Educational and Professional Standards as Factors of Meetings Industry Services Quality Improvement

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Abstract: Fast pace of meetings industry development raises the importance of specialized training of personnel for this field of activity. For creation of effective system of specialists training it is important to establish educational standards based on professional ones, the development of which is impossible without participation of employers having information on competences required by the labour market. The work suggests a principle scheme of establishing specialists training educational standards based on professional ones.

Key words: Personnel training • Professional standards • Educational standards • National framework of qualifications

INTRODUCTION

Level of quality of the services rendered and these services’ conformity to business tourists expectations is very important to the meetings industry. Nowadays all over the world and in Russia too a concept of national framework of qualifications and professional standards as the basis for education and training of specialists for the labour market is actively used. Theoretical and methodical aspects of considering of national framework qualifications [1, 2] allow to harmonize labour market and educational system.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is based on methods of comparative analysis and systematization, which allowed to carry out a comparison study of existing directions of higher education specialists training for the meetings industry, to mark and classify directions of students training for the meetings industry and to estimate the conformity of obtained competences to professional standards and levels of national qualifications framework.

RESULTS

This research allowed to reveal problems having a differently directed impact on professional personnel training. The main ones are: changes in the specialists training system and establishment of multilevel training of personnel; continuous updating and development of new educational standards with intensified competence component; insufficient harmonization of educational and professional standards in the country.

A control lever of quality of personnel training for meetings industry and the whole hospitality industry is improvement of educational standards, which include set of professional knowledge, skills, requirements raised for specialists of different professions of the industry. One of new educational standards’ key points is that they are based not on the “qualifications” approach to specialists training (this standard is used today), but on the “competency-building” one, which is supposed to be created also by employers, public and professional associations. It is not a secret that there is an evident discrepancy between the labour market, its needs and the educational system. Educational standards first of all reflect possibilities and educational traditions of
educational institutions, rather than real demands of the labour market, at the point of level and profile of specialists training.

Global experience shows that harmonization of education and labour market is possible on the basis of using professional standards as the foundation for establishment of educational standards and curriculums. A professional standard is a multifunctional normative document determining, for a certain field of activity (field of professional activity), requirements to workers fulfilling labour functions and competences necessary to do so. Structurally such a standard is made of separate units associated with labour functions. It is a professional standard which gives orienting points for educational standards and also criteria for evaluation of qualification and certification of vocational education institutions graduates.

It should be noted that nowadays a task of creation of professional standards national system in different variants (from development of professional standards to bringing already existing standards to conformity with requirements raised by the labour market) is set by the Russian Federation government and federal executive bodies responsible for the labour sphere regulation. However, in spite of sufficiently developed system of normative documents aimed at stimulation of this task fulfillment, until now an integral system of professional standards has not been created. This work in Russia is coordinated by two subjects: initiator of professional standards usage-the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (RUIE) and Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Russian Federation.

According to the RUIE’s committee on professional standards, nowadays there is a lot of such standards developed and approved, among them we can see the following ones [3]:

- Professional standards in food industry and hospitality industry.
- Professional standards in aircraft industry.
- Professional standards in information technology field.
- Professional standard “Assembly of framed sheathed constructions”.
- Professional standard “Organization administration”.
- Professional standard “Organization’s risk management”.
- Professional standard “Metrological provision of development, production and testing of nanotechnological articles”.
- Professional standard “Production of nanosized semiconductor devices and integral circuits with the help of nanotechnology”.

By now there are professional standards approved and used in some economic branches and what should be pointed particularly is that hospitality industry and food industry have sufficiently full list of professional standards, which has over 15 items, from cleaner and dishwasher to sommelier and headwaiter. Nowadays more than 60 professional standards drafted by large associations of employers and industrial companies were developed and underwent expert examination. And we should underline one more time that there is still no explicit integral system of professional standards, which would combine different areas of activity of a specialist on the modern Russian labour market.

Minimum evaluation of situation with educational and professional standards allows to suggest some algorithm of interaction between labour market and education system concerning training of personnel for the meetings industry. We should mention the necessity for including of directions of training for this sphere into educational standards and for activation of professional standards drafting. Now there is neither the former ones nor the latter ones. In general, interaction between labour market and educational system, to our mind, can be based on the following principle scheme:

- Labour market monitoring and identification of needs for specialists and certain specialists’ competences.
- Identification of sphere of professional activity and types of professional activity in the meetings industry.
- Creation of model of a specialist for the meetings industry (skills and competences).
- Development of professional standard for different categories of meetings industry specialists.
- Development of educational standard for profile in the context of some directions (management, economics, tourism, services).
- Training of bachelors (masters) in the context of new profiles of training for the meetings industry within economical, managerial and service directions.
Upgrade of qualifications of specialists in MICE-industry and event-industry.

We believe that professional standards are essential condition for creation of educational standards, because they allow to bring training to conformity with employers’ requirements as much as possible.

CONCLUSION

We proposed a general scheme of interaction between labour market and educational system in the context of harmonization of educational and professional standards in the meetings industry; this scheme includes labour market monitoring and identification of needs for specialists with certain competences, creation of a model of a specialist for the meetings industry, development of professional standard for different categories of specialists and then development of educational standard for some directions on the basis of which specialists’ training and qualifications upgrade is possible. Thus we can provide conditions for development of applied, practice-oriented directions of training which will take into account employers’ requirements more seriously.

REFERENCES