

UDC 332

DOI: 10.31733/2786-491X-2022-1-88-95



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## PERSONNEL IN TOURISM INDUSTRY OF UKRAINE AS A MEANS TO ACHIEVE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

**Abstract.** In the context of globalization of the tourism industry, the organization of personnel management and the efficiency of its use require more and more attention, as personnel is the main resource of tourism business enterprises. The competitiveness and performance of tourism enterprises directly depend on the effectiveness of personnel management, namely on its objective assessment and proper distribution of competencies, which reflect not only the professional level but also the business and personal qualities of tourism employees. Personnel evaluation is considered as an element of management and certification of personnel used in the tourism industry, as a necessary tool for studying the quality of staff, its strengths, and weaknesses. Any assessment is the result of a comparison of a facility with certain standards, regulatory requirements, well-known parameters, and staff assessment is no exception. In the proposed approach, personnel evaluation involves comparing certain competencies of employees with the relevant reference requirements of the position held or claimed by an object of evaluation. The essence of the evaluation proposed in the article is that for each position in the tourism industry it is possible to develop a reference version of competencies, through which, after the evaluation, management makes an informed management decision, namely to train, develop, motivate or release the object of evaluation. Training is appropriate if there is a lack of knowledge, skills, and abilities; it is necessary to develop when there are basic skills and it is necessary to reveal potential; motivate, if the necessary set of knowledge and skills is available, but not used to the full extent; and an employee is fired in the event that education and training are impractical. The article proposes an approach to solving the problem of objective evaluation of tourism industry personnel. The above approach is aimed at obtaining detailed information about how a certain employee shows his professional and personal qualities and how they correspond to the position. The proposed approach is based on the theoretical and methodological instruments of the method of alternative characteristics and scoring system.

**Keywords:** *personnel evaluation, weighted evaluation, competencies, Google forms, online surveys, customer orientation, loyalty.*

**Introduction.** Proper selection of staff mainly affects the implementation of the strategy of any organization in the tourism industry and to ensure that employees feel good at work place that corresponds to their abilities and capabilities. Currently, performance score is becoming one of the main tools for the formation and development of the work team, so deep knowledge and skills in this area is one of the main components of the leadership style of a

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modern manager. To make leaders manage employees better according to evaluation results and use them more effectively, the evaluation of organization personnel should be conducted regularly and according to all the qualities of subordinates or candidates for the position. Thus, the study proposes a method to evaluate personnel of the tourism industry which will use the scoring system to evaluate not only the level of qualification, which is determined by the ability to perform certain material operations, but also competencies which are considered as a set of skills inherent in each individual, i.e. his/her personal qualities.

**The purpose** of the article is to develop a model for determining the weighted evaluation of tourism industry personnel according to the reference version of the necessary competencies for different positions.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The study of the personnel evaluation system of an enterprise is devoted to the work of foreign and domestic scientists, in particular: L. Balabanova, O. Grishnova, V. Danyuk, G. Dmitrenko, G. Zavinovska, A. Kolot, O. Krushelnytska, M. Meskon, I. Petrova, V., Petyukh, O. Stakhiv, V. Khrutsky et al. Their research considered a variety of new approaches, procedures and methods for organizing and conducting of personnel assessment. However, the need to use a systematic approach to this problem requires further research for the effective use of personnel assessment system in tourism enterprises.

Tourism industry is unique in that the personnel working in it makes a part of its goods, it is one of the main resources in tourism business, the main component of the end product, competitive advantage of a company. We can call personnel the most important resource, as tourism makes its activity only through certain people (Rovenskaya, V., & Shishkova, N., 2019). Thus, a profit level, image and competitive ability of tourist companies directly depend on creativity, consciousness and personal characteristics of their employees. The labor potential is of particular importance in the development and competitiveness of tourism enterprises, its unique role is due to the fact that the provision of tourism services, identification of their quality and level of provision is directly related to employees (Romanyuk, I., 2020). When it comes to improve the management of the tourist organization, in addition to paying attention to market issues, competitors, customers, etc., the main efforts in the tourism industry should be directed to its staff. Therefore, the function of personnel management is the most important function in the tourism industry. The tourist product includes tangible and intangible components, i.e. tangible and intangible services or goods. The material part includes hotel rooms, furniture, equipment, vehicles, food and so on, and the intangible part – the level of qualification and professionalism of managers, professional ethics and culture, communication policy, etc. While tangible services are easier to evaluate because they are real, objective, and commensurate with other objects, intangible services are much more difficult to evaluate objectively because they are abstract, subjective, and impossible to evaluate. Development, preservation and increase of the level of the staff professional competence is one of the main directions in the personnel management system of the tourism industry. It consists of an analysis of existing personnel, making decisions on the development, maintenance or restructuring of personnel, according to the overall strategy of an enterprise; on creation of organizational culture; on integrated

control and evaluation of personnel (Klimova, A., 2020). Personnel evaluation is an important element of effective management aimed at increasing the competitiveness of a company. Different systems, methods and techniques of personnel evaluation make it possible to identify and reveal the potential of each employee and direct it to the implementation of strategic goals of a company. To achieve maximum efficiency, personnel evaluation requires the use of all scientific approaches, as well as their generalization and combination. An objective assessment can be achieved only on the basis of professional, personal and business characteristics of an employee (Buchynska, T., 2017). One of the most important issues in personnel evaluation is the choice of evaluation methods used to evaluate certain indicators (Krikun, O., & Rybalka, A., 2020). It should also be noted that the evaluation results were reliable and objective, it is necessary to use the selection of indicators and criteria that best meet the task. Personnel evaluation is a necessary means of studying the quality of the human resources of the tourism industry, its strengths and weaknesses and the basis for improving the individual working abilities of employees and improving their skills (Kichko, I., & Gayova, D., 2021).

**Formulation of the main material.** Customer satisfaction in the field of tourism is achieved by the courtesy of staff, their sensitivity and professional qualities. Therefore, it is very important to take evaluation of the personal working in the tourism industry as seriously as possible. Personnel evaluation provides information on the effectiveness of employees, their potential and growth prospects, the causes of inefficient work of individual employees, needs and priorities in training and retraining. Usually a large number of approaches to personnel evaluation are divided into three groups, according to the focus, these are qualitative, quantitative and combined methods. However, it should be recognize that using one of the three main groups of methods, only a certain aspect of the employee or his socio-psychological characteristics can be evaluated. Thus, it is better to use comprehensive universal methods that incorporate all available approaches to personnel evaluation for objective evaluation analysis. Particular attention should be paid to methods of evaluation the competencies of staff, because they give the most objective idea of all the necessary qualities of employees for certain positions (Malytz, V. & Tarasenko, Y., 2018). Personnel evaluation is carried out to determine the suitability of the employee for a vacant or occupied position and it is advisable to do it according to the competencies of an employee (Huertas-Valdivia, I., 2021). In the tourism industry, it is impractical to evaluate personnel for their qualifications as a characteristic of the level of professional skills, it is more appropriate to evaluate the competencies that reflect not only the professional level but also business and personal qualities of tourism employees. The characteristics that allow to solve successfully the tasks in a specific field of activity and in a specific position are evaluated, and the authors call them the competencies. Evaluation of personnel by competencies is necessary to understand the existing human resources in the company, the efficiency of their use and the need to attract new ones. The essence of the proposed evaluation is to determine the set of human qualities, compare it with the reference version for a particular activity and make an informed management decision on how to bring the employee closer to the required “standard” (Tsybalyuk, S., & Bilyk, O., 2021).

**Table 1**

Reference version of competencies of a tourist services sales manager

Requirements to the personnel of tourist companies	Ranking by importance		
	Desirable	Important	Very important
1	2	3	4
<b>Professional qualities, education</b>			
1. Higher / incomplete higher education in the field of tourism	+		
2. Other types of education		+	
3. Knowledge of foreign languages		+	
4. Professional experience / practice in tourism	+		
5. Special knowledge and skills	+		
6. Sales skills, presentations		+	
7. Good user of a personal computer with various information systems			+
8. Sociability		+	
9. Focus on achieving results			+
10. Customer orientation			+
11. Responsibility			+
12. Tendency to learn	+		
13. Ability to plan work, organization ability	+		
14. Stress resistance		+	
15. Ability to work in a team	+		
16. Accuracy	+		
17. Attentiveness		+	
18. Loyalty to the tourist organization			+

There are four options for management decisions:

1. Teach if there is a lack of knowledge, skills and abilities;
2. Develop when you have basic skills and need to unleash potential;
3. Motivate if the necessary set of knowledge and skills is available, but not fully used;
4. Release when it is impractical to educate and teach.

Let us make a probable reference variant of qualities of the sales manager for work in tourist companies (table1).

The following weighed ratios can be selected to determine the weighted evaluation: for the 1<sup>st</sup> Desirable rank – 0.5; for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Important rank – 1.0; for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Very important rank – 1.5.

For example, we need to choose the best one of three candidates for the vacant position of travel services sales manager. We calculate the weighted average values of the overall ratings for each of evaluated candidates evaluate by multiplying the weighted ratio by the rating result. To evaluate professional and personal qualities of the personnel the authors use a five-point scale with the following description:

**Table 2**

Indicator's number	Weighed ratio	Applicant 1		Applicant 2		Applicant 3	
		Score	Weighed score	Score	Weighed score	Score	Weighed score
1.	0.5	1	0.5	5	2.5	5	2.5
2.	1.0	5	5.0	2	2.0	5	5.0
3.	1.0	4	4.0	3	3.0	3	3.0
4.	0.5	3	1.5	3	1.5	3	1.5
5.	0.5	3	1.5	3	1.5	2	1.0
6.	1.0	5	5.0	4	4.0	5	5.0
7.	1.5	5	7.5	5	7.5	3	4.5
8.	1.0	5	5.0	4	4.0	4	4.0
9.	1.5	4	6.0	3	4.5	5	7.5
10.	1.5	4	6.0	5	7.5	3	4.5
11.	1.5	5	7.5	3	4.5	5	7.5
12.	0.5	4	2.0	3	1.5	4	2.0
13.	0.5	3	1.5	4	2.0	4	2.0
14.	1.0	5	5.0	5	5.0	4	4.0
15.	0.5	4	2.0	3	1.5	4	2.0
16.	0.5	4	2.0	4	2.0	3	1.5
17.	1.0	5	5.0	3	3.0	3	3.0
18.	1.5	4	6.0	5	7.5	4	6.0
Total score			73		65		66.5

- quality cannot be seen (1 point);
- development level: business quality can be seen far not always, but an employee already understands an importance of its appearance and strives to develop it (2 points);
- basic experience level: business quality can be seen in the majority of working cases (3 points);
- expanded experience level: business quality can be seen in standard and difficult conditions (4 points);
- creativity level: business quality can be seen in the most difficult conditions, an employee teach colleagues and improves himself (5 points) (table 2).

Analyzing the calculations in the Table 2, it is possible to conclude that the position of tourist services sales manager, according to the developed reference version of competencies, the applicant 1 is the most suitable.

Evaluation of employees of a travel company is to obtain data on human actions in real work situations and to identify his/her business, professional and

personal qualities. While some of professional qualities of our benchmark can be assessed by their presence or absence, it is much more difficult to obtain objective data on the personal qualities of tourism industry employees. It is better to receive information from people who communicate with this employee at different levels: leader, colleagues, subordinates, customers.

This method can be used to solve the widest range of tasks related primarily to the professional development of employees. It is used for the preliminary formation of the personnel reserve, identifying the need for training, creating plans for individual development and other needs. When forming the company's personnel reserve, it should be borne in mind that not all the necessary quality in the new position can be applied at the current work place.

Experts' personal sympathy for the test subject should be avoided. There is a danger of evaluating the degree of team cohesion rather than professional qualities and competencies of a person if he/she is able to build effectively his/her relationships with colleagues. To do this, it is necessary to approach very carefully and thoughtfully to preparation of questionnaires and options for their answers.

There are several ways to conduct a survey:

- paper survey;
- Google forms;
- automated services.

To conduct a paper survey, questionnaires should be printed out and distributed to all respondents. The disadvantage of this survey method is that the results have to be checked manually. Increasingly, such methods are being replaced by online surveys (Labanaukaite D., Fiore M., & Stashis R., 2020).

If it possible to create questionnaires in Google forms, this method is well suited for working with remote workers and to save paper. However, with this survey method, you will still have to process the results manually.

In case of the third method of survey, special services are used to automate collection and analysis of information about employees. This method guarantees the anonymity and independence of reporting by group. The disadvantage of automated services is that they are all paid.

The final stage of evaluation is to provide feedback (in the form of a personal conversation with a specialist or e-mailing). The main thing is that a person who became an object of such a large-scale study, gets acquainted with its results. In addition, the evaluator must have a clear idea of how and for what the evaluation results will be used.

After processing the results, it is necessary to compare new data with existing ones, draw conclusions, submit them to company's management, and ensure the preservation of results for further use, for example, to form a staff reserve.

The Martial Law in Ukraine has paused the tourism activities, but there are many examples in the world when, after the end of the conflict, the country quickly recovered and welcomed guests again. Taking into account the current popularity of our country in the world, we can conclude that there will be many people who want to visit Ukraine and see everything for themselves. Starting with the post-conflict "memory tourism", over time, tourism in Ukraine will be mixed with other interesting areas, namely cultural, marine, sports and

innovative rail tourism. Resumption of development and implementation of the new innovative project “Railway Tourism” will develop the tourist infrastructure of Ukraine and attract domestic and, most importantly, foreign tourists; replenish state and local budgets; create new jobs for population and increase their living standards; partially reduce the losses of the passenger economy by increasing the volume of rail traffic (Martsenyuk, L., & Charkina, T., 2017). Improving the state of the sphere of tourist services in Ukraine is also possible due to the favorable geographical location, the availability of optimal climatic conditions, national cuisine, intellectual potential and international image of the country. In future, after war ends, all this will also increase demand for tourism services, increase the flow of foreign tourists, provide new jobs, increase revenues to the state budget and thus improve the economic condition of the country (Biba, V., Tenitskaya, N., & Bilyzna, A., 2018). It is very important for the citizens of Ukraine to be ready for the restoration of our country and the hospitable reception of tourists from all over the world in gratitude for their indifference, support and large-scale assistance.

**Conclusions.** According to the results of the study, it is possible to make a conclusion that the implementation of the strategy and competitive advantage of any organization in the tourism industry is influenced by the correct selection of personnel, which in turn is the most important component of the end product. Thus, the personnel evaluation, which is carried out to determine the suitability of an employee for the vacant or occupied position is very appropriate. Therefore, the authors offer the models for determining the weighted evaluation of tourism industry personnel according to the reference version of the necessary competencies for different positions.

#### *Conflict of Interest and other Ethics Statements*

The author declare no conflict of interest.

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Галина ГРЕБЕНЮК

### ПЕРСОНАЛ У ТУРИСТИЧНІЙ ГАЛУЗІ УКРАЇНИ ЯК ЗАСІБ ДОСЯГНЕННЯ КОНКУРЕНТНИХ ПЕРЕВАГ

**Анотація.** В умовах глобалізації туристичної галузі дедалі більше уваги вимагає організація управління персоналом та ефективність його використання, оскільки персонал є головним ресурсом підприємств туристичного бізнесу. Конкурентоспроможність та результати діяльності підприємств туристичної галузі на пряму залежать від ефективності управління персоналом, а саме від його об'єктивної оцінки та правильного розподілу за компетенціями, що відображають окрім професійного рівня ще й ділові та особистісні якості працівників туристичної галузі. Оцінювання персоналу розглядається як елемент управління та атестації кадрів, що застосовується на підприємствах туристичної галузі, як необхідний засіб вивчення якісного складу персоналу, його сильних та слабких сторін. Будь-яка оцінка є наслідком порівняння об'єкта з певними еталонами, нормативними вимогами, загальновідомими параметрами і оцінка персоналу не є винятком. У запропонованому підході оцінка персоналу передбачає порівняння певних компетенцій працівників з відповідними еталонними вимогами посади, яку займає або на яку претендує об'єкт оцінювання. Сутність запропонованого в статті оцінювання полягає в тому, що для кожної посади в туристичній галузі можна розробити свій еталонний варіант компетенцій, завдяки якому, після проведення оцінки, керівництво приймає виважене управлінське рішення, а саме, навчати, розвивати, мотивувати або звільняти об'єкт оцінювання. Навчання доцільно, якщо виявився брак знань, умінь та навичок; розвивати треба, коли є базові вміння та потрібно розкрити потенціал; мотивувати, якщо необхідний набір знань та умінь є, але не використовується на повну і звільняється працівник в тому випадку, коли виховувати та навчати недоцільно. В статті запропоновано підхід до вирішення проблеми об'єктивної оцінки персоналу туристичної галузі. Викладений підхід спрямований на отримання розгорнутої інформації про те, як певний співробітник проявляє свої професійні та особистісні якості та якою мірою вони відповідають займаній посаді. Запропонований підхід засновано на теоретико-методологічному інструментарії методу альтернативних характеристик та бальної системи оцінки.

**Ключові слова:** оцінка персоналу, зважена оцінка, компетенції, гугл-форми, онлайн-опитування, клієнтоорієнтованість, лояльність

**Submitted:** 20.09.2021

**Revised:** 26.12.2021

**Accepted:** 12.02.2022