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Multi-unit restaurant management training: An exploratory study

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MULTI-UNIT RESTAURANT MANAGEMENT TRAINING:
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

by

Stan Suboleski

Bachelor of Science
Syracuse University
1984

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Master of Science Degree in Hotel Administration
William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
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ABSTRACT

Multi-unit Restaurant Management Training: An Exploratory Study

by

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This exploratory study focuses on the training practices and procedures of branded multi-unit restaurants. The study is specifically focused on aspects of training as they relate to the position of multi-unit managers (MUMs). The goal of the paper is to investigate current MUM training programs and trends. Very little literature exists on the specific topic of this study. A literature review focuses on three areas: the nature of the multi-unit restaurant industry; the definition and role of the multi-unit manager; and the need for and importance of training the MUM. Descriptions of current training programs in place at branded multi-unit foodservice operations are also reviewed. A survey instrument was designed, and interviews with executives in the multi-unit restaurant industry were administered. Seven executives from the top 100 multi-unit restaurant organizations were interviewed. The interviews were analyzed using qualitative software. Conclusions are presented on the general state of training and the types of programs

presently used with multi-unit managers. Specific training was often conducted in both group and individual settings. Common group training approaches were structured, and often held as some form of class, meeting, or seminar. Individual training often included a one-on-one component in the form of mentoring, shadowing, or coaching. Training content was explored, and included people and business skills training, operations training, and orientation, among others. Recommendations are offered for further, more focused research of a quantitative nature.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Research Statement

Multi-unit restaurant organizations (MURs) have become a dominant force in the foodservice industry. Gross-Turner (1999) describes a multi-unit firm in the hospitality sector as an organization that competes in the industry with more than one unit of like concept or theme. Also referred to as chain restaurants, the multi-unit segment of the restaurant industry has grown steadily since the 1970s to become a prevailing leader in sales revenue and market-share.

In 1975, the top 200 multi-unit firms generated \$14.8 billion in gross revenues, or 34.8% of total foodservice sales (Lombardi, 1996). Muller and Inman (1996) noted that, when viewed across all restaurant industry segments, MURs could be seen as a pluralistic market with no dominant player. Twenty-three of the corporations operating in the industry in 1996 each had annual revenues greater than one billion dollars. At this point, the MUR industry generated annual revenues in excess of \$100 billion, and corporations within the segment managed over 250 different brand names (Muller & Inman, 1996). In 1999, 17% of all US restaurant sales were generated by the three top organizations in the MUR segment (Jones, 1999). By 2004, the top 100 multi-unit firms generated \$173 billion in gross revenues, approximately 60% of total foodservice sales (Liddle, 2004).

The MUR segment continues to expand. This growth is fueled chiefly by the

success of national brands. Annual guest counts for the largest chains rose 3% during 2004. Currently, chain affiliated restaurants number over 234,000 units (Anonymous, 2004), and corporations manage over 250 foodservice brand names (Muller & Inman, 1996).

Jones (1999) described the growth of the MUR industry from a manufacturing perspective. As physical operations grow in size, the complexity increases, and the need arises for more complex ways to manage. Restaurants expand through geographical dispersion, increasing the organizations complexity and creating unique issues to operations that require specific managerial attention. The evolution of multi-unit management (MUM) originates from the rise of these growing, large chains (Jones, 1999).

The multi-unit manager is a vital component in a multi-unit restaurant's implementation of operating strategies. A MUM can be defined as the key operational interface between the corporate strategic planning function and the unit-level operational management. The MUM implements and maintains standards for the organization, and is the ambassador for the company as a whole (Gross-Turner, 1999). Most studies that examine this position focus on the lowest level of multi-unit manager, commonly referred to as the area manager (Jones, 1999). The current body of literature agrees on the importance of the role of MUM, but varies in terms of describing actual responsibilities, scope, characteristics, management style, and tactics of this member of the organization.

Many factors exist that have an affect on a MUR's operations. Issues such as segmentation, growth and expansion strategies, company life cycle, and the labor market all impact the manner in which a multi-unit foodservice company develops operating strategies. In order to flourish, chain companies must develop and execute plans that will manage these influences. The multi-unit manager is the individual chiefly responsible for

translating corporate plans into actions. This is done primarily through regular communication of expectations and assessment of results of the company's unit level operators (Gross-Turner, 1999). In order to accomplish this, these multi-unit managers need to be provided with training that conveys the function and importance of their role. Restaurant companies, however, fail to clearly define MUM responsibilities (Umbreit, 1989). Currently, very little research on the types of training given to a MUM exists. Given the growth and economic strength of this foodservice segment, it is surprising to discover that very little is known about the management of chain restaurants (Jones, 1999).

Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to determine what types of training for multi-unit managers are currently in place in multi-unit restaurant organizations. This will be accomplished by a review of the current body of MUM training related literature, and by a series of in-depth interviews with executives within MUR firms. Another purpose of this study is to review the current literature and develop an overview of critical aspects related to multi-unit restaurant management training. This study will touch on MUR industry trends affecting a MUM's execution of operating strategies. It will also review the differing perceptions of the role of the MUM. This study will then summarize the literature with the goal of defining and discussing chain restaurant and MUM characteristics as they pertain to training methodologies for MUMs. This information will be used to develop a set of questions relating to MUM training programs used by the interviewees' organizations. An important component of this study will be to identify where current research has identified the need for and the potential benefits of MUM training.

Justification

Due to the absence of research on the role and existence of MUM training, this study will be exploratory in nature. A more comprehensive view of the state of the MUR industry would enable firms to develop more effective training programs (Umbreit, 1989). Such programs could assist in clarifying the expectations for the MUM. In general, training is needed in any position due to the fact that skills and knowledge are not necessarily automatic. Even the simplest job has aspects that are not self-evident to the novice and must be somehow communicated to an employee (LaGreca, 1988). As the multi-unit foodservice segment continues to grow and thrive, these expanding organizations will have an increased need to attract and retain a greater number of individuals in this key position. Training is an important element in the successful execution of operational tactics within the scope of responsibility of the MUM. Therefore, comprehensive training programs can assist the MUM in terms of better quality outcomes, and the organization in terms of better operating results. A better understanding of the training approaches currently in place, combined with an identification of inherent industry trends and characteristics that affect the MUM, can be an important first step in guiding future research efforts aimed at determining what methodologies yield the most preferable results for an organization. This study's primary benefit is to create future opportunities for formalized research by identifying current training efforts and programs identified in the literature and in the course of research via personal, in-depth interviews.

Organization

This study will be organized in distinct parts. The second chapter will focus on the current body of literature. Specific focus will be on identification of current training programs. The literature review will also cover aspects of multi-unit firms that affect the multi-unit manager's understanding and execution of duties. Notation of previous mention of the need for MUM training will be made. Aspects of the MUR industry that have emerged as the field has grown will be discussed in terms of how the evolution of the segment affects operating strategies.

Through the identification of specific components of multi-unit restaurant management, this paper will provide a foundation for the development of a survey instrument. This will be discussed in the third chapter. In general, the survey is designed in an open-ended question format. Questions are focused on examining the extent to which training is utilized for the development of the MUM. Using these questions, interviews have been held with foodservice corporate and human resource executives directly involved with MUMs within their organization. Through the qualitative approach of content analysis, the goal of this research is to develop an overview of MUM training processes currently in practice in the industry.

While a small sample of in-depth interviews may not produce a statistically significant, generalizable set of outcomes, the main purpose of the collection of this data is to identify opportunities for further quantitative research efforts in the future. The scope of potential approaches to MUM training, combined with the absence of research in the area, presents an excellent opportunity to develop a solid foundation for further research efforts. Future studies will be able to utilize the findings of this study to design and produce a

stronger set of results that could be applied to the industry. To accomplish this goal, related aspects identified as relevant by established research must be gathered, identified, and interpreted. That interpretation must then be shaped to provide a sensible platform for the creation of a study that assesses the current state of the industry. The development of this overview of MUM training is the specific goal and main purpose of this study. The literature review helps to identify aspects of multi-unit management as they pertain to training practices, needs, and benefits. A survey instrument is developed as a result of the literature review. Responses from interviews can, in turn, be compared to the current research. These results will provide further opportunity to create wider or narrower research efforts, which can be aimed at determining whether MUM training provides the benefits and results industry managers intend and current research indicates.

Summary

In terms of gross revenue, number of units, and market share, multi-unit restaurants (MURs) have grown significantly in the past twenty-five years. The expansion in this segment of the foodservice industry continues at a dramatic pace. Multi-unit managers (MUMs) are a vital link between the planners in an organization's corporate office and the executors at the firm's operational unit level. As MURs grow in size and scope, so does the need for greater numbers of MUMs. Traditional methods of internal development for this position may not be adequate for the increased volume of MUMs required. This study focuses on the preparation given to a MUM for their job, specifically in terms of training for the duties and responsibilities of the position. A review of the literature on the topic of MUMs helps to create an instrument for interviewing executives

in the industry about the methods and types of training a MUM receives prior to and during their tenure. A better understanding of the training approaches used by multi-unit foodservice firms can assist in creating a general overview of the state of the industry in this area. That overview can provide an excellent resource for future studies that would delve more deeply into the impacts, affects, and influences of training upon MUMs.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Research has been conducted on some of the various characteristics of the multi-unit manager (MUM) in the foodservice industry. However, literature discussing training methodologies for MUMs is scarce. Gross-Turner (1999) discusses the lack of published material on the contemporary role of the MUM. Jones (1999) notes there exists a great deal of information on what managers at unit level hospitality operations do, but far less research exists regarding what managers above the unit level do and how they are prepared for their roles. There is a body of literature addressing the various job components common to multi-unit restaurant managers. There are also several works on the specific and changing role of the MUM in the restaurant industry. Much of this research notes the need for greater focus on MUM training.

The growth and changes in the multi-unit restaurant industry are discussed in many works. Most research focuses on the multi-unit restaurant industry in terms of economic impact, segmentation, and strategic operations. Often times, the importance of the MUM in achieving corporate objectives in these areas are emphasized. Another common subject topic is the review of key operating factors within the industry that affect or impact MUM capacity and performance. While there has been minimal research on the type or impact of specific training programs for MUMs, there are pieces describing MUM training and

development programs currently in place in certain organizations.

There are three specific areas reviewed in this section. The first will present information regarding the nature of the multi-unit restaurant industry, and focuses on definition, segmentation, and strategic operational approaches as they pertain to or affect the MUM. The following section will cover the multi-unit manager, and examine the various and divergent stances on the role, function, scope, characteristics, duties, and importance of the MUM. The final focus of the review will be on aspects of MUM training programs, and will cite positions on the importance of the training of the MUM, as well as provide accounts of training programs currently in place at multi-unit firms. In general, this section will focus on defining the characteristics of the MUM and the multi-unit restaurant industry as developed in prior research. This overview will provide support for an emphasis on the training and development of the MUM.

Multi-Unit Restaurants

Overview

In order to understand the role MUMs play in operational efforts and outcomes, it is prudent to provide a definition of multi-unit restaurants, also known as chain restaurants. According to Gross-Turner (1999), a multi-unit restaurant (MUR) firm can be defined as an organization competing in the industry with more than one unit of like concept or theme. However, it is not solely the presence of multiple, similar units that differentiates MURs from other segments, such as independent, single-unit operators (Hume, 2002). Growth, segmentation, strategy, life cycle, and labor characteristics all assist in differentiating a MUR organization from an independent operation.

Growth

Growth is identified as a persistent influence on the operations of multi-unit firms. Some of the influences noted are directly related to the human element within the firm. Wilkerson (1998) examined the external and internal pressures affecting multi-unit restaurants. One of the influences considered amongst the biggest challenges facing MURs was the focus on people within the firm as assets (Wilkerson, 1998). Lombardi (1996) identified the tendency toward achieving growth through the opening of new units in international markets. Jones (1999) observed, since restaurants expand primarily through geographical dispersion, new sets of completely different issues will subsequently emerge.

Examination of the rapid growth and expansion in the development of the multi-unit restaurant industry highlights the changes prevalent in its history. The industry first began to change perceptibly in the 1970's and 1980's, as chains introduced more sophisticated and strongly marketed products (Gross-Turner, 1999). This growth trend was inevitable. The economies of scale and scope present in multi-unit organizations provide large chains opportunities, otherwise non-existent for independent operators (Muller & Woods, 1994). Not all multi-unit firms necessarily experience growth in the development process in the same fashion. Muller and Inman (1996) assert that the restaurant industry consists of a variety of distinct and highly complex organizational forms.

Due to reach and marketing powers, MURs have been steadily pulling customers away from independent organizations (Anonymous, 2004). The future will continue to see the expansion of the multi-unit restaurant industry. Lombardi (1996) notes that chain

restaurants will clearly play an important role in defining the foodservice industry's future. Matorin (2000) takes a stronger position, indicating the future of the restaurant business in America is and will remain in the hands of the chains.

Segmentation

The former typology of multi-unit restaurants included three segments: quick service, midscale, and upscale. A study conducted by Muller and Woods (1994) concluded multi-unit restaurants had developed and now operate in two additional segments: moderate upscale or casual theme, and business/industry. All segments enact operating strategies which affect management focus and duties.

Segments Defined

Quick service restaurants are also referred to as QSRs. Midscale restaurants are often referred to as family dining or coffee shops. Both of these segments strategically focus upon increasing volume and controlling costs (Muller & Woods, 1994). Basic management strategy for these segments is aimed at the establishment of solid operating standards and controls (Muller & Woods).

Moderate upscale, upscale, and business dining operations approach things with a different focus. These segments believe strong operator identification is vital to success. Personalization of the dining experience, combined with the creation of a bond between consumer and operator are predominant operating strategies in these segments (Muller & Woods).

New Segments

In 2004, the Technomic Top 100 report delineated multi-unit restaurant segments

in a different fashion. Rather than concentrate on traditional market segments, the report classified restaurants in terms of product offering categories. The report included segments such as sandwich, dinnerhouse, pizza, contract, family, chicken, grill-buffet, snack, c-store, and others (Liddle, 2004). No mention was made of different multi-unit management functions within these segments.

Regardless of segment definition, Muller and Woods (1994) noted that distinct management competencies were directly tied to the attributes of the particular segment. They indicated one aspect common to all segments was the development of quality MUMs.

Strategy

Further understanding of the nature of the multi-unit restaurant industry can be developed from a review of strategies. Strategies applied by multi-unit firms are relevant when considering impact and effect upon the roles and requirements of MUMs. In terms of segmentation, different strategies for different segments indicate operational management of each may differ.

Paul (1998) identified the most common strategies utilized by multi-unit organizations. A predominant MUR development strategy from the 1970's to the 1990's was simple unit expansion, and it remains a common approach today. Paul identified a growing strategy called portfolio development. Portfolio development is a type of horizontal integration where a multi-unit firm expands through the acquisition or development of a new and separate brand. This strategy is seeing increased adoption. In 1998, for the first time, the Technomic Top 100 report revealed there were twenty-five chain restaurant companies that operated three or more brands in 1997, and sixteen across various segments that operated four or more. Paul noted that an obvious challenge

stemming from this particular strategy was how and where an organization will staffs for this type of growth.

Other strategies identified by Paul include the up-scaling of chains in terms of asset, product and service, and full-service franchising in domestic and international markets. Of particular interest is the discussion of international expansion. In the past, the percentage of international growth exceeded that of domestic growth, with no indication this trend will change (Lombardi, 1996). The international aspect of growth and expansion carries with it challenges similar to domestic expansion issues, but adds the additional dimension of cultural congruency. Differences between the culture of the corporate offices and the units in foreign locales will require additional attention and preparation on the part of the MUMs overseeing these units.

Life cycle

The stage in the service life cycle has an effect upon a MUM's duties. In a restaurant firm's growth from smaller to larger, Jones (1999) identified four stages of the service life cycle: introduction, growth, maturity, and decline.

At the introduction stage, the skills needed for start-up are not necessarily the same skills that will guide the venture to a long life. As operations expand, multi-unit skills tend to become more abstract and conceptual, and multi-unit management shifts to a knowledge based approach as opposed to skill based (Jones, 1999). As firms grow in size over time, management roles change. There is an increased emphasis on long-term strategic management and formalization of management processes that does not exist in smaller, younger, and less developed organizations (Jones).

In identifying varying forms of influence on an organization, Jones (1999) noted

that a firm's age comes into play in terms of organizational structure. An older, mature firm will have more traditional hierarchies, with greater amounts of middle management levels. Gross-Turner (1999) also identifies a relationship between human resource management and the life cycle of the operation. Human resources efforts grow along with the cycle and have an effect on recruitment, selection, training, development, and compensation and benefits (Gross-Turner).

Multi-Unit Managers

Overview

The MUM position has been defined by Gross-Turner (1999) as a first line corporate management level positioned immediately above operating unit manager. A traditional career development position, it encompasses a variety of job titles, including area manager, regional manager, and district manager.

There is a great amount of information on the purpose, role, scope, and nature of the MUM. Much of the literature establishes qualities specific to the position, but also reflects a degree of difference in opinion as to those aspects. In the past, large firms assigned management functions to specialists in areas like operations, marketing, human resources, and finance/accounting (Jones, 1999). A reduction of specialists at corporate headquarters created a need for a broader range of management skills in the MUM role (Gross-Turner, 1999).

As the multi-unit industry has evolved, the industrialization of operations caused a shift in services towards a type of production line scenario. This structure required the appointment of multi-site managers who were responsible for a number of like units, and to

whom each unit manager reported (Gross-Turner, 1999).

Responsibilities

Umbreit (1989) discusses the role of the MUM as the most difficult one in the organization to define. He argues that, in general, restaurant companies have failed to clearly define MUM responsibilities. The role is described as one responsible for policy implementation, sales promotions, facility appearance and maintenance, and human resources management. Jones (1999) defined the areas of responsibility in terms of specific involvement in finance, restaurant operations, marketing, facilities, safety, and human resource management. The position is an important conduit between superiors who need to know what is going on in the field and unit managers who are expected to achieve corporate management's established goals (Umbreit). Gross-Turner (1999) concurs with the function of the position as a conduit, and adds that the job is the key operational interface between strategic planning and operational unit management. The responsibility of implementing and maintaining standards at a high level makes the MUM a sort of ambassador for the company as a whole.

Gross-Turner (1999) categorized MUM responsibilities into four aspects; diagnostic control systems, boundary systems, interactive control systems, and belief systems. Diagnostic control systems are concerned with goals being achieved effectively and efficiently. Boundary systems are about establishment of clear parameters for the job. Interactive control systems pertain to face-to-face meetings, and belief systems have to do with the extent to which employees share the same values as the organization. Of importance are the human resource strategies behind these responsibilities, as the MUM has a strong involvement with human resource efforts and practices developed from them

(Gross-Turner). Some of the components of the human resource aspect include the supervision of effective orientation, training and management of employees, the teaching of unit managers about how to manage people, and the development of managers for promotion within the organization (Umbreit, 1989).

Because MUMs are positioned between the unit-level and corporate-level management, the MUM is forced into the role of implementing strategies, not creating or even influencing them (Umbreit, 1989). This largely limits the MUM to checking, inspecting and maintaining the standards to the brand or concept formula so there is consistency across the region, ultimately tending to make the position a highly results oriented one (Gross-Turner, 1999).

Many aspects of the MUM's job are linked to sales growth, employee turnover, quality, service, and cleanliness issues. Umbreit (1989) also focused on the human resources function of the position, and described it as one of coaching, motivating, and following up to see whether instructions were understood and correctly implemented.

Jones (1999) indicated that human resource skills tended to be a major problem for MUMs. Gross-Turner (1999) agreed that while there is a strong people focus aspect to the position, the role is predominantly one of a controller. The level of empowerment of the MUM tends to be severely restricted by the rigid standards and policies of the brand.

Additional standards related to the MUM's position are concerned with the checking of operational principles and policies such as cleanliness and customer service. Other standards included regular measurements of performance, management of the monitoring of stock control, responsibility for planned maintenance schedules and major capital investment projects, and the management and monitoring of health, sanitation, and

safety aspects of the company's operations (Gross-Turner, 1999).

Another major responsibility of the MUM is to maximize the profitability of the business area and the individual units under their control (Gross-Turner, 1999). Jones (1999) differs, stating that all MUMs are not necessarily focusing on lowering production costs, increasing efficiency and productivity, or enforcing quality control. MUR firms have a wider range of strategic options outside of the MUM to address issues. Umbreit's (1989) perspective is that the focus is generally short term in nature, and that the MUM can exert substantial control over most of the important outcome measures related to their job performance.

Human Resources

MUMs must expend an increasing amount of time dealing with issues such as finding competent unit managers, assisting unit managers with personnel staffing, motivating and training supervisors, and helping to establish performance goals. MUMs indicate human resources as their most difficult problem. Umbreit (1989) notes that it is easier to teach someone the operational or financial aspects of the job, but the management of human resources requires a greater level of patience, maturity, trust, and determination.

Characteristics and Skills

Gross-Turner (1999) looked at the characteristics of the individual in the MUM position. The MUM needs to be tough and demanding of subordinates, possess motivational ability, energy and stamina, and be able to deal with stress. MUMs are required to exhibit meticulous advance planning and organizational skills. They need to have the ability to persuade unit managers to adopt company philosophy. They must

possess strong observational and listening skills (Gross-Turner). Van Warner (1994) asserts the skills that mark a great restaurant manager transfer well to performance at the corporate level, the most important being the interpersonal skills necessary to keep an operation running.

A MUM is responsible for unit managers of similar operational activities who are physically distant. Likewise, MUMs are physically distant from each other and their own supervisors. Any form of direct control by MUMs of unit management behavior is only possible for irregular, short periods of time, and subsequently requires higher levels of interpersonal skills to be successful (Gross-Turner, 1999). Umbreit (1989) felt there was a need for the MUM to develop the skills to work through unit managers in order to let the unit manager better learn and grow.

Organizational Influences

Within organizations, there is a wide range of perceptions as to the role of the MUM. Jones (1999) reveals that MUM related processes and policies designed and developed at the corporate level of a multi-unit organization are quite dissimilar to the MUM's perceptions of their role.

The business format of the organization is such a factor to consider. The MUM position is affected by whether the company has developed into a wholly owned enterprise, subsidiary, franchise operation, or is part of an international brand. The scale and complexity of the operation is also an issue because larger, multifaceted operations require a closer degree of supervision, as do firms with larger profit centers (Gross-Turner, 1999).

Jones (1999) identified several corporate level aspects that influence MUM behavior. One of these is the amount of levels of management present in the organizational

structure. Organizational policies, organizational culture, and geographical location of business units all affect a MUM's approach to execution of duties.

Self-perception

MUMs view their job responsibilities quite differently than their corporate supervisors, and many indicated they were unaware of what was expected of them (Gross-Turner, 1999; Umbreit, 1989). MUMs assigned greater weight to finance, while their corporations assigned greater weight to operations, marketing, and promotions (Umbreit). MUMs expressed the greatest satisfaction with the exercising of their ability to motivate and develop unit managers, instilling upon them their personal management style (Gross-Turner). When asked to recount their daily activities, MUMs indicated they spend most of their day visiting units and managers, solving problems, implementing new sales promotion programs, and dealing with personnel issues (Umbreit).

Span of control

Span of control refers to the amount of units under the direction of the MUM. A variance in span of control will affect MUM behavior with regards to frequency and duration of visits to units (Jones, 1999). Organizations vary greatly in terms of identifying the typical size of that span. The growth rate of a firm can influence the span, depending on corporate structuring decisions made during the development process. Jones indicated some growing firms with increasing amounts of units modify the span of control, while others may not.

MUMs tend to supervise from four to eight units (Lefever, 1989; Umbreit, 1989). recounted his personal experiences, indicating that his first MUM position as a District

Manager placed him in charge of seven units. According to Gross-Turner (1999), the span of control can vary from between two and fifteen units. Jones (1999) also indicates a wide range in the span, from three to twenty units. Ultimately, the organization's management philosophy and culture determines how hands-on the MUM role needs to be. Some firms require MUMs to be technically able to step in on short notice to fill in for unit management, and this approach tends to limit the MUM span of control (Gross-Turner).

Development

A multi-unit restaurant company's policies towards career development may affect the MUM. Additionally, internal and external development policies will impact the amount and timing of training needed for MUMs. Some companies develop the MUM via an intermediate position within the company, often limiting their supervision to a smaller sub-group of units. Other firms operate a fast track management program in order to develop future MUMs. These programs often start with the requirement of a university hospitality management degree (Gross-Turner, 1999). Current means of identifying development candidates tend to principally involve personal recommendation, appraisals, and elements of remedial training (Gross-Turner).

Unit managers are a primary source of supply for the MUM position, as a majority of employers prefer promotion from within the firm (Umbreit, 1989). In the 1970s, most large hospitality firms had MUMs with backgrounds in finance (Jones, 1999). In some cases, restaurant chains have hired MBA graduates not for the corporate headquarters, but as regional managers (Van Warner, 1994).

Muller and Inman (1996) consider the lines of succession for the corporate positions as clearly defined. Those individuals selected for corporate positions may spend

years being groomed for a smooth transition into the executive offices. They also mention, in some cases, the hiring of an outsider as a viable solution to development shortages.

Training

Gross-Turner (1999) suggests that training and development of managers towards assuming MUM roles requires greater depth. Wilkerson (1998) notes that the industry will be forced to develop innovative and thought-provoking ways to find, career-path, train, develop, and compensate MUMs in order to keep them within the company. If promotion from within is the preferred method for an organization, then more systematic training of unit managers considered to have MUM attributes is needed (Gross-Turner). Jones (1999) agrees, indicating that job tasks and managerial emphasis are very different at the MUM level compared to the unit level. In general, area managers were inadequately trained for multi-unit positions.

In Umbreit's (1989) study, more than half of the MUMs surveyed said they never received training for the position. Gross-Turner (1999) adds that there exists a lack of planned training and development at the stage between unit and area manager. He suggests that training and development of managers towards assuming MUM roles requires greater depth.

Recognizing that a more comprehensive view of the MUM position would enable foodservice firms to develop appropriate selection criteria and training programs, Umbreit's (1989) study focused on isolating skills and personal characteristics required for the job, and determining appropriate recruitment and training strategies. In cases of promotion from within the organization, there is a transitional problem related to

management style (Umbreit). Management style is very hard to teach and difficult to change within an individual, and the delegation of responsibilities was a particularly deficient area when transitioning. MUMs need to learn the secrets of managing remotely, specifically how to effectively manage unstructured time, establish priorities, and maximize productivity at each visit to a unit. Umbreit identified two areas requiring the greatest need for training. The first was human resources issues, including enhancement of motivational and leadership style in particular. The second was personnel policies related to the hiring, training, and evaluation of unit managers. His research identified two goals to counter these deficiencies: learning more creative problem solving skills, and the improvement of communication skills. Another area identified as requiring training was marketing, with the goal being a greater degree of influence on competitive survival.

Wilkerson (1998) stresses that operators need to identify corporate culture, and instill it in a broad based system wide communications, training and support program. Lombardi (1994) stresses that two pertinent issues in human resource strategy as it pertains to MUM development are: whether turnover is an issue, and if training programs need to be enhanced to counter such issues.

Other issues will have implications on the need for the training of MUMs. Jones (1999) identified the increasing internationalization of chains, evolving consumer tastes and lifestyles, hospitality workforce diversification, and technological changes. Wilkerson (1998) agrees that technology is a major issue. Technology spending will increase dramatically in multiunit and franchise organizational budgets in the future, not only on hardware and software, but on staff, operators, and system administration. Muller and Inman (1996) add that today, the core technology required to run a MUR is more

sophisticated than that of historically independent restaurant organizations, and has a critical set of unique requirements for more highly developed management skills. All such areas have implications for the recruitment and training departments of multi-unit firms in developing the most appropriate individual for the job.

Rich Boyce, Senior Vice President of Operations for LaBelle Management, which operates Big Boy's, Bennigan's, and Ponderosas, comments that without training and support, his company would not be able to serve their customers (Zuber, 1997). Tom Horn, the Director of Staffing and College Relations for Aramark Corporations Food and Support Services staffing division, notes that staffing and training is no longer a series of transactions; rather it's more of a long term strategy (Anonymous, 1998). Horn's firm formed a new staffing organization comprised of regional recruiters and developers that focus on developing new high-tech and high-touch resources to meet current and future staffing and training needs. Alexander Dembski, Director of Training for Subway, uses an integrated approach, noting an organization needs to step back from operations and look at overall profitability. He added profitability follows good, basic, sound operations, and one cannot exist without the other (Zuber). Ron Magruder, President of Olive Garden, is actively seeking educational hospitality programs that prepare and entice students to the restaurant industry, as well as one that develops business skills for managing people and the business (Farkas, 1993).

Muller and Inman (1996) revealed that CEOs of multi-unit restaurant firms predict future leaders will require substantial skills in international business, in addition to exposure to advanced analytical skills, such as those learned through graduate level business degree programs. Van Warner (1994) proposes a training program may not be

enough. He mentions no training manual can prepare a manager for the difficult task of calming an irate customer and frazzled servers on a busy night when a vital piece of cooking equipment conked out. He notes it is nearly impossible to simulate the daily drama that marks the restaurant business, and asserts that a few months of in-restaurant training will not make too much of a difference.

Types of Training Programs

Training programs currently in use by multi-unit organizations tend to utilize mixtures of classroom training, on-the-job training (OTJ), and education. In the quest for the right training program, many operators have found the most comprehensive approach incorporates operational instruction with business education (Zuber, 1997). Gross-Turner (1999) identified a training gap in the largely implementational role of the MUM. As a solution, some firms have utilized management development courses at business schools, designed to expose MUMs to strategic concepts of operational mgmt, corporate governance, finance, marketing, and human resources.

There is a varying scope of MUM training programs. Taco Cabana provides a six-week managers building abilities program, including a week in which trainees work at a unit in their area. They are also experimenting with intranet-based training. The firms' training goal is to create a caring environment that allows the regional chain to compete in areas of learning and job satisfaction (Ruggless, 2000). In many cases, the training a MUM receives at such programs is identical to the training received by unit-level franchisees.

At Subway, trainees are required to attend two weeks of training at chain headquarters. This includes about 55 hours of classroom instruction and 35 hours of

in-store training. There, MUM candidates are taught cost controls, personnel management, marketing, and advertising. The bulk of the course is operationally based, with an emphasis on the profitability of the units. The on-the-job training (OTJ) takes place at one of several designated units, and covers everything from food preparation to maintenance. Trainees must pass several tests before program completion, including a seven hour final exam (Zuber, 1997).

At Schlotzsky's Deli, trainees are required to attend a three week program at the company training center. Forty percent of the training is classroom instruction and 60% is OTJ training. The focus in the classroom ranges from communication skills to operations, and often uses role-playing techniques. The course also addresses purchasing and product handling. OTJ training takes place at a high volume unit near corporate headquarters and trainees must work in every position in the restaurant from sandwich preparation to working the cash registers at lunch-time (Zuber, 1997).

The focus of the training program at Kokopelli's Pizza is on marketing and brand awareness. Candidates are taught how to promote the business. Trainees are required to attend a two-week program in which they spend the majority of their time working in a unit, making pizzas, handling money, and closing the store at night (Zuber, 1997).

At Bennigan's, trainees are required to attend an eight day leadership conference at corporate headquarters that focuses on teaching human resources, people skills, leadership, and motivation. Following the conference, trainees spend 13 weeks working in a restaurant. Due to the background of its trainees, Bennigan's focuses on management practices as opposed to technical skills during the OTJ portion of the training. It is considered to be a mentoring program, with trainees working side by side with a general

manager 90% of the time (Zuber, 1997).

The initial phase of training at Domino's begins with several one-day orientation courses offered at several regional offices around the country. Upon completion, trainees are required to spend six days at company headquarters for intensive training, which covers areas such as restaurant policies and risk management, with two days devoted to financial skills (Zuber, 1997).

Summary

There is a great degree of interest and support for training efforts on the parts of MUR organizations. There is as wide an array of training programs as there are positions on its importance. Most important is the need for managers and operators to realize a different set of core competencies is needed to succeed in a multiunit environment than in an independent one (Muller & Woods, 1994). This is also reflected in the literature in the areas of MUM responsibilities and duties. When combined with the broad scope of issues particular to the multi-unit restaurant industry, the literature indicates that, in order for the MUM to be of the greatest benefit in their role of intermediary between corporate executives and unit managers, a thorough training and development program must be created and consistently applied. The great changes inherent in the industry, its strategies, and the duties of the MUM require that emphasis be placed on communicating expectations, and providing resources to the MUMs responsible for execution of strategies dealing with change. This literature review in the areas of the multi-unit restaurant industry, its MUM staff, and its training approaches, has provided a foundation for the development of research questions that will further investigate the present state of the

industry and its current and future needs. The development of such an instrument will be discussed in the following methodology section.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this exploratory study was, primarily, to identify the training multi-unit restaurant organizations provide for their multi-unit managers (MUMs). An exploratory study is appropriate to the current research because there has been little research of any kind completed on training in a multi-unit foodservice environment. There are three chief motives for completing an exploratory study of this nature. An exploratory study focuses on the investigation of little known or understood phenomenon, identifies important and specific meanings, and generates direction for further research (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

The study attempted to gather as much data as possible, with the intention of gaining insight into the current training practices and characteristics of MUMs. A secondary function of the research is to construct a basic framework that will present opportunities for further, more structured research. The research in this study centers on a number of semi-structured interviews with key executives in the multi-unit restaurant industry. These executives were selected to include individuals possessing direct multi-unit management experience within the organization, or held detailed knowledge or influence on training policies and procedures for their organization.

Research Process

The approach used for this study is similar to the approach used by Gross-Turner (1999) in a foundational study on the characteristics of MUMs. The research strategy is to produce an overview of the types and content of training programs for MUMs in the multi-unit restaurant industry. The primary objective in this type of research is solely to explore responses of corporate executives, and examine the subsequent outcomes and implications (Gross-Turner).

In-depth interviews were used to gather information on MUMs and training. In an in-depth interview, the goal is to get as much information as possible from participants on a particular topic or subject area (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Using the literature review as a foundation, an open-ended survey instrument was developed. Interviews were conducted with multi-unit restaurant executives, either over the telephone or in person. The interviews were tape recorded, with respondent consent. These recordings were transcribed into computer word-processing files. Transcriptions of the interviews were subjected to content analysis, both manually and using computer software.

Research Question

This study is focused on gathering data about the training of MUMs. Since it is an exploratory study, there is no specific hypothesis. In the review of the literature, a theme arose that became the foundation for a general research question. Much of the literature indicated the position of the MUM is an important and vital role in implementing corporate strategies at the operational level. The main research question that emerged was concerned with the kind of training the MUMs received in order to prepare them for the execution of their duties. Within this area, additional questions were developed that were concerned

with the type of training currently provided for MUMs, and what training programs were being considered for future development and adoption. In addition to how training was delivered, a supporting question that arose was focused on what specific training content was provided.

Population

A population was identified for this study. Technomics, Inc. produces an annual report of the top performing branded multi-unit restaurant organizations. Restaurant firms on this list are all large international, national, or regional multi-unit operating companies. While Technomics collects data mainly from the top 100 companies, it generates a list of over 200 of the largest firms in the country. The collective history of these lists was considered as the population. From this population, a sample was drawn.

Sample

From its qualitative perspective, this study follows the tenets of internal sampling. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) discuss this approach to the selection of participants in the context of the decisions made with regards to whom the researcher will interview. These decisions are made after the researcher has a solid idea of the phenomenon he or she wishes to study. Upon identification of individuals of interest, the study applied a convenience sampling method. Also referred to as haphazard or accidental sampling, convenience sampling refers to sampling by units or people who are most conveniently available (Zikmund, 2003).

The researcher contacted executives who knew other academics at the university on a personal or professional basis, who were willing to participate. Twelve executives with personal relationships were solicited to participate, with the final sample size being seven

total interviews. Although each respondent did not necessarily refer another participant, Marshall and Rossman (1999) would argue that the sampling would more accurately be referred to as chain or snowball sampling. The initial source of the participants was offered by individuals in the academic field that knew managers in the chain restaurant industry whose interviews would very likely yield appropriate and richly descriptive data. Because this study draws on more than one “type” of sampling, the sampling process will heretofore be referred to as convenience-chain sampling.

The respondents interviewed included executives in multi-unit restaurant firms that held human resources or executive operations positions. In some cases, respondents were currently, or at one time in their career, MUMs themselves. Respondents were limited by the requirement they have knowledge of policies and practices concerning MUM training, or they have some degree of influence over that area within the firm.

Instrument

Utilizing the literature as a foundation, an open-ended survey instrument was designed. A copy of the instrument, with sample probative follow-ups, can be viewed in Appendix I. The instrument was categorized, for sake of future analysis, into two general sections, open-ended questions and demographic questions. The demographic questions were developed to give each organization some kind of quantifiable description. The data analysis includes a table showing the various results of these questions. Each organization will be randomly labeled to ensure anonymity.

Demographic questions were developed from a review of previous top 100 reports by Technomics, Inc. They were placed into two separate sub-categories: Organization and MUM. Organization questions were concerned with company size, age, market segment,

span of control, and gross revenues. MUM questions were concerned with characteristics of MUMs within the organization. They included inquiries such as number of MUMs within the company, age, gender, pay rates, incentives, tenure, and turnover.

With respect to the open-ended questions, three specific dimensions of interest were determined. The dimensions of interest included the MUM's job, the MUM's employment, and the training the MUM received. The MUM's job dimension posed questions regarding the roles, duties, responsibilities and expectations of the MUM. The MUM's employment dimension was concerned with the criteria used in the organization for employing, promoting, and developing the MUM. The MUM training dimension examined training efforts or programs in place, and future training plans in development.

All questions in this section of the instrument are open-ended and broad in scope. Interviewers were armed with several probative and follow-up questions to be used if it was determined a deeper or clearer response was warranted. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) argue that, with such semi-structured interviews, the researcher is more likely to get comparable data across subjects. This may come at the cost of understanding how the respondents personally structure the topic, but for the purposes of exploratory research, semi-structured interviews are preferable.

In order to ensure that interviews were as detailed and in-depth as possible, several questions may have been revisited or probed further during the course of the interview. More than one interviewer was used, each exhibiting their own unique style of creating a conversation with the respondents. In some cases, answers to questions were generated before they were directly asked. This often generated responses in different orders in each of the interviews. Though the framework was similar for each interview, these stylistic

differences are a strong reason to homogenize the results using content analysis.

Data Collection

In this study, interviews were conducted in person whenever possible or by phone if a face to face interview was not possible. In-person interviews allow the researcher to more effectively control the flow and pace of the interview, while minimizing interruptions that are more likely to occur if the respondent is in their own work area talking over the telephone. Two interviews were conducted in person. These were conducted at the Multi-Unit Food Service Organization (MUFSO) Center at the University of Central Florida (UCF). The remaining five interviews were conducted over the telephone, from the researcher's office. All phone interviews were set to be conducted at the respondent's office or workspace. All in-person and telephone interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes, and were collected over a two month period in the spring of 2005.

The data was collected by two interviewers. The author conducted the phone interviews from Las Vegas, and the second researcher, employed at the UCF, conducted the in-person interviews. It was intended that all interviews be held in person at the MUFSO facility, but ensuing difficulties getting participants to the site led to the decision to add interviews over the telephone. Both interviewers are experienced in conducting in-depth interviews and in posing follow up or probative questions in order to maximize the quality and depth of the responses.

Mehmetoglu and Altinay (2005) warn of the potential dangers of note-taking in interviews. He advises that transcription take place as soon as possible after an interview to avoid possible loss of data or poor note recall and interpretation. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) stress the importance of careful and attentive listening throughout the entire interview

process. The researchers in these interviews did not converse freely with respondents, but did strive to create a conversational atmosphere where no responses would be omitted due to self-consciousness or levels of discomfort. Consistent with the nature of a semi-structured interview, the goal was not to get all the questions in the instrument asked, but rather to focus on understanding of the participant's perspective of MUM training (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

Because of the desire to keep the data as pure and complete as possible, it was decided that all interviews be taped. Respondents were advised of the taping. Each participant was advised of the steps taken to protect their anonymity and keep them from embarrassment and harm (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Even though this was fully explained in the consent process, the respondents were advised of the precautions taken at the beginning and end of each interview.

Upon completion, each interview was promptly transcribed into a Microsoft Word file by a professional transcriber. The transcriber was instructed to include all stutters or false starts, and all verbal pauses such as "umms" or "uhhs" in order to keep the data as accurate as possible. All conversation during the interview, formal or otherwise, was transcribed so that interviewer follow-ups and probative questions could be reviewed as needed should there be any discrepancy in interviewer style affecting analysis. All interviewer responses, such as "OK", "mmmm", and "go on" were included in order to present a final dialogue accurately portraying the level of interactivity. Many of these verbalizations were aimed at bringing comfort to the respondent in knowing the interviewer is actively listening.

Analysis

An important part of the analysis portion is to determine the unit of measurement. For oral content transcribed into a document, the most relevant units of measurement are words, phrases, and themes (Kassarjian, 1977). As recommended by Mehmetoglu and Altinay (2005), information from each participant was first analyzed separately to identify emerging themes within particular organizations. The themes that emerged from each respondent were then compared across individuals in order to identify common beliefs or practices. Such a multiple analysis approach can lead to a more sophisticated understanding (Mehmetoglu & Altinay). An exploratory study of this nature is designed to present as much information as possible to assist with future research efforts.

Analysis was completed using the program Atlas/ti. Atlas/ti is a computer based program for users to manage, organize and support research using qualitative data (Muhr, 2005). A hand-coding process was used first, prior to the computer analysis. The hand-coding is a necessary component of preparing the interviews for analysis in Atlas. The coding process was simple and natural. The unit of measurement was first defined. Berg (2001) identifies “theme” as a useful unit to count, defining it as a simple string of words, or a sentence. The three dimensions identified for the construction of the instrument, MUM job, MUM employment, and MUM training, can be considered the major themes developed from the literature and utilized in the process of open coding (Berg, 2001). Themes and/or words are coded initially into one of these three major themes. Of specific interest for this study are the concepts or words grouped together (Berg), into ideas that fall into the major category of MUM training. After identifying those passages in the interview transcription that belong or relate to the dimension of

MUM training, further word, concept, and theme coding was completed. Specific codes were developed that reflected descriptions of training and training programs. These codes were developed using the natural speech and words of the respondents.

Current computer programs are not sophisticated enough to identify emergent codes without being directed from a list of pre-generated options. Identified codes are entered into Atlas/ti in a list of all codes developed in the process of manually examining the transcripts. The process of coding will be discussed further in Chapter 4. A list of the specific codes related to MUM training that were used in the coding process will be included with the results in Chapter 4

The software developer, Muhr (2005) describes the process of coding and entering data for analysis by Atlas/ti. First, all of the data (the interview transcriptions) gathered is entered and associated with the program in what is referred to as a hermeneutic unit (HU). This creates a single file of all the data, allowing practical and easy access to all the sources in one corpus. Text passages are then selected and assigned code words or phrases previously determined and entered into the program by the researcher. These passages tie together lines of text, referred to by the software program as quotes, to certain codes from the established list. Upon completion of initial coding, the program is then able to look at patterns across all interviews, and generate an assessment of codes fully or partially shared by multiple respondents. With Atlas/ti, the researcher can access specific features that assist in making connections between various coded concepts, especially in terms of unique and distinct forms of useful diagrams and other visual output (Berg, 2001). From this analysis, the researcher can build what the software refers to as semantic, propositional, or terminological networks representing the relationships between the content of the

varying interviews (Muhr, 2005). These results can then be further analyzed in detail by the program's generation of what it identifies as super codes, or coding that is prevalent and prominent in all data sources. The researcher can guide the analysis process by tacking memos, or basic notes of interest to multiple quotes from different respondents.

Output from the program can be generated via a compiled report that sorts and groups all codes, super codes, memos, and networks into one amalgamated file (Muhr, 2005). Additionally, Atlas also assists in producing graphic representations of the existence, relationship, frequency, and strength of themes within or across interviews. This research produced several such outcomes, which will be presented and discussed in Chapter 4.

Summary

Berg (2001) described content analysis as a process for systematic inferences about meanings in communication that objectively identifies special characteristics of messages. A content analysis approach of in-depth interviews has several distinct advantages. It is detailed in nature. The open-ended approach allows for skilled interviewers to use follow-up, probative questions in order to get the richest answer possible without the need to hold multiple interviews with the same respondent. With the exception of generating an underlying theme or notion, no further pre-determined paradigms are imposed. This assures that analysis and interpretation are grounded solely in the data (Mehmetoglu & Altinay, 2005). Furthermore, reliability, or reproducibility, is one of the distinguishing characteristics of content analysis. It rests in the assurance the data obtained is independent of the measuring event, instrument, or person. Berg discussed the usefulness of this approach in terms of cost-effectiveness, unobtrusiveness, and ability to capture and reflect

trends in a particular society. It is for these reasons that content analysis was selected for the processing of the data in this study. Strong content analysis techniques can permit the analyst to make inferences about the latent or underlying meaning of messages for exploratory rather than only for descriptive purposes (Mitchell, 1967).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter will review the findings of the content analysis. Seven open-ended interviews were conducted ($n = 7$). There will be a review of the open coding categories used within each coding family. This is followed by a detailed review of respondent interviews, as well as comparisons of results across cases. The nature of each company and the individual respondents will be summarized in a descriptive fashion. Each interview will be summarized with respect to the types and content of the training provided to the MUMs within that organization, as well other relevant or noteworthy issues pertaining to the organization's attitude and philosophies towards training. Wherever possible and appropriate, direct quotes from the interviews are cited. This is for the purposes of adding as much depth and description to the analysis of the emergent themes within each interview.

Coding

The open coding process concentrated on the portions of the interview that addressed MUM training. As coding progressed, three logical groupings, or categories, of codes emerged: attributes and characteristics of training in general; types of, and approaches to training; and training content (See Figure 1). A detailed listing of codes will be presented in the following sections.

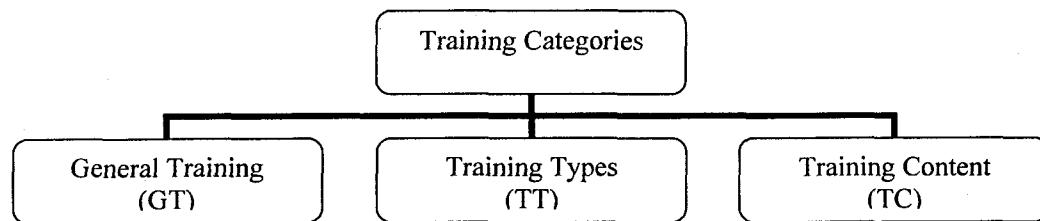


Figure1. Major Training Categories.

General Training

Within Atlas/ti, the General Training category is represented by a prefix code of TG. Four codes were identified for this category: future, history; philosophy; and time (See Table 1). The codes history and future indicate which training programs have been in place and which training programs are planned for the future of the organization. These themes help to paint a picture of the strategies used by the firms with respect to training. The Time code pertains to instances where the length of particular training approaches was identified, and could range from days to weeks. It can be helpful in ultimately attempting to compare programs across cases. Certain passages were identified with the Philosophy code. In all of the interviews, there was some amount of discussion about the culture of training within the organization. These entries were of great assistance in presenting the company's position and attitude towards training. While the codes within the General Training family do not address specific methodologies or content of training, they are nonetheless helpful in painting a more robust picture of the goals and value of MUM training within each case.

Table 1

General Training (GT) Codes

Code Names
Future
History
Philosophy
Time

Training Types

Throughout the coding process, numerous types of training were identified. These emergent codes were identified as belonging to the coding category of training type, which was identified within Atlas/ti with the prefix TT. There were a total of 18 codes identified within the TT family (See Table 2). Of particular interest was the no training code. This was the only code to indicate an absence of training within the organization.

Table 2

Training Type (TT) Codes

Code Names	Code Names
Books	No training
Certification	On-line
Class	Outside trainer
Coaching	Projects
Conference	Seminar
Group	Shadowing
Internal programs	Technology
Meetings	Tests
Mentoring	Workshops

Dependent upon descriptions provided by the respondents, several codes emerged that described an approach geared towards individual, one-on-one training. Codes within the individual family included: coaching, mentoring, and shadowing.

Other individual-oriented training themes were identified as being more of a self-guided or self-paced approach that involved various tasks or resources. The books code refers to workbooks or training packets provided as a self-guided training tool. The tests code and the certification code are concerned with training programs that included some kind of measurable assessment of the quality or completeness of the training. The technology and on-line codes, which refer to training completed on a computer with network access to remote server-based training materials, also share these characteristics.

Another individual training theme that emerged is the projects code. This code refers to self-paced projects given to individual trainees to simulate work experiences. A final code of an individual nature was labeled as the internal program code, and refers to custom-designed, self-paced training programs for individuals with specific training needs. Over all the interviews, nine TT codes for individuals were identified.

Several themes emerged that were related to training completed in groups as opposed to individuals. Codes in the group family include: class code, meetings code, workshop code, seminar code, and conference code. The outside trainer code is included in this group as well. All of these codes share the characteristic of being executed for a group of individuals. The setting and style of the group training is what separates these six TT codes from those within the individual family.

Training Content

Codes in the Training Content family were the most extensive of the three categories. The list of codes is varied and extensive (See Table 3). Organizing these codes in a meaningful fashion required the researcher to maintain a great deal of objectivity in the family analysis, as there is not an obvious path to grouping or categorizing the codes in the same fashion as the previous two coding categories. This is a precursory indication that the content of MUM training varies extensively within and amongst the respondent companies. There were 42 total codes identified within the TC family.

Table 3

Training Content (TC) Codes

Code Names	Code Names
Administration	Information Sharing
Analysis	Leadership
Audits	Listening
Beverage	Maintenance
Branding	Marketing
Business Writing	Meetings
Communication	Menu
Computer Skills	Operations
Conflict Management	Orientation
Critical Thinking	People
Cross-Company	Personnel Management
Culinary	Problem Solving
Culture	Quality
Developing Subordinates	Role
Development	Sanitation & Safety
Diversity	Sexual Harassment
Financial Management	Skills
Franchise	Time Management
Goal Setting	Training
Incentives	Values

Several codes were identified as unit-level operational themes. The operations code, the beverage code, the culinary code, and the maintenance code were all concerned with training on operating procedures. Additional codes in this group included: menu code, financial management code, marketing code, store visits code, audits code, and the sanitation and safety code. There were a total of 10 codes in this group.

A slightly larger group of emergent codes identified with a people skills orientation. These codes had to do with interaction with co-workers and/or subordinates. This included: communication code, listening code, information sharing code, diversity code, the sexual harassment code, and people code. Other codes in this group included: personnel management code, conflict management code, developing subordinates code, and leadership code. All of these share the common traits of being related to training on interaction amongst fellow workers. The training code refers to a training the trainer approach, but is still chiefly concerned with people interaction. There is also the goal setting code, incentive code, and meetings code. A total of 14 codes were identified in this group.

Another grouping of codes within the TC category is concerned with training on specific and personal skills for the MUM as they relate to the workplace. These include: analysis code, problem solving code, strategy code, and critical thinking code, all of which are concerned with mental process based skills. The skills code represents all non-specific skills mentioned but not identified within the interviews. More conceptual skills training included: culture code, values code, and quality code. Business based skills training was identified with the time management code, technology code, computer skills code, and administrative code, business writing code, and branding code. There were also codes

concerned with training the MUM on their position within the organization. This included: orientation code, development code, and role code. There is also a theme for respondents with multiple brands which was identified as the cross-company code. There are a total of 18 codes in this category.

Respondent Overview

Questions within the instrument were specific to characteristics of both the organization and the individual respondent (See Appendix1). This maintains the qualitative philosophy of gathering as much, richly detailed information as possible to produce more robust and descriptive output. The following section will identify characteristics of the companies first, followed by characteristics of the individual respondents. Additionally, there is information on some of the demographic characteristics of the MUM within the organizations (See Tables 4 and 5).

Company Characteristics

Seven companies were interviewed ($n = 7$). All of these organizations are Multi-Unit restaurant firms, with one or more brands in the market. Ages of these companies ranged from 5 to 51 years, with the mean being 28.5 years (See Table 4). Only two of the companies were younger than 10 years old. Two of the companies were older than 25 years old. Two firms identified themselves as belonging to the Quick-Service hamburger market segment. The remaining five all described themselves in terms of segment with the term “casual”. Two of the companies identified themselves as the casual dining market segment. The remaining three identified themselves as fast casual, family style casual and full-service casual market segments respectively. When asked, one respondent did not know how many units in the company. This was one of the two quick

service hamburger companies that were both franchisor and an owner/operator. The remaining companies had anywhere from 32 to 800 units. The company with 800 units was a franchisor that had identified another 1,100 franchised units domestically. Of those companies that identified owned or operated facilities, the mean ownership was 192 units. Gross company revenues were difficult to obtain. Four of the seven interviewees did not know (DNK) the gross annual revenues of their firm. The three companies that identified their revenues ranged from \$140 million to \$250 million, with the mean being \$187 million.

Table 4

Company Respondent Demographics

Company	Age	# of Units	# of MUMs	Gross Revenues	Market Segment
Company 1	8 years	32	9	\$164-175M	Casual Dining
Company 2	51 years	800 (corporate)	100-120	DNK	Quick-Service Hamburger
Company 3	27 years	100	13	\$250M	Fast Casual
Company 4	23 years	50	9	\$140M	Family Style Casual
Company 5	22 years	565	67	DNK	Casual Dining
Company 6	5 years	103	21	DNK	Full Service Casual Dining
Company 7	35 years	DNK	335-342	DNK	Quick-Service Hamburger

Note. DNK = Do not know

Respondent Characteristics

Interviewees had a range of titles and positions. This is a typical result with convenience sampling. For the purposes of a qualitative study, this can be considered beneficial, as it assists in the detailed examination of the phenomena of MUM training from multiple perspectives (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). This kind of detail adds to the thickness of the study. Two of the respondents held positions as Directors of Operations, and one is a Divisional Vice-President of Operations. These positions are MUMs, and relate their stories from first-hand experience. Three of the respondents are involved in training, and reveal their perspectives from a planning and execution perspective. Their titles were: Regional Training Director, Vice-President of Management Development & Training, and Field Training Specialist. All these positions are directly involved with the training of MUMs. One respondent was a Vice-President of Human Resources, and was also directly involved with MUM training.

MUM Characteristics

Questions were asked about the characteristics of the MUMs within the companies (See Table 5). In many cases, respondents did not know or would not reveal certain information. In four organizations called their MUMs Multi-Unit Managers. One firm referred to the position by the title Company Business Managers.

Table 5

MUM Respondent Demographics

MUMs	Age	Gender	Salary	Tenure	Turnover	Span of Control
Company 1	35-48	8 male 1 female	\$90-120K +	6 years	Lost 2 in 5 yrs	4 - 6
Company 2	DNK	DNK	\$50-65K	NA	DNK	5-7
Company 3	40	9 male 13 female	\$100-150K	15 years	Under 5%	5-11
Company 4	30-33	9 male 0 female	\$85-127K	2½-3 years	Lost 2 in 3 years	3-8
Company 5	DNK	54 male 13 female	\$75-100K	3-15 years	10-12%	3-8
Company 6	40.4	WND	WND	13.4 years	Under 5%	4-6
Company 7	DNK	DNK	DNK	DNK	DNK	5-6

Note. DNK = Do not know. NA = Not asked. WND = Would not disclose.

Individually, the companies employed a range of MUMs, ranging between 9 and 342. Two of the companies employed more than 100 MUMs, while four of the companies employed less than 25. The span of control, or number of properties for which each MUM is responsible ranged from three to eleven. The mean number of properties in the span of control for the companies interviewed was six.

Three of the companies did not know the average age of their MUMs. The remaining four companies had MUMs ranging from 30 to 48 years old, with the mean age of the MUM being 38 years. Two companies did not know the gender breakdown of their MUMs. The percentage of male MUMs ranged from 41% to 100%, with the mean being

78% male. Only one company had more female MUMs than male.

Only one company did not know the average length of their MUM's tenure. Of the remaining five companies, tenure ranged from 2.5 years to 15 years. The mean tenure was a little over 9 years. Only one company had tenure less than five years, while two companies had tenure of over 10 years. With respect to MUM turnover, two organizations did not know their turnover rate. Three firms expressed their turnover as a ratio, two of which stated that it was less than 5%, and one stating it was between 10% and 12%. One company said it lost only two MUMs in the last three years, and one company said it lost only two MUMs in five years.

Individual Responses

For each company, a summary of the codes established for all three categories has been generated. These summaries will include with as much descriptive detail as possible with respect to MUM training. This includes a discussion of the Training General codes, which relate the past and future training plans of the company, lengths of time associated with particular training endeavors, and training philosophies. In general, the past and future plans, represented by the History code and the Future code, along with lengths of time, referred to as the Time code, will be coupled with the particular programs identified during the discussion of the Training Types (TT) or Training Content (TC) family codes. Each interview will also relate the codes concerning TT and TC. Quotes will be provided throughout as needed for further detail or context. Frequency counts for all respondents have been generated within the overall domain analysis created as output by the Atlas/ti software (See Appendix 2).

Company 1

Training Philosophy.

Company 1 (C1) expressed no training philosophy in the course of the interview. C1 was the only respondent that did not receive a training philosophy coding entry.

Training Types.

Seven references were made to approaches to training. C1 trains in seminars conducted internally, referring to the process as “held by our company.” It also holds classes. Some kind of training is conducted every quarter. Each of these is mentioned once in the interview. C1 “bring(s) a lot of people from outside” to conduct training for them, and mentioned this once. One particular act of mentoring was mentioned: “we always have our senior vice-president, he spends a lot of time at least two times a year with each of the directors, you know, spends a whole day with us and teaches us what he does.” C1 uses a “general manager structured coaching workbook” as a three-month self-paced training tool for new MUMs. Books are mentioned again, albeit without specificity. Reference is made to outside development of the managers by the provision of good books. When new managers start at C1, they shadow their supervisor by traveling along with that supervisor for a week. In this way, “they get to see what a director does.”

Training Content.

Twelve code specific references were generated in this interview. C1 trains MUMs on branding concepts, mentioning it once. C1 stresses the importance of development in its training content. Development is mentioned four times in the interview, making it the most established code for C1. “progress assessment” programs and “assessment of specific departmental goals” are programs used by C1 for MUM development. Mention is also

made of outside development provided for the MUM by the organization. Culture seemed an important part of the development issues established by C1. A quote that overlaps with one of the development codes states “(MUMs) have got to understand the culture of the company and always teach and act through that, and not your way or the highway. It’s got to be—we really live within the way in our culture, which is our vision.” A “performance towards achieving desired personal and professional development goals” program is in place at C1 as well, another clear focus on a development theme of training. A “skills and learning” program is also referenced. A “diversity seminar” held by C1 lasts for three days, ten hours a day, and is only one part of a three-month initial training program for new MUMs. In addition to getting visits from various restaurant support personnel within the firm for two week training periods, C1 provides basic orientation training. This orientation includes “going through the routines and who to call for travel and how you work your credit card, how you work your gas card, how you work your computer, how you set up your computer.” Leadership training is also provided during this period, where Dale Carnegie philosophies are taught.

Training Strategies.

C1 has had a new director development program in place for a year and a half, but it has had a continual development and training program for current MUMs for eight years. C1 expects to hire five more MUMs in the next year and does not plan on changing its MUM development programs in the foreseeable future.

Company 2

Training Philosophy.

Company 2 (C2) differentiated between training issues for its employees and its

franchisees: “(we have a) more organized strategic approach to training, whereas the franchise community, of course, they’re independent owners and businesspeople, and therefore they can kind of do their own thing, where we have more of a recommended guideline structure.” For their franchisee MUM training, C2 tries to always be “incorporating training on a daily basis in their restaurants. Work on diagnostic, diagnosing issues and then delivering training solutions to help them improve their operations and improve their training in the restaurants.” C2 notes that they do system-wide corporate training for their units.

Training Types.

C2 uses a wide variety of training approaches. The company seems to prefer books and classes as training methods, as both are mentioned repeatedly. MUMs are trained on and required to use a daily planner book as training and an operational tool. MUMs in C2 are required to go to several classes: “IMUM, which is introduction to multi-unit management training, which is a two-day course. They would go to-somewhere in there, they would need to go to PTWE, people the winning edge, which is a five-day course. AROC, which is advanced restaurant operations course, is a detailed class on equipment and continuous improvement.” C2 also mentions “a situational leadership (class) that we would ask them to attend, and also a daily planner, Franklin Covey daily planner class that they have to go to.” Workshops are mentioned more than any other approach to training, generating a total of five references. C2 also makes use of conferences, “large” meetings, certification programs and outside trainers, which are referred to as “subject matter experts on training,” for MUM training. There is an annual conference for Restaurant Managers. Many of these meetings and workshop are multiple day endeavors. Certification is

required in several training programs.

Training Content.

C2 has training programs in a variety of areas. Training is provided in communications, developing subordinates, personal development, diversity, and financial management. There are three mentions of goal setting training, and two of leadership training. There are five references to time management training. Singular references are made to orientation and training in the areas of people, operations, sanitation & safety, and sexual harassment. Both of the latter two require participation in a certification program. A training program on becoming a trainer is also a part of C2's varied training content. Financial training occurs in the form of profit and loss management, usually held at large, quarterly meetings. Leadership training is also conducted.

Training Strategies.

When asked about future plans for training, C2 replied: "one is training that really focuses the multi-unit managers on behaviors and actions that are going to move the needle or make a difference on a daily basis. So those are skills and skills development of things like communication, goal setting, time management, classes like that, training like that, I should say, that will really focus multi-unit managers on getting their goals accomplished. And then I would also like to see training for our franchisees on how to manage their multi-unit managers and how to maximize and get the most efficiency out of them. A sort of a two-pronged approach."

Company 3

Training Philosophy.

Company 3 (C3) has a unique training philosophy amongst all the respondents. It

claims it has no training program. The respondent stated: “Well, given that those jobs are pretty few and far between, actually there is no multi-unit supervision training program for our company, and the reason for that is that all of the current supervisors, multi-unit people, have come up through the system. We don’t hire anybody from the outside for that position. They’ve all been through production manager, general manager. They’re some of the strongest general managers. It’s obviously a lead to the job. We don’t necessarily have a direct training program, so they would get that from their prior supervisor as to what’s needed to get to the next level.” What is of particular interest is that even though it is firmly stated, there are several training approaches that arise from C3, even if they are not necessarily formalized. C3 stresses several times in the interview that there is no need for a training program, and that those that exist are not formal, but evolve informally over time.

Training Types.

There are specific instances in the interview where training approaches are discussed. C3 mentions mentoring activities for training twice. The respondent notes: “I would spend time with them, probably hands-on time, up front, setting them up, getting them organized, and then follow up with them on a weekly basis, and eventually we go to a monthly one-on-one process where every month I sit with each of my directors of operations.” It also refers to certification programs twice during the interview. The certification is for different levels of management growth.

Training Content.

C3 provides training in a few specific areas. These areas include computer skills, personal development, and sanitation & safety. The company focuses on establishing “risk management and developing safety programs and getting those implemented into the

field.” With regards to computer skills, C3 provides computer training to its MUMs so they will be “up to speed on whatever computer programs we need them to be on.” Time management training is also provided.

Training Strategies.

Even though C3 espouses a no training approach to training MUMs, the company does have future training plans. The respondent noted: “So yeah, we do need to develop better programs and as we grow, that will evolve naturally.” This is still a fairly laissez-faire approach.

Company 4

Training Philosophy.

Company 4 (C4) tries to give its MUMs an “up-front load of training.” It describes its perspective to training as “very hands-on, so everybody that gets promoted has a lot of time spent with them by direct supervisors, and including up to the president of the company will take new multi-unit managers out for ride-alongs a couple times a year.” C4 is concerned with the difficulties in the transition process of a new MUM: “the hardest thing to train for is a multi-unit manager because by nature you take someone that’s very good at doing a very tight role and then thrust them into this role of autonomy, and I think it’s very hard on them.” With seven references to training philosophies, C4 has clearly established a training culture that aims at being focused on the needs of MUMs in their career development. C4 relates how concerned it is with the traditionally difficult transition from unit manager to MUM. That strong position is reflected by the respondent’s comments regarding the connection between success and failure and the adequacy of their MUMs: “anybody that’s in a growing company has to spend a lot of time

thinking about multi-unit management supervision and how to get people ready for that position and how to train them once they find them because if you had to replace anybody in the company, in a growing restaurant company, the multi-unit management and the abilities of the multi-unit management to be successful would make your company successful or unfortunately make it not successful.”

Training Types.

C4 discusses tests and classrooms as training methodologies it utilizes. C4 provides training workbooks for all its MUMs, which are often followed by assessment tests. Classroom training is described simply, as: “our Training Manager, (who) conducts a class for them that lasts a week, Shadowing, called “ride-alongs”, and outside trainers, guest speakers from elsewhere in the firm, not traditionally involved with MUM training, are also approaches, each of which were mentioned twice in the interview. For C4, books and mentoring are two major approaches to training, each being mentioned five and six times respectively. When mentoring is mentioned, it is often in conjunction with terms such as “coaching” and “guiding.” Mentoring was described as: “very much a hands-on with the director ... preparing him for what it’s like” in their new position.” C4 has their most senior MUM spend a week with each new MUM. That individual returns again later in the training process to spend another full week with the MUM.

Training Content.

C4 also trains in content in several different areas. Culture, financial management, problem solving, sanitation & safety, and sexual harassment are all noted once in the interview. Audit training was noted in terms of “how to fill them out, how to turn them in, what to do if they’re, you know, not a score that we would accept.” Communication,

incentives, meetings, operations, and personnel management are all mentioned twice. Incentive training was provided to clarify the incentive process, and was described as: "Show me the money, and it lays out very clearly with examples and some spreadsheet examples of, you know, Store A and if this happens, this would be the percentage, here's how it affects you, here's how it affects your paycheck." Operations had to do specifically with "a twelve-week training program where they (MUMs) touch on every front-of-house and back-of-house position for a short amount of time, so they're comfortable with the position(s)." Meeting training was on how to hold an effective meeting: "sitting in on other people's meetings, when to jump in, when to stay out of it," while personnel management was concerned with how to speak to people. Orientation is described as: "the first two days (spent) just going through an orientation of expectations and terminology and what to turn in and when, things like that." Administration is given a detailed description in one passage that relates the: "first week (of training) is all geared toward administrator responsibilities, scheduling, organization, what to turn in and when, you know, the simple things, how to turn in a travel and expense report, who to talk to at the main office when there's a problem, all the little things that you generally learn over months and months the hard way, we try to give them in the first week." Four weeks of the training process involves shadowing other managers in order to learn administrative and leadership duties. Leadership and store visits are the most frequently mentioned codes, with three and four references respectively. Although mentioned often, the best descriptions of store visit training: "what to look at when you walk in the door...just kind of walking the stores, looking at product, tasting product."

Training Strategy.

In the past, C4 was struggling with MUM training. Five years ago, they instituted an Executive General Manager Program designed to ease the transition into a MUM position. C4 implemented this training program because it felt “that we were lacking a bit of formality to the (training) program(s), and it was evidenced by the fact that maybe a few months into the role, you still had a multi-unit manager that didn’t quite know how to fill out certain paperwork or didn’t know who to turn to for certain things, and wasted a lot of his or her time as well as his or her direct reports time. C4 decided that new training programs were “a step in the right direction of cementing more things that we know to be issues that you need to learn and struggle to learn as a brand new multi-unit manager.” In terms of future plans, C4’s interview explained the concept of formalizing the training programs as “better documentation, better follow-up, (and) more of a workbook (training) style than a meeting (training) style. That statement is somewhat contradictory to the revelation in the same interview that C4 implemented a new workbook training program less than a year ago.

Company 5

Training Philosophy.

Company 5 (C5) makes eleven references to training philosophy, more than any other respondent organization in this study. C5 is focused on ensuring new MUMs know members of the firm that should be considered support members for the MUM during the transition process. The respondent noted new MUMs are “meeting and greeting with everybody that they can to get a broader understanding of what support is available to them from here.” During their training, each MUM will spend time individually with each

support member to get to understand their role in assisting the MUM. C5 allows the MUM to select which training they might wish to participate in each year. C5 is serious about the training process and the effective monitoring and adjustment of it and the trainees: “(we) look at them as a group as we bring new people on, and see where from a competency and leadership perspective we have gaps, and we can target and address those gaps.” One of C5’s forward-looking goals is to possess “(the) ability to really provide very targeted specific development to our high-potential leaders.” To accomplish their training goals, C5 designs some of its own training materials, and out-sources the rest. The firm even offers tuition reimbursement for MUMs wishing to return to school in a part-time capacity.

Training Types.

Coaching, mentoring, shadowing, group training, seminars, and technology are all mentioned once. Classes, meetings, and conferences are each mentioned twice as approaches to the training of MUMs by C5. Conferences are three-day retreats where the MUM continues to interact with and get to know their support team. Projects and technology also received two mentions. The technology training focused on: “understanding...the first time when they’re (MUMs) using a laptop versus a back office system.” Outside trainers were referred to four times in the course of the interview. Outside trainers are hired as keynote speakers and special topics trainers for C5’s group gatherings, conferences, orientation, etc. C5 has experimented with the type of outside trainers they hire: “in one case we brought in a professor from the Wharton marketing team to deliver a session.”

Training Content.

There was a long list of codes revealed once in the course of the interview with C5.

These include training in beverage, branding, conflict management, developing subordinates, diversity, listening, personnel management, quality, strategy, and training. An interesting group based, project oriented training program designed to train critical thinking skills is in place at C5. It was described as: "a strategic team project...there's a group of twelve to fourteen and they're assigned a project that comes right out of our business plan. And they have eight weeks, with a lot of direction and help, to come up with recommendations. You research and make recommendations in terms of that particular initiative, and the end result is they're back in eight weeks later, they formulate a Power Point deck and do a presentation in our boardroom to our E-team on what they would do." Technology was noted twice, specifically with regards to software and on-line training. Operations were also mentioned twice. Orientation was mentioned four times while financial management was mentioned three. Orientation in C5 lasts 90 days. During that time, the MUM spends time at the company's support center. Development and leadership were the most commonly revealed themes, with seven and six references respectively. Almost all group training efforts within the company include training sections on leadership development, subordinate development, and various degrees of personal development. C5 has a program called: "(the) emerging leader program for our high-potential general managers and our restaurant managers where we bring them in...for a week, and it's more leadership development-focused." Another development program is the "high-potential directors of operations...we send them to the Center for Creative Leadership for leadership development, a week-long leadership development session." Development is a key issue to C5.

Training Strategy.

In previous years, formal training such as a director's conference: "had much more of an operational focus." The formal program involving the MUM support team is about a year old. The goal is to ensure that the MUM is: "really focus(ed) and (management will) target a development for each of them to get them ready for the next level." With the exception of the detailed discussions of future MUM development programs, very little was discussed with respect to future training strategies or plans.

Company 6

Training Philosophy.

Training philosophies were mentioned five times by Company 6 (C6). C6 believes that: "everyone who joins us from outside (the firm), even another concept, (must) go through our entire manager and training program." C6 professes to: "maintain...commitment to high standards when it comes to our investment in training, and when we look at our history, (our first executive) hire was a trainer, and our commitment in all of our concepts to insure...ongoing training at all levels will continue to be a huge priority for us." The organization freely shares its best practices with its other brands. Within the organization's core values is the phrase "always learning, always teaching." The firm is intent on developing quality personnel with quality training as a means to achieve that goal.

Training Types.

Single notations of training approaches made by C6 include coaching and on-line training. There is a big push to get training MUMs to do some work projects on-line. C6 seemed to focus on group gatherings for training venues. It mentioned classes once,

conferences twice, and meetings for training purpose three times. Regular Director of Operations conferences are held that are often geared towards varying development-related topics. Projects and technology is noted twice. C6 has a fully integrated recipe sharing system that it trains all of its staff and MUMs to utilize. Projects are considered “hands-on learning activities.” Mentoring is mentioned often, with four references. The training and mentoring happen from the top levels in C6. Mentoring subjects change frequently so the MUM gets new people to interface with regularly. The firm practices “ongoing and routine coaching and development from their Senior Vice-President of Operations, and this is done during typically one-on-one visits in their region and their restaurants.” Orientation and development are each referred to five times. C6 believes that in heavy culture training. C6 “offer(s) a strong orientation program to insure that the new Directors of Operations receive a solid understanding and a grounding of (the company’s) value, the culture, and an introduction to their new role.” Initial orientation lasts five, intensive weeks.

Training Content.

Single mentions of training content made by C6 included beverage, culinary, and menu, all very task and operationally-specific. Single references for culture, values, and role were also made. These topics had to do with training on the company’s position towards deeper issues, and on the specific duties of the MUM. Information sharing is noted twice. Monthly directors of operations meetings are held, and the target is to deliver new information, share information, and discussing key concepts. Development and people led the content frequency for C6, each receiving five references. C6 conducts “targeted personal development activities. (These include) on-the-job assignments, cross-functional or cross-concept projects that (they) always are looking for Directors to participate in.”

Training Strategy.

Within the last year, C6 has altered its orientation process for any new position. It has “improved (it)-provided more structure and then specific roles and accountabilities for people involved in the orientation.” Historically, the company has held director’s meetings that were integrated with training for “as long as the firm has had (MUMs).” Information sharing will continue to be a goal in the future. C6 boasts of its technological training applications: “we do have now intuitive and flexible technical platforms that make the delivery of training and the communication of new information very easy.”

Company 7

Training Philosophy.

Company 7 (C7) also has a strong focus on its training philosophy, and refers to it eight times in the interview. It believes in: “providing proper...management training and development through-through our systems...And following-following through to make sure that there’s compliance with company standards as it relates to the training.” C8 is results oriented in its training: “translated, that means that there are a number of people we provide this training for. Some of them will move on to become district managers and some won’t.” C7 monitors and tracks the effectiveness of MUM training and subsequent MUM performance, advising: “people in the promotability code go through some other training, the higher level training that people in the contributing positions don’t go through that typically, and so therefore the-(training) I’m about to mention to you is one that we teach (only) to all promotable folks.” C8 has performed a decent amount of internal research as well as the use of some “outside folks”, and have gone through every position in the company and identified what the training mission and critical competencies are for each

one of those positions. They have designed various training programs for a litany of different needs, many of which are designed specifically for the MUM in training.

Training Types.

Single notes are made of mentoring, shadowing, and internal programs as training methodologies. C7 defined shadowing well with: “to follow and make sure the person is going through the proper steps to be properly trained as a management person, in the field as well as in the classroom.” Books are a supported training approach in C7, with two mentions. The firm uses a “multi-unit manager orientation guide.” On-line training is noted seven times, also more than any other firm in the study. Technology as an approach is measured three times. C7 expects its MUMs to be fully trained on a laptop in order to complete their required administrative duties and reports in minimal time. Meetings are also noted three times. Coaching and individual projects are both referred to twice in the interview. Classes are very significant approach with fifteen references, more than any other company in the study. C7 wants MUM trainees to attend class and receive good amounts of post-class to work to keep them performing at higher levels. Orientation is mentioned twice, and the program for MUMs lasts from six to eight weeks. Most all of the training programs at C7 are designed around or in conjunction with a classroom setting of some type.

Training Content.

C7 offers the longest list of training content areas. Operation-specific training content mentioned once includes operations, culinary, maintenance, sanitation & safety, store visits, and marketing. The organization wants its MUM to be fully trained on all aspects of marketing by regular meetings with the marketing executives in an on-going

training basis. They also do the same with the MUMs and the financial managers fir the corporate offices. Additional content mentioned once during the course of the interview includes problem solving, analysis, critical thinking, business writing, developing subordinates, information sharing, listening, and people. C7 wants its MUMs trained in: “problem-solving, critical thinking, working with people, probing for information, that type of thing.” Audits, administration, communication, computer skills, development, financial management, leadership, and orientation are all noted twice. C7 looks at an integrated approach to audits and training, stating the process goes: “inspections, coaching and retraining, redirecting folks in-in anything that they need to improve on.” Time management was mentioned three times, as was training. New product roll-outs are to be completed by the MUM as the trainer to the unit level managers.

Training Strategy.

The MUM training programs at C7 have been in place for eight years. Within the last year, C8 has: “(a new) system we-we’ve implemented, which is moving to the next level... we have introduced leadership development, an executive leadership development program.”

Case Comparisons

The in-depth interviews yielded a rich and descriptive amount of text that aptly painted a picture of the firm’s position and approach towards MUM training. The amount of descriptive data produced allowed for the development of codes for emergent concepts and themes. Standing alone, each case presents an interesting snapshot of that particular organization. Coding and analysis through Atlas/ti has enabled this study to look at trends across individual cases and identify frequently mentioned themes and concepts. As with a

content analysis based qualitative study, every effort is made to avoid assigning any causality to these findings. For this reason, frequency, or magnitude of emergent codes remains the main method of assessing similarities and differences across the seven cases. Refer to Appendix II for a complete and detailed list of frequency by code, and by respondent.

Training Philosophy

A philosophy of training existed in all companies with the exception of one. In all of these cases, the philosophy was clearly stated, usually on several occasions throughout the interview. Only one respondent (C1) had no coding established for training philosophy, due specifically to no direct or indirect mention of a philosophy within the interview transcript. This firm did have codes in the training type and content areas. Interestingly, as a firm, C1 had the second lowest number of total codes for all respondents, a total of only 28 coding entries as compared to the overall mean of 54 coding entries. The only other respondent with lower overall coding also possessed an interesting position in their training philosophy. C3 was the only firm that noted it had no training philosophy, stating that it promoted all its MUMs solely from within the organization. C3 generated only 19 coding entries.

Other firms that had clearly stated training philosophies tended to have a much higher magnitudes of overall coding entries. Additionally, the mean for training philosophy codes was 5.6 per respondent.

Examining the MUM training philosophy is important because it sheds light on reasons behind the training programs at these companies. Most respondents were quite serious about and well-versed on their training philosophies, referring to them throughout

the interview. In these philosophies, “internal research” and “system-wide assessments” are a fundamental part of an “organized and strategic” approach to developing training efforts. These efforts are aimed at developing better training programs for future MUM candidates. Several companies mentioned their approach to training as determining a set of diagnostic issues that were then transformed into “training solutions”. Noted as a process of “natural evolution”, one firm referred to the process as a “life-long learning mantra.” Other respondents identified the process as an important one that established and reinforced “core values” and “cultural norms” for the transition into a MUM position.

Another note of interest is that several firms identified the approach to training as very customized. Phrases like “specifically targeted” and “self-designed programs” were commonly used in the interviews. One description related there were “different options to choose from,” while another firm echoed this and added that “some would pass and some would not.” Both respondents were describing their company’s possession of training resources and programs, and informing they were implemented on an as-needed basis for each MUM candidate.

Finally, a majority of the respondents noted most of their training approaches “lacked formality” because of their customized origins. Three firms indicated that, as they grow and hire more MUMs, they will repair this lack of formality by the “addition of documentation.”

Training Type

Analysis using Atlas/ti helped to produce graphic reproductions of the relationships amongst established codes and categories. Two main families of training types were established: group and individual (See Figure 2). Respondents seemed to utilize both

approaches almost equally, in terms of frequency of established codes. A total of 55 entries, or a mean of 7.9 per respondent, were recorded for the individual category, while a total of 61 entries, or a mean of 8.7 per respondent were recorded for the group category. This is a mean difference of less than one entry per respondent. What's noteworthy here is several respondents mention their training philosophy is to provide customized, targeted training to individuals based on need, the distribution of weight towards a group training experience actually outweighs individual training efforts and programs.

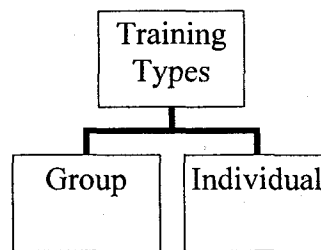


Figure 2. Training Types Family.

The individual training family included four sub-categories: technology; one-on-one; written; and projects (See Figure 3). One-on-one training, which included coaching, mentoring, and shadowing, was clearly the most frequently mentioned sub-category (See Figure 4). A total of 23 entries, or a mean of 3.3 per respondent, were tallied in the one-on-one category. Five out of the seven firms made at least one or more statements about this type of training. Forty-two percent of all entries made in the individual training area were concerned with one-on-one training approaches.

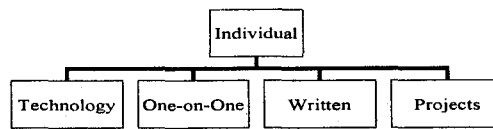


Figure 3. Individual Family

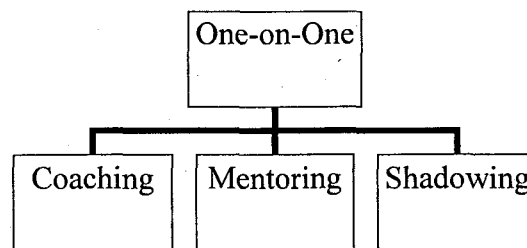


Figure 4. One-on-One Training Sub-Category

Shadowing and coaching are the least utilized of the three codes in this category. Mentioned by four and three respondents respectively, these training approaches have to do with providing feedback to MUM candidates throughout and as a part of their training program(s). They also are concerned with the candidate “seeing how the job is done” by watching others perform it. Mentoring was 60.8%, or 14 entries out of 23, of the overall one-to-one category. Respondents described the approach as “hands-on,” a “real learning experience,” and a significant approach to the “development of the candidate.”

The written sub-category, with thirteen entries, or 23.6% of the total individual training category, was the third largest. Consisting of only two codes, workbooks, and tests, this was the only category that reflected any mention of assessment of training (See

Figure 5). The test that was noted was mentioned in the context of completing a workbook, and then being tested to see if the material was absorbed by the trainee. Only one firm mentioned this testing process. The remaining twelve entries were in the workbook code. The workbook, used by four of the companies interviewed was described as a self-driven, self-paced binder of written materials, procedures, and policies which were considered important for the role of the MUM candidate to learn.

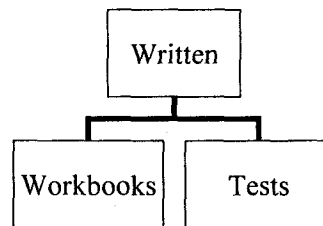


Figure 5. Written Sub-Category

The other two individual sub-categories include technology and projects. Project, mentioned four times, accounts for 7.2% of the individual category, and was the only code in the sub-category. Two organizations use projects for training. This involves the assignment of small projects to the MUM candidate. These projects reflect future tasks the MUM will be expected to accomplish in their job. The projects are small, controllable versions of larger-scale duties common to the position. The technology sub-category includes only one code: on-line training (See Figure 6). Firms noted the growth or increase in the use of and demand for this type of training. Fifteen entries made, or 27.2% of all entries in the individual category, make this the second most frequently mentioned individual training type. Three respondent organizations utilize technology, either

personal computer-based or Internet, as a form of training the MUM candidate.

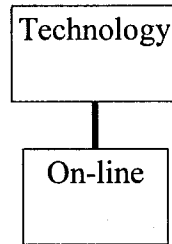


Figure 6. Technology Sub-Category.

The Group category had three sub-categories. They were: external; internal; and structured (See Figure 7). External group training refers specifically to the use of an outside trainer, usually some kind of expert on the training topic or material, to accomplish training goals (See Figure 8). Three firms utilize outside trainers. Eight entries were made for the outside trainer code, or 13.1% of all group codes. Internal group training can be considered to be similar to the projects code in individual training types (See Figure 9). In other words, the internal program of training creates a controllable version of a task or responsibility common to the job description of a MUM, and sets a small group of candidates together to design a solution and complete the task or series of tasks related to the project. Although well-detailed in its description, only one respondent, in one coding entry utilized this approach, accounting for less than two percent of the total group training category.

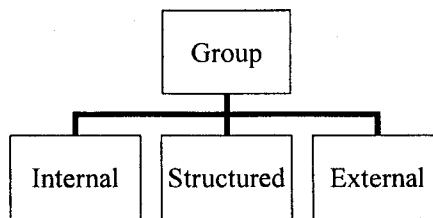


Figure 7. Group Family.

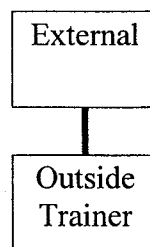


Figure 8. External Sub-Category.

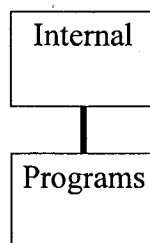


Figure 9. Internal Sub-Category.

The structured sub-category contains 51 coding entries, or 90.2% of total references to group training. This category is concerned with formalized, structured training programs for a group of candidates, usually in some sort of classroom or meeting style setting (See Figure 10). The programs can be considered as a mixture of internal and external training, as they are sometimes performed at facilities at units or at corporate or regional headquarters of the organization, and other times is a part of a retreat or conference not on company property. Codes within this category include: meetings; classes; seminars; conferences; workshops and certification. Meetings, classes, seminars, workshops, and conferences are all fairly similar in their nature, and have been described similarly by various respondents as a gathering of individuals meeting together to be trained in a specific area or on a specific topic. Most respondents, who mentioned several different structured group training approaches, did not make much, if any, delineation between classes, conferences, seminars, or meetings. Six of the respondents mentioned this type of approach. Only one organization (C3), which espoused no training as a philosophy, did not mention or utilize the structured approach to group training.

With 23 entries, classes account for 45.1% of the total entries in the structured sub-category. Meetings, with nine entries, were second, with 17.6% of the total entries. The remaining codes: seminars, conferences, and workshops, all had between 4 and 6 entries per code. Certification, with four entries, or 7.8% of the total entries in the structured sub-category, is slightly different than the other structured codes. While it is indeed a part of a structured classroom/group process, by nature is it additionally concerned with a form of assessment. If the trainee does not pass whatever criteria are established for certification, then they do not receive the certificate. As with assessment

issues in the individual training category, very few respondents make mention of certification. Only two organizations noted that certification were a part of their group training approach. One of these companies (C6) was the same company that utilized project work as an assessment tool for individual training approaches.

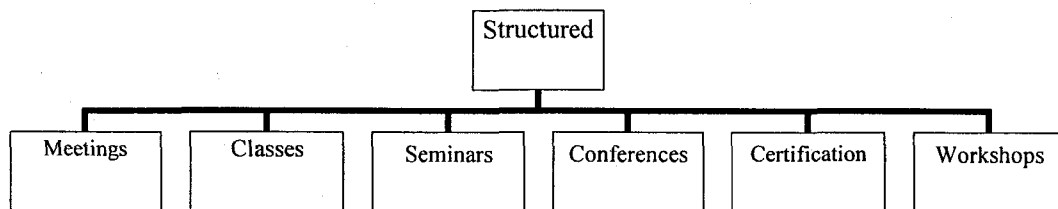


Figure 10. Structured Sub-Category.

Training Content

A total of six sub-categories of codes were developed in the training content family. A total of 167 entries were established, representing 43.9% of all coded entries in the dimension of MUM training. The six categories included: orientation; personal skills; business skills; operations; people skills; and analytical skills (See Figure 11).

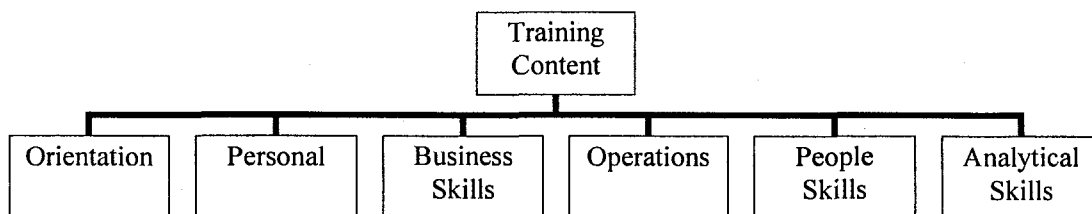


Figure 11. Training Content Family.

The orientation category had 21 entries, representing 12.6% of all training content entries (See Figure 12). Orientation is concerned with exposing the MUM candidate to the particulars of the job and of the company. 15 of the entries, or 71.4% of the sub-category, were directly coded as orientation, and descriptions followed the definition provided above. As codes, roles and values each had only one entry. The same firm (C6) noted both as content created for and delivered directly in orientation sessions. One other company (C5) mentioned quality, in a single entry, as a part of their orientation program. Culture, the only code in this sub-category with more than one entry was noted by three different firms as an important part of the orientation training process. One respondent discusses orientation training content as job “expectations and terminology, and what to turn in and when.” This supports the general perception from respondents that the orientation is to get the candidate acquainted with the way things are handled within the firm, the people and departments they will be working with, and the expectations and duties of the MUM position.

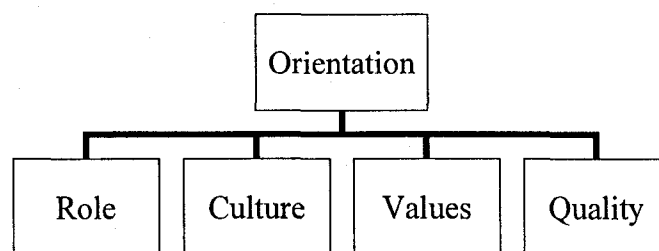


Figure 12. Orientation Sub-Category

The personal sub-category includes the skills code and the development code (See Figure 13). A total of 22 entries, or 13.1% of the total, fell in this sub-category. The skills

code received only one entry from one organization (C1), and was explained in ambiguous terms as a set of skills relating to personal goals and accomplishments. The remaining 21 entries were all concerned with development of the individual. Specifically, such training was provided by six of the seven respondents, at an average of two or more entries per respondent, with one firm (C5) noting development seven times in the course of the interview. Development codes were directly related to providing the trainee with information and/or advice on how to maximize their career growth. Concepts within this code are the most mentioned of any training content code. This code's importance is further supported by comments from respondents that keeping the MUM happy and focused on opportunities within the organization was a strategy to minimize turnover and increase productivity. This coincides with the concept that the majority of respondents prefer MUMs to be promoted from unit level or corporate positions internally. This is a notable focus, at the earliest of stages of candidate selection and grooming and in an ongoing basis, at retaining the MUM candidate internally as long as possible by provision of clear career path information and training.

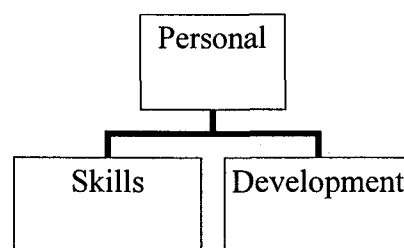


Figure 13. Personal Sub-Category.

Business skills were identified as another sub-category. The twenty entries in this sub-category account for 12% of total training content entries (See Figure 14). Codes within the sub-category include: time management, technology, computer skills, administrative, business writing, branding and cross-company skills. With a single entry, one respondent (C5) mentions cross-company skills. This respondent is the only one that mentions cross-company training. Cross-company training is concerned with training the MUM to be able to oversee operations from different brands that are owned by the same firm. This was noted as a new training approach for C5. Of interest is the fact that four of the seven respondent organizations have multiple brands in their firm, but only C5 discusses this new training approach. In a related area, two firms discuss brand training, both with single entries, as training focused at enhancing and supporting the consistency of the restaurant's brand identity. Both respondents utilizing this training (C5, C1) are multi-brand organizations.

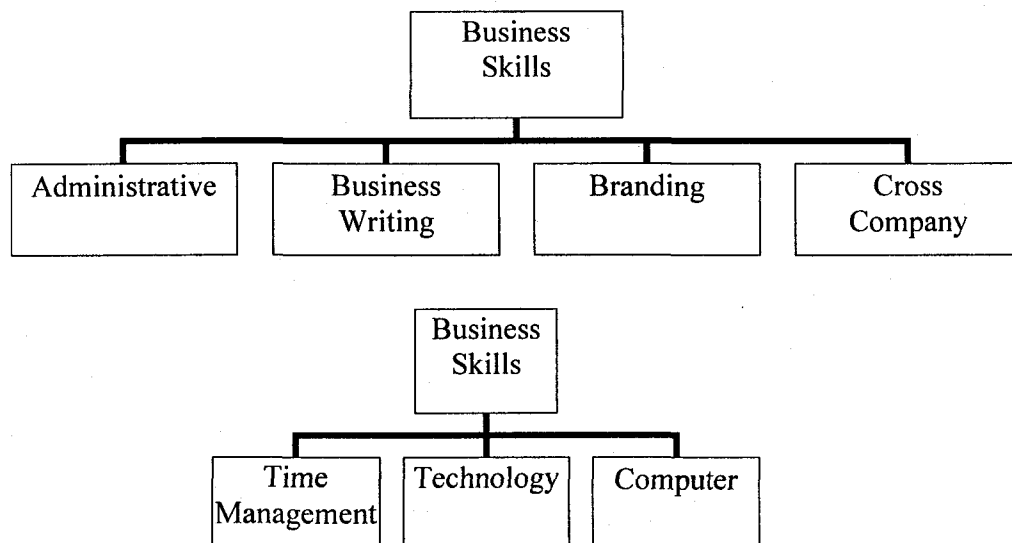


Figure 14. Business Skills Sub-Category.

The most prevalent code in the business skills sub-category is time management. With a total of seven entries, or 35% of the total sub-category, time management is noted by three respondents more than twice as often as the majority of the codes in this sub-category. Time management skills were discussed by respondents as focusing on assisting the MUM trainee in allocating resources and prioritizing work-load. More than one firm expressed the importance of this skill due to the remote and decentralized nature of the MUMs geographic region of units. Travel time and other time wasters were noted as adversely impacting the MUMs ability to perform and so these respondents felt the need for training on this specific skill-set. Technology and computer skills codes are concerned with training on the use of technology present in the organization. They are separately identified, because some technology exists in respondent firms that are proprietary in nature. When discussing this technology, the respondents never used the specific term computer, so the two were separated. Computer skills were noted as specific training on the use of office based software used by the organizations to communicate and produce reports. The combined five entries in these two codes represent 25% of the total entries in the business skills sub-category. Administrative skills were noted by two respondents with a total of four entries, representing 20% of total entries in the business sub-category. These skills were described as being related to production and submittal of required paperwork, reports, forms, etc. to the corporate offices. One company (C7) notes training provided in the area of business writing, specifically on grammar, style and format of required reports and business communiqués.

Analytical skills account for only five entries, approximately 2.9% of total training content entries (See Figure 15). Codes within this sub-category include single entries by

single firms in analysis, critical thinking, and strategy, with each of the three codes being noted by a different firm. Problem solving is an additional code within this sub-category that generated two entries by two different forms. What's interesting here is that many firms in the study identify within the definition of the roles and duties of a MUM certain necessary aspects related to analysis and problem solving. This is also supported by several of the varying definitions of the role within the literature review (Gross-Turner, Umbreit, Jones, et al). Though this is expressed as an important aspect of the MUMs role, it is surprising to note that only three of the companies provide any type of training to condition the MUMs analytical skills.

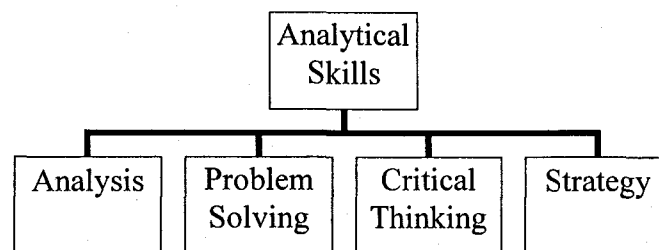


Figure 15. Analytical Skills Sub-Category.

The second largest sub-category is that of operations. Generating a total of 33 entries, the operations code accounts for 19.8% of the total entries in the training content category (See Figure 16). Six of the entries, or approximately 18.2% of the total entries in the operations sub-category, are coded simply as operations. This code is ambiguously described by respondents as anything and everything having to do with the actual operation of a unit within the organization. Since it is such a sweeping scope, it was given its own

code. Further investigation into general statements such as these may yield greater details regarding what actual aspects of operations are being presented as training material. There are more specific statements made in this sub-category that allowed more detailed codes to emerge. For instance, C6 makes two individual notations about beverage and menu training. C7 also makes two individual notations, specifically regarding operational training in maintenance and marketing. Three different firms made single entries in the area of culinary skills, while two different firms made a total of three entries in the area of audit training. Each of these codes account for 9.1% of the total codes in the operations sub-category.

Audit training focuses on preparing the MUM on how to accomplish a complete and thorough inspection of a unit utilizing the organization's proprietary audit form(s). Four respondents identified sanitation and safety as an area of focus for MUM training. A total of five entries in this code represent 15.2% of the total entries in the operations sub-category. Another five entries identified by only two firms address training in the area of store visits. This training included how to effectively prepare for and make a visit to the units in a MUMs region.

Finally, financial management was the leading code with seven entries representing 21.2% of the total entries in the operations sub-category. Five out of the seven respondents utilize financial training, which includes review and analysis, action strategies, and goal setting or problem solving remedies for under-performing units and managers. In the operations sub-category, there were the second most codes (seen) of any sub-category. Most of the entries were unique to each company, and not much detailed information was generated with regards to specifics of the training in any one operational area. In terms of

operations, more so than any other category or sub-category, there are more unique single-coding entries. Perhaps this is representative of the different operational focuses and strategies of each responding company.

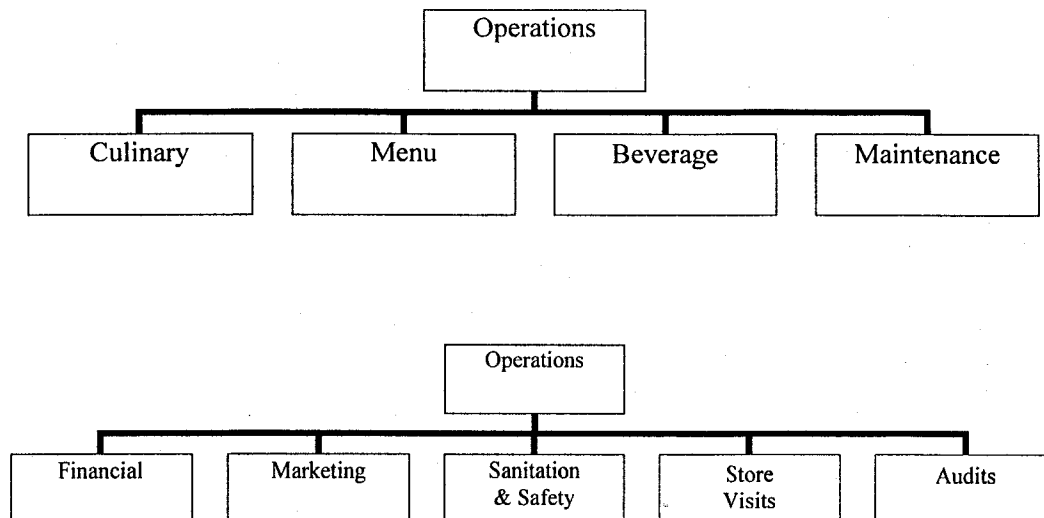


Figure 16. Operations Sub-Category.

People skills were the most prevalent sub-category in the training content category (See Figure 17). A total of 54 entries represent 32.3% of total entries in the training content category. This sub-category also possesses the largest variety of codes, with a total of 13. The next nearest sub-category was operations, with nine codes. It is obvious from the range and spread of entries in this sub-category, that all of the respondents place some degree of weight on the training of a MUM in solid people skills. Codes in this sub-category include: communications, listening, information sharing, diversity, sexual harassment, personnel management, conflict management, leadership skills, developing

subordinates, training, incentive, goal setting, and meetings. Only one code in this sub-category had a single entry. The code of conflict management was mentioned only once by C5. It would be interesting if it were possible to determine if something related to conflict management occurred in that firm's history that led it to develop such a unique program.

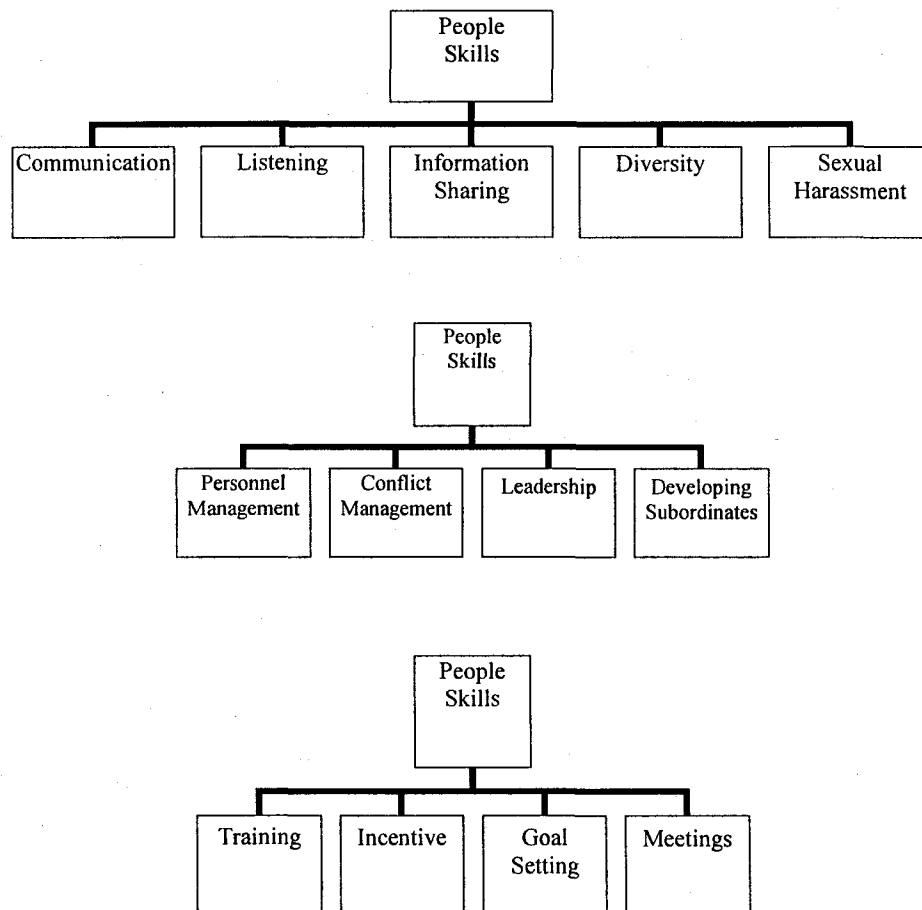


Figure 17. People Skills Sub-Category.

Several codes emerged in this sub-category concerned with communication amongst employees. Training on effective listening was provided by two firms, which generated two entries. Information sharing generated three entries by two different firms. One firm generated two entries in the area of training on how to conduct a good meeting. Aspects of this training included listening and communication skills. Additionally, the code of communication skills training generated five entries from three more firms. Almost every respondent noted the existence of some form of communications training within this category. Collectively speaking, these communications-based training programs accounted for 12 entries, approximately 22.2% of the total entries in the people skills sub-category.

Three entries each were generated for the codes of diversity and sexual harassment. Three and two firms respectively train on these types of content. Three entries each were also generated for the codes of personnel management and developing subordinates, by two and three companies respectively. Other firms also discussed issues related the management of and interaction with various personnel. People skills training is offered by three different companies, and generated three entries. When combined, these personnel training concepts generated 15 entries, a total of 27.8% of the total in the people skills sub-category. Additionally, five entries were made by three firms in the area of training. This code specifically addresses the notion of training the MUM to be an effective trainer of other unit managers in their region.

The largest personnel related code was that of leadership skills. Five of the seven respondents utilize some form of leadership training, and generated 15 entries in the code, which represents 27.8% of the total entries in the training content sub-category. It is also

the second most frequent code in the training content category, after personal development. It is clear that these firms concentrate on generating training programs that are related to the development of managerial and interpersonal skills necessary to be an effective MUM.

Summary

In-depth interviews were conducted with seven respondents in the multi-unit restaurant industry. Results included the generation of a domain and frequency analysis (See Appendix 2). A total of 380 coding entries concerned with MUM training were generated. Specific major categories emerged during the coding and content analysis process. The three major categories of codes were: General Training; Training Types; and Training Content. Within general training, a predominant code was that of training philosophy. Most firms had a clearly defined attitude towards training that was embodied within that philosophy.

Codes within the Training Types (TT) category fell into two families of codes: group and individual. The most common sub-category of codes with the Group family was the Structured sub-category. This included formalized training sessions conducted in group settings, including meetings, seminars, classes, workshops, and conferences. Other types of group training used included sub-categories such as internal and external group training. Prevalent Individual family codes included those within the one-on-one sub-category. These included: shadowing, coaching, and mentoring. Other codes of a lesser magnitude emerged in the written, technology, and projects sub-categories.

Training content was examined. Several families emerged in this category, including smaller families like orientation, personal, and analytical skills. More predominant families included business skills and operations. The most frequently

mentioned training content family was that of people skills, and its most often cited codes included concepts such as: communication, listening, leadership, development, information sharing, personnel management, and diversity.

A large amount of rich and descriptive data was generated, reviewed, and organized. The result was a comprehensive overview of attitudes towards training, training programs, and their content. Graphic exhibits were created to physically represent the organization of these concepts into families, categories, and sub-categories of themes and codes.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Introduction

Content analysis of the seven in-depth interviews produced several notable results. There is a good degree of training conducted for the important position of multi-unit manager (MUM). Training varies greatly from organization to organization. This is true in both terms of the training approach and the training content. Most organizations in the study offered a wide array of training types and content, as opposed to just one training strategy. Many had formal group programs, and informal, self-paced individual programs. All respondents indicated that they had a combination of training programs that could be implemented for groups or individuals on an as-needed basis.

Personal, analytical, writing, and business skills were the most frequently cited training contents. In people skills, leadership, communication and employee development were noted the most frequently. However, this varying content was not consistently used across all companies. All firms did, however, have some form of orientation in place. These programs usually provided information on company history, job duties, and other skills associated with the daily routine of working within that particular organization.

None of the organizations indicated there was a rubric in place for the assessment of the effectiveness of the training programs at their company. As a result, it is not possible to calculate which programs were working and which were not. A method in place to

assess the quality of the training programs would be beneficial to organizations interested in maximizing the return on their training dollars.

All respondents use training for their MUMs. Even the organization that stated it had no formal training programs had several informal programs at its disposal to use for MUM training should the need arise. When coupled with the extensive and detailed training philosophies possessed by respondents, this is a strong indicator that training is perceived as an important resource for the development of a MUM. More intense and focused research should be conducted on program details and specifics. This can provide a greater insight into how to select programs and content that has the most desirable results.

Limitations

One of the challenges of gathering this data was finding an adequate number of respondents willing to come to one of the interview locales, and/or willing to devote at least an hour or more to the interview. Originally, interviews were set to coincide with business-related travel to one of the locales. Interviews were often scheduled and cancelled later. Telephone interviewing was adopted in order to reach more respondents. These telephone interviews were conducted at the workplace of the respondent, and were often interrupted by work-related issues. For some of the interviews, this made it difficult to maintain a cohesive flow to the narrative from the respondents.

In a qualitative, exploratory study, the ability of a sample to accurately represent a larger population is not the chief issue. Rather, the goal of an exploratory study is to examine the phenomena from as many varying aspects as possible. This is the reason the sampling pursued individuals that were familiar with the MUM position.

Validity may also be considered a limitation. Validity is defined as the ability to

reproduce the study and its results in a different research scenario, with different respondents, but using the same research instrument. In a qualitative study, validity is examined in a different fashion than quantitative research. Qualitative researchers address issues of lack of validity by examining transferability and credibility (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, & Davidson, 2002).

One limitation discovered during the process was the inability to return to the respondents to ask further follow up questions. Such a return to the interviewee in order to get clarification on a concept, or greater detail of a mentioned process would have been extremely helpful. Certain concepts, such as the timing involved with specific training programs, and greater detail on the specific content of certain training processes could have painted an even more in-depth and descriptive picture. It may be hard to identify when or if the researcher should return to the respondent for a follow-up interview. But, planning and arranging for future follow-up interviews would be beneficial in a process where codes and themes emerge after analysis has been completed.

Recommendations

The results of this exploratory study lead to recommendations in two specific areas. The aggregate information produced here can assist firms in making choices about MUM training. More importantly, these findings suggest there are opportunities to broaden this research in several areas.

This type of foundational research provides an opportunity for MUR firms to examine the practices and approaches of their competition in the industry. A “best practices” comparative approach allows companies to discover and apply approaches to MUM training they may not have previously considered. Examining the content of

training provided by other institutions in their field allows a company to compare its MUM training programs to others. In this way, adjustments or additions can be made to a training regimen to make a MUR organization more competitive in terms of producing and maintaining MUMs that are effective in completing their assigned duties. At the very least, firms can identify training trends within the industry being addressed by other firms. Specific details on approach and content can stimulate ideas within a company for new and progressive training programs. Many respondents identified internal development as key for the position of a MUM. In other words, most firms interviewed identified internal promotion as the key method of developing MUMs. This being stated, the analysis of training programs by content could be extremely helpful in assessing which training programs can or should be used early in the process of developing a unit-level manager into a MUM. Early, well-integrated training programs for MUM development can assist a firm in having an adequate number of candidates ready for a smoother transition into the role of a MUM as the company needs them.

Opportunities for Further Research

There are several areas of opportunity for further research created by this study. The study was initially designed to examine three dimensions: MUM training, MUM development, and MUM responsibilities. MUM training was the primary focus of this research. An obvious choice for additional research is in the area of the dimension of MUM development and MUM responsibilities. A similar, qualitative and exploratory approach could be adopted to continue the research with the data already collected, or with a new sampling. The goal of this research, in addition to further exploration of the general concept of MUMs in MURs, would be to see if there is any measurable relationship

between the actual role, duties, and responsibilities of the MUM and what training is being provided. Are MUMs being trained for the actual tasks they are expected to undertake and complete? An examination of the dimension of career development with respect to training would be of interest. What training is or should be given to MUMs in development that would lend to the rapid assimilation of the position and/or the effectiveness of the individual in the job? Further study could be approached with the focus remaining on the dimension of training. More information could be gathered on the specific details of each program within a firm or group of firms. In this way, similarities and differences between various company approaches to and content of training could be compared in detail. Does the orientation for one firm compare to the orientation of another? What specifically is being done to train MUMs on people skills? There are a vast number of comparisons that can be made across these three dimensions, collectively or individually, and each comparison would generate additional knowledge that would add to a greater understanding of the phenomena of MUM training.

An exploratory study of this nature also lends itself to future research of a different nature. This study avoids making assumptions of causality. But causality and other related relationships within the data are of great interest to researchers who intend to generate applicable knowledge. In terms of sample, only two major segments were reached: quick-service, and casual dining. Further research should focus on additional segments. The goal of this research would be to determine if there was any relationship between the segment of the MUR and the mixture of training approaches and content utilized. If it is established that different segments utilize different operating strategies, should there be a difference in the type and content of training provided?

Most firms reported low turnover rates. A study on training programs and their relationship to turnover could assist a company in deciding how much time, effort, and money to invest in MUM training. The goal could be to determine a “package” of training programs that are effective in reducing turnover. Similarly, there was very little, if any, mention of the assessment of training program effectiveness. Which types and content are most effective in creating a successful MUM? To accomplish this, criteria for MUM success would need to be established. Those criteria, perhaps partially developed from further examination of the dimension of MUM responsibilities, could be compared across companies, segments, or by MUM demographics such as gender and age, with training programs in place. This comparison could target training that was most appropriate given the specific characteristics of the firm or the individual being trained.

Timing itself could be studied. This study attempted to collect data on duration and length of various training sessions. Is there a relationship between the actual amount of time spent in training processes and the success of the individual so trained? Much more data would need to be collected regarding specific lengths of classroom style training sessions, time limitations placed on workbook or on-line training sessions before expected completion, and frequency of large group-training processes.

Finally, a strong recommendation could be made for further exploration of training program content. While this study identified many areas of training focus, the programs were coded by the inherent nature of the meaning of the word(s) used to describe the programs. Immersion on a more detailed level could identify content themes, specificities, and other aspects of programs. In the same fashion as the content analysis approach, these aspects could be categorized and analyzed in order to generate a greater understanding of

what is considered to be a part of the training identified. Cross-comparison of the most basic aspects of training programs may reveal great differences in one firm's approach to operations training versus another, or may reveal further similarities to other MUR organizations.

The opportunities for further investigation of this topic are vast and may be done with the methodology of this study, or a different approach. The findings of this exploratory study have accomplished one of its main goals: to investigate in some detail, the phenomena of MUM training and to create opportunities for further, more structured research into the topic or related aspects.

Summary

The multi-unit manager (MUM) is a key figure in the multi-unit restaurant (MUR) industry. He is the individual responsible for the communication and implementation of corporate policies and projects. This study explored the organization's attitudes towards training of the MUM. It also reviewed and discussed the types of training given to the MUM, as well as the content of that training.

The majority of the respondents' firms possessed a strong and clearly defined philosophy towards training. The one respondent that claimed they conducted no training for the MUM showed, after content analysis of his interview, that his firm did indeed utilize several types of training, even though they were considered to be informal and unofficial to some degree.

The information that was generated from the analysis of the seven interviews conducted revealed patterns to the approaches to training in the MUR industry. The MUMs are trained almost equally in groups and as individuals. Group training is almost

always structured, and conducted in a formal classroom style setting. Individual training occurs most often as a custom based and paced approach. Not all training programs are given to all candidates; rather they are administered on an as-needed basis. The most common type of individual MUM training involves some sort of direct one-on-one training, and usually takes the form of mentoring or coaching.

Training content varied widely. Several predominant areas were defined to include: business skills, personal skill, analytical skills, and people skills. People skills were the most frequently utilized training content. Many of the content types noted were unique to the organization. It is proposed that this is due to past incidents within the organization that ultimately demanded training in the area to rectify that issue.

More research can be done in this realm. A more detailed assessment of how often, how long, and how effective particular programs are would be the next logical step after this exploratory study. As the MUR industry continues to grow and thrive, the need for MUMs to fill new posts will follow. Any firm interested in successful growth must focus on how the MUM can be best trained to effectively complete their expected duties.

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APPENDIX 1

MUM TRAINING SURVEY

Open-Ended Questions

- 1 Describe in detail the tasks, responsibilities, and accountabilities of your multi-unit managers.
2. Describe in detail the current method(s) of training that you use for multi-unit managers.
 - 1 *Probing Question* – Differentiate between initial training programs and ongoing, recurrent training programs.
 - 2 *Probing Question* – Which of these programs are the newest/most recently implemented (within the last 3 -5 years)
3. Describe your vision of the training and development programs for multi-unit managers in your organization 5 years from now.
4. Discuss how multi-unit managers are selected for their positions.
 - 1 *Probing Question* - What attributes/characteristics do you seek/expect in multi-unit managers?
5. Describe methods of assessment in place for evaluating individual-unit managers' preparedness for advancement.
6. Describe any current, non-pay benefits for your multi-unit managers.
7. Describe incentive programs your organization utilizes with multi-unit manager.

Demographic Questions

Respondent:

1. Please provide your title and describe your area(s) of responsibility.

Organization:

1. How many total units and in what geographic regions are units in your organization?
2. Describe your company in terms of market segment.
3. How old is your company?
4. What are your company's gross annual revenues?

Managerial Profile:

1. How many multi-unit managers do you employ?
2. What is the average span of control of your multi-unit managers?
3. What percentage of your multi-unit managers is male?
4. What is the average age of your multi-unit managers?
5. What are the current pay ranges for your multi-unit managers?
6. What is the turnover rate for multi-unit managers in your organization?
7. What is their average tenure with the company?

APPENDIX 2

MUM TRAINING DOMAIN ANALYSIS

Primary Documents								
Codes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
TC-Administration	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	4
TC-Analysis	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
TC-Audits	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	3
TC-Beverage	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
TC-Branding	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
TC-Business Writing	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
TC-Communication	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	5
TC-Computer Skills	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	3
TC-Conflict Management	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
TC-Critical Thinking	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
TC-Cross-Company	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
TC-Culinary	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
TC-Culture	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
TC-Developing Subordinates	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
TC-Development	4	2	1	0	7	5	2	21
TC-Diversity	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	3
TC-Financial Management	0	1	0	1	3	0	2	7
TC-Franchise	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
TC-Goal Setting	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	5
TC-Incentives	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
TC-Information Sharing	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
TC-Leadership	1	2	0	3	6	0	2	14
TC-Listening	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
TC-Maintenance	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
TC-Marketing	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
TC-Meetings	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
TC-Menu	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
TC-Operations	0	1	0	2	2	0	1	6
TC-Orientation	1	1	0	2	4	5	2	15

(table continues)

Codes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
TC-People	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
TC-Personnel Management	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	3
TC-Problem Solving	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
TC-Quality	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
TC-Role	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
TC-Sanitation & Safety	0	1	2	1	0	0	1	5
TC-Sexual Harassment	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
TC-Skills	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
TC-Store Visits	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	5
TC-Strategy	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
TC-Technology	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
TC-Time Management	0	5	1	0	0	0	1	7
TC-Training	0	1	0	0	1	0	3	5
TC-Values	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
TG-Future	1	1	1	2	2	0	3	10
TG-History	2	1	0	1	4	3	1	12
TG-Philosophy	0	3	5	7	11	5	8	39
TG-Time	6	7	1	9	9	6	3	41
TT-Books	2	3	0	5	0	0	2	12
TT-Certification	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	4
TT-Class	1	3	0	1	2	1	15	23
TT-Coaching	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	4
TT-Conference	0	2	0	0	2	2	0	6
TT-Group	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
TT-Internal Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
TT-Meetings	0	1	0	0	2	3	3	9
TT-Mentoring	1	0	2	6	1	4	1	14
TT-No Training	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
TT-On-Line	0	0	0	0	1	1	7	9
TT-Outside Trainer	1	1	0	2	4	0	0	8
TT-Projects	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4
TT-Seminar	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	4
TT-Shadowing	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	5
TT-Technology	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	6
TT-Tests	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
TT-Workshops	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
Totals	28	54	19	63	80	48	88	380

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