

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter of the report restates the study problem and reviews the major methods used in the research. It includes three main sections. The first part is a conclusion to the research. The second part is a discussion of the results derived from the findings. Finally, the third part consists of suggestions for further study.

5.1 CONCLUSION

5.1.1 Statement of the Problems & Review of the Methodology

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this study was a comparative study of emotional intelligence communication of newly recruited and experienced cabin attendants at Thai Airways International (Public) Company Limited. The researcher wanted to confirm his belief that there were differences between groups of cabin attendants, from people who had no experience in a service business before joining the company and those who had been working for many years in the service providing business. The study also aimed to find out whether certain demographic backgrounds of cabin attendants; sex, age, marital status, level of education and their present positions had any impact on their emotional intelligence communications.

The study was carried out among cabin attendants who were at the Cabin Crew Training Center during their initial and periodical trainings on 9th May 2008. The instruments used in collecting information were questionnaires which were distributed to the samples in their classes. The researcher did not explain all the questions to them and let them answer using their own judgment. The samples had 15 minutes to complete the questionnaires. There was no interview used in this study.

5.1.2 Summary of the Results

More than half of the sample group were female (66.7%). They were between 20 and 52 years old and 53.8% were younger than 30. Most of the subjects were single (70.5%). The majority of the subjects had an education level of bachelor degree whilst 15.4% of them had higher education. There were 40 newly recruited

cabin attendants and 38 experienced ones. 30.8% of them had no experience working as cabin attendants before while the rest had experience from one to 27 years.

First, the study implied that subjects had an average level of emotional intelligence communication at the higher level (60.3% high and 3.8% highest), while 29.5% had moderate level and only 6.4% had lower level. The subjects had higher skill of interpersonal than intrapersonal communication.

Next, it was found that the subjects whose ages were less than 30 had higher levels of emotional intelligence than those who were older than 30.

Finally, the study discovered that the newly recruited subjects had higher levels of emotional intelligence communication than the experienced ones. Gender and level of education did not have any impact on the level of emotional intelligence regardless of the group they were in. Other important findings were that marital status and experience caused significant correlation to levels of emotional intelligence communication.

5.2 DISCUSSIONS OF THE RESULTS

The study clearly shows that most of the subjects who seek a job working as a cabin attendant have already possessed the important skills required for the service business, which is emotional intelligence communication skill. It confirms the statement made by Akiyama (1976). The subjects have higher skills of interpersonal than intrapersonal communication and this clearly indicates that they can handle relationships with others and recognize emotions in others better than knowing how to manage their own emotions. It can be implied that they need more skills in motivating themselves as well as managing their emotions at work.

It is crucial that one should be aware of his or her own state of emotion such as knowing to use “self-talk” to relieve oneself, being able to identify when one’s mood is shifting, and knowing when he or she is becoming defensive (Salovey & Mayer, 1997). This skill of knowing emotions in oneself will help when dealing with other people. It will definitely lead to developing oneself in two important skills which are self motivation and the ability to manage his or her emotions (Goleman, 1998). To be able to regroup oneself quickly after a setback, to be enthusiastic even when doing uninteresting tasks and to develop new and more productive patterns are

three ways of self motivating. It is not easy to possess the skill of managing emotions in oneself. One needs to learn and practice how to reflect on negative feeling without being distressed, act productively in situations that arouse anxiety and constantly self-improve one's ineffective habits.

The study shows that the skills of interpersonal communication of the subjects are high. As THAI employs mainly Thai cabin attendants with only 2.5 % of other Asian nationalities, it reflects the nature of Thai people. The humbleness, politeness, and calm personality of Thai people make Thai hospitality well known all over the world. Caring for others especially their guests and other great qualities such as service mindedness, friendliness, supportiveness, kind heartedness and peacefulness are embedded in Thai character in general.

It is found that the group of subjects who was older than thirty had a higher level of emotional intelligence communication than the younger group. It can be explained that the older group might have less enthusiasm and motivation in their work than the younger one. This is another important finding and should be considered to include motivation in the training curriculum.

The research shows that gender of the subjects had no impact on their emotional intelligence communication. This finding is supported by the statement of Weisinger (1998) which defined that there were no sex differences in terms of total emotional intelligence.

The study also shows that there was no impact of education level on emotional intelligence communication of the subjects. This result is the same as what Taksina Seanyen had found in his study "The Relationship between the States of Emotional Intelligence Communication of Thai Cabin Crew and the Service" in 2002.

Next, the result shows that marital status had impacts on levels of emotional intelligence communication. It can be compared to the nature of human beings. The single group of subjects had less stress and responsibility to take care of, while the married ones had to work harder at the work place and do household chores. The concentration on the job of single cabin attendants would be more than married ones respectively.

The final part of the findings shows that those who have no prior experience in working as cabin attendants possess higher levels of emotional intelligence ($\bar{X} =$

3.96) than those who have the experience. The level decreases when they become “older” in the job. ($\bar{X} = 3.76, 3.00, 3.43$) With 37 years working within the In-flight Service Department of THAI, the researcher can explain that it is a normal phenomenon. When they first join THAI, they will perform their utmost care in providing service and communicating with passengers. Especially newly recruited groups have to perform their duties above the standard to pass their trial or probation period of 6 months. Once they pass the “trainee” position and become an employee of THAI, they start losing some motivation and eagerness in pleasing customers. As there are more senior cabin attendants around and this group being relatively “young”, they will still perform their duties reasonably well. But when they think they have become “older”, they become careless and less enthusiastic. The group that has been working for 7 – 12 years with THAI has the highest amount of complaints from customers, and disciplinary problems (Statistics from QV and QQ, THAI). Later on, when they pass the “immature” period to become more mature cabin attendants, they show more responsibility in their work. Hence, they will have a higher level of emotional intelligence communication.

The researcher would like to suggest that consistency in training cabin attendants is very important. They have to be updated in their job knowledge and enhance their competency regularly. Language ability is also very important in communications. It is not only Thai or English languages that cabin attendants need to master, but also nonverbal language and multicultural knowledge. On-the-job evaluation is another effective tool to be implemented. With effective training and good management in human resources, THAI cabin attendants can definitely become the world’s most renowned for in-flight customer service.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

There are some points worth mentioning regarding this study. It would have more dimensions in the findings if it included interviews which subjects can express more ideas as well as to give the researcher some suggestions which will be more useful for further research. Observation techniques can also be used to study emotional intelligence communication during the training period. This study was limited to numerical statistics and could not record all the attributes concerning

nonverbal communication and body language. The methodology would be more satisfying if the questionnaire could be distributed “out of the classroom”. The subjects should also have more time in “judging” themselves regarding the level of each statement in emotional intelligence communication. Nevertheless, the findings are satisfactory and will be useful in designing effective communication courses for future THAI cabin attendants.