

**What Makes a Successful Hospitality Graduate in New
Zealand? Key Stakeholder Perspectives**

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Abstract

There is considerable debate amongst academics and industry professionals as to what are the predictors for success in hospitality and this field remains unanswered. Knowledge of the critical components that contribute to people being successful can significantly enhance individual career progression and, provide organisations with a focused workforce, which can create competitive advantage. The recruitment of employees who are already focused on being successful is commercially attractive, in addition, employers' expect universities to produce these work-ready graduates. Hospitality degree education, however, adopts a longer-term career orientation rather than a focus on the provision of immediately applicable skills.

This thesis explores the range of skills, qualities, competencies and intelligences that establish predictors of success for the hospitality industry. The thesis is framed by three main research questions: 1) how is success in hospitality understood and measured? 2) What factors are perceived as critical for success in hospitality? and 3) what is the role and contribution of hospitality higher education in the development of successful hospitality graduates? The study adopts a constructivist-interpretivist approach to the investigation and evaluation of hospitality stakeholder perspectives on what makes a successful graduate, using the case of AUT hospitality teachers and students, combined with industry representatives from the Auckland region. Using interviews and a survey, the study utilises data from of each stakeholder group to answer the research questions.

The study finds a clear link between the concepts of passion and success; participants considered that success in New Zealand hospitality is more likely to be achieved by those motivated by a deep passion for the industry. Findings highlight the importance of generic capabilities, personal attributes and multiple intelligence abilities for success in

hospitality. Participants particularly noted characteristics such as, good interpersonal skills, good personality and a strong work ethic as predictors for success.

This study advances understanding on the purity of motive; that is, the purer the motive toward an activity the more success is likely to be achieved. In essence, people do the things they do because they have passion for them. To manage and work hospitably in a hospitable environment therefore requires students to have a passion for hospitality as a quintessential motive. Understanding passion as purity of motive advances understanding of human behaviour in hospitality and how people are motivated to undertake specific jobs. This knowledge contributes to human behavioural studies and provides significant insights into how success is understood and achieved in the hospitality sector. Passion is a pure motive pivotal to success and is a critical focal point for organisational behaviour and motivational studies.

The key practical contribution of this study is the new direction it presents for hospitality education - the development of a pedagogy of passion. The challenge for higher education and industry is to review the teaching and learning environment, and the focus is to seek ways to nurture passion for hospitality in students. The study also challenges hospitality industry organisations to provide quality work-integrated learning experiences to enhance the behavioural components of success. The discovery that passion leads to success has not been previously explored, and now that these two concepts are linked, work can commence to understand the development and application of passion.

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List of Abbreviations

ATTTO	Aviation, Tourism and Travel Training Organisation
AUT	Auckland University of Technology
AUTEC	Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee
BERL	Business and Economic Research Ltd
BIHM	Bachelor of International Hospitality Management
CAQDAS	computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software
CAUTHE	Council for Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Education
CCM	constant comparative method
CQ	cultural intelligence quotient
EHL	Ecole Hôtelière, Lausanne
EQ	emotional intelligence quotient
ESP	extra sensory perception
ExQ	experiential intelligence
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
GDP	gross domestic product
HANZ	Hospitality Association of New Zealand
HICP	hospitality industry culture profile
HQ	hospitality quotient
HR	human resources
HRM	human resource management
HTF	Hospitality Training Foundation
ICT	information communication technology
ILPC	International Labour Process Conference
IQ	intelligence quotient
ISTTE	International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators
KSA	knowledge, skills, and abilities
MBA	Master of Business Administration
NZTRI	New Zealand Tourism Research Institute
OE	overseas experience
PA	personal attribute
PBL	problem-based learning
RQ	resilience intelligence quotient
SBE	small business enterprise
SIDS	small island developing states

SME	small to medium enterprise
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SQ	social intelligence quotient
UK	United Kingdom
UTS	University of Technology Sydney
WIL	work-integrated learning

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The Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee approved this research on 24th September 2009. AUTEK Reference number Ethics Application Number 09/216.

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement is made in the acknowledgements.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Cox', with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Stephen Cox

November 2015

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale

The study explores, expands and readdresses a question raised more than 30 years ago: “What are the predictors of success for men and women in the hospitality industry?” (Pizam & Lewis, 1979, p. 12). It explores a range of skills, qualities, competencies and intelligences, and how these may contribute to establishing the predictors of a successful career in the hospitality industry. The perspectives on what constitutes a successful hospitality graduate are presented from a multiple stakeholder group – teachers, industry and students. The notion of success in hospitality is influenced by three key areas of debate identified by Baum (2002): firstly, the nature of work in the hospitality industry requires complex skill sets despite the traditional view of it being low skilled; secondly, these complex skills are becoming increasingly less technically focused; and finally, the development of these skills involves sound educational engagement and cannot just be achieved through training.

There is a perception that hospitality education should focus on graduate preparation for the workplace (see Spowart, 2011). However, this requires education providers to adapt the teaching and learning environment to one which can mirror, as best as possible, the commercial world. This issue is aptly outlined by the following pedagogical challenge that underpins much of this study:

In order to prepare graduates for the workforce universities need to promote and support a culture of teaching and learning that parallels an unpredictable and irregular social and commercial world in which supply and demand is neither linear nor stable, and labour is shaped by complex patterns of anticipations, time and space (McWilliam, 2007, p. 4).

Baum (2006) argues that working in the hospitality industry requires a combination of unique skills and attributes. In addition, often the ability of an individual, in terms of

unique skills and attributes, overshadows the importance of his or her formal qualifications or the amount of training required (Bradley, Erickson, Stephenson, & William, 2000; Harkison, Poulston, & Kim, 2011). Baum (2006) noted:

[T]he nature of work has changed from its predominantly technical basis to include a range of, arguably, sophisticated generic skills covering areas such as communications, languages and information technology as well as emotional and aesthetic labour inputs. (p. 131)

In terms of the nature of work in hospitality, this study adopts a Westernised perspective to the classification of employment based on historic manpower planning practices and trade union power (see Burns, 1997). Using this classification, hospitality can be divided into sectors that take different approaches to human resources management depending on how they are organised. Organised sectors such as large hotel companies with defined hierarchical structures tend to place a high value on staff skills, whereas sectors, such as fast food, tend to view staff as a cost to be controlled and kept as tightly as possible (Burns, 1997; Wang, 2006). The industry stakeholders who participated in this study originate from organised sectors of the hospitality industry, this work contributes to the argument that the skills perspective of hospitality is content specific (Burns, 1997). In other words, the focus of this research centres on the perspective that specific skills sets are required for organised sectors of hospitality, such as hotels and restaurants.

Specific skills sets needed for hospitality requires different types of intelligence related to emotional, social, resilience and enhanced cultural awareness. Multiple intelligence ability, in particular social and emotional, contributes towards success (see Gardner, 2006; Goleman, 2006; Stein, 2000) and, cultural awareness is viewed as a vital source of competitive advantage in the global hospitality industry (Mkono, 2010). Hospitality education is also facing increased numbers of international students and rising levels of cultural diversity (Barron, Gourlay, & Gannon-Leary, 2009). As the higher-education

hospitality classroom becomes more multicultural, educators face new challenges in relation to language barriers, cultural differences and learning styles (Charlesworth, 2009; Hwang & Allison, 2010). An educational response to these challenges lies in embedding intercultural competence into the curriculum (Kirkness, 2009) and the development of cultural intelligence quotient (CQ), among other intelligences, as a critical individual ability (Arora & Rohmetra, 2010). This study explores whether multiple intelligence ability is regarded as an important component of success in hospitality.

There has been major growth in hospitality education as a response to government expectations that tertiary education establishments provide a wider range of qualifications. From the inception of the first hotel programme at Cornell University in the 1920s, hospitality education has grown with the industry in response to the changes in the sector and evolving demands for skilled labour (Goodman & Sprague, 1991). Over the past thirty years, hospitality undergraduate degree programmes have experienced significant growth in the southern hemisphere (Breakey & Craig-Smith, 2008). The challenge for universities is to ensure hospitality programmes remain engaging, sustainable and to manage the anticipated increased competition from private providers that are also able to offer degrees (Breakey & Craig-Smith, 2008).

From an industry perspective hospitality organisations are looking for “work-ready” employees who are creative, dynamic, responsive, strategic and proactive to customer demand (Spowart, 2011). For individuals to be successful in hospitality, they must be able to adapt in a highly competitive industry where consistency in delivery of quality service is linked to organisational growth. This study investigates and discusses the perspective that being successful in hospitality is dependent upon a number of factors

that relate to the work setting, job requirements and personal attributes (Noon & Blyton, 1995, 2002).

There has also been a rapid expansion of hospitality services in New Zealand which has seen the industry grow in importance to the national economy (Auckland City Council, 2007). This has led to a recognised skills shortage in the local industry and the need for research to facilitate better integration of appropriately skilled hospitality graduates into the workplace (New Zealand Tourism Research Institute (NZTRI), 2007). The former New Zealand Prime Minister, Rt Hon. Helen Clark (2004), once commented that although the New Zealand economy was strong,

...record levels of unemployment have created skill shortages across a wide variety of industry and occupational areas. Many firms are reporting increasing difficulty in finding skilled labour... (p. 38)

Since this observation, reported skills shortages in hospitality have become of increasing concern in the industry and are primary source of difficulty when filling positions (Bradley, 2015; RANZ, 2013; New Zealand Tourism Research Institute (NZTRI), 2007). It has become increasingly difficult to find good hospitality staff and the industry needs to address a growing demand for skilled workers in a tight labour market (Auckland City Council, 2007; DOL, 2002; (RANZ), 2013;). Since 2004, the hospitality industry has continued to report skills shortages and recruitment issues ((RANZ), 2013; Stokes, Norman, & Nana, 2010a).

In addition to reported skills shortages and recruitment issues, the hospitality industry is characteristically seasonal in some locations and is relying on an increasingly globally mobile workforce (Duncan, Scott, & Baum, 2009). In addition, there is currently a call for the relaxation of restrictions on foreign workers entering New Zealand hospitality and tourism (see Bradley, 2015). Hospitality work as being mobile and seasonal gives rise to a number of issues: the ability to provide an authentic or genuine and unscripted

service experience (Meyer, 2006), reduced levels of employee retention, and increased complexities resulting from cultural diversity (Baum, Hearn, & Devine, 2007; Duncan *et al.*, 2009). A rise in hospitality workforce mobility not only increases the diversity of the workforce across various dimensions (Baum *et al.*, 2007), but also creates complex relationships between the tourist and the mobile worker. Duncan, Scott and Baum (2009) discussed the notion of the “backpacker worker” and raised interesting discussions around the influence these tourist workers had on the communities in which they worked. These discussions are particularly relevant given the global rise in backpacking and in New Zealand as a backpacking destination. Backpackers are not only viewed as holidaymakers but also as a transient workforce (Allon, Anderson, & Bushell, 2008). The complexities surrounding a transient and mobile workforce indicate complex skills sets are indeed required to be successful in hospitality work. Successful hospitality graduates, therefore, require a clear understanding of the nature and characteristics of the industry for which they are being educated.

Combined with the complexities highlighted above, a business needs high-quality staff if it is to compete effectively, which may mean that employers need to focus on personal attributes and skills sets of graduates, rather than qualifications (Bennett, 2002; BERL, 2004; Harkison *et al.*, 2011). Such emphasis on the skills and education of people entering the hospitality industry is important to a number of stakeholders, including employers, policymakers (education and employment), education providers and students. Employers will be looking for high-quality talented staff to provide a competitive edge for their organisations (Deery, 2008), students will be looking for quality education that meets their expectations and enhances their employment and career prospects (Richardson, 2009a), and educators will be looking to provide an educational experience that meets both students’ expectations and the needs of the industry (Spowart, 2011). Educators, therefore, need to emphasise the type and quality

of global hospitality education being provided (Littlejohn & Watson, 2004). A degree that offers specific focus on becoming successful will therefore become a commercially attractive option to prospective students wishing to undertake study that enhances their career prospects and makes them more employable.

The concept of *employability* and its links with higher education has a particular influence on this research. The development of employability skills is integral to the development of a successful employee in the hospitality industry (see Raybould & Wilkins, 2005). The key debate remains how best to develop these skills and how higher education providers can respond to external pressures such as industry expectations of provision of work-ready employees (Maher & Graves, 2007). Employability should be regarded as more than a question of how students get jobs: more fundamentally, employability is about who does what in a knowledge economy (Brown, Hesketh, & Williams, 2003). This research therefore engages with and contributes to discussions about how higher education providers can best achieve employability of their students (see Maher & Graves, 2007).

The concept of employability is also linked to the current New Zealand tertiary education strategy (Ministry of Education, 2010). The national tertiary education strategy emphasises the need to raise skills and knowledge of the future workforce to 1) meet labour market demand, and 2) respond to the needs of the economy. The strategy also outlines the Government's expectations of universities and polytechnics. The key expectations are to enable a wide range of students to complete qualifications, create new knowledge that contributes to social and economic development, deliver vocational education that provides skills for employment, and work with industry to ensure learning meets industry needs (Ministry of Education, 2010). These expectations suggest that tertiary education institutions should concentrate not just on the

development of lifelong learning skills, but also on developing work-ready employees. The industry–education tension that can ensue is well documented in a hospitality context (Harkison *et al.*, 2011; Spowart, 2011) and provides a background for research on how to develop successful hospitality employees.

As well as pressures from industry to produce work ready employees, hospitality higher education in the developed world is undergoing a period of review and consolidation. Hospitality higher education faces challenges from the changing socio-economic environment, global competition and changes in the student market (Fidgeon, 2010; Sigala & Baum, 2003). Universities are experiencing a high influx of international students into hospitality education programmes, and institutions are witnessing changes in both the cultural make-up of the classroom and higher-education teaching and learning processes (Barron *et al.*, 2009; Charlesworth, 2008; Gordon, 2010; Hwang & Allison, 2010). These issues prompt a need for evaluation and change to the hospitality higher education teaching and learning environment.

Zwaal and Otting (2006) argue for a student-centred approach to learning in higher education, a view also supported by Johansen (2006). Avril and Magnini (2007) argue that the best way to develop success is through a holistic approach to learning (i.e. developing the whole of the learner). The more recent trend in higher education is the development of an organic approach to teaching and learning, which involves ongoing integration of current “business thinking” into the curriculum (Adcroft & Lockwood, 2010). This means education providers need to create and promote a range of teaching and learning activities, and develop a relationship between them to promote good practice (Adcroft & Lockwood, 2010). Each of these approaches focuses on the development of key transferable skills within each individual to add value and increase employability.

By examining the critical factors of success as perceived by different stakeholders, this study contextualises and investigates these ongoing debates to establish what a suitable role for higher education in hospitality is and how education providers' teaching and learning programmes contribute to the success of the hospitality graduate.

A final issue facing hospitality higher education is the changing attitudes of undergraduates towards a career in the hospitality and tourism industry. Recent studies suggest that most undergraduate hospitality and tourism students do not intend to work in the industry after graduation, and a career in hospitality will not fulfil their needs (Richardson, 2008, 2009a, 2009b; Teng, 2008). In addition, research from Australia shows there is a developing negative attitude among hospitality students towards the industry (Richardson, 2008, 2010). There is evidence to suggest that students do not see a career in hospitality as a financially or socially rewarding career option (Richardson, 2009a). This creates a challenge on how to develop and interest students studying for a qualification that may not be used for a career in the industry for which the qualification is intended.

1.2 Aims of the research

The research focuses on a tri-fold stakeholder (teachers, industry, students) perception of success in commercial hospitality in New Zealand. Using a multifaceted approach to the definition of success, the research provides the opportunity to determine *when* and *how* success is achieved and measured in hospitality. This study is set against the background of tertiary education policy in New Zealand which recognises broader participation in tertiary education. This broader participation in can produce a highly skilled and flexible labour force in relation to changing labour market conditions (McLaughlin, 2003).

Using New Zealand as a case study and drawing on contemporary hospitality literature, this study compares and contrasts stakeholder expectations and perceptions in relation to graduate development, i.e. the skills, competencies and qualities required for success in hospitality. The triangulation of perceptions, observations and opinions from the student, teacher and industry representatives creates the foundation for an examination of the nature of the hospitality workplace, the challenges facing hospitality graduates, and the development of successful hospitality graduates. Based on its findings, this study provides direction on the alignment of hospitality curriculum design, hospitality graduate education and success in the workplace (Williams, 2005). Against this background, the research addresses discussions about the various skills and skill sets required by individuals in modern hospitality settings (see Baum, 2006; Bennett, 2002; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005, 2006; Zinser, 2003).

This study is guided by six key research questions:

1. How is success in life and the workplace perceived by key stakeholders (industry, teachers and students) in hospitality education?
2. What are stakeholder perspectives on the critical factors required by higher-education graduates for success in the New Zealand hospitality industry?
3. How do stakeholders view the role and contribution of university education in the development of a successful hospitality graduate?
4. How can the stakeholders' perspectives on critical factors required for success be implemented in the development of hospitality students?
5. What are the challenges facing hospitality graduates in becoming successful in the workplace?
6. How can challenges be addressed to facilitate the development of successful hospitality graduates in New Zealand?

To develop the body of knowledge around graduate success in hospitality, research is required to explore the critical factors required for each individual. This thesis therefore addresses and builds upon key themes emerging from the review of previous research

(see Pizam & Lewis, 1979) to present predictors for success in hospitality through a multi-stakeholder perspective. This research also offers a southern hemisphere perspective on the growing body of knowledge surrounding success in the hospitality industry and hospitality higher education.

This study focuses on three key areas in hospitality education viewed by academia as important to the future of the industry: course design, career information and stakeholder relationships (Littlejohn & Watson, 2004). Hospitality education requires more consideration of *soft skills* (e.g. communication, problem solving, decision making) (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005, 2006), the inclusion of foreign languages (Petersone, Skrupska, Skrupskis, & Iriste, 2008; Yuan, Houston, & Cai, 2006) and the integration of work experience to enhance learning (Maher & Graves, 2007; Spowart, 2011).

The role and contribution of hospitality university education in the development of successful graduates needs an understanding of the nature of hospitality work and its workplace requirements. This thesis contributes to the bodies of literature that investigate the nature of work and skills required in the hospitality industry, and graduate development of skills and knowledge in hospitality higher education (Baum, 2006; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005). The nature of work and skills in hospitality is changing, as is the way in which hospitality is defined and studied. The investigation of hospitality now incorporates other academic perspectives: historical, cultural and anthropological (Lashley, 2000; Lashley, Lynch, & Morrison, 2007a). This work aims to contribute to the perspective that success in hospitality is achieved through a holistic approach to student development (Avril & Magnini, 2007). In this context, the research adopts the viewpoint that a more liberal orientation is required in contemporary hospitality education (Morrison & O’Gorman, 2006). Learning is “a social process and

is a process of construction and re-construction” (Zwaal & Otting, 2006, p. 257). Thus, the research aims to contribute to discussions surrounding a global trend in the developed world, towards a more student-centred approach in higher vocational education (Johansen, 2006; Zwaal & Otting, 2006).

The hospitality industry is contaminated by Keep and Mayhew’s (1999b) lingering stereotype of an industry of low wages and unsociably long hours (Williamson, Harris, & Parker, 2008). These characteristics are exacerbated by the stereotype that hospitality work requires only low-level skills (Baum, 2006; Shaw & Williams, 2002; Wood, 1997). Unfortunately, some of these characteristics are upheld in some New Zealand hospitality organisations which pay poorly and have high staff turnover and workplace problems such as sexual harassment and theft (Poulston, 2008). This research challenges these stereotypes through the investigation of stakeholder perspectives on the nature of hospitality in New Zealand, and supports the argument that work in hospitality requires a unique and complex set of skills, qualities and competencies that reflect abilities in a variety of intelligences (Baum, 1996, 2002; Nickson, Warhurst, & Dutton, 2005).

The complexities of hospitality are further compounded by a reliance on an internationally diverse workforce (see Christensen-Hughs, 1992; Devine, Baum, Hearn, & Devine, 2007). The nationality, demographic and educational backgrounds of international workers changes the cultural landscape of the hospitality workforce, and creates complexities relating to the integration of the workforce into its surrounding community (Baum *et al.*, 2007). Furthermore, hospitality has been found to have a unique and specific sub-culture that sets it apart from other industries (Dawson, Abbott, & Shoemaker, 2011). To be successful in hospitality graduates therefore need to understand cultural influences, diversity and mobility in the hospitality industry. These

and other potential challenges this study uncovers have an impact on how the development of a successful hospitality graduate can be facilitated.

A dilemma, however, exists in that hospitality degree programmes are facing the pressure of providing a balance between the theory base required of a university programme and the range of skills required by industry (Baum, 2006a; Harkison *et al.*, 2011; Ruhanen, 2005). This study therefore investigates stakeholder perspectives on educational development for success in hospitality undergraduates, and addresses the debate relating to the balance of applied and theoretical approaches to hospitality curriculum design (see Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). A focus is on the development and improvement of the hospitality education and industry relationship, which is viewed as essential to sustaining student numbers in hospitality and developing a more successful graduate (Glover, Law, & Yougman, 2002). Effective collaboration will encourage students to view hospitality as a viable career choice and provide clarity of purpose of their education. It will also allow incorporation of differing hospitality higher-education and industry requirements in the development of specific capabilities that will contribute to hospitality graduates becoming successful.

1.3 Thesis structure

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive review of literature relating to the characteristics and nature of the hospitality workplace, success in hospitality and skills, competencies and qualities associated with being successful. Other themes directly connected to the research are explored, such as hospitality, employability, and undergraduate development in hospitality higher education. The purpose of the review is to reflect on previous research and establish the problematic nature of determining critical factors for success in hospitality.

The third chapter, methodology, outlines the development of the research process and, in response to the literature review, establishes a rigorous and robust research method. The study adopts a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm using a mixed methods approach to data collection and analysis – the teacher and industry stakeholder data results from an extensive interview process, whereas the student data were obtained from a survey. The interview findings then provide a framework for collecting quantitative data through a survey of students.

The first of three results, findings and discussions chapters then follows. Chapter 4 focuses on a qualitative analysis of the interview responses from industry representatives. It highlights and explores important discussion points in relation to the industry perspective of success in hospitality and for the individual. Chapter 5 presents a teacher perspective, again through qualitative analysis, on success and being successful in hospitality. Teachers' perceptions of hospitality higher-education provision and the hospitality industry are explored, with the data from the interviews also giving an education perspective of what success in hospitality is and how to educate for being successful.

Chapter 6 reviews the findings from the student survey and students' perceptions in response to important themes uncovered by the education and industry stakeholder groups. The students offered their perceptions of the hospitality industry, the critical factors for success in hospitality, and the degree they were studying. This chapter adds a third stakeholder perspective to the study and an opportunity to evaluate any intersecting themes from each group. These three chapters allow for a triangulated perspective that addresses the research questions.

Chapter 7 presents the intersecting themes that emerge from the previous findings chapters, and presents notable differences and commonalities from each data set in

relation to the research questions. A series of insights is offered to explain what makes a successful hospitality graduate and recommendations are made as to how the critical factors of success can be incorporated into hospitality higher education.

The final chapter of the thesis revisits the research questions and provides a measured review of how these were answered. Reflection is made on the study as a whole and its contribution to knowledge is discussed along with suggestions for future investigations and how the research could be expanded. The chapter concludes by setting out a research agenda based on the implications and contributions of the investigations.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews academic literature on hospitality, organisational behaviour, hospitality higher education and the meaning of success, as an understanding of these contexts will help inform the predictors of success. The review commences with an investigation into what hospitality is and how it can be defined. Firstly, definitions of hospitality provide an insight into what is required to work in hospitality. These are followed by a discussion on the nature of hospitality work, industry characteristics, and an insight into the culture of hospitality. The review then examines the skills, competencies and qualities viewed by industry and academia as necessary for working in the hospitality industry. The concept of success is then explored followed by a review of discussions that identify the critical factors for success in hospitality. The literature review also visits discussions about how an individual can be successful in hospitality. The investigation into success and skills, competencies and qualities for success will help to inform answers to the research questions. Following the discussions of success, hospitality higher education is placed in the context of the thesis, which leads to discussions relating to graduate development and the concept of employability in hospitality. The literature review then explores what is expected of graduates by the hospitality industry and what is required, educationally, to develop hospitality graduates for the 21st century – both globally and in New Zealand.

2.2 Context for research – the hospitality industry

The hospitality industry is considered to have its own culture and set of characteristics which place certain demands on the individual (Baum, 1996, 2002; Blue & Harun, 2003; Dawson, Abbott, & Shoemaker, 2011). In addition, the globalisation and growth of commercial hospitality has precipitated the emergence of complex issues including, but not limited to, the advancement of computer technology (Whitelaw, 2008), market

growth across different cultures (Hai-yan & Baum, 2006; Jauhari, 2006; Tajeddini, 2009; Velo & Mittaz, 2006) and environmental challenges (Kirk, 1995; Webster, 2006). These issues create challenges in the global development of skills, competencies and thinking processes required by those associated with hospitality, whether they are employees, owners, managers or educators. These aspects therefore indicate a complex range of skills, abilities and competencies are required for hospitality.

There is also an increased awareness of hospitality through global tourism (Bharwani & Butt, 2012) and this, combined with advances in information communication technology (ICT), has intensified the level of understanding of hospitality in contemporary society (Baum, 2006a). The growth and development of the international tourism market has also led to a change in the way of hospitality work is viewed (Bharwani & Jauhari, 2013). The concepts of *emotional labour* (Hochschild, 1983; Seymour, 2000) and *aesthetic labour* (Warhurst, Nickson, Witz, & Cullen, 2000) contribute to an understanding of more traditional views of hospitality work (for example, see Gabriel (1988) and Wood (1997)) and provide evidence of the developing awareness of the complexity of hospitality labour.

The hospitality industry is characterised by key operational drivers (such as revenue and yield) which increase the complexity of management's role and place considerable demands on both managers and employees for profit and cost control (Chandana, McMillan, Pantin, Taller, & Willie, 2013; Conn, 2009). The industry is also affected by high capital costs and fluctuating operating costs, which require careful management of resources (Mitchell & Ingram, 2002). From a legislative perspective, hospitality managers and employees are responsible for the health and safety of the public, with a particular emphasis on food hygiene. This necessitates specified competencies, specialist knowledge and in some cases, particular levels of training and qualifications

(Baum, 2002; Coleman, Griffith, & Botterill, 2000). To be successful in hospitality, graduates therefore require specific skills to negotiate the complexities of their work.

Hospitality is essentially an “inseparable” service whereby production and delivery take place at the same location and in the same time frame (Brotherton, 1999; Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2006). Service in hospitality is intangible, perishable, and heterogeneous, and employees are faced with interpreting and managing guest complex expectations (Brotherton, 1999). As employees negotiate these service complexities and guest expectations, they can experience internal and external conflicts related to their roles and the boundaries of the service encounter (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2006). This can create times of unusual pressure on employees in order to produce and deliver the service product (Susskind, Borchgrevink, Brymer, & Kacmar, 2000). As these conflicts and pressures require complex skills, hospitality work cannot be regarded as low skilled labour.

Hospitality work has traditionally been perceived as unskilled or semi-skilled work (Baum, 1996). Wood (1997) suggested that this low skill profile of hospitality work may explain its reputation as being characterised by low pay and poor working conditions, a reputation that persists (Williamson, 2010). The hospitality industry is also characterised by high levels of labour turnover and has a poor image in the eyes of prospective hospitality students (Jenkins, 2001; Teng, 2008). Students have indicated that the industry is not attractive due to these negative characteristics (Teng, 2008; Williamson *et al.*, 2008). This issue needs to be resolved as attracting students to hospitality education is an important component of industry growth and sustainability.

2.3 Defining hospitality

The study of hospitality has gained academic maturity and generated increased interest from other disciplines (Lashley, Lynch, & Morrison, 2007b). Growing links have been observed between the study of hospitality and more established academic disciplines, such as psychology, anthropology, economics and sociology (Lashley *et al.*, 2007a; Morrison & O’Gorman, 2008). In addition, the integration of these academic fields contributes to the exploration of the meaning of hospitality in relation to motives, values, beliefs and culture (Morrison & O’Gorman, 2008). Hospitality is more than just a provision or exchange; rather, it is a complex transaction that transcends a service encounter. The emotional experience of dealing with an angry guest, the awareness required to deal with cultural diversity, and the complex range of communication skills required in a hospitality environment, suggest that an understanding of human relations is integrated to understanding hospitality. Hospitality is a societal and cultural phenomenon (Lashley *et al.*, 2007b) and this study supports O’Gorman’s (2007b) observation that “true hospitality is somewhat of an enigma” (p. 200). It is a phenomenon that “cannot be resolved on the pages of an academic journal”, but more importantly “is an act of generosity which turns a stranger into a friend for a limited period of time” (O’Gorman, 2007a, p. 210). This generosity underpins the nature of hospitality skills and work.

The search for a definition of ‘hospitality’ has reveals a plethora of ideas. As Jones (1996a) pointed out “there is certainly no commonly shared paradigm of what we mean by “hospitality”... reference to the research literature would indicate that there has been little or no discussion of what we mean by hospitality” (pp. 6–7)

Derrida (2002) proposed that hospitality not only involves the welcoming of strangers but that the attainment of genuine hospitality is not possible. Derrida makes explicit that

the notion of hospitality requires one to be the “master” of the house, country or nation (and hence the controller). This means that any attempt to behave hospitably is betrothed to keeping guests under control and can therefore be interpreted as inhospitable. On the other hand, hospitality demands a welcoming of strangers and the relinquishing of control to those in need (Derrida, 2002). It follows, therefore, that hospitality requires unconditional actions as well as conditional. Nouwen’s (1986) philosophy recognises this complexity of the concept of hospitality. He proposed true hospitality as being able to welcome a person into one’s space and life, which requires defining a set of boundaries. Hospitality is viewed by him as an individual spiritual state of existence between people that involves the creation of space into which strangers can enter. This spiritual perspective interprets hospitality as an ability to create space which enables people the opportunity to change. The spiritual essence of hospitality has an integral role in the lives of individuals and families (Grottola, 1998).

Derrida introduced the concept of a *host–guest relationship* and initiated discussions of boundaries within this relationship. This relationship and its boundaries were further explored by Sheringham and Daruwalla (2007). They discussed the need to determine the nature of the host and the guest in order to establish the relationship boundaries that shape the process of turning a stranger into a guest, a process that involves the role of food and/or drink.

Discussions about the concept of hospitality and its meaning have also been influenced by research into previous civilisations (O’Gorman, 2005). Early humans offered food to other groups as a sign of acceptance and the start of a new relationship (Tanaka, 1980). O’Gorman (2007a) explored classical and ancient origins of hospitality. His study, which focused on Greek, Roman and Persian civilisations, differentiated between domestic, civic and commercial hospitality. Discussions in relation to mythological and

Judeo-Christian writings offer a fascinating insight into the connection of hospitality with food, drink, and treating strangers with respect and dignity, connections which arguably remain. O’Gorman (2007a) proposed that hospitality has a divine characteristic in as much that offering hospitality is akin to making offerings to a deity. This implies that offering hospitality has a righteous aspect and implies an (unwritten) code of conduct in provision and acceptance (O’Gorman, 2005, 2007a). Hospitality then, is an established reciprocal interaction, regardless of host or guest identity, and a natural human behavioural interaction.

The provision of hospitality to strangers involves acts of nobility and morality. Sheringham and Daruwalla (2007) continued the nobility theme by referring to hospitality as a virtue, a moral obligation and a civilised process. In contrast, the provision of hospitality for money might be viewed as demeaning for a service provider (e.g. Telfer, 2000) and hospitality employees are viewed by some, as having poor social status (Wildes, 2005). Poulston (2008) also indicated that pressures to serve and please guests can make hospitality employees feel vulnerable and subservient. It is potentially this viewpoint that creates a negative image of hospitality for potential employees, and as a result, the industry has difficulty recruiting, retaining and enhancing the employment opportunities of its employees.

Heal (1990) argued that the underlying principles of hospitality, which determine its nature, require essentially a natural relationship and an act of selfless giving and receiving. The centrality of the concept of hospitality has been noted in studies of early Rome, the Indian tribes of Canada, and in Maori culture (Heal, 1990). In these studies hospitality is seen as a virtue and can be understood further through the exploration of human nature (O’Connor, 2005). In this context, hospitality is associated with human interaction (King, 1995) and consumption and provision of products (Jones, 1996b;

Pfeifer, 1983; Tideman, 1983), and involves an exchange process that generates benefits for those involved (Burgess, 1982; King, 1995; Reuland, Choudry, & Fagel, 1985). Cassee and Reuland (1983) acknowledged its physiological benefits for people, and defined hospitality as “...a harmonious mixture of food, beverage, and/or shelter, a physical environment, and the behaviour and attitude of people” (p. 144).

Hospitality is viewed as having four distinct characteristics: it is a host–guest relationship, it is interactive, it is a blend of tangible and intangible factors, and the host provides security and comfort for the guest (Hepple, Kipps, & Thomson, 1990; King, 1995). A common theme in these definitions is the focus on hospitable behaviour. A more economic perspective is offered by Tideman (1983), who argues that hospitality is a method of production by which:

....the needs of the proposed guest are satisfied to the utmost and that means the supply of goods and services in a quantity and quality desired by the guest at a price that is acceptable. (p. 1)

This economic and commercial view is shared by Pfeifer (1983) and Jones (1996b). They both introduced a *product-supply orientation* to definitions of hospitality and the inclusion of the provision of services away from home.

Lashley (2000) explored the concept of hospitality further through development of a three-domain theoretical framework: the private domain seeks to establish a duty-orientated, domestic and hospitable nature to hospitality; humanity, culture and social connection characterise the social domain, and the commercial domain introduces the aspects of money exchange and service retail into hospitality. Lashley (2007) argued that hospitality has a deep-seated social significance and is grounded in the complexities of a host–guest relationship. The problem with this three-domain approach is that it excludes the contexts of the corporate and business characteristics of the hospitality industry (Slattery, 2002). Slattery argued that the three-domain approach is redundant

due to the complex diversity of the global hospitality industry. Taking a critical view however, Slattery's (2002), approach of focusing on the range and structure of hospitality business still requires an acknowledgement of the process of human exchange within those businesses. This study proposes that graduate preparation should therefore include a conceptual understanding of hospitality, not only based on range and structure (e.g. corporate and business characteristics) but also on human exchange.

A more multidimensional definition of hospitality has since emerged (Lashley *et al.*, 2007a) whereby hospitality is viewed as the greeting and entertainment of strangers from different social and cultural backgrounds. Characteristics of kindness, charity and generosity are introduced and, more importantly, the acceptance of strangers into one's space (Morrison & O'Gorman, 2006). This multidimensional perspective has incorporated previous views and progressed the understanding of hospitality. Brotherton (1999) initially captured some essential elements and dimensions of the hospitality concept in his definition. He viewed hospitality as a human exchange based on products and services, and characterised by being voluntary, mutually beneficial and contemporaneous. Brotherton (2005) also posited an operational definition of hospitality and suggested that hospitality is comprised of four dimensions: physical, temporal, behavioural and spatial. He explored customer perceptions of hospitality in relation to this definition with some interesting findings. Using word association, he asked respondents to describe the term 'hospitality'. The study demonstrated that the behavioural dimension of hospitality was dominant in customers' perceptions of the term – "welcoming", "friendly" and "warm" prevailed in the descriptions of hospitality. His findings also indicated that food and/or drink are not necessarily associated with hospitality.

As the present study is undertaken from a New Zealand perspective, it is important to recognise the philosophical approach to hospitality adopted by Maori culture. *Manaakitanga*, the Maori term for ‘hospitality’, adopts the view that hospitality should be “something that comes from within” and is “a desire to please and accommodate” (Thorp, 2008, p. 23). The concept of *Manaakitanga* has been embraced by the New Zealand Government as an underpinning value for the development of the tourism industry (New Zealand Tourism Strategy, 2008). Hospitality has an important part to play in Maori society; *manaaki* is the term used to describe love and hospitality towards others (Barnett, 2001). A key component of Maori hospitality is the importance of a warm welcome (Ryan, 1997), but other important attributes of Maori hospitality involve food, a place to rest and being pleasant (Barlow, 1991).

In relation to Maori practices surrounding food, *tikanga* involves customs and protocol, while *manaakitanga* relates to the protection, blessings and respect shown (Thorp, 2008). As an underlying principle, *manaakitanga* is about being hospitable and necessitates giving visitors a high priority. It is related to nurturing relationships, looking after people, showing respect, and showing care in how others are treated. An essential part of *manaakitanga* is a strong focus on positive human behaviour and relationships (Mead, 2003). This view provides further evidence of the importance placed on human interaction and its role in hospitality.

In summary, hospitality can be defined as a multifaceted and multidimensional concept (Lashley *et al.*, 2007a; Morrison & O’Gorman, 2006) that demands an unconditional welcome (Derrida, 2002), a natural ability to please others (Thorp, 2008) and is embedded in the complexities of society and culture (Lashley *et al.*, 2007a). In addition, hospitality has its own cultural characteristics, laws and principles (Westmoreland, 2008). There are clear cultural and societal dimensions and influences to hospitality. In

order for graduates to demonstrate authentic hospitality, it is crucial they develop an understanding of these various dimensions and views. Hospitality is a fundamental aspect of society and the engaging principles lie in the essence of human relationships. It is therefore often the case that the study of hospitality will “unlock” perspectives on wider aspects of society (Lynch & Morrison, 2007).

2.4 The hospitality industry – characteristics and culture

The hospitality industry and its culture can be identified by specific characteristics that set it apart from other industries. The hospitality industry can be described as a group of individual organisations that provide services to tourists and local residents (Pizam, 2009). While there are some similarities between the travel, tourism and hospitality industries, they are neither the same nor interchangeable (Pizam, 2009). Tourism expenditure in New Zealand was \$23.4 billion in 2012, and much of it derived from the hospitality industry (RANZ, 2013). In 2012, the New Zealand hospitality industry employed just over 100,000 people and produced around \$3.8 billion gross domestic product (GDP), around 2% of national GDP. There were at this time, 103,490 people employed across 14,549 hospitality outlets across New Zealand, contributing \$6978.1 million in sales to the national economy (RANZ, 2013).

The hospitality industry has some unique characteristics in that it provides goods and services to non-tourists, and in some cases provides only to local people (Mullins, 1981). The argument of the uniqueness of the hospitality industry was initially based on the different services that organisations provided for people away from home (Mullins, 1981, 1998; Wood, 1997). General industry characteristics such as unpredictable demand and high degrees of coordination of different service elements were used to distinguish it from other industries (Mullins, 1981, 1998). The elements of the hospitality product include service delivery and service environment as well as the

physical product (Rust & Oliver, 1993), which often occur simultaneously (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2006). While these characteristics demonstrate some element of uniqueness they are not however, unique to hospitality alone.

However, the hospitality industry has a unique and specific culture (Dawson *et al.*, 2011; Mullins, 1981) which requires certain personal attributes and characteristics of its employees (Dawson *et al.*, 2011). In addition, different skills along with a blend of experience and education are required by individuals to negotiate the different characteristics of the industry (Baum, 2006a).

Some studies set out to establish the uniqueness of the hospitality industry and its associated culture. Taking a critical view however, these studies are limited to restaurants (Ogaard, Larsen, & Marnburg, 2005; Woods, 1989) and hotels (Kemp & Dwyer, 2001). Woods (1989) noted that a restaurant culture includes characteristics such as, the need for teamwork and the importance of fun and enjoyment, characteristics that are not unique to hospitality, though. Kemp and Dwyer (2001) identified the importance of providing good high-quality service, with an emphasis on putting guests' needs first. Both of these studies highlighted specific characteristics that set the restaurant and hotel industry apart from others, but little has been done to generalise these aspects to the rest of the hospitality industry. Tepeci and Bartlett's (2002) study identified a hospitality industry culture profile (HICP) that identifies characteristics that are unique to hospitality organisations. However, their study used data from hospitality students with limited industry work experience. Dawson, Abbott and Shoemaker (2011), on the other hand, explored the unique characteristics of the wider hospitality industry. Their research identified some unique aspects of the hospitality industry and specific characteristics of a person who would be successful in such an environment. Their research recognised that there are specific attributes that are key to a hospitality

graduate's success, and they focused on which HICP characteristics can be integrated into hospitality higher education and attributed to success.

Dawson *et al.* (2011) identify a unique culture in hospitality that sets it apart from other industries. Zeithaml *et al.* (2006) consider that hospitality employees should be reflective of a service-oriented culture that is conveyed to the customers. This view suggests that the nature of hospitality work means frontline employees have actually to personify the organisation in the customers' eyes (Nickson & Warhurst, 2007). This personification may not be unique to hospitality, but does indicate a distinguishing aspect of hospitality work. The personification of the organisation requires hospitality workers to cross certain boundaries between the external customer and the internal organisation; this is known as *boundary spanning* (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2006). In addition, employees in a service environment are required to participate in *emotion work* (maintaining a positive emotional persona in front of the guest) (Bolton, 2004; Hochschild, 1983) and *multiple role conflict* (undertaking a number of different roles in one transaction) (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2006). Boundary spanning, emotion work and role conflict not only often demand physical labour, but a set of mental skills and the ability to deal with interpersonal and inter-organisational conflict, often causing stress (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2006).

Another distinguishing feature of hospitality is its own language (Blue & Harun, 2003). In a restaurant, for example, French terms are still commonly used in the kitchen along with jargon such as *cover* (guest) and *card* (menu). The existence of a specialised language means a specific set of communication skills is required for hospitality work. Language plays an integral role in every stage of a globalised economy (Heller, 2005); however, the need for cross-cultural communication between hospitality employees and customers is becoming increasingly important (Blue & Harun, 2003). This is mainly

due to increased multiculturalism in hospitality (Yuan *et al.*, 2006). It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that language needs to become a part of work-related competence, and multilingualism has an integral role in contemporary hospitality work (Petersone *et al.*, 2008; Sinha, 2010; Yuan *et al.*, 2006).

Awareness and knowledge of the cultural diversity of hospitality requires discussion. From a Western (predominantly Europe and the United States of America (USA)) and Pacific (predominantly Australia and New Zealand) perspective, there is a reliance on a culturally diverse workforce in hospitality, and the migrant flow in these countries is rapidly increasing the multicultural nature of the contemporary workforce (Devine *et al.*, 2007; Duncan, 2005). The modern multicultural nature of hospitality, which has developed because of demographic shifts due to migration, means the industry requires new sets of skills and competencies in its workers, such as the ability to speak a second language (Yuan *et al.*, 2006).

Having an understanding of cultural diversity in a hospitality workplace improves the chances of an individual being successful regardless of their cultural background, and contributes to a range of organisational benefits, such as improved service recovery, complaint handling and cross-cultural relationships (Arora & Rohmetra, 2010; Baum *et al.*, 2007; Devine *et al.*, 2007; Reece, Brandt, & Howie, 2011). There is a strong argument that hospitality is culturally unique; Barnett (2001) highlighted the cultural uniqueness of hospitality in New Zealand. He observed that the indigenous nature and culture of the Maori people contributed a unique approach to hospitality in New Zealand and explained that “the unique, rich culture of the Maori is a strong and attractive component of the social heritage in Aotearoa” (Barnett, 2001, p. 83).

Along with this cultural uniqueness, there are certain characteristics that create a stressful environment for hospitality workers (Sarabakhsh, Carson, & Lindgren, 1989;

Poulston, 2008; Zohar, 1994). From a front-of-house (i.e. direct contact between a customer and employee in a hospitality setting) perspective, the nature of the service transaction (the host–guest relationship), the demand for a pleasant and courteous nature in a customer-service environment, and the workload (physical and emotional) indicate significant stress factors (Zohar, 1994). Lo and Lamm’s (2005) New Zealand study identified that causes of occupational stress for hospitality employees were heavy workloads and an emphasis on establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships with customers and colleagues. These factors have since intensified due to growing economic pressures and the desire to increase labour productivity (Williamson, 2010). Hospitality students gaining work experience will not only have to deal with the work-related stress factors of entry-level employment, but also the emotional, financial and academic stress factors encountered while being a student (Jogarathnam & Buchanan, 2004).

A comparison with other industries in New Zealand showed that hospitality has one of the highest labour turnover rates and one of the lowest hourly wage rates (MBIE, 2013; RANZ, 2013; Williamson, 2010). In his study of hospitality employees in New Zealand, Williamson identified a “hospitality crisis” for employers characterised by low staff-retention rates and poor working conditions. Other studies have described the high labour turnover and drop-out rates in the hospitality industry (DiPietro & Condly, 2007; Pratten, 2003). Such characteristics, along with other recognised workplace problems (Poulston, 2008), have resulted in the industry having a reputation for service staff feeling inferior in the host–guest relationship (Thomson & Thomson, 1995) and having poor status in society (Wildes, 2005). There is a perception that hospitality work is characterised by high turnover and low wages resulting in poor motivation and satisfaction for its employees (Brown & McIntosh, 2003; DiPietro & Condly, 2007; Wildes, 2008).

Hospitality labour turnover is a cause for constant concern amongst employers and has been consistently reported as a major challenge for the industry in New Zealand (MBIE, 2013; RANZ, 2013; Williamson, 2010). In addition, labour turnover in hospitality has been a great source of interest for employers and academics (Chen, Wang & Chu, 2010) as understanding the reasons people leave their jobs could unlock answers in how to make people stay (retention). It is recognised that high labour turnover causes higher staffing costs (Blomme, van Rheede & Tromp, 2010b; Hinkin & Tracey, 2000), and common sources of high turnover in the hospitality industry are linked to a stressful environment, poor working conditions and the reputation of low pay (Lo & Lamm, 2005). A particular area for concern has been the growth in turnover of well-educated employees in the hospitality industry (Blomme *et al.*, 2010a). These employees (graduates who have completed a higher education programme - see Blomme *et al.*, 2010a) have increased chances of becoming successful by achieving higher management positions (Blomme *et al.*, 2010a). Therefore retaining well-educated graduates is particularly important to an organisations' competencies (Blomme 2003) and knowledge base (Blomme *et al.*, 2010b), and therefore contributes to organisational success.

Tackling the issue of labour turnover in hospitality has been addressed from a range of perspectives. In their study of hotels Kazlauskaite, Buciuniene and Turauskas, (2006) found that one measure of reducing turnover was to give employees more psychological and organisational empowerment, therefore leading to increased levels of commitment. Wolfe and Kim (2013) found that enhancing emotional intelligence factors, such as interpersonal skills, is crucial for success in hotel management and improves employee commitment. Alternatively, one perspective is that graduates may leave the industry because any commitment is 'knocked out' of them at an early stage so they become disenchanted. Therefore focusing on the dimensions that encourage graduates to stay,

such as commitment, engagement or passion, could enhance worker performance and reduce turnover. In addition, establishing which dimensions are crucial for retention and sustaining these in students, is more likely to keep graduates in hospitality and help them become more successful.

There is a current focus among hospitality employers on the importance of human relations in today's labour market and contemporary employers tend to expect employees to show greater responsibility for developing their potential than ever before (Reece *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, in order to work in the service economy, relationships have become more important than the product (Reece *et al.*, 2011). If service industries such as hospitality rely on social abilities in their workforce, then certain personality traits become necessary for hospitality work. The "right" person for hospitality, or the "hospitalitarian" (as described by Meyer, 2006, p. 143), demonstrates five key traits: friendliness, curiosity, work ethic, empathy and self-awareness (Meyer, 2006). While these traits may not be unique to hospitality, they do provide a strong point for discussion. Meyer (2006) also posited that hospitality is impossible to teach and is reliant on hiring the right people. Meyer's opinion does not take account of the technical nature of hospitality work but suggests that anyone can work in the service industry. While work in the service industry and hospitality requires a generic skills bias (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005, 2006), there is, however, also a need for technical ability such as financial and systems knowledge (Baum, 2006a).

Not only do individuals in the hospitality industry have to demonstrate some of the characteristics noted above, but their work also involves emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983; Korczynski, 2003) and requires emotional competence (Reece *et al.*, 2011). The nature of work in frontline hospitality is further compounded by the importance of attitude and appearance in the service encounter (Nickson & Warhurst, 2007; Nickson

et al., 2005; Warhurst & Nickson, 2007). Frontline employees are those who have direct contact with customers and engage in boundary-spanning roles in the organisation (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2006). Hospitality frontline employees are required to “look right” and “sound right”, as professional presentation and attire lead to favourable perceptions from employers regarding job prospects (Ruetzler, Taylor, Reynolds, Baker, & Killen, 2012).

2.5 The nature of work in hospitality

Early commercial hospitality activities in the Western world were largely influenced by nineteenth-century European travel patterns and embraced the values of Victorian domestic service (Wood, 1997). Traditionally, the nature of work in the hospitality industry has relied upon specific technical skills required for food preparation or food service in the industry (Wood, 1997). It was viewed that hospitality work, in particular the focus on the service of food and drink, involved low skill levels for the obligation, necessity and effort to produce service to others (Noon & Blyton, 2002). Contemporary Western hospitality still demonstrates some of these traditional characteristics, but uses a more mobile and transient workforce (Duncan *et al.*, 2009) and has established flexibility in its workforce through the use of contingent labour (Deery & Jago, 2003; Duncan *et al.*, 2009).

In addition to being mobile and transient, Baum (2002) describes hospitality as also being horizontally and vertically diverse in nature. From a horizontal perspective, there is a wide range of jobs within each sector of the industry. The traditional focus of hospitality was centred upon food, beverage and accommodation (Baum, 2002; Gabriel, 1988), but as industry has grown, the work has extended to include front desk, reservations, call centres, information technology (IT) management, administration, leisure, entertainment, food and beverage, and even manufacturing (Baum, 2002).

Vertical diversity reflects a more traditional perspective of the nature of work through the classification of roles in an organisation into, for example, management, supervisory and operative (Baum, 2002). A job role or title carries with it a range of skills and tasks, and specific job roles or titles are influenced by a range of external factors such as qualification requirements, pay and union membership (Baum, 2002), which adds to the complexity of hospitality work.

The nature of work in hospitality has been characterised as having poor working conditions (DiPietro & Condly, 2007), unsocial hours (Pratten, 2003), low pay (Brown & McIntosh, 2003), and stressful working conditions (Jogarathnam & Buchanan, 2004). In addition, the industry has been frequently portrayed as one with low job security and limited opportunity for personal development (Baum, 2008; Deery & Shaw, 1999). Unfortunately, students have often seen these as prevailing characteristics of the industry they are being educated to enter (Kang & Gould, 2002; Keep & Mayhew, 1999a; Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000), which may deter them from a hospitality career.

These prevailing characteristics are unlikely to attract the best candidates into an industry that values delivery of high-quality service, as they can create a negative attitude towards the industry (Teng, 2008). The challenge, for the hospitality industry (noted for its skills shortages and hard-to-fill vacancies) is to overcome students' negative perceptions of the work and make it more attractive to enter (Marchante, Ortega, & Pagan, 2006; Teng, 2008).

Perhaps it is not surprising therefore, that Shaw and Williams (2002) observed that hospitality employees were generally "uneducated, unmotivated, untrained, unskilled and unproductive" (p. 42). However, Baum (2002), leaning on the work of Noon and Blyton (1995, 2002) and the classification of skills in hospitality, argued that referring to hospitality work as "unskilled" is unjustifiable. A number of other writers have also

challenged the stereotype of hospitality work as low skilled (Baum, 1996; Nickson, Baum, Losekoot, Morrison, & Frochot, 2002; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). Although initially slow to react, Western hospitality education has seen a decreasing reliance on technical skills (Jones, 1983, 2002), and an increasing focus on generic skills regarded as essential for employment (Kearns, 2001). Indeed generic skills (e.g. communication, decision making) have become increasingly important as a requirement for hospitality employees (Baum, 2002; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005, 2006; Sisson & Adams, 2013).

Shaw and Williams' (2002) criticism is also unjustified because hospitality work is complex. Employees are required to be physically, behaviourally and spatially aware in response to customers' needs (Brotherton, 2005), culturally aware (Baum, 1996, 2006a) and aesthetically and emotionally engaged with customers (Hochschild, 1983; Warhurst & Nickson, 2007). Hospitality service is intangible, perishable and heterogeneous (Jones & Lockwood, 1989), and it is this intangibility and its heterogeneity that separates hospitality service from most industries (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2006). Reece (2012) noted that nature of service is more important than the product or experience provided. If so, then hospitality work requires skill sets necessary to deal with the complexities of communication and human relationships (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005; Reece, 2012). In the light of these discussions, it is reasonable to argue that hospitality work is not low-skilled but complex and also requires a generic-skills focus (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005).

Frontline employees have a key role in organisational success in hospitality in terms of delivery of service quality, service recovery and ensuring repeat business (Chi & Gursoy, 2009; Chiang & Birtch, 2008; Guchait, Kim, & Namasivayam, 2012). They represent the image of the organisation to customers and are a vital source of information about customers' needs and expectations (Bettencourt & Brown, 2003);

thus the skills, abilities and performance of frontline employees are influential on an organisation's productivity, profitability and success (Slatten & Mehmetoglu, 2011). Frontline employees are expected to be courteous to customer requests and demonstrate appropriate responsiveness in problem solving to ensure customer satisfaction (Bettencourt, Brown, & MacKenzie, 2005; Yavas, Karatepe, Babakus, & Avci, 2004). In addition, frontline employees are often required to engage in "extra-role" customer service, going beyond the required role requirements (Karatepe, 2012). It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that frontline employees require specific skills and competencies adapted from multiple intelligences (cognitive, social and emotional) to enable them to be proactive in addressing challenging service encounters (De Jong & De Ruyter, 2004).

In summary, hospitality work is complex and creates a unique set of customer experiences that requires high-level skills (Chung, 2000; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005). These high level skills have a generic focus and are transferable and essential for employability (Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). Skills that can be categorised as "high" include interpersonal skills, communication skills and problem-solving and decision-making (Baum, 2006a; Chung, 2000; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). The next section examines these skills in more depth.

2.6 Key requirements for hospitality employees

It is important to identify key skills, competencies and qualities of hospitality employees to determine the critical factors that contribute to the success of a hospitality graduate.

2.6.1 Skills for hospitality

'Skill' is an elusive concept difficult to define, and the term is controversial due to the subjective perceptions that surround it (Riley, Ladkin, & Szvias, 2002). Traditional

concepts of skill focused on the development of technical abilities to equip unemployed workers in the early to mid-1980s (Lafer, 2004). In the last few decades, however, there has been a recognisable shift from a technical skills requirement to a more behavioural or generic skills demand from employers (Lafer, 2004; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005, 2006). Various criteria can be used to determine what a skill is. Bradley *et al.* (2000) identified qualifications, levels of training and the ability to perform a task as measures of skill. Baum (2006a) added that gender and ethnicity influences need to be considered when defining the concept of skill. In contrast to these definitions, Lafer (2004) observed that there is no consensus on which skills are important, noting that “‘skill’ means nothing more than ‘whatever employers want’” (p. 118). Identifying what hospitality employers want from education is problematic (Harkison *et al.*, 2011), although studies have indicated that skills development in vocational degree programmes should focus on student preparation for the workplace (Baum, 2002; Moodie, 2002) and therefore, satisfy an industry requirement for work-ready employees (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005; Spowart, 2011). A gap exists, however, between what employers want and what hospitality education provides (Harkison *et al.*, 2011).

Attempts to identify the necessary skills for hospitality employment have been extensive. Early research into hospitality skills development largely ignored graduate perceptions of what was required for hospitality work and adopted an employer’s perspective (Christou, 2000). Research including graduates has found that students rate human resource skills and customer liaison as the most important competencies for hospitality work (Knutson & Patton, 1992; Okeiyi, Finley, & Postel, 1994). Many studies have identified interpersonal skills development as a key area of importance for graduates in the workplace (Nelson & Dopson, 1999; O’Halloran, 1992; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006; Spowart, 2011; Tas, LaBrecque, & Clayton, 1996). Research into the changing roles of both the hospitality graduate and the hospitality industry has

identified the need for graduates to have a range of interpersonal and human relations skills, while technical skills are seen as comparatively unimportant (Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). Although these forgoing studies were conducted outside of New Zealand, recent research indicates that New Zealand hospitality employers also value personality and attitudinal qualities, as well as technical skills and knowledge (see Harkison *et al.*, 2011).

When recruiting for frontline roles in hospitality, employers seek non-technical skills (Odgers & Baum, 2001; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). They also appear to want immediately applicable skills and training, whereas higher education adopts a longer-term career-orientated path in relation to skills development (Thorne, 1995). There is employer demand for transferable skills – communication, initiative, creativity and leadership – which enables students to be part of a flexible and adaptable workforce (Bennett, 2002; Bennett, Dunne, & Carre, 1999). Employers also require qualities such as the ability to cope with stress, respond to a change and intercultural communication skills (Gow & McDonald, 2000). It is possible that education providers are not responsive enough to the changing nature of work, the workplace and the requirements of employers (Gow & McDonald, 2000). Hospitality employers in New Zealand require future graduates to possess language skills, basic interpersonal skills and information technology and problem-solving skills (NZTRI, 2007). Hospitality employers also want graduates to be able to organise and be self-motivated (Bennett, 2002).

By definition, a workplace skill is whatever employers want or need. Given the discussions above, employers require numerous skills of hospitality workers, and these skills encompass a wide range of individual abilities and qualities:

- Attitudinal (Lafer, 2004) – punctuality, loyalty and discipline
- Technical (Baum, 2002, 2006a) – numeracy, literacy, systems knowledge

- Generic or soft skills (Baum, 2006a; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005, 2006) – e.g. communication, problem solving
- Emotional (Hochschild, 1983) – the ability to manage emotions in the workplace
- Aesthetic (Nickson *et al.*, 2005; Warhurst & Nickson, 2007) – “looking good” and “sounding right”
- Cultural (Arora & Rohmetra, 2010; Baum *et al.*, 2007; Dawson *et al.*, 2011; Mkono, 2010) – an awareness of cultural diversity
- Experiential (Baum, 2006a) – the ability to evolve through experience
- Linguistic (Blue & Harun, 2003), and
- Transferable (Bennett, 2002).

The concept of a skills gap is not new and has been raised in the UK and other parts of Europe, as well as in the South Pacific, including New Zealand (Baum, 2002; Clark, 2004; Department of Labour, 2002; IRDAC, 1990; NZTRI, 2007). The skills gap refers to the differing perspective of employers and educators on the requirements and skills needed to enter the workforce (Baum, 2002; New Zealand Tourism Research Institute (NZTRI), 2007). In the hospitality industry, many employers consider that new recruits are not work ready and not being educated to meet the needs of the industry (see Harkison *et al.*, 2011; Spowart, 2011).

Employers have a role in the development of skills and the employability of young people (Smith & Comyn, 2004). This role requires clarity in how the needs of employers are being communicated to education providers (Wellington, 1994). Education providers can receive mixed messages from employers over what skills and personal qualities they should be developing in students as future workers (Harkison *et al.*, 2011; Spowart, 2011; Wellington, 1994). In addition, the difference in the perception of training and development needs for industry across organisations needs to be addressed (Skinner, Saunders, & Beresford, 2004). Armitage *et al.* (1999) posited that while there may be some evidence of a skills gap, it is possible that the gap does not

exist and it is just a one-sided economic viewpoint promoted by employers to address skill shortages in their organisations. It is possible that this perception is still valid.

Large-enterprise employers' needs are focused on the Marxist concept of *labour-power* (Rikowski, 2001), which is realised through education and training. The Marxist perspective focuses on the development of physical and mental capabilities in individuals, and produces "use-value" that matches what employers are looking for (Rikowski, 2001). This perspective, however, does not easily fit into an industry characterised by small business enterprises (SBEs), entrepreneurial ventures and family-operated establishments (Getz, Carlsen, & Morrison, 2004). There is still a shortage of skilled staff in the SBE sector in Australia and New Zealand which can be remedied through further education and training (Becton & Graetz, 2001). Employers' needs can be met through the Marxist concept of labour-power, but this must be realised through education and training. Furthermore, regardless of whether a skills gap exists or not, the continued development of skills of individuals, either through education, training or experience, is necessary for economic growth (Skinner *et al.*, 2004).

Employers seek success in business by recruiting employees with a variety of skills (National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd, 2003), and expect students completing their education to have basic career-readiness skills (Fallows & Steven, 2000; Gow & McDonald, 2000; Smith & Comyn, 2004; Worth, 2002; Zinser, 2003). Education providers however, are accountable to students and the market (Scott, 1989); to this end, responsiveness to and responsibility for student preparation for the workplace is a necessity.

In New Zealand, increasing demands are being made for future hospitality employees to have varied skill sets (Department of Labour, 2007). The philosophical question that arises, and which has become increasingly important for key stakeholders, is how to

develop the required skills to meet the needs of the hospitality industry (Skinner *et al.*, 2004), while also taking into account the variety of skills identified as needed by the Department of Labour as well as the education providers' perceived responsibility to prepare students for the workplace.

2.6.2 Competencies and qualities for hospitality

To examine the composition of a successful hospitality graduate, it is important to identify the competencies, qualities and personal attributes of individuals in hospitality. Competency is open to differing interpretations. *Competence* is defined as the level of application of ability and knowledge a person demonstrates in relation to a situation or professional domain (Kane, 1992). In relation to the service industry, the term 'competency' refers to the abilities and knowledge required to do a job (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2006). Tas (1988) argued that competence is based on the ability to complete or accomplish job-related tasks. Chung-Herrera, Enz and Lankau (2003) identified a model of competency that incorporates knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviour required to perform at a desired level within an organisation. Zegward and Hodges (2003) considered competency an individual characteristic, and the reliance on personal ability rather than technical ability was included by Hodges and Burchell (2003). This study posits that competence is a combination of knowledge, skills and behavioural qualities in relation to a specific work role and/or the completion of job-specific tasks (see Jauhari, 2006). Competence incorporates the development of higher-level skills and the application of lifelong learning resources (Litchfield, Oakland, & Anderson, 2002).

According to Zeithaml *et al.* (2006), in most service organisations employers are looking for a level of service competence (skills and knowledge) and an inclination for service work (interest and attitude). Employers often comment on the lack of preparedness of students entering the hospitality workplace (Barrie, 2006; Kember &

Leung, 2005) and that they are looking for work-ready recruits complete with a wide range of established competencies (Yorke & Harvey, 2005). Investigation into established work competencies and 'work readiness' for hospitality is ongoing.

There have been several attempts over the past three decades to identify the ideal competencies or qualities needed for frontline hospitality work. Various studies have analysed the views of workers at various levels in hospitality organisations (managers, supervisors and employees) as well as hospitality graduates. One of the first studies of key qualities required for improved individual performance in organisations was by Maier (1955). He indicated that the main qualities essential for productivity and efficiency are motivation and personality. His study, however, was not hospitality specific but undertaken in the manufacturing sector. These requirements were later confirmed by Witt and Ferris (2003) and Phelan and Mills (2011), who identified that motivation and personality improved an individual's chances of achievement – but again their studies were in non-hospitality contexts. One of the first hospitality-specific studies was by Swanljung (1981), and found that hotel executives needed to be determined and hard working. This concept of work ethic as a competency was subsequently endorsed by Phelan and Mills (2011), also in a hospitality context.

The importance and value of high levels of social competence in an individual has also been outlined in various studies. Worsfold (1989) compared hotel employees with workers in other industries and found that hospitality requires people to be socially active and tough minded. This concept of *social boldness* and the need for hospitality workers to be highly sociable was confirmed by Ladkin (1999) and Mullins and Davies (1991). Mullins and Davies (1991) also concurred with Worsfold (1989) on the need for such qualities as competitiveness, independence and assertiveness. Nickson *et al.* (2003) contributed to the importance of social ability in their discussions surrounding what

they termed aesthetic labour, while in their textbook about hospitality and tourism careers, Riegel and Dallas (1998) introduced the requirement for hospitality managers to have personal qualities and attainable skills. Personal skills and their contribution to a hotel management career were confirmed by Harper, Brown, and Irvine (2005). The personal qualities or skills were outlined as problem solving, decision making, communication, flexibility and entrepreneurship, and were confirmed in subsequent studies (Hind, Moss, & McKellan, 2007; Ko, 2010; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). These qualities still remain a key requirement by employers (Spowart, 2011).

Following Riegel and Dallas' (1998) initial study, communication continues to be a core competency identified as necessary for hospitality work. Fallows and Steven (2000) outlined the importance of communication in the wider context of building employability skills into university higher curricula, and Nickson *et al.* (2005) identified good communication skills as necessary for working in the retail and hospitality industries. The emphasis on good communication as a key contributor to becoming successful in hospitality continues to be a dominant theme in more recent research (Hai-yan & Baum, 2006; Hind *et al.*, 2007; Ko, 2010; Robertson, 2007; Spowart, 2011). It is also important to note that Bronwell (2008) found that communication skills are not just critical for success in hospitality, but are also relevant in other industry sectors.

In a broader discussion of qualities and skills, it is important to include soft skills and interpersonal abilities. While each term can be considered individually, there are some common principles underlying each of them. Through the application of multiple intelligence theory, interpersonal ability comprises a set of skills that allow people to engage in human relationships using emotional and social intelligence (Albrecht, 2006; Bar-On & Orme, 2002; Goleman, 2006). Skills in this set include communication, active listening, disclosure and empathy (Reece *et al.*, 2011). Burns (1997) understood

soft skills as those directly related to attitude and emotional aptitude. Nickson *et al.* (2005) considered soft skills are about responsiveness, courtesy and understanding of others, concepts that relate to emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983). Nickson *et al.* (2005) stated that “[soft skills are] the ability to ‘look’ good and ‘sound’ right” (p. 196). The similarity of these terms was noticed by Raybould and Wilkins (2006) who referred to interpersonal skills as soft skills, therefore classifying them as the same thing.

The importance of soft or interpersonal skills to improved performance in organisations is well documented. Kay and Russette (2000) identified the interpersonal skill of an individual as a core competency for hospitality management. Fallows and Steven (2000) also concluded that individual success and performance are enhanced through high levels of interpersonal skills. This perspective is supported in more recent studies; for example, done by Hind *et al.* (2007), Huang and Lin (2011) and Lolli (2012). Interpersonal skills have been rated among those most important for entry-level hospitality managers (Chung-Herrera *et al.*, 2003; Kay & Russette, 2000; Tesone & Ricci, 2005). Not only are good interpersonal skills required for effective hospitality, but also for leadership of organisations generally (Chung-Herrera *et al.*, 2003; Huang & Lin, 2011; Kay & Russette, 2000). In fact, recent research has confirmed an earlier observation by Mayo and Thomas-Haysbert (2005) that interpersonal skills are the most important competency required by industry of hospitality graduates by the industry (Ruetzler, Taylor, Reynolds, & Baker, 2011). Ruetzler *et al.*’s (2011) study, however, was limited to an investigation of hospitality trade-show practitioners in the USA and therefore needs further examination from a New Zealand perspective.

An alternative to interpersonal or soft skills is offered by Raybould and Wilkins (2005), who used the term *generic competence*. This term is used to describe skills that can be transferred across different settings and therefore enhance employability; such skills

include problem solving, self-management and interpersonal communication. The concept and importance of transferability and employability competencies have also been developed by Smith, Clegg, Lawrence, and Todd (2007) and Reddan (2008). Therefore generic competence, transferability and employability are important to developing a successful graduate.

In addition to the generic perspective, Kay and Moncarz (2004) identified the importance of human resource management (HRM) competency and its contribution to success in hospitality. HRM skills involve developing human relations, leadership and teamwork. While their study was limited to lodging management in the USA, these competencies have some relevance to the identification of core qualities required for success in hospitality anywhere. The viewpoint that HRM skills are essential qualities for success in hospitality is also supported by Guerrier and Deery (1998), Kim (2006), and Singh, Hu, and Roehl (2007).

Other key competencies and qualities perceived as important in contributing to success in hospitality are:

- An understanding of language (Heller, 2005) – both of a foreign language (Yuan *et al.*, 2006) and the language that is unique to hospitality (Blue & Harun, 2003)
- Cultural awareness (Baum *et al.*, 2007; Robertson, 2007), and
- An ability to demonstrate self-management, self-awareness and self-confidence (Crebert, Bates, Bell, Patrick, & Cragolin, 2004; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006).

It is worth noting that some studies have highlighted the importance of the practical application of learning in enhancing competencies and qualities. Rainsbury *et al.* (2002) identified an educational requirement for students to have more work experience opportunities, a viewpoint shared by Crebert *et al.* (2004), Reddan (2008), and Smith *et al.* (2007). Betts *et al.* (2009) also argued that work-related experience gives the

individual the opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills. This would increase and enhance their value as a potential employee when seeking employment (Yorke & Harvey, 2005).

2.6.3 Multiple intelligence as a requirement for hospitality

Part of the rationale behind this study is that the skills, competencies and qualities required for hospitality work are associated with different intelligences, or multiple intelligence theory (Gardner, 1983, 2006). Intelligence implies interacting with one's environment as well as thinking and reasoning (Reece *et al.*, 2011). A certain level of intelligence tends to remain stable throughout an individual's life; however, other levels of intelligence can be achieved through learning and experience (Reece *et al.*, 2011). Traditionally, intelligence was considered to be a combination of certain cognitive abilities – logical, mathematical and problem-solving – expressed as an intelligence quotient (IQ) (Cavelzani & Esposito, 2010). Multiple intelligence theory has now replaced this traditional IQ approach and respects individuals' different dimensions of ability (Cavelzani & Esposito, 2010).

Research now indicates that intelligence is multidimensional and includes other facets in addition to more traditional cognitive abilities. Gardner (1983) proposed that individuals can be intelligent in many different ways; for example, musically, spatially, linguistically and socially. One of the more notable dimensions of intelligence proposed by Gardner (1993, 2006) is that of interpersonal intelligence, which he defines as the ability to understand others. His theory posits that those with high levels of interpersonal intelligence are able to cooperate in order to work as part of a group and able to understand what people need to work well. Individuals with high levels of interpersonal intelligence are sensitive to their feelings and moods, and able to

empathise with others. These are all characteristics associated with providing customer service in hospitality (Scott-Halsell, Blum, & Huffman, 2008).

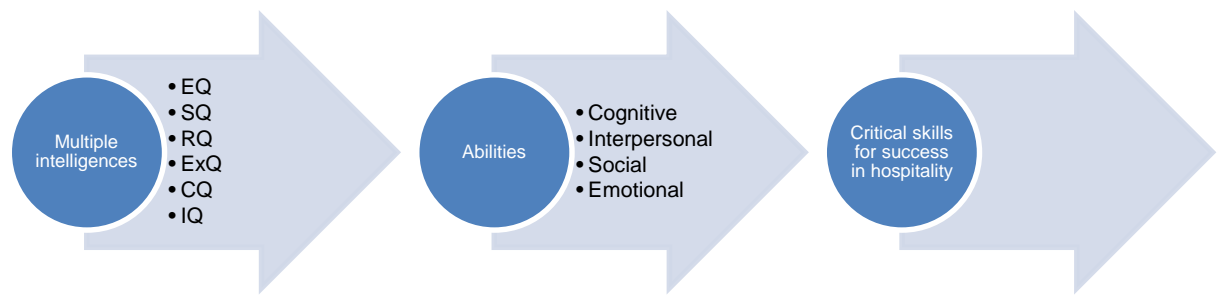
The importance of multiple intelligences in contributing to one person being regarded as more successful than another was highlighted by Cooper and Sawaf (1997). They found that those with a higher IQ (therefore deemed to be more intellectually intelligent) were less capable of controlling their emotions and becoming “in tune” with others than those who had a higher *emotional intelligence quotient* (EQ). The foregoing discussion (i.e. section 2.5) demonstrated that the nature of hospitality work requires employees to be intelligent on a number of different levels; Gardner’s theory supports this view (2006) and, therefore, suggests that success in hospitality also requires multiple intelligences.

Cognitive intelligence means an individual has complex intellectual skills and problem-solving abilities (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Norman, 2005). *Social intelligence* and *emotional intelligence* (measured by SQ and EQ respectively) mean an individual can sense, understand and interact in complex interpersonal relationships and environments (Albrecht, 2006; Bar-On & Orme, 2002; Goleman, 2006). *Cultural intelligence* (denoted as CQ) provides an individual with the ability to interact with those from culturally diverse backgrounds (Arora & Rohmetra, 2010), while *experiential intelligence* (denoted as ExQ) provides an individual with the ability to empathise with the expectations and needs of other individuals (Baum, 2006a). Finally, the *resilience intelligence quotient* (RQ) is an indicator of how well a person can recover from adversity (Clement, 2009; Edward & Warelow, 2005). EQ and SQ are two focal points of this study as these intelligences concentrate on the complexities of the human exchange and are regarded as essential to the hospitality workplace (Cha, Cichy, & Kim, 2008; Scott-Halsell *et al.*, 2008).

The demonstration of effective competence on the part of a hospitality employee relies on the use of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 2006). Indeed, Gardner (2006) advocated that the application of multiple intelligences leads to improved individual performance and hence success. In addition, the contribution of social and emotional intelligence skills in a hospitality workplace is well documented (e.g. Cha *et al.*, 2008; Kim & Agrusa, 2011; Scott-Halsell, Blum, & Huffman, 2011; Scott-Halsell *et al.*, 2008). However, while these studies identified specific skills associated with SQ and EQ in the workplace, they did not directly link specific intelligence skills to becoming successful in hospitality.

The growth of multiculturalism in hospitality has increased the need for a high CQ among hospitality employees (Arora & Rohmetra, 2010; Mkono, 2010). CQ can be described as an individual's ability to adapt to cultural settings and contexts (Earley & Ang, 2003). It combines elements of multiple intelligences, such as linguistic, spatial, intrapersonal and interpersonal abilities (Gardner, 1983, 1993; Peterson, 2004). CQ is viewed as the ability to understand and display appropriate behaviours in a culturally diverse environment (Van Dyne, Ang, & Livermore, 2010). There is a link between the development of multiple intelligences and improved performance in the hospitality workplace, as outlined in Figure 2.1 below. However, the critical skills for success in hospitality, in respect of the different intelligences, have yet to be established.

Figure 2.1 Developing critical skills for success in hospitality



Greenberg and Baron (2003) found that cognitive intelligence and the ability to use complex information enable managers to become successful. Clement (2009), indicated that success in the workplace is reliant on the application of a combination of intelligences: EQ, SQ, IQ, and RQ. Companies are therefore better to employ those with high levels of EQ as these are predictors of success (Scott-Halsell *et al.*, 2008; Scott-Halsell, Shumate, & Blum, 2007). Despite differences in perceptions of success between males and females (Kogan, McConnell, & Schoenfeld-Tacher, 2004), people who show high levels of EQ are more likely to succeed in hospitality (Lawn, 2005). Higher levels of SQ can also provide more successful career progression in the workplace (Goleman, 2006; Kinsman, 2006). Stein (2000) noted that the stronger one's EQ, the more likely one is to be successful, and Lawn (2005) indicated that people who show high levels of EQ are twice as likely to succeed in the food industry. In a hospitality context, Langhorn (2004) indicated that managerial performance is improved with higher levels of EQ. In addition, Kim and Agrusa (2011) also identified that high levels of EQ are more likely to provide people with the ability to cope with the nature of hospitality work so they will stay longer in the industry. The development of a successful hospitality graduate, therefore, requires a focus on development of abilities from multiple intelligences.

From the discussion in this section it is clear that the key requirements for hospitality employees are a complex combination of different skills, competencies, qualities and multiple intelligence abilities. Watson (2008), in her comprehensive review of management, tourism and hospitality journals from 2000-2007, attempted to classify key requirements for hospitality employees into the following categories – operational, food and beverage, interpersonal, leadership and international skills. Whilst this classification is a valuable tool for understanding how hospitality employees can be developed, and addressing issues of attraction and retention to the industry, it does not incorporate the components of multiple intelligences and specific personal attributes such as, personality. This study provides an opportunity to fill this gap in the research and expand the classifications outlined by Watson (2008) and, in addition, directly correlate key requirements for hospitality employees to what is required by graduates to become successful in the hospitality industry.

2.7 Success and being successful

Success is a relative concept and is therefore best defined in an exploratory way. Peacock (1995) notes that “success or quality are terms which are grounded in the perception of the user, and the wide variety of perceptions creates problems” (p. 48).

Success can be broadly defined from a range of perspectives, the attainment of wealth, position, honours, achievement, fame or triumph (“Success”, 2008). Watson’s (2008) discussions highlighted that the keys to success involve planning, the achievement of set goals, discipline, and the acceptance of failure. He indicated that success is personal and differs between individuals. This view is shared by Lupton (2007) who indicated that success is to do with finding personal satisfaction. Success is an individual mind-set (Osorio, 2008) and is related to individual accomplishment (Firebaugh, 2008; Suhaimin, 2009). In this context, success to a hospitality graduate could be interpreted as having a

well-paid job or senior position in an organisation, working with a famous person, or just achieving a qualification, depending on their motivation.

Success can be viewed from a variety of perspectives: spiritually, religiously and in connection with failure. Spiritually, success is perceived as the continued expansion of happiness and the progressive realisation of worthy goals (Chopra, 1994). Success is the ability to fulfil desires with effortless ease (Chopra, 1994). This opinion views success as an individualistic concept related to the pursuit of satisfaction of personal goals.

From a Christian perspective, success is seen not so much as the achievement of the goal or the goals themselves, but as the desire and fulfilment obtained on the journey towards achievement; success is doing the best possible and having self-control (Firebaugh, 2008). Saint Paul noted that success was not just about winning a race but also taking part (1 Cor. 9:24). The religious perspective of success was echoed by Kotkin (1992) who identified that religion, race and identity are determinant factors of being successful, and the most successful people in the current global economy are perceived as those who have strong ethnic, cultural and religious identities.

Success is the opposite of failure and can be attained through dealing positively with an inability to achieve (Suhaimin, 2009). Although some view success as related to accomplishment, there appears to be a difference between accomplishment, success, and true success. Accomplishment is the attainment of desired goals from an attempted task, whereas success is more related to the ongoing attainment of desired results, or in other words, a series of accomplishments. True success is different from success because it is driven by emotional desire and fulfilment (Firebough, 2008).

Not only is success widely discussed in spiritual and philosophical contexts, but it is also reflected in poetry and literature. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1905) encompasses

interesting aspects of human nature in relation to the attainment of success in his poem titled what is success? He associates the behavioural characteristics of happiness, enthusiasm, love and affection with being successful. In addition, Emerson indicates that the ability to give unconditionally is associated with success.

This study analyses these definitions of success in order to present a visual summary of the literature (Figure 2.2). Firstly, it is proposed that success is a cyclical concept that is contributed to through time, age and experience. As Kotkin (1992) noted, success occurs over a period of time, and this concept is found in spiritual and religious perspectives that describe success as a progression or a journey.

Figure 2.2 The concept of success



Success can also be related to a number of other key factors and recurrent fundamental themes which evolve during this cyclical process. Success involves fulfilling individual desires (Chopra, 1994; Firebaugh, 2008), the pursuit of happiness (Emerson, 1905), and finding personal satisfaction (Lupton, 2007). It also involves planning and the

achievement of goals (Watson, 2008), along with the resilience to overcome failure (Suhaimin, 2009). Two other key aspects of success identified in the literature are an ability to treat people with respect (Kotkin, 1992) and having a mind-set to apply oneself to the best of one's ability (Osorio, 2008).

There is little in the literature that constitutes a framework or model of success in hospitality from a frontline worker, student or educator perspective. Peacock (1995) observed that success in the hospitality industry is widely debated and grounded in the perception of the individual, thus creating a variety of perceptions. Peacock's (1995) study was based upon a telephone survey of 200 hospitality managers, in which he asked them to clarify how they thought they had done a good job. Managers were asked to determine the influencing factors that indicated their perception of successful performance in their role. Based on their responses the study established a sevenfold classification for perceptions of success in hospitality:

1. Internal
2. Financial
3. Staff
4. Superiors
5. Customers
6. Operational, and
7. Other

Peacock's (1995) initial study was carried out in the UK nearly 20 years ago. There has not been any follow-up on this work to establish a more up-to-date categorisation of success in hospitality. Peacock's observations, along with those in Figure 2.2, provide an opportunity for an updated investigation of success in hospitality, and one that adopts a broader perspective that incorporates insights from a range of stakeholders.

2.8 Success and the graduate

Research into the factors relating to success in organisations first appeared through Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford (1950). Research into predictors for success then gathered momentum during the mid-1960s to early 1970s (e.g. see Bray & Grant, 1966; Brenner & Lockwood, 1965; Hobert & Dunnette, 1967; Srinivasan, Shocker, & Weinstein, 1971; Williams & Harrell, 1964); however, these studies concentrated on specific factors relating to success *after* participants had joined an organisation. In the early 1970s there were some attempts to relate education performance to business success (see Crooks & Campbell, 1974; Harrell, 1972; Weinstein & Srinivasan, 1974), but these studies focused on the American Master of Business Administration (MBA).

Research into success factors and undergraduate performance in hospitality did not surface until a study by Pizam and Lewis (1979). They investigated success in hospitality using 350 alumni of the University of Massachusetts hotel and restaurant programme, and focused on predictors of career success and satisfaction at work. Their research showed that an increase in pay and career progression was regarded as an indicator of success and this was clearly linked to being people orientated. A quantitative study into the skills and competencies that contribute to graduate success was subsequently conducted by Enright and Gitomer (1989). This study (again from an American perspective) and focused on the graduate education process in general.

Knutson and Patton (1992) surveyed students to determine what was necessary in order to succeed in the hospitality industry. Their study, conducted at Michigan State University, USA, recognised the importance of being people focused in achieving success in hospitality. The inclusion of hospitality industry representatives in the investigation of factors related to success appeared in studies by Graves (1996) and

Emenheiser, Clay, and Palakurthi (1998). While these studies did focus on perceptions of hospitality human resource executives, they were again quantitative in nature and from an American perspective. Emenheiser *et al.* (1998) did, however, provide a foundational framework to measure success using three dimensions: job skills, character traits and experience/education background. Chung (2000) undertook a mixed methods study (qualitative and quantitative) to identify critical competencies for success for hospitality students and implications for university hospitality education. While the study correlated findings from students and industry representatives, it focused on Korean universities and concentrated on graduates.

More recent studies by Richardson (2008, 2009a), despite being mainly focused on career choice, have investigated student perceptions and attitudes towards the hospitality industry. These studies, conducted across eight Australian institutions and 379 hospitality students, identified an enjoyable job as being the focal point of a hospitality career. A subsequent study into success and hospitality was undertaken by Zopiatis (2010). This research investigated competencies for success among 92 chef professionals in Cyprus and found that specific technical specific skills were most important for success. Taking a critical view however, Richardson (2008, 2009a) and Zopiatis (2010) did not specifically define what success is or how it is measured, but simply identified some factors that lead to success. In addition, not one of the studies discussed has incorporated a tri-fold stakeholder-group perspective and they have all been conducted outside New Zealand.

Nicholson and Cushman (2000) investigated the perceptions of industry representatives and academics on how to develop a successful employee. Their research did focus on how to develop a successful graduate by identifying critical factors, it was also a quantitative study and focused on the American retail trade. More recently, studies by

Jauhari (2006) and Akrivos, Ladkin and Reklitis (2007) focused on identifying critical factors related to success in a hospitality field. While these studies have value to the current study, one was solely qualitative and focused on hospitality education in India (Jauhari, 2006) and the other adopted a case study methodology on luxury hotels in Greece (Akrivos *et al.*, 2007). In addition, both studies lack contributions from hospitality students.

Another recent study relating to critical factors for success in the hospitality industry was undertaken by Staton-Reynolds, Ryan, and Scott-Halsell (2009). Their study used a comprehensive quantitative approach to skills considered important for success in hospitality and focused on hospitality higher education in the USA; even so, it provides a useful foundation for further investigation into identifying the specific factors related to success in hospitality.

The view that technical and people skills are essential to success is reflected in the underpinning philosophy of the Ecole Hôtelière, Lausanne (EHL) (Tschumi, 2008). This organisation considers that success in hospitality requires not only technical, management and communication skills, but also a special kind of personality. This kind of personality requires an individual to be open-minded and energetic, diplomatic, innovative, and at ease in different social situations. The EHL philosophy also notes that while certain management techniques, practical skills and foreign languages can all be taught, specific personal qualities are not so easy to learn. A view also supported by Tschumi (2008). Robertson echoed aspects of the EHL philosophy by noting that to be successful,

...we must develop skills that go beyond the technical proficiencies taught in university programs into a new realm of expertise that requires us to embrace and acknowledge the very human aspects of communication and culture (p. 14).

For graduates to meet the requirements of a successful career in management, three specific levels of skills and knowledge are required (Pedlar, Burgoyne, & Boydell, 1994). A possession of basic knowledge and information, combined with specific skills and attributes that affect behaviour and performance, are key contributors to improved performance in the workplace (Webber, 1997). More importantly, the development of situation-specific skills needed in particular circumstances, which allow managers to develop and deploy skills and resources (meta qualities), are becoming increasingly important in the workplace (Akrivos *et al.*, 2007; Webber, 1997). Such qualities are identified as mental agility, balanced learning skills and creativity. Organisations are demanding that higher-education hospitality graduates possess all three skills sooner in their careers (Tesone & Ricci, 2005). The challenge for higher-education providers is to enable hospitality graduates to obtain these meta qualities as quickly as possible (Webber, 1997) and to address the gap between the differing perceptions of industry and academia in developing the successful employee (Nicholson & Cushman, 2000).

2.9 Critical factors for success in hospitality

Burgess *et al.* (1995) asked “What makes a successful international hotel group?” and Peng (2003) extended this question by analysing the determinants of success and failure for international firms. These studies found that one of the key drivers that provide organisations with significant international presence is their managers and people. They also established that success for an organisation can be obtained through the relationship building and maintenance of customer loyalty with its respective markets. This predictor of success is achieved through the management and nurturing of individuals within the organisation (Roper, 2009). It was also noted by Brien and Smallman (2011) that the more successful hospitality managers were those who adopted a humanistic approach to management where “...people should be the priority” (p639).

Reece, Brandt, and Howie (2011) note that the key success factor in every organisation is people and the quality of an individual's people skills will indicate to employers how new employees interact with customers and engage with existing employees. Moreover, "People skills will often make the difference in how high you rise in an organization" (Reece, 2012, p. 4). Knowledge work is the predominant form of labour in the economy (Mewton, Ware, & Grantham, 2005) and demands the development of "character" and "worker resistance" (Hughes, 2005). Successful employees in the hospitality industry are required to have competence in *intrapersonal and interpersonal abilities* to engage with knowledge work (Hughes, 2005).

Hospitality workers, or indeed those in any organisation, are required to engage in social and economic relationships (Karatepe, 2012). These relationships involve the understanding of certain rules and are essential to the social-exchange process of the organisation (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Success in hospitality is related to the individual and his or her interaction and integration with the social experiences encountered (Kinsman, 2006; Lawn, 2005). To be able to engage in these social experiences, individuals need to be equipped with a range of skills, competencies and qualities perceived as critical for success.

Critical factors for success are realised through a range of intelligences which can then be incorporated into the education and development of hospitality graduates. The relationship between success and higher levels of emotional intelligence is being increasingly used by organisations in recruitment and selection (Book & Stein, 2001; Scott-Halsell *et al.*, 2011). In addition, more and more organisations are realising the importance and impact of having emotionally intelligent people in their workplace (Book & Stein, 2001; Scott-Halsell *et al.*, 2011) and, emotions have a direct impact on individual performance and organisational productivity (Bharwaney, Bar-On, &

MacKinlay, 2007). Research has shown there is a positive connection between emotional intelligence development and being successful in the workplace (e.g. Bar-On & Orme, 2002; Caruso & Salovey, 2004; Gohm, 2003). In addition, cognitive intelligence and the use of complex information enable a manager to become successful, and the more people are culturally aware the more likely they are to succeed (Baum *et al.*, 2007; Le Man, 1999).

Tas (1988) revealed that the essential competencies in relation to success and hospitality are the ability to manage problems with sensitivity, maintain professional standards, and communicate effectively. Pizam and Lewis (1979) found that graduates were more likely to succeed if they were people orientated as 40% of their respondents indicated that dealing with people was the most important skill in hospitality. Their main recommendation was more emphasis in hospitality curricula on communications, organisational behaviour and interpersonal relations. The findings of these two early studies indicate that improved chances for success for an individual in hospitality centre around problem solving, professionalism, interpersonal relations and communication skills.

It is well documented that effective communication is a critical factor of success (Emenheiser, Clay, & Palakurthi, 1998; Enright & Gitomer, 1989; Mayburry & Swanger, 2010; Staton-Reynolds *et al.*, 2009; Tomlinson, 2002). Effective communication can lead to improved career opportunities (Akrivos *et al.*, 2007; Chung, 2000) and enhance the customer-service orientation of an organisation (Jauhari, 2006). Effective communication also improves problem-solving capability which enhances opportunities to become successful (Christou, 2000). Tas (1988) uncovered the relationship between professionalism and individual success, which has been explored again in more recent studies (Staton-Reynolds *et al.*, 2009; Zopiatis, 2010). Zopiatis

(2010) found that professionalism was the key aspect of success for chefs, but failed to clarify his understanding of the concept and classified it as a leadership-management competence. Staton-Reynolds *et al.* (2009), on the hand, identified that maintenance of professional work standards and appearance is important for success.

Success in hospitality is also related to personality type (Velo & Mittaz, 2006). Personality provides a strong foundation for managerial success in hospitality and continues to be a pivotal recruitment criterion (Emenheiser *et al.*, 1998; Ineson, 2011). Certain personality types are associated with being more successful in hospitality. Those who demonstrate characteristics such as energy, friendliness and sociability are more likely to succeed than those who do not (Graves, 1996). Personality traits are also valued by employers, and those with enthusiasm and a willingness to learn are more likely to be recruited (Akrivos *et al.*, 2007; Jauhari, 2006; Staton-Reynolds *et al.*, 2009).

Closely associated with personality is the relationship between appearance and being successful in hospitality. A professional appearance is viewed as a critical factor for positive relationship development with customers (Warhurst & Nickson, 2007). It can also contribute to success through sensitive customer problem solving, as customers feel their issues will be dealt with more effectively by someone of professional appearance (Annaraud, 2006; Christou, 2000; Johanson, Ghiselli, Shea, & Roberts, 2010). Personal appearance and presentation are highly valued by hospitality employers and lead to improved chances of success in an organisation (Staton-Reynolds *et al.*, 2009; Tomlinson, 2002).

Two other factors considered important for success in hospitality, initially revealed by Enright and Gitomer (1989), are leadership and creativity. Strong leadership and creativity skills provide a base for effective management and sound decision making which facilitates business success (Enright & Gitomer, 1989; Ineson, 2011; Johanson *et*

al., 2010; Nicholson & Cushman, 2000; Williams, DeMicco, & Shafer, 2000). Ineson's (2011) study of comparative personality dimensions of hospitality managers and students discovered that business success was clearly linked to leadership capability, which increased through the development of EQ.

The majority of the studies reviewed so far have utilised either hospitality students or industry representatives. A few investigated student-management perceptions (Christou, 2000; Ineson, 2011) or industry-academia relationships (Nicholson & Cushman, 2000; Staton-Reynolds *et al.*, 2009), but to date there has been no tri-fold investigation. The majority of research examined has centred upon frontline hospitality individuals involved with direct positive customer-relationship development. Recent research, however, has highlighted that success in hospitality is not just applicable to frontline employees. Zopiatis (2010), for example, observed that to be a successful chef, requires professionalism and human relationship skills.

Technical skills alone are not an accurate predictor for success in hospitality, and employers are seeking individuals with higher levels of SQ and EQ (Scott-Halsell *et al.*, 2008). The skill sets provided by SQ and EQ are clearer indicators of workplace success than are pure cognitive skills (Langhorn, 2004; Prati, Douglas, Ferris, Ammeter, & Buckley, 2003; Stein, 2000). Ware and Grantham (2005) noted that "to be successful, managers must master major and often unrecognized new behaviours and skills" (p. 15).

2.10 Hospitality higher education – an overview

Having a well-educated workforce enables firms to seize new opportunities, improve performance, increase wealth and increase resources for professional development of its staff. The growth in numbers of workers with higher qualifications is beneficial to an economy, and a higher proportion of the workforce that has a bachelor's degree or higher results in an increase in gross domestic product per capita (Razzak & Timmins,

2010). In addition, increased qualifications at degree level or above contributes to a rise and improvement in labour quality (Szeto & McLoughlin, 2008). The key issue relates to the quality of the education received, whether it prepares graduates adequately for employment, and whether it is relevant to their future (Earle, 2010b). Improvements in education are also associated with long-term improvements in economic performance in three broad areas (OECD, 2010a):

- Human capital – education improves skills and abilities of the workforce leading to greater productivity
- Innovation – education improves the capacity to develop new ideas and technology, and
- Knowledge transfer – education enables the application of new ideas and use of new technologies.

Tertiary education in New Zealand is offered by a range of education institutions: universities, institutes of technology and polytechnics, and wananga (Maori centres of tertiary learning). There are also 16 other tertiary education providers that receive government funding, 727 private training institutes, and eight government institutes (Ministry of Education, 2010). The eight universities across New Zealand collectively enrol approximately 177,000 students.

There has been a significant growth in the number of people employed in New Zealand with higher-level qualifications. The proportion of employees with a bachelor's degree or higher has nearly doubled from 1992 to 2008 (Earle, 2010a). This country has also seen an expansion of its workforce to include more low-skilled workers and an increase in skilled migration. New Zealand has one of the highest proportions of tertiary-educated people living overseas (Earle, 2010a) and approximately 25% of 25 to 64 year olds are qualified with a bachelor's degree or higher (OECD, 2009).

New Zealand's changing economy and labour market conditions have led to alterations in the structure of the workforce, which in turn, have resulted in an increase in demand for tertiary education, as "white-collar" jobs require more education and higher skill levels (McLaughlin, 2003). The focus from employers has been on the selection of young people with the appropriate attitude, academic skills for success and employability skills (Strathdee, 2003). This approach is reflected in a number of education initiatives in New Zealand, and in particular, the delivery of *Enterprise education* which aims to help young people develop skill sets that make them more employable (Lewis & Massey, 2003).

Hospitality programmes are influenced by regulatory and public sector bodies but tend to be largely influenced by the industry (Airey & Tribe, 2000). Indeed, it has been observed that hospitality higher education, in general, is designed to meet the needs of industry (Lashley, 2004). Approximately half of those employed in the New Zealand hospitality industry in 2001 had only secondary school qualifications or less. In the five years to 2006, however, there was a 10% increase in the number of staff with vocational or degree qualifications (Hospitality Standards Institute, 2007). In addition, vocational hospitality degree programmes have experienced rapid growth (Breakey & Craig-Smith, 2008) and are generally viewed to meet employers' needs through the provision of skilled prospective employees (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005).

Vocational education is generally viewed as education fit for employment (Good, 1959) and "a specialised education ... designed to develop skills, abilities, understanding attitudes, work habits and appreciations needed by workers to enter and make progress in employment" (Harris, 1960, p. 1555). Vocational education is the provision of skills, professional competencies and the understanding of changing circumstances in order for an individual to adapt and cope in the world. Vocational education is more than a

narrow economic perspective of training for work (“Training and jobs: what works?”, 1996). Moodie (2002) proposed that vocational education be viewed as teaching a combination of characteristics that deliver the application of knowledge and skills needed by society from time to time. Vocational education is education and training for work; in other words, a means to an end in which the predominant focus is on the provision of certain skills to meet predetermined requirements (Dhillon, 2002).

Hospitality degree programmes have traditionally followed a vocational education perspective (Airey & Tribe, 2000; Harkison *et al.*, 2011), with the development of future hospitality practitioners as a central aim (Alexander, 2007). Historically, the content of a typical hospitality degree focused on food and beverage management as a core element (Alexander, 2007). This focus on the practical aspects of hospitality has been demonstrated through an extensive use of training restaurants and kitchens in universities (Airey & Tribe, 2000; Gillespie & Baum, 2000). Another typical subject of hospitality degree curriculums has been information technology (IT) or information systems (IS), as there is an expectation that graduates will have generic and hospitality specific IT competency (Murphy & de Jongh, 2011). More recently, due to the demand for graduates capable of working in the global hospitality industry, hospitality degree programmes have typically included the provision of an international perspective which promotes cultural competency (Brookes & Becket, 2011).

In general hospitality degree programmes have typically been vocationally grounded (Alexander, 2007), but there has been extensive debate about ways to enrich the curriculum to provide students with more reflective qualities (see Airey & Tribe, 2000; Lashley, 2004; Morrison & O’Mahony, 2003). It has also been recognised that graduates need to cope with some of the technical complexities of the industry, but

more importantly, develop generic management skills such as problem solving and decision-making (Knowles, Teixeira & Egan, 2003).

More recent thinking on vocational education has moved away from a means-end model to the concept of practical knowledge (O'Connor, 2005). The emerging argument is that a practical education requires a more comprehensive focus in order to develop not just skills but also moral and intellectual capacity. Education requires students to be developed in areas other than pure skill (Irwin, 2000).

Jones (1990) outlined three main areas of understanding required by hospitality students: a broad competency overview, the environment, and the technical areas. Go (1990) noted that hospitality students need social, political, legal and psychological information to be able to engage with the workforce. Rimmington (1999) noted the importance of the combination of operational management skills, strategic skills and some basic craft skills for supervisory positions in hospitality. Tribe (2002) mentioned “higher” skills as a necessity for effective customer service and people management. Chaisawat (2004) built on Rimmington’s (1999) arguments, stating that students require basic operational and functional skills for frontline hospitality operations. More recently, Inui, Wheeler, and Lankford (2006) contributed to the debate by discussing the need for studies of cultural perspectives required for hospitality work, which is also supported by Baum *et al.*, (2007). Cultural awareness is seen as a critical individual capability and so must be a focus for higher-education providers (Arora & Rohmetra, 2010; Mkono, 2010). Despite these studies being conducted outside New Zealand and from a predominantly European perspective, they all adopted a common educational approach, namely the development of various abilities and capacities that reflect an engagement with different intelligences or, as described by Hirst and Peters (1973), the “development of mind”.

There is a need to move away from the traditional hospitality curriculum so graduates can develop broader skills. Also, the development of a better balanced curriculum is more likely to meet stakeholders' needs from three key perspectives – pedagogical, economic and developmental (Alexander, 2007). The need to move away from traditional hospitality education was also highlighted by Connolly and McGing (2006) who found that hotel managers perceived that qualities such as people management, communication and a good personality were more important than technical qualities.

A sound and balanced education can prepare students for many aspects of life (Alexander, 2011; Harkison et al., 2011), however there is some disagreement as to what subjects are deemed important in the curriculum, and industry appears to have a weak understanding of the purpose of a hospitality degree (Harkison et al., 2011). Furthermore, Ricci (2005) noted that while hospitality degrees are typically designed by educators and administrators, in most cases they are also informed by input from industry advisory boards. The realisation that hospitality education can be liberated from its “traditional vocational origins” (Morrison & O’Mahony, 2003, p. 38) therefore requires a multiple stakeholder perspective to hospitality curriculum design, and input from teachers, industry and students. In addition, the development of less traditional competencies and broader abilities such as (problem solving, decision making and communication) also requires an environment for students to engage with deeper learning, and the ability to critically examine new ideas and link course content to real life (Murphy & de Jongh, 2011, p. 395). Students with skills developed through deep learning are considered more likely to have the ability to succeed (Lizzio, Wilson & Simons, 2002).

In relation to hospitality curriculum and enhancing the opportunities for success of graduates, programmes need to emphasise the development of student experience as

well as management competencies (Cocchiara *et al.*, 2009). The success of graduates also requires that students are included in the educational pathway (Duranczyk, *et al.*, 2015) and a multidimensional approach to curriculum that incorporates behavioural, emotional and cognitive engagement (Wang & Eccles, 2011). Graduate career success can be realised through educational strategies that focus on developing a deeper understanding of commitment and motivation, which in turn can be used to address the retention of talent in the hospitality industry (Scott & Revis, 2008).

Recent trends in higher education have shown a particular focus on the provision of work experience and internship as an integral part of a degree (Ring, Dickinger, & Wober, 2009). The provision of work experience in higher education is known to as *work-integrated learning* (WIL), and can be described as the learning acquired by students outside the classroom in a workplace setting (Lee, McGuigan, & Holland, 2010). WIL improves the professional development of students (Breen, 2002), and is a means of meeting employers' expectations of graduates (Freudenberg, Brimble, & Cameron, 2010). Based on this argument Spowart (2011) called for WIL opportunities to be an integral part of a curriculum in order to enhance a student's employability. Richardson (2008) cautioned that while work experience is an important part of a hospitality degree, the key focus should be on how productive the work experience is. The more recent perspective in relation to student success through hospitality education now focuses on a systematic model that continually tracks stakeholder feedback to enhance curriculum development (Cecil, Fu, & Jones, 2010). Evident amongst these academic debates is the need for continuous consolidation and review of hospitality education and curriculum design to enhance the *employability* and *transferability* of students (Fidgeon, 2010). In this context, employability relates to the ability of a student to both gain initial employment and then maintain employment (Hillage & Pollard, 1998), while the transferability of students relates to the competencies that can be

applied in different functional areas (Kay & Russette, 2000) and that are required for employment at some level (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005).

A traditional focus of hospitality curricula has been on technical skills and their outcomes (Sigala & Baum, 2003), or specific content issues (Breiter & Hoart, 2000). Nonetheless, there is general agreement among researchers that the needs of students, industry and education need to be met through clear curriculum design (Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). Innovation is required and curriculum development requires initiative and responsiveness to a complex industry (Baum, 1987). If knowledge, skills and attitude are viewed as the key indicators of worker success in hospitality (Tesone & Ricci, 2005), then higher education needs to be responsive.

The development of a successful hospitality graduate requires a combination of liberal and practical education approaches; i.e. the development of mind (Hirst & Peters, 1973) and of skills, intellect, and morality (O'Connor, 2005). It also requires the vocational development of students using different perspectives: a way of knowing (James, 1995; Ryle, 1951), a way of learning (Stevenson, 1998), and a field of knowledge (Cantor, 1989).

2.11 Hospitality higher education and employability

Tomlinson (2002) argued that success in individuals is driven through the development of employability skills. This argument is carried forward strongly in a hospitality context by Spowart (2011) who found that by enhancing personal attributes, self-confidence and knowledge, hospitality graduates are more employable and more likely to become successful.

Large corporations are prone to continuous restructuring in response to changing economic situations, so there has become an increased need for employees to remain employable (Brown, Hesketh, & Williams, 2003). Thus employability is seen as a

source of competitive advantage for organisations and plays a key role in the development of a knowledge-driven economy (Brown, Green, & Lauder, 2001; Brown *et al.*, 2003; Brown & Lauder, 2001).

There is an inextricable link between education, employability, the role of employers and the modern workplace (Armitage *et al.*, 1999; Fallows & Steven, 2000; Glover *et al.*, 2002; Knight & Yorke, 2003; Smith & Comyn, 2004; Worth, 2002; Yorke & Knight, 2004). It also appears that employers in large corporations have dominated debates about employability and shaped perceptions of the skills and personal characteristics required for a successful worker (Brown *et al.*, 2003). This debate creates pressures on tertiary providers to build employability skills into their higher-education curricula (Fallows & Steven, 2000) to produce employable graduates (Maher & Graves, 2007).

Hillage and Pollard (1998) noted that employability relates to the ability to obtain new employment. However, this view ignores the issue that employability can also be determined more by the labour market than the capabilities of individuals. As the labour market changes, this can affect the employment of individuals (Brown *et al.*, 2003). Employability is therefore a concept that depends on the supply and demand of the labour market, and thus will vary according to economic conditions (Brown *et al.*, 2003). In this context, it can be defined as the relative chances of acquiring and maintaining different kinds of employment (Brown *et al.*, 2003).

Employability is also concerned with the development and acquisition of skills, knowledge and personal qualities (Glover *et al.*, 2002; Hannam, Mitsche, & Stone, 2004b). Young people have traditionally faced greater employability challenges than older workers in terms of skills deficits and less experience and confidence in the labour market (Allard, 1996). It may appear that older workers provide the workforce with

greater levels of skill and knowledge acquired through experience (Hannam, Mitsche, & Stone, 2004a), but young people provide the means for businesses to sustain an economic advantage. They contribute innovative approaches to traditional methods and processes and are arguably cheaper to hire (Brown *et al.*, 2003).

The development of skills for employment is seen as an important part of the higher-education curriculum as introducing sets of transferable skills to young people enhances their job opportunities (Glover *et al.*, 2002; Tomlinson, 2002). Addressing employability in higher education is important as it allows students to maximise their potential for a successful career (Knight & Yorke, 2003). The issue, however, is not preparing students for work by teaching them skills, but more about a lack of high-quality employment (Brown *et al.*, 2003).

This study recognises the notion of *positional conflict theory* (Brown, 2000) which holds that employability is based on the criteria used by employers to screen applicants (Brown, Hesketh, and Williams, 2003). While qualifications may not ensure employment, without them some applicants may not be able to participate in the employment process. It follows that the acquisition of qualifications becomes necessary to meet employers' demands, but more importantly, is key to maintaining employability. In addition, past changes to models of efficiency in organisations have led to an emphasis on key interpersonal skills such as problem solving, communication and teamwork (Ashton, Felstead, & Green, 2000). Therefore, it follows that in order for students to participate in the employment process and to maintain employability, a qualification with an emphasis on interpersonal skills is required. While the positional conflict theory is founded on the UK labour market and education principles, the argument has validity in the context of this study, particularly in light of the literature reviewed on changing skills requirements.

Employability is not education's job, as encouraging employability jeopardises the academic responsibility for the pursuit of wisdom and lifelong learning (Yorke & Knight, 2004 p.36). Sustaining successful hospitality graduates' employment status requires more than just development of skills; it is about implementing a framework that involves the development of process, core and personal knowledge (Yorke & Knight, 2004).

Research on graduate success with respect to how long those with a degree have fared in the hospitality industry is limited. However, in the context of a key issue facing hospitality education and industry, the recruitment and retention of talented people (Barron, 2008; Baum, 2008; Deery, 2008), studies have indicated that graduates do not stay long. The ability to attract, recruit and retain skilled, educated and motivated employees has an impact on organisational success in the hospitality industry (Barron, 2008). In addition, research has identified that hospitality students do not favour a career in the industry (Richardson, 2008; Song & Chathoth, 2008, 2011) which compounds the recruitment and retention issue. For those hospitality graduates that choose hospitality as a career, research has confirmed that many leave (Blomme *et al.*, 2010a; O'Leary & Deegan, 2005). Reasons for graduates leaving the hospitality include poor work-life balance caused by long hours and low job security (Blomme *et al.*, 2010b) along with limited opportunities for career advancement (O'Leary & Deegan, 2005). The hospitality industry, therefore, has a particular growing issue of highly-educated employee turnover (see Blomme *et al.*, 2010a).

These discussions highlight a key challenge for hospitality industry and education, which is how to best facilitate career success in hospitality graduates (Chi & Gursoy, 2009). Career success can be viewed from two different perspectives – subjective or objective (Ng *et al.*, 2005). Subjectively, a career can be perceived as successful when

measured intangibly such as through a feeling or sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. An objectively successful career can be measured in terms of high levels of remuneration, speed of promotion and organisational status (Wang, 2013). Recent research indicates that those hospitality graduates who have a higher levels of emotional intelligence and a service orientation will have increased feelings of satisfaction about working in the industry (Walsh, Chang & Ching-Yick Tse, 2015). This study also establishes that those hospitality graduates with higher levels of satisfaction towards working in the industry are more likely to build successful careers. This discussion therefore suggests that hospitality education and industry should facilitate a subjective approach to enhancing career development in graduates (i.e. the development of a sense of satisfaction), in order for them to become more successful.

2.12 Hospitality higher education and graduate development

As many students enter hospitality programmes without really understanding the nature of the industry (Barron, Maxwell, Broadbridge, & Ogden, 2007), giving realistic information about careers is essential. To do this, educators can give students an extensive overview of the type of careers available in the industry and the working conditions, pay levels and promotion prospects these positions have to offer (Richardson, 2009b). The improvement of the quality of career information given to students before they enrol and as they progress on their programmes should reduce the development of negative views and help increase the numbers that remain in the industry after graduation (Chuang, 2011).

Successful graduate development is not a question of whether hospitality education should meet the needs of employers (Baum, 2002) but, more importantly, how hospitality education should be implemented (Lashley, 2004). Effective student preparation for the workplace is seen as developing skills sets for employment and

making a contribution to the knowledge economy through securing graduate commitment, developing an adaptive attitude, and developing professionalism (Lewis & Massey, 2003). The increasing complexity and sophistication of the workplace necessitates that education needs to be responsible not just for technical skills and knowledge, but also for ethical and moral education (Yeung, 2004).

The recent trend in higher vocational education is towards a student-centred approach to learning (Zwaal & Otting, 2006) and the principle that learning should reflect industry practice as accurately as possible (Petraglia, 1998). Education studies conducted outside New Zealand (in the UK and Europe), found that hospitality students prefer active and concrete learning processes rather than abstract or reflective practices (Lashley, 2004; Lashley & Barron, 2006), and respond best to problem-based learning (Kivela & Kivela, 2005). In contrast, employers generally require graduates with transferable skills such as written and oral communication skills, interpersonal skills, and teamwork and problem-solving skills (DEETYA, 1998; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). While qualifications are considered by employers as necessary to succeed (Harper *et al.*, 2005), there is a strong preference for employees with practical skills who are educated from within the profession than through an institution (Connolly & McGing, 2006; Pizam, 2007). In addition to practical skills, qualifications and transferable skills, there is an increasing demand by employers for educated people to demonstrate professional attributes (see Pizam, 2007).

New Zealand hospitality employers have complained in the past and continue to bemoan the fact that frontline entrants lack personal qualities such as a willingness to learn, a good work ethic as well as the skills to communicate with customers (BERL, 2004; Kennelly, 2014) and technical skills (Clark & Willis, 1984). Indeed, there is still a perception that frontline hospitality entrants are lacking key skills (ATTTO, 2011), and

that there is a (transferable) skills shortage in New Zealand graduates (Department of Labour, 2002; New Zealand Tourism Research Institute (NZTRI), 2007). The shortage of skilled and experienced staff in the hospitality industry in New Zealand (Doesburg, 2014; Hospitality Standards Institute, 2007) was highlighted when New Zealand embarked on the hosting of the Rugby World Cup and large numbers of hospitality operators said they were struggling to find the required skilled labour (ATTTO, 2011). Hembry (2011) reported that one of the main reasons for hospitality employers having difficulty recruiting and retaining staff is poor pay. International and domestic hospitality and tourism accounts for \$14.6 billion to New Zealand (ATTTO, 2011), so the industry is clearly important to New Zealand. Yet 42% of operators struggle to find the right staff and the issue remains that wage levels are usually lower than the national average and therefore not attractive to new entrants (ATTTO, 2011).

The skills in demand in the hospitality industry are increasingly considered to be generic rather than technical (Baum, 2006a; Christou, 1997, 2000; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006; Spowart, 2011). Given that skilled competent employees are essential for economic growth (Skinner *et al.*, 2004), it follows that if employers are unhappy about the quality of graduates, then either employers' needs are not being communicated effectively to the education providers (Rikowski, 2001), or there is a mismatch between the skills taught in higher-education programmes and the employers' needs (Skinner *et al.*, 2004).

Employers tend to require immediately applicable skills and training from hospitality education which contrasts with the longer-term career-orientated education process (Thorne, 1995). Employers also demand transferable skills (such as communication, initiative, creativity and leadership) that enable graduates as potential employees to be part of a flexible and adaptable workforce (Bennett, 2002). Both these studies (Bennett,

2002; Thorne, 1995) raise the issue of whether higher education providers should respond to the “work-ready” demands of the industry (Spowart, 2011) and, as highlighted earlier, if it is higher education’s job to develop work-ready graduates (Yorke & Knight, 2004).

It is apparent that there are contrasting perspectives between education and industry on how students should be educated. The suggestion is that hospitality higher education should not be driven by or orientated towards meeting employers’ needs, but that a balance needs to be established between the demand for immediate applicable skills and lifelong career-oriented learning. How to merge these contrasting perspectives into the development of the successful hospitality graduate is a key issue (Maher & Graves, 2007).

2.13 Developing a successful hospitality graduate

In order to succeed in the hospitality environment, people are required to have the right attitude (Warhurst & Nickson, 2007) and to be able to control their emotions (Scott-Halsell *et al.*, 2008). In addition, graduates entering the workforce are expected to be open-minded, culturally aware and have a service attitude (Velo & Mittaz, 2006) as well as speak a foreign language (Yuan *et al.*, 2006). These characteristics, along with those discussed earlier in this chapter, indicate the range of competencies needed in hospitality graduates in order to enhance their chances of success.

Hospitality graduates are entering a knowledge economy in which the traditional link between qualifications and employment is becoming more problematic (Young, 1998). In addition, they are faced with working in an “emotional” economy (Hochschild, 1983) where the ability to perceive, understand and regulate emotions is paramount (Scott-Halsell *et al.*, 2008). Hospitality graduates are also finding themselves an integral part of an “experience” economy (Bryman, 2004), where the ability to perform as actors is

important (Hemmington, 2007). Purchasing intangible services, such as hospitality, involves a set of events and personal engagement akin to a theatrical experience (Hemmington, 2007; Pine & Gilmore, 1999). To be able to do this, graduates require a combination of skills and attributes developed from a range of educational perspectives.

Another significant challenge facing modern hospitality higher education is the changing nature of the student population, which reflects multi-ethnic and multicultural backgrounds (Hearns, Devine, & Baum, 2007; Jayawardena, 2001). This has implications for the relationship between and integration of student, industry and academic needs. Global events such as civil unrest in some of the world's key destinations (southern Europe and the Middle East, UK and USA) and recent natural disasters (New Zealand, Japan, USA) have an impact on travel patterns of international students who are becoming increasingly concerned for their safety and security (Rittichainuwat & Chakraborty, 2012; Seabra, Dolnicar, Abrantes, & Kastenholz, 2012). These global events can have an effect on students' choice of destination for higher education (Gupta, 2012).

Social media is changing the communication, marketing and interaction techniques of the hospitality industry (Mahon, 2009). Attitudes to and use of social media by students for hospitality and tourism has an impact on the delivery of education in these fields. The paradigm of educational delivery of hospitality programmes has changed due to the impact of social media and the way in which students "connect" to their development (Sigala, Christou, & Gretzel, 2012). In other words the way in which students learn has dramatically changed because of social media. This will therefore affect the teaching and learning environment.

Hospitality and tourism is globalised through technology and communication (Holjevac, 2003), and hospitality organisations around the world face similar issues over

employment, taxation and techniques for survival in an uncertain financial climate (Duncan, 2005). The changes that have taken place in societies across the world, has had consequences for the delivery of education in hospitality and tourism as institutions respond to economic and societal pressures (Sigala & Baum, 2003).

There has been a developing preference for the pursuit of knowledge over production in society (Guile, 2001). The command of economic knowledge now overshadows manufacturing ability (Young, 1998) and this has been reflected in changes to educational provision (Sigala & Baum, 2003). The implications for the hospitality industry are that employers are looking for a more knowledgeable workforce capable of interacting in a multicultural workplace (Christou, 1999; Sigala, 2001; Sigala & Baum, 2003). Hospitality organisations can reasonably expect educators to deliver professional, qualified individuals who can address the challenges faced by the industry (Velo & Mittaz, 2006). These specific skills include open mindedness, a service attitude, a capacity for quick reaction to problems, and cultural awareness (Velo & Mittaz, 2006). The demand for increased professionalism of hospitality graduates is gathering intensity (Pizam, 2007) and professional presentation increases the chances of employment for graduates (Ruetzler *et al.*, 2011, 2012).

In addition, there is a perception held by some employers that graduates lack professional communication skills, there is also a general consensus that critical competencies for success in the hospitality field include communication and problem-solving skills (Cecil *et al.*, 2010). The way forward appears to be a systematic approach to student learning and career preparation that monitors competency development (Cecil *et al.*, 2010). This study contributes to developing this systematic approach and outlines specific competencies hospitality graduates require for successful learning and career preparation.

One more consideration of significant influence for hospitality education, especially for New Zealand in October 2011, was the growth and importance of mega events. The Beijing Olympics in 2008 and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup in South Africa 2010 resulted in major economic contributions to their respective economies. The 2011 Rugby World Cup attracted approximately 133,000 fans to New Zealand between August and October 2011. There were reservations prior to the Rugby World Cup that the exposure of New Zealand hospitality to tourists would raise questions about service standards and an apparent lack of professionalism in New Zealand hospitality compared with that in other parts of the world (Johns, 2010). Christian (2011) reported various frailties and inadequacies of New Zealand hospitality and questioned the social ability of hospitality staff to provide a hospitable experience. Despite an initial fear, on the part of event organisers, that these inadequacies and apparent lack of professionalism would be exposed for evaluation by international tourists, hosting the 2011 Rugby World Cup was an important part of the improvement process for New Zealand hospitality (Johns, 2010; Christian, 2011). By being able to adapt to different cultures and experiences, individuals and organisations can develop a competitive lead in the global hospitality market that can lead to improved chances of success (Baum *et al.*, 2007; Devine *et al.*, 2007; Hearn *et al.*, 2007; Pollitt, 2007). Hospitality organisations are able to improve performance and output by increasing their employees' cultural and experiential knowledge awareness of their markets (Mkono, 2010). With universities experiencing increased numbers of international students in hospitality education (Hwang & Allison, 2010), it is important to recognise the need to embed the development of intercultural competence into student learning (Kirkness, 2009).

Finally, to succeed in the contemporary hospitality environment, employees are required to have passion, attitude and be able to create an emotional and theatrical

experience. Very little research has been done on the concept of *passion* in the hospitality industry, but it is gradually becoming recognised as an emerging factor for success in the New Zealand hospitality industry (Bidois, 2009). In addition, it has been noted that a factor in becoming a successful hospitality manager is being passionate about the job (see Brien & Smallman, 2011).

The concept of passion has been investigated in a variety of fields of study; for example, advertising and marketing (Sasser & Koslow, 2012), brand management (Edwards & Day, 2005), criminology (Ragatz & Russell, 2010), mathematics (Landri, 2007), religion (Bill & Williams, 2002) and gambling (Ratelle, Vallerand, Mageau, Rousseau, & Provencher, 2004). There have been recent studies identifying passion as a key component of successful leadership (Kalargyrou & Woods, 2011; Marques, 2007), but to date there has been no research on the concept of passion and its association with success in hospitality.

The origins of the word passion lie in the Latin *pati*, meaning “to suffer”, and it is described as “a state or outburst of strong emotion”, “an intense desire” and “a thing arousing great enthusiasm” (Oxford online dictionaries, 2013). Linstead and Brewis (2007) explore the literal meaning of passion further and describe it as “something that is neither the property of nor controlled by the bearer – instead it is imposed on them” (p. 352). In this context, passion involves pain, suffering and sacrifice, as used in the term “the Passion of Christ” (Linstead & Brewis, 2007).

Western thought, based on the works of Aristotle, associates passion with desire, so there is an inseparable connection between the two. Linstead and Brewis (2007) identified three forms of desire: appetite (*epitheimia*), passion (*thymos*) and will (*boulesia*). They conceptualised passion as the ontology of desire and even subsumed the term passion within desire (Linstead & Brewis, 2007).

A different perspective is offered by the *Dualistic Model of Passion* (see Vallerand *et al.*, 2003) and is defined as “a strong inclination toward an activity that one finds important, likes (or even loves), and to which one devotes time and energy” (Carpentier, Mageau, & Vallerand, 2012, p. 502). In this model the two types of passion are “harmonious” and “obsessive”. Harmonious passion is a motivational force that allows people to choose to engage in an activity, whereas obsessive passion is “characterised by intra- or interpersonal pressures that push obsessively passionate people to partake in their activity” (Carpentier *et al.*, 2012, p. 501). People with a more harmonious passion partake in freely endorsed activities that are pursued by choice and because of the satisfaction they provide (Carpentier *et al.*, 2012). The Dualistic Model of Passion also posits that activities are passionate when they become a central feature or focus of a person’s identity (Mageau *et al.*, 2009) and that these activities are under the control of and in harmony with a person’s life (Vallerand *et al.*, 2003).

Other perspectives associated with passion relevant to this study are the key constructs of vocation, calling and work passion. Vocation is viewed as having a certain role in life “that is orientated toward demonstrating or deriving a sense of purpose or meaningfulness” (Dik & Duffy, 2009, p. 428). This working definition indicates that a vocation relates to how an individuals approach their position in life and is associated with strong internal motivation. Dik and Duffy (2009) distinguish the construct of calling as separate from vocation but do recognise significant overlaps. They define calling as “a transcendent summons, experienced as originating beyond the self, to approach a particular role in life” (p. 427). They recognise that calling, as with vocation, is associated with a sense of purpose and meaningfulness, but is seen as externally motivated. It should also be noted that the term calling has traditionally been associated with a belief in God, and this spiritual perspective distinguishes it from vocation (Haney-Loehlein *et al.*, 2015).

Some researchers have argued that calling and vocation are important aspects of life and work (see Dik & Duffy, 2009), whereas Hall and Chandler (2005) considered that vocation and calling are viewed as contributors to satisfaction and success. In addition, those with a higher sense of vocation and calling tend to find more meaning in life and work, and are therefore more likely to be committed to and engaged in a career (see Haney-Loehlein *et al.*, 2015). When the constructs of vocation and calling are applied to paid employment, work can be viewed as a calling (Haney-Loehlein *et al.*, 2015). In this respect, the role an individual (e.g. a teacher) takes is perceived as more than just a job, but something that is deeply personally driven through enthusiasm and commitment (Serow, 1994). Therefore, just as some teachers view their jobs as a calling (Serow, 1994), some of those working in hospitality may view their jobs as a calling.

Based on these discussions and the earlier perspective offered by the Dualistic Model of Passion (Vallerand *et al.*, 2003), a relationship is evident between what Dik and Duffy (2009) highlight as sense of purpose, meaningfulness and motivation (vocation and calling), and how Carpentier *et al.* (2012) define passion as “a strong inclination” (p. 502). This relationship is evident in studies on work passion. Zigarmi *et al.* (2009) offer an operational definition of work passion that includes the aspect of meaningfulness, along with being viewed as “emotionally positive” and about a “state of well-being” (p. 310). The relationship between vocation, calling and passion in work is further strengthened by Ho, Wong and Lee (2011) who apply the Dualistic Model of Passion to the workplace. They found that employees with harmonious passion (those who choose to engage) performed better at work. In addition, Perrewe *et al.* (2014) highlighted that those who are passionate have a desire to engage in their chosen work. It follows therefore, that there is a relationship between the constructs of vocation, calling, passion and success.

It is evident from the literature that passion in the workplace is valued, sought after by employers, but remains elusive in terms of its understanding and application (see Ho *et al.*, 2011; Perrewe *et al.*, 2014). Ho *et al.* (2011) indicate that there is qualitative evidence from different studies on managers, students and educators that indicate passion for a job can stimulate work success. Not one of these studies, however, offers a multiple stakeholder methodological approach or is conducted from a hospitality perspective.

In this context, if success is dependent on passion, then hospitality workers need to like (or *love*) hospitality and spend time and energy devoted to providing hospitality. Hospitality needs to become a central focus of an individual's identity, achieved either through personal choice or nurtured through education. It follows that if people have a passion for running or golf then they do not just run or play golf, they are called runners or golfers. Therefore, if people have a passion for hospitality, they do not just provide or enjoy hospitality but become hospitalitarians (Meyer, 2006; Reece *et al.*, 2011).

Meyer (2006) argued that the qualities of a hospitalitarian (natural warmth, work ethic and passion) cannot be taught. If so, passion can only be stimulated by a knowledge-transfer process (Sie & Yakhlef, 2009) and it is therefore possible to enhance an innate passion through pedagogical delivery (Gallos, 1997). A pedagogy of passion involves focus on the emotional parts of human nature and relationships and,

.... asks us to look at our students, not as subjects, cases, or needy receptacles for new knowledge or skills, but as individuals seeking opportunities to clarify their special contribution – their destiny (Gallos, 1997, p. 7).

Passion in graduates can be achieved through more focus on the aesthetic and intuitive aspects of organisations, rather than the traditional rational, hierarchical and functional aspects of higher education (Bilimoria, 1999).

2.14 Hospitality and the future – challenges and issues

The education of a successful hospitality graduate requires consideration of the main issues and challenges facing the hospitality industry and the implications these may have for employers, teachers and students. Increasing multiculturalism of developed countries and an ageing population are viewed as factors contributing towards the changing nature of the hospitality workforce (Baum, 2009). Baum also highlights a number of implications for the hospitality workplace caused by increased globalisation:

- The need for response and openness to innovation and change
- Continued demand for high labour skills
- Increased competition for labour, and
- Increased labour mobility and migration.

In addition to these, students' perceptions of a career in hospitality need to be taken into consideration when constructing a framework for developing a successful hospitality graduate. Case study research from Australia suggests that most hospitality students consider a career outside of hospitality or do not end up working in hospitality at all (Richardson, 2008). Richardson's study, because it was conducted in Australia, provides the closest indication of students' expected perceptions in New Zealand. This same study also demonstrated a change in students' perceptions towards a career in hospitality, as Jenkins (2001) had previously noted a high proportion of hospitality students wanting to enter the industry. Richardson (2009a) suggested that this change in students' intentions is mainly because hospitality graduates generally do not think the industry can offer important career prospects such as good working conditions, fair pay structure and promotional opportunities. In New Zealand, there is a high drop-out rate of hospitality students once they begin to work in the industry, mostly because of poor pay, poor working conditions and unsociable working hours (O'Leary & Deegan, 2005; Poulston, 2008). The stark reality is that unless the industry raises wage levels and

improves opportunities for promotion, it will continue to lose skilled and talented employees (Baum, 2009; Richardson, 2008).

Some consider that hospitality education places too much focus on curricula that meet the short-term needs of industry (Spowart, 2011). There is a need to build in change and leadership qualities to equip graduates with skills that have impact in strategic hospitality roles and hence facilitate career progression (Baum, 2009; Testa & Sipe, 2012). In addition, higher-education providers around the world are experiencing increasing numbers and diversity through international students (Barron *et al.*, 2009; Hwang & Allison, 2010). This increase in numbers of foreign students is changing the landscape of teaching and learning in higher education (Gordon, 2010). The implications for education are that in order to engage with the increased diversity and internationalisation of students, staff are adapting their practices to more informal methods rather than relying on formal programmes (Barron *et al.*, 2009). The higher-education hospitality environment is becoming more multicultural with increasing levels of intercultural sensitivity between students (Barron & Dasli, 2010). The management of this environment, therefore, requires specific teaching strategies, and teachers who are competent in delivery to international students (Charlesworth, 2008, 2009).

The changing nature of higher education is reflected in the offering of undergraduate degree programmes in hospitality in New Zealand and Australia, which have experienced significant growth since they were first launched thirty years ago (Breakey & Craig-Smith, 2008; Harkison, 2006). Questions arise as to how sustainable this growth is, and whether consolidation of offerings needs to take place to fulfil demand (Breakey & Craig-Smith, 2008). However, the number of offerings may increase due to

continued reporting of labour shortages and the recognised importance of hospitality to the economies of both countries (Breakey & Craig-Smith, 2008).

Hospitality organisations, at times experience recruitment freezes, suspended benefits and pay-rise restrictions, but employees are still expected to improve customer service and maintain high standards (McBain, 2009; McVeagh, 2009). It appears that the solution is to recruit the right people with the right skills. Organisational success can be obtained through a focus on morale, initiative and change through people, and important factors appear to be initiative and an ability to accept and manage change (McBain, 2009; McVeagh, 2009). The individual skills sets required to achieve this are dominated by employable or transferable skills (Baum, 2009; McBain, 2009; McVeagh, 2009; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). The changing nature of higher education presents new focal points for teaching of and learning within hospitality degree programmes, and requires higher-education institutions to create points of difference in the programmes they offer (Breakey & Craig-Smith, 2008).

2.15 The Generational debate

When discussing the development of graduates and challenges facing hospitality higher education, it is impossible to ignore the increasing emphasis on generational differences. Different generations in the hospitality workforce will have different perceptions towards success and how it can be achieved.

The generation of individuals now entering the workforce is Generation Y (sometimes called Generation Next) or those born from 1980 onwards (Loughlin & Barling, 2001; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). There are differences between generational groups currently in the workforce, so human resource managers are finding interesting challenges in managing a workforce containing Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008). Given these challenges and because one of

the stakeholder groups in this study represents Generation Y, discussion of the generational debate provides a useful background to the study.

In 2006 Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) made up 36% of the labour force in New Zealand and 41% were identified as Generation X (those born between 1965 and 1980) (Statistics New Zealand, 2007). Baby Boomers were raised in relatively settled times (Kupperschmidt, 2000) whereas Generation X experienced times of immense technological advancement and social unrest (Jurkiewicz, 2000). Each group presents differing attitudes towards work values, job satisfaction, commitment and intentions to leave, with Generation X and Generation Y placing more emphasis on status and freedom at work (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008).

Generation Y's characteristics are well documented. A 70-year old study in the USA found that Generation Y are characterised by high self-esteem and a lower need for social acceptance and, more destructively, increased levels of anxiety and depression (Twenge & Campbell, 2008). Conversely, Wong, Gardiner, Lang, and Coulon (2008) noted there is minimal generational difference in relation to personality or motivational drivers in the workplace, and implied that generational differences tend to be based on generational stereotypes rather than a focus on individual differences.

Morton (2002) identified the importance of equality, good wages and training opportunities to Generation Y. This observation is supported by Lloyd (2005) who noted that Generation Y employees tend to pick and choose jobs and have high expectations of wages, workplace conditions and promotion. Martin (2005) stated that Generation Y are independent and seek increased responsibility and flexibility. She also noted that Generation Y are easily bored and unable to manage time for themselves. By contrast, in the same study Martin (2005) also found that Generation Y employees thrive on challenging work and creative expression. Oliver (2006) noted that Generation

Y employees will tend to value a work-life balance over a long-term career. Research into Generation Y's characteristics generally indicates that organisations are changing training programmes and offered career pathways to meet the different needs of this generation (Martin, 2005).

Generation Y's characteristics are not all negative – they are also reputed to be well educated, confident, sociable and highly informed (Eisner, 2005). Indications are that Generation Y have characteristics that will be highly beneficial for the 21st century workforce. Generation Y should not be viewed as a disloyal and uncommitted group of individuals, but as employees who long for opportunity and responsibility (Kerslake, 2005), need to succeed (Eisner, 2005) and who are technically literate (Eisner, 2005; Foreman, 2006). Generation Y demonstrate numerous positive attitudes towards employment in respect of management approach, personal career development and personal values (Broadbridge, Maxwell, & Ogden, 2007).

In the hospitality industry, recent research from Australia indicates that Generation Y employees seek the opportunity to advance as quickly as possible but that the majority of hospitality students do not necessarily consider their career to be in hospitality (Richardson, 2009b). Generation Y are regarded by some in hospitality as having a poor work ethic and low sense of loyalty and who prioritise social activity over working hard (Gursoy, Maier, & Chi, 2008). Gursoy *et al.* also highlight, however, that Generation Y hospitality employees like teamwork, have a strong will to get things done, and are optimistic about the future. Generation Y hospitality managers are concerned about economic return and value work relationships higher than other generations do (Chen & Choi, 2008). As younger generations engage in hospitality management, bringing their own unique characteristics, organisations will have to undergo changes to structure and

direction to accommodate the career demands of the millennial workforce (Barron *et al.*, 2007; Chen & Choi, 2008).

Generation Y employees have a number of strengths upon which employers can draw (Cairncross & Buultjens, 2007). They have a technical ability above that being used in most workplaces and a strong social orientation that fosters teamwork and collaboration. As Cairncross and Buultjens noted; “Organisations that strategically target their employment policies and practices to address areas of importance to Generation Y will be successful in attracting and retaining Generation Y employees” (p. 8).

With employment in hospitality generally suffering from a poor reputation with Generation Y (Solnet & Hood, 2008) and human resource management that focuses on cost-cutting and flexible numbers (Knox & Wood, 2005), emphasis needs to be placed by employers on engaging young people entering the industry. *Engagement*, in the context of this study, relates to the level to which individuals are able to express themselves in a work environment (Solnet & Kralj, 2010). In hospitality, engagement of Generation Y involves finding opportunities for exposure to a variety of tasks and encouraging input on process improvements (Solnet & Kralj, 2010).

Hospitality organisations need to adopt strategies to engage Generation Y employees in the workforce as this can lead to financial success and organisational competitive edge (Schneider, Macey, Barbera, & Martin, 2009). Employee engagement for Generation Y in hospitality requires organisations to recognise and respect the creativity and involvement younger employees can offer (Solnet & Kralj, 2010). Some Generation Y characteristics may not appear compatible with hospitality work; however, the key to attracting and retaining Generation Y in the hospitality industry lies in designing and promoting strategies that meet their attitudes and values. To do this, organisations may

need to develop opportunities for empowerment, flexibility, multitasking and multiskilling (Chacko, Williams, & Schaffer, 2010). In light of the current global financial climate and evidence that hospitality organisations are trying to prevent staff from moving in order to retain talent (Baum, 2008; South, 2010), organisational architecture of flexibility and transferability for Generation Y becomes a challenge.

This challenge will become even more pertinent over the next 10 years as organisations will see another generational shift in the workforce with the arrival of Generation Z. Generation Z are those born between 1995 and 2009, and are future employees fresh from the education system (Fleming, 2010). Sometimes referred to as the “silent” or “iGeneration”, Generation Z has been characterised as overindulged and materialistic and predicted to be rebellious (Fleming, 2010). It is possible that because Generation Zers have been taught from an early age to be outspoken, this may present different challenges to employers (Fleming, 2010). This new generation of employees entering the hospitality workforce will require review of and changes to strategies needed to educate, train and retain these individuals (Solnet & Hood, 2008).

It is important to recognise that current notions about generational differences can sometimes be overgeneralised and people will have different personal-organisation values (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008). There is also a need to focus on educating and managing individuals as individuals instead of adhering to generational stereotypes (Wong et al., 2008). It is important that educators are flexible in relation to generational differences and preparation for employment through education.

2.16 Summary of literature review

The foregoing discussions have been able to inform different perspectives that are relevant to this study but similarly, there are ‘gaps’, as it has not been able to define important aspects upon which this study focuses. Firstly, it is evident that to work in hospitality, a set of skills is required that reflects different intelligence abilities of individuals – not just IQ, but more importantly, EQ, SQ, RQ and CQ. The literature shows that for graduates to become successful in hospitality, there is a need to better understand multiple intelligences development and associated skills, competencies and abilities. Studies have indicated that there are specific skills associated with multiple intelligences, however none of them has directly linked specific intelligence skills with becoming successful in hospitality. This thesis fills this gap by identifying specific skills associated with multiple intelligence that directly link to becoming successful.

Prior research also shows that hospitality students tend to view a career in the industry with some disdain (Richardson, 2008, 2009a). The literature has also established that there are a wide range of hospitality courses and programmes available for students to choose (Breakey & Craig-Smith, 2008). Therefore for hospitality degree programmes in New Zealand to remain competitive in the domestic and international higher-education market they need to be attractive and innovative. This study provides an opportunity to fill this gap by outlining focal points of teaching and learning in relation to success in hospitality and multiple intelligence. These focal points can be incorporated into hospitality degree programmes, and therefore provide students with a more informed choice about their programme of study that is relevant to vocation.

Notably, the literature on success and hospitality graduates reviewed is scarce and descriptive in nature, which is reliant solely on either a quantitative or qualitative focus rather than a combination of the two. In addition, the literature has not been able to

define multiple stakeholder perspectives on success in hospitality. This highlights the need to explore the meaning of success in hospitality using a new approach not previously used. This study fills this gap by providing a comprehensive multiple stakeholder investigation using a mixed methods approach.

With respect to success in hospitality there has not been any follow up work on Peacock's (1995) study to establish a more up-to-date categorisation of what success really means. This study provides an opportunity to fill this gap and provide an updated investigation of success in hospitality - one that adopts a broader perspective and incorporates a multiple stakeholder perspective rather than just a study on hospitality managers (Peacock, 1995). Research has attempted to identify factors that lead to success in hospitality (see Zopiatis, 2010), but has not been able to specifically define what success means or how it is measured in hospitality. In addition, there has been no multiple stakeholder research in this area, nor any from a New Zealand perspective.

The literature review has uncovered the concept of passion as a key factor in becoming successful in hospitality (see Bidois, 2009). Studies on passion in respect to work and vocation are scarce (see Ho *et al.*, 2011) and it appears that research on passion, success and hospitality is non-existent. More notably, research on passion in the workplace is valuable to employers but remains elusive in terms of application and understanding (Perrewe *et al.*, 2014). As the link between passion and success in hospitality is unexplored territory, this research can fill this gap by establishing a relationship between passion and success in the hospitality industry. Understanding this relationship is important as it will enable individuals and organisations to become more successful, and the knowledge can be used to overcome persistent problems in hospitality such as labour turnover.

The literature clearly establishes that hospitality has a problem retaining talented graduates (Barron, 2008; Scott & Revis, 2008) which is reflected through high turnover of well-educated employees (Blomme *et. al.*, 2010a). In addition, how best to develop career success in hospitality graduates remains a topical issue yet to be resolved (Walsh *et. al.*, 2015). Research has presented certain strategies for addressing issues of retention and turnover amongst hospitality graduates from different perspectives; 1) enhancing higher levels of emotional intelligence and service orientation (Wolfe & Kim, 2013), 2) giving increased psychological and organisation empowerment and 3) improving satisfaction levels in the workplace (Walsh *et al.*, 2015). This study provides a new approach to address the retention of talent, by relating motivators for success in hospitality to educational development of hospitality students.

Chapter 3. Methodology

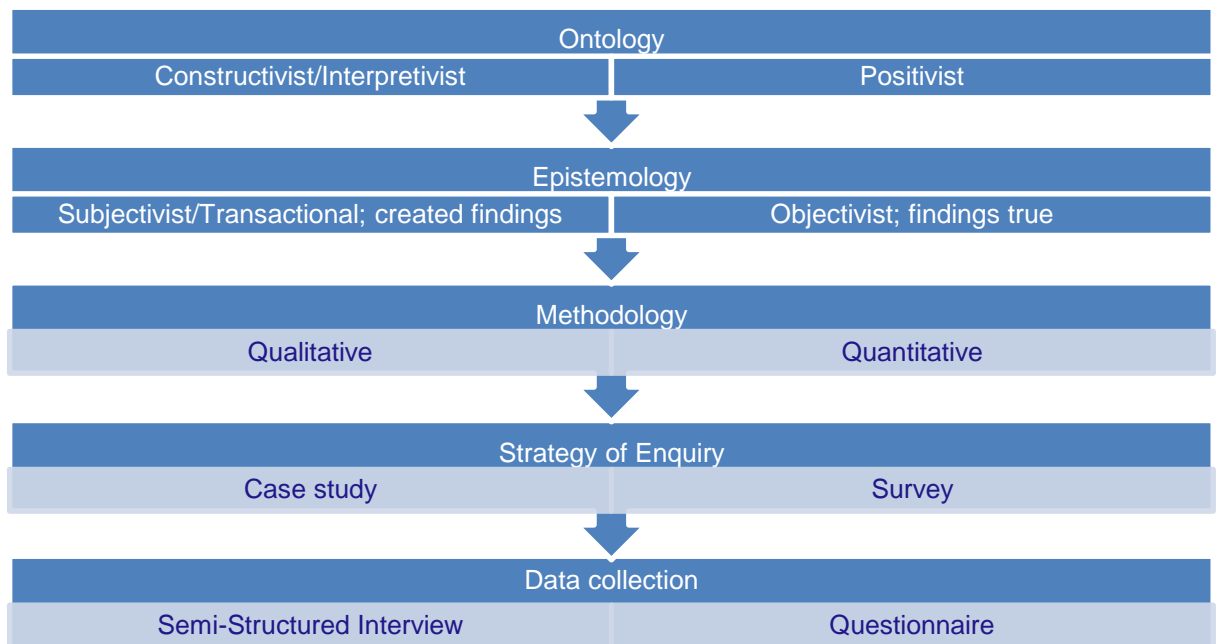
3.1 Introduction

This following chapter outlines the key approaches used to inform the study, and to gather, analyse and interpret the data needed to answer the research questions. The ontological approach of the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm adopted in the study is presented, along with the research strategy undertaken. An overview of the methodology adopted is presented in Figure 3.1. The study adopts a social science perspective to research in hospitality (Botterill, 2000) which recognises a social construction of reality and knowledge (Crotty, 1998; Searle, 1995). As Crotty (1998) noted:

...all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context. (p. 42)

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue that a research design methodology should incorporate a flexible set of guidelines that connect paradigms to enquiry strategies and methods for data collection. Flexibility of research design in this study can be seen in the mixed methods approach (see Figure 3.1). A combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods was used: case study, survey, semi-structured interview and questionnaire. The complexity of a multi-stakeholder group required a two dimensional approach to the research strategy, qualitative for the teacher and industry group, and quantitative for the students.

**Figure 3.1 Research strategy adapted from the “Research Onion”
(Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007)**



3.2 Paradigm and perspective

This research focuses on establishing the perceptions of key stakeholders in the hospitality industry of what “success” is in hospitality, and determining critical factors for success for hospitality graduates. Qualitative and quantitative research methods are applied to develop a comprehensive understanding of expectations, perceptions and interpretations from each group of stakeholders. Qualitative research allows a naturalistic interpretive approach, which enables a richer range of descriptions and experiences to be gathered from the subjects under investigation (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2003). Qualitative research also creates an opportunity for detailed study of issues through the use of open-ended questions in a semi-structured interview process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Scientific enquiry and theory development generally originate from two approaches: deductive and inductive (Bryman, 2001). Deductive theory testing is associated primarily with quantitative research, whereas an inductive approach typically employs qualitative data. A deductive approach investigates the objective features of the data and

thus adopts a positivist paradigm, which is defined as generating knowledge through the gathering and analysis of facts (Bryman, 2001). The use of qualitative research methods in this study follows an inductive approach, which allows the development of theory from the data collected; hence theory is developed out of the collective reality of individual experiences of the topic studied (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

The study adopts a cross-paradigmatic philosophy of positivism and constructivist-interpretivism. The paradigmatic approach adopted is largely influenced by two advocates of constructivist methodologies: Stake (1995, 2000) and Yin (2003, 2006). Both these researchers provide a clear and logical framework for a strategy of enquiry that can be applied to this study. Constructivists adhere to the notion that truth is relative and largely founded on the individual's subjective perspective (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Constructivism is founded on the notion of social construction of reality (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Searle, 1995) and "recognizes the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning, but doesn't reject outright some notion of objectivity" (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, p. 10). One of the key advantages of adopting a constructivist paradigm is that it allows participants to "open up" with information due to the close relationship between the researcher and participant (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

A constructivist-interpretive paradigm accepts there is more than one way of constructing knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). It adopts a subjective epistemology (Guba & Lincoln, 2005) in which understanding is co-created by the interviewer and participants through dialogue. This methodology allows the construction of knowledge through studious repetitive analysis of the data. Interpretive research is concerned with the construction of meaning through an understanding of the participants' experiences and thoughts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). This study constructs meaning through the semi-structured interview process with the teacher and industry stakeholder groups. It

follows a constructivist philosophy (Guba & Lincoln, 2005) whereby knowledge and reality is created through acts of interpretation that are achieved by social construction and shared meaning. In this context, knowledge derived from the teacher and industry stakeholder groups is created through context and perspective rather than being discovered (Schwandt, 1994, 2000). As Schwandt (2000) comments:

...human beings do not find or discover knowledge so much as construct or make it. We invent concepts, models, and schemes to make sense of experience and, further, we continually test and modify these constructions in the light of new experiences. (p. 197)

From an epistemological point of view, the majority of stakeholder knowledge is acquired through a transactional partnership between the researcher and interviewees (Bryman, 2001; Charmaz, 2006). Knowledge is constructed in a process of social interchange between the subject (researcher) and the object (in this case, the students, teachers and industry representatives) (Flick, 2006). The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods reflects a multiple-strategy approach that crosses two paradigms (Layder, 1993), which allows richer social construction and theory generation from the data through multiple participant contributions and perspectives (Creswell, 2008).

The underlying principles for this study follow constructivist-interpretivism approach (see Figure 3.1) for one main reason. The key philosophy of objective or positivist research is to generate and test hypotheses from theory and literature, and be value free (Gehrels, 2007). However, as the data in this study interact with the researcher's understanding and interpretation, the findings cannot be regarded as completely objective or value free. Even so, the study does not completely reject a positivist perspective, as outlined in the following explanation.

A Positivist perspective in this study is presented through the quantitative methodology used to collect data from the student stakeholder group. The study accepts the findings generated from the data not as objective reality but as perceptions that allow interpretation and construction of reality. A quantitative methodology allows the researcher and respondents to be independent entities and thus reduces investigator influence on the findings. In this respect the validity of the findings remains firm and the findings can be viewed as “true” (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

Traditional approaches to research in social and behavioural sciences such as hospitality have been both quantitative and positivist (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2003). Qualitative research in hospitality has been infrequently reported and received comparatively little attention (Sandiford & Seymour, 2007). Mehmetoglu and Altinay (2006) also confirmed the low output of qualitative research in hospitality, and suggested this is mainly due to the methods of data analysis employed. This study therefore employs a mixed methods approach to data collection and analysis. The mixed methods approach has become increasingly popular in social and behavioural research (Tashakkori & Teddle, 2008) and allows a conceptual framework to enhance the understanding of a social phenomenon (Rossman & Wilson, 1991).

The literature review revealed that hospitality can be regarded as a social, cultural and human phenomenon (Causevic & Lynch, 2009; Lashley *et al.*, 2007b), so this study adopts a mixed methods approach to enhance understanding of what makes a successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand. Using a mixed methods approach adds strength to the study as it allows the analysis to answer confirmatory and exploratory questions and simultaneously, verify and generate theory (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Teddle & Tashakkori, 2003). Mixed methods can be more time consuming and expensive than a single method approach (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), but more importantly,

overcoming the logistics of adopting such an approach can be a challenge. For example, in a mixed methods approach, each method (qualitative and quantitative) must be kept separate in order for its strengths to be realised (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). In terms of this study, the adoption of a mixed methods approach resulted in time-consuming organisation of interviews (of teachers and industry representatives) as well as the analysis and collection of data using a student questionnaire, and, furthermore, each data collection method (the interviews and the questionnaires) required separate ethical approval from the University's ethics committee.

Although the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data was time consuming, the time spent was justified because the mixed methods approach offered a number of advantages to the research. The more extensive data provided stronger evidence for conclusions through the convergence, corroboration and triangulation of the data (see Rossman & Wilson, 1991), and the opportunity to present a greater diversity of knowledge and views (see Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Rossman & Wilson, 1991; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). The mixed methods approach is more effective in providing answers to questions than using a single method (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). Finally, a mixed methods approach establishes a significant platform which can be used to increase the generalisation of findings (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods gives "richness" to the data (Jack & Raturi, 2006) and offers a more rounded and holistic approach (Devine & Heath, 1999). Finally, the use of a mixed methods approach will develop a researcher's ability in the two most widely used methods of data collection (Jogulu & Pansiri, 2011).

The study aims to focus on three levels of evaluation: fit, relevance and workability. *Fit* is concerned with how closely the research represents and is related to the concepts identified; *relevance* of the thesis is realised when the research deals with the real

concerns of the participants involved; and the *workability* of the thesis is delivered through explanations of the problems identified and how they can be solved (Bryman, 2001; Thomas & James, 2006).

3.3 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher and is concerned with the experience of the individual, as both inquirer and participant, in the study process (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). In addition, reflexivity forces the researcher to come to terms with the choice of research approach and with those involved in the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

As the researcher is a hospitality lecturer with a history of working in the hospitality industry, this study could be interpreted as being prepared from a predominantly hospitality-orientated perspective for a hospitality-orientated audience. To this extent, the researcher is implicated in the construction of knowledge through these relationships. This researcher recognises and is fully aware of the influence of personal interest, knowledge and experience of the hospitality industry, and does not attempt to make generalisations based on subjective knowledge or personal experience. The influence of values, biases and decisions in the construction of knowledge, are also recognised, as the research cannot be completely value free (Bryman, 2001).

3.4 Research strategy

The selection of an appropriate method is important to inform the development of theory and facilitate the research process (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). The research design is concerned with the complexity and particular nature of an education institution in a single environment – the School of Hospitality and Tourism at Auckland University of Technology (AUT), New Zealand. The study focuses on a specific qualification: the Bachelor of International Hospitality Management (BIHM) degree. The study adopts a

qualitative case study strategy of inquiry because case studies are commonly associated with a location in a particular community or environment (Bryman, 2001). The main instrument adopted in quantitative research is a survey (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) and for qualitative research, the use of interviews (Bryman, 2001).

Previous research in the area of perceptions and competencies required in hospitality have primarily focused on data collection through questionnaires (see Hai-yan & Baum, 2006; Okeiyi *et al.*, 1994; Teng, 2008; Yuan *et al.*, 2006; Zwaal & Otting, 2006). Little research in this area has been carried out by interview alone (Jauhari, 2006). Some hospitality studies have focused on comparisons of data from different sample groups using mixed methods (Baum *et al.*, 2007; Brotherton, 2005; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006; Warhurst & Nickson, 2007). However, the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches, including the combination of data collection and analysis methods, adds greater strength to findings than would have been achieved by merely using a single-method approach (Patton, 2002).

There are various definitions on what a case study is. Miles and Huberman (1994) define a case as “a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context” (p. 25), while Patton (2002) says cases can “be individuals, groups, neighbourhoods, programmes, organisations or cultures. ... [They] can also be critical incidents, stages in the life of a person or programme, or anything defined as specific, unique, bounded system. Cases are units of analysis...” (p. 447). In addition, Stake (2000) indicates that case studies should focus on individual units. However, Flyvbjerg (2011) observed that definitions of case studies have become problematic, misleading and promote mistaken views. The main misconception, which this research agrees with, is that “the case study is hardly a methodology in its own right, but best seen as a subordinate to investigations of larger samples” (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 301).

Case study research includes single and multiple cases; therefore each stakeholder group, and potentially each individual under investigation in this study, to some extent, is regarded as a case. The teachers in this study, comprise a specific group associated with hospitality education at the selected institution, and the industry representatives are associated with hospitality organisations and the culture of hospitality. Patton (2002) also indicated that case studies may include several participants, which allows for cross-case comparisons and analysis. It is important to obtain as much depth of detail on a chosen topic as possible from a small sample of stakeholders. The choice of participants was, therefore, purposefully sampled and not randomly selected. Purposeful sampling allows the selection of cases that are “rich” in information in respect of the topic being studied (Patton, 2002; Sarantakos, 1995).

Case study enables the investigation of important topics not easily covered by other methods (Yin, 2006). A case study design should be considered when the behaviour of those involved in the study cannot be manipulated, and when there are unclear boundaries between the phenomenon and the context (Yin, 2003). A case study is also a pertinent approach that can be adopted when the research addresses descriptive questions (Yin, 2006), as in the case of this study. The case study approach was chosen because the case addresses the question of how to make a successful hospitality graduate, but the case could not be considered outside the context of hospitality higher education, and the hospitality industry, and hence without the input of teachers and students in the BIHM degree programme as well as representatives from the hospitality industry. The research design follows a multiple-case approach (teachers, industry representatives and students) and attempts to understand similarities and differences between these cases (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2003).

Baxter and Jack (2008) advise that a case should have clear boundaries to ensure the study remains reasonable in scope. A qualitative case study also requires boundaries in order to focus the research on the complexities of the phenomenon under scrutiny and its broader context (Baxter & Jack, 2008). In order to avoid the topic becoming too broad or the objectives too numerous, the parameters of the research place boundaries on the case (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). The first boundary follows the principles of time and place (Creswell, 2008). The study focuses on a three-year undergraduate degree programme at AUT, Auckland. Secondly, in terms of activity (Stake, 1995), the study addresses hospitality higher education, developing a successful hospitality graduate, and the phenomenon of success in hospitality. Finally, by definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994), the study addresses the debate surrounding curriculum development in hospitality higher education and its role in graduate development.

Critiques of case study design have questioned the transferability of findings from such a strategy of inquiry (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Stake, 1995, 2000). The main purpose of a case study is not to generalise but to represent a case that allows theory refinement and the suggestion of points for further investigation (Stake, 2000). In this context, the case study design is intrinsic in nature. The intent of the study is to gain insight and maybe understanding of the phenomenon of success in hospitality. In this respect, the methodology provides some transferability. For qualitative researchers, the key to evaluation of findings is about credibility and transferability (Hoepfl, 1997). Qualitative researchers tend to focus less on how well the findings can be replicated (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992), and more on how precise they are (Winter, 2000).

In order to maximise the credibility and transferability of the thesis findings, a *triangulation* strategy – a key component of case study design (Stake, 2000) – was adopted. Triangulation is the process of using different perceptions to clarify meaning

and verify interpretation (Stake, 2000). The study does this analysing the methods of enquiry and data across cases and comparing how the research question is interpreted. Triangulation gives the opportunity to test the trustworthiness of the findings and produce a more defensible result of the data (Johnson, 1997).

The choice of case study also addressed case study paradox (Flyvbjerg, 2011), the paradox being that despite being widely used in social science, case studies are generally held in low regard as a methodology. This is mainly due to a number of misunderstandings about the theoretical basis of case study research as well as about the reliability and validity of findings generated from this method (see Flyvbjerg, 2011). Case study research, however, provides clear strengths: an understanding of context and process, an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation linking causes and outcomes, and a depth of data in terms of detail and richness (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Flyvbjerg, 2011). The study agrees with Flyvbjerg's (2011) arguments and responses to what might be described as misunderstandings of case study research, as outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Response to the case study paradox

Case study criticism	Response
General theoretical knowledge is more valuable than concrete case knowledge.	Predictive theories cannot be found in the study of human affairs; therefore, concrete case knowledge is more valuable.
One cannot generalise on the basis of an individual case; therefore, the case study cannot contribute to scientific development.	Although one can often generalise on the basis of a single case, the case study may be central to scientific development via generalisation as a supplement to other methods. The force of example is underestimated.
The case study is most useful for generating hypotheses, while other methods are more suitable for hypothesis testing and theory building.	The case study is useful for both generating and testing of hypotheses but is not limited to these research activities alone.
The case study contains a bias towards verification; i.e. a tendency to confirm the researcher's preconceived notions.	The case study contains no greater bias toward verification of the researcher's preconceived notions than other methods of enquiry. Experience indicates that the case study contains a greater bias towards falsification than verification.
It is often difficult to summarise and develop general propositions and theories on the basis of case studies.	It is correct that summarising case studies is often difficult. The problems are due more often to the properties of reality than the case study as a research method. Good studies should be read as narratives in their entirety.

Source: Adapted from Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 302.

3.4.1 Generalising

A common misunderstanding of case study research (Table 3.1) is that generalisations cannot be made on the basis of one case and a single case cannot contribute to scientific study. This study may be limited to the case, or cases, in context and thus may have restricted external validity. However, the research presented in this thesis could be generalised to other cases or populations beyond this case, and provide knowledge that can be expanded and reflected upon. Through the adoption of Flyvbjerg's (2011) perspective, the choice of case study methodology provides the thesis with depth, conceptual validity and an understanding of the context and process of hospitality and success in hospitality.

There are two reasons why it could be valid to generalise from the findings of this study. Firstly, the student population under scrutiny can be considered to be representative of other hospitality student populations in universities around New Zealand. Secondly, although there will be differences between teacher stakeholder groups at different universities, there could still be some shared characteristics with the teachers surveyed in this study, for example, in age, experience, qualifications and cultural diversity.

3.4.2 Reliability and validity

The notions of reliability and validity are strongly associated with a positivist paradigm and are therefore commonly found in quantitative research rather than being suited to a constructive or interpretive paradigm (Golafshani, 2003). To this end, some of the findings of this study are represented as numbers that can be summarised and the results explained using statistical terminology (see Charles, 1995). *Reliability* is concerned with the issue of whether the findings can be replicated, and *validity* concentrates on the integrity of the findings (Bryman, 2001). From a quantitative perspective, reliability is more concerned about whether the results are replicable, and validity is more about the accuracy of the measurements used (Golafshani, 2003).

The concepts of *reliability* and *validity* have different meanings in a non-positivist paradigm (Golafshani, 2003). In this context, the study seeks credibility through *transferability*: i.e. how well the findings can be applied in another context. In addition, this study regards the findings as “dependable” rather than reliable as steps have been taken to ensure consistency in the research process (see Hoepfl, 1997; Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

One of the key limitations of the study is the extent to which it aims to establish external validity (Bryman, 2001). *External validity* is one of the main goals of quantitative

research but of less importance to qualitative research (Winter, 2000). It can be argued that a case cannot be representative when placed in a wider context. The findings, however, can be used to make generalisations about the hospitality industry, hospitality students or hospitality education, and provide foundations for further research. In this context, single case studies can be used for generalisation (see Table 3.1) and provide a foundation for the refinement of theory (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Winter, 2000).

The main issue faced in the development phase was that of conducting research in one's own workplace, as an insider research. Insider research presents issues around access, familiarity, intrusiveness and rapport (Mercer, 2006). It is generally presumed that access is more easily granted to the insider researcher and that data collection is less time consuming. Insiders have a better understanding of the social setting but this can make insiders take things for granted (Mercer, 2006). Some argue that being an insider researcher influences the whole research process (Hockey, 1993) and that insider research produces different knowledge to that of an outsider (Griffith, 1998). In contrast, many researchers who have conducted studies in their own settings did not perceive any difference to outsider research (Anderson & Jones, 2000).

Potentially there are three main dilemmas for the insider researcher to overcome: informant bias, interview reciprocity and research ethics (see Mercer, 2006). *Informant bias* concerns the willingness of informants to open up and any reveal relationships that may influence how the interviewer is perceived (Drever, 1995; Powney & Watts, 1987). The potential distortion of the data in this respect is that respondents might adopt a more pragmatic than candid approach due to their professional relationship with the interviewer (Mercer, 2006). However, it was felt at times during this study, that the formality of the interview process prevented the interviewees from divulging more natural and informal data, which protected against potential distortion of the findings.

Insider research also raises the dilemma of *interview reciprocity* which relates to the level of familiarity between the researcher and those being interviewed. There are opposing arguments about the levels of familiarity between interviewer and interviewee, and how familiarity might influence the data and findings. Holstein and Gubrium (2003) stated that the interviewer should remain out of the interview process and not reveal any opinions, whereas Porter (1984) pointed out a moral obligation to respond to questions asked during interviews, which may include the offering of opinions. Logan (1984) offered the perspective that contributing opinions and involvement in interviews allows trust to develop. The important issue here is for the researcher to avoid leading the subjects and conversation. However, semi-structured interviews do require some shaping from the interviewer (Bryman, 2001). Increased levels of trust and friendship mean the more likely the participant is to “open up” and provide rich data. In this study, the researcher established rapport and trust during the interview process, and employed interview techniques to limit personal contributions while still encouraging discussion.

The issues and challenges of insider research in educational institutions were carefully considered, particularly the claim that insider research produces different knowledge to outsider research (Griffith, 1998). This study is not solely based upon insider research but, rather, on combined perspectives (both in and out). In this context it is acknowledged that “the insider/outsider dichotomy is actually a continuum ... and that all researchers move back and forth along a number of axes, depending on time, location, participants and topic” (Mercer, 2006, p. 1).

3.5 Research ethics, permissions and arrangements

A process of informed consent was taken with all participants and no deception was used (see Diener & Crandall, 1978). Informed consent recognises a commitment to the autonomy of the individual and “in the Mills and Weber tradition insists that research

subjects have the right to be informed about the nature and consequences of experiments in which they are involved” (Christians, 2000, p. 138). Emphasis was placed on voluntary participation and cooperation based on open information. Privacy and confidentiality was another key aspect to the ethical philosophy adopted in the study. “Professional etiquette uniformly concurs that no one deserves harm or embarrassment as a result of insensitive research practices” (Christians, 2000, p. 139). In this respect, safeguards were used to protect people’s identities, unwanted exposure and the security of the data.

Ethical approval from Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) was obtained for both research stages (the interviews and the survey; see Appendix I). Interviewees were asked permission for their cooperation and whether they wished to be acknowledged in the final publication. The background to the research was explained prior to each interview as well as the context of the research. Approaches to representatives of the hospitality industry were made on the understanding that all data analysis would be made accessible to participants upon request.

Two ethical issues arose, mainly because the study involved insider research (see Mercer, 2006). First was the issue of what level of information to give to peers before and after they participated in the research. Researchers need to avoid “contaminating” their study by giving too much information about the research questions (Silverman, 2000). The second dilemma involved the process of interviewing peers, which is outlined by Platt (1981):

... it seems offensive not to give some honest and reasonably full account of the rationale and purpose of one’s study to such respondents [who are equals] ... it is difficult to do this without inviting discussion of the study rather than getting on with the interview and without providing so much information that may bias the course of the interview (p. 80)

In light of this dilemma, a conscious decision was made not to reveal opinions around the workplace where the data were collected, and not to specify exact details of the research. Furthermore, in an attempt to encourage candid involvement from participants, confidentiality was emphasised as was how the findings would be reported. The other issue was that of using informal data obtained from personal conversations, meetings with restricted access or anything overheard by chance. The use of such “incidental data” (Mercer, 2006) could constitute a betrayal of trust or abuse of access, so it was not used.

3.6 Population and sample

Hospitality is the seventh largest economic activity in Auckland and employs 4.1% of the region’s labour force (RANZ, 2013). The Auckland region has grown, and continues to grow, faster than any other in the country and an increasing number of firms are reporting difficulties in finding skilled staff (Department of Labour, 2007; Hospitality Standards Institute, 2007; MBIE, 2013; New Zealand Tourism Research Institute (NZTRI), 2007). In addition to employers’ concerns over future skills shortages, there is a lack of confidence that the future workforce will be able to meet the industry’s labour needs (Doesburg, 2014; Harkison *et al.*, 2011). A considerable proportion of the future hospitality workforce is currently enrolled in higher education in the Auckland region.

At the time of the study there were 1300 students studying a range of hospitality-related courses at the School of Hospitality and Tourism at AUT University. The decision to use students from the Bachelor of International Hospitality Management (BIHM) degree was made for a number of reasons. The researcher is familiar with and understands the social setting of the study. Moreover, access to the population was simplified because the researcher is a lecturer in hospitality at the school, so data collection was both less time consuming and less costly than it would have been if a

different student group had been chosen. The researcher also enjoys what Mercer (2006) refers to as “a more readily available frame of shared reference with which to interpret the data” (p. 13).

3.6.1 Industry sample

The industry and professional organisation interviewees were selected in an attempt to obtain a substantial representation of hospitality industry perspectives. The researcher approached eight selected senior managers from a range of hospitality industry sectors – commercial institutions, training organisations and associations. The participants were selected using criteria relevant to the study’s objectives, creating a purposive sample (see Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006). Using this technique the classification of the hospitality industry identified the following population groups for the study:

- Accommodation sector
- Food and beverage sector (Restaurant Association of New Zealand (RANZ))
- Hospitality Standards Institute, and
- Hospitality Association of New Zealand (HANZ) (in relation to licensed premises).

These population groups represented a cross-section of the hospitality industry across the Auckland region as identified in other studies (see Department of Labour, 2007; New Zealand Tourism Research Institute (NZTRI), 2007). The first three interviews were with representatives from three of the identified groups (Accommodation sector, RANZ and HANZ). A further two interviews were conducted with participants from the accommodation sector. Following a period of consolidation and review, the decision was taken not to interview the other three participants because data saturation had been reached, which can occur with a small number of in-depth interviews (see Guest et al., 2006).

3.6.2 Teacher sample

Access was available to approximately 40 teachers in the School of Hospitality and Tourism, 14 (34%) of whom had direct teaching contact on the BIHM programme. Eleven teachers were interviewed for the study. The selection of teachers to be interviewed reflected the need to collect data from students at different academic levels on the BIHM programme, and, therefore, involve teachers who taught first-, second- and third-year students. The teachers interviewed were also involved in the coordination of papers across different majors of the degree. This was important as it allowed interviewees to reflect on different aspects of the BIHM programme instead of focusing on just their particular teaching area. Of the 11 teachers interviewed (including the pilot interviews), five were female and six male. The gender of the interviewees is an element used to filter knowledge and shape masculine or feminine identities, which can influence interview responses (Fontana & Frey, 2000), and so is relevant to data collection and analysis.

3.6.3 Student sample and response rates

At the time of the research, access was available to 550 students undertaking the BIHM, which represented a target population of 42% of the total AUT University hospitality-student population. The target population focused on students who were currently undertaking different majors or specialist groupings of papers across the programme, and included students undertaking first-, second- and third-year papers. The reason for this was to obtain perspectives of students exposed to different aspects of the degree to ensure a full range of perspectives was sampled. The target population was spread over four core papers for the degree over each of the three years. Ten key classes were identified for survey administration (see Appendix A), and classes were a mixture of core and elective papers spread across three different academic levels of the degree. Time constraints and potential disruption to teaching and learning prevented all of the

students in the target population from being surveyed; however, restricting the sample had the advantage of enabling the survey administration to be concentrated in certain areas. The implementation of the survey schedule allowed clear communication to all involved in the data collection process.

Three hundred and fifty-five BIHM students were targeted after discussions with each of the identified lecturers of the selected classes. Following ethics approval and questionnaire piloting, the survey was administered towards the end of the first semester in 2012. As some students do not attend class, a 25% non-response rate was anticipated, so a revised target population of 266 was set when taking into consideration the non-response rate. One hundred and sixty-six completed questionnaires were received by third-party administrators from NZTRI. The decision to use NZTRI was twofold: use of a third party conferred neutrality to the study and the students, and using NZTRI was an accessible and cost-effective method of data collection. The final result was a useable response rate of 62.4% (166 usable questionnaires from 266 issued).

The response rate to a questionnaire is a key issue in determining its success or failure (Finn, Elliott-White, & Walton, 2000). Questionnaire response rates are also considered as indicators of how representative the sample is (Babbie, 1973). It is considered that the higher the response rate, the more reflective the sample is of the population (Finn et al., 2000). There is some debate as to what is considered to be a good response rate for questionnaires. A rate of 50% is good according to Brunt (1997), whereas Babbie (1973) considered 50% as adequate, 60% as good and over 70% to be very good. The questionnaire response rate in this study is 62.4% and therefore can be considered good. Indeed, this figure represents a strong response rate in comparison to other recent survey of hospitality students in New Zealand (see Harkison *et al.*, 2011). The strength of the response rate also exceeds Beam's (2005, p.35) observation that "for a good chance of

getting statistically significant results, there should be more than 100 responses.” Beam’s benchmark of 100 responses provided confidence that there would be enough responses for sufficient analysis and “to turn quantitative data into meaningful information” (see Beam, 2005, p. 35).

3.6.4 Sampling rationale

The selection process of each stakeholder group was based on purposive sampling, the aim being to choose subjects relevant to the research topic (see Sarantakos, 1995). A non-probability convenience sampling strategy was used (see Bryman, 2001) as it is a common form of sampling for social research and is less costly and time consuming than probability sampling (Bryman, 2001).

Possible limitations surrounding the choice of the sampling techniques employed are recognised. The sample size of the teacher and industry representative groups was relatively small and the population samples were taken from hospitality teachers, students and industry, and were therefore relatively homogeneous (i.e. all related through hospitality). For the data to be heterogeneous, a larger sample is needed (Bryman, 2001). When convenience sampling is used (as is frequently in social research) then generalisation of findings is limited, although it should be noted that even with probability sampling, findings can only be generalised to the population from which the sample was taken (Bryman, 2001). Nevertheless, even with the use of a non-probability convenience sampling strategy, this study has generated rich information from the sample sizes selected and the methods of enquiry employed. Golafshani (2003) also recognised the value of reliability and validity to quantitative research, but the two criteria need to be reassessed and redefined to be applied to qualitative research. One of the first steps taken to negate possible errors that may have occurred during this

research was, therefore, a pilot study for both the quantitative and qualitative approaches (see Bryman, 2001).

3.7 Pilot studies

A pilot study provides advantages when designing interview schedules and questionnaires as it gives feedback that can be used to make improvements to design (Veal, 2006). A pilot study also enables the clarity of questions, structure of the questionnaire, and time taken to answer questions to be tested (Wilson, 1996). More importantly, pilot studies provide the opportunity to enhance skills before the main study is undertaken (Mason, 1996; Sandiford & Seymour, 2002). Pilot studies are essential to ensure that the research instruments function well (Bryman, 2001) and “test wording, sequencing, layout, familiarity with respondents, test fieldwork arrangements, estimate interview time, and test analysis procedures” (Veal, 2006, p. 276). In this study, the pilot study provided an opportunity to test the planned qualitative methodology and data collection process. It also provided an opportunity to experiment with analysis; in other words, to try different techniques of data interpretation.

3.7.1 Pilot interview process

To establish validity and reliability of response, a pilot sample of two participants from the teacher stakeholder group was chosen to reflect the main population of the study. The pilot subjects were male and female, both of whom were known to the interviewer, one well and the other not. This selection was deliberate as it enabled the researcher to test the influence that certain levels of familiarity in relationships between the interviewer and interviewees may have on the process and findings and, as a result, the researcher was able to pitch future interviews at appropriate levels of familiarity between the interviewer and rest of the stakeholder group. Increased levels of familiarity have the potential to increase the levels of comfort and therefore enable interviewees to open up and engage in more conversation, thus producing richer

information. Conversely, being able to pilot an interview with a lecturer with whom the researcher was not familiar, provided with experience and confidence to manage similar future interviews.

Although it is recommended that results from a pilot study should not be used as part of the main data set (Bryman, 2001), the decision was taken to include the pilot study data as the pilot interviews could then be used as a valuable source of information in their own right. This decision was justified because considerable time had been spent on reviewing the research tools until the researcher felt comfortable with their robustness before the pilot study went ahead. In addition, the pilot study worked well and provided confidence that the research tool did not need to be altered. Following the pilot, amendments were made to the time allowance for satisfactory completion of the interview.

3.7.2 Pilot questionnaire process

The initial draft of the self-completion questionnaire was piloted on a group of six university students; the findings from this initial questionnaire were not included in the final data set. Hospitality has its own language (Blue & Harun, 2003), so the pilot provided the opportunity to test the language content of the questions in order to identify any ambiguity or jargon that needed clarification and/or alteration. Following a period of review and discussion with NZTRI's online survey team, changes were made to the instructions for completing the questionnaire, question wording, and questionnaire flow and structure.

3.8 Data collection and preparation

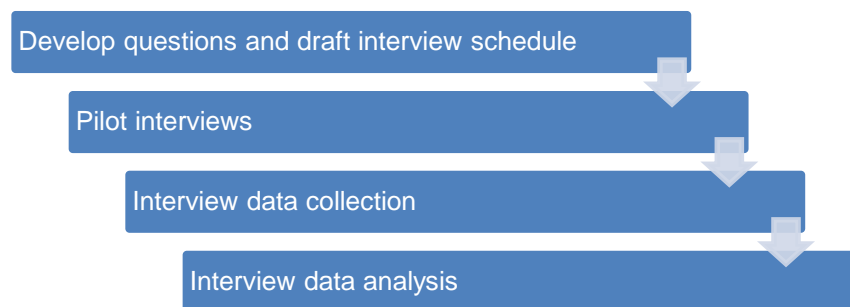
Data collection followed a sequential strategy of enquiry and procedure (see Figure 3.2), as this allowed interviews to inform the survey design and enhanced confidence in the research (Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, & Sechrest, 2000). The convergence of

qualitative data (from the semi-structured interviews) and quantitative data (the questionnaires) collected sequentially allowed for a wider integration and interpretation of results (Creswell, 2008). To corroborate the quantitative and qualitative research findings (Hammersley, 1996), the researcher analysed and cross-checked findings from the semi-structured interviews to support and strengthen the findings from the questionnaires.

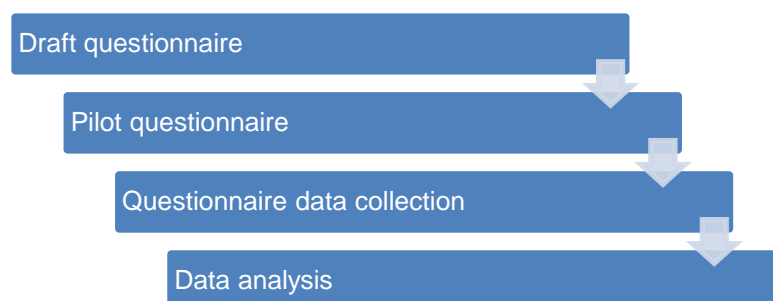
Collection of statistical data questionnaires created a view of reality based on objective results and testing of theories. The study allowed the analysis and triangulation of the findings from the questionnaires against those from the semi-structured interviews.

Figure 3.2 Sequential research process of data collection

Stage 1



Stage 2



3.8.1 Interviews

The semi-structured interviews were conducted face to face at the interviewees' workplaces. The interviews were conducted over an 11 month period which included

time for consolidation and review of data. The fieldwork schedule, including interview start times, was flexible in order to accommodate the interviewees' different work schedules. Each interview, following refinement after the pilot study, took on average, 45 minutes. The wording for all the interviews was similar and, as much as possible, questions were asked in a standardised manner. Standardisation allowed reduced potential interviewer effect (for example, by leading or influencing responses to the questions), maintained structure, and provided responses to a set of standardised questions (Fontana & Frey, 2000). The same set of questions was used in all the interviews, although the sequence of the questions was determined by the course of the interview. It was important for each interview to explore the interviewee's experiences and perceptions; the data collection process therefore allowed for conversation rather than rigidly structured query (Yin, 2003).

Data were recorded in a standard manner (either digitally or by accurate note-taking) and there was consistency in the way the questions were asked. All the teachers consented to having their interviews digitally recorded; the industry representatives, however, preferred not to have their interviews recorded so information was recorded through a conventional note-taking method. It could be argued that some information may have been lost due to the interviews not being digitally captured, but the key themes and issues raised in the interviews were recorded through accurate note-taking and clarification of responses with each interviewee. It was found that the note taking was sufficient and the recordings offered a safety net. The qualitative approach adopted was semi structured interview data to be investigated through thematic analysis. The use of a 'full transcript' process was considered time consuming and some participants did not want to be recorded therefore the provision of a 'full transcript' was not possible.

The opening part of the interview set out to develop an interviewee profile in terms of age, gender, occupation and previous work experience, education level and ethnic origin. A combination of open and closed questions was then used to record and process answers, as well as generate conversation. Interview questions were not all qualitative in nature as the interviewees were also asked to rank some answers on a Likert scale (see Foddy, 1993). This quantitative ranking was introduced for some interview questions so the data could be cross-analysed directly with the self-completed questionnaires. The interviews of both stakeholder groups (i.e. teachers and industry representatives) employed the same indicative question list (see Appendix B). The semi-structured interviews concentrated on the following areas of investigation:

- Hospitality and the nature of the industry
- Success
- Skills, competencies and qualities required to work in hospitality
- Challenges facing the hospitality industry
- Hospitality graduates and higher education, and
- Future issues facing hospitality and the industry.

Before the teacher stakeholder interviews were conducted, a few preparatory steps were taken. A notice was placed on the staff noticeboard and in the departmental newsletter, to alert potential interviewees to the proposed data collection process and advise that not all would be directly contacted for interview. An email was then sent to each of the identified interviewees with a participant information sheet (Appendix C) and consent form (Appendix D). Finally, interview dates, times and locations were confirmed through email and discussion. The email list was generated without breaching participants' privacy as their email addresses were found on the publicly available staff list on the AUT website.

The industry representatives were contacted in a similar manner. A letter (Appendix E) was sent to each targeted interviewee with a participant information sheet (Appendix F), and then follow-up telephone calls were made to each participant to establish interview dates, times and locations. During the recruitment phase the main difficulty occurred in securing appointments with the industry representatives, as they had to allow for 45 minutes out of their busy schedules. All the industry representatives invited to participate were extremely cooperative and willingly contributed once appointments had been secured. There was no difficulty in recruiting interviewees from the teacher stakeholder group either, as all were aware that the research was being conducted and were keen to participate.

To reduce variations in response, interview questions should be predominantly closed (Fontana & Frey, 2000), although such an approach may limit the amount of information gathered. For this reason, interviews were semi-structured, and generated both quantitative and qualitative data, which was analysed using the *constant comparative method* (CCM). By comparing the qualitative and quantitative data collected through interviews, the study was able to generate theory and increase the internal validity of the findings (Boeije, 2002).

Interviews were conducted in two phases: firstly the teacher stakeholder group was interviewed and then the industry representative group. Each phase was broken down into two further sub-phases, which incorporated a period of review and analysis before further interviews were conducted. This was necessary to identify possible points of information saturation (repeated themes from different interviewees) during the interview process (Fontana & Frey, 2000). The review periods were also used to identify gaps in data collection that required further investigation. Thus, the review

periods provided control over the interview process to establish the richness and quality of data collected, and whether further interviews were required.

The 11 teacher interviews were conducted over nine months. A period of review was taken after the pilot interviews and then six interviews were conducted (over one month). Following some manual analysis, it was found that patterns were starting to emerge in themes, key words and perceptions. Another period of review was taken between interviews six and seven, and again between interviews seven and eight. Following interview eight, it was felt that there was still sufficient divergence to continue for at least one more interview, and possibly a second. Interview nine was conducted after a period of analysis and, following the mapping of the results of that interview on to the overview, it was decided that sufficient data had been collected; i.e. interview nine data contained sufficient similarities in themes, key words and perceptions to that from other interviews and patterns to conclude that data saturation had been reached. At this point, including the pilot interviews, 11 interviews had been conducted out of the initial identified target of 14.

A similar process to that used to collect data from the teacher stakeholder group was applied to collecting data from the industry representative stakeholder group. Four of the initially targeted eight interviews were conducted in a relatively (over one month), and then a period of review and analysis applied.

Following some manual analysis it was found that patterns were starting to emerge in the themes, key words and perceptions identified in the interview data. It was felt that there was still sufficient divergence to continue for at least one more interview, and possibly a second. Interview five was conducted, analysed and, after the mapping of its results on to the overview, it was decided that sufficient data had been collected; i.e. the fifth interview indicated sufficient similarities in themes, key words and perceptions to

the other interviews and patterns to suggest data saturation had been reached. The more the same concept appears in the data, the more likely it is to be a theme, as “repetition is one of the easiest ways to identify themes” (Ryan & Bernard, 2003, p. 89). The repetition in data was considered strong after the fifth interview and the decision taken at this point to conclude interviews because saturation had been reached.

3.8.2 The survey

A self-completion student questionnaire was chosen because it is convenient for participants, quicker and cheaper to administer than a structured or semi-structured interview, enables a large number of responses to be obtained, and is absent of interviewer influence on the answers. In this respect, the chosen methodology minimised researcher effect and variability in the collection of student stakeholder data. The main potential disadvantage of a self-completion questionnaire is the inability to clarify issues arising directly with the respondents. Respondents cannot be prompted if they are having difficulty with the questions or language, and there is no opportunity to probe them to elaborate on answers given (see Bryman, 2001).

The questionnaire was administered by a third party from the NZTRI, who was provided with details of the targeted degree classes, and each teacher was fully informed of the process. The questionnaires were handed out at the end of class in order not to impinge on teaching and learning time. Students were advised that participation was voluntary and that by completing the questionnaire, they were giving their consent to be involved in the research. The questionnaire was conducted anonymously to respect the confidentiality of the individuals. NZTRI was chosen to administer the questionnaire as they provided a neutral source of data collection which did not influence the participants' answers and maintained ethical considerations of anonymity.

3.8.3 Questionnaire design

The student questionnaire (see Appendix H) was designed so that it could be completed in a relatively short time. Most questions were closed, and for a response to be scaled and ranked. The key advantage of this questionnaire structure is that the questions can be pre-coded, so data processing is an easier task (see Bryman, 2001).

The design of the questionnaire and most questions was influenced by a range of previous and similar studies associated with success, hospitality and graduates (see Knutson & Patton, 1992; Pizam & Lewis, 1979; Richardson, 2008; Zopiatis, 2010). Some researchers disagree about whether questions should be based on a five-point or seven-point Likert scale rating in order to maximise reliability and validity of the measure (Busch & Turner, 1993; Finn, 1972; Foddy, 1993). Following the pilot study, a six-point scale was chosen in order to avoid centre-point bias (see Brown, 2008).

The opening questions were designed to ascertain the age, gender and current levels of the papers studied by the student participants. Questions 2 and 3 were asked to ascertain the level of the BIHM programme the participant was studying at, and whether they had any hospitality experience. The purpose of these opening questions was to probe the influence of age, gender and experience (or inexperience) of working in the hospitality industry. Questions 4 and 5 investigated the perception of the value of a hospitality degree in relation to future employment and the student's intentions upon graduation.

Question 6 investigated the student's perception of success in relation to the workplace and work-related attributes required for success in hospitality. This question also explored extrinsic and intrinsic interpretations of what success means to the individual. The following question explored their perception of the most important skills or qualities of a successful hospitality person. The focus was to construct an interpretation

of the most critical skills or qualities in relation to success. As indicated before, this question had already been asked of the interviewees to allow direct correlation.

Students were then asked to choose between two sets of skills. Each set had been constructed using previous studies that had categorised technical and generic skills important for hospitality work (see Baum, 1996, 2002; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005, 2006). Set A outlined a technical skills set and B a generic skills set. This question was also given to all teacher and industry representative interviewees (using a six-point Likert scale) and therefore allowed correlation and comparison across the three stakeholder groups. In addition, this question provided quantifiable evidence as to which skill set (technical or generic) was perceived as most important for work in hospitality. It also enabled analysis of the value and purpose of technical and generic skills content in hospitality higher education, and the opportunity to use student preference in recommendations for curriculum development.

The students were then asked for their understanding and perceptions of the hospitality industry. The 12 descriptors used had been identified in other studies (Brotherton, 2005; Dawson *et al.*, 2011; Richardson, 2008, 2009b) and included recurring themes identified in the interviewee data. The findings from the questionnaire provided the foundations for answering the research questions. The design of the questions allowed each descriptor to be coded and ranked which allowed for a quantitative analysis of responses. Question 10, for example, adopted a quantitative approach to the importance the students placed on three main areas for gaining initial employment in hospitality: education, personality and experience.

The final two questions sought to establish which areas of the BIHM programme the students valued the least and the most. These two questions were designed to offer an insight to student preferences to the degree content that they perceived would be most

valuable for becoming successful in hospitality. The questions were also an opportunity to confirm or refute the responses given to Question 8, which had asked the students whether technical or generic skills content were more important for their career aspirations.

3.9 Data analysis

Data from the semi-structured interviews (with the teachers and industry representatives) were analysed using a two-stage process: 1) manual filtering through thematic analysis, and 2) analysis using computer-aided software (QSR NVivo 9). This process allowed word repetition, categories and similarities (Ryan & Bernard, 2003) to be identified.

Thematic analysis was applied to the interview data as it offered an accessible and flexible approach to analysing the qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis seeks to describe patterns across a range of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and is a fundamental task in qualitative research (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Using thematic analysis of the interviewees' responses, it was possible to identify significant words, subjects and themes. Thematic analysis brings objectivity and transparency to the research method, and can present findings based on documented evidence (Bryman, 2001; Creswell, 2008). It also provides an unobtrusive method to research and flexibility of data analysis (Webb *et al.*, 2000). Thematic analysis was used primarily in this study to identify categories, which provided the researcher with something to describe, compare and explain (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Each of the teacher interviews was digitally recorded and the data typed into separate Word documents using key themes. The data were then filtered on to A3-sized charts based on frequent words and themes. The words and themes were highlighted by teacher interviewees, to present a visual presentation of the interview data. This process

allowed word-frequency analysis across the data, and established the grouping of major themes and patterns within the data set. The manual filtering of data also helped identify the convergence and divergence of opinion in the interview data. A similar process was applied to the data from the industry representative interviews. However, as these interviews were not digitally recorded, the pen-and-note data were first converted to Word documents. Data were then manually filtered following the same process as the teachers' data. This analysis, although time consuming, did provide a thorough analysis of the data and allowed for easier visual presentation of themes and frequency, as presented in the discussion chapters.

The same interview data were then analysed using the computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software CAQDAS. CAQDAS enabled the researcher to “think about codes that are developed in terms of ‘trees’ of inter-related ideas” (Bryman, 2001, p. 408). QSR NVivo 9 (NVivo) qualitative research software was used to assign sections of interview data to relevant codes. NVivo software was used after the manual thematic analysis to either provide confirmation of the initial analysis or to identify any variance to the manual procedure. The software analysis using NVivo did not show any variance to the manual analysis and the decision was therefore taken to continue with NVivo9.

Survey data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The questionnaire contained a mixture of closed and open questions. The closed questions asked the students to choose from a set of answers, ranked in order of importance from a list of variables, or use a score six-point Likert scale. The closed questions enabled simple statistical data analysis which could be presented in the form of tables or graphs, and the ranking presented through means analysis. The open

questions were coded into SPSS to produce word frequency analysis from the student data, the results of which could also be presented using tables.

The use of a mixed method approach enabled this study to combine positivist and constructivist-interpretative ontologies to generate knowledge about successful graduates in hospitality. This knowledge is revealed in the following stakeholder discussion chapters.

3.10 Limitations of the study

It is important to note the methodological limitations that characterise this thesis. Data analysis is of findings from within a particular context, and is therefore largely limited to the perceptions of those involved. The study is limited to a single industry (hospitality) in the Auckland region of New Zealand, and to a specific degree programme in a specific university (AUT). Generalisation of the findings should therefore be made with caution and should take into consideration differences from other industries, locations and hospitality education programmes.

It could be argued that the isomorphic approach constitutes a limitation, because the findings have an exclusive focus on the perceptions of hospitality ‘in-house’ participants (industry representatives, teachers and students). Therefore the selected participants may be more likely to frame their answers in terms of a particular route they have taken through a system of hospitality education and employment. This could lead to definitions and perspectives of a successful hospitality graduate that arise solely from participants’ particular education, training and careers. Such an approach may raise questions over the use of these perspectives as a foundation for theory development. However, the validity and reliability of the findings can be enhanced through future research that addresses the issue of isomorphism by expanding future studies to include perceptions of success from those outsiders the hospitality field.

It should, however, be noted that whilst it would have been useful to include outsider perceptions in this study, the selection of outsider stakeholder groups would create additional complexities to the study. This study therefore had to be realistic in terms of what it set out to achieve, and the decision was taken to constrain the research to chosen stakeholder groups. Despite potential problems related to isomorphism, the outcomes from this thesis are valid and of practical and theoretical benefit. Single case studies can be used for a degree of generalisation and provide a foundation for the refinement of theory (Flyvbjerg, 2011). This thesis, therefore provides valid evidence that informs an understanding of the hospitality industry, educational development of hospitality students, and the constructs of passion and success.

It could be argued that another limitation of the research is that it is based on a small sample of industry participants (five in total, of which three were Human Resource managers (HRMs)). Despite there being 16 in-depth interviews in total (industry and teachers) and the fact that all of the teachers had hospitality managerial experience to draw from, the issue of potential bias remains. For example, it could be argued that the outcomes of this study rely on HRM perspectives as there were no general managers interviewed. In developing the research it was evident that the general managers who were approached demonstrated interest in the study, but referred participation to those in their organisations who they felt would be in the best position to comment, hence three HRMs were included in the industry group. In total eight industry interviews were planned, but the decision was taken to stop after five as data saturation had been reached. This can occur with small sample in-depth interviews (see Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

A further area of weakness could be identified in the significant differential in participant numbers between industry and student representation. A multiple

stakeholder approach was deliberately undertaken but as a result of accessibility and time constraints some sacrifices had to be made. It may therefore be construed as a limitation that more emphasis appears to be placed on the teacher and student perspectives than on those from industry. However, because data saturation had been reached this apparent emphasis is more related to the number of participants than a difference in perspectives. Validity can be enhanced in future studies by focusing on participants from industry, rather than a relying on the more accommodating nature of students as a research group. In addition, it could be argued that the student stakeholder group in this study had limited industry work experience and therefore potentially lacked sufficient knowledge upon which to adequately respond. All students, however, had been exposed to hospitality either through some form of experience or interaction (e.g. as a customer, in the classroom, or through social and mass media), and were therefore able to present a perspective on the questions asked. Future study can focus on specific and separate student perceptions, for example those with work experience, or graduates working in industry.

Chapter 4. Industry stakeholders: Findings and Discussions

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussion points to emerge from the data collected from the interviews with the industry representatives. The section opens with an overview of the demographic characteristics and backgrounds of these representatives from the industry stakeholder group, and discusses any potential influences these characteristics may have on the research outcomes. The chapter then explores how this group defined hospitality and how it viewed the nature of the hospitality workplace. The industry representatives' perceptions of success and being successful in hospitality are explored, along with the skills, competencies and qualities required to work in hospitality. The chapter concludes with a presentation of industry stakeholder views on challenges and issues facing hospitality and the critical factors, necessary for a hospitality graduate to be successful.

4.2 Demographic profiles and backgrounds

Three females and two males were interviewed to represent the views of the industry (see Table 4.1). Four had formal qualifications (diploma or higher); of these, only one had a hospitality-related degree and one had a master's degree in a field other than hospitality. Four had worked in the hospitality industry at various levels of management and within different aspects of the industry, while the fifth had experience in hospitality related activities in hospitals. Four had worked in hospitality while undertaking study, generally to help fund their education, and two had obtained hospitality qualifications during this time. From an age perspective the participants did not reveal their exact age but did indicate an age bracket they associated with. Two of the participants were relatively youthful (20-25), in comparison to the two who identified themselves as 30-40 and over 40. H3 identified herself as 25-30.

Table 4.1 Demographic profile of the industry representative interviewees

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Formal qualifications	Main area of hospitality knowledge/expertise
H1	F	20-25	New Zealander	Y	Human resources
H2	M	20-25	New Zealander	Y	Human resources
H3	F	25-30	New Zealander	N	Human resources
H4	M	>40	New Zealander	Y	Restaurants and small businesses
H5	F	30-40	New Zealander	Y	Public bars and the liquor industry

H1 gained her first real experience of hospitality working in a local café while at school. She gained admission to the University of Auckland where she completed an honours degree in human resource management. She found restaurant work relatively easy to obtain and a good source of income to support her studies. Upon graduation she obtained full-time employment in a private sector accounting role before moving into human resources. The degree, combined with her background in hospitality work and human resources experience, led her to her current role as a human resources manager in a large internationally branded hotel in Auckland.

H2 left high school for university and graduated with a BIHM from AUT. He also used the hospitality industry as a source of work experience and income when studying. During his degree he decided to focus on human resources and he obtained a human resources role at a large Auckland hotel while still studying. On graduation he secured a place on the hotel company's graduate management scheme and was able to move around various hotels in the chain to obtain valuable work experience. He noted that based on his experience "human resources was difficult to enter but soon found the degree a necessary and very useful stepping stone to a career". At the time of the research, H2 was the human resources manager for a large internationally branded hotel.

In contrast, H3 has no formal tertiary education qualifications. She acquired a lot of work experience in a range of retail establishments after leaving high school and finally established herself in a human resources role in the private sector. This experience enabled her to obtain work overseas in the ambulance service in the UK and she also obtained an English-teaching certificate which led to teaching experience in Japan. Her first role in hospitality was as a human resources manager in a New Zealand hotel and she has remained in hotel human resource management.

H4 had exposure to hospitality life when employed in food service after leaving school. He followed a “very hands-on apprenticeship route”, gaining work experience in a range of different small-business food-and-beverage-focused hospitality operations; e.g. in cafes, bars, restaurants and takeaway outlets. This accumulation of hospitality experience and knowledge led to H4 becoming an owner and operator of various restaurants in New Zealand. Despite having no formal high school or tertiary qualifications, he went on to graduate with an MBA. At the time of the study, H4 was heavily involved with training and development in the restaurant sector of New Zealand, and still committed as a restaurant owner/operator.

H5 described how her discovery of hospitality was an accident that occurred when she was on her overseas experience (OE). After leaving high school, as with H1 and H2, she went to university and graduated with a degree. Her degree, however, was in English and politics, as she wanted to establish a career in journalism. On her travels in the UK, H5 looked to hospitality work as a source of income and found that working in pubs was “fairly easy money and employment”. She commented that:

I went for my big OE (Overseas Experience) and ended up in hospitality by accident as I found that employment and money could be fairly easily obtained by working in pubs and hotels. After that experience I decided a role in hospitality was the probable direction

instead of journalism as I really enjoyed the people aspect in terms of leading and managing.

The overseas hospitality experience had altered H5's original career direction and she became attracted to the hospitality industry, especially the management and leading of people. To pursue a career in hospitality, H5 used her original degree as a base to obtain further management and human resources qualifications. She later embarked on an entrepreneurial role by setting up various public houses and bars around New Zealand. At the time of the study, H5 was established in a role that focused on support, training and development in the liquor licensing sector of the hospitality industry (e.g. public houses, bars, nightclubs and retail outlets).

Two industry representatives (H4 and H5) had operated their own businesses, with the rest working for large hospitality corporations. The hospitality industry work experience of the group was from a predominantly New Zealand background (four out of five); however, H5 had gained hospitality experience in the UK and H3 had obtained non-hospitality-related overseas experience (in Japan and the UK). The hospitality sectors mostly worked in by the group were hotels, restaurants, bars and public houses. The industry representatives' work experience covered various other organisational roles, both in hospitality and non-hospitality-related sectors. Based on their work experience, the industry representatives were able to comment on the following sectors of the hospitality industry:

- Hotels
- Restaurants
- Café operations
- Takeaway food outlets
- Bars
- Nightclubs
- Public houses

- Conference and banqueting operations
- Accounting, finance and auditing operations, and
- Kitchen management.

There was some similarity in how the interviewees had been exposed to hospitality. This exposure appeared to be either at an early stage of career development, and as a means of funding study. H1 and H4 both experienced hospitality work at a young age, whereas H2 and H3 found hospitality work as a source of income and funding for their studies.

There was also variance between the interviewees in relation to the direction their career paths had taken. H3 and H5 shared similar paths into hospitality as they both initially set out to follow non-hospitality-related careers: H5 had gone to university and undertaken a degree related to a career in journalism, but changed direction on the discovery of hospitality work, while H3's background was in the ambulance service and then teaching before she obtained a human resources role in hotels.

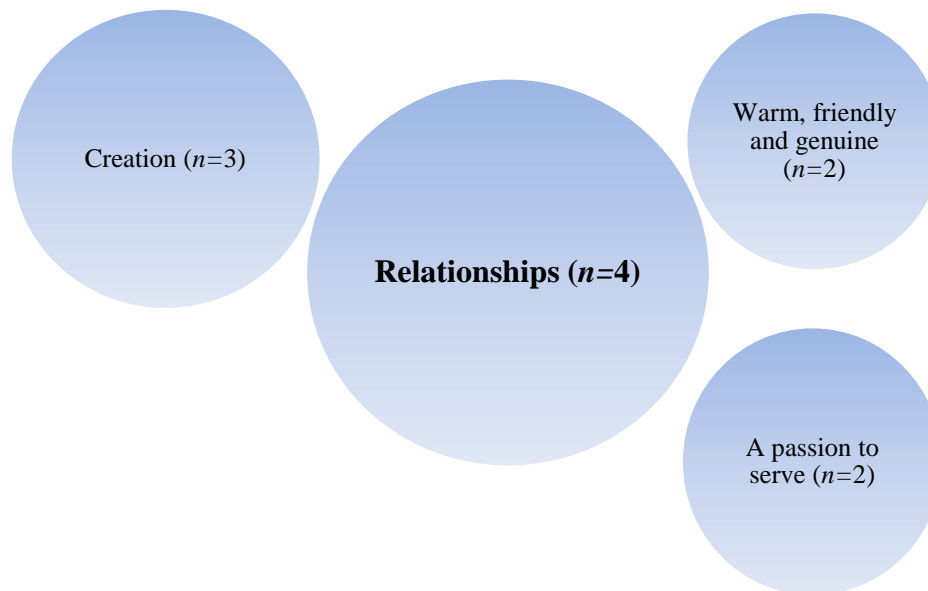
At the time of the study, four of the group had obtained formal tertiary qualifications. H1 and H2 had both undertaken degrees specifically related to their current roles and gained hospitality experience while studying; indeed, H2 had graduated from AUT with a BIHM and gained employment following work-experience placement during his third year of study. H5's degree provided a foundation for hospitality-related qualifications, while H4 obtained a professional qualification after having spent a number of years in the hospitality industry.

4.3 The meaning of hospitality

Interviewees were asked their perceptions of the meaning of hospitality. Figure 4.1 provides an overview of their responses based on word frequency and recurring themes. Given the background of each of the industry representatives (see section 4.2), their

perceptions of hospitality come from a wide range of experience in hospitality operations. In Figure 4.2, each cell combines a key theme and the number of interviewees who referred to that theme.

Figure 4.1 The meaning of hospitality – an industry perspective



The most frequently used word associated with the meaning of hospitality was “relationships”. H1 understood hospitality to be “about building relationships and the understanding of care in those relationships”. H4 said that hospitality was about “creating relationships” and “customer relationship building”. Hospitality was described by H3 as being about “the individuality of the host and guest and how they interact in their relationship” and H5 commented that it is about “a relationship with people”. In addition, three of the interviewees mentioned that hospitality involved the “care of others”.

The concept of creation was the next most common meaning ascribed to hospitality. For example, H4 offered the following definition:

“Hospitality is about the creation of relationships and the creation of emotion. It is about truly embracing the concept of wanting to give and to create an emotional response in others.” (H4)

H5 added that hospitality was “about the creation of an atmosphere and having passion and a real interest in the creation of that atmosphere”. “Warm”, “friendly” and “genuine” were also common words used to describe hospitality. The concept of passion was raised by H5 when she noted “that good hospitality is related to ability to want to serve with passion”. This was repeated by H2, who commented that hospitality is about “having a passion for service”.

The industry perspective on hospitality focused on the dynamics of people relationships. Hospitality is about building, understanding and creating relationships, in particular the host–guest relationship (Lashley, 2007; Lashley *et al.*, 2007a). Based on the interviews, the role of the host personality appears also to play a key role in the concept of hospitality and the influence it has on establishing relationships. It was evident from the interview analysis that hospitality, from an industry perspective, is about a passion for service and having an interest in people.

The findings suggest industry’s perception of hospitality is consistent with the viewpoint that hospitality is founded in the nature and complexity of the relationship between host and guest (see Lashley, 2007). H3 highlighted this point by commenting, “hospitality is very much focused on individuality of the host and guests and how one acts.” These findings also offer the perspective that hospitality is seen as the ability to be genuinely friendly to strangers, have a natural willingness to please others, and have a desire to please and accommodate. Data indicated that success in hospitality, from an industry perspective, should focus on passion and an understanding of people and relationships. It follows, then, that these factors should be incorporated into the development of the successful hospitality graduate.

4.4 Hospitality in New Zealand

The industry representatives' responses indicated that the nature of hospitality in New Zealand has some unique characteristics. An investigation of these characteristics is important as they indicate key attributes required for the development of successful graduates in New Zealand.

All interviewees identified themselves as New Zealanders and were therefore in a position to comment on characteristics they felt were unique to their country of origin. A key theme that emerged from this stakeholder group was that hospitality in New Zealand has a strong cultural influence and there is a concept of “Kiwi” service. An overview of the themes that shape New Zealand hospitality, as perceived by the industry group, is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 The characteristics of New Zealand hospitality – an industry perspective

Interviewee	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	Frequency of response	Ranking
<i>Hospitality characteristic</i>							
Multicultural						5	1
Casual						4	2
Warm and friendly						3	3
Diverse						2	4 ⁼
Vibrant						2	4 ⁼
Colourful						1	5 ⁼
Natural						1	5 ⁼

H2 talked about New Zealand as having a “vibrant, colourful and friendly nature”. When questioned further, H2 related colour and vibrancy to the strong influence of Pacific countries on the food and drink aspect of hospitality, especially the variety of ingredients and range of dishes. H1 also used “vibrant” to describe hospitality in New Zealand, but in a different context: “It is an interesting environment and you meet

interesting people; that's what makes it dynamic and vibrant." H1 associated the vibrancy of hospitality in New Zealand with the variety of people and relationships, and made particular reference to the wide range of ethnicities in New Zealand and the different approach each ethnic group adopts towards hospitality. In addition, H4 noted that the "New Zealand hospitality industry was very diverse in respect of the wide range of relationships that can be formed". A successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand, therefore, must have a sound understanding of the ethnic influences on hospitality; in particular, on food, drink and people.

All interviewees commented on the multicultural nature of hospitality in New Zealand. H2 and H4 both stated that the "New Zealand hospitality industry is very diverse". The industry participants all commented on a wide range of ethnic and cultural influences provided through the people in the New Zealand hospitality industry, with H3 noting, "Hospitality in New Zealand is very multicultural with lots of nationalities all thrown together into one big melting pot." H3 went on to point out that "cultural competence is very important in hospitality". Multiculturalism is an important aspect of hospitality, and an understanding of it is required to work in the hospitality environment (Mkono, 2010). Development of cultural knowledge, therefore, becomes a necessary factor for hospitality graduate development in New Zealand and a contributor towards success in hospitality (Mkono, 2010).

In addition to diversity, vibrancy and multiculturalism, some industry participants alluded to other perceived unique aspects of New Zealand hospitality. H5 noted that New Zealand does not have "a classic tip-based approach to hospitality as the Americans ... [but] more of a professional style that is warm and casual at the same time". H2 also commented on an apparent casual nature to New Zealand hospitality by noting that "hospitality in New Zealand is friendly and refined with a more natural or

casual approach”. This perception was echoed by H3 who stated, “Kiwi service has a rural cafe style; warm and casual.”

There was a strong recognition of a “Kiwi” approach to hospitality, a style which was mainly perceived as open and friendly individuals displaying natural warmth. This Kiwi approach was also described as genuine, welcoming and relaxed. H3 went on to point out that although there is a certain Kiwi style to hospitality, it can be inappropriate at times in a large hotel or corporate hospitality operations. This comment indicates that a degree of social appropriateness is required by workers in the industry, and an understanding of how to act with guests in different service environments.

The interviews reveal that New Zealand hospitality is viewed as vibrant, multicultural and friendly, and something created through emotion, atmosphere and relationships. Emotion and relationships are essential parts of human behaviour (Reece *et al.*, 2011) and this finding is consistent with O’Gorman’s (2007a, p. 28) view that relationships are a key dimension of hospitality. New Zealand “is not a classic tip-based society” but is “friendly”, “refined”, “warm” and has a “rural cafe style”. The identification of such characteristics is important as these findings need to be incorporated into wider discussions about hospitality graduate development from a New Zealand hospitality context. The uniqueness identified with New Zealand hospitality can be integrated into the teaching of different approaches or styles of hospitality.

4.5 The nature of hospitality

Data analysis highlighted some common intersecting themes among the industry representatives’ responses to their understanding of the hospitality industry. Table 4.3 presents each of their perceptions of the nature of hospitality.

Table 4.3 The nature of hospitality work – an industry perspective

Interviewee	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	Frequency of response	Ranking
<i>Description of hospitality work</i>							
Hard work						4	1 ⁼
Diverse/multicultural						4	1 ⁼
Poorly paid						3	2 ⁼
Social						3	2 ⁼
Dynamic						2	3 ⁼
Rewarding						2	3 ⁼
Easy to get frontline employment						2	3 ⁼
Unsociable hours						1	4 ⁼
Fun						1	4
Glamorous						1	4 ⁼

Four of the interviewees described the hospitality industry as hard work and poorly paid, but it was noted by H1 that:

Hospitality is hard work and yes sometimes on the frontline it can be seen as poor pay and poor hours, but if you're prepared to 'gut it out' then it is very rewarding.

This statement supports the perception of the hospitality industry as one suffering from low wage rates and unsociable hours (see Baum, 2008; DiPietro & Condly, 2007; Poulston, 2008). Despite these problems, H1 also described the hospitality industry as being rewarding. When questioned further, H1 suggested that hospitality is financially rewarding in terms of career progression, explaining, "the higher you go in hospitality the better the pay." H5 also commented that hospitality was rewarding, not financially but socially, as she "really enjoyed the people aspect and the social environment". In the context of these discussion points, hospitality graduates are more likely to be successful if they can overcome the problems of an industry that is poorly paid with unsociable hours, establish a career and embrace the social nature of hospitality.

The majority (4 out of 5) of industry representatives in this study believed that hospitality work is hard work;

Hospitality is hard work and often physically as well as mentally. A good work ethic is required; not just understanding what work ethic means, but how much is required (H5).

This perception was echoed by three other interviewees, with H2 stating “hospitality is tough work” and H3 noting “in hospitality, [a] work ethic is required and an understanding of working life”. H1’s perception about hospitality raised an interesting point when she noted:

Yes hospitality is hard work and work ethic is key, but those who can gut it out will make it quicker than those who can’t.

The phrase “gut it out” implies that a certain degree of resilience is required for hospitality work and the need for employees to have RQ. Placing resilience in the context of “will make it quicker than those who can’t” alludes to a perception that the higher their RQ, the faster an individual will progress in a hospitality career. It follows that high RQ might be an indicator of success in the hospitality workplace and that longevity can be used as a measure (Clement, 2009). When questioned further, H1 commented that “You need resilience and to be able to deal with failure.” H3 also noted that “to be successful in hospitality, you need to be prepared to take a risk.” These discussions highlight three key components perceived to be essential for the development of a successful hospitality graduate: RQ, a work ethic and an ability to manage failure.

The hospitality industry was described by H1 as “multicultural, diverse and different. It’s full of personalities.” The diversity of the hospitality industry was also commented on by H3, who noted, “hospitality is very multicultural and lots of different nationalities all thrown together into one big melting pot.” This raises the importance of CQ in hospitality, which was indicated by H3’s observation that “due to nature of multicultural aspect of New Zealand, cultural competence is very important.” These findings are

consistent with the argument that an understanding of cultural diversity in hospitality is an important component in the development of hospitality organisations (see Baum *et al.*, 2007), and represents a source of competitive advantage (see Mkono, 2010). The data also supports the view that the development of a successful hospitality graduate involves highlighting CQ as a key capability because “the need to deal effectively with people from diverse cultural backgrounds has become cardinal for success” (Arora & Rohmetra, 2010, p. 216).

Three of the industry representatives commented on the social nature of the hospitality industry; for example, H5 described “an intense social aspect”. H2 and H3 both noted that the hospitality workplace “is based on friendly relationships” and “the need to care for people”. H1 commented that the industry was “an interesting environment, always changing. It’s dynamic” and this sentiment was echoed by H5:

[Hospitality is] an interesting environment and you meet interesting people. The hospitality environment is always changing and one day is never the same. It is this difference that makes it dynamic.

An ability to socially interact with others and being adaptable to change are, therefore, important elements of success in hospitality. These discussions about the social nature of hospitality indicate that having good interpersonal skills and being flexible are important for hospitality work. These findings are consistent with those of Akrivos *et al.* (2007) who found that being mobile and able to handle diverse situations are key components to enhancing career success in hospitality.

The glamorous perception portrayed through the media of hospitality and, in particular, of television chef celebrities was commented on by H4 and H5. They noted that there is a “media portrayal of fun, excitement and glamour” and “there is still the chef stereotype as portrayed through the media”. It is not surprising, then, that some people have a misconception that hospitality is all about all fun and glamour:

Sometimes people entering hospitality think it is too much of a fun park and lack the understanding of the business because of the intense social aspect. Hospitality is and can be fun, but it is more about the business of fun taken seriously (H5).

This view suggests that some industry representatives feel that some students could have a false impression of the nature of hospitality and that graduates need a better understanding of the industry before they enter it. H5 commented that some are possibly starting to see through the glamour stereotype and beginning to realise how tough the industry can be: “people are starting to question whether it is a viable industry to enter”. Students need to have a realistic understanding of hospitality if they are to be successful in the industry. The provision of work experience in the hospitality curriculum will allow students to develop a realistic understanding of what hospitality work is like. H2 suggested that “encouraging students to get a job and develop an understanding of working life” will give them a wider understanding of the hospitality industry. Providing work experience is an integral part of a degree and can enhance a graduate’s chances of becoming successful in hospitality (Ring *et al.*, 2009).

In summary, there was an acceptance by the industry representatives interviewed for this study that the hospitality industry has hard working conditions and poor pay. The descriptions given of poor pay and a hard working environment were made in the context of frontline employees, who work in non-supervisory or management roles and in direct customer contact positions, and the examples given were restaurant, food-service and hotel-reception employees. The hospitality industry was, however, also described as “very rewarding, especially if you stay the distance”. Being able to “stay the distance” refers to long-term career development and the prospect of increased pay and benefits associated with career progress. This viewpoint indicates that hospitality is best approached from a long-term career-minded perspective. By doing so, employees

will achieve higher levels of satisfaction and increase their opportunities to becoming successful (Wang, Horng, Cheng, & Killman, 2011).

4.6 The skills, competencies and qualities required for hospitality work

The industry representatives identified 37 different skills, competencies and qualities that they perceived as important for working in hospitality (see Table 4.4). Each factor in Table 4.4 is also presented with a frequency (based on the number of times mentioned in the interview data) and a subsequent ranking; for example, being creative was mentioned 11 times in the interview data, and hence was ranked as the second most important skill, competency or quality required for hospitality work.

Of all 37 factors, only three references were made to technical skills (basic technical skills, business acumen and systems knowledge). The limited reference given to technical skills by the industry representatives indicates that they are not perceived as particularly important for the hospitality work, which is consistent with Baum's (2002) study. Clear links could be made between the remaining 34 factors; for example, cognitive ability (problem solving, decision making), personal attributes (passion and creativity) and generic skills (communication, willingness to learn and work ethic) (Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). All of the industry representatives talked of the importance of soft skills, with H1 commenting that "soft skills are very important, more so than the technical skills", and H2 noting that "soft skills are more important than the technical side of things". Nevertheless, technical skills were not discounted entirely and they recognised that a basic technical ability is required in hospitality.

Table 4.4 Skills, competencies and qualities required for hospitality work – an industry perspective

Skill, competency, quality	Word frequency	Ranking
Passion	17	1
Being creative	11	2
Work ethic	10	3
Interpersonal skills	9	4
Personality	8	5
Communication	6	6
Soft skills	5	7 ⁼
Work experience	5	7 ⁼
Personal presentation	5	7 ⁼
Problem solving	4	8 ⁼
Punctuality	4	8 ⁼
Teamwork	4	8 ⁼
Friendliness	4	8 ⁼
Initiative	3	9 ⁼
Interest	3	9 ⁼
Flexibility	3	9 ⁼
Critical thinking	3	9 ⁼
Resilience	3	9 ⁼
Cultural competence	3	9 ⁼
Ability to change	3	9 ⁼
Toughness	2	10 ⁼
Willingness to learn	2	10 ⁼
Attention to detail	2	10 ⁼
Determination	2	10 ⁼
Planning and organisation	2	10 ⁼
Drive	2	10 ⁼
Deal with pressure	2	10 ⁼
People management	2	10 ⁼
Entrepreneurial thinking	1	11 ⁼
Basic technical skills	1	11 ⁼
Common sense	1	11 ⁼
Maturity	1	11 ⁼
Reliability	1	11 ⁼
Business acumen	1	11 ⁼
Systems knowledge	1	11 ⁼
Meet deadlines	1	11 ⁼
Persistence	1	11 ⁼

H2 commented that “technical skills are necessary but only as a base on which to build” and H3 noted that “basic technical knowledge is needed but most of it can be taught in the workplace”. H4 connected the two, saying it is an individual’s soft skills rather than their technical skills that lead to success in hospitality:

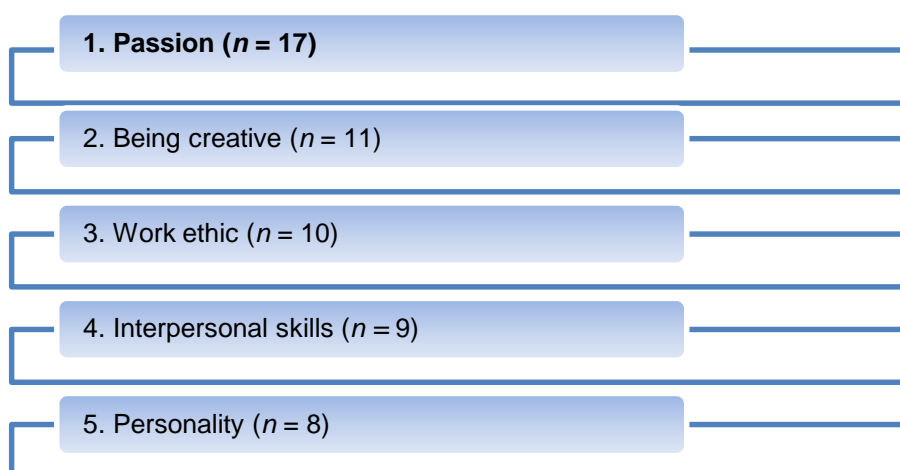
Technical skills are necessary and enable movement through company structure; however, the people skills in a hospitality setting are more

important. Those who are successful in hospitality have a unique set of personal skills.

There was a clear indication from the industry representatives interviewed that the development of a hospitality graduate should focus on generic skills content above technical skills. This finding is consistent with that of Raybould and Wilkins (2006).

Deeper analysis of the data revealed patterns in the industry representatives' responses and the words used to describe the skills, competencies and qualities required for hospitality. Figure 4.2 clarifies the top five themes the industry stakeholders believe are essential for working in hospitality.

Figure 4.2 The top five key skills, competencies and qualities required for hospitality work – an industry perspective



The attribute of passion was identified by the industry representatives as the most important requirement to work in hospitality. Passion was referred to by all the interviewees, with H1 indicating that “passion for the hospitality industry is necessary as this will lead to quicker promotion”. H2 believes that “hospitality is about passion for service and as an individual you need to have passion and interest in serving people”. Both H3 and H4 echoed the requirement to be “people focused” and “the need to have passion in dealing with people”. H5 placed passion in a business context, noting: “You need to have a real interest and passion for key areas of a hospitality business.”

Therefore, the nurturing of passion for the hospitality industry must be an important part of development for a successful graduate.

Being creative was perceived as the second most important attribute for hospitality work. Reference was made to the importance of being able to create in an emotional response in others:

Hospitality is about creativity. The creation of emotion and creating relationships. It is about truly embracing the concept of wanting to create an emotional response in others (H4).

The importance of creating the right hospitality atmosphere was also noted:

Hospitality is about the creation of an atmosphere that the guest feels comfortable in and having the passion and a real interest in the creation of that atmosphere (H5).

These quotes not only highlight that being creative in relationships is an important requirement for success in hospitality, but also show the importance of EQ. Having good EQ skills is not only a key requirement for the hospitality industry, but is seen as an integral part of the hospitality workplace (Scott-Halsell *et al.*, 2011). These findings are consistent with the view that development of high EQ is a predictor of success (Stein, 2000) and, therefore, needs to be an essential part of the development of a successful hospitality graduate (Staton-Reynolds *et al.*, 2009).

Work ethic was the third most frequently mentioned attribute. H5 said:

Work ethic is required as hospitality is hard work and often physically hard work. Also an understanding of what work ethic means and what is required in hospitality (H5).

H2 also noted that “to work in hospitality a strong work ethic is required”. Demonstrating a good work ethic is an important part of hospitality (Raybould & Wilkins, 2006); however, this needs to be developed through the provision of work-based learning (Baum, 2006a). If a good work ethic is perceived as an important

requirement for the hospitality industry, then opportunities need to be created in hospitality higher-education programmes for students to “be encouraged to get a job and develop an understanding of working life” (H2).

Interpersonal skills were ranked by the industry representatives as the fourth most important requirement for hospitality work. H5 stated, “Interpersonal skills are important for hospitality and you need to be able to enjoy people.” This perception was echoed by H4 who noted “that you need to have the personal skills to understand people and relationships”. It was also pointed out by H1 that individuals in hospitality “need to understand how to care and deal with people”. Interpersonal skills are perceived by employers to be predominant indicators of success in hospitality (Huang & Lin, 2011; Kay & Moncarz, 2004; Kim, 2006; Singh *et al.*, 2007), so development of interpersonal skills needs to be a focal point of any hospitality education programme (Fallows & Steven, 2000; Huang & Lin, 2011; Kay & Russette, 2000; Nelson & Dopson, 1999; O’Halloran, 1992; Raybould & Wilkins 2005).

Personality was perceived as an important requirement for hospitality and was ranked fifth by the industry representatives. It was noted by H2 that:

A bubbly personality is needed and you need to have clear communication skills. You need to be friendly, warm, refined and have emotional interest (H2).

H5 also commented that “the ‘right’ personality for hospitality is viewed as warm, friendly and professional, with a genuine customer-service mentality”. Personality, in conjunction with strong interpersonal skills, is one of the main contributing factors to good management in service industries such as hospitality (Ineson, 2011). An outgoing personality is also a key factor that contributes to the profile of a successful hospitality manager (Emenheiser *et al.*, 1998), and personality development is an influencing factor in hospitality career success (Wang *et al.*, 2011). H5 suggested that the “right

personality for hospitality” demonstrates the key trait of warmth, which was also echoed by H2. Warmth is regarded as a trait that can lead to management success, along with emotional stability (Ineson, 2011).

Although not ranked in the top five, it is worth noting that reference was made to the importance of aesthetic skills (Nickson *et al.*, 2005) in particular reference was made to attitude and appearance. Personal presentation was ranked fairly highly (7th =) and H1 noted that “students need to understand the importance of dress code and have good attendance and attitude.” Personal appearance as an important component of hospitality was also commented on by H3: “Students need to realise that the basic things like the need for personal dress and presentation is invaluable in an industry like ours.” It therefore appears to be important to build aesthetic skills awareness and development into hospitality higher education as it can enhance a graduate’s chances for employment and success (Nickson, Warhurst, Commander, Hurrell, & Cullen, 2012).

The findings presented in this section support the idea that generic skills are more important than technical proficiencies (Robertson, 2007), and are consistent with the view that hospitality education should include the development of personal attributes (Dawson *et al.*, 2011). These findings also support the perception that personal attributes such as personality (Phelan & Mills, 2011; Riegel & Dallas, 1998; Witt & Ferris, 2003), motivation (Crebert *et al.*, 2004) and attitude (Nickson *et al.*, 2005; Ricci, 2010) are central to being successful in hospitality.

4.7 Success and being successful in hospitality

4.7.1 The meaning of success

The indicative interview questions relating to the concept of success were informed by and developed in recognition of the view that perceptions of success are grounded in the user (Peacock, 1995). In addition, that success is personal, and understandings of

success differ between individuals (Watson, 2008). The literature also revealed that success can be viewed in a spiritual context, which is related to the ability to fulfil desires (Chopra, 1994). From a philosophical perspective, Firebaugh (2008) observed that success is about a pursuit of happiness, and Watson (2008) outlined that success is associated with the achievement of set goals. Success can be measured in different ways (see Peacock, 1995) and can change over time (Kotkin, 1992). Based on these aspects, the construct of success, therefore, had to be approached in an exploratory way that allowed participants to reveal their desires, philosophies and goals in the investigation of the meaning of success.

A variety of answers was provided to define ‘success’ and a number of dominant themes arose. All of the words or short phrases used by the industry representatives to describe the meaning of success are presented and ranked in Table 4.5.

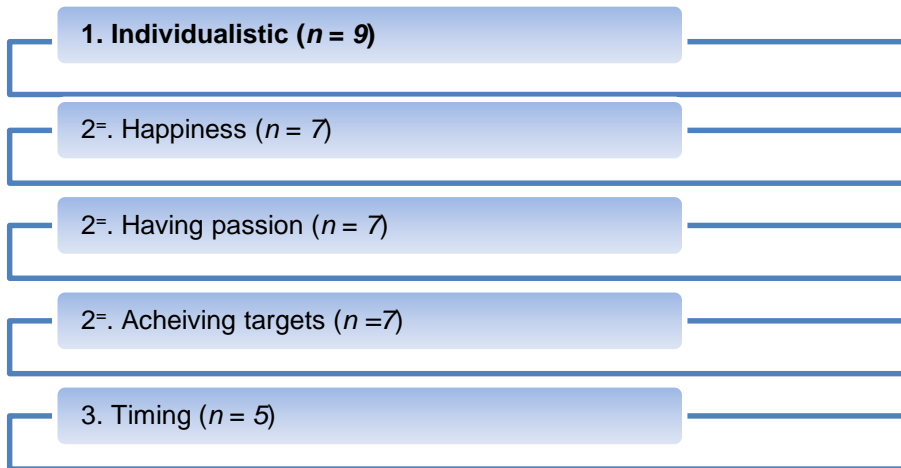
Table 4.5 Industry representatives’ perceptions of the meaning of success – an overview

	Word frequency	Ranking
<i>Meaning of success</i>		
Individualistic	9	1
Being happy	7	2=
Having passion	7	2=
Achieving targets	7	2=
Timing	5	3
Making money	3	4=
Promotion	3	4=
Status	2	5=
Getting noticed	2	5=
Being resilient	2	5=
Career progression	1	6=
Seizing opportunity	1	6=

The industry representatives’ responses incorporated intrinsic and extrinsic perspectives towards success; however, the dominant perspective was intrinsically focused. This

section will focus on the top five dominant themes given to the meaning of success, as perceived by the industry representatives as clarified by Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3 The meaning of success – an industry perspective



Responses on perceptions of success were based on two interview questions that asked about: 1) the participants' hospitality knowledge and experience, and 2) whether they viewed themselves as being successful. Using the perceptions of people who considered themselves to be successful in the hospitality industry would provide valuable information to support theory on the development of the successful hospitality graduate.

Success was seen by all of the interviewees to be highly dependent on the individual. Participants commented that success “works on an individual basis”, “is a personal and individual state of feeling”, and “is a very individual thing and can be seen and measured on many different levels”. The individual levels and measures of success identified included a range of personal attributes. For example, H1 noted that “you need resilience and to be able to deal with criticism”, H3 commented that “success requires desire and ambition”, and H4 that “you need persistence and determination”. The perception was that success is driven by the individual and measured through RQ and components of motivation (desire, ambition and determination) (see Reece, 2012). Each

of these components, therefore, is necessary in the educational development of a successful hospitality graduate.

For three interviewees, success meant being generally happy, with H4 noting that success “on a personal basis it is about being happy in your work and about the provision for yourself”. Provision in this instance related to the ability to provide sufficient income to maintain an enjoyable lifestyle; it was about making sure one looked after oneself. The interviewees indicate that success involves that maintenance of a work-life balance. The management of work-life balance for employees is an important theme for hospitality HRM (Baum, 2007). Bauman (2005) refers to the management of clarity between work and home life as *liquidity*. It follows, therefore, that graduates need to understand the management of liquidity, and a clear distinction between work and home life could, potentially, lead to being more successful.

Success also means sustaining passion; H2 noted that “being successful requires you to have a real passion”. This was supported by H1 who stated, “To be successful in life ... you need to have a genuine passion for what you do” and H2 who commented, “Along with that passion there needs to be a real interest.” Passion is a key component of success, or as Firebaugh (2008) observed, true success. He made the distinction between success and *true success*; success, according to Firebaugh, is an ongoing achievement of desired objectives which could be in life, business or wealth. True success, however, is a higher level; he believes it is driven by strong personal emotion and the attainment of something the heart is deeply connected to, which is described as passion. An environment that nurtures a passion for hospitality in students will not only contribute to the development of a successful graduate, but also enable a wider contribution to successful hospitality organisations.

Success was also perceived as being dependent on timing, or as H2 noted, “Being in the right place at the right time and getting noticed.” H3 related this to the ability to seek opportunity: “Success is about being able to try new experience and grasping opportunity when it comes along in whatever shape or form.” In this context, success means that individuals need to be prepared to take a chance and accept an element of risk. Graduates, therefore, need to be encouraged to seize opportunities and accept that success can be achieved by accepting and overcoming failure (see Firebaugh, 2008).

Finally, it was perceived that success can be attained at different stages or phases life, as indicated by H4:

Success works on two levels – on an individual basis and in the eyes of others. On a personal basis it is a personal and individual state of feeling. In the eyes of others success is measured by things like career progression and status (H4).

H5 also alluded to the concept of success on two different levels:

Firstly at the front end it is about having a real passion for the customer. It is about innovation and creating a point of difference. Secondly there is the back end; this is about making money (H5).

Other references were made to success as “achieving set goals” (H1) and “making money” (H3).

The industry representatives measured success as financial reward, personal satisfaction and meeting targets. As Osorio (2008) notes there is often a strong connection between affluence and success; however, the findings in this study suggest that success is not seen as just about making money. Findings suggest success is more related to adopting a mind-set and finding personal satisfaction in work, which is consistent with Lupton’s (2007) argument that enjoyment of one’s work is important to being successful.

4.7.2 Success in hospitality

Industry representatives were asked to identify the factors they thought were required for success in hospitality. These factors and their frequency across each of the industry representatives' interviews are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Factors significant for success in hospitality – an industry perspective

Being successful in hospitality	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	Word frequency	Ranking
Passion						13	1
Interpersonal skills						11	2
Ability to create						7	3
Resilience						4	4
Flexibility						3	5
Taking a chance or risk						2	6 ⁼
Recognising opportunity						2	6 ⁼

The three dominant factors were passion, interpersonal skills and the ability to create. Each of the industry representatives indicated that success in hospitality is strongly related to passion, and as H1 aptly noted, “To be successful in hospitality you have to have a genuine passion for what you do.” H5 believed that “you have to have real passion for the customer” and H4 commented, “Being successful in hospitality is about passion, interest and being genuine when it comes to the customer.” A passion for the industry is regarded as a key quality for hospitality by New Zealand employers (Bidois, 2009). Developing a passion for hospitality, therefore, needs to be a focal point for the education of successful graduates.

H1 made the link between passion and success in terms of “ambition that comes from within” therefore suggesting that success comes from a deep intrinsic orientation. The intrinsic orientation was echoed by H3, who referred to success in hospitality as about having “spirit”, and H4 noted passion and success was about “an individual state of feeling” which also suggests an emotional dimension. The industry participants made the link between passion and success from two perspectives. Firstly, it was about being

able to give without receiving anything in return which was suggested in H4's comment "success in hospitality is about understanding people and how you care for others. It is about a culture of wanting to give, the more you give the more successful you are". The other perspective related to service with H5 commenting "success is about having a genuine customer service mentality that requires you to have a real passion for the customer". H2 echoed this perspective in her comment "hospitality is about a passion for service and being genuine when it comes to the customer".

Interpersonal skills was the next most frequently raised theme, with H4 noting, "Those who are successful in hospitality have an innate set of unique personal skills." Other references were made to "people skills" and "an interpersonal ability". The interpersonal skills commonly referred to are those related to relationship building, especially with customers. It was highlighted by H1 that success in hospitality requires an "understanding that you need to care in relationships", and H2 noted: "It is about anticipation and about being able to read the customer. Being able to read the customer's body language and read the signs". H4 also pointed out that success in hospitality relates to "creating relationships and truly embracing the concept of wanting to give and to create an emotional response in others".

The industry participants offered some insights to how they defined interpersonal skills. They were referred to as "those soft skills that help you understand how to care in relationships and the importance of care in a hospitality environment" (H1), and "skills which help develop and understanding of the relationship with the customer in hospitality" (H3). H4 presented the following categorisation of interpersonal skills as

The people skills you need to know about when customer relationship building, team creation and the management of people. It is what is required to create and maintain relationships and work in a hospitality environment

The relationship between success in hospitality and having unique interpersonal skills was emphasised by H2:

It's almost like having a customer service ESP (Extra Sensory Perception), reading and anticipating before the guest says something and responding with a genuine passion and interest

H4 also commented that successful hospitality interpersonal skills were “innate” and “unique” and that “some [people] have these more than others, which makes qualifications unnecessary for working in hospitality”.

These views suggest that hospitality requires a certain type of intelligence which does not necessarily require qualifications. Meyer (2006) refers to such intelligence as a *hospitality quotient* (HQ) and notes that a higher HQ can lead to more success in hospitality. Meyer argues that HQ cannot be taught and the key components – warmth, empathy and passion – are more prevalent in some people than in others. These components, however, are deliverable through a pedagogy of passion, which means “teaching to touch the contradictory, irrational, and emotional parts of human nature” (Gallos, 1997, p. 7). HQ in individuals, therefore, can be enhanced through hospitality higher education.

H5 raised a third key theme relating to success in hospitality: the ability to create and be innovative. Successful hospitality is seen to be “about innovation and creating a point of difference” and “successful people have a spirit of conquest and a more enhanced capability for innovation than others”. The perception of the industry representatives was that success in hospitality is being able to create a point of difference through emotion in social interaction, and, therefore, EQ ability. Having emotional stability is an important requirement for hospitality management (Ineson, 2011) and a high EQ can be a contributing factor towards a successful career in hospitality (Cavelzani & Esposito,

2010). EQ training, therefore, is an essential part of the development of a successful hospitality graduate (Scott-Halsell *et al.*, 2008)

Other themes that emerged from the interviews related to resilience, recognising opportunity, flexibility and chance. Two interviewees commented that being successful in hospitality is about “being able to grasp opportunity” and “being flexible, trying new experiences and being prepared to take a risk”. The relationship between success and resilience was highlighted by H1: “[T]hose who can ‘gut it out’ will make it quicker than those who can’t”. RQ, an individual’s ability to deal with adversity, is an important component required for hospitality (Clement, 2009). H1 implied that those individuals with a higher resilience will progress in hospitality quicker than those without. The development of RQ as a key aspect of multiple intelligence during hospitality higher education therefore, becomes a necessary component for developing success in graduates.

4.7.3 Critical factors for success in hospitality

The industry representatives identified 22 different factors they perceived as critical for the success of a hospitality employee. These are presented and ranked in Table 4.7.

During the thematic analysis it became evident that some factors (see Table 4.7) were linked as they could be categorised in the same way. For example, work ethic and flexibility could both be categorised as generic skills (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005; 2006). Two industry participants considered that “being successful in hospitality relies on generic skills” (T1) and made references to soft skills saying, “they are really important for success” (T3). Likewise, being creative and innovative can both be considered as personal attributes (Ineson, 2011). The industry representatives commented that a successful graduate requires “interpersonal skills”, is able “to focus on understanding of people” and have “care of others”.

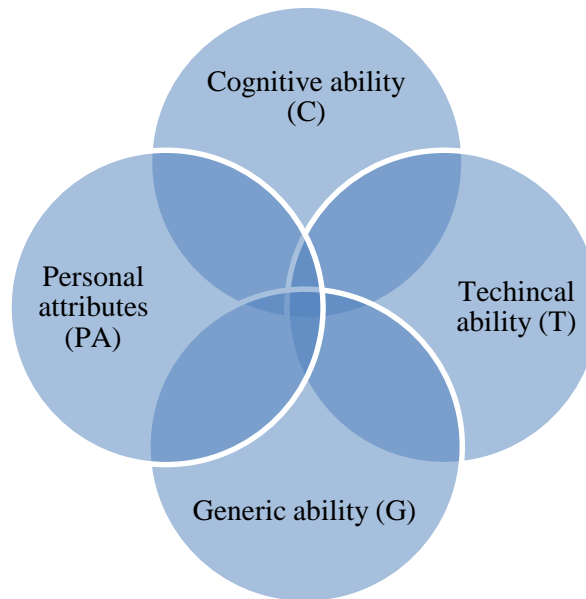
Table 4.7 Critical factors for success – an industry perspective

Critical factor for success	Word frequency	Ranking
Passion	9	1
Being creative	7	2
Personal skills	6	3
Work ethic	5	4
Flexibility	4	5
Care of others	3	6 ⁼
Deal with failure	3	6 ⁼
Understanding people	3	6 ⁼
Innovation	2	7 ⁼
Managing people	2	7 ⁼
Problem solving	2	7 ⁼
Resilience	2	7 ⁼
Transferable skills	2	7 ⁼
Able to take a risk	1	8 ⁼
Ambition	1	8 ⁼
Anticipation	1	8 ⁼
Business acumen	1	8 ⁼
Deal with criticism	1	8 ⁼
Natural leadership	1	8 ⁼
Performance management	1	8 ⁼
Selling skills	1	8 ⁼
Spirit of conquest	1	8 ⁼

A further two domains emerged from the analysis, the first of which was, a cognitive ability that involves the use of mind and process of thought (see Gardner, 2006) in problem solving. The second domain can be categorised as technical abilities that related to certain hard skills that could be acquired through knowledge and training such as business acumen (see Baum, 2002).

The four identified domains are presented in Figure 4.4. Success requires a range of skills and abilities associated with multiple intelligences such as care, or emotional intelligence (EQ), and understanding people, or social intelligence (SQ) (Gardner, 2006). The domains in Figure 4.4 also reflect a multiple intelligence approach to the development of a successful hospitality graduate.

Figure 4.4 Domains of critical factors for success in hospitality



The factors in Table 4.7 were then classified using the four domains presented in Figure 4.4; analysis is presented in Table 4.8.

Each domain contains a set of factors, as identified by the industry representatives, which are critical for success in hospitality. The cognitive domain relates to the ability to apply thought processes and includes skills such as problem solving. The second domain contains skills identified by the industry participants relating to technical ability, such as business acumen. The third domain categorises skills the industry representatives identified as generic, for example, interpersonal skills, care of others, and a good work ethic. Finally, the fourth domain identifies characteristics that represent personal attributes, such as, being creative and having passion.

Table 4.8 Domain categorisation of the industry representatives' critical factors for success in hospitality

Critical success factor domain	Critical factors for success
Cognitive ability (C)	problem solving
Technical ability (T)	business acumen, performance management selling skills
Generic ability (G)	care of others, flexibility, interpersonal skills, managing people, people skills, transferable skills, understanding people, work ethic
Personal attributes (PA)	ambition, anticipation, being creative, deal with criticism, deal with failure, innovation, natural leadership, passion, resilience, spirit of conquest, take a risk

Word frequency analysis of each factor within these domains provided a ranking of the top five factors for success:

1. Passion ($n = 9$) (PA)
2. Being creative ($n = 7$) (PA)
3. Interpersonal skills ($n = 6$) (G)
4. Work ethic ($n = 5$) (G)
5. Flexibility ($n = 4$) (G)

All of the industry representatives in this study indicated that a passion for hospitality is a critical factor for being successful. H2 noted: "Hospitality is about a passion for service and being successful in hospitality is about having genuine passion." Both H4 and H5 commented that "to be successful in hospitality you have to have passion" with H5 continuing, "You need a genuine passion and real interest for key areas of a hospitality business, especially where the customer is concerned." Both H1 and H3 also stated that "passion for the hospitality industry is definitely necessary".

Data from sections 4.6 and 4.7 allowed a comparison of the factors required for hospitality work with the critical factors for success in hospitality, as identified by the industry representatives. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 A comparison of industry perceptions of factors for hospitality work and success

Ranking (by frequency)	Factors required for hospitality work	Factors critical for success in hospitality
1	Passion (PA)	Passion (PA)
2	Being creative (PA)	Being creative (PA)
3	Work ethic (G)	Interpersonal skills (G)
4	Interpersonal skills (G)	Work ethic (G)
5	Personality (PA)	Flexibility (G)

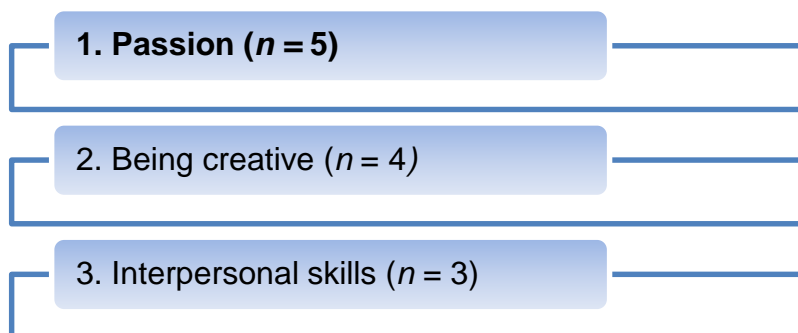
The domains of critical factors for success identified in Figure 4.4 are also included in Table 4.9. The dominant factors viewed as critical for success by industry representatives are the personal attributes of passion and creativity. An individual's generic skills ability is the second most important domain critical for success, with particular reference given to interpersonal attributes. Based on this classification process and pattern analysis, personal ability and generic ability are considered to be critical for success in hospitality.

These findings from the industry interviews support a large body of research that identifies interpersonal skills development as the main focal point for graduate development (e.g. Fallows & Steven, 2000; Huang & Lin, 2011; Kay & Russette, 2000; Nelson & Dopson, 1999; O'Halloran, 1992). There is also evidence to substantiate the argument that interpersonal skills are predominant indicators of success, a finding that is consistent with other studies (see Huang & Lin, 2011; Kay & Moncarz, 2004; Kim, 2006; Singh *et al.*, 2007). These findings also highlight the importance of personal

attributes that contribute to being successful, and particularly they support the view that the personality of an individual is an important part of being successful (Phelan & Mills, 2011; Riegel & Dallas, 1998; Witt & Ferris, 2003). The findings also suggest that individuals who are highly motivated and have a positive attitude are more likely to be successful in hospitality (Crebert *et al.*, 2004; Nickson *et al.*, 2005; Ricci, 2010). The industry representatives believed that work ethic is as an essential requirement critical for hospitality. This finding reflects the earlier work of Phelan & Mills, (2011) and Swanljung, (1981) that determination and hard work contributes to being successful

Finally, the stakeholders were asked the main research question: “What makes a successful hospitality graduate?” Their answers were classified into themes, and the top three themes presented in Figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5 “What makes a successful hospitality graduate?” – an industry perspective



‘Passion’ was the word most frequently used associated with success and the hospitality graduate. It was thought that being successful in hospitality requires “passion, interest and being genuine when it comes to the customer” and that “you to have a real passion for the customer”. Being creative was ranked second, with it being noted that successful hospitality “is about innovation and creating a ‘point of difference’”, “about creating relationships” and having “a more enhanced capability of innovation”.

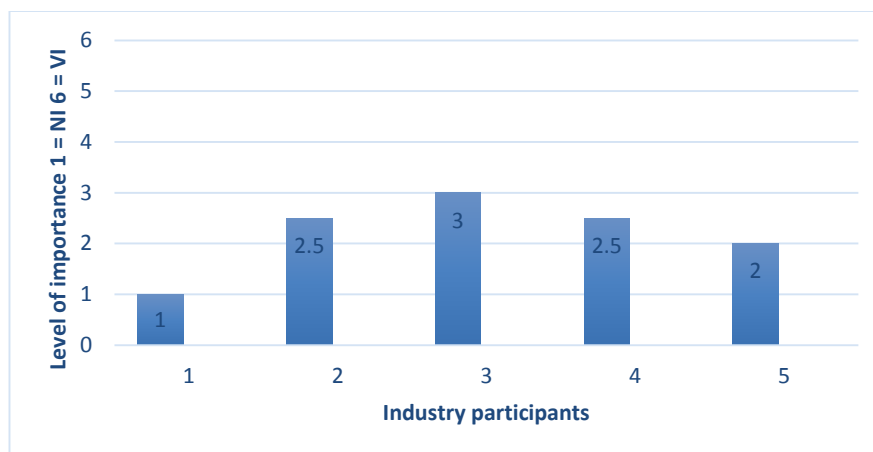
Interpersonal skills were the third most commonly raised theme by the stakeholders. This theme was summarised by H4 who stated, “Those who are successful in hospitality have an innate set of unique personal skills and true hospitality people have an innate personal ability.”

Other answers included flexibility ($n = 2$), and experience, grasping opportunity, taking a risk and resilience ($n = 1$). These, however, were not as frequently mentioned as the top three. H5 was the only interviewee to relate success and hospitality graduates to technical skills and ability: “Success in hospitality is about making money. It is about business acumen, knowing what to do to make a profit.” The dominant perspective of the industry stakeholder group is that success is strongly related to generic ability and personal attributes.

4.7.4 Technical versus generic ability for hospitality work

The industry interviewees were asked to rate on a six-point Likert scale (1 = not important to 6 = very important) the importance of a hospitality graduate’s technical ability for succeeding in the industry. The industry representatives’ responses are presented in Figure 4.6.

Figure 4.6 The importance of technical ability to hospitality work– an industry perspective



All of the industry representatives scored the importance of technical ability as having low importance (3 or below), with H1 scoring it 1.0 and commenting, “Technical ability is not important at all; it is the ‘soft’ skills that really matter.” It was a common theme that “technical ability is not very important and ‘soft’ skills are much more important”. Nevertheless, there was recognition that some technical skills are necessary, as indicated by H3: “A balance of skills is needed. Some basic technical ability is needed; however, most of it can be taught”. Participants also acknowledged that some technical skills can help in career progression: “They do enable movement in a company” (H2). However, technical skills were mainly viewed as “a base upon which to build an understanding of the business to improve decision making ability” (H1).

Despite the recognition that some technical skills are required for hospitality work, there was agreement amongst the industry representatives of the greater importance of generic skills. For example, H2 noted “it is the skills like critical thinking and problem solving that are more important and need to be developed.” Other skills referred to were “a genuine customer service mentality is more important and you need to be able to enjoy people” and “people skills”, which were described as “understanding relationships”. Also H5 thought that, “employers are more likely to recruit on personality, experience and some basic technical understanding rather than qualifications alone. A balance of skills is needed but more ‘soft’ than technical.” This comment suggests that personality and experience are more important than technical skills and qualifications. These findings are consistent with the view that generic skills are more important than technical proficiencies (see Robertson, 2007), and hospitality requires personal attribute development (see Dawson *et al.*, 2011).

The evidence collected from industry representatives agrees with the notion that generic ability is more important than technical ability in the hospitality industry (Nickson *et al.*,

2005; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006; Robertson, 2007). The evidence also supports the perspective that intrinsic personal attributes are more applicable in the hospitality working environment than technical ability (Harper *et al.*, 2005; Hind *et al.*, 2007). An individual's capacity for passion and creativity is more important than basic technical understanding for progression in hospitality. There was also a strong indication from the industry representatives that interpersonal skills are a critical competency for hospitality work, a view consistent with other studies (Fallows & Steven, 2000; Hind *et al.*, 2007; Huang & Lin, 2011; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006).

A common theme to emerge from the interviews was that to be employable in hospitality, individuals should focus on development of personality, as employers are more likely to recruit based on this than technical ability and qualifications alone (Phelan & Mills, 2011; Witt & Ferris, 2003). The industry representatives' perceptions were consistent with the view that accumulation of work-related experience is key as it develops an individual's abilities in hospitality work, and hence enhances their employability (Betts *et al.*, 2009; Crebert *et al.*, 2004; Rainsbury *et al.*, 2002; Reddan, 2008; Smith *et al.*, 2007). It was noted by H1 that, "Students need to be encouraged to work while they are studying as the experience they gain is very important." This perception was echoed by H2 who stated, "It is important for anyone wanting to do hospitality to get a job and gain some experience." The integration of work-related experience into the hospitality higher-education curriculum provides opportunities for students to obtain experience and enhance their employability and therefore contributes to their becoming more successful.

4.8 Challenges facing the hospitality industry

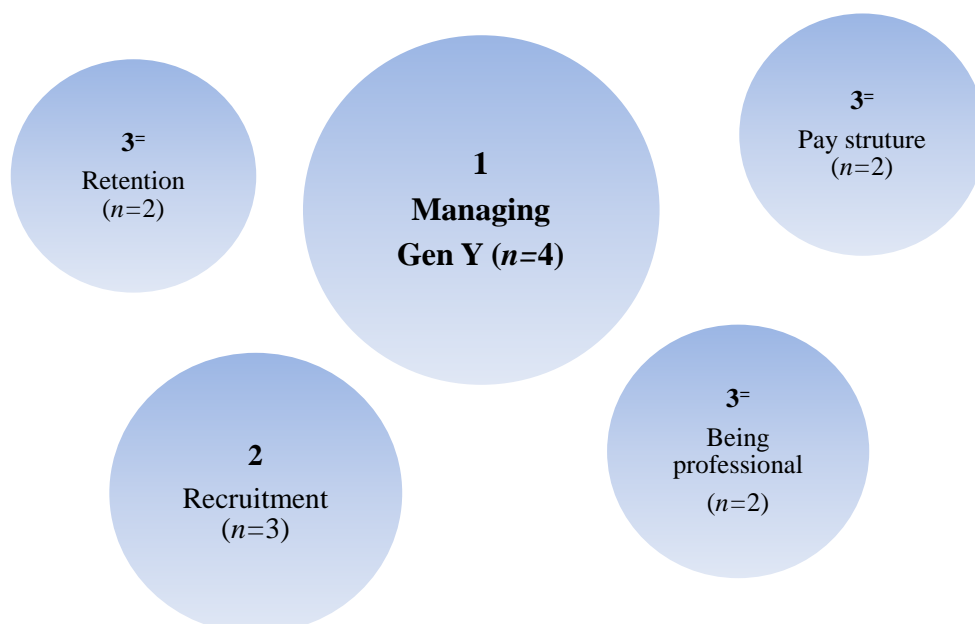
Industry representatives were asked about the key challenges facing the hospitality industry. An investigation of these issues is helpful as they may impact on the role and

contribution of education towards the development of a successful hospitality graduate. The significant common themes to emerge from the industry representatives are presented in Figure 4.7. Each circle identifies a key challenge facing the hospitality industry in New Zealand, a ranking of its importance based on word pattern analysis of the data, and its frequency across all the interview data from the industry representatives. For example, managing Generation Y is rated as the most important issue facing New Zealand hospitality, with four of the five industry representatives raising the same issue.

The most significant challenge raised related to generational differences between young people entering the industry and the expectations of the industry itself. H1 commented that:

Generation Y has a lack of understanding of work ethic; they don't understand the relationship between performance and rewards. ...there are differing expectations between Gen Y and Gen X in the workforce.

Figure 4.7 Key challenges facing the hospitality industry – an industry perspective



H2 also noted that “there is a Generation Y attitude. There needs to be a clearer understanding of the work ethic required to work in hospitality.” H5 indicated that young people were entering the industry with a “lack of individual responsibility” but were “being put in charge of large businesses”. These comments were based on H5’s experience in the liquor industry where she had witnessed young people with little experience and training being placed in bar-management situations. H5 said, “The qualifications would give some knowledge; however, individual responsibility needs to be developed”, therefore improving business acumen and people-management skills. H1 shared a similar view to H5, but offered a different perspective in her comment:

Gen Y have a lack of understanding of what it takes to become a working professional and the development of professionalism in Gen Y is an issue. There are differing expectations of professionalism between Gen Y and Gen X in the hospitality workforce.

Some of the industry representatives questioned the ability of Generation Y graduates to face the responsibilities of management. The provision of more realistic opportunities to obtain management experience, through work-related experience, will enhance their management ability and contribute to success. The comment by H1 refers to a lack of professionalism, which was also referred to by H2 and H4, respectively, as a “lack of understanding of what is needed” and “a lack of understanding of what it takes to become a working professional in the hospitality industry”. These comments suggest there is a lack of professionalism among those entering the industry and that personal professionalism could be enhanced by education (Phelan & Mills, 2011). This finding is consistent with the view that developing an understanding of what professionalism is and the importance of the concept to the hospitality industry is a key component of hospitality higher education (Pizam, 2007).

Two other significant issues highlighted by the industry representatives relate to staffing. Recruitment and retention were a common concern or, as summarised by H1,

“finding the ‘right’ people with the ‘right’ work ethic”. H3 echoed this by stating that “one [of] the key issues is staffing shortages and being able to get the right people”, and H2 mentioned “not being able to find the right people”. There are two immediate questions that arise from these perceptions: What is the “right” person? and What is the “right” work ethic?

Work ethic was viewed by industry representatives as an important quality for an individual to have in hospitality (see Table 4.9). Work ethic was also raised by H5 as an issue in relation to generational differences: “Graduates need to have a clearer understanding of the work ethic required to work in hospitality; maybe it’s a Gen Y thing or attitude.” This indicates differing perceptions of work ethic between Generation X and Generation Y individuals and what is required to work in the industry. There was a perception that young people coming into a workplace do not fully understand the expectations of hospitality organisations. In addition to the perception of generational differences of approach to work ethic, H2 alluded to differing international expectations about work ethic:

It is about dealing with [the] two different types of work force there is the New Zealand hospitality labour market and there is also a reliance on a more transient workforce which tends to be dominated by a European skill basis. This transient workforce tends to be more hospitality aware and offers more high-end hospitality knowledge.

H2 described this transient workforce as “migrant groups of young overseas people working in New Zealand on student visas, or looking for work to supplement their lifestyle while on an OE”. Particular reference was made to English, French and Germans working in the hospitality industry. It was felt that these employees offered a more suitable skill set for the organisations’ needs with regards to their approach to hospitality than the skills that New Zealanders offer. H2 indicated that the New Zealand hospitality workforce is potentially less knowledgeable about hospitality and service

than the European countries she mentioned. These findings suggest that there is a different work ethic and approach to hospitality in New Zealand compared with that in parts of Europe. H2 noted that the hospitality knowledge of European workers was superior or “more high end” than that of New Zealand hospitality workers. Thus, the development of a work ethic in hospitality graduates is an important component for success and furthermore, this ethic needs to incorporate an awareness of differing generational and international expectations.

In relation to labour retention, H2 commented that after “finding the right people it is about the retention of those people”. H1 talked of “trying to keep people” and H3 stated:

... it is being able to hold on to people and retention as the people are our first asset when it comes to good customer service. One of the key challenges is to improve ways of staff retention and developing talent.

The retention of the right individuals, as indicated by H3, is an essential element of good customer service, and contributes to the successful operation of a hospitality business. H3’s comment also acknowledges a perceived industry requirement of specific skill sets in individuals and that “finding the right people” will contribute to an organisation’s success. Upon questioning what qualities would be attributed to the right person, H3 stated “critical thinking and problem-solving skills”. Both H1 and H2 perceived the right people should have “good soft skills” and be able to “deal with pressure and meet deadlines”. Each of the interviewees noted that the right person has “a passion for hospitality”.

H3 commented that it was important to allow people to move from job to job (within an organisation), as employer flexibility would contribute to improved retention of employees. He noted, “It is important to encourage flexibility and to encourage experience, but it is important to ensure the people are retained within the company.” This viewpoint effectively encourages flexibility in the hospitality labour market;

however, the comment assumed that employees remained in a company and did not leave. The key focus for H3 was on retention of individuals within the wider organisation; he explained, “We operate a company transfer visa where people can move between units but stay within the company. This prevents ‘brain drain’ from our company.”

From a hospitality education perspective, students need to be made aware that being flexible is an important part of working in the hospitality industry and contributes to the accumulation of industry knowledge. In addition, industry representatives alluded to key qualities associated with the right person, which can be incorporated into programmes designed to develop a successful hospitality graduate.

In relation to the perceived issue of poor pay in the hospitality industry, an issue that was raised by three of the interviewees, H4 said:

Hypothetically speaking, if we doubled the pay rates across the industry overnight, what do you think would happen? It would increase motivation to work in the industry as there would be clear benefits. Increasing the pay would add value to working in the industry and would necessitate the recruitment of more skilled people to deliver the higher expectations of the consumer. Increasing the pay rates would demonstrate the industry is looking after its people. This would require middle management to develop the right skills sets to control the people and the relationships in relation to the service, quality and product expected by the consumers. Therefore it becomes necessary to employ people with the skills and knowledge of being able to manage people, i.e. the degree graduates. In other words, the hospitality industry needs to focus on the management of people through an effective pay structure which demonstrates it is a viable industry to enter.

The focus of H4’s comment is clearly on the economic advantages of an attractive pay structure and the development and management of people. This finding is also consistent with the view that low pay is associated with the hospitality industry (Brown & McIntosh, 2003) and paying fair wages is a significant employee retention factor in New Zealand (Choudhury & McIntosh, 2012). The comment from H4 reflects the

argument that money is a motivating factor for recruitment and retention in the hospitality industry (Choudhury & McIntosh, 2012) and also supports the notion that paying fair wages will improve employee output (Wildes, 2008). H4 indicated that should the wage structure of the hospitality industry in New Zealand be improved, then more graduates would be attracted to enter the industry. The industry would benefit from an increase in knowledge and skills offered by the graduates, which would effectively require higher levels of management ability to organise the people and manage relationships. This would create a need to recruit people with the necessary management capabilities, such as degree graduates. More effective management capability would contribute to both more successful organisations and more successful individuals.

H2 was concerned about differing perceptions of service levels and service expectations between New Zealand, the USA and parts of Europe. This comment was made from a corporate hotel perspective and experience of the expectations of international tourists comparing branded hotels. The concern was that international tourists (in particular from the USA and Europe) would perceive that hotels in New Zealand offer a lower standard of service compared with that offered by branded hotels in their own country. Two other noticeable issues were the increased levels of consumer knowledge leading to higher expectations from customers, and the economic repercussions (i.e. cost-cutting and increased levels of competition in the industry).

The industry representatives highlighted two issues 1) a lack of soft skills development in employees entering the workplace and, in particular, 2) that young people entering the industry often lack vital people skills. Both of these findings are consistent with the studies of Nickson *et al.* (2005) and Spowart (2011). This data also indicates a perception from industry of a lack of generic skills development in young people

entering the hospitality workplace. Some industry representatives also raised the issue of staff retention. The industry data suggest that attracting and retaining people could be solved through improvements to pay (which could also enhance the industry's image), but higher wages could lead to attracting more people with the right skill set, and therefore enhance opportunities for success.

4.9 Hospitality graduate development and the learning environment

Recent research has revealed a difference between the expectations of hospitality education providers and those in the industry over graduate development and learning in New Zealand (Harkison *et al.*, 2011). In addition, there is strong view, based on Spowart's (2011) study, that hospitality industry organisations expect a certain style of higher education to produce work-ready graduates. Given this context, it was necessary to gain an understanding of the perceived relationship of this stakeholder group, i.e. industry organisations, with hospitality education providers. The industry representatives were therefore asked about their understanding of hospitality higher education and graduate development in New Zealand, and what value a hospitality degree had for the industry.

A range of perceptions of hospitality education was offered by the industry representatives. There was certainly some scepticism about the value of a hospitality degree in relation to working in hospitality; for example:

I don't know a lot about your particular degree but from what I do know I get the impression that degree students are being 'spoon fed' too much and there is not enough critical-thinking skills which will help to develop initiative and strategic thinking. It is about getting the students to take more individual responsibility and become active members in the learning process (H2).

This comment suggests that students are being directed too much by education providers and not encouraged to develop a range of personal skills such as critical

thinking, initiative, and strategic thinking. H1 had a similar opinion with respect to a lack of development of soft skills:

Some graduates and future employees are lacking basic soft skills so our focus is on developing them. If the students arrived with these already then time could be spent on developing other aspects in the employees.

H1 was influenced in her perception of graduates' abilities because she considers much of the degree content she had undertaken to be irrelevant:

About 60 per cent of what I covered at university was not applicable in the workplace. The 40 per cent I did use was related to soft skills and basic professional development.

This comment supports the idea that the key competencies required for hospitality are soft skills and not technical. H4 said the main focus of hospitality education should be on the development of personal skills, and students should be given the opportunities to implement and apply these. He also questioned whether a degree is actually required to work in hospitality:

Based on personal experience, is a degree really necessary for employment in the hospitality industry? It does have some value but how and when? By focusing on personal skills and people skills and consistently profiling these, then students will understand what is required to create and maintain relationships and work in a hospitality environment. It is about a unique set of innate personal skills. If personal skills are innate in some more than others then it makes a degree superfluous to employment and working in the hospitality industry (H4).

H4 is saying that anyone with an innate set of personal skills and an aptitude to use them could work in hospitality, thus making a degree "superfluous to employment". H4 did, however, recognise the importance of a degree in relation to knowledge of relationships, organisational behaviour and the management of people in controlled environments.

In contrast, H3 spoke positively of the need for a degree in hospitality and offered the following perspective as a graduate from AUT:

The BIHM is a good degree and a very good stepping stone to enter hospitality. Based on my experience on the degree, it took me until the third year to really start to mature and be exposed to corporate hospitality. Maybe we could do that sooner and get the students to realise that dress, personal presentation and experience is invaluable in our industry.

The general view of the industry representatives was that more could be done to develop experience in students at an earlier stage in a degree. H3 commented that focus could be given to encouraging students to obtain experience and to develop certain aesthetic aspects such as dress and personal presentation. H5 questioned a generational attitude towards how a degree is perceived by the students:

There appears to be a lack of understanding what a degree is and means; students need to take more pride in what is required to achieve a degree. There appears a generational attitude that by doing a degree it will give the necessary skills to enter the industry straight away. It is an issue of further personal training and responsibility.

According to the interviewees students do not fully appreciate what a hospitality degree is and what it means in the context of skills and knowledge. H5 thought that students expected to “walk straight from university into a job because the degree had given them the skills to do so” and believed that more individual responsibility was needed by graduates in relation to experience and the application of knowledge obtained. This comment reflected H5’s perception that graduates lack a full understanding of business acumen and systems, and require further experience to develop a mature, responsible attitude.

H2 and H5 both raised the issue of encouraging individual responsibility and noted that more focus should be placed on students. As H2 commented, “It is about getting the students to take more individual responsibility and become active members in the

learning process.” Three interviewees (H1, H3 and H5), however, thought it was the responsibility of university to develop in the graduates the skills required for hospitality. This was aptly summarised by H1: “[The] university needs to pay more attention to things like attendance and work ethic” and “If anything, a degree needs to focus on the development of things like critical thinking and problem solving.” The opinion that hospitality education providers need to address their teaching content was also noted by H5: “Students need to focus on the long-term management of people and the development of people skills which can be achieved through formal teaching.” (H5)

It may appear from these discussions that the industry representatives employed only those with a hospitality degree; however, the focus of this study is on the development of a successful hospitality graduate. It also examines what can be done through higher education to improve the chances of success for graduates entering the hospitality industry. The industry representatives considered that more could be done for graduate development. There was a perception that hospitality higher-education programmes are insufficient to meet the needs of the industry, and a new direction is needed to meet the hospitality industry’s requirements. Some of the industry representatives thought that success in hospitality for graduates is centred on generic skills such as problem solving, critical thinking and the management of people; hence generic skills need to be a focus in any hospitality higher-education programme.

4.9.1 What hospitality degree graduates should learn

The industry representatives were asked what factors are essential for educational development and preparation of graduates for the hospitality industry at the tertiary level of a degree. Data analysis produced a profile of skills, competencies and qualities that the representatives from the industry stakeholder group felt should be a part of the hospitality higher-education teaching and learning process. A detailed list of the factors

the industry representatives identified as essential to tertiary hospitality education is presented in Table 4.10.

Initial analysis shows there is a greater emphasis on generic (critical thinking, work ethic and problem solving) than technical skills (systems knowledge and business acumen).

Table 4.10 Factors essential in hospitality education – an industry perspective

Interviewee Factors essential for hospitality graduate development	
H1	Attendance Work ethic Communication and writing skills Professional development The interview process (doing a CV, interview coaching, dress code) Soft or people skills development Gain work experience
H2	Time management Organisation skills Work experience and understanding of working life Management and leadership in context Problem solving and becoming solution orientated Critical thinking Developing individual responsibility Development of initiative
H3	Critical-thinking skills Problem-solving skills Provide opportunities for students to network Encourage flexibility Opportunities for and to gain experience Early exposure to corporate hospitality to develop maturity
H4	Focus on the long-term management of people Development of people skills Entrepreneurial skills Understanding of the consumer and consumer knowledge Team creation and management of people in controlled environments An understanding of organisational behaviour and people in organisations
H5	Understanding of work ethic for hospitality Understanding of systems and business acumen Development of individual responsibility Development of customer service mentality

Further analysis identified some common key factors; these are presented, ranked in order of frequency, in Figure 4.8. The most frequently occurring theme was that of experience, with three of the interviewees commenting on “gain work experience”,

“work experience and understanding of working life” and “opportunities for and to gain experience”, respectively. The development of a work ethic was seen as the second essential requirement of hospitality education, with H5 noting “graduates need to have a clear understanding of the work ethic required for hospitality”, and H1 stating that “work ethic is key”.

Figure 4.8 Factors essential in hospitality education – an industry perspective



The lack of any reference to technical skills in figure 4.8 clearly supports the claim that generic skills are considered more important for the hospitality workplace above technical ability (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005; 2006). The industry representatives identified problem solving, critical thinking and interpersonal skills as the third and fourth essential focal points for education. Only one referred to technical skill development with regards to an “understanding of systems and business acumen”.

The general opinion from the industry representatives was that education providers need to place a greater focus on the development of individuals’ personal qualities. This perspective was reflected by H1:

Some graduates and future employees are lacking the basic soft skills so our focus is on developing them. If the students arrived with these

already then time could be spent on developing other aspects in employees.

This comment, however, raises questions about the purpose of higher education; i.e. whether the purpose of higher education is to prepare students to be work ready, or whether it is to develop and encourage skills for lifelong learning and long-term career development (see Spowart, 2011).

This analysis shows the industry representatives lean towards increased development of personal skills such as critical thinking and problem solving, and these findings reflect the work of earlier studies (Hind *et al.*, 2007; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006; Riegel & Dallas, 1998). The industry representatives largely supported the perspective that hospitality higher education should contribute more towards the development of maturity and experience in individuals, and encourage individual responsibility. This view is consistent with the educational perspective that students require work experience opportunities to develop responsibility and decision making (Ko, 2010; Phelan & Mills, 2011; Ricci, 2010). While the majority of the industry representatives were positive and supportive of hospitality degrees, it was felt that a degree programme should focus on promoting work experience and developing an understanding of working life, along with generic skills development in the areas of critical thinking, problem solving and people skills.

4.10 Summary of the industry perspective

Industry representatives' perceived success in hospitality as being reliant on the interpretations of the individual, which is consistent with Peacock (1995). Success is generated through personal attributes such as persistence, resilience, ambition, passion and happiness. There was also recognition that success is related to reward, recognition and meeting targets. The industry representatives interviewed for this study believe that

the critical factors for success in hospitality are the presence of generic skills and the personal qualities of the individual.

Three specific qualities emerged as essential for a successful individual in hospitality: passion, creativity and work ethic. This focus provides further evidence that generic skills are more important to success in hospitality than technical skills. As indicated in the literature review, there is an expectation from industry that students graduate with a sound work ethic (Phelan & Mills, 2011). The expectation of strong and well-developed people skills is also well documented (Dawson *et al.*, 2011; Harper *et al.*, 2005; Ladkin, 1999; Mullins & Davies, 1991; Riegel & Dallas, 1998; Witt & Ferris, 2003). These findings are also consistent with those in previous studies, that employers want individuals with more generic abilities than technical skills (Nickson *et al.*, 2003; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006; Robertson, 2007). If anything, the findings support recent research that the hospitality industry expects modern graduates to have well-developed soft skills (Spowart, 2011), unique personal attributes (Dawson *et al.*, 2011) and high-level communication skills (Ko, 2010).

The findings reflect the view that employers expect graduates to be highly competent in knowledge, ability and attitude (Ricci, 2010) as well as having leadership and interpersonal skills (Huang & Lin, 2011; Kay & Russette, 2000). This supports the long-standing argument that hospitality education programmes should focus on the development of HRM skills, which are seen as the most important elements of success in hospitality (Guerrier & Deery, 1998; Kay & Moncarz, 2004; Kim, 2006; Singh *et al.*, 2007). The industry representatives interviewed believe that passion and success in hospitality are linked, and therefore developing passion in graduates should be a critical component of hospitality higher education.

Despite any initial appearance that findings from the industry representatives seem to merely reinforce views established in other studies, new findings have been developed from their evidence. Significantly, there is now evidence to substantiate a particular approach to hospitality in New Zealand. The industry participants' clearly indicated a preference for 'Kiwi' service which has specific and unique characteristics. The implications of this knowledge are that New Zealand hospitality education programmes can now combine these unique perspectives with those from other studies in order to develop a more holistic approach to understanding hospitality. If students are developed with a wider cultural understanding of hospitality perspectives they are more likely to become successful.

This study has also revealed a new hospitality industry perspective on success. Peacock (1995) established that success in the hospitality industry, from a management perspective, was driven primarily by a financial focus in terms of generation of profit and control of cost. This study, however, produces evidence that this is not the case and success in hospitality from an industry perspective is intrinsically driven through a pursuit of happiness and good work-life balance. The key driver behind this perspective is the personal attribute of passion, and that having a "genuine" or "real" passion for hospitality will make one successful in this industry. The findings indicate that the hospitality industry is not just looking for interpersonal skills in new employees, but those with the new found concept of a 'passion to serve'. The findings, therefore, suggest that motivation for success in hospitality is more likely to be intrinsic rather than extrinsic, and that passion is a quintessential motive for being successful in hospitality.

In addition, the industry representatives in this study agree that a major challenge facing hospitality is the retention of talent. A possible reason talented staff leave hospitality is

that they either do not have passion or have passion 'knocked out' of them, leading to high turnover. Therefore, as a consequence of this study, integrating dimensions of passion into the education of hospitality students, as well as the training of employees, can be used to sustain passionate individuals in the workplace to enhance performance and lower turnover.

Chapter 5. Teachers: Findings and Discussions

5.1 Introduction

This chapter opens with an overview of the demographic characteristics and background of teachers involved in the interviews. The chapter reviews the teachers' perceptions of hospitality and the nature of the hospitality workplace. The main part of the interview comprised a series of questions aimed to exploring thoughts, feelings and attitudes towards success, hospitality and graduate development, which adopts a similar investigative approach as used in an earlier study by Will, Eadie, & MacAskill (1996). Perceptions of success and being successful in hospitality are then explored, along with the skills, competencies and qualities required to work in hospitality. The chapter concludes with the teachers' views on challenges and issues facing hospitality and critical factors perceived as necessary for a graduate to be successful in the industry.

5.2 Demographic profiles and backgrounds

A demographic profile of the teachers who were interviewed is presented in Table 5.1. Six gave their ethnicity as European, with the remainder stating "New Zealander" or "Kiwi". This is relevant because a person's ethnicity is often closely linked with their culture, and culture, along with gender, is an element used in filtering knowledge and could influence their perspectives (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Cultural background has an influence on attitude, personality and perceptions towards others as well as interactions with the environment (Wood *et al.*, 2013, p. 51). Perceptions towards success and being successful may, therefore, differ according to a person's cultural and ethnic background (i.e. whether they are from Europe or New Zealand).

Table 5.1 Demographic profile of the teacher interviewees

Interviewee	Gender	Ethnicity	Formal qualifications	Hospitality work experience	Overseas work experience
T1	M	European	✓	✓	✓
T2	F	European	✓	✓	✓
T3	M	European	✓	✓	✓
T4	M	New Zealander	✓	✓	✓
T5	F	New Zealander	✓	✓	✓
T6	M	European	✓	✓	✓
T7	M	European	✓	✓	✓
T8	M	New Zealander	✓	✓	✓
T9	F	European	x	✓	✓
T10	M	New Zealander	✓	✓	✓
T11	F	New Zealander	✓	✓	✓

Ten of the eleven teacher interviewees had an undergraduate diploma or higher, and the interviewee without formal qualifications had various craft (trade) qualifications. Of the formal qualifications, four had degrees not related to hospitality, nine had master's degree qualifications, and nine were undertaking doctoral study. All had worked in the hospitality industry and all had middle-management experience. Food and beverage operations were the dominant area of work experience, with eight having worked in this sector. In addition to middle-management experience, three interviewees had owned and operated small businesses. Furthermore, all had worked in the hospitality industry while undertaking study, generally as a means of funding their study. A number of the interviewees classified this approach of combining study with working as a "classic" or "traditional" path into hospitality.

Most of the teachers had worked for large hospitality corporations, and four had operated their own businesses (two cafés, a bar, and a bed and breakfast operation). One was still combining work in the hospitality industry with a part-time teaching position. Seven had obtained international hospitality work experience in Europe, having spent the majority of their hospitality working life in the UK, France, Germany or the Netherlands. The experience of the teachers also included time spent in the USA, Japan

and Australia. Seven had worked in the New Zealand hospitality industry prior to teaching at AUT. Five had an education background and teaching experience prior to their current positions, and most had worked in one or more of hotels, restaurants and bars or public houses. The teachers' work experience also covered a number of other hospitality-related sectors and functions within hospitality organisations:

- Cruise liners (food and beverage staff)
- Auditing
- Conference and banqueting
- Finance and accounting
- Contract catering
- Housekeeping operations
- Fast-food restaurants
- Information technology and systems maintenance, and
- Kitchen management.

The teachers' indicated a dominant European and New Zealand exposure to hospitality, and therefore locates the findings largely in a Westernised context. Another key influence is the wide range of hospitality sectors covered by their experience. This could influence their perceptions of the critical factors of success and how an individual becomes successful, due to different organisational factors such as size, location, and management structure.

The teachers had all spent a number of years (ranging from 5 to 15) in the hospitality industry prior to teaching, and two continued to work in the industry at the time of writing. The views and perceptions of the representatives from this stakeholder group about the hospitality industry were based on personal experience and ongoing networking relationships, as teachers, with those in industry. The data presented cannot, therefore, be seen as just coming from "boffins in an ivory tower", but from well-informed educators who know what the hospitality industry is actually like.

There were similarities in how the teachers had been exposed to hospitality. Exposure to hospitality was described as either “by accident”, “at a young age” or through “family connections”. T1 had a very young exposure to hospitality life when employed in food service at the age of 13-14 – “It was fun and provided money,” he said. T5 had also worked in the sector from an early age, starting in hotels at just 14 years. T5’s positive perception of this early start in the sector echoes that of T4, when he “decided it was a good thing”. This early exposure is mirrored, too, by T2 and T7 who both had family in the hospitality industry; one said she “grew up as a child in a hospitality environment”.

T4 found she had discovered hospitality “by accident as I was in the UK and I ran out of money before I could get home so I went to hotels asking for a job”. This supports Richardson’s (2009a) argument that the hospitality industry is sometimes perceived as a place for easily obtained employment and income. T9 had to find money for university fees so gained “quick” employment in a fast-food restaurant, and T6 worked in pubs for income while at university. Another key connection between the teachers lies in how they were attracted to hospitality life or work. The descriptions and characteristics obtained from the teachers are summarised in figure 5.1, which presents the dominant themes (as indicated by word frequency) of what attracted them to hospitality work.

Figure 5.1 How the teachers were attracted to hospitality work

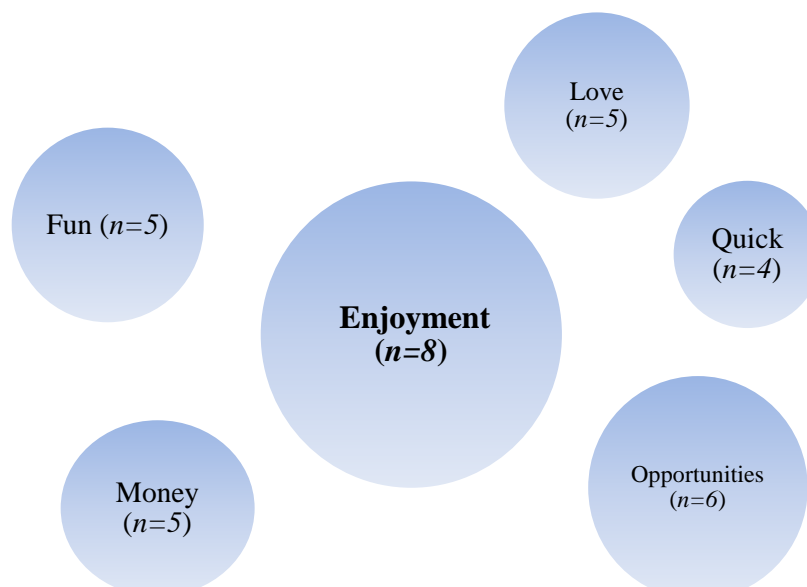


Figure 5.1 reveals the teachers' perceptions of the enjoyment and excitement associated with hospitality work. Hospitality was perceived as a fun environment, as well as being described as "alive" and "vibrant". Hospitality work provided good experience through "the development of practical skills" but was mainly viewed as offering financial reward (money). The teachers were also attracted to hospitality as it gave them opportunities to "gain work experience" and "financial support while studying". The hospitality environment also provided them with opportunities for the growth of their social capability and for "personality development". One of the attractions revealed by the teachers was their love of this area of work. This love suggests that to work in hospitality requires an intense desire, and therefore, to be successful, this intense desire needs to be fulfilled.

The description of hospitality as "quick" portrays a perception of a fast-moving and dynamic industry. Four of the teachers highlighted the speed at which they progressed through their hospitality career as being something that attracted them to the industry. This suggests some are drawn to certain attributes of the hospitality industry: the social dimension, employment and promotion prospects, opportunities for travel, and job enrichment through a dynamic people-orientated working environment. Based on this particular group of participants and their experiences, hospitality is presented as an attractive and positive environment in which to work. This teachers perspective differs from the studies of hospitality students who perceive the industry to have an unattractive image associated with poor pay, long and unsociable hours (Richardson, 2008), and therefore a negative environment to work in (Teng, 2008).

5.3 Hospitality and the nature of the workplace

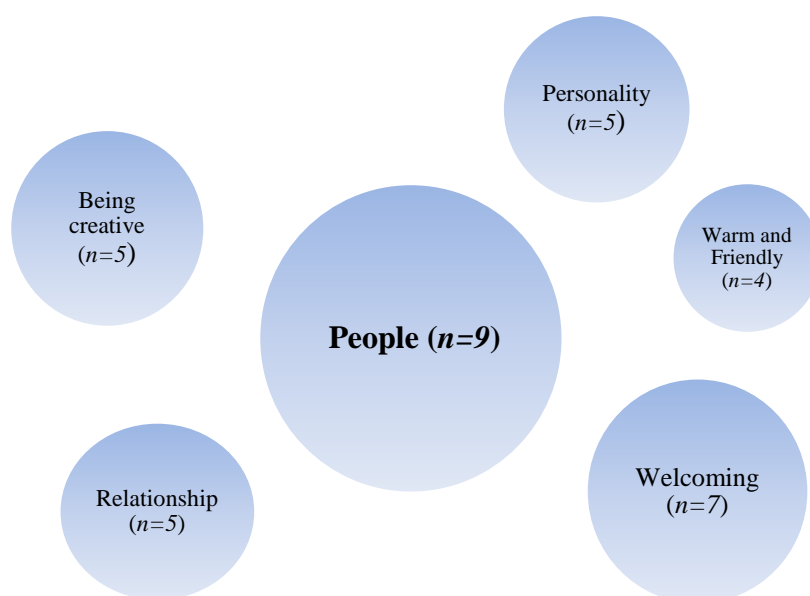
Data from the teachers revealed a range of perspectives about the nature and definition of hospitality in the New Zealand workplace. The teachers' responses highlighted

specific descriptors in their understanding of what the concept of hospitality meant. They also indicated that the nature of the hospitality workplace in New Zealand has some particular characteristics. An investigation of these descriptors and characteristics is important as they indicate key attributes required for the development of a successful hospitality graduate.

The meaning of hospitality

T4 described hospitality as being “quite simply about the whole package of relationships”. This observation highlights the complexity of attempting to define hospitality. The description also indicates an emphasis on relationships. The teachers were asked what hospitality means to them; their responses are presented as dominant themes (as indicated by word frequency) in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2 The meaning of hospitality – an education perspective



The data revealed a strong perception from the teachers that hospitality is concerned with the sociological and psychological interactions between people. Hospitality, in their view, is essentially about liking people and the creation of relationships with

others. Hospitality means being friendly and welcoming towards others and the ability to satisfy the needs of others. The provision of hospitality needs to be entered into willingly and be authentic (genuine and natural). The teachers indicated that being creative is a key part of the meaning of hospitality. In their view, it was important to provide a point of difference in the hospitality experience or package. In addition, hospitality relates to the “creation of a hospitable environment” that is characterised by warmth, friendliness and being made to feel welcome. T1 explained that: “the essence of hospitality is that you need to be hospitable, because if you don’t get along with people then don’t bother.”

This sentiment was shared by T6 who commented that:

A key driver of hospitality is a sociological desire or need to be fulfilled, to be around people and a liking of people. It is being able to swim in and out of the wonderful ocean of humanity.

Both quotes support Lashley *et al.*’s (2007a) argument that hospitality is a social phenomenon which centres on the process of human relationships and interpersonal exchange. The focus on interpersonal exchange is also reflected in the comments of T8, who stated that hospitality is:

...an underpinning ethos of giving and receiving ... about kindness and meeting needs and being able to lubricate conversation ... it provides a vehicle for social gathering.

T3 commented that hospitality is “...about service and taking care of people’s needs. It is about people, personality and total experience.” A key aspect of hospitality, as perceived by the teachers, is human relationships and social connection. This is consistent with King’s (1995) view that hospitality centres on human interaction. Data from the interviews also suggest the teachers’ approach and perception of hospitality should focus on the relationship between the host and guest (see Lashley, 2007). The data also support Derrida’s (2002) contention that hospitality requires an ability to be

genuinely friendly to strangers and have a desire to please and accommodate. The teachers' perspective is also consistent with the philosophy and principles of *manaakitanga* discussed by Thorp (2008), in which hospitality involves nurturing relationships, looking after people, and showing care and respect for how others are treated.

'Personality' was another dominant theme to emerge from the data; with some teachers commenting that hospitality was about having a certain "personality" or "about being a people person and the need for the social interaction". Essential personal characteristics of warmth, friendliness and a willingness to please were highlighted by the teachers. They also viewed a hospitality personality as having a liking for people and the need to be genuine or natural. Certain personality types were associated with being more successful in hospitality. Individuals who demonstrate such characteristics as energy, friendliness and sociability are more likely to succeed than those who do not (Graves, 1996). Personality traits such as a willingness to please are valued by employers and individuals with self-management competencies are more likely to be recruited (Akrivos *et al.*, 2007; Jauhari, 2006; Staton-Reynolds *et al.*, 2009).

Data from the teachers supports the argument in the literature that personality is a key factor in improving chances of achievement (Phelan & Mills, 2011; Witt & Ferris, 2003). The personality trait identified by the teachers, of competent social interaction (liking people), supports the view that hospitality individuals are required to be socially bold (Ladkin, 1999; Mullins & Davies, 1991; Swanljung, 1981). The teachers' perspective also indicates that being successful in hospitality requires a special kind of personality (see Tschumi, 2008), and personality provides a strong foundation for managerial success in hospitality and continues to be a pivotal recruitment criterion (see Emenheiser *et al.*, 1998; Ineson, 2011).

5.3.1 Hospitality in New Zealand

The second research question investigated the critical factors for success in the New Zealand hospitality industry. To answer this question, it was necessary to obtain a stakeholder perspective on how hospitality in New Zealand is viewed.

The general consensus among the teachers was that the hospitality industry in New Zealand has unique characteristics which differentiate it from hospitality in elsewhere. The discussions in this section are drawn from the eight teacher interviewees who had international hospitality experience and so were in a position to make comparisons between the hospitality industry in New Zealand and other parts of the world (Australia, USA, UK, Germany, France, Japan and Hong Kong). A key theme that emerged was the strong multicultural influence on the hospitality industry in New Zealand, which contributes to the notion of “Kiwi” hospitality.

The interviews revealed the recognition of the particular influence of Maori culture on hospitality in New Zealand. It is interesting to note that the influence of Maori culture was acknowledged by teachers who defined themselves as European, New Zealander or Kiwi (there were no Maori teachers interviewed for the study). T2 commented that hospitality in New Zealand is about “a desire to be hospitable possibly reflected in the warm nature of the Maori culture” and “it’s [hospitality in New Zealand] got an edge to it from the Maori culture which makes it welcoming and inclusive”. T1 referred to the “genuine New Zealand culture, especially the warm nature of the Maori”. This perception was echoed by T3 who commented on a “Kiwi culture which has got an edge from Maori” and T9 who talked of a “Maori-influenced multicultural hospitality”. There is a suggestion of commodification of Maori culture in the teachers’ perspective as they did not fully understand the indigenous nature of Maori hospitality, but appreciated the dimensions it offers New Zealand hospitality (see McIntosh, 2004). T4 and T8 also

commented that New Zealand is dealing with a multicultural hospitality industry, which raises the issue of authenticity (tourists expecting a genuine New Zealand experience). The former commented on “some cultural expectations which cause confusion”, while the latter commented:

Based on personal experience the issue with New Zealand hospitality appears to be cultural. Tourists appear quite happy to be served by Maori when they come to New Zealand. They don't expect to see large numbers of other cultures from around the world or to be served by people from their own country (T8).

These findings support Thorp's (2008) view that the role of Maori culture in the provision of hospitality and tourism in New Zealand has a unique place in comparison to other countries and cultures. With an emphasis on ethnicity and cultural heritage associated with New Zealand, it therefore follows that an understanding of these are required to work in and contribute to the hospitality environment. Thus, development of ethnic and cultural knowledge were seen by these teachers as necessary factors for the development of a successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand.

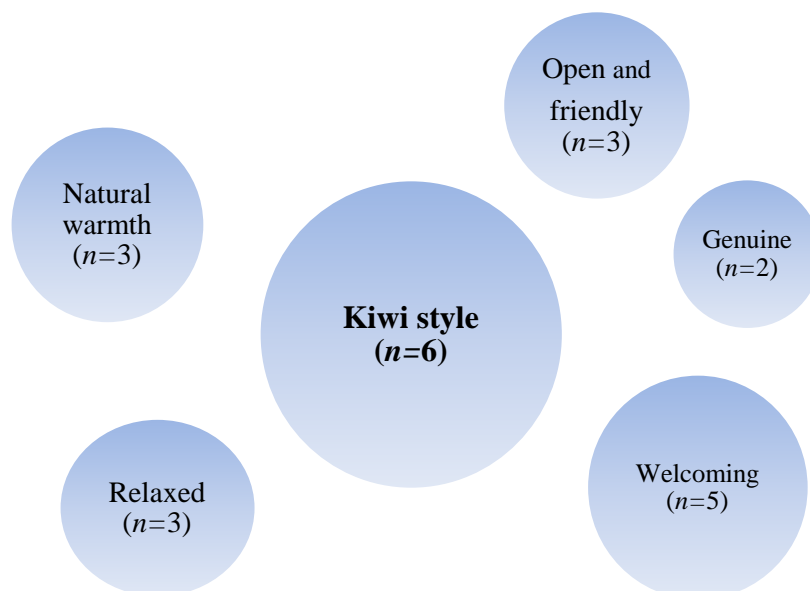
The interviews also revealed a particular style of hospitality in New Zealand, with T2 stating:

Is there a 'Kiwi' service? I don't know as New Zealand seems a little confused over its hospitality identity as it has a bit of European and a bit of USA. It does have, however, Australasian culture and a unique Pasifika culture which does not easily fit into this European or USA model. Possibly there is Kiwi service but we need to do more research to see if we have something special.

This observation highlights a number of influences on hospitality identity in New Zealand and also raises the question of whether a Kiwi style exists. The reference to a Kiwi style of service occurred in a number of interviews. T1 stated “there is a Kiwi style” and T4 alluded to “Kiwi service as unique” in New Zealand. Other teachers indicated there is “a Kiwi approach” and there are “some unique Kiwi features”. The

descriptions and characteristics obtained from the teachers are summarised in Figure 5.3, which presents the dominant themes (as indicated by word frequency) of hospitality in New Zealand.

Figure 5.3 The characteristics of New Zealand hospitality – an education perspective



There was a strong feeling that a Kiwi approach to hospitality is reflected by open and friendly individuals displaying natural warmth. This Kiwi approach was also described by some as genuine, welcoming and relaxed. Despite the earlier stated recognition of Maori influence on hospitality in New Zealand, there was no mention of manaakitanga in relation to Kiwi hospitality. Nevertheless, there was a clear perception from the teachers that there is something unique about New Zealand hospitality, which was summarised by T7:

New Zealand hospitality can be unique as it comes from the heart and hospitality in New Zealand is still very different to Europe. Hospitality in New Zealand shows a genuine openness and confidence in friendliness. It is not a crass resort but more of a B&B (i.e. bed and breakfast) homestay approach. Not mass tourism but more of a small private welcoming feel.

In contrast to discussions around the uniqueness of New Zealand hospitality, there was also a common perception among some teachers that the industry is still maturing and

searching for an identity. T1 noted that hospitality in New Zealand is “a bit like a young adult as it is a young country” and T4 commented that “New Zealand is still searching for an identity through new qualifications, education and experience”. The youth of New Zealand hospitality was echoed by other teachers, who commented that “it’s like having and watching your children, like watching all the best aspects and worst aspects as they grow up” and “Hospitality in New Zealand is like a teenager – not mature yet.”

A theme also emerged concerning the level of service formality in New Zealand hospitality. An understanding of formality levels in the hospitality customer service process is important (Crawford, 2013) and should therefore be an important part of hospitality graduate development. T1 stated “In New Zealand, in some places, hospitality is too informal as often staff refer to the customers as ‘guys’.” This sentiment was echoed by T4, who recalled, “I recently went to a top restaurant. The staff member had a shirt that wasn’t ironed and greeted us as ‘you guys’. I thought, ‘I’m not your friend’ – too informal”. This perception that service in New Zealand is too informal could be a reflection of the earlier discussions regarding Kiwi service and that the country is still developing a hospitality identity. Alternatively, this informality could reflect a naivety and lack of understanding about what hospitality is, as suggested by T7:

Most of the service is genuinely friendly and demonstrates a willingness to please but are not sure on how to. Most want to please but lack the knowledge and or expertise to recognise good or poor service and to read customers.

Both T4 and T8 commented on a lack of social appropriateness by staff towards customers in New Zealand restaurants, and “the need to understand the appropriateness of working in a social situation” (T8).

Interviewees also considered that hospitality in New Zealand has improved its levels of service in comparison with other countries. T1 talked of “slowly increasing skill levels and tools for the trade” and T8 described a “growing, vibrant industry”, while T3 noted a “dramatic improvement” and T4 commented that “hospitality in New Zealand is improving and developing. People have improved over the past 10 years and are still improving.” T8 also suggested that New Zealand hospitality has improved so much that it is now recognised as a leader in certain fields:

Hospitality has vastly improved over the past few years. In the early days there was some good food; now there is advanced wine knowledge and the product is very good. Some of the chefs in New Zealand are ahead of [their] time in innovation.

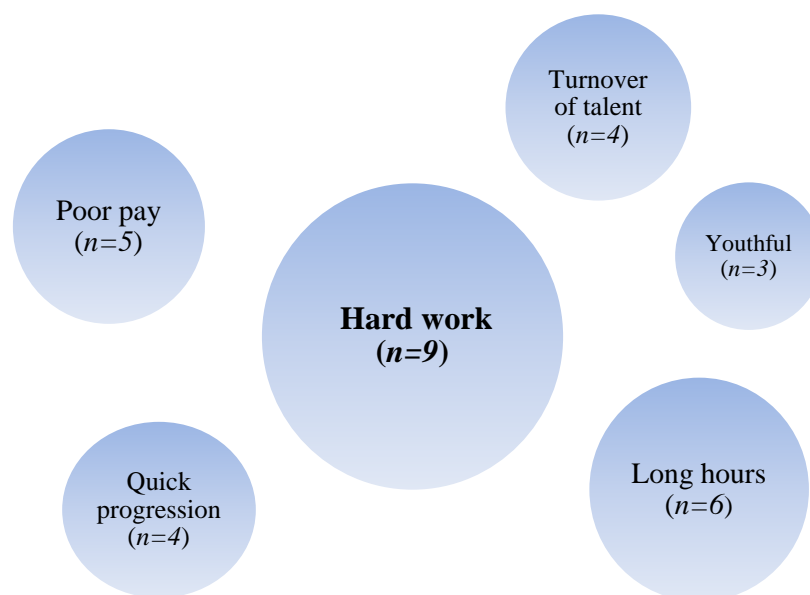
These comments indicate that hospitality service levels are an area of concern for the teachers and therefore need to be incorporated into the development of hospitality graduates. Hospitality work requires skills appropriate to social situations (Nickson *et al.*, 2005) and an understanding of what service is and how to serve others (Crawford, 2013). Focus on these areas through educational development will enable individuals to deliver service more effectively and appropriately (Crawford, 2013).

5.3.2 The nature of hospitality work

Data revealed interesting perceptions about the hospitality industry, which the teachers felt should be used to inform those entering it. Key themes about the nature of the industry are presented in Figure 5.4. The findings present both negative and positive perceptions about the nature of hospitality work. There was a general perception that the hospitality industry is associated with negative characteristics such as hard work, poor pay, long hours, and low-skill. Hospitality was viewed as a tough industry to work in, with T2 stating, “You have to be able to grin and bear it.”

T2, T3, T6 and T7 all commented on the relatively low skill requirement for frontline hospitality roles, with T7 commenting that “formal qualifications are not particularly necessary for hospitality work” and “you don’t necessarily have to have a degree to be a great manager”. The teachers’ data confirmed the stereotype of hospitality work as dominated by a low skills profile (see Wood, 1997). T2 also commented on the lack of qualifications required for hospitality work: “Few skills are needed to work in hospitality ... it can be fairly easy to gain employment at the coal face or to do frontline fodder work.” Conversely, it was noted by six of the teachers (including T7 who had made earlier contrasting comments) that formal qualifications had improved the speed of promotion and “working up the ladder” was quicker with a formal qualification.

Figure 5.4 The nature of the hospitality industry – an education perspective



The teachers used a variety of descriptors to convey the nature of the hospitality, the dominant themes are presented in Figure 5.4 (as indicated by word frequency). Key themes were: poor pay, long hours, young industry, hard work, turnover and quick career progression. These themes combined a blend of positive and negative perceptions. The teachers’ perceptions in this study are consistent with the typical view of hospitality as having hard and tough working conditions (DiPietro & Condly, 2007),

long and unsocial hours (Baum, 2008; Deery & Shaw, 1999; Pratten, 2003), and poor pay (Brown & McIntosh, 2003).

There was concern expressed by the teachers that some students in hospitality education programmes had negative experiences and understandings of industry conditions (Teng, 2008)

I've seen wonderful talented students born for hospitality with a deep sensitive ability in interpersonal skills get put into 'machines' and put into repetitive soulless jobs with long hours and poor pay and it crushes them; they lose spirit and leave (T6).

Another theme to emerge was the perception that the hospitality industry is unable to retain talented students. T6's likened large hospitality organisations to "machines" that demoralised hospitality competent graduates and forced them to leave the industry. T2 and T7 referred to "coal face frontline work" and "frontline fodder" respectively, and indicating repetitive unimaginative work. This data provides evidence of the staff retention and labour turnover issues in the New Zealand hospitality industry (see Williamson *et al.*, 2008). The teachers' comments, therefore, questions processes of talent management within the hospitality industry (see Baum, 2008). Hospitality organisations need to focus on inclusive approaches to employee development in order to provide opportunities for the enhancement of skills and knowledge (Baum, 2008).

The teachers also had some positive perceptions of the hospitality industry. There was a sense that the nature of hospitality is fun, vibrant, dynamic and rewarding and that the industry offers good career progression. They felt that employment can be obtained fairly quickly, especially at the frontline, and there are opportunities for quick promotion. Despite a general consensus that hospitality is a tough industry to work in, the teachers found it rewarding and enriching. Incorporating fun and vibrancy into hospitality higher education, may help students appreciate that hospitality can be

dynamic, rewarding and offer good career progression. These aspects can become focal points for hospitality higher education and the development of the successful hospitality graduate.

Some teachers also indicated that good people skills are required in hospitality. It was considered that having these skills would provide employees with quicker career progression and improve opportunities for better pay (see Baum, 1996, 2002, Nickson *et al.*, 2002; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005, 2006). Therefore, the development of competent people skills will contribute to a more successful career path for hospitality graduates.

5.4 The meaning of success

Success is a relative concept open to a variety of individual perceptions (Peacock, 1995); a diverse range of responses was therefore anticipated from the teachers in relation to its meaning. A detailed summary of the teachers' responses to what success means and how it can be measured is presented in Table 5.2. Shaded cells represent words used by the teachers to describe what success means to them and how it could be measured.

Table 5.2 The meaning and measures of success – an education perspective

Interviewee	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11
<i>Meaning/measures of success</i>											
Happiness and enjoyment											
Individualistic											
About work/life balance											
Changes/happens in stages											
About achieving targets/goals											
Materialistic											
Overcoming failure											
Sociological/psychological fulfilment											
Respect/recognition from others											
Have personal qualities higher than others											
Achieving emotional balance											
Taking a chance or risk											
Making a difference											
In the right place at the right time											

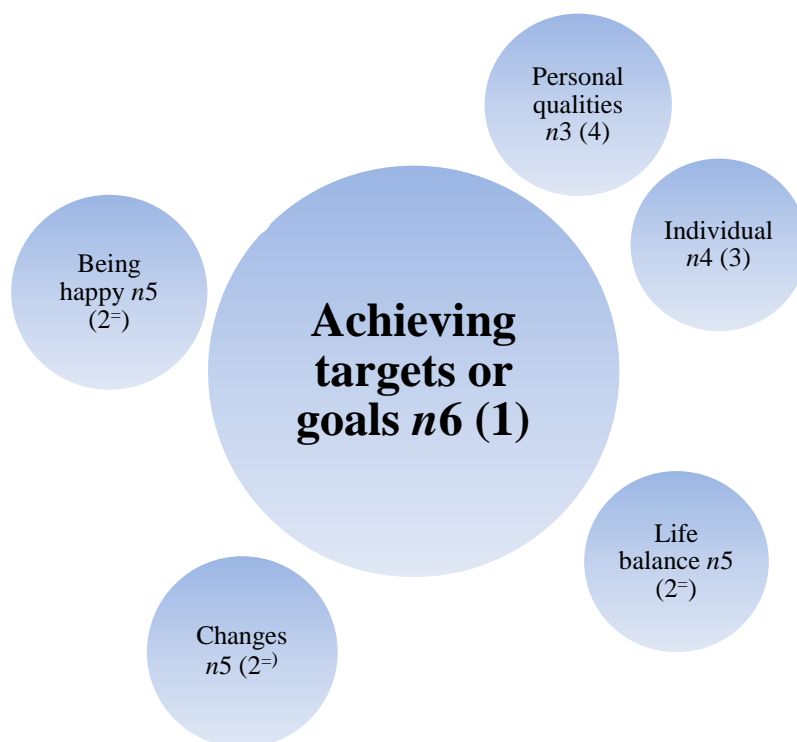
Findings suggest that motivation towards success can be both intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic themes are those with intangible nature (e.g. psychological factors such as happiness), whereas extrinsic relate to tangible values (e.g. materialistic factors such as money) (Reece, 2012). Using this thematic analysis, two perspectives on success are presented. Firstly, the teachers considered success to be predominantly measured extrinsically through the achievement of set goals or targets, money, promotion, position or benefits. However, the dominant perception to the meaning of success by the teachers was that it mainly focused on intrinsic factors such as happiness and individual sociological or psychological fulfilment. It was also found that success could be achieved in different aspects of an individual's life: either, as T5 commented, "general or business". T1 also highlighted the differentiation between "work and life" and success, and T6 referred to success in "all aspects of life". Success in work or business was viewed as having a rewarding job, responsibility, longevity through promotion and being well paid, whereas success in general was seen as being fulfilled (socially and psychologically), happy and achieving emotional balance. The idea that someone could be successful in different aspects of their life was further clarified by T4, who observed somewhat paradoxically that "one can be successful in work but not life."

Six key themes emerged from the teachers' interviews (Table 5.2), and are presented in Figure 5.5. The numbers indicate the ranking given to each theme and which were determined by how frequently words or phrases relating to a theme were mentioned in the interviews.

The dominant theme was that success means the achievement of targets or goals. The importance of happiness and enjoyment was also high, with six interviewees commenting that success was "about being happy in what you do" or "enjoyment".

Success was also viewed as an individual phenomenon, as T5 stated, “Success is a very individual thing; it is not formula driven.”

Figure 5.5 What success means – the teachers’ top ranked themes



Another theme that arose was that success relates to “a balance of life aspects” and “a balance of choices in life”. T6 and T8 both noted that “success can cover all aspects of life and it is about finding a balance” and “it is about finding a life balance”. Upon further exploration of this theme during the interviews, it was found that the two key factors that require balancing are work and personal circumstances. This need for a balance was summarised by T1: “Success is enjoying work and life and about having fun.” The life-balance theme was further highlighted by T4 when he noted: “one can be perceived to be successful in work but not in life or relationships, so success is finding a balance.” The development of a successful hospitality graduate, therefore, requires the development of techniques and strategies to manage work-life balance.

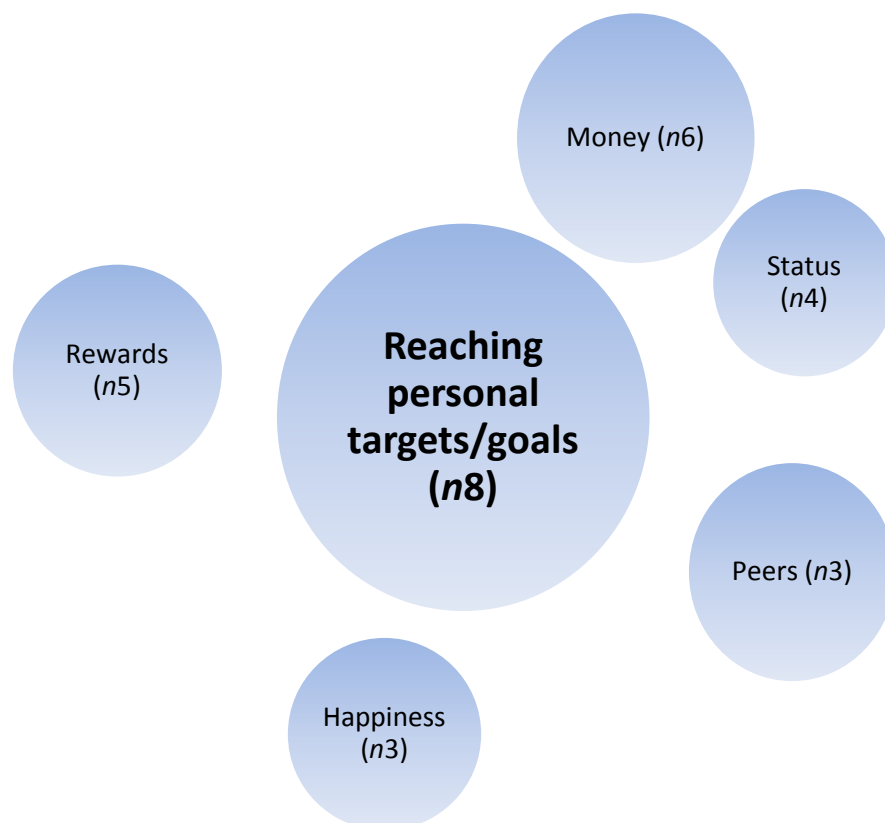
The teachers noted that success is open to change and “is a journey” that “happens in stages”, “phases, trends” and “cycles”. Four of the teachers acknowledged that success changes and is influenced by two factors: time and a person’s stage in life. Time was highlighted in the responses, with success being identified as “a journey”, “how long you last”, “can be measured by one’s longevity” and “changes with age”. T1 commented that “success can change with experience” and supported this with statements conveying the idea that success “changes through life experience” and “is influenced by what you experience”.

There was also a perception that success occurs in stages throughout life, as indicated by T7 who noted that “success is a progression through a constantly changing career path” and “happens in stages”. The interviews explored what these stages are, and the teachers indicated the following stages of success: graduating, employment, promotion, salary and organisational status. The teachers viewed graduation as the first stage of success, followed by obtaining employment. Once employed, the teachers thought success could be represented through varying increases in salary, opportunities for promotion and the achievement of certain levels of organisational status (e.g. general manager).

These comments imply that success occurs in stages related to establishing a fulfilling balance between life and work, develops with age, and requires experience. A hospitality undergraduate entering higher education for the first time will not necessarily have amassed a wealth of experience. However, undergraduates can obtain work experience and set achievable goals for specific stages towards a successful pathway. Later, as graduates, they can obtain employment, earn a salary and gain a position in an organisation that can provide a foundation for a career.

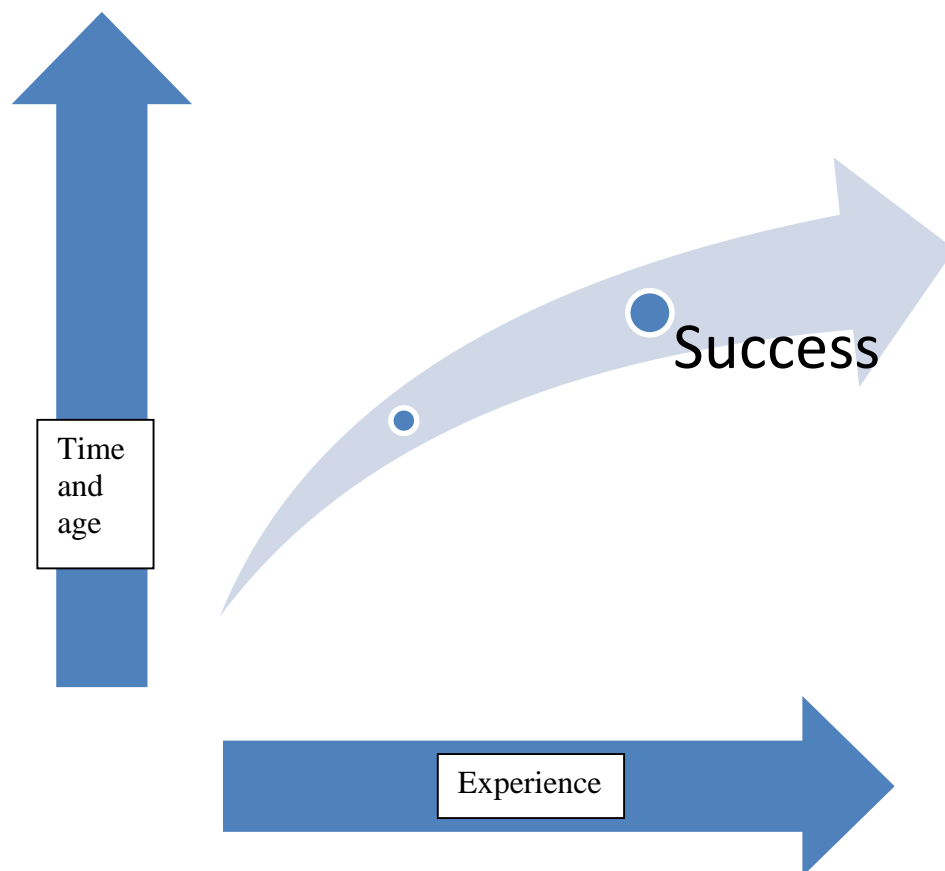
Data also provided an insight into the teachers' perceptions of how success is measured. The six key themes that emerged from the discussion of measures of success are presented in Figure 5.6. The numbers in the circles indicate how frequently words or phrases relating to each theme were mentioned in the interviews. The dominant measure of success was perceived as the achievement of set personal goals or targets. There was a perception that the extrinsic value of money was a measure of success and that the "materialistic value of money and a good salary provided a balance of enjoyment in work and life". Status and respect among peers were also perceived to be important measures of success. Some teachers commented that success was measured by "having respect and recognition from others" or achieving "position", "promotion" and "status". The teachers also identified happiness as a theme in the meaning of success. The level of happiness is seen as an important measure of how successful an individual is.

Figure 5.6 Measures of success – an education perspective



From the analysis it is possible to provide a visual representation of the meaning of success from the teachers' perspective (see Figure 5.7). Based on the responses given, success is considered to be associated with: employment, "good" organisational status, a "good" salary, and promotion. These factors occur at different stages in life and improve over time and with experience. As people age (x axis) and become exposed to different aspects of life, their level of experience increases (y axis), which changes their perceptions of, and reactions to, different stages in life associated with success. Based on the teachers' data, as age and experience increases, success is realised and judged on five key factors: employment (rewarding job), salary increases, promotion opportunities, organisational position and establishing happy relationships.

Figure 5.7 An understanding of how success works



The most notable theme revealed by the teachers, in relation to hospitality graduate development, was that achieving success requires certain personal qualities. From the

data (see Table 5.2), the teachers ranked personal qualities lower than achieving targets and happiness; however, personal qualities are key elements that can be developed through a higher-education programme and thus support the development of successful hospitality graduates. “Having some personal qualities higher than others” was regarded as a key contributor towards being successful. These personal qualities were described as “a mind-set” of attitude, work ethic, respect, dignity, creativity and internal passion.

5.5 Being successful in hospitality

The teachers were asked what is required to become successful in hospitality. Findings presented in Table 5.3 rank the key themes that emerged.

Table 5.3 Factors significant for success in hospitality – an education perspective

Factor for success	Frequency of theme	Ranking
Interpersonal skills	8	1 ⁼
Customer orientation	8	1 ⁼
Being creative	6	2 ⁼
Passion	6	2 ⁼
Personal qualities	5	3 ⁼
Emotional intelligence (EQ)	3	4 ⁼
Resilience	3	4 ⁼

The dominant theme in the teachers’ responses was the quality of interpersonal skills. Three teachers stated that success in hospitality is “having some personal qualities higher than others” (T7), “the soft skills” (T4), and “relies on generic skills and interpersonal ability” (T3). These findings strengthen Akrivos *et al.*’s (2007) and Emenheiser *et al.*’s (1998) argument that interpersonal skills are a key to success in hospitality. Being creative as a focal point of success was also evident in the data. According to the teachers, success in hospitality is provided through “the creation of experience” (T8), “making a difference” (T9) and “creating points of difference” (T10). These findings are consistent with the view that an ability to develop new ideas, have

vision and be creative are key personal attributes to being successful (see Williams *et al.*, 2000).

In addition to interpersonal ability and creativity, the teachers linked success in hospitality with a positive relationship between employees and their customers. Employees were perceived to have a key influence on customer service: “a successful hospitality business is about satisfied customers, firstly meeting then exceeding their expectations” (T8). Customer orientation to success in hospitality also commented on: “the customers need to be happy” (T7), “you need to go the extra mile for the customers” (T9), and “you have to have a feel for the market and find out what people like” (T2).

The perception that being successful in hospitality requires a customer-focused approach is consistent with Peacock’s (1995) findings. His study of 200 hospitality managers found that the second most important factor of a successful organisation (after a financial focus) was having positive and strong employee-customer relationships. Having a strong customer-service orientation in hospitality can result in success as measured through an increased volume of repeat business and reduced customer complaints (Jauhari, 2006). Therefore, customer-service orientation is a key element in the development of a successful hospitality graduate.

Having specific personal qualities and developed personality traits are key to managerial success in hospitality (Ineson, 2011). The personal qualities of internal drive and passion were mentioned by two participants: “To be successful in hospitality you must have that internal passion” (T11), and “It is about drive and passion” (T10). Other personal qualities regarded as important were also highlighted in the following comments: “To be successful in hospitality you need to be able to take a chance and a risk” (T10), “Success in hospitality is about respect, integrity and equality, [and] it is

about showing patience” (T6). It is clearly important for a hospitality graduate to develop personal qualities, and transfer these skills into the workplace. This can be achieved through personality profiling and analysis, and research has shown that this can have a significant educational role in hospitality graduate development (Ineson, 2011).

T6 commented that to be successful in hospitality “you need to be emotionally resilient and tough. Success in hospitality is about “‘minerals’ (i.e. resilience), ‘staying power’ and ‘stickability’” (T5). The reference made to emotion and resilience indicates that high levels of EQ and RQ are important to success. Goleman (2006) found EQ to be more important for job performance than cognitive or technical skills. RQ provides an individual with resilience in adversity and includes characteristics such as flexibility, vision and interpersonal competencies. The development and combination of EQ and RQ provide a pathway to being successful (Clement, 2009).

To be successful individuals need to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses and must be adaptable (Carmeli, 2003). This study’s findings agree with those of Ineson (2011) and Scott-Halsell *et al.* (2008), that high EQ is linked to being successful in hospitality management.

5.6 Critical factors for success in hospitality

The teachers were asked to identify factors they thought were critical to being successful in hospitality. They identified 40 different factors perceived as critical for individual success, a full list and ranking of which is presented in Table 5.4.

The personal attribute of passion was identified as the most important factor for success in hospitality. Passion was rated significantly higher and more consistently than any other factor. Bidois (2009) commented that “success in hospitality comes from passion” (p. 30). This study provides evidence to support this claim, with a number of teachers

noting that “success in hospitality is about passion”, “you have to have passion” and “to be successful in hospitality you have to have passion and be a welcoming host”.

The teachers presented some indication of what they perceived passion to be. T1 likened passion to a “desire and hunger”, and T3 noted that “you need passion to work in hospitality as it is tough industry to work in”. Both of these perceptions suggest passion is linked to motivation. Passion as a motivator for success was also suggested by T5 who noted “success is about having some personal qualities higher than others. Success in hospitality is about drive and passion”. T8 also mentioned “desire and hunger” in relation to passion and success, but also introduced the concept of love by commenting that “hospitality is a love-hate thing, to get on you have to have a love for social situations and an intrinsic desire to care for people”. Success in hospitality was also referred to as “having internal passion and joy and to be a welcoming host” (T9) and as “having a passion for the industry and in particular serving” (T11).

Table 5.4 Critical factors required for success –an education perspective

Critical factor for success	Word frequency	Rank	Critical factor for success	Word frequency	Rank
Passion	14	1	Commitment	1	10 ⁼
Adaptability to change	9	2	Courage	1	10 ⁼
Work ethic	8	3	Demonstration of ability	1	10 ⁼
Interpersonal skills	7	4	Desire	1	10 ⁼
People skills	6	5	Easy going	1	10 ⁼
Flexibility	5	6 ⁼	Entrepreneurial thinking	1	10 ⁼
Initiative	5	6 ⁼	Equality	1	10 ⁼
Critical thinking	4	7	Financial acumen	1	10 ⁼
Being creative	3	8 ⁼	Forward thinking	1	10 ⁼
Personality	3	8 ⁼	Genuineness	1	10 ⁼
Problem solving	3	8 ⁼	High energy	1	10 ⁼
Soft skills	3	8 ⁼	Honesty	1	10 ⁼
Ability to manage others	2	9 ⁼	Hunger	1	10 ⁼
Happiness	2	9 ⁼	Financial acumen	1	10 ⁼
Motivation	2	9 ⁼	Integrity	1	10 ⁼
Resilience	2	9 ⁼	Lateral thinking	1	10 ⁼
Taking chances	2	9 ⁼	Loyalty	1	10 ⁼
Working with others	2	9 ⁼	Patience	1	10 ⁼
Attention to detail	1	10 ⁼	Sense of humour	1	10 ⁼
Attitude	1	10 ⁼	Speed of reaction	1	10 ⁼

Passion was closely followed by the ability to adapt to change, which was summarised by T4 when he stated that “successful graduates in hospitality can embrace change”. A number of interviewees mentioned “being able to get your hands dirty and work hard”, and that having a “strong work ethic” were important for success. The theme of interpersonal skills was ranked fourth, with the closely associated factor of people skills ranking fifth. Flexibility and initiative were given equal rankings.

During the thematic analysis it became evident that some factors (see Table 5.4) were linked. For example, work ethic, problem solving, critical thinking, team working and communication could all be categorised as generic skills (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005; 2006). A few teachers considered that “being successful in hospitality relies on generic skills” and made references to soft skills saying, “They are really important for success”. Likewise, personality and attitude can both be considered to be personal attributes (Ineson, 2011; Nickson *et al.*, 2005). The teachers said that a successful graduate requires “interpersonal ability”, is able “to focus on interpersonal relationships” and have “social control”. Other common personal attributes mentioned were initiative, motivation, ambition and a positive attitude.

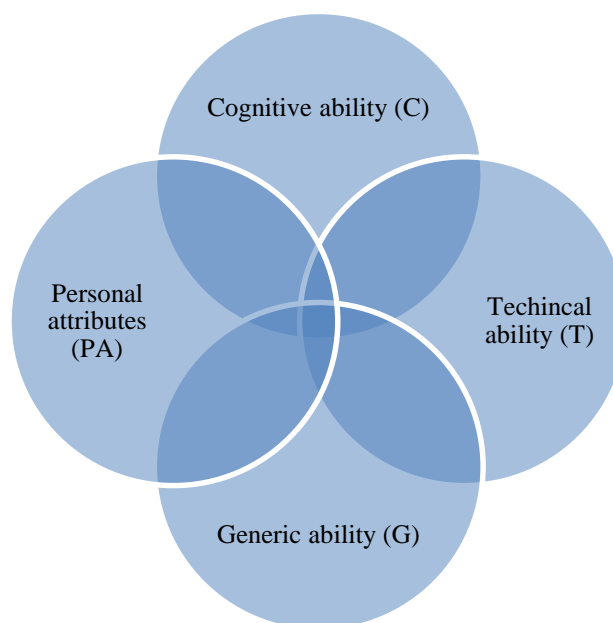
Interpersonal skills were interpreted by the teachers to be “the soft skills students need to understand social appropriateness when working in a social environment” (T11), and “the skills people need to use the appropriate behaviour for the appropriate situation” (T7). It was noted by three teachers that interpersonal skills were “about dealing with people” (T1), “know how to behave in relationships” (T4) and “they are the essence of hospitality and being hospitable” (T3). T8 described interpersonal skills as about “those skills that allow you to be around people and like people. They make you able to swim in and out of the wonderful ocean of humanity”.

A further two domains emerged in the analysis: firstly, a cognitive ability that involves the use of mind and process of thought (Gardner, 2006), such as problem solving; and secondly, a technical ability that highlights certain hard skills that could be acquired through knowledge and training such as systems or financial knowledge (Baum, 2002). The four identified domains are presented in Figure 5.8.

To be successful in hospitality, graduates require a range of skills and abilities which require multiple intelligences (Gardner, 2006). The domains in Figure 5.8 address a multiple intelligences approach to the development of the successful hospitality graduate.

Each domain contains a set of factors, as identified by the teachers, which are critical for success in hospitality. The cognitive domain relates to the ability to apply thought processes and includes skills such as problem solving, critical thinking and lateral thinking. The second domain contains skills identified by the teachers that relate to technical ability, such as financial acumen and systems knowledge. The third domain categorises skills the teachers identified as generic; for example, interpersonal skills, working with others, flexibility, and good work ethic. And finally, the fourth domain identifies characteristics that represent personal attributes, such as, personality, motivation, sense of humour and passion.

Figure 5.8 Domains of critical factors for success in hospitality



The teachers' critical factors for success in hospitality in relation to these four domains are presented in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5 Domain categorisation of the teachers' critical factors for success in hospitality

Critical success factor domain	Critical factors for success
Cognitive ability (C)	Critical thinking, entrepreneurial thinking, forward thinking, lateral thinking, problem solving
Technical ability (T)	Attention to detail, demonstration of ability, financial acumen, speed of reaction
Generic ability (G)	Ability to manage others, adaptability to change, flexibility, initiative, interpersonal skills, people skills, soft skills, work ethic, working with others
Personal attributes (PA)	Attitude, being creative, commitment, courage, desire, drive, easy going, equality, genuineness, happiness, high energy, honesty, hunger, integrity, loyalty, passion, patience, personality, motivation, sense of humour, resilience, taking a chance or risk

Further analysis was required to identify which factors the teachers perceived as most important for success in hospitality. Word and pattern analysis of the data from the interviews revealed six key factors, from the initial 40 identified in Table 5.4, most

frequently referred to as critical for success in hospitality. These six key factors are presented in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6 Key critical factors for success in hospitality – an education perspective

Critical factor for success	Ranking (by frequency)
Passion (PA)	1
Adaptability to change (G)	2
Work ethic (G)	3
Interpersonal skills (G)	4
People skills (G)	5
Flexibility (G))	6=
Initiative (PA)	6=

Table 5.6 presents the top-ranked critical factors for success and allocates each factor to one of the domains outlined in Table 5.5. This classification process reveals that personal attributes and generic ability are perceived to be the top two domains critical for success. These findings are consistent with the view that personal attributes and generic ability have a significant role in becoming successful in hospitality (Akrivos *et al.*, 2007; Emenheiser *et al.*, 1998; Graves, 1996; Ineson, 2011; Staton-Reynolds *et al.*, 2009). The thesis findings also provide evidence to support the views of Raybould and Wilkins (2005) and Staton-Reynolds *et al.* (2009), that personal attributes and generic skills are viewed as more important for success than are technical skills.

5.7 The skills, competencies and qualities required for hospitality work

The teachers were asked to identify certain skills, competencies and qualities necessary for working in the hospitality industry. The purpose of this question is to enable comparisons to be made between the teachers' perceptions of the factors required for hospitality work and the factors perceived as critical for success in hospitality. An investigation of teachers' perceptions of the skills, competencies and qualities required for hospitality will not only inform their perspective on the factors that are critical for

success, but can also be used to inform the role and contribution of university education in the development of a successful hospitality graduate.

A similar analytical approach to that adopted in section 5.6 is used in this section. The teachers identified 35 different skills, qualities or competencies they perceived as important for working in hospitality (Table 5.7).

Table 5.7 Skills, competencies and qualities required for hospitality work – an education perspective

Skill, competency, quality	Word frequency	Ranking
Interpersonal skills	11	1
Passion	9	2
Teamwork	7	3
Flexibility	6	4
Being creative	5	5
Initiative	4	6
Work ethic	3	7=
Ability to change	2	8=
Communication	2	8=
Financial/numerical skills	2	8=
Personal skills	2	8=
Positive personality	2	8=
Problem solving	2	8=
Resilience	2	8=
Sense of urgency	2	8=
Willingness to learn	2	8=
Accepting of others	1	9=
Aesthetic skills	1	9=
Analytical skills	1	9=
Attention to detail	1	9=
Desire	1	9=
Easy going	1	9=
Enthusiasm	1	9=
Emotional intelligence	1	9=
Entrepreneurial skills	1	9=
Hunger	1	9=
Intelligence	1	9=
Listening skills	1	9=
Motivation	1	9=
Personal presentation	1	9=
Perseverance	1	9=
Positive attitude	1	9=
Strategic management	1	9=
Willingness to serve	1	9=

As in section 5.6, patterns and themes emerged from the data that described skills, qualities and competencies. Clear links could be made between the factors: for example, problem solving and decision making both fall in the domain of cognitive ability, and passion and creativity are personal attributes.

Word frequency and pattern analysis identified six key factors perceived as required of graduates to work in hospitality. These are presented along with their domain classification in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8 Key factors required for hospitality work – an education perspective

Skill, competency, quality required to work in hospitality	Frequency ranking
Interpersonal skills (G)	1
Passion (PA)	2
Teamwork (G)	3
Flexibility (G)	4
Being creative (PA)	5
Initiative (G)	6

Interpersonal skills were identified by the teachers as the most important requirement for work in hospitality. This was closely followed by the personal attribute of passion, as summarised by T11: “To work in hospitality you need internal passion and joy.” A number of responses mentioned that “being able to get your hands dirty and work hard” and that having “a strong work ethic” were important for success. Flexibility was ranked fourth, with being creative and having initiative placed fifth and sixth, respectively.

Further analysis was carried out on the teacher data and a comparison made between the skills, competencies and qualities the teachers perceived as required for hospitality work and those they identified as critical for success in the industry. This comparison is presented in Table 5.9 along with the domain classification presented in Figure 5.8.

Table 5.9 A comparison of the key factors the teachers perceive as required for hospitality work with the factors they perceive as critical for success in hospitality

Frequency ranking	Factors required for hospitality work	Domain of success	Factors critical for success in hospitality	Domain of success
1	Interpersonal skills	G	Passion	PA
2	Passion	PA	Adaptability to change	PA
3	Teamwork	G	Work ethic	G
4	Flexibility	G	Interpersonal skills	G
5	Being creative	PA	People skills	G
6	Initiative	G	Flexibility, initiative	G/PA

The set of factors perceived by the teachers as required for hospitality work is slightly different from the set of factors they perceived to be critical for success in the industry. The teachers considered teamwork and being creative to be important skills for hospitality work, whereas the same skills were not considered, by them, to be critical for success in hospitality. Instead, the teachers said that people skills, work ethic and an adaptability to change are important factors for success. Data in Table 5.9 also rank the PA domain as more important for success in hospitality as compared to the G domain.

The findings presented in Table 5.9 are consistent with a large body of research that has identified interpersonal skills development as the main focal point of graduate development (e.g. Fallows & Steven, 2000; Huang & Lin, 2011; Kay & Russette, 2000; Nelson & Dopson, 1999; O'Halloran, 1992; Raybould & Wilkins 2005). These findings also support Robertson's (2007) idea that generic skills are more important than technical proficiencies, and hospitality requires personal attribute development (see Dawson *et al.*, 2011). The findings also support the view that interpersonal skills are a predominant indicator of success (e.g. Huang & Lin, 2011; Kay & Moncarz, 2004; Kim, 2006; Singh *et al.*, 2007). These findings are also consistent with the view that personal attributes such as personality (Phelan & Mills, 2011; Riegel & Dallas, 1998; Witt &

Ferris, 2003), motivation (Crebert *et al.*, 2004) and attitude (Nickson *et al.*, 2005; Ricci, 2010) are important to being successful in hospitality.

The teachers made reference to different types of intelligences, supporting Gardner's (1983, 1993, 2006) view of the importance of the role of multiple intelligences theory in the development of the individual. T6 alluded to the concept of RQ when making the comment: "You need to be emotionally resilient and tough enough." SQ and common sense were highlighted by T7 who stated, "[You] need to understand the appropriateness of working in a social situation ... [and have] common sense."

These research findings support the notion that ability, knowledge and development of skill sets associated with EQ are essential to hospitality (see Hochschild, 1983; Kernbach & Schutte, 2005; Langhorn, 2004; Scott-Halsell *et al.*, 2008). They also highlight the importance of RQ and resilience (see Clement, 2009; Edward & Warelow, 2005; Swanljung, 1981; Worsfold, 1989) in hospitality work.

5.7.1 Technical versus generic ability for hospitality work

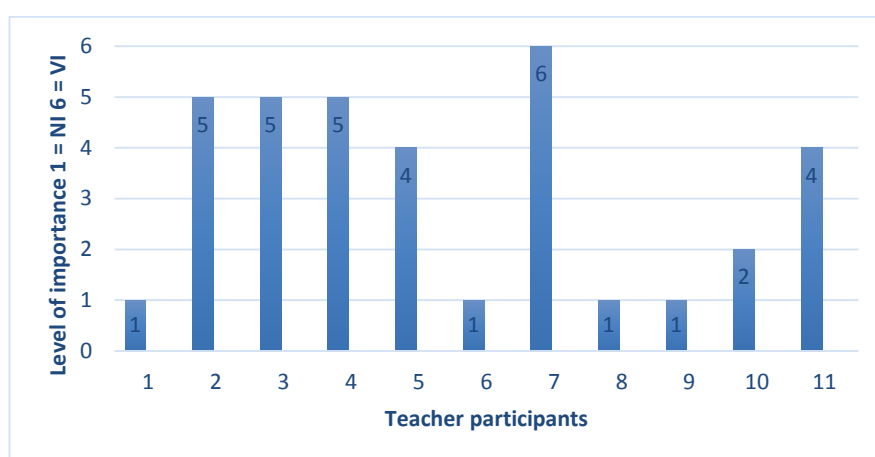
There is considerable debate between hospitality academics over which skill set is perceived as the most important for hospitality work: technical or generic. Some hold the view that generic skills are more important in hospitality work than technical skills (for example, Raybould & Wilkins, 2005, 2006), while there is evidence to indicate that educators place a higher importance on technical skills than other skills (Staton-Reynolds *et al.*, 2009).

The teachers were asked to rate on a six-point Likert scale (1 = very unimportant to 6 = very important) the importance of a hospitality graduate's technical ability (see Figure 5.9). The purpose of this question was to generate discussion from the teachers surrounding the technical- versus generic-skills debate. Data presented in Figure 5.9

show a relatively even split between the teachers with regards to the importance of a hospitality graduate's technical ability in hospitality work.

The majority of the teachers (six out of eleven) said a graduate's technical skills were more important (4 or higher) than generic skills in hospitality work. The teachers' scores for technical ability contrast with their perceptions of which skills are viewed as important and critical for success. The teachers considered that success in hospitality is about personal ability and generic skills (see Table 5.6), yet they also placed a higher importance on hospitality graduates' technical ability.

Figure 5.9 The importance of a hospitality graduate's technical ability – an education perspective



Interviewees also commented that “technical skills are needed to gain respect” and “are needed to run a business”. Technical ability was linked to confidence, leadership and the process aspect of hospitality: “Technical ability is important to demonstrate confidence as a leader and is strongly linked to leadership management.” (T2). “Technical ability is very important as hospitality can be process driven and tech skills are needed to deliver service consistently.” (T7)

Data in Figure 5.9 suggest that most teachers perceived technical skills as more important for success in hospitality than generic skills. However, there is a perception

that technical ability can be easily taught. Some teachers commented that “technical skills is the easy bit and can be taught”, “learnt” and “picked up quickly”. Teachers’ comments also revealed a perception that although technical skills are important; they provide “a foundation that will help deliver the soft skills”. The teachers indicated that generic ability is critical to success in hospitality (section 5.6). It is therefore concluded that taught technical skills can provide a foundation to teach the generic skills which are more important for success in hospitality. It is worth noting, however, that generic skills are not founded on taught technical skills but are been shaped through life and take some work to alter.

These findings support the notion that the development of a successful graduate requires skills from both generic and technical domains (see Figure 5.8). The importance of generic skills to success in hospitality was highlighted by T6, who noted: “If the politeness is missing, sense of humour not there or you are not able to get along with people, then you will not get on in hospitality.” This was supported by T8 who stated: “Making money in hospitality is linked to interpersonal skills. People need to know how to sell, charm and have emotional response. Generic skills make money.”

5.8 Challenges facing the hospitality industry

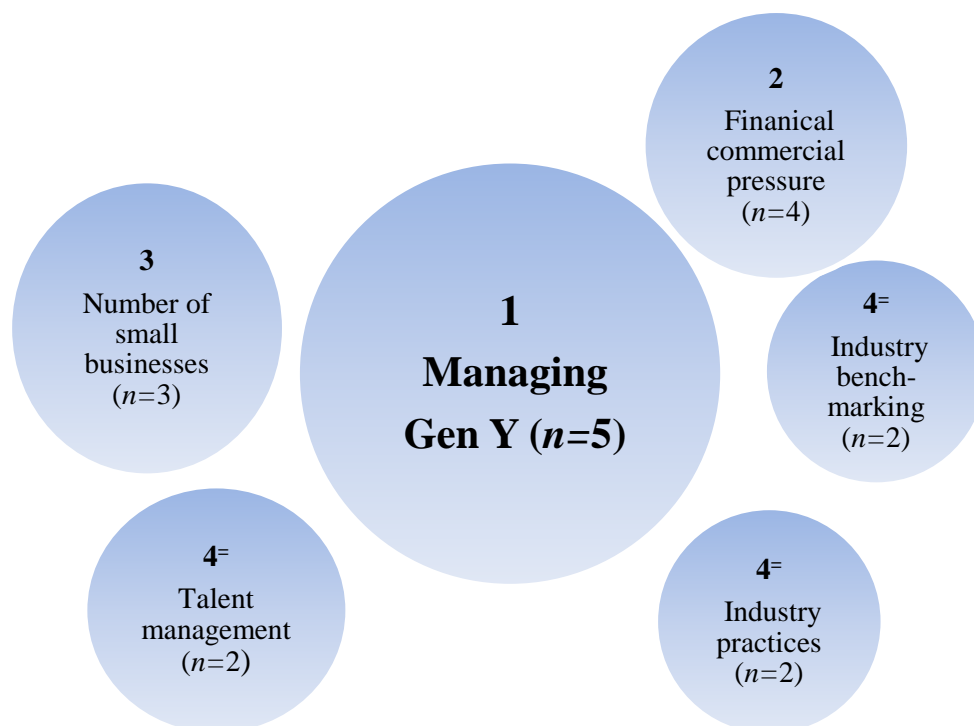
The teachers described challenges they feel the industry as facing. These are relevant to the discussion on success because they have an influence on how the framework for successful hospitality graduates is developed in education and industry.

The range of challenges and key themes identified is summarised in Figure 5.10. Each circle identifies a key challenge facing the hospitality industry in New Zealand, a ranking of its importance based on word pattern analysis of the data, and how frequently that challenge was mentioned in the teacher interview data. For example, managing

Generation Y was rated as the most important challenge facing New Zealand hospitality, with five of the eleven teachers raising this.

The most frequently raised challenge facing the hospitality industry concerns the management, education and integration of Generation Y into work. Generation Y (or Generation Next) are those who were born from 1980 onwards (Loughlin & Barling, 2001; Zemke *et al.*, 2000). Five of the teachers expressed concern over potential management issues created by generational differences in the workforce.

Figure 5.10 Key challenges facing the hospitality industry– an education perspective



Generation Y employees were described by some of the teachers as having a “lack of stability” or “lack of loyalty” and “they want easy life, tick the boxes, do what they can to pass with minimum effort” was also mentioned. T4 commented:

Based on experience and teaching this generation, it is scary to think that these are the people who are going to be managing our industry in five years’ time. They lack initiative which is what industry wants.

Generational differences were also highlighted by T6:

There is a difference in individual communication styles and use of technology between Gen Y employees and Gen X supervisors and managers. This is affecting organisational communication.

T5 added, “Youth are coming into industry with more immaturity based on a lack of experience; dealing with Gen Y is a huge wake-up call.” These comments are consistent with the view that generational differences in the workforce present human resource managers with interesting challenges in people management (Bharwani & Butt, 2012). Findings also recognise that a workforce containing a mix of Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y will have a range of perceptions of work practices, loyalty and career progression (see Cennamo & Gardner, 2008). The teacher data indicated a strong focus is required on the education of hospitality students in generational differences in the workforce. Therefore, for a graduate to be successful, an understanding of different generational attitudes is important as it will contribute to improved interpersonal relationships across generational groups.

Concerns about commercial and financial pressure being placed on hospitality organisations were perceived by the teachers as the second biggest challenge facing New Zealand hospitality. The view was that “commercial pressure puts pressure on systems and resources [which] inevitably leads to cost-cutting exercises in the pursuit of profit delivery”. A number of the teachers commented on the “financial pressure from shareholders to deliver”. The consequences of this pressure are a reduction in resources and lack of opportunity for employment and work experience. T5 offered the following economic perspective of commercial and financial pressures facing the hospitality industry:

The hospitality business is treated like a machine with a focus on keeping margins. For example, hotels’ room rates are low and getting

lower; therefore there is a focus on efficiencies and productivities which strips out conditions, wages and enjoyment of work in the industry. It is a downward spiral model. Employers can't afford the wages due to low yields and not charging higher rooms rates as this will put off customers. Hotels becoming too competitive by dropping price and not adding value to the customer experience. Hotels are becoming too standardised and therefore the experience for the customer is becoming the same. The industry is being driven by customer choice and price. So now we have an industry saying they can't find good staff and claiming skills shortage. This is self-induced by the industry due to lower wages driven through profit and yield.

Teachers believed that too much focus is being placed on the reinvestment of profit to other areas of the business and not into higher wages or training, this is therefore damaging the level and quality of hospitality offered. T5 suggested that hotels are becoming too standardised, and therefore adopt the business strategy to reduce the price rather than add value through experience. Price reduction reduces the opportunity for profit and therefore places financial pressure on meeting financial targets. However, if the approach were to focus on customer experience, there would be no need for price reduction, as customers would receive value for money.

The teachers' perceptions are consistent with the view that value can be added to hospitality experience through employees and their interaction with customers (Hemmington, 2007). The teachers feel that hospitality graduates can provide creative and innovative ways to enhance customer experience, and they need opportunities for productive work-integrated learning, as observed by Richardson (2008). It is also believed by the teachers that cooperation between hospitality stakeholders (industry and education) in the work-integrated learning of students contributes to the success of both the graduate and business organisation. This view is consistent with Cecil *et al.* (2010). For graduates to be successful in hospitality, they need to understand how to be creative and innovative in a customer-service environment, and have a range of techniques for providing a positive and rewarding experience for customers.

The teachers perceive that a reduction of employment and work-experience opportunities is being caused by the “pursuit of profit delivery” (T5), which will decrease graduates’ chances of becoming successful, as they will be unable to demonstrate and refine their skills and enhance their employability. An important part of a hospitality degree is the provision of work experience in order for students to implement and refine skills acquired through education (Ring *et al.*, 2009). In addition, work-integrated learning opportunities are a vital part of enhancing hospitality students’ employability (Spowart, 2011).

The dominance of the New Zealand hospitality industry by small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) also concerned teachers: “New Zealand hospitality is largely dominated by small businesses” which have “differing standards and inconsistency in quality leading to a poor reputation for the industry to graduates”. It was felt by some teachers that “there was a lack of general understanding and operational experience amongst small business owners” largely driven by a “lack of qualifications and knowledge”. Three interviewees noted that “the amount of small businesses presents a lack of development opportunities” for graduates entering the hospitality industry.

The third area of concern related to industry practices, as some believed that a review of business thinking in the hospitality industry is required. This was commented on by T6 who noted, “More social responsibility is needed from the industry in respect of pay, working conditions, and hours.” Other comments were made that the hospitality industry needs to “review the business processes” and “people management”. It was commented that “industry need to be honest and address the quality of work in terms of pay and working conditions”. These comments suggest that if the industry takes more social responsibility over the working environment then it may attract more graduates.

This, in turn, could allow more opportunities for organisational and individual growth, leading to more success.

Closely linked to a review of industry practice, is the concept of benchmarking qualifications in hospitality against those in other industry sectors. Some of the teachers raised this as an issue, bemoaning “a lack of correlation between the degree and the industry”. T3 described inequities in qualifications in hospitality compared with those for other industries:

For example, if you want to be an Environmental Health Officer you need to have an applied science degree; for nursing you have to have a nursing degree. To be a hospitality manager, you don't have to have a degree.

Benchmarking involves setting high standards of excellence and recognising what is required to meet the set standards (Nassar, 2012). The process of benchmarking also concerns the establishment of best practice (Elmuti & Kathawala, 1997) and is a valuable tool for organisational improvement (Nassar, 2012). Some teachers considered it should be best practice for hospitality managers to have a degree. Effective benchmarking is a contributing factor towards enhanced organisational performance and therefore becoming more successful (Fuller, 1997). The establishment of qualification benchmark standards in the hospitality industry would lead to improvements in quality and problem solving in organisations and in turn, improved opportunities for success of organisations and individuals (Nassar, 2012). However, benchmarking requires collaboration and more correlation between hospitality education and industry standards; as noted by T6: “We need to use industry more and team up. University is there to improve strategy, skills thinking and brain growth and analyse information. Then we need to partner with industry.”

Some of the teachers suggested that more collaboration and understanding between hospitality education providers and those working in the industry would address many of the issues raised. Increased collaboration between the hospitality industry and education providers would provide a better understanding of the skills, competencies and qualities required of graduates. Collaboration between hospitality education and industry would also enhance the quality and reputation of a degree among industry professionals as they would be engaged with the learning process. Benchmarking is a learning process that requires review and evaluation of how best practice standards are set in different disciplines (Cox, Mann, & Samson, 1997). Hospitality can learn from benchmarking in other contexts (e.g. engineering or nursing) in order to establish clear achievable goals for students to aspire to on their path to success.

The teachers also raised an issue over hospitality talent management. Talented individuals tend to be more recognisable than others in an organisation, as they exceed expectations and are often seen as future managers (Baum, 2008). Some interviewees were concerned over the apparent inability of hospitality organisations to adequately develop and encourage these exceptional graduates entering the industry; for example:

Employers want to see people with passion and enthusiasm and the graduates have this when they leave university. Then what happens is that this passion and enthusiasm is battered out of them by the quantity of work and the nature of the work for very little in return (T1).

and:

I've seen wonderful talented students born for hospitality with a deep sensitive ability in interpersonal skills get put into 'machines' and put into repetitive soulless jobs with long hours and poor pay and it crushes them, they lose spirit and leave (T6).

Some felt that there was a lack of "ability to develop and encourage individuals" and in general there was "little done to encourage the talent of individuals". Some felt that this

could be improved through better collaboration between the industry and education providers, as previously discussed. Graduates are more likely to become successful when they are studying in an environment that nurtures their skills and talents (Baum, 2008).

Finally, the teachers anticipated potential threats to the New Zealand hospitality industry arising from the impact of culture and language. T4 noted, “Fancy coming all the way to New Zealand for a unique experience only to be served by someone from your own culture or a different one.” T7 also commented on the “cultural difficulty of matching the service to other countries’ guests’ needs. For example, the Americans are demanding and want to be served by a New Zealander.” These comments raise the issue of the authenticity of hospitality in New Zealand in respect to visitors’ cultural expectations. Data from the teachers’ interviews suggest that success in hospitality in New Zealand requires an element of authenticity.

It was also noted that advances in technology were “leading to changes in the workplace and higher expectations of the speed of service”. It was felt that the “global phenomenon of social media was changing the way we teach and learn hospitality” and that “teachers could potentially become ‘out of touch’ with the students and technological advances”. It is important for teachers to stay technologically connected with their students in order to maximise the development of the critical factors required for success.

5.9 Hospitality graduate development: an education perspective

The teachers were questioned on their understanding and perceptions of the nature of hospitality higher education and graduate development. Data will provide an insider perspective on focal areas for the development of a successful hospitality graduate. From a wider perspective, it allows the study to recommend a framework of skills and

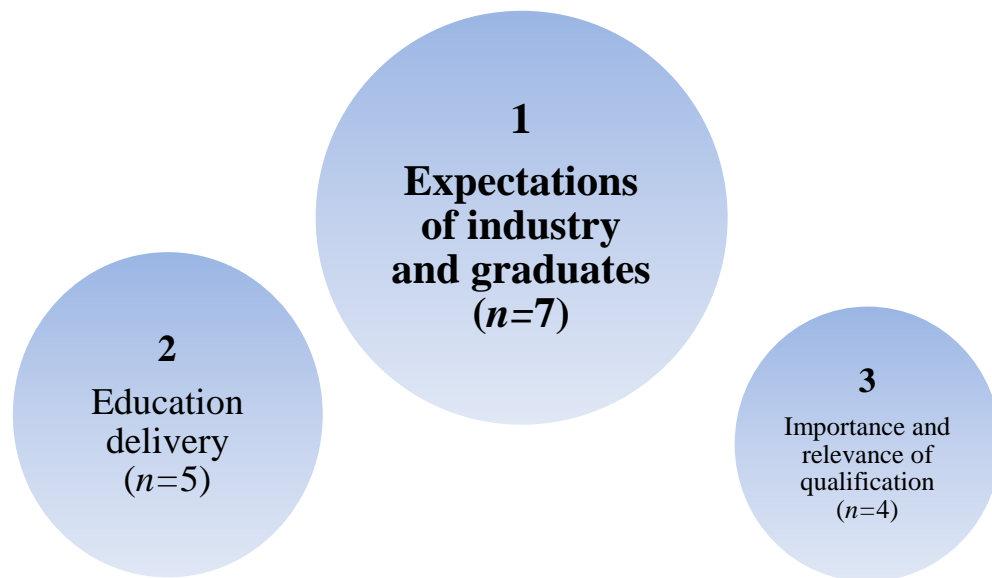
qualities that can be integrated into hospitality graduate education in New Zealand. This section explores the teachers' perspectives on the relationship between hospitality education and industry, and the delivery of hospitality education.

When initially exploring the relationship between education and industry, T1 commented on a possible mismatch stating, "Industry seems to want us to focus on developing passion and commitment in our graduates; however, this is not higher education's main focus." A thematic analysis of the data revealed all eleven teachers perceived differences in perspective between the education providers and industry; these differences are summarised in Figure 5.11. Each circle identifies a perceived difference between the education providers and industry, a ranking of its importance based on word pattern analysis of the data, and how frequently that difference was mentioned in the teacher interviews. For example, expectations of industry and graduates were rated as the most significant difference, with seven of the eleven teachers raising this in their interviews.

T6 described the expectations that industry has of hospitality graduates: "They want a 'super being', a 'super graduate'." A similar perception of the unachievable expectations of industry was offered through this comment:

Employers want the 'holy grail', a graduate who can do it all.
Employers want people to come in and do a job with a minimum
amount of input from themselves. I often get the impression that the
industry just needs frontline fodder for the coal face (T4).

Figure 5.11 Differences between the hospitality industry and hospitality education – an education perspective



A comment was made that, “There is the age-old argument that employers expect the students to be readily equipped for business.” This perception is consistent with recent research finding that employers want work ready graduates (see Spowart, 2011), and frequent references were made by the teachers to industry’s expectations that graduates will be equipped with work-ready skills, maturity and a good work ethic. Further evidence of the divide between hospitality education and industry in New Zealand was offered by T4:

There appears to be a dichotomy between what the industry are looking for and expect and what we are doing at the university. A mismatch between what we teach and what the industry are looking for. What are industry looking for? If the industry employ on low wages, what do they expect to get for their money? It appears that the hospitality in general want hundreds of people with a work ethic to do long hours and mundane jobs for low cost.

Conversely, instead of industry having expectations that are too high, it could be that the graduates’ expectations are too high and they need to be more realistic. The following comments emphasise this:

Graduates need to understand that they need to go into the industry and work up. Maybe there is too much of an expectation that they will go into the industry at a higher position than they think. Maybe the expectation of our BIHM graduates is too high, but also it could be that the industry is threatened by degrees and degree students (T7).

Students need to know the levels of expectations of the positions they are applying for. Maybe students' expectations are too high; realistically they need to start at the bottom in order to advance (T3).

The dominant perspective was that employers seek graduates who are fully developed with the skills necessary for immediate employment. This perspective is consistent with those in recent studies that found that the hospitality industry seeks work-ready graduates equipped with industry-relevant skills (Harkison *et al.*, 2011; Spowart, 2011).

The second key area of difference between industry and education related to the purpose and role of hospitality education delivery. The teachers felt that the hospitality industry did not fully understand the delivery of higher education; for example:

Industry sees a disparity between what AUT offers and what they require in terms of education. Industry doesn't quite get us and doesn't quite know what they want also (T4).

A similar point was raised by T6: who considered that the focus of a hospitality degree is to support lifelong learning and provide an individual with the ability to reflect and learn from experience. Some teachers felt that industry needs to accept this responsibility to allow graduates to cultivate new ideas and not "to be put to work at the coal face". One noted that "the qualifications offered through a university are not a perfect fit for the hospitality environment and have a different focus" and another that "higher education has a responsibility and accountability to develop skills for lifelong learning". The perceived mismatch between industry and teachers on the delivery of hospitality education was summarised by T8: "Industry want training and intensity of real world experience, but the university is about long-term education".

Two teachers suggested reasons for the perceived mismatch between education and industry, commenting that “a university needs to respect rules” and “education needs to respect processes”. These perceptions suggest that hospitality education is bound by policy and universities are sometimes inflexible and unable to deliver the type of education industry requires. This inflexibility was noted by one teacher:

Sometimes in organisations, decision making can be very inhibited as you always have to involve others in the process in relation to customer service. Sometimes it is necessary to overstep the delegated authority to deal with situations direct and take the initiative to deal with issues quickly and directly. This has organisational consequences as one is not following the rule and regulations. It follows that individuals need to be prepared to overstep the line to solve problems. Education cannot be seen to encourage students to do this as it shows a disrespect for the industry rules and regulations and it can be dangerous to encourage students in relation to customer service to ‘go for it’. But how are we then expected to provide the development of initiative which the industry craves? (T5)

The key issue appears to be about building flexibility into hospitality higher-education curricula. Increased flexibility within a curriculum provides more opportunities to meet students’ learning needs (Asher, 2005). The creation of more opportunities to enhance student learning, in particular work-based learning (Asher, 2005), contributes to the educational development of a successful hospitality graduate.

In addition to curriculum flexibility, teachers thought the hospitality industry lacked an understanding of the relevance of a hospitality degree, as illustrated by these comments: “Employers do not recognise the importance of a degree” and “There is the need for wider acceptance of the abilities of the young qualified graduates entering the industry.” Perhaps this is because degrees in hospitality are relatively new qualifications and, as T7 noted, “You don’t necessarily have to have a degree to be a great manager and there are a lot of people like this in the industry at present.” Other participants raised the issue of the relevance of a degree as an industry specific qualification and a lack of industry benchmarking. It was perceived that the hospitality “industry understand some

qualifications like 706/1 (City and Guilds vocational trade (craft) qualification) etc. but do not understand what a degree is”. One teacher commented that the hospitality industry recognises and values vocational or craft-based qualifications, such as City and Guilds culinary qualifications, but some operators do not understand the relevance or level of a degree.

Three teachers questioned the relevance of a degree for hospitality; they noted that even if you had a degree, “you still enter at the bottom and work your way up”. There was also a general perception that in New Zealand, graduates were expected to enter the industry at the frontline and work their way up through the organisation, and that they had to demonstrate management ability despite having a degree. It was noted by T5 that this situation in New Zealand is culturally different from that in other countries:

The culture of expectations being generated in Europe and the UK is different to here. Graduates from good hotel schools enter the industry with a certain management mind-set and when they move up to the top they don't expect their recruits to work up from scratch. The attitude of companies here in New Zealand is different. Managers in the UK tend to have degrees; here they don't. Therefore the graduates are viewed as a threat to current managers as they had to 'work up the ranks'. This took a long time and they want to hold on to what they've got. There is a 'I started at the bottom, so you have to as well' attitude. There appears a difference in the expectation between this UK model and NZ model. In the UK, a high-quality degree will get a junior management role. Industry expects AUT BIHM graduates to enter at the frontline. To enter at the bottom and work up.

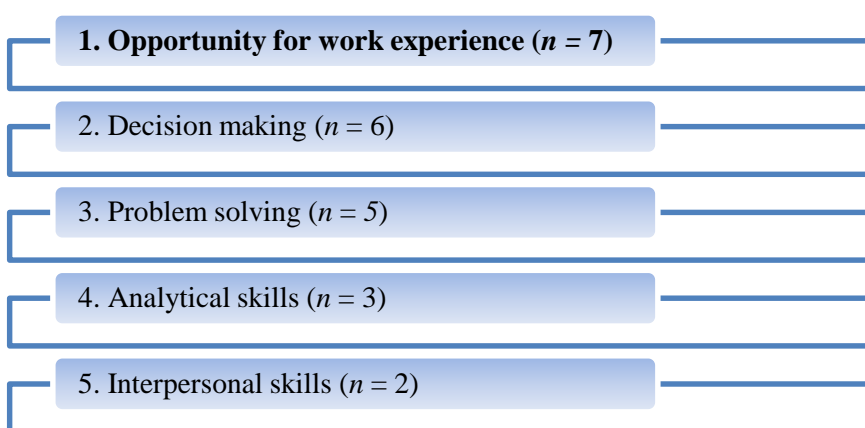
Despite this, two teachers commented that a degree provides “a fast track ... to move through the industry very quickly” and an opportunity to “move quicker in a large corporation”.

5.10 Education for hospitality success – key components

The teachers were asked about their understanding of the key components of educational development and preparation of graduates for hospitality (i.e. education delivery) and how these elements should be delivered. Data analysis of the teachers'

interviews allowed the development of a profile of skills, competencies and qualities that this stakeholder group felt should be a part of hospitality teaching and learning. Figure 5.12 presents the top five ranked key factors perceived to be essential for hospitality graduates' education for success. The factors in Figure 5.12 were ranked according to word frequency in the interview data.

Figure 5.12 Factors essential in hospitality education – a teachers perspective



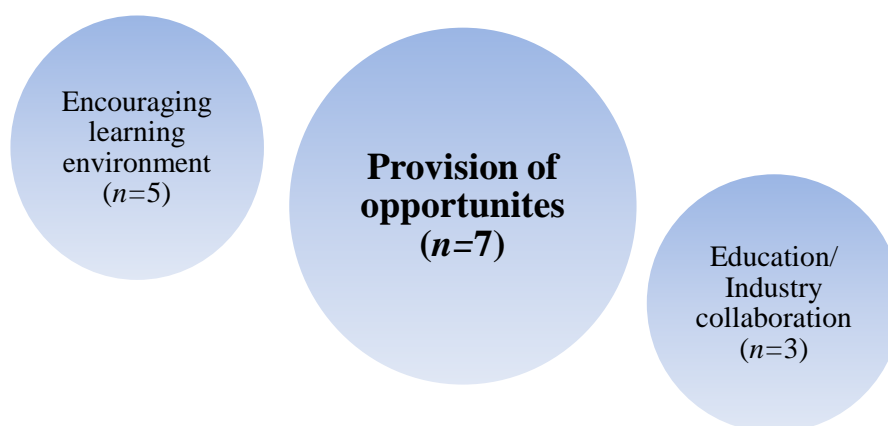
Seven participants felt that a key component of hospitality education relates to experience. References were made to a “combination of study and experience”, the “need for experience while doing studies” and the “opportunity for experience”. Some teachers commented that students should be encouraged to incorporate relevant work experience with their studies and that structured work experience was a useful step in the learning process. This finding is consistent with and backs up a number of studies arguing for the integration of work experience into degrees. Ring *et al.* (2009) stated that the delivery of and opportunity for work experience and internship is an integral part of a degree. Collaboration between education providers and industry improves professional development (Breen, 2002). Spowart (2011) supported this argument by calling for work-integrated learning opportunities to be an integral part of a curriculum to enhance students' employability. Richardson (2008) also noted that work experience is an important part of a hospitality degree and should be productive (i.e. the work

experience is beneficial and provides maximum opportunity for the student to apply learnt knowledge in the workplace).

The remaining four components in Figure 5.12 are generic skills that Christou (2000) and Raybould and Wilkins (2006) consider to be in demand in the hospitality industry. The findings in Figure 5.12 are consistent with the view that employers generally require graduates with transferable skills such as problem-solving skills (see Raybould & Wilkins, 2005; 2006).

Data from the teachers' interviews is consistent with the findings of Raybould and Wilkins (2005, 2006), who found generic skills development is more relevant for hospitality graduates, and technical skills are becoming less important. The development of successful hospitality graduates will emerge from a curriculum that can develop flexibility and focus on the development of generic skills (Asher, 2005; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). The teachers' views on the key focus areas in delivering hospitality education are presented Figure 5.13.

Figure 5.13 How hospitality education should be delivered – a teachers perspective



The most significant focus area that emerged is the need to provide opportunities for students to express themselves and develop specific skills. Some teachers believed that increased opportunities for the students to demonstrate learnt skills, either in the academic environment or through work experience, is a key requirement in becoming a successful graduate. The key skills for success in hospitality that emerged from the data were problem solving and decision making. Most considered more opportunities were needed for students to develop management capabilities, and to be able to think and develop “problem solving mind-sets for application in the industry”. One thought need for “the provision of environments that reflected industry to support the development of life skills” and “encourage creativity, initiative and passion for the industry”. Teachers feel that students should be given the opportunity to demonstrate their “ability to manage a business”.

The next main focus area was the teaching and learning environment. Some teachers felt that this should be “student centred” and “provide less focus on technical skill development and more on generic”. They also said the learning environment needed to change to “reflect the real world” and “encourage and support passion and enthusiasm for the industry”. One teacher commented that “the papers on the degree are too restrictive to encourage and develop passion for hospitality”. Other comments included the need for the teaching and learning environment to “be fun, positive and encouraging to develop maturity” and to encourage “initiative, creativity and passion”.

Another reference was made to the need for more collaboration between education providers and the industry: if the “learning environment was to reflect the industry as best as possible” then the relationship between industry and education should be improved. Two participants noted that through more collaboration between education and industry the status of the degree amongst employers would be raised. Increased

collaboration provides a better understanding of the role and purpose of hospitality education towards the development of a successful hospitality graduate. Collaboration between education providers and the industry can be improved through effective partnerships such as advisory boards, and constructive work-integrated learning programmes such as cooperative education.

5.11 Summary of the teachers' perspective

From the teachers' perspective there are three main components of a successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand: passion, interpersonal skills and personal attributes. The development of a successful hospitality graduate is based on human resource management related skills (Guerrier & Deery, 1998; Kay & Moncarz, 2004; Kim, 2006; Riegel & Dallas, 1998; Singh *et al.*, 2007), and interpersonal ability is regarded as a key requirement for the hospitality industry (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005; 2006). The emerging evidence relates to the concept of passion and how it is regarded as a focal point for hospitality students to become successful.

The teachers' findings produce new evidence that can be used to inform the development of successful graduates. As with the industry representatives, the teachers substantiate the claim of a specific approach to hospitality in New Zealand, compared to that in other countries. The uniqueness of 'Kiwi' hospitality requires recognition in hospitality education programmes in New Zealand to promote a greater understanding of hospitality philosophy based on strong cultural principles (e.g. the Maori concept of Manaakitanga). This will promote the cultural and philosophical development of students in a holistic approach to hospitality education.

The teachers also perceived success in hospitality to be intrinsically orientated, as opposed to financially focused (Peacock, 1995). The teachers highlighted the notion that success in hospitality is related to being happy and having a good work-life balance.

The teachers identified that the key driver to achieving this intrinsic perspective of success, is not just about the development of technical and interpersonal skills, but in a new field – a passion for hospitality. The findings, therefore, suggest that motivation for success in hospitality is more likely to be intrinsic rather than extrinsic, and that passion is a quintessential motive for being successful in hospitality.

This presents a new direction for hospitality education in relation to typical hospitality degree content, which means introducing new pedagogical approaches to hospitality such as integrating the dimensions of passion into teaching. In addition, the teachers presented a different view of passion to that of the industry participants. They perceived passion as a ‘desire to please’ in contrast to ‘a passion to serve’. The desire to please is associated with the construct of harmonious passion (see Perrewe *et al.*, 2014), whereas the passion to serve is more closely linked to the construct of vocation (see Dik & Duffy, 2009).

Notably the teacher’s data contains new evidence that there is no significant divide or mis-match between education and industry as identified in other studies (See Harkison *et. al.*, 2011; Spowart, 2011). The teachers perceived that essential factors in hospitality education should be opportunities for work experience and problem solving (see Figure 5.12), as agreed by industry (see Figure 4.8). In addition, the teachers perceived, along with industry participants, that there is much to be done regarding the retention of talent in the hospitality workplace. The common ground is therefore the new direction of integrating the dimension of passion into hospitality higher education with a view to sustaining passion in hospitality employees and, therefore, combat issues of retention and turnover.

Chapter 6. Students: Findings and Discussions

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from and discussions relating to the student survey. The chapter combines qualitative and quantitative data to present a higher-education-student perspective on what makes a successful hospitality graduate.

6.2 Demographic profiles and backgrounds

One hundred and sixty-five students out of a survey population of 266 responded to the self-completion questionnaire. Of the respondents, 127 (77%) were female and 38 (23%) male. The gender balance was further analysed in relation to the levels of papers being studied (i.e. first-, second- or third-year papers). The purpose of this was to establish if there were any gender bias across the papers. Table 6.1 outlines the gender analysis of the respondents across each year of the BIHM. Across all three years of the survey population there is a clear dominance of females over males. The results of this study therefore reflect a more feminine perspective than masculine, and indicate that perhaps females and males have different understanding of what success means and how it is achieved.

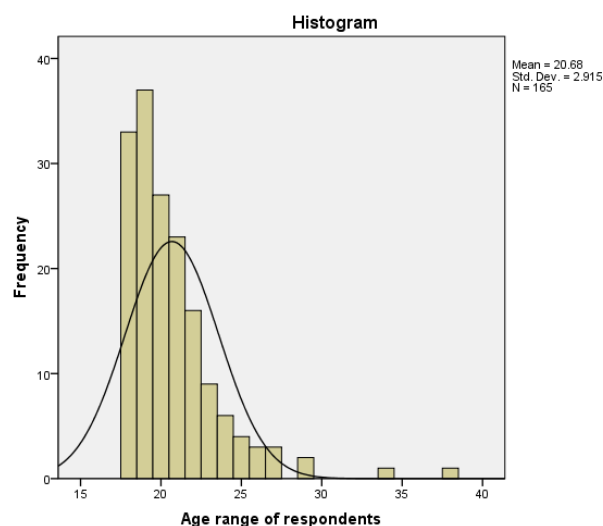
Table 6.1 Gender analysis of the student respondents and the levels of papers being studied

Level of paper	Number of students	Gender	
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
First year	68 (41.2%)	16 (23.5%)	52 (76.5%)
Second year	61 (37.0%)	15 (25.6%)	46 (74.4%)
Third year	36 (21.8%)	7 (19.4%)	29 (80.6%)
Total respondents	165 (100%)	38 (23.0%)	127 (77.0%)

The students' ages ranged from 18 to 38, with a mean age of 20.68 years (see Figure 6.1). The mode was 19 years (22.4%), and 72.7% were aged between 18 and 21. Most were born from 1980 onwards and can therefore be classified as Generation Y – the

dominant generation now entering the workforce (Loughlin & Barling, 2001; Zemke *et al*, 2000).

Figure 6.1 Age of students who responded to the survey



The age range and gender composition of the students in this study is consistent with the comparative age and gender profile of New Zealand hospitality workers (see Table 6.2). The profile of New Zealand hospitality employees is female dominant (62.5%) and has a high percentage of workers under the age of 24.

Table 6.2 Comparative age and sex profile of New Zealand hospitality industry workers

Age	Hospitality industry		All industries	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
15–19	7.0%	13.8%	3.6%	3.3%
20–24	6.5%	10.6%	4.8%	4.3%
25–29	4.2%	5.8%	4.7%	4.2%
30–34	3.5%	5.0%	5.5%	4.9%
35–39	3.2%	5.0%	6.1%	5.5%
40–44	3.0%	5.6%	6.5%	6.1%
45–49	2.9%	5.3%	6.1%	5.9%
50–54	2.5%	4.5%	5.3%	4.9%
55–59	2.3%	3.7%	4.7%	4.1%
60–64	1.4%	2.0%	3.1%	2.3%
65+	1.1%	1.0%	2.6%	1.5%
Total	37.5%	62.5%		

Source: (Department of Labour, 2010)

Although this study draws participants from AUT hospitality students and not the general labour force, the sample used is a good representation of the New Zealand hospitality industry having a high proportion of 19 – 24 year olds and more females than males. These findings are consistent with other gender diversity studies in hospitality that indicate the industry is comprised of a larger proportion of females than males, (Kara, 2012; Kara, Muzaffer & Magini, 2012), and indicates possible differing gender perceptions towards working in hospitality.

6.3 Degree status and work experience

The majority of respondents were studying level-one (41.2%) and level-two (37%) papers (see Table 6.1). As students' progress through a degree, they increase in their maturity and decision making about their career choices (Richardson, 2009b). The level at which students are studying on their course could therefore influence their perception of success and being successful.

Nearly half (48.5%) of the students in this study indicated they were currently working in the hospitality industry at the time of the survey. In the context of this research, 48.5% of the survey population represented a considerable proportion of students involved in work-related experience. This is significant, as nearly half of the survey population were able to provide a "real" work-experience perspective to their responses on success in hospitality. Moreover, of those who stated they were not currently working, a significant proportion (61.8%) indicated they had worked in the hospitality industry in the past six months.

Those who were working at the time of the survey had a wide range of job roles (Table 6.3), with most employed as waiting staff. Twenty-four students (15%) had two jobs. 11 were in supervisory positions, and one in senior management. Only two participants were in non-hospitality related jobs.

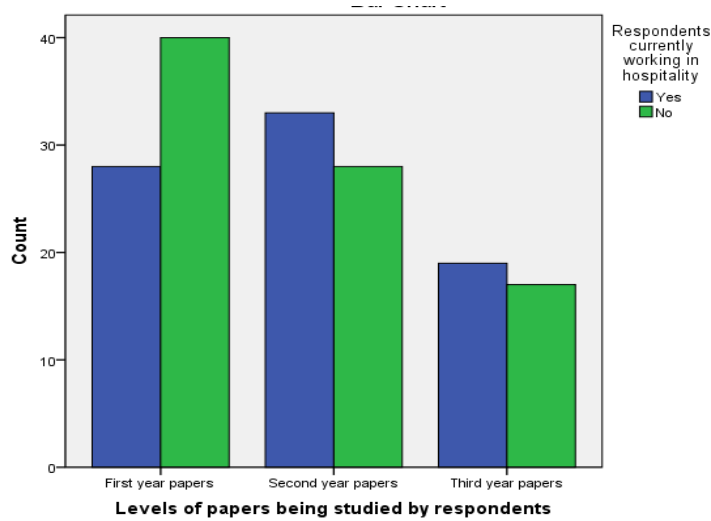
Table 6.3 AUT Student work experience employment roles

Identified job role	Number of students
Waiting staff	48
Foodservice supervisor	6
Chef	4
Barista	4
Hotel receptionist	3
Bar tender	3
Restaurant manager	3
Contract catering	2
Conference and banqueting	2
Retail assistant	1
Accounting	1
Duty manager	1
Human resources administrator	1
Senior management	1
Total	80

The majority of roles in Table 6.3 are frontline roles (interactive service jobs with direct contact between employees and customers (Nickson *et al.*, 2005). This is significant because the aesthetic skills (appearance and attitude) of frontline employees are an important aspect of company image (Warhurst & Nickson, 2007). In this context, and as many students in the study were employed in frontline roles, aesthetic skills development therefore becomes an important part of the educational process of a successful hospitality graduate.

Data were analysed by work experience against level of paper being studied. A basic comparison of student numbers working against those not working was conducted at each stage of the degree (Figure 6.2). The purpose of this was to identify patterns between stages of the degree and student employment. The analysis showed that the proportion of students working at the time of the survey was greater for those studying second- and third-year papers (see Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2 Students currently working in hospitality by level of paper being studied



This finding indicates a possible shift in attitude between first-year students and second- and third-year students. There are possible reasons for this such as the realisation of students that as they progress in their studies there is a need for extra income to support study costs or offset loan repayments, but this remains conjecture. The main reason, however, could be the need for work experience as a requirement to complete the final component of the BIHM degree at AUT. Students are required to undertake a cooperative education paper before they graduate, which requires them to have a work placement to complete their project. The increase in numbers of students working (Figure 6.2) in the second and third stages of the degree could reflect increased numbers of students preparing for their cooperative education paper.

6.4 Does the degree improve chances of employment?

Over three quarters of the students surveyed felt that completion of the BIHM degree would improve their chances of employment with a further 21.8% who felt unsure and only 3% felt the degree would offer no advantage. This indicates a strong perception that their degree will enhance employment opportunities.

Data were further analysed by comparing data across each year of the degree to see if there were any significant change in perceptions. As Figure 6.3 indicates, there was a positive response from each year cohort of students. More than 70% of students in each year level of the degree thought the degree would improve their chances of employment. This suggests a high level of confidence in the qualification they were studying, particularly in the first year as compared to the second and third years. These findings support those of Harkison *et al.* (2011), who found that New Zealand hospitality students place considerable value on a hospitality degree. They also found that hospitality students thought that an employee with a degree would offer significant benefits to an employer and have enhanced promotion prospects.

Figure 6.3 Students' perceptions of whether a degree improves chances of employment

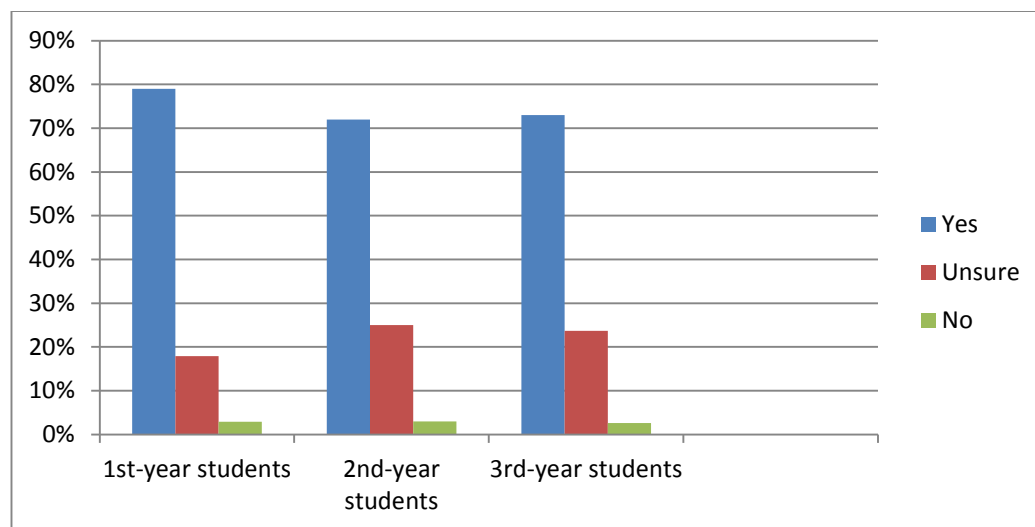


Figure 6.3 indicates a relative consistency of responses across each year of the BIHM. The data, however, reveal a small increase in the proportion from years one to three of students who are unsure about the BIHM increasing their employment chances. The main point is that the 'yes' falls from year one to year 3, hitting a low in year 2. As students progress through the degree, perhaps more is learnt about the hospitality industry and the relevance of a degree qualification. Conversely, Figure 6.3 also reveals

a small decrease in proportion from years one to three of students who believe that the BIHM will increase their employment chances. This decrease in confidence after the second year could possibly indicate that as students progress through the degree and become exposed to different specialist areas of hospitality (e.g. majors in accommodation or event management), their career aspirations change, and therefore they begin to question the relevance of the degree. The challenge then becomes a question of how to develop and interest a student population that is pursuing a qualification that may not be used for a career in the industry for which the qualification is intended.

6.5 Student intentions after graduating

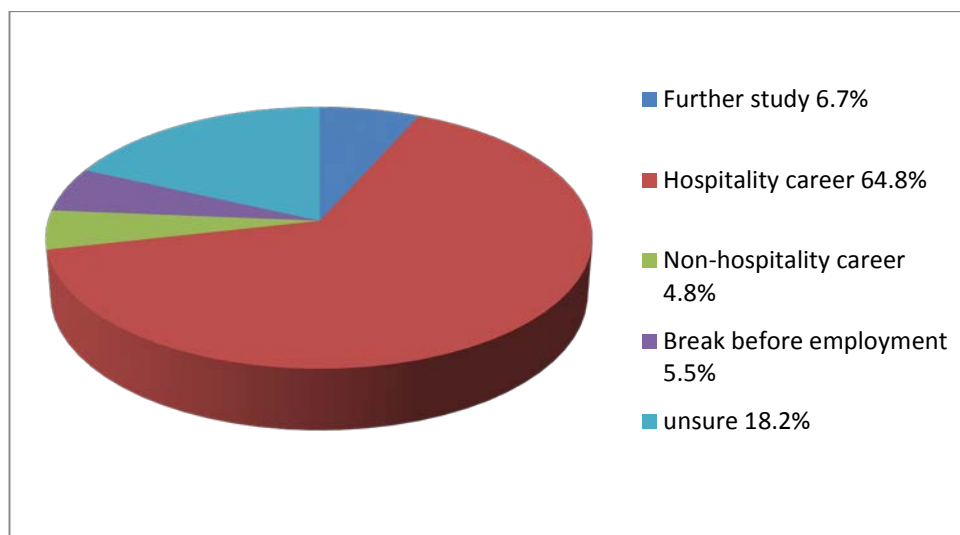
Students were asked about their short-term employment intentions after graduating (Figure 6.4), which allowed the study to establish their attitudes towards hospitality as a career choice. If hospitality students have a positive attitude towards the industry it could provide a foundation for development of the successful graduate, as a positive attitude was indicated by the industry representatives as a key factor for being successful in hospitality.

Recent studies suggest that the majority of undergraduate hospitality and tourism students do not intend in the short term to work in the industry after graduation, and that a chosen career in the industry will not fulfil their needs (Richardson, 2008, 2009b). Richardson's studies, however, focused on students who had completed work experience placement, whereas half of the students in this study had not completed any work experience at the time they were surveyed.

The majority (64.8%) of the students intended to follow a hospitality-related career, indicating a strong belief that they were undertaking qualifications relevant to the hospitality industry, and intended to pursue a career in the industry that their

qualification is designed for. The findings also indicate that the majority of students saw hospitality as a chosen career path upon graduation.

Figure 6.4 The students' intentions after graduating



A small proportion (4.8%) indicated they were not intending to follow a hospitality-related career; they still intended to obtain employment. A few (5.5%) said they were intending to take a break before seeking employment, indicating a longer-term approach to employment. It could be that these students felt they need to gain more experience either through work or travel (e.g. OE). The findings indicate that 69.6% of the students intended to use their degree for employment and career-related purposes after graduating. Almost a fifth (18.2%) were unsure of their intentions with the remainder (6.7%) indicating further study (perhaps progressing to a master's qualification).

6.6 The meaning of success in the workplace

The focus then turned to the students' perceptions of the meaning of success in the workplace. Nearly all (93.9%) of the students answered this question. The top five words and phrases that the students used to describe the meaning of success are ranked in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4 The meaning of success in the workplace – a student perspective

	Word frequency %	Ranking
<i>Meaning of success</i>		
Well paid/good salary	20.4	1
Enjoying work	19.8	2
Achieving goals	14.3	3
Gaining promotion	8.4	4
Having good relationships	7.5	5
Respect, acknowledgement and recognition from others	6.9	6
Happiness	5.3	7
Having position	3.9	8=
Doing your best	3.9	8=
Getting a job	3.5	9
Total	93.9	
Percentage non responses	6.1	
<hr/>		
Total	100.0%	

The dominant perception of students was that being successful in the workplace was being well paid or having a good salary (20.4%); however, they also thought that being successful also depends on enjoying work (19.8%). It is reasonable to assume that happiness and enjoyment at work is more important to students, as these frequencies combined (25.1%) are higher than the descriptor of a well-paid job or good salary (20.4%). The students also thought that goal setting and achievement of goals was strongly linked to success. They placed almost equal value upon gaining promotion (8.4%) and being involved in positive relationships (7.5%) as contributors to success. The sixth-ranked theme related to how they were valued by others in the organisation (6.9%). Students also indicated (despite its relatively low ranking) that respect, acknowledgement and recognition from others in the workplace was a key factor to being successful. Equal ranking was given to “doing your best” (3.9%) and “having position” (3.9%). Students indicated that “doing your best” related to ability and

demonstrating capability, whereas “having position” was related to being the manager or owner of an organisation or business.

One significant theme (3.5%) associated with being successful was “getting a job”. This possibly reflects the mind-set of respondents as undergraduates, that being successful is obtaining qualifications that lead to full-time employment. Other factors that could influence this perception are that jobs are seen as difficult to obtain and for younger people, simply getting a job is viewed as a priority.

The analysis of student responses and presentation of Table 6.4 was informed by Peacock’s (1995) framework for success in hospitality. The students’ responses and key words were coded through thematic analysis and allocated to one of six key focus areas (see Table 6.5) seen as necessary for success in the hospitality workplace (Peacock, 1995). Based on Peacock’s classifications, student responses such as “satisfaction”, “happiness” and “doing your best” were categorised as internal factors, whereas responses such as “making money”, “profit” and “high salary” were regarded as financial. Response relating to staff relationships were identified by references to “feedback from peers” and “teamwork”, while examples of a superior relationship included “promotion” and “acknowledgement from bosses”. Responses such as “quality” and “meeting standards” were viewed as operational and references to the guests or customers were classified as a customer focus.

This analysis provided a similar outcome to the word frequency analysis in Table 6.4, and it is clear that the dominant student opinion (see Table 6.5) was that success in the workplace is strongly linked to an internal focus (something of intrinsic value and felt personally). The students valued intrinsic aspects, using words such as ‘happiness’, ‘good relationships’, ‘respect’ and ‘recognition from others’, over a ‘financial focus’. A customer focus was rated as the least important (2.4%) by the students, and they

perceived an operational focus (10.9%) to be more important than relationships with staff (9.1%) and superiors (7.9%).

Table 6.5 Classification of the students' perceptions of what success in the workplace means

	Word frequency (<i>n</i>)	Word frequency %	Ranking
<i>Classification of success</i>			
Internal focus	80	48.5	1
Financial focus	25	15.2	2
Operational focus	18	10.9	3
Staff relationship focus	15	9.1	4
Superior relationship focus	13	7.9	5
Customer focus	4	2.4	6
Total	155	93.9	
percentage non responses	10	6.1	
Total	165	100.0%	

These findings offer a different perspective to Peacock's (1995) study. He found that hospitality management focal points for success should concentrate on finance, customers and the operation. In contrast, students in this study thought that the focus for success in the workplace, not necessarily in hospitality, should be on personal attributes and the fulfilment of the individual. Findings in this study, from hospitality students two decades later, therefore provide a different generational perspective to success. The comparison of these two studies suggests generational differences in the perception of success in the workplace that success in business is measured more extrinsically than intrinsically.

A comparison was made between the different year groups of the degree to see if there were any differences in the focus on being successful. This would indicate if there were changes to the perception of success from students at different levels of their degree. As

Table 6.6 indicates, the dominant classification of success across each year of the degree is an internal focus.

Table 6.6 Classification of the students' perceptions of the meaning of success in the workplace year level of BIHM papers

	1st year (n = 68)	Ranking	2nd year (n = 61)	Ranking	3rd year (n = 36)	Ranking
<i>Classification of success</i>						
Internal focus	64.7%	1	57.3%	1	47.2%	1
Financial focus	14.7%	2	16.4%	2	11.1%	3 ⁼
Staff relationship focus	10.3%	3	6.6%	4	8.3%	4
Operational focus	5.9%	4	13.1%	3	11.1%	3 ⁼
Superior relationship focus	2.9%	5	3.3%	5 ⁼	19.4%	2
Customer focus	1.5%	6	3.3%	5 ⁼	2.9%	5

There was, however, a notable decreasing trend on the importance students placed on internal focus when the data were compared across the three levels of papers being taken (see Figure 6.2). It is possible that the exposure of students to the hospitality industry, through work experience, alters their perceptions of and attitudes towards employment and career intentions, as found in other studies (see Richardson, 2009a). Therefore, in order to develop a successful hospitality graduate, the management of student work experience needs to focus on establishing a positive experience for students. A positive experience could alter their perceptions and attitudes towards a career in the hospitality industry.

Another notable shift in perceptions of success in the workplace across the paper level was the importance of relationships with their superiors. The increase in importance placed by students studying first-year papers (2.9%) to those studying third-year papers (19.4%) on relationships with superiors demonstrates a change in how success is perceived. It is possible that as hospitality students learn more about the industry, either through education or work experience, they value the importance of a positive relationship with superiors contributing to success in the workplace.

Across the full sample (i.e. not differentiated by year of study) there was a stronger emphasis on operational focus than on customer focus. Across each study year of the BIHM the students perceived customer focus as the least important factor influencing success in the hospitality workplace. This perception could perhaps reflect that a lot of the students do not perceive themselves going into frontline service roles. Alternatively, it may reflect that half of the study population have no hospitality-work-related experience and, therefore, are unable to appreciate the importance of a customer focus to success in hospitality (Peacock, 1995).

In relation to a key objective of this study – the perception of success and being successful in hospitality – some interesting themes were revealed. There was a wide range of often conflicting student perceptions as to what actually makes a successful hospitality person. As Peacock (1995) noted, “success or quality are terms which are grounded in the perception of the user” (p. 48). In the current study, students recognised being successful in the workplace as having a well-paid job or good salary. However, this financial perspective was very closely followed by the perception that success was related to enjoyment at work. Other key themes about being successful at work the students presented were achieving set goals, promotion, having good relationships, happiness, respect and acknowledgement.

Significantly, the meaning of success for the students was very different to the perceptions held by the teacher and industry stakeholder groups. The students quite clearly perceived that success means having extrinsic value associated with being “well paid” or having a “good salary” (see Table 6.4). In contrast, both the industry representatives and teachers perceived that success is related to the intrinsic value of “being happy” (see Tables 4.5 and 5.2 respectively).

The difference in stakeholder perspectives may be attributed to a number of variables. Notably, the student participants were younger than those from the other two stakeholder groups and as they age, their perspective on what success means may alter to a more intrinsic orientation. In addition, just under half of the students in this study (48.5%) had work experience in the hospitality industry, mostly in frontline roles (e.g. waiting staff - see Table 6.3). The other two stakeholder groups, in contrast, were able to draw on their considerable experience in senior management, having already achieved a “well paid” position or having a “good salary”. In this respect, the students had yet to reach this extrinsic goal and therefore their understanding of intrinsic values and success was still developing.

The students’ comparative lack of experience in comparison to participants from the other two stakeholder groups could also indicate that they have not yet fully appreciated what is required to work in hospitality, and therefore not yet able understand the intrinsic values of pursuing a work-life balance and simply being happy. In their defence, however, they did perceive the intrinsic value of enjoyment at work as an important part of success (Table 6.4). Finally, the students’ extrinsic focus on remuneration may have been influenced by the fact that they had not graduated and were therefore used to thinking more in the ‘short term’. Until they were working full-time, it may have been difficult for them to perceive that their degree would result in “getting a job”, achieving a high salary and which means being successful.

6.7 The skills, qualities and competencies of a successful hospitality person

Students were asked to identify and list in order of importance (if they had more than one answer) the skills and qualities they considered necessary for a successful hospitality person. They were asked to *consider* words rather than simply choose and rank from a list using a Likert scale. It was decided that by asking the students to

consider and list the words in order of importance, more depth of thought and reflection would be given to the responses. Out of the total survey population (165 questionnaires) some students indicated more than one answer, which resulted in 191 responses. Data analysis of the responses listed first identified the top 10 factors. Further investigation was then conducted and 26 respondents had offered more than one answer.

In order to present a more definitive set of data in response to this question, the primary and secondary responses were combined for further word frequency analysis. In addition, refinements were made to the categorisation of responses. It was decided that the respondents' use of specific words could be grouped for easier analysis and understanding. Accordingly, "people interaction skills", "social skills" and "people person" were categorised under the term "social awareness skills", as identified in Goleman's work on social intelligence (2006). Interpersonal skills were regarded as a separate category to social awareness as they require application of emotional intelligence (Bar-On & Orme, 2002; Stein, 2000) as well as social intelligence (Goleman, 2006). Using this classification, teamwork skills, therefore, was categorised under interpersonal skills (Bar-On & Orme, 2002). Table 6.7 presents the overall top 10 listed responses from the primary and secondary responses.

Table 6.7 Important skills or qualities for a successful hospitality person – a student perspective

Skill or quality	Word frequency (n)	Word frequency %	Ranking
Good communication	43	22.5	1
Social awareness	38	19.9	2
Customer service	29	15.2	3
Interpersonal skills	21	11.0	4
Personality	15	7.9	5
Knowledgeable	14	7.3	6
Friendly	12	6.3	7
Positive attitude	6	3.1	8
Experience	5	2.6	9
Time management	4	2.1	10=
Conflict resolution	4	2.1	10=
Total	191	100.0%	

Data presented in Table 6.7 show that the students ranked good communication and social awareness as the top two skills or qualities required to be a successful hospitality person, with customer service, interpersonal skills and personality completing the top five.

The findings provide further evidence to support the argument that communication skills are a key requirement for working in hospitality and are regarded as a high priority for students entering hospitality organisations (Emenheiser *et al.*, 1998; Fallows & Steven, 2000; Hai-yan & Baum, 2006). In addition, there is evidence to support the view that the focal point of hospitality education should be on developing generic skills (including communication skills) of students (Hind *et al.*, 2007; Ko, 2010; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). Good communication skills are not only a contributor towards being successful (Robertson, 2007), but also a key component of a competent hospitality person (Meyer, 2006).

The data also support the importance of social awareness for individual success (Goleman, 2006). As early as 1991, it was identified that to be a competent hospitality

person one had to be socially bold (Mullins & Davies, 1991). This opinion is also supported by Ladkin (1999), and Riegel and Dallas (1998). The findings in this study are consistent with these studies and also the work of Witt and Ferris (2003) who identified that social skills lead to improved individual performance and therefore a better chance of achievement. The students' perspectives in Table 6.7 concur with more recent research that has shown that hospitality requires unique social and personal attributes in respect of its unique nature (Dawson *et al.*, 2011). Student findings in the current study highlight the importance of interpersonal skills as an essential factor for hospitality work, and are therefore consistent with findings from other research (Harper *et al.*, 2005; Huang & Lin, 2011; Kay & Russette, 2000; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006).

Students ranked interpersonal skills as the fourth most important skill or quality for a successful hospitality person. The importance of soft or interpersonal skills to improve individual performance in organisations is well documented. Kay and Russette (2000) identified the interpersonal skill of an individual as a hospitality management core competency. Fallows and Steven (2000), Hind *et al.* (2007), Huang and Lin (2011) and, more recently, Lolli (2012) have all added their support to this concept. Interpersonal skills have been rated among the most important skills for entry-level hospitality managers (Chung-Herrera *et al.*, 2003; Tesone & Ricci, 2005). Not only are good interpersonal skills required for effective hospitality, but they are also important for leadership ability in organisations (Chung-Herrera *et al.*, 2003; Huang & Lin, 2011; Kay & Russette, 2000). The current research is consistent with these findings and confirms an earlier observation that interpersonal skills are the most important competency required by industry of hospitality graduates (Mayo & Thomas-Haysbert, 2005; Ruetzler *et al.*, 2011).

Personality was ranked by the students as the fifth most important skill or quality for a successful hospitality person. This finding is consistent with other hospitality student studies which indicate that specific personality traits (good communication skills, strong social awareness) are required for hospitality (Phelan & Mills, 2011), and that personality development is an essential element of being successful in hospitality (Ineson, 2011).

In Table 6.7, four out of the top five ranked skills or qualities perceived by the students to contribute to a person being a success in hospitality are personal attributes (i.e. communication, social awareness, interpersonal skills and personality). The research findings support the argument that personality is a significant quality important for success among students in hospitality (Ineson, 2011; Phelan & Mills, 2011).

6.8 The most important skill set for frontline hospitality

The study is designed to present multiple stakeholder perspectives in response to the research questions. This section presents student perceptions on the importance of technical or generic skills for work in hospitality, which have already been examined in the analysis of data from the other two participant groups. The student data, combined with that from the teachers and industry stakeholders, can be used to inform the role and contribution of university education in the development of a successful hospitality graduate.

Students were given two sets of skills and asked to choose which they viewed as the most important for working in frontline hospitality. Skill sets A and B (Table 6.8) were compiled based on the generic versus technical skills debate in hospitality academia. Each skill set was compiled based on technical and generic skills necessary for working in hospitality as identified in previous research (see Baum, 2002, 2008; Raybould &

Wilkins, 2005, 2006; Spowart, 2011). Skill set A identified technical skills and skill set B, generic skills.

Table 6.8 The most important skill set for working in frontline hospitality – a student perspective

Skill set A (technical)	Skill set B (generic)
Finance and accounting	Initiative
Knowledge of systems	Interpersonal communication
Application of number	Willingness to learn
Writing skills	Solving problems
Knowledge of technology	Being flexible
Practical knowledge	Adapting to change

There was an overwhelming opinion from the students (97%) that skill set B was perceived as the most important for working in frontline hospitality (Table 6.9).

Table 6.9 The most important skill set for working in frontline hospitality – a student perspective

	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percentage
Skill set A (technical)	4	2.4
Skill set B (generic)	160	97.0
Total	164	99.4
Percentage non responses	1	0.6
Total	165	100.0%

There is clear evidence from this data that supports the argument (see Raybould and Wilkins, 2006) that generic skills are perceived as more important by students in relation to front-line hospitality work and graduate development than technical skills. The students place more importance on problem solving, flexibility and interpersonal skills than on knowledge of system, application of number, and writing skills. This raises an interesting challenge as numeracy and literacy skills play a core role in

educational development and are skills still recognised as important for hospitality graduates (Baum, 2006a; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005).

6.9 The nature of the hospitality industry

The teacher and industry participants' perceptions on the nature of the hospitality workplace have already been investigated and therefore a student perspective is required to complete the multiple stakeholder approach to this study. Student perceptions on the nature of the hospitality workplace can influence their understanding of the key skills and competencies deemed necessary for work in hospitality and hence, inform perceptions on the critical factors required to become successful.

Students were also presented with a list of descriptions about the hospitality industry that were based on the perceptions offered by the teacher and industry representative stakeholder groups (Table 6.9). The students were asked to rank each variable on a six-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree).

The evidence presented through the means analysis indicates a primary perception that the hospitality industry is hard work ($m = 5.2$) and not glamorous ($m = 3.3$) (see Table 6.10). The students also, to a lesser degree, view the industry as fast paced ($m = 5.1$) and as a social industry ($m = 5.0$). There is a significant perception amongst the students that hospitality is seen as professional ($m = 4.6$), exciting ($m = 4.7$) and fun ($m = 4.7$). The data reveal that these students had a positive perception of the hospitality industry, but also appreciate it is hard work.

Table 6.10 The students' ranking of the descriptions of the hospitality industry

Hospitality industry perception	Mean response (<i>m</i>)
Hard work	5.2
Fast paced	5.1
Social	5.0
Exciting	4.7
Fun	4.7
Professional	4.6
Dynamic	4.5
Having unsocial hours	4.5
Youthful	4.4
Rewarding	4.3
Profitable	4.1
Poorly paid	3.9
Glamorous	3.3

Note: Mean response (*m*) from a six-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree).

It is interesting to note the relatively low mean response the students gave to the statement that hospitality is poorly paid ($m = 3.9$). It is recognised that the hospitality industry has one of the lowest pay rates in New Zealand (MBIE, 2013; Poulston, 2008; Williamson, 2010). Some have argued that this characteristic tends to create a perceived negative attitude of the nature of hospitality for students entering the industry (Teng, 2008). The thesis findings, however, indicate a different perception and this research paints not such a negative angle over hospitality as being poorly paid. It is possible that this perception is influenced from a part-time employment perspective, as all of the 48.5% of participants who indicated current work experience at the time of study did not have full-time employment. This finding indicates that further research is required to investigate the pay perception to understand why there is less negativity as compared to other studies.

6.10 Qualifications, experience and personality for initial employment

Participants were asked to rank the importance of experience, qualifications and personality in relation to gaining initial employment. Each of the three factors was ranked on a six-point Likert scale (1 = not at all important to 6 = extremely important).

From the mean scores presented in Table 6.11, it is clear the students rated personality ($m = 5.6$) as the most important factor for gaining employment. Gaining experience ($m = 5.0$) was also rated as more important than qualifications ($m = 4.3$). These findings are consistent with Graves (1996) who found that personality is perceived to play a key role in obtaining hospitality employment. The data support the perception that personality development is an important component for new employees entering hospitality (Harkison et al., 2011).

Table 6.11 Key factors for gaining initial employment – a student perspective

Area of importance for gaining employment	Number of responses	Mean response (m)
Personality	163	5.6
Experience	163	5.0
Qualifications	163	4.3

Students acknowledged the importance of gaining experience almost as highly as personality. This concurs with a wide body of research relating to students' perceptions on the importance of experience in obtaining hospitality work (Betts *et al.*, 2009; Crebert *et al.*, 2004); Rainsbury *et al.*, 2002; Reddan, 2008; Smith *et al.*, 2007). The findings indicate that students perceive qualifications to be less important than personality and experience when obtaining work in hospitality.

6.11 The top three factors necessary for success

Students were asked to rank from twelve different factors the top three that they perceived would be most important to contributing towards a successful career. Each of the factors presented to the students had been identified, either through the literature or from the teacher and industry representative interviews. The twelve factors presented to the students were:

- Work ethic
- Attitude
- Business knowledge
- Creativity
- Personality
- Cultural understanding
- Passion
- Critical thinking
- Language skills
- Resilience
- Interpersonal skills, and
- Initiative.

The factors were placed in random order and the students were asked to select three from the list and rank them in order of importance. Word frequency analysis of each student response given for the identified chosen factors placed in order of importance is presented in Tables 6.12, 6.14 and 6.15.

The data presented in Table 6.12 shows the students' ranking of each of the critical factors of success that they had identified as the most important of their chosen three. The students identified passion (28.8%) as the most important factor critical for success in the workplace. Passion was followed by attitude (20.9%), personality (19.7%) and interpersonal skills (18.5%).

Table 6.12 The most important factor for success – a student perspective

Critical factor for success	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percentage	Rank
Passion	47	28.8	1
Attitude	34	20.9	2
Personality	32	19.7	3
Interpersonal skills	30	18.5	4
Work ethic	11	6.7	5
Business knowledge	4	2.4	6
Language skills	2	1.2	7
Cultural understanding	1	0.6	8 ⁼
Critical thinking	1	0.6	8 ⁼
Initiative	1	0.6	8 ⁼
Creativity	0	0.0	9 ⁼
Resilience	0	0.0	9 ⁼
Total	163	100.0%	

The top five ranked critical factors for success in Table 6.12 are either a personal attribute (passion, attitude, personality) or a generic skill (interpersonal skills, work ethic). There is evidence to support the view that students perceive passion as the key factor required for success in the workplace (Bidois, 2009). There is also evidence to support that view that attitude and personality are important qualities required in the workplace and contributors to being successful (see Ineson, 2011; Warhurst & Nickson, 2007). With work ethic and interpersonal skills being ranked as being more important than technical skills (business knowledge and language skills), the students perceive that soft skills will contribute more towards being successful in hospitality. These findings also provide a students' perception that supports an academic view that generic skills should take priority over technical skills in the hospitality higher-education curriculum (Raybould & Wilkins, 2006).

Based on their low ranking in Table 6.12, the students perceive that cultural understanding and resilience are not very important qualities required to be successful in the workplace. In addition, the students place low importance on creativity, initiative and critical thinking. It is possible that the low importance given to these factors is due

to a lack of work experience – 51.5% of students had not worked at the time of the survey, and therefore had not had the opportunity to fully understand these factors. In addition, the majority of students who were working were employed in frontline roles (see Table 6.2) where the level of decision making required is not as complex as in supervisory or management positions.

The students surveyed fell into two distinct groups: those working in hospitality and those not working. It is important to explore the impact of this variable as student responses to what the critical factors are for success in hospitality may vary based on their level of work experience. The data presented in Table 6.13 compares how the students who were working ranked each critical factor for success in hospitality with how the students who were not working ranked the same factors. Note that these factors were the ones that the students had identified as the most important of their chosen three.

Table 6.13 The most important factor for success in the workplace – a comparison of student perspectives based on work experience

Critical factor for success	Frequency (n)	Rank	Critical factor for success	Frequency (n)	Rank
<i>Students working</i>			<i>Students not working</i>		
Passion	21	1	Passion	26	1
Personality	17	2	Interpersonal skills	18	2
Attitude	19	3	Personality	15	3 ⁼
Interpersonal skills	12	4	Attitude	15	3 ⁼
Work ethic	9	5	Business knowledge	3	4
Business knowledge	1	6 ⁼	Work ethic	2	5
Language skills	1	6 ⁼	Language skills	1	6 ⁼
Cultural understanding	0	7 ⁼	Cultural understanding	1	6 ⁼
Critical thinking	0	7 ⁼	Critical thinking	1	6 ⁼
Initiative	0	7 ⁼	Initiative	1	6 ⁼
Creativity	0	7 ⁼	Creativity	0	7 ⁼
Resilience	0	7 ⁼	Resilience	0	7 ⁼
Total	80			83	

Students who were working and those who were not both ranked passion as the most important factor for success in hospitality; however, students who were in work ranked personality and attitude higher than interpersonal skills. It could be argued that students who have hospitality work experience recognise that personality and attitude have an important influence on being successful in the workplace, more so than interpersonal skills. The students with work experience also placed a greater importance on work ethic than those without experience. In contrast, the students without work experience ranked business knowledge higher than work ethic. This could indicate that some students feel that technical skills and an understanding of business operations are important for success, but the perception changes as students undertake work experience. Table 6.14 presents the students' ranking of each of the critical factors of success that they had identified as the second most important of their chosen three.

Table 6.14 The second most important factor for success in workplace – a student perspective

Critical factor for success	Frequency (n)	Percentage	Rank
Interpersonal skills	37	2.7	1
Attitude	26	16.0	2=
Personality	26	16.0	2=
Passion	19	11.7	3
Work ethic	14	8.8	4
Business knowledge	12	7.4	5
Critical thinking	11	6.7	6
Language skills	5	3.1	7=
Initiative	5	3.1	7=
Creativity	3	1.8	8=
Resilience	3	1.8	8=
Cultural understanding	1	0.6	9
Total	163	100.0%	

The top five ranked factors rated as the second most important by the students are the same as in Table 6.12, but in a different order. The highest ranked of the second most important factor perceived by the students as critical for success in the workplace was

interpersonal skills (22.7%). This was closely followed by attitude and personality (equally ranked at 16%). Notably, the technical skills of business knowledge and critical thinking were given more importance by the students than their ranking given in Table 6.12. Again the dominance of personal attributes and generic skills above technical skills is prevalent. Data analysis then focused on the critical factor the students perceived as the third most important factor for success in the workplace (see Table 6.15).

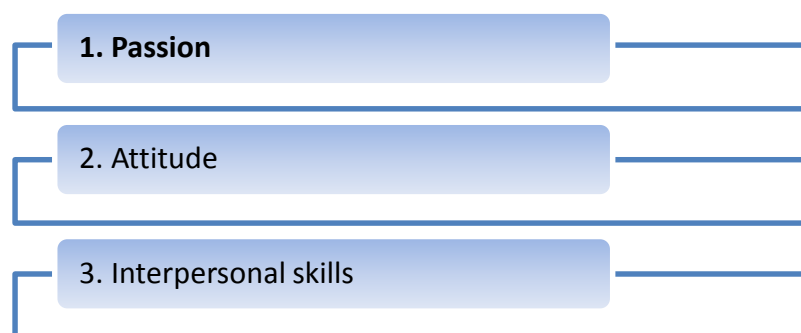
Table 6.15 The third most important factor for success in the workplace – a student perspective

Critical factor for success	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percentage	Rank
Attitude	25	15.4	1 =
Passion	25	15.4	1 =
Interpersonal skills	22	13.6	2
Personality	17	10.4	3
Business knowledge	15	9.3	4
Language skills	12	7.4	5
Work ethic	10	6.2	6 =
Creativity	10	6.2	6 =
Critical thinking	8	4.9	7
Initiative	7	4.3	8
Resilience	6	3.8	9
Cultural understanding	5	3.1	10
Total	163	100.0%	

Once again the top four ranked factors in Table 6.15 are either personal attributes (attitude, passion, personality) or generic skills (interpersonal skills). There is, however, another notable increase in importance given to technical skills: business knowledge and language skills were ranked fifth and sixth, respectively, which are higher rankings than they were given in Tables 6.12 and 6.14. This increase in importance indicates that while the students perceive personal attributes and generic skills as being most important, there is recognition that some technical knowledge is required for success in the workplace.

From the evidence presented, the three most important factors viewed by the students as important for success in the workplace are presented in Figure 6.5.

Figure 6.5 The top three critical factors for success in the workplace – a student perspective



The students found passion as the most important quality required for success in the hospitality industry. Interpersonal skills are perceived by students as a critical factor in respect of success in hospitality and this supports student findings from other studies (see Fallows & Steven, 2000; Hind *et al.*, 2007; Huang & Lin, 2011; Kay & Russette, 2000; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). The data also support the importance of attitude as a critical factor for individuals in hospitality (see Nickson *et al.*, 2003, 2005) and that attitude is regarded as a necessary competency expected in graduates by employers (see Ricci, 2010). The findings support Bidois's (2009, p 30) comment: "The hospitality industry is one driven by passion. To survive and succeed, you have to have an endless supply of this key ingredient."

6.12 Value of degree topic areas

The final part of the student survey asked students to state what topic area of the degree they thought would be the most and least important to their hospitality career. The students were not presented with a list to choose from but asked for their opinion. The reason behind the structure of this question was to try to get the students to reflect upon their degree programme and it was considered that simply choosing from a list would not generate the level of thought and reflection required. The top five most frequently

cited topic areas the students perceived as most valuable to their future career in hospitality are presented in Table 6.16. In contrast, the top five least important topics are presented in Table 6.17.

Table 6.16 The BIHM degree topic areas perceived by the students as being most valuable for their future career in hospitality

Degree topic area	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percentage	Rank
Organisational behaviour and interpersonal skills	24	14.5	1
Event planning, design and management	19	11.5	2
Human resources management	15	9.1	3
Service management	10	6.1	4
Applied food and beverage management (restaurant)	8	4.8	5

The highest-ranked topic area was organisational behaviour and interpersonal skills. Event planning, design and management, along with human resources management and service management were also popular topic areas. The findings contribute to the recognition of the importance placed on interpersonal skills development and the understanding of behaviour in hospitality (Fallows & Steven, 2000; Hind *et al.*, 2007; Huang & Lin, 2011; Kay & Russette, 2000; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006; Riegel & Dallas, 1998; Witt & Ferris, 2003). The students in this study perceive that interpersonal skills development is an essential part of educational preparation for their hospitality career. The development of good interpersonal skills is a key part of becoming employable, and is viewed as a contributing factor to becoming successful (Nickson *et al.*, 2012). The students also placed high value (3rd ranking) on the importance of learning about human resources management (HRM). This perception supports the argument that educational development of soft skills is a critical factor for success in hospitality (Guerrier & Deery, 1998; Kay & Moncarz, 2004; Kim, 2006; Singh *et al.*, 2007).

Table 6.17 The BIHM degree topic areas perceived by the students as being least valuable for their future career in hospitality

Degree topic area	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percentage	Rank
Accounting and finance	21	12.7	1
Academic writing	18	10.9	2
Information communication technology (ICT)	14	8.5	3
Applied food and beverage management (kitchen)	9	5.5	4
Facilities development and design	7	4.2	5

The students clearly perceive accounting and finance to be the least important topic for a career in hospitality (Table 6.17). This was closely followed by academic writing. Information and communication technology (ICT) was ranked in the top five least-valuable topic areas. The top four of the five least-valuable topic areas in Table 6.17 are technical-skills-based topics (accounting, academic writing, ICT and applied food and beverage management). These findings indicate that the hospitality students in this study do not perceive value in technical ability which is consistent with other hospitality student studies (see Baum, 2002; Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). This provides further evidence to support the view that technical skills, while necessary, are not perceived as important for hospitality as generic skills (i.e. interpersonal skills) (Baum, 2006a).

The student findings presented in Tables 6.16 and 6.17 support the argument that interpersonal skills and communication are considered more important than technical proficiencies (Robertson, 2007). The student findings are also consistent with the perception that soft skills are preferred by employers over hard technical skills (Nickson *et al.*, 2005, 2012) and that such skills lead to one becoming more successful (Spowart, 2011). From the findings in this study there is a clear perception from the students, that interpersonal skills and personal attribute development should be an educational focus for a successful hospitality graduate.

6.13 Summary of the student perspective

From the evidence presented in this chapter, it is possible to construct an AUT student perspective about the nature of hospitality. The students view the hospitality industry as hard work, fast paced and social. They also see it as fun, dynamic, exciting and professional. The students in this study also appreciate the necessity to undertake work and obtain experience in hospitality. Almost half (48.5%) were currently working in the hospitality industry and 61.8% had worked in hospitality in the past six months. Some had two roles and the most frequently reported role was that of frontline food and beverage, such as a waiter or waitress.

In respect to intentions after they had graduated, the majority of students indicated that they would follow a hospitality-related career. More than three quarters of the students perceived that obtaining a degree would improve their chances of employment once they graduated. The majority perceive value in the qualification they are studying in relation to their career and realise the importance of a qualification in securing employment. Hospitality higher education, therefore, has a key role in the career success of hospitality graduates (Richardson, 2009a).

The students in this study perceived the hospitality industry as a positive environment to work in (social, exciting and fun). In addition, they had a realistic expectation that hospitality is hard work, and the relatively low mean response suggests they viewed the industry as not being poorly paid. The students believed that their personality is more important than experience and qualifications in terms of securing employment. There is a perception from the students that to become employable, generic skills (initiative, interpersonal communication, willingness to learn, problem solving, flexibility, adaptable to change) are more important for working in frontline hospitality than technical skills (financial knowledge, numeracy, system knowledge, literacy, technical

and practical knowledge). In addition, there is an indication that the perceived critical factors for success in hospitality change once students acquire work experience.

Students ranked good communication skills as the most important factor to becoming a successful hospitality person. Other critical factors presented were the importance of social awareness, customer service, interpersonal skills and personality. When asked to rank the top three most important factors for success, the clear response was passion.

Chapter 7. Intersecting Themes

7.1 Introduction

This study aimed to answer six research questions:

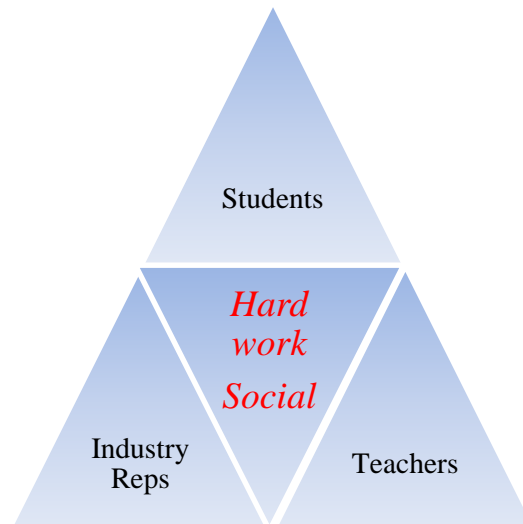
1. How is success in life and the workplace perceived by key stakeholders (industry, teachers and students) in hospitality education?
2. What are stakeholder perspectives on the critical factors required by higher-education graduates for success in the New Zealand hospitality industry?
3. How do stakeholders view the role and contribution of university education in the development of a successful hospitality graduate?
4. How can the stakeholders' perspectives on critical factors required for success be implemented in the development of hospitality students?
5. What are the challenges facing hospitality graduates in becoming successful in the workplace?
6. How can challenges be addressed to facilitate the development of successful hospitality graduates in New Zealand?

This chapter addresses these questions through an analysis of cross-cutting themes that emerged from the stakeholder data. The chapter presents these from a tri-stakeholder interpretation of the nature of hospitality, and key skills, competencies and qualities required to work in hospitality. The chapter finishes with a clarification of what makes a successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand.

7.2 The nature of hospitality – a New Zealand perspective

Each of the groups agreed on two key characteristics used to describe the nature of the hospitality industry in New Zealand. The students, teachers and industry representatives all indicated that the hospitality industry is hard work, but also sociable (see Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1 Stakeholder perceptions of the nature of hospitality



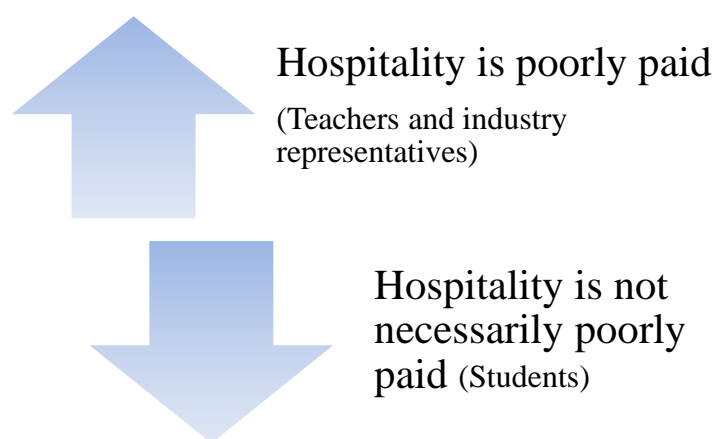
The majority of industry representatives indicated that hospitality is a hard industry to work in and a tough place to be sometimes, and ranked hard work as the primary descriptor for the New Zealand hospitality industry. The teachers also described hospitality as tough and hard work, and often associated with long hours. Hard work was ranked as the most important descriptor ($m = 5.2$ from a maximum possible score of 6) of the hospitality industry by the students. Nearly half of the student population (48.5%) in this study was employed in hospitality and therefore, offered perceptions based on work experience. Another theme that linked each stakeholder group was that they were all described hospitality as hard work at the frontline. The majority of students with work experience indicated they were employed as waiting staff and therefore were in the frontline of hospitality (i.e. in direct contact with the customer). The frontline was referred to by three of teachers as the “the coal face of hospitality”. This comparison of hospitality to mining enhances the perception of physically demanding work.

Three of the industry representatives described hospitality as having “an intense social aspect” and H5 summarised the industry stakeholder perception by noting “hospitality is an interesting environment and you meet interesting people”. The teachers perceived

hospitality work to be “socially enriching” and characterised by interpersonal relationships. The students ranked “sociable” highly ($m = 5$) as a key descriptor of the hospitality industry. The students also associated hospitality with being fun ($m = 4.7$) and exciting ($m = 4.7$). ‘Fun’ and ‘vibrant’ were also used by the teachers and industry representatives to describe the nature of hospitality.

In addition to hospitality being perceived as hard work and sociable, teacher and industry data agreed that hospitality is poorly paid (see Figure 7.2); both groups highlighted low wages at entry-level frontline hospitality positions. Interestingly student data suggested that poor pay was not a significant issue, as they ranked this factor second lowest ($m = 3.9$). This difference of opinion between the groups could be due to the lower salary expectations of young people starting out in the workforce. All of the teachers and industry representatives had worked in frontline and management positions and, therefore, were able to comment on the disparity of wage levels. The teachers and industry representatives’ higher levels of past experience could influence their expectations on pay levels.

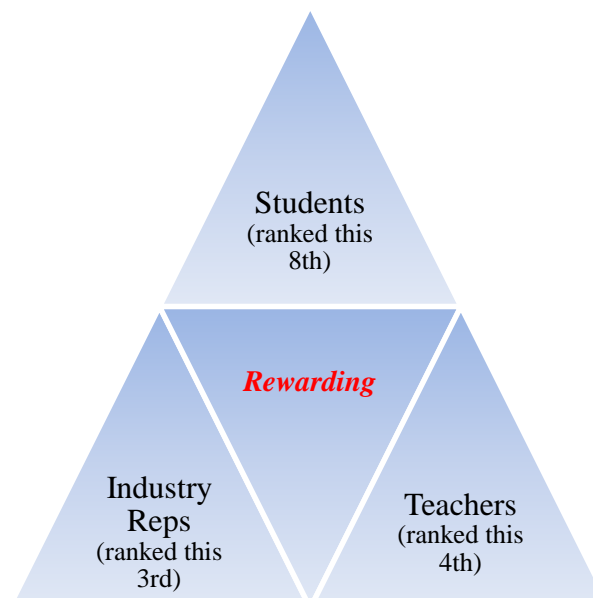
Figure 7.2 Stakeholder perceptions of pay rates in hospitality



Each group thought that the hospitality industry was rewarding to work in (see Figure 7.3). The teacher and industry groups perceived the rewards from hospitality work as

both intrinsic (personal satisfaction) and extrinsic (financial, promotion). Both the teachers and industry representatives indicated that financial rewards increased quickly with promotion and progress in a career (either in management or business ownership), and that a degree improved opportunities for promotion. Students ranked “rewarding” ($m = 4.3$) higher than “poorly paid” ($m = 3.9$), so perceived other benefits more than just financial. Students may perceive the hospitality industry as providing a rewarding experience through the provision and accumulation of work experience, and opportunities for career development. The hospitality industry may be more rewarding to students socially than financially, as interaction with people provides opportunities for the development of new relationships, which are important at the start of their career.

Figure 7.3 Stakeholder perceptions of benefits of the hospitality industry



Three common key issues emerged from the stakeholder data. Firstly, hospitality is perceived as physically demanding work and requires an individual to be, as H1 described, “mentally tough”. Mental toughness is having the resilience to deal with criticism and failure, therefore having high RQ (Clement, 2009). Secondly, hospitality provides a rich social environment in which to establish relationships and potential

networking opportunities to enhance career success. To be able to engage with other people, good interpersonal skills are necessary, which requires a high social and emotional capacity (Bar-On & Orme, 2002; Goleman, 2006). Finally, hospitality is an enjoyable industry to work in – it is perceived as fun, vibrant, exciting and rewarding – but can potentially pay poorly in the early stages of a hospitality career.

A focus of hospitality education, therefore, should be to ensure students have realistic expectations of the industry before they enter it, which can be achieved through the provision of effective work-related experience (Spowart, 2011). In addition, hospitality work is mentally, emotionally and socially demanding. The educational preparation of graduates for the hospitality workplace, therefore, requires multiple intelligences development (RQ, EQ and SQ) so that the students can cope with these particular characteristics of the industry.

7.3 Key factors required for hospitality

An analysis of each stakeholder group's data enabled the study to establish a definitive set of essential key skills, competencies and qualities required for success in hospitality work (see Figure 7.4). Each of the components presented in Figure 7.4 was highlighted by the three groups and has emerged as a key cross-cutting theme.

Each of the factors in Figure 7.4 highlights the importance of generic skills in hospitality (see Raybould & Wilkins, 2005; 2006). They are also important aspects of the “human dimension”, which is viewed as being key to success in a hospitality organisation (Kusluvan, Kusluvan, Ihlán, & Buyruk, 2010). The human dimension relates to key aspects involved in the management of people in organisations, such as personality, intelligence, skills and ability (Kusluvan *et al.*, 2010).

Figure 7.4 Stakeholder perceptions of the essential factors required for success in hospitality work



Each of the three groups recognised the importance of the human dimension as being essential for success in hospitality (personality and intelligence (RQ, EQ)). Hospitality work requires interaction between customers and service providers (Kusluvan *et al.*, 2010) and some aspects of human behaviour (personality and interpersonal skills) are viewed as a source of competitive advantage in a hospitality context (Baum, Amoah, & Spivack, 1997). Therefore, for an organisation to be more successful, a focus on the development of these particular human characteristics is required. These findings support the integral role of the human dimension in the strategic and operational success of a hospitality organisation (see Bharwani & Butt, 2012).

7.4 Stakeholder perceptions of success

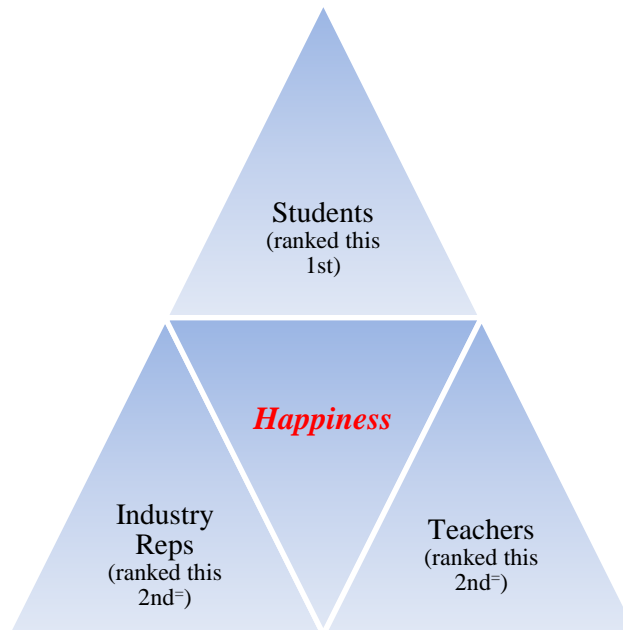
Although success was measured and perceived in a variety of ways by each of the stakeholder groups, common themes still emerged. Firstly, all three groups perceived success as enjoyment and being happy (see Figure 7.5). To most of the industry representatives (60%), success was perceived as a certain level of happiness either at

work or “on a personal basis and provision for yourself”. The industry representatives also suggested that success was the achievement of happiness through the establishment of good work-life balance. The teachers also referred to “happiness” as “finding a life balance” and success was enjoying work and life at the same time.

The stakeholder perceptions of success were shaped by their experience but there are variances in length and depth of experience between the students, teachers and industry representatives. The teacher and industry participants had five years or more hospitality experience, and had worked in a senior management position. In addition, all of the participants described themselves as having achieved some aspect of success, either through organisational position, award or salary. The ages of the teachers and industry representatives were higher than that of the students and may therefore have influenced their perceptions of success. At the time of writing there was no research to support or refute this, so it is quite possible that maturity and experience facilitate a more philosophical than materialistic approach to success (i.e. success gradually becomes more related to being happy than having wealth). It is evident, however, that perceptions of success and being successful vary with age.

The students also positioned happiness and enjoyment as integral to meanings of success (see Figure 6.4). They regarded being happy at work (32.6%) as more important than having a well-paid job or good salary (25.4%). In addition, just under half (48.5%) of the student population had work experience in the industry.

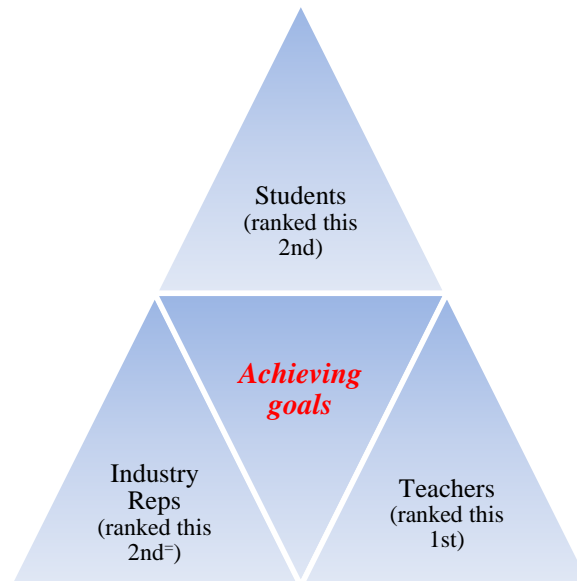
Figure 7.5 Stakeholder perceptions of success in hospitality



All three stakeholder groups agreed that success is measured by achieving goals (see Figure 7.6). Teachers and the industry representatives both viewed success as being an individual concept that could be achieved on many different levels, such as financial status, position, and how one is perceived by others. It was also noted by both these stakeholder groups that one's perception of success changes with age and experience, and at varying stages in a person's life cycle.

The main measure of success for the teachers was the achievement of personal targets, although they recognised the material value of money as well as the intrinsic value of personal satisfaction. The industry representatives also noted that reaching set targets indicated success, which could be measured by income or recognition from others. The student group associated financial reward and affluence with success, along with position and promotion.

Figure 7.6 Stakeholder perceptions of the measurement of success



This study established that success in hospitality is related to achieving happiness and reaching set targets; therefore, specific strategies related to these factors need to be adopted by graduates in order to make them successful. Firstly, success is about *personal liquidity* (the management of work and personal life) and establishing clear boundaries for a good work-life balance (Bauman, 2005). Managing and maintaining a good work-life balance is an important factor that contributes to becoming successful in hospitality (Newman, Moncarz, & Kay, 2014). Hospitality education providers therefore need to make students aware of what liquidity is and teach strategies for managing their work-life balance.

The hospitality industry can focus on developing specific work-life-balance strategies and these could be promoted in collaboration with education programmes. Deery (2008) proposed three main strategies that can enhance work-life balance for a graduate in an organisation:

1. Establishing flexibility for employees through effective work hours and arrangements
2. Adopting company policies that are family friendly, and

3. Providing good training and development opportunities.

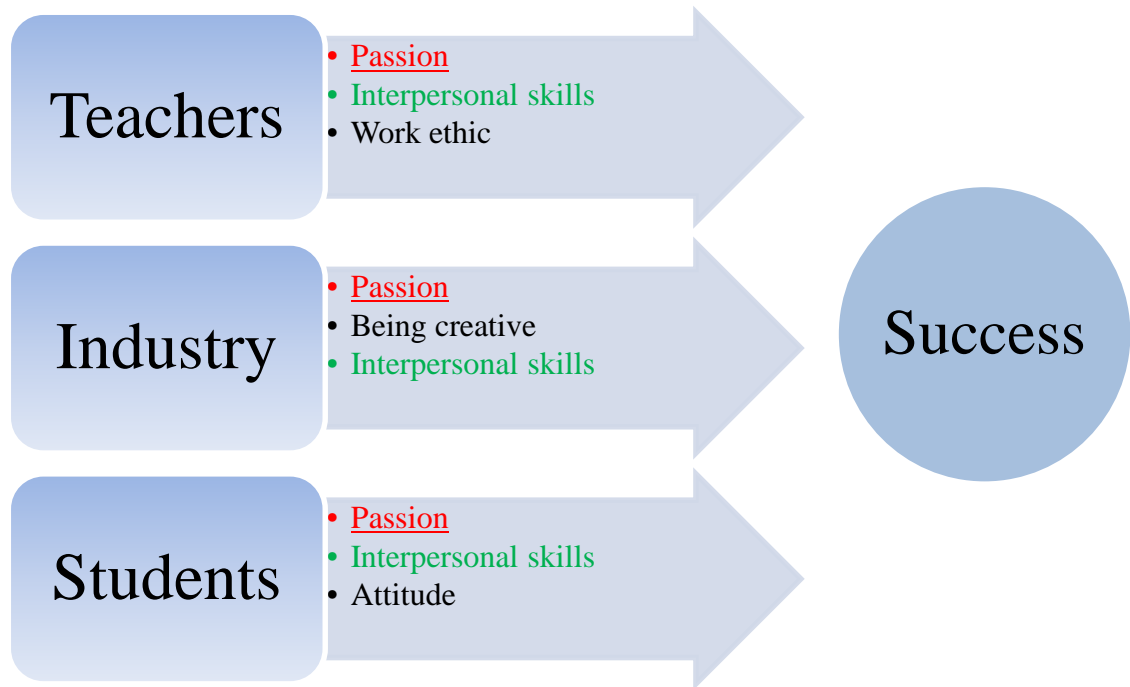
The provision of a good work-life balance is a responsible practice for business organisations (Brookes, Altinay, & Ringham, 2014). Hospitality organisations that value and promote work-life balance may attract more graduates seeking this as an integral part of their career success. The recruitment of more success-minded graduates, in turn, could lead to more organisational success.

If success is related to achieving targets, then graduates need to be educated in management for success. Management for success relates to building techniques that allow for the pursuit of personal satisfaction (Lupton, 2007) and accomplishment (putting together a series of achievements) (Firebaugh, 2008). Graduate success in hospitality, can therefore be enhanced through effective goal-setting and review techniques that cover all aspects of life indicated in this study: i.e. work, academia and personal.

7.5 Critical factors required for graduate success in hospitality

A key aim of this study is to determine the critical factors for success for a hospitality graduate in New Zealand. The top three ranked responses, from each stakeholder group in the study, is presented in Figure 7.7. The convergence of opinion from the three groups includes two common themes: passion and interpersonal skills. All of the industry representatives stated that passion was required for hospitality, and this focus continued with the teachers who ranked passion as the most important factor for success in hospitality. Similarly, passion was ranked by students as the most important factor for success in hospitality (see Table 6.12).

Figure 7.7 Stakeholder perceptions of critical factors for success in hospitality



Another common theme, as highlighted in Figure 7.7, is that all of the factors perceived as critical for success are either personal attributes (PA) or generic skills (G). Passion, creativity and attitude are personal attributes and work ethic and interpersonal skills are generic skills (see Table 4.8 and Table 5.5). This finding strengthens the view of Ineson (2011) and Nickson *et al.* (2012) that success in hospitality should focus on the development of soft skills and personality traits.

From these findings it is possible to formulate an answer to the main research question – what makes a successful hospitality graduate? From a New Zealand stakeholder perspective, passion and interpersonal skills enable a graduate to be successful in the hospitality industry. To fully complete the answer, the other critical factors required are work ethic, being creative and attitude. These findings also support the claim that survival and success in the hospitality industry requires limitless quantities of passion (Bidois, 2009).

The industry group used the descriptors of “genuine”, “real” and “interest” in responses relating to passion. A passion for the industry can be interpreted therefore as about having an internal desire to want to be in hospitality, demonstrated through authentic behaviour and actions. H4 associated passion with “embracing a wanting to give” which means passion can be associated with a pure motive of giving without receiving founded on the inspiration of just wanting to help others (see Dhiman, 2011). The teachers associated passion with similar aspects of authenticity using descriptors such as “natural welcoming” as well as “genuine” and “interest”. From a motivational perspective, the teachers associated passion with “internal drive” and also with a deep feeling of satisfaction elicited by the descriptor “joy”.

As highlighted in Chapter 2, passion is dualistic – either harmonious or obsessive (Carpentier *et al.*, 2012). The concept of passion referred to by the stakeholders is, arguably, harmonious passion. Participants in this study have presumably *chosen* to partake in and freely engage with hospitality as an activity, which potentially occupies a significant part of their identities. The choice to engage in an activity (hospitality) that provides personal satisfaction (the pursuit of happiness) is a key feature of harmonious passion (Carpentier *et al.*, 2012; Mageau *et al.*, 2009). A successful hospitality graduate, therefore, requires a *harmonious* passion for hospitality.

As indicated in the literature review, passion has been investigated in a variety of fields of study (advertising, marketing, brand management, leadership, mathematics and gambling) but not to any depth in hospitality. In addition, no research has been conducted to determine whether passion is a critical factor to success in hospitality. This study links passion to success in hospitality, and therefore developing passion needs to be a crucial part of the educational development of a successful hospitality graduate. Passion is an innate quality and cannot be taught, but it can be stimulated by a

knowledge-transfer process (Sie & Yakhlef, 2009) and therefore it is possible to enhance passion through pedagogical delivery (Gallos, 1997). Hospitality higher education is therefore recommended to integrate a pedagogy of passion into the curriculum. A pedagogy of passion can explore the emotional aspects of human nature and be achieved in graduates through a focus on the aesthetic and intuitive aspects of organisational behaviour (Bilimoria, 1999).

Interpersonal skills are a recurrent theme in the data from three stakeholder groups, as they are considered not only critical for success in hospitality, but also as critical factors for working in the hospitality industry (see Figure 7.4). This study supports the view that good interpersonal skills are an indicator of success in the industry and should be a focal point of graduate development (see Huang & Lin, 2011).

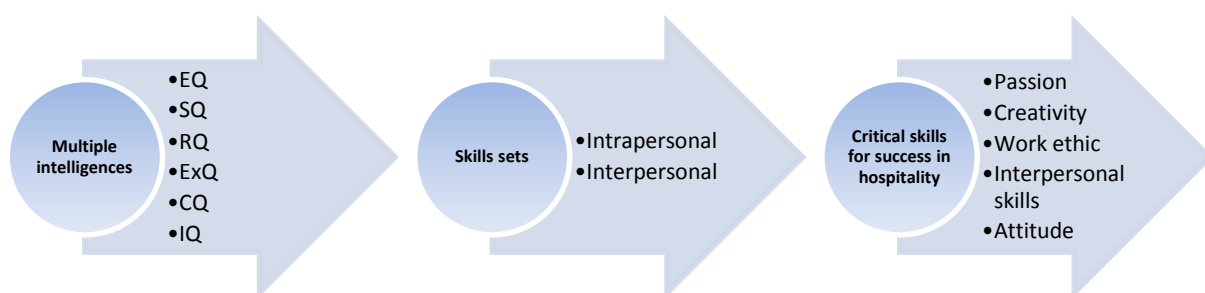
Interpersonal skills were described by industry participants as “innate”, “unique” and “people skills”. It was particularly noted from industry that interpersonal skills were associated with an ability to “have an emotional response”, “care for others” and “create relationships”. The industry stakeholders also spoke about interpersonal skills as being the “soft skills” related to “reading people”. The teachers similarly used the descriptors of “soft” and “generic” when discussing interpersonal skills, and perceived that interpersonal skills related to an ability to “work” and “communicate” with others, and having the “personal quality” of “social control”.

The fifth research question sought to establish how the critical factors of success can be developed through hospitality higher education. The factors outlined as critical for success by the stakeholder groups (see Figure 7.7) can be classified into two aspects of an individual’s ability: interpersonal and intrapersonal. *Interpersonal ability* is the capacity to directly engage in human relationships (i.e. communication and interpersonal skills), whereas *intrapersonal ability* is the internal capacity of the mind to

engage in appropriate action and reaction (i.e. attitude and passion) (Gardner, 2006). Interpersonal and intrapersonal abilities are realised through different types of intelligence; for example, the ability to control emotions (an intrapersonal ability) is driven by EQ (Goleman, 2006).

This study has found that the different skills required for work in hospitality are derived from different types of intelligence. According to this perspective, the application of multiple intelligences learning (Gardner, 1983) can enhance the interpersonal and intrapersonal abilities of an individual and, therefore, develop the critical factors regarded as necessary for success in hospitality (Figure 7.8).

Figure 7.8 The development of critical factors for graduate success in hospitality



7.6 Challenges facing the development of the successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand

The fifth and sixth research questions address the challenges facing hospitality graduates in striving to become successful and how these challenges can be addressed. The thesis can make informed recommendations on curriculum development for graduate success in hospitality. From an industry perspective, two main perceptions emerged:

1. Graduates entering the industry lack basic soft skills, and so a lot of industry time is spent on developing these aspects.
2. The right people are not entering the industry is resulting in recruitment issues.

The industry representatives indicated that hospitality higher education could do more to improve the levels of graduates' soft skills as this would save the industry time and money spent on extra training. The teachers gave an indication of differing perceptions between education and industry about the development of hospitality graduates. These inferences of a mis-match support the argument of a gap or divide between hospitality education and industry needs in New Zealand (Harkison *et al.*, 2011). In addition they support the view that industry expect graduates from hospitality programmes to be work ready and that higher-education providers are not meeting the industry's needs (Harkison *et al.*, 2011; Spowart, 2011).

These differences in expectations can be resolved through effective cooperative education that integrates industry, education providers and students. Cooperative education enables the application of theory to be transferred from the classroom into the workplace and allows students to benefit from work-integrated learning. The industry representatives' perceptions in this study are consistent with the view that employers are looking for graduates who are better prepared for the workplace (see Litchfield, Frawley, & Nettleton, 2010). The only way to achieve this is to work closely with industry to complete students' education in a co-operative manner, which will develop their application of theory and the kinds of skills that cannot be fully developed in the classroom, such as interpersonal skills, critical thinking etc. Exposure to the hospitality industry through work experience can deter students from pursuing a career in hospitality (Richardson, 2009a). It is therefore important that industry and education collaboration strategies are adopted to ensure students working in hospitality have a

positive experience (Richardson, 2009b). This would promote a positive attitude towards becoming successful in hospitality.

The 'right person', according to the perceptions of the industry representatives, is professional, has a strong work ethic and well developed interpersonal skills. It was also perceived that the right person has a passion for hospitality and working with people. This finding indicates that some perceive that higher-education programmes should focus mostly on specific skills and attitudes required for hospitality work. The development of a successful graduate requires a curriculum designed to enhance a mind-set for success. This requires opportunities for students to realise that success is a series of accomplishments that are connected on different levels, through work, personal and academic life (Firebaugh, 2008). Therefore, the development of the successful graduate requires curriculum opportunities that develop a personality profile which focus on warmth and emotional stability. Based on this evidence, it is important to build aesthetic skills awareness and development into hospitality higher education as it can enhance a graduate's chances for employment and success (Nickson, Warhurst, Commander, Hurrell, & Cullen, 2012).

Educational programmes such as effective cooperative education and the University of Technology Sydney's (UTS) Work-Ready Project (Litchfield *et al.*, 2010) involve industry partners in the education and transition of graduates into work-ready employees (Lee *et al.*, 2010). The implementation of a scheme like the UTS Work-Ready Project would allow the attributes of a successful hospitality graduate to be developed more effectively through higher education.

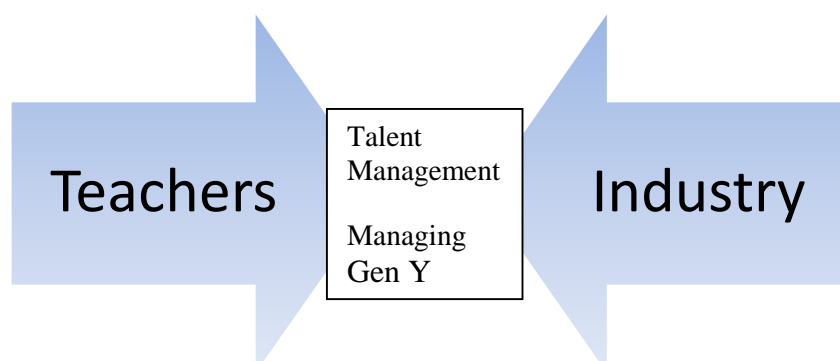
The teachers, however, had a different concern. Their main perception was that commercial pressures to produce a profit are restricting the introduction of a competitive pay structure in hospitality and when compared with pay rates in other

industries, this provided students an image of a poorly paid industry. Hospitality pays poorly, particularly at what is termed entry-level or frontline positions (Poulston, 2008). The implications of the resultant negative reputation could be that people do not want to work in the hospitality industry and that poor pay contributes to high labour turnover. Hospitality teachers and industry representatives, therefore have a responsibility to ameliorate this reputation of poor pay and high turnover and encourage students view the industry positively. In other words, the teachers should provide realistic information to the students about the hospitality industry so that informed decisions can be made about career direction.

In contrast, the students in this study demonstrated some moderate agreement with the view that the hospitality industry was not low paid, which is an interesting perspective. It is possible that the students either are not aware of the reputation of a poorly paid industry, or there are other benefits that outweigh low pay rates such as socialising and personal satisfaction. It is also quite possible that students in this study consider that the wage rate for their jobs was fair and the reputation of hospitality being a poorly paid industry is misinformed. This however requires further investigation.

Despite these different perspectives, there was a convergence of opinion in relation to two main perspectives: talent management and the management of Generation Y (see Figure 7.9).

Figure 7.9 Stakeholders' perceptions of the key challenges facing graduates and the hospitality industry in New Zealand



The industry representatives indicated the industry is challenged by issues of the retention of quality people and were concerned that talented people were leaving hospitality. This perception was summarised by H3:

The issue is being able to hold on to people as people are our first asset when it comes to good customer service. One of the key challenges is to improve ways of staff retention and developing talent.

Talent management problems in the hospitality industry were echoed by the teachers who perceived that the hospitality industry is at fault due to its inability to develop and encourage its employees. This perception was articulated by T6:

Wonderful talented students who appear born for hospitality with deep sensitivity and great interpersonal skills get put into the machine of hospitality, with long hours and poor pay which crushes their spirit, so they leave.

Both the teachers and industry representatives indicated that more collaboration is required to improve ways of maintaining and developing talent in the hospitality industry. As the students in this study perceived the hospitality industry as social, fun and exciting, these characteristics should feature prominently in the promotion of the industry to students and be focal points of industry-education collaboration. Strategies to improve talent management should focus on the need to encourage flexibility and allow movement in order to keep good people in the industry. An environment that actively promotes opportunities for flexible career progression is more likely to attract and retain quality graduates (Deery, 2008). This, in turn, can contribute to career success for the graduates and therefore a more successful organisation.

The other challenge identified by the teachers and industry representatives was the management of Generation Y. Both stakeholder groups alluded to differing generational perceptions (between Gen X and Gen Y) of professionalism in the workforce. It was

perceived, by both groups, that more focus was required on the management and development of Gen Y graduates for a hospitality workplace.

The perspectives expressed by the teachers and industry representatives in this study support a large body of research which indicates the hospitality industry is facing a substantial generational shift in attitudes to work which is creating management issues in hospitality workplaces (Barron *et al.*, 2007; Broadbridge *et al.*, 2007; Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Chen & Choi, 2008; Gursoy *et al.*, 2008; Richardson, 2009b; Solnet & Hood, 2008; Solnet & Kralj, 2010). The key differences are in the attitudes, motivation, values and behaviours of the different generational groups – Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y.

The teachers and industry representatives' perceptions of generational differences in the workplace provide a response to two key questions. Firstly, in response to Benson and Brown (2011), generational differences in the workplace really matter, and secondly, they are a problem (Cairncross & Buultjens, 2007).

By accepting and adapting to intergenerational differences, organisations will be able to recognise opportunity and foster creativity and talent in their workforce. This becomes more significant given the future workforce which is currently in the education system: Generation Z (Egan, 2008). Generation Z are employees of the future, and so education for success needs to accommodate and adapt to their generational learning styles. Generation Z lives in a world dominated by technology and social media (Egan, 2008) so student learning spaces and engagement require adjusting to incorporate this (Matthews, Andrews, & Adams, 2011). The development of a successful hospitality graduate requires a curriculum that provides learning in and out of the classroom and embraces technology to promote active learning through social interaction (Matthews *et al.*, 2011).

7.7 University hospitality education and the development of successful hospitality graduates

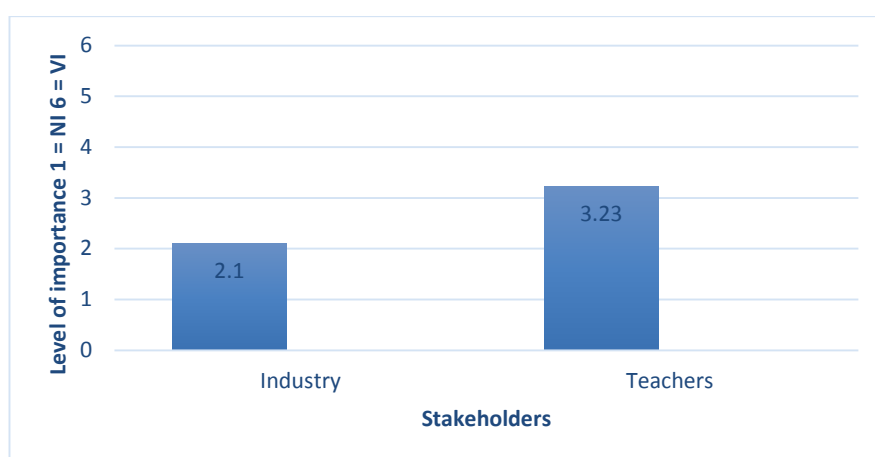
The teachers in this study were confused about what the hospitality industry required from graduates; for example, T4 asked: “What are industry looking for?” An answer was provided by H1, who summarised the majority of the industry representatives’ views when she commented, “Some graduates and future employees are lacking basic soft skills.” In essence, the findings in this study indicate that the hospitality industry in New Zealand is looking for graduates who are better prepared for the workplace. This finding supports other global studies with a similar view (see also Litchfield *et al.*, 2010; Spowart, 2011). Two conflicts arise from this perspective: firstly, higher education has a traditional focus on longer-term career development rather than short-term applicable-skills preparation (Thorne, 1995), and secondly, hospitality higher education has a theoretical foundation instead of the practical work orientation required by industry (Ruhanen, 2005). Whilst it is possible to entertain the industry perspective of developing skills ready for a work place through effective collaboration, a university education still orientates towards longer term skills development.

Employers seek graduates with the right attributes and capabilities, such as the ability and willingness to learn, energy and passion, and team working, interpersonal and communication skills (Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). Hospitality employers expect that graduates should possess transferable generic skills in leadership, communication and decision making (Buegermeister, 1983; Clichy, Sciarini, & Patton, 1992; Goodman & Sprague, 1991; Williams & DeMicco, 1998). There is an expectation that higher education institutions should produce work-ready graduates who can ‘hit the ground running’ (Spowart, 2010). The role of hospitality higher education in the development of a successful graduate, therefore, requires focal points that can meet key stakeholder

(student, education and industry) requirements and address the two conflicts indicated. The findings of this study provide direction to address these issues.

All three stakeholder groups were asked to rate the importance of technical skills for hospitality work generally. The teacher and industry representative responses are presented in Figure 7.10, (1 = being not very important to 6 = very important). The industry stakeholder group placed a low importance on technical ability ($m = 2.1$) and indicated that soft skills were essential for hospitality. In contrast, the teachers placed a higher importance ($m = 3.23$) on technical ability, whereas the students considered that technical skills were not necessarily important for hospitality. Furthermore, 97% of students indicated that generic skills (communication, problem-solving and interpersonal skills) were those most important for working in frontline hospitality. The similarity of opinion between the students and industry can be explained by the moderating factor of industry experience. Just under half of the student population in this study was employed in hospitality work and therefore could provide an informed view on the level of technical skill required in the workplace.

Figure 7.10 Stakeholders' perceptions of the importance of technical skills in the hospitality industry



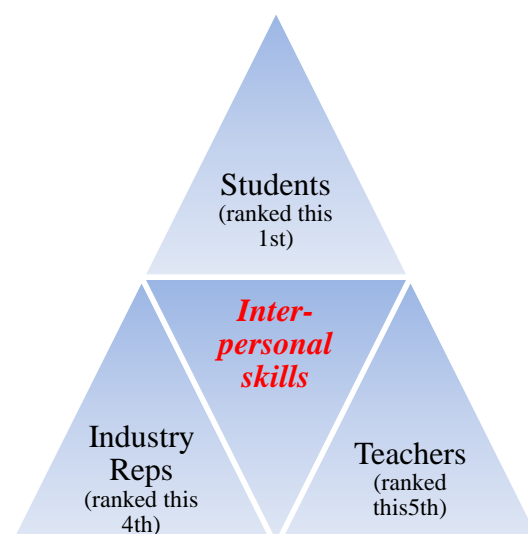
There was a divergence of opinion between the teachers and industry representatives over the value of a hospitality degree. The industry representatives questioned whether a

degree was necessary for hospitality and felt that a large proportion of what was covered at university was not applicable in industry. The teachers were aware of this industry perspective, saying that the value of a hospitality degree was neither recognised nor fully appreciated by the industry. The teachers suggested that the hospitality industry did not fully understand the degree as it was common for graduates to enter industry at the “bottom and work their way up”. Paradoxically, the teachers also thought that industry expectations of hospitality graduates were too high. The student perception of the importance of technical and generic skills for hospitality was made abundantly clear. They believed technical skills are much less important than generic skills and clearly perceived that a degree is important and will improve their chances of employment.

7.8 The focus of teaching and learning for success in hospitality

The industry representatives, teachers and students were asked what they perceived to be the key areas that hospitality higher education should focus on for graduate success. All three stakeholder groups indicated interpersonal skills are essential for success in hospitality and perceived this component to be the most important focus for higher education development (see Figure 7.11).

Figure 7.11 Stakeholder perceptions of what higher education should focus on for success in hospitality



The teachers ranked interpersonal skills fifth while the industry representatives ranked fourth, in terms of what higher education should focus on in relation to success in hospitality. The students, however, placed organisation behaviour and interpersonal skills as the most important aspect of their education in terms of developing success in hospitality. Even though there is a convergence of opinion from the three stakeholder groups on the importance of interpersonal skills for success in hospitality, the teachers and industry representatives did not rate this as highly as the students. This difference may be due to a difference in age and experience between the stakeholder groups. The teachers and industry representatives had more hospitality experience in senior management positions and, therefore, may perceive that different abilities are required for success, whereas the students were drawing on frontline work experience and current educational knowledge.

The teachers and industry representatives perceived two other aspects as being more important than interpersonal skills: work experience and critical thinking. Although they may not bring immediate success, the teachers and industry representatives felt that focus on these two aspects in hospitality higher education programmes would contribute to hospitality graduates being successful over time. Both stakeholder groups rated the provision of work-related experience as the most important focal point of hospitality higher education, saying that work experience would contribute to graduates becoming successful because it would lead to opportunities for career progression, development of personal attributes, and allow the application of theory into practice. The teachers felt that the provision of work-related experience should be an integral part of a degree (Ring *et al.*, 2009) as it would improve the professional development of students (Breen, 2002) and enhance their employability in the hospitality workplace (Spowart, 2011).

The industry representatives also considered that work experience contributes to graduate success; however, their perspective on the provision of work experience had a slightly different focus to that of the teachers. The industry representatives felt that work experience develops an understanding of working life and promotes the understanding of a work ethic as a component of success. The industry representatives considered that work experience gives students an understanding of the need of passion for hospitality in order to be successful.

Effective work-related learning in higher education allows the development of work-ready capabilities required by industry such as communication, working as part of a team, and problem solving through critical thinking (Litchfield *et al.*, 2010). The balancing of graduate learning in and out of the classroom has benefits for all the stakeholders: students can address problems in a real work environment, teachers can use a different learning environment to promote work-ready attributes, and industry can obtain work-ready graduates (Lee *et al.*, 2010).

There was a perception from both the teacher and industry representative groups that more understanding is required of what a hospitality degree is and what its value is to the industry. The link between a person's qualifications and contribution to an organisation remains vague. However, there is an argument that the more qualified a person is, the better they are at communicating and, therefore, can contribute more to an organisation than those not as qualified (see Brien, Thomas & Hussein, 2013). Both groups also indicated that more collaboration between hospitality education and industry would improve relationships and, therefore, graduate education. Connecting employers with education necessitates the development of capability, opportunity and a collaborative industry-education approach (Littlejohn & Watson, 2004; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005).

The teacher and industry representative groups rated critical thinking third in their top five focal points of education for success in hospitality, ranking critical thinking more important than interpersonal skills. T2 summarised the teachers' perspective by commenting, "Students need to develop capabilities to make it in the hospitality workplace – the ability to think, make decisions, reflect and take responsibility." This sentiment was supported by the industry representatives; for example:

There appears to be not enough critical-thinking skills which will help to develop initiative and strategic thinking. It is about getting the students to take more responsibility (H3).

The hospitality industry requires employees who can react quickly to problems (Velo & Mittaz, 2006), and the application of critical thought through problem solving is a critical component of success in hospitality (Cecil *et al.*, 2010). However, graduates entering the hospitality industry are generally lacking critical-thinking skills (Cecil *et al.*, 2010). As indicated in this study, critical-thinking skills are highly valued by employers (Carrington, Chen, Davies, Kuar, & Neville, 2011), but are often promoted in universities without a full understanding of what they are or how to implement them (Hammer & Green, 2011).

The hospitality industry is complex and graduates will be required to deal with confusing and ambiguous situations; in particular, the social and emotional exchanges between employees and guests. Education for success in hospitality, therefore, needs to provide opportunities for graduates to develop the critical thinking skills required for decision making in practical situations; i.e. *situational critical thinking* (Hammer & Green, 2011). Situational critical thinking can be achieved in higher education through *problem-based learning* (PBL) and implemented through a step-wise approach in curriculum design (Hammer & Green, 2011).

The common ground on education for success in hospitality between all three stakeholder groups in this study is interpersonal skills (see Figure 7.11). The findings in this study support the view that interpersonal skills, as a generic capability, are an essential component of career success and a desired outcome of higher education (see Bridgstock, 2009; McNeil *et al.*, 2012).

Dewey (1938) proposed that the purpose and basis of education is founded on experience, and students develop competency by learning through experience. Experiential learning through PBL enhances students' decision-making capabilities and interpersonal skills (Lee *et al.*, 2010). An effective means of achieving the required learning outcomes for success in hospitality therefore, is cooperative education. Cooperative placements can improve collaboration between education providers and industry and also meet students' needs through an experiential learning process (Lee *et al.*, 2010). PBL through a work-integrated learning process therefore, will provide a framework for the development of the three key educational components required for success in hospitality: interpersonal skills, work experience and critical thinking.

Chapter 8. Conclusions

This chapter draws together the findings and intersecting themes from the stakeholder discussions in order to establish what makes a successful hospitality graduate and a direction for education of success in hospitality. The chapter presents an overview of the study and discusses the answers to the research questions. The chapter highlights the significant contributions the study makes to hospitality education and industry, and the practical implications of its findings. In addition, this chapter highlights a new direction to hospitality pedagogy. Finally, suggestions are offered for further research directions that will benefit the fields of hospitality knowledge, success and career success through education.

8.1 Overview of the study

The overarching purpose of this thesis is to identify what makes a successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand. By exploring the perceptions of three stakeholder groups (industry, teachers and students), the study aimed to establish what success in hospitality means, how it can be measured, and the critical factors that enable success in hospitality. By identifying these factors, the study can comment on the role and contribution of higher education in the development of successful hospitality graduates.

8.2 Research questions and discussion of key findings

The research aims of this thesis are set in the context of hospitality; in particular this includes how hospitality is defined, the nature of the hospitality workplace, and the requirements for hospitality work in New Zealand. The industry representatives defined hospitality as the creation of relationships with and through people (see Figure 4.1). The teachers also understand hospitality as the formation of relationships and interactions between people (Figure 5.2). These definitions of hospitality, as the creation of relationships and interactions with people, contribute to a sociological and

psychological perspective on how hospitality is understood. The study also offers the perspective that New Zealand hospitality has a Kiwi style (Figure 5.3) characterised as casual, welcoming, relaxed, warm and friendly.

Analysis of the stakeholder qualitative and quantitative data revealed that the hospitality industry is perceived as having two dominant characteristics. The industry representatives, teachers and students all described hospitality as hard work and the workplace as a social environment. The teachers and industry representatives also concurred that hospitality is poorly paid, although all three stakeholder groups in this study also perceived the hospitality industry as financially rewarding. The financial rewards, however, are achieved on a long-term basis and through career progression to senior management positions.

The stakeholders perceived a range of skills, competencies and abilities as being required for hospitality work. Employees need a strong work ethic, a good personality and to be flexible. In addition, they are expected to be resilient and emotionally stable. It was a key finding that each stakeholder group considered generic skills to be more important for hospitality work than technical skills. In particular, participants considered interpersonal skills most important for hospitality work.

The first research question asked how success in life and the workplace place was perceived, and all participants were questioned on their understanding of success and how it is measured. The industry representatives and teachers perceived success to mean being happy and having happiness. This perception correlates with the student survey data (Table 6.4) where enjoying work and happiness were both highly ranked. In addition, all three stakeholder groups viewed that success is measured by achieving goals and targets. The study also found that success is individual, and therefore means something different to each person, and is found in achieving a work-life balance (see

section 4.7.1, and Table 5.2). Success can be defined on the basis of this research as the pursuit of personal happiness through the achievement of a series of personal goals and targets in order to obtain a satisfying balance between work and life.

The next research question asked the stakeholders what they viewed to be the critical factors required by higher-education graduates for success in the New Zealand hospitality industry. The industry representatives, teachers and students all ranked passion as the most important factor. The second factor that stood out was interpersonal skills. In order for a graduate to be successful in New Zealand hospitality, it is critical that passion and interpersonal skills development is undertaken.

The role and contribution of university hospitality education in the development of a successful hospitality graduate was explored in the third research question. Industry would like to see a focus on development of personal skills that are directly applicable to the work environment (section 4.9). The teachers agreed that personal skills development is important (section 5.9) but had concerns over their direct employment application; instead the teachers take a longer career/lifelong-learning perspective. Both the industry representatives and teachers agreed that hospitality higher education could do more to develop problem-solving skills in students, while the students viewed is that accumulation of experience and personality development is more important than qualifications for gaining initial employment. Thus the perspectives of all three stakeholder groups are that hospitality higher education should focus on interpersonal skills development, and the provision of work experience.

The fourth research question investigated how the critical factors for success could be implemented in the development of hospitality students. This was explored through the industry and teacher qualitative data, and both stakeholder groups considered the answer was through the provision of work-experience opportunities.

The final two research questions explored perceived challenges facing successful development of hospitality graduates, and how these challenges could be addressed. A qualitative investigation was made through the teacher and industry stakeholder groups. Both groups agreed that the biggest challenge facing the hospitality industry is the management of Generation Y that could arise from potential generational differences in the workforce. There was also agreement that this could be addressed through better collaboration between education and industry, encouragement of student responsibility, and improved work experience or work-integrated learning opportunities.

8.3 Contributions of the research

This thesis makes significant contributions to knowledge from three main perspectives: 1) motivational and behavioural theoretical perspectives linked to success 2) predictors for success and becoming successful, 3) the importance of generic skills contributing to being successful. This research provides evidence that supports different pedagogical perspectives to behavioural studies and the nature of human development; i.e. passion as a motive and the contribution of multiple intelligences development to being competent, effective and successful. The study presents a case that passion and predictors for success can be developed through practical application, which requires the introduction of a new pedagogical direction for future hospitality education – a pedagogy of passion.

Theoretically, this study contributes to motivational and behavioural perspectives of being successful, particularly, the understanding of purity of motive and success (see Turak, 2013). Pure motivation is viewed as an ability to give without expecting anything in return and the notion that the “intention behind every action should be motivated by our desire to help and benefit others” (Dhiman, 2010, p. 53). When actions are motivated by the intent to benefit oneself then the motivation is not pure and

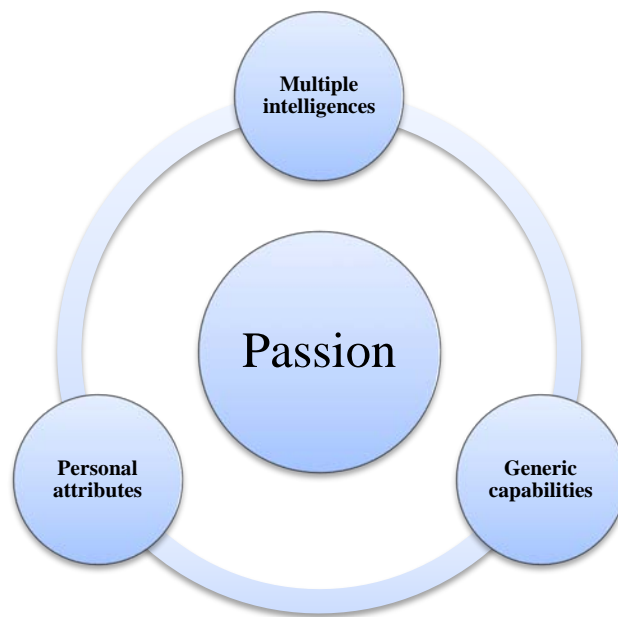
becomes a “means to our end, a business transaction” (Dhiman, 2011, p. 41). Therefore, a pure motive is quite simply the intent to give without receiving founded on the inspiration to just help others (Dhiman, 2011). Purity of motive is not only viewed from a social psychological perspective (i.e. that all behaviour has a motive), but also from a spiritual perspective that it is a “gift” or a “virtue of dedicating our work to a higher power” (Dhiman, 2011, p. 45). To this end purity of motive also has a relationship with the perspectives of calling and vocation, as discussed in chapter 2.

Those that have purity of motive, along with other aspects such as selfless service and total acceptance, can realise a deeper feeling of satisfaction and success (Dhiman, 2011). In addition, it is believed that a high level of dedication, involvement and commitment to an activity leads to purer motives, so therefore, the purer the motive, the more success is achieved (Turak, 2013). In other words, pure motive is deemed to exist when people do something primarily because they enjoy it. This study outlines passion as a quintessential motive and contributor to becoming successful in hospitality. Therefore, the reason people are successful in hospitality is because they enjoy hospitality and have a pure motive that benefits others. Given the above discussions on purity of motive, success in hospitality can be realised from having a passion or desire to please others without seeking anything in return, and serving “from the heart” (Dhiman, 2011, p. 39). In essence, this thesis provides a better understanding of human behavioural attitudes and motives towards success, becoming successful and, how these behavioural attitudes and motives can be taught. The study establishes a pedagogical contribution that necessitates embedding the teaching, learning and development of passion in hospitality graduates.

This thesis establishes that the key to success in hospitality in the NZ context (the core of Figure 8.1) is passion. This major contribution presents new evidence that hospitality

higher education needs to consider teaching and learning of passion. The education of passion, along with positive attitude and communication skills, can enable students to understand and develop a more humanist approach to management in hospitality rather than rational, which can lead to them becoming more successful (see Brien & Smallman, 2011).

Figure 8.1 The key to hospitality graduate success in New Zealand



To educate for success and to address the challenges of talent management and generational differences in hospitality, a pedagogy of passion is needed. Developing a successful graduate for hospitality work requires the nurturing of passion which involves the development of mind (Hirst & Peters, 1973) and the education of a student as a “whole being” (Ramsey & Fitzgibbons, 2005). The education of passion is about nurturing a learning environment that enables every learner to see beyond the basic technical knowledge of their subject and understand why people devote their lives to specific disciplines: for example understanding why people spend their whole lives in hospitality. Pedagogy of passion is about understanding that passion is about motivation with a purpose and desire (Linstead & Brewis, 2007). Passion for hospitality can be

taught and it requires a holistic approach that encompasses different learning types (emotional, cognitive, physical and spiritual) (see Shrivastava, 2010).

As outlined in chapter 2, passion can be instilled in others using a knowledge transfer process (Sie & Yakhlef, 2009) which is possible through pedagogically sound delivery (Gallos, 1997). In addition, earlier discussions on passion have centred on harmonious passion, as well as the constructs of calling and vocation. Those who have harmonious passion in the workplace have higher work satisfaction and are less likely to leave. Therefore, harmonious passion has a positive impact on reducing turnover intention in an organisation (Houlfort *et al.*, 2014). In addition, research has shown that those who have a harmonious passion are more likely to enjoy an activity and be happier (Carpentier, Mageau & Valerand, 2012). Furthermore, harmonious passion as a motive leads to greater well-being and performance (Curran *et al.*, 2015). Therefore if individuals are satisfied, less likely to leave and perform better, they are more likely to become successful and contribute to organisational success.

Pedagogical delivery of passion requires a focus on the intuitive and aesthetic aspects of an organisation (Bilimoria, 1999) and educational evidence “suggests that environments that acknowledge individuals emotions and thoughts and provide adequate structure and feedback, a meaningful rationale for tasks and opportunities for decision-making” will develop harmonious passion (Birkeland & Buch, 2015, p. 404). A pedagogy of passion involves facilitating an environment in which students have flexibility in how they approach their learning, understand the value of themselves in the workplace and realise their “signature strengths” (ways of behaving and feeling) (Trepanier *et al.*, 2014, p. 364).

Pedagogy of passion also requires a focus on interpersonal skills development through experiential learning, and effective collaboration between hospitality education

providers and industry for the provision of work experience through cooperative education. Effective cooperative education will allow students to apply knowledge acquired in the classroom to a real work situation and develop critical thinking through PBL.

Pedagogy of passion for hospitality has not been previously investigated and this study provides the impetus for a change to the direction of the hospitality teaching and learning environment. The implications of this in terms of the teaching and learning environment pose a key challenge for teachers. The challenge is how to address passion in hospitality through the classroom and curriculum. One potential solution is to adopt an educational perspective that views passion as moral behaviour (see Bureau, Vallerand, Ntoumanis & Lafreniere, 2013).

This research adds to previous work initiated by Pizam and Lewis (1979) to establish what the predictors for success in hospitality are (see Figure 7.4), and therefore provide a contemporary platform to inform undergraduate development. In addition, this study contributes a variety of stakeholder perspectives on what is meant by success and how it can be measured, which expands Peacock's (1995) observations that success is more than financial focus. The predictors of success in hospitality found in this study (a good personality, a good work ethic, flexibility and developed interpersonal skills) can be used as foundations to inform curriculum development on student learning outcomes and assessment of learning.

Each of the stakeholder groups investigated in this study regarded technical ability as being less important than generic ability for hospitality work. In addition, all of the industry representatives stated interpersonal skills and work ethic as two of the most important factors required for hospitality work. This evidence contributes to the view that employers prioritise soft skills over hard skills (Nickson *et al.*, 2005; Spowart,

2011) and, therefore, developing interpersonal skills should be a focal point of hospitality higher education (Ruetzler *et al.*, 2011).

The stakeholder discussions provide evidence that contributes to debates surrounding the importance of generic skills development in the hospitality industry and employers' expectations of university graduates. This study supports the argument that generic skills are more important than technical ability (see Raybould and Wilkins, 2006) and concur with the principle that hospitality work is complex and requires a complex skills set (see Baum, 2002). The findings also contribute to the view that employers expect university graduates to have established skills and abilities such as developed interpersonal skills, a strong work ethic and a positive attitude (see Spowart, 2011).

In addition, this research contributes evidence that reinforces the importance of university programmes placing an ongoing focus on the development of soft skills over hard skills (Sisson & Adams, 2013). This study also provides contributions to other current or potential aspects of hospitality research. It provides quantitative and qualitative evidence that establish what key skills, competencies and qualities are required by hospitality students for the workplace. This study also presents a multiple hospitality stakeholder perspective that establishes specific factors (interpersonal skills, good attitude and a strong work ethic) are essential components of an 'ideal' personality for hospitality. From a wider perspective, the key discussions have established that having a regard for relationships and care for others are key components for hospitality and therefore contribute to research on aspects of professionalism in hospitality (see Cockburn-Wootten, 2013).

The role and contribution of hospitality education in the development of success in hospitality needs to focus on the development of students' abilities (Lashley, 2004). In addition, the thesis provides further evidence that hospitality requires a more

customised skill set rather than the low skills set so commonly associated with the industry (see Baum, 2006a). Hospitality employees are exposed to work that requires emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983), and aesthetic (Warhurst & Nickson, 2007), experiential (Baum, 2006a), cultural (Baum *et al.*, 2007) and generic skills (Raybould & Wilkins, 2006). It is emerging that relationships are becoming more important than products (Reece *et al.*, 2011), communication skills more important than technical skills (Robertson, 2007), and the development of the right attitude is key to hospitality organisations (Nickson *et al.*, 2005; Ricci, 2010).

This study provides evidence that a specific set of skills, competencies and qualities is required to work in the hospitality industry (see Blue & Haran, 2003; Dawson *et al.*, 2011). This specific set combines multiple intelligences (EQ, RQ, CQ, ExQ and SQ) with personal attributes (personality) and generic capability (work ethic, flexibility and interpersonal skills) (see Figure 8.1). Success can be achieved through the cultivation of various states of mind and the development of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983; 2006). Cha, Cichy and Kim (2008) identified that an understanding of emotional and social intelligences improves social skills and has an integral role in how frontline hospitality individuals manage stressful environments. A clear understanding of the specific competencies associated with different intelligences (social, emotional, cognitive, cultural) can lead to improved individual performance and success in hospitality (Kernbach & Schutte, 2005; Kim & Agrusa, 2011; Langhorn, 2004; Scott-Halsell *et al.*, 2008).

The critical factors for success in hospitality identified by this study can therefore be developed through a curriculum that incorporates opportunities for graduates to develop multi-intelligence capability. EQ and SQ can be developed through a focus on human

relationships and organisational behavioural studies, a focus on cultural diversity will enhance CQ, and effective work-related experience will develop ExQ and RQ.

A better understanding of the behavioural and educational contributions of this study aids the formation of a framework of success, which can be used by educators and industry professionals to enhance the employability of young hospitality graduates entering the industry. This thesis contributes to the body of knowledge of enhancing employability in higher education graduates as it identifies critical factors of success as required by employers'. These factors can therefore be incorporated into the curriculum to increase the opportunities of graduates in obtaining employment. In addition, the students themselves will have more of an understanding of the requirements that underpin a successful career in the hospitality industry and potentially have more responsibility and control over their own development.

8.4 Practical implications

As indicated by this study, teachers want to see the incorporation of generic capability development (e.g. interpersonal skills, work ethic) into the curriculum. In addition, they acknowledge the importance of personal attributes (e.g. personality) and higher-order skills (e.g. critical thinking) in preparation for the workplace. The thesis has also highlighted the challenge for academia in maintaining the support of industry and balancing the needs of the students at the same time. This study has established focal points for hospitality higher education where the industry representatives and students agree with the academics – the development of critical thinking, and improved provision of work based learning.

Hospitality higher education requires:

1. The facilitation of a teaching and learning environment that engages students to develop the core competencies related to success; i.e. interpersonal and critical-thinking skills
2. Strategies to enhance opportunities for students to develop higher-order skills and personal attributes through experiential learning (problem-based learning, realistic working environments)
3. An educational shift in the paradigm of teaching to focus on the development of mind (Hirst & Peters, 1973) and the development of the student as a whole being (Ramsey & Fitzgibbons, 2005), and
4. The incorporation and implementation of a pedagogy of passion into hospitality higher education.

The teaching and learning focus should facilitate environments that enable students to engage with the core competencies of success and develop their interpersonal skills, as the “hospitality industry is a people industry and to be successful, employees must have highly developed interpersonal skills” (Payne & Schitko, 2006, p. 87). The findings in this study indicate the need for increased behavioural development in hospitality higher-education curricula. Behavioural development can be achieved through learning activities such as student exploration of behavioural characteristics (e.g. leadership, team working), through reflection in individual portfolios and the implementation of work-ready learning activities (Litchfield *et al.*, 2010). Portfolio assessment is a collection of work put together by a student over an allocated period of time (e.g. a semester) in relation to specific learning outcomes and theoretical objectives (Alimemaj & Ahmetaj, 2010). Portfolios provide process-based learning and are a pragmatic approach to teaching and learning (Alimemaj & Ahmetaj, 2010). Moreover, portfolios focus on what students know (their knowledge creation) and their ability to problem solve, and provide opportunities for those with English as a second language to demonstrate their command of English.

This thesis has established that problem solving is a key requirement in hospitality work in New Zealand. Problem solving requires critical thinking (Hammer & Green, 2011) and is considered a key part of hospitality management (Berger, 2008). Critical thinking is also viewed as a necessary skill of graduates but there is some debate as to how critical thinking can be developed (Mulnix, 2012; Weissberg, 2013). The development of critical thinking in students can be achieved through problem-based learning, which is perceived as a teaching strategy rather than a pedagogical approach (Kek & Huijser, 2011). Problem-based learning is an effective way for students to obtain knowledge and expertise through a series of learning activities (Kek & Huijser, 2011). The combination of problem-based learning and effective work-integrated learning in hospitality will provide a way in which education can meet employers' needs for successful graduates with work-ready attributes (Lee *et al.*, 2010).

Education for success in hospitality graduates is possible but requires a move away from traditional classroom learning to a student-centred form of education in which the student takes more responsibility (Zwaal & Otting, 2006). Higher-education teachers could benefit from building more informality into the teaching and learning environment and focus on problem-based learning activities to develop knowledge (Lee *et al.*, 2010). The introduction of informality into the teaching and learning environment, through a student-centred focus, will allow:

- An interaction and integration with social experiences (Kinsman, 2006)
- The development of personality (Ineson, 2011; Velo & Mittaz, 2006)
- The development of a positive attitude (Tesone & Ricci, 2005), and
- The development of situational critical thinking (Hammer & Green, 2011).

These are all key factors essential to success in hospitality. Cooperative education and problem-based learning are solutions to achieving the above outcomes and contribute to successful hospitality graduates. The implementation of these aspects into the

curriculum requires a rethinking of the hospitality higher-education teaching and learning environment in terms of learning outcomes, teaching strategies and assessments (Kek & Huijser, 2011).

If the path to success for a hospitality graduate is to be fully realised, then a focus is required on a pedagogy of passion (Gallos, 1997). Introducing a pedagogy of passion is possibly the most challenging implication for hospitality education arising from this study, because its introduction will require a shift from a rational and functional style of teaching to a more emotional orientation that focuses on “the more affective, aesthetic, intuitive and evocative aspects of organisations and their work” (Bilimoria, 1999, p. 465). Passion is having a *love* for and making progression in work (Marques, 2007). Therefore, in the context of this study, the key to success is a *love* for hospitality. Educators, therefore, need to engage students in a teaching and learning environment that nurtures a love for hospitality.

The engagement of individuals is another key factor required for success. Engagement is a measure of passion (Bharwani & Butt, 2012) and is reflected in the level of involvement and commitment people make to fully using their skills and abilities (Schneider et al., 2009). From a hospitality human resource perspective, higher levels of individual engagement result in improved outcomes for organisations: for example, increased satisfaction and reduced staff turnover (Bharwani & Butt, 2012).

The educational path to developing successful graduates, therefore, requires a philosophical approach that engages students on different levels. Humanistic teaching and learning considers the student as a whole being and under this philosophy, education would encapsulate each part of the whole (Rogers, 1969, 1980). This study has established that developing a successful hospitality graduate involves various educational aspects: multiple intelligences, generic capability and personal attributes

(see Figure 8.1). Education for success and nurturing passion, therefore, requires a learning environment that captures each part of the whole student (Ramsey & Fitzgibbons, 2005). In other words the learning environment needs to provide opportunities for multiple intelligences, personal attributes and generic skills to be developed. A philosophical shift to teaching and learning for success, however, presents one of the biggest challenges to hospitality higher education.

This study has identified three requirements for the hospitality industry in New Zealand. Firstly, improved collaboration between education providers and industry to increase the provision of opportunity for graduates to apply knowledge, learn and demonstrate core competencies associated with success. This study has found that hospitality employers expect universities to provide work-ready graduates; however, the sole responsibility does not lie with education providers. Work-integrated learning allows organisations to contribute to the successful development of graduates and also act as a recruitment process at the same time (Gamble, Patrick, & Peach, 2010). If hospitality employers, as established in this study, view successful graduates as needing a strong work ethic, then they need to provide more opportunities for student work experience so that the students can develop this work ethic.

Another emerging theme was the perception from teachers that the hospitality industry lacks the ability to retain talented students. Data from the study also provide evidence of the major issues of staff retention and labour turnover in the New Zealand hospitality industry (see Williamson *et al.*, 2008). This raises the issue of talent management within the hospitality industry (see Baum, 2008). Further research is required in this area to substantiate the teachers' perception but, even so, hospitality organisations clearly need to focus on inclusive approaches to employee development in order to provide opportunities for the enhancement of skills and knowledge (Baum, 2008).

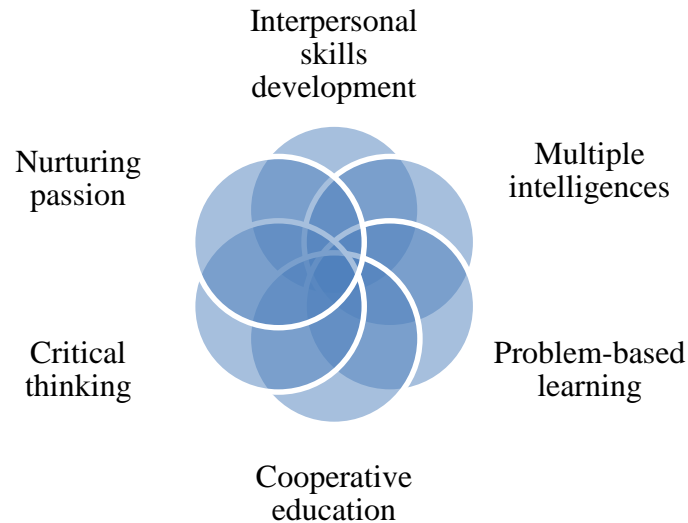
The love for hospitality (passion) cannot be nurtured in the classroom alone and requires the industry to have mechanisms in place to enable the continued success of graduates. Effective talent management can help to attract quality students and retain quality graduates (Deery, 2008). If graduates can see they will be given opportunity to develop and express themselves, they may be more likely to engage with an organisation. Organisations that have employees who are engaged are more likely to have higher staff retention and, hence, be more successful.

Finally, this study has established that happiness is the persistent factor used to measure success in hospitality, which can best be achieved through a good work-life balance. An appropriate work-life balance is an essential part of career success in hospitality and can lead to improved organisational performance (Newman *et al.*, 2014). The hospitality industry, therefore, needs to provide a flexible working environment that promotes an achievable work-life balance, as this will appeal to entering graduates.

8.5 Future directions

The path to the development of a successful hospitality graduate requires education (both teachers and student) and industry to embrace and engage with the key factors of an individual that are critical to success (see Figure 8.2). The central point at the intersection of the circles in Figure 8.2 is a successful hospitality graduate. Achieving success as a hospitality graduate requires interpersonal skills development, critical thinking and multiple intelligences. The teaching of these skills can potentially be delivered through problem-based learning, cooperative education and nurturing a passion for hospitality.

Figure 8.2 Education for success in hospitality



Ongoing research into the critical factors required for a successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand could usefully build on the outcomes of this research. This study is case specific to AUT and Auckland and future research could gather data from a larger sample that includes different institutions, cities and sectors of the hospitality and tourism industry. Future research could also incorporate wider stakeholder groups such as graduates working in the industry and incorporate a public sector perspective.

Future research could also be expanded across student and teacher populations at other universities to explore wider perspectives to developing success in graduates from other disciplines. In addition, different perspectives to success need to be explored across other industry sectors, such as success in manufacturing or retail. This would enable a comparison of what success looks like in hospitality with success in other industry sectors. The research could also be taken nationally and perspectives of success explored between rural and urban parts of New Zealand. Further research could be taken globally, and an Australasian perspective to success in hospitality explored in comparison with perspectives from other parts of the world.

One key aspect revealed by this study that requires future research is a deeper exploration of cultural perspectives towards success. There is reference throughout this study to the development of CQ; however, further understanding is required to reflect the multicultural nature of hospitality referred to in Chapters 4 and 5. In addition, the teacher sample in this study is only Kiwi and European (no Pasifika, Maori, Asian, etc.). A Pasifika perspective could be valuable as hospitality and tourism are growing sectors in Pacific countries (Lee, Hampton & Jeyacheya, 2014).

Each of the actions discussed above would enhance the quality and validity of this research; however, the suggestions so far appear to just simply expand the sample frame and methodology. This study has further research implications, though, as it has introduced a different unexplored pedagogical perspective to hospitality, and this work poses further questions about the direction and future of hospitality higher education.

Bidois (2009) stated that success in hospitality is having passion. This study has confirmed that from a New Zealand stakeholder perspective, this is true. Further research, therefore, requires an investigation into the key components of passion for hospitality. Secondly, further work is needed on curriculum design and the nature of a teaching and learning environment that will foster a passion for hospitality. This will have further implications for how hospitality higher education is managed and programmes are implemented.

Employers are looking for people with passion so further research is required to explore how to identify someone with passion; for example, what are the particular qualities of someone with passion? Research in this area would also require further clarification on what constitutes a passion for hospitality, what passion for hospitality looks like and how it is constructed. For example, the literature review identified that passion is either harmonious or obsessive; therefore, the type of passion required for hospitality needs to

be more firmly established. Once these issues have been investigated, further questions arise in terms of how it can be tested for or assessed, and where passion lies as a core competency in relation to other hospitality studies. In addition, accepting that passion is a core competency required for success and hospitality, it provides useful knowledge that can be incorporated into the personality profiling of hospitality employees.

The pedagogy of passion proposed by this study also requires further exploration. Future research could be largely framed by the question ‘What does a pedagogy of passion in hospitality look like?’ Passion needs to be deconstructed in order to integrate its components into a hospitality curriculum. It could be that passion is already in the curriculum – if so, how is it found?

What is clear from this study is that developing hospitality graduates for success is complex and a pedagogy for passion is required. Success is about the interaction of an individual with social experiences (Kinsman, 2006; Lawn, 2005) and is related to personality development (Velo & Mittaz, 2006). Success is also related to knowledge, skills and attitude (Tesone & Ricci, 2005), and realised through ability in multiple intelligences (Gardner, 2006). Passion appears to be a common thread through each of these aspects and requires nurturing through the development of mind (Hirst & Peters, 1973) and the whole being of the individual (Rogers, 1980).

8.6 Closing thoughts

As a hotel manager for a number of years, I considered myself to be successful based on a variety of factors which included a good salary and a good work-life balance. When asked why I worked in hospitality with all the long hours, demanding work and often stressful circumstances, the response was always because I *loved* it. As a teacher I consider myself to be successful based on the teaching awards I receive and compliments from students. Again when asked why I teach, the response is because I

enjoy it and it makes me happy. As an emerging researcher, I now understand that success is measured and realised in a number of ways and that a passion for what you do is essential. This research has shown that passionate individuals are an essential asset for organisations (Houlihan, Philippe, Vallerand & Menard, 2014 p28). Passion, as purity of motive, is essential to being successful in hospitality and can be nurtured in graduates only through a structured pedagogy. To manage and work hospitably in a hospitable environment requires students to develop passion for hospitality.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Survey administration schedule

Overview of degree papers for student questionnaire administration

Class Title	Room number	Day & Date	Class time	Approx class size
215008 Hospitality Organisational Behaviour and Interpersonal Skills	WH418	Weds (wk 12) 1/6/11	8.00–10.00am	25
215008 Hospitality Organisational Behaviour and Interpersonal Skills	WH418	Weds (Wk 12) 1/6/11	10.00–12.00	25
215008 Hospitality Organisational Behaviour and Interpersonal Skills	WH418	Thurs (Wk 12) 2/6/11	8.00–10.00	25
215008 Hospitality Organisational Behaviour and Interpersonal Skills	WH417	Thurs(Wk 12) 2/6/11	12.00–2.00pm	30
215504 Hospitality Information Communication Technology	WE240	Mon (Wk 12) 30/5/11	2.00–3.00	90
216802 Hospitality Human Resource Management	WH418	Thurs (Wk 11) 26/5/11	10.00–12.00	25
216802 Hospitality Human Resource Management	WH418	Thurs(Wk11) 26/5/11	12.00–2.00	25
216802 Hospitality Human Resource Management	WH416	Thurs(Wk11) 26/5/11	4.00–6.00	25
216802 Hospitality Human Resource Management	WH418	Fri (Wk 11) 27/5/11	12.00–2.00	25
217805 Hospitality Strategic Management	WH125	Tues(Wk11) 24/5/11	12.00–1.00	60

The questionnaire will be administered and co-ordinated through Suzanne Histen and Anne Kaiser, NZTRI

Class schedule by week day and date

Monday

Class Title	Room number	Date	Class time	Approx class size
215504 Hospitality Information Communication Technology	WE240	30/5/11 (wk 12)	2.00–3.00 NZTRI @ 2.40	90

Tuesday

Class Title	Room number	Date	Class time	Approx class size
217805 Hospitality Strategic Management	WH125	24/5/11 (wk 11)	12.00–1.00 NZTRI @12.40	60

Wednesday

Class Title	Room number	Date	Class time	Approx class size
215008 Hospitality Organisational behaviour and Interpersonal Skills	WH418	1/6/11 (wk 12)	8.00–10.00am NZTRI @ 9.15	25
215008 Hospitality Organisational behaviour and Interpersonal Skills	WH418	1/6/11 (wk 12)	10.00–12.00 NZTRI @ 10.15	25

Thursday

Class Title	Room number	Date	Class time	Approx class size
215008 Hospitality Organisational behaviour and Interpersonal Skills	WH418	2/6/11 (wk 12)	8.00–10.00 NZTRI @ 9.00	25
215008 Hospitality Organisational behaviour and Interpersonal Skills	WH417	2/6/11 (wk 12)	12.00–2.00pm NZTRI @ 1.15	30
216802 Hospitality Human Resource Management	WH418	26/5/11 (wk 11)	10.00–12.00 NZTRI @ 11.30	25
216802 Hospitality Human Resource Management	WH418	26/5/11 (wk 11)	12.00–2.00 NZTRI @ 1.30	25
216802 Hospitality Human Resource Management	WH416	26/5/11 (wk11)	4.00–6.00 NZTRI @ 5.30	25

Friday

Class Title	Room number	Date	Class time	Approx class size
215504 Hospitality Information Communication Technology	WB410	27/5/11	10.00–12.00 NZTRI TBA	
216802 Hospitality Human Resource Management	WH418	27/5/11 (wk11)	12.00–2.00 NZTRI @ 1.30	25

Appendix B: Indicative question list for semi-structured interviews



Demographic/Background Questions

Can you tell me what you think hospitality is.
Please tell me about when your interest in hospitality began.
Please give me a little background about your education and experience coming into hospitality.
What formal qualifications do you have?
Please briefly describe your role and responsibilities at work.

Hospitality and the nature of the industry

What does hospitality mean to you?
How do you think the hospitality industry in New Zealand is perceived?
Describe the hospitality industry in New Zealand
What is your perception of the nature of work in hospitality?

Success

Do you consider yourself to be successful? How? Why?
What is your perception of the term success?
Can success be measured? If so how?
When does someone become thought of as successful?
What are the important components of success in hospitality?
What is your perception of a successful person in the hospitality industry? (i.e. How would you recognise success?)
What makes a successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand?

Skills/competencies and qualities required to work in hospitality

Technical ability in hospitality can be considered as an accumulation of skills required for specific tasks (Baum, 2002), whereas generic ability can be considered as an accumulation of skills that encourage individuals to be more reflective and self-directed (Hager, Holland & Beckett, 2002).

On a scale of 1 to 6 how important would you rate the technical ability of a hospitality graduate?
Using the same scale, how important would you rate the generic ability of a hospitality graduate?

What do you think are the key qualities someone needs to be able work in the hospitality industry?
What skills/qualities, in your opinion, make a successful hospitality employee?

Challenges facing the hospitality industry

What are the main challenges facing the hospitality industry in New Zealand now? In 5 years?

Hospitality graduates and higher education

Is there a skills shortage in the New Zealand hospitality industry? if so please elaborate?
Do you perceive there to be any gaps between what is taught hospitality in higher education and the needs of hospitality employers in New Zealand? If so please elaborate
Do you think that higher education adequately prepares graduates for the workplace?
Why?

New Zealand hospitality employers say that entrants to the industry lack personal qualities. Do you agree? Why?

What would you like to see more of from hospitality higher education? What should they do better?

What is your perception of education in hospitality? What do they teach?

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being very inadequately prepared and 5 being very well prepared) how would well do you think university students prepared for the workplace?
Does student preparation for the workplace through taught hospitality higher education need to be improved? If so please elaborate

Which would you rate as more important for a hospitality graduate entering the workplace, the level of qualifications or the level of experience?

The future

What do you anticipate are the key issues facing the future of the New Zealand hospitality industry?

What skills/qualities/attributes do you anticipate will be the most valuable for hospitality graduates in the future?

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

24th September 2009

Project Title

What makes a successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand? Key stakeholder perspectives

An Invitation

I am a hospitality lecturer studying towards a PhD at Auckland University of Technology and I would like to invite you to participate in my research. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the research at any time, without any adverse consequences, should you wish to do so

What is the purpose of this research?

This research will help me write my doctoral thesis and provide opportunities to explore ways to improve the educational development of young people entering the hospitality industry at AUT. The research also provides the opportunity to involve hospitality teacher stakeholder perspectives in the educational development process.

How was I chosen for this invitation?

This information sheet has been sent to staff members from AUT School of Hospitality and Tourism who have direct contact with Bachelor of International Hospitality Management students, of which you are one.

What will happen in this research?

I will interview you at a public place that we both agree on. I will make a digital recording of our conversation and will also take notes. The interview will take around an hour, and afterwards you will be sent a transcript or the notes made so you can check for accuracy. You will not be identified in the final report unless you request to be acknowledged.

During the interview you will be asked questions about the types of skills and qualities you look for in hospitality graduates, perceptions of success in hospitality and the challenges facing the hospitality industry.

What are the discomforts and risks?

I do not expect there to be any discomfort from the interview as the questions are not of a sensitive nature. Should you experience any discomfort or embarrassment with a particular question, you do not need to answer it. Please note that this research is not an evaluation of the programme or of your performance.

What are the benefits?

The research will provide an insight into various perspectives of contemporary hospitality in New Zealand and provide opportunities for you to engage with the educational development of graduates entering the hospitality industry.

This research gives an opportunity for you to express your views and ideas on an important topic in the hospitality industry and make a contribution to the educational development of hospitality graduates from AUT.

How will my privacy be protected?

All interviews and transcripts will remain confidential and your name will not be published in the final report, nor the name of your organisation. All data will be secured on AUT premises for six years, accessible by the researcher and project supervisor. All data will be shredded after six years.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The interview will last around 40 to 60 minutes.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Please consider this invitation over the next 7 days. Your participation is voluntary and you are welcome to withdraw from the study (up to the completion of data collection) at your discretion, without any adverse consequences.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Please email or telephone me if you are happy to participate, so we can arrange a time to meet. I will send you an interview consent form which you will need to complete before the interview starts.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

If you are interested in reading the final report, please let me know and I will email you when it becomes available.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, *Professor Simon Milne* smilne@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9245.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTECH, Madeline Banda, madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 8044.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?***Researcher Contact Details:***

Stephen Cox

School of Hospitality and Tourism, AUT City Campus, WH Building, 49 Wellesley Street East, Auckland 1010, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142

Telephone: 09 921 9999 extn. 8907

Stephen.cox@aut.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Professor Simon Milne

School of Hospitality and Tourism, AUT City Campus, WH Building, 49 Wellesley Street East, Auckland 1010, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142

smilne@aut.ac.nz,

09 921 924 .

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *14th September 2009*

AUTEC Reference number 09/216

Appendix D: Teacher participant consent form

Consent Form



Project title: *What makes a successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand? Key stakeholder perspectives*

Project Supervisor: *Professor Simon Milne*

Researcher: *Stephen Cox – Doctoral Candidate*

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 24th September 2009
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....
.....
.....
.....

Date:

--	--

Appendix E: Invitation letter for industry participation in the study



Mr Stephen Cox
School of Hospitality and Tourism
Faculty of Applied Humanities
AUT City Campus
WH Building
49 Wellesley St. East, Auckland 1010
Private Bag 92006

Date

Dear.....

What makes a successful hospitality graduate? I am a lecturer and doctoral student at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) trying to answer this question. I am conducting research into perceptions of success in the New Zealand hospitality industry. By attempting to establish benchmarks for how young people can become successful within the hospitality industry, the study can be used by hospitality organisations to enhance the quality of education and development of those entering the industry.

As part of this work I am conducting interviews with key HR managers in the Auckland accommodation sector. I would like to invite you to participate in my research, the response to date has been extremely positive and I hope you too will be willing to be involved. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes and will touch on the following broad areas; critical factors in becoming successful in hospitality, skills and competencies required by graduates entering the hospitality industry and future issues and challenges facing the hospitality industry in New Zealand.

An executive summary of the thesis will be sent to you upon completion of the project and further outcomes from the research will be available online at www.nztri.org

Thank you very much for your time and I will be calling you over the next 2–3 days to try and set up an interview time.

Kind regards

Stephen Cox MSc, BA(Hons), PGCE
Phone: (w) 09 921 9999 extn. 8907
(m) 0212 999148
Email: stephen.cox@aut.ac.nz

Participant Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced:

24th September 2009

Project Title

What makes a successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand? Key stakeholder perspectives

An Invitation

I am a hospitality lecturer studying towards a PhD at Auckland University of Technology and I would like to invite you to participate in my research. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the research at any time, without any adverse consequences, should you wish to do so

What is the purpose of this research?

This research will help me write my doctoral thesis and provide opportunities to explore ways to improve the educational development of people entering the hospitality industry at AUT. The research also provides the opportunity to investigate people's perceptions of the hospitality and what is needed to make potential employees more successful.

How was I chosen for this invitation?

This information sheet has been sent to representatives and leading figures from the hospitality industry and its associated professional organisations, of which you are one

What will happen in this research?

I will interview you at a public place that we both agree on. I will make a digital recording of our conversation and will also take notes. The interview will take around an hour, and afterwards you will be sent a transcript or the notes made so you can check for accuracy. You will not be identified in the final report unless you request to be acknowledged.

During the interview you will be asked questions about the types of skills and qualities you look for in hospitality graduates, perceptions of success in hospitality and the challenges facing the hospitality industry.

What are the discomforts and risks?

I do not expect there to be any discomfort from the interview as the questions are not of a sensitive nature. Should you experience any discomfort or embarrassment with a particular question you do not need to answer it.

What are the benefits?

The research will provide an insight into various perspectives of contemporary hospitality in New Zealand and provide opportunities for you to engage with the educational development of graduates entering the hospitality industry.

This research gives an opportunity for you to express your views and ideas on an important topic in the hospitality industry and make a contribution to the educational development of hospitality graduates from AUT.

How will my privacy be protected?

All interviews and transcripts will remain confidential and your name will not be published in the final report, nor the name of your organisation. All data will be secured on AUT premises for six years, accessible by the researcher and project supervisor. All data will be shredded after six years.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The interview will last around 40 to 60 minutes

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Please consider this invitation over the next 7 days. Your participation is voluntary and you are welcome to withdraw from the study (up to the completion of data collection) at your discretion, without any adverse consequences.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Please email or telephone me if you are happy to participate, so we can arrange a time to meet. I will send you an interview consent form which you will need to complete before the interview starts.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

If you are interested in reading the final report, please let me know and I will email you when it becomes available.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, *Professor Simon Milne* smilne@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9245 .

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTECH, Madeline Banda, madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz , 921 9999 ext 8044.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details:

Stephen Cox

School of Hospitality and Tourism, AUT City Campus, WH Building, 49 Wellesley Street East, Auckland 1010, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142

Telephone: 09 921 9999 extn. 8907

Stephen.cox@aut.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Professor Simon Milne

School of Hospitality and Tourism, AUT City Campus, WH Building, 49 Wellesley Street East, Auckland 1010, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142

smilne@aut.ac.nz

09 921 924 .

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *14th September 2009*

AUTEC Reference number *09/216*

Appendix G: Final questionnaire for the student survey



Hospitality Research Questionnaire

Research title

What makes a successful hospitality graduate? Key stakeholder perceptions

Instruction

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please read each question carefully. The questionnaire will ask your perceptions about the hospitality industry, your thoughts on being successful, your intentions after graduating and the skills you feel are needed to work in hospitality. The questionnaire will take approximately 10–15 minutes to complete. All of the information on this questionnaire is given **anonymously**. The completion of this questionnaire indicates your consent to participate in the research.

Demographics and background

Gender (please circle) – M F **Age** _____

1. What level of papers currently studying on the BIHM? Please tick

<input type="checkbox"/> First year papers	<input type="checkbox"/> Second year papers	<input type="checkbox"/> Third year papers
--	---	--

2. Do you **currently work** in the hospitality industry? Y N

3. Have you worked in hospitality in the past six months? Y N

If yes to the above questions please state your job role/title

4. Do you think that obtaining the BIHM will improve your chances of securing your preferred employment? Please tick one box.

Yes	Unsure	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. What do you intend to do **in the short term** after graduating with the BIHM? Please tick.

- ☐ Further study
- ☐ Follow a hospitality related career
- ☐ Follow a non-hospitality career
- ☐ Take a break before seeking employment
- ☐ Unsure at this stage

6. What does being '**successful**' in the workplace mean to you?

7. What do you consider to be the most important **skills or qualities** of a **successful hospitality person**? (Please rank in order of importance if you have more than one.)

8. Below are two sets of skills. **Which sets** of skills do you think are more important for working in 'front line' hospitality? **Please choose one set and circle A or B**

A	B
Finance and accounting	Initiative
Knowledge of systems	Interpersonal communication
Application of number	Willingness to learn
Writing skills	Solving problems
Knowledge of technology	Being flexible
Practical knowledge	Adapting to change

9. Please rank how much you agree or disagree with the following words that **describe the hospitality industry**? Please score each word

	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree
Glamorous	1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor pay	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fun	1	2	3	4	5	6
Dynamic	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fast paced	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hard work	1	2	3	4	5	6
Exciting	1	2	3	4	5	6
Unsocial hours	1	2	3	4	5	6
Rewarding	1	2	3	4	5	6
Professional	1	2	3	4	5	6
Social	1	2	3	4	5	6
Youthful	1	2	3	4	5	6
Profitable	1	2	3	4	5	6

10. If you plan to work in the hospitality industry please rank how important you think the following are for gaining initial employment?

	Not at all important					Extremely important
Experience	1	2	3	4	5	6
Qualifications	1	2	3	4	5	6
Personality	1	2	3	4	5	6

11. Which of the following **do you think will be the most important to becoming successful in your chosen career**? Please rank your **top 3** in order of importance.

Work ethic		A passion for the industry	
Attitude		Critical thinking	
Business knowledge		Language skills	
Creativity		Resilience	
Personality		Interpersonal skills	
Cultural understanding		Using initiative	

12. If you plan to work in the hospitality industry at some point in your career what **topic area** of the **BIHM** do you think will be the **most important** to your career? *If you plan not to work in hospitality please leave blank.*

13. If you plan to work in the hospitality industry at some point in your career what **topic area** of the **BIHM** do you think will be the **least important** to your career? *If you plan not to work in hospitality please leave blank.*

End

You have now completed the questionnaire. Thank you very much for your time. Please hand in to the administrator.

Appendix H: Ethical approval from Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTC)



MEMORANDUM

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTC)

To: Simon Milne
From: **Madeline Banda** Executive Secretary, AUTC
Date: 24 September 2009
Subject: Ethics Application Number 09/216 **What makes a successful hospitality graduate in New Zealand? : Key stakeholder perspectives.**

Dear Simon

I am pleased to advise that the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTC) approved your ethics application at their meeting on 14 September 2009, subject to the following conditions:

1. Given that the secondary supervisor is the Head of Department and that staff are being invited to participate, provision of a conflict of interest protocol identifying how this will be managed and inclusion of information about this in the Information Sheet;
2. Amendment of the Information Sheets as follows:
 - a. Alteration of the sections titled 'What are the discomforts...' to read something like 'Should you experience any discomfort or embarrassment with a particular question, you do not need to answer it';
 - b. Inclusion in the section titled 'What are the discomforts...' in the Information Sheet for staff of advice that this research is not an evaluation of the programme or of their performance.

This approval is for the interviews of staff and industry representatives only. Full information about later stages needs to be submitted and approved before the data collection for those stages commences.

I request that you provide the Ethics Coordinator with a written response to the points raised in these conditions at your earliest convenience, indicating either how you have satisfied these points or proposing an alternative approach. AUTC also requires written evidence of any altered documents, such as Information Sheets, surveys etc. Once this response and its supporting written evidence has been received and confirmed as satisfying the Committee's points, you will be notified of the full approval of your ethics application.

When approval has been given subject to conditions, full approval is not effective until *all* the concerns expressed in the conditions have been met to the satisfaction of the Committee. Data collection may not commence until full approval has been confirmed. Should these conditions not be satisfactorily met within six months, your application may be closed and you will need to submit a new application should you wish to continue with this research project.

When communicating with us about this application, we ask that you use the application number and study title to enable us to provide you with prompt service. Should you have any further enquiries regarding this matter, you are welcome to contact Charles Grinter, Ethics Coordinator, by email at ethics@aut.ac.nz or by telephone on 921 9999 at extension 8860.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Banda'.

Madeline Banda
Executive Secretary
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Stephen Cox stephen.cox@aut.ac.nz, Jill Poulston