

Hotel and Catering Preparatory Skills Programme

Pilot Training Programme Report

Presented 15/2/2006 to the Hotel Discuss and Planning Group

Introduction

The Ballymun Job Centre in association with the Ballymun Partnership and the Department of Social and Family Affairs developed a preparatory training course for individuals interested in developing skills for employment in the Hotel and Catering Industry. Ballymun, as a geographical area, has a high concentration of educational disadvantage and marginalised groups. This programme was developed as an integrated, thematic approach to developing basic skills.

This programme targeted adults who wished to work within the Hotel and Catering Industry but who do not possess the formal education qualifications or experience that are necessary in order to apply for these jobs. The programme focused on basic skill acquisition with an emphasis on subjects that have a vocational application to the service industry. Participants completed FETAC modules, to prepare them for further training within this sector.

This programme ran four afternoons per week for an eight-week period.

Objectives

- To raise participants level of basic skills including numeracy and literacy
- To develop a knowledge of the Hotel Industry
- To foster awareness and knowledge of basic skills within the Hotel Industry e.g. Food Safety & Hygiene, Customer Care etc.
- To provide job-search skills
- To foster personal independence and decision making
- To develop a team approach to problem solving
- To invite the learner back to the world of study
- To develop computer literacy
- To equip learners with FETAC certification in some modules
- To identify progression routes into further training/education or work.
- To recruit and induct participants in a manner designed to create a positive attitude to training & education, and a strong team spirit.
- To offer clients an insight and understanding of the benefits, demands and advantages of adult learning.
- To operate a mentoring service to assist participants to make maximum use of the programme and to prepare for progression.
- To assist clients to successfully integrate into mainstream training and/or sustainable employment.

- To guide and assist clients through the application process for further training/employment.

Target Group

Those who wish to work within the Hotel Industry but who lack basic skills in relation to this area of employment. This group will include the following:

- Unemployed people
- Single Parents

Individuals may wish to develop skills to enable them to work in either full time or part time positions (or flexible working hours).

Course Content

Communications FETAC Foundation:

- Learning to Learn
- Non Verbal Communications
- Personal Interaction
- Reading Skills
- Writing skills
- Media Awareness
- Introduction to IT

Personal Effectiveness: FETAC Foundation:

- Develop ability to plan and learn independently
- Reflect on experiences of education and work
- Develop interactive skills
- Develop critical evaluation skills
- Develop good workshop practice

Introduction to Customer Care:

- Elements of quality customer service
- Importance of customer enquiries
- Telephone techniques
- Handling customer enquiries
- Handling customer complaints

Introduction to IT (Database): Hotel Booking System

- Create database structure
- Enter data
- Organise database
- Query database
- Modify database
- Load, Save and Print database
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Preparation for work:

- Goal setting
- Forward planning
- Benefits of having a career
- Finding the right career
- Preparing to start a job

Food Hygiene & Safety:

- Introduction to Food Safety Practice
- Personal Hygiene Practices
- Risks to Safe Food
- Safe Food Practices
- Cleaning and Safe Food
- Pest Control

Certification

- FEATC Foundation Level Communications
- FETAC Foundation Level in Personal Effectiveness
- Failte Ireland Essential Food Safety Certificate

Recruitment

Ballymun Job Centre contacted 250 local people who had registered with the Job centre for Catering work.

Mediators in the Job Centre also referred existing clients who had indicated an interest in working in the Hotel sector.

Applicants were interviewed by Job Centre staff and ten participants selected based on their interest and commitment to pursuing a career in Hotel and Catering industry.

Of the ten clients selected 6 were in receipt of Lone Parent Allowance, 4 were in receipt of Unemployment Assistance.

1 client had been unemployed up to 6 months

2 unemployed between 6 and 12 months

7 unemployed between 1 yr and 20 years.

Organisation

The course was based in Ballymun Job Centre's training room, and tutors were contracted to deliver the modules.

The Job Centre's staff supported the participants throughout the course. The support included regular reviews with participants to assess their progress, and accompanying participants when visiting local hotels and Failte Ireland.

In addition to completing the FETAC and Failte Ireland certification, the students visited two local hotels. These visits provided them with an insight into career opportunities within the sector, and allowed them to experience the working environment in a large hotel.

The visit to Failte Ireland's Training Centre was an important element of the course. The tour of the centre allowed participants to experience first hand the diverse range of career options within the Hotel sector, the excellent training facilities offered by the centre, and the opportunity to speak with instructors who were extremely enthusiastic about the Hotel and Catering industry.

Certification Achieved

8 Students completed Failte Ireland Essential Food Safety certificate
8 Students completed FETAC Personal Effectiveness certificate
9 Students completed FETAC Communications certificate

Progression

10 trainees completed the course with 50% moving on to further training with Failte Ireland 10% found employment 10% seeking researching the availability of training with 30% not seeking a career in hotels at this time.

Summery

The pilot programme proved very successful and all of the participants felt they had benefited from participating in the programme.

One of the prime objectives of the course was to encourage participants to participate in mainstream training. 50% of the students have already secured a place with Failte Ireland, which will allow them to gain further experience and qualifications in their chosen career path. Two other participants are exploring further training options.

The construction of 3 new hotels in the Ballymun area will offer excellent employment opportunities for the students who have completed the course, and wish to pursue a career in the hospitality industry.

Ballymun Partnership & Ballymun Job Centre and have met with representatives of several of the planned hotels, and have received very positive feedback on the training. Early in 2006 Ballymun Job Centre applied for CDVEC funding to run 2 further courses modelled on this pilot programme.

We are all hopeful that the local hotels will support the programmes, and provide concrete job opportunities for local people who have completed the training.

