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Industry Association Develops Skills Matrix and Job Descriptions for the Exhibitions and Events Industry

- Undertaking a job task analysis for multiple occupations to serve as a guide for other exhibition and events businesses
- Utilizing a competency-based approach to identify requisite skills for industry certifications
- Working with college faculty to use competencies to inform curricula

Introduction

The International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE), one of the industry champions that participated in the updating of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) Hospitality, Tourism and Events Competency Model in 2014, has launched a new initiative. IAEE, through a partnership with Janet Sperstad, Certified Meeting Professional (CMP), Madison Area Technical College and Dr. Amanda Cecil, CMP, Indiana University, has identified job roles for exhibition professionals that are common across organizations. These job descriptions were developed to serve as a guide for businesses across the country to use in developing their own job descriptions, thus promoting greater clarity in the sector of the requirements for key positions.

Workforce Need

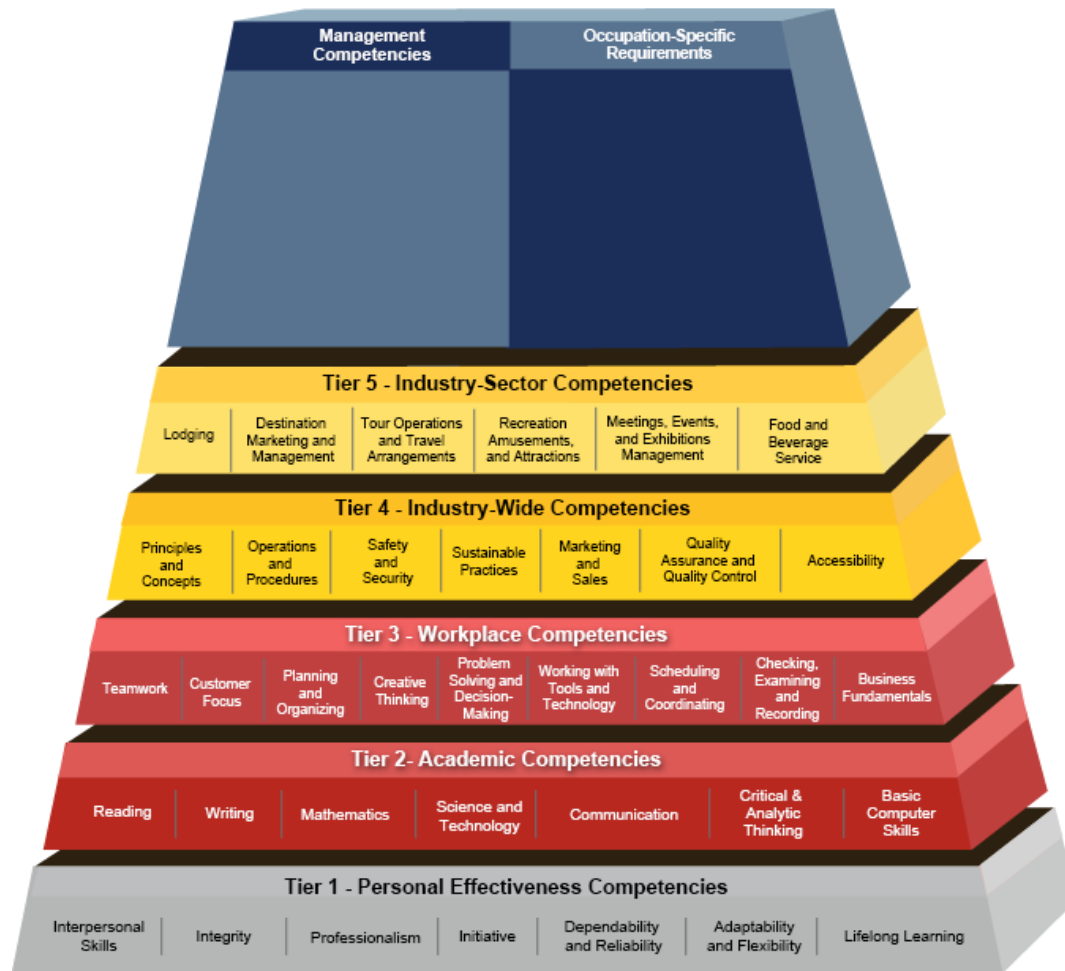
From a national perspective the outlook for hospitality, tourism and event planning occupations is strong. For example, according to projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of meeting, convention and event planners will grow by 10.2% from 2016 to 2026, exceeding the 7.4% average for all occupations.¹ Employment of marketing and sales managers is projected to grow 8.3% during that time period, also faster than the national average.

Approach

"In 2012, we gathered over 200 job descriptions within the industry and undertook an intensive job-task analysis," says Marsha Flanagan, M.Ed., Vice President, Learning Experience, IAEE. "We identified four primary occupational areas: Exhibition Operations, Sales/Business Development, Marketing, and Meeting Event Operations, and developed a skills matrix for each. The skills matrices for all four occupational areas correlate with many of the Personal Effectiveness, Academic, Workplace and Industry-Wide competencies identified in Tiers 1-4 of ETA's Hospitality, Tourism and Events Competency Model. The Meeting and Event Operations Skills Matrix specifically correlates to the competencies identified in the Tier 5, Industry-Sector Competencies relating to Meetings, Events, and Exhibitions Management as delineated here http://www.iaee.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/2017-IAEE-Positions_Skills-Matrix_FINAL_DOL-MATRIX.pdf.

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections, https://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_102.htm

Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Competency Model



Source: Competency Model Clearinghouse, <https://www.careeronestop.org/CompetencyModel/competency-models/hospitality.aspx>

Industry associations offer their own certifications including the following: International Association of Exhibitions and Events, Certified Exhibition Manager; American Hotel & Lodging Association, Certified Hotel Administrator; Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International, Certified Digital Marketer; International Live Events Association, Certified Special Events Professional; and Society for Incentive Travel Excellence, Certified Incentive Specialist. “Our members embrace the ETA model as a standard for industry certifications,” says Ms. Flanagan.

The Society for Incentive Travel Excellence, a collaborator on this initiative, also undertook its own job-task analysis to define competencies for incentive travel professionals based on three job families: Coordinator, Manager and Director. “We used the ETA competency model as a conceptual framework in conducting our job-task analysis and developed our own competency model specific to the incentive travel industry sector,” says Cellie Morales, Education Manager, Society for Incentive Travel Excellence. “Incentive travel is a niche in the exhibitions and events industry, focused on rewarding, retaining, and motivating employees with unique travel experiences to recognize their productivity.”

“In addition to our industry members, our partner educational institutions that prepare students for careers in the exhibits and events industry have also benefitted from ETA’s Hospitality, Tourism and Events Competency Model,” says Ms. Flanagan. “A faculty member from Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, TX, used ETA’s model as part of their gap analysis in reviewing their curricula for this industry sector. As a result of that analysis, the university tweaked their curricula to more closely conform to the competencies identified in ETA’s model.”

Next Steps

“IAEE will continue to embrace the Hospitality, Tourism and Events Competency Model,” says Ms. Flanagan. “It is a value-added component of our certification program for our membership. We are also working on a Career Pathway ‘micro’ website to support the model and the various career paths with which it aligns. We want it to be the landing page of choice for anyone interested in a career in the events and exhibitions industry. IAEE is also continuing to work with the Events Industry Council (EIC), a federation of 30+ associations in the exhibitions and events space - that promotes high standards and professionalism in the event industry with its Certified Meeting Professional and signature program initiatives. Our hope is that EIC will ultimately serve as a clearinghouse for all events and exhibitions industry certifications.”

Related Links

International Association of Events and Exhibitions

<https://www.iaee.com/>

Society for Incentive Travel Excellence

<http://www.siteglobal.com/>

Events Industry Council

<http://www.eventscouncil.org/>