrants).
A series of 22 focus groups were conducted across the following locations and across the following cohorts:

Table 1: Focus group schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year 10/11/12 students open to a career in the tourism &amp; hospitality sector</th>
<th>Parents of year 10/11/12 students open to a career in the tourism &amp; hospitality sector</th>
<th>Mature age workers (50+) not in the sector (unemployed or underemployed)</th>
<th>Mature age workers (50+) currently working in the sector</th>
<th>Those aged 25 – 35 that have left a career in the sector within the past 3 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 focus groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 focus groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairns</td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gold Coast</td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devonport</td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 focus group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National (online)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 online groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The views of small to medium sized employers in the sector were canvassed via a series of n=20, 1-hour depth interviews as per the following table.

Table 2: Depth Interview schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Interview Type (Phone/F2F)</th>
<th>Industry Type</th>
<th>Industry Flag</th>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Business Size</th>
<th>Number of employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 NSW</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Adventure Holidays &amp; Tours</td>
<td>Business Owner/CEO</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Total: 112 16 Full time 96 Contractors running the ships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 NSW</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Adventure Holidays &amp; Tours</td>
<td>Business Owner</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>12 - 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Size</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>Restaurants &amp; Bistros</td>
<td>Business Owner</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CAIRNS, QLD</td>
<td>F2F</td>
<td>Hospitality also Tourism</td>
<td>Tourist Attractions Information &amp; Services</td>
<td>Senior Leadership HR Manager</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Adventure Holidays &amp; Tours</td>
<td>Business Owner / Operator</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Travel Agents &amp; or Consultants</td>
<td>Business Owner</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>F2F</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>Accommodation – Hotels</td>
<td>Business Owner</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>Restaurants &amp; Bistros</td>
<td>Restaurant Manager (runs the restaurant)</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Tourist Attractions Information &amp; Services</td>
<td>Business Owner</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>F2F</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>Hotels/Pubs</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Hospitality (also Tourism)</td>
<td>Accommodation - Guest House</td>
<td>Business Owner</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>Hotels/Pubs</td>
<td>Manager/Director</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>F2F</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>Accommodation /</td>
<td>Business Owner</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All fieldwork was conducted between February 2 and February 11, 2016.

Discussion guides

Colmar Brunton worked closely with the Austrade project team to develop detailed discussion guides tailored to each of the respective target audiences of the study. Discussion guides for each audience can be found at Appendix A.

Locations

The following factors were considered in determining the locations for the focus groups and depth interviews:

- Analysis of the 2015 Tourism Labour Force Report identified that the demand for skilled workers and skilled labour shortages by states and territory. New South Wales, Victoria,
Queensland and Western Australia have the highest demand for skilled workers and the highest level of skilled labour shortages.

Further analysis of the 2015 Tourism Labour Force Report also identified the top 10 tourism regions by demand for skilled workers and skilled labour shortages. Included in the top 10 regions are the locations of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Gold Coast and Tropical North Queensland (Cairns).

We also considered the eight labour and skills hot spot regions across Australia that have been identified for the development of Tourism Employment Plans (TEPs). Included in the eight regions are the locations of Sydney, Tropical North Queensland (Cairns) and the North West and West Coast of Tasmania (Devonport).

Recruitment

To ensure the right participants were recruited for the focus groups and depth interviews, a detailed recruitment guide was developed and provided to Austrade for approval. The final recruitment screener is attached at Appendix B.

Moderation and incentives

All interviews and group discussions were conducted by senior, experienced and expert moderators. Focus group participants received an incentive of $80, and depth interview participants received $100.
4. Qualitative findings

4.1. Students (years 10/11/12)

Students were asked their perceptions of the Australian tourism & hospitality sector and what might be positive and negative about pursuing a career in the sector.

Most were reasonably positive towards career opportunities in the tourism & hospitality sector, with words such as “dynamic”, “fun”, and “sociable” used to describe opportunities in the sector. It was commonly noted that the sector was well suited to those who enjoy meeting and interacting with a diverse range of people.

The key benefits of pursuing a career in the sector were identified as:

- The diversity of roles, with opportunities spanning smaller restaurants and cafes through to large hotel chains and cruise ships;
- Opportunities for travel – both domestically and also the portability of the skills learned in the sector overseas – was a key benefit cited by many students; and
- The perception of many entry level roles across the sector, including those that require minimal training or qualifications.

The key negatives of potentially working in the sector were identified by students as:

- Long and unsociable hours (e.g. the peak periods such as weekends and holidays were noted as taking time away from socialising with friends and family);
- Having to deal with difficult/rude/demanding customers;
- Low pay (relative to other sectors) was mentioned by some, but typically as a secondary concern (those with part-time work in the hospitality sector were generally more knowledgeable on pay rates based of firsthand experience); and
- Concern about a lack of opportunity for advancement in a reasonable timeframe.

Career & study pathway consideration

Among students, knowledge of career pathways in the sector quite low – while many could identify ‘jobs’ in the sector, far fewer were able to identify what a ‘career’ in the sector might look like (apart from roles such a chef, which has a much more clearly defined training pathway through the apprenticeship system). There was also very limited awareness that the sector was on a strong growth trajectory and the forecast employee shortage across the sector.
Most respondents started thinking about their career options when subject choices had to be made in high school (most commonly around Year 10). Triggers for considering career options included undertaking work experience in a field of interest, when parents started talking about careers, when school results provided an indication of final marks, or when an opportunity came up to undertake an apprenticeship or commence a TAFE course in Year 11/12.

Some students recalled undertaking ‘career’ type units at Year 10 level (including how to job search, prepare a resume etc.). For some, this was accompanied by aptitude testing to identify career pathways that best match personality and skills.

Students indicated that parents do play a significantly influential role in career/course selection. This was evident not in terms of directing which course or career pathway a child should embark on, but rather in terms of ensuring options are considered in appropriate depth and have been considered from a range of perspectives (such as job security, opportunities for career progression, etc.).

Career and study exhibitions were a commonly referenced point of influence in terms of career interest. Many students said that such exhibitions allowed them the opportunity to question those promoting careers or education pathways, which was viewed as a far superior way to assess suitability for careers or study pathways than accessing written or online information only. Interestingly, across all student groups few could recall the tourism or hospitality sector having much of a presence at these events.

School career counsellors can play a very influential role in terms of career guidance and suggesting career and study pathways, albeit there was more variation observed across the student groups in terms of level of activity and contact with each student (e.g. some were reported to be very proactive and engaging with all students individually to discuss options and provide advice, others provided advice only if they were approached themselves). Similarly to the career expos, few students with interaction with school counsellors could recall them ever raising career pathways in the tourism & hospitality sector.

**Information needs when considering career and study pathways**

Overall, the majority of students across the groups indicated they had not yet made up their mind in relation to possible career pathways. As such, most students appeared open to influencing this decision – and at least getting tourism and hospitality in their consideration set – as opposed to already seeking out specific information on one or two pathways of interest.

Knowledge of formal training pathways in the tourism and hospitality sector were generally quite low across the student groups. A minority mentioned that there were perhaps more university pathway options open to those seeking a tourism-related career as opposed to hospitality career, but knowledge of actual courses was low.

While not on the radar for most students, the key questions they have about potential careers in the sector included:

- Information about expected type of work / work activities (and ideally don’t just tell them about it, get other young people already working in the sector to tell them in order to add credibility and relatability e.g. YouTube videos );
- Information about job opportunities / ability to find work in the sector;
Information about enjoyment / self-fulfilment that careers in the sector may offer;

Information about expected salary (and if starting salaries are low, how they can work their way up the ladder and be earning more in the future);

Information about and promotion of possible alternative career pathways or gaining exposure to the industry such as pre-apprenticeships (one day a week apprenticeship while continuing high school) or work experience;

Information about qualifications acquired (through education) and how these can ‘get them ahead’ in the sector; and

Information about requirements, costs and location of education pathways required for careers in the sector.

At this stage, few students reported having proactively searched for career related information. Search activity (if undertaken) tended to be limited to University or TAFE websites in terms of understanding pre-requisite or assumed prior knowledge for certain degree types.

A few students across the groups were already undertaking tourism and hospitality sector related TAFE courses as part of Year 11/12 studies, with peers often having been influential in driving awareness and interest in such courses. However, for the majority tourism and hospitality careers pathways (and associated formal training options) were generally not on their radar.

In discussing potential messaging to students about the scale of the opportunities emerging in the sector and how they can get involved, a number of participants referenced the Defence Force Recruitment ads that were broadly perceived to give the viewer a good insight into what life in the armed forces might be like. To this end, they suggested that promotion of the sector should be similarly ‘fast paced’ and ‘dynamic’ and allow industry participants to tell narratives about how they got their start in the sector, how they have progressed in the sector and what they enjoy about working in the sector. Facebook advertising, while described by some as annoying, was clearly an avenue for exploring in the promotion of tourism and hospitality career pathways.

4.2. Parents of Year 10/11/12 students

Perceptions of tourism & hospitality careers

As likely significant influencers of student career path decision making, parents were asked how they perceived the tourism and hospitality sector in Australia.

While the sector offers plenty of entry level jobs, it doesn’t appear to offer identifiable careers where hard work, training and dedication can be rewarded with promotion and advancement. Low pay, hard work and long hours were the key points of concern with the sector for most parents across these groups.

While many parents indicated a degree of concern about their children pursuing a longer term career in the sector, they would be happy for their children to work in the sector while supporting themselves through study or training, suggesting such roles offer great life skills including dealing with people, resilience and responsibility. Many recalled their own experiences of having ‘done their time’ in the sector while studying or as a stop-gap when between other employment.
In terms of choosing a career in the sector, some parents said they would be disappointed in terms of their child not fulfilling their potential or the opportunities that had been afforded to them (e.g. sacrifices by parents to send the kids to private schools). For these parents, there was a sense that their children could end up working alongside those that had not been afforded the same educational experiences for the same pay and conditions.

There was also a degree of concern expressed by a number of parents that the lack of professionalism in the sector (or at least their perceived lack of professionalism) means that hard work may not be sufficiently recognised and valued through formal recognition. This could be a barrier to career progression or advancement within the sector.

**Parents are a key influencer of their child’s study or career pathway**

While all parents said they would support whatever career choice their children made, they clearly identified their role as ensuring their children investigated any option properly and were making an informed decision.

While most parents were supportive of their children working in the sector to support themselves through study towards a different career pathway, most would be concerned if their child wanted to pursue a career in the sector for the following reasons:

- Perceptions that while there are multiple entry level jobs, there are far fewer ways to build a career in the sector;
- A fear that they would need to work hard at a low level for a long time to progress anywhere;
- A view that even if there were limited pathways (of which they were generally unaware), there would be significant competition for these limited places;
- The perceived poor pay means that it may be difficult to support themselves (and potentially their own family) into the future;
- The industry does not provide roles suited to changing life stages (e.g. raising a family, getting a mortgage);
- The perception that the sector can be tenuous (e.g. many small business operators) and that other pathways offer greater job security; and
- Some noted that there is often a drinking/drugs culture in the hospitality sector and wanted their children to steer clear of this.

**Awareness of formal study options**

Similarly to students, parents were generally aware that those wanting to pursue hospitality pathways would likely attend TAFE rather than University courses.

There was a degree of cynicism towards courses operated by full fee private colleges. Some felt these were run on a volume basis with little regard to quality of training or the ability of students to secure work following completion of the course. A number of parents felt this happens at a lower level also in the form of short courses such ‘Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA)’ and barista courses – they had funded their children to undertake these courses but there were very few jobs in relation to number of young people attending these courses.
Some parents noted that while they would support their child choosing to pursue a career in the sector, they would encourage their child to consider undertaking a business degree on the basis such skills could subsequently be applied in the tourism and hospitality sector (albeit in a middle management role as opposed to entry level role).

4.3. Those aged 25-35 who left the sector in the past 3 years

Experiences of working in the Tourism and Hospitality sector

In order to understand potential challenges the tourism and hospitality sector needs to address in terms of retaining staff within the sector, two focus groups were conducted with people aged 25 to 35 who had left a career within the sector over the past three years.

Encouragingly, despite having left the sector to pursue alternate career pathways, these participants were still able to readily identify a number of positive aspects of working in the sector. These included:

- The opportunity to work in roles where you interact with a diverse range of interesting people - both customers and other employees;
- The flexible work hours and times that are available to those working in the sector;
- Tourism and hospitality roles allowing development of portable skills that can facilitate domestic and overseas travel;
- That tourism and hospitality is generally a fun and social industry in which to work; and
- That it’s relatively easy to find work and enter the sector.

However, these positives were outweighed by negative aspects of working in sector. These included:

- Low pay and younger people exploited because they are unaware of their rights in regards to breaks, overtime, etc.;
- Long shifts;
- Unsociable working hours (i.e. required to work weekends and evenings);
- Limited career development opportunities;
- Rude and difficult customers; and
- Poor management practices.

Why they left the sector - and would they consider returning?

Across these groups, participants reported leaving the sector for one or a combination of the aforementioned negative aspects of the sector. Overall, the key factors motivating an exit from the sector included the unsociable hours, perceived poor management of staff, a lack of financial security (i.e. could not justify the hours worked for the pay received), a lack of an identified career path or the decision to pursue an interest in another area.

Many participants had found careers in other fields linked to their own personal interests and no longer had a ‘passion’ for the tourism and hospitality industry based on their past experience. These participants described a potential return to the industry as a ‘step back’ in their career, most likely requiring a reduction in pay and a decrease in job security.
A few participants were open to returning to the sector, albeit that this would depend on the type of role, hours of work and the rate of pay. These participants were after roles which allowed for career progression, more sociable working hours, better conditions and higher job security (with this last requirement commonly lined to a desire for a role with a larger employer with more developed staff development and retention policies and practices).

4.4. Mature workers (50+) currently employed in the tourism & hospitality sector

As with other groups, mature workers (50+ years of age) currently working in the sector were asked to describe the positive and negative factors associated with working in this industry.

Positives things identified about working in the tourism and hospitality sector among this group included:

- Meeting a diverse range of people;
- Making people happy - giving them a good experience was personally rewarding;
- Learning about other cultures;
- Travel and travel related perks (discounts, promotions etc.);
- Skills and experience that would permit work anywhere;
- The variety of work available;
- Flexibility of work hours; and
- Playing a role in one of Australia’s most important industries.

Conversely, mature workers in the sector were also able to identify some key negatives about working in the industry:

- The sector can be both seasonal and cyclical, which results in lost jobs or hours cut in off-peak periods;
- The highly casualised nature of the sector with few permanent positions;
- Hard and physical work (on feet all day);
- Shift work (incl. evenings and weekends);
- Long hours;
- Rude customers;
- Alcohol related abuse / violence;
- Some roles can be quite stressful (especially client facing roles);
- Low pay;
- The lack of career opportunities or ability to progress;
- Difficult to take time off in peak season; and
- A perception that employers in the sector are ageist, with a preference of providing opportunities (both at entry and for promotion) for young people.
Why are these people working in tourism and hospitality?

A common theme amongst mature people working in tourism and hospitality sector is the desire to meet and interact with people and give them a good experience. This gives them a sense of pride and job satisfaction.

Most are at a point in their lives where working reduced hours with a reasonable degree of flexibility suits their lifestyle (e.g. children have grown up, financial commitments not as large as they were previously).

Only a minority of participants across these groups viewed their current employment as a career or had any aspiration for, or expectation of, career advancement or progression. Rather, these roles were seen as jobs.

Rather than being attracted to work in the sector by choice, many indicated staying in their jobs for long periods of time for fear that they won’t be able to get another job if they were to leave.

Training and education

Almost all had undertaken some form of training in relation to their roles. TAFE / VET courses were the most commonly mentioned, but also university as well as some private training providers. The minimum for those in hospitality pertains to compulsory courses for responsible service of alcohol and gambling, as well as first aid and occupational health and safety.

For the majority, all training and education was conducted a long time ago. There was little perceived value in pursuing further training and education at this point in their lives. Most didn’t feel that further training would progress them in their employment. The exception was those employed by large companies, such as airlines and hotel chains - these employers provided more opportunities for training and more opportunities for progression.

Only a small minority are considering further education and training in relation to tourism and hospitality. Though some are either undertaking (or are considering) further training and education out of personal interest in an unrelated field or topic.

Hiring and retention

Participants reported that most of the tourism and hospitality businesses they had worked for experienced quite high levels of staff turnover. This was commonly attributed to employers not valuing staff, and treating them like a number or commodity. Again, the larger businesses in the sector (such as major hotels and airlines) were perceived to be better at attracting and retaining staff.

High turnover was also considered an industry issue. The seasonal and highly casualised nature of the industry isn’t conducive to loyalty from either the employer or the employee.

Mature aged workers across the groups argued that employers in the sector wanted to hire complicit, younger, casuals that are happy to work shifts. It was noted that the younger people that fit this criteria aren’t doing the job because they love it - they’re doing it to support themselves through university studies or to pay for planned travel.

In order to address the high levels of turnover observed across the sector, mature aged workers argued that employers need to treat staff with more respect. They also need to hire people that have a customer service mentality and are appropriately motivated to provide a good service experience,
not just people that are young and want a job. It was noted that while technical skills can be learned on the job, having the right service-oriented attitude cannot.

4.5. Mature workers – unemployed and underemployed

With the forecast shortfall of unskilled and skilled roles across the sector projected in coming years, focus groups were conducted with those aged 50+ who were either currently unemployed or underemployed (that is, they have some part time or casual work but a desire for more hours or paid work) to explore their perceptions of the sector and their views on potentially re-skilling to take up likely vacancies emerging across the industry.

Perceptions of age discrimination were common

It was evident from discussion in the groups that many mature age workers feel that age discrimination is a major problem in terms or trying to find work. Several participants reported having applied for many jobs and never even being offered an interview. Often they received no feedback on why they were unsuccessful, or where they did they were told they were either under-qualified or even over-qualified for the position. This led to a degree of pessimism about being able to secure meaningful and sustainable employment into the future – despite a sense they still had a lot to offer in terms of transferable skills and life experience to a potential employer.

Unfortunately, these mature aged workers also perceived that the hospitality and tourism sector has a strong bias towards employing young people only. Given the perception of age discrimination occurring across the general labour market, this poses a further challenge in terms of encouraging mature workers to apply for opportunities within the sector.

Willingness to consider taking up a role in the sector

If these perceived barriers were adequately addressed, most mature age workers indicated they would be quite interested in taking up a role within the tourism and hospitality sector. The type of role was identified as somewhat important, with a number of participants indicating they may struggle if the work involves heavy physical work or long periods of time spent on their feet. To this end, there was typically more interest in tourism related opportunities rather than hospitality roles – albeit those that were unemployed were more willing to consider any employment opportunity if the opportunity is a genuine one.

The perceived low rates of pay were identified as of concern to some participants. Some have greater flexibility to take up a lower-paying role than others depending on their personal situation. For the majority, this concern can be addressed if people know there are opportunities for advancement or pay increases within a reasonable timeframe (e.g. they won’t be stuck on an award level minimum for too long and know how to advance from this base level).

The flexible hours perceived to be on offer for many roles in the sector were welcome for some, who felt they would be able to structure hours around other commitments and interests. Others said they would much prefer a degree of certainty (e.g. a fixed number of minimum hours per week) in order to ensure they budget and can meet their financial commitments.
Willingness to retrain to take up roles in the sector

Encouragingly, most mature age workers across the groups indicated they would be willing to undertake training or re-skilling in order to take up a role in the sector. However, a key question was raised as to who pays for this training. On-the-job or employer sponsored training was viewed as highly preferable, with most either unable or unwilling to self-fund additional training unless they were guaranteed a job at completion. Some noted that if the Government has identified this as a key sector likely to face skills shortages in the short to medium terms, then this should be met by government funded training programs and placements within the sector.

Key barriers to entering the sector & being retained in the sector

Given the points made above about perceived age discrimination in general and the sense that the sector hires young people only, the biggest challenge to be overcome is convincing mature age workers that opportunities are genuine. Most argued that in order to achieve this, job advertisements for positions in the sector need to overtly encourage mature age workers to apply (e.g. by spelling this out).

From a retention perspective, evidence that employers in the sector are willing to invest in developing their older staff (such as ongoing training and development programmes) were identified as both an opportunity to advance from entry level roles and assurance that they are not just being viewed as occupying a job until they reach retirement age.

4.6. Employers in the tourism & hospitality sector

Employers’ perceptions of the tourism & hospitality sector in Australia

Tourism and hospitality businesses view a career in the industry as intrinsically rewarding in particular for those who are people persons. The opportunity to make a difference to another person’s life, even for a very short time and to actively contribute to positive interactions and special or memorable moments in the lives of others is a very strong source of personal and job satisfaction for these people. Others value the fun and camaraderie the industry offers, and do not feel this would be the experience in a desk based job or industries. The opportunity to travel is also a strong motivator, in particular for people considering entering the industry and those who love to travel. It is understood that hospitality experience is highly portable and can ‘take you around the world’. However, in the tourism industry, there are fewer opportunities for travel paid for by employers (famils) in recent years.

Those in the industry acknowledge there is a perception that the financial rewards are often lower than other industries but do not necessarily feel that the industry, in particular at entry level pays lower than it should, or that the industry can afford more. Furthermore, for those who have remained in and built a career in the industry, this has not been an insurmountable barrier. For some, the financial rewards are less important than job satisfaction and enjoyment, or they do not have an imperative to earn a high income, for example they are not the main income earner. Others have remained in the industry because they have found a way to make it financially rewarding, either through owning their own business, seeing an opportunity to turn a passion into a viable business or starting or buying a business in a field in-line with their experience, or working their way up to senior positions in organisations they are employed by. Those working in management roles for larger businesses have experienced how a career in tourism and hospitality can offer a career path with ample opportunity for progression; while those in small businesses are more likely to see a career path as leading to business ownership.
There is a view held by those in the industry who undertook their training and worked in Europe early in their career that compared to Australia, in Europe, hospitality is perceived as a profession, whereas in Australia the industry is less respected. However, employers also acknowledge this could also be a generational phenomenon that may have changed over time in Europe.

“There is the perception that the person giving the service is a servant.” (Business owner, Tourist Attractions, Information and Services, small)

While there appears to be broad acceptance of this, some believe the customer needs to change or feel the industry needs to “lift its game” particularly in terms of customer service and give the customer a reason to change this attitude.

“My wife and I stayed at Palazzo Versace on the Gold Coast and when I parked the young man who took my car, he was very pleasant and friendly, and as I got out he said “G’day mate” to me. He was friendly, but it’s not what you expect at Versace.” (General Manager, Holidays/resorts/tourism, medium)

Employers Perceptions of How Young People and Their Parents View the Industry

Employers believe young people recognise some of the benefits the industry offers, in particular the opportunity to travel and fun working environment. However, these benefits do not reinforce the view that the industry offers long term career opportunities.

Employers believe young people are discouraged from considering or remaining in the industry because the industry is perceived to involve, hard work, high pressure, unsociable working hours, lower pay rates, a lack of prestige, and limited career paths. However, the industry is considered to be easy to enter with many jobs requiring little or no formal training.

Many jobs in tourism and hospitality, in particular entry level jobs, but also more senior roles (such as executive chef) are fast paced and physically demanding. Some young people will thrive in the high pressure environment and enjoy the camaraderie and adrenalin, whilst others who struggle to keep up will not enjoy this type of environment (for example working in a commercial kitchen).

Furthermore, an acceptance that working in the industry will mean missing out on social and family activities is seen as necessary and something that some young people are not willing to give up when they have other options.

There is a view that pay rates could discourage some young people even if they are otherwise interested in and well suited to the industry. However, those in the industry have mixed views about whether pay rates are lower than comparable roles. Some feel that compared to trades and mining in particular, tourism and hospitality do not pay well. However, this did not necessarily mean they feel that hospitality roles are underpaid or that the industry can pay more.

Thus, some young people enter the industry as a stepping stone (as evidenced by the large numbers of students in the industry) or as a way to see the world rather than intending to pursue a career. This is not seen as entirely negative because some young people will enter for these reasons and end up staying because they are suited to the industry. Furthermore, a casual workforce is needed to fill the many casual positions in the industry especially in hospitality. However, the extent to which lack of prestige and perceived lack of a career path discourage young people from entering the industry is seen as a problem.
Those in the industry tend to think that parents view the industry similarly to young people. Even some who have had successful careers in tourism and hospitality actively discourage their children from the industry, hoping for an easier life for them. Others will encourage their children to enter the industry if they are passionate and well suited to it. Parents may see tourism and hospitality as a good option for their children who are not interested in continuing their formal education.

**Employing Young People in Tourism and Hospitality**

Young people are viewed by employers as a vital part of the industry. Positives employers associate with young people are; having the energy and enthusiasm that is required for the industry, a source of new ideas and initiatives and fresh thinking. Young people are also needed to replace those exiting the industry either due to retirement or moving on to other industries. In many instances, employers like to hire young people so they can train them their way, rather than having to ‘fix’ bad habits learnt by other employers. Having said that, employers often prefer to employ young people who have at least some experience in the industry. Experience provides an understanding of what the industry is about and is associated with a lower likelihood of leaving due because the job is not what was expected. Experienced staff are also preferred by businesses with limited resources to train young people. This is particularly apparent in the travel industry where some smaller travel agencies try to hire people who have received training as a travel agent from one of the large players in the industry on the basis that they have the required skills to do the job if they have completed that training.

One of the most common complaints about young people entering the industry is that there are not enough of them. This appears to be a problem in the case of chefs (entering apprentices) and travel agents in particular.

When employers may point out differences between young people today and their own generation, this does not detract from the value of young people as employees nor does it mean they are unwilling to employ young people. There is a perception that young people in Australia today have a great deal of choice and therefore are less willing than previous generations to stay in a job that is not quickly meeting their expectations or in which they cannot quickly progress or see a career path. However, this is not perceived as an unrealistic assessment of many jobs in hospitality, in particular of those jobs offered by small and medium businesses.

**The Importance of Soft Skills versus Technical Skills**

Soft skills are generally considered a must have for the industry irrespective of the job role or level. Soft skills include, personality (being a people person), a positive attitude towards customers and willingness to help others, flexibility, a good level of energy and enthusiasm and a willingness to learn. For entry level roles, employers who have the capacity to train new staff are likely to be positively predisposed to somebody with these soft skills. If they also have some experience this will also be well regarded. However, some employers do prefer to hire those with no experience and train them their own way.

The importance of technical skills depends on a number of factors including the requirements of the job, and the employer’s capacity to train staff. For more senior or specialised roles, for example financial controller, executive chef, or gaming operator, technical skills are vital, however the applicant must still be a good fit with the organisation.
Employers’ capacity to provide on the job training and career development for employees

Employers in the tourism and hospitality industry generally feel they have the skills to train employees because they have worked their way through the industry to their current position and therefore know the job requirements at entry level. On the job training is also felt by many to be the most effective way to train staff. However, tight profit margins can mean that some businesses are not able to give new or inexperienced team members as much time as they would prefer to learn the job before they need to be able to carry out their duties independently.

“The majority of training is done under the pump” (Owner, restaurants and bistros, small)

Therefore, in addition to bringing demonstrated commitment to the industry, hiring staff in entry level or junior roles with some industry experience can also ease the burden of training. As discussed above, some jobs require particular technical skills (i.e. travel agent) or are regulated (i.e. chef), and smaller employers in particular may prefer to hire qualified staff for these roles rather than take on responsibility for training.

Many owners or managers of small and medium tourism and hospitality businesses do not have formal industry qualifications and have worked their way up, or bought into or started a business based on a hobby or passion. Consequently, they place less value on a formal qualification and more on industry experience and consider it necessary for new entrants to also start from the bottom. Employers indicate that even if a candidate has completed a hospitality degree or diploma or other qualification the real training starts on the job and they should not expect to start at a more senior level because of their qualification. Ideally, they should prioritise getting some practical experience while studying if this is not a significant component of their course. Institutions that are understood to offer adequate experience along with technical training are hotel schools which include longer (6 month) industry placements in addition to classroom learning.

“They probably won’t use what they have learnt for a couple of years.” (Assistant Hotel Manager, Holidays and Resorts, medium but part of a larger hotel group)

“We had a manager with training but no experience, he had a lack of respect because he didn’t know what he was talking about because he hadn’t done it. It’s different to a job as an accountant.” (Restaurant manager, Restaurants and bistros, medium)

Countering negative perceptions of tourism and hospitality careers

While some, particular smaller businesses do not feel they have done anything to counter negative perceptions of tourism and hospitality careers, some businesses feel they have positively contributed to industry perceptions. Actions included:

- Becoming an employer of choice;
- Providing a fun and safe environment;
- Creating a culture where employees are given the opportunity to have a say in the running of the business, in particular issues that impact them;
- Reinforcing and practising high standards in the business;
- Being aware of and considering broader issues outside the travel and hospitality industry;
- Guest speaking at universities and other learning institutions; and
Founding a tourism group of local operators.

Some feel the industry needs support to change the general public’s view of people in service roles (i.e. that the person giving the service is a servant). The expectation that weekends and evenings are not work times is also seen by some as an out-dated concept in this age of 24 hour cities. However, others feel this will always be an issue and something that those in the industry need to accept.

Views on the quality and desirability of industry-related training

As discussed above, soft skills are a ‘must have’ in the tourism and hospitality industry. Furthermore, when employing staff in entry level roles, industry experience is generally regarded more highly than either industry specific or generalist qualifications. The tendency to recruit based on experience rather than qualifications carries over to more senior roles, especially among small and medium businesses, though some larger businesses have a greater appreciation of formal qualifications especially for senior roles.

Those in the industry perceive it as unique in that it is easy to enter because formal qualifications are not required for most roles. However, it is also perceived as a highly skilled industry where industry specific skills are vital to carer progression. On the job training is understood to be the best way to learn the required skills largely because it is such a ‘hands on’ industry. Those in the industry perceive it as very different from office based industries and believe that good managers do not sit behind a desk - they maintain a hands-on approach and intimately know their business, their customers and the level of service their business is providing. There is acknowledgement that this ‘hands on’ aspect of the industry contributes to the industry being underrated by those looking for a professional career.

Many in the industry are aware of the significant value of tourism and hospitality to the economy; however this alone will not make it an attractive industry to pursue a career. There is some understanding that the tourism and hospitality industry needs to improve its’ game to become more attractive to young people choosing a career path and that increasing professionalism through better training and career path opportunities would help achieve this.

Expectations of hospitality graduates are generally low signalling a lack of confidence in the current industry educational offering. Furthermore, there is an expectation from employers that those with an industry qualification but no experience will still need to start from the bottom and work their way up. However, the young person trying to enter the industry with a qualification but no experience, may feel they have more skills than the industry perceives and therefore expect to enter at a higher level than they are likely to be employed and have unrealistic pay expectations. Naturally this can lead to disappointment among these young people and frustration among employers. Overall, tourism and hospitality courses are felt to provide an unrealistic view of what working in the industry is about.

“They think they can chop onions because they chopped one at school, then they get a job and they have to chop 10 onions, then see how they feel about chopping onions. It gives them a taste of the job, but not a realistic one.” (General Manager, Holidays/resorts/tourism, Queensland)

“You learn a lot, but whatever you learnt goes by the wayside.” (Manager, Travel lodge)

One exception is hotel schools, where students receive both classroom tuition and extensive real world practical experience, including 6-month industry placements. Hotel schools were considered by some, to offer the best industry qualification due to this real world experience element. Some employees are more likely to value an industry qualification, in particular larger businesses in the
hospitality industry which also offer more structured career paths and professional management roles. Furthermore, a minority in the industry value achievement of a tertiary level qualification from any discipline as an indication of a willingness to learn or one element of a broad life experience that can be helpful when dealing with the public generally and/or selling luxury holidays or experiences.

Employers who themselves have a tertiary level qualification tend to place greater value on either a generalist university or hospitality school qualification compared to those who do not have a tertiary level qualification. These employers may be owners of smaller business or employed managers of larger businesses. The high incidence of hospitality business owners and managers who do not have a formal industry or general tertiary qualification (and therefore place less value on this) is a barrier to industry support for formal training.

Feasibility of addressing skill gaps with industry training packages

Many hospitality and tourism businesses operate on low margins. Furthermore, being one of the largest costs for tourism and hospitality businesses, controlling wage costs is vital. Time taken to develop or deliver training contributes to lower productivity, at least in the short term, and this is not always affordable or acceptable to business owners and managers.

Larger businesses, branches of larger businesses, companies belonging to a parent company and franchises have better access to more structured in-house training and are often able to take advantage of training modules developed elsewhere in the business. Furthermore, larger businesses with more formalised HR policies are more likely to have structured career paths and associated training. In contrast, the majority of small and even medium businesses in the sector do not even have a dedicated full time or part time HR professional with this responsibility likely falling on the manager of the business.

Smaller businesses are therefore limited in the amount of time and money they can spend on training whether it is ad hoc or formal. Small businesses are also likely to lack the expertise to develop formal training and even if they had the expertise, they may hire so infrequently as to make it impractical to develop training materials for one off or very infrequent use. Overall, the implementation of anything but ad hoc on the job training is beyond the reach of many businesses in the sector, thus the strong preference to hire somebody with industry experience who is ‘tried and tested’ and can be reference checked.

Employers identified the following concerns about current tourism and hospitality training and education:

- Courses that are not necessarily based on specific workplace needs;
- Trainers who lack practical industry experience;
- Training being too theoretical and not equipping people with key practical skills (e.g. RSA does not cover dealing with an inebriated person);
- Hospitality courses that do not dedicate sufficient time to industry placements;
- Insufficient focus on computer/IT skills; and
- At TAFE, a perception of students having the attitude that you need to attend but not necessarily learn.
Affordable training that can be undertaken as individual units is attractive to tourism and hospitality businesses. Examples of training offered to staff and delivered by external training providers include:

- Responsible Service of Alcohol (though some employers leave this up to staff members to maintain this as it is their responsibility to have this);
- Fire safety;
- First aid;
- Product training (by suppliers);
- Excel and Powerpoint;
- Anti-corruption (online training);
- Marketing; and
- Business finance.

**Developing and promoting career pathways in tourism and hospitality businesses**

Continuous training and a career path are both acknowledged by employers to be important to young people considering a career in tourism and hospitality. However, many small businesses - and even some larger businesses with relatively flat structures - feel they are not able to offer this. For those entering the industry to earn money while training for a different career, this is not a problem and these people also meet the needs of businesses that have casual roles to fill. However, those who have an industry related qualification are likely to have career aspirations in the industry – and it was acknowledged that well defined career paths are relatively scarce across the sector.
5. Conclusions

Based on the findings across the focus groups and depth interviews from this study, Colmar Brunton makes the following conclusions for Austrade’s consideration.

- The projected growth trajectory for the tourism and hospitality sector in Australia – and the scale of employment opportunities this growth will provide for – is not well known to the key audiences of interest. All participants expressed a desire to be better informed about the projected growth in the sector and how they can potentially be a part of this.

- However, even if awareness of the opportunities is raised, there are a number of potential barriers to uptake of these roles. While roles within the sector are seen to offer a number of positive benefits (including offering fun and dynamic work, the ability to meet and interact with a diverse range of people and cultures, and the portability of skills both domestically and overseas), these tended to be outweighed by negative perceptions or risks of the sector (including poor pay, unsociable hours, difficult/rude customers, lack of job security and lack of defined career pathways).

- The key perception of ‘lots of entry level jobs, but very few careers’ tended to shape an overall perception of the sector as lacking professionalism and being primarily the domain of unskilled workers. Knowledge of formal training pathways across the sector was very low among students and parents, while small to medium employers in the sector frequently indicated they valued practical experience over formal qualifications (most commonly on the basis that an experienced employee would be less costly to train and deliver value to the business from the outset of their employment, and because formal training has insufficient practical content to deliver ‘work ready’ graduates).

- Parents are a critical influencer in relation to guiding their children through study and career pathway choices. At this point, the findings suggest that although parents would encourage their children to seek work in the sector to support them through study or other life goals, there is more reluctance to support a career in the sector given its perceived lack of sustainability and opportunity for growth and career advancement. It is evident that given many of the roles in the sector are open to unskilled entrants, parents commonly aspired for their children to aim beyond this and to fulfil their potential.

- Among small to medium employers, the ability to define and articulate defined career pathways is challenging from a number of perspectives:
  - Very few smaller employers have formalised HR policies or practices – with the size of their operations not seen to warrant any greater investment in this regard;
  - The preference for maximum flexibility in minimising labour costs (or at least aligning this with business demand) leads most staff to be engaged on a casual basis only;
  - There are actually very few avenues for promotion within small to medium businesses, with a competent worker in this field most likely needing to start their own business in terms of career progression.
Mature age workers (unemployed and underemployed) are willing to take up roles within the sector (and undertake training or re-skilling to do so), but are very cynical that employers in the sector would be genuine in offering them roles or invest in training and developing them. They need evidence that they are welcome and that applying for roles will not be a waste of their time.

People of prime working age (25 to 35) are leaving the sector due to unsociable hours, low pay, perceived exploitative practices by some managers, and frustration at a lack of opportunities for career progression. Few express a willingness to return to the sector, with most having secured employment in sectors where these factors are either a non-issue or are significantly less of an issue for them.
6. Appendix A: Discussion guides

6.1. Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Introduce name and company</td>
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**PRIVACT ACT REQUIREMENTS**

- Describe subject – “To help us understand motivations and barriers to considering a career in the tourism and hospitality industry.”
- State maximum duration of session (90 minutes)
- Give assurance that information and opinions will be used for research purposes only and that there are no right or wrong answers
- State that answers will be combined with other participants and will remain confidential
- State that you would prefer that they answered all the questions, but if there is anything they would prefer not to answer/opinions that they would prefer to keep to themselves, then that’s fine
- Reveal Client identity – “The research is being conducted for the Australian Trade Commission, otherwise known as Austrade.”
- **Recording** – “Today’s session will be audio recorded with your permission. Tapes will only be used for research purposes and will be retained for three months after the completion of the project.”
- **Observation** - Describe who if relevant (clients, CBR staff), describe how (one way mirror, closed circuit TV), give assurance that if any one recognises respondent they will cease to observe
- **Facilities (i.e. toilets), food and drinks provided, mobiles off**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC 2: WARM UP</th>
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<td>- Respondent to introduce</td>
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<td>- First name</td>
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<td>- Age</td>
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<td>- Grade in school / level of schooling completed</td>
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<td>- Hobbies / interests</td>
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<td>- Career ambitions</td>
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<td>- Current priorities in life</td>
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• Questions before starting
TOPIC 3: Drivers & Barriers of Tourism & Hospitality Careers

SELF COMPLETION ACTIVITY Before we start the discussion in full we are going to do a short exercise. Could you please all fill in this one page of questions individually and then we can use your answers to kick start the discussion.

- Rate on a scale of 0 to 10 the appeal of:
  - A career focused on the tourism sector
  - A career focused on the hospitality sector
  - A career focused on the travel sector *(Note: as a comparative point)*
  - A career focused on business and management *(Note: as a comparative point)*
  - A career focused on providing a professional service to customers *(Note: as a comparative point)*
  - A career focused on a trade or skill e.g. builder, plumber, electrician *(Note: as a comparative point)*
  - Working in a restaurant
  - Working in a hotel
  - Being a supervisor of others in the hospitality / tourism industry

- What are all the positives you can think of about working in the tourism and hospitality sector?
- What are all the negatives you can think of about working in the tourism and hospitality sector?

GENERAL DISCUSSION:
- How would you describe the tourism and hospitality industry within Australia?
- What do you think working in the tourism and hospitality industry would involve?
- What would appeal about undertaking a career in tourism and hospitality industry? PROBE IF NECESSARY What about the hours of work or the pay rates?
- What doesn’t appeal about undertaking a career in the tourism and hospitality industry? PROBE IF NECESSARY What about the hours of work or the pay rates?
- Does seeing a particular career in the media, such as on Masterchef for example, positively or negatively impact on your decision to consider a career in tourism and hospitality?
- In your ratings of 0 – 10 were there any that stood out from the others, e.g. any that you rated higher or lower than others? What sorts of ratings did you give careers in the tourism and hospitality sectors?
- Thinking about career options for yourself, when did you first start thinking about these? How old were you at the time? Talk me through what you were thinking about at the time.
  - Were there specific sources of advice or information that helped? PROBE IF NECESSARY This could be anything that you saw or read, or someone you spoke to or discussed your choices with, or somewhere you went to obtain information. Have the career choices of your friends had an impact on the careers you are considering? IF YES In what way/s?
- FOR THOSE CONSIDERING A CAREER IN THE TOURISM & HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY:
  - Why are / what made you consider a career in tourism and hospitality?
  - Why did you choose this over other career options?
  - What are you most looking forward to in your career pathway?
• How will a career in the tourism and hospitality industry help you with your life goals? How does this compare to other options?
• When thinking about further education and training options in the tourism and hospitality industry did you have any concerns or worries? Are there any positives about the education and training available for the tourism and hospitality industry?
• When thinking about your career path in this industry did you have any concerns or worries?

• FOR THOSE NOT CONSIDERING A CAREER IN THE TOURISM & HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY:
  • Have you ever considered a career in tourism and hospitality? Why? Why not?
  • For what reasons do you think it might not be the best option for you?
  • What sort of other career options are you considering? Why do these appeal over tourism and hospitality?
  • When thinking about careers in tourism and hospitality, do you have any concerns about:
    ▪ Education or training options PROBE why?
    ▪ Availability of education and training PROBE why?
    ▪ Career pathways / this being a long term career PROBE why?

TOPIC 4: Criteria of Choice & Consideration Set

• Is / did anyone consider going to university or VET training? Which type? Why/why not?
• What are the key factors you considered/are considering while deciding to undertake further education and training?
  PROMPT IF NECESSARY:
  • Academic results, personality, background, the educational institution (i.e. University, TAFE provider), the course, the experience, something else…
  • And which of these was the most important in your considering undertaking / deciding to undertake further education or training?
• What are / were the most important factors when deciding on an education or training provider?
• What are / were the most important factors when deciding on a course?
• GO AROUND THE GROUP FOR EACH PERSON TO COMMENT: At this point in time what are your top two / three preferences for further education and training and why. Be as specific about what and where as you can if you know these details.

TOPIC 5: Decision Making Process for Tourism & Hospitality Training

Now thinking specifically again about tourism and hospitality training …
• What sort of training is available for someone wanting to enter this sector? INITIALLY JUST GAIN TOP OF MIND THOUGHTS BEFORE PROBING SPECIFICALLY FOR where, who, type of training.
• What sort of further education / higher education is available for someone wanting to enter this sector? AGAIN WAIT UNTIL FULLY UNPROMPTED RESPONSES BEFORE PROBING where, who, name of
facility, type of course, degree / diploma, level of higher education available.

- Is there anywhere else you could get training and education if you wanted to enter this sector?
- Do you have any concerns about the training and education available for people wanting to enter the tourism and hospitality sector? Why do you feel this way?
- How do you think you would go about making a final decision to enter the tourism and hospitality sector?
  - What sort of process would you take?
  - What sort of information would you need?
  - Where would you need information from?
  - Who would you talk to? Why?
  - Who is talking to you? Are you listening? Why?
  - When would you / did you start thinking about this sort of decision i.e. what grade?
  - How long would you need to come to a decision?
- Would there be anything or anyone who would potentially make this decision easier for you? What? Why?
- Have there been any challenges to date about trying to make a decision about your future with regards to a career or further training and education?

**TOPIC 6: Information Needs & Sources** 15 mins

We’ve just talked about some of the information we would need to decide to enter into the tourism and hospitality sector. Let’s quickly recap on these …. GROUP OR MODERATOR TO SUMMARISE

- Any other information you would need / want?
- What is the most important information you thing you might need?
- What information could you hear / get that may make it easier to decide to enter into this sector?
- What information could you hear / get that may dispel a myth or reduce your concern about this sector?

Now I want to think about specific information sources:

- What information sources have you accessed / would you access to get information about the tourism and hospitality sector careers?
- What information sources have you accessed / would you access for other careers?
- PROBE FOR EACH SOURCE MENTIONED How do you use this information?
- What sources are most useful? Why?
  - What sources are most useful when starting to think about a career? Getting your options?
  - What sources are most useful when investigating your options?
  - What sources are most useful to get details on courses or further training?
- PROMPT WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS IF NECESSARY:
  - **Online**: which websites have you accessed for education, training or job searching? Why? Which social media tools (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, YouTube, blogs, news/social platforms) have you accessed? Why?
- **Events/expos:** which ones? Why? What about careers days – which ones? What about University career days?

- **Printed publications:** which ones (e.g. newspapers, magazines)? Why?

- How do the printed sources compare to online information (e.g. TAFE website)?

- How do these compare to talking to someone (e.g. open day stall, calling the training provider)?

- How do your parents factor into your decision making process? Do you talk to them about it? What do you talk to them about? How does this influence you in comparison to other information you get from elsewhere?

- Have your parents accessed any information related to your decisions about education or work? IF YES do you know whether they have found this information useful / interesting / relevant? Why / why not?

- Do careers advisors / guidance counsellors factor into your decision making process? Have you talked to them? What do you talk to them about? How does this influence you in comparison to other information you get from elsewhere?

**TOPIC 7: Key Messages & Moving Forward**

- What types of information are/were you most interested in when considering education and training? i.e. Media content about the success/offerings of particular industries (i.e. salary offerings, vacancies, remuneration, career progression, hours of work), provider and course quality, location and transport, the experiences of others (e.g. friends, peers), advice from career advisor, the cost of training, etc.

- Which of these are most important? Why is this?

- How do you think training and education providers can best communicate with prospective learners like you?

- How do you think the tourism and hospitality sector can best communicate with you? What do they need to be saying to get considered as you make your decisions?
  - **PROBE IF NECESSARY** Should they be telling you about …
  - The type of career you can have in the industry
  - The adventure and excitement
  - The reality of the industry
  - Career pathways / opportunities for skilled employees
  - That you can be a skilled professional in this industry
  - Dispelling myths / concerns? Which ones?
  - Hours of work
  - Financial information e.g. pay rates, non-salary benefits etc.

- What sorts of information sources/channels can you think of that could be developed in the future to help provide information about a career in the tourism and hospitality sector? To you? To your parent(s) (if relevant)?
  - When someone is first looking for information on career and training options?
  - When someone is thinking about training or working in the sector?
  - When someone has decided to train or work in the sector?
  - When someone has enrolled further training or education in the sector?
Currently there is a problem where the tourism and hospitality sector needs far more trained and skilled employees who treat it as a long term career. What sorts of things need to be done or said for more people to consider being trained in this industry or to consider it as a long term career option?

- What negative perceptions should most be focused on turning around? Why? How?
- PROBE IF NECESSARY
- Long term career / short term positions
- Limited career path
- Hard work / labour focused / unskilled profession
- Difficult to get into
- Hours of work
- Financial information e.g. pay rates, non-salary benefits etc.

What would a job in the tourism industry have to look / be like to be appealing to young people? IF NECESSARY PROMPT ON type of role, culture, career opportunities, training available, stable environment, excitement etc.

**TOPIC 9: Closing and thanking** 5 mins

- Inform respondents that it is the end of the discussion and thank them for their time and opinions.
- State that as this is market research, it is carried out in compliance with the Privacy Act / information provided will only be used for research purposes.
- Remind them that you are from Colmar Brunton. Advise if any queries, call the Market Research Society’s free Survey Line on 1300 364 830 or CBR on (1800 555 145).
- Ask for any final comments?
- Issue incentives - ensure respondent signs “Qual Validation Report & Acknowledgement of Reimbursement”.
- Complete comments section of “Qual Validation Report & Acknowledgement of Reimbursement”.
6.2. Parents

**TOPIC 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

- Introduce name and company

**PRIVACT ACT REQUIREMENTS**

- Describe subject – “To help us understand motivations and barriers for young people considering a career in the tourism and hospitality industry.”
- State maximum duration of session (90 minutes)
- Give assurance that information and opinions will be used for research purposes only and that there are no right or wrong answers
- State that answers will be combined with other participants and will remain confidential
- State that you would prefer that they answered all the questions, but if there is anything they would prefer not to answer/opinions that they would prefer to keep to themselves, then that’s fine
- Reveal Client identity – “The research is being conducted for the Australian Trade Commission, otherwise known as Austrade.”
- **Recording** – “Today’s session will be audio recorded with your permission. Tapes will only be used for research purposes and will be retained for three months after the completion of the project.”
- **Observation** - Describe who if relevant (clients, CBR staff), describe how (one way mirror, closed circuit TV), give assurance that if any one recognises respondent they will cease to observe
- **Facilities (i.e. toilets), food and drinks provided, mobiles off**

**TOPIC 2: WARM UP**

- Respondent to introduce
  - First name
  - Working status / profession
  - Number of children
  - Information about child about to enter further education or workforce:
    - Age
    - First child to make this decision
    - Grade in school or level of schooling completed
    - Their interests
    - Any career ambitions or preferences
- Questions before starting
SELF COMPLETION ACTIVITY Before we start the discussion in full we are going to do a short exercise. Could you please all fill in this one page of questions individually and then we can use your answers to kick start the discussion.

- Rate on a scale of 0 to 10 the appeal of:
  - A career focused on the tourism sector
  - A career focused on the hospitality sector
  - A career focused on the travel sector (*Note: as a comparative point*)
  - A career focused on business and management (*Note: as a comparative point*)
  - A career focused on providing a professional service to customers (*Note: as a comparative point*)
  - A career focused on a trade or skill e.g. builder, plumber, electrician (*Note: as a comparative point*)
  - Working in a restaurant
  - Working in a hotel
  - Being a supervisor of others in the hospitality / tourism industry
- What are all the positives you can think of about working in the tourism and hospitality sector?
- What are all the negatives you can think of about working in the tourism and hospitality sector?

GENERAL DISCUSSION:
- How would you describe the tourism and hospitality industry within Australia?
- What do you think working in the tourism and hospitality industry would involve?
- What would appeal about undertaking a career in tourism and hospitality industry? PROBE IF NECESSARY What about the hours of work or the pay rates?
- What doesn’t appeal about undertaking a career in the tourism and hospitality industry? PROBE IF NECESSARY What about the hours of work or the pay rates?
- Does seeing a particular career in the media, such as on Masterchef for example, positively or negatively influence your perception of careers in tourism and hospitality?
- In your ratings of 0 – 10 were there any that stood out from the others, e.g. any that you rated higher or lower than others? What sorts of ratings did you give careers in the tourism and hospitality sectors?
- What are your perceptions of the tourism and hospitality industry as a career based on? PROBE personal experience, perception

Now going back to thinking specifically about your child …
- Are they actively thinking about their next steps to working or further education?
- How far down the process are they?
- At what stage / grade / age did they start thinking about this? Initially v. actively?
- What were you thinking at this stage?
- Were you talking to them about their choices or options? Describe this for me?
o How vocal were you being?
o How much assistance were they seeking?
o What sort of industries were you encouraging them to consider? Why?

- Off the top of your head, were there any specific sources of advice or information that helped during these early stages?
- Are any of your children considering or open to considering a career in the tourism and hospitality industry?

- FOR THOSE CONSIDERING A CAREER IN THE TOURISM & HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY:
  - Why do you believe they are considering a career in tourism and hospitality?
  - Why did they choose this over other career options?
  - What do you believe they are most looking forward to?
  - How does this compare to other options?
  - What do you think the reality will be like for them pursuing this industry?
  - When thinking about further education and training options in the tourism and hospitality industry did you have any concerns or worries? Are there any positives about the education and training available for the tourism and hospitality industry?
  - Do you feel that this industry offers them a career path? Are there any concerns or worries about this?

- FOR THOSE NOT CONSIDERING A CAREER IN THE TOURISM & HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY:
  - Was your child ever open to considering or actively considered a career in tourism and hospitality? Why? Why not?
  - For what reasons do you think it might not be the best option for them?
  - What sort of other career options are they considering? Why do these appeal over tourism and hospitality?
  - When thinking about careers in tourism and hospitality, do you have any concerns about:
    - Education or training options PROBE why?
    - Availability of education and training PROBE why?
    - Career pathways / this being a long term career PROBE why?

TOPIC 4: Criteria of Choice & Consideration Set 10 mins

- Is anyone’s child anyone consider going to university or VET training? Which type? Why/why not?
- What are the key factors they considered/are considering while deciding to undertake further education and training?
  - Did you talk to them specifically about important factors to consider? Which ones? Why are they important?

PROMPT IF NECESSARY:
- Academic results, personality, background, the educational institution (i.e. University, TAFE
TOPIC 5: Decision Making Process for Tourism & Hospitality Training  
10 mins

Now thinking specifically again about tourism and hospitality training …

- What sort of training is available for someone wanting to enter this sector? INITIALLY JUST GAIN TOP OF MIND THOUGHTS BEFORE PROBING SPECIFICALLY FOR where, who, type of training.
- What sort of further education / higher education is available for someone wanting to enter this sector? AGAIN WAIT UNTIL FULLY UNPROMPTED RESPONSES BEFORE PROBING where, who, name of facility, type of course, degree / diploma, level of higher education available.
- Is there anywhere else young people could get training and education if you wanted to enter this sector?
- Do you have any concerns about the training and education available for young people wanting to enter the tourism and hospitality sector? Why do you feel this way?
- Please explain to me how your child might go about making a final decision to enter the tourism and hospitality sector?
  - What sort of process might occur?
  - What sort of information would be needed? By your child? By you?
  - Where would they / you need information from?
  - Who would they talk to? Why?
  - What sort of role do you have in this decision making process?
  - How long to come to a decision?

TOPIC 6: Information Needs & Sources  
15 mins

We’ve just talked about some of the information that might be needed either by our child or for us to help them make a decision to enter the tourism and hospitality sector …. GROUP OR MODERATOR TO SUMMARISE

- Any other information would you or they need / want?
- What is the most important information you think you or they might need?
- What information could you or they hear / get that may make it easier to decide to enter into this sector?
- What information could you or they hear / get that may dispel a myth or reduce your concern about this sector?

Now I want to think about specific information sources:
- What information sources have you accessed / would you access to get information about the tourism and hospitality sector careers?
- What information sources have you accessed / would you access for other careers?
- PROBE FOR EACH SOURCE MENTIONED How do you use this information?
- What sources are most useful? Why?
  - What sources are most useful when starting to think about a career? Getting your options?
  - What sources are most useful when investigating your options?
  - What sources are most useful to get details on courses or further training?
- PROMPT WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS IF NECESSARY:
  - Online: which websites have you accessed for education, training or job searching? Why? Which social media tools (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, YouTube, blogs, news/social platforms) have you accessed? Why?
  - Events/expos: which ones? Why? What about careers days – which ones? What about University career days?
  - Printed publications: which ones (e.g. newspapers, magazines)? Why?
- How do the printed sources compare to online information (e.g. TAFE website)?
- How do these compare to talking to someone (e.g. open day stall, calling the training provider)?
- How do you factor into your child’s decision making process? Do you talk to them about it? What do you talk to them about? How does this influence them in comparison to other information they get from elsewhere?

**TOPIC 7: Key Messages & Moving Forward**

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- What types of information are/were you most interested in when considering education and training for your child? i.e. Media content about the success/offering of particular industries (i.e. salary offerings, vacancies, remuneration, career progression, hours of work), provider and course quality, location and transport, the experiences of others (e.g. friends, peers), advice from career advisor, the cost of training, etc.
- Which of these are most important? Why is this?
- How do you think training and education providers can best communicate with prospective learners and their parents?
- How do you think the tourism and hospitality sector can best communicate with you and your child? What do they need to be saying to get considered decisions are being made?
  - PROBE IF NECESSARY Should they be telling you / your child about …
  - The type of career available in the industry
  - The adventure and excitement
- The reality of the industry
- Career pathways / opportunities for skilled employees
- That you can be a skilled professional in this industry
- Dispelling myths / concerns? Which ones?
- Hours of work
- Financial information e.g. pay rates, non-salary benefits etc.

- What sorts of information sources/channels can you think of that could be developed in the future to help provide information about a career in the tourism and hospitality sector?
  - When someone is first looking for information on career and training options?
  - When someone is thinking about training or working in the sector?
  - When someone has decided to train or work in the sector?
  - When someone has enrolled further training or education in the sector?

- Currently there is a problem where the tourism and hospitality sector needs far more trained and skilled employees who treat it as a long term career. What sorts of things need to be done or said for more people to consider being trained in this industry or to consider it as a long term career option?
  - What negative perceptions should most be focused on turning around? Why? How?
  - PROBE IF NECESSARY
  - Long term career / short term positions
  - Limited career path
  - Hard work / labour focused / unskilled profession
  - Difficult to get into
  - Hours of work
  - Financial information e.g. pay rates, non-salary benefits etc.

- What would a job in the tourism industry have to look / be like to be appealing to young people? IF NECESSARY PROMPT ON type of role, culture, career opportunities, training available, stable environment, excitement etc.

**TOPIC 9: Closing and thanking 5 mins**

- Inform respondents that it is the end of the discussion and thank them for their time and opinions.
- State that as this is market research, it is carried out in compliance with the Privacy Act / information provided will only be used for research purposes.
- Remind them that you are from Colmar Brunton. Advise if any queries, call the Market Research Society's free Survey Line on 1300 364 830 or CBR on (1800 555 145).
- Ask for any final comments?
- Issue incentives - ensure respondent signs “Qual Validation Report & Acknowledgement of Reimbursement”.
- Complete comments section of “Qual Validation Report & Acknowledgement of Reimbursement”.

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6.3. Mature aged workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Introduce name and company</td>
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<td>PRIVACT ACT REQUIREMENTS</td>
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<td>• Describe subject – “To help us understand motivations and barriers to considering a career in the tourism and hospitality industry.”</td>
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<td>• State maximum duration of session (90 minutes)</td>
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<td>• State that you would prefer that they answered all the questions, but if there is anything they would prefer not to answer/opinions that they would prefer to keep to themselves, then that’s fine</td>
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<td>• Reveal Client identity – “The research is being conducted for the Australian Trade Commission, otherwise known as Austrade.”</td>
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<td>• Recording – “Today’s session will be audio recorded with your permission. Tapes will only be used for research purposes and will be retained for three months after the completion of the project.”</td>
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<td>• Observation - Describe who if relevant (clients, CBR staff), describe how (one way mirror, closed circuit TV), give assurance that if any one recognises respondent they will cease to observe.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Facilities (i.e. toilets), food and drinks provided, mobiles off</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC 2: WARM UP</th>
<th>5 mins</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Respondent to introduce</td>
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<td>• First name</td>
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<td>• Age</td>
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<td>• Household status</td>
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<td>• Current employment status and job / role</td>
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<td>• Length of time in role</td>
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<td>• Work life ambitions</td>
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<td>• Current priorities in life</td>
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<td>• Questions before starting</td>
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</table>
TOPIC 3: Drivers & Barriers

25 mins

SELF COMPLETION ACTIVITY Before we start the discussion in full we are going to do a short exercise. Could you please all fill in this one page of questions individually and then we can use your answers to kick start the discussion.

- Rate on a scale of 0 to 10 the appeal of:
  - Working in the tourism sector
  - Working in the hospitality sector
  - Working in the travel sector *(Note: as a comparative point)*
  - Working somewhere focused on business and management *(Note: as a comparative point)*
  - Working somewhere that provides a professional service to customers *(Note: as a comparative point)*
  - Working using a trade or skill e.g. builder, plumber, electrician *(Note: as a comparative point)*
  - Working in a restaurant
  - Working in a hotel
  - Being a supervisor of others in the hospitality / tourism industry

- What are all the positives you can think of about working in the tourism and hospitality sector?
- What are all the negatives you can think of about working in the tourism and hospitality sector?

GENERAL DISCUSSION:
- How would you describe the tourism and hospitality industry within Australia?
- What do you think working in the tourism and hospitality industry involves?
- What appeals about working in the tourism and hospitality industry? PROBE IF NECESSARY What about the hours of work or the pay rates? Flexibility of hours? Culture / atmosphere? In demand sector?
- What does not appeal about working in the tourism and hospitality industry? PROBE IF NECESSARY What about the hours of work or the pay rates? Hard work on body? Starting at a low entry level?
- Do you think seeing a particular career in the media, such as on Masterchef for example, positively or negatively influence people’s perception on considering the tourism and hospitality industry?
- In your ratings of 0 – 10 were there any that stood out from the others, e.g. any that you rated higher or lower than others? What sorts of ratings did you give the tourism and hospitality sectors?
- What made you consider working in tourism and hospitality?
  - Why did you choose this over other job options? What influenced you?
  - How did you enter the industry?
  - What were you most looking forward to when entering the industry? Was this realised?
  - How does the industry compare to other job options?
  - How did working in the industry align with your priorities in life when you were younger? What about now, how does it align with your priorities?
- Why did you choose to turn it into a career?
- Was it planned or just happened?
- Do you consider it a career? Why / Why not? How else would you describe it?
- Why are you still in this profession when so many others are not? Was it something specific to your circumstances? Training offered? Opportunities offered? Right fit?

- Does the tourism and hospitality industry offer a viable long term career path to people? Why/why not? Are there any challenges related to this?

### TOPIC 4: Training & Education for Mature Workers

Now thinking specifically about tourism and hospitality training …

- What training have you undertaken specific to your job?
- What sort of training is available for someone wanting to enter this sector? INITIALLY JUST GAIN TOP OF MIND THOUGHTS BEFORE PROBING SPECIFICALLY FOR where, who, type of training.
- What sort of further education / higher education is available for someone wanting to enter this sector? AGAIN WAIT UNTIL FULLY UNPROMPTED RESPONSES BEFORE PROBING where, who, name of facility, type of course, degree / diploma, level of higher education available.
- Is there anywhere else you could get training and education if you wanted to enter this sector?
- What are your perceptions regarding the quality of industry-related training? Why?
- What institution or type of institution best prepares someone for the industry? Why? Which fall short?
- What sort of course is best? Why? Why are other courses not?
- Do you have any concerns about the training and education available for people wanting to enter the tourism and hospitality sector? Why do you feel this way?

- How about the training and education available to people already in the industry? What sort is available?
  - Does your business offer other training opportunities for staff? PROBE on the job, external training, formal internal training, mentoring, career path planning.
  - Which has worked best? Which has not worked well? Why?
  - Has your involvement in these training opportunities influenced your decision to stay in the industry?
  - What are your perceptions regarding the quality of industry-related training for people who have been in the industry for a while?
  - What sort of course is best? Why? Why are other courses not?
  - Do you have any concerns about the training and education available for people already in the tourism and hospitality sector? Why do you feel this way?

- Does the training and education on offer align with what the industry needs?
  - What do you think aligns well?
• What do you think does not align well?
  • What needs to be improved with the training and education on offer to align with your needs?

• Would anyone consider doing further education or training in the industry? Why and for what reasons?
  • Would it be to advance you further along a career path? Other reason?
  • What are the key factors you would consider when making a decision whether to undertake further education or training? Which factor is most important?

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TOPIC 5: Hiring and retention

10 mins

• How would you describe the ability of the business you work in to be able to hire and retain quality staff?
  • Why do you think that is?
  • What level of turnover do you see? Is this better or worse than other tourism / hospitality businesses you’ve been involved in?
  • What are some of the core success factors?
  • What are some of the core issues?
  • What would make you considering leaving this industry for good?

• Does the business you work in have any specific recruitment policies regarding the level of training or education required for hiring new staff? What are these? Why are / aren’t they in place?
  • What seems to be more important when hiring for the industry – soft skills such as personal presentation or technical skills? Why?
  • Are employers more likely to employ someone with qualifications or a person with industry experience and desirable soft skills? Why?

• Does the business you work in have any strategies to retain good staff? What are these? What’s missing?

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TOPIC 6: Key Messages & Moving Forward

15 mins

• The Australian Trade Commission has recognised there is a shortfall of skilled employees to service the tourism and hospitality sector; and a shortfall of those who wish to treat it as a career.
  • Do you feel this is the case? How have you observed this?
  • What sorts of things need to be done or said for more people to consider being trained in this industry or to consider it as a long term career option? PROBE FULLY UNTIL ALL RECOMMENDATIONS EXHAUSTED
  • What negative perceptions should most be focused on to turn this around? Why? How?
    • PROBE IF NECESSARY
    • Long term career / short term positions
    • Limited career path
    • Hard work / labour focused / unskilled profession
o Difficult to get into
  - Is there anything that the sector needs to do in order to be more appealing to potential employees?
  - Is there anything that the government needs to be doing? Why? Which level of government?

- What would a job in the tourism industry have to look / be like to be appealing to young people to train in? IF NECESSARY PROMPT ON type of role, culture, career opportunities, training available, stable environment, excitement etc.
- What would a job in the tourism industry have to look / be like to be appealing to workers from other industries? IF NECESSARY PROMPT ON type of role, culture, career opportunities, training available, stable environment, excitement etc.
- How do you think the tourism and hospitality sector can best communicate with people about considering it as a career and undertaking training? What do they need to be saying to get the sector considered?
  - PROBE IF NECESSARY
  - The type of career you can have in the industry
  - The adventure and excitement
  - The reality of the industry
  - Career pathways / opportunities for skilled employees
  - That you can be a skilled professional in this industry
  - Dispelling myths / concerns? Which ones?
  - Financial information e.g. pay rates, non-salary benefits etc.

**TOPIC 7: Closing and thanking**  5 mins

- Inform respondents that it is the end of the discussion and thank them for their time and opinions.
- State that as this is market research, it is carried out in compliance with the Privacy Act / information provided will only be used for research purposes.
- Remind them that you are from Colmar Brunton. Advise if any queries, call the Market Research Society’s free Survey Line on 1300 364 830 or CBR on (1800 555 145).
- Ask for any final comments?
- Issue incentives - ensure respondent signs “Qual Validation Report & Acknowledgement of Reimbursement”.
- Complete comments section of “Qual Validation Report & Acknowledgement of Reimbursement”.
TOPIC 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

- Hi my name is ____________ and I work for Colmar Brunton Research. We conduct research for all types of organisations on all sorts of topics and I’m looking forward to this session with you.

PRIVACY ACT REQUIREMENTS

- Tonight’s online session will assist us in understanding motivations and barriers to working long term in the tourism and hospitality industry. The session will last for approximately 90 minutes. The research is being conducted for the Australian Trade Commission, otherwise known as Austrade.
- Any information and opinions you give will be used for research purposes only and that there are no right or wrong answers. Your answers will be combined with other participants and will remain confidential.
- As it is an online session it would be great if you could also type in extra explanation or detail when you answer some responses as it is more difficult for me to quickly question why. If there is anything you would prefer not to answer or keep to yourself that is fine as well.
- Are there any questions before we start

TOPIC 2: WARM UP

- Firstly, can you please give me some information about yourself including male/female, age, hobbies / interests, what you are doing currently for work or education and your current priorities in life.
- I understand you all worked in the tourism and hospitality industry previously. Can you give me some information on this including type of job, length of time in the industry, how long ago you left and whether you’d consider entering into it again.
- Thanks for sharing.

TOPIC 3: Drivers & Barriers of Tourism & Hospitality Careers

Before we open up to more general discussion I would like you to all do a couple of individual exercises for me.

First exercise: describe your ideal career including industry (or types) and why it is ideal for you

Second exercise: describe your ideal type of job or role and why it is ideal for you

Now we are going to more into a more general discussion where you can comment on the questions as you like.

- How would you describe the tourism and hospitality industry within Australia?
- What are all the positives you can think of about working in the tourism and hospitality sector?
- What are all the negatives you can think of about working in the tourism and hospitality sector?
• How does the tourism and hospitality industry compare to other industry and career choices?

All of you have previously worked in the industry, thinking back to when you first started working in the industry …

• How old were you? What stage of life e.g. school leaver, unemployed etc
• What did you think working in the tourism and hospitality industry would involve?
• At that stage what appealed about undertaking a career in tourism and hospitality industry?
• What didn’t appeal about undertaking a career in the tourism and hospitality industry?
• Did you ever consider the hours of work or pay rates?
• Were you influenced in any way to take up a job or training in tourism and hospitality? PROBE IF NECESSARY what occurred? Were you influenced by any of the following – parents, friends, guidance counsellors, others?
• Were there specific sources of advice or information that you recall helped make your decision to enter the industry?
• What information did you need?
• How long did it take to make a decision to enter the industry?
• Ultimately why at that stage did you choose tourism and hospitality over other career options?
• What were you most looking forward to?

Now thinking about your experiences working in tourism and hospitality …

• Describe for me what your experience was like.
• What were the most enjoyable or best parts of your time in the industry
• What was not enjoyable about your time in the industry
• Describe for me why you decided to leave.
  • PROMPTS
  • Was there anything about the industry that made you decide to leave? What?
  • Was there anything about what you were going to be doing that was more appealing and why?
  • Did you have any concerns about career pathways?
• What could have been done to encourage you to stay working in tourism and hospitality?

TOPIC 4: Long Term Career

• Does anyone think they will go back into the industry and why?
• For those of you who won’t why not?
• What, if anything, could be done to encourage you to return to the industry?
• When first starting out did you think you’d have a long career in the tourism and hospitality industry? Why / why not?
• Is it possible to have a long term career in this industry?
• When can a long term career be successful?
• Did anyone ever want a long term career in the tourism and hospitality industry – what happened?
• Does the tourism and hospitality industry offer clear career pathways?
• What could be done to make it easier for young people to understand their potential career pathways and how to go about achieving these?
• Did you ever work for a business (either within tourism or outside) where they were very good at letting you know how to go about achieving your career or long term job goals? What did they do well?

TOPIC 5: Decision Making Process for Tourism & Hospitality Training 15 mins

Now thinking specifically about tourism and hospitality training …
• What sort of training is available for someone wanting to enter this sector? PROBES where, who, type of training?
• What sort of further education / higher education is available for someone wanting to enter this sector? PROBES where, who, name of facility, type of course, degree / diploma, level of higher education available?
• Is there anywhere else you could get training and education if you wanted to enter this sector?
• Do you have any concerns about the training and education available for people wanting to enter the tourism and hospitality sector?
• When you entered the industry did you receive any formal training or prior education? Which type e.g. TAFE, University, In-house training program etc
• Why did you take on this training?
• Describe the type of training / education or course and how valuable you found it.
• What were the key factors you considered when deciding to do training or further education prior to entering the industry?
• What were the most important factors when deciding on an education or training provider?
• What were the most important factors when deciding on a course?

TOPIC 6: Information Needs & Sources 10 mins

• What sorts of information should someone be getting about the industry prior to entering?
• What is the most important information they should get? PROBE what sort of message & why?
• What information do they need that they never hear?
• What information do they need to let them know the industry can work for them?
• Anything else you wish you had known?
• When you were in the industry, were you looking for information on additional training, education or career pathways available?
• Is there information available or do people tell you about this sort of thing?
• What’s missing?
• Since you’ve left the industry what sorts of information sources have you been using to look into other jobs, careers, training or education. Please tell me about all the types you’ve used and why.
  • What have been the most useful sources and why?

TOPIC 7: Key Messages & Moving Forward 15 mins

• How do you think the tourism and hospitality sector can best communicate with young people? What do they need to be saying to get considered as decisions are being made?
  • PROBE IF NECESSARY Should they be telling them about …
  • The type of career they can have in the industry
  • The adventure and excitement
  • The reality of the industry
  • Career pathways / opportunities for skilled employees
  • That you can be a skilled professional in this industry
  • Dispelling myths / concerns? Which ones?
  • Hours of work
  • Financial information e.g. pay rates, non-salary benefits etc.
• Currently there is a problem where the tourism and hospitality sector needs far more trained and skilled employees who treat it as a long term career. What sorts of things need to be done or said for more people to consider being trained in this industry or to consider it as a long term career option?
  • What negative perceptions should most be focused on turning around? Why and how?
  • PROBE IF NECESSARY
  • Long term career / short term positions
  • Limited career path
  • Hard work / labour focused / unskilled profession
  • Difficult to get into
  • Hours of work
  • Financial information e.g. pay rates, non-salary benefits etc.
• What would a job in the tourism industry have to look / be like to be appealing to young people? For example type of role, culture, career opportunities, training available, stable environment, excitement etc.

TOPIC 8: Closing and thanking 5 mins
### 6.5. Employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION</th>
<th>5 mins</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Introduce name and company</td>
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**PRIVACY ACT REQUIREMENTS**

- Describe subject – “To help us understand how careers in the tourism and hospitality industry are perceived and assist in identifying systematic problems in industry related training.”
- State maximum duration of session (1 hour)
- Give assurance that information and opinions will be used for research purposes only and that there are no right or wrong answers
- State that answers will be combined with other participants and will remain confidential
- State that you would prefer that they answered all the questions, but if there is anything they would prefer not to answer/opinions that they would prefer to keep to themselves, then that’s fine
- Reveal Client identity – “The research is being conducted for the Australian Trade Commission.”
- **Recording** – “Today’s session will be audio recorded with your permission. Tapes will only be used for research purposes and will be retained for three months after the completion of the project.”
- Questions before starting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC 2: BUSINESS OVERVIEW</th>
<th>10 mins</th>
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<tr>
<td>• If you could take a minute just to give me a brief overview of you and your role here at ________________</td>
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<td>• Business type &amp; role</td>
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<td>• Length of time in role</td>
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<td>• How entered the industry</td>
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<td>• Your own personal formal or informal training received in industry sector</td>
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<td>• Level of interaction you have with those entering the industry e.g. hiring, training, supervising etc</td>
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<td>• Number of employees in business</td>
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<td>• What is your employee mix? E.g. young transient, mature workers, long term employees</td>
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<td>• How would you describe the ability of your business to be able to hire and retain quality staff?</td>
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<td>• Why do you think that is?</td>
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<td>• What level of turnover do you see? Is this better or worse than other tourism / hospitality businesses you’ve been involved in?</td>
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<td>• What are some of your core success factors? (We will come back to this in depth)</td>
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<td>• Does your business have any specific recruitment policies regarding the level of training or education required for hiring new staff? What are these? Why are these? Why are / aren’t they in place?</td>
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<td>• For your hiring what is more important – soft skills such as personal presentation or technical skills? Why?</td>
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<td>• Are you more likely to employ someone with qualifications or a person with industry experience and desirable soft skills? Why?</td>
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<td>• Does your business offer other training opportunities for staff? PROBE on the job, external training, formal</td>
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internal training, mentoring, career path planning

- Which has worked best? Which has not worked well? Why?
- Do you tell staff and potential applicants? Why / why not? How could these be better promoted to both staff and external applicants?

TOPIC 3: Perceptions of Tourism & Hospitality Careers 10 mins

Now we are just going to take a step back and have a more general discussion about the tourism and hospitality industry in Australia.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

- How would you describe the tourism and hospitality industry within Australia?
- What do you think appeals to people about a career in the tourism and hospitality industry?
  - How would you describe a career in tourism and hospitality?
  - What do you think young people and their parents view careers in tourism and hospitality?
  - Why do you think people ultimately take a job in tourism and hospitality? Why would someone choose it as a career?
- Why did you choose a career in tourism and hospitality?
  - Was it planned or just happened?
  - Did you have an alternative career in mind? What? Why did you not end up here?
  - Why are you still in this profession when so many others are not? Was it something specific to your circumstances? Training offered? Opportunities offered? Right fit?
- What doesn’t appeal about a career in the tourism and hospitality industry?
- How do you think a career in tourism and hospitality stacks up against other professions in people’s minds?
- Why don’t you think more people consider a career in tourism and hospitality?
- Why do you think that a large number of young people enter the industry only to leave and look for work in a different profession?
- Does the tourism and hospitality industry offer a viable long term career path to people? Why/ why not? Are there any challenges related to this?
- What are the core factors to successfully retaining good staff?
- What are the core challenges or issues that need to be overcome?

TOPIC 4: Perceptions of Industry Related Training 15 mins

Now thinking specifically about tourism and hospitality training …

- What sort of training is available for someone wanting to enter this sector? INITIALLY JUST GAIN TOP OF
MIND THOUGHTS BEFORE PROBING SPECIFICALLY FOR where, who, type of training.

- What sort of further education / higher education is available for someone wanting to enter this sector? AGAIN WAIT UNTIL FULLY UNPROMPTED RESPONSES BEFORE PROBING where, who, name of facility, type of course, degree / diploma, level of higher education available.

- Is there anywhere else you could get training and education if you wanted to enter this sector?

- What are your perceptions regarding the quality of industry-related training? Why?
  - What institution or type of institution best prepares someone for the industry? Why? Which fall short?
  - What sort of course is best? Why? Why are other courses not?

- Do you have any concerns about the training and education available for people wanting to enter the tourism and hospitality sector? Why do you feel this way?

- How do you feel about someone entering the industry following the formal training or higher education path?
  - What are all the good things you see about this pathway into the industry?
  - Are there any concerns or shortfalls about someone using this formal pathway into the industry?
  - How do their skills match with what is required? IF A GAP: What is lacking? Is this gap an issue or can it easily be filled on the job? Can this gap be filled by training packages developed for industry?

- IF NOT YET COVERED IN AN UNPROMPTED MANNER: Does the training and education on offer align with what the industry needs?
  - What do you think aligns well?
  - What do you think does not align well?
  - What needs to be improved with the training and education on offer to align with your needs?

- How do you feel about young people entering the industry? Why? Any concerns?

- How do you feel about mature age workers entering the industry for the 1st time? Why? Any concerns?

TOPIC 5: Key Messages & Moving forward 15 mins

- The Australian Trade Commission has recognised there is a shortfall of skilled employees to service the tourism and hospitality sector; and a shortfall of those who wish to treat it as a career.
  - Do you feel this is the case? How have you observed this?
  - What sorts of things need to be done or said for more people to consider being trained in this industry or to consider it as a long term career option? PROBE FULLY UNTIL ALL RECOMMENDATIONS EXHAUSTED
  - What negative perceptions should most be focused on to turn this around? Why? How?
    - PROBE IF NECESSARY
    - Long term career / short term positions
    - Limited career path
    - Hard work / labour focused / unskilled profession
- Difficult to get into
- Hours of work
- Financial information e.g. pay rates, non-salary benefits etc.

- Is there anything that the sector needs to do in order to be more appealing to potential employees?
- Is there anything that the government needs to be doing? Why? Which level of government?
- Is there anything that you in your career or that the business has done to try to counter any negative perceptions?

- What would a job in the tourism industry have to look / be like to be appealing to young people to train in? IF NECESSARY PROMPT ON type of role, culture, career opportunities, training available, stable environment, excitement etc.

- How do you think the tourism and hospitality sector can best communicate with people about considering it as a career and undertaking training? What do they need to be saying to get the sector considered?
  - PROBE IF NECESSARY
  - The type of career you can have in the industry
  - The adventure and excitement
  - The reality of the industry
  - Career pathways / opportunities for skilled employees
  - That you can be a skilled professional in this industry
  - Dispelling myths / concerns? Which ones?
  - Hours of work
  - Financial information e.g. pay rates, non-salary benefits etc.

**TOPIC 9: Closing and thanking**

- Inform respondents that it is the end of the discussion and thank them for their time and opinions.
- State that as this is market research, it is carried out in compliance with the Privacy Act / information provided will only be used for research purposes.
- Remind them that you are from Colmar Brunton. Advise if any queries, call the Market Research Society’s free Survey Line on 1300 364 830 or CBR on (1800 555 145).
- Ask for any final comments?
- Issue incentives - ensure respondent signs “Qual Validation Report & Acknowledgement of Reimbursement”.
- Complete comments section of “Qual Validation Report & Acknowledgement of Reimbursement”.
This document takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our Client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.