

**A contextual approach to  
understanding managerial  
roles and competencies:  
the case of luxury hotels in Greece**

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Submitted in the fulfillment of the requirements for  
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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April 2012

# Abstract

Studies of managerial work span more than half a century, nevertheless there is no clear account of the managerial work context and content. The dominance of the North American school of thought in management and the rapid global expansion of American multinational companies, was based on the creation of common (standard) managerial practices in their global operations. Since the early 1980s universality on management practices has been challenged from cross-cultural and HRM studies, that emphasised the influence of national culture on managerial work. In addition, organisational studies have focused on the influence of organisational context since the early 1960s, but only recently has this been directly linked with managerial work.

This study explores managerial work roles and competencies in a country study. Greece was selected because it encompasses 'cultural compatibility' with the West, while simultaneously maintains a strong national character. The research focuses on the Greek luxury hotel sector in order to investigate the effects of national and organisational culture on managerial work. Secondary data on the Greek luxury hotel sub-sector was used to identify a sample of sixteen hotels, with 32 participant senior managers (hotel unit GMs and assistants). A qualitative approach was employed, using several methods of data collection (in-depth interviews, questionnaires, non-participant observations and company documents). The large amount of primary and secondary data collected was triangulated in order to enhance validity of the findings.

Based on the work of Johns (2006) and Dierdorff *et al.* (2009) this research unearths the importance of contextual variables in managerial work, and demonstrates that there are alternatives to the use of universal (standard) management practices. The wider theoretical contributions include insights on managerial work, and the interplay between managerial work and context. More specifically, the contributions of this research are: a) the acknowledgement that contextual factors such as the organisational and national culture affect managerial work to a great extent; b) managerial work roles and competencies are shaped and exercised according to the dominant organisational and cultural context; and c) the set of roles performed and competencies exercised is unique and inimitable for every manager.

# **Acknowledgements**

To my supervisor Prof. Dora Scholarios,  
the most wonderful Greek person I have ever met.

To my wife Lia Marinakou, for her unconditional support  
in this difficult journey.

To all those who believed in me, and to those who strived against me.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1. Background and rationale

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, managerial work was understood and studied under a narrow scope which presented managers performing specific roles and tasks (Fayol, 1949; Taylor, 1911). Since the early 1960s it has been understood that managerial work can be defined by a variety of formal and informal roles that shape managerial behaviour (Burns, 1957; Campbell *et al.*, 1970; Hales, 1986; Martin, 1956; Martinko and Gardner, 1985; Mintzberg, 1973; Sayles, 1964; Stewart, 1967; Shetty, 1982; Willmott, 1987). During the 1980s and 1990s the interest of researchers shifted to consider managerial competencies which have been viewed as a prerequisite to perform managerial work roles. The dominant 'behavioural' approach, that separated average from superior performers argued for a 'universal' manager able to operate anywhere in the world, by using the same or at least a similar set of competencies (Boyatzis, 1982; Cockerill, 1989; Dulewicz and Herbert, 1992,1999; Schroeder, 1989; Spencer and Spencer, 1993).

Moreover, it can be suggested managerial work roles and competencies studies are limited for two main reasons. First, the dominance of North American management thought throughout the twentieth century, has spread the unquestionable assumption of 'universality' for managerial work (Boxall and Purcell, 2000, 2003; Newman and Nollen, 1996; Thomas, 2008; Von Glinow *et al.*, 2005). Based on the above, it can be argued that research on managerial work tended to be culturally biased. The second reason is the deeply rooted persistence of management researchers and scholars to ignore the influence of context in managerial work. On the other hand, the

role of context has been studied throughout the second half of the twentieth century by organisational studies (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009; Johns, 2006). Work context research has focused mainly on two directions: organisational and national culture. The latter, in conjunction with internationalisation has triggered an increased interest in cross cultural management studies. This relatively new field of international management research, studies the behaviour of people and organisations in different countries and cultures around the world; in particular it studies the influence of culture on managerial work (Adler, 1991; Edwards and Kuruvilla, 2005; Fisher and Hartel, 2003; Soderberg and Holden, 2002).

Some researchers such as Child and Tayeb (1983) and Okechuku and Wai Man (1991) claim that organisational characteristics are similar, if not identical, across nations and for the most part are free of cultural dominance. These researchers are identified with the 'convergence' school of thought and argue that organisational variance depends more on other contingencies, such as size, technological development, geographical diversification and market segment, than on national culture. On the other hand are scholars who support the 'divergence' school of thought such as Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, (1994), Hofstede (1980) and Laurent (1983). These scholars argue that organisations have always been, still are and will always be culture-bound. Therefore, one should not expect to see any convergence in managerial practices, leadership styles or work attitudes across different cultures, since these are dependent on the implicit model of organisational functioning prevalent in a particular culture. Unlike the 'convergence' school of thought, these researchers argue that despite a similarity in tasks, size and market segments, organisations operating in different cultures will differ in many of their managerial practices. These researchers believe that national and ethnic cultures are a major determinant of people's behaviour and when the culture of an organisation is incongruent with the national or ethnic culture, the result would be failure, regardless of its size, available resources or nationality.

Furthermore, literature indicates that managerial work roles and competencies research in different cultural settings has not been free of criticisms. The core of the problem here is focused on the selection of a commonly accepted research methodology as well as the use of suitable research tools. So far quantitative research methods (i.e. large scale surveys) have tended to dominate this field, and it is suggested that such approaches cannot fully capture the interaction between managerial work and the local/national context (Wright, 1996). A growing number of researchers in this field (Boyacigiller and Adler, 1991; Brewer, 1992; Daniels, 1991; Kiessling and Harvey, 2005; Parkhe, 1993) suggest the use of qualitative research methods such as semi-structured interviews and observations in order to be able to identify managerial work differences in different cultural settings.

This study attempts to remedy these oversights and identify links between managerial work roles and competencies with the national/local socio-cultural context. It also attempts to enhance our understating of the interplay between the use of standard management practices and the local work context.

## **1.2. Context of the study**

One of the key aims of this thesis is to fill a gap in the managerial competencies literature, which to a great extent ignores the significance of contextual factors such as the organisational and national culture. By using the Greek case as an example, the first contribution of the thesis is to provide a coherent framework for further research in this field. In addition, it can be suggested that this research is a response to Christou and Eaton (2000) who replicated the work of Tas (1988) and Baum (1991); their quantitative work has highlighted the significance of the different cultural context comparing Greece with the USA and the UK respectively. Similarly, the aspects of enquiry for this research are the managerial roles and competencies needed,

in order to perform efficiently and effectively in the Greek context. The exploration of contextual/cultural factors reveals reasons related not only to *what* managers do, but also *why* and *how* they do what they do.

This research provides insights into the interaction between the national context and managerial work roles and competencies adopted by hotel general managers (GMs) in luxury hotels (4 and 5\*) in Greece, in the late 2000s. The luxury hotel sub-sector, poses as one of the most dynamic and demanding in the hospitality industry. In addition, it can be argued that work in luxury hotels poses some multidimensional challenges for managerial staff, where there are tremendous pressures for service quality, customer satisfaction and outstanding (financial) performance. All these targets must be achieved for a '*perishable*' product that it is consumed at the place (hotel) and the time it is produced. Hotel managers must predict and face successfully the constant external environment changes which affect to a certain degree their sensitive product. Based on the above luxury hotel unit GMs are considered valuable resources in hospitality industry; nevertheless it can be argued that research for this type of managers is restricted on quantitative studies conducted in the USA and the UK.

With respect to the wider cultural context in this research, managerial work in Greece appears to be in alignment with what is called '*Western*' management (Myloni *et al.*, 2004). There are however some unique societal and cultural characteristics that affect managerial behaviour to a certain degree depending on a variety of factors such as the company's size, structure and ownership status. These characteristics include the values of '*filotimo*', trust and humanism as well as the '*in-group*' or family collectivism (Broome, 1996; Papalexandris, 2008). Thus, based on the above, it can be argued that forces of convergence and divergence regarding managerial work co-exist in Greece. What remains unclear is how and to what extent these forces influence managerial work.

Overall, it can be argued that the post - 2004 Olympic games era signposted significant developments and changes in the Greek hotel sector, towards convergence with the international hotel industry. The latter is translated into the adoption by Greek owned hotels of international quality standards (i.e. ISO and HACCP), standard operating procedures and the use of standard managerial practices. At the same time a steady increase of international hotel chains in this country, has been observed in the post-2004 years (Koutoulas, 2009). The findings of this research are specific to that period of time. Thus, the findings remain valid due to their insights into a specific phase in the evolution of the Greek luxury hotel industry.

### **1.3. Overview and structure**

This thesis is organised in 8 chapters. The specific information contained in these chapters is listed below.

Chapters 2-4 critically review the literature apposite to the study. Chapter 2 discusses the context of managerial work and the evolution of managerial work studies throughout the twentieth century. While classic management studies have failed to provide a coherent account of managerial work roles, more recent research has acknowledged successfully the importance of context on managerial work roles. Context also affects the work role requirements which are encapsulated in the concept of managerial competencies. The behavioural approach, which has dominated the management literature since the early 1980s, separates superior from average performers and views managerial competencies as context-independent and universally applicable in different work situations. Several authors have questioned this approach by arguing that it is not possible to separate the individual from the context. Hence, the application of managerial competencies ideas in organisational and national contexts is discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter 3 examines managerial work roles and competencies in a hospitality context. The hospitality industry was one of the first to be internationalised in the post World War Two years, and this has affected to a certain degree managerial work in this sector. There are strong indications from a wide body of empirical research that managerial work in hotels differentiates to a certain degree from other sectors; this results to a certain personality and competencies profile, which becomes more complex and multidimensional in diverse cultural settings. The preparation of the future hospitality managers goes through higher education programmes, which are currently popular worldwide. The quality and usefulness of these programmes however has been questioned and criticised based on their strong vocational orientation. On the other hand the existence of these programmes is purely based on the industry needs and requirements. Another controversial area of the hospitality management literature focuses on the successful managers' characteristics. Despite the wealth of studies regarding managerial skills and competencies for hospitality managers there is little agreement on what it takes to be a successful hotel GM. The existing research suggests that hotel unit GMs need to demonstrate a multitude of personal characteristics as well as expertise and experience in management, specialist craft and technical know-how. In addition, it is argued that there is a need to integrate theoretical and empirical research by the employment of qualitative methods, in order to be able to move towards the creation of a competencies framework for hotel managers that incorporates contextual issues such as the national and organisational culture.

The third and final part of the literature review (Chapter 4) discusses the influence that the Greek context exerts in managerial work. The Greek context was explored from various perspectives such as: the HRM and work context through the findings of the CRANET (1993-1999) survey; the Greek management education; the national culture, the values of '*filotimo*', trust and humanism, and the findings of the GLOBE (1999) project which reveals aspects of the Greek management. The discussion was also focused on the

Greek hotel managerial work context where a small but growing number of empirical studies exist. The overall conclusion was that Greek managers receive pressures from both the European and Global business environment and the national/local distinctive characteristics. Thus, convergent and divergent forces co-exist on a delicate balance. At the end of this chapter is provided a summary of the key themes that emerged from the literature review. The chapter closes with the formulation of the research aims and questions of this thesis.

With the original research aims and questions in mind, chapter 5 demonstrates how the researcher adopted an interpretivist approach to explore the nature of the GMs' roles and competencies in the Greek luxury hotel industry. The planning and execution of the field work is described in detail here: the rationale for the selection of the sample (16 hotels – 32 senior managers) is explained. In addition, the research methods and tools employed for this thesis are also discussed. More specifically, a combination of an in-depth semi-structure interview, questionnaire and non-participant observation, was selected as the appropriate research tool. The difficulties in gaining access and analysing different types and large quantities of data are discussed. Moreover, the method used to ensure validity and reliability of the data collected is also discussed. The chapter closes with considerations about the methodological limitations of this research.

Chapter 6 presents the findings of the methods deployed based on a three level analysis according to the work of Dierdorff *et al.* (2009) on categorical model of work context. Level 1, the *omnibus context*, explored the generic profile of managerial work in the Greek luxury hotel context based on the results of the personal competencies framework (PCF) questionnaire. Although all participants agreed on the importance of certain competencies for successful managers, there were small variations based on the hotel's ownership status. The following level of analysis, *the mesotype relationship*, explored the contextual similarities and differences that appear in GMs' work



in luxury hotels in Greece. This level of analysis allowed for limited categorisation of GMs based on the common characteristics that appeared in their work. The cultural context and the different management practices employed from different hotel types based on the ownership status, seem to exert influence to a certain degree, in luxury hotel GMs' work. Four hotel types are examined in relation to the above: family, local chain, national chain and international chain. Based on the management and HRM practices, family hotels GMs were found to exercise management in a paternalistic manner, putting emphasis on communication and interpersonal relations; in addition, informality prevails in management and HRM practices. The owner is actively participating in the management of the hotel. In local hotel chains, despite the profound similarities with family hotels in management style, a more systematic approach to hotel management is adopted. Formality and informality co-exist on a delicate balance; important operational and strategic decisions are taken after 'consultation' with the owner. In Greek national chains, a systematic approach to management has been adopted to the Greek context. GMs work is multidimensional and required hard and soft competencies like entrepreneurship, leadership and interpersonal skills. The owner's role is deteriorated to important strategic decisions (i.e. hotel renovation). Multinational hotel chain GMs are bound by a plethora of rules, procedures and 'best practice'. Performance and the achievement of targets are on the top of the GM's agenda. The local and/or national context exerts little or no influence on the GM's work. From the exploration of the different hotel types, emerge five key themes that affect the GM's work context: management mobility; contact intensity; dealing with public sector and corruption; hierarchical demarcation; reputation and networking. Finally, the third level of analysis (*discrete context*) presented the emerging themes from the research data namely: management mobility; contact intensity; hierarchical demarcation; dealing with the public sector and corruption; reputation and networking. The following chapter explores the wider implications of the research findings for GMs in the hospitality sector.

Chapter 7 discusses the implications of the research findings on managerial work. The discussion provides insights on the interaction between managerial roles, competencies and context. The synthesis of the research data and the use of Dierdorff's *et al.*'s (2009) categorical model of work context, enabled the generation of a model which describes the social construction of managerial roles and competencies. This model conceptualises managerial work roles and role requirements (competencies) in three levels: the generic occupational omnibus context; a mesotype relationship which allows occupational groupings; and the specific discrete context. It is argued that the managers' roles and competencies framework is unique and shaped by context. More specifically, there are five areas which appear to be affected more by contextual factors such as the organisational structure and the ownership status of the company. These areas are: management education, satisfying customers' needs, recruitment and selection, training and development, and performance appraisal.

In the final chapter (8) the research aims and questions are reviewed in relation to the key findings and the contributions to knowledge. Based on the research findings, this thesis argues that managerial work roles and competencies are shaped and developed under various contextual influences. These influences were demonstrated (in chapter 7) on a theoretical model of managerial roles and competencies, based on Dierdorff's *et al.*'s (2009) categorical model of work context. Within this framework the local, national and organisational contexts meet with the GMs personal characteristics and create a unique, 'context specific' situation. This means that managerial work in the hospitality, tourism and leisure sector may demonstrate similarities that allow us to create occupational groupings, but each case is never the same; this is determined by the existing contextual influences in effect, blended with the GM's profile. The chapter closes with this thesis limitations and recommendations for future research.

# Chapter 2: Towards an understanding of managerial work roles and competencies

## 2.0. Introduction

For the past half-century, management scholars and practitioners have engaged in research to describe managerial work roles. This body of research has focused on making management an absolute science, making important strides in creating a body of 'standard' (common) management practices. Along the way they created generations of managers who believed that managerial work could be described in absolute terms, even quantified, and that predictions about some future business events could be devised (i.e. through scenario planning and modeling, or trend analysis). In short, too many managers gave the science of management more credit for being mature than the field deserved, based on extensive use of data and information, and not necessarily on more tacit inputs, such as context. Although organisational studies provide evidence that context matters to managerial work, theoretical efforts describing the relationships between context and managerial work have remained absent. The way in which work context shapes the requirements of managerial role enactment is a vital issue in its own right, because the extent to which individuals view various activities and attributes as important to enacting their work roles is central to how they ultimately perform those roles (Dierdorff and Rubin, 2007).

Furthermore, since the early 1980s much attention also has been focused on personal attributes required of managerial incumbents themselves for superior performance; such attributes include knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) and other attributes like personality that constitute the concept of

competencies (Sandberg, 2000). The common idea behind all competency models was to create a widely accepted inventory of competencies, intended to make the diagnosis and fulfilment of management development needs easier, for large numbers of employees in different departments (Antonacopoulou and FitzGerald, 1996). The extent however to which the various managerial competency frameworks can facilitate superior performance or better management development needs to be critically assessed.

This introductory chapter explores the connections between features of work context and requirements of managerial roles. It also examines the personal attributes needed to perform a role from the managerial competencies movement perspective. The relation between context and managerial competencies is also discussed.

## **2.1. Managerial work roles**

Among the hundreds of distinct organisational work roles, few have received as much scholarly attention as that of the managerial role (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). For a long time, writing about management focused on what as an overall activity, it would achieve. Thus, prominent writers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century like Max Weber, Henri Fayol and Frederic Taylor saw managerial work as rational, subject to planning and governed by the principles of time and motion to achieve efficiency with employees (Kakabadse *et al.*, 2004). The '*classical*' school was distilled in the work of Fayol (1916, 1949) who categorised managerial activities into a few basic tasks and procedures which applied to all administrative positions in hierarchical structures. Fayol's *POC* model (command, co-ordinate, control, forecast and plan, organise,) was the cornerstone of managerial work for more than half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. While Fayol is clearly regarded as one of the founders of management thinking, his account of the functions of management tell us little about management and managing (Collins, 2000). In order to avoid

confusion of terms here, there is a need to distinguish between *management* as a function, *managers* as an occupational group appointed from the organisation in order to fulfil/execute the management function and *managing* as a directing activity conducted by managers (Watson and Harris, 1999). *Management* can be viewed as an outcome, and is something that has to be achieved. It is a functional requirement of the work organisation as it has been shaped in the 20<sup>th</sup> century capitalist societies. *Managers* are those people formally employed to concentrate on carrying out the functions of management. It is a modern form of occupation which has grown with the growth of the modern bureaucratised work organisation. *Managing* is the set of activities which bring about management - the directing or steering of the organisation as a whole to enable it to continue.

During the 1950s and 1960s, scholars argued that the conceptual understanding of management was detached from actual managerial practice (Carlson, 1951; Mintzberg, 1973). As a reaction to that critique, a series of mostly descriptive studies were conducted during those decades (Martin, 1956; Burns, 1957; Sayles, 1964; Stewart, 1967; Mintzberg, 1973), all contributing to the basic understanding of the characteristics and qualities of managerial work. This body of research has sought to delineate what managers do and how they can influence organisational functioning (Campbell *et al.*, 1970; Shetty, 1982). Mintzberg's (1973) work appears as one of the most influential (Kakabadse *et al.*, 2004) and at the same time controversial (Fondas and Steward, 1994) in the study of managerial roles. On the basis of his research, Mintzberg formulated ten management roles and made thirteen propositions about the characteristics of managerial work (Mintzberg, 1973, pp.51–53). The propositions describe managerial work in a rather precise and well-defined manner (reactive and fragmented behaviour, conducted at a relentless pace, preferably through verbal interactions). The propositions were based on the theoretical assumption that structural conditions determine managerial behaviour to a large extent. Mintzberg's Role Model has been criticised by academic scholars (i.e. Luthans *et al.*,

1985; Martinko and Gardner, 1985; Fondas and Stewart, 1994) mainly due to his methodology limitations focused in time, place and length of his research.

During the eighties and the nineties, the early studies of managers' jobs were criticised for being purely descriptive and primarily localised accounts of managerial behavior in specific settings (Hales, 1999), and for having a tendency to be undirected in terms of any coherent theory of managerial behavior guiding the actual research (Martinko and Gardner, 1985). These early studies were, furthermore, criticised for recording 'behaviour', 'activities', 'tasks', and 'functions' without making any clear distinction between them (Hales, 1986). They were also criticised for not connecting their findings to other studies of managers' jobs (Fondas and Stewart, 1994) or to the stream of study focusing on the management process as a whole (Hales, 1999). It was also argued that the coding approaches in earlier research appeared to be '*somewhat haphazard and arbitrary*' (Martinko and Gardner, 1985, p.688), and that these studies, having been done without any consistent categories or models, are difficult to compare (Martinko and Gardner, 1985; Hales, 1986). In the mid-eighties, Hales (1986) concluded that the research area had little sense of a sustained, systematic accretion of knowledge. In response to the critique of the often purely descriptive nature of the early studies and their tendency to focus on variations among reductionistic and localised accounts, research has lately set out to develop explanatory frameworks in order to understand why managers do what they do (Mintzberg, 1994; Hales, 1999).

About twenty years after his seminal study on the nature of managerial work, Mintzberg (1994) set out to come to grips with the whole of managers' jobs. According to Mintzberg, individuals come into managerial jobs with personal histories. They have values like honesty, integrity or morality. They also bring a body of experience, which expresses itself in terms of a set of skills or competencies and knowledge. An individual's knowledge may be used directly or indirectly to help interpret the various work situations encountered,

for example, when an employee's absence from work becomes a pattern requiring attention. Mintzberg asserts that each individual has a set of mental models to interpret the world. All of these individual characteristics come together to influence how the manager approaches his or her job. This is referred to as the manager's style of managing. The manager is located within the *frame* for the job. The frame consists of three specific components. First is *purpose*, which is what the manager is seeking to do with the unit he or she is supposed to manage. The second component is *perspective*, which is the overall approach to the management of the unit; and the third is *positions*, which is about the specific strategies for how the job is done. The implication of this model was that, regardless of the managerial style adopted, a manager's work had to be '*well rounded*', meaning that it should incorporate successfully all these primary and secondary roles in one unified activity: managing.

Mintzberg's model of managing is visually attractive and seems 'sound' (Kakabadse *et al.*, 2004). Despite its soundness though, a major drawback with the model is that it fails to take into account the socio-cultural context in which the manager operates. As noted by Hales (1999), the model with the individual in the center – both visually and analytically – suggests that the manager is an autonomous, proactive agent, able to choose and control his/her work pattern. This unbound-agent approach has been criticised for being too uncritical about the dualism between 'action' and 'system' (Willmott, 1987). According to Willmott (1987), the institutional conditioning and consequences of managerial work are either bracketed, taken for granted, or treated as an independent variable in most studies of managers' jobs. Drawing on this general critique, it could be argued that Mintzberg (1994) underestimates institutional constraints on managers' behaviour.

From a slightly different perspective than that of Willmott's, Hales (1986) criticised earlier research for having been reluctant to ask *why* managers behave as they do, and why they conduct the activities they do. Hales (1999)

repeated this criticism, and kept arguing for a need for explanatory accounts of the common characteristics of managerial work. In the centre of Hales' framework are the notions of responsibility and accountability. Where Mintzberg (1994) limits his analysis of the impact of the social context on managers' jobs, by recognising only that the frame of the manager to different degrees can be either created by the manager himself/herself or imposed by other actors, Hales (1999) identifies two constituent elements of the frame, *interpretive schemes* and *norms*, that influence how the specific managerial agency is operated (i.e. enacted). Interpretive schemes (in the form of cognitive rules) and norms (in the form of moral rules) at the same time constrain and enable what managers do, since certain practices become meaningful as 'managing' and since they define what is legitimate practice. They therefore shape how issues are given priority and how the schedule is arranged.

Hales' (1999) approach also highlights the emergent nature of managerial behaviour. According to Hales, managers' attempts to act in meaningful 'managerial' ways (which consequently reaffirm or alter these cognitive rules) both enable and constrain their own future managerial practices. He thereby follows the path suggested by Stewart (1989) who conceptualises the manager's job as dynamic and as consisting of a negotiable space. An important implication of Hales' framework is that managerial practice should be seen from a historical and a contextual perspective. This is, according to Hales, a key explanation for the repeatedly identified variations in managerial work. Hence, Hales emphasises the situational nature of managers' jobs.

Yet another attempt adopted in the pursuit of an explanatory framework that explains *why* managers do what they do was suggested by Hales (1986). In response to his conclusions from a critical review of earlier research, Hales argued for the use of a role framework as a way forward in the search for the answer to why managers do what they do. This proposal was later explored by Fondas and Stewart (1994). A contribution of this approach is that it



situates the behaviour of managers in the context of expectations being held on the job by the manager himself/herself as well as by other organisational actors, sometimes labeled *the role set* (Merton, 1957, in Hales, 1986). In particular, the role framework explicates how the manager affects the expectations others hold of his or her behaviour on the job (Fondas and Stewart, 1994). From this perspective (and also implied by the framework developed by Hales, 1999), the manager's job is continuously defined and created by the manager and his or her 'role set'. The expectations of the people with whom managers work – 'the role senders' – lay the foundations for how the manager perceives his/her role – 'the received role' – in response to his/her and others' perceptions of the job, which in turn impinge on how the manager approaches his/her job.

Despite the wealth of research on managerial work roles discussed above, literature indicates that a clear and coherent framework has not yet been established. The reason behind that according to Cortada (2009, p.15) is that management as science is still immature and needs to incorporate '*whole bodies of information*' from other disciplines such as psychology and economics. The following section thus, is an effort to contextualise managerial work.

## **2.2. Managerial work in context**

Theoretical and empirical efforts focusing on the interplay between work context and managerial roles have been conspicuously absent despite the recognition that context meaningfully shapes organisational behaviour (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). Work context can be thought of as a set of moderating factors that influence the employee's behaviour and adaptation (Strong *et al.*, 1999). Dierdorff *et al.* (2009) suggest that there have been two exceptions to this general tendency. The first exception refers to scholars who have studied managers at work, by interviewing or observing them as they go about their day-to-day activities (Carlson, 1951; Sayles, 1964;

Mintzberg, 1973/1994; Silverman and Jones, 1976; Stewart *et al.*, 1980; Kotter, 1982; Luthans *et al.*, 1985). The second exception refers to scholars who have been interested in how organisational factors can influence managerial behaviour from a cognitive perspective (Osborn and Hunt, 1975; Stewart, 1982; Hammer and Turk, 1987). Stewart (1982) showed that all managerial jobs offer choice and that managers perceive similar jobs in personal ways. Other studies using a cognitive approach are Hannaway (1989) and Watson (2001).

Another crucial aspect that is largely neglected in managerial work research is premised in the fact that, the structure of work in organisations is partially a social construction (Weick, 1979, Sanchez and Levine, 2000). Thus, the job performed by organisational members reflects specific activities performed within the job as well as the capabilities, preferences, and opinions of the role holders (Morgeson and Campion, 2000). Because of this, similar roles are often enacted in different ways (Graen, 1976; Katz and Kahn, 1978; Biddle, 1979) within different contexts (Johns, 2006; Dierdorff and Morgeson, 2007; Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). Context can exert a profound influence on what work role requirements are more or less important for managers (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). Despite this implicit recognition, and the fact that managerial work roles occur in diverse work contexts, there have been very few empirical examinations of how different aspects of work context shape managerial behavior (Schneider, 1983; Mowday and Sutton, 1993; Johns, 2001; Dierdorff and Morgeson, 2007). This gap in managerial work role literature is not necessarily surprising given the general lack of consideration of context in organisational research (Cappelli and Sherer, 1991; Hatrup and Jackson, 1996; Johns, 2006).

Dierdorff *et al.* (2009) argue that theory and research on managerial work stands to benefit greatly from a systematic and explicit examination of managerial work roles and their relationships to features of the work context. Building on managerial work role literature and Johns' (2006) categorical

model of work context, Dierdorff *et al.* (2009) developed an integrative *meso-level* framework (House *et al.*, 1995) that links features of the work context to individual (managerial) role enactment. Dierdorff *et al.* (2009) empirically tested this framework with a nationally representative sample of 8,633 managers spanning 52 managerial positions in the USA. Their findings from hierarchical linear modeling analyses demonstrated that discrete forms of context (task, social, and physical) exert significant and predictable effects on managerial role requirements. In defense of their methodology they argued that such an approach is theoretically important because it attempts to explicate the intermediate steps by which categories of variables are interrelated (Hattrup and Jackson, 1996), as well as characterising both person-centric and contextual factors in “*mutually relevant and comparative forms*” (Chatman, 1989, p. 337). The exploration of the links between context and managerial work roles begins with our understanding of the latter; thus the following section provides a description of what comprises and shapes managerial work roles.

### **2.2.1. Expectations and requirements of managerial work roles**

The concept of role expectations has been forwarded to explain how different role holders come to enact their roles in a similar manner (Dierdorff and Morgeson, 2007) within particular environments (Biddle, 1986). Role expectations are viewed as the primary element in ‘*maintaining the role system and inducing the required role behaviour*’ (Katz and Kahn, 1978, p.189); in other words a role subsumes expectations regarding the various obligations that are associated with a particular position. These expectations are simply beliefs about what a role entails (Ilgen and Hollenbeck, 1991) and are purported to be antecedents to role behaviour. Both role expectations and role behaviour are affected by a host of factors, including work attitudes such as job satisfaction, commitment, fairness perceptions (Organ and Ryan, 1995; Conte *et al.*, 2005), leadership (Smith *et al.*, 1983; Hofmann *et al.*, 2003), personality (Bateman and Crant, 1993), job autonomy (Morgeson *et*

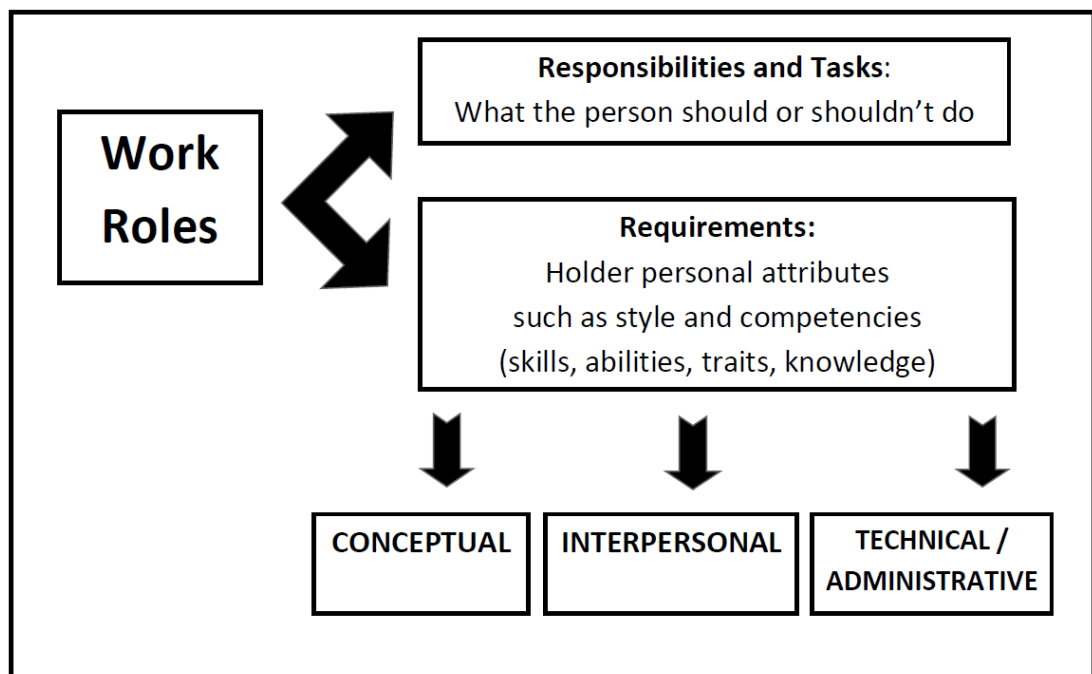
*al.*, 2005), task engagement (Richman and Quinones, 1996), work experience (Borman *et al.*, 1992), and ability (Morgeson *et al.*, 2005).

Furthermore, Ilgen and Hollenbeck (1991) suggest that work roles are generally defined in terms of responsibilities and requirements associated with enacting specific jobs. Work role responsibilities include role activities/tasks (what the person should or should not do), and on the other hand requirements include role holder attributes such as personal characteristics and style (Katz and Kahn, 1978). Tasks are considered to be specific to a particular work role, and responsibilities can be described as a collection of tasks that form generic activities that are applicable across a wide variety of work roles (Cunningham, 1996). Jeannerete *et al.* (1999) argue that responsibilities can be seen as broad activity statements, that are aggregates of several highly related behaviours used in accomplishing work roles. Whereas tasks and responsibilities have a behavioural focus, person requirements are needed for role enactment: they are employee oriented attribute descriptors, that describe facets of individuals that are important to role enactment (Dierdorff and Morgeson, 2007). Work role requirements encompass more than just the *activities* managers must perform as part of their roles, but also extend to relevant *attributes* that are requisite to role enactment, such as different knowledge, skills, abilities, and traits of the role holders themselves (Dierdorff and Rubin, 2007)(Figure 1).

The sum of these personal attributes constitute the concept of competencies (Sandberg, 2000) which will be explored in following section (2.3). The enactment of work roles necessarily encompasses behaviour that is the product of personal characteristics and characteristics of the work situation (Neff, 1987). Thus, it can be argued that context and processes involved in role enactment are definitely intertwined. Moreover, similarities in work role requirements also enable individual work roles to be meaningfully combined in occupational groupings that share a common overall goal or purpose (Dierdorff and Morgeson, 2007). Occupations can be defined as collections

of work roles with similar goals that require the performance of distinctive activities as well as the application of specialised skills or knowledge to accomplish these goals (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). In this sense, managerial work roles entail the various attribute and activity requirements associated with enacting specific managerial occupations (Cortada, 2009) e.g., hotel managers, restaurant managers and human resource managers. As such, not only do occupations reflect groupings of similar work roles, but they also reflect distinctively different contexts within which work roles are enacted (Johns, 2006; Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009).

**Figure 1:** Managerial work roles' responsibilities and requirements



Source: adapted from Johns (2006), Dierdorff *et al.* (2009)

Managerial work role requirements research has primarily focused on deriving the assortment of behaviours or functions that coincide with managerial work (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). Despite the use of diverse methods (e.g. critical incidents, standardised job analysis instruments) and samples (e.g. military, executives, first-line supervisors), a review of managerial work role literature suggests that there are three general categories of requirements: conceptual, interpersonal and technical/administrative. Table 1

presents select examples of these three requirement categories from studies spanning five decades. To start with, *conceptual* requirements incorporate knowledge, skills, characteristics, and behaviours associated with cognitive processes, such as collecting and processing information (Harvey, 1991), planning (Hemphill, 1959), and learning (Mintzberg, 1973; Lau and Pavett, 1980). *Interpersonal* requirements reflect interacting, influencing, and leading others (Katz, 1974; Harvey, 1991; Borman and Brush, 1993). Finally *technical/administrative* requirements, include aspects of managerial work dealing with the traditional functions of business (Katz, 1974; Tett *et al.*, 2000), such as operations, accounting, and coordinating administrative activities (Stogdill *et al.*, 1953; Mahoney, 1961; Pavett and Lau, 1983). In short, literature suggests that various comprehensive reviews (Katz, 1974; Thornton and Byham, 1982; Bass, 1990; Harvey, 1991; Hunt, 1991) have supported these general requirement categories.

Although the three broad categories appear to underlie the enactment of all managerial roles, as noted above managerial work takes place in diverse contexts that are likely to shape the manner in which managerial roles are enacted (Johns, 2006; Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). In addition, organisational role theory suggests that the interplay between individual factors and contextual influences on role enactment occupies a key role in (managerial) work (Kahn *et al.*, 1964; Thornton and Nardi, 1975; Biddle, 1986). As Stewart (1982) argues managerial roles are subject to a variety of diverse demands, constraints, and opportunities; thus, a complete understanding of managerial roles, requires a consideration of contextual influences.

**Table 1:** Categories and examples from five decades of managerial work role research

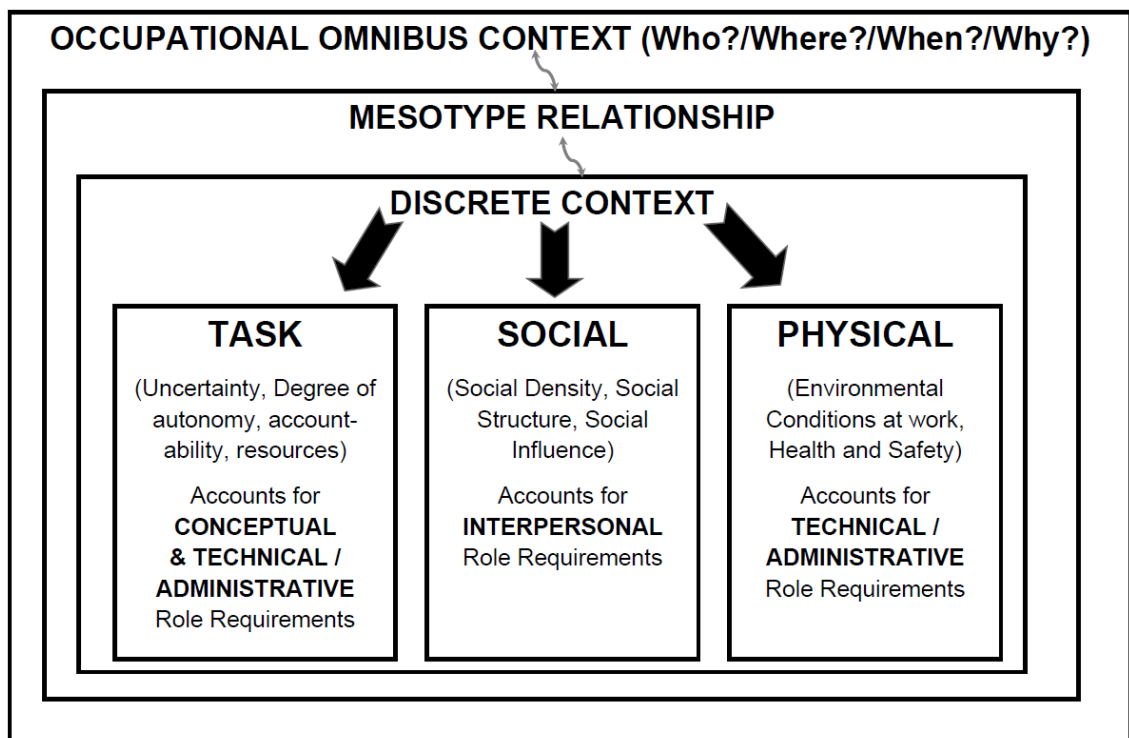
| <b>Study</b>                         | <b>Conceptual</b>   | <b>Interpersonal</b>  | <b>Technical/<br/>administrative</b>  |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Flanagan (1951)</b>               | Planning and directing action   | Supervising personnel   | Handling administrative detail, accepting organisational responsibility, accepting personal responsibility                                      |
| <b>Stogdill et al. (1953)</b>        | Methods planning, high-level policymaking   | Managing personnel services   | Administrative, coordinating  |
| <b>Prien (1963)</b>                  | Coordinating and administrating personnel, organising work, planning and preparing          | Supervising employees, maintaining employee contact and communication, handling union-management relations    | Supervising and handling administration of manufacturing process  |
| <b>Katzell et al. (1968)</b>         | Long-range planning   | Staffing, shared responsibility, individual responsibility  | Budgeting, technical consulting, operational concerns, professional concerns, controlling, technical activity, administrative activity          |
| <b>Dowell &amp; Wexley (1978)</b>    | Organising work of subordinates, work planning and scheduling                               | Working with subordinates   | Maintaining efficient/ quality production, maintaining safe/ clean work areas, maintaining equipment & machinery, compiling records and reports |
| <b>Morse &amp; Wagner (1978)</b>     | Organising and coordinating, information handling, strategic problem solving                | Providing growth and development, motivating and handling conflict  | Managing the organisation's Environment and resources   |
| <b>Luthans &amp; Lockwood (1984)</b> | Planning and coordinating,  | Motivating and reinforcing, interacting with outsiders, managing conflict                                     | Processing paperwork, monitoring and controlling performance  |
| <b>Yukl (1989)</b>                   | Planning, problem solving, clarifying roles and objectives                                  | Supporting, networking, managing conflict and team building, motivating, recognising and rewarding, informing | Monitoring operations and environment   |
| <b>Borman &amp; Brush (1993)</b>     | Planning and organising, decision making, problem solving, collecting and interpreting data | Guiding, directing, motivating subordinates, maintaining good working relationships                           | Monitoring and controlling resources, handling administration and paper work  |
| <b>Tett et al. (2000)</b>            | Decision making, strategic planning, problem awareness                                      | Maintaining person orientation, developing self and others, communicating, motivating                         | Having occupational acumen and expertise, monitoring, having a concern for safety   |

Source: Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009, p.974

## 2.2.2. Placing managerial work roles in work context

Knowing how to understand and leverage context remains one of the most basic requirements in work life, yet very difficult to achieve in managerial work (Cortada, 2009). Johns (2006, p.386) defines context as '*situational opportunities and constraints that affect the occurrence and meaning of organisational behaviour as well as functional relationships between variables*'. In his review, Johns (*idid.*) puts forth a categorical model of context that can be used to inform inquiry about such influences on managerial roles. Specifically, he conceptualised context at two levels. The first level is termed *omnibus* context and the second *discrete* context. Between the omnibus and discrete contexts, a mesotype relationship (House *et al.*, 1995) exists (Figure 2); this implies that discrete contextual variables provide the explanatory link between more descriptive and general omnibus context and specific organisational behaviour and attitudes (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009).

**Figure 2:** Three levels of context



Source: adapted from Johns (2006)



According to Johns (2006, p.391) the term omnibus '*refers to an entity that comprises many features or particulars*'. Dierdorff *et al.* (2009) argue that omnibus context is studied or explored when researchers aim to yield similar findings for participants working under one particular organisational structure rather than another. The omnibus context provides information about the broad essential elements of a given context and describes managerial roles' moderating influences collectively in a non-differentiated manner (Johns, 2006). Dierdorff *et al.* (2009) suggest that the omnibus context is synonymous with occupation when studying work roles; they also argue that occupation accounts for variance in the importance of role requirements across different managerial work roles. Such variances in effect linked to omnibus context suggest that managerial requirements that are technical/administrative are likely to be the most occupation specific, whereas interpersonal and conceptual requirements are more universally important (Dierdorff *et al.*, *ibid.*).

On the other hand, discrete context seeks to identify specific situational variables that impact behavior directly or indirectly (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). Discrete context can be viewed as nested within omnibus context such that the effects of omnibus context are mediated by discrete contextual variables; these variables might apply to any level of analysis, from individuals to industries (Johns, 2006). Three important components compose the discrete context and shape role requirements: task context, social context, and physical context (Mowday and Sutton, 1993; Hatrup and Jackson, 1996, Johns, 2006). Discrete task context encompasses contextual features that are structural and informational in nature, including attributes such as the availability of information, degree of consensus among information cues, amount of behavioural or informational ambiguity and uncertainty, level of accountability, degree of structure in role demands, and the amount of autonomy (Hatrup and Jackson, 1996; Johns, 2006). On the other hand, discrete social context refers to contextual aspects that are interpersonal in nature and includes attributes such as social density, norms, degree of

interdependence, and interpersonal conflict (Evans *et al.*, 1994; Hattrup and Jackson, 1996; Kelly *et al.*, 2003; Johns, 2006). Finally, discrete physical context comprises contextual elements of the material or built environment, including environmental conditions, such as acoustic (noise), visual (lighting and glare), temperature, humidity, and air quality, as well as hazardous work conditions, such as radiation, high places, and disease exposure (Hatch, 1987; Pfeffer, 1997; Strong *et al.*, 1999; Johns, 2006). Dierdorff and Morgeson (2007, p.1229) suggest that '*of these components of discrete context, task and social contexts are arguably the most salient to consensus in work role requirements, because such contexts directly relate to and describe the milieu in which role enactment is specifically pursued*'. For example, task contexts can be described as autonomous, uncertain, or predictable, whereas social contexts can be described in terms of social influence and social interactions (Johns, 2006). In short, factors from the task and social contexts should be expected to shape not only the ways work roles are enacted but also the consistency of expectations employees have about different work role requirements (Dierdorff and Morgeson, *ibid.*).

Although work context can be specifically delineated with discrete dimensions (i.e., task, social, and physical contexts), it is essential to recognise that these dimensions are by no means theoretically orthogonal (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). In this sense, the task, social, and physical contexts shape role requirements regardless of whether they are conceptual, interpersonal, or technical/ administrative. Therefore, a given discrete context dimension is likely to be more or less relevant (Tett and Burnett, 2003) to a given category of managerial role requirements, which results in a larger or smaller contextual impact on that role requirement category. Based on their research data, Dierdorff *et al.* found that:

- Task context accounts for more variance in the importance of technical/ administrative managerial role requirements than interpersonal requirements.

- Social context accounts for more variance in the importance of interpersonal managerial role requirements than conceptual and technical/administrative requirements.
- Physical context accounts for more variance in the importance of technical/administrative managerial role requirements than conceptual and interpersonal requirements.

A type of discrete context discussed by Johns (2006) is the discrete occupational context. Discrete occupational contexts arise from the nature of the work itself, such that *'knowing someone's occupation permits reasonable inferences about his or her task, social, and physical environment at work, which, in turn, can be used to predict behaviour and attitudes'* (Johns, 2006, p.393). In the present thesis, facets of discrete occupational context that pertain to both task and social context are explored.

The following section focuses on the managerial work role requirements and more specifically on managerial competencies, which are the prerequisites for the role enactment in discrete occupational context.

### **2.3. Managerial competencies**

Research into management competencies and the development of consequent competency frameworks gained momentum during the 1970s. The rapid technological change in combination with growth in service and knowledge-based industries (Neef, 1998) has led to the need for an ongoing development of competence for competitive success (Kanter, 1983; Porter, 1990). This in turn has created a further demand for efficient ways to select, train and develop managers within organisations; in order to do so organisations needed to understand what constitutes human competence at work. Without such an understanding, competence development cannot be managed effectively (Sandberg, 2000) and therefore, managerial effectiveness in organisations cannot be achieved. Early approaches to

managerial competence focused on the relation between person and work. Mintzberg (1973, 1975) claimed that a manager's work has central importance to all aspects of management but that research in this area had been limited and inconsistent and had not built upon prior knowledge. Consequently, his research utilised both primary research and an integration of the relevant findings of prior research (Mintzberg, 1975). Several management competencies emerged from Mintzberg's (1975) work, which considered them as essential components for effective management. These were: developing relationships, resolving conflicts, motivating subordinates, establishing information networks, disseminating information and allocating resources.

Katz (1974) attempted to address the concerns raised by Mintzberg (1975) and investigated management competencies as an extension to the previous work that had predominantly examined management functions. Katz (1974) claimed that managers at all levels require technical, human and conceptual skills and the emphasis on particular types of skills will depend on the individual's management level. For example, technical skills have greater emphasis at lower levels of management while well-developed conceptual skills are crucial to senior management. In addition, clarifying the content and relationship between the desired performance, required job activities and the underlying competencies is crucial as *'many organisations, in concentrating on specific traits or qualities, stand in danger of losing sight of their real concern: what a man can accomplish'* (Katz, 1974). The different approach used by Katz to evaluate what makes an effective manager has had profound impact on management development and signalled the possibility that effective management can be achieved by practising management competencies. As well, the management competencies espoused by Katz (1974), have been extensively used by others to develop further management competency frameworks (Peterson and Van Fleet, 2004).

Despite the popularity of the various competency based approaches within the past three decades it is still not clear what they are and what they do, in the managerial context. The terms '*competence*' and '*competency*' became increasingly fashionable in the late 1980s and during the 1990s to express what the target of assessment and development initiatives should be, especially in management development programmes (Cheng *et al.*, 2003). Some treat competencies as qualities of the corporation as an entity (i.e. Pahalad and Hamel, 1990), while others treat competencies as qualities of employees (i.e. Boyatzis, 1982; Burgoyne, 1989; Cockerill, 1989; Spencer and Spencer, 1993; Dulewicz and Herbert, 1992/1999). Employees' core competencies are also referred to as personal competencies (Reagan, 1994; Burack *et al.*, 1997). When the competencies possessed by successful managers are discussed, the term '*managerial competencies*' is frequently used (Burgoyne, 1989; Collin, 1989). Reagan (1994) argues that organisational and managerial (personal) competencies are very much connected, in the sense that managerial competencies are said to derive from the values and core competencies of the organisation.

Within this context it is possible to identify two main approaches to managerial competencies. First, the behavioural approach which appeared in the US in the early 1980s is mainly concerned with identifying what kind of behaviours are associated with superior or average managerial performance (Boyatzis, 1982; Schroeder, 1989; Spencer and Spencer, 1993). This appears as the dominant approach (Kakabadse *et al.*, 2004) in managerial competencies literature for the past three decades and will be discussed in section 2.3.2. The second, known as the standards approach appeared in the UK in the early 1990s, and is based upon functional analysis of the job or position; the standards approach is describes minimum standards of performance for managerial positions (Tate, 1995) in order to ensure a certain quality of the job outcome (MCI, 1991, 1994, 1997, 2004). The focus here is on the job, not on the individual holding the job. This approach has dominated the competency work in the UK during the last two decades and

standards are developed for around 85% of the workforce (Chivers and Cheetham, 1996). However the standards approach has been criticised (Jubb and Robotham, 1997; Keep and Mayhew, 1999) and many UK firms have preferred to use behaviour based competence models (Matthewman, 1998, 1999).

### **2.3.1. Defining Competencies**

Literature suggests that there is much confusion concerning this concept and that it is impossible to identify a coherent theory or to arrive at a definition capable of accommodating and reconciling all the different ways that the term is used (Jubb and Rowbotham, 1997). Antonacopoulou and FitzGerald (1996, p.29) argue that *“the divergent meanings attached to the word ‘competency’ create great confusion, not least in terms of all those soft characteristics, which might lead to an individual being awarded the title ‘competent’”*.

Since the late 1980s there have been a few attempts to establish coherent terminology (Boak, 1991; Burgoyne, 1988; Tate, 1995; Woodruffe, 1993). Boak (1991) argues that *‘competency’* in the American sense complements *‘competence’* as used in the UK occupational standards. Burgoyne (1988) similarly distinguishes *‘being competent’* (meeting the job demands) from *‘having competencies’* (possessing the necessary attributes to perform competently). Moloney (1997) argues competency and competence, although linguistically very similar, are not alternative approaches to the same concept. Woodruffe (1993) asserts that there is a basic distinction between competence, defined as aspects of the job which an individual can perform, with competency, referring to a person’s behaviour underpinning competent performance. Salaman (1995, p.33) notes that *‘competencies and skills inhabit the same ground, but the two are not the same’*. In addition Parry (1998) separates competencies from traits and personal characteristics by defining competency as *‘a cluster of related knowledge, attitudes and*

*skills that affects a major part of one's job'* (*ibid*, p.60). The *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* (1995) defines 'competence' as the ability to do something well or effectively. According to the dictionary, the word is a noun and the forms 'competence' and 'competency' are used interchangeably. However as Cheng *et al.* argue (2003, p.527) these terms '*are rarely used interchangeably in the singular, but are often interchanged in the plural and may also be used synonymously*'. Rowe (1995) defines competence as "...a skill or standard of performance reached while 'competency' refers to a behaviour by which it is achieved...One describes what people do while the other focuses on how they do it." (cited in Brophy and Kiely, 2002, p.167).

Based on the above discussion, it can be argued that despite the fact that there are numerous definitions of competency, they lead to a similar conclusion – that the competencies of a manager are positively related with his/her effectiveness of his/ her job performance.

### **2.3.2. The behavioural approach to managerial competencies**

Since the early post-war years many researchers focused their efforts to identify the qualities and the skills of an effective manager or to identify the characteristics of a good manager (Carlson, 1951; Sayles, 1964; Stewart, 1967; Mintzberg, 1973). Early research into the field has adopted a job analysis approach, trying to identify *what* a manager actually does (and later *why*), and then derive necessary skills from the work requirements. Another issue that researchers were interested in at that time was the relation of competencies development with successful performance. In the early 1970s McClelland (1973) published an influential paper '*Testing for competence rather than intelligence*' which was later credited for launching the competency movement in psychology. In this paper, he claimed that job performance should be predicted from competency. McClelland (1973) reviewed studies indicating that traditional academic aptitude and knowledge content tests, as well as school grades and credentials, did not predict job

performance or success in life and in addition were often biased against minorities, women, and persons from lower socioeconomic strata. Drawing from his early work, McClelland later (1998) argued that competency captures skills and dispositions beyond cognitive ability such as self-awareness, self-regulation and social skills; while some of these may also be found in personality taxonomies competencies are fundamentally behavioural and susceptible to learning.

**Table 2:** Major contributions in the ‘behavioural’ competencies approach

| <b>Researcher</b>              | <b>Performance measure</b>                                | <b>Competence measure</b>                                    |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Boyatzis (1982)                | Supervisory nominations and ratings, work output measures | Behavioural Event Interview (BEI)                            |
| Schroder (1989)                | Work group / managerial performance                       | Behavioural Observation Method (BOM)                         |
| Spencer and Spencer (1993)     | Various managerial levels performance                     | Job Competence Assessment (JCA)                              |
| Dulewicz and Herbert (1991-99) | Career advancement  | 360 degree ratings (from supervisor, peers and subordinates) |
| Cheetham and Chivers (1996-98) | Professional performance in different professions         | Provisional model of critical peer evaluation / reflection   |

Managerial competencies are variously defined in terms of underlying personal characteristics like traits, knowledge, skills and motives of the individual holding the job which have been causally related to superior performance (Stuart and Lindsay, 1997). This tradition has remained particularly influential in the USA, with competency defined in terms of underlying characteristics of people that are causally related to effective or superior performance in a job, generalizing across situations, and enduring for a reasonably long period of time (Boyatzis, 1982; Guion, 1991; Klemp and Spencer, 1982; Spencer and Spencer, 1993). From the assessment centre



literature (Gaugler *et al.*, 1987; Dulewicz, 1989) it seems clear that competency and job performance is better assessed and predicted from observations in real job-situations or in assessment centres. This fact has led to a considerable interest in identification of the competencies associated with successful managerial performance in the last three decades (Robertson *et al.*, 1999). The major contributions within this approach (Table 2) are based on research conducted largely in the US (Boyatzis, 1982; Schroeder, 1989; Spencer and Spencer, 1993). Within the 1990s an increasing number of researchers from the UK have also based their work in this approach (Cockerill, 1989; Dulewicz and Herbert, 1992/1999; Cheetham and Chivers, 1996, 1998). Research within this area typically involves measurements of performance which is primarily based in measurements of competencies.

Boyatzis' (1982) research has triggered the '*competency*' or '*behavioural*' approach; its focus lies in endorsing and promoting types of managerial behaviour rather than measuring managerial outcomes (Rees and Garnsey, 2003). Boyatzis used the Behavioural Event Interview (BEI), developed originally by McClelland (1973), in a sample of over 2,000 practicing managers in 41 different types of jobs in 12 different organisations in both the public and private sector (Woodall and Winstanley, 1998). Boyatzis argued that '*because job competencies are underlying characteristics, they can be said to be generic*' (1982, p.21). This generic, context-independent nature of job competencies means that they can appear in many different work activities (Sandberg, 2000). In addition, he identified characteristics that were causally related to effective and/or superior performance in a job; he distinguished between two levels of competencies, *threshold competencies* and *superior competencies*. According to Boyatzis (1982, p.23) a threshold competency is '*a person's generic knowledge, motive, trait, self-image, social role or skill which is essential to performing a job, but not causally related to superior performance*'. In other words these constitute the minimum requirements for competencies needed to carry out a task or a job

completely. On the other hand superior performance is related with superior competences, distinctive characteristics that differentiate it from poor or average performance. A criticism of Boyatzis is that his definition has created much confusion on the interpretation of the concept. Woodruffe (1991, p.32) argues that *'...perhaps Boyatzis assumed too much psychological knowledge on behalf of his readers when he gave his definition. It led many away from the fact that, although the competency might be a trait, at heart is still only a convenient summary label for people's behaviour'*. Furthermore, even though Boyatzis acknowledged the importance of the context and organisational setting/culture, he did not observe the managers in real job-situations and this was an issue that was criticised by later researchers (Schroder, 1989). He used the Behavioural Event Interviews to produce a framework with a list of competencies, which were shown to relate to effective behaviour regardless of the specific job and organisation. In addition some researchers argued that it is necessary to perform observations in real job-situations in order to take the context and organisational culture into consideration (Chivers and Cheetham, 1998).

Schroder (1989) further developed a framework of *high performance competencies*, following on from Boyatzis' research on the connection between the individual's competence and the surrounding work context or organisational environment. Schroder (1989) identified its purpose as being *'the identification, measurement and development of managerial characteristics which are significantly related to superior organisational performance in particular organisational contexts'* (p.7). Having distinguished between the external environment and the internal environments, he defined three classes of competencies: *Entry Level* (individual characteristics such as knowledge, ability, motivation and style), *Basic* (knowledge and skills needed to perform or execute managerial work) and *High Performance Competencies*. The latter were defined as *'a relatively stable set of behaviours which produce significantly superior workgroup performance in more complex organizational environments'* (Schroder, 1989, p.22)

comprising the part of managerial behaviour within an organisation. Although this definition builds on Boyatzis' definition of competence, it focuses more on contextual factors like organisational environments and relates individual competence to workgroup performance.

The competencies identified are applicable for managers operating in dynamic, unpredictable and turbulent environments and thus highlight the cognitive and interpersonal dimensions of adaptability. Schroder emphasises that not all senior managers require all eleven *High Performance Competencies*, but rather that a team or work group needs to reflect capability in most of these competencies. He also argued that one of the most significant competencies a manager needs to have is self-awareness of his or her own strengths and weaknesses so that they can be complemented by others. From Schroder's point of view, a manager's success should be measured by the performance of the group/department they are in charge of, and not by their career advancement. He also saw it as important to observe the managers in job-like situations; he used the Behavioural Observation Method (BOM) and assessment centre techniques while Boyatzis based his work on the Behavioural Event Interview (BEI).

The different ways of defining superior performance makes a vital difference when comparing the work of Boyatzis with the work of Schroder. By using work group performance as the performance measure he made a clearer link between value creation in the company and managerial competencies. Salaman (1995, p.5) commenting on Schroder's work argues that *'if these competences for change are research based, they are the result of the statistical amalgamation of the thoughts and intuitions of practicing managers'*. This notion clearly is drawing on the fact that Schroder's work was an effort to couple the HR function with statistics: he measured work group performance in terms of hard data such as sales, profit or productivity measures. The argument here is that for many managerial positions it could be difficult to identify and measure specific workgroup performance. Later

research (Cockerill et. al., 1993) found the eleven HPMC's to be discrete, stable and valid dimensions of managerial behaviour. The competencies can be measured reliably and correlate positively and significantly with organisational performance (Cokerill et al., 1995).

After reviewing an impressive amount of studies, Spencer and Spencer (1993) explicitly differentiated competencies into a threshold competency, which an employee in a job needs in order to show a minimum standard of performance, and differentiating competency that an employee must have in order for superior performance. According to Spencer and Spencer (1993, p.4) competencies include '*...motives, traits, self-concepts, attitudes or values, content knowledge, or cognitive or behavioural skills – any individual characteristic that can be measured or counted reliably and that can be shown to differentiate significantly between superior and average performers, or between effective and ineffective performers*'. The first typology of competencies Spencer and Spencer provide is quite similar to the Schein's model (1980) of organisational culture. Competencies are presented in a three level model of concentric cycles where there is a clear distinction between surface competencies easy to identify such as knowledge and skills, attitudes and values in the middle, and at the core of the model lie deeper and more hidden concepts such as self-concept, trait and motivation competencies. Similarly they provide the Iceberg Model with hidden and visible competencies. They argue that surface knowledge and skill competences are relatively easy to develop through training. On the other hand core motive and trait competencies at the base of the personality iceberg are more difficult to assess and develop thus the selection process has the vital role to select for these characteristics. The model highlights the similarities between all managerial jobs, but is not intended to be applied to any particular job. Spencer and Spencer's *base* requirements are similar to Boyatzis' (1982) threshold competencies and Schroder's (1989) basic competencies.

Dulewicz (1989) developed a framework for managerial competence based upon many years of experience in the field of management assessment, job analysis and drawing heavily on the assessment centre literature of the time (i.e. Stewart and Stewart, 1982; Thorton and Byham, 1982). The Job Competencies Survey developed originally by Dulewicz (1989) demonstrated that the skill needs of managers are sufficiently generic to permit generalisations across the occupation. Despite differences in the managerial function in different contexts, Dulewicz (1992) found that firm-specific competencies represented only 30% of the total competencies basket, while the remaining 70% were common to a wide range of organisations. Dulewicz' (1992) framework included originally forty competencies organised under five main headings. Later (1998) it was expanded to forty five questions under six main headings. From this framework Dulewicz and Herbert (1992) empirically identified twelve independent dimensions supra-competencies which are related to superior managerial performance. During the 1990s Dulewicz and Herbert (1992, 1999) conducted a study in order to track the career progress of general managers over a seven-year period. The main aim was to identify those competencies (skills, abilities, values) and personality characteristics assessed in the initial study (1992) which are associated with current success and rate of advancement. The sample included seventy two British managers who had been assessed on the Henley general management course in 1988/89. Factor analysis revealed two main criteria of success: current seniority and rate of advancement. The sample was divided into discrete groups of 'high fliers' and 'low fliers', based on their respective rate of advancement. Almost all in the 'high flier' group were Directors, and received an average salary of £80,000. According to Dulewicz and Herbert (1999) ten characteristics differentiated the high fliers and these included the following: Risk taking, Planning, Organising and Motivating Others. On the Supra Competencies the high fliers differentiated on: Risk Taking, Planning and Organising, Managing and Motivating Staff, Assertive and decisive and Achievement-Motivation.

Cheetham and Chivers (1996, 1998) claimed to develop a holistic model of professional competence, comprising five sets of inter-connected competencies. Their original analysis drew on a number of prior educational theories, including the Bloom (1956) tradition and Schon's (1983, 1987) '*reflective practitioner*' model. Cheetham and Chivers research results support Schon's view of the importance of reflection to professional growth, but challenge some of his other assertions, such as the extent to which professionals use tacit knowledge and repertoires of solutions. They also found that, in practice, professionals often refer back to the basic theory they have been taught, especially in novel situations, though they also extemporise extensively.

These findings led Cheetham and Chivers to a modified epistemology of practice, which they named technically-grounded extemporisation, along with a new paradigm of professional development. Cheetham and Chivers identified four major blocks of competence: *knowledge/cognitive competence* included the basic technical, contextual, conceptual, and procedural knowledge required of the ideal professional; *functional competence* included the basic 'occupation-specific' procedural and psychomotor skills, together with a number of organisational and managerial skills, plus the necessary literacy, numeracy, and IT skills; *personal/behavioural competence* included a cluster of 'social/vocational' skills and qualities, such as self-confidence, persistence, and the ability to think on one's feet, as well as a willingness to conform to the norms of professional behaviour; and finally, *values/ethical competence*: included such factors as being law abiding, and possessing the required levels of '*sensibility to needs and values of others*' (Cheetham and Chivers, 1996, p.275), and the recognition that professionals are duty bound to keep up-to-date and to help to develop newcomers to their profession. The activation of these blocks of competence was then overseen by a number of '*meta-competencies*', or the ability to manage ability. Meta-competencies thus reflect cognitive processes of a higher order, such as '*creativity, analysis, problem solving, and self-development*' (*ibid*, p.268).

From a critical perspective Cheetham and Chivers' work classifies what professionals do, but makes no direct inferences at what might be going on inside their heads while they are doing it. In talking about numeracy skills, for example, the emphasis is on particular types of behaviour, rather than the cognitive processes that give rise to it. In other words, this approach provided a model of behavioural outcomes, but no clear account of the organisation of cognitive processing. On the other hand, this model suggests that the concept of competency is being broadened to capture underlying knowledge and behaviours rather than simply functional competences associated with specific occupations.

### **2.3.3. The behavioural approach – summary and criticisms**

So far the discussion about the '*behavioural*' approach has identified a variety of approaches, which share common characteristics, sometimes under different names. As it has already been mentioned, this approach is mainly based on identifying what kind of competencies underlie successful performance and to produce a generic list of relevant competencies. Table 3 summarises the commonalities observed among these models. This comparison shows that the categorisation or '*clusterisation*' of competencies is a common feature in this approach. Thus, for the purpose of the current comparative analysis, competencies are divided into 6 clusters: *1. Intellectual / Information Handling; 2. Achievement / Results-orientation; 3. Managing and Leadership; 4. Interpersonal; 5 Intrapersonal; 6. Values and Ethical Competence.*

There are obvious similarities between the above described models. It can be argued that, given that these models are supported by research findings, it is reasonable to conclude that there are some managerial competencies that are causally related to effective and/or superior performance in a job. As it was mentioned above each researcher has used different methods of measuring competence and performance.

**Table 3:** Similarities between competencies models related to superior managerial performance

| <b>Competencies</b>   | Boyatzis (1982) | Schroder (1989) | Spencer & Spencer (1993) | Dulewicz & Herbert (1992-99) | Cheetham & Chivers (1996-98) |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>1. Intellectual / Information Handling</b>   |                 |                 |                          |                              |                              |
| Analytical thinking   |                 |                 | ✓                        |                              | ✓                            |
| Information seeking   |                 | ✓               | ✓                        |                              |                              |
| Conceptualisation   | ✓               | ✓               | ✓                        |                              |                              |
| Conceptual Flexibility  |                 | ✓               |                          |                              | ✓                            |
| Analysis and Judgement  |                 |                 |                          | ✓                            | ✓                            |
| Diagnostic use of concepts  | ✓               |                 |                          |                              |                              |
| Strategic Perspective   |                 |                 |                          | ✓                            |                              |
| <b>2. Achievement / Results Orientation</b>   |                 |                 |                          |                              |                              |
| Efficiency / Achievement orientation  | ✓               | ✓               | ✓                        | ✓                            |                              |
| Impact, influence and persuasiveness  | ✓               | ✓               | ✓                        | ✓                            |                              |
| Proactive Orientation / Energy and Initiative   | ✓               | ✓               | ✓                        | ✓                            |                              |
| Business sense  |                 |                 |                          | ✓                            |                              |
| <b>3. Managing and Leadership</b>   |                 |                 |                          |                              |                              |
| Self-confidence   | ✓               | ✓               | ✓                        |                              | ✓                            |
| Planning and organising   |                 |                 |                          | ✓                            | ✓                            |
| Managing staff  |                 |                 |                          | ✓                            | ✓                            |
| Directiveness/Assertiveness   |                 |                 | ✓                        | ✓                            | ✓                            |
| Team leadership   |                 |                 | ✓                        |                              | ✓                            |
| <b>4. Interpersonal</b>   |                 |                 |                          |                              |                              |
| Interpersonal sensitivity   |                 | ✓               |                          | ✓                            | ✓                            |
| Managing group processes  | ✓               |                 |                          |                              | ✓                            |
| Use of socialized power   | ✓               |                 |                          |                              | ✓                            |
| Perceptual objectivity  | ✓               |                 |                          |                              | ✓                            |
| Managing Interaction  |                 | ✓               |                          |                              | ✓                            |
| Teamwork & cooperation  |                 |                 | ✓                        |                              | ✓                            |
| Communication   | ✓               | ✓               |                          | ✓                            | ✓                            |
| Developmental Orientation   |                 | ✓               | ✓                        |                              | ✓                            |
| <b>5. Intrapersonal</b>   |                 |                 |                          |                              |                              |
| Self-control (trait)  | ✓               |                 |                          |                              |                              |
| Adaptability and Resilience   |                 |                 |                          | ✓                            |                              |
| Stamina and adaptability (trait)  | ✓               |                 |                          |                              |                              |
| <b>6. Values and Ethical Competencies</b>   |                 |                 |                          |                              |                              |
| Personal Ethics   |                 |                 |                          |                              | ✓                            |
| Professional Ethics   |                 |                 |                          |                              | ✓                            |
| <b>Note:</b> Competencies might not appear with the same name in all models – for the purpose of this study competencies with similar or close meaning have been described under the same name. |                 |                 |                          |                              |                              |



If one considers the models apart from Boyatzis (1982) and Spencer and Spencer (1993) who were inspired from McClelland's and McBer's work, all the other researchers use a completely different approach. In addition it can be suggested that these models have followed an evolutionary course through time incorporating and acknowledging more elements each time. For example Boyatzis (1982) introduced the *competencies clusters*, Schroder (1989) acknowledged the *work context*, Dulewicz and Herbert (1992) introduced the concept of *Supra-Competencies* (Meta-Competencies), Spencer and Spencer (1993) provided a weighting for each competency, Cheetham and Chivers (1998) have introduced the *Values and Ethical Competence cluster* in their model. Given also that several other researchers (i.e. Cockerill, 1989; Thompson *et al*, 1996; Iversen, 2000) have been able to identify competencies that are relevant for superior managerial performance at different levels in different organisations and in different countries, it gives further support to the view that it is possible to identify managerial competencies that are related to superior performance.

The logic behind how competencies are identified and implemented in practice appears straightforward: a single set of competencies for a job or family of jobs (i.e. all managerial jobs at a certain level) is identified by examining the factors that differentiate the job performance of those who are more successful vis-à-vis those who are less successful and then used to identify, reward, and promote others or future candidates (Briscoe and Hall, 1999; Levenson *et al.*, 2006). Yet there are concerns with applying this logic, particularly for managers. Thus, the effectiveness of this approach has often been questioned since it suffers from several conceptual and practical limitations (Zingheim *et al.*, 1996). As already stated, researchers defined and measured performance differently and this fact resulted in a non-homogenised body of literature (Woodruffe, 2000). It is also important to note, that the same researchers that produced these models (Boyatzis, 1982; Schroder, 1989; Spencer and Spencer, 1993) have also identified that competencies associated with managerial performance could vary at

different hierarchical levels (i.e. senior, middle and line management) and different sectors (private or public). One of the strongest concerns however that has been raised, is that the descriptions of managerial competence produced by the rationalistic approaches are indirect. This practically means that a predetermined set of KSAs or competencies demonstrates neither whether the employees use these attributes, nor how they use them in accomplishing their work roles (Sandberg, 2000). For example, two managers may be identified as possessing an identical set of competencies but may accomplish work differently, depending upon which competencies they use and how they use them. Another issue that has been raised is that there are different routes to managerial effectiveness so managerial evaluation models based on a single set of competencies may be inadequate (Hollenbeck and McCall, 2003; McKenna, 2002). Antonacopoulou and FitzGerald (1996, p.31) warn that the *'fact that many organisations use the same terminology to describe a set of managerial characteristics is not a strong argument for claiming that it is possible to identify a set of universal management competencies'*. Jubb and Robotham (1997) consider whether it is either desirable or possible to attempt to develop generic managers. In addition Antonacopoulou and FitzGerald (1996) suggest that, the production of a single list of generic management competencies that might be effective and work as a good predictor of superior performance today, cannot guarantee the same for the future. Cheetham and Chivers (1998) argue that the personal competence approach does not define effective performance within the job role, in terms of what has to be achieved.

Moreover, since the appearance of competencies in management development literature many writers have warned of the dangers of the use of generic competency frameworks that relate to superior performance (Burgoyne, 1989; Antonakopoulou and FitzGerald, 1996; Cheetham and Chivers, 1996/8). Most of these models discussed in 2.3.2, were based on checklists containing numerous competencies. The behavioural approach to competencies has been criticised as too static (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1997,

Hollenbeck and McCall, 1997), and retrospective (Ruth, 2006). More specifically *'even if one may gain some sense of what competency might be, however problematic, then assuming it can be developed and, furthermore, that there is a link between its development and practice and performance, the question of how to develop it remains'* (Ruth, 2006, p.207). Other criticisms directed at those taking the behavioural approach to managerial competencies is that the processes are bureaucratic and mechanistic (Cockerill *et al.*, 1995), and that once outlined the competencies become a straightjacket which stifle innovation and flexibility (Jubb and Robotham, 1997). Finally, the model might not reflect the volatility of the business environment that demands organisations to continuously examine their need for competency (Dulewicz, 1989; Stuart and Lindsay, 1997).

In short, it can be argued that despite the various criticisms, the behavioural approach was welcomed by practitioners and used extensively in assessment centres as an effective selection tool (Dulewicz, 1989; Woodruffe, 2000) as well as in managerial development (Sandberg, 2000). The various problems however associated with methodological and conceptual problems of this approach, call for further research on managerial competencies.

## **2.4. Managerial work and competencies in cross-cultural settings**

*"Until recently the dominance of American management theory led to the belief that 'one size fits all', that a good manager in the US will also be a good manager in other countries and that effective US management practices will be effective anywhere. This view is now being supplanted with the knowledge that managerial attitudes, values, behaviours, and efficacy differ across national cultures. There is no one best way to manage a business. Differences in national cultures call for differences in management practices."*

(Newman and Nollen, 1996, p.753)

Since the early 1980s a critical question for management scholars has been, whether differences among management practices and national cultures matter to managerial work. The 'global-local' question originates from the wider cultural 'convergence-divergence' debate, which is premised on the assumption that in time, cultures will converge to the point that no difference in values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour exist (Dunphy, 1987; Eisenhardt, 1973; Inglehart and Beker, 2000; Kerr *et al*, 1960; Perlmutter, 1969). As a result, societies and organisations will become similar due to the universal application of management practices (Brewster, 2006; Dowling *et al*, 1999; Schneider and Barsoux, 1997, 2003). On the other hand, divergent theorists argue that in today's complex globalised business environment, international companies must manage, on a day-to-day basis, the national institutional and cultural differences presented in various localities, and this highlights another form of balance for enterprises where they have to achieve a judicious and effective equilibrium between some local HRM practices and elements of consistency across their subsidiaries (Brewster, 2006).

While the adoption of global, 'culture-free' (convergence) or local 'culture-specific' (divergence) managerial practices may represent polar extremes, a third approach appears as a unifying model. In this respect, there are writers who argue that corporate culture can influence, but not eliminate, national culture values (Adler, 1997; Ricks *et al.*, 1990), or who argue for 'crossvergence', which is defined as a combination of organisational culture and national culture values (Ralston *et al.*, 1993). Basically, crossvergence theorists argue that as the global economy grows, countries will influence one another economically as well as culturally; in that respect crossvergence means that different management approaches are expected to converge in the middle (Vance and Paik, 2006). Regardless of whether management is converging, diverging or crossverging, culture can be seen as having an important influence on performance (Fisher and Hartel, 2003). The solutions to the culture problem identified in international management literature are respectively to reflect, eliminate or adapt.

The 'global-local' question has had a direct impact in managerial work, especially in MNCs who espoused the universal application of management practices. As a consequence, the importance of international managers as exponents of the corporate culture was widely recognised and much of the international management and IHRM research focused upon expatriates (Brewster, 1991; Scullion, 1995; Scullion and Brewster; 2001; Scullion and Collings, 2006). The term '*expatriation*' defines the process of sending parent country company employees (often described as parent country nationals – PCNs) to a host country company, in most cases to a foreign subsidiary, during a pre-defined period of time; those employees sent to work in a foreign country are called 'expatriates' (Herry and Noon, 2001). Expatriate managers are seen as '*strategic resources*' of the MNCs and their roles include '*knowledge transfer*', networking and coping with the complexities of internationalisation; they are also responsible for the dissemination of corporate culture (Graf, 2004). Successful international assignments increase the organisations' international reputation and profits (Lee, 2005). The reasons for using expatriate managers include for example, the paucity of supply of suitably qualified or experienced managers in the host country (Edstrom and Galbraith, 1977; Scullion, 1992; 2001; Scullion and Collings, 2006). Other factors, such as, facilitating control over local subsidiaries, helping to start up new subsidiaries, turnaround of poorly performing subsidiaries, and securing international acquisitions and investments, are the result of internal company views that expatriates are more apprised of the financial priorities, control systems and culture associated with the regional or headquarters of the parent company (Edstrom and Galbraith, 1977; Harzing, 1999).

A primary motive for expatriates to accept international assignments is the expectation to advance in their careers upon return (Medich, 1995). Thus, expatriation may also be seen as part of a manager's development, which in turn is part of a company's HR development processes. According to Scullion (1992) the participants on such development schemes are younger than

previous cohorts. Despite the high cost of the process and the various arguments (Banai and Harry, 2006; Barham and Oates, 1991; Harris and Brewster, 1999; Forster, 2000; Sparrow, Brewster and Harris, 2004) the continued use of expatriates seems unlikely to diminish. The increasing use of '*inpatriates*' however has been adopted as an attractive alternative to the use of expatriates during the past few years. This type of international manager refers to a host country national (HCN), or possibly a third country national (TCN), sent to the parent country headquarters (Harvey *et al.*, 1999; 2000) and suggests an effective means of developing a global and integrated organisation.

A growing body of field research and literature suggests that the expatriates' work roles and behaviour are the results of both the national and organisational contexts, which impose demands and constraints on the choices they make, and are influenced by national culture (Thomas, 2008). As a result, the expatriate manager needs to know how to activate different constructs to mediate between sometimes contradictory role expectations (Yiu and Saner, 2000) in different national and organisational contexts. That is, roles should be understood in their environmental contexts. Harvey (1974) argues that managers should not only master the cognitive understandings of other cultures but also gain a subjective familiarity of the other culture, almost like an insider. Admittedly, such psychological plasticity cannot be achieved without managers undergoing profound change. For instance, when working in countries of high power distance and high collectivism, some managers, particularly those who are field independent (Witkin, 1978), might not be sufficiently sensitive to the social cues in the situation and rely too much on their own frames of reference. Such expatriate managers often take on an aggressive role, like the proverbial bull in the china shop. This is often the stereotype held by local managers and employees of US expatriate managers. However, in countries of medium to low power distance and high individualism, field dependent managers might be overly sensitive to the social cues and relay too much of this information onto their own frame of

reference. In this case, managers mistakenly play a too-passive role, to the extent that they may be perceived as overly reluctant to act. Clearly, understanding the notion of role is essential for management effectiveness in a cross-cultural context (Yiu and Saner, 2000).

Moreover, international organisations require managers who are not only well informed of the business environment but also competent in working with people from different cultures. Harnessing the competencies that international managers develop, remains a considerable challenge for international organisations (Tams and Arthur, 2007). The development of managerial competencies for international managers is seen as a source of competitive advantage (Harvey and Novicevic, 2001; Lado *et al.*, 1992; Oliver, 1997). These competencies are particularly valuable to the organisation if they provide an institutional bridge between the cultural, social, and political divide often found between the domestic and foreign subsidiaries (Gabby and Zuckerman, 1998). The importance of global assignments for expatriate managers is directly tied to their ability to transfer knowledge and cultural attributes of the headquarters to overseas operations (Bender and Fish, 2000). Developing this multilevel competency through knowledge transfer may result in superior performance by the organisation (Wright *et al.*, 1994). The importance of co-ordination and the possession of the 'right' set of competencies are nowadays more than visible in international organisations, where managers need to manage complexity, diversity and change. International managers operate in multiple and different contexts; this complex environment is described by Von Glinow *et al.*, (2005) as 'Polycontextualisation'. The effective polycontextualisation of HR practices in the workplace requires managers to be armed with knowledge, skills, and capabilities to do so. As a result, international organisations which have adopted a strategy of placing expatriates in top management positions at host country locations select and train individuals who have both technical and contextual competency (Chong, 2007). Those managers have the ability to perceive patterns of thought and action,

accurately interpret and attribute meaning to the patterns, integrate the meaning of the patterns with others, and finally create organisational opportunities where the patterns can interact in the service of mutually beneficial goals (Finney and Von Glinow, 1988). In addition, those international managers must be capable of accessing and integrating information through multiple cultural filters as well as capably developing and enacting multiple strategies for organisational goal achievement.

It can be argued however, that the call for the creation of a global management cohort (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1989; Boyacigiller, 1990; Gourlay, 2006; Sparrow *et al.*, 2004) is often accompanied by various vague '*must have*' competencies lists for present and future managers. What is actually absent from this discussion is the explanation of how these lists of managerial competencies apply in given situations, in isolation or combination. Thus, according to Bird and Osland (2004) without a contextual understanding, the practical value of such lists is limited. The situational, or contextual, approach emphasises the importance of situational factors, as well as trying to identify a link between certain situational factors and competencies needed for superior managerial performance. Some of the research within this approach uses behaviour based competency definitions and could be included in the behavioural approach to managerial competency. The difference is that competencies' research focused in international managers is more aimed at exploring whether situational factors are influencing the competencies required for superior performance, rather than factors related to an individual.

In the broadest sense this approach could also include the work from the culture literature like Hofstede (1980) and Trompenaars (1993). However, these authors put more emphasis on cultures and values and how these influence organisational practice. Some writers claim that the situational factors from job to job vary so much that it is impossible to make a generic list of managerial competencies that are relevant for most managerial



positions (Barlett and Ghoshal, 1997). Given that '*more than 90% of organisational behaviour literature reflects US-based research and theory*' (House, 1998, p.230) and that there is a tendency to extrapolate these research findings and to apply theory universally (Triandis, 2004), a question that emerges here is to what extent can the managerial competencies acquired in one cultural environment be applied to in a different environment?

Empirical research findings (Boutet *et al.*, 2000; Chong, 2007) suggest that competencies of managers from different nationalities are subject to cultural factors that shape personality and behavioural choices. These findings also suggest that certain competencies compatible with North America culture are incompatible with Asian and European cultures. For instance, leadership, decision-making, influencing skills and people development competencies are significantly different between North American and Asian cultures, and require redefining to ensure accuracy (Chong, 2007). Boutet *et al.* (2000) established a direct connection between culture and managerial competencies in their study of Rothmans International. The study revealed that managerial competencies, particularly of its Asian operational regions, had to be adjusted to account for cultural differences. The development of a competency model based on each cultural dimension was evaluated for cultural fit. Chong (2007) provides empirical evidence that suggest organisations, in managing and assessing their overseas personnel, ought to distinguish between technical skills which tend to be applicable across cultures and people skills which are prone to cultural differences. He also found that managerial competencies are likely to be influenced by contextual factors such as perceptions of status, the need for consultation and the degree of openness of communication between managers and their subordinates.

Despite the plethora of empirical and theoretical studies, research on managerial work roles and competencies in different cultural settings has

been problematic and received criticism on several grounds. These include arguments that much of the research conducted was descriptive and lacking in analytical rigour (DeCieri *et al.*, 2007). In addition, many managerial studies across different cultures suffered from small sample size, low response rates, and have been restricted to quantitative analysis (Peterson *et al.*, 1996; Tayeb, 1994). The most common methods of data collection in cross-cultural research are questionnaires followed by interviews (Peng *et al.*, 1991 in Thomas, 2008); this is not surprising because most researchers conducting international research are trained or educated in Anglo-American institutions (Thomas, 2008). As a result international management researchers face the challenge of deciphering the conceptual and functional equivalence of measures such as survey instruments (Von Glinow *et al.*, 2002) and the many methodological problems inherent in much of the international business literature.

Another significant limitation in the existing international management literature was found to be the under-representation of scholars from Eastern Europe, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East, as well as the lack of research using data from these regions (Kirkman and Law, 2005). Overall, management scholars identify the need for international management research to become more inclusive (De Cieri *et al.*, 2007; Kriek *et al.*, 2009; Ozbilgin, 2004; Schuler *et al.*, 2002), and argue that further work is needed in order to develop an understanding of the international context with theoretical rigour and concrete operationalisation of terms (De Cieri and Dowling, 2006).

## **2.5. Putting managerial competencies in context**

The dominant view in managerial practice assumes competencies are '*universal*' constructs whose meaning is independent from the specific organisational context in which they are activated and developed (Sandberg, 2000). Although management scholars and researchers differ in the ways they identify competency, they provide similar theories of competence at

work: they all regard competence as an attribute-based phenomenon. More specifically, within the rationalistic approaches, human competence is described as constituted by a specific set of attributes that employees use to accomplish their work. Since this set of attributes is viewed as context-independent it can be adopted in a range of work activities (Boyatzis, 1982; Dulewicz and Herbert, 1992). The widespread adoption of the universalist approach is mainly due to the fact that it is usually quite easy to adapt pre-existing competency frameworks and standard profiles instead of performing time consuming and expensive field analyses (Capaldo *et al.*, 2006). Thus, the increasing standardisation through the use of common managerial competencies' frameworks and practices, leads organisations to end up with similar sets of competencies, instead of creating distinctive, value creating and inimitable assets (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990) to fit each organisation's unique needs and demands. The creation of generic and standardised managerial competencies lists creates ambiguity in the way competencies are described and adopted within organisations (Woodruffe, 1991; Sandberg, 2000). In addition, Fischer *et al.* (1993) argue that *'theories of competencies have been fundamentally flawed by their focus on the organism and their failure to recognise the contributions of context to competence'* (p.94).

The main weaknesses of focusing primarily on personal competence is that this approach does not take account of the complex and dynamic context in which managerial behaviours may be carried out (Cheng *et al.*, 2002) as well as other important factors such as gender (Rees and Garnsey, 2003) or knowledge and ethics (Cheetham and Chivers, 1996, 1998). Stuart and Lindsay (1997) suggest that this approach fails to adequately define managerial competence in terms of the context of the organisation, its culture, its marketplace and its business environment. A further important consideration within this research is to be aware of the possibility that management styles are in some manner bounded by national, geographical boundaries (Handy, 1998). In addition it has been argued that approaches

focused on the individual as the unit of analysis, tend to neglect group dynamics (Jacob, 1989).

Since competencies are centred on the individual, they are viewed as independent of the social and task-specific context in which performance occurs, yet *'skill level is a characteristic not only of a person but also of a context. People do not have competences independent of context'* (Fischer *et al.*, 1993, p.113). The social settings in which people work have undoubtedly a major influence on their *successful* performance. People are social creatures who rarely learn in isolation (Brown, 1993). So, from this view it is pointless to follow approaches, which neglect the organisational (and in a broader sense socio-cultural) context. Furthermore, some authors claim that the predominant rationalist approaches in the management competencies literature create abstract, narrow and oversimplified descriptions of competence that fail adequately to reflect the complexity of competency in work performance (Attewell, 1990; Norris, 1991; Yulk, 1994).

The interpretative research approach suggests that managerial skill effectiveness and competence are not universal phenomena able to be defined and measured in a clear and objective way (Sandberg, 2000; McKenna, 2004). Instead managerial effectiveness and competence are particularistic, situated, contextual and socially constructed (Putnam and Mumby, 1993; Chia, 1995; Clegg and Palmer, 1996; McKinlay and Starkey, 1998; Watson and Harris, 1999; McKenna, 2002). Context does not merely influence behaviour; it is literally part of the behaviour, participating with the person to produce an action or thought (Fischer *et al.*, 1993). Competencies arise from the collaboration between person and context, with competencies changing when context changes. In their ethnographic research of workplace practices, Brown and Duguid (1991, p.40) concluded that *'the ways people actually work usually differ fundamentally from the ways organisations describe that work in manuals, training programs, organisational charts and job descriptions'*. Furthermore, Schön (1983) discovered that when

employees encounter their work, they frame and set the problem situations of the work through their experience; thus competencies and experiences are interwoven in order the employee to perform.

A recent effort to put competencies in context was labelled as the '*situationalist*' approach and was proposed by Capaldo *et al.* (2006); it defines competencies as situated, idiosyncratic constructs that are deeply influenced by organisational culture, social interaction and the unique way people make sense of their jobs within organisations. In this sense, the definition of competencies and the reasons why one is considered competent in a specific task, are strictly related to the social context in which competencies are activated and developed through time (Sandberg, 1994; Dall'Alba and Sandberg, 1996). The situationalist approach ignores the deep-seated psychological aspects of personality as the behavioural approach does; this approach is more concerned about contingent factors characterising the socially constructed nature of competencies (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Giddens, 1979) and the network of social, moral, and technical ties in which an individual is involved (Akrich and Latour, 1992). Based on Lewin's (1951) field theory, it can be argued that behaviour is a function of both the person (P) and the situation (S), and much of the competency movement has focused heavily on the P at the expense of the S (Capaldo *et al.*, *ibid.*). Moreover, it can be argued that the relative importance of the different managerial competencies is not clear (Levenson *et al.*, 2006), and that they can be influenced not only by the work context, but also by situational factors and work requirements (Johns, 2006; Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). Even though it is generally accepted that all three will influence what kind of competencies are required for effective job performance, few researchers address this question in depth. To sum up, although interpretative studies provide a coherent account of the competencies' interaction with context, they do not provide evidence why some employees perform work more competently than others (Sandberg, 2000).

From the above discussion it can be argued that contextual factors, like size of the firm, education, gender and national embeddedness are likely to influence what kind of competencies are required for successful job performance, and other competencies will be relevant across situations. However, due to the lack of research in this field, it still remains unclear how managerial work roles and competencies interact with specific work contexts.

## **2.6. Chapter summary**

This chapter introduced the concept of managerial work roles, and more than half a century of research in this field. While classic management studies have failed to provide a coherent account of managerial work roles, more recent research has acknowledged successfully the importance of context on managerial work roles. Context also affects the work role requirements which are encapsulated in the concept of managerial competencies. The behavioural approach, which has dominated the management literature since the early 1980s, separates superior from average performers and views managerial competencies as context-independent and universally applicable in different work situations. Several authors have questioned this approach by arguing that it is not possible to separate the individual from the context. Hence, the application of managerial competencies ideas in organisational and national contexts will be discussed in the following chapters.

# Chapter 3

## Managerial work roles and competencies in hotels

### 3.0. Introduction

Hospitality and tourism were among the first internationalised industries in the aftermath of World War Two (Nickson, 1998; Nickson and Warhust, 2001). From the early stages of internationalisation in the 1950s, a plethora of empirical studies (Arnaldo, 1981; Berger, 1984; Ferguson and Shortt, 1989; Hales and Nightingale, 1986; Hales and Tamangani, 1996; Lee, 1980; Nailon, 1968; Nebel and Ghei, 1993) suggests that work in hotels poses various challenges for managers, especially in luxury establishments where there are tremendous pressures for service quality, customer satisfaction, effective people management and outstanding (financial) performance. All these targets must be achieved for a *'perishable'* product (Archer, 1987) that is consumed at the time and place (hotel) is produced. Hotel managers must predict and face successfully the constant external environment changes which affect to a certain degree their sensitive product. This chapter discusses the nature of managerial work roles, the required managerial competencies in hotels, and the diverse challenges that hotel managers are faced with. The various limitations of hospitality studies within the wider framework of management research are also discussed.

### **3.1. A profile of the hotel industry**

Hospitality as a modern phenomenon was shaped after World War Two and is closely linked with the development of mass tourism and the rapid growth of the airline industry. The hospitality and tourism industries together are the largest and fastest growing industry in the world (Clarke and Chen, 2007). The World Travel and Tourism Council ([www.wttc.org](http://www.wttc.org)) estimated that hospitality and tourism are directly and indirectly responsible for 11% of gross domestic product, 200 million jobs, 8% of total employment and 5.5 million new jobs per year until 2010. Today, the hospitality industry is a growing sector, generating an ample number of jobs in most countries globally. During the 1990s the industry expanded by over 25% to over fifteen million units (Littlejohn, 2003). Within the EU the hospitality and tourism sector accounts for 12.1 % of total employment (one in every 8.2 jobs) and this figure is expected to grow by almost 2% until the year 2015 (WTTC, 2005). In particular Spain, Greece and Italy experienced the highest specialisation compared with the EU average.

The early adoption of internationalisation in the hotel industry came initially from US hotel companies, who took the lead and moved across borders for supply and demand reasons; that was to satisfy the needs of American travellers as other trades internationalised (Nickson, 1998; Thompson *et al.*, 1998). Since the early 1980s a growing number of these original American operators were acquired by UK based companies, and simultaneously other European and Asian companies began to compete on more broadly international scales (Segal-Horn, 2000; Thompson *et al.*, 1998). The transformation of the sector in a truly globalised industry occurred after a prolonged period of mergers and acquisitions during the 1990s. This brought changes in the adopted growth strategies of many hotel companies who were now competing on a global basis (Price, 1993). While the hotel industry was traditionally dominated by individually and/or family owned properties it can be argued that it is heavily influenced by multinational hotel companies defined by Peng and Littlejohn (1997) as:



*“multi-unit service organizations in which units operate under a system of decision-making permitting coherent policies and a common strategy through one or more decision-making centres, and where hotel units and corporate functions are linked to add value to each other by ownership or contractual relationships.”*

(cited in Litteljohn, 2003, p.15)

Despite the economic significance and global spread of the hospitality industry, the majority of literature reflects what has happened in the US and the UK since the early 1980s. Only recently have studies focused on what is happening in the rest of Europe or the world. This was made possible through the contribution of a steadily growing number of overseas students in the US and UK business schools who deliver hospitality programmes. The most popular forms of research used to study the hospitality industry outside the Anglo-American context, is the use of country case studies (Agut *et al*, 2003; Christou, 1999; Kim, 1994) and studies within the context of the international hospitality business (D’Annunzio-Green, 1997). Although the recent progress in hospitality research has included ‘unexplored’ regions such as Eastern Europe and Russia, it can be argued that the academic research conducted so far in this field, reflects largely the Anglo-American approach in hospitality management.

### **3.2. Hospitality management education**

Many of the hospitality managers who will be responsible for meeting the challenges of tomorrow are the hospitality management students of today. How well they are prepared to meet these challenges depends on the quality of the current hospitality management curriculum and educators (Blum, 1996). Hospitality management programmes are now an established part of higher education, but the question as to whether hospitality is a serious or worthy area for study still hangs in the air.

The European educational structure in tourism, hospitality and related fields has highlighted the operational aspects of the industry for more than a

century. Until the early 1980s, only hands-on vocational programs were offered in the hospitality and tourism field. The curricula were based on skills oriented training, and students received a narrow education (Formica, 1996). During the 1990s there was a strengthening international movement, driven by higher education hospitality academics towards the 'liberation' of hospitality management higher education from its vocational base and to explore the inclusion in the curriculum of a broader and more reflective orientation (Morisson and O'Mahony, 2003). Baum and Nickson (1998) suggest that hospitality students were at that time uncritical perpetrators of the status quo rather than effective and thinking would-be managers ready to change things for the better.

Hospitality as an area for study is faced with uncertainties and controversies over the past 40 years. These include simple misunderstandings about what the study of tourism is about, doubts about the seriousness of the subject, concern about the over-reliance on what Tribe (2005) has referred to as extradisciplinary, worries about the proper balance between vocationalism and academicism, questions of whether there is a need for a core curriculum, the challenge of identifying a unique body of knowledge about tourism, concern about the best location for tourism programmes in institutional and organisational arrangements and the associated invisibility of tourism if it is spread and divided across a range of different subject areas and departments.

In an effort to chart the development of hospitality and tourism as a distinct area of study, Airey (2005) noted three significant developments. First, there has been a massive increase in the numbers of students, institutions and teachers of tourism. Second, the curriculum has broadened beyond the vocational and hospitality and tourism has emerged as a subject for study at many different levels of education. Third, this growth and change has led to tensions in the development of the curriculum. On the one hand, Airey sees the danger of excess vocationalism where hospitality education does little

more than provide a reflection of the world of work. On the other, he cautions against hospitality education turning its back on its industry connections as this would jeopardise one of its key *raison d'être*. O'Connor (1996) argues that a practical education (as opposed to a rather more narrowly defined vocational education) needs to equip students both for employment and '*to cope in the world*'.

According to Christou (1999, p.685) '*it cannot be argued that hospitality management education is about the management of hotel and catering operations and organisations*'. Christou suggests that hospitality management education is a function of both the acquisition of knowledge and skills about management in a way similar to that of other management courses and, the acquisition of knowledge and skills about hotel and catering operations in a similar way to craft courses. This means that hospitality management education can be perceived as a mixture of academic, professional and craft knowledge and skills aimed at satisfying the needs of the hospitality industry. In addition, tertiary hospitality education should assist the student to develop communications and interpersonal 'soft' skills and learn how to lead others (Goodman and Sprague, 1991). The development of students' interpersonal skills is considered to be very important according to the views of the hospitality industry (Tas, 1988; Baum, 1990).

Furthermore, the controversial subject of tenure has raised serious considerations about the quality of the available hospitality management programmes in higher education. In the 1980s, assistant and associate professors with industry experience and a master's degree staffed many hospitality programs. The research requirements to achieve tenure were minimal. A terminal degree became a requisite for getting a tenure track in the late eighties and early nineties. Schmidgall and Woods (1994) determined the three most important attributes for gaining tenure were a PhD; a track record of publications; and a track record of good teaching. How often educators get published and in what journals are also important

considerations when discussing tenure and promotion (Rutherford and Samenfink, 1992). Today, many hospitality programs are requiring a terminal degree that provides their graduates with research skills. As more universities stress research, the pressure for academic staff to publish is increasing. According to Bowen (2005), in some cases the department or college uses a very objective approach for the research requirements for tenure. These programs require their faculty to produce 12-16 refereed articles to meet the research requirement for tenure. They stress quantity rather than quality because the number of articles published is very easy to measure. Determining the quality of an article is more difficult. One of the outcomes of this quantitative requirement is that professors publish only to gain tenure. These professors publish across a variety of disciplines, depending on the opportunities to publish with colleagues. They also seek journals that will provide the least resistance to publication. These journals are not well read or indexed. As a result, professors who chase quantity to meet tenure requirements are often not known as an expert in any area and few people have read their work.

One of the characteristics of education for hospitality in many parts of the world is that it is highly international both in the student population and in the academic staff. However, all too often this internationalism has not been well developed, either to provide wider cultural dimensions to the study (Jayawardena, 2001) or to provide wider mobilities (Airey and Tribe, 2005). The developments under the Bologna initiative in the countries of the European Union, provide a beginning to increased internationalisation in that part of the world. But the significant number of students from other areas, particularly from China and South East Asia, suggest that there is scope for a much more adventurous approach to internationalism. In part, this is about ensuring that the development of tourism knowledge, the delivery of programmes and the production of resources do not pursue an exclusively 'western' orientation, but it is equally about providing opportunities for mobility of staff and students.

Moreover, an international industry invariably attracts international students as well as international employees making the question of whether or not learning might be influenced by culture increasingly pertinent. Grey (2002, p. 165) suggests that *'it is no longer appropriate to restrict one's frame of reference to one culture'*. It is imperative therefore that educators and trainers both in and out of the workplace ask how best to teach international groups and question how successful learning can best take place. Charlesworth (2007) suggests that one step in this direction might be to look at the learning styles of individuals of different cultural backgrounds. Based on research that analysed the learning style preferences of international students studying hospitality and tourism management in Australia, Baron (2005) argues that a large sub-group of international students have learning style preferences that are different to those of other international and domestic students. From this, Baron raises the question whether such students should fit into a system which is very different to their prior experience or whether the system should be more sensitive and accommodating to their needs.

Overall, Airey and Tribe (2005) suggest that the over-supply of programmes and graduates globally, has been a fairly constant strand of criticism of hospitality education. Looked at in fairly narrow terms of programmes providing fairly specific training and education for specific entry positions in industry, the criticism may be justified. Indeed some of the early programmes may have had such a narrow orientation. However, today there is little excuse for programmes to be confined to narrow vocationalism. The knowledge base about hospitality is extensive and provides a rich basis from which to develop programmes and in turn will provide a broad and demanding education at all levels. From this graduates should be equipped for a range of career and personal development opportunities. The most important ingredient in this is that the education and the knowledge base on which it draws must do much more than reflect the immediate needs of the work place or the immediate demands of the entry employment positions. Airey and Tribe conclude that after an intense period of growth and

development, hospitality education is now in a good position to do this: to provide new insights to the operation and management of a major world activity; to contribute to the effective stewardship of scarce resources used by hospitality; to ensure that those who leave their courses have a range of knowledge and competencies for their career, whether it be in hospitality or elsewhere. It is these features that will make hospitality education relevant for the future.

### **3.3. The nature of managerial work roles in hotels**

The hospitality industry today consists of six sectors, namely contract catering, hotels, leisure, licensed retailing, restaurants and welfare (non-profit organisations). Attention so far has focused on the hotel sector but gradually there is a shift towards the other five due to the continuous growth and expansion of the industry. Hospitality businesses often have distributed business units. It can be argued that the size and complexity of a hospitality business unit affects managerial work within the unit (Nebel and Ghei, 1993). A large hotel corporation with multi-site units, such as two or three star city hotels (e.g. *Sleep In, Ibis, Travel Lodge*), requires more unit managers who are responsible for daily operations with multiple skills. Its specialist managers, for instance HR and marketing managers, often work at the regional and corporate levels. However, in a business unit that operates a wider range of functions, such as a large four and five-star hotel, specialist managers are needed within the property in order to maintain the high operational standards aligned with the company's policies and customers' demands (Wood, 1997).

The debate on whether hospitality managers are different than managers in any other industry has resulted in efforts to formally recognise hospitality managers as a profession. These efforts are reflected in the action taken by the Corpus of Management Excellence (assisted by the Hotel and Catering International Management Association) which has developed a hierarchical

managerial structure in order to set management standards in the industry (HCIMA, 1998). The Corpus outlines three levels of management in the hospitality, leisure, and tourism industry, namely supervisory, operational, and senior management. It proposes that the first line managers are those who are responsible for the daily running of a department or small unit, implement procedures, make short term plans and decisions that affect the daily business only. Roles at the operational management level include taking responsibility for long-term decisions and planning, for budget setting and initiating actions. Senior management is responsible for corporate or strategic planning and policymaking. Their role is to direct operations and business policy. In the hospitality industry, managers at the supervisory level may have job titles such as Assistant Housekeeper, Assistant Restaurant Manager, Sous Chef, and Events Manager. At the higher level, one may see job titles Rooms Division Manager, Food and Beverage Manager, HR Manager and Executive Chef all reporting directly to the unit's General Manager (GM). Some of the titles used in senior management are Marketing Director, Human Resource Director, and Corporate Finance Executive. Eder and Umbreit (1989, p.333) describe the GM work as '*...the key implementer of the business strategy for the property and the behavioural role model for the entire management team*'. According to this notion it can be argued that the GM is the central management figure in the hotel business unit. Another description provided by Jayawardena (2000, p.67) portrays graphically the work of hotel GMs:

*"The general manager of a hotel can be compared to the captain of a ship or the conductor of an orchestra or the main performer of a stage show. Often in hotels, the general manager will be in the limelight while performing his (or her) normal duties. He/she depends on the support of 'front of the house' employees (similar to the musicians and dancers of a stage show) and the 'back of the house employees' (similar to the sound engineers, lighting specialists, choreographers, stage managers and set designers of a show) to enhance his/her performance. The hotel manager also uses the directions of the hotel owners and operating company (similar to the producers of a show) and the manuals/guidelines set for each hotel operation (similar to the theme, script and music score of a show). The hotel general manager has to ensure that*

*most of the guests/ customers of the hotel (similar to an audience at a show ) are satisfied and the hotel employee teams are motivated.”*

In an effort to understand the nature of managerial work in hospitality, research has focused on whether there are particular personality traits that set hotel managers apart from other professions (Brownwell, 1994; Ladkin, 1999; Ladkin and Riley, 1996; Mullins and Davis, 1991; Nebel, 1991; Peacock, 1995, Stone, 1988; Wilson, 1998). The work of hotel GMs' has been described as highly individualistic and thus a particular type of personality seems to be attracted to this job (Wood, 1994). This can be justified due to a wide range of high demands, stress, and long hours that are part of the GMs' daily routine. In his study Stone (1988; cited in Mullins and Davis, 1991) argues that hotel managers are more assertive, stubborn, cheerful, competitive, active, independent, cynical, calm, socially bold and spontaneous, harder to fool and more concerned with self, than other non-hotel managers. In the same tune, Worsfold (1989) provided a definition of the abilities and characteristics that a person must have in order to become a successful hotel general manager; he has discriminated these requirements into people handling, spirituality and physical stamina, self motivation, personality characteristics such as personal style, natural talent, tolerance, willingness to undertake risks and the need for sentimental stability and intelligence where common sense and strong memory are included. Similarly, Brownell (1994) found that personal attributes such as hard work, positive attitude and strong communication skills are essential ingredients for those who aspire to top management positions in hotels; personal sacrifice and having the right personality (i.e. being likeable, having physical attractiveness and being charismatic) received high rankings, as well. Later studies (Kay and Moncarz, 2004) challenge the value of the above findings by arguing that hospitality managers have much in common with managers from other sectors especially in higher hierarchical levels.

Furthermore, the roles that managers play in performing their jobs and the relationship of managerial roles to managerial effectiveness and performance



are the foci of considerable research interest in hospitality. Several researchers have replicated or tested Mintzberg's (1973) early work in the hospitality sector (Arnaldo, 1981; Ferguson and Berger, 1984; Hales and Tamangani, 1996; Kim, 1994; Ley, 1980; McCall and Segrist, 1980; Mount and Bartlett, 1999; Nebel and Ghei, 1993; Shortt, 1989). Based on his observations, Mintzberg (1973) contends that all managerial jobs are essentially alike in pace, variety, brevity and fragmentation. Thus, for Mintzberg the ten Interpersonal, Informational and Decisional roles (Figurehead, Leader, Liaison, Monitor, Disseminator, Spokesman, Entrepreneur, Disturbance handler, Resource allocator, Negotiator) are applicable to all levels of management. He also argues that differences in managers' jobs are with respect to the relative importance of roles according to the functional areas and levels in the hierarchies. Mintzberg's work has been criticised from several perspectives (Snyder and Gleeck, 1980; Steward, 1982; Martinko and Gardner, 1985). Mount and Bartlett (1999) summarise these criticism as follows: first his sample is extremely small (five CEOs); second he assumes CEOs represent typical managers; third his sample does not allow testing of his assertions about function and level, and forth, because simply describing '*what managers do*' is not necessarily linked or related to effectiveness. Despite these criticisms, Mintzberg's ideas have been part of the management lexicon and are widely taught in business and hotel schools.

During the 1990s, there have been further studies of managerial work in the hospitality industry, notably by Nebel (Nebel, 1991; Nebel and Ghei, 1993) and Hales and Tamangani (1996). Two interrelated themes recur through this work, as well as in the earlier studies (Guerrier and Deery, 1998). Firstly, to what extent is the work of hospitality managers influenced by the industry context? Secondly, to what extent do hospitality managers engage in reaction or reflection? Is their role essentially about coping with the immediate, operational problems, or to what extent do and should they act as strategic thinkers? In an effort to answer the above questions, Nebel and

Ghei (1993) developed a conceptual framework of the GM's work roles in hotels (Table 4). They suggested that a hotel GM's job can be better understood by examining the contextual variables that influence and help shape it.

**Table 4:** An integrated framework for the GMs' work roles, demands and relationships in hotels

| <b>Time Frame</b>       | <b>GM Job Function &amp; Roles</b>  | <b>Key Job Demands</b>  | <b>Key Relationship Issues</b>  |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Short Run</b>        | Operational Controller:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitor and Disseminator (of internal information)</li> <li>- Disturbance Handler</li> <li>- Resource Allocator (of own time)</li> <li>- Leader</li> </ul>  | Day-to-day operational control of service, costs, and revenues. Intense pressure to earn profits and render high-quality service.                   | Intense and frequent downward, internal verbal communication and interaction with hotel subordinates.   |
| <b>Intermediate Run</b> | Org. Developer:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Liaison</li> <li>- Monitor and Disseminator (of both external &amp; internal information)</li> <li>- Entrepreneur</li> <li>- Resource Allocator (of own time, programs, and funds)</li> <li>- Leader</li> </ul> | Train and develop subordinates. Fine-tune hotel's service strategy to changing external environment. Develop and refine the organisation structure. | Downward internal communication. Lateral communication with the external environment. Upward communication with corporate superiors and staff specialists or owners.                  |
| <b>Long Run</b>         | Business Maintainer:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Liaison</li> <li>- Monitor and Disseminator (of external and internal information)</li> <li>- Resource Allocator (of programs and funds)</li> <li>- Entrepreneur</li> <li>- Leader</li> </ul>              | Capital expenditure decisions in line with hotel's strategic service vision. Develop and sustain organisational stability and vitality.             | Downward internal communication to further stability and vitality. Lateral communication with the external environment. Intense upward communication with corporate office or owners. |

Source: adapted from Nebel and Ghei (1993) cited in Rutherford and O'Fallon (2007) pp.94, 97

In addition they argued that a hotel's context presents GMs with a series of job demands and relationship issues with which they must deal effectively in order to be able to perform successfully. These contextual elements (job demands and relationship issues) differ depending on the time frame (short-run, intermediate-run, or long-run) under consideration. These considerations give rise to specific job functions that GMs perform through a variety of work roles. In the short run, the GM job function was described, based on Mintzberg's (1973) model, as that of operational controller. Here, GMs are involved with the day-to-day internal operational control of their business, requiring intense and frequent downward verbal communication within the hotel. They must be adept at the managerial work roles of monitoring and disseminating a wide variety of internal information, handling non-routine disturbances, and allocating their own scarce time to important operational issues.

In the intermediate run (medium term), the GM job function was described as that of organisational developer. Here, GMs face the challenges of developing subordinates, formulating specific plans and programs to improve their operational control of the hotel, and fine-tuning the hotel's service strategy in the context of external environmental conditions. In addition to internal downward communication, these challenges require intense lateral communication with both the hotel industry and local community sources. This helps the GM stay abreast of market and environmental trends. The GM also maintains upward communication with corporate superiors and staff specialists to ensure their cooperation in the successful implementation of operational plans and programs. Here, GMs' work roles require them to monitor and disseminate external as well as internal information, so they act as liaison between the hotel and the outside world. They also may initiate, as entrepreneurs would, plans and programs designed to improve the hotel's operational and organisational efficiency. This requires the allocation of their own time, as well as the financial and human resources of the hotel, to these plans and programs.

In the long run, the GM's job function was described as that of business maintainer. Here, GMs must ensure the long-term viability of the hotel through capital expenditure decisions that are consistent with the hotel's strategic service vision, and by developing a degree of organisational stability that allows the hotel to carry out its strategic plan. Intense upward communication to corporate superiors, staff specialists, and owners, as well as lateral communication with a wide variety of industry and community contacts, highlight the relationship issues of this job function. GMs are required to play the work role of liaison between the hotel and corporate office or owners as well as industry and community sources. This involves monitoring the widest variety of external and internal information and disseminating it laterally, downward, and upward. In addition, GMs play both the work roles of resource allocator of capital funds and of entrepreneur when seeing to the organizational stability of the business. All three job functions require GMs to be leaders, a work role they play through every contact with subordinates. Finally, Nebel and Ghei (1993) argue that these job functions need not and often are not performed independently of each other.

Hales and Tamangani (1996) drew similar conclusions in relation to hotel unit GMs. Firstly, most of the day-to-day operational problems in hotels are service centred and therefore a major focus of the role of any hotel manager must be on the management of service quality. They argued that where retail unit managers place an emphasis on reactive customer administration, hotel managers place it on proactive service quality management. Secondly, most of the day-to-day business problems in hotels have extremely short time leads. Whilst managers should also concern themselves with the medium and long term needs (notably the development of staff) *'the pressing needs of the immediate and recurrent often drive out longer-term considerations'* (Hales and Tamangani, 1996, p.748).

Since the early 1990s, the rapid growth of international hotel chains and the effects on managerial work, have also draw the attention of researchers (Bradley *et al.*, 1999; Gilatis and Guerrier, 1994; Gilbert and Guerrier, 1996; Ladkin and Juwaheer, 2000; Nebel *et al.*, 1995). The personality characteristics required of the international hotel managers include people and interpersonal skills, adaptability, flexibility and tolerance, cultural sensitivity and intercultural competence followed by emotional maturity, industry experience, and self-confidence (Feng and Pearson, 1999; Gilatis and Guerrier, 1994; Kriegl, 2000; Shay and Tracey, 1997). International etiquette, demonstrating an understanding of international business matters, the ability to work with limited resources and effectively manage stress were judged to be relatively important, while functional and technical skills were rated as the lowest priority for managers.

Research also indicates that in an international hospitality organisation building managers' cross cultural skills may be far harder but more important than developing their functional and technical skills (Gilatis and Guerrier, 1994; Kriegl, 2000; Shay and Tracey, 1997). This is because of the high level of interpersonal and relational skills required where the host country culture and the needs of a diverse customer base must be understood and catered for. The knowledge and competences of GMs are wide-ranging and include not only the enabling capabilities (Leonard-Barton, 1995) essential for survival within the international hotel industry but also the supplemental and core capabilities specific to companies' market positions and strategies, and competitive advantage.

International hospitality managers are seen as change agents who help corporations to cope with the fast changing environment. In addition, international hotel chains such as Starwood, Hilton, Intercontinental and Accor invest in the development of a cohort of international managers by using staff from both the host and parent countries they operate (Nickson, 1998; Jones *et al.*, 1998). The recruitment and selection of this management

'cadre' is conducted in assessment centres and requires a variety of aspects such as a mix of competencies, technical skills, strong personality, cultural sensitivity and adaptability (D'Annunzio-Green, 1997). Teare (1995) provides a wide – ranging set of issues that arise from the internationalisation of the industry; the education training and development of managers, is one of the main six issues reviewed. In addition, Kriegl (2000, p.64) suggests that international hospitality operations' success *'depends largely on the availability of qualified managers who are able to export, translate and maintain their companies' operational standards and service consistency overseas'*. Therefore, identifying the required competencies to become and flourish as an international hotel unit GM is important and it seems to influence national managerial contexts as well, when companies use host country's nationals (HCNs) in senior management positions. The various efforts on the identification and development of managerial competencies that will lead hotel GMs to high or superior performance, are discussed in the following section.

### **3.4. Managerial competencies in the hospitality industry**

The competencies movement in hotels appeared in the early 1990s, when a growing number of tourism and hospitality courses aimed to meet the demands of a volatile and changing world (Umbreit, 1993) took up the challenge to prepare students by developing and enhancing the management competencies and skills needed to operate successfully. This movement has been supported by the industry's growing demand for suitable qualified managerial staff. Research conducted to identify the right mix of competencies has use a number of frameworks like Katz's hierarchical competency model or Sandwith's (1993) competency-domain model which builds on Katz's (1974) model and groups competencies into five areas (Conceptual-Creative; Leadership; Interpersonal; Administrative; Technical).

In addition, efforts were made to establish generic competencies frameworks for hotel managers; this is reflected in the report on European Management Skills in the Hospitality Industry (Lockwood, 1993). In this report four broad functional areas are identified (Table 5): managing operations, managing the business, managing people and personal management skills. These areas are then broken into 15 sub-areas as given in the table. The report takes this forward by outlining 78 indicative activities for the competencies of hospitality managers.

**Table 5:** Functions performed by hospitality managers

| <b>Functional Areas</b>           | <b>Sub-Areas</b>  |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Managing Operations</b>        | Day-to-day operation<br>Specialist / technical areas<br>Managing a crisis                                       |
| <b>Managing the Business</b>      | Managing business performance<br>Managing products<br>Managing strategic decisions<br>Managing legal complexity |
| <b>Managing People</b>            | Managing individuals<br>Managing teams<br>Managing external contacts<br>Managing personnel administration       |
| <b>Personal Management Skills</b> | Making presentations<br>Interpersonal skills<br>Using computers in management<br>Self development               |

Source: adapted from Lockwood (1993)

Okeiyi *et al.* (1994) investigated the importance of food and beverage companies' expectation of hospitality management graduates from the hospitality practitioners, educators and students perspectives. This study reported that human relations and managerial skills are rated most important

whereas technical skills are less important. In the same tune was a study by Tas *et al.* (1996) which looked at the property management competencies that employers wanted from management trainees. Their findings shaped a theoretical model which was based on Sandwith's (1993) competency domain model. Tas *et al.* (1996) suggested that although technical and administrative domains are more numerous, the competencies are not rated as important as those of the conceptual/creative, interpersonal and leadership domains.

Also receiving some attention in the literature has been the research that has specifically attempted to identify the importance of managers possessing a balanced range of skills and competencies (Gamble *et al.*, 1994; Ladkin and Riley, 1996). As early as in the late 1980s, Guerrier and Lockwood (1989) questioned the validity of the traditional approach to developing hospitality managers, which had led to an operational perspective on skill requirements being developed. At the time of their study there was little evidence of any focus on '*the development of human relations skills for managers and indeed little acceptance for this sort of development*' (Guerrier and Lockwood, 1989, p.85). The changing balance of the importance of management skills versus operational skills is contested by Carper (1993). He indicates that there is still support for operational skills training, but hotel managers acknowledge the growing importance of managerial skills in enhancing the performance of the hotel.

Studies conducted in the US show a broader perspective of managerial competencies in hospitality which escapes the predominant '*human skills*' approach. Perdue *et al.* (2000) in researching competencies required for Country Club Managers in the US found that they need expertise in accountancy and finance, human and professional resourcing and food and beverage management. Kay and Russette (2000) studied the hospitality management competencies at entry and middle managerial levels within the front desk, food and beverage, and sales functional area. They identified



eighteen core essential competencies, which lie in all Sandwith's (1993) domains apart from the administrative, and discover that '*working knowledge of product-service*' and '*adapting creatively to change*' are essential competencies for all the managers studied. It is also reported that middle-level front desk and sales managers need more competencies than the same level food and beverage managers. Chung – Herrera *et al.* (2003) identified a link between leadership competencies and '*future hospitality leaders*'. They argued that the development of a competency model will help senior managers in selecting, developing and coaching future leaders, as well as mapping career paths and planning management succession. Their study looked into eight factors – communication, critical thinking, implementation, industry knowledge, interpersonal skills, leadership, self-management, and strategic positioning. They identified twenty-eight dimensions under the heading of these factors, and ninety-nine specific behavioural competencies that future leaders would need to possess. A recent study by Kay and Moncarz (2004) suggests that, in addition to human skills, competencies in information technology, financial management and marketing play a significant role in hospitality managers' success. Thus, they argue that educational institutions and training providers should cover these areas to equip future managers with the required knowledge and skills.

As mentioned above there are only a handful of studies conducted outside the Anglo-American context. Although most of them suffered the same methodological weakness as the ones conducted in the UK and US, it is very interesting to compare their findings. Christou and Eaton (2000) replicated the studies of Tas (1988) and Baum (1991) in an effort to identify the competencies needed for hospitality graduate trainees. This study was part of an effort to change the nature of the hospitality management curriculum which traditionally had a vocational / technical orientation (Baum, 2002). It involved the examination of the views of the general managers of seventy-five properties with four hundred or more rooms. By using the same tool (competencies questionnaire with 36 items) they found that all three studies

concluded that hotel general managers identified so-called '*soft skills*' as essential. Soft skills are personal attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance and career prospects; unlike hard skills, which tend to be specific to a certain type of task or activity, soft skills are broadly applicable. Christou and Eaton conclude that Greek managers have higher expectations of their potential recruits than their British and American counterparts. The main limitation of these studies is its quantitative approach, which as Christou and Eaton suggest could be combined with qualitative tools such as in-depth interviews, in order to triangulate the data.

Agut *et al.* (2003) studied the competency needs and training demands among managers from Spanish hotels and restaurants. They used a multi-method approach in their survey by employing a custom made questionnaire (*Questionnaire for the Analysis of the Role of Hotel and Restaurant Managers*) and semi-structured in-depth interviews in a sample of 80 managers. Their findings suggest that the Spanish hotel and restaurant managers need to improve mainly their knowledge and skills components in competencies involving computing, languages, health and risk prevention, marketing, work organisation, human resources management, and customer profiles and behaviours.

Brophy and Kiely (2002) developed a competency framework for middle managers in three star hotels, in the Irish hotel sector context. They clustered competencies by mapping these to the key results areas of customer care, quality and standards, managing staff, achieving profitability and growing the business. This work was conducted as part of the '*Hotel Management Skillnet*' project which examined the introduction of a competency based framework in the Irish hotel sector.

Apart from Europe and North America, interest in the development of competency frameworks has recently sparked in Australasia. Dimmock *et al.* (2003) surveyed the existing competencies of the hospitality and tourism

management students in Australia. They based their study in the work of Quinn *et al.* (1990) and their *Competing Values Framework* (CVF) which was linked to Di Padova's (1996) *Self Assessment of Managerial Skills* (SAMS) instrument. The study found that students perceive most of the CVF competences as significant (nineteen out of the twenty-four), many of them referred as meta-competences. These meta-competences address to higher order skills and tasks an individual undertakes as part of their management role. Students in this study identified a lack of competencies with other areas of managing such as those associated with designing work and managing across functions.

Jauhari's (2006) study examines the link between industry competency requirements and the current provisions for hospitality management education in India. He uses a qualitative approach (unstructured interviews) by interviewing academics and practitioners from the hospitality management education and the industry respectively. In his findings a gap appears to exist in terms of ensuring that the needs of the industry are met by the ongoing skills development of the workforce. In addition he notes that '*hotel management in India has been seen more as a trade than as a business organisation*' (*ibid*, p.130). This notion indicates clearly the source of the problems faced by the Indian hospitality industry.

In recent research, Blayney (2009) demonstrated the Canadian hotel managers' capabilities, and made an effort to link competencies with performance during a time of economic stress. Some long held beliefs that managing human resources, communications, interpersonal skills and other so called 'soft skills' are the most important elements of hotel management, were not found in this study. On the contrary, Canadian hotel managers identified the capability of financial management as being practiced with greater diligence during economic stressful times. In addition, the increase of direct competition has been the reason that financial performance became their focus. This finding agrees with the results obtained from New Zealand's

managers in a survey conducted by Matheson (2004). It can be argued that it is not surprising to see Canadian managers focusing on 'hard skills' such as financial management, due cultural similarities with their US counterparts (Hofstede, 1980, 1991), and the adoption of managerial practices that originate from the US.

So far the vast majority of the competencies models reviewed within the hospitality context fall in the behavioural approach which assumes that those models can be universally applicable regardless of the manager's background. This is no surprising as this industry is considered as '*results-oriented*' and superior performance is believed to be the key to achieve organisational goals. Iversen (2000, p.12) argues that '*it is reasonable to conclude that there are some managerial competencies that are causally related to effective and /or superior performance in a job*'. Based on the above discussion on hospitality managerial competencies, some conclusions can be made from the comparison of five hospitality management competency frameworks with Dulewicz's (1998) model (Table 7).

Dulewicz's competencies framework was selected as a benchmark, for being one of the most tested and validated model that falls in the behavioural approach (Iversen, 2000). It must be noted that it was not possible to present all the competencies that each framework includes, thus only the broad areas of competency are compared. Despite the diversity of these models there are common areas or overlaps among them. Five out of six competency areas are covered by the majority of these frameworks (intellectual, personal, communication, inter-personal and leadership). Surprisingly the '*results orientation*' area is not clearly covered by Lockwood *et al.* (1993) possibly because their focus was in various managerial levels (Kay and Russette, 2000). This analysis provides an indication that it would be possible to use a generic managerial competency framework in order to assess hotel GMs – which is the focus of this research. It is argued however, that the use of a single managerial competencies model itself is not enough to provide a

credible account of the hotel GMs competencies, as contextual factors such as the national culture and the characteristics of the group studied must be also acknowledged. Another important observation is the similarities of the hospitality (Table 6) with the generic management competencies frameworks as presented in Table 3 (see Chapter 2). This observation suggests that hospitality managers at least at senior level, are found to adopt similar sets of competencies with managers from other sectors.

**Table 6:** A comparison of managerial competency frameworks in hospitality

| <b>Competency Areas</b><br>( <i>'clusters'</i> ) | <b>Tas (1988);<br/>Baum (1991);<br/>Christou and<br/>Eaton (2000)</b> | <b>Lockwood<br/><i>et al.</i> (1993)</b> | <b>Kay and<br/>Russette<br/>(2000)</b> | <b>Brophy<br/>and Kiely<br/>(2002)</b>   | <b>Chung –<br/>Herrera<br/>(2003)</b> |
|--|---|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Intellectual</b>                           | Operational Awareness   | Managing Operations & Business           | Conceptual – Creative; Technical       | Planning & Organising, Problem Solving   | Industry Knowledge; Critical Thinking |
| <b>2. Personal</b>                               | Ethics; Professionalism; Legal Responsibility                         | Personal Management Skills               |  | Enthusiasm   | Self Management                       |
| <b>3. Communication</b>                          | Communication   |  | Administrative                         | Effective Communication  | Communication                         |
| <b>4. Inter-Personal</b>                         | Customer Problems Handling  |  | Inter-personal                         | Teamwork   | Inter-personal                        |
| <b>5. Leadership</b>                             | Employee Relations; Leadership; Motivation                            | Managing People                          | Leadership                             |  | Leadership                            |
| <b>6. Results – Orientation</b>                  | Development & Control of Productivity; Customer relations             |  |  | Leading for results, Customer Service Focus; Financial Awareness; Strategic Thinking | Implementation; Strategic Positioning |
| <b>No. of Competencies:</b>                      | 36  | 78                                       | 18                                     | 36   | 99                                    |

To conclude, it can be argued that practitioners and management scholars have already recognised the need for the creation of a framework to assess and develop the competencies that match the needs of the hotel industry. The literature reviewed so far provides evidence that hotel managers have a vested interest in the creation of generic managerial competency frameworks. On the other hand contextual factors such as the national and organisational culture cannot be ignored in the design of these frameworks especially when hotel GMs operating worldwide. Moreover, further research is needed in order to overcome problems related with methodological or approach limitations such as quantitative interpretation, ignorance of contextual factors, or use of outdated or inappropriate models/frameworks.

### **3.5. Managerial work in hotels: research limitations**

So far the discussion has explored a wealth of studies on the nature of managerial work roles and competencies in the hospitality industry. These studies are actually similar to those in the general management context and may be able to answer the question of what managers do, and why. Their usefulness lay in the fact that they provide a fundamental framework for management development. The understanding of what hotel managers do at the micro (organisational) and macro (industry) level is certainly helpful for academics and practitioners who can develop training activities that aim to enhance specific skills and competencies. Thus, by having appreciated what knowledge and skills managers need to acquire and improve, learning activities can be pre-structured, such as a standard training package on corporate culture or service quality (Li *et al.*, 2006). It can be argued however, that based on the above the following question emerges: *‘Would it be possible to create a conceptual model for hotel GMs’ competencies applicable for every manager or is it unique for each one of them?’*

Around the mid -1990s research addressed the question of *‘what does it take to make a successful hotel manager?’* The effectiveness of managers’

performance is underpinned by their competencies including personal attributes, knowledge and skills. However, despite the proliferation of studies on managerial work, the accounts on how effective and less effective managers perform differently are still not clear in the literature. Effectiveness is measured and perceived in different ways within different or even the same context. Peacock (1995, p.48) argues that *'what influences the industry is not any objective measure of success or quality, but an individual manager's subjective measures of success'*. In the pursuit of appreciating what constitutes an effective manager, American and European scholars have started to investigate the competencies of successful managers. Most of these models were based on big checklists containing numerous competencies. In addition, Jubb and Robotham (1997) consider whether is either desirable or possible to attempt developing generic managers. Since the appearance of the competencies movement in the literature there are voices that warn about the dangers of the use of the generic competency frameworks that relate to superior performance (Antonakopoulou and FitzGerald, 1996; Brophy and Kiely, 2002; Burgoyne, 1989; Cheetham and Chivers, 1996, 1998; Chung, 1999; Raelin and Coolege, 1995). Often debated is the question: *'Is there a set of common generic competencies that all managers require to be successful?'* Researchers of this view of generic competencies in the human resource discipline have determined *'...that off-the-shelf generic competencies cannot serve as a proper model to guide the human resource planning process'* (Raelin and Coolege, 1995, p.32). Organic competencies are those that apply to a specific managerial job and organisation and were determined to be the important factors, especially where flexibility may be required. In the hospitality industry, flexibility and quick reaction are deemed critical skills due to continuous dynamic market conditions. Researchers that investigated the possibility of a set of universal senior management competencies (Hayes *et al.*, 2000) found that some managers need different sets of competencies to manage specific circumstances. These researchers also found there are *'...some shared*

*competencies that can be usefully developed in the context of generic senior management development programmes'* (Hayes et al., 2000, p.5).

On the other hand Ruth (2006, p.207) argues that *'even if one may gain some sense of what competency might be, however problematic, then assuming it can be developed and, furthermore, that there is a link between its development and practice and performance, the question of how to develop it remains'*. What is right or wrong in terms of deciding which competency framework to use is subjective and depends on where this is going to be used and for what purpose. In addition, the different results in the application of the same managerial competencies model, such as the study of Tas (1988) in the US context, Baum (1991) in the UK context and Eaton and Christou (2000) in the Greek context provide evidence that contextual factors such as the national culture really matter. Herein lies the heart of a debate, which is broadly represented by the situational and universal approach to management. On the one hand *'situational factors vary so much that it is impossible to make a generic list of managerial competencies that are relevant for most managerial positions'* (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1997), while others believe that *'superior managers of all types and levels share a general profile of competencies. Managers of all types are more like each other than they are like the individual contributors they manage'* (Spencer and Spencer, 1993). This dilemma has confronted organisational studies for decades. As Ruth (2006) argues the problem of developing a competency framework involves abstraction, aggregation and standardisation. The extent to which this takes place is precisely the extent to which its applicability and usefulness in any particular situation is vitiated.

In order to understand the difficulties for the creation of a general managerial competencies framework in hospitality, there is a need to examine the various problems appeared in the wider area of managerial work research. Thus, of the various criticisms levelled at studies of managerial work (Hales, 1999; Hales and Nightingale, 1986; Martinko and Gardner, 1985; Mintzberg,



1973; Stewart, 1989; Willmott, 1984), one of the most insistent has been of the reluctance to situate either models of managerial work or empirical evidence on managerial activity within a broader contextual (i.e. institutional and/or cultural) framework (Boyacigiller and Adler, 1991; Doktor *et al.*, 1991; Hales and Tamangani, 1996; Hofstede, 1980, 2001; Lewis, 2000). Armstrong's (1986, p.19) observation that *'the orthodox management literature is neutered by its own studied ignorance of the context and purpose of management activity'*, is also echoed by other writers (Burgoyne and Hodgson, 1984; Hales, 1986; Marples, 1967; Stewart, 1989; Tsoukas, 1994; Willmott, 1987). Indeed, this failure to situate managerial work in its broader context is, arguably, not simply one but the key deficiency in the field, since from it flow a number of other significant limitations: the failure of studies to distinguish sufficiently carefully between managerial work, jobs, behaviour, tasks or functions and competencies; the failure to explain, other than in reductionist terms, the characteristics of the managerial activities described; and the failure to offer any basis for evaluating the effectiveness of managerial activities (Hales, 1986; Martinko and Gardner, 1985; Stewart, 1989; Tsoukas, 1994).

In summary, the above discussion has indicated a clear need for a change in the direction of research on hospitality managerial work roles and competencies. What needs to be done, is to re-examine what is meant by the word 'competency' from a contextual lens, consider how appropriate or inappropriate frameworks might be and search for ways to express and practice what is currently perceived as 'the development' of hotel managers, which in turn will play a part in producing better results not only from the narrow business sense but in broader socio-cultural terms. As Ruth (2006, p.216) argues that "*...there is a need to reframe and re-root a discussion of management competency in a social and political framework, rather than the market/efficiency/technological paradigm*".

### **3.6. Chapter summary**

The hospitality industry was one of the first to be internationalised in the post World War Two years, and this has affected to a certain degree managerial work in this sector. There are strong indications from a wide body of empirical research that managerial work in hotels differentiates to a certain degree from other sectors; this results to a certain personality and competencies profile, which becomes more complex and multidimensional in diverse cultural settings. The preparation of the future hospitality managers goes through higher education programmes, which are currently popular worldwide. The quality and usefulness of these programmes however has been questioned and criticised based on their strong vocational orientation. On the other hand the existence of these programmes is purely based on the industry needs and requirements. Another controversial area of the hospitality management literature focuses on the successful managers' characteristics. Despite the wealth of studies regarding managerial skills and competencies for hospitality managers there is little agreement on what it takes to be a successful hotel GM. The existing research suggests that hotel unit GMs need to demonstrate a multitude of personal characteristics as well as expertise and experience in management, specialist craft and technical know-how. There is a need however to integrate theoretical and empirical research by the employment of qualitative methods, in order to be able to move towards the creation of a competencies framework for hotel managers that incorporates contextual issues such as the national and organisational culture.

# Chapter 4

## The Greek Context

### 4.0. Introduction

The final chapter of the literature review discusses the effect of the Greek socio-cultural and economic context in managerial work. A brief description of the country and its main economic activities focused in hospitality, is used in order to introduce the socio-economic Greek context; then the country's work context and HRM practices are explored in areas such as work patterns, employment practices and personnel policies. The data here were collected mainly through the participation of the country in the CRANET survey that took place in the late 1990s / early 2000s. A brief discussion of management education in Greece is also provided here. The core of the discussion is focused on Greek culture and its effects on managerial work drawing from classic views on national culture (Hofstede, 1980; Morden, 1995; Trompenaars 1993), research from Greek scholars (Bourantas and Papadakis, 1996; Makridakis *et al.*, 1997; Myloni *et al.*, 2004) and the results from the GLOBE Project. Then, the existing literature on managerial work in Greek hotels is investigated as a distinct and differentiated branch of the Greek management. The chapter closes with conclusions regarding the Greek managerial work context as a whole.

### 4.1. An overview of the Greek economy

Greece, during its modern history has gone through long periods of shaping and transforming the country's economic and political system. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the main issue was to preserve the country's security and to consolidate democratic institutions, economic and social development. It can be argued that after the country has joined the European Union in 1981, a rapid transition of the economy from a mainly agricultural to an industrial and

service-based one has been achieved. Although the transition to, and consolidation of democracy in Greece saw the culmination of a long process of political and socio-economic modernisation (Malefakis 1995), in the sector of state bureaucracy the change was rather slow (Sotiropoulos 2004). Despite Greece's incorporation into the EU, some argue that its bureaucratic structure has not yet converged with the Western European one (Kalogeraki, 2009). Nowadays, Greece is characterised by the coexistence of traditional and modern sectors of activity and by rather small and medium-sized family-owned businesses (Makridakis *et al*, 1997). Recent ICAP (2007) figures reveal that only 12% of the manufacturing companies have more than one hundred employees. In addition, international organisations, like the UN, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the International Bank, have ranked Greece as a developed economy, however not among the most economically advanced nations (Papalexandris, 2008).

A very large public sector exists that is heavily bureaucratised (Papalexandris and Bourantas, 1993) often uncompetitive (Koufopoulos, 2002); overall its huge deficit is a major problem for the Greek economy as a whole. Bourantas and Papadakis (1996) suggest that the underdevelopment of management in the public sector is to a large extent, due to powerful political forces. In addition, its overstaffing has also a cultural explanation: the 19th-century Greek state lacked any effective development policy and merely acted as an employment agency for peasants, who had left the countryside in search for work in the cities (Mouzelis, 1978). This was accomplished through a large 'clientele' network, under the patronage of highly personalised political parties and using a practice commonly known as '*rousfeti*'. This is a word of Arab origin, which means personal favor to supporters and differs from bribery (Broome, 1996). Even today, *rousfeti* is a common practice in the public sector and often serves to surpass bureaucratic formalities and connect individuals thus offsetting insecurity. Moreover, modern Greece is a relatively new democracy that bears painful memories from both world wars, from the civil war of 1944-1949, and from the junta (military dictatorship) of

1967-1973. All of these events have strengthened the power of politicians over technocrats and managers at least in many (until recently) state-controlled enterprises. Even today, the top management of all major public enterprises (i.e. Water and Power Supply, Transportation, National Health System) is appointed by the government, and the key criteria for appointment are loyalty and contributions to the political party, rather than managerial competence (Spanou, 2001).

Another characteristic of the Greek business environment is a steady increase in inward foreign direct investment (FDI) over the last thirty years (Anastassopoulos *et al.*, 2007). Keen to attract foreign funds, Greek governments have offered investment incentives by way of capital grants, tax allowances, increased depreciation rates, and interest rate subsidies. Just prior to the 1992 European drive toward a '*single market*', a large number of European and some US companies invested in several Greek industries, mainly by acquiring major players. Examples include the acquisition of Metaxa (a Greek brandy and ouzo producer) by Grand Metropolitan, of AGET Hercules (a cement producer) by Calzestruzzi, of Pavlidis (a chocolate producer) by Jacobs Suchard, and of Misko (a pasta producer) by Barilla.

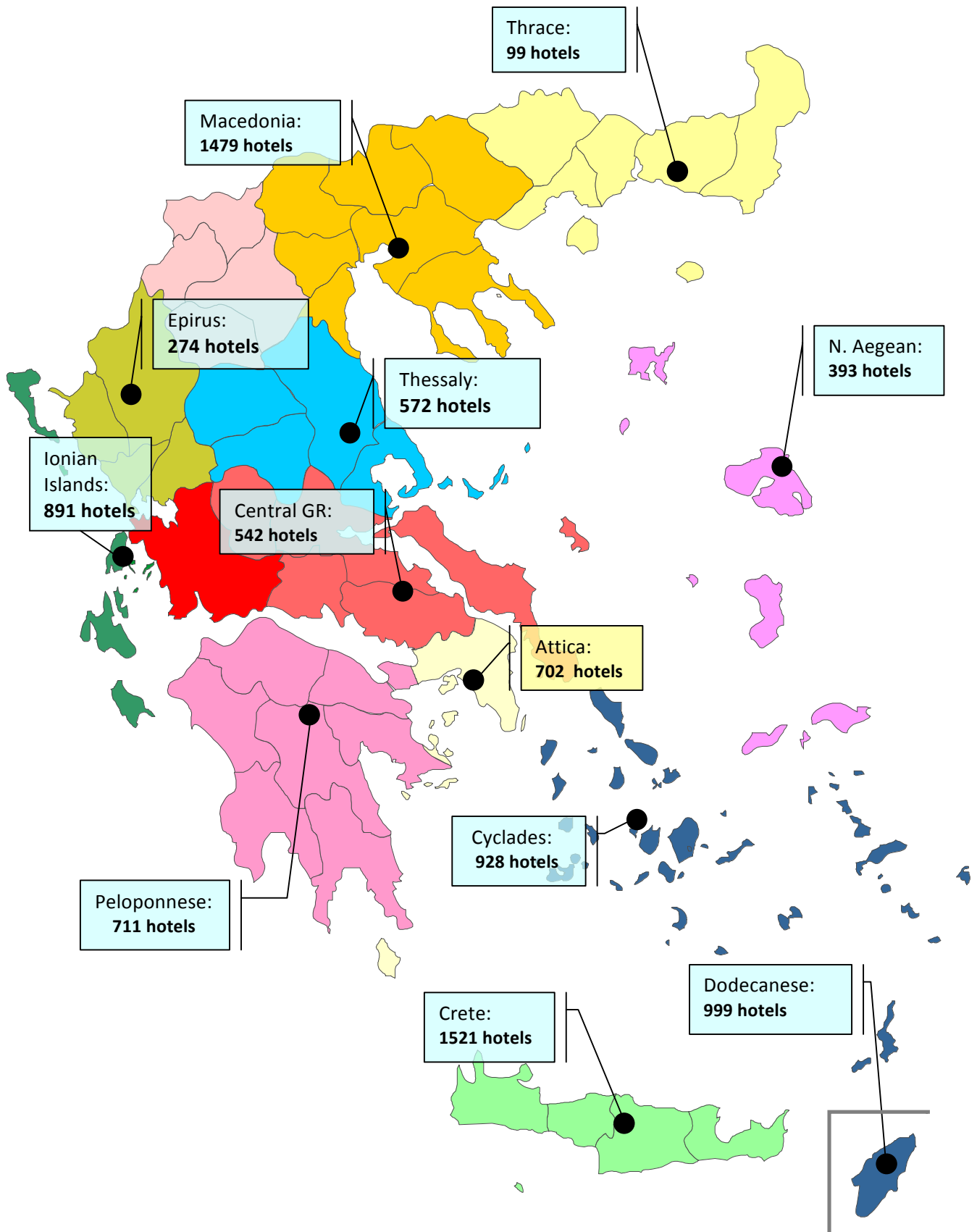
On 12 June 1975, Greece submitted its candidature to become a member state of the European Economic Community (EEC) and on 28 May 1979 the Act of Adherence was signed in Athens. Without any doubt, this was one of the most important events in the recent history of Greece. The country has moved from a rather small, isolated place in the south-eastern Mediterranean, to a full-fledged member of the E.U. European unification and the creation of the internal market, together with the entry of many European multinationals into the Greek market, have increased environmental dynamism and complexity. As one of the economically weaker countries of the EU, Greece had to intensify its efforts to meet the challenges of the EU, converging the last years with the rest of the European economies. Inflation has decreased from two-digit figures in the 1980s to less than 4% in 2006,

while the rate of increase of the gross domestic product (GDP) over the last years is above the EU's average (ICAP, 2007). The traditionally increased role of the agricultural sector is diminishing and the structural changes of the last decades have resulted in the growth of the industrial and service sectors. According to the latest figures, the service sector accounts for 47% of GDP, while agriculture only for 14% (*Eurostat*, 2005). These rates have brought the country closer to the norms of developed economies. On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2002 Greece entered the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). This has set the preconditions for financial circles to take more significant investment initiatives. This achievement has boosted the overall performance of the economy (OECD, 2005). The successful undertaking of the 2004 Olympic Games that held in Athens, had temporarily boosted the image and self confidence of the country in the international community (Karkatsoulis and Michalopoulos, 2005). Unfortunately, the efforts for the country's image restoration were hit particularly hard in the late 2000s financial crisis, as the legacy of high public spending and widespread tax evasion combined with the credit crunch and the resulting recession to leave the country with a crippling debt burden ([http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country\\_profiles/1009249.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country_profiles/1009249.stm), accessed 7/3/2010).

#### **4.1.1. The Hotel Sector in Greece**

Greece today, is among the most attractive and well established world destinations, offering luxurious hotels, a rich culture and tradition, sea and mountain resorts, exhibition and conference centres, recreation areas, ski centres, modern marinas, paths for hiking, and other tourist attractions. Tourism has traditionally been, and continues to be, important source of revenue for Greece (Papalexandris, 2008). A modern industry has emerged since the 1950s to cater for the tourism demand. Due to the rapid growth of tour operators in Europe and the phenomenon of mass tourism, Greece experienced a dramatic increase of tourism flows in the late 1970s and 1980s.

**Figure 3: Geographical distribution of hotels in Greece (rated 1\*- 5\*: 9,111 hotels)**



Source: Adapted from the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels (2007)

Since then the country has been selected solely as a place of recreation. Despite a plethora of cultural and other qualitative elements, these are not the main incentives of tourist attractiveness (Patsouratis *et al.*, 2005). This perception has resulted in a highly seasonal industry, focused primarily on the Islands, and largely dependent on low return package tours for its success (WTTC, 2010). Buhalis (2001) argues that Greek resorts have different product and market profiles making them capable of satisfying a great diversity of tourism demand. This potential was exploited as a source of competitive advantage after the successful organisation of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. Since then Greece has managed to change its competitive positioning from a low cost, to a higher quality and value for money destination (Anastassopoulos *et al.*, 2007). Today the Hospitality and Tourism sector in Greece contributes approximately 15% of the National GDP ranking third in the E.U. after Spain (18.38%) and Portugal (15.40%) according to the WTTC (2010). The hospitality and tourism sector occupies in total eight hundred eight thousand employees, 18% of the country's entire labour force.

More specifically, a total of ninety six thousand seven hundred fifty employees work in hotels, and twenty four thousand eight hundred ninety five in small lodges (SETE, 2003). The geographical distribution of hotels (Figure 3) in 2007 clearly indicates that hospitality activity is gathered in a few regions of the country. Five out of the thirteen regions gather 76.5% of hotel beds in Greece, while differences in distribution even inside each region are significant. The most considerable number of beds can be found in Central Greece (15%), Crete (20%), Ionian Islands (11%), Dodecanese (18%) and Central Macedonia (13%). In general, tourism growth in Greece seems to be centred in the groups of the Aegean and Ionian islands, presenting a certain model of growth, that is the model of mass tourism on which the entire structure of the tourism industry has been based since the end of the Second World War.



At the end of 2004, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in hotels and the hospitality sector reached 819.4 € million, representing 3.8% of the total FDI stock located in the country (WTTC, 2005). Global hotel brands have been expanding their presence in Greece over recent years, yet their share still remains low when compared to other European countries. According to the *2009 Greek Hotel Branding Report*, 4% of the country's hotels - controlling 19% of the total room capacity - have an affiliation with one of 113 brands (Koutoulas, 2010). Large international hotel chains, like IHG's InterContinental, Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn, Accor's Club Med, Sofitel and Novotel, Hilton, Marriott and Hyatt have established a limited presence of one or two hotels, in a market with significant potential in order to capitalise on the transition of the Greek tourism market from a low cost to a high value added profitable market. These firms further attracted other international competitors in a potentially prosperous market. In their research on international hotel chains in Greece, Anastassopoulos *et al.* (2007) found that overall they over perform their domestic competitors and are generally larger both in terms of their total assets and their employment. Another interesting finding is that the characteristics of the Greek tourism market make it imperative for international hotel chains to find a local partner with a good strategic fit in order to deal with the local complexities. The notion of strategic fit here refers to the level of compatibility between the international hotel chain and the potential local partner (i.e. the adoption of common standard operating procedures and management practices). Thus, minority owned international hotel chains was found to perform better, as they make use of local partners who bring into the firm knowledge of the local market, an aspect important for the hotel sector.

## **4.2. Management education and training in Greece**

The starting point on the exploration of the Greek management context is how the country creates and develops its managerial workforce. Following the Educational Reform of 2001, public higher education is divided into the

University (universities, polytechnic schools, and Athens School of Arts) and Technological sector (technological educational institutes - TEI). Student admission depends on performance in national written examinations. Those who are over the age of twenty-two can also apply for admission to the Hellenic Open University. There is also a thriving private education industry providing unofficial tertiary education. In 2000 there were two hundred and twenty five private institutions offering diplomas or certificates in several subjects (Koulaidis, 2002).

Since the early 1990s, learning forces have exerted a profound influence on Greek management and its modernisation/professionalism. Learning in this case implies formal management education. The past ten to fifteen years have seen dramatic changes in how management is taught in Greek academic institutions. For example, autonomous departments of business administration, marketing, and the like, have been formed in all major economic universities, which now offer postgraduate and doctoral programs in business administration (Papalexandris, 1995). The curricula of these departments have been significantly modified, with the aim of replicating the respective curricula of UK and US business schools. While first degree and post-graduate courses are offered by all Greek universities, Greeks have the highest percentage in Europe of people studying abroad (more than forty two thousand students in various European universities mainly in the UK), and the percentage of young people (twenty five to twenty nine years old) with upper secondary education rank among the highest in the EU. The number of Greek students enrolled in another EU country is nearly four times the number of foreign students hosted at Greek universities (*Eurostat*, 2009).

In addition, a number of foreign business schools and other academic institutions have a significant presence in Greece collaborating with local colleges. Approximately five hundred students earn an MBA or equivalent postgraduate management degree each year from foreign business schools (mainly in Great Britain and the United States). Various EU programmes

(e.g., *Erasmus, Training and Mobility of Researchers*) encourage the exchange of students and researchers, and the cross-fertilization of ideas concerning management practices, while many Greek universities engage in joint research programs with American and European business schools.

Some of the best-known international training companies operate in Greece (e.g., *Wilson Learning, Learning International, Mercury*). The concepts, theories, and methods used by trainers are imported, since most trainers were formally educated outside Greece. Moreover, the consultancy market, has expanded rapidly. Most of the major consulting companies are present in the Greek market (e.g., *Andersen Consulting, KPMG, Arthur D. Little, Deloitte & Touche, Coopers and Lybrand, Ernst and Young*). At the same time, other Training and Development methods, such as programmes for international experience, career development schemes and assessment centres, show an increase, indicating the efforts made by firms in order to retain and develop their young and talented employees.

Until recently and unlike other European countries, public higher education options in Greece were limited, when pursuing a career in the hospitality industry. In the UK, for example, there were sixty-six undergraduate programmes in 1997, and fourteen tourism courses in universities in Italy (Airey and Johnson, 1999). In Greece, only the technological sector (TEI) of public higher education offers undergraduate tourism and hospitality degrees. Currently, there are seven TEIs offering an undergraduate degree in Tourism Business and two Training Centres of Advanced Studies (ASTE) on the islands of Rhodes and Crete offering an undergraduate degree in Hotel and Catering. In 2000, there were almost two thousand two hundred students admitted to study tourism and hospitality courses (Stamelos, 2002). Currently, there are five universities offering postgraduate degrees in hospitality and tourism management. In addition to these Universities, there are a number of private education establishments offering courses in hospitality management. The courses offered are either franchised or

validated by foreign universities – mainly from the UK – but the Greek Ministry of Education does not officially recognise them (Christou, 1999) despite the continuous EU pressures for deregulation in higher education. The latest progress in this issue was the compliance of the Greek legislation in 2007, with the EU Directive 36/2005 regarding the recognition of European university titles operating in Greece with franchised or validated programmes. The debate however is ongoing and is expected to last a few more years until Greece will fully comply with the European directives as many students and lecturers in Public Universities oppose to these reforms.

### **4.3. The Greek work context**

Since the late 1990s, an ongoing debate exists in Greece among academics and practitioners whether human resources management (HRM) is maintaining its national character or whether it is converging towards a model that potentially clashes with the country's traditional societal values. The convergence – divergence discussion is part of a wider debate in Europe. The Greek work context has been studied with the framework of a pan-European research during the 1990s under the name the Price Waterhouse Cranfield Project (CRANET); this concerning HR strategies and policies across Europe (Sparrow and Hiltrop, 1997). Greece participated in this survey with a sample of approximately one hundred fifty companies employing more than two hundred employees, during 1993, 1996 and 1999 (Papalexandris and Chalikias, 2002).

An important feature of the Greek labour market is the high proportion of employers (5.4% of the total working population) and self-employed people, which account for 29.7% of the total working population (*Eurostat Yearbook*, 2003). In addition, the Greek labour market does not seem to follow the predominant principle of labour supply and demand. During the 1990s research showed that only about 15% of job holders gained their position through fair, open competition, the rest having resorted to connections

(Papakonstantinou, 1996). Rising unemployment and intense competition for a position, besides generating the need to acquire extra certificates, seems also to favour the adoption of indirect means and the use of connections for the promotion of applicants' interests. Peculiar occupational conditions in Greece have resulted in the formation of some distinct employment patterns (Patiniotis and Stavroulakis, 1997). For instance, formalised personnel activities in selecting, appraising and remunerating employees have existed in larger private and public sector firms for a considerable period of time. However, these activities were not geared towards assisting individuals to develop their potential, or to make a significant contribution to their organisations' effectiveness. Papalexandris and Nikandrou (2000) say that in the early 1960s, there was a spectacular upturn in the economy, following the Association Agreement of Greece to the EEC and the influx of foreign multinational firms which invested in the country. Foreign firms provided a challenge to the attitudes of Greek company owners concerning the practice of management (Makridakis *et al*, 1997). Multinational companies started successfully using sophisticated management staffing techniques, which Greek firms seemed to ignore at that time. Greek firms followed their example at a rather slow pace until the start of the 1980s.

Research studies covering this period showed that, compared to other management functions, HRM seemed to lack sophistication, and the application of modern HRM practices was rather limited (Georgoulis, 1978; Hassid, 1977). This was seen as a reason for the low level of organisational effectiveness of Greek firms at the time (Hassid, 1980). In the 1980s, and following full membership of Greece in the EEC, the situation seemed to change, as some large and progressive Greek firms applied HRM similarly to the multinational companies (MNCs) operating in Greece.

However, in the 1990s the scene changed dramatically: increased competition in the Greek market, the increasing size of most Greek companies, the quest for modernisation, and European integration were

among the most powerful forces that led Greek management towards modernisation. In addition, according to Papalexandris and Nikandrou (2000) increased competitiveness in the environment has led Greek organisations to search for factors that would serve as a source of competitive advantage. Thus, the demand for a more qualified and competent workforce became a strategic force in the effort to raise competitiveness. Changes in the competitive environment have been followed by changes in the labour market structure. The workforce has become more diversified but also more educated and trained in new technologies (Koufidou and Michail, 1999). In addition, the development of generic managerial competencies based on the 'behavioural approach', became a prerequisite for large Greek companies operating throughout the country and abroad.

In Greece, as in other European countries, there is evidence of both convergence and divergence in HRM policies and the overall work context (Myloni *et al.*, 2004). Brewster (1994) argues that the introduction of common legislation and agreements between countries of the EU, will eventually lead to harmonisation of the Industrial Relations (IR) and HRM systems across different national contexts. In addition, globalisation forces multinational companies to adopt common HR practices in their overseas subsidiaries and develop common managerial competencies frameworks for their managerial staff in all levels. On the other hand, there is still a persistent belief that social and cultural differences between countries will continue to supersede the forces of globalisation emanating from technologically driven markets or supranational agreements (Sparrow and Hiltrop, 1997).

Myloni *et al.* (2004) has found that for a range of HR issues (Business Policy and Evaluation; Industrial Relations; Recruitment and Selection; Management Training and Development; Employee Benefits and Reward; Performance Evaluation) MNC subsidiaries have adapted parent company HRM practices to the local ones, up to a point. These practices might be characterised by high levels of cultural susceptibility and to a certain degree

sensitivity to cultural differences. On the contrary Greek firms seem to adapt fewer HR 'Best Practices' and continue to follow local patterns and norms. It is possible that Greek firms still have some way to go in terms of facing direct competition in the global market. Greek companies are still embedded in their cultural environment to a considerable extent (Myloni *et al.*, 2004). Thus, there is a need for a deeper analysis of the Greek cultural context and its effects on managerial behaviour.

#### **4.4. Management and the Greek context**

It is arguable that the notion of culture constitutes the most elusive and yet tantalising concept for both management theorists and practitioners. It can be argued however, that when research focuses on the Greek context it becomes extremely difficult to come to any conclusion about the role of culture in relation to managerial work because a limited number of studies and research has been conducted in this field. The discussion below is an effort to provide a general overview of the cultural context that Greek managers operate in. It is thus necessary, to highlight some important cultural-contextual dimensions of Greek management, which will provide a better understanding of the Greek context. But first, it would be useful to discuss the complexity of the concept and the ongoing debate on what is culture and how it affects managerial behaviour.

##### **4.4.1. Managing in different cultural contexts**

The dynamic and complex nature of the management function in global business today and the realisation that what works effectively in one country may not be as efficient in another, has led management scholars and practicing managers in continuous efforts to enhance their understanding of this context and its effects on managers. This is sought through the systematic study and exploration of management across cultures (cross cultural management). Although cross-cultural management is often

regarded as a discipline of international management, is not a clearly demarcated discipline of management. Yet as far as Soderberg and Holden (2002) are concerned for many management scholars the term is meaningful because it implies (a) procedures and policies relating to the management of workforces with different cultural backgrounds, and (b) moderating the impact of cultural differences in the execution of management tasks. Perhaps the most accurate and complete definition of cross cultural management came from Adler (1991) who argues that cross cultural management studies the behaviour of people and organisations in different countries and cultures around the world; he also suggests that “*cross cultural management expands the scope of domestic management and encompass the international and multicultural spheres*” (*ibid.*, p.11).

The extremely high failure of US expatriate managers in non-western countries assignments during the 1970s and 1980s, has driven the creation of research focused on national cultures and its effects in organisational context (i.e. Hofstede, 1980; House *et al.*, 2004; Tayeb, 1989; Trompenaars, 1993). As the concept of national culture dominates cross-cultural research, it has figured as an explanation for management differences across nations (Edwards and Kuruvilla, 2005; Fisher and Hartel, 2003; Newman and Nollen, 1996; Mwaura *et al.*, 1998). Literature reveals over one hundred and sixty identifiably distinct definitions of culture (Kanugo, 2006). The vast majority of definitions of culture (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Lawrence and Lorsch, 1986; Schwartz and Davis, 1981) lead to the conclusion that culture is a set of beliefs and values shared by the people in an organisation/society/country that exerts a powerful influence on people’s behaviour, because it operates without being talked about. In addition, national culture is embedded deeply in everyday life and is relatively impervious to change (Newman and Nollen, 1996). National culture is based on languages, economy, religion, policies, social institutions, class, values, status, attitudes, manners, customs, material items, aesthetics and education which subsequently influences managerial values (Hofstede, 1991; Trompenaars, 1993). Thomas (2008) suggests that



the influence of culture is difficult to detect, and it is very easy for international managers to overlook it.

Jackson (2002) argues that two potentially opposing loci of human values exist. Traditionally, Western countries such as the United States have long practiced instrumentalism, which considers human resources mainly as a means to an end, emphasising individual competences of employees to make the best use of these human resources through a calculative exchange between employers and employees. It focuses on a utilitarian value of people in organisations as they are managed as a resource. Just as time needs to be managed in the most efficient manner, people also need to be managed in the same way. In stark contrast, Eastern countries such as Japan and Korea traditionally value human beings in their own right. That is, they view people as an end in themselves and have shown higher interest in developing the maximum potential of employees because they consider people not as a disposable resource but as an integral part of the organisation. However, as the global economy increases the interaction among countries and results in the maturity of human resource management systems within any one country, Jackson (2002) found that Anglo-Saxon countries, such as the United States and Australia, would soften their instrumental approaches. Likewise, the humanistic approach in East Asian countries tends to become weakened by the introduction of instrumental approaches. Such a trend is more visible in those economies that experience a rather rapid transformation of their society as the interface of Western and Eastern cultures intensifies. On the other hand, Alexashin and Blenkinsopp (2005) argue that although there is evidence of some convergence toward western managerial values and practices, the form of this convergence is not uniform nor the effect on managerial behaviour.

Furthermore, several attempts have been made to conceptualise and measure differences in cultures among nations, and to relate cultural differences to differences in management practices. The most well known

examples include the international survey results reported in Hofstede (1980, 1991), Laurent (1983) and Trompenaars (1993). This body of research clearly indicates that the national culture interpretation and adaptation are a prerequisite to the comparative understanding of national management practice. As early as in the 1970s, a major research programme was established by Hofstede (reported in *Culture's Consequences*, 1980) to scientifically and systematically study cultural differences. In Hofstede's study data was collected from all employees of the IBM Corporation across thirty eight countries (the sample size being *circa* one hundred and twenty thousand). The aim of Hofstede's (1980) work was to provide an analytical framework for enabling people management professionals to understand and explain the behaviour of managers and employees from different cultural backgrounds. In his early work Hofstede identified four cultural dimensions (Table 7) based on which he explained cultural differences.

**Table 7: Hofstede's cultural dimensions**

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|--|
| <p><b>Power Distance Index (PDI)</b> that is the extent to which the less powerful members of organisations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. This represents inequality (more versus less), but defined from below, not from above. It suggests that, a society's level of inequality is endorsed by the followers, as much as by the leaders. Power and inequality, of course, are extremely fundamental facts of any society and anybody with some international experience will be aware that 'all societies are unequal, but some are more unequal than others'.</p>  |
| <p><b>Individualism (IDV)</b> on the one side versus its opposite, collectivism, that is the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. On the individualist side we find societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him/herself and his/her immediate family. On the collectivist side, we find societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, often extended families (with uncles, aunts and grandparents) which continue protecting them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. The word 'collectivism' in this sense has no political meaning: it refers to the group, not to the state. Again, the issue addressed by this dimension is an extremely fundamental one, regarding all societies in the world.</p>  |
| <p><b>Masculinity (MAS)</b> versus its opposite, femininity refers to the distribution of roles between the genders, which is another fundamental issue for any society to which a range of solutions are found. The IBM studies revealed that (a) women's values differ less among societies than men's values; (b) men's values from one country to another contain a dimension from very assertive and competitive and maximally different from women's values on the one side, to modest and caring and similar to women's values on the other. The assertive pole has been called 'masculine' and the modest, caring pole 'feminine'. The women in feminine countries have the same modest, caring values as the men; in the masculine countries they are somewhat assertive and competitive, but not as much as the men, so that these countries show a gap between men's values and women's values.</p>   |
| <p><b>Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)</b> deals with a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity; it ultimately refers to man's search for Truth. It indicates to what extent a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. Unstructured situations are novel, unknown, surprising, different from usual. Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to minimise the possibility of such situations by strict laws and rules, safety and security measures, and on the philosophical and religious level by a belief in absolute Truth; 'there can only be one Truth and we have it'. People in uncertainty avoiding countries are also more emotional, and motivated by inner nervous energy. The opposite type, uncertainty accepting cultures, are more tolerant of opinions different from what they are used to; they try to have as few rules as possible, and on the philosophical and religious level they are relativist and allow many currents to flow side by side. People within these cultures are more phlegmatic and contemplative, and not expected by their environment to express emotions.</p> |

Source: [http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede\\_greece.shtml](http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_greece.shtml), accessed 7/3/2010)

Triandis (1982) observed that specific management actions could be facilitated or inhibited by culturally determined orientations. He made a distinction between *Dionysian* cultures, where subordinates are motivated through close interpersonal affiliation and *Apollonian* cultures, where the relationship between manager and subordinate is characterised by tasks and formality. According to Triandis, defining goals is most likely facilitated in cultures where Mastery of Nature and Masculinity are valued. In these cultures, Masculinity is seen in terms of taking control quickly and setting quantifiable objectives. Planning is facilitated by an orientation towards the future, but effective planning is inhibited by a lack of trust in others where power distance is high. A high Power Distance culture facilitates the selection of people into management groups which are more exclusive than inclusive. There is a tendency for managers to impose greater control on staff in cultures where human nature is perceived as self-serving. The degree of self-esteem in individuals within a culture affects the managerial approach to correcting undesirable subordinate behaviour. In low-contact Apollonian cultures the emphasis is on tasks and formality between managers and subordinates, whereas managers in Dionysian cultures motivate subordinates through close interpersonal affiliation (Triandis, 1982). For Newman and Nollen (1996) national culture is seen as a central organising principle of employees' understanding of work, their approach to it, and the way in which they expect to be treated. National culture implies that one way of acting or one set of outcomes is preferable to another.

Thus, when management practices are inconsistent with these deeply held values, employees are likely to feel dissatisfied, distracted uncomfortable and uncommitted. As a result, they may be less able or willing to perform well. House *et al.* (1999), in their GLOBE study, separated aspects of culture into its 'etic' and 'emic' qualities. The former are common for all cultures and the latter are culture-specific. The authors believe that these qualities can be used to explain similarities and differences in organisational practices and leadership behaviours. In particular, culture has been shown to shape the

individual's perceptions and behaviours towards job design, supervision and rewards (Aycaan *et al.*, 2000; Smith *et al.*, 2001). Furthermore, national cultures differ in the degree to which they enable managers to adopt non-homegrown practices (Tayeb, 1995), although recent research suggests that some contingency-type theories may be applicable (Ralston *et al.*, 1999). Empirical evidence indicates that a variety of management practices differ by national culture, including decision making (Schneider and De Meyer, 1991), strategy (Ayoun and Moreo, 2008), leadership style (Dorfman and Howell, 1988; Puffer, 1993), and human resources management (Luthans *et al.*, 1993).

The main obstacle in the effort to understand these management differences across different countries and cultural settings is that researchers and practitioners must often rely on theory originally developed in the United States. This has resulted in the fact that management theory development has been synonymous largely with what happens in this country and its MNCs operating around the globe are responsible for the dissemination of this US-centric management knowledge. Guest has suggested that HRM is '*American, optimistic, apparently humanistic and also superficially simple*' (Guest, 1990, p.379), and has argued that HRM can be seen as a contemporary manifestation of the American dream owing to its emphases on the potential for human growth, the desire to improve opportunities for people at work, and the role of strong leadership reinforced by strong organisational culture (Guest 1990). In that respect, many management scholars argue that international and cross-cultural management studies originate in the individualistic achievement-oriented management culture of the United States (Doktor *et al.*, 1991; Jackson, 2002; Tayeb, 2005; Thomas, 2008). This body of US-centric literature also suggests (Ferner and Quintanilla, 1998; Marschan, 1996; Mayrhofer and Brewster, 1996; Ralston *et al.*, 1997; Ruigrok and van Tulder, 1995) that where a nation has a strong and distinctive culture this carries over into the nation's organisations, the most cited examples being Japanese, German and United States'

organisations. MNCs operating independently of national borders continue to have their assets, sales, work-force, ownership and control concentrated in the country where their corporate headquarters are located (Ferner and Quintanilla, 1998). Thus, universality in international management theory, research and practice is accepted without question (Kiesling and Harvey, 2005).

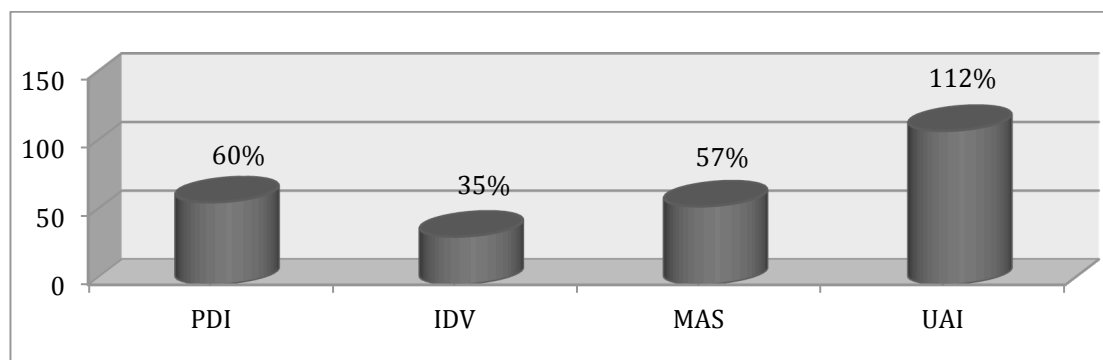
It can be argued however that attempts to establish a common corporate culture in an international or multi-national firm can be undermined by the strength of national cultures, and research points to the fact that the cultures of individual countries are both more stable and more powerful than those of individual organisations (Hirst and Thompson, 1996; Newman and Nollen, 1996; Pauly and Reich, 1997). Furthermore, as noted above, the concept that human beings are a resource to further the executive ends of an organisation is a concept that is contrary to the values of many non-Western cultures (Thomas, 2008). Perhaps in its most instrumental conceptualisation, this may also be contrary to the values of many 'Western' cultures. Little thought is given to the implications of the underlying concepts in people management theory, nor to its manifestations in the policies and practices that multinational corporations employ across different countries (Ferner and Quintanilla, 1998). Boyacigiller and Alder (1991) argue that this bias in theory development is the result not of an inherent belief in the superiority of US management but of *parochialism* – a lack of awareness of alternative contexts, models, research and values. As a result culture is often ignored in management research and universality is assumed (Thomas, 2008). Recently, a number of scholars have challenged the assumption that management theories formulated in one country are applicable universally, and have demonstrated in their research that management theories applicable in one country cannot be generalised directly to other countries (i.e. House *et al.*, 2004; Javidan *et al.*, 2005). Yet, progress in developing new context relevant theory in international management has been slow (Peterson, 2004; Tsui, 2004).

#### 4.4.2. A contextual analysis of Greek management

Early research concerning the management of Greek organisations has suggested that management is underdeveloped relative to other national EU partners (Greek Management Association, 1986). From the few empirical studies that refer to the Greek management culture, it is not easy to classify Greece as a member of any one of the clusters of countries suggested by Hofstede (1980, 1991) and his successors (i.e. Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 1994). The literature provides however some interesting data relating to management culture in Greek context.

Hofstede (1980) found that, of the fifty-three countries included in his sample, Greece (Figure 4) is characterised by the highest ‘*uncertainty avoidance*’ index (UAI), as well as by a moderate to high masculine culture (MAS). On the basis of these two characteristics, he suggested that the need for security and status as a result of wealth is especially important to Greeks. In addition, Greece appears to have a greater collectivist orientation (IDV) among other European countries (Kalogeraki, 2009). Thus, it is no surprising that in leadership styles by which people would like to be managed, Hofstede (1980, 1991) showed that the consultative style is greatly preferred over other styles in Greece (e.g., 70% of respondents preferred the consultative style, 18% the participative, 12% the persuasive, and 0% the autocratic).

**Figure 4:** Greece scores in Hofstede's cultural dimensions



Source: [http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede\\_greece.shtml](http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_greece.shtml), accessed 7/3/2010)

This survey reflected the will of people for change in a time that management was perceived as authoritative and an autocratic function in a rather conservative and depressed society (democracy was restored in 1974 after a seven-year military junta). Compared with the other thirty seven countries in Hofstede's sample, Greece gave the highest preference percentage to the consultative style (the average was 49%), while the participative style accounted for a considerably lower percentage than the average (28%). It can be argued that since Hofstede's research in the late 1970s, Greek managers have significantly adapted their autocratic and paternalistic national management style, conditioned by their national culture, to the international corporate culture studied abroad (Makridakis *et al.*, 1997). In addition, the societal values and the way that companies are structured and operate have made many steps towards convergence with the rest of the EU despite the significant cultural differences (Georgas, *et al.*, 1997; Myloni *et al.*, 2004; Triandis *et al.*, 1986).

Hofstede's cultural model has received significant criticisms by a number of scholars over the years. His work has been criticised for being: vague, contradictory and for lacking basic theory (Baskerville, 2003; Cray and Mallory, 1998); far too static and homogenous (Kwek, 2003; Tayeb, 2001); lacking relevance for discussing intercultural interactions (Adler, 1996; Bartholomew and Holden, 2002); its functionalist ambition of measuring largely unquantifiable phenomena (Baskerville, 2003); its inappropriate and time-worn data which were collected in only one organisation worldwide (Baskerville, 2003); and the failure to mitigate ethnocentrism and parochialism (Adler, 1997). Indeed, it can be argued that it is not possible to come to safe conclusions about the national management style characteristic only from the responses of a few employees working for an American multinational company (IBM), in a country with deeply rooted anti-Americanism (Christou, 2006), so we must treat the above results with caution. Nevertheless, Hofstede's survey is a good starting point for the discussion on the Greek cultural context.

Bozatzis (1999) argues that a distinctive characteristic of the Greek culture is the strong national identity. As a social phenomenon it involves feeling proud to be the national of a particular country, appreciating the nation's problems and participating in problem solving, believing the country is fulfilling its goals, taking personal pride and joy in achievements, introducing oneself openly as a national, and encouraging friends and close acquaintances to see one's country in a positive light (Karkatsoulis and Michalopoulos, 2005; Smith, 1996; Tajfel, 1979). Metaphorically speaking, a shared national identity can be seen as providing the social '*glue that holds a nation together*' (Smith and Jarkko, 1998); in these terms nationality can become a basis of mutual obligation and social solidarity. National identity is often a product of international recognition that enables the national community to '*imagine itself*'; in other words, the national '*self*' emerges through dialogue with '*others*' (Tzanelli, 2006). The notion of the '*others*' has a prominent role in considering the construction/formation of (national) identity (Stets and Burke, 2000); significant others may be internal or external to the in-group, ranging from minorities to foreigners (Triandafyllidou, 1998).

An increased sense of national identity results in national pride, which is both the pride or sense of esteem that a person has for one's nation and the pride or self-esteem that a person derives from one's national identity (Smith and Jarkko, 1998). National pride is related to feelings of patriotism and nationalism; the former refers to the love of one's country or dedicated allegiance to same, while the later is a strong national devotion that places one's own country above all others. National pride co-exists with patriotism and is a prerequisite of nationalism (Blank and Smith, 1993), but nationalism extends beyond national pride and feeling national pride is not equivalent to being nationalistic (Doob, 1964). Based on the results of Kosterman and Feshbach (1989), it can be argued that nationalism and patriotism are independent dimensions of national identity (Müller-Peters, 1998). Viroli (1995, p.12) distinguishes between a prejudiced '*language of nationalism*' an exclusionary, intolerant, xenophobic, jingoistic and self-aggrandizing



discourse which rests on assumptions of the uniqueness of a primordial folk, and a tolerant '*language of patriotism*' which rests upon a sense of civic duty and a love of country '*understood not as attachment to the cultural, ethnic, and religious unity of a people, but as love of a common liberty and the institutions that sustain it*'. Any individual might not embrace all attributes of national identity because of social dynamics and personality elements (Triandis, 1995).

How strong or weak one is in terms of national consciousness and identity depends on influence systems (positive or negative) projected and propagated by the nation and its people. It can be argued that there are differences in the general opinions of people towards their country in different periods and between different generations. Thus, people who grew up in a time of national solidarity, such as the World War Two (Katz, 1985), might be more likely to acquire a lifelong attachment to their nation than those who grew up in a time of '*externalism*' such as when a country is seeking entry to the European Community (Müller-Peters, 1998). Broome (1996, p.22) suggests that the Greek identity '*has never been a simple issue*'; he further argues that Greeks have a very strong sense of themselves, a sense that is connected to language, religion, culture and historical continuity. Modern Greek national identity is seen to have drawn from multiple interpretations, embedded in Greek national history. National histories are written through narratives entailing ways of life and cultural stereotypes. In Greece as in many other cases, national history in the process of nation-state building was contingent upon political aims, stressing therefore a concrete continuity between past and present, between Classical and Modern Greece which is also reflected in recurrent discursive and constitutive binaries (Hertzfeld, 1986; Bozatzis, 1999; Billig, 2001; Bozatzis, 2004). In addition, Bozatzis (2004) considers Greek national identity an exemplary case study since Greece has symbolically been both included and excluded from the western context of identity formation. Broome (1996, p.24) provides a graphic description of this situation with the following notion:

*“It is ironic that while the West looks to Greece for the source of its own identity, for most of its history the sights of Greece have been turned toward the East.”*

On the other hand ‘Greeks have been compelled to look both East and West at the same time during most of their history’ (Broome, 1996, pp. 26-27). Kazantzakis (1966, pp.167-168) refers to the ‘two great currents which constitute the double born soul of Greece’. By this duality he described the complex mixture of character constituents that have resulted from Greece’s location between East and West and from the combination of classical with modern elements in the Greek national character.

Isocrates, in the fourth century B.C., stated that a Greek is any person educated as a Greek. By education he was referring to more than formal education; he meant someone who had incorporated Greek values and learned all the Greek ways. Thus, in order to adequately understand the Greek context, it is necessary to explore the Greek sense of self, especially as it is tied to in-group behaviour. In the late 1960s Triandis *et al.* (1968) suggested that two central attributes of the Greek national character are extreme competitiveness and an unusual response to people in authority. In addition, Triandis and Vassiliou (1972) observed that Greeks behaved much more differently when they interfaced with an in-group (i.e. the family) than with an outgroup (i.e. strangers). Within the ‘in-group’ there is warm acceptance of people with authority, and behaviour is cooperative and given to self-sacrifice (the value of ‘*philotimo*’). By contrast, there is a cold rejection of out-group authorities, and behaviour toward out-group people is suspicious, hostile, and extremely competitive (Georgas, 1993). Thus, it can be argued that Greek ‘*anti-authoritarianism*’ is a by-product of the distinction between in-group and out-group.

Moreover, Greek people believe that the organisation they belong to has a great influence on their well-being and expect the organisation to look after them as a family (Kessapidou and Varsakelis, 2002). Most employees expect

that when they enter into an organisation they are likely to spend the rest of their working lives there. This is a common characteristic in collectivist societies such as China and Japan. The working culture of Greeks is based on a sense of honour, dignity, loyalty and a sense of duty what is referred in the modern Greek language as the value of 'filotimo'. There is no equivalent for this word in English; literally translated, it means love of honour and, as a concept, it implies a self-imposed code of conduct based on trust and fairness (Broome, 1996). As Triandis (1972) indicates, a person who is considered *philotimos* behaves toward members of his or her in-group in a way that is '*polite, virtuous, reliable, proud, truthful, generous, self-sacrificing, tactful, respectful and grateful*' (p. 308). 'Philotimo' requires a person to sacrifice him- or herself to help family or friends and to avoid doing or saying things that reflect negatively on them. Appropriate behaviour should be seen and felt, not only by the in-group but by the out-group as well, thus increasing prestige for the former in the eyes of the latter. 'Philotimo' often helps in overcoming difficulties and encouraging cooperation between workers or staff, which no rule or order could impose. It also means that, if treated 'properly', an employee will give more than what is normally expected in order to please his or her employers, 'properly' meaning being respected, praised, and shown concern with regard to personal matters (Papalexandris, 2008).

The value of 'filotimo' appears similar to the concept of 'face' as has appeared in the Chinese and other Asian cultures. Face is a person's dignity, self respect, status and prestige. According to Ho (1976), an organisation member tries '*not to lose face*'; face is lost when the individual, either through his/her action or that of people closely related to him/her, fails to meet essential requirements associated with his/her position. This characteristic benefits the organisations by having a high committed workforce without the need to create employee loyalty and retention schemes. In addition, following Triandis *et al.* (1968) argument, which later verified by Earley (1993), Greek employees perform better while working in an in-group rather than in an out-

group context or working alone. Therefore, their 'moral' involvement expressed as the value of 'filotimo' provides reasons for the members to comply with the organisation's requirements and meet the expectation of their colleagues or in a broader sense any member who belongs to the in-group. To some extent the value of 'filotimo' appears some similarities to 'simpatia' script characteristic of Hispanic people who want to have good relationships with others, i.e. want others to see them as 'simpatico' (Triandis *et al.*, 1984).

Moreover, Fukuyama's (1995) analysis of Trust identifies and compares low and high trust societies. He suggests that in family oriented societies like in Greece, there are strong families with weak bonds of trust among people unrelated to one another. These societies are dominated by family owned and family managed business - in the case of Greece more than 97% (ICAP, 2007). In this type of business there is a strong preference for authority that is centralised, hierarchical and formally or legally defined (Coviello and McAuley, 1999; Mihail, 2004). Disputes between individuals of the same status are difficult to resolve without reference to a higher and centralised form of authority. In general, Fukuyama (1995) suggests a correlation between hierarchy and the absence of trust that characterises low-trust societies. Hierarchies are necessary because not all people within a community can be relied upon to live by tacit ethical rules alone. They must ultimately be coerced by explicit rules and sanctions in the event that they do not conform / comply with these rules. Importance of the family is underpinned by the apparent weakness of voluntary citizens' welfare associations purported to function as intermediate protective layers between the family and the state. Therefore, the family has to absorb all vibrations inflicted by the state bureaucracy and/or by the working environment (Broome, 1996; Fukuyama, 1995). One should expect that the prevalence of a 'familial' social organisation would cause a high societal sensitivity to family values (Becker, 1995), also that the family business might constitute the social tissue that strengthens societal cohesion. In Greece instead, a hybrid

of the 'Montegrano model' (Banfield, 1958) seems to unfold, by which families survive and prosper by striving against one another (Broome, 1996), as well as against the state (Stavroulakis, 2009). Although family ties have loosened in recent years, the family still constitutes the fundamental nucleus of Greek society.

As already discussed in 4.4.1., national culture affects managerial work in various ways and in different levels. Laurent (1983) found that the cultural/national origin of European, North American and Asian managers considerably influenced their views on how effective managers should carry out their roles and functions. In addition, the extent to which managers viewed organisations as political, authoritarian, role formalising or hierarchical relationship systems differed according to their country of origin/culture. In the same context but from a different perspective, Lessem and Neubauer (1994) studied the impact of national culture in European management systems. They categorise this impact under four inter-related criteria. The first two refer to the tension between pragmatism and idealism/wholism that characterises European approaches to the theory and practice of management. The Anglo-Saxons and the Dutch tend to take a more pragmatic line towards management issues than their more idealistic or wholistic German counter-parts. There is also the tension between a rationalist approach to dealing with management issues, as for instance taken by the French; and the humanist or people-oriented approach that characterises the family companies in southern Europe (Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece).

Humanism is defined by Webster's Dictionary as '*pertaining to the social life or collective relations of man kind; devoted to realising the fullness of human being; a philosophy that asserts the essential dignity and worth of man*'. Humanism is associated in particular with Italy. It is also a feature of Spain, Greece, and Ireland. Humanism puts a strong emphasis on the family group and the community, which creates a sense of personal obligation and duty

(see also the value of *'filotimo'*). The society overall is characterised by opportunism, change, flexibility and adaptability. Entrepreneurship and business are based on family, community, or socio-economic networks. The management style in this case is personalised and *'convivial'*. Humanism in business is developed by the family patriarch or matriarch; or by the *impannatore*, defined by Lessem and Neubauer as *'designer, responsible for shaping and responding to fashion, as well as for organising production, also urging firms to experiment with materials and processes'* (1994, pp.214-215). Furthermore, according to Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (1994) a humanistic approach to management is characterised by:

- The management of communities of individuals (being both individualistic and communitarian).
- A tendency to personal equality within the hierarchy of the family, the community, or the socio-economic network. Each person has his or her place, duties, obligations, and rights within that context. Some people may also believe that what ever *Fate* has decreed the individual must accept.
- Particularism: it is the manager's job to deal with exceptions and individual cases as they arise. The universalistic application of rules may be perceived as being synonymous with bureaucratic control by the state, and with corruption by officials.
- Outer-directedness and opportunism.
- The perception of time as short-term sequence within longer term historical patterns or synchrony.

The above three values (Filotimo, Trust and Humanism) that are met in the Greek management context provide a strong indication of the existence of a different work context between Greek managers' and their European counterparts.

Greek managers are also influenced by the country's high context culture (Table 8). Context here is defined in terms of how individuals and their

society seek information and communicate (Hall and Hall, 1990). People from high context cultures obtain information from personal information networks. Before such people make a decision, or arrange a deal they have become well informed about the facts associated with it. They have discussed the matter with friends, colleagues or even family members. They will have asked questions and listen to rumours or gossip. On the other hand, people from low context cultures seek information about decisions and deals from a research database whilst they would also listen to the views of colleagues or relatives (Morden, 1999). In addition, Broome (1996) suggests that because the thinking process of Greek managers is 'nonlinear', there does not seem to be a need, such as in most western countries, to complete tasks in a serial manner. Thus, it is not uncommon in Greece to find several people in a manager's office at the same time, each with a different concern, or the manager might be on two phones, concurrently working on various tasks at different stages of completion, all the while receiving and passing messages to the secretary or giving directives to other employees. Thus, in relation with time, Greek managers tend to deal with several items simultaneously and to cope well with constant interruptions, often in an unplanned or opportunistic sequence (Broome, 1996). They may not be interested in time schedules or concepts of punctuality. They consider that the reality of events and opportunities is more important than adherence to what they perceive to be artificial constructs of planning, schedules and appointments.

**Table 8:** High and low context cultures affecting management practices

| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>LOW CONTEXT</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Business first<br/>Value performance<br/>Legal contract<br/>Fast and efficient</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>HIGH CONTEXT</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Relationships first<br/>Value goodwill<br/>Trust<br/>Slow and ritualistic</p> |
|---|---|
|---|---|

Source: Adapted from Hodgets and Luthans (2003)

Time is neither seen as a resource nor as an opportunity cost that equates to money – behaviour synonymous to *western management* practices. For most Greeks, matters can always be settled tomorrow; Lewis (1992) calls this a Polychronic culture. Making and keeping appointments in Greece is not an easy task. Generally there is a more relaxed attitude toward the time of appointments, since everyone is aware of the difficulty involved in getting from one place to another, especially in Athens as well as other large cities. However, many managers are now accustomed to following the western practice and they expect punctuality regarding appointments and meetings (Broome, 1996).

It seems that the long history of instability in the external political and economic environment have made Greeks reluctant to plan ahead (Papalexandris, 2008). Greek culture, on all levels, has always been characterised by its '*here and now*' attitude, mainly due to the environmental instability, wars and the resulting insecurity (Papalexandris *et al.*, 2002). What is missing is the sense of belief in the future and the systematic approach to a long-term program that will look ahead and prepare action plans to meet future needs. To this, should be added the frequent changes in legislation, practiced over the years by the state, and the general mistrust about what lies ahead, due mainly to the country's geopolitical position Broome (1996). There is little advance planning unless it is imposed from the outside. Thus, it can be argued that since the country became a member of the EU in the early 1980s, detailed planning ahead of time is a prerequisite in order to participate in projects and get access to available funds. This fact has also forced state administration to adjust their practice and become more future-oriented. Especially after joining the European Monetary Union (EMU), Greece will inevitably follow norms common in other European countries.

The implications for Greek managers operating in a high context and polychronic environment are profound – especially when dealing with '*Westerners*' from low context and polychronic cultures. American and



European multinational companies were the first that experienced these difficulties back in the 1960s. The problem was – and to a large extent is – that western managers value most performance and business whilst Greeks value relationships and goodwill alongside with performance. In addition the mix of monochronic with polychronic cultures may result to unpredictable situations; it can either give rise to constant culture clash and disagreement or may yield synergies as features of each complements the other (Morden, 1996).

Part of the problem was solved as many Greek and multinational companies' executives received Anglo-Saxon education and training where management is seen as a general and transferable skill. The creation of this new cohort of managers has been a small step towards convergence with the rest of the EU regarding managerial behaviour. It is however questionable if Greek managers will ever fully comply with the established western management values and practices (Myloni *et al.*, 2004).

#### **4.4.3. Studies related to Greek management culture**

In the post-second world war years during the 1950s and 1960s there was a high level of unemployment and a significant amount of immigration to industrialised countries like Germany and the United States. The level of education among employees, managers, and entrepreneurs was low. The civil war, which broke out just after World War Two, had only just been resolved, and for several years the political situation was unstable and lacking in the basic elements of democracy.

The majority of empirical studies that were carried out in Greece during the 1970s and 1980s, sketch a period where the level of industrialisation, the growth rate, and the level of disposable income were very low (Bourantas and Papadakis, 1996). As early as in the early 1970s, Cummings and Schmidt (1972) examined the relative roles of cultural background and

degree of industrialisation in the managerial beliefs of a sample of Greek managers. Findings were compared with the previous results reported by Haire *et al.* (1966) and Clark and McCabe (1970). The Greeks were as inconsistent as those in these two previous studies in displaying little belief in their subordinates' capacities for leadership and initiative while advocating the practice of participative management. On two beliefs (capacity for leadership and initiative and belief in internal control) the Greeks tended to cluster with a Latin-European cluster, thereby suggesting a cultural explanation. On the other hand, regarding beliefs in sharing information with subordinates and participative management the Greeks clustered with a developing countries cluster, thereby suggesting an industrialisation explanation. Exclusive focus on either explanation of managerial attitudes and beliefs does not seem warranted.

A study by Bourantas *et al.* (1987) addressed whether there have been significant changes since the early 1950s, in the needs of Greeks. Indeed, their empirical data suggest a process of evolution: the Greeks' physiological and security needs (Maslow, 1970) are relatively well satisfied, while new, higher-order needs now appear to be important. The 'ego needs' of self-esteem and status through wealth, which largely coincide with the national character of the Greek people, remain important, as would be logically expected.

It can be suggested that Greek 'management' as something distinct has hardly existed until the early 1980s; all management practices and methods were largely adoption of multinational companies' practices. Kanelpoulos (1991) has documented a lack of wide diffusion of modern management methods and systems such as formal structures, planning and control systems, human resource management systems, incentive systems, and management information systems. Bourantas and Papadakis (1996) argue that the salient characteristics of Greek management (in the 1980s and early 1990s) were firstly, concentration of power and control in the hands of top

management, and secondly a lack of modern systems to support strategic decisions. A question raised here is whether management in Greece possesses any unique characteristics that distinguish it from other European management styles (e.g., the institutionalised participation of employees in Germany or Sweden and the informal network relationships among small and medium-sized enterprises in Italy). Bourantas and Papadakis (*ibid*, p.17) argue that:

*“...we are so far unable to single out one important dimension distinguishing Greek management from the management style of other European countries. We would rather characterize Greek management as a Western-type management style that has not yet reached a high level of modernization and adoption of scientific and analytical methods and techniques.”*

They also suggest that Greek management differs in the degree of modernisation and professionalism of management functions, management systems, and professional knowledge and skills. Thus, the differentiation of Greek management relative to that of other European countries is a matter of degree of development and does not constitute a different model. Although this view is correct and accepted by Greek academics and practitioners, it does not emphasise the role of culture in managerial work. This is normal because researchers at that time (early 1990s) in Greece focused their attention on the improvement of management practices and technological advancements.

Bourantas and Papalexandris' (1992) empirical study of five hundred eighty eight Greek managers found that 74% of respondents perceived that their organisations reflected either the characteristics of an Eiffel Tower culture (38%) or a Family culture (36%), providing support for the classification of Greek organisations as either of these two organisational culture types (Table 9). Consistent with Trompenaars' (1993) work, it is probable that the size of the Greek organisation differentiated between the implementation of a Family or Eiffel Tower organisational cultural form. The two dimensions of Trompenaars' model, hierarchy/equity and person/task, can be

operationalised by considering the degree of centralisation and the degree of formalisation, respectively. Thus, Greek organisations are likely to adopt an Eiffel Tower culture, characterised by centralisation of decisions-making authority (hierarchy focus) and high reliance on formalisation (task focus).

**Table 9:** Four types of organisational culture

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>The Family<br/>(Power-oriented culture)</b></p> <p>This culture is characterised by strong emphasis on the hierarchy and an orientation toward the person. Individuals within this organisational form are expected to perform their tasks as directed by the leader, who may be viewed as the caring parent. Subordinates not only respect the dominant leader or father figure but they also seek guidance and approval.</p>                 | <p><b>The Eiffel Tower<br/>(Role-oriented culture)</b></p> <p>A strong emphasis on the hierarchy and an orientation toward the task characterises this culture. The 'Eiffel Tower' image is intended to symbolise the typical bureaucracy - a tall organisation, narrow at the top and wide at the base where roles and tasks are clearly defined and coordinated from the top. Authority is derived from a person's position or role within the organisation, not the person per se.</p> |
| <p><b>The Guided Missile<br/>(Task-oriented culture)</b></p> <p>This type of organisational culture is characterised by a strong emphasis on equality and an orientation toward the task. The motto for this cultural type is '<i>getting things done</i>'. Organisation structures, processes and resources are all geared toward achieving the specified task/project goals. Power is derived from expertise rather than the formal hierarchy.</p> | <p><b>The Incubator<br/>(Fulfilment-oriented culture)</b></p> <p>This culture is characterised by a strong emphasis on equality as well as an orientation toward the person. Trompenaars states that the purpose of the organisation in such a culture is to serve as an incubator for the self-expression and self-fulfilment of its members.</p>  |

Source: Trompenaas (1993)

The hierarchy focus of the Eiffel Tower organisational culture seems congruent with Greek managers' high-power distance societal values (Joiner, 2001). Indeed, it is likely that encouraging Greek managers to increase their involvement in decision making may generate anxiety and lead to lower levels of performance. Such managers tend to prefer and respect a more non-consultative, decisive approach from their superior. Similarly, upper management inculcated with the values of a high-power distance culture, are likely to be reluctant to give up decision-making authority (perceived to be

rightly bestowed upon them) to promote a relationship of greater equality in decision making (Veiga and Yanouzas, 1991).

GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness) is a research programme initiated in the late 1990s, focusing on the effects of societal culture on leadership, organisational practices and values in sixty-two nations, including Greece. National cultures are examined in terms of nine dimensions: performance orientation; future orientation; assertiveness; power distance; humane orientation; institutional collectivism; in-group collectivism; uncertainty avoidance; and gender egalitarianism. The participants in this survey were eighteen thousand middle managers in food processing (including luxury hotels), finance and telecommunications. The project used a multi-method approach by employing both qualitative and quantitative data. These data were collected from one hundred and fifty Country Co-Investigators (CCIs) who were social scientists or management scholars. CCIs ensured the accuracy of questionnaire translations and are responsible for the writing of each country's culture specific descriptions that derive from the interpretation of the qualitative data collected from the questionnaires. This process provided useful insights for each participative country's cultural perspectives in relation to management and leadership (Javidan and House, 2001) .

The central theoretical proposition of the model that guides the GLOBE research programme, is that *"the attributes and entities that distinguish a given culture from other cultures are predictive of the practices of organisations and leader attributes and behaviours that are most that are most frequently enacted, acceptable and effective in that culture"* (House *et al.*, 2002). The theoretical background of this model is an integration of implicit leadership theory (Lord and Maher, 1991), value/belief theory of culture (Hofstede, 1980), implicit motivation theory (McClelland, 1985), and structural contingency theory of organisational form and effectiveness (Donaldson, 1993). The GLOBE project concludes to some interesting

findings, regarding Greek management context. Thus, the most important Greek management attributes revealed by the Globe Project, follow below.

To begin with 'Assertiveness', it is the extent to which a society encourages people to be tough, confrontational, assertive and competitive versus modest and tender. This dimension is part of Hofstede's (1980) Masculinity dimension. Highly assertive societies such as Greece and the USA. tend to have a '*can-do*' attitude and value competition (Table 10). They have sympathy for these who are strong and the winners. Less assertive societies such as Sweden and Japan tend to prefer warm and cooperative relations and harmony.

The second attribute, 'Uncertainty Avoidance', refers to the extent to which its members seek orderliness, consistency, structure, formalised procedures and laws to cover situations in their daily lives. Societies that scored low in uncertainty avoidance such as Greece and Russia, there is a strong tolerance of ambiguity and uncertainty (Table 11). People are used to less structure and order in their lives and are not as concerned about following rules and procedures. In low uncertainty avoidance countries people are not used to structured or organised communication. Meetings are not planned in advance, they have not set time and there is a tendency to have open-agenda or no agenda at all. This dimension is linked directly with the Greek high context polychronic culture discussed above in 4.4.2.

Furthermore, 'Institutional emphasis on collectivism versus individualism' (Table 12) reflects the degree to which individuals are encouraged by societal institutions to be integrated into groups within organisations and the society. Rewards in Greece are based on individual performance because self-interest is more strongly valued than the collective group. This dimension indicates the societal transformation that occurred since the early 1980s when Hofstede (1980) has found Greece to score very low in the individualism-collectivism index.

On the other hand, 'in-group collectivism' (also referred as 'family collectivism') is quite different than the above dimension; it reflects the extent to which a society's institutions favour autonomy versus collectivism (Table 13). It refers to the extent to which members of a society take pride in membership in small groups such as their family and circle of close friends, and the organisations in which they are employed. Papalexandris *et al.* (2002) indicate that one of the main characteristics of the Greek culture is strong family bonds, even though in big cities there might have been a recent change in this respect. The father is the centre of the family, he is responsible for all its members and the one who makes the final decision. There is a strict hierarchy and younger members are expected to show respect to the older. Power is concentrated in a few hands, which is usually accepted although it does not go unquestioned. Family members and close friends tend to have strong expectations from each other. Taking care of their needs and satisfying their expectations is critical to each individual. It is not unusual to forego due diligence, or equal employment opportunity, and to favour a close friend or family member in recruiting or in allocating rewards and promotions. Making regular references to one's family and especially one's father is quite acceptable and can go a long way in opening doors.

Finally, 'performance orientation' refers to the degree to which a society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence. Greece has scored low in this dimension (Table 14); the society in this case tends to emphasise loyalty and belonging, view feedback as discomforting, emphasise tradition, and pay attention to one's family and background rather than performance. In addition, competition is associated with defeat and sympathy is valued. These characteristics express the widespread feeling of disappointment, over the general tendency towards mistrusting those achieving individual goals and reaching high levels of success. Here, a situation similar to the '*tall poppy syndrome*' is observed in

Australia (Ashkanasy and Falkus, 1999): this refers to dislike of those who excel and are above others, especially when success leads to arrogance.

Thus, although Greeks strive for achievements, they often refuse recognition to those performing well, while on the contrary they very often think of themselves as victims of this lack of recognition, having a feeling of being betrayed by their organisation and by society in general (Papalexandris *et al.*, 2002). This explains the low productivity tradition – especially until the mid1990s – in the private and mostly the public sector. In addition, managers from low-performance oriented cultures tend to prefer indirect and vague language. They are not too comfortable with strong results-driven and explicit communication. Hard facts and figures are hard to come by and not taken as seriously even when they are available. To a typical Greek manager, effective communication does not necessarily mean a clear agreement on facts and expectations. It may mean a discussion and exploration of issues without any commitments and explicit results.

Summarising the findings of the GLOBE project in Greece, the following about perceptions of societal culture can be suggested (Papalexandris, 2008). First, the participant managers are not satisfied with the performance orientation of their society and they wish that things should be planned more carefully. In addition, they are not satisfied with the high levels of assertiveness shown and they show a longing for more collective ways of life that was the rule in the past but is now threatened by rapid urbanization and modern ways of life. Moreover, Greek managers value family life and gender equality; they also long for a more caring society, which was the rule in the past. Greeks also resent power distance, which they perceive as high. Finally, they perceive their society as highly uncertain and would like this situation to improve.



**Table 10: Country rankings on assertiveness**

| Least Assertive Countries in GLOBE |      | Medium Assertive Countries in GLOBE |      | Most Assertive Countries in GLOBE |             |
|------------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Sweden                             | 3.38 | Egypt                               | 3.91 | Spain                             | 4.42        |
| New Zealand                        | 3.42 | Ireland                             | 3.92 | U.S.A.                            | 4.55        |
| Switzerland                        | 3.47 | Philippines                         | 4.01 | <b>Greece</b>                     | <b>4.58</b> |
| Japan                              | 3.59 | Ecuador                             | 4.09 | Austria                           | 4.62        |
| Kuwait                             | 3.63 | France                              | 4.13 | Germany (DDR)                     | 4.73        |

**Table 11: Country rankings on uncertainty avoidance**

| Lowest Uncertainty Avoidance Countries in GLOBE |             | Medium Uncertainty Avoidance Countries in GLOBE |      | Highest Uncertainty Avoidance Countries in GLOBE |      |
|---|-------------|---|------|--|------|
| Russia  | 2.88        | Israel  | 4.01 | Austria  | 5.16 |
| Hungary   | 3.12        | U.S.A.  | 4.15 | Denmark  | 5.22 |
| Bolivia   | 3.35        | Mexico  | 4.18 | W. Germany                                       | 5.22 |
| <b>Greece</b>                                   | <b>3.39</b> | Kuwait  | 4.21 | Sweden   | 5.32 |
| Venezuela                                       | 3.44        | Ireland   | 4.30 | Switzerland                                      | 5.37 |

**Table 12: Country rankings on individualism / collectivism**

| Most Individualistic Countries in GLOBE |      | Medium Individualistic Countries in GLOBE |      | Least Individualistic Countries in GLOBE |      |
|---|------|---|------|--|------|
| <b>Greece</b>                           | 3.25 | Hong Kong                                 | 4.13 | Denmark                                  | 4.80 |
| Hungary                                 | 3.53 | U.S.A.                                    | 4.20 | Singapore                                | 4.90 |
| Germany (DDR)                           | 3.56 | Egypt                                     | 4.50 | Japan                                    | 5.19 |
| Argentina                               | 3.66 | Poland                                    | 4.53 | South Korea                              | 5.20 |
| Italy                                   | 3.68 | Indonesia                                 | 4.54 | Sweden                                   | 5.22 |

**Table 13: Country rankings on in-group collectivism**

| Least In-Group Collective Countries in GLOBE |      | Medium In-Group Collective Countries in GLOBE |      | Most In-Group Collective Countries in GLOBE |      |
|--|------|---|------|---|------|
| Denmark                                      | 3.53 | Japan   | 4.63 | <b>Greece</b>                               | 5.27 |
| Sweden                                       | 3.66 | Israel  | 4.70 | Egypt                                       | 5.64 |
| New Zealand                                  | 3.67 | Qatar   | 4.71 | China                                       | 5.80 |
| Netherlands                                  | 3.70 | Austria                                       | 4.85 | India                                       | 5.92 |
| Finland                                      | 4.07 | Italy   | 4.94 | Iran  | 6.03 |

**Table 14: Country rankings on performance orientation**

| Least Performance Oriented Countries in GLOBE |             | Medium Performance Oriented Countries in GLOBE |      | Most Performance Oriented Countries in GLOBE |      |
|---|-------------|--|------|--|------|
| Russia  | 2.88        | Sweden   | 3.72 | U.S.A.                                       | 4.49 |
| Argentina                                     | 3.08        | Israel   | 3.85 | Taiwan                                       | 4.56 |
| <b>Greece</b>                                 | <b>3.20</b> | Spain  | 4.01 | New Zealand                                  | 4.72 |
| Venezuela                                     | 3.32        | England  | 4.08 | Hong Kong                                    | 4.80 |
| Italy   | 3.58        | Japan  | 4.22 | Singapore                                    | 4.90 |

Source: Adapted from Javidan and House (2001), pp.294-301

#### **4.4.4. Research on managerial work in Greek hotels**

So far the discussion has focused on the Greek management context and the various studies that tried to identify its distinctive characteristics, if any. While there is plenty of research in the field of general management, only a few sporadic studies exist in relation to hospitality managerial work in Greece, despite the important contribution of the sector in the country's economy. As already discussed in Chapter 3, managers working in hospitality, are faced with a series of challenges and particularities that are met only in this sector. Thus, there is a need to take a closer look at the nature of hospitality managers' work, detached from general management research. Despite management's growing popularity as a discipline within the Greek and English hospitality and tourism research, literature mainly contains contributions in the sociological and economics fields (Galani-Moutafi, 2004). Thus, over the past three decades researchers have focused on tourism planning and economic dimensions in Greece. Unfortunately, there is no common starting point to the investigation of managerial work in the Greek hotel sector; there are only a handful of papers that examine particular aspects of managerial work in Greek hotels, mainly focus on HRM practices and policies (i.e. recruitment and selection; training and development).

Hospitality management education is one of the most popular research topics in Greece. The effectiveness of the available hospitality curricula comparing to the current and future needs of the industry are the focus of the debate; the common denominator for these studies is the need for change in the existing programmes – especially those offered for public higher education institutions. Christou (1997, 1999) argued that graduates of hospitality management courses in Greece are not fully prepared for the requirements of the hotel industry. He also called for immediate action in order to close the gap between the industry needs and the results achieved by the provided hospitality education. As a starting point Christou (1999) suggests increasing the breadth and quality of hospitality management programmes' curricula; this effort can be based on the pursuit of the continuous development of

students' transferable skills. Furthermore, Moira *et al.* (2004) studied the employment status of hospitality and tourism graduates in Greece. The survey revealed there was no correlation between age, sex or degree classification and salary or career expectations, and that the interviewed graduates consider family network, foreign languages or computer literacy to be more important than the degree itself in getting their first job in the hospitality industry. Prinianaki (2005) examined and assessed the relevance of hospitality management programmes to the current and future industry needs in Greece from an industry perspective. By using focus groups consisting of hotel general managers, she found that hospitality graduates in general seem to be poorly prepared for managerial roles and their future progression. According to Prinianaki a prominent reason for this problem, out of many, seems to be the lack of adequate co-operation between education and industry, which results to the provision of poor programmes from the state owned higher education institutions. The outcomes of this study highlighted the need for hospitality management programmes to fully address the industry's current and future requirements.

Career development was another area of interest regarding managerial work in Greek hotels. Akrivos *et al.* (2007) explored the career strategies used by Greek hotel managers in order to advance their career successfully. They found that the most commonly strategies used in relation to career opportunities, are mobility, training and willingness to be adaptable. On the other hand, the least commonly used ones relate to family contacts, job search techniques and pay. An interesting argument that the authors made in this research was that they found no obvious differences comparing to UK and Australian hotel managers in terms of career strategies used, based on previous research (Ladkin, 2002; Ladkin and Riley, 1996).

The level of involvement in strategic planning was studied by Gkliatis and Koufopoulos (2010), who found that the majority of participating hotel managers were able to plan ahead effectively. Planning practices seem to be

highly centralised with the role of the GM being highly significant in participation and decision making for Greek luxury hotels. This study also revealed that Greek managers in 5\* hotels, highly focus on customer services and the analysis of the competitive business environment (internal and external).

Paraskevas (2000) studied the role of hotel managers' involvement in recruitment and selection and the extent to which organisations adopted modern methods apart from the traditional ones (i.e. word of mouth and recommendation). The results showed an overall resistance to the new culture in managerial selection due to cost and reliability concerns. Furthermore, although Greek hospitality managers as recruiters are more interested in the personality aspects of the managerial candidate than their colleagues in other sectors, they tend not to use techniques that would help them towards this end. This study also showed that hospitality recruiters in theory share the same views with their colleagues in other sectors in terms of specific techniques' validity and usefulness, however, their practice is totally different. More recently, Velissariou and Apladas (2008) investigated the recruitment methods employed from hotels (mainly 4 and 5\*) on the island of Crete. The findings of this study indicated that the main recruitment methods used were by means of personal contact (i.e. word of mouth), by placing classified ads in local press and by contacting educational institutes; alternatively other means of recruitment such as specialised Internet web sites or through private/public employment services were used less frequently. The findings of this survey also revealed that Human Resource Departments had not yet been well established in Cretan hotels apart from 5\* hotels and those belonging to hotel chains. As a result most of the HR functions were assigned to senior managers, who in most of the cases were unsuitable, untrained or just too busy to perform the HR manager's job.

Klidas (2002) has studied the cultural relativity of empowerment from a cross cultural perspective, based on the findings of a comparative study in the

hotels of a major American MNCs in seven European countries – including Greece. Klidas highlighted some interesting differences between hotel managers in the south and north Europe, in relation to power distance. In general, the available evidence from the research data pointed to a higher centralisation of power in the hotels in the south, as opposed to a lower centralisation of power in those of the north, aligning to the theory of Hofstede and other comparative studies (Drenth and Groenendijk, 1998). Klidas concluded that the empowerment doctrine is the cultural product of American culture and its propositions are not necessarily embraced in different cultural contexts. As a result Klidas (2002) raises the issue of the broader implications for the ‘universal validity’ of management and organisational theories, within the context of the ‘global-local’ question.

Chitiris (1990) studied the profile of the luxury Greek hotel GMs; he argued that demographic characteristics of hotel managers such as age education and length of employment, have some influence on their motivation, while other such as marital status, sex and length of time in current job have no impact all. This empirical study does not identify or discuss in great detail the actual motivators or their differences potentially caused by the different demographic characteristics. Another effort to identify the characteristics of the Greek hotel GMs can be found in a recent survey by the Tourism Research Institute (TRI, 2009), which studied the relationship between the hotel owner(s) or *hotelier* and the GM in Greece. According to TRI the GM is the person who is responsible for a variety of tasks and roles such as the hotel’s smooth day-to-day operations and high room occupancy. A GM is holder of at least a university first degree (required by law) and in average speaks two foreign languages; his/hers level of technical expertise is high, and acquires also a range of interpersonal skills focused in communication. The level of networking is crucial for the GM’s effort to ‘sell’ the hotel successfully; the latter is also determined by the relation between the GM and the travel agents and tour operators. The GM knows what happens inside and outside the hotel, thus the control of information plays a crucial

role in his/her job. The roles of the GM are focused in what Mintzberg (1973) calls '*father figure*' and leader. The Greek hotel GMs are influenced to a certain degree by the local context and often move between the authoritative and consultative management style, depending on the situation. There are instances where their formal authority is overshadowed by the informal interventions of the hotelier or his/hers family members; this is one of the common reasons GMs' leave – especially in family business.

Kriemadis *et al.* (2008) examined the level of awareness of organisational culture (OC) of hotel managers in middle (2 & 3\*) and upper (4 & 5\*) class hotels. A random sample of 140 hotel managers were surveyed using Sashkin's (1997) Organisational Culture Assessment Questionnaire (OCAQ) which identifies 5 OC factors namely '*managing change*', '*achieving goals*', '*cultural strength*', '*coordinated team work*' and '*customer orientation*'. Generally no significant differences were found among managers of middle and upper level hotel units in terms of general OC awareness. The authors argued for a rather homogenous picture, with all hotel unit managers placing more or less the same importance to the five factors of OC, while also experiencing a rather satisfactory OC within their respective hotel unit.

In a recent conference paper Nicolaidis and Katsaros (2010) explored the Greek hotel GM' readiness to change. More specifically they examined the influence of locus of control, involvement and job satisfaction on Greek hotel managers' readiness-to-change. They argued that the role of managers' personal characteristics and emotional attitudes towards change are deemed essential for the survival of Greek hotels in a highly competitive international environment. They also suggested a number of practical implications for enhancing Greek hotel managers' level of readiness-to-change.

As a concluding point it can be argued that research on managerial work in Greek hotels seems to be sporadic, fragmented and is based on empirical findings which suffer from a theoretical or methodological perspective.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that this body of research grows slowly but steadily, as more researchers show interest on this topic. In order to be useful however, managerial work research in Greek hotels needs to be placed in a coherent and straightforward framework, that requires a clear direction from both academics and practitioners. There is also a need to place this type of research in the wider European context, since hospitality poses as one of the most dynamic and promising sectors in the EU. Thus, more cross-national and cross-cultural studies are needed in order to be able to create an enhanced awareness of the managerial work context in hotels.

#### **4.5. Conclusion**

*“In Greece you must manage persons, not personnel”*  
(Broome, 1996, p.79)

The above notion sketches very well the challenges that the national work context poses for managers operating in Greece. The successful Greek manager is expected to take care of employee needs as they arise, showing an interest in their family problems, because for most Greeks, the family is more important than work. The personal relationship with employees and the ability of the manager to develop and maintain personal connections with both subordinates and colleagues is often what distinguishes a leader from a manager, especially at the middle levels of hierarchy (Broome, 1996). In fact, there is no corresponding translation for manager in Greek language. For higher levels, the word most often used is ‘diefthintis’, meaning director. Indeed, many managers still carry out their jobs in a more directive and controlling approach than is commonly found in Western companies. Research in the mid-1960s showed that autocratic management was a consequence of the family structure and the lack of separation between ownership and management (Alexander, 1968). Today, even in family-owned companies, which could be characterised as patriarchal, very rarely does the directive style mean harsh treatment to employees (Papalexandris, 2008). As relationship bonds run deep in Greek culture, the manager expects loyalty. In

return for this loyalty the boss will look after the interests of subordinates (Broom, 1996). The manager-subordinate relationship is viewed as reciprocal.

In addition, Greeks are both very individualistic and independent; as a result they do not like to be told what to do without proper explanations. They dislike orders and are not at all intimidated by status. They face difficulties in cooperating and are very quick to question authority and mistrust superiors. Therefore, only the person/manager who can win approval, encourage teamwork, and be recognised as superior due to his or her qualities, skills, fairness, and integrity, can be characterised as a leader. Such a person can achieve levels of performance from his or her group that far excel what would be considered as normal by international standards. Papalexandris (2008) argues that managers and people of foreign origin should remember that Greece is a country with a complex past history where ancient myths blend with modern reality. This has led to a vast and diversified pool of values, attitudes, and behavioural patterns, from which individuals draw to form their own character and personality.

This complex environment creates various implications for foreign managers operating in Greece (Broome, 1996; Papalexandris, 2008). Thus, not only do they need to spend a lot of time with members of their group, but also spend time on establishing personal connections with peers and subordinates, as good human relations will speed up operations and improve communications and overall performance. Management must be exercised by using a participative style, listening to suggestions and inviting comments from employees. Moreover, it would be wise to avoid criticising everyday reality as Greeks are eager to criticise their society but reluctant to listen to others doing so. Foreign managers should not expect much formality and attention to detail, making sure to constantly insist on deadlines if they wish to keep a time schedule. Finally, they are expected to keep a firm position after reaching a well-informed decision and make clear that although the



manager/leader considers others' opinions, the responsibility rests with the leader.

Despite the paternalistic family oriented management style, there are indications of a strong will to change. Figures from the GLOBE project show that Greece has low mean scores in 'society as is' and higher scores in 'society should be' (Table 15). The later is translated to a desired society where longing for collectivism, family values, and humane orientation is high normally respects leaders who treat employees fairly, are good team integrators, have integrity, are not tough, can raise morale, but are at the same time kind and pay attention to employee needs (Papalexandris, 2008).

**Table 15:** GLOBE results on Greek societal culture

| <i>Culture Dimensions</i>           | <i>Society "As Is"</i>  |                         |                         | <i>Society "Should Be"</i> |                         |                         | <i>Differenced</i>              |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                                     | <i>Mean<sup>a</sup></i> | <i>Band<sup>b</sup></i> | <i>Rank<sup>c</sup></i> | <i>Mean<sup>a</sup></i>    | <i>Band<sup>b</sup></i> | <i>Rank<sup>c</sup></i> | <i>"Should Be"–<br/>"As Is"</i> |
| <i>Performance Orientation</i>      | 3.20                    | C                       | 61                      | 5.81                       | C                       | 40                      | 2.61                            |
| <i>Future Orientation</i>           | 3.40                    | C                       | 51                      | 5.19                       | B                       | 48                      | 1.79                            |
| <i>Assertiveness</i>                | 4.58                    | A                       | 9                       | 2.96                       | C                       | 57                      | –1.62                           |
| <i>Institutional Collectivism I</i> | 3.25                    | D                       | 61                      | 5.40                       | A                       | 5                       | 2.15                            |
| <i>In-Group Collectivism II</i>     | 5.27                    | B                       | 35                      | 5.46                       | B                       | 41                      | 0.19                            |
| <i>Gender Egalitarianism</i>        | 3.48                    | A                       | 27                      | 4.89                       | A                       | 15                      | 1.41                            |
| <i>Humane Orientation</i>           | 3.34                    | D                       | 59                      | 5.23                       | B                       | 48                      | 1.89                            |
| <i>Power Distance</i>               | 5.40                    | A                       | 21                      | 2.39                       | D                       | 52                      | –3.01                           |
| <i>Uncertainty Avoidance</i>        | 3.39                    | D                       | 57                      | 5.09                       | A                       | 17                      | 1.70                            |

<sup>a</sup>Country mean score on a 7-point Likert-type scale. <sup>b</sup>Bands A > B > C > D are determined by calculating the grand mean and standard deviations across all society "As Is" and "Should Be" scales respectively for the GLOBE sample of countries. These means and standard deviations are used to calculate low, medium, and high bands of countries (GLOBE standard procedure, cf. Hanges, Dickson, & Sipe, 2004). <sup>c</sup>The rank order for Greece relative to the 61 countries. <sup>d</sup>Absolute difference between the "Should Be" and "As Is" scores.

Source: Papalexandris (2008), p.780

The exploration of the Greek management context focused on HRM, management practices, culture, and managerial work in hotels, provided strong indications that both convergence and divergence with the rest of the EU seem to occur simultaneously. The Greek context seems to exert a quite prominent effect in managerial work. Practices such as the use of

recommendations and references in recruiting employees - for both Greek firms and foreign subsidiaries - are still common even in larger Greek companies based on evidence from the GLOBE project (Myloni *et al.*, 2004). The greatest pressures for convergence are coming from the obligations of Greece as a member of the EU and several other organisations, which require planning ahead, and efficient management of the various projects. While this affects mostly the public sector, globalisation puts pressures for uniform management practices and policies on private sector organisations (Broome, 1996; Papalexandris, 2008). Thus, a slow but steady movement towards harmonisation of management practices at least with the rest of the E.U. members is observed. On the other hand, a certain level of differentiation from the average E.U. social and working conditions within the Greek context provides the basis for the argument that it is not only the right mix of competencies or the adoption of best practices that makes a manager successful but also the understanding of the work context itself.

As a concluding thought here, it can be argued that further research is needed in order to understand the nature of interaction between national culture and the managerial work context. As a result, a different methodological approach and qualitative or mixed research methods must be followed in order to enhance our understanding of managerial work.

#### **4.6. Chapter summary**

The third and final part of the literature review has discussed the influence that the Greek context exerts in managerial work. The Greek context was explored from various perspectives such as: the HRM and work context through the findings of the CRANET (1993-1999) survey; the Greek management education; the national culture, the values of '*filotimo*', trust and humanism, and the findings of the GLOBE (1999) project which reveals aspects of the Greek management. The discussion was also focused on the Greek hotel managerial work context where a small but growing number of

empirical studies exist. The overall conclusion was that Greek managers receive pressures from both the European and Global business environment and the national/local distinctive characteristics. Thus, convergent and divergent forces co-exist on a delicate balance. The following chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the research approach and methodology used for this thesis.

#### **4.7. Literature review chapters – summary points:**

Following the exploration of managerial roles and competencies, the characteristics of managerial work in the hotel sector, and managerial work in the Greek context, it is helpful to provide a précis of the key findings from the extant literature:

- Managerial work is defined by a variety of formal and informal roles (e.g. information, interpersonal, decision making); these roles largely define managerial behaviour. Although it can be argued that similar roles and behaviours can be observed, these are modified / adapted according to the work context and the manager him/herself.
- In order to perform their roles, managers need a wide range of competencies, often referred as a '*competencies framework*'. The dominant '*behavioural*' approach which separates average from superior performers argues for a '*universal*' manager able to perform anywhere in the world, with the same set of competencies. This effort to standardise managerial work, ignores the various different work contexts and the significant role of organisational and national culture.
- Work in hotels poses a wide range of challenges for managerial staff, especially in luxury establishments where there are tremendous pressures for service quality, customer satisfaction and outstanding (financial) performance. All these targets must be achieved for a '*perishable*' product

that it is consumed at the place (hotel) and the time it is produced. Luxury hotel managers must predict and face successfully the constant external environment changes which affect to a certain degree their sensitive product. Although many empirical researchers believe that managerial work in hotels is 'unique', the required set of competencies for managers appears many similarities with general management, at least at senior level.

- Managerial work in Greece appears to be in alignment with what is called 'Western' management. There are however some unique societal and cultural characteristics that affect managerial behaviour to a certain degree depending on a variety of reasons such as the company's size, structure and ownership status. These characteristics include the values of 'filotimo', trust and humanism as well as the 'in-group' or family collectivism. It can be argued that forces of convergence and divergence regarding managerial work co-exist in Greece.

This research will therefore attempt to reveal the interplay between managerial work in hotels and the Greek context.

#### **4.8. Research aims and questions**

The completion of the literature review on managerial work roles and competencies, with a particular focus on hotels, and the various challenges for hotel managers in Greece, allows the formulation of the research aims and questions of this thesis. The stimulus for this research originated in the researcher's undergraduate and postgraduate studies as well as his managerial career in the Greek luxury hotel sector, in a period from the early 1990s to the late 2000s. Escalating interest in the nature of managerial work in relation to context (Dierdorf *et al.*, 2009; Jones, 2006), managerial competencies (Boyatzis, 1982; Cockerill, 1989; Dulewicz and Herbert, 1992,1999; Schroeder, 1989; Spencer and Spencer, 1993), the international

hotel industry (Jones *et al.*, 1998; Nickson, 1998) and the acknowledgement of the importance of the local context in managerial work (Hofstede, 1991; House *et al.*, 2004; Trompenaars, 1993), provided the basis for this study.

Furthermore the critical role of managerial competencies in international business success has been only partially examined in the literature on hotel general managers (Baum, 1991; Christou and Eaton, 2000; Tas, 1988). This body of research has been heavily influenced by the Anglo-Saxon management tradition and ignored the role of the local context (particularly national culture) by assuming that a set of universal hotel management competencies can be applicable anywhere. The broadest aim of the study was therefore to examine the '*global-local*' question (Chan, 2008; Harris, 2008) by focusing on how key managers (e.g. senior managers) at business unit level acquire, develop, and exercise their managerial competencies outside the Anglo-Saxon context. As such the rules, values, meanings and motives of the luxury hotel senior managers (GMs and Department Managers) were the focus for the study.

This resulted in three sets of research aims and questions:

**1:** *To identify the key managerial roles performed and competencies required of General Managers (GMs) in the Greek luxury hotel sector.*

- 1.1. Are competencies important for GM's performance?
- 1.2. How do GMs rank work roles and competencies by importance and why?

**2:** *To evaluate the compatibility of Greek managerial roles and competencies in the Greek luxury hotel sector with 'western' managerial frameworks.*

- 2.1. Are GMs' competencies consistent with western conceptions of management competence, in the luxury hotel sub-sector?

2.2. How does the Greek context influence conceptions of the required work roles and competencies?

2.3. How does the ownership structure influence the required competencies of Greek GMs?

**3:** *To develop a model of the process through which definitions and perceptions of the required management roles and competencies in different contexts are formed.*

3.1. How does the Greek context at a national and local level shape conceptions of hotel unit GMs' work roles and competencies?

3.2. How does ownership status interact with local / national context to shape managerial work roles and competencies in the Greek luxury hotel?

# Chapter 5

## Research Methodology

### 5.0. Introduction

The research questions of this thesis discussed in the previous chapter, have driven the formulation of the research design. The exploration of managerial work in context based on Dierdorff *et al.*'s (2009) work, and the investigation of managerial work roles and competencies called for a qualitative approach. Thus, building on the key findings and arguments from the literature, this chapter engages with the appropriate research methods and techniques which facilitate the research agenda of this thesis, charting the research design, the methods applied, and data collected. Finally this chapter also provides an appraisal of the research methods and techniques deployed to collect and analyse the data for this study.

### 5.1. Research Design

The failure to situate managerial work studies in context that has been discussed in Chapter 2, can be partially explained by the researchers' persistence to follow a rationalistic approach. The rationalistic perspective of managerial work makes use of what has been called a dualistic view (Sandberg and Targama, 2007). It is assumed that reality exists independent of the observer and person can be kept apart and analysed separately (Girod-Seville and Perret, 2001). Since employees and managers in organisations are characterised by a set of inherent and stable attributes, it is possible to influence their work performance by controlling the external conditions, such as changing rules and regulations, the organisation structure or reward systems. Management research from a rationalistic perspective often means searching for relationships between changes in conditions on

the one hand and effects upon human behaviour on the other hand (Sandberg and Targama, 2007). Hence, while it is regarded as important to figure out what effects changed conditions have on human behaviour, how people understand the changed conditions is typically treated as a black box.

On the other hand, from an interpretative perspective it can be argued that *'our understanding of reality is created by ourselves and others on the basis of our experiences and through communication and interaction with other people'* (Sandberg and Targama, 2007, p.29). In the interpretivist's methodology, the key is to understand situations and give plausible and acceptable accounts of them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000), not to explain and predict as in the positivism methodology. In practice, this means that managers who want to have an impact upon their employee's performance in an organisation should not confine themselves to changing external conditions. They also have the option to influence employee's understanding of what the changes in conditions mean and stand for. This means that it is possible to obtain behavioural effects without making formal or substantial changes in the external conditions, such as the introduction of a new reward system. Instead, it may be enough to influence employee's understanding of the external conditions at hand.

Even if the rationalistic perspective has been dominating the past thirty years, interest in alternative perspectives based on the interpretative research tradition has steadily increased in management and organisational science (Alvesson and Sköldbberg, 1999; Lincoln and Denzin, 2003; Prasad and Prasad, 2002; Riley and Love, 2000; Zald, 1996). The reason for this has been the fact that the rationalistic perspective has been subjected to increased criticism for being unable to advance adequately knowledge of what constitutes human action and activities in organisations and society at large (Sandberg and Targama, 2007). It can be argued however, that despite the overall realisation for the need to build a management theory that reflects the unique reality of different cultures and contexts (Kriek *et al.*, 2009), North



American management scholars remain faithful to rationalistic approaches and persistently assume universality in management theory building. As a result, progress in developing new context relevant theory has been slow (Tsui, 2004).

The growing influence of the interpretivists' approach to management studies have led a number of scholars to challenge the assumption that management theories formulated in one country are applicable universally, and have demonstrated in their research that management theories applicable in one country cannot be generalised directly to other countries (i.e. House *et al.*, 2004; Javidan *et al.*, 2005). Based on this argument, researchers indicate that managers working in a global context might experience disconnection between international management theory prescriptions and the imperatives of the local context unless international management theory is grounded in the realities of the local context (i.e. Horwitz *et al.*, 2002; Ngambi, 2004). Qualitative methodologies provide researchers with a valuable tool in this regard because they assume a value-laden approach in terms of data that are collected and interpreted within the context in which it is generated (Kriek *et al.*, 2009). Dennis and Garfield (2003, p.297) assert '*quantitative research is theory in search of data while qualitative research is data in search of theory*'. Qualitative field studies provide rich data and a strong base on which to build theory; this view is supported by a number of authors (i.e. Cassel, *et al.*, 2006; Eisenhardt, 1989; Mendenhall *et al.*, 1993; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Strauss and Corbin, 1990) who have written extensively on the use of qualitative research methods in building theory.

Others assert qualitative research precedes theoretical and empirical research in driving a field to maturity (Van de Ven, 1989; Weick, 1989). The use of qualitative methods, such as case studies (Eisenhardt, 1989), has long been noted to be especially important in the progression of theoretical knowledge in organisational behaviour studies (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003; Gummesson, 2000; Yin, 2003). Werner (2002) found that case studies and

other qualitative methodologies have still limited application in international management studies. It is not clear though, whether this is because of the inherent difficulties of qualitative research (Wright *et al.*, 1988), because of the dominant philosophical position of the quantitative method superiority, or because of some other reason (Werner, 2002).

A number of authors suggest that quantitative research is more likely to find acceptance in managerial work research, because of a view that suggests statistical methods to be often perceived as more 'rigorous' and reliable while qualitative methodologies appear more open to bias and subjectivity (Argyris, 1980; Creswell, 2003; Lee, 1995; Marschan-Piekkari and Welch, 2004; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Some scholars also point to the 'ordeal' of interviewing via focus groups and structured interviews which are often very difficult to perform (i.e. Lee, 1995), often physically and emotionally draining (Harari and Beaty, 1990) and actually frightening if participants' emotions are kindled (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). A further reason could be that qualitative and field research can involve extraordinary logistical hurdles in establishing rapport and breaking down people's distrust, particularly when working with participants from diverse cultures and backgrounds (Triandis and Gelfand, 1998). Qualitative research necessitates some in-depth preliminary study of the history, culture, and language of the people whom one is investigating (Triandis, and Gelfand, 1998). It also requires good interpersonal and group facilitation skills often not taught in doctoral programmes. Qualitative or a joint research method preclude a rapid gathering of aggregate data, and instead demands a longer-term commitment from the researcher (Miles and Huberman, 1994). As such it is often not encouraged as a good career move for young scholars.

The extant literature reveals that researchers studying managerial work in different cultural contexts, employed 'qualitative' methods and 'joint' methodologies in their work less than 'quantitative' and 'conceptual' approaches (Kriek *et al.*, 2009; Mendenhall *et al.*, 1993; Werner, 2002). Kriek

*et al.* (2009) suggest that there is an intimate relationship between the methodology utilised in conducting international management research and the development of new international management theory. Several authors assert the need to set aside methodological preferences and encourage 'qualitative' and 'joint' research methodologies to facilitate theory generation (Bryman, 1992; Oppermann, 2000; Rabinowitz and Wessen, 1997; Schurink, 2003). Daniels (1991) emphasises that the field of international management could benefit enormously from as-yet-unrealised synergies. To this end, Kriek *et al.* (2009, p.131) argue that *'it may well be worthwhile to remind ourselves again of the need to dissolve the boundaries between qualitative and quantitative methods and turn our efforts to intellectual integration rather than separation'*. In addition Mendenhall *et al.* (1993, p.151) asserted that *'perhaps those of us who work in the international management field should set aside our methodological differences, for if we do not, another decade may pass without significant progress toward the development of theory in the international management field'*.

In this thesis, the managerial work in context is the unit of analysis. As already discussed in chapter 2, managerial work is shaped and exercised in context, and cannot be viewed in isolation (Johns, 2006; Dierdorff *et al.* 2009). More specifically, the research questions aimed to explore the roles and competencies framework of the luxury hotel GMs in Greece. *How* and *why* those managers develop and exercise their roles and competencies framework in a given organisational and national context, formed the main focus of the data to be collected. As such the researcher was inclined towards the qualitative research preferences outlined previously (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Harris, 2008; Silverman, 2000) rather than any specific testing of established hypotheses or conscious counting of objective social events. By attempting to generate an interpretive analysis of the meanings and stories of luxury hotel GMs the researcher hoped to arrive at theoretical propositions about the way these key human resources exercise their roles and competencies. Whilst the interpretivist perspective informed the main

choice of research design the researcher was also keen to complement his study with some insights into the Greek luxury hotel sector; as such the more quantitative aspects (geographical spread, size and structure of the industry) were used to help understand the GMs' work context alongside the more important qualitative aspects (what/why/how in managerial roles and competencies).

The contextual-cultural orientation of this research posed some additional challenges in the research design; it has been well documented that this type of research can take a number of forms, each with a distinct purpose and characteristics, viewed from different perspectives (e.g. Harris, 2008; Van de Vijver and Leung, 1997). Gephard and Richardson (2008) suggest that the application of qualitative research in this field provides better insights and understanding of the studied phenomena; however, only a small number of interpretivist studies have been conducted on international management research. For example, in their study Fisher and Hartel (2003) sought to identify the different dimensions of perceived effectiveness demonstrated by Thai and Western managers working in intercultural teams, by using interviews and case studies. The findings suggested that Western managers believed that it was difficult for them to be effective because Thai culture was ethnocentric and homogenous. Conversely, Thai managers believed that Western managers' ineffectiveness was due to their failure to understand Thai culture. Thomas (2008) identifies six distinct types of approaches in this type of research, namely *Domestic*, *Replication*, *Indigenous*, *Comparative*, *International* and *Intercultural*. These different approaches differ in the assumptions they make about culture and the universality of management theory and in the types of questions they address. It can be argued that it is different to categorise this research in one of the above approaches; it is a combination of indigenous and comparative research where local and global management practices are examined in a given context (Greece). From this research rationale it can be seen how the approach, embracing qualitative methods (semi-structured in-depth interviews and non-participant

observation) supplemented by quantitative techniques (questionnaire and industry statistics) allowed the researcher to distinguish particularly useful company profiles.

The scale and dynamic nature of the luxury hotel sector during the study also guided the researcher to adopt a strategy of '*progressive focusing*' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). Such an initiative involved moving from the population of hotel companies initially identified to a more limited set. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983, p.175) identify the '*funnel*' structure of research and suggest:

*“Progressive focusing has two analytically distinct components. First over time the research problem is developed or transformed, eventually its scope is clarified and delimited and its internal structure explored. In this sense, it is frequently only over the course of the research that one discovers what the research is really ‘about’, and it is not uncommon for it to turn out to be about something quite remote from the initially foreshadowed problems.”*

Such progressive focusing allowed the researcher to move between industry and environmental (macro) phenomena, and company and management (micro) phenomena with relative ease. This was important in any attempt to capture the relationships between the organisational and national culture, and how the managers fit in this context.

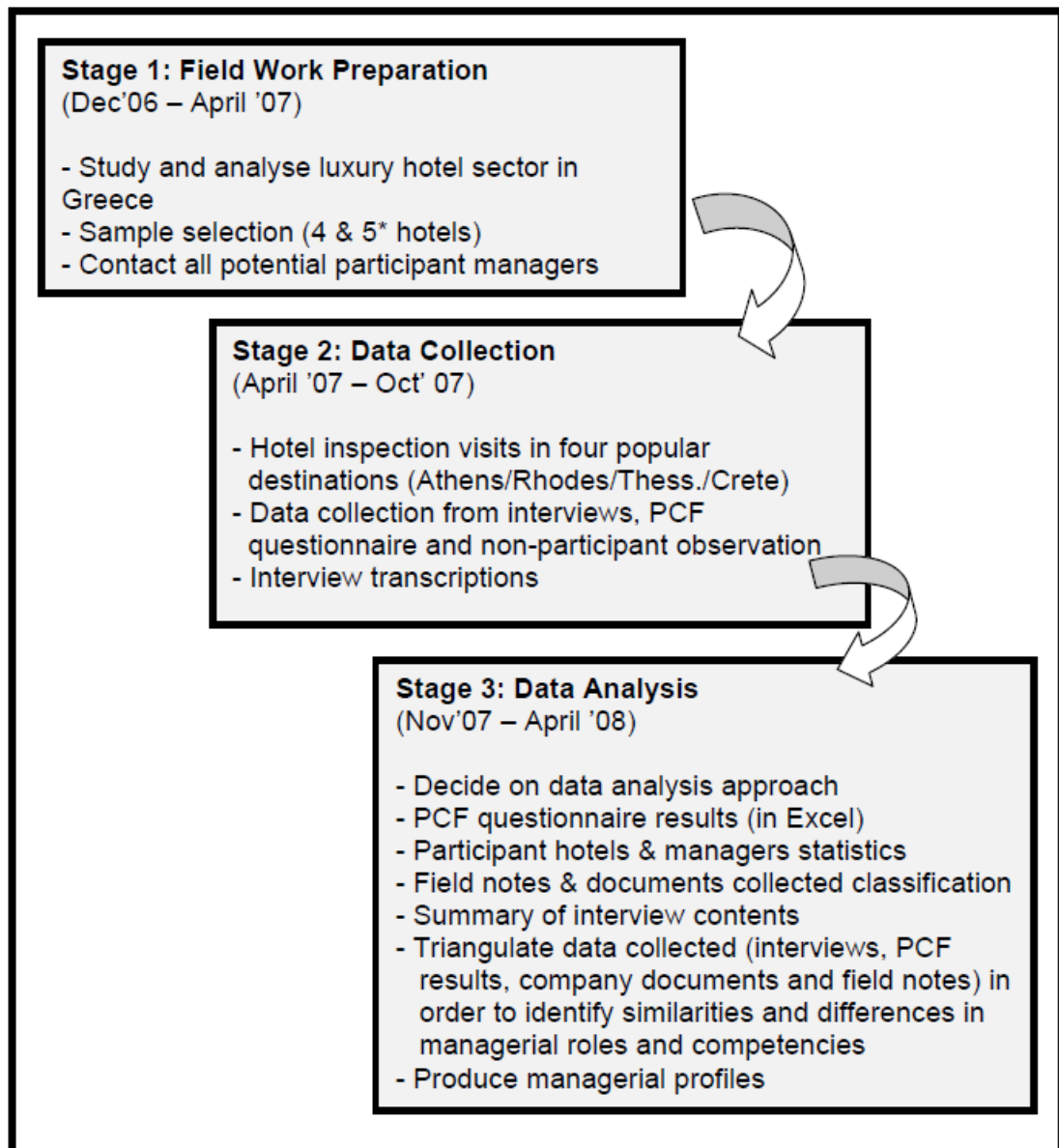
Furthermore, the debates surrounding the value and suitability of different research designs and methodologies (Alasuutari, 1995; Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002; Silverman, 2000) have been well documented but more pragmatic approaches to studying social phenomena have also been advocated (Robson, 2002). It can be argued that there are few '*hard and fast*' rules to research and design methodology with many researchers endorsing research designs which use a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, rather than solely those derived from one epistemological stance or the other. Such designs and the data collected can allow researchers a greater amount of flexibility in their studies and can lead to further authentication of the findings (Bryman 1988; Easterby-Smith, *et al.*, 2002; Gephard and

Richardson, 2008). The ability to draw on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods can lead to more rigorous analysis where different forms of data may seem to contradict each other (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002). Bryman (1988) identifies that a combination of methods can increase the level of confidence social scientists have in their data and results. Furthermore qualitative research involves both data collection and analysis and each of these process can be qualitative or quantitative (Gephard and Richardson, 2008). Quantitative techniques can also often provide the '*bare bones*' of data to which the '*flesh*' of qualitative data can be added (Hakim, 1987; Silverman, 2000). Finally, the use of quantitative and qualitative techniques at different stages in the research process can be particularly useful (Brannen, 1992; Bryman, 1988; Hammersley, 1992; Gephard and Richardson, 2008). Bryman (1988) argues that, when exploring organisational processes and changes which occur as part of social dynamics, quantitative and qualitative methods can link into how the actors perceive these processes as well as the physical changes taking place over time. Based on the above, it was decided to employ both qualitative and quantitative techniques in this thesis.

Having outlined some of the philosophical influences on the researcher it is important to describe the chronological maturation of this research study. A three stages approach identifies how the narrowing of respondents and data was achieved. The first stage involved the planning and preparation for the fieldwork. An analysis of the Greek luxury (4 and 5\*) hotel sector was conducted in order to decide on the potential participant managers and ways to secure access. All potential participants were contacted through e-mail and telephone within a period of three months. The finalisation of the participants' short list, signposted the second stage of this research, data collection. This required visits in four popular tourist/visitor destinations, namely Athens, Thessaloniki, Crete and Rhodes. Four luxury hotels were selected for each destination; each hotel visit incorporated data collection through the employment of interviews, questionnaires and non-participant

observations. A research protocol was followed in order to ensure through standardisation, valid and reliable data.

**Figure 5:** Research stages



Shortly after each visit, interview transcriptions were prepared and the data collected were organised and stored for future processing. The completion of the data collection was followed by the data analysis, the final stage of this research. A serious consideration on this stage was to decide upon the approach to be used on data analysis. The qualitative nature of this research

required the production of a rich set of data, which viewed the topic under study from different angles. The first set of data was generated from the participants' demographics and the processing of the PCF questionnaire results. Then, a summary of the 32 semi-structured interview transcripts was produced on an excel spreadsheet; this made easier the processing of data gathered from the interviews. Alongside the material collected from interviews and questionnaires, notes from observations, company documents and electronic media (i.e. websites, brochures) were also used. The final phase of this stage was the triangulation of data, meaning the combination of data from these diverse sources in order to identify commonalities and differences among the participating hotel managers.

The presentation and discussion of these results will be the focus of the following chapters. A detailed account of each stage is provided in the following sections, with specific reference to the methods deployed. The research stages outlined in Figure 5 provide a synopsis of the three stages adopted – their focus and research methods deployed.

## **5.2. Hotel selection**

One of the primary considerations that set the context for the whole project was based in the Guerrier and Lockwood (1991, p.157) notion who state that:

*“Any research study concerned with managers in the hospitality industry should start with an attempt to define the population from which a sample can be selected.”*

Chan (2008) argues that the validity issues in sampling are best summarised by the notion of representativeness of the study's sample with respect to the target population about which the inferences are made. These inferences are concerned with answers to the research question. Hence, the specific research questions and the characteristics of the target population together form the basis on which the appropriateness of a sampling procedure is evaluated. In this research the target population (unit of analysis) was the

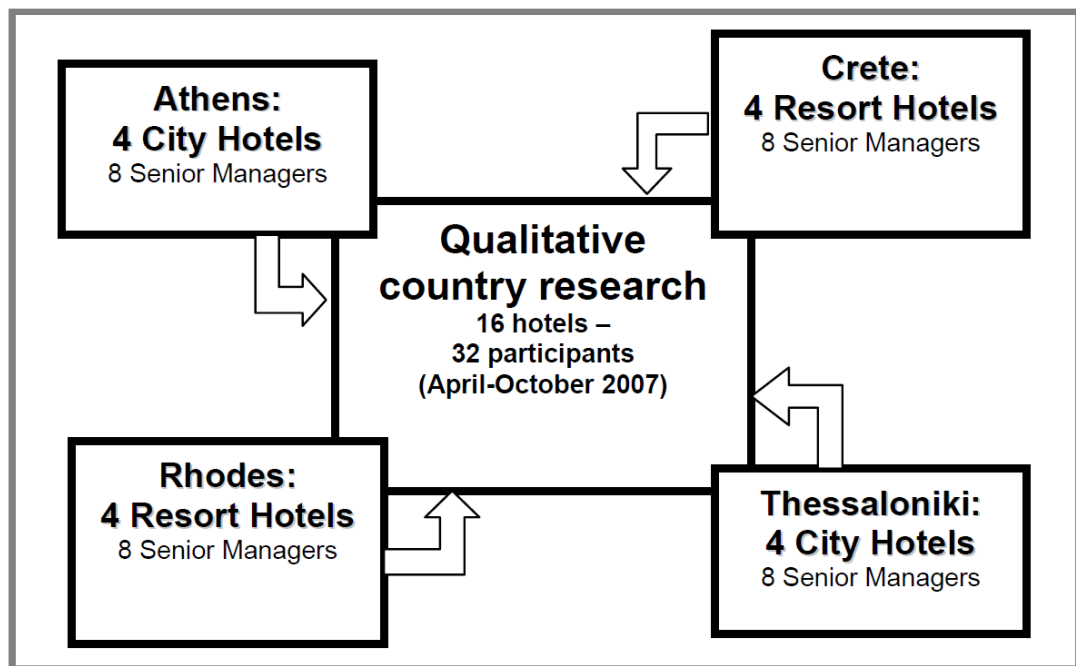


luxury hotel GMs and their assistants working in Greece (senior management in business unit level). The Greek luxury hotel sector can be divided in four different parts based on the ownership structure of the hotel namely family owned hotels, local hotel chain, national hotel chains, and multinational hotel chains. In total thirty two participant senior managers – representing sixteen 4\* and 5\* city and resort hotels respectively were employed (Figure 6). The number of cases of theoretical replication in qualitative research depends on the number of conditions expected to affect the phenomenon being studied (Royer and Zarlowski, 2001). In addition, Yin (1994) argues that the replication logic in qualitative research is analogous to that of multiple experiments, with each case corresponding to one experiment. As the number of conditions increases, so does the potential number of theoretical replications. In general, there are two criteria for selecting qualitative samples: each case is selected either because similar results are expected (literal replication) or because it will most likely lead to different results for predictable reasons (theoretical replication). According to Yin the number of cases of literal replication required depends on the scale of the observed differences and the desired degree of certainty. Thus, two or three cases are enough when the rival theories are substantially different or the issue at hand does not demand a high degree of certainty. In other circumstances, when the differences are less visible or the required degree of certainty is higher, at least five or six literal replications would be required. According to Bryman and Bell (2003, p.56) social phenomena can be better understood when *'compared in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasting cases or situations'*.

The 16 hotel units selected in this research have as common denominators the same star rating (4\* and 5\*), type (city or resort), size (medium to big hotels, over 150 beds) and ownership status (family; local Greek chain; national Greek Chain; multinational chain). Thus, it can be argued that these conditions have covered the critical issue of representativeness. However, apart from that, each organisation (hotel unit) differentiates more or less for

contextual factors (e.g. different organisational culture, different standard operating procedures). This may even happen in hotels belonging to the same chain / owner, operating in the same area, and sometimes using in common part of the staff. Thus, it is this differentiation that the current research aims to explore.

**Figure 6:** Research sampling



Furthermore, the hotels selected for this research represented two broad types operating in Greece – city and resort. The basic prerequisite for the participant city (Athens, Thessaloniki) and resort (Crete, Rhodes) hotels was to be holders of 4\* or 5\* official rating that is accredited by the Greek Chamber of Hotels. The establishments under investigation should have more than one hundred fifty rooms in order to make sure that all participant hotels have similar or at least comparable structure and organisation. Establishments with less than one hundred fifty rooms are considered as Small or Medium Tourism Enterprises (SMTEs) which present a high degree of divergence in management practices and cannot be compared because literally each case is unique. The case selection process followed in this research was dictated by the structure of the luxury hotel sector in Greece:

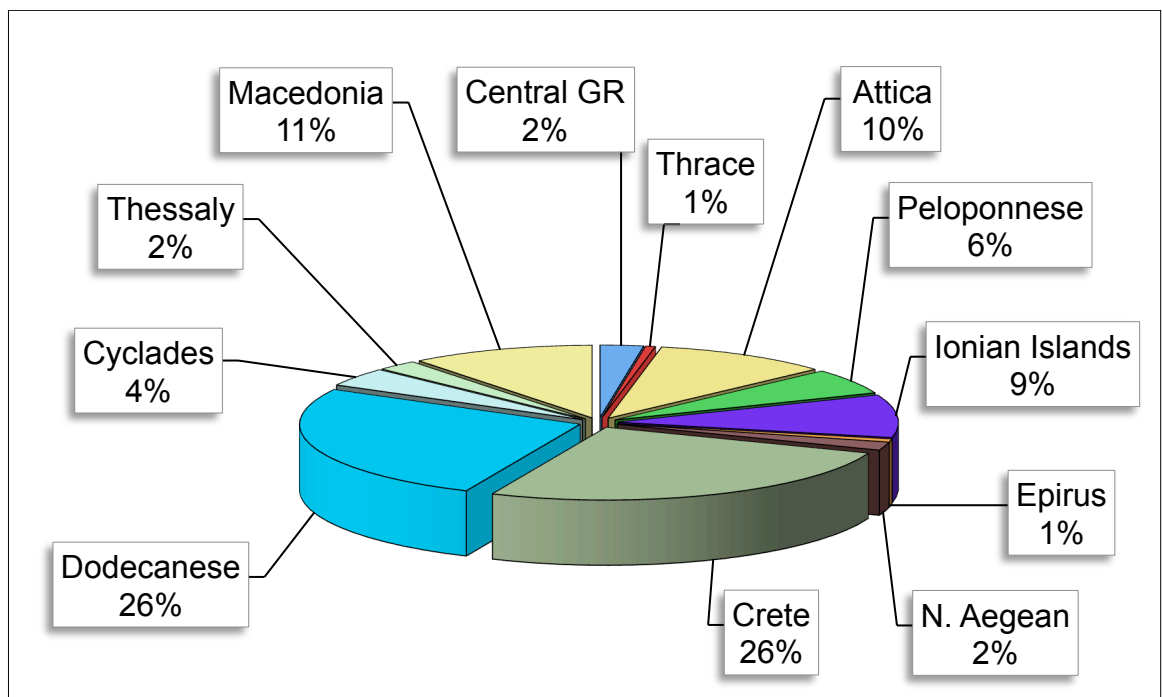
given its nature and geographical spread a decision was made to limit the field work destinations in the most representative and popular places for city and resort hotels respectively. This was made possible by comparing quantitative data retrieved from the databases of the National Statistics Agency ([www.statistics.gr](http://www.statistics.gr)), the Greek National Tourism Organisation ([www.gnto.gr](http://www.gnto.gr)) and the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels ([www.grhotels.gr](http://www.grhotels.gr)).

For this research, categorisation (city – resort) and the official star rating was the only reliable starting point to determine the size of population (approximately one thousand fifty hotels) and set the standards for choosing the cases (sample). The decision to research only the up-market Greek hotel sub-sector (4\* and 5\*) was based on the fact that this sub-sector appears to follow certain operational standards so it would be viable to research managerial roles and competencies based in common research questions. In other words luxury hotel managers can speak the ‘*same language*’ regardless of factors such as size, location, type or ownership status of the hotel. In addition, the choice to use the city – resort hotel criterion was determined on the basis that the product and services they provide differentiate significantly, capturing thus greater diversity in the sample population. The initial screening of the hotels started with the use of a reliable database. All data for the hotels, was retrieved from the official web site of the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels – part of the Greek Ministry of Tourism. This is considered the most updated and valid database to use; this happens because hotel owners are providing annually this type of information (e.g. hotel size, type, facilities) to the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels in order to obtain their annual license for hotel operations.

The geographical distribution of hotel beds in 2007 (Figure 7) clearly indicates that tourism activity is gathered in a few regions of the country. Five out of the twelve regions gather 72% of hotel beds in Greece, while differences in distribution even inside each region are significant. The more considerable number of beds can be found in Attica (Athens) (10%), Crete

(26%), Ionian Islands (9%), Dodecanese (26%) and Central Macedonia (Thessaloniki) (11%). Based on this differentiation, four regions in total were chosen as the most popular (number of visitors) and developed (infrastructure) destinations in Greece: Attica (Athens) and Central Macedonia (Thessaloniki) for city hotels, and Crete and Dodecanese (Rhodes) for resort hotels. In the case of city hotels there was no other choice, because the rest of Greece's regional capitals do not have a significant luxury hotel infrastructure.

**Figure 7:** Number (%) of 4 & 5\* hotel beds by region



Source: [www.grhotels.gr](http://www.grhotels.gr) (accessed 02/03/2008)

The luxury hotels in these four geographical regions were then filtered by using the following two criteria (Table 1):

1. Following the national and international standards for the provision of services and facilities in luxury hotels, as a minimum standard the city hotels should provide TV and air conditioning in room and bar/restaurant

and parking facilities. Additionally for resort hotels should have swimming pool, a prerequisite for tour operators in this hotel type.

2. The hotel should have more than one hundred fifty rooms. This ensured that only medium to large companies were chosen so that hotels with similar organisational structure could be compared, and to allow compatibility with other European countries with similar size and structure hotels.

The filtering was conducted through the use of the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels web site search machine. The first filter was conducted through the '*criteria search*' that is available. Then the hotels that qualified were checked one by one for the total number of rooms. As there was no available tool to short hotels by number of rooms, this was conducted manually through the use of the '*Hotel Details*' data fact sheet of the same tool. The total number of city hotels fulfilling the criteria was 21 (16 in Athens and 5 in Thessaloniki). All participants were contacted through e-mail and telephone, eleven have responded positively to the research participation enquiry and finally eight were chosen (four in Athens and four in Thessaloniki). The third and final selection criterion for these hotels was the ownership status (family, local chain, national chain, multinational chain); effort was made to cover all hotel types in both cities. It should be noted here that there are two types of multinational hotel chains operating in Greece: those managed directly from the parent company and the franchised brand names. The former are only a handful (less than ten establishments in the whole country); those are managed strictly '*by the book*' meaning that at least for managerial staff in all levels there are rules and procedures that cannot be broken. GMs play a strategic role by taking decisions mostly related with sales and finance; the operational part of the job is coordinated by their immediate subordinates – in this case the department managers.

On the other hand, the targeted resort hotels numbered 122 in total. It was decided to narrow the research in the area of Chania for Crete (total 6 hotels), and Faliraki (12) and Ixia (14) in Rhodes (total 26) for Dodecanese. The rationale for choosing these two destinations is that they have a developed infrastructure matching the criteria described above. The procedure followed and the final number of hotels chosen was identical with city hotels. 15 hotels responded positively to the research participation enquiry (5 in Chania and 10 in Rhodes) and finally 8 were chosen, based again in ownership status and structure. Furthermore, in both cases (city and resort) a *'mature'* and a *'developing'* destination was chosen: Athens, Faliraki and Ixia for the former, and Thessaloniki and Chania for the latter case. The final number of hotels matching the criteria set for this research can be viewed in Table 16.

**Table 16:** Number of potential hotels participating in research

| Region  | Initial No. of hotels | Short by Criterion No.1* | Short by Criterion No.2** | Shortlisted Hotels | Short by Criterion No.3*** |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>City Hotels</b>  |                       |                          |                           |                    |                            |
| Athens  | 49                    | 26                       | 15                        | <b>15</b>          | <b>4</b>                   |
| Thessaloniki  | 28                    | 20                       | 6                         | <b>6</b>           | <b>4</b>                   |
| <b>Resort Hotels</b>  |                       |                          |                           |                    |                            |
| Crete   | 250                   | 141                      | 66                        | 66                 |                            |
| → Region criteria narrowed in the city / area of Chania   |                       |                          |                           | <b>6</b>           | <b>4</b>                   |
| Dodecanese  | 171                   | 70                       | 56                        | 56                 |                            |
| → Region criteria narrowed in Faliraki & Ixia, Rhodes   |                       |                          |                           | <b>26</b>          | <b>4</b>                   |
| <p>*<b>Criterion No.1:</b> provision of TV and air conditioning in room and bar/restaurant and parking facilities; additionally for resort hotels swimming pool</p> <p>**<b>Criterion No.2:</b> minimum number of available rooms 150</p> <p>***<b>Criterion No.3:</b> Each region should cover the four types of ownership status (family, local hotel chain, national hotel chain, international hotel chain)</p> |                       |                          |                           |                    |                            |

Although the differences and similarities between each type of hotels are superficially visible (different structure and organisation), the same cannot be suggested for the GMs who run these hotels. It is often the case that a GM in his/her career will work in both city and resort hotels, so the roles and competencies framework adopted, are changing according to the case, otherwise s/he will not be able to cope with the position demands. 'What, why and how' each GM does in the work context, is the result of a complex process which integrates elements such as personality, roles, competencies, organisational and national context (culture). From each hotel the GM and a department manager (Operations Manager, Food and Beverage Manager, Rooms Division Manager, HR Manager) were interviewed. There are many instances that a Food and Beverage or a Rooms Division manager is considered as assistant hotel GM in Greece. This justifies their participation in the research as they are fully aware of their GM's agenda and responsibilities. In big chains it was necessary to interview also the HR manager in order to obtain information and documents regarding HR policies and practices.

A serious consideration regarding the planning of the fieldwork was the period selected for the interviews: during the '*high season*' when occupancy rates are very high it is almost impossible to approach hotel managers. Thus, all interviews were scheduled in '*low or mid season*' according to the type (city or resort) of the targeted hotel. The city hotels '*low*' season (July – August) is considered the '*high*' season for resort hotels. This fact gave the researcher flexibility to utilize the field work time more effectively: the field work started in April 2007 with hotels in Crete; then followed Athens in a period between June and August and Thessaloniki followed in September; the field work closed in October 2007, in Rhodes. It can be argued that this fact did not affect the reliability of the research results; this could occur if the interviews were scheduled for the *high season*. At that time managers work under extreme pressures and tight time schedules which would make almost impossible for them to dedicate their valuable time to any kind of research.

The description of the hotels selected for this research is shown in Table 17. In the city of Athens three 5\* and one 4\* were finally selected, covering all types of ownership (family, local chain, national chain, multinational chain). The average number of employees per hotel was 113 and the average number of rooms 255.

**Table 17:** Participant hotels' background information

| Hotel Coding  | Ownership | Country of origin | Rating | Employees  | Rooms | Type   |
|---|-----------|-------------------|--------|--|-------|--------|
| H1 – Ath  | GR/L/Ch   | GR                | 5*     | 160  | 167   | City   |
| H2  | GR/N/Ch   | GR                | 5*     | 110  | 263   | City   |
| H3  | MNC       | USA(F)            | 5*     | 90   | 192   | City   |
| H4  | FAMILY    | GR                | 4*     | 93   | 398   | City   |
| H5 - Thes   | GR/N/Ch   | GR                | 5*     | 110  | 287   | City   |
| H6  | MNC       | USA(M)            | 5*     | 80   | 196   | City   |
| H7  | GR/N/Ch   | GR                | 4*     | 102  | 425   | City   |
| H8  | FAMILY    | GR                | 5*     | 100  | 178   | City   |
| H9 - Crete  | FAMILY    | GR                | 5*     | 149  | 146   | Resort |
| H10   | MNC       | CY(M)             | 4*     | 250  | 414   | Resort |
| H11   | GR/L/Ch   | GR                | 4*     | 65   | 200   | Resort |
| H12   | GR/L/Ch   | GR                | 4*     | 84   | 202   | Resort |
| H13 - Rho   | MNC       | USA(M)            | 5*     | 240  | 402   | Resort |
| H14   | GR/L/Ch   | GR                | 5*     | 215  | 390   | Resort |
| H15   | FAMILY    | GR                | 4*     | 64   | 176   | Resort |
| H16   | GR/N/Ch   | GR                | 5*     | 194  | 694   | Resort |
| Ownership status explained:   |           |                   |        | Locations explained:   |       |        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Family:</b> Greek family owned hotel</li> <li>▪ <b>GR/L/Ch:</b> Greek local chain hotel</li> <li>▪ <b>GR/N/Ch:</b> Greek national chain hotel</li> <li>▪ <b>MNC:</b> Multinational hotel chain operating in Greece</li> <li>  <b>M:</b> Managed / <b>F:</b> Franchised</li> </ul> |           |                   |        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Ath:</b> Athens</li> <li><b>Thes:</b> Thessaloniki</li> <li><b>Rho:</b> Rhodes</li> <li><b>Crete:</b> ref to the area of Chania</li> </ul> |       |        |



On the other hand, participation of 5\* hotels in Thessaloniki was equally high (three 5\* and one 4\*) but the ownership status did not include a local hotel chain. The average number of employees was 98 and the average number of rooms 272. Moreover, in Cretan resort hotels (the region of Chania) the level of 5\* hotel participation was rather low (one 5\* and three 4\*); the ownership status included one family business, two local chains and one multinational chain. The average number of employees was 137 and the average number of rooms 241. In Rhodes, 5\* hotels seemed more eager to participate (three 5\* and one 4\*), covering all types of ownership. The average number of employees was 178 and the average number of rooms 416.

### **5.2.1. Participant managers' characteristics**

The participant demographics showed that the job of the luxury hotel GM in Greece, is dominated from middle aged married males. GMs speak on average two foreign languages and they are holders of a first degree and the majority has been abroad for postgraduate studies. On the other hand, only a few have previous managerial experience abroad. Near retirement GMs are mostly found in family and local chain hotels; on the other hand the younger and more ambitious GMs are recruited from national and multinational hotel chains. These characteristics are consistent with domestic quantitative research about managerial work in Greek hotels (e.g. OTEK, 2003; Papanikos, 2000). Table 18 summarised key characteristics of the participants. It should be noted that all participants were of Greek origin, despite the fact that efforts were made to include expatriate managers from multinational hotel chains. At the time of data collection (2007) there were less than 10 foreign GMs in 4 and 5\* hotels in Greece (most of them in Athens); they were not represented in this study because it was not possible (politely rejected) to reach them. To begin with the sample in Athens, included only males with the majority of them being married. Two age groups of GMs and GM assistants were identified: those who entered the workforce in the 1970s and those in the 1980s /early 1990s respectively.

**Table 18:** Participant managers' background information

| <b>Managers' Coding</b>   | <b>Sex</b> | <b>Age</b> | <b>Marital Status</b> | <b>Academic Qualifications</b>   | <b>Languages</b> | <b>Worked Abroad</b> |
|---|------------|------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|----------------------|
| H1/GM/Ath   | Male       | over 50    | Married               | ASTER/ PgD   | 2                | YES                  |
| H1/HR mgr   | Male       | over 50    | Married               | ASTER  | 2                | No                   |
| <b>H2 / GM</b>  | Male       | 40-50      | Married               | ASTER, BSc   | 3                | YES                  |
| F&B mgr   | Male       | 20-30      | Single                | HND / MSc  | 2                | No                   |
| <b>H3 / GM</b>  | Male       | 40-50      | Married               | ASTER / BSc  | 2                | No                   |
| H3/F/O mgr  | Male       | 40-50      | Married               | BSc / MSc  | 2                | No                   |
| <b>H4 / GM</b>  | Male       | over 50    | Married               | ASTER / PgD  | 3                | No                   |
| H4/F&B mgr  | Male       | 30-40      | Single                | ASTER  | 4                | No                   |
| <b>H5/GM/Thes</b>   | Male       | 40-50      | Married               | ASTER/BSc  | 2                | No                   |
| H5/F&B mgr  | Male       | 30-40      | Married               | BSc/MSc  | 2                | No                   |
| <b>H6 / GM</b>  | Male       | over 50    | Married               | ASTER / PgD  | 2                | YES                  |
| H6/Ops mgr  | Female     | 30-40      | Married               | TEI  | 2                | No                   |
| <b>H7 / GM</b>  | Male       | 40-50      | Married               | ASTER  | 2                | No                   |
| H7/F/O mgr  | Female     | 40-50      | Married               | TEI  | 3                | No                   |
| <b>H8 / GM</b>  | Male       | over 50    | Married               | ASTER  | 2                | No                   |
| H9/F/O mgr  | Male       | 30-40      | Married               | TEI/MSc  | 2                | No                   |
| <b>H9/GM/Crete</b>  | Female     | 30-40      | Married               | ASTER  | 3                | No                   |
| H9/F/O mgr  | Female     | 30-40      | Married               | BSc  | 2                | No                   |
| <b>H10 / GM</b>   | Male       | 40-50      | Single                | BSc / MSc  | 2                | YES                  |
| H10/Ops mgr   | Male       | 30-40      | Single                | BSc / MA   | 2                | YES                  |
| <b>H11 / GM</b>   | Female     | 30-40      | Married               | TEI  | 2                | No                   |
| H11/F&B mgr   | Male       | 30-40      | Married               | ASTER  | 2                | No                   |
| <b>H12 / GM</b>   | Male       | 40-50      | Married               | BSc  | 3                | No                   |
| H12/F&B mgr   | Male       | 30-40      | Married               | TEI  | 2                | No                   |
| <b>H13/Ops/Rho</b>  | Male       | 40-50      | Married               | BSc / MSc  | 4                | YES                  |
| H13/F&B mgr   | Male       | 40-50      | Married               | ASTER / MA   | 2                | No                   |
| <b>H14 / GM</b>   | Male       | 40-50      | Married               | ASTER / TEI  | 4                | No                   |
| H14/F&B mgr   | Male       | 30-40      | Married               | ASTER / MSc  | 2                | No                   |
| <b>H15 / GM</b>   | Female     | 40-50      | Married               | ASTER / PgD  | 3                | No                   |
| H15/F&B mgr   | Female     | 30-40      | Single                | TEI  | 2                | No                   |
| <b>H16 / GM</b>   | Male       | 30-40      | Married               | BSc / MSc  | 2                | No                   |
| H16/F/O mgr   | Male       | 30-40      | Married               | TEI / MSc  | 3                | No                   |
| <b>Academic Qualifications explained:</b>   |            |            |                       | <b>Job Titles Explained:</b>   |                  |                      |
| <b>ASTER:</b> Higher Education Hotel School/1 <sup>st</sup> Degree<br><b>T.E.I:</b> Technical Education Institute<br>(equivalent to former British polytechnics)/1 <sup>st</sup> Degree<br><b>H.N.D:</b> Higher National Diploma<br><b>BSc:</b> Bachelor of Science (in Greek AEI Diploma)<br><b>MSc or MA or PgD:</b> Postgraduate Studies |            |            |                       | <b>GM:</b> Hotel unit General Manager<br><b>Ops Mgr:</b> Operations Manager<br><b>F&amp;B Mgr:</b> Food & beverage Manager<br><b>F/O Mgr:</b> Front Office Manager<br><b>HR Mgr:</b> Human Resources Manager |                  |                      |

The average age for GMs was fifty and for assistant GMs forty years. All managers in Athens were holders of a first degree and the majority of them had postgraduate degrees from abroad; in addition they spoke two to three foreign languages. In Thessaloniki there were two female assistant GMs; all participant managers were married. The average age for GMs and their assistants was identical with Athens (fifty for GMs and forty for assistant GMs). Although all managers in Thessaloniki were holders of a first degree, half of them had further academic qualifications (postgraduate studies). Most of them spoke two foreign languages.

The sample in Crete included more female managers (three out of eight) and considerably lower average age – for GMs forty-five and for assistants thirty-five years. The level of academic qualifications was also lower with all managers to be holders of a first degree but only three out of eight holders of a postgraduate degree. Participant managers in Chania spoke at least two foreign languages. Finally, in Rhodes female managers had low representation (one GM and one assistant GM), with the vast majority of male and female managers being married (seven out of eight). The average age was almost the same with Crete, indicating that Greek resort hotels give more chances for younger managers to hold senior positions. The majority of managers in Rhodes were holders of a first degree and a postgraduate diploma; in addition each manager spoke on average two to three languages. Based on the above, it can be argued that managers in mature destinations (Athens and Rhodes) acquire more academic qualifications (a first degree and postgraduate studies seem to be the norm); in addition they spoke on average one foreign language more. This set of data also indicates that the average age in city hotels is higher (five to ten years) than in resorts.

### **5.3. Hotel access and ethics issues**

Arranging interviews with targeted individuals proved very difficult even after they agreed to take part in this research. The researcher had to learn how to

tackle experienced '*gatekeepers*' to gain access to his respondents, be ready to spend several hours on the telephone and the Internet to track the respondents down and maintain contact, and juggle his own timetable to be able to conduct the required hotel inspection visits and interviews.

A customised strategy was followed for each case in order to make sure that access would be granted. For the resort hotels, the use of existing personal networks was valuable for securing access to the hotels. The author has a professional background both as a practitioner (Food and Beverage Manager in luxury hotels and restaurants) and as a hospitality and tourism lecturer for both public and private sector organisations in Greece. As a former practitioner the communication and networking with other hotel Food and Beverage managers working in hotels assisted with the initial contact. In addition, during the field work, the author was working for the Organisation of Tourism Education and Training (OTEK) as project leader in European funded programmes related to vocational education and training (VET) for hospitality and tourism. The Organisation is a branch of the Ministry of Tourism, a fact that made possible to access easier data and documents from the ministry's resources. Finally, the eight years experience as associate hospitality lecturer for BCA – a collaborating college with London Metropolitan University in Athens – has also created a valuable network with people working in city and resort hotels. These people are either colleagues from the college or guest lecturers that have visited the college in the past. The networks in this case also assisted to contact the hotels that resulted from the initial screening / selection process.

City hotels in Athens proved more difficult for approaching GMs and gaining access e.g. four out of five multinational hotel chains ignored or rejected the research enquiry. Overall, in a sample of fifty three shortlisted hotels fifteen have responded positively to the author's request. Managers commented on their '*heavy workloads*' and limited amount of available time, so additional networks and channels of communication were found in order to ensure

access. In this case, a limited ‘*snowball*’ effect with direct personal recommendations from the managers interviewed helped to finalise the interview dates – there were however many postponed scheduled appointments (a particular case took almost three months to finally interview the managers). Thus, there were three instances in Athens where the GMs personally intervened (with a phone call) to arrange the next interview. In Thessaloniki the situation proved better as the tight schedule of the researcher’s visit had not left any room for delays or cancellations. The help of the GMs interviewed there proved also invaluable as in two cases they also intervened to book an appointment with the next case’s hotel GM.

In general, all the managers seemed extremely interested in the topic, cooperated and were happy to help and provide further information in the future. The use of a research protocol (see section 5.5. below) in all the stages of the field work – especially during the interviews – limited any potential bias originating from the author’s professional background (Yin, 2003). Thus, a generic standard procedure was followed throughout the field work: after the identification of suitable cases (initial hotel screening), access was negotiated via personal contact directly with the hotel’s GM, or a department manager, or the HR Department in the case of the multinational hotel chains. The initial contact included an e-mail with a cover letter explaining the aims of this research and the proposed settings of the interview. The e-mail also included all the interview material. Then telephone call/s were made to follow up. While negotiation took some time before access was granted, this process was invaluable in ensuring both parties were satisfied with the research terms of reference. The methods used to gain access to the hotels and the total time to finalise appointments are shown in Table 19.

A serious consideration during access negotiation was to ensure confidentiality for the participant managers and hotels. It can be argued that the ethical considerations of conducting research with human participants

have become an increasingly prominent feature of the social science literature (Robson, 2002; Silverman, 2000). As part of his research registration the author attended a series of lectures and workshops on these issues and became aware of the importance of consent, deception, withdrawal, confidentiality and participant protection (Robson, 1993). Thus, a consent form (*Personal Data Protection Declaration*) – prepared by the researcher – was signed before each interview on behalf the researcher on the one hand, and the Hotel or participant stakeholders on the other. This involved issues such as disclosure of company information to third party and guaranty of anonymity for the participants and the company.

**Table 19:** Case access methods and arrange time to finalise appointment

| Region / Hotel       |          | E-mail | Telephone | Networking /<br>Recommen-<br>dations | Snowball<br>Effect | Time to<br>finalise<br>appointment |
|----------------------|----------|--------|-----------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>City hotels</b>   |          |        |           |                                      |                    |                                    |
| Athens               | Hotel 1  | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | x                  | 2 months                           |
|                      | Hotel 2  | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | ✓                  | 1,5 months                         |
|                      | Hotel 3  | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | ✓                  | 3 months                           |
|                      | Hotel 4  | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | ✓                  | 2 months                           |
| Thessaloniki         | Hotel 5  | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | x                  | 1 month                            |
|                      | Hotel 6  | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | x                  | 1,5 months                         |
|                      | Hotel 7  | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | ✓                  | 3 weeks                            |
|                      | Hotel 8  | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | ✓                  | 1 month                            |
| <b>Resort hotels</b> |          |        |           |                                      |                    |                                    |
| Crete                | Hotel 9  | ✓      | ✓         | x                                    | x                  | 1 week                             |
|                      | Hotel 10 | ✓      | ✓         | x                                    | x                  | 3 weeks                            |
|                      | Hotel 11 | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | ✓                  | 1 month                            |
|                      | Hotel 12 | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | x                  | 3 weeks                            |
| Rhodes               | Hotel 13 | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | x                  | 3 weeks                            |
|                      | Hotel 14 | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | x                  | 3 weeks                            |
|                      | Hotel 15 | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | x                  | 2 weeks                            |
|                      | Hotel 16 | ✓      | ✓         | ✓                                    | x                  | 3 weeks                            |

It also mentioned that this research complies with all Greek and European legislation regarding Data Protection. It can be argued that this mutual agreement created a considerable amount of control over the research. This practically means that use of a consent form in conjunction with anonymity, minimises the ethical and legal implications on the use of data collected on-site during the fieldwork. On the other hand this could cause considerable difficulties if the current research explored / discussed issues that the company would rather keep out of the public domain (Bryman and Bell, 2003). The use of a consent form (Appendix 3) also aimed to comply with the University's policy regarding Research Ethics (Ethics Code of Practice).

#### **5.4. Research instruments and techniques**

Qualitative approaches to data collection usually involve direct interaction with individuals on a one-to-one basis or / and in a group setting (i.e. interviews). The benefits of using these approaches include richness of data and deeper insight into the phenomena under study (Bryman and Bell, 2003).

While methodology refers to the theory of knowledge guiding the design of a research project, methods refer to the specific techniques that are used to gather evidence (Harding, 1987). In interpretive research the most common data collection methods include observations, interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis (Gephart and Richardson, 2008). In most cases, a research question can be explored using more than one method, and it is often the research questions that determine the specific methods that are used (Robson, 2002). However, no method is completely neutral and without limitation, and studies that only use only one method are considered to be more vulnerable to errors linked to that particular method than studies that use multiple data collection methods (Patton, 2002).

This research was conducted through the employment of a multi method approach incorporating the use of in-depth interviews combined with a

Personal Competencies Framework (PCF) Questionnaire and non-participant observation. The combination of these methods of enquiry aimed at the production of a rich set of qualitative data, that in turn satisfied the aims of this research, namely the exploration of the Greek luxury hotels GMs' competency framework, its compatibility with '*western*' conceptions of competencies, and the exploration of the '*social truth*' of the phenomena under which this framework is shaped and developed. This was achieved through the employment of a three-level analysis based on the work of John's (2006) and Dierdorff et al. (2009). The following section provides a detailed account of each data collection method used on this thesis.

#### **5.4.1. The personal competencies framework (PCF) questionnaire**

The exploration of the Greek luxury hotels GMs' competencies framework, and its compatibility with '*western*' conceptions of competencies, required the use of a tool able to surface the GMs' perceptions and personal opinions on the ideal preferred competency framework for their job. In order to choose the suitable tool, various competency frameworks found in hospitality and general management literature were identified and compared in Chapter 3 (Table 6). The results provided evidence that it is possible to use a generic managerial competency framework in order to assess hotel GMs – who constitute the unit of analysis for this research. As noted above, since this research takes a qualitative stance, the selected tool was not used in order to test large samples based on statistical analysis; the use of a competency framework helped the researcher to draw conclusions about which competencies hotel GMs consider important or not. In addition the fact that the sample population were all managers, called for the use of an '*easy to understand and use*' tool. A questionnaire about managerial competencies administered before the actual interviews, was the '*door*' that led to the qualitative semi-structured interviews, which yielded the core of this research's data. In addition, the PCF results relate directly with the first two



research questions (1.1. and 1.2.) which aim to identify if and which competencies, managers consider as significant.

The selection of the Personal Competencies Framework (PCF) questionnaire in order to explore which competencies are currently considered important from the GMs' and the department managers' respectively, was decided upon the fact that it was the most recent, developed and tested tool to measure the importance of competencies in relation to managerial performance (Iversen, 2001). The latter constitutes the main evaluation criterion for senior managers in luxury hotels worldwide. This tool is based upon the work of Dulewicz and Herbert (1991; 1999) that used rate of managerial advancement as a measure of performance in their research. The Personal Competence Framework (PCF) was originally developed by Dulewicz at the end of the 1980s, drawing heavily on the assessment centre literature of the time (Stewart and Stewart, 1982; Thorton and Byham, 1982) and based on his own earlier work in the field. Dulewicz and Herbert followed managers over a seven year period and identified the competencies of the managers that could be categorised as '*high flyers*', namely the managers that had the most successful career over the seven year period. It is important to note that this tool measured managerial competencies not in a simulated environment but in the '*real world of work*' using two independent raters (Dulewicz and Herbert, 1999). They correlated the responses of managers and their superiors on importance and performance ratings for each competency and found that 70% of correlations between raters were statistically significant. The inter-rater reliability for the performance ratings ranged from a coefficient of 0.02 to 0.43 with a median of 0.34, whereas the coefficients for the importance ratings ranged from 0.02 to 0.42 with a median of 0.36. In addition Dulewicz (1992) has presented some evidence for the construct validity of the PCF through correlation with Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ) scores. This work has been replicated by several doctoral students under Prof. Dulewicz's supervision, in the UK and abroad (Chong, 1997; Gay, 1995; Iversen, 2000, 2001; Saruwono, 1993).

Much of this work remained unpublished, except Iversen's (2000) cross-cultural study of European HR managers.

The original instrument incorporated forty competencies which have subsequently been expanded to forty five (Dulewicz, 1998). Dulewicz grouped his competencies under six main headings (competency clusters) namely *intellectual, information handling, achievement, result oriented, management and leadership, motivational, interpersonal* and *intra-personal*. The PCF was designed as a 360-degree feedback instrument, with the first section being a performance evaluation and the second, an importance rating of the different competencies. Each of the competencies is rated on a five-point scale, where 1 corresponds to "*not relevant for successful managerial performance*" and 5 to "*vital for successful managerial performance*".

The use of PCF in this research only applied the section of the instrument that rates the importance of the different competencies. As a research tool, a questionnaire is always more '*tangible*' and easier to understand and complete for participants; according to Chan (2008) the most common method of data collection in international management is the self-report questionnaire. In addition, it can be argued that it is not uncommon to use quantitative tools such as questionnaires in interpretive research (Gephart and Richardson, 2008). The challenge in qualitative research is to produce an analysis that shows how parts of a culture or phenomenon fit together and influence one another and how similar processes may operate in other settings (Feldman, 1995, p.2). The use of questionnaires in this case allowed the researcher to produce richness of data in combination with other qualitative methods (interviews and non-participant observation); in this way the studied phenomena were better understood and analysed.

Aligning with the aims of this thesis, the PCF questionnaire explored which managerial competencies were considered important by luxury hotel senior managers in Greece, and if these competencies were compatible with

'western' conceptions of managerial competence. In total, 32 PCF questionnaires were completed and collected from the participants. Although each of the 45 competencies is well defined and should be self explanatory an overview of the competencies and its interpretation was provided (Appendix 4); these interpretations were bilingual (English and Greek). All translations from English to Greek, were conducted from the department of English literature at IST – University of Hertfordshire (Athens Campus). During the interviews there were only a few instances that participants asked clarifications for the interpretation of a specific competency. It can be argued that, since the PCF questionnaire was used in interpretive research, the statistical significance of its results was not significant as in the original tool. The results of the questionnaire (Appendix 5) were processed in Excel spreadsheets. The data collected contributed to the analysis of the similarities and differences between each hotel GM.

#### **5.4.2. In-depth Interviews**

In-depth interviews are seen to be a widely used method of eliciting data from research respondents; however, such a method should be tailored to suit the data sought the nature of the respondent and accurately reflect the philosophical influences of the researcher and the research aim and objectives (Robson, 1993; Silverman, 2000). Thus, in order to identify the contextual factors responsible for the creation and development of the GMs roles and competencies framework, this research employed qualitative in-depth interviews for the participant hotel GMs and their immediate assistants (department managers). In qualitative research the interview involves questioning the subject while maintaining an empathetic demeanor: that is accepting the subject's frame of reference, whether in terms of feelings or relevance. Kvale (1983, p.174) defines the qualitative research interview as "*an interview, whose purpose is to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena*". Subjects can express openly their views, and all elements of their conversation '*have a certain value because they refer directly or*

*indirectly to analytical elements of the research question'* (Ibert *et al.*, 2001, p.180). If the interview schedule is too tightly structured this may not enable the phenomena under investigation to be explored in terms of either breadth or depth. Interviewees should feel as though they are participating in a conversation or discussion rather than in a formal question and answer situation. However, achieving this informal style is dependent on careful planning and on skill in conducting the interview. Although the validity, reliability and objectivity of interviews have been questioned from the various philosophical stances advocated within the social science community (Cassell *et al.*, 2005), it is the ability to provide explanation and description as well as the personal interaction that drew the researcher to use in-depth interviews as a technique to explore the GMs' roles and competencies framework.

In relation to the divide between the interpretivist and positivist research philosophies it is useful to identify at this point what the researcher hoped to achieve in the choice of in-depth interviews as a research method (Easterby-Smith, 1991; Silverman, 1993). This research employed *semi structured interviews*; a semi-structured interview, is based around a set of predetermined questions but the order and wording of the questions can be modified based on the interviewer's perception of what seems most appropriate (Robson, 2002). An interview protocol was used in order to provide a basic structure for the interviews. The protocol incorporated fourteen open-ended questions; the rationale for the selection of the questions is described below:

- Questions **1**, **2** and **3** were ice breaking ones, which aimed to establish rapport with the interviewees. They also surfaced interesting information about the GMs' profile and professional background, for example if they had experience in the Front Office or the Food and Beverage Department. Question 3 also introduced the discussion about the work context of the hotel GMs by letting them talk about their jobs freely.

- Questions **4** and **5** focused in two crucial HR functions (Recruitment and Selection; Training and Development); the formulation of these functions is shaped from contextual factors internally (company structure/size; ownership status) and externally (local/national HR practices).
- Question **6** covered a wide area, referring to the roles performed by the GMs in their work context. The answers in this question were what the managers perceived as formal and informal work roles; these answers were triangulated with data provided from their department managers in the same question.
- Question **7** explored the contextual factors that affect the GMs' competencies framework, in and outside their workplace. More specifically four factors from the hotels' internal environment (ownership, managers, staff, customers) and two from the external (relations with suppliers and the public sector) were examined. The selection of these six factors did not imply that they were exclusively responsible for the shape of the competencies framework; it was rather a prompt for further exploration.
- Question **8** explored the GMs' perceptions regarding the adopted competence framework (self evaluation). These data were later triangulated with the PCF questionnaire's results; they were also compared with the department managers' results.
- Question **9** explored another significant HR function, performance evaluation; the existence or not of formal evaluation systems determines to a great degree the GMs' roles and competencies performed in and outside the hotel unit.
- Question **10** explored the role of networking and reputation on the GMs' work; the unique contextual factors in Greek hotels shift great importance

to the role and power of the informal networks that each GM creates during his career.

- Question **11** emphasised the differentiation between the family business and the national and international chains. The size, structure and ownership status influence the GMs' behaviour to a great degree in luxury hotels.
- Question **12** explored the GMs' perceptions regarding the influence of the Greek context on their job.
- Question **13** investigated how the GMs perceived themselves in comparison with their European colleagues; this question has also discussed the possibilities of convergence towards a European management style in luxury hotels.
- A final question (**14**) was open for comments on behalf the GMs in order to reflect on add their views about this research.

During the interviews, the open-ended nature of the question defined the topic under investigation but also provided opportunities for both interviewer and interviewee to discuss some topics in more detail. In addition, in case the interviewee had difficulty answering a question or when provided only a brief response, the interviewer used cues or prompts to encourage the interviewee to consider the question further. In a semi structured interview the interviewer also has the freedom to probe the interviewee to elaborate on the original response or to follow a line of inquiry introduced by the interviewee (Ibert *et al.*, 2001). This style of interview therefore ensured that the same basic lines or inquiry are pursued with each person interviewed, but there is some freedom to pursue new or unusual insights (Patton, 2002). As Stake (1995, p.65) points out '*formulating the questions and anticipating probes that evoke good responses is a special art*'.

Moreover, in his investigation of in-depth interviews the researcher became familiar with the work of interactionist researchers who drew upon different aspects of this experience (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995). This approach suggests that people create and maintain meaningful worlds and that this can be facilitated by the interviewer treating the respondent as the expert in the topic of interest (Miller and Glassner, 1997). The first interviews provoked the researcher's interest in this perspective due to the ways in which the respondents used '*stories and anecdotes*' to describe their work (roles and competencies) as well as the Greek context. The researcher's initial expectations from the interviews were clear descriptions of organisational and managerial practices and explicit arguments about their value to be the mainstay of the participants' responses. Instead the GMs and their assistants repeatedly used (often quite personal) examples in their answers and the interviews themselves acted as '*confessionals*' on the rights and wrongs of hotel management and its interaction with the various stakeholders (hoteliers, managers, staff, customers, suppliers).

Interviews typically lasted around forty five minutes and took place in the hotel unit that the GMs and their assistants were based. Accordingly the researcher travelled to Thessaloniki, Rhodes and Crete to conduct his fieldwork (the fourth destination, Athens, is the author's hometown and permanent place of residence). While the interviews focused mainly on the responses of the senior managers there was also the opportunity to meet administrators and support staff within the hotel. The researcher had not originally anticipated these additional insights. Indeed given the difficulty with which the interviews themselves were secured the researcher was surprised to find that, in most of the cases he was afforded more than the original time allocated to the interview by his respondents, shown generous hospitality and introduced to other managers and staff within the hotel. These briefer interviews and observations on the senior hotel managers' work, were recorded and written up as addendum to the main GMs' interviews, and helped to develop the context of the main interviews. Thirty three out of the

thirty six interviews were digitally (audio) recorded, with the consent of the respondents, although the researcher was often asked not to audio-record parts of the interviews which were particularly sensitive. In most of the cases, transcriptions were prepared no more than two weeks after each interview (see Appendix 9 for one example transcript). Furthermore, as each of the interviews was completed the researcher set about writing notes and exploring the data collected. This is often referred to as data reduction where the researcher is involved in plotting out the key themes, which emerge from the data (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Initially the researcher embarked on these analysis activities manually, listening (again and again) to the tapes, reading and re-reading the transcripts, documents and field notes, highlighting and making notes against the recurring themes and issues. The intervals between visits to the field meant that the first priority was analysing and writing up rich descriptions of each hotel's managerial roles and competencies framework, using the company documents, field-notes, and interview transcripts. In order to summarise the findings of the thirty two interviews, a spreadsheet with the key responses for each question was used (Appendix 9); in this way it was easier to explore the GMs' similarities and differences regarding their roles and competencies, and thus to create managerial profiles according to this level of analysis.

#### **5.4.3. Non-participant observation and documentation**

The encounter with the managers and staff in hotels has led to the consideration and selection of the third method employed for this research, non-participant observation. As a method of inquiry, observation is an alternative or complement to the use of interview, documentary, or questionnaire data (Ritzer, 2007). A non-participant observer maintains either a literal or phenomenal distance from the phenomenon under study (Bryman and Bell, 2007), fulfilling no other role than observing human behaviour (Couchman and Dawson, 1995). The observer would not participate in everyday activity of the group under study, but instead try to blend into the



background in an attempt to reduce any effect their presence might have on the group's behaviour (Sarantakos, 1998). The non-participant observer normally uses a structured or systematic tool for recording data to produce quantitative data (Denscombe, 1998). Careful recording of what occurs is the cornerstone of observational research. Field notes, taken during or immediately after periods of observation, have been the traditional method of recording (Fitzpatrick and Boulton, 1994). Sarantakos (1998) recognised that attempting to define the role of an observer may not always fit neatly into the two categories of participant and non-participant observation. The observer may, in certain cases, combine elements of participatory and non-participatory roles.

In this research, non-participant observation was chosen as a complementary method of enquiry to interviews and questionnaires, in order to be able to produce a rich set of qualitative data. The main tenets of non-participant observation were adopted and the author kept a research diary (observation log) for each hotel visit (Appendix 10) in order to record observations in a systematic manner (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Several writers advocate the maintenance of a reflective diary as a rigorous documentary tool in this context (for example: Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Janesick, 2002; Stake, 1995). Thus, in this case the diary included important observations mainly about the behaviour of participant managers; it also included information about informal conversations conducted with other managers or members of staff during the visits. Non-participant observation implies several challenges for the researcher (Baker, 1988). First, the researcher needs to understand the settings in which behaviour occurs, and observe particular phenomena including verbal and nonverbal behaviours (i.e. body language). The professional and academic background of the researcher played a vital role here for the deeper understanding and assessment of the environment and the behaviours demonstrated by the senior managers. In addition, as already argued above, the role of the observer (active-passive) can vary from fully participant to full observer

(Baker, 1988, p.237). Given the nature of this research as well as access and time restrictions, it was decided to take a rather passive role, which was restricted mainly in the interviewer's tasks. This decision has also tackled the dilemma whether to conduct overt or covert observation (Sharpe, 2002). Although covert research minimises the impact of researcher demand effects on participants because they are unaware they are being observed, this choice involves ethical dilemmas (i.e. confidentiality and personal data) that made it unsuitable for this research.

Another challenge was the required preparation for each visit. Thus, since access was granted and the interviews were scheduled any available information about the hotel and the managers (where this was possible) were gathered through the internet (e.g. the company's web site; hospitality on-line periodicals and journals and customers' comments) and the author's personal contacts network. Thus, although a standardised procedure (research protocol) was followed for all hotel visits, in many instances the researcher had '*a rough idea*' of what to expect from the participant managers. For example, before the scheduled interview with an assistant GM in a Greek-Cypriot owned resort hotel in Crete, the author was warned by another participant manager that this person is extremely biased against Greek owned hotel companies. In fact, although the interview was finally conducted the case was rejected not only for the aforementioned reason but also due to his overall behaviour during the interview (aggressive towards the researcher and extremely arrogant).

Another integral part of the non-participant observation process is the collection of company documents (Tharenou *et al.*, 2007); these can provide the researcher with information about things that cannot be directly observed (e.g. recruitment policies for managerial positions). They can include policy documents, mission statements, annual reports, minutes or meetings, and codes of conduct. The researcher has to be careful in evaluating the accuracy of the records before using them: documents can lead to false

leads, in the hands of inexperienced researchers (Tellis, 1997). For this research it proved extremely difficult to retrieve such documents for two main reasons:

- a. in all cases the hotel management considered this information as '*sensitive*' and expressed considerations regarding their use for this research, and
- b. the absence of documentation in the exercise of formal procedures in Greek hotels excludes the heavy use or even the existence of these type of documents.

The author tried to identify at least the frequency of using formal (i.e. annual performance evaluations) and informal documentation by asking the interviewees (GMs and Department Managers): the results for Greek family and local chain hotels were disappointing, a fact that is not necessarily negative. On the contrary, national and multinational hotel chains impose the use of documentation as a standard operating procedure: managers in senior levels have to justify their actions by producing the relevant '*piece of evidence*' printed and stored in paper.

Despite the negative reaction on behalf of the interviewees when they were asked to provide such documents (most were treated as confidential), it was possible to retrieve a satisfactory number of company documents, mainly from Greek national and multinational hotel chains. These documents were provided in most of the cases from the HR Department of each hotel and included employment application forms, job descriptions, training and development programmes, performance assessment forms, and generally documents associated with the managers' recruitment, training and development within the hotels (Appendices 14-19). These documents and records provided data relating to the various HR implications for the GMs' roles within each case. In addition, digital media such as the internet provide opportunities for new forms of non-participant observation (Given, 2008).

**Table 20: Company documents by hotel**

|                               | H1 | H2 | H3 | H4 | H5 | H6 | H7 | H8 | H9 | H10 | H11 | H12 | H13 | H14 | H15 | H16 |
|-------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Research Tool x 2 (1)         | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Job Description(2)            | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  |    |    |     | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   |     |     |
| Application Form              | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Interview Form(3)             |    | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |     | ✓   |     |     |
| Training & Dev. Info. (4)     |    | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |     |     |     | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   |
| Performance Appraisal Form(5) |    | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |     | ✓   |     |     |
| On-line HR related info       | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| In house Magazine             | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    |    | ✓   |     |     | ✓   |     |     | ✓   |
| Hotel Promo. & Brochure       | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Hotel info from Press(6)      | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   |

| Legend     |         | NOTES   |
|------------|---------|---|
| H1 - Ath   | GR/L/Ch | <p>(1) See Appendix 4 for details / The Research Tool was applied in each hotel's GM and the GM assistant (Ops or F&amp;B or F/O or HR manager)</p> <p>(2) In total 13 out the 16 companies claimed to use job descriptions</p> <p>(3) Family owned hotels and local chains claimed to keep '<i>some short of records</i>' from interviews meaning scrap notes on the applicants CV or application form/ national chains and MNCs claimed to have a standardised form</p> <p>(4) Refers to the disclosure of information about T&amp;D programmes and policies / in-house or outsourced</p> <p>(5) All National chains and MNCs reported annual or bi-annual performance appraisal interviews by using customised forms / In most of cases refused even to show this form</p> <p>(6) This includes anything that can be related with the case study hotels ranging from periodical articles to customers' views about the hotel</p> |
| H2         | GR/N/Ch |   |
| H3         | MNC     |   |
| H4         | FAMILY  |   |
| H5 - Thes  | GR/N/Ch |   |
| H6         | MNC     |   |
| H7         | GR/N/Ch |   |
| H8         | FAMILY  |   |
| H9 - Crete | FAMILY  |   |
| H10        | MNC     |   |
| H11        | GR/L/Ch |   |
| H12        | GR/L/Ch |   |
| H13 - Rho  | MNC     |   |
| H14        | GR/L/Ch |   |
| H15        | FAMILY  |   |
| H16        | GR/N/Ch |   |

Thus, valuable information was retrieved from the companies' web sites including mission statements, the company's structure, and generic employee and customer policies as well as HR related activities. The amount of data accumulated from the respondents, including the documents collected, totalled nearly one hundred twenty five documents (including thirty two interview transcripts) was immensely encouraging though it also posed a significant challenge in research analysis terms. Table 20 identifies the type of documents gathered as part of the field work of the research.

### **5.5. Ensuring data quality**

Researchers working within a positivist framework tend to criticise interpretive studies for being *subjective, biased and ungeneralisable* (Hakim, 1994). Ensuring issues of *trustworthiness* regarding data collection and analysis is thus paramount if interpretive research is to have any impact on theory or practice (Robson, 2002). Here, *trustworthiness* reflects the notion that if there can be several possible accounts of a social reality aspect, it is the feasibility or credibility of the account that determines its acceptability to others (Bryman, 2001). The aim is to demonstrate that the explanations and conclusions are actually sustained by the data and that they accurately describe the phenomena being studied. Furthermore, the emphasis shifts away from being able to obtain replicable results, towards providing sufficient evidence for the reader to concur that, given the data collected, the results make sense, that is, that they are consistent and dependable (Yin, 1994). Thus, according to the above, a major methodological concern for this study was to produce valid and reliable outcomes (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002; Robson, 2002; Saunders *et al.*, 2000). According to Altheide and Johnson (1994) reliability refers to the stability of findings, whereas validity represents the truthfulness of findings.

Silverman (2000) identifies five interconnected routes to addressing the validity of qualitative data analysis, which are: the '*refutability principle*'; the

constant comparative method; comprehensive data treatment; deviant case analysis; and using appropriate tabulations. Firstly, the '*refutability principle*' demands that researchers contest the preliminary assumptions about their findings to enhance the objectivity of their work. For example, the data was searched for examples of hotel GMs failing to adopt the established '*western*' hospitality management practices. Secondly, the constant comparative method encourages researchers to verify their findings by seeking comparisons for their hypotheses in other instances. Here the data of specific management and HRM practices across the hotels was used as part of the attempt to ascertain the validity of the findings. The next step, comprehensive data treatment, is achieved by using every last drop of data to ensure that generalisations are supported through repeated inspections of the data. Associated with comprehensive data treatment is the aspect of deviant case analysis with the opportunity to verify the analysis by identifying and addressing discrepant cases. Using appropriate tabulations, or applying some quantification to qualitative data is the final step in improving the validity to qualitative data analysis and is relevant where the techniques are '*theoretically derived and ideally based on members' own categories*' (Silverman, 2000, p.185). The secondary data, questionnaire results, in-depth interviews, observations and company documents all provided correlated opportunities to improve the validity of this research.

In terms of reliability the researcher was wary of Hammersley and Atkinson's (1983) caveat regarding the assumption that the different data sources improves the validity and reliability of the research. In this case as already mentioned, case studies employed more than one approach (interviews, questionnaire, company documents). Denzin (1970) argues that multiple and independent methods should, if reaching the same conclusions, have greater reliability than a single methodological approach to a problem. This combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon is known as *triangulation*. Triangulation allows the display of multiple, refracted realities simultaneously (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003) and can enhance

interpretability and trustworthiness (Robson, 2002). In terms of validation, qualitative research depends on the presentation of solid descriptive data, so that the researcher leads the reader to an understanding of the meaning of the experience under study (Stake, 1995). In essence, validation is an interpretive understanding of truth (Angen, 2000). Thus, triangulation is not a tool or a strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation in this context (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003).

This research employed two different triangulation types namely *Data* and *Methodological* triangulation:

1. **Data triangulation** involves the use of a variety of data sources in a study. Thus, for this research different types of material was collected. Next to primary data from the thirty two interviews, secondary data were also an important source of information. Multiple types of documents were collected for each case and included the following: applications for employment, company vision / mission statement, promotional material (including audiovisual material like DVDs), company newspapers, performance evaluation forms and any other printed material that could provide information for this study. This material was found in the hotel and was provided from the HR department or the managers themselves; in some instances (Greek Chains) material was provided from the Head Office HR department. A second way to triangulate data was to write field notes during and immediately after each interview session. These notes were especially useful as they shed additional light on the textual content or indicated specific questions that do not directly appear in the interview transcripts. In this context it can be argued that recording the meaning of what is being said rather than the exact words of the respondent is more important in this context (Perry, 1998; Stake, 1995). As already mentioned above, most interviews were recorded (a digital voice recorder was used), and field notes were taken to ensure optimum

recall regarding the interview content. The goal was to '*document carefully the practical contours of interaction in the varied circumstances in which they unfolded*' (Gubruim and Holstein, 2003, p.229). Things to be observed were not limited to verbal activities. Non-verbal behaviour, communicational aspects (interviewee reactions) and global elements (body language) often gave precious clues if not direct insights. Finally, elements of the managers' working environment (atmosphere, office setting, furniture, etc.) were also described, some of the visible elements of hotel's organisational culture.

2. **Method triangulation** entails the use of multiple methods to study a single problem (Decrop, 1999). This can be different qualitative methods or a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques (but not in hierarchical order like qualitative exploration and quantitative inference). Since each method has its own limits and biases, and single methodologies result in personal biases, using multiple methods paves the way for more credible and dependable information. This research employed in-depth, semi-structured interviews supported by the PCF questionnaire measuring the participants' perceptions. Additional information for each case was retrieved from demographics – statistical data referring to the luxury hotel industry and the managers as well.

In addition, a research protocol (Table 21) was prepared for this research as recommended by Yin (1994, 2003). It was created prior to the data collection phase; the research protocol contains procedures and general rules that should be followed using the research instrument/s and is considered essential in asserting the reliability of qualitative research.



**Table 21:** Research protocol

| Activity   | Description  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <p><b>Research aims guiding the research questions</b></p> | <p><b>Aim 1:</b> To identify the key managerial roles performed and competencies required of GMs in the Greek luxury hotel sector.</p> <p><b>Aim 2:</b> To evaluate the compatibility of Greek managerial roles and competencies in the Greek luxury hotel sector with ‘western’ managerial frameworks.</p> <p><b>Aim 3:</b> To develop a model of the process through which definitions and perceptions of the required management roles and competencies in different contexts are formed.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Research method / design</b></p>                     | <p>Country qualitative research in 16 luxury hotels with 32 participant managers, in 4 different locations (Athens, Thessaloniki, Rhodes, Crete)</p>   | <p>Field Work<br/>Duration:<br/>04/2007-<br/>10/2007</p> |
| <p><b>Participant selection process</b></p>                | <p>Prerequisite for participant interviewees is to belong in the target group: hotel GMs and senior managers (Operation managers; Food &amp; Beverage managers; Front Office Managers; HR – Personnel Managers).</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Case selection process</b></p>                       | <p>Basic prerequisite for the participant hotels is to have 4* or 5* official rating in Athens, Thessaloniki, Crete and Rhodes – representing city and resort hotels respectively. All hotels must have more than 150 rooms / also provide TV and air-conditioning in rooms / bar-restaurant and parking / swimming pool (resorts only).</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Case access</b></p>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Identify hotels fulfilling the criteria in the research protocol.</li> <li>➤ Negotiate full access to the case through written and/or verbal permission.</li> <li>➤ Meet to establish researcher/participant rapport prior to the interviews.</li> </ul>  |  |
| <p><b>Research instruments</b></p>                         | <p>In-depth semi-structured interviews, PCF questionnaire, non-participant observation (including company documents)</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Boundary device</b></p>                              | <p>Luxury hotel GMs’ roles and competencies framework within a specific cultural context (Greece)</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Research techniques</b></p>                          | <p>On-site semi-structured in-depth interviews supported by PCF questionnaire for GM’s and Dept. Managers; informal conversations before and after the visit in hotels. Maintenance of reflective field notes. Company document collection.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Data management</b></p>                              | <p>Employ tests for quality research (construct and external validity, reliability) and use data and method triangulation.</p>   |  |

(Source: adapted from Yin, 1994)

A typical protocol should have the following sections: an overview of the qualitative project (aims, issues, topics being investigated); field procedures (credentials and access to sites, sources of information); case questions (specific questions that the investigator must keep in mind during data collection); and guide for a case report (outline, format for the narrative). This structured research protocol was used to guide the qualitative research to address rigour (Yin, 2003). This research blueprint focused on what questions to study, what data were relevant, what data to collect, and how to analyse the results. It also encompasses the data management criteria (meaning how the researcher decides to use the data collected) relating to the case, and the research instruments used. The protocol allows for a chain of evidence, ensuring increased reliability and reduced misperception at every stage of the research process.

Linked through the literature, research questions, data collection strategies, data description, analysis and interpretation, a robust foundation of evidence for the validity and reliability of the research was established.

## **5.6. Methodological limitations and boundaries**

The implications of assuming different ontological and epistemological stances are elaborated extensively elsewhere (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Bryman and Bell, 2003; Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002). These ways of understanding how reality and knowledge are derived shape researchers' approaches to their studies of social phenomena (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002) and revolve around two opposing philosophies, positivism and interpretivism (or phenomenology). From the positivism perspective reality is seen to exist objectively, distinct from the individual's consciousness (Girod-Seville and Perret, 2001). Furthermore, this reality is composed of discrete elements whose character can be recognised and classified (Hirschman 1986; Guba and Lincoln 1994; Tsoukas 1989;). In contrast the interpretivist perspective suggests that reality is based upon the individual's own

conscious experience of social phenomena and can be established by individuals themselves (Lincoln and Guba, 2003; Patton, 2002). In addition this perspective suggests that knowledge is socially constructed by human individuals and highlights the value of capturing such insights (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Bryman and Bell, 2003; Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002; Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

It can be argued that use of these opposing paradigms result in different ways of investigating the social world (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Guba and Lincoln, 1994). In the case of positivism the emphasis is on counting objective social phenomena whereas the interpretive stance advocates the need to capture and understand social reality from the individual perspective. Hence positivistic methods of social enquiry are associated with quantitative research methods, which typically include social surveys, experiments, structured observation, content analysis and official statistics (Bryman and Bell, 2003; Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Layder 1993; Tsoukas, 1989). These (positivistic) methods fail to capture the need for a deeper understanding of social phenomena as preferred by the interpretivist researcher. Such preferences include the desire to analyse words and images, establish meanings from the perspective of the people studied, capture naturally occurring data and a *'preference for inductive, hypothesis-generating research rather than hypothesis testing'* (Silveman, 2000, p.8). Furthermore, the role of the researcher in the interpretive inquiry is also acknowledged and emphasised; understanding must begin from the presupposition that there is at least some common ground between the researcher and the researched (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988). In addition, the researcher decides what the reported *'story'* will be (Stake, 1995). Robson (2004) suggests that the researcher's personal background, influences and perspectives can impact the research process. This process is known as *'reflexivity'*; it involves self-questioning and self-understanding and is important in order to take account of researcher bias (Patton, 2002).

The interpretive paradigm was found as the most appropriate for this research, for investigating the beliefs of individual respondents (in this case hotel managers) rather than investigating an external reality (i.e. the industry's quality standards). The interpretive research has emerged as an important strand that has the potential to produce deep insights into social phenomena such as managerial work in hotels. Within the interpretive paradigm, perception by itself is not reality, for reality is a blend of perceptions and external reality. Perceptions are important for they assist in examining complex reality, but perceptions or multiple realities cannot be the focus of interpretive research. Interpretivism is interested in the values which are beneath the findings, thus it uses inductive methods. In addition, for more than four decades, a considerable amount of theory and research subscribe to the basic tenet that people make the social and cultural worlds at the same time these worlds make them (Fairhurst and Grant, 2010). Thus, in social constructionist terms, taken-for-granted realities are produced from interactions between and among social agents (Hacking, 1999). Furthermore, reality is not some objectifiable truth waiting to be uncovered through positivistic scientific inquiry (Astley, 1985). Rather, there can be multiple realities that compete for truth and legitimacy. Material or otherwise, these realities are constructed through social processes in which meanings are negotiated, consensus formed, and contestation is possible. Such a view reveals how meanings that are produced and reproduced on an ongoing basis create structures that are both stable and yet open to change as interactions evolve over time (Giddens, 1984).

This research has been driven from the author's professional and academic background insights in hospitality, and is based upon his own conscious experience of social phenomena (hospitality managerial work). Despite the potential methodological limitations and shortcomings (e.g. the absence of foreign GMs from the sample), it is believed to offer a useful piece of knowledge in our efforts to understand managerial work in organisational and cultural context. To conclude it is argued that the use of different ontological,

epistemological and methodological approaches leads to different conclusions which are not necessarily incorrect or invalid; they just view the social phenomena under study from a different angle.

## **5.7. Chapter summary**

With the original research aims and questions in mind, this chapter demonstrates how the researcher adopted an interpretivist approach to explore the nature of the GMs' roles and competencies in the Greek luxury hotel industry. The research methods and techniques adopted are outlined and justified in relation to the social science literature but also the nature of managerial work in the hotel industry, and practical concerns of the researcher are considered. More specifically 32 participants (senior managers) from 16 luxury hotels in 4 popular Greek destinations were the sample for this research. Driven from the qualitative nature of this thesis, a combination of an in-depth semi-structure interview, questionnaire and non-participant observation, was selected as the appropriate research tool. The difficulties in gaining access and analysing different types and large quantities of data are discussed as well as the validity and reliability issues associated with the data and its analysis. Research boundaries and limitations are also considered since the selection of different methodological approaches leads to different interpretation of findings. The following chapter presents the findings of this research.

# Chapter 6

## Research Findings

### 6.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings from the data collected during a six months fieldwork period, in sixteen luxury hotels throughout Greece. The discussion begins with the effect of context (focused on culture) in managerial work. Then, the research findings are presented in three levels of analysis based on Dierdorff's *et al.* (2009) categorical model of work context. Level 1, the *omnibus context*, is explored in relation to the personal competencies framework (PCF) questionnaire results which provide an introduction on the similarities and differences between senior managers in four different hotel types: family, local chain, national chain and multinational chain (research questions 1.1. & 1.2.). The following level of analysis, *the mesotype relationship*, explores the contextual differences that appear in GMs' work in luxury hotels in Greece (research questions 2.1. 2.2. and 2.2.). The discussion of the findings here builds up on the similarities and differences in management practices and approaches across the four different hotel types. The third level of analysis (*discrete context*) presents the conditions under which the managerial work in luxury hotels in Greece is shaped (research questions 3.1. and 3.2.).

### 6.1. The role of the local and national context

As noted in chapter 2, managerial work and context inseparable and interacting in a continuous and personalised manner, which means that every manager experiences the influence of context in a different way. A good starting point for the exploration of context can be traced on the level of influence of the organisational and national or even local culture respectively

in hotels (research question 2.2). In this research, study visits included observations of at least the surface manifestations of organisational culture (Schein, 1980) such as architecture, dress code, the use of standard operating procedures and the company values. The results of these observations showed that family owned city and resort hotels along side with the local chains, were greatly influenced by the national and local culture; thus employees behaved as the rest of the local community and there was a feeling of '*being at home*', a sense of genuine local hospitality by people who live in this place. Architecture, decoration, food and beverage were also influenced and reflected a '*local flavour*'. In private informal conversations with staff people were relaxed and eager to express their opinions; no restraints from the company seemed to exist. In addition, in most of the cases, those employees considered in most of the cases the workplace as '*their second home*' and colleagues as a '*second family*', corresponding to the Greek managers' national characteristics as discussed earlier in Chapter 4.

Another factor that determines to a certain degree the hotel's organisational culture is the role of the owner(s): the interviews with senior managers and the unofficial discussions with staff, have shown clearly that the owner's personality and the level of his/her involvement in the management of the hotel can influence the organisational culture in various ways: from the decoration choices to the management of the human resources and strategic decision making. This is probably why family business (and in most of the cases local hotel chains) are unique in terms of organisational culture. On the other hand, Greek national chains and multinational hotel chains are dominated by strong corporate cultures (Figure 8). This was observed in uniform management practices and the use of standard operating procedures, standardised equipment and facilities layout; the products and services here are similar – what actually differentiates them is the addition of the '*corporate flavour*'.

**Figure 8:** Example of MNC hotel chain corporate culture values

The fundamental ideals of service to associates, customers, and community which serve as the cornerstone for all Marriott associates are exemplified by Marriott's "Spirit to Serve" philosophy.



#### ...Our Associates

- The unshakeable conviction that our people are our most important asset
- An environment that supports associate growth and personal development
- A reputation for employing caring, dependable associates who are ethical and trustworthy
- A home-like atmosphere and friendly workplace relationships
- A performance-reward system that recognizes the important contributions of both hourly and management associates
- Pride in the Marriott name, accomplishments, and record of success
- A focus on growth -- managed and franchised properties, owners, and investors

#### ...Our Guests

- A hands-on management style, i.e., "management by walking around"
- Attention to detail
- Openness to innovation and creativity in serving guests
- Pride in the knowledge that our guests can count on Marriott's unique blend of quality, consistency, personalized service, and recognition almost anywhere they travel in the world or whichever Marriott brand they choose

#### ...Our Communities

- Demonstrated every day by associate and corporate support of local, national and global initiatives and programs
- An important part of doing business the "Marriott Way"

Source: <http://www.marriott.com/corporateinfo/culture/coreValues.mi>

(accessed: 10/2/2010)



Figure 9: Manifestations of culture



Source: www.hiltonathens.gr (Accessed: 16/9/2010)



Source: www.grecotel.com/crete/agreco/welcome\_1598.htm (Accessed: 15/9/2010)

Customers and employees are constantly reminded that they are staying or working in the specific hotel of the specific hotel chain; the addition of the local flavour comes always second and it is superficial i.e. the adoption of local architecture styles or the availability of some dishes from the local cuisine (Figure 9). In this case, private conversations with staff were extremely brief and there was a sense that they were not allowed to air their opinions freely. The employment relationship was formal and working in this type of hotels was seen as a career step rather than a long-term relationship. It can be argued that the corporate culture in this case prevails and is evident everywhere. Even in Greek national chains where the owner and his/her family act simultaneously as members of staff, the company is presented as an abstract conceptualisation of values, norms and beliefs that make it unique (Appendix 9). In contrast with the family business this '*uniqueness*' is largely artificial and its purpose is to work as '*social glue*' and create loyalty for employees and managers.

Moving from field observations to the interviews' content analysis (the coding of the hotels and participants can be viewed in Table 22, p.186), it can be suggested that most managers working in family, local and national chain hotels demonstrated a deep understanding of the Greek context; they claimed efforts to diminish the negative and take advantage of the positive aspects that this context generates. A national chain GM in Thessaloniki (H7) argues that '*you can't ignore the distinctive characteristics of our culture for example the value of filotimo and in-group collectivism that need special handling or approach... the multinational companies cannot understand this dimension for their Greek managers and staff*'. Most of the respondents acknowledged the problems created by the Greek context and did not hesitate to air openly their opinions. For example according to a Cretan local chain GM (H11):

*"The Greek context definitely influences GMs' work a lot (emphasis)... there is 'a parallel universe' with hidden agendas like bribes, favouritism and nepotism... unfortunately these phenomena are deeply rooted in the Greek society and it would be extremely difficult to extinct"*.

The complexity of the Greek context is maybe best described in the following words of an Athenian family hotel GM:

*“Owners and GMs in Greece want to concentrate power and control everything... on the other hand, the value of ‘filotimo’, concern for the colleague and education (academic qualifications and language literacy) create positive effects... we should not use culture as an excuse... Greek staff in hotels is demanding with special needs that foreigners cannot understand”.*

(Athenian family hotel GM – H4)

**Table 22:** Participant hotels and managers coding explained

| Hotel Coding   | Hotel location | Ownership status | Hotel country of origin   | Participant manager 1 position | Participant manager 2 position |
|--|----------------|------------------|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| H1   | Athens         | GR/L/Ch          | GR  | GM                             | HR mgr                         |
| H2   | Athens         | GR/N/Ch          | GR  | GM                             | F&B mgr                        |
| H3   | Athens         | MNC              | USA(F)  | GM                             | F/O mgr                        |
| H4   | Athens         | FAMILY           | GR  | GM                             | F&B                            |
| H5   | Thessaloniki   | GR/N/Ch          | GR  | GM                             | F&B                            |
| H6   | Thessaloniki   | MNC              | USA(M)  | GM                             | Ops mgr                        |
| H7   | Thessaloniki   | GR/N/Ch          | GR  | GM                             | F/O mgr                        |
| H8   | Thessaloniki   | FAMILY           | GR  | GM                             | F/O mgr                        |
| H9   | Crete          | FAMILY           | GR  | GM                             | F/O mgr                        |
| H10  | Crete          | MNC              | CY(M)   | GM                             | Ops mgr                        |
| H11  | Crete          | GR/L/Ch          | GR  | GM                             | F&B mgr                        |
| H12  | Crete          | GR/L/Ch          | GR  | GM                             | F&B mgr                        |
| H13  | Rhodes         | MNC              | USA(M)  | Ops mgr                        | F&B mgr                        |
| H14  | Rhodes         | GR/L/Ch          | GR  | GM                             | F&B mgr                        |
| H15  | Rhodes         | FAMILY           | GR  | GM                             | F&B mgr                        |
| H16  | Rhodes         | GR/N/Ch          | GR  | GM                             | F/O mgr                        |
| Ownership status explained:<br><b>Family:</b> Greek family owned hotel<br><b>GR/L/Ch:</b> Greek local chain hotel<br><b>GR/N/Ch:</b> Greek national chain hotel<br><b>MNC:</b> Multinational hotel chain operating in Greece<br><b>M:</b> Managed / <b>F:</b> Franchised |                |                  | Managerial Positions explained:<br><b>GM:</b> Hotel unit general manager<br><b>Ops Mgr:</b> Operations manager<br><b>F&amp;B Mgr:</b> Food & beverage manager<br><b>F/O Mgr:</b> Front office manager<br><b>HR Mgr:</b> Human resources manager |                                |                                |

Greek senior managers employed by multinational hotel chains have demonstrated an overall negative attitude against the Greek context; in addition some bitter comments about their colleagues working in 'Greek' hotels created the impression of a 'rival clan' in the luxury hotel family. An Athenian multinational chain GM (H3) argued that '*hotel managers in Greece are not very well trained... even if they are, there are no opportunities for career development... overall small business thinking prevails in Greek hotels*'. Another negative characteristic that emerges from the national context is the highly political behaviour that senior managers and owners demonstrate in Greek hotels. '*All Greek businesses are run in an autocratic way which leads staff to bureaucratic behaviour*' argued a Greek-Cypriot assistant GM in a multinational hotel chain operating in Crete.

Managers working in multinational chains operating in Greece, demonstrated knowledge of the 'Greek' paternalistic management style and the central role of the owner:

*"In Greek hotels owners involve without having the knowledge or even proper hospitality education... owners and GMs run the hotels in the Greek way".*

(Rodian multinational chain F&B mgr – H13)

Furthermore, the level of the Greek context influence in multinational hotel chains operations was reported to be insignificant:

*"Not at all in our job [referring to the Greek context influence]... how could this happen anyway when a strong corporate culture is present in every aspect of our daily work routines".*

(Multinational hotel GM in Thessaloniki – H6)

All managers interviewed in multinational hotel chains seemed to fully appreciate and embrace their corporate culture. What was not clear in this case is what happens if a capable manager does not comply with the corporate '*commandments*'. In general, all managers from multinational hotel chains were very cautious in their interview responses. For example an operations manager in Rhodes (H13) suggests that '*there are very good GMs in Greece but the context does not allow further development...if encouraged*

*there are unlimited potential*, while his colleague a food and beverage manager in the same MNC hotel chain argues that there are '*many differences with the foreign hotel GMs*' without providing further details. Thus, although hotel managers in MNC chains acknowledged the same problems and issues concerning the GMs' work in Greek hotels, there was a sense that they avoided to reach the heart of the problem by providing neutral and superficial answers, within the limits of their company's 'code of conduct' (Appendix 24).

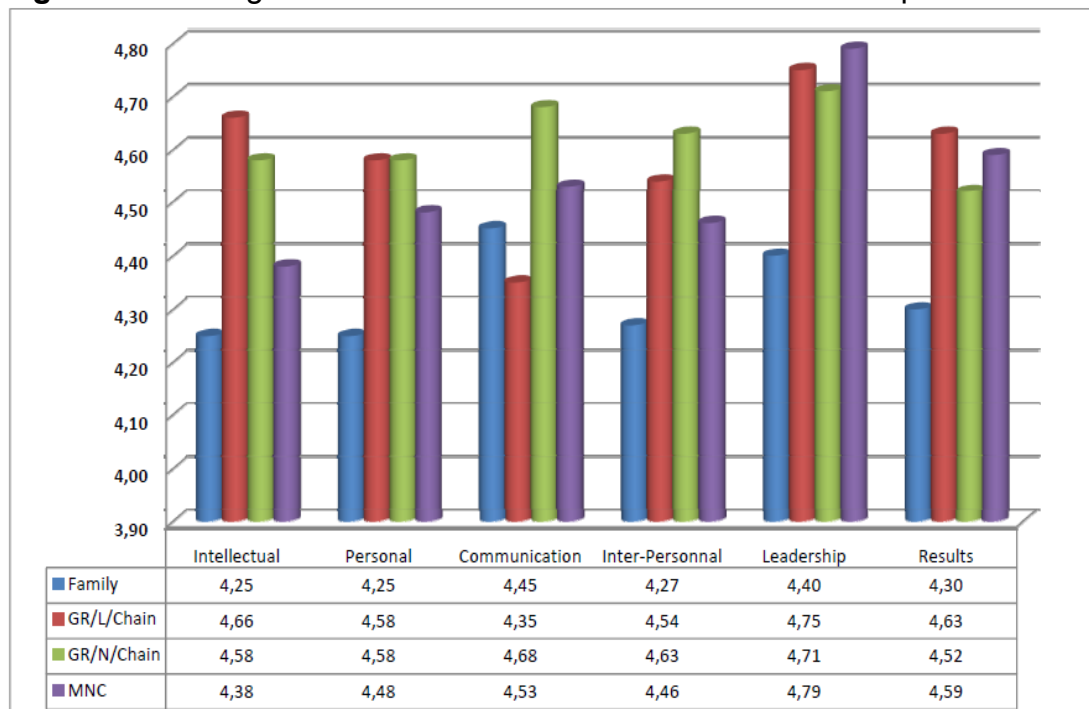
The following parts, discuss the findings of this research in three levels, based on Dierdorff's *et al.* (2009) categorical model of work context.

## **6.2. Level 1: The omnibus context through the personal competencies framework of Greek GMs**

The first level (omnibus context) provides information about the broad essential elements of a given context and describes managerial competencies' moderating influences collectively in a non-differentiated manner (Johns, 2006). This exploration of the omnibus context in this research was achieved through the use of the personal competencies framework (PCF) questionnaire, which assisted to explore the GMs' and their assistants' perceptions regarding their ideal required competencies for the job (research questions 1.1. and 1.2). As discussed in chapter 2, the concept of managerial competencies is universal (at least in the western world) and helped at this level to verify the overall idea, on behalf the participants, of what it takes to be a good luxury hotel GM. In total thirty-two PCF questionnaires were completed immediately after the interviews with the hotel managers. This was decided in order to avoid bias the managers' responses during the semi-structured interviews which contained questions regarding competencies. The presentation of the PCF findings is organised in six competencies '*clusters*' (Dulewicz, 1998). In each cluster, competencies responses are examined according to the ownership status of the hotels (family owned, local Greek chain, national Greek chain, and multinational chain). This section provides a general overview of the PCF results as an

introduction to the presentation of the research findings. More detailed accounts are provided later in this chapter in section 6.3.

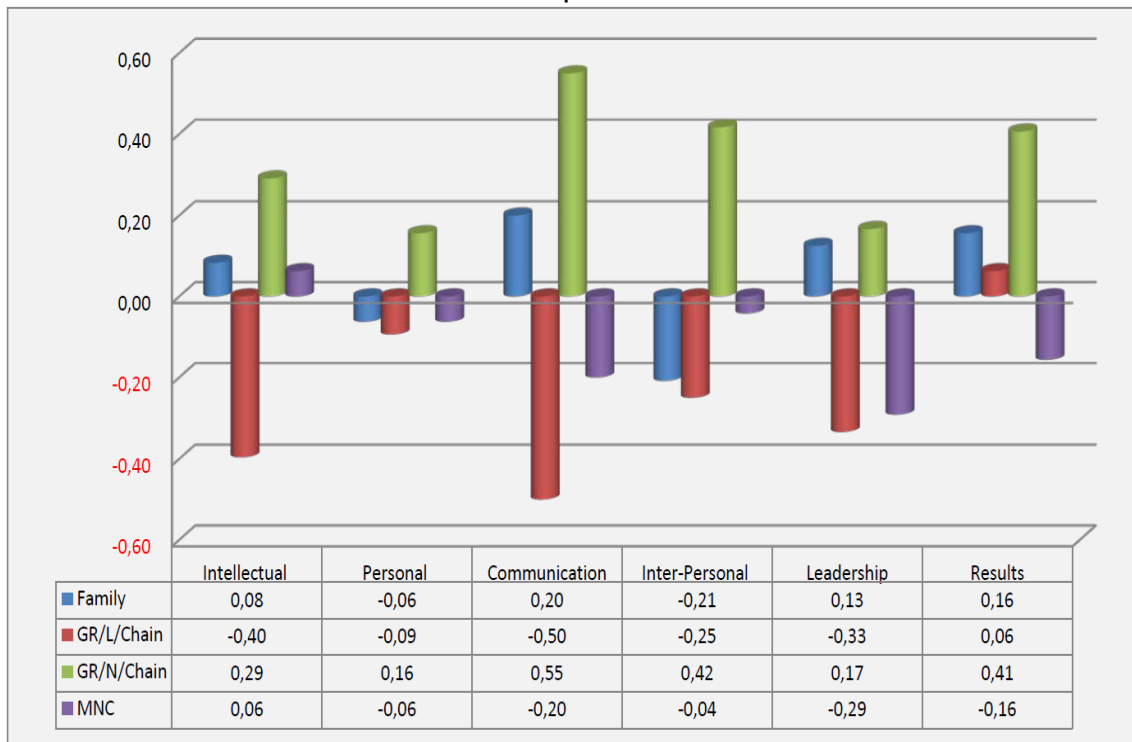
**Figure 10:** Managers' PCF results based on the hotel ownership status



The participant managers ranked competencies (Figure 10) with high scores ranging from four to five, which in the questionnaire's scale represents *'important'* and *'vital for successful managerial performance'*; this fact leads to the argument that all competencies clusters are important for the GMs' work in hotels. In most of the cases scores were very close and it can be argued that it was difficult to sketch the hotel GMs' profiles solely based on the PCF results. Only managers employed in family owned hotels have differentiated themselves by scoring the lower ratings in five out of six competencies clusters. Their results seem to be inconsistent to the rest three types of hotel managers (local chain, national chain, multinational). More specifically, only in the communication cluster managers from family owned hotels were not last in ranking. On the other hand Greek local and national chains' managers have demonstrated similar competencies preferences followed closely by their colleagues employed in multinational hotel chains.

Overall, it can be suggested that there was convergence on the perceived required competencies preferences of managers employed in all types of hotel chains.

**Figure 11:** PCF result differences between GMs and assistant GMs based on the hotel ownership status



Another level of analysis on the exploration of the PCF questionnaire results lays on the comparison between the views of the GMs and their assistants (Figure 11), where greater deviations were observed. In essence, this means that the GMs' views of the ideal required competencies were found to be different from their assistants, in the same hotel type (based on the ownership status). The wider gaps appeared between managers who were employed in Greek local and national chains. Starting from the intellectual cluster, a very small gap exists in family owned and multinational chains managers' views. On the other hand, a significant gap is observed in the case of the Greek chain managers; assistant GMs rated higher intellectual competencies in local chains while in national chains the opposite occurred. In personal competencies clusters the smallest rating deviations were

observed. Only Greek national chains GMs gave higher ratings than their assistants; in the rest three types of hotels assistant GMs gave slightly higher ratings than their superiors. The communication cluster appears the greatest variations in competencies rankings; more specifically GMs in family owned hotels rated higher these competencies while the opposite is observed in multinationals where assistant GMs had a notable difference in scores. Significant differences are found in Greek chains: in local level assistant managers seem to value communication much more than their superiors while almost the same differences in scores in favour of the GMs this time, are found in national chains. In the inter-personal cluster it is the GMs from the national hotel chains that gave notably higher scores than their assistants; also notable differences in favour of the assistant GMs are observed in family owned hotels and local chains while in multinationals differences are insignificant. Furthermore, the leadership cluster is valued higher from the GMs working in family owned hotels and national chains; the opposite happens in local chains and multinationals with assistant GMs demonstrating higher scores than their superiors. The last competencies cluster (results-orientation) is characterised by higher scores on behalf of the GMs, with the greater gap observed in national chains; only multinationals assistant managers gave slightly higher ratings to this cluster.

Although the above discussion cannot reveal the conditions under which a competencies framework is shaped and developed, it certainly provides a first indication that hotel GMs have different views about the ideal required competencies in luxury hotels in Greece. On the other hand all hotel managers rate competencies as important or very important for their job. In order to develop a deeper understanding of the interplay between managerial competencies, roles and context there is a need to examine the views of the social actors – in this case the hotel managers, from a different level, what Dierdorf et al. (2009) call the *mesotype relationship*; this is explored in the following section.



### **6.3. Level 2: The mesotype relationship through the management practices' similarities and differences**

The second level (mesotype relationship context) provides the explanatory link between the more descriptive and generic *omnibus context* and the specific *discrete context* (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). This level of analysis is very important for the understanding of managerial work in context, since it allows for limited categorisation of the luxury hotel GMs, based on their competencies and roles preferences.

The wider context of this research was to examine the convergence and divergence in general management practices between the Greek and multinational hotel managers (research questions 2.1., 2.2., 2.3.). The managers' views favoured the argument that there is a clear distinction between those working in family business (including local hotel chains), in comparison to their colleagues in national and multinational hotel chains. On the one hand family hotels appear to adopt a high level of informality in family business regarding management practices; in national hotel chains, despite the existence of standard operating procedures a high degree of flexibility is observed in managerial decision-making. Due to the effect of informality in management practices, GMs and their assistants expressed a wide range of positive and negative views. A Rhodian national chain F/O manager (H16) argues that '*you cannot compare David with Goliath...they are uneven things... however Greek hotels look straight in the eyes their multinational competitors (emphasis)*'. The main strength of the Greek hotels appears to be the very good relations with customers in a '*family like*' environment, most common in Greek resort hotels:

*"We have daily contact with our customers.... we know each other by the first name...almost forty per cent of our clientele are repeaters.... this is more difficult because we have to satisfy any wish they have".*

(Cretan local chain GM – H12)

In addition managers acknowledged the signs of improvement in Greek luxury hotels and expressed their optimism about the future. The forces that

move Greek luxury hotels towards convergence and harmonisation with the international hospitality industry seem to derive from the introduction of standards and quality audits, examples of these for all hotel types are included in Appendices 20 and 21:

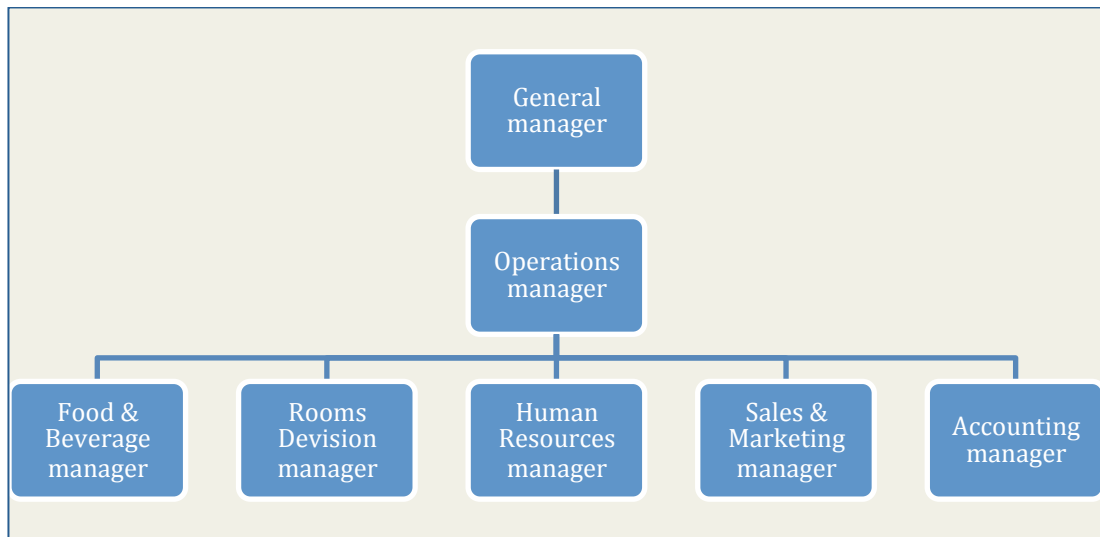
*“The period before the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens brought the introduction of standards in Greek luxury hotels through the accreditation for ISO 9001 and HACCP... this definitely pushed business to operate in a healthier basis... a lot of work needs to be done yet”.*

(National chain GM in Thessaloniki – H7)

A Cretan family hotel GM (H9) argued that *‘the Greek luxury hotel sector is going through radical transformation due to the adoption of standards... this will help them acquire a better position in the global market... on the top of that their size and structure enables them to respond faster than their multinational competitors’.*

There were however senior managers that expressed without hesitation their disappointment with the current situation. Thus, from a critical perspective *‘what’s missing from Greek hotels... organisational chart; procedures; standards; job descriptions and rational allocation of responsibilities... gradually owners and GMs are positive to changes... but there is no help by middle management because they afraid to take responsibility’* (Rhodian multinational chain F&B mgr – H13). Another problem identified by an Athenian multinational chain F/O mgr (H3) is that *‘owners intervene in the hotel’s operations and GM’s work... in Greece owners do not have hospitality education... they do not even have an elementary business plan in their head’.* By contrast we can compare the multinational hotel chains which tended to have better resources, excellent organisation, high quality levels, and product/services standardisation. In addition, a straight forward organisational structure (chart) is communicated to the entire hotel unit; in this way it is made clear who is responsible for what (Figure 12).

**Figure 12:** Typical MNC hotel unit, organisational chart



Source: H6 – MNC hotel chain in Thessaloniki

The management practices in managed and franchised multinational hotel chains were highly formalised; the existence of ‘*Standard Operating Procedures*’ justifies that (Figure 13). The difference here between GMs employed in managed multinational hotel chains and those in franchised, is that the former follow these procedures in almost an evangelic manner whereas in the later case GMs follow a ‘*best fit*’ approach. In this research one franchised (Athens) and three managed (Thessaloniki, Rhodes and Crete) hotels were investigated. Managers in franchised MNC hotel chains share the same profile with those in Greek national chains. Greek managers seem to be aware of the benefits gained from the prevailing international hotel management model and the use of similar practices and standard operating procedures (Figure 14). An Athenian family hotel GM (H4) argues that:

*“In multinationals everyone knows what to do... they are organised with available resources... there are standards that are kept... in Greece we are not organised we do ‘a bit of everything’ and lose our focus... the multinationals have recruited the Greek hotel managers’ elite, based on rigorous selection criteria not just the manager’s personal contacts...in other words they worth it”.*

**Figure 13:** Example of MNC hotel chain standard operating procedure

**COMPANY LOGO**

**DEPARTMENT**

|                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Department           | Food & Beverage: Service |
| Task                 | <b>MONTHLY TRAINING</b>  |
| Responsible for SOP  | Food & Beverage          |
| Date Issued          |                          |
| Document Reference # | F&B S 017                |

**Outlet Training**

- Outlet Managers or Head Waiter / Waitress will submit their training calendar to the Food & Beverage Director on the 25<sup>th</sup> of every month.
- 4 hours a week will be allocated to training.
- Training will be conducted by the Outlet Manager or the Supervisors.
- Training records will be submitted to the Food & Beverage Director.

**F&B Office Training Programme**

- It will be the responsibility of the Service Manager to issue the monthly F&B training programme.
- 2 hours every week will be allocated to the preparation of training.
- Food and Beverage training will be conducted all year.
- Copies of training records will be submitted to the Training Manager.
- Training reports will be discussed during the bi-monthly F&B meeting.
- The training programme / calendar will be forwarded to the Corporate Training Department.

**Corporate Training**

- The training schedule will be issued by the Training Department.
- The Assistant F&B Director / Restaurant Manager will be responsible to co-ordinate and schedule the attendees.
- The Assistant F&B Director will be responsible to ensure all associated scheduled attend the training.
- The corporate training function will arrange the following training: Food Hygiene, Fire Safety, First Aid, Telephone Etiquette, Language Training, Extra Mile Training, Supervisory Skills, etc.
- Follow up training for the above will be coordinated by the Assistant F&B Director.
- It is the responsibility of the Assistant F&B Director to ensure that all training records are current and up to date.

**Training Forms & Records**

1. Food & Beverage Training Calendar
2. Training Attendance Record
3. F&B departmental training

Source: H13 – MNC hotel chain in Rhodes

**Figure 14:** Example operational standards from a national Greek hotel chain (Translated)

### **The Restaurant Manager**

The restaurant manager / assistant outfit consists of gray / blue / black suit, black shoes, blue / white shirt, tie or blue scarf with the company badge. From the uniform cannot be missed the pin and the mermaid (corporate badge).

The restaurant manager / assistant is responsible for the public relations of the department and s/he is in constant contact with customers on their arrival, during the breakfast/lunch/dinner and departure.

The restaurant managers are four: the Maitre D' and three sous-maitre (assistants). The area of responsibility for the maitre D' is the whole restaurant throughout the day. The assistants are responsible for the time periods before the service, during and after the service. Before the allocated service areas of responsibility, are checked and special control forms are filled, e.g. the tags of the buffet menu for the main dishes are in place, there is proper preparation and setting-up of the restaurant and back office (storage, linen closet, scullery). During the service, the assistants are assigned to the sitting of the customers, proper flow of the service, and the proper functioning of the buffet.

In cases of heavy workloads the restaurant manager intervenes to service or buffet, for a better and faster customer service.

The restaurant manager contacts also other departments in case of workloads to ask for help, where s/he should cover a special event e.g. Greek Evening. In addition, s/he contacts daily the kitchen for information relating to food e.g. soup of the day, also for the right timing to pass the food, or specific customer requests.

Source: H16 – national hotel chain in Rhodes

There were also negative views expressed about the multinational hotel chains operating in Greece. The main argument here refers to the lack of cultural sensitivity and the overall high-performance approach focused mainly in financial results. According to a Rhodian family hotel F&B manager (H15):

*“...multinationals manage with the cold logic of numbers... that is why they cannot grow [in Greece] and their expatriate failure rates are very high.... foreign companies adopt an impersonal cold approach with customers and staff... sometimes this makes customers feel uneasy”.*

The ‘convergence-divergence’ question was also explored through the perceptions of the Greek senior managers of themselves in comparison to

their European and American counterparts. The overall impression was that Greek hotel managers '*can do the same things as foreigners...although less organised, they are more flexible and speak more [foreign] languages*' (Athenian local chain HR mgr – H1). In addition there was a unanimous '*us and them*' attitude even from those (Greek) managers employed by multinational chains. A Rhodian local chain GM (H14) argued that '*the only think you can compare is the job title... because of our culture we cannot compare ourselves with Europeans or Americans*'. On the other hand there was a strong belief that the context is responsible for blocking the Greek hotel managers' careers and potentials:

*"There is a sense that Greece has a significant pool of managers that cannot be used properly... this happens for a number of reasons such as bad [hospitality] education, unwillingness of employers to offer more, personal responsibility of the managers themselves, etc"*.

(Rhodian national chain F/O mgr – H16)

Greek managers have also demonstrated sound knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses:

*"Greek managers are capable of doing the same or even more than their foreign colleagues if they are given the opportunity... we are able to adapt very fast in new environments and situations and this is a great advantage... we are also able to think 'outside the box'..."*

(Family hotel GM in Thessaloniki – H8)

In addition, according to a Cretan family hotel GM (H9) '*Greek GMs have temperament... are friendly and cheerful... this differentiate us to a great extent from foreigners*'. On the other hand, '*although the level of the Greek GMs' knowledge is comparable with that of the foreigners in multinationals, foreign GMs perform better because they adopt a technocratic approach which is more consistent*' (Cretan local chain F&B mgr – H12).

When Greek managers were asked to describe their foreign colleagues, they highlighted their negative characteristics despite the fact that they acknowledged their higher levels of professionalism:

*“Foreigners are strictly professionals... however they cannot adapt very easy in new situations something that Greeks do easily... however Greeks need to be ‘pushed’ in order to be productive”.*  
(Multinational chain Ops mgr in Thessaloniki – H6)

Moreover, based on the arguments of an Athenian Greek national chain GM (H2) *‘foreign managers believe that we are a third world country... they only doing things by what their job description says that is why they are so inflexible... they cannot understand the Greek culture...they do not care’*. Expatriate managers were viewed as *‘cold technocrats versus the temperate Mediterranean hotel managers... senior managers in multi-nationals see numbers and decide... they would fire staff without second thought’* (Cretan local chain GM – H11).

To conclude, there were indications of convergence in standard operating procedures and general management practices when comparing Greek and multinational hotels. On the other hand, there are also contextual barriers such as the deeply rooted *‘in-group’* (family) collectivism that seem to be almost impossible to overcome in Greek hotels. So far the influence of context and a general discussion on management practices provided an outline of managerial work in luxury hotels in Greece. A detailed account of the four different types of hotels under investigation, namely family owned, local chain, national chain and multinational, follows below.

### **6.3.1. Family owned hotels**

GMs employed in Greek family owned hotels, identified a wide range of roles, which covered tasks in both operational and strategic level. A GM who belongs in this group monitors closely day-to-day hotel operations supported by his/her immediate subordinates the Food and Beverage manager and the Front Office manager. On the other hand s/he has to achieve the agreed financial targets, which in most of the cases are unspecified and vague (i.e. increase revenues and decrease costs). A F/O manager in a family hotel in Thessaloniki (H8) adds that *‘the hotel GMs primary role is to materialise the*

owner's wills...in that sense s/he must be ready to accomplish mission impossible' (laughs). Other roles that GMs reported were direct communication with staff and customers, problem solving, and the constant monitoring of the hotel's service quality levels. GMs play also a vital support role to the hotel's Human Resources department: they participate in the recruitment and selection process; they negotiate staff's salaries; they approve or reject training and development programmes; they lead, motivate staff and act as 'father-figures'; they intervene as 'fire-fighters' in cases of conflict; they have the last word in cases of dismissal and disciplinary action. Moreover, two out of four participating hotels did not include an HR/Personnel Department in their organisational chart.

**Figure 15:** Typical recruitment advertisement for family hotel

| <b>Assistant Hotel Manager (code AHM)</b>   |
|---|
| <p><b>LOCATION:</b> Santorini, Greece or Mykonos, Greece</p> <p><b>POSITION SUMMARY:</b> The ideal candidate should be able to provide excellent customer service and to make sure that the highest quality standards are achieved. He/she should motivate and inspire his/her colleagues and be responsible for the both the well being of the quests and the product. The applicant should have the knowledge and understanding of budgeting, supervising and controlling. Constant co-operation with the Management Company will require from the applicant to be able to comply with the Company's standards.</p> <p><b>POSITION REQUIREMENTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2 years minimum experience in a Luxurious Boutique Hotel</b></li> <li>• <b>Excellent command of both the English language and the Greek language</b></li> <li>• <b>Computer Literacy</b></li> <li>• <b>Hospitality Degree</b></li> <li>• <b>Well groomed with strong interpersonal skills</b></li> </ul> |

Source: <http://www.skywalker.gr> (accessed: 22/11/2010)

The interview responses in family owned hotels revealed a great extent of informality in recruitment and selection practices. Recruitment advertisements for GMs are generic and vague (Figure 15). Word of mouth and internal promotions act as the main recruitment tools. The selection process is also characterised by informality where two (rarely three) candidates are selected by the hotel owner, supported by a senior manager that s/he can trust. The manager's reputation and personal recommendations play vital role in this process. This highly subjective process is depended largely on the owners' ability to predict if the candidate is right for the job, and



if what has been heard through recommendations and rumours is true. The internal or external candidates apply for the job by filling in an application form accompanied by a curriculum vitae (CV). It should be noted that application forms are used by all luxury hotels in Greece. Although the content is more or less the same they appear significantly smaller in length (one, maximum two pages) in family hotels; they require from applicants to provide a brief profile, in most of the cases by ticking boxes or provide YES/NO replies. For the Greek family hotels, the selection interview process is characterised by a high level of informality. A representative or the owner him/herself, contacts the candidate GMs and an appointment is arranged; then the selection interview is conducted by the owner him/herself. In most of the cases this process can be characterised as an informal chat rather than a formal structured process. In some instances a senior manager might be also present during the interview. The owner is the person who makes the final decision on the short listed candidates and makes a final appointment with the GM who persuaded the owner for his/her suitability for the job. The process is subjective and is based primarily on the owners' opinion of the candidate and secondarily in references and information from the local and national market.

Another critical HR function examined was training and development. Family owned hotel managers reported during the interviews lack of formalised training and development policies to be at the top of the list. The most common pattern found in these hotels is that the GM or his/her assistant finds randomly a programme, seminar or event (trade show or conference), which s/he attends when the workloads allowing to do so. In addition, these companies seem to take advantage of the programme called '*LAEK - 0.45*' (*Employees Vocational Training Programme*) run by the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation (OAEΔ). This is based in an early 2000s national legislation implied by the EU, which requires from all companies with more than fifty staff to allocate 0.45 of their total annual revenues in training and development initiatives ([www.laek.oaed.gr](http://www.laek.oaed.gr)). Despite the slow but steady

growth of training and development schemes for senior managers, the majority of the interviewees from family owned and local chain hotels aired openly their disappointment; for example an assistant GM in family owned hotel in Athens argued that *'there are no real training and development opportunities in Greece unless you work for a multinational hotel chain'*. From another perspective a female GM in a Cretan family owned hotel (H9) suggested that:

*'we do the best we can with our limited resources through the Cretan GMs' Association...every year during the winter we organise successfully specialised seminars for senior hotel managers...this however is not enough, a more systematic approach is needed on behalf the hoteliers in Training and Development initiatives'*.

In addition career planning and development seems to be a personal concern for senior managers; as a near retirement GM in family owned hotel in Athens (H4) noted *'the hotel owners consider that you are already trained and developed because your CV says so!'*

Furthermore, the use of an informal performance evaluation system was identified in luxury family hotels in Greece. The performance evaluation interview takes place once a year for seasonal resort hotels or twice a year for city hotels. It can be argued that this interview can be described as an informal meeting between the owner and the GM; it is possible for a third person specialised in the company's finance to be present (e.g. accountant, financial advisor). The starting point to explain the lack of systematic approach in managerial performance evaluation is the absence of operational standards. In addition, in most of the cases it is not very clear what is expected from the GM in terms of performance. The hotelier sets vague short term targets which are agreed, or at least discussed, with the GM. In addition, the high levels of informality and the potential problems appeared in the process of performance evaluation are deeply rooted in the Greek culture where employees would accept *'constructive'* feedback only from superiors who are considered *'trustworthy'* and *'capable'*; anyone who does not belong

in this 'circle of trust' poses a threat to the individual manager and the group s/he belongs. Thus, when the superior manager, responsible for the evaluation, is not accepted by the individual or the group the process itself is cancelled – or at least questioned – by the group members' denial to accept the results. The following views depict very well the existing situation:

*“Our evaluation from the [hotel's] owner is verbal...it is based in 'annual results'... the whole process is subjective and obscure... how somebody can evaluate something that cannot understand”.*  
(Athenian family hotel GM – H4)

When senior managers were asked during the interviews what they consider as the most important part of their job, the multi-dimensional and complex nature of the job was emphasised by all the respondents. The most common response in family hotels was good communication and good relations with staff and customers. Managers from family owned hotels valued relations with staff; their interview responses indicated a humanistic approach to management based more on strong relationships and informality rather than procedures and rules. The case study visit observations verify that: GMs and their assistants in family hotels were found around the hotel premises talking with staff and customers in a loose informal manner. The strong emphasis in communication is also reflected on the managers' PCF questionnaire responses where the communication cluster received the highest scores (Table 23). In their responses on the ideal set of competencies for family owned hotels, GMs and their assistants indicated a balanced use of all PCF competencies adapted to the humanistic management style, common in Greece (Chapter 4):

*“A successful luxury hotel GM in Greece, must be well educated, act as a fair leader, be a good motivator, have strong personality... above all s/he must be able to control staff and the property”*  
(family hotel GM in Thessaloniki – H8)

GM assistants expressed similar views with their superiors, and emphasised more on interpersonal competencies, something that is reflected on their PCF responses. They depict the ideal GM as the person who is 'a leader, the person who inspires staff to go on when things are tough' (Rhodian family

hotel F&B mgr – H15); in addition s/he *‘must be able to understand, empathise and solve – if possible – people’s (meaning staff) problems... satisfied staff equals satisfied customers (emphasis)’* (Athenian family hotel F&B mgr – H4).

**Table 23:** PCF questionnaire scores in family hotels in Greece

| FAMILY                      |      |       | Av.   | AGMD         |                            |                       |             | Av.         | AGMD         |
|-----------------------------|------|-------|---|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>a. Intellectual</b>      |      |       | <b>4,25</b>   | <b>0,08</b>  | <b>d. Inter – Personal</b> |                       |             | <b>4,27</b> | <b>-0,21</b> |
| 1. Information Collection   | 4,38 | 0,25  | 26. Impact  | 4,50         | 0,00                       | 27. Persuasiveness    | 4,38        | 0,25        |              |
| 2. Problem Analysis         | 4,38 | 0,25  | 28. Sensitivity   | 3,88         | -1,25                      | 29. Flexibility       | 4,38        | -0,25       |              |
| 3. Numerical Interpretation | 4,38 | 0,25  | 30. Ascendancy  | 4,13         | -0,25                      | 31. Negotiating       | 4,38        | 0,25        |              |
| 4. Judgment                 | 4,50 | 0,00  | <b>e. Leadership</b>  |              |                            | <b>4,40</b>           | <b>0,13</b> |             |              |
| 5. Critical Faculty         | 4,25 | -0,50 | 32. Organising  | 4,38         | -0,25                      | 33. Empowering        | 4,25        | 0,5         |              |
| 6. Creativity               | 3,88 | 0,25  | 34. Appraising  | 4,38         | 0,25                       | 35. Motivating Others | 4,63        | 0,25        |              |
| 7. Planning                 | 4,50 | 0,00  | 36. Developing Others   | 4,38         | 0,25                       | 37. Leading           | 4,38        | -0,25       |              |
| 8. Perspective              | 4,25 | 0,00  | <b>f. Results - Orientation</b>   |              |                            | <b>4,30</b>           | <b>0,16</b> |             |              |
| 9. Org. Awareness           | 4,25 | 0,00  | 38. Risk Taking   | 3,88         | 0,25                       | 39. Decisiveness      | 4,50        | 0,50        |              |
| 10. External Awareness      | 4,00 | 0,00  | 40. Business Sense  | 4,38         | 0,25                       | 41. Energy            | 4,50        | 0,00        |              |
| 11. Learning – Oriented     | 4,13 | 0,75  | 42. Concern for Excell.   | 4,00         | 0,00                       | 43. Tenacity          | 4,13        | 0,25        |              |
| 12. Technical Expertise     | 4,13 | -0,25 | 44. Initiative  | 4,25         | 0,00                       | 45. Customer Oriented | 4,75        | 0,00        |              |
| <b>b. Personal</b>          |      |       | <b>4,25</b>   | <b>-0,06</b> | <b>Notes:</b>              |                       |             |             |              |
| 13. Adaptability            | 4,63 | 0,75  | <b>Av.</b> (average): refers to mean scores for competencies and clusters (a-f)                                 |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| 14. Independence            | 3,75 | 0,50  | <b>AGMD</b> (Assistant GM Difference): expresses the difference between the GMs’ and their assistants’ opinions |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| 15. Integrity               | 4,63 | 0,25  |   |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| 16. Stress Tolerance        | 4,38 | 0,25  |   |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| 17. Resilience              | 4,25 | -1,00 |   |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| 18. Detail Consciousness    | 4,25 | -0,50 |   |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| 19. Self - Management       | 3,88 | -0,25 |   |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| 20. Change – Oriented       | 4,25 | -0,50 |   |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| <b>c. Communication</b>     |      |       | <b>4,45</b>   | <b>0,20</b>  |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| 21. Reading                 | 3,88 | -0,25 |   |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| 22. Written Communication   | 4,38 | 0,25  |   |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| 23. Listening               | 4,63 | 0,25  |   |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| 24. Oral Expression         | 4,63 | 0,25  |   |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |
| 25. Oral Presentation       | 4,75 | 0,50  |   |              |                            |                       |             |             |              |

Overall the PCF responses were consistent with the interviews' content: there is strong operational orientation on behalf of the GMs in this hotel type and communication is valued very high.

### **6.3.2. Local hotel chains**

Family owned and local chain hotel managers shared many common characteristics. For local chain hotel managers the key words were flexibility and adaptability, since they appeared themselves during the interviews as '*all-in-one/multi-purpose*' managers. The multi-tasking nature of the job was best described in the following words of a local chain GM in Rhodes (H14), who suggests that '*due to the limited availability of resources, GMs in family owned hotels need to be creative and resourceful, to cope with the everyday challenges and often think 'outside of the box' in order to provide credible solutions*'. In addition:

*"It is really very hard to distinguish between formal and informal roles in this hotel... one moment you are in a meeting with the financial manager of the company and the next moment you find yourself arrested in the local police station for a construction permit which has not been issued!... what can I say I love my job but sometimes it is hard to cope with all these challenges at the same time."*

(Cretan local chain GM - H11)

Local chain hotel managers rely heavily on their team – in most of the cases the department managers – who are often treated as '*family*' with the GM playing the role of the '*father*'. A Cretan local chain F&B manager (H12) argued that '*you have to be able to communicate and work with these people [department managers] regardless your disagreements or rivals... when you spend together at least ten to twelve hours a day they become something more than colleagues...they are your second family*'. Observations during the case study visits confirm the above: in all cases GMs and their assistants were found spending most of their time outside office, monitor closely operations, and interacting with staff and customers.

The HR function in local hotel chains appeared more organised than in family hotels, with all participant hotels running an HR/Personnel Department. Despite the existence of written rules and policies, informality prevails in this type of hotel. The recruitment and selection function appears to a certain degree similarities with family hotels. Senior management recruitment is conducted through internal promotions, personal recommendations and word of mouth; GMs also reported during the interviews the use of specialised web sites since the mid 2000s (Figure 16).

**Figure 16:** Typical recruitment advertisement for local chain hotel

| <b>Hotel Manager ( ref. code HM)</b>   |
|--|
| <p><b>Job Description:</b><br/>           Set up, develop and manage the day-to-day operations of the hotel<br/>           Drive sales and maximize revenue from the Greek and International market<br/>           Strengthen customer relations by promoting the services of the hotel<br/>           Establish and Implement short and long range goals, objectives and operating procedures</p> <p><b>Requirements and Skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University degree in Business Administration or Hotel / Tourism management</li> <li>• Experience in Hotel Management in relevant positions</li> <li>• Willing to travel</li> <li>• Advanced leadership skills, results orientation and excellent communication, negotiation and networking skills</li> </ul> <p><b>The Hotel offers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenging working environment</li> <li>• Attractive remuneration and benefits package</li> <li>• Career opportunities</li> <li>• Continuous training and development</li> </ul> |

**Source:** H11 – Greek local chain in Crete

The use of application forms and CVs was reported from all participants as a standard selection tool. Although the senior management recruitment in this type of hotel is formalised, the same cannot be suggested for the selection process. The latter appears highly subjective, with the owner and/or his/her family to decide which candidate is suitable for the job:

*“There is close co-operation with the HR manager and the owner’s son to decide on who we’re going to call for the first interview which is conducted from the HR... having decided on the short list (no more than 2-3 candidates) the final interview is conducted by the owner himself, under a veil of secrecy”.*

(Athenian Local Chain GM – H1)

Moreover, training and development seems to be a personal concern for senior managers who *'must take care on their own these matters'* (Rhodian local chain F&B mgr – H14). On the other hand, senior managers in this type of hotel are participating in the design, preparation and delivery of short training courses for the hotel's staff:

*"Every year we deliver a programme we call the [redacted] Lessons' compulsory for all staff and line managers... the HR manager, the department managers and even me (GM) participate as instructors... the ultimate goal apart for achieving technical competence is to learn from each other (emphasis)".*

(Athenian Local Chain GM – H1)

The opportunities for participating in various activities like seminars, conferences and trade shows provided in-house or outside the hotel are plenty in Athens, less in Thessaloniki and almost none in Rhodes and Crete. Nevertheless, it is in the manager's discretion whether to participate or not in such activities:

*"... in most of the times the company is willing to pay our expenses for participating in seminars, conferences and exhibitions that take place in Athens during the winter...there is absolutely no chance to leave the hotel from April till October... sometimes we visit with the owner and other colleagues and their employers international trade shows... although the opportunities here [Crete] are rare we're trying to make the best out of it".*

(Cretan Local Chain GM – H12)

Furthermore, the GMs' performance evaluation is conducted annually in local hotel chains and it can be argued that despite its high degrees of informality (friendly conversation with no specific agenda), it appears more analytical and systematic, than in family hotels (Rhodian Local Chain GM – H14):

*"At the end of the season we [GM and Owner] review in detail what happened throughout the season basically in two directions: financial results and quality... despite our disagreements, I would say that this is more like a constructive discussion to find out were we've been, where we are and where we want to be".*

On the other hand, performance appraisal for assistant GMs and department managers appears as an informal on-going systematic process:

*“The GM provides constantly feedback on our performance during the frequent meetings we have...we set together the departments’ targets and when the job is done we evaluate and review these targets...regarding the annual performance evaluation this more like a loose chat were we review the main events of the past year and see our strengths and weaknesses...although it is completely informal it seems to work”.*

(Cretan local chain F&B mgr – H11)

Based on the managers’ PCF questionnaire and interview responses, the ideal set of competencies for local hotel chain GMs, reflects the multi-dimensional nature of their job. All competencies clusters received high scores (Table 24), with great emphasis given on leading and inspiring staff:

*“...good management skills, knowledge of marketing and finance and good colleagues to rely on... at the end of the day I think that people orientation is the key for every successful luxury hotel GM in Greece”.*

(Athenian local chain GM – H1)

In addition, a Cretan local chain GM (H11) argues that *‘a good luxury hotel GM must be proactive not reactive.... the combination of leadership, flexibility and filotimo is crucial for the success of the company’*. GM assistants stressed the importance of a balanced competencies framework for GMs, who must *‘understand the environment and be able to respond fast requires essentially all of these [PCF] competencies’* (Athenian local chain HR mgr – H1). Moreover, the work of a luxury hotel GM in Greece requires *‘direct problem solving for staff and customers... with focus on staff – they are going to be the ones to support you at the end of the day (emphasis)’* (Cretan local chain F&B mgr – H12). In addition a successful GM *‘must know the job very well... be flexible, have good communication skills, and get along well with technology and people’* (Rhodian local chain F&B mgr – H14).

As already discussed in 6.1. an interesting observation in this hotel type was the gap between the views of the hotel GMs and their assistants on the PCF responses. In five out of six clusters assistant GMs ranked lower the importance of competencies than their superiors. There were complaints on behalf assistant GMs that there are no training and development opportunities since *‘all roads are closed’* in this hotel type according to a



food and beverage manager in Crete (H12). The actual problem was reported to be the lack of delegation on behalf their superiors, which leaves no room for the development and exercise of critical competencies clusters like leadership.

**Table 24:** PCF questionnaire scores in local hotel chains in Greece

| GR/L/CHAIN   | Av.  | AGMD  |                                 | Av.  | AGMD  |
|--|------|-------|---------------------------------|------|-------|
| <b>a. Intellectual</b>   |      |       | <b>4,66 -0,40</b>               |      |       |
| 1. Information Collection  | 4,63 | 0,25  | 26. Impact                      | 4,63 | -0,25 |
| 2. Problem Analysis  | 4,88 | -0,25 | 27. Persuasiveness              | 4,63 | -0,75 |
| 3. Numerical Interpretation  | 4,63 | 0,75  | 28. Sensitivity                 | 4,25 | 0,00  |
| 4. Judgment  | 4,75 | -0,50 | 29. Flexibility                 | 4,50 | 0,00  |
| 5. Critical Faculty  | 4,75 | -0,50 | 30. Ascendancy                  | 4,50 | 0,00  |
| 6. Creativity  | 4,50 | -1,00 | 31. Negotiating                 | 4,75 | -0,50 |
| 7. Planning  | 5,00 | 0,00  | <b>e. Leadership</b>            |      |       |
| 8. Perspective   | 4,75 | 0,00  | <b>4,75 -0,33</b>               |      |       |
| 9. Org. Awareness  | 4,75 | -0,50 | 32. Organising                  | 4,88 | -0,25 |
| 10. External Awareness   | 4,13 | -1,25 | 33. Empowering                  | 4,75 | 0,00  |
| 11. Learning – Oriented  | 4,63 | -0,75 | 34. Appraising                  | 4,75 | -0,50 |
| 12. Technical Expertise  | 4,50 | -1,00 | 35. Motivating Others           | 4,75 | -0,50 |
| <b>b. Personal</b>   |      |       | <b>4,58 -0,09</b>               |      |       |
| 13. Adaptability   | 4,88 | 0,25  | 36. Developing Others           | 4,75 | 0,00  |
| 14. Independence   | 4,50 | 0,00  | 37. Leading                     | 4,63 | -0,75 |
| 15. Integrity  | 4,75 | 0,00  | <b>f. Results - Orientation</b> |      |       |
| 16. Stress Tolerance   | 4,88 | -0,25 | <b>4,63 0,06</b>                |      |       |
| 17. Resilience   | 4,25 | -0,50 | 38. Risk Taking                 | 4,13 | 0,25  |
| 18. Detail Consciousness   | 4,63 | -0,25 | 39. Decisiveness                | 4,75 | 0,00  |
| 19. Self - Management  | 4,00 | 0,00  | 40. Business Sense              | 4,38 | 0,75  |
| 20. Change – Oriented  | 4,75 | 0,00  | 41. Energy                      | 4,88 | -0,25 |
| <b>c. Communication</b>  |      |       | <b>4,35 -0,50</b>               |      |       |
| 21. Reading  | 4,00 | -1,00 | 42. Concern for Excellence      | 4,38 | 0,25  |
| 22. Written Communication  | 3,75 | 0,00  | 43. Tenacity                    | 4,75 | 0,00  |
| 23. Listening  | 4,63 | -0,25 | 44. Initiative                  | 4,88 | -0,25 |
| 24. Oral Expression  | 4,63 | -0,75 | 45. Customer Oriented           | 4,88 | -0,25 |
| 25. Oral Presentation  | 4,75 | -0,50 | <b>Notes:</b>                   |      |       |
| <p><b>Av.</b> (average): refers to mean scores for competencies and clusters (a-f)<br/> <b>AGMD</b> (Assistant GM Difference) expresses the difference between the GMs' and their assistants' opinions</p> |      |       |                                 |      |       |

As such assistant GMs move to another hotel in search for better career opportunities. A food and beverage manager in Rhodes (H14) remembers:

*“I have spent five years as a maitre D’ in my former job and I have seen three different food and beverage managers passing from this post...they did not even think to propose me take over because as they claimed, ‘I was doing the job very well’.... I finally left to a better company and got promoted to my current position”.*

### **6.3.3. National hotel chains**

The exploration of the next group of managers – those in national hotel chains – revealed during the interviews results-oriented roles like achieving agreed targets; ‘selling’ the hotel; materialise budgets; maintain or increase product and service quality standards:

*“Our roles focus on increasing business for the hotel [this includes selling events and securing contracts with tour operators], monitoring closely the agreed targets for budgets, and co-ordinating efforts for maintaining high standards of quality”.*

(Rhodian national chain GM – H16)

They also emphasised their roles as representatives of the hotel and the company in local or regional level. The greatest difference with the former two types of managers (those in family and local hotel chains) was that they connected the importance of good staff relations and communication with performance. During the case study visits, all GMs were found spending most of their times in their office, leaving their immediate subordinates to deal with staff. An Athenian GM in a Greek national chain (H2) said:

*“The first thing I do before I get to my office is walk around the hotel to check the condition of the premises and say good morning to as much staff I can...I try to spend some time with them often using small talk to hear if everything’s OK with their family... we need to show them that the company cares and the hotel is their second home... on the other hand of course there is distance between me and them, for job matters they have to meet their immediate supervisor”.*

National hotel chains pay greater attention to the utilisation of their workforce; thus at hotel unit level an HR Department is responsible for materialising the

company's HR strategy, policies and practices. In most of the cases the company's official web site includes HR related issued such as posting job vacancies (Figure 17). The recruitment and selection process for senior managers is highly formalised in Greek national chains where an internal and more rarely external advertisement is posted. Employment advertisements in national hotel chains and multinationals vary considerably from those in family hotels and local chains. The later are rather brief and vague with a short description of the GMs tasks and required competencies for the position; on the other hand, national chains provide a detailed account of the position's requirements, and very often incorporate part or the whole job description (Figure 18) in the job advertisement.

**Figure 17:** Typical recruitment advertisement for Greek national hotel chain

| <b>General Hotels Manager (Code: GMPC)</b>   |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Candidate Profile</b>   |  |
| <b>Qualifications Required:</b>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor Degree in Business Administration or in Finance or in Tourism Education and Training</li> <li>• Master Degree in Business Administration or in Finance or in Tourism Education and Training would be an advantage</li> <li>• At least 10 year relevant work experience at the same position</li> <li>• Knowledge of Budjeting</li> <li>• Knowledge of customers Safety policies</li> <li>• Knowledge of Legislation of Unions of Employees</li> <li>• Excellent command of the English language. Knowledge of the German or Russian language would be an advantage</li> <li>• IT Literacy</li> <li>• Flexible and Adaptative</li> <li>• Able to work effectively within a team</li> <li>• Organizational and leading skills</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>The Company Offers:</b>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dynamic working environment</li> <li>• Career development opportunities</li> <li>• Competitive remuneration package</li> <li>• F &amp; B benefits</li> <li>• Housing Allowance</li> </ul>   |  |
| Interested candidates should address detailed CV mentioning the reference code (GMPC) via fax: +30 210 [REDACTED] or e-mail: [REDACTED]. All CVs will be treated with strict confidence  |  |

Source: <http://www.skywalker.gr/> (accessed: 1/2/2009)

**Figure 18:** Sample job description for a national hotel chain GM (Translated)

Company Logo

HR Department

### Job Description

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Department: | Administration                                      |
| Location:   | Athens  |
| Job Title:  | Hotel Unit General Manager                          |
| Reports to: | Head Office, The Board of Directors & the President |

#### General Description

The ideal person for this position should have knowledge and understanding of budgeting, supervising and controlling. Constant co operation with the Head Office will require from the applicant to be able to comply with the Company's standards. He/she should motivate and inspire his/her colleagues and be responsible for the both the well being of the guests and the product.

#### Position Requirements

- 5 years minimum experience as a Hotel Manager in a Luxurious (4 or 5\*) Hotel
- Age up to 40
- Excellent command of the Greek, English and German languages
- Computer Literacy
- Hospitality Degree
- Well groomed with strong interpersonal skills

#### Position Duties

- Procedures control
- Compliance to the applied laws of the Greek State
- Human Resources supervision and controlling
- Attention to the detail
- Maintaining the Company's operational and service standards

|             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| REVIEWED BY | <i>Title</i> |
| APPROVED BY | <i>Title</i> |
| DATE POSTED |              |
| DATE HIRED  |              |

Source: H2, Greek national hotel chain in Athens

Although application forms and CVs remain the main selection tool in Greek national chains, applicants should include details of their professional and educational background in a rather lengthy form (can be up to 5 pages – Appendix 11). This critical information about the applicant's profile is then passed to interviewers; in this way, it is ensured that the selection interviews will be thoroughly planned and prepared. In national and multinational chains this process is highly formalised: the initial selection interview takes place in the Head Office Human Resources (HR) Department from the executive HR manager and then one or two more interviews follow with senior managers from the company. The final interview of the short listed candidates is conducted by the hotel owner – who is, in most of the cases, the CEO – and a highly ranked executive. The owner's involvement in the decision making process for the candidate GMs' suitability is the main difference between Greek national chains and multinationals; in the later the GM might not have the chance to see or hear the CEO of the company through his/her career. An Athenian national chain GM (H2) notes that *'although this [recruitment and selection] is a highly formalised process your relationships with key people and reputation within the company play vital role in your career development...the final word for the selection of a hotel unit GM comes from powerful senior executives who work in the company for many years and enjoy the owner's trust to the maximum'*. Emphasis is also put on the GMs' preparation/orientation before they take their new post; *'the best practice in our company for new recruits [GMs] is to stay with a senior GM in another hotel of our chain for at least fifteen days in order to familiarise not only with processes and procedures but also with our company culture'* (Athenian national chain GM – H2).

Training and development is seen as an integral part of the HR function within the hotel and is closely related with performance. The HRM departments allocate annual training budgets; they also include succession planning and career development programmes for the middle and senior management. Training can be delivered in-house by existing staff, can be

outsourced and delivered by hospitality specialists (Appendix 19), or a combination of those two. A national chain GM in Thessaloniki (H5) says:

*'...our company allocated this year 80,000€ for senior management training programmes... some of these are developed and delivered in-house, most of them however are outsourced from renown companies in this field...we customise these programmes according to our training needs...this year in a pilot scheme we have send a small group of GMs to Cornell (USA) for short courses in marketing and sales techniques'.*

Managerial training programmes in national hotel chains include training on operational aspects of management, people management issues, and also personal effectiveness. For example, conducting performance appraisals, leading teams, coaching, training and mentoring figured prominently amongst the people management courses, while aspects of budgeting and forecasting, planning and more advanced customer care and marketing programmes are popular in the more business or operationally focused courses. Training in the area of personal effectiveness concentrates on managers' ability to manage themselves, and included content on time management, networking and career development. These supervisor and management courses are delivered over several days and often at regional hotels. The additional benefits of such courses are the opportunities for managers to meet colleagues from other units and be further socialised into their company's corporate culture.

Career development is conducted though internal promotions and careful planning, seems to be the norm in national hotel chains. The vacancies for senior management positions are posted in the company's intranet and can be viewed by all employees. The senior managers thus, have the power to determine their next career move within the company. An F/O manager in a national hotel chain in Rhodes (H16) notes that:

*"...we try to develop our own senior management cohort by recruiting and keeping those graduates who worth...we make efforts to bring out their best talent...we reward them with promotions if they perform accordingly".*

Performance evaluation for senior managers is conducted one or two times throughout the year, and it is multi-dimensional. First each manager goes through a performance evaluation interview from a superior manager; the interview is based in a standardised form which examines the managers' behaviour and performance in various aspects such as appearance, communication, efficiency, quality and team work (Appendix 16). These standardised evaluation forms, found to be similar in Greek national chains and multinationals – apparently the Greeks '*borrowed*' these forms from the multinational hotel chains. The '*Greek*' version of performance evaluation forms appears to be rather descriptive – the assessor in most of the cases is required to tick boxes or answer 'Yes/No' questions. The performance evaluation process also includes actions as peer and staff evaluations (*180° evaluation*) and self-evaluations (*360° evaluation*); hotel chains also use the mystery guest reports to examine how the senior managers respond in difficult situations.

All managers from Greek national chains expressed their appreciation for the value of communication and good relations with staff and customers (Table 25). Given the high context Greek culture (Chapter 4), the existence of corporate policies and standard operating procedures that require a high level of formality can be considered as the main obstacle in communication. Nevertheless during the interviews, both GMs and assistants argued that they were flexible enough to manoeuvre between formality and informality. According to a national chain F/O manager in Rhodes (H16) '*there's a very delicate balance between people and numbers...you have to be able to understand both if you want to survive in this extremely competitive environment*'. In addition, Greek national chain managers appreciate those competencies that they consider suitable for achieving outstanding performance:

*“Good management skills and ‘soft’ skills needed to cope with staff and customers are taken for granted in this profession...it takes much more than that to be a successful GM in a Greek luxury hotel... you have to be knowledgeable, cope with technology, have good sales skills and the most important to be*

*able to understand, interpret and use numbers...at the end of the day it is you who takes the decisions – or at least suggests to make a move – not the accountants”.*

(National chain GM in Thessaloniki – H7)

**Table 25:** PCF questionnaire scores in national hotel chains in Greece

| GR/N/CHAIN                  | Av.         | AGMD        |   | Av.         | AGMD        |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|-------------|-------------|
| <b>a. Intellectual</b>      |             |             |   | <b>4,63</b> | <b>0,42</b> |
| 1. Information Collection   | 4,50        | 1,00        | 26. Impact  | 5,00        | 0,00        |
| 2. Problem Analysis         | 4,63        | -0,25       | 27. Persuasiveness  | 4,88        | 0,25        |
| 3. Numerical Interpretation | 4,38        | 0,25        | 28. Sensitivity   | 4,13        | 0,25        |
| 4. Judgment                 | 4,88        | 0,25        | 29. Flexibility   | 4,75        | 0,50        |
| 5. Critical Faculty         | 4,75        | 0,00        | 30. Ascendancy  | 4,50        | 0,50        |
| 6. Creativity               | 4,38        | 0,75        | 31. Negotiating   | 4,50        | 1,00        |
| 7. Planning                 | 4,88        | -0,25       | <b>e. Leadership</b>  |             |             |
| 8. Perspective              | 4,75        | 0,00        |   | <b>4,71</b> | <b>0,17</b> |
| 9. Org. Awareness           | 4,75        | 0,50        | 32. Organising  | 4,63        | 0,25        |
| 10. External Awareness      | 4,50        | 1,00        | 33. Empowering  | 4,75        | 0,50        |
| 11. Learning – Oriented     | 4,75        | 0,00        | 34. Appraising  | 4,63        | 0,25        |
| 12. Technical Expertise     | 3,88        | 0,25        | 35. Motivating Others   | 4,63        | 0,25        |
| <b>b. Personal</b>          |             |             |   | <b>4,52</b> | <b>0,41</b> |
|                             | <b>4,58</b> | <b>0,16</b> | 36. Developing Others   | 5,00        | 0,00        |
| 13. Adaptability            | 4,75        | 0,00        | 37. Leading   | 4,63        | -0,25       |
| 14. Independence            | 4,38        | 0,75        | <b>f. Results - Orientation</b>   |             |             |
| 15. Integrity               | 4,88        | 0,25        |   | <b>4,52</b> | <b>0,41</b> |
| 16. Stress Tolerance        | 4,75        | -0,50       | 38. Risk Taking   | 4,38        | -0,25       |
| 17. Resilience              | 4,38        | 0,75        | 39. Decisiveness  | 4,75        | 0,50        |
| 18. Detail Consciousness    | 4,25        | 0,00        | 40. Business Sense  | 4,38        | 0,75        |
| 19. Self - Management       | 4,50        | 0,00        | 41. Energy  | 4,50        | 1,00        |
| 20. Change – Oriented       | 4,75        | 0,00        | 42. Concern for Excell.   | 4,25        | 0,50        |
| <b>c. Communication</b>     |             |             |   | 4,38        | 0,25        |
|                             | <b>4,68</b> | <b>0,55</b> | 44. Initiative  | 4,50        | 0,50        |
| 21. Reading                 | 4,50        | 0,50        | 45. Customer Oriented   | 5,00        | 0,00        |
| 22. Written Communication   | 4,63        | 0,75        | <b>Notes:</b>   |             |             |
| 23. Listening               | 4,88        | 0,25        | <b>Av.</b> (average): refers to mean scores for competencies and clusters (a-f)                                 |             |             |
| 24. Oral Expression         | 4,75        | 0,50        | <b>AGMD</b> (Assistant GM Difference): expresses the difference between the GMs' and their assistants' opinions |             |             |
| 25. Oral Presentation       | 4,63        | 0,75        |   |             |             |



The PCF results for all participant managers in this hotel type are consistent with the content from the interviews and demonstrate a high performing manager who, on the one hand values communication and human relations, and on the other hand functions as a dynamic leader and entrepreneur. There are notable differences between the GMs and their assistants; these differences are generated from the different demands on each position: the former perform strategic roles by representing the owner/s while the latter are focused in operational roles.

#### **6.3.4. Multinational hotel chains**

The responses from Greek managers employed in multinational hotel chains reflected clearly the corporate line in pre-described required roles and competencies. Although those managers were able to understand the value of informality and flexibility (all of them have worked in Greek firms) they were bound by a number of rules and procedures difficult to escape from. Similarly to national hotel chains, performance was the key word during the interviews. Nevertheless, in multinationals the discussion was focused on the tight monitoring of operations for assistant GMs and the fulfilment of financial targets and implementation of corporate policies for GMs. During the case study visits, all GMs spent most of their working time in their office; face-to-face communication was restricted to their immediate subordinates and some important customers. In this case GMs play both a strategic and a 'passive' operational role; the later is delegated to the department managers who constantly inform their superior for the progress of operations. A franchised multinational hotel GM in Athens (H3) notes that:

*"...it is definitely not my job to be the person to hear staff's or customers' complaints but for God's sake I should be the first person to know...when something wrong happens we should be able to respond immediately as a team...the fire-fighter role is something inevitable when you deal with people and services."*

**Figure 19:** Typical recruitment advertisement for multinational hotel chain



**FLOYD HOTEL GROUP**  
Hotel & Property Management

**Floyd Hotel group GmbH** managed business city hotels, exclusive hotel resorts, boutique hotels and luxury hotels in Europe Middle East & Africa.

*We are currently looking for experienced:*

**Hotel Manager to join our Hotel in Greece**

- The role reports directly to the General Manager/ Europe, Middle East & Africa
- Degree in Hospitality Management
- Strong interpersonal & communications skills
- Fluency in German and English
- Age between 33-40yrs
- 2 or more years experience in a similar position of a Four Star hotel
- Must be willing to relocate
- Excellent knowledge of MS Office. Knowledge of Ermis and Fidelio
- Develops financial, operational and business plans which support the overall objectives of the Hotel
- Develops and implementation of marketing plans to maximize revenue generation
- Develop maximum profits through cost and labor control
- Ability to work well under pressure
- Strong working knowledge of budgets, goals, yield, forecasting, profit and loss statements
- Maximizes food and beverage revenues in the Food and Beverage outlets
- Establishes and maintains a pro-active human resources function
- Fosters the development of a positive work environment for all employees
- Champions the brands at all times and provides brand perspective site tours
- Ensures that product quality and service standards are met in all areas of the Hotel
- Comply with all Corporate and Property Standards and Procedures

Please submit your resume in **English**, Word format with current photograph to:  
[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com

**Attn: Dimitris [REDACTED]**  
**General Manager**  
**Europe Middle East & Africa - EMEA**  
Offices: Frankfurt a.m, Berlin, Athens, Tel Aviv, Florida, California

***We will contact you via email reply in order to arrange a date and time for a personal interview in Athens.***

Source: <http://www.skywalker.gr/> (accessed: 2/2/2009)

In addition, as part of their job description, multinational hotel chains GMs work very hard in order to build and maintain a good image as a company, in local communities:

*“Understanding and ‘manipulating’ the (internal and external) environment of the hotel unit is integral part of our job...it is very important for example to know personally the mayor and all the key people in local authorities... they might be useful one day (laughs)”.*  
(multinational chain GM in Thessaloniki – H6)

Multinational hotel chains invest many resources in order to attract and develop the most suitable candidates for the job. The recruitment process for hotel unit senior managers, is conducted both internally mainly through the company’s intranet, and externally through the use of specialised websites; it is also possible to use ‘head-hunters’ for high profile candidates. The recruitment advertisement for senior managers includes a detailed job description, in order to ensure that suitable applicants will be attracted (Figure 19). The selection process is claimed to be ‘*objective*’ determined by criteria such as the candidate’s past performance, professional and academic background. GMs are appointed directly from the regional/head office; managers of Greek origin are usually positioned from overseas assignments and are considered expatriates. Some companies are using assessment centres in order to attract the best suitable candidates:

*“It doesn’t matter if you are black or white as long as you are able to pass successfully the rigorous assessment centre tests... the process is so stressful that at the end of each day you feel physically and mentally drained”.*  
(multinational chain GM in Thessaloniki – H6)

A different policy is followed for assistant GMs who can be recruited directly from the national market – this indicates a clear demarcation between the role of the GM as the main expression of the corporate policy and the subordinate senior managers who are more focused in operational tasks. The above described recruitment and selection process does not apply to franchised multinational hotel chains in Greece, where it is in the owners’ discretion who is a suitable candidate GM and who is not.

The multinational hotel chains provided a wealth of opportunities for training and development (Figure 20); those programmes were delivered both in-house and outside the hotel unit. Each hotel unit senior manager identifies training typically called development, taking place within their companies. External providers, notably leading European and American business schools, operated such training courses often on a bespoke basis with some on-campus delivery supported by distance learning:

*“We pay a lot of attention in the delivery of management development programmes... we’re more than happy to run these programmes for all levels of management... the length is 5-18 months for junior and middle managers... there is no pre-described length for GMs, the Head Office decides this based on the case”.*

(multinational chain GM in Thessaloniki – H6)

**Figure 20:** Training and development examples in multinational hotel chains

The screenshot shows the IHG Careers website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: About us, Our brands, Investors, Media, **Careers**, Corporate responsibility, Guest centre, and Directory. Below the navigation bar, the IHG logo is displayed on the left, and a search bar is on the right with options: Search for a job | Create a profile | Update your profile.

The main content area is divided into several sections:

- About us:** A large banner with the text: "Discover a culture where our seven individual and unique hotel brands all work towards one ultimate goal; to create Great Hotels Guests Love. Whichever of our brands you work for at IHG we promise to give you Room to be yourself and value you for the contribution you make to our success." Below this is a "Select an option" dropdown menu with "Our brands" selected. A "Click here to visit this section" button is also visible.
- Job search:** A red-themed section with the heading "Job search" and the text "Look for available job opportunities at IHG." It includes a form with fields for "What career are you interested in?", "Select a job", "What location are you interested in?", "Choose a location...", and "Enter any keywords". A "Search" button is at the bottom.
- Personality is behind our success:** A section featuring a photo of a man holding a camera and the text "Wayne Holiday Inn Hotels & Resorts".
- 24 hours at IHG:** A section with the text "Unlike our guests, our business never sleeps." and a right-pointing arrow.
- Skills matcher:** A section with the text "Play to your strengths" and a right-pointing arrow.
- You can go a long way with:** A section with a photo of a man and the text "You can go a long way with".

On the left side of the page, there is a "Careers" sidebar with links: About us, Working at IHG, Job search, Feature and promotions, FAQs, and Contact us. Below this are "Tools" including Text (Larger | Smaller), Tell a friend, Printer friendly, and Share (Digg, Google Bookmarks, del.icio.us, StumbleUpon). At the bottom left, there are several award logos: "BRITAIN'S MOST ADMIRABLE COMPANIES 2007", "CHINA'S TOP EMPLOYERS 2007", and "Personnel Today AWARDS 2008".

Source: <http://www.ihgplc.com/index.asp?pageid=7> (accessed: 3/4/2007)



Source: <http://www.hilton-elevator.com/> (accessed: 3/4/2007)

A senior manager's participation in such programmes possibly requires relocation of the manager in regional corporate offices or outsourced training centres. Such courses also facilitated further socialisation where senior managers participated with colleagues from their parent company's other divisions. This research findings clearly identified common approaches adopted by the MNCs towards training their senior managers, as part of their attempts to achieve organisational success.

Furthermore, the performance evaluation process appears to be more sophisticated, analytical and multi-dimensional than in Greek national hotel chains; an example of annual performance evaluation for senior managers can be found in Appendix 17. Performance appraisal systems are used from MNC hotel chains not only to provide feedback and monitor managerial performance but also to identify future potential and readiness for promotion. The companies used annual systems with the managers' immediate superiors conducting these events. For hotel-unit GMs, this means their

performance appraisal is conducted by their area vice president or a senior regional unit GM. In addition to the important evaluation of performance and development issues associated with performance appraisal mechanisms, all GMs are eligible for monetary bonuses following their appraisals. Managers are obliged to complete appraisals by certain calendar dates to ensure bonuses are paid in line with financial deadlines. Despite the differentiations in MNC hotel chains performance appraisal systems, managers are broadly evaluated on the basis of three areas; their technical skills for the position they currently held, their general managerial skills and their performance against previously set targets. Due to the variety of expectations associated with different hotel management positions the technical skills sections tends to be rather broadly stated on the appraisal forms. General managerial skills are typically tied to each company's managerial criteria though common areas included leadership, interpersonal skills, people management, creativity and demonstration of initiative, decision-making, vision and strategic awareness, financial analysis, communication and flexibility and adaptability. Target or objective setting and measurement are again very broadly outlined on the appraisal forms to accommodate the variations in the tasks and roles hotel management positions include. Performance appraisal forms include some feedback mechanism for managers to comment on the perceived fairness of their performance evaluation, and a section, which related to future potential. Identification of future potential or promotability is typically the last portion of the appraisal form and not only mentions development potential, but training and education needs too. The overall approach during the interviews from both Greek and multinational hotel chain senior managers was that the performance evaluation process is a critical part of their job. This is reflected in the words of a multinational chain F&B manager in Rhodes (H13) who contents that '*this process is sacred for managers and employees...we use it to improve ourselves not to fire people*'. It can be argued however that despite the Greek national and multinational chains systematic approach to performance evaluation the bottom line seems to be the same: '*a (hotel unit) GM's job is to materialise*

*budgets and achieve agreed targets'* no matter the local conditions, size, structure and ownership status of the hotel (Cretan multinational chain GM – H10).

**Table 26:** PCF questionnaire scores in multinational hotel chains in Greece

| MNC                         | Av.         | AGMD         |   | Av.         | AGMD         |
|-----------------------------|-------------|--------------|---|-------------|--------------|
| <b>a. Intellectual</b>      |             |              |   | <b>4,38</b> | <b>0,06</b>  |
| 1. Information Collection   | 4,00        | 0,00         | 26. Impact  | 4,88        | -0,25        |
| 2. Problem Analysis         | 4,63        | -0,25        | 27. Persuasiveness  | 4,75        | -0,25        |
| 3. Numerical Interpretation | 4,50        | 0,00         | 28. Sensitivity   | 4,25        | 0,00         |
| 4. Judgment                 | 4,63        | 0,25         | 29. Flexibility   | 4,25        | 0,00         |
| 5. Critical Faculty         | 4,25        | 0,25         | 30. Ascendancy  | 4,13        | 0,50         |
| 6. Creativity               | 4,50        | 0,25         | 31. Negotiating   | 4,50        | -0,25        |
| 7. Planning                 | 4,75        | -0,25        | <b>e. Leadership</b>  |             |              |
| 8. Perspective              | 3,88        | 0,50         |   | <b>4,79</b> | <b>-0,29</b> |
| 9. Org. Awareness           | 4,63        | 0,00         | 32. Organising  | 4,88        | -0,25        |
| 10. External Awareness      | 4,50        | -0,25        | 33. Empowering  | 4,63        | 0,00         |
| 11. Learning – Oriented     | 4,38        | 0,25         | 34. Appraising  | 4,50        | 0,00         |
| 12. Technical Expertise     | 3,88        | 0,00         | 35. Motivating Others   | 5,00        | -0,50        |
| <b>b. Personal</b>          |             |              | 36. Developing Others   | 5,00        | -0,50        |
|                             | <b>4,48</b> | <b>-0,06</b> | 37. Leading   | 4,75        | -0,50        |
| 13. Adaptability            | 4,88        | -0,50        | <b>f. Results - Orientation</b>   |             |              |
| 14. Independence            | 4,00        | 0,50         |   | <b>4,59</b> | <b>-0,16</b> |
| 15. Integrity               | 4,38        | 0,25         | 38. Risk Taking   | 4,25        | 0,50         |
| 16. Stress Tolerance        | 4,75        | -0,50        | 39. Decisiveness  | 4,63        | -0,25        |
| 17. Resilience              | 4,13        | -0,25        | 40. Business Sense  | 4,75        | -0,25        |
| 18. Detail Consciousness    | 4,38        | 0,50         | 41. Energy  | 4,75        | -0,50        |
| 19. Self - Management       | 4,63        | -0,25        | 42. Concern for Excellence  | 4,38        | -0,25        |
| 20. Change – Oriented       | 4,75        | -0,25        | 43. Tenacity  | 4,38        | 0,00         |
| <b>c. Communication</b>     |             |              | 44. Initiative  | 4,63        | 0,00         |
|                             | <b>4,53</b> | <b>-0,20</b> | 45. Customer Oriented   | 5,00        | -0,50        |
| 21. Reading                 | 3,75        | 0,25         | Notes:  |             |              |
| 22. Written Communication   | 4,38        | 0,00         | <b>Av.</b> (average): refers to mean scores for competencies and clusters                                       |             |              |
| 23. Listening               | 4,63        | -0,25        | <b>AGMD</b> (Assistant GM Difference): expresses the difference between the GMs' and their assistants' opinions |             |              |
| 24. Oral Expression         | 5,00        | -0,50        |   |             |              |
| 25. Oral Presentation       | 4,88        | -0,50        |   |             |              |

Moreover, when asked about the ideal set of competencies, MNC hotel GMs and their assistants valued leadership and performance higher (Table 26) than the other categories. An Athenian multinational chain front office manager (H3) argues that *'the ideal luxury hotel GM should be a dynamic and creative leader, who inspires and motivates staff'*.

In addition,

*"...good management and communication skills, leadership, IT skills, sales, efficiency improvement and financial control are the most essential competencies for any manager working in a multinational chain... in addition a manager should be able to cope and respond very fast in new environments when for instance moving department, hotel or even country...this requires a high level of flexibility and adaptability"*.

(Rhodian multinational chain Ops Mgr – H13)

According to a Cretan multinational chain operations manager (H10), *"problem solving, 'calming waters', motivating and retaining staff, and improving efficiency"* are also important competencies for managerial work in hotels.

The PCF results are overall consistent with the GMs interviews and reveal a strong emphasis on leadership and results orientation competencies. Assistant GMs slightly differentiated their opinions in PCF questionnaires and interviews, by emphasising the importance of communication and interpersonal relations with staff and customers:

*"Senior managers need to be able to listen, delegate and trust their own team... it is not possible to run a 4 or 5\* hotel by 'one-man-show'... this definitely needs well planned and co-ordinated efforts"*.

(multinational chain assistant GM in Thessaloniki – H6)

As noted earlier there is a strong demarcation between the job of the GM and the immediate subordinated in MNC hotel chains.



### **6.3.5. Profiling the GMs: Key managerial roles and competencies in luxury hotels in Greece**

Based on the presentation of the research findings it can be argued that the central role of managerial competencies, skills and abilities of GMs was emphasised by all participant senior managers. What was different though, was how and to what extent those managers used competencies to perform their roles. The use of Dierdorff *et al.*'s (2009) categorical model of work context in this research, allowed the limited use of luxury hotel GM groupings, which provide a better understanding of managerial work in hotels.

Thus, it can be argued that from this research's data analysis emerged three different managerial profiles in luxury hotels in Greece regarding the key managerial roles and competencies. The first labeled the '*native*' GM, is employed in family and local hotel chains, which represent the vast majority of Greek 4 and 5\* hotels (Hellenic Chamber of Hotels, 2007). This is a typical SMTE (small-medium tourism enterprise) owned and essentially co-managed by the leader of the family surrounded by relatives in various positions. Then, the '*glocal*' GM, is found in Greek national hotel chains; this type of hotel is a former family business – led very often by a charismatic founder – which expanded gradually its operations nationwide. In addition, this type of hotel has adapted to a certain degree the organisational structure and standards of a multinational hotel chain; there is still however moderate involvement of the owner (or his family) to the management of the company. Finally, the '*Greek global*' GM, is found in multinational hotel chains; this hotel type is a foreign brand name, franchised in most of the cases by a Greek businessman. There are only a few cases that the management of the company belongs to the parent company. In this type of hotel, the organisation, structure and standards are dictated by the parent company; there are however some variations / deviations due to the Greek socio-cultural context. For example, the standard operating procedures are adapted to the local working patterns and legislation.

The 'native' GMs are males between 55-65 years old, speaking on average two foreign languages and have at least a hospitality first degree. Employers in this category are in favour of the 'old school' (over 50-55 years old) for two main reasons: they value more the experience, reputation and seniority than qualifications; in addition 'near retirement' GMs may cost less in the payroll. The recruitment is conducted mainly through recommendations and 'word of mouth', and rarely with internal recruits; the selection process is usually conducted by the owner and in most of the cases is based in subjective criteria (i.e. personal references, reputation and salary). There are limited options for training and development in this type of hotel, and very often is up to the GMs' discretion to recommend which programme to attend. In most of the cases, there is no time allocated for training and development activities, in the GMs daily schedule. The job roles performed by the GMs are focused on what Mintzberg (1973) describes as 'figurehead', the person who is there to inspire and lead the staff; they also find the time to communicate with customers and listen carefully to their views. The communication competencies are perceived as the most valuable for successful operations and management. Thus, high contact intensity with various stakeholders (i.e. owner, subordinates, suppliers, customers) is a key aspect of managerial work. GMs in family hotels go through an informal performance evaluation – in most of the cases conducted by the hotel owner – based primarily on the overall financial performance, and secondarily the levels of customer satisfaction and quality. This type of GMs puts great emphasis in networking, and they work very hard to build networks and a good reputation on the local/regional/national market. Their overall relations with the owners can be described as 'tolerable' since the GMs are often faced with unrealistic demands on behalf of the owners. Overall, the level of the owner's involvement (and his/her family) in the GMs' work in most of the cases is high (Hofstede, 1980; Trompenaas, 1993). The Greek context is dominant here, with the 'in-group collectivism' dimension to dictate the relationships between the owner, the GM and their subordinates (Javidan and House, 2001; Papalexandris, 2008).

On the other hand, 'glocal' GMs employed in national and franchised MNC hotel chains, are males between 45-55 years old, speaking on average two foreign languages and have very good educational attainment including a hospitality first degree and postgraduate studies. This professional background includes the 'primary' departments of a medium/big size hotel (Food and Beverage, Front Office - Reservations); in addition, sales, finance and contracting background is a prerequisite for this type of GMs. GMs' recruitment is conducted through personal recommendations or internal candidates with experience in various hotels of the chain; 'head hunters' are rarely used for high profile candidates. Since the recruitment process does not involve a large number of candidates, two or three selection interviews take place with senior managers from/in the Head Office; during the final interview the owner is also present. Throughout the year there are moderate opportunities for training and development; the GMs are free to choose between in-house or outsourced programmes, in Greece and/or abroad. Their job roles are focused on leadership (employee motivation / inspiration) and entrepreneurship (help business grow). The leadership competencies is their primary concern, they value however the remaining managerial competencies (PCF) as integral parts of their competencies framework (Chung – Herrera *et al.*, 2003). This is reflected in their performance evaluation, a formal procedure that takes place once or twice a year depending on the type of the hotel unit (city-resort). The primary targets are mainly financial and the maintenance of high quality standards; there is however a reference to the 'performance' of the GMs in areas such as communication, leadership and inter-personal relations. The GMs 'secondary' competencies are evaluated through peer reviews, customer satisfaction questionnaires and 'mystery guest' audits. Although there is intense networking activity within the corporate limits, GMs maintain their contacts outside the company; in addition, their reputation is mostly heard within the corporate limits. The owners – who in most of the cases occupy the position of the managing director or chairman of the board – have a

moderate to low involvement in the GMs' work, mainly at strategic level. There are however cases of interventions in GMs' work when owners have personal interest, i.e. they 'strongly recommend' the selection of a particular candidate. It is important to note here that the owners know personally all of their GMs, and maintain regular communication. High contact intensity with key stakeholders inside (owner, senior managers, immediate subordinates, repeating clientele) and outside (local authorities, tour operators) the hotel unit is deemed critical for the manager's job. It can be argued that, in this type of business Greek context meets corporate culture: the Greek hotel national chains are structured and managed according to the multinational hotel chain model; the Greek context is however evident everywhere and it is very often the case that 'favours' and deviations from the standards occur when it is about relatives or friends (Broome 1996; Fukuyama, 1995; Triandis *et al.*, 1968). On the other hand, it can be argued that this type of business has embodied the Greek context characteristics in the best way, so their GMs can use it in order to improve performance and efficiency.

The 'Greek global' GMs, are middle aged (45-55 years old) males with impeccable educational background. They speak on average two languages - including the hotel chain's parent country language (in case it is not English). Their professional background includes a sales and finance orientation, although they understand hotel operations very well. The recruitment is conducted internally or through the use of 'head hunters' who are aiming at high profile recruits. The selection process is rigorous and involves at least three interviews. There are many opportunities for training and development in Greece and abroad on a regular basis. The GMs' roles in this type of hotels are focused in entrepreneurship and finance – based on Mintzberg's (1973) typology, decisional roles. Their annual performance evaluation is multi-dimensional, lots of emphasis is put however in achieving agreed (financial) targets. This corresponds to their preference in the results-orientation competencies cluster.

**Table 27:** The general managers' profile in 4 and 5\* hotels in Greece

| Manager & Company Type<br>GMs' characteristics | The 'Native' GM<br>(Family /Local Chain) | The 'Glocal' GM<br>(GR Nat. Chain & MNC franchised)           | The 'GR Global' GM<br>(MNC managed)                           |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Average Age</b>                             | 55-65                                    | 45-55   | 45-55   |
| <b>Sex</b>                                     | Male                                     | Male  | Male  |
| <b>Education</b>                               | HE Graduates                             | HE Graduates & Postgraduate Edu.                              | HE Graduates & Postgraduate Edu.                              |
| <b>Professional Background</b>                 | All Departments<br>(Emphasis in F&B)     | All Departments<br>(Emphasis in Finance, Sales & Contracting) | All Departments<br>(Emphasis in Finance, Sales & Contracting) |
| <b>Recruitment &amp; Selection</b>             | Recommendations                          | Head Hunters & Internally                                     | Head Hunters & Internally                                     |
| <b>Training &amp; Development</b>              | Sporadic – GMs' own discretion           | Moderate to High Opportunities                                | High Opportunities  |
| <b>Job Roles</b>                               | "Figurehead"                             | Leader & Entrepreneur   | Leader & Entrepreneur   |
| <b>Competencies</b>                            | Emphasis in Communication                | Leadership  | Results Orientation & Leadership                              |
| <b>Performance Evaluation</b>                  | Informal Annual                          | Formal Annual (1 or 2 times)                                  | Formal Annual (1 or 2 times)                                  |
| <b>Role of Networking</b>                      | High                                     | Moderate outside<br>High inside                               | Low outside<br>High inside                                    |
| <b>Role of reputation</b>                      | High in local / national market          | High in national marker                                       | High in regional / international market                       |
| <b>Ownership level of involvement</b>          | High to Moderate                         | Moderate to Low   | Low   |
| <b>Role of Culture</b>                         | High                                     | Moderate  | Moderate to low   |

Networking is very important within the corporate limits; outside these limits the GMs maintain only those contacts necessary to 'do the job'. Their reputation is synonymous with hard work and what is actually on their resume. The Greek culture is something that they cannot ignore –especially in the case of foreigners – the corporate culture however is this, which determines their behaviour. The above profile refers to Greek nationals working in managed Multinational hotel chains. The fact that a such a small number of foreign nationals work as luxury hotel GMs in Greece (less than ten in 2007) may lead to the following arguments: first that a pool of Greek GMs who satisfy the high standards of the multinational hotel chains exists in the country; and second that the Greek context is posing difficulties that foreign nationals cannot cope with (Broome, 1996). Table 27 summarises the findings of this research in relation to managerial roles and competencies; the three different profiles identified for Greek luxury hotel GMs are not exclusive and provide a generic context for discussion in this field.

#### **6.4. Level 3: The discrete context through the emerging themes**

The third and last level of analysis (the discrete context) explores the conditions that make the managerial work unique for each manager. So far the discussion has identified the generic socio-cultural context and the various similarities and differences in hotel management practices, roles and competencies as exercised in four different types of luxury hotels in Greece. The emerging themes from this research regarding managerial work roles and competencies, as well as the conditions under which these are formed, follow below (research questions 3.1. and 3.2).

##### **6.4.1. Management mobility**

Throughout their careers, luxury hotels GMs are expected to relocate or move to another company; the frequency of these changes depends on the

manager's career choices. During the interviews managers reported that it is very common to see GMs from family hotels moving to local chain hotels and vice-versa. Based on the above discussion about the four different hotel types, there are many similarities between family business and local chain hotels; this organisational compatibility encourages GMs' mobility. On the other hand, regardless this potential organisational and cultural compatibility, the GM adapts to certain roles and competencies required in his/her new working environment. In a similar manner, management mobility is observed in hotel chains, where the majority of the managers working in multinational chains have already been employed in Greek national hotel chains. More rarely, a family or local hotel chain GM can move to a national hotel chain, especially when the latter is faced with scarcity of suitable candidates:

*“Just before the 2004 Olympics the company made a very big expansion... 24 hotel openings within a year... at that time we had to lower our standards and recruit GMs with relatively poor background (meaning in family hotels)... our priority was to open these hotels (emphasis)”.*

(Athenian national chain GM – H2)

The level of mobility and cross national / international experience of GMs was seen as a very difficult aspect to manage within the national and MNC hotel chains. In particular, aspiring GMs are expected to be mobile and to facilitate their own mobility through their language proficiency, eagerness to work and live with other cultures, and their lack of domestic ties; this justifies the fact that, national chains and MNCs seem to attract a certain type of hotel-unit GM:

*“We avoid to recruit (GMs) ‘old school’ hotel managers (over 50) ... we prefer to develop younger talented managers with knowledge, ambition and enthusiasm for work”*

(national chain GM, Thessaloniki – H5)

This fact is also supported by the participant manager's profile in this research (Chapter 5); the average age for hotel chain GMs was between 40 and 50, whereas family hotel GMs were over their 50s, in near retirement age. Management mobility is clearly affected by the manager's age and background. Hotel chains emphasise in the manager's technical and

academic qualifications and its potential for development, while family hotels appreciate experience and seniority.

Moreover, the 'work-life' balance for hotel managers posed as one of the greatest challenges for managerial career choices in this sector. All respondents identified the importance of mobility and age, either in terms of the rise in dual career couples, concern over children's education or hopes of 'settling down'. A female local chain hotel GM in Crete said that *'if I had to decide which profession to do for the rest of my working life I would do this again...but I wouldn't recommend it to my children'*. Despite the fact that managers were overall satisfied with their jobs and optimistic about spending the rest of their working lives in Greek luxury hotels, they could not suggest the same for the new 'breed' of managers – those who had graduated since the mid-1990s up to today. A near retirement hotel GM from an Athenian local chain (H1) argued that:

*"...the young generation is extremely unlucky...they are talented, well educated but unfortunately they have extremely limited options for career development in this country...I would recommend all young graduates to try their luck abroad in multinational companies where they can boost their potential."*

Another factor that affects manager's career choices and mobility is compensation. In an unofficial chat with a GM during the study visit in an Athenian national hotel chain (H2), it was admitted that *'there are many managers who decide to leave the company and work even in family hotels if the money is good (emphasis)'*. Family and local chain hotels are willing to pay above the average market rate in order to attract senior managers for chains, especially in remote destinations throughout Greece. On the other hand national chains and multinationals offer the promise of career development, moderate salaries and frequent relocations, at least for senior managers.

Management mobility is also influenced by the available options in career paths. During the interviews, GMs and their assistants argued that there are



limited career path options in order to become a GM in Greek luxury hotels: either by starting a career in the Food and Beverage (F&B) department, and/or less frequent in the Rooms Division or Front Office (F/O) department. The Food and Beverage department as a significant step stone to the GMs' career was also reported in literature (Baum, 1989; Christou and Eaton, 2000; Ladkin, 1999; Ladkin and Riley, 1996; Nebel *et al.*, 1995). On the other hand the majority of respondents acknowledged that, alongside the recognition that wider business skills are important for GMs, most of the revenue created by hotels originates from the rooms side rather than the provision of food and beverage. More experienced GMs have worked in both departments by their own choice; this work experience provides the prospective GMs with a holistic view of hotel operations. While this career path (from the food and beverage department) is very common in family hotels and local and national hotel chains, it is not followed in multinational companies and more recently in big Greek national chains; those chains emphasise in Sales, Marketing and Finance background for appointing senior management positions and try to develop the required skills through the employment of training and/or development programmes. In addition, among the participant managers there was a belief that the advent of hospitality degree programmes had led to more managers attaining such qualifications before embarking on a career as hotel manager. Nonetheless while educational provision was seen to have influenced the quality of GMs there was still a wide diversity of qualifications and abilities across cohorts of GMs.

Finally, the creation of strong internal labour markets in national and MNC hotel chains, is the main driver for internal management mobility. These hotel types encourage internal mobility through a range of factors such as: expansion plans providing promotion opportunities; acceptance that national/internal mobility is beneficial for individuals and the company; the overall importance of being seen as an employer who offers good development prospects; and the consistency and internal expertise accretion provided. The reasons for the extensive use of internal labour markets is

based on supply side arguments and on advantages accruing inside each company. These included; opportunities to perpetuate corporate culture, adverse prior experiences of external recruitment and problems in adjustment and effective hotel management by external candidates.

#### **6.4.2. Contact intensity**

Contact intensity with superiors, subordinates, staff, suppliers and customers, emerged as a key theme in this research. Starting with the owners and/or their representatives, it can be argued that the contact intensity escalates from very high in family owned hotels to very low in multinational chains. Managers working in all types of Greek hotels (family, local and national chains) reported close co-operation with the owners; the required competencies here were good listening skills, honesty, patience, sincerity, trust, and diplomacy. A experienced near-retirement Athenian family owned hotel GM (H4) provided a graphic view of the ownership representatives by saying that *'it really depends on the person...most of the [family] hotel owners in Greece are not educated or they are just incompetent to run their business properly'*. A Cretan local chain GM (H12) argued that *'you shouldn't panic when the owner expresses his wills and wants... in addition, you should not demonstrate subordination... what you need to do is to show that you have the knowledge, the know-how to achieve the desired results... patience is a virtue when you deal with hotel owners in Greece'*. More formalised relationships were reported in national chains:

*"You need to have clear articulated proposals and be able to explain everything in detail...hotel owners are like any other businessmen they need a good rationale and justification before they give you any money to spend"*.

(Rhodian national chain GM – H16)

Similar findings regarding the relationship between the hotelier and GM in Greek hotels were reported in a nationwide survey conducted by DRATTE (2009), a brief summary of which was presented in Chapter 4.

Managers who work in multinational chains do not actually see the owner or even his/her representatives; what they actually do is report directly to the regional or head office in senior corporate executives. A Rhodian multinational chain operations manager (H13) argued that *'a lot of diplomacy is involved in this process...it is not enough to be good, you also need allies to support you in the head or regional office...unfortunately it is not easy to identify friends from foes...you have to be a strong character in order to survive this game'*. Despite the clearly determined and communicated performance criteria for senior managers in multinationals, a hidden agenda seems to exist in the relationship between the hotel unit senior managers and their superiors in the regional or the head office.

The following two types of people associated with the hotel GMs' work, are their immediate subordinates (assistant GMs and department managers) and the staff. The distinction here in the interviewee responses was made between the Greek and multinational hotel managers. In the former, a great emphasis in teamwork was given in most of the responses referred to subordinate managers. A national chain F/O manager in Thessaloniki (H7) described the managers' relationships with the following words:

*"Our management team works together as a family...we even go out together with our families and friends...despite our disagreements we manage to achieve what we want because of this special relationship...we all trust and support the current GM...he is like father to us"*.

GMs are also required to encounter the hotel's suppliers; they can be divided in two broad categories: those supplying the hotel with goods like foods, beverages, sanitary materials, and equipment and those supplying the hotel with customers – in most of the cases travel agents and tour operators. Managers employed by Greek family owned and local chain hotels follow a *'carrot and the stick'* strategy by keeping safe distances from the suppliers. The reason for this approach was best described with the words of the local chain GM in Crete (H11):

*“If you let them give you any kind of ‘treats’ then you are finished...you have to carefully select and closely monitor all your suppliers constantly...in the long term building relations of trust with your suppliers is very important if you want to have a piece of mind in this business...after all it’s a win-win situation, or at least it should be”.*

An Athenian family owned hotel GM (H4) adds that *‘the tour operator’s reputation is very important selection criterion...from our own side it is very important to be able to keep your word – do not promise more than you can deliver, otherwise it is very easy to lose business’*. The integrity and reputation problems do not seem to reach most of the managers employed by national and multinational chains since goods, equipment and customer suppliers are largely pre-determined from the head or regional office. There is relatively small room for manoeuvre in this case and if somebody considers the internal audits and quality monitoring mechanisms it is really hard for a senior manager to *‘deviate’* regardless his/her authority and power:

*“We exert tight price and quality controls in our food and beverage suppliers... there are very high and strict standards in their selection...we always bind them with contracts that do not leave any room for ‘grey’ areas”.*

(Cretan multinational chain Ops mgr – H10)

GMs employed by multinational hotel chains rarely need to deal with goods suppliers and tour operators since agreements and contracts go through the company’s head or regional office. Nevertheless, hotel-unit GMs maintain a passive role by keeping personal contacts with these suppliers, and monitor if agreements and contracts are implemented without problems.

The last group related to the GMs’ contact intensity, are the hotels’ customers. Managers were more talkative here, and provided a wealth of opinions and views the bottom line of which was the same: *‘the customer is the king’*; *‘the customer is our real employer’*; *‘customers are the A-Z of our work’*. The respondents emphasised in *‘soft’* competencies like understanding, empathising, warmth, patience and personal contact. A Greek national chain assistant manager in Rhodes (H16) notes:

*“We try to provide luxury services with a human approach; luxury cannot happen without the warm smile and kindness of our staff...we make considerable efforts to fulfil all of our customers’ needs and wants without showing it”.*

Another issue stressed here by managers concerned mostly family owned and local chain hotels, was the importance of repeating clientele (*‘repeaters’*):

*“Almost forty percent of our clientele are repeaters, there are the hotel’s best advertisement... what they get here is this family environment, something they cannot find in their countries... there is no room for customer complaints and misunderstandings... sometimes however they have unreasonable requests... when for instance we make major or smaller changes in the hotel’s facilities they tell us how we should or shouldn’t have done this... it is really difficult to explain them that this was done for their own sake”.*

(Cretan family owned hotel GM – H9)

Indeed, observations during the case study visits revealed that all managers in resort family and local chain hotels, had some kind of contact with *‘repeaters’* throughout the day: a warm welcome during the arrival; a big smiley *‘good morning’* in breakfast; friendly advice on which place to visit. *‘Repeaters’* were treated as members of the extended hotel family. In return, those customers maintain contact with the GMs during the winter, by sending postcards, e-mails, or even sending small gifts for the manager’s family.

While managers in family businesses and local chain hotels follow a warm and friendly approach in customers’ handling, their national and multinational chains counterparts adopt a more *‘mechanistic’* behaviour:

*“We are trying to handle and resolve rapidly any customer complaint or problem... our staff is trained to do this in a uniform manner regardless department or rank... we make sure that our repeaters get always a little bit more of what they want...the secret of our success: excellent service quality customised to the customer’s needs and standardised product... there is no room for unpleasant surprises when dealing with customers in luxury hotels”.*

(Athenian multinational chain F/O mgr – H3)

GMs are not involved in customers’ *‘handling’* unless the case is serious (i.e. theft, injury, etc) or the guest is a VIP Line managers are responsible for

customer complaints; difficult cases follow the chain of command (line manager, department manager, assistant GM, GM). It should be noted however that during the study visits, national chain GMs were observed to spend some time 'around' the hotel talking to customers and staff. Although they receive constant information from their assistants, GMs want to have firsthand knowledge of the various issues that arise in the hotel throughout the day.

Overall, based on the above discussion, contact intensity poses as one of the key factors in the shape of the luxury hotels GMs' roles and competencies.

#### **6.4.3. Hierarchical demarcation**

The status of the GM position exerts power and creates demarcation lines, communicated in various ways, formally and informally within the hotel. The limits of the GM's authority and the visibility of those demarcation lines were found to be different in each hotel type. Thus, in family and local hotel chains a rather confusing pattern seems to exist regarding the GM's status and authority. Despite the superficial 'good climate' with the owner and his/her family, GMs reported problems such as conflicting interests and fierce 'disagreements'. There were also cases that the managers were 'caught in the middle' in disagreements between family members. In other cases the GM's ability to take important decisions is eliminated after interventions that originate from the owner himself or his/her family:

*"...they [the owner and his son-GM] often disagree on the way they should run the hotel... in this case you just sit in the corner and listen (emphasis)"*

(Athenian family hotel F&B mgr – H4)

On the other hand the paternalistic management style blended with the 'family like' atmosphere in family and local chain hotels, create problems in people management which is characterised by high levels of informality. Moreover, the recruitment of GM's next of kin (relatives and friends) in various positions, lead to political behaviour (Pfeffer, 1992) and the creation

of 'in-groups' and 'out-groups' among members of staff. Thus, the existence of 'clans' that support or battle the GM is not uncommon. Another problem that was raised from GMs was the subordinates' hesitation towards delegation. For example, middle and senior managers first consult with their superior in order to take a decision, despite the fact that they can avoid this.

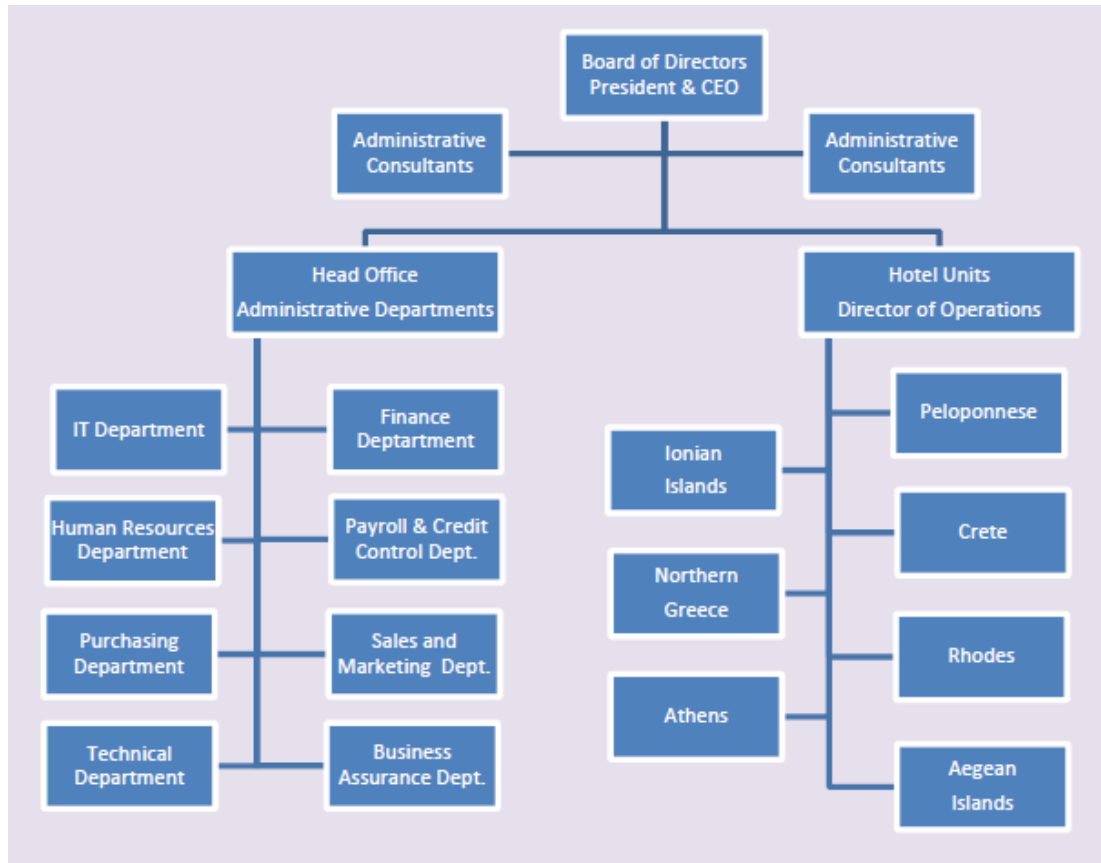
A different situation was reported in national hotel chains where the existence of clear hierarchical demarcation lines is communicated through the hotel unit's organisational chart (Figure 21). The status and authority of the GM cannot be challenged and ownership interventions are rare. Relations with the immediate subordinates are loose, friendly, and team work is appreciated. Nevertheless, the GM has always the final word and bears responsibility for all important decisions in hotel unit level. As already discussed above, the GM acts as father figure and leader for managers and staff. Regarding the latter, all GMs employed in national and MNC chains, mentioned that they sought good relations but at the same time maintained hierarchy:

*"I am trying to avoid talking in the hotel's corridors in order to avoid gossips, this is something that can ruin your career you know...nevertheless you have to respect your staff, be fair and honest, otherwise it is very easy to lose the game... just spend sometime informally and listen to them, but for Christ's shake not in the corridors (laughs) "*

(Rhodian national chain assistant GM - H16)

Demarcation lines in multinationals are communicated and function as a motive for career progression. Responses from managers employed in multinational hotel chains focused around the unified concepts of '*teamwork-motivation-efficiency*' in a very mechanistic approach. Leadership is considered as a key competence for developing such a climate. The message behind the words of those managers was '*...something like do your job as you told or even better, otherwise you get fired*', as a family owned hotel GM in Crete commented.

**Figure 21:** Example of Greek national chain organisational chart



Source: H5 – national hotel chain

The relations between managers and staff reported to be formal and strictly oriented:

*“As a senior manager I have to be able to communicate with anyone working in this hotel regardless his/her position... nevertheless hierarchy should be kept at all levels without any distinctions...this is the only way to get the job done without unpleasant surprises”*

(Rhodian multinational chain F&B mgr – H13)

The situation is different in franchised multinational hotels, where the owner plays an active role at least in strategic level alongside the GM. *‘The level of the owners’ involvement depends on the person itself* as a multinational (franchised) chain assistant GM in Athens said. The example of the Athenian franchised multinational hotel GM interview is characteristic: the author interrupted the interview for 15 minutes due to a telephone ‘brief of the day’



conversation between the GM and the hotel owner. Managers reported that Greek franchised hotel owners do trust their GMs in order to make important decisions; on the other hand GMs are required to be able to provide clearly articulated and well documented proposals in order to be able to persuade their employers invest money or resources.

#### **6.4.4. Dealing with corruption**

*“It doesn’t matter if you obey the law...at the end of the day you’ll have to bribe somebody to take care of your case!”*

(Rhodian family hotel F&B mgr – H15)

One of the greatest challenges that the Greek context poses for the GMs’ work in luxury hotels, is the encounter with the wider Greek public sector. Unfortunately in Greece as in much of the world, an over-regulated market is producing corruption and distortion, driving business to underground (not-lawful) activities. A substantial number of public services, authorities and agencies are connected with the capacity of the hotel to operate legally and comply with the country’s health and safety regulations. The case of *Costa Navarino* resort in southern Peloponnese is the best example: it took 13 years and more than 10,700 signatures for a huge investment that reached 5.2 billion euro to reach eventually the opening in 2010 (Kousounis, 2010). The problems appeared in the businesses’ transactions with the State, originate to the relatively high corruption levels in the public sector (Lambropoulou, 2007; Transparency International, 2009). The ones who are not willing, cannot afford or have no connections to central or local government bureaucrats are systematically choose the shadow side of the economy as a substitute for corruption (bribery), making the shadow economy complementary to a corrupt state (Katsios, 2006).

In this research, most of the interviewees responded that the manager’s integrity against corruption is of paramount importance. This opinion was verified by the PCF results, where ‘integrity’ received very high scores in all

hotel types. The *'course of action'* for managers against corruption, escalated from a *'hands-on'* approach in family owned and local chains, to *'acknowledgement'* in national chains and *'ignorance of the phenomenon'* in multinationals. Social intimacy appears as a key strategy for GMs in family and local chain hotels; they keep strong social or even family relations with *'key people'* – not necessarily high ranked – in local authorities and public sector organisations:

*"There will be always a friend or relative to help you overcome bureaucracy in the public sector... this is quite helpful especially during 'visits' from the police, health and safety officers, etc... although we have nothing to be afraid of, we receive warning phone calls in order to avoid unpleasant surprises (emphasis)".*  
(Cretan local chain, F&B mgr – H12).

When this is not feasible, GMs use their networks and connections to approach the person/s that will help the GM to achieve his/her objective. The situation was best described in the following words of an experienced near-retirement manager:

*"I'm not proud to say but I had to bribe low or medium rank public servants a few years ago in order to get my job done... unfortunately this is how it works in this country... there were signs of improvement during the past ten years but we still have a long way to go if we want to consider ourselves Europeans".*  
(Athenian family owned hotel GM – H4)

Greek national chain managers reported that they were aware of this situation but it did not affect their job since most transactions with the public sector were contacted by others (i.e. the hotel's accountants and legal advisors or even directly by the head office). There were however references that GMs in national chains make sure that they know or at least have access to the *'right'* people in local communities, *'just in case for a potential difficult, hard to resolve situation'* (Athenian Greek national chain GM – H2).

On the other hand, managers in multinationals claimed that they *'do everything by the law so there is nothing to be afraid of'* (multinational chain assistant GM in Thessaloniki). There is definitely a hidden agenda here: a

number of multinational companies operating worldwide especially in developing countries are investigated for suspicious behaviour towards red tape and bureaucratic delays (Doh *et al.*, 2003). Corruption exists and persists in international corporations in many shapes and forms despite the existence of corporate Codes of Conduct (Appendix 24). Unfortunately only a very small fraction of unlawful activities such as bribes and engagement with organised crime is reported. This does not necessarily mean that MNC hotel chain GMs are corrupted. Local people who know the situation and are able to approach the 'right' people in this case conduct the 'transactions' (i.e. bribes) on behalf the multinationals. Although the GMs have no involvement at all in these 'transactions' are fully briefed from the company.

It can be argued that the data collected from the hotel case studies did not allow further reflection in this field, since all managers considered it as a 'sensitive issue' and felt uneasy when this issue was raised during the interviews. The available data however in conjunction with a wealth of Greek and international research, indicate clearly that the encounter of hotel GMs with corruption influence to a certain degree the manager's work.

#### **6.4.5. Networking and reputation**

Networking and reputation play an integral part in hospitality managerial work. Networking secures valuable information from the hotel's external environment (Mintzberg, 1973, 1994) while the manager's reputation works as a stepping stone in managerial career progression. According to this research, the managers' views can be grouped in three categories: those from family and local chain hotels, then those from Greek national chains and finally those from multinational chains.

For the first category networks and reputation (or '*name*' as it is called by the managers) seem to be extremely important not only for the GMs' work but for the hotel itself. Hotel GMs maintain a vast array of contacts outside their

workplace, in local, regional and national level (Appendix 29). This network provides the GMs with any kind of information that would possibly help them assess situations and make decisions. These networks are closely related with the manager's reputation; GMs work very hard in order to be acknowledged as a 'good' or 'excellent manager' from the local, regional or national market.

An Athenian local chain GM argues that '*a GM's name is very important... it creates prestige for the hotel...helps also the hotel's reputation and enhances the brand name especially in family business...makes it easier for the company to do business*'. From another perspective '*it is easier to create a good reputation in Greece because the criteria for being a good GM are not clear...abroad assessment is more strict...a good name might help you find staff, good prices, suppliers or even a new job...networking happens also abroad and also there GMs help each other, see for example the EHMA (European Hotel Managers Association – Figure 22)*' (Athenian family hotel GM – H4). A local chain assistant GM in Thessaloniki adds that '*luxury hotel GMs is a closed community in Greece like masons...* '. The importance of reputation and networking outside the hotel is also reflected in the following words from a Cretan local chain GM (H12):

*"A GM's reputation in the market is everything (emphasis)...this is the main criterion to get a good job... a CV cannot reflect the GM's reputation in the market... networks are essential for the GM's work... it is easier for GMs to communicate even if they work in competitive companies"*.

The younger GMs refusal of participation in the established networks, may lead to social and professional exclusion from the local GMs 'in-group', which may function as a serious career progression barrier:

*"...this (networking) is necessary evil you can't avoid... you have to play with the older guys' rules, otherwise they will find ways not only to block but to destroy your career (emphasis)"*.

(family hotel GM in Thessaloniki - H8)

While the managers' networks and reputation criteria are vague in family and local chain hotels, there is a more systematic and clear approach in Greek national chains.

**Figure 22:** The European hotel managers' association (EHMA)



Source: <http://www.ehma.com> (Accessed on 24/10/2007)

The GMs in this category are encouraged by their companies to create a 'corporate network' in order to help each other; help might also come from the head office and the senior executives who work there. There are also other networks from previous jobs or from the GM's activity outside the hotel:

*"...it is very important to know people in and out the hotel...GMs networking in Greece expands throughout the country... especially for those who are members in [hotel GMs] Associations it is easier to build a very big network which covers not only GMs but suppliers, tour operators, local authorities, etc".*

(Rhodian national chain GM – H16)

Outside the company GMs make sure that they know all the important or key people in the local community and public services. A GM's reputation in this

hotel type is created through hard work and the acceptance of his/her colleagues. The later is equally crucial to the former and is rooted to the '*in-group-collectivism*' phenomenon met in the Greek culture, described in literature review.

Managers in multinational hotel chains take a different stance in networking and reputation. Despite the fact that the majority of multinational GMs and their assistants have also worked in family businesses or Greek chains, they seem to adopt the '*corporate mentality*' regarding networking and reputation.

*“The quality of networking in Greece is in lower level than abroad... in multinational hotel chains there is a different mode, everything happens within the limits of the company... only the GM who acts as a corporate representative has the right to develop networks outside the hotel... it is true that you can achieve many things in Greece with networking the matter is how (emphasis)”*

(Rhodian multinational chain F&B mgr – H13)

Although it is considerable easier to identify managerial networks in multinational hotel chains, a secret agenda seems to exists; a multinational chain GM in Thessaloniki (H6) argues:

*“You need to be very competent and have excellent diplomatic and communication skills in order to create good reputation within the company not the local market... this helps you in promotions and sometimes in information finding”.*

As a conclusion in this section, it can be suggested that managerial reputation and networking are highly valued and appreciated by luxury hotel GMs in Greece. The social settings and the different approaches used by GMs, according to the ownership status of the hotel, seem to set the scene for the creation of networks and good reputation.

## 6.5. Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings from qualitative research in 16 luxury hotels in Greece. The starting point of the exploration of managerial work in context was culture. The different management practices employed from different hotel types based on the ownership status, seem to exert influence to a certain degree, in luxury hotel GMs' work. Four hotel types were examined in relation to the above: family, local chain, national chain and international chain.

Then, based on Dierdorff's *et al.* (2009) categorical model of work context, the presentation of this research's findings was structured in three levels. Level 1, the *omnibus context*, explored the generic profile of managerial work in the Greek luxury hotel context based on the results of the personal competencies framework (PCF) questionnaire. Although all participants agreed on the importance of certain competencies for successful managers, there were small variations based on the hotel's ownership status. The following level of analysis, *the mesotype relationship*, explored the contextual similarities and differences that appear in GMs' work in luxury hotels in Greece. This level of analysis allowed for limited categorisation of GMs based on the common characteristics that appeared in their work. Finally, the third level of analysis (*discrete context*) presented the emerging themes from the research data namely: management mobility; contact intensity; hierarchical demarcation; dealing with the public sector and corruption; reputation and networking. The following chapter explores the wider implications of the research findings for GMs in the service sector.

# Chapter 7

## Discussion

### 7.0. Introduction

The findings presented in this thesis have provided some new interpretations of the managerial work roles and competencies, and its interaction with the organisational and cultural context in hospitality. This chapter presents a conceptual model of managerial work, based on Johns (2006) and Dierdorff's *et al.* (2009) categorical model of work context, and thus makes a contribution to building new theory in this area of inquiry. The model synthesises the results of this research presented in three different context levels, in order to demonstrate the interplay between managerial roles, competencies and context. It is also argued that the set of managerial work roles and competencies developed throughout their career is unique for GMs. Thus, the global character of managerial competencies required to perform the job is challenged.

### 7.1. The social construction of managerial roles and competencies

As already discussed in Chapter 2, managerial work takes place in diverse contexts that are likely to shape the manner in which managerial roles are enacted (Johns, 2006; Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). The work context can be thought of as a set of moderating factors that influence the employee's behaviour and adaptation (Strong *et al.*, 1999). In addition, organisational role theory suggests that the interplay between individual factors and contextual influences on role enactment occupies a key role in (managerial) work (Kahn *et al.*, 1964; Thornton and Nardi, 1975; Biddle, 1986). As Stewart (1982) argues managerial roles are subject to a variety of diverse demands, constraints, and opportunities; thus, a complete understanding of managerial

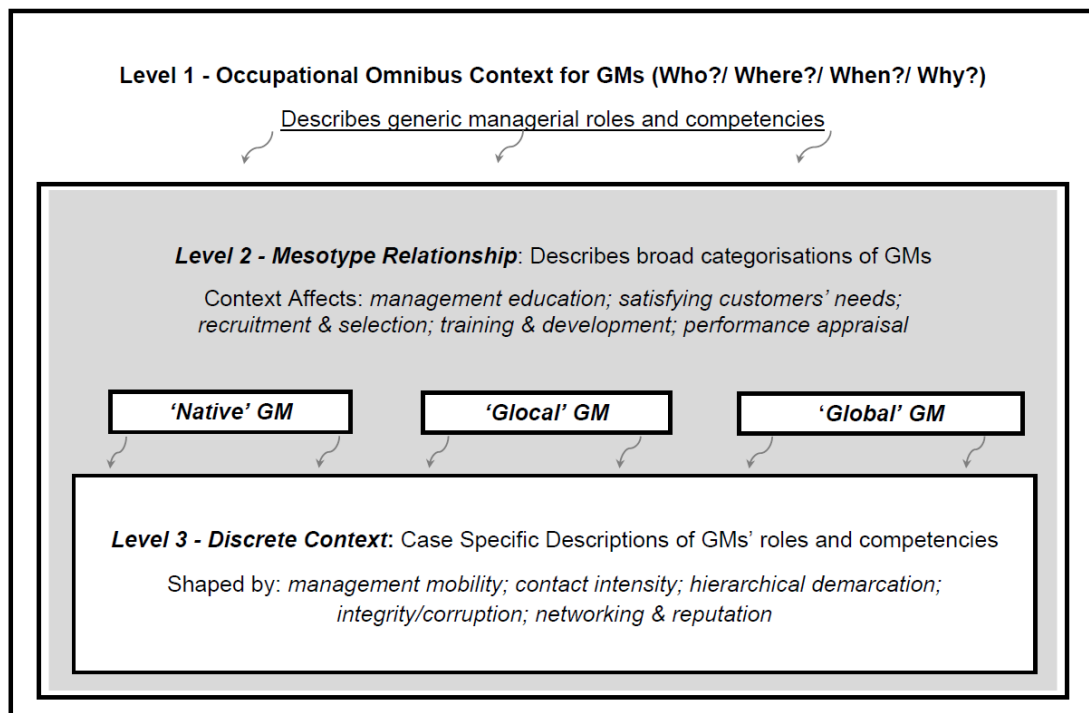


roles and competencies, requires a consideration of external reality (contextual influences) as well as the social actors' (managers') perceptions.

Based on the interpretive orientation of this research, a conceptual model of the social construction of managerial roles and competencies in the hospitality industry is attempted below. Based on Johns (2006) and Dierdorff's *et al.* (2009) categorical model of work context, managerial work roles and role requirements (competencies) are conceptualised in three levels: occupational omnibus context; a mesotype relationship context; and discrete context (Figure 23). The first level (omnibus context) provides information about the broad essential elements of a given context and describes managerial roles' moderating influences collectively in a non-differentiated manner (Johns, 2006). Research findings indicate that, managerial work is drawn through generic profiles and job descriptions that include the minimum job requirements. These 'base' requirements are taught in 'western' management curricula, so prospective GMs are socialised with these generic conceptions of management. The reason for the existence of these managerial 'base requirements' can be traced under the globalisation pressures for product and service standardisation on behalf the tour operators and customers. Thus, it can be argued that unit GMs must meet certain generic job requirements (i.e. knowledge of foreign languages, computer literacy, and interpersonal skills), regardless of the existence of contextual differences such as ownership status or the organisational structure of the firm. The second level (mesotype relationship context) provides the explanatory link between the more descriptive and general omnibus context and the specific discrete context (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). The findings of this research has led to the development of three different GM work profiles in Greece: the '*Native*' GM; the '*Glocal*' GM; and the '*Greek Global*' GM. The need for this categorisation was created from the existence of different managerial work variables in different firms: i.e. the employment of different practices in GMs' recruitment and selection process. These broad occupational groupings allow the creation of more specific accounts of

managerial work in services. The third and last level (discrete context) seeks to identify specific situational variables that impact behavior directly or indirectly (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). The personal competencies framework is unique for each hotel manager and it would be meaningless to attempt any effort for the construction of generic typologies. What is important here though is to identify the contextual variables that shape this framework. Thus, based on this research emerging themes (discussed in chapter 6) the personal roles and competencies profile is shaped mainly by five contextual factors namely: management mobility; contact intensity; hierarchical demarcation; integrity / corruption; networking and reputation.

**Figure 23:** A model for the social construction of hotel general managers' roles and competencies



The following sections discuss the meaning that each of the above described level of context has, for managerial work roles and competencies in the hospitality industry.

## **7.2. Level 1: the generic context of managerial work**

The starting point for the exploration of managerial work roles and competencies, is the omnibus context that provides the generic descriptions of managerial work in hospitality found in literature. As such, managerial work in the hospitality, tourism and leisure sector is characterised by complex and multi-dimensional relations (O'Fallon and Rutherford, 2011). Complexity in managerial work is defined as the extent to which an occupation requires processing, integrating, and choosing among multiple and sometimes ambiguous and divergent data or information (Lievens *et al.*, 2010). Complex jobs are multifaceted and flexible (Gottfredson, 2002; Tierney and Farmer, 2002; Shalley, Gilson, and Blum, 2009), and by their nature encourage employees to combine knowledge from various sources. Farr (1990) suggested that complex jobs require more intricate thought processes than do simpler jobs. Others have argued that more complex jobs require flexibility and allow managers the opportunity to use advanced cognitive faculties and processes (Campbell, 1988; Tierney and Farmer, 2002). A major aspect of managerial work complexity is dealing with people and their relationships, which make it difficult and often frustrating, rather than the particular technical problems of different management functions (Watson, 2001).

Evidence from this research suggests that the complex nature of hotel GMs, is discerned where the respondents highlight the importance in developing and managing culturally diverse relationships with a range of stakeholders (i.e. ownership, subordinates, customers and local authorities) under atypical and sometimes hostile environmental conditions. These findings align with a body of literature which identify GMs as valuable resources both to international and local companies, through their crucial representative roles, relationships with owners, investors, local and international businesses, alongside their capacity to generate revenue (Forte, 1986; Guerrier, 1987; Ruddy, 1989; Gilatis and Guerrier, 1994; Nebel and Vidakovic, 1995; Field, 1995; Jauncey, 2000; Guilding, 2006). The long, intense, experiential, highly mobile and separate nature of GMs' occupational tenure renders it difficult to find alternative sources of expertise. Simultaneously then GMs are deemed

to be rare resources, by virtue of the complex combinations of their proprietary knowledge, skills and experiences, while the characteristics and qualities demanded of them are broadly similar across the hospitality, tourism and leisure sector sample, with the strong occupational community amongst hotel managers further enhancing their value (Guerrier, 1987; Jauncey, 2000).

The context in which managerial work takes place, has also drawn the attention of this research. Based on the findings of this study it can be argued that organisational context may have a very large impact on the nature of the GMs' work, and it is likely that jobs vary as a function of the organisations within which they reside. Dierdorff and Morgeson (2007) noted that the context wherein employees work might promote or restrict idiosyncratic role enactment. Literature suggests that three factors were thought to be important because they can affect how work is structured and conducted on a day-to-day basis. First, type of industry has long been thought of as an important element in understanding organisations (Hall, 1982). Second, structural characteristics, including organisational structure (i.e. organisational size, differentiation, decision making system; Mintzberg, 1979a) and human resource systems and practices (i.e. selection, training, and reward systems; Cascio, 1987). Third social processes, including organisational culture (Schein, 1992), goals (Locke and Latham, 1990), roles (Kahn *et al.*, 1964), and leadership (Yulk, 1994) were also found to affect managerial work.

The above three factors are reflected in this research's findings; these suggest that hotel GMs operate in multiple and different contexts (Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009). The term used to describe this complex environment is '*Polycontextualisation*'. The effective polycontextualisation of managerial and HR practices in the workplace requires GMs to be armed with knowledge, skills, and capabilities to do so (Von Glinow *et al.*, 2005). Interpersonal and communication competencies seem to be the starting point for managing

polycontextualisation in services: GMs who value, espouse, and enable getting along with others and encourage compliance with company values and simultaneously respect the local and national context. Based on the organisational structure and culture, the findings of this research suggest a clear demarcation between GMs employed in 'local' and 'international' (MNC) business. On the one hand GMs in 'local' businesses acknowledge the value of building social intimacy and maintaining strong personal relationships higher than following standard operating procedures. On the other hand GMs in MNCs express their trust to corporate standard procedures among the different units operating globally. While local GMs refer to subordinates as colleagues, MNC GMs see people as resources that need to be managed and any local contextual issues are dismissed as irrelevant to their corporate culture. A third approach adopted by GMs employed in nationwide operating businesses, appreciate both standardisation and the building of social intimacy with key people (i.e. owner, immediate subordinates, repeating clientele, local authorities) inside and outside the various unit. In this research, there was no argument on behalf the participant managers that standardisation and local responsiveness have raised conflicting demands; it was however agreed that GMs must incorporate apart from multiple, qualitatively different, embedded cultural contexts.

### **7.3. Level 2: The mesotype relationship effect on managerial work roles and competencies**

The creation of three different hotel GM profiles in chapter 6 (the 'Native' GM; the 'Glocal' GM; and the 'Greek Global' GM) based on the *mesotype* relationship suggested by Dierdorff *et al.* (2009), was found to be shaped and influenced by certain contextual factors. Thus, this section focuses the discussion on five areas that the ownership status and organisational structure influence managerial work roles and competencies in the hospitality context, namely: education attainments; satisfying customer needs and

quality; recruitment and selection; training and development; and performance appraisals.

### **7.3.1. Management Education**

Formal management education and training plays a key role on the creation of the future hotel managers. Education refers to formal schooling, coursework and training. The focus of this domain is not on the content of knowledge per se, but on how and when it is acquired. Because education has a large impact on the development of both knowledge and skills (Ward, Byrnes and Overton, 1990; Snow and Swanson, 1992), educational background is an important managerial attribute that can be used to describe cross-occupational differences in various managerial positions. In this research, the value of education attainments was praised by all participant managers; this was expressed in two opposing views. The first that was supported by family business GMs, favoured the emphasis on technical expertise and personalised customer service. The second view supported by the majority of MNC and national chain senior managers, moves away from purely technical/vocational-oriented education to a general business administration model (Gilbert and Guerrier, 1997; Jones, 1999; Garavan *et al.*, 2006; Bignold, 2006). This '*professionalisation*' of management in service industries through the existing hospitality, tourism and leisure education systems, serves to support the early arguments regarding the play-off between American business skills and European emphasis on craft and technical skills (Barge, 1993; Guerrier, 1987; Gilbert and Guerrier, 1997). The findings indicate that the American business acumen arguments seem to be prevailing in international and national chains while family businesses maintain their trust in the technical-craft side of management (Johnson, 1996; Bignold, 2006). As a result, it can be suggested that the profound domination and influence of the Anglo-American management conventions in international hospitality, tourism and leisure industry (Nickson, 1997; 1999;

Nickson and Warhurst, 2001; Groschl and Doherty, 2005), shapes the current and future managerial competencies.

### **7.3.2. Satisfying customers' needs**

Another important finding in this research was that all GMs are faced with the same challenges when it comes to fulfil the needs of customers (Todd and Mather, 1995; Thompson *et al.*, 1998; Atkinson, 2006). Despite the perceived heterogeneity of the service industry there are strong similarities between the demands and desires of the frequent international business and leisure customers regardless where they come from. This fact alone creates pressures for standardisation and homogeneity in terms of customer service quality, facilities and provisions. The intangible nature of service quality (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985) poses unique challenges for hotel managers and requires high levels of contact intensity with customers. Thus, as already discussed in Chapter 6, it is not unlikely to see a family firm GM talking personally to customers trying to resolve 'issues' in a fire fighting role. On the other hand, it is unlikely to see an MNC GM talking to customers on a daily basis, since in most of the cases operational issues are of lower priority and are handled from department managers or specialised staff from Public Relations or Customer Service department. Thus, the company type (ownership status) determines to a great degree the fashion in which GMs face common or similar challenges in hospitality management.

### **7.3.3. Managerial recruitment and selection**

Furthermore, based on the ownership status of participant companies, different approaches were found to be adopted in managerial recruitment and selection. On the one hand, rigorous multiple job interviews, technical skill proficiency, and work experience are all seen as the most important selection criteria among MNCs and local national firms. This is also reflected in the job advertisements, where a detailed profile of the suitable GM candidate is

available. The vast majority of MNCs advertise the post internationally, whereas local national chains prefer internal recruits or use '*headhunters*' in order to obtain the most suitable candidate for the job. On the other hand family businesses appear to have vague selection criteria such as '*responsible for hotel operations*' and '*increase of revenues*' without providing further details. There is strong evidence however that, family businesses have embraced and employ to a certain degree, standard practices in recruitment and selection. These include the use of job advertisements CVs and formal selection interviews, which are now the norm for the vast majority of companies (regardless the size) not only in Greece but in the European continent as a whole (Brewster *et al.*, 2004). This however is more often seen from family businesses as a bureaucratic necessity rather than a strategic decision; it is the owner's subjective opinion at the end of the day the catalyst for the decision on which candidate GM is suitable. The notion of suitability for GMs here has more to do with competencies such as '*getting along with others*' and '*fit to company's values*' and at the same time being able generate revenue for the company.

#### **7.3.4. Managerial training and development**

In addition, it can be argued that the development of managerial competencies poses as a challenge for both domestic and international firms. The strategic nature and the element of rarity of GMs as unique human resources (Boxall and Purcell, 2003), have led MNCs and national firms to a systematic approach in training and development aiming at the creation of strong internal labour markets. The combination of experience, technical expertise and the tacit nature of managerial knowledge has led to the belief that these unique strategic human resources are inimitable for competitors (Jones *et al.*, 1998). There have, however, been some challenges to inimitability where cost savings through the elimination of deputy GM positions and the combinations of specific positions (namely multi-unit managers) have been used (Goss-Turner, 1999). On the other hand based



on this research, there is no evidence of systematic training and development efforts in family firms. Moreover, all participating MNCs and national firms allocated a considerable amount of resources for the training and most important the development of senior managers at unit level. Most of the training programmes focused on the development and/or improvement of technical expertise, sales, financial management skills and business communication. On the other hand, an integral part of the GMs' development process, are the constant transfers and relocations, when and where the company needed their '*unique*' expertise and talent. The relatively high mobility of GMs and their families, is perceived as a difficult and demanding challenge.

The situation appears much different in family businesses, where systematic training and development efforts for senior management deteriorated in those businesses that acquired an ISO 9001 accreditation. The overall attitude on behalf of the owners is that training and development pose as '*unnecessary expenses*' or even worse '*wasted money*' since they hire somebody that s/he is already trained. On the other hand, most family business GMs appear as '*eager to learn new things*' but they don't have the time or the resources to do so. Thus, there is evidence that although the importance of training and development is acknowledged in family businesses there are contextual barriers in their adoption and implementation such as lack of resources, time, expertise and ownership resistance.

On the other hand, GMs in MNCs and national firms play a key role in identifying future managerial talent through their internal and external networks. It may be that the geographical distances and size of business portfolios renders such a localised approach to talent identification, at the hands of GMs, as indispensable and entirely reasonable (Harris and Brewster, 1999; Scullion and Collings, 2006; Sparrow, 1999). Furthermore, the role of GMs in developing, coaching and mentoring young promising managers is apparent (Jauncey, 2000; Jones *et al.*, 1998). GMs are not

afraid to delegate subordinate senior managers as this is viewed as part of the development process and succession planning.

In family businesses GMs also play a key role in identifying and developing new managerial talent for senior management positions. There is however a reverse picture from what is found in international and national chains: older generation GMs appear superstitious and prejudiced against the younger '*talented and educated*' managers. GMs in family businesses claim that they are not afraid to delegate and promote the younger and at the same time blamed their colleagues for not doing so. This defensive blame culture leaves no room for development efforts at senior management level. Let us not forget that in family businesses there are only a few options for promotion – in order to be a GM somebody has to wait for the existing one to get fired, leave or retire. Thus, there is place only for one GM and this creates tremendous pressures in all senior management members. This results in a considerable high amount of voluntarily leaves and mobility since this is the only way for the talented younger managers to get promoted. From the above, it can be argued that there is a great gap in GMs' training and development efforts between national and international firms and local family businesses. The roots of this problem are consistent with the family businesses paternalistic management culture that prevails in countries like Greece, Italy and Spain.

### **7.3.5. Managerial performance appraisal**

Assessing managerial competencies through performance appraisals is another key area of differentiation between managers employed from companies with different ownership status. Although a great diversity of methods and models exists, performance appraisal often includes a definition of the employee's objectives, monitoring and measuring of the performance, feedback on the results and, possibly, rewards and plans to improve future performance (Mabey and Salaman 1995). The dominant view in these

systems is '*what's get measured gets attention*' (Pucik, 2005); in other words employee behaviours are interpreted and evaluated in a numerical manner. Moreover, while there has been extensive research on performance appraisal in a domestic context (Vance *et al.*, 1992; Dowling *et al.*, 1994); only a few studies conducted outside the US have investigated the performance appraisal practices of Western companies in developing countries (Brewster *et al.*, 2005). One of the essential questions facing MNCs operating worldwide is the extent to which the management of human resources is, and in fact should be, adapted to local conditions (Pucik, 2005; Brewster *et al.*, 2005). The dominant standardisation view ('*one size fits all*') among all the aspects of performance is challenged since management appraisal and feedback are generally considered to be the most sensitive to local context (Pucik, 2005). There is also need to acknowledge that national culture is only one element of context. Variations in norms and values within cultures are just as important as variations across cultures. Consequently, there is tremendous variance on performance management across firms, industries, and sectors within most nations.

This research has surfaced three different approaches in performance appraisals. The first that refers to MNCs is profound: a universal performance appraisal system exists for senior management positions. Although it was claimed by interviewees that the system served purely developmental purposes, its primary function is to convey the strong corporate message of compliance to the company norms, values and rules. GMs in MNCs seem to accept that since they acknowledge performance appraisal as one of the '*key rules of the game*'. National firms adopting MNCs practices are found '*in between*': personal relationships with the owner/s and performance appraisals are equally important as achieving performance targets, for the career progression of senior managers. On the other hand cultural and contextual factors seem to prevail in family business where no systematic performance appraisal efforts existed; the GMs' '*suitability*' is determined from the owner/s' subjective opinion with no clearly determined criteria.

The universality of performance appraisal systems is challenged in this research. In MNCs, the commitment to implement a rigorous process at unit level is more important than the sophistication of the methodology itself (Pucik, 2005). This results in the existence of gaps between what was desired and what actually happened. There is a need here to integrate global HR practices with the local contextual conditions. Another barrier in the MNCs' case is the fact that corporate HR practices do not encourage GMs to do what they personally believe should have been done (Pucik, 2005). Thus, more freedom of choice and independence is needed for GMs; this calls for the creation of different approaches in corporate performance appraisal systems. The centre of these systems will be the ability of the managers to adapt to the local cultural-contextual factors that affect their work – directly or indirectly.

On the other hand, performance appraisals in family businesses are subjective and based literally in human relations; if the owner/s is/are satisfied with the GM's '*performance*', they will probably have a long lasting relationship. '*Performance*' here is solely defined by the interpretation of the owner – in most of the cases lacks clearly defined targets and guidelines. This situation is consistent to the Greek context where the owner-head of the family, decides who is suitable employee and who is not – including the hotel's GM.

Overall, the discussion above has provided evidence that the different organisational structure and ownership status affects to a certain degree managerial roles and competencies. The results of this research also express the need for change on the GMs set of competencies in order to be able to cope with the dynamic and fast changing external business environment. The increasing importance of general business knowledge and acumen over specific competencies and knowledge amongst the existing cohort of GMs and for those in the future, is also evident. The need for GMs to demonstrate initiative, along with the capacity to be entrepreneurial and

autonomous (Johnson, 1996; Harris and Mongiello, 2001) is also evident in this thesis. This view is more than obvious in family businesses, where GMs are overshadowed under the owners' pressures and limitations.

#### **7.4. Level 3: The moderating effect of discrete context on managerial roles and competencies**

One of the key findings of this research is the argument that even within the same job, GMs have different beliefs regarding what their role is about. Role theory has long recognised that individuals holding the same job will perform a slightly different set of tasks, thereby enacting their roles in slightly different ways (Graen, 1976; Katz and Kahn, 1978; Biddle, 1979; Ilgen and Hollenbeck, 1991). This research also argues that the way GMs define and perceive their roles, or their role orientation, is a powerful influence on their behaviour, resulting in more or less effective job performance. Literature supports the importance of taking into account how people see their roles (Parker, 2007). This has served as the backdrop for attempts at understanding the kinds of changes individuals make to their work roles, where employees are viewed as active 'crafters' or 'sculptors' of their jobs (Bell and Staw, 1989; Staw and Boettger, 1990; Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001).

Work roles are socially constructed rather than purely objective. As already discussed in the previous section, it has been found that the work and organisational context are responsible for shaping managerial work roles. In Ilgen and Hollenbeck's (1991) terms, roles contain both 'established task elements' that are constructed by the organisation as well as 'emergent task elements' that occur as a result of social factors, including the job-holder who can self-generate these elements. Moreover, the concept of role orientation refers to how an individual defines their work role, such as how broadly they perceive their role; what types of tasks, goals, and problems they see as relevant to their role; and how they believe they should approach those tasks,

goals and problems to be effective (Parker, 2000). The concept is thus more cognitive in its emphasis than variables such as job satisfaction and affective commitment. Thus, role orientation is expressed as a set of beliefs, and as such, is shaped by the environment, as well as by personality and individual differences (Parker, 2007).

Based on the findings of this research, the GMs' role orientation is largely affected by the organisational structure and the ownership status of the company. MNCs and national chain GMs, stressed the importance of the ability to work together, solve problems under pressure, network and know their companies expectations following their long and progressive tenures (Guerrier, 1987; Jauncey, 2000). On the other hand, family business GMs emphasised less reliance on extensive standard practice manuals and briefer service standards; those managers were seen to foster more flexible approaches to delivering their services. This required tacit knowledge amongst human resources, excellent communication and interpersonal competencies (Jones *et al.*, 1998). As a result, the ability to develop mutually beneficial relationships with owners (Field, 1995; Guilding, 2006), staff and customers was considered as a key role across family hotels.

The GMs role enactment which is expressed as the framework of managerial competencies was also found to be affected by contextual factors. The global character of competencies is viewed as an advantage because it provides for a more flexible taxonomy of work given the demands of dynamic and changing organisational environments (Morgeson *et al.*, 2004). Although it is not clear how social and cognitive factors might influence competency judgments, the use of a competency framework in this research has highlighted the significance of context in managerial work. Based on the PCF results, organisational context has been found to affect competency ratings, because variability in organisational culture and structure explains the relative weight assigned to competencies (Werbel and DeMarie, 2005).

A characteristic example that emerged from this research's findings is how different GMs perceive the importance of communication and networking based on the different organisational and cultural context they work. All respondents reported their reliance to information gathered inside and/or outside their workplace and provided inflated results on the PCF questionnaire. While the GMs' responses on PCF were not very useful because of the inflated results, data from the in-depth interviews showed that what differentiates GMs employed in international business with the locals, is the use of different communication channels. Big foreign firms encourage GMs to use the company's official communication channels (i.e. corporate e-mail; regular meetings; newsletters; memos; personal contacts). Although GMs report here reduced reliance on standard practice manuals, it is apparent that the various communication channels also function as indirect control mechanisms in the face of the demise of direct forms of control (Forster, 2000; Sparrow *et al.*, 2004). On the other hand national firm GMs use different communication tactics, by maintaining contacts with colleagues employed in family and local chain hotels; this provides them information about the wider business environment outside the corporate limits. Family business GMs appear to be more independent and diverse regarding their communication channel choices. They maintained contacts with a diverse pool of sources outside the company limits (Mintzberg, 1994) and participated in an extended nationwide network with other GMs. In this case, 'raw' information originate outside the company limits from diverse sources, is filtered from the GMs in order to reach to a safe conclusion. Although this type of communication is more hazardous because the quality and reliability of information is questioned, it provides GMs more freedom of choice regarding the number of sources. For family business GMs information gathering and networking posed as key competencies for '*doing the job*'.

The use of the various competencies frameworks and their global character has raised various questions regarding their suitability to assess managerial work 'anytime, anywhere'. The above example has demonstrated clearly that

the use of a universal tool like the PCF is not able by itself to show the interaction between context and managerial competencies. A large body of research that suggests that these kinds of global or holistic judgments are less accurate and of lower quality than are more decomposed judgments (Goldberg, 1971; Einhorn, 1972; Dawes and Corrigan, 1974; Armstrong, Denniston, and Gordon, 1975; Meehl, 1986; Ravinder, 1992; Kleinmuntz, Fennema, and Peecher, 1996; Morera and Budescu, 2001). Holistic methods directly assign overall values to a given stimulus, whereas decomposed methods divide the judgment task into a simpler set of subtasks (Fischer, 1977). In the job analysis context, holistic strategies involve incumbents using their knowledge about a job to make overall judgments about the job. This is similar to making global competency judgments. Decomposed strategies involve incumbents making judgments about the individual elements of a job. These individual judgments are then combined to derive an overall judgment about the job (Cornelius and Lyness, 1980). This involves breaking a global competency down to its component parts (i.e., specific abilities and tasks).

A problem that emerged from the use of a managerial competencies framework in this research, was the tendency on behalf of the respondents to provide inflated results in competency ratings. According to Morgeson *et al.*, (2004) the inflated results appear for two reasons. First, because competency statements represent combinations of tasks and KSAOs (Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other characteristics), the respondent is not given the opportunity to separately rate the individual parts. Thus, the inclusion of potentially inapplicable content along with applicable content will serve to inflate the overall rating. In essence, respondents are forced to include job elements they may skip if rated separately. Second, because competency statements generally are larger and more complex than the individual items, the respondents will view competencies as more important. Nevertheless, the effort to break down the various managerial competencies into smaller parts in this research through the employment of in-depth



interviews has provided a valuable tool that helped towards the understanding of the interaction between managerial work roles, competencies and context.

Moreover, this research identified five different variables (emerging themes in Chapter 6) that influence to a certain degree the shape, development and exercise of the managerial roles and competencies, namely: management mobility; contact intensity; hierarchical demarcation; integrity/corruption; networking and reputation. To start with management mobility, GMs are expected to follow certain career paths that eventually lead them to this position. The findings of this research showed limited career path options in family businesses. The situation in MNCs and more recently in local chains is different, with career paths being available from finance, sales and marketing.

Then, contact intensity poses as the most important theme that influences the managerial roles and competencies in services. GMs communicate daily with a broad spectrum of 'stakeholders' (owners, ownership representatives, subordinates, staff, customers, local authorities officers/public servants); the contact intensity with each stakeholder category determines to a certain degree the managerial roles and competencies adopted. Thus for instance, in family businesses the high level of contact intensity with all stakeholders is deemed important for the survival of the GM, whereas this is not the case for MNC GMs.

Hierarchy demarcation is the following emerging theme with two contrasting situations emerging from this research. Family businesses and local chains GMs experience difficulties in identifying the limits of their status and authority; the frequent owner interventions and the appointment of family members or friends as members of staff coupled with high levels of informality, influence to a large extent managerial work in family businesses and result very often to political behaviour. On the other hand hierarchical

demarcation in local and MNC chains is strictly orientated and communicated throughout the organisation. There are however 'unseen' relationships between the unit GMs, superiors and immediate subordinates that determine managerial work to a certain degree.

Another theme emerging is the manager's integrity. Although this was considered a sensitive issue, all participant managers in this research acknowledged this problem. In family businesses and local chains, GMs contact intensity with public servants and local authorities was reported to be high, so managers are responsible to 'find their own ways' to deal with bureaucracy and corruption. On the other hand national and MNC chain GMs reported that although they have personally no transactions with the public sector, they have contacts to ask for help if needed.

Finally the GMs' reputation and networking was valued very high from the vast majority of participant managers. There were however variations in the way each type of GM participates in networks and builds up his/her own reputation. Thus, managers in family businesses and local chains work very hard to build a good reputation in local, regional or national market; the key in this effort is the participation in the 'right' networks. On the other hand national and MNC chains encourage the participation in managerial networks within the company limits; nevertheless managers in national chains were found to maintain a large number of contacts outside the company limits. Reputation in chains is not valued high, since GMs are appointed based on performance and qualifications. The above variables are constantly changing throughout the manager's career advancement, who adapts each time to the new situation. Neff (1987) argues that the enactment of work roles necessarily encompasses behaviour that is the product of personal characteristics and characteristics of the work situation. Thus, it can be argued that context and processes involved in role enactment are definitely intertwined. The above discussion provides strong indications for the interplay between managerial work roles, competencies and context. What is

needed here is more research in different cultural contexts (i.e. other E.U. countries) in order to test the applicability of Dierdorff's *et al.* (2009) categorical model of work context.

## **7.5. Chapter summary**

This chapter discussed the implications of the research findings of this thesis on managerial work. The discussion provided insights on the interaction between managerial roles, competencies and context. The synthesis of the research data and the use of Dierdorff's *et al.*'s (2009) categorical model of work context, enabled the generation of a model which describes the social construction of managerial roles and competencies. This model conceptualises managerial work roles and role requirements (competencies) in three levels: the generic occupational omnibus context; a mesotype relationship which allows limited occupational groupings; and the specific discrete context. The first level provides a generic overview of managerial work in hospitality by emphasising the complex and challenging nature of this occupation and at the same time its interaction with context. The next level (mesotype relationship) allows for limited broad categorisations of hospitality managers based on their work context. Five areas were found to be affected more by contextual factors such as the organisational structure and the ownership status of the company. These areas are: management education, satisfying customers' needs, recruitment and selection, training and development, and performance appraisal. The final level (discrete context) identifies those contextual factors responsible for the 'uniqueness' of managerial work. This research identified five different variables that are responsible for the shape, development and exercise of the managerial roles and competencies, namely: management mobility; contact intensity; hierarchical demarcation; integrity/corruption; networking and reputation.

Chapter 8 identifies the wider implications of this thesis and addresses the limitations of the research.

# Chapter 8

## Conclusion

### 8.0. Introduction

The concluding chapter presents the implications of this research, which was concerned with managerial roles in luxury hotels, within the broader context of managerial work in the hospitality, tourism and leisure sector. The primary contributions of the research are: a) the acknowledgement that contextual factors such as the organisational and national culture affect managerial work to a great extent; b) managerial work roles and competencies are shaped and exercised according to the dominant organisational and cultural context; and c) the set of roles performed and competencies exercised is unique and inimitable for every manager. The chapter also comments on the implications of the research findings for senior managers, owners and MNC hotel chains in the hospitality industry. In particular, it focuses on the exploration of the domains of managerial work and HRM using a contextual lens that focuses on organisational and national culture. Research limitations are considered, specifically those related with the various problems appeared during the field work such as access difficulties and the amount of raw data to be processed. Finally, recommendations for further research in the areas of managerial work and HRM are outlined.

### 8.1. Contributions to knowledge

There were three aims associated with this research followed by a number of research questions. The interpretivist approach to this research did not allow the formulation of objectives since the outcomes were neither tested nor pre-determined but emerged from the exploration of the social construction of managerial roles and competencies. The contributions to knowledge made

by this study fall into the areas of managerial work in hospitality management and HRM. The discussion below concentrates on the findings related to this research's aims and questions.

**Aim 1: To evaluate the compatibility of Greek managerial roles and competencies in the Greek luxury hotel sector with 'western' managerial frameworks.**

*1. Are GMs' competencies consistent with western conceptions of management competency, in the luxury hotel sub-sector?*

This research's findings clearly indicated **fully compatibility of managerial roles and competency frameworks** in all hotel types investigated. More specifically all managers in luxury hotels demonstrated knowledge of the managerial competencies concept. Although the concept clearly originated from the North American MNC hotel chains, the globalisation pressures forced for a widespread adoption by the vast majority of luxury hotels in the western world. What actually changes in different types of GMs is the way they interpret and exercise managerial competency, which is affected from a series of contextual factors (i.e. national and organisational culture). This research question is better understood within the omnibus context of managerial work, which suggests that the work of hotel GMs appears to be similar regardless the cultural context, size and ownership status.

*2. How does the Greek context influence conceptions of work roles and competencies (i.e. in how managers are recruited, selected and promoted outwith formal and informal practice, local or occupational networks, etc)?*

The base requirements of managerial work in luxury hotels appear the same. What actually changes is the level of formality exercised in managerial and HRM practices. Thus, local companies (family and local chain hotels) employ a great number of managerial and HRM practices

that incorporate a **high level of informality**, meaning the **absence of written rules and procedures**. On the other hand, Greek national chains and MNCs demonstrate a high level of formality, regulated by written policies and rules. **The Greek context influences the hotel managers' conceptions of work roles and competencies to a great extent in family and local hotel chains, and to a moderate extent to Greek national chains.** A handful (less than ten in Greece) of managed MNC hotel chains do not seem to be influenced by the Greek context; on the other hand franchised MNCs are managed in the same manner as national Greek hotel chains. Overall, the influence of the Greek context was evident to a certain degree, in all Greek owned hotels. This research question is better understood under the mesotype relationship managerial work context, where broad categorizations of managerial work can inform the similar or common managerial practices appeared in hotels that belong to the same category based on the ownership status.

*3. Which are the key differences and similarities between Greek GMs employed in different type of luxury hotels based on the ownership status (family owned hotel; local hotel chain; national hotel chain; multinational hotel chain)?*

Three types of hotel GMs were identified (see 6.3.5.) based on the hotel ownership status analysis: the 'native' GMs; the 'Glocal' GMs; and the 'Greek Global' GMs. Although the 'native' GMs acknowledged the western managerial practices, they follow a 'best fit' approach to the management of the hotel and its human resources. On the other hand the 'Glocal' and the 'Greek global' GMs in franchised MNCs, stand successfully between the highly formalised MNC environment and the informal Greek family business environment. Their management style may be best described through the 'resource based view' that utilises in the best way all available human resources. Finally, the 'Greek global' GMs employed from managed MNC hotel chains, were bound by 'best practices' and corporate policies imposed by the corporate head offices.

Again here, it can be argued that the mesotype relationship managerial work context is evident, through the appearance of three distinctive managerial types.

Overall (Aim 1), the managerial roles and competencies required of GMs in the Greek luxury hotel sector are consistent both with the Greek context and western conceptions of management; the latter have been adopted to the national work context in order managers to be able to cope with contextual influences.

**Aim 2: To identify the key managerial roles performed and competencies required of GMs in the Greek luxury hotel sector.**

*1. Are competencies important for Hotel GM's performance?*

Competencies were deemed important by all participant hotel managers in this research. All managers ranked competencies very high (above 4.0) in PCF questionnaire. The small differences in competencies cluster scores in conjunction with the participant managers' interview responses, indicated that **managers from different hotel types perceive, value and adopt competencies in a different manner, due to the existence of contextual variables such as the ownership status.** Since the concept of managerial competencies is universal (at least in the western world) this research question is better understood under the omnibus context of managerial work.

*2. How GMs rank work roles and competencies by importance and why?*

Different GMs' types valued in a different manner the importance of competencies, based on the dominant contextual variables (i.e. national vs corporate culture). Thus, **in the highly informal family business environment, communication competencies were valued as the most important competencies** cluster from hotel GMs. On the other hand, **national and franchised MNC hotel chain GMs valued leadership and**

**interpersonal skills.** It should be mentioned here that those two types of GMs, perceive in a different manner the employment and exercise of the managerial competencies framework. Managers in national hotel chains and franchised MNCs, have demonstrated high levels of contact intensity with various stakeholders in and outside the hotel (i.e. owners, subordinates, customers and local authorities officers). On the other hand GMs in managed MNCs, reported lower levels of contact intensity spending most of their working hours in the office, behind closed doors. In this case contact intensity was reported high with superiors in head or regional office and the immediate subordinates (i.e. assistant GM). The approaches of the different manager types here are better understood within the mesotype relationship managerial work context.

*3. Which are the key themes for managerial work roles and competencies that emerge from this research?*

In total five themes emerged as factors that influence the shape and development of the GMs' roles and competencies in luxury hotels in Greece. To start with **management mobility**, GMs are expected to follow certain career paths that eventually lead to the position of the hotel unit's GM. This research showed limited career path options in Greek hotels with the F&B and the Front Office departments to appear as the only options for career progression. The situation in MNCs and more recently in national hotel chains is different, with career paths being available from finance, sales and marketing. Then, **contact intensity** poses as the most important theme that influences the managerial roles and competencies in luxury hotels in Greece. GMs communicate daily with a broad spectrum of 'stakeholders' (owners, ownership representatives, subordinates, staff, customers, local authorities officers/public servants); the contact intensity with each stakeholder category determines to a certain degree the managerial roles and competencies adopted. Thus for instance, in family hotels the high level of contact intensity with all stakeholders is deemed important for the survival of the hotel manager, whereas this is not the



case for MNC hotel GMs. **Hierarchy demarcation** is the following emerging theme with two contrasting situations emerging from this research. Family and local chain hotel GMs experience difficulties in identifying the limits of their status and authority; the frequent owner interventions and the appointment of family members or friends as members of staff coupled with high levels of informality, influence to a large extent managerial work in Greek hotels and result very often to political behaviour. On the other hand hierarchical demarcation in Greek and MNC hotel chains is strictly orientated and communicated throughout the organisation. There are however 'unseen' relationships between the hotel unit GMs, superiors and immediate subordinates that determine managerial work to a certain degree. Another theme emerging from the Greek context, is **the manager's integrity in relation to the high levels of corruption in the Greek public sector**. Although this was considered a sensitive issue, all hotel managers acknowledged the existing problems; in the case of family and local chain hotels GMs contact intensity with public servants and local authorities was reported to be high, so managers are responsible to 'find their own ways' to deal with bureaucracy and corruption. On the other hand national and MNC hotel chain GMs reported that although they have personally no transactions with the public sector, they have contacts to ask for help if needed. Finally the hotel GMs' **reputation and networking** was valued very high from the vast majority of participant managers. There were however variations in the way each type of hotel manager participates in networks and builds up his/her own reputation. Thus, managers in family and local chain hotels work very hard to build a good reputation in local, regional or national market; the key in this effort is the participation in the 'right' networks. On the other hand national and MNC chains encourage the participation in managerial networks within the company limits; nevertheless managers in national chains were found to maintain a large number of contacts outside the company limits. Reputation in hotel chains is not valued high, since GMs are appointed based on performance and

qualifications. The five emerging themes from this research are responsible for the managers' 'uniqueness', since they set the scene for the development, adoption and exercise of different roles and competencies from each manager individually. Thus, these themes are better understood within the discrete relationship managerial work context.

Overall (Aim 2), the key managerial roles performed and competencies required of GMs in the Greek luxury hotel sector are subjected to a variety of contextual influences such as the country's paternalistic management style, the central role of family and the existence of 'in-group' collectivism. On the other hand globalisation pressures for standardisation have also established performance oriented roles and competencies into the Greek luxury hotel management lexicon.

**Aim 3: To develop a model of the process through which definitions and perceptions of the required management roles and competencies in different contexts are formed.**

*1. How the Greek context (in national and local level) shapes conceptions of hotel unit GMs' work roles and competencies?*

Dierdorff's *et al.* (2009) categorical model of work context discussed in the previous chapter **provided a strong indication of the interaction between context and managerial work in three levels** (generic, middle level, specific). **The local, national and organisational contexts meet with the GMs personal characteristics and create a unique, 'context specific' situation.** This means that managerial work in hotels may demonstrate similarities that allow us to create occupational groupings, but each case is never the same; this is determined by the existing contextual influences in effect, blended with the GM's profile.

2. *What is the level and nature of interaction between the local/national context with managerial work in different types of luxury hotels based on the ownership status?*

**Almost all hotel types in this research were recipients of contextual/cultural influences to a certain degree: medium for national and franchised MNC hotel chains; high for family and local chain hotels.** As expected, the only hotel type in this research that reported remaining unaffected by the Greek context influences, was the managed MNC hotel chain. As a result three types of hotel GMs were identified based on the level and nature of interaction with the Greek context: **the ‘natives’; the ‘glocal’; and the ‘Greek global’.**

Overall (Aim 3), this research has demonstrated that context matters and cannot be viewed separate from managerial work. The national context affects to a certain degree managerial work, which must be adapted to local and national conditions. The social construction of managerial roles and competencies is a complex process, which allows for multiple interpretations. In this research, a theoretical model of managerial roles and competencies was developed, based in Dierdorff's *et al.* (2009) categorical model of work context.

## **8.2. Implications for research**

This research is an attempt to increase the current body of knowledge of the existing literature on GMs' roles and competencies in a hospitality, tourism and leisure context. In addition, it can be argued that there are also wider implications for senior managers in a service context. Nevertheless the fact that service environments are very diverse (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985; Grönroos, 2001), limits the discussion of this research in a hospitality, tourism and leisure context. The approach taken in this thesis is positioned within an emergent body of research in the field of managerial work (Johns, 2006; Dierdorff and Morgenson, 2007; Dierdorff *et al.*, 2009), that applies an

interpretive paradigm to uncover the complex facets of the managerial work interaction with context. The assumptions guiding the choice of methods for the research are firmly placed within an interpretive perspective that is committed to a social constructivist philosophy (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). As such, this thesis makes a methodological contribution through the use of an interpretive framework, to analyse the perceptions of 36 luxury hotel GMs in Greece in relation to managerial work roles and competencies.

Specifically, this study explores the influence of contextual factors such as ownership status and national culture, on managerial work roles and competencies. Based on Dierdorff's *et al.* (2009) categorical model of work context, a model of work roles and competencies was developed for the services industry GMs. Although there have been repeated attempts in literature to describe managerial work roles and competencies (Chapter 2), none of them so far has made a direct link with context. This research provides a better understanding of managerial work in non Anglo-Saxon contexts. Management literature assumes that senior managers in hospitality, tourism and leisure sector (i.e. hotel managers) are expected to behave and work in a standard 'universal' manner. This research shows that even though managers may adopt similar practices, roles and competencies, they interpret and use them in a different 'customised' manner. This practically means that even the same manager is expected to perform different roles in different companies. The role of the context here is crucial since it affects managerial work greatly. There is evidence that strong national cultures affect managerial behaviour in family businesses, whereas multinational corporate cultures remain unaffected due to the existence of a strong corporate culture. There are also 'in-between' situations where a 'hybrid' model uses both national and corporate culture to better adapt on the local/national conditions. Therefore, this research contributes to the managerial work literature by understanding how general managers adapt their roles and competencies framework according to the existing contextual conditions.

Finally, it can be argued that statistical research that analyses managerial work roles and competencies is certainly valuable in providing a backdrop for the general conditions of managerial work in the hospitality, tourism and leisure sector. Yet, research such as this one, which moves beyond these rational analyses and focuses on providing in-depth examinations of managerial behaviour, offers new insights into the complex, multi-faceted reality of the GMs' work. As a result, it is imperative that researchers in the field continue to look into the roles and competencies in a variety of settings.

### **8.3. Implications for managers and owners**

In terms of its practical contribution, these results also have a number of implications for corporate ownership representatives, Greek hotel owners and managers aspiring to be luxury hotel unit GMs in the Greek and international hotel industry.

Corporate ownership representatives from MNC hotel chains should revisit their persistence in 'best practice' orientation since the international hospitality research clearly indicates that contextual influences affect managerial work. The failure of expatriate managers to understand the importance of national and local context is the wake-up call for the multinational corporations in the new millennia. The dominance of the north American '*one-size fits all*' mind set must give space to the more pragmatic '*think global – act local*'. The rapidly growing trend in the use of host country (HCN) and third country (TCN) nationals demonstrates the difficulty of the American international hospitality corporations to cope with the local challenges. The creation of truly global managerial '*cadres*' who can simultaneously embrace local and 'best' practices, has produced spectacular results in non-American international hospitality corporations (Nickson and Warhust, 2001) such as the Accor group from France. In addition, the existence of IHRM and SIHRM strategies are the key for the successful development and deployment of the hotel GMs in the company's properties

worldwide. The central point in the development of such a management cohort is focused in cultural/contextual awareness and the ability of the expatriate managers to create networks and communicate with people in the host country.

On the other hand, local luxury hotel owners in Greece and to a great extent in the European south (Portugal, Spain and Italy), need to acknowledge that hotel GMs act as the key mediators and facilitators of their companies' strategies and they are pivotal in transferring proprietary knowledge, managing resources and driving revenues and reputations of specific hotel units and companies. These strategic resources are often seen – especially in family business – as a 'necessary expense'. The lack of formality and absence of formal authority limits within family business can be threatening for the work of the hotel unit GM. Moreover, the 'family like' work environment consistent with the Greek cultural context, poses as one of the greater challenges for hotel managers who find themselves trapped in crossfire between family member disputes. Nevertheless, the adoption of the 'traditional' Swiss/French (European) management model which exemplifies craft and technical skills (Guerrier, 1987) have proven successful for family business and local hotel chains in the E.U. (Eurostat, 2009). On the other hand, when hotel owners decide to expand regional or nationwide, they necessarily need to turn to GMs with '*American*' attitude, which emphasizes in generic business and management skills (Nebel *et al.*, 1995; Jauncey, 2000; Bignold, 2006). The challenge here is not addressing hotel GMs but the hotel owners themselves who must convert the 'small business' mindset, to corporate mentality. The example of successful Greek national hotel chains proves that a hybrid model can exist, where small business thinking meets corporate mentality and the 'family like' work environment for GMs has eliminated most negative contextual influences (i.e. favouritism in selection or performance evaluation). The bottom line for family hotel owners is that they need to evolve and escape from the paternalistic management style, which is a major drawback for the work of the GMs.

Managers aspiring to be luxury hotel unit GMs in the Greek and international hotel industry, must be aware of the unique challenges attached to this job. The multidimensional facet of the hotel manager's job requires young talented and highly qualified candidates who are willing to learn and develop themselves in a continuous process, even when they reach the peak of their career. A very important aspect of managerial work that is not taught in hospitality and business curricula is the understanding of context. The frequent relocations within and/or outside the country of origin, requires from hotel managers to develop instant situational and contextual awareness in order to be able to adapt to new environments. Adaptation is the prerequisite for hotel managers to be efficient and productive. Globalisation demands hotel managers to behave and work in a similar manner and at the same time be able to understand the local work environment. There is no golden rule in the adoption of specific roles and competences, since each manager decides personally what works better in his/her case. Another unseen and often ignored quality of hotel managers, is the ability to infiltrate and participate in 'professional' networks that provide valuable information or even assist in their career progression. Overall, aspiring hotel GMs are expected to perform in a volatile working environment and very often exceed the limits of job descriptions. Management mobility is expected throughout the individual's career progression; the 'traditional' career paths (through the Food & Beverage and Front Office departments) are not adequate for the new cohort of aspirant hotel GMs who also need to acquire generic business skills.

As a concluding thought, it can be argued that the results of this research can contribute in the redesign and reshape of hospitality management curricula, since the future managers must be able to cope with a vast array of needs and demands. It is hoped that the findings of this study will establish a good starting point for future research.

#### **8.4. Research limitations**

Research is usually limited by the social scientific researchers' background and personal views (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002). Nevertheless, the researcher is usually aware of such limitations. In this thesis, the basic obstacles were created by the slow and non-linear evolution of the research from its initial research design and data collection methods stage to its final analysis and write up. Another challenge for the author was the fact that since 2005 when this research actually started, management as well as HRM literature made advances. This practically means that literature review had to be partially replaced from more recent or more relevant material that was better suited to this research's content.

A concern for the author was the fact that the dynamic nature of the GMs' work, in terms of available time, reflects a difficulty concerning the timing of the fieldwork and challenges in securing access to interview participants. Despite the researcher's concerns about this issue after a painstaking planning, access was secured. Another serious concern was the level of this research's 'attractiveness' for the participants; eventually the content of the interviews revealed remarkably uniform issues and concerns on behalf of the participating managers. The research therefore stands as a comparative overview of the managerial roles and competencies as long as the HRM approaches taken to managing hotel units in the Greek and international hotel industry, in the late 2000s. However, the gap between the fieldwork and the writing up has enabled additional insights to be gained through consideration of subsequent industry changes and management theory advancement.

Another weakness of the methodology approach adopted, involves acquiring sufficient access only to senior managers of Greek origin, excluding foreign GMs as it was discussed in Chapter 5. The participation of foreign managers that work in Greece could improve the findings of this research and enhance our understanding of the interplay between management and context.



Additional insights from other stakeholders (i.e. owners, subordinates, customers) could have highlighted the roles and competencies framework of hotel unit GMs, and this would have enhanced the quality of this research further (Yin, 1993). However, issues of access and resources (time, money and length of research) precluded such ambitions. It should be mentioned here that in all hotels, the researcher has unofficially 'interrogated' (interviewed without the company's permission) other stakeholders, such as customers and staff. Unfortunately this opportunistic and unstructured approach did not allow further analysis of this data, alongside the in-depth interviews, PCF questionnaires and company documents. There were even two focus groups with senior hospitality management students, but in view of the potential danger of 'losing track' in field work, these data were not used. In addition, while further in-depth insights into a single company management and HRM approaches and practices could have been achieved through a more longitudinal single case study approach, the opportunity to compare such activities across such a number of companies would have been compromised. Future studies would however seek to include these additional insights of other organisational informants.

Other shortcomings in this research, are potential sources for bias; these include the large amount of data which may have led to missing important information or overweighting some findings due to focusing on a particular and large set of data. The researcher's personal involvement in field work also increases the possibility that the recorded interviews and observations highlighted particular incidents while ignoring others. Thus, personal involvement implied the danger of being selective and overconfident with some data.

Overall, a number of specific problems are related with qualitative research, including the Hawthorne effect, researcher-participant interaction, context dependency, conditioning, atypical research participants and differing measurement methods. On the other hand, this huge amount of raw data

could have been lost in the author's collective memory over the five years of involvement with this thesis. To address the above shortcomings, multiple data sources were used for triangulation to achieve an agreement of one data source with another. Multiple sources of data, such as the PCF questionnaires, personal interviews, observation logs, and company documents, provided different strengths and complemented each other. During the analysis of these data sources, the author looked for contrasts, comparisons, and exemplars and reported these during the data reduction so as not to filter out outliers and extreme instances.

Finally, it can be argued that one of the greatest anxieties of this research was to unearth '*what lies beneath*' the acts and words of the social actors (GMs) under this study. The author strongly believes that, what is missing from the extant literature is qualitative work about the nature of managerial work, which is bound by positivistic interpretations. In addition, though the methods used to achieve the research objectives did not aim to create generalisations from this sample to a larger population, it is important to acknowledge that the results of this research may indeed not provide relevant generalisations for the wider service industry and additional research would be required to do so. It can be argued however that even this narrow focused qualitative research with the above aforementioned limitations, is a small step forward to managerial work research.

## **8.5. Suggestions for future research**

With regard to managerial work roles and competencies in services context, future research is needed in connection to a number of areas of inquiry highlighted in the results of this research, which uncovered some findings that require further exploration. These issues include:

***Management and context.*** Management studies have notoriously ignored (or at least undermined) the role of context in managerial work for

more than half a century. On the other hand, organisational studies have explored this for at least four decades. The first efforts to combine these two disciplines came in the late 2000s with the work of Johns (2006), Dierdorff and Morgenson (2007) and Dierdorff *et al.* (2009). In this research managerial work roles and competencies were explored through the prism of the contextual influence of a national culture. Further research is needed in diverse cultural contexts (i.e. cross cultural research in the EU) and other service sub-sectors, in order to understand the interaction and dynamics between context and managerial work.

***Convergence – divergence of management and HRM practices in services.*** This debate has been researched for at least two decades, but still with poor results. This thesis focused specifically on the international and Greek hotel industry, which experiences internationalisation through the domination of American multinational companies (Nickson, 1999). The dilemma to follow the ‘European’ or ‘American’ model in hospitality management is still in effect especially for hospitality SMEs all over the E.U. Further research should be conducted to identify how the American ‘business’ model has evolved more recently, its relation with local management models, and whether other industries and sectors have experienced similar heritage issues within the areas of general management and HRM.

***Local versus International managers.*** The research suggests that local managers can perform as well as their international colleagues. The balance is gradually shifting in using parent country nationals for a number of reasons such as the excessive costs in supporting expatriates and pressures to localise management positions. The key for the selection and development of these strategic resources is the employment of sophisticated HRM practices and policies that maximises the potential of local (managerial) recruits. On the other hand, high profile candidates are also attracted from successful local companies; this ‘best

talent' battle creates additional pressure especially on labour markets that experience shortage of suitable candidates. As such these dynamics of management recruitment and selection need to be explored in future research.

***Developing GMs for the international hospitality industry.*** Key features of the development of service unit GMs include their mobility within and across national and international borders and long socialisation into management. Both these factors alongside broader issues of the prioritisation of business and management competencies over traditional craft skills, and the ambiguity of international adaptability require further exploration in the international services industry. This research only focused upon hotel unit GMs as key resources in the Greek hotel industry. Further important insights into the experiences of managers attempting to and actually achieving these vital management positions within services sub-sectors in other European countries would provide important insights into the challenges of the effective management of strategic human resources in the international hospitality industry.

## **8.6. The research journey**

This study has engaged and preoccupied the researcher for much longer than was initially anticipated. The change of department and supervisor after the completion of the first year of study and the lack of funding, have led to the decision to return to the country of origin as a part-time student, putting this effort in jeopardy. The exemplary support and guidance from the new supervisors for which the author is immensely grateful, played a critical role for the progress and completion of this thesis. Another important motivator and at the same time constrain, was the fact that the author's wife has also been a PhD research student in the same programme. This practically meant that tuition fees and travel expenses for two persons would have to be secured; this was achieved by working full time in hospitality and academic

jobs respectively. On the other hand the atypical spouse 'competition' for the completion of the thesis, worked in a beneficiary manner. Moreover, it can be argued that opportunities for procrastination and distraction presented themselves continuously during the completion of this study, and too often secondary aspects of the study allowed the researcher to drift into inconsequential subjects. That is not to say that the researcher's enthusiasm for the subject matter waned but that in the process of completing the thesis forays into unhelpful areas and literature occurred. Further frustrations and time challenges in gaining access to the hotel units and the required participant managers, offered opportunities for the researcher to deviate from the task of completing the data collection and problems of analysing sizeable collections of qualitative data further slowed the progress made.

There were also positive experiences in this difficult journey. Publishing and presenting work in conferences proved a useful and rewarding experience. The exchange of ideas and constructive feedback has worked in a beneficiary manner towards the completion of this thesis. Another 'win' was the warm acceptance of the participant hotel managers who felt that their story '*would be heard*' through the publication of this research's results. Moreover, this research has undoubtedly informed and influenced the researcher's teaching of hospitality management and HRM, and offered opportunities to enthuse students about the features of people management in a dynamic and fast growing industry. Finally, engagement with such a project impacts upon the lifestyle and lifecycle experiences of the researcher and can influence approaches to tasks and deadlines in different ways. Despite the fact that the long research journey is based on individual effort, it is hoped that the lessons learnt will hopefully be of benefit to other researchers.

As a closing remark the author would like to state from his own perspective that, the research journey is a difficult but useful learning experience that

never stops, even after the completion of the thesis; Don Williams Jr. (1968) quote reflects that:

*“The road of life twists and turns and no two directions are ever the same. Yet our lessons come from the journey, not the destination.”*

## **8.7. Chapter summary**

Managerial work roles and competencies are shaped and developed under various contextual influences. Based on this research’s findings, a theoretical model of managerial roles and competencies was developed, according to Dierdorff’s *et al.* (2009) categorical model of work context. The model presented in chapter 7, demonstrates the interaction between context and managerial work in three levels (generic, middle level, specific). Within this framework the local, national and organisational contexts meet with the GMs personal characteristics and create a unique, ‘context specific’ situation. This means that managerial work in the hospitality tourism and leisure sector may demonstrate similarities that allow us to create occupational groupings, but each case is never the same; this is determined by the existing contextual influences in effect, blended with the GM’s profile. The examination of these contextual influences, in combination with the suggested additional research on the topic and the effort to eliminate the various research limitations, would provide hospitality GMs with support that more appropriately reflects their reality and ensuing needs.

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# APPENDICES



## Appendix 1: 4\* and 5 \* Hotel Capacities in Greece

| Region                           | 5 Star     |              |              | 4 Star     |              |               |
|----------------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
|                                  | Units      | Rooms        | Beds         | Units      | Rooms        | Beds          |
| Central Greece<br>(excl. Attica) | 7          | 586          | 1296         | 27         | 2448         | 4728          |
| Attica (Athens)                  | 28         | 6328         | 11913        | 76         | 6757         | 12606         |
| Peloponnese                      | 10         | 2348         | 4784         | 79         | 4617         | 8939          |
| Ionian Islands                   | 10         | 1841         | 3573         | 90         | 10269        | 19356         |
| Epirus                           | 2          | 70           | 147          | 29         | 717          | 1417          |
| N. Aegean                        | 6          | 646          | 1369         | 25         | 1576         | 2907          |
| Crete                            | 41         | 10229        | 20172        | 209        | 22099        | 42176         |
| Dodecanese                       | 16         | 5643         | 11.060       | 155        | 27176        | 52495         |
| Cyclades                         | 17         | 928          | 1848         | 137        | 4294         | 8126          |
| Thessaly                         | 12         | 671          | 1309         | 78         | 2216         | 4334          |
| Macedonia                        | 26         | 3743         | 7259         | 81         | 9611         | 18311         |
| Thrace                           | 1          | 97           | 183          | 8          | 592          | 1186          |
| <b>Total :</b>                   | <b>176</b> | <b>33130</b> | <b>64913</b> | <b>994</b> | <b>92372</b> | <b>176631</b> |

(Source: Hellenic Chamber of Hotels- <http://www.grhotels.gr>)

## Appendix 2: Sample of hotel data fact sheet

HOTEL **THE IXIAN GRAND** Class : 4<sup>stars</sup>

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17

|  |                     |                      |                 |
|--|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Region :</b>                                    | DODECANESUS         | <b>Pricelist (€)</b> |                 |
| <b>Prefecture :</b>                                | DODECANESUS ISLANDS | <b>Single Room :</b> | 80,00 - 170,00  |
| <b>Island :</b>                                    | RHODOS              | <b>Double Room :</b> | 110,00 - 220,00 |
| <b>City/Village :</b>                              | Ixia                | <b>Suites :</b>      | 120,00 - 250,00 |
| <b>Address :</b>                                   | Paraiou Ialissou    | <b>Breakfast :</b>   | 10,00           |
| <b>Zip :</b>                                       | 851 01 Ixia         | <b>Lunch :</b>       | 20,00           |
| <b>Telephone :</b>                                 | 2241-092944         | <b>Rooms :</b>       | 237             |
| <b>Fax :</b>                                       | 2241-094413         | <b>Beds :</b>        | 438             |
| <b>E - mail :</b>                                  |                     | <b>Open :</b>        | 4-10            |
| <b>Website :</b>                                   |                     |                      |                 |
| <b>Distance nearest :</b>                          |                     |                      |                 |
| <b>Airport</b>                                     | <b>Port</b>         | <b>City/Village</b>  | <b>Beach</b>    |
| 12kms  | 5kms                | 2kms                 | 10m             |
|  |                     |                      | <b>Hospital</b> |
|  |                     |                      | 5kms            |
| <b>Hotel Facilities</b>                            |                     |                      |                 |
|  |                     |                      |                 |
| <b>Room Facilities</b>                             |                     |                      |                 |
|  |                     |                      |                 |
| <b>Operator : Rodos'Hotels G.Karayannis (S.A.)</b> |                     |                      |                 |

(Source: Hellenic Chamber of Hotels- <http://www.grhotels.gr>)

## Appendix 3: Consent Form

### Δήλωση Προστασίας Προσωπικών Δεδομένων (EL)

Η διαχείριση και προστασία των προσωπικών δεδομένων της συμμετέχουσας εταιρίας και των υπαλλήλων της στην παρούσα έρευνα, υπόκειται στις σχετικές διατάξεις της ελληνικής νομοθεσίας (Ν. 2472/1997) για την προστασία του ατόμου και την προστασία δεδομένων προσωπικού χαρακτήρα όπως έχει συμπληρωθεί με τις αποφάσεις του Προέδρου της Επιτροπής Προστασίας Προσωπικών Δεδομένων, τα Π.Δ. 207/1998 και 79/2000 και το άρθρο 8 του Ν. 2819/2000 όπως και το Νόμο 2774/1999 και του ευρωπαϊκού δικαίου (οδηγίες 95/46/EK και 97/66/EK). Επίσης δηλώνεται υπεύθυνα πως όλα τα στοιχεία που θα προκύψουν από την έρευνα θα χρησιμοποιηθούν ανώνυμα.

### Personal Data Protection Declaration (En)

The management and protection of the participant company and its employees in this research are liable to the Greek (Law 2472/1997) and EU legislation (directives 95/46/EK & 97/66/EK) regarding the Personal Data Protection. In addition, any data and documents derived from the research will be used anonymously.

Τοποθεσία / Place: ..... Ημερομηνία / Date: \_\_ / \_\_ / 2007

ΟΕρευνητής / The Researcher

Για την Εταιρία / On Behalf of the Company

Charalampos Giousmpasoglou



University of  
**Strathclyde**



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## **Appendix 4: The Research Tool**

(Available in English and Greek)

(Includes: Cover letter / Company & Participant's Profile /  
Interview Form / PCF Questionnaire / Competencies  
Interpretation)

Dear Colleague,

This is the first scientific effort in our country to identify the kind of skills and competencies needed for successful GM's performance in four and five star hotels. This research aims to map the right mix of competencies that make good managers; it also explores the reasons why these competencies are considered important in the Greek hospitality context. In a wider context it studies GMs' behaviour in the hotel sector which is the backbone of the hospitality industry and one major contributor in the Greek economy. Please spare some of your precious time to help this really important effort to make this profession widely acknowledged and recognised.

With my best regards

Charalampos Giousmpasoglou

(MSc, MA, PDPM, PgD)



*This research is partly funded (33.3%) from the  
3<sup>rd</sup> EU Framework through OTEK's 2005-6  
Scholarships Programme.*

**Mini Bio:** Mr. Charalampos Giousmpasoglou is a holder of a first degree in Hotel Management (1994) from 'ASTER' the reputable hotel school in Rhodes, Greece. He is also a holder of a MSc in Hospitality Management from the University of Birmingham (2000), a PDPM accredited from the CIPD (2001), a MA in Personnel Management (with distinction) from Leeds Metropolitan University (2001), and a PgD in Research Methods from Strathclyde Business School. His professional background includes various F&B managerial positions in 4 & 5 star resort hotels in Rhodes (1991-1999). From 2001 until 2004 he has worked as an executive F&B manager for 'Interni Restaurants' an upmarket Greek restaurant chain in which he still remains as a consultant. Mr Giousmpasoglou is working in the Organisation of Tourism Education & Training (OTEK) since 2003. During his service in OTEK he involved as a group leader in significant projects such as the creation of Hospitality & Tourism Vocational Schools in Georgia, Armenia & Egypt and the design & delivery of an EU funded scholarship scheme for hospitality & tourism graduates. He has also been working since 2001 as associate hospitality lecturer at BCA – a collaborating college with London Metropolitan University. He is married with Lia Marinakou since 1998.

This research tool is organised in four parts. Parts *A+B* refer to demographics and the collection of statistical data regarding the sample. Part *C* is a semi-structure interview aiming to explore the factors that shape and influence managerial competencies. Part *D* is employing the Personal Competencies Framework (PCF) questionnaire from Dulewicz (1998); its aim is to shape a competencies framework as it is currently employed by hotel GMs.

Please tick (✓) where appropriate

| <b>A. Hotel Background:</b>                           |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <b>A1.</b> What is the ownership status of the hotel? |  |   |  |
| Self Proprietorship:<br><input type="checkbox"/>      | Greek Chain (local):<br><input type="checkbox"/> | Greek Chain (national):<br><input type="checkbox"/>     | International Chain:<br><input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>A2.</b> What is the official rating of the hotel?  |  | Four Star: <input type="checkbox"/>                     | Five Star: <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| <b>A3.</b> How many employees does the hotel occupy?  |  | ___ Employees   |  |
| <b>A4.</b> How many beds does the hotel have?         |  |   |  |
| 50 – 150: <input type="checkbox"/>                    |  | 150 – 250: <input type="checkbox"/>                     | over 250: <input type="checkbox"/>               |
| <b>A5.</b> What is the main type of your customers:   |  |   |  |
| <b>Business:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>             | <b>Leisure:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>         | <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/> (please specify): |  |

| <b>B. Managerial background:</b>                     |                                  |                                  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>B1.</b> Please indicate your sex:                 |                                  | Male <input type="checkbox"/>    | Female <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <b>B2.</b> Please indicate your age bracket:         |                                  |                                  |                                  |
| 20 – 30 <input type="checkbox"/>                     | 30 – 40 <input type="checkbox"/> | 40 – 50 <input type="checkbox"/> | over 50 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>B3.</b> Please indicate your marital status:      |                                  | Married <input type="checkbox"/> | Single <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <b>B4a.</b> What are your academic qualifications?   |                                  |                                  |                                  |
| None <input type="checkbox"/>                        | VET <input type="checkbox"/>     | ASTE <input type="checkbox"/>    | TEI <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| Bachelor <input type="checkbox"/>                    | Master <input type="checkbox"/>  | PhD <input type="checkbox"/>     | Other :                          |
| <b>B4b.</b> How many foreign languages do you speak: |                                  |                                  |                                  |
| English <input type="checkbox"/>                     | French <input type="checkbox"/>  | German <input type="checkbox"/>  | Italian <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please specify): .....                        |                                  |                                  |                                  |

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**Part C: Semi-Structure Interviews**  
**Qualitative analysis of managerial roles & competencies,**  
**and the influence of the context**

**Question 1:**

Please describe briefly your professional background.

**Question 2:**

What was your main motive for choosing this profession?

**Question 3:**

In your opinion which part of your job do you consider as most important?

**Question 4:**

Please describe a) the Recruitment and b) Selection process for upper management employees (GM & Dept. Mgrs) in your hotel.

**Question 5:**

Please describe the Training & Development process for managerial staff in your hotel. How do you contribute in this process?

**Question 6:**

Please describe your formal and informal roles in day-to-day operations.

**Question 7:**

What competencies do you consider important to deal with the following groups:

- Superiors / Ownership
- Supervisors
- Employees & workers
- Customers
- Suppliers
- Public Sector

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**Question 8:**

What you perceive as the ideal competencies mix for upper managerial staff in Greek 4 & 5\* hotels?

**Question 9:**

Please describe the performance evaluation system in your hotel.

**Question 10:**

What is the role of networking and communication in your work? What is the role of a GM's reputation in the market?

**Question 11:**

What are the similarities and differences between family owned, Greek chain and international chain 4 & 5\* hotels operating in Greece?

**Question 12:**

Do you think that the Greek context (culture, national identity, values, family, distinctive personal characteristics) influences the GMs' professional profile?

**Question 13:**

What are the differences and similarities with what is called "international (western) hotel management" considering the current situation in Greece?

**Question 14:**

Please feel free to make further comments in our discussion.

## D. Personal Managerial Competencies Framework (PCF)

(Source: Dulewicz, 1998)

**Questionnaire Guidelines:** The questionnaire below reflects your personal opinion on the importance of the specified competencies in managerial work. In simple words is what competencies from the list below you perceive important or less important for a successful hotel GM. A detailed list with definitions of each competency is attached.

| Please circle your preference<br>( 1: not important – 5: very important ) |                           |                            |                           |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. Intellectual   |                           | d. Inter – Personal        |                           |
| 1. Information Collection   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 26. Impact                 | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 2. Problem Analysis   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 27. Persuasiveness         | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 3. Numerical Interpretation   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 28. Sensitivity            | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 4. Judgment   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 29. Flexibility            | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 5. Critical Faculty   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 30. Ascendancy             | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 6. Creativity   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 31. Negotiating            | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 7. Planning   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |                            |                           |
| 8. Perspective  | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | e. Leadership              |                           |
| 9. Org. Awareness   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 32. Organising             | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 10. External Awareness  | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 33. Empowering             | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 11. Learning – Oriented   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 34. Appraising             | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 12. Technical Expertise   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 35. Motivating Others      | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| b. Personal   |                           | 36. Developing Others      | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 13. Adaptability  | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 37. Leading                | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 14. Independence  | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |                            |                           |
| 15. Integrity   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | f. Results - Orientation   |                           |
| 16. Stress Tolerance  | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 38. Risk Taking            | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 17. Resilience  | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 39. Decisiveness           | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 18. Detail Consciousness  | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 40. Business Sense         | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 19. Self - Management   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 41. Energy                 | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 20. Change – Oriented   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 42. Concern for Excellence | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| c. Communication  |                           | 43. Tenacity               | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 21. Reading   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 44. Initiative             | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 22. Written Communication   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + | 45. Customer Oriented      | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |
| 23. Listening   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |                            |                           |
| 24. Oral Expression   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |                            |                           |
| 25. Oral Presentation   | - 1... 2... 3... 4... 5 + |                            |                           |
|   |                           |                            |                           |

## Σύντομη Περιγραφή Δεξιοτήτων - Competencies Brief Description

### a. Πνευματικές Δεξιότητες (Intellectual)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>1. Συλλογή Πληροφοριών</b><br/>Αναζητά συντηματικά όλες τις συναφείς πληροφορίες σχετικά με το έργο. Αποσπά σχετικές συμαντικές πληροφορίες από άλλους.</p>   | <p><b>1. Information Collection:</b><br/>Seeks all possible relevant information for the task systematically. Elicits relevant information from others.</p>  |
| <p><b>2. Ανάλυση Προβλήματος</b><br/>Εντοπίζει ένα πρόβλημα και το διασπά σε μικρότερα κομμάτια που είναι ευκολότερο να διαχειριστούν. Συνδέει και αξιολογεί πληροφορίες από διαφορετικές πηγές, και εντοπίζει πιθανές αιτίες του προβλήματος.</p>  | <p><b>2. Problem Analysis:</b><br/>Identifies a problem and breaks it down into its constituent parts. Links together and evaluates information from different sources, and identifies possible causes of the problem.</p>   |
| <p><b>3. Ερμηνεία Αριθμών</b><br/>Αφομοιώνει με ακρίβεια αριθμητικές και στατιστικές πληροφορίες, και δίνει λογικές και σοβαρές επεξηγήσεις.</p>  | <p><b>3. Numerical Interpretation:</b><br/>Assimilates numerical and statistical information accurately and makes sensible, sound interpretations.</p>   |
| <p><b>4. Κρίση</b><br/>Παίρνει λογικές και σοβαρές αποφάσεις ή κάνει προτάσεις βασιζόμενος σε λογικές υποθέσεις και τεκμηριωμένες πληροφορίες</p>   | <p><b>4. Judgment:</b><br/>Makes sensible, sound decisions or proposals based on reasonable assumptions and factual information.</p>   |
| <p><b>5. Κριτική Σκέψη</b><br/>Ελέγχει την εγκυρότητα των υπαρχόντων στοιχείων και υποθέσεων. Αναγνωρίζει άμεσα τα λάθη και αδύνατα σημεία μιας πρότασης ή ενός σχεδίου, και αιτιολογεί γιατί είναι πιθανό να μη δουλέψουν.</p>   | <p><b>5. Critical Faculty</b><br/>Challenges existing facts and assumptions. Rapidly identifies the shortcomings and flaws in a plan or proposal, and the reason why it might not work.</p>  |
| <p><b>6. Δημιουργικότητα</b><br/>Παράγει υψηλής ποιότητας καινοτόμες ιδέες και προτάσεις οι οποίες δεν είναι προφανείς σε συναδέλφους με μικρότερη αντίληψη.</p>  | <p><b>6. Creativity</b><br/>Produces highly imaginative and innovative ideas and proposals that are not obvious to less perceptive colleagues.</p>   |
| <p><b>7. Σχεδιασμός</b><br/>Θεμελιώνει τις μελλοντικές προτεραιότητες και ενσαρκώνει όλες τις μελλοντικές ανάγκες για αλλαγές προκειμένου να αντιμετωπιστούν επιτυχώς μελλοντικές απαιτήσεις. Εντοπίζει τις κατάλληλες πηγές για να αντιμετωπιστούν οι μελλοντικές απαιτήσεις συμπεριλαμβανομένου του προσωπικού, προκειμένου να επιτευχθούν μακροπρόθεσμοι στόχοι.</p> | <p><b>7. Planning</b><br/>Establishes future priorities and visualises all foreseeable changes required to meet future requirements. Identifies appropriate resource requirements, including staff, to achieve long-term objectives.</p>   |
| <p><b>8. Προοπτική</b><br/>Φέρνει στην επιφάνεια τα άμεσα προβλήματα ή καταστάσεις και βλέπει τα ευρύτερα θέματα και επιπτώσεις. Συνδέει στοιχεία και προβλήματα σε ένα αρκετά ευρύ πλαίσιο μέσα από την ικανότητά του να αντιλαμβάνεται κάθε δυνατό συσχετισμό.</p>  | <p><b>8. Perspective</b><br/>Rises above the immediate problem or situation and sees the broader issues and the wider implications; relates facts and problems to an extremely wide context through an ability to perceive all possible relationships.</p>                         |
| <p><b>9. Ενδο-επιχειρησιακή Αντίληψη</b><br/>Έχει εκτεταμένη γνώση των θεμάτων της επιχείρησης και είναι ικανός να εντοπίζει προβλήματα, απειλές και ευκαιρίες μέσα σε αυτήν. Αντιλαμβάνεται τον αντίκτυπο και τις επιπτώσεις των αποφάσεών του σε άλλα τμήματα της επιχείρησης.</p>  | <p><b>9. Organisational Awareness</b><br/>Has extensive knowledge of organisational issues and is able to identify problems, threats and opportunities within the organisation. Perceives the effect and the implications of own decisions on other parts of the organisation.</p> |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>10. Εξω-επιχειρησιακή Αντίληψη</b><br/>Έχει εκτενείς γνώσεις των θεμάτων και αλλαγών στο εξω-επιχειρησιακό περιβάλλον και βάση αυτού είναι ικανός να εντοπίσει πιθανές ευκαιρίες και δυνατά σημεία καθώς και απειλές και αδύνατα σημεία της επιχείρησης. Αντιλαμβάνεται τις επιπτώσεις και επιπλοκές που έχουν οι εξωτερικές αλλαγές του επιχειρησιακού περιβάλλοντος στις αποφάσεις του.</p> | <p><b>10. External Awareness</b><br/>Has extensive knowledge of issues and changes within the external environment and is able to identify existing or potential strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the organisation. Understands the effects and implications of external factors on own decisions.</p> |
| <p><b>11. Έφεση στη Μάθηση</b><br/>Εντοπίζει μόνος του ενεργά τις μαθησιακές του ανάγκες. Εφαρμόζει αποτελεσματικά τις νέες γνώσεις στο πλαίσιο της εργασίας του.</p>   | <p><b>11. Learning – Oriented</b><br/>Actively identifies own learning needs and opportunities. Is effective applying new learning in a work context.</p>   |
| <p><b>12. Τεχνικές Δεξιότητες</b><br/>Φροντίζει πάντα να διατηρεί ενημερωμένες τις τεχνικές του γνώσεις, ικανότητες και δεξιότητες και τις εφαρμόζει αποτελεσματικά.</p>  | <p><b>12. Technical Expertise</b><br/>Keeps relevant technical knowledge, skills and expertise up-to-date and applies them effectively.</p>   |
| <p><b>b. Προσωπικές Δεξιότητες (Personal)</b></p>   |   |
| <p><b>13. Προσαρμοστικότητα</b><br/>Οποτεδήποτε βρεθεί σε ένα νέο περιβάλλον ή κουλτούρα, προσαρμόζει τη συμπεριφορά του αστραπιαία στα νέα δεδομένα και εξακολουθεί να είναι αποτελεσματικός.</p>  | <p><b>13. Adaptability</b><br/>Whenever placed in a new situation or culture adapts behaviour rapidly to the new requirements and maintains effectiveness.</p>  |
| <p><b>14. Ανεξαρτησία</b><br/>Η συμπεριφορά του καθορίζεται από την κρίση, τη γνώμη και τα 'πιστεύω' του, και δεν επηρεάζεται από τη γνώμη άλλων.</p>   | <p><b>14. Independence</b><br/>Behaviour is determined by own judgments, opinions and beliefs, and not unduly by those of other people.</p>   |
| <p><b>15. Ακεραιότητα</b><br/>Είναι έντιμος, ειλικρινής και άνθρωπος εμπιστοσύνης, και συμμορφώνεται με τις τρέχουσες ηθικές αξίες. Δεν συμβιβάζεται σε θέματα αρχής.</p>   | <p><b>15. Integrity</b><br/>Is truthful, honest and trustworthy, and conforms to current ethical standards. Does not compromise on matters of principle.</p>  |
| <p><b>16. Αντοχή στο στρες</b><br/>Σε κάθε πρόκληση να λειτουργήσει κάτω από πιεστικές συνθήκες, διατηρεί την απόδοσή του σε υψηλά επίπεδα και σε καμία περίπτωση δε διακατέχεται από άγχος, δε γίνεται ευερέθιστος και δε χάνει την αυτοκυριαρχία του.</p>   | <p><b>16. Stress Tolerance</b><br/>Whenever challenged or put under significant pressure, maintains performance level and does not appear to become irritable or anxious, or to lose composure.</p>   |
| <p><b>17. Ελαστικότητα</b><br/>Διατηρεί την απόδοσή του σε συνθήκες ανταγωνισμού ή αντιπαλότητας. Δεν αντιδρά αρνητικά σε απογοητεύσεις, προσβολές ή άδικα σχόλια.</p>  | <p><b>17. Resilience</b><br/>Maintains performance in the face of adversity. Does not react negatively to disappointments, insults or unfair remarks.</p>   |
| <p><b>18. Έμφαση στη λεπτομέρεια</b><br/>Δίνει σημασία στην λεπτομέρεια και δουλεύει με πληροφορίες υψηλής λεπτομέρειας. Είναι μεθοδικός και φροντίζει να μην παραβλέπονται οι λεπτομέρειες.</p>  | <p><b>18. Detail Consciousness</b><br/>Works precisely and accurately with highly detailed factual information. Is methodical and ensures detail is not overlooked.</p>   |
| <p><b>19. Αυτοδιοίκηση</b><br/>Κάνει αποτελεσματική χρήση του χρόνου του και των άλλων πόρων του. Οργανώνει τη γραφειοκρατία τακτικά και αποτελεσματικά, εφαρμόζει αποτελεσματικά μεθόδους αρχειοθέτησης.</p>   | <p><b>19. Self – Management</b><br/>Makes effective use of own time and other resources. Organises paper work efficiently and tidily, adopts effective filing and retrieval procedures.</p>   |



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| <p><b>20. Δεκτικός σε νέες καταστάσεις</b><br/>Αναζητά ενεργά την αλλαγή στον εργασιακό του χώρο όποτε το κρίνει αναγκαίο. Είναι προνοητικός και ενθαρρύνει την εισαγωγή νέων δομών, μεθόδων και διαδικασιών.</p>  | <p><b>20. Change – Oriented</b><br/>Actively seeks to change the job and environment whenever appropriate. Is proactive, encourages the introduction of new structures, methods and procedures.</p>                              |
| <p><b>c. Επικοινωνιακές Δεξιότητες (Communication)</b></p>   |  |
| <p><b>21. Διάβασμα</b><br/>Αφομοιώνει και χρησιμοποιεί αποτελεσματικά τις γραπτές πληροφορίες</p>  | <p><b>21. Reading</b><br/>Shows by the use made of written information that it has been effectively assimilated and retained.</p>  |
| <p><b>22. Γραπτή Επικοινωνία</b><br/>Ο γραπτός λόγος του γίνεται εύκολα κατανοητός. Οι ιδέες και τα μηνυτά του μεταφέρονται ξεκάθαρα στον αναγνώστη.</p>   | <p><b>22. Written Communication</b><br/>Written work is readily intelligible; points and ideas are conveyed clearly and concisely to the reader.</p>   |
| <p><b>23. Ικανότητα να ακούει το συνομιλητή</b><br/>Ακούει χωρίς προκατάληψη, και δεν είναι επιλεκτικός σε αυτά που έχουν ειπωθεί. Δίνει ξεκάθαρα την εντύπωση πως τα κεντρικά σημεία / μηνύματα έχουν ληφθεί υπόψη.</p>   | <p><b>23. Listening</b><br/>Listens dispassionately, is not selective in what has been heard; conveys the clear impression that key points have been recalled and taken into account.</p>  |
| <p><b>24. Ικανότητα Έκφρασης</b><br/>Έχει ευχέρεια στο λόγο, μιλάει καθαρά και δυνατά, και δίνει σαφείς οδηγίες.</p>   | <p><b>24. Oral Expression</b><br/>Is fluent, speaks clearly and audibly, and has good direction.</p>   |
| <p><b>25. Ικανότητα Παρουσίασης</b><br/>Σε επίσημες παρουσιάσεις, είναι περιεκτικός και μπαίνει στην ουσία των πραγμάτων, δε χρησιμοποιεί ορολογία άγνωστη στο κοινό χωρίς πρώτα να την εξηγήσει, και φροντίζει το περιεχόμενο της παρουσίασης να γίνεται κατανοητό από όλους. Είναι ενθουσιώδης και κεφάτος κατά τη διάρκεια της παρουσίασης.</p> | <p><b>25. Oral Presentation</b><br/>Informal presentations, is concise and to the point; does not use jargon without explanation; tailors content to the audience's understanding. Is enthusiastic and lively when speaking.</p> |
| <p><b>d. Διαπροσωπικές Δεξιότητες (Inter – Personal)</b></p>   |  |
| <p><b>26. Επιρροή</b><br/>Δίνει μια έντονα θετική εικόνα με την πρώτη επαφή. Εμπνέει κύρος και αξιοπιστία, και συνάπτει εύκολα σχέσεις με πελάτες και συναδέλφους.</p>   | <p><b>26. Impact</b><br/>Makes a strong, positive impression on first meeting. Has authority and credibility, establishes rapport quickly with colleagues and customers.</p>   |
| <p><b>27. Πειστικότητα</b><br/>Επηρεάζει και πείθει τους άλλους να συμφωνήσουν ή να δώσουν την υπόσχεσή τους για μια απόφαση ή δράση με την οποία αρχικά δεν συμφωνούσαν.</p>  | <p><b>27. Persuasiveness</b><br/>Influences and persuades other to give their agreement and commitment to a decision or course of action which they initially opposed.</p>   |
| <p><b>28. Ευαισθησία</b><br/>Είναι γνώστης των αναγκών (υλικών και συναισθηματικών) του προσωπικού, των συναδέλφων και πελατών και αντιδρά λαμβάνοντας υπόψη αυτές τις ανάγκες.</p>  | <p><b>28. Sensitivity</b><br/>Is aware of the needs and feelings of staff, colleagues and customers, and responds accordingly.</p>   |
| <p><b>29. Ευελιξία</b><br/>Υιοθετεί ένα ευέλικτο στυλ χωρίς να γίνεται υποτακτικός, όταν συναναστρέφεται με άλλους. Παίρνει την γνώμη του στα σοβαρά υπόψη, και αλλάζει στάση όταν το θεωρεί σκόπιμο.</p>  | <p><b>29. Flexibility</b><br/>Adopts a flexible but not compliant style when interacting with others. Takes their views into account and changes position when appropriate.</p>  |

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| <p><b>30. Κυριαρχία</b><br/>Είναι ισχυρός και θετικός όταν συναναστρέφεται με άλλους. Ηγείται των καταστάσεων και κερδίζει το σεβασμό των άλλων.</p>   | <p><b>30. Ascendancy</b><br/>Is forceful and assertive when dealing with others. Takes charge of a situation and commands the respect of others.</p>   |
| <p><b>31. Διαπραγματευτική Ικανότητα</b><br/>Όταν διαπραγματεύεται, μεταβιβάζει τις προτάσεις του αποτελεσματικά, εντοπίζει κοινό έδαφος για συμβιβασμό και φτάνει σε συμφωνία με άλλους μέσα από την ικανότητά του να ασκεί εξουσία και επιρροή.</p>  | <p><b>31. Negotiating</b><br/>When negotiating, communicates proposals effectively, identifies a basis for compromise and reaches agreement with others through personal power and influence.</p>  |
| <p><b>e. Ηγεσία (Leadership)</b></p>   |  |
| <p><b>32. Οργάνωση</b><br/>Ορίζει καθήκοντα για τους υφισταμένους του και άλλους για να επιτευχθούν οι τρέχοντες στόχοι, και συντονίζει τις δραστηριότητές τους αποτελεσματικά. Οργανώνει όλους τους πόρους αποτελεσματικά.</p>  | <p><b>32. Organising</b><br/>Sets tasks for subordinates and others to achieve current objectives, and coordinates their activities effectively. Organises all resources efficiently and effectively.</p>  |
| <p><b>33. Παραχώρηση Αρμοδιοτήτων</b><br/>Διακρίνει αποτελεσματικά μεταξύ του τι πρέπει κάνει ο ίδιος και τι πρέπει να κάνουν οι άλλοι. Εξουσιοδοτεί τους υφισταμένους του μεταβιβάζοντας τους τα κατάλληλα καθήκοντα και ευθύνες.</p>   | <p><b>33. Empowering</b><br/>Distinguishes effectively between what should be done by others and what one should do oneself. Empowers subordinates by delegating all appropriate tasks and other responsibilities to them.</p>                         |
| <p><b>34. Αξιολόγηση</b><br/>Παρακολουθεί και αξιολογεί αποτελεσματικά τη δουλειά των υφισταμένων του και δίνει συμβουλές και παρατηρήσεις όπου κρίνει αναγκαίο.</p>   | <p><b>34. Appraising</b><br/>Effectively monitors and evaluates the results of subordinates' work, and provides feedback and advice whenever appropriate.</p>  |
| <p><b>35. Παρακίνηση</b><br/>Εμπνέει τους άλλους να πετύχουν τους στόχους τους με το να τους μεταβιβάζει ξεκάθαρα το όραμά του και το τι πρέπει να επιτευχθεί, και επιπλέον δείχνει ο ίδιος ενθουσιασμό και δέσμευση στην επίτευξη των στόχων.</p>   | <p><b>35. Motivating Others</b><br/>Inspires others to achieve goals by showing vision and a clear idea of what needs to be achieved; and by showing commitment and enthusiasm.</p>  |
| <p><b>36. Ηγεσία</b><br/>Δίνει σαφείς οδηγίες και ηγείται των άλλων όταν το κρίνει απαραίτητο. Υιοθετεί την μέθοδο της αποτελεσματικής ομαδικής εργασίας και προσαρμόζει το στυλ της ηγεσίας του ανάλογα με τους στόχους που πρέπει να επιτευχθούν.</p>  | <p><b>36. Leading</b><br/>Gives clear direction and leads from the front whenever necessary. Fosters effective teamwork by involving subordinates and adopting the appropriate leadership style to achieve the team's goals.</p>                       |
| <p><b>37. Εκπαίδευση/Ανάπτυξη Στελεχών</b><br/>Κάνει όλες εκείνες τις προσπάθειες που οδηγούν στην απόκτηση επιπλέον γνώσεων, προσόντων και δεξιοτήτων από τους υφισταμένους και συνεργάτες του, εντός και εκτός εργασίας, έτσι ώστε να είναι ικανοί να ανταποκριθούν στις απαιτήσεις της καριέρας τους.</p> | <p><b>37. Developing Others</b><br/>Makes every effort to develop, both on and off the job, the knowledge, skills and competencies of subordinates or others required to advance their careers.</p>  |
| <p><b>f. Αποτελεσματικότητα (Results – Orientation)</b></p>  |  |
| <p><b>38. Ανάλυση Ρίσκων</b><br/>Παίρνει αποφάσεις που εμπεριέχουν σημαντικό ρίσκο προκειμένου να επιτύχει κάποιο αναγνωρισμένο όφελος ή πλεονέκτημα για την επιχείρηση. Αναζητά νέες εμπειρίες και καταστάσεις αντί να παραμένει στην ασφάλεια της τρέχουσας παγιωμένης κατάστασης.</p>                     | <p><b>38. Risk Taking</b><br/>Makes decisions which involve a significant risk in order to achieve a recognized benefit or advantage. Seeks new experiences and situations rather than the security afforded by well-established or familiar ones.</p> |

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| <p><b>39. Αποφασιστικότητα</b><br/>Είναι προετοιμασμένος για τη λήψη αποφάσεων, τη σύνταξη προτάσεων και την επίδειξη αφοσίωσή του προκειμένου να επιτευχθούν κάποιο στόχοι, ακόμα και εάν οι πληροφορίες που έχει είναι ελλιπής ή αμφιβόλου αξιοπιστίας.</p> | <p><b>39. Decisiveness</b><br/>Is prepared to make decisions or recommendations, or to show commitment, even if information is incomplete or of uncertain validity.</p>  |
| <p><b>40. Επιχειρηματικότητα</b><br/>Εντοπίζει τις ευκαιρίες που θα αυξήσουν τις πωλήσεις και τα κέρδη της επιχείρησης. Επιλέγει και εκμεταλλεύεται τις δραστηριότητες που θα αποφέρουν τα μεγαλύτερα κέρδη στην επιχείρηση.</p>                              | <p><b>40. Business Sense</b><br/>Identifies those opportunities that will increase the organisation's sales or profits; selects and exploits those activities that will result in the largest return.</p>                          |
| <p><b>41. Ενεργητικότητα</b><br/>Εκπέμπει ενέργεια και ζωντάνια. Παράγει υψηλό βαθμό έργου. Εργάζεται συνεχώς και αντιδρά άμεσα έτσι ώστε να μην αφήνει εκκρεμότητες.</p>   | <p><b>41. Energy</b><br/>Shows energy and vitality. Produces a high level of output. Works rapidly at all times so that a backlog does not build up.</p>   |
| <p><b>42. Δίψα για διάκριση</b><br/>Θέτει παρατεταμένους στόχους και αξιώνει υψηλά επίπεδα απόδοσης από τους άλλους αλλά και τον εαυτό του. Πρωτοπορεί στην διαρκή βελτίωση των ποιοτικών προτύπων και δεν αποδέχεται τη μέτρια ή κακή απόδοση.</p>           | <p><b>42. Concern for Excellence</b><br/>Sets stretching goals, and expects high standards of performance and quality from self and others. Continuously endeavours to improve standards and will not accept poor performance.</p> |
| <p><b>43. Επιμονή</b><br/>Δείχνει μια άκαμπτη αποφασιστικότητα στην επίτευξη αντικειμενικών σκοπών ακόμα και όταν αντιμετωπίζει εμπόδια ή δυσκολίες.</p>  | <p><b>43. Tenacity</b><br/>Shows an unwavering determination to achieve objectives when faced with setbacks or obstacles.</p>  |
| <p><b>44. Ανάλυση Πρωτοβουλιών</b><br/>Παίρνει πρωτοβουλίες για την ανάληψη δράσης και επηρεάζει τα γεγονότα μέσα από ενέργειές του. Είναι πάντα σε εγρήγορση και είναι πάντα έτοιμος να αναλάβει νέα καθήκοντα και ευθύνες.</p>                              | <p><b>44. Initiative</b><br/>Initiates action and influences events through own efforts. Is always seeking, and is keen to accept additional tasks or responsibilities.</p>  |
| <p><b>45. Έμφαση στο πελάτη</b><br/>Αναζητά ενεργά να αντιληφθεί τις ανάγκες του πελάτη. Οι ενέργειες του προβλέπουν και προλαμβάνουν τις απαιτήσεις των πελατών, βασιζόμενος στις πολύ καλές μεταξύ τους σχέσεις.</p>  | <p><b>45. Customer Oriented</b><br/>Actively seeks to understand customers' requirements. Actions anticipate and pre-empt requests for service based on well developed relationships.</p>  |
|   | (adapted from Dulewicz, 1998, Figure 2, pp:2-4)  |

## Appendix 5: PCF Questionnaire Results (by region & ownership status)

### a. Intellectual

|                             | REGIONAL MEANS |       |       |      | OWNERSHIP STATUS MEANS |         |        |      |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|------|------------------------|---------|--------|------|
|                             | ATH            | THESS | CRETE | RHO  | Family                 | GR/Loc. | GR/Nat | MNC  |
| 1. Information Collection   | 4,38           | 4,25  | 4,50  | 4,38 | 4,38                   | 4,63    | 4,50   | 4,00 |
| 2. Problem Analysis         | 4,75           | 4,38  | 4,63  | 4,75 | 4,38                   | 4,88    | 4,63   | 4,63 |
| 3. Numerical Interpretation | 4,25           | 4,25  | 4,75  | 4,63 | 4,38                   | 4,63    | 4,38   | 4,50 |
| 4. Judgment                 | 4,75           | 4,88  | 4,38  | 4,75 | 4,50                   | 4,75    | 4,88   | 4,63 |
| 5. Critical Faculty         | 4,38           | 4,75  | 4,38  | 4,50 | 4,25                   | 4,75    | 4,75   | 4,25 |
| 6. Creativity               | 4,50           | 4,25  | 4,00  | 4,50 | 3,88                   | 4,50    | 4,38   | 4,50 |
| 7. Planning                 | 5,00           | 4,63  | 4,63  | 4,88 | 4,50                   | 5,00    | 4,88   | 4,75 |
| 8. Perspective              | 4,50           | 4,38  | 4,25  | 4,50 | 4,25                   | 4,75    | 4,75   | 3,88 |
| 9. Org. Awareness           | 4,63           | 4,75  | 4,25  | 4,75 | 4,25                   | 4,75    | 4,75   | 4,63 |
| 10. External Awareness      | 4,25           | 4,38  | 3,75  | 4,75 | 4,00                   | 4,13    | 4,50   | 4,50 |
| 11. Learning – Oriented     | 4,50           | 4,63  | 4,25  | 4,50 | 4,13                   | 4,63    | 4,75   | 4,38 |
| 12. Technical Expertise     | 4,25           | 3,63  | 4,00  | 4,50 | 4,13                   | 4,50    | 3,88   | 3,88 |

### b. Personal

|                          | REGIONAL MEANS |       |       |      | OWNERSHIP STATUS MEANS |         |        |      |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|------|------------------------|---------|--------|------|
|                          | ATH            | THESS | CRETE | RHO  | Family                 | GR/Loc. | GR/Nat | MNC  |
| 13. Adaptability         | 4,63           | 4,75  | 4,75  | 5,00 | 4,63                   | 4,88    | 4,75   | 4,88 |
| 14. Independence         | 4,00           | 4,00  | 4,00  | 4,63 | 3,75                   | 4,50    | 4,38   | 4,00 |
| 15. Integrity            | 4,75           | 4,75  | 4,38  | 4,75 | 4,63                   | 4,75    | 4,88   | 4,38 |
| 16. Stress Tolerance     | 5,00           | 4,75  | 4,38  | 4,63 | 4,38                   | 4,88    | 4,75   | 4,75 |
| 17. Resilience           | 4,25           | 4,25  | 4,25  | 4,25 | 4,25                   | 4,25    | 4,38   | 4,13 |
| 18. Detail Consciousness | 4,38           | 4,25  | 4,38  | 4,50 | 4,25                   | 4,63    | 4,25   | 4,38 |
| 19. Self - Management    | 3,88           | 4,50  | 4,25  | 4,38 | 3,88                   | 4,00    | 4,50   | 4,63 |
| 20. Change – Oriented    | 4,38           | 4,75  | 4,63  | 4,75 | 4,25                   | 4,75    | 4,75   | 4,75 |

### c. Communication

|                           | REGIONAL MEANS |       |       |      | OWNERSHIP STATUS MEANS |         |        |      |
|---------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|------|------------------------|---------|--------|------|
|                           | ATH            | THESS | CRETE | RHO  | Family                 | GR/Loc. | GR/Nat | MNC  |
| 21. Reading               | 4,25           | 4,13  | 3,63  | 4,13 | 3,88                   | 4,00    | 4,50   | 3,75 |
| 22. Written Communication | 4,13           | 4,63  | 4,13  | 4,25 | 4,38                   | 3,75    | 4,63   | 4,38 |
| 23. Listening             | 4,50           | 4,75  | 4,63  | 4,88 | 4,63                   | 4,63    | 4,88   | 4,63 |
| 24. Oral Express.         | 4,63           | 5,00  | 4,63  | 4,75 | 4,63                   | 4,63    | 4,75   | 5,00 |
| 25. Oral Present.         | 4,88           | 4,75  | 4,63  | 4,75 | 4,75                   | 4,75    | 4,63   | 4,88 |

|                    | REGIONAL MEANS |       |       |      | OWNERSHIP STATUS MEANS |         |        |      |
|--------------------|----------------|-------|-------|------|------------------------|---------|--------|------|
|                    | ATH            | THESS | CRETE | RHO  | Family                 | GR/Loc. | GR/Nat | MNC  |
| 26. Impact         | 4,63           | 4,88  | 4,63  | 4,88 | 4,50                   | 4,63    | 5,00   | 4,88 |
| 27. Persuasiveness | 4,63           | 4,63  | 4,63  | 4,75 | 4,38                   | 4,63    | 4,88   | 4,75 |
| 28. Sensitivity    | 4,00           | 4,13  | 4,38  | 4,00 | 3,88                   | 4,25    | 4,13   | 4,25 |
| 29. Flexibility    | 4,13           | 4,88  | 4,25  | 4,63 | 4,38                   | 4,50    | 4,75   | 4,25 |
| 30. Ascendancy     | 4,25           | 4,25  | 4,50  | 4,25 | 4,13                   | 4,50    | 4,50   | 4,13 |
| 31. Negotiating    | 4,75           | 4,25  | 4,38  | 4,75 | 4,38                   | 4,75    | 4,50   | 4,50 |

|                       | REGIONAL MEANS |       |       |      | OWNERSHIP STATUS MEANS |         |        |      |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------|-------|------|------------------------|---------|--------|------|
|                       | ATH            | THESS | CRETE | RHO  | Family                 | GR/Loc. | GR/Nat | MNC  |
| 32. Organising        | 4,88           | 4,50  | 4,63  | 4,75 | 4,38                   | 4,88    | 4,63   | 4,88 |
| 33. Empowering        | 4,63           | 4,75  | 4,38  | 4,63 | 4,25                   | 4,75    | 4,75   | 4,63 |
| 34. Appraising        | 4,50           | 4,75  | 4,50  | 4,50 | 4,38                   | 4,75    | 4,63   | 4,50 |
| 35. Motivating Others | 4,88           | 4,88  | 4,63  | 4,63 | 4,63                   | 4,75    | 4,63   | 5,00 |
| 36. Developing Others | 4,88           | 4,88  | 4,63  | 4,75 | 4,38                   | 4,75    | 5,00   | 5,00 |
| 37. Leading           | 4,63           | 4,50  | 4,75  | 4,50 | 4,38                   | 4,63    | 4,63   | 4,75 |

|                            | REGIONAL MEANS |       |       |      | OWNERSHIP STATUS MEANS |         |        |      |
|----------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|------|------------------------|---------|--------|------|
|                            | ATH            | THESS | CRETE | RHO  | Family                 | GR/Loc. | GR/Nat | MNC  |
| 38. Risk Taking            | 4,13           | 4,38  | 3,88  | 4,25 | 3,88                   | 4,13    | 4,38   | 4,25 |
| 39. Decisiveness           | 4,75           | 4,75  | 4,38  | 4,75 | 4,50                   | 4,75    | 4,75   | 4,63 |
| 40. Business Sense         | 4,50           | 4,63  | 4,13  | 4,63 | 4,38                   | 4,38    | 4,38   | 4,75 |
| 41. Energy                 | 4,75           | 4,25  | 4,75  | 4,88 | 4,50                   | 4,88    | 4,50   | 4,75 |
| 42. Concern for Excellence | 4,13           | 4,13  | 4,25  | 4,50 | 4,00                   | 4,38    | 4,25   | 4,38 |
| 43. Tenacity               | 4,25           | 4,13  | 4,63  | 4,63 | 4,13                   | 4,75    | 4,38   | 4,38 |
| 44. Initiative             | 4,63           | 4,50  | 4,38  | 4,75 | 4,25                   | 4,88    | 4,50   | 4,63 |
| 45. Customer Oriented      | 5,00           | 4,88  | 4,88  | 4,88 | 4,75                   | 4,88    | 5,00   | 5,00 |

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## Appendix 6: Example of hotel general manager interview transcript (translated from Greek)

MNC (Franchised) Hotel Chain – Athens

Start: 11.00 – Finnish: 11.55 / Date: 25/06/2007

I – I would like to thank you again for giving me the opportunity for this interview, I have been trying for a long time to 'persuade' a multinational hotel chain GM to participate in this research!

R – And why is that?

I – To be honest I don't know, foreign GMs are hard to get, I found it easier with Greek hotel managers...

R – Mmm...Maybe because of their mentality or perhaps they are cautious (in disclosing company information), who knows... at the end of the day there not many in Greek hotels!

I – Well, I think it's time to start, so please describe briefly your professional background in hotels.

R – During my placement I went through the kitchen department and restaurant; then I got my first job as an F&B controller, and after that as a night auditor and receptionist. Most of my career, before the first appointment as a GM, was focused on reception, reservations and sales.

I – Did you choose to follow this profession, and what was your main motive?

R – Ehhh.... initially as a student it wasn't my first choice, I would say this was more like a career choice, I thought that this was a good profession with many possibilities that suited me very well...eh, and I also thought that I was capable of coping with the various challenges in hospitality.

I – I'm asking this question because people of my generation or older– I'm 35 –got in to this profession (hotel management) ... accidentally!

R – Well, my generation was the first to enter ASTER (hotel school in Rhodes) through the national examination system...em, when you adopt this system you should expect that there will be people in Hospitality curricula, that wasn't really their first choice... for instance my first choice was the Law School and as second choice I had the hotel school in Rhodes.

I – Did you regret that?

R – No!

I – I'm asking because sometimes I think I was wrong to follow this profession, that is why I had my postgraduate studies in the U.K. On the other hand ASTER was proved a good hotel school, I feel I was equipped very well for this job!

R – Ehhh...yes, I totally agree with you, although now competition is very hard, there are so many hospitality graduates that compete for a limited number of good jobs...em, when I graduated from ASTER almost 30 years ago, things where straightforward, one way or another you would eventually get a good job.

I – Let's move on to a generic question, in your opinion which part of your job as a hotel unit GM do you consider as most important?

R – I would say planning and control...emm, I would like to avoid the word management (in Greek: 'Dioikisi') includes everything, it's very broad... we spent most of our time in these two functions...

I – Do you do this on your own or just provide the guidelines to immediate subordinates?

R – Em, I would say that this is a product of team work... nevertheless important decision are going through me.

I – Now, I would like to see the Recruitment and Selection practices, so please describe this process for senior managers (GM & Dept. Mgrs) in your hotel.

R – The first think we look at when we need a senior manager is internal promotion – if a current member of staff is capable of doing the job. Emm, then we use our professional (GMs') networks.

I – So, does this means that you just call people you know and trust, and describe the type of person you're looking for?

R – Exactly that! In this process the ‘personal approach’ is included; if, for example, I know that Mr. X is a good Food & Beverage manager, I can approach him on my own...

I – Even if he is employed by a competitive company?

R – Yes, this is quite possible, although we (GMs) try not to poach staff from each other! Ehh, on the other hand you can’t avoid this – one way or another you’ll do it. In addition, I would like to add that when we move from one hotel to another, especially in middle and senior management positions, it’s almost sure that you ‘play safe’ and you know exactly where you’re going... emm, after a few years in this profession you know everybody (emphasis).

I – Do you use job adds for recruiting staff?

R – Eh, yes, although for senior managers this is our last resource.

I – Do you use recruitment agencies or ‘head hunters’?

R – No, not at all.

I – What about selection?

R – Emm, if we talk about senior managers, initially short-listed candidates go through me; then a last interview is contacted by me and the owner, who already has my recommendations for the most suitable candidate. The final decision by the owner, just verifies my recommendations.

I – So the owner does participate actively in the selection process.

R – Ehhh, yes, as I said this happens only for senior managers, and in my opinion he must have the final word for these critical employees.

I – I’m asking this because there is an issue in Greece, if and to what extent owners intervene in GMs’ work.

R – Mmmm... exactly... *(at this point the GM tried to avoid talking about owner-GM relations)*

I – Please describe the Training & Development process for managerial staff in your hotel. How do you contribute to this process?

R – There is no specific plan... what we do is that every year we commit to paper the senior managers’ training needs; this is an interactive process... In their opinion I also add my remarks, for instance somebody might consider that s/he needs to improve the foreign language skills, and my opinion might also include training needs regarding specific job-related competencies i.e. sales.

I – Since you identify the individual training needs, how do you proceed?

R – For the time, we try to send small groups of managers (2-4 people) in various seminars that are funded through LAEK (a fund which all companies with more than 50 staff, contribute 0.45 of their total revenues). Ehhh, we also try to utilize the best way the parent company’s programmes that take place in regional offices (in Europe). These programmes are e-mailed to us on a regular basis, what we need to do is decide which one is suitable for our needs. Ehh, In most of the cases they are addressed to hotel unit GMs and senior officers from regional offices... emm, of course there is a cost for us, we need to pay each time we participate in such activities.

I – Does this happen because you are franchised and not managed brand?

R – No on the contrary, even if we were managed MNC hotel unit, there would be a participation fee in most of these programmes. Anyhow, this is much a cheaper solution than hiring an outsourced training company.

I – Please describe your formal and informal roles in day-to-day operations.

R – Ehhh..it is not easy to discriminate between formal and informal roles... emmm, as a hotel unit GM there is a need to function as a decision making centre... you have to bear in mind though that I’m not 100% free to make my own decisions. This means that ownership provides generic directions, that we (senior management team) must materialize...em, in this process we include our own proposals. Ownership provides you with an ‘operation framework’; as a GM you must either keep it like this or enlarge it by including your opinions...mmm, what really counts is the viability of the final product / result.

I – A question I address to all GMs is the following: is it only numbers (financial results) that the ownership is interested about?

R – No definitely not, they are also interested in quality issues... mmm, look, every business by definition aims at profit, and nobody denies this! You can reach into good profit margins if you are not stuck in this ‘number’ (strictly profit making) mentality, you must be able to have a holistic view of your business... Emm, in the past few years luxury hotel owners are interested

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in quality, they realise that this is a way of making more money. They also connect quality with their own reputation in the market as good employers and overall the company as good business.

I – Ok, let's move to the following question; what competencies do you consider important to deal with the following groups of people:

- Inside the hotel: ownership; immediate subordinates; staff and customers
- Outside the hotel: Suppliers (F&B suppliers and tour operators) and the Public Sector

R – Emm, I think that with the entrepreneur (owner) you must be direct, honest and consistent; on the top of all you must be flexible, and please do not misunderstand my words, I don't mean that owners need 'Yes Men'...emm, it may be flattering for owners but at the end of the day this (behaviour) does not provide credible solutions. In most of the times GMs find themselves between owners and staff, so they must be ready to absorb the shock after each 'difficult' decision... eh, it is not easy when you have to deliver messages from/to both side... is not always pleasant to hear the truth.

I - Em...and what about the immediate subordinates?

R – I strongly believe that you must be honest and fair with your immediate subordinates; it is also important to be co-operative so the team can perform without hierarchical demarcations.

I – Mmm...and what about staff?

R – Although my relations with staff are formal, I truly believe that a luxury hotel unit must be able to inspire trust, be a role model for staff and make sure that there clear lines of his authority and status... Eh, hierarchy in this type of hotels must be communicated clearly to all staff; if you allow me this army type of hierarchical demarcation makes things clear and everyone does the job s/he has to do – nothing more, nothing less.

I – Let's move to people outside the hotel starting with hotel suppliers, including tour operators).

R – What you definitely need is diplomacy and negotiation skills...emm, something that you develop as you move to senior positions is to be able to foresee the suppliers real intentions, i.e. what s/he thinks can get from you (meaning the hotel). It is part of our job to know beforehand some information about the supplier through his reputation in the local/national market.

I – Ehh...something that hurts now, what about your relationship with the public sector?

R – The transactions with the public sector needs dynamic character, persistence and good public relations...Em, an MNC hotel chain like this cannot do anything 'under the table', we wouldn't risk our reputation...emmm, nevertheless we all live in Greece and we know that this happens... Sometimes we are forced to do, not something illegal, but to use our personal contacts and networks, people we know in public sector organisations in order to do the job...Eh, apart from that I believe that a business like this shouldn't be tempted to take advantage of some corrupted public servants...em, it's a great risk that may lead to unpleasant surprises.

I – Finally, do you have contacts with customers?

R – Yes we have, not in daily basis...ehh, I would say that this is not a part of my daily routine, but still it's part of our job... Em, if you see it from another perspective this is a city hotel not a resort where people stay longer, strictly for holidays; it is easier there to approach the customer and the other way round. Eh, nevertheless the customer is the most important part of our job – he is the one who pays for our salaries. So if anything comes up i.e. complaint or request we try to be responsive and deal with it immediately.

I –What you perceive as the ideal competencies mix for upper managerial staff in Greek 4 & 5\* hotels?

R – A creative individual, dynamic – you have to be anyway in this position (senior manager), motivator and leader.

I – Please describe the performance evaluation system in your hotel.

R – We run formally annual performance evaluations for staff and managers; through this procedure we also identify their training needs. The evaluation form we use is based in the equivalent used from the parent company; the content has been customised to match our needs.

I – Would it be possible to have one of these forms? I'll use it anonymously don't worry!

R – Ehhh.... We're going through some changes right now due to ISO accreditation, so we



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have not finalised the form we're going to use. Nevertheless I see what I can do...

I - What is the role of networking and communication in your work? What is the role of a GM's reputation in the market?

R - Look maybe is not affecting that much your daily routine, but generally speaking it is very important for your career...

I - So you suggest that informal communication between hotel GMs (that work for different companies) is happening and works!

R - I wouldn't say informal, this type of communication is part of our job. What happens is that in Greece we pay more attention to networking (outside the corporate limits) than our colleagues abroad do. Overall my opinion is that this type of networking is overrated in Greek hotels. Regarding your reputation in the market now, it is expected after 20 or 30 years of hard work to create a good 'name' (reputation) in the market, and a good name means a lot of things, like that you are a good person and at the same time an effective and efficient manager... although it is subjective it follows you and may open or close doors respectively. A reason behind that is maybe the fact that, there is no clear meritocratic system in Greece.

I - So you suggest that somebody may not have excellent qualifications or performance, but still, because of this situation may have a very good reputation.

R - Exactly, this happened a lot especially with the old generation of GMs, but don't forget that our profession is very closed there are not so many positions available. So if you come to me for a job I would certainly call your previous job to find out things about you. The same happens with owners: when they want to hire a GM and they have a name in mind, they make the phone call, although they appear more cautious because they do not want to be heard in the market that s/he wants to hire the X manager, before they come to an agreement. Some owners don't even talk to each other just because they are competitors!

I - At this point of your career you must be able to answer the following question: what are the similarities and differences between family owned, Greek chain and international chain 4 & 5\* hotels operating in Greece?

R - Ok there are similarities but there are also differences (laughs)

I - Ok let's start with the positive side...

R - If we want to be objective we must compare similar things, for example a Greek family hotel with the equivalent foreign.

I - Yes, but if we talk about other countries in the EU, the industry has different structure, take for instance the U.K. where you have on the one hand the B.B. accommodation, in essence family business and after that you find national and international hotel chains...

R - I agree with you that the market is different structured, although I would argue that companies from southern Europe are pretty much similar with us. What has significantly changed in the past few years, is that the entrepreneurs stopped to interfere so much in the GMs work.

*(At this point the interview stopped for about 15 min. - the GM had a conversation with the hotel owner about operational issues)*

R - What were we talking about? Ah... differences, well I consider that in hotel chains there is no interference on behalf of the ownership. In MNCs (franchised) the owners focus only on entrepreneurship, that's it! I remember a hotel owner who told me once that the key for success in this business is to find the right people (senior managers) to run the hotel. In family business the picture is much different... there are not standards, or even there is no educational attainment on behalf the owner. And there is another great difference with hotels abroad: the man (company) that builds the hotel has nothing to do with those who will run the hotel; in Greece those two are the same person... Many entrepreneurs, especially in famous resorts, they want to be hoteliers without the basic knowledge and background... this is catastrophic, not only for the person him/herself but for the local community and for tourism as a whole... they don't even have a basic master-plan in their heads what they will do, they consider that they can survive by stealing clientele from their neighbor competitors, or using other unorthodox methods; he (the prospective family hotel owner) has not conducted any kind of research or business plan before, he just had the land and therefore he thought he could be a hotelier!

I - Despite this grim situation I have noticed signs of improvement since a lot of hotel owners have send their children in hotel schools as part of their succession planning - if you can call it

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like that in Greece.

R – Ok but to be honest this doesn't mean anything, the fact that the father is a successful entrepreneur doesn't mean necessarily that his children will do the same. You may study in the best business schools and be a good manager; on the other hand though entrepreneurship is a charisma, it is not learnt in business schools, and of course it is neither inherited!

I – Do you think that the Greek context (culture, national identity, values, family, distinctive personal characteristics) influences the GMs' professional profile?

R – One thinks that differentiates us positively from foreigners is (the value of) 'filotimo'. On the other hand abroad you will find high levels of professionalism in every profession, and this is what is missing from Greece. In this country you are what you claim you are (Greek expression which depicts the lack of professionalism)

I – Nevertheless, from my professional experience and from this research, I have the impression that luxury hotel GMs in Greece, have a different quality and try to differentiate themselves from the negative aspects of the Greek national character; do you believe that this is true?

R – Correct, you are right that's the way it is!

I – What are the differences and similarities with what is called "international (western) hotel management" considering the current situation in Greece?

R – Look many Greek hotel managers already have careers abroad in MNCs, so I truly believe that under the right circumstances you can do what they do. Apart from your overall professional and academic profile you must be willing to relocate very often. They used to call this profession a 'gipsy' job because you have to move all the time, like you are in the army. Abroad, those who pursue a career in this profession want to travel and work abroad in order to have experiences. On the contrary a hotel manager in Greece who lives and works in the same place for many years, stays in the same things, s/he cannot learn new things... It is very important to travel and work in countries with a developed hotel sector; what happens now there, will come to Greece in 10 – 15 years. So an expatriate senior manager regardless his/hers ethnic origin, will be a pioneer for the Greek family hotel standards.

I – Please allow me to ask about the situation in this hotel, how would you describe it?

R – Look the standards and procedures are the same, but because of the franchise the mother company show understanding in our situation, they are more flexible with franchised hotel units. This is a kind of a hybrid between a big MNC hotel chain and a typical family hotel – if you take out its negative aspects (laughs). You have to bear in mind though that customisation in franchised hotels is acceptable all over the world. By realising their inflexibility due to fixed standards and procedures, MNCs allow a degree of customization even for managed hotels.

I – As a concluding point let's finish our previous discussion about the negatives of the Greek GMs.

R – First you have many 'wanna be' luxury hotel GMs who do not really worth it. Sooner or later the market expels those people, it is the nature of the job you see. In addition there is a problem in education and training...

I – This is what everybody (GMs) say!

R – And from this point and on everything else starts.

I – So you suggest, that it is up to the GMs educational and professional background and competencies, that determine the success or failure of the hotel.

R – This is almost true, don't forget the role of the owner: if the GM is not provided with the necessary tools and support on behalf the ownership, then he is likely to fail. So it is not always the manager that fails to meet the challenges of the profession, the coin has two sides you know!

I – Let's close this interview by giving me your predictions for the Greek luxury hotel sub-sector.

R – After the 2004 Olympics there are signs of recovery, so I'm a bit optimistic about the future. Let's see....

I – Mr. ██████ thank you very much for this interview!

R – It was my pleasure. If you wish I can recommend a couple of GMs to contact for your interviews, you can use my name.

I – Fantastic! Thank you again, that's great help.

End of Interview.

## Appendix 7: Sample of Interview Content Analysis Summary

| Question 5: Training & Development |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>H1/GM</b>                       | Own Discretion / LAEK or Comp. Funding/  |
| Assistant                          | GMs Association / "█████ Lessons" (workshops) to mgrs from HR  |
| <b>H2 / GM</b>                     | Internal: Senior GMs train newer ones for the assignment of new posts / Development an ongoing progress regardless the seniority / open to learning  |
| Assistant                          | External: outsourced services in diverse subjects (mostly sales)   |
| <b>H3 / GM</b>                     | Find out training needs by asking senior mgrs annually   |
| Assistant                          | LAEK + company expenses / in Groups/ Abroad with MNC head office - meetings & seminars evaluated by himself if useful - they pay for that  |
| <b>H4 / GM</b>                     | Sporadic/Own Discretion / LAEK or Comp. Funding/ More seminars/ Started Recently   |
| Assistant                          | No real opportunities for T&D in Greek hotels / only in MNCs   |
|                                    |  |
| <b>H5/GM/Thes</b>                  | Systematic Training (annual budget for the company 50-80.000 E)/Some In-house - most Outsourced from renown companies in the field / custom training progs/ Send GMs abroad - even in the US - Cornell for seminars/ Bring over famous guest lecturers |
| Assistant                          | Try to develop their own senior management cohort by recruiting and keeping those graduates that worth/ Bring out their talent/ Emphasis also in proper GM orientation (spend 15 days with an experienced GM)  |
| <b>H6 / GM</b>                     | Annually available corporate progs for senior mngmnt usually abroad - have to pay a small contribution (fees) / GMs can decide - choose which to attend / can also apply to the corporate Uni. (Holland) takes some time to have a place there!        |
| Assistant                          | Great emphasis in mngmnt devel. Progs (5-18 month) for developing their own pool of GM candidates  |
| <b>H7 / GM</b>                     | GM's own discretion - Head HR takes final decision / Dept mgrs: Find out training needs by asking senior mgrs annually   |
| Assistant                          | LAEK + company expenses / Limited options in Thess. For GMs  |
| <b>H8 / GM</b>                     | LAEK + company expenses / Limited options in Thess. For GMs  |
| Assistant                          | GM's own discretion / Dept mgrs: Find out training needs by asking senior mgrs annually  |
|                                    |  |
| <b>H9/GM/Crete</b>                 | LAEK + company expenses / Limited options in Chania For GMs  |
| Assistant                          | Specialised Seminars from GMs' association/ GMs participate in Trade shows & exhibitions   |
| <b>H10 / GM</b>                    | LAEK + company expenses / GM can ask from Head Office a specialised seminar/training   |
| Assistant                          | GM's own discretion / Dept mgrs: Find out training needs by asking senior mgrs annually  |
| <b>H11 / GM</b>                    | LAEK + company expenses/Limited options in Chania For GMs but try constantly to find new thg   |
| Assistant                          | GM's own discretion / Dept mgrs: Find out training needs by asking senior mgrs annually  |
| <b>H12 / GM</b>                    | GM's own discretion - Head HR takes final decision /   |
| Assistant                          | Dept mgrs: Find out training needs by asking senior mgrs annually/Emphasis in "on-the-job" train   |
|                                    |  |
| <b>H13/GM/Rho</b>                  | Detailed annual planning for Training & Development - action decided after performance evaluation (MNCs invest in Mgmnt Dev.) / Promotions in GR depends on what the owner likes to here from the mgr! / Growing trend outsourced Training             |
| Assistant                          | GMs and Dept. mgrs more independent to choose which prog. to attend / Comment: In GR there are not Induction Progs (at least 2 weeks) and NO proper T&D/ Recently owners acknowledged the importance of T&D  |
| <b>H14 / GM</b>                    | Informal annual planning - GM and Dept. Mgrs prepare in-house training in the beginning of the season  |
| Assistant                          | Emphasis to "on-the-job" training for staff - GM and Mgrs free to choose and recommend which program to attend   |
| <b>H15 / GM</b>                    | GM's own discretion / Dept mgrs: Find out training needs by asking senior mgrs annually  |
| Assistant                          | GM and Dept. mgrs contribute in preparing in-house training for staff / Use also LAEK  |
| <b>H16 / GM</b>                    | HR Dept in Head Office prepares annual training programme  |
| Assistant                          | GMs and Dept. mgrs more independent to choose which prog. to attend  |

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## Appendix 8: Sample of Observation Log

**Subject:**CF [REDACTED] **Time:**12.30– 13.20**Date:** 29/05/2007

### Field Notes & Observation Log No.09

Dept. of HRM – Strathclyde Business School

#### Description of Experience:

Interview & PCF ( GM & HR mgr) – Athens

Arranged interview 2 weeks before (GM 4 weeks) through telephone and e-mail

#### Important Observations:

- Very organised Family hotel with high operational standards
- HR participating in decision making (issues concerning staff)
- Very good knowledge of their product and position in the market
- F&B mgr, HR mgr and GM very friendly and helpful
- GM near retirement – almost 3 decades in this hotel represents the ‘old school’ in Greek hotel management based on traditions and reputation / a bit ‘out of time’ however very good in what he is doing
- GM was graduate from ASTER – this made it easier to establish rapport
- Active participation of the owner and his son in strategic decision making
- In Guest relations a former student of mine from BCA has provided info about limited career progression option in this hotel
- There are procedures for everything – however no use of written policies
- A lot of direct informal communication without documentation occurs

#### Other Comments:

- This case proves that a family owned hotel can achieve many things even if it does not follow the MNC model / flexible can adapt very fast to internal and external organizational changes

## Appendix 9: Manifestations of national & local culture

### a) Multinational Hotel Chains

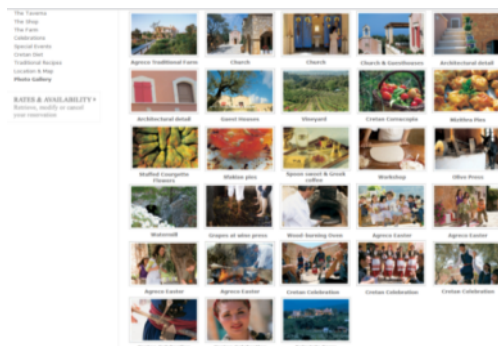


Source: [www.costanavarino.com/#/experience](http://www.costanavarino.com/#/experience) (Accessed: 16/9/2010)



Source: [www.hiltonathens.gr](http://www.hiltonathens.gr) (Accessed: 16/9/2010)

### b) National Chain Hotels



Source: [www.grecotel.com/crete/agreco/welcome\\_1598.htm](http://www.grecotel.com/crete/agreco/welcome_1598.htm) (Accessed: 15/9/2010)

# Appendix 10: Corporate Culture

## a) Multinational Hotel Chains

The image displays four screenshots of corporate culture pages from major hotel chains:

- IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group):** The page features a collage of photos showing employees in various settings. Key text includes "Our culture: There's a good reason why IHG is so successful - we are all part of a great company...". It also highlights "Room to be yourself" and "Winning Ways: IHG's Winning Ways are how we behave every day".
- Hilton Worldwide:** The page is titled "Core Values & Culture" and lists values such as Hospitality, Integrity, Leadership, Teamwork, Ownership, and Now. It states, "The core values established by the Marriott family over 80 years ago have served our company well and will continue to guide our growth into the future."
- Marriott:** This page also focuses on "Core Values & Culture" and includes a "Marriott Timeline" section with a notable entry for 1969: "Opens first international hotel in Acapulco."
- Starwood:** The page is titled "What We Believe: Mission and Values" and describes the company's mission to create a "trust- and respect-based corporate family" and its core values: Trust, Collaboration, and Accountability.

Sources:

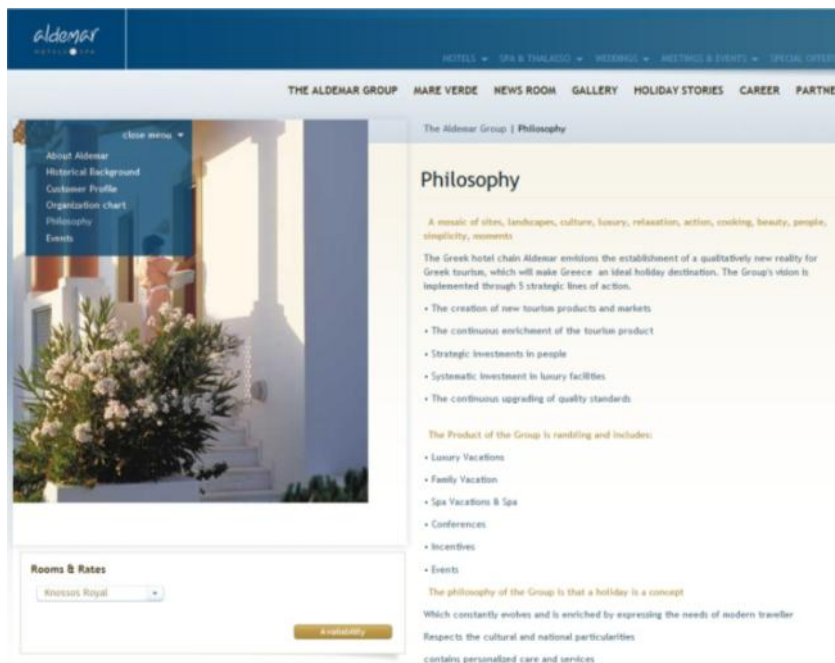
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[www.ihgplc.com/index.asp?pageid=436](http://www.ihgplc.com/index.asp?pageid=436) (Accessed: 10/9/2010)

[www.marriott.com/corporateinfo/culture/coreValuesCulture.mi](http://www.marriott.com/corporateinfo/culture/coreValuesCulture.mi) (Accessed: 10/9/2010)

[www.starwoodhotels.com/corporate/careers/believe/values.html](http://www.starwoodhotels.com/corporate/careers/believe/values.html) (Accessed: 10/9/2010)

## b) National Chain Hotels



Source: [www.aldemarhotels.com](http://www.aldemarhotels.com) (Accessed: 15/9/2010)

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**THE WORLD OF GRECOTEL**  
THE EPITOME OF GREEK HOSPITALITY

The name of Grecotel is synonymous with quality hotels, personalised service, traditional Greek hospitality, thalassotherapy centres and a caring concern for the environment and culture of Greece. The Grecotel Group is the largest hotel chain in Greece with 39 properties. In 2004 the total bed capacity of the Grecotel Group exceeds 14,600 beds.

**GRECOTEL S.A., THE RESORT MANAGEMENT COMPANY...**

Grecotel S.A. is the largest hotel chain in Greece with 20 resort hotels and a total bed capacity in 2006 of over 10,600 beds. The twenty Grecotel Resort hotels (4\* and 5\*) are located in Crete, Corfu, Halkidiki, West Peloponnese, Rhodes, Mykonos and Kos and Attica.

In 2005, a new concept, Couples Hotels, was launched at the new Grecotel Eva Palace in Corfu. This hotel offers a romantic, relaxing refuge for couples of all ages who seek a holiday away from the lively family hotels. 2004 saw the opening of the first Grecotel Resort hotel in Attica - the Grecotel Cape Sounio and the luxury Grecotel Olympia Riviera resort with three new hotels in Kyllini, Peloponnese.

Grecotel SA is owned jointly by the Daskalantonakis family and the multinational TUI Hotels & Resort Division (World of TUI) which has more than 290 properties worldwide. The group reported 1,8 million guest overnights in its resort hotels during the 2005 season and had a 91% occupancy rate.

Grecotel has been awarded over 150 international awards by guests, tourism organisations, tour operators and international associations for the quality of its hotels, its upgrading of the Greek tourism product and for its initiatives in the environmental and cultural field.

Over 85,000 families are members of the Grecotel Privilege Club (approx. 255,000 individuals). These loyal guests have visited one of the resort hotels from two to sixty times since Grecotel was founded in 1981.

**QUALITY & SERVICE**

Over 4,000 personnel are employed in the Grecotel offices and hotels, making it the most significant employer in the Greek hospitality sector. In 1992, Grecotel became the first Mediterranean hotel group to undertake eco-audits in its hotels according to EU standards and formed an environment and culture department in its head office operations department.

These environmental initiatives, including the formation of an unique agricultural department which supplies biological produce to the hotels, have resulted in the Group being honoured with the most prestigious environmental awards worldwide. Grecotel is now a textbook example in leading tourism schools and universities.

To demonstrate the group's agricultural initiatives, the Agreco Traditional Estate opened in 2001 on Crete. This unique showcase organic farm allows visitors to experience how everything from olive oil to honey and wine have been produced for centuries and then feast on the healthy Cretan cuisine in the farm taverna.

**HISTORY & EVENTS**

For more information on the company's history and events throughout the years please click on the link below. [more info](#)

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**

**Grecotel SA, Athens Office**  
Ypsilantou 4, 106 75 Kolonaki, Athens - Tel. +30 210 72 80 300 - Fax. +30 210 72 19 544  
Call centre: +30 210 72 80 433 - Email: [contact@grecotel.gr](mailto:contact@grecotel.gr)

**Grecotel SA, Rethymnon Office**  
P.O. Box 25, 741 00 Rethymnon, Crete - Tel. +30 28310 54014 - Fax. +30 28310 54033 - Email: [info-crete@grecotel.gr](mailto:info-crete@grecotel.gr)

N. Daskalantonakis Group | [About Grecotel](#) | [News Room](#) | [Partners](#) | [Counter Club](#) | [Contact us](#)

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World of TUI

Source: [www.grecotel.com/about-grecotel/company-profile.72.htm](http://www.grecotel.com/about-grecotel/company-profile.72.htm) (Accessed: 15/9/2010)

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### c) Local Chain Hotels

Dear Guest,

Welcome to the Rodos Palladium Hotel!  
It is a pleasure to have you here with us. Myself, as well as my colleagues, are at your disposal to make your stay a truly pleasant experience.

At Rodos Palladium, we are dedicated to offer you personalized and friendly service, but more than that, Quality. Our aim is simple: to make our hotel your favourite place to stay in Rodos.

Furthermore, we will be constantly listening to our guests with open minds, so that we may, truly, emerge as Rodos' finest hotel.

Yours faithfully,



Lefteris Danas  
General Manager

(Company Document / Hotel directory for guests introduction)

### d) Corporate Press





**Appendix 11:**  
Sample Employment Application Form for national chain hotel

Recent  
Photo

## Application for Employment

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Requested Position Title:</b>   |   |
| Salary based on (please tick): Collective Bargain <input type="checkbox"/> | Ind. Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Personal Details

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Surname  |  |
| First Name   |  |
| Father's Name  |  |
| Mother's Name  |  |
| Date and Place of Birth                                      |  |
| Nationality  |  |
| Marital Status   |  |
| Number of Children   |  |
| Permanent Address  | (Street / Number / City / Post Code)                           |
| Contact Telephone Number<br>(please include home and mobile) |  |
| E-Mail   |  |
| Military Obligations Fulfilled<br>(where applicable)         | YES ___ NO ___   |
| Identification Card Number (1)<br>Date of Issue / Authority  | (Applicable in Greece –<br>issued by the local police station) |
| Tax Registration Number &<br>Inland Revenue Office           |  |
| National Security Number (IKA)                               |  |

(1) Please submit a photocopy of your ID

### Education (start with the most recent)

| Date | Institution              | Title |
|------|--------------------------|-------|
|      | Postgraduate Studies (2) |       |
|      | AEI (University) (2)     |       |
|      | TEI (Polytechnic) (2)    |       |
|      | Lyceum                   |       |

(2) Submit a photocopy of your Academic Title

### Foreign Languages

| Language | Written Communication Level |      |            | Oral Communication Level |      |            |
|----------|-----------------------------|------|------------|--------------------------|------|------------|
|          | Excellent                   | Good | Elementary | Excellent                | Good | Elementary |
| 1        |                             |      |            |                          |      |            |
| 2        |                             |      |            |                          |      |            |
| 3        |                             |      |            |                          |      |            |
| 4        |                             |      |            |                          |      |            |

---

**Seminars**(start with the most recent)

| Duration | Topic | Organisation / Institution |
|----------|-------|----------------------------|
|          |       |                            |
|          |       |                            |
|          |       |                            |
|          |       |                            |

**P/C Literacy**(including specialised hospitality packages)

| Software | Level     |      |       |
|----------|-----------|------|-------|
|          | Excellent | Good | Basic |
|          |           |      |       |
|          |           |      |       |
|          |           |      |       |

**Other Qualifications**

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
|                                  |  |
|                                  |  |
| Driving License (inc. category): |  |

**Professional Background**(start with the most recent)

| Years in this position (3) |                        |          |
|----------------------------|------------------------|----------|
| From / To                  | Company Name & Address | Position |
|                            |                        |          |
|                            |                        |          |
|                            |                        |          |
|                            |                        |          |
|                            |                        |          |

(3) Submit proof for employment from previous employers

**References**

| Name | Company / Org. & Position | Contact Details |
|------|---------------------------|-----------------|
|      |                           |                 |
|      |                           |                 |
|      |                           |                 |
|      |                           |                 |

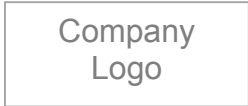
I certify that the answers given by me to the foregoing questions and statements are true and correct without falsifications, omissions, or misleading statements of any kind whatsoever. *(Modified)*

Athens ...../..../200...

The Applicant

(signature)

**Appendix 12: Sample Application Form for MNC hotel**  
(Translated – Original size 4 pages)



**Application for Employment**

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Passport No: \_\_\_\_\_  
 First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ I.D. No: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Issue: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: Male \_\_\_ Female \_\_\_  
 City/Area/Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ 1)..... 2).....  
 Date and Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
 National Security Number (IKA): \_\_\_\_\_ Tax Registration Number \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status: Married \_\_\_ Single\_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_ Widow\_\_\_

Number of Children: \_\_\_\_\_

| <b>Studies</b>     |             |           |                                |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Institution</b> | <b>From</b> | <b>To</b> | <b>Diploma (Qualification)</b> |
| 1.                 |             |           |                                |
| 2.                 |             |           |                                |
| 3.                 |             |           |                                |
| 4.                 |             |           |                                |

| <b>Foreign Languages</b> |                |      |         |                |      |         |
|--------------------------|----------------|------|---------|----------------|------|---------|
| <b>Languages</b>         | <b>I speak</b> |      |         | <b>I write</b> |      |         |
|                          | Excellent      | Good | Average | Excellent      | Good | Average |
| 1.                       |                |      |         |                |      |         |
| 2.                       |                |      |         |                |      |         |
| 3.                       |                |      |         |                |      |         |
| 4.                       |                |      |         |                |      |         |

| <b>P/C Literacy</b> | <b>Seminars</b> |
|---------------------|-----------------|
|                     |                 |
|                     |                 |
|                     |                 |

| <b>Professional Background</b>     |                       |                           |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Company &amp; Employer Name</b> | <b>Date From / To</b> | <b>Reason for leaving</b> |
|                                    |                       |                           |
|                                    |                       |                           |
|                                    |                       |                           |

**References**

| Company | Name | Position | Telephone |
|---------|------|----------|-----------|
| 1.      |      |          |           |
| 2.      |      |          |           |
| 3.      |      |          |           |

| <b>Company Remarks (for office use only)</b> |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Complete if candidate is hired</b>        |            |
| Department:                                  |            |
| Salary:                                      |            |
| Position:                                    |            |
| Date hired:                                  |            |
| Is the employee going to have P/C access?    | YES__ NO__ |
| Date:  |            |
| Signature:                                   |            |

I case of an accident, who would you wish to be contacted?.....

Have you got the special Hotel Employee Booklet? YES\_\_ NO\_\_  
(Issued by Public Health Authorities – compulsory for employees who handle Food and Beverage)

Do you allow us to ask for information from your current employer? YES\_\_ NO\_\_

| <b>Military Obligations</b>                |            |
|--|------------|
| Did you serve (in the Greek Armed Forces)? | YES__ NO__ |
| Discharge Date: .....                      |            |
| End of Deferral Date: .....                |            |

The candidate consents for the filing of this application form on behalf the company's HR Department, which complies with the Data Protection Legislation  
 (Greek Law: N.2472/1997)

I certify that all the above answers are true, and if they are found not true there is a case for dismissal without compensation.

Signature: .....Date:.....

---

**Appendix 13:**  
Sample Interview Form for Greek National Chain Hotel

Company Logo  
Department

HR

**Interview Form**

|                        |
|------------------------|
| Candidate's Name:      |
| Date / Time:           |
| Interviewer:           |
| Position applied for : |

| <b>Interview Evaluation</b> |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Successful Application:  | 2. Rejected Application:     |
| 3. Repeat Interview:        | 4. Move in other department: |

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| <b>General Comments:</b>        |
| <b>Education:</b>               |
| <b>Professional Background:</b> |
| <b>Personality:</b>             |

For extra notes use the back side of this sheet

---

## Appendix 14: Sample Interview Form for MNC Chain Hotel

Company Logo  
Department

HR

### Interview Form (Original Size: 4 pages)

Position:

.....

Candidate Name:

.....

Interviewer Name:

.....

Interview Date: .....Interviewer's Signature: .....

Based on the interview, please evaluate the candidate's qualifications for the position listed above. In each section, space is provided to write additional job specific comments. If one of the questions does not apply to the position, please write N/A in the comment section.

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Education / Training:</b> The candidate has the necessary education and/or training required by the position.  |           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meets requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Needs further training<br><input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't meet requirements | Comments: |
| <b>Work Experience:</b><br>The candidate has prior work experience that is related to the position.   |           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meets requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Needs further training<br><input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't meet requirements | Comments: |
| <b>Skills (Technical):</b><br>The candidate demonstrated to your satisfaction that he/she had the   |           |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| necessary technical skills to perform the job successfully.   |           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meets requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Needs further training<br><input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't meet requirements | Comments: |
| <p><b>Supervising Others:</b><br/> The candidate demonstrated to your satisfaction that he/she had the necessary experience in supervising others to perform the job successfully.</p>                |           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meets requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Needs further training<br><input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't meet requirements | Comments: |
| <p><b>Leadership Skills:</b><br/> The candidate demonstrated to your satisfaction that he/she had the necessary leadership skills to perform the job successfully.</p>                                |           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meets requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Needs further training<br><input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't meet requirements | Comments: |
| <p><b>Interpersonal Skills:</b><br/> Communication: articulated ideas clearly both written and orally.</p>  |           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meets requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Needs further training<br><input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't meet requirements | Comments: |
| <p><b>Teamwork:</b><br/> Demonstrated the ability to work well in a team and with superiors, peers and reporting staff.</p>   |           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meets requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Needs further training<br><input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't meet requirements | Comments: |
| <p><b>Time Management:</b><br/> Demonstrated the ability to manage time independently and work efficiently.</p>   |           |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meets requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Needs further training<br><input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't meet requirements | Comments: |
| <b>Customer Service:</b><br>Demonstrated the ability to be customer focused.  |           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meets requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Needs further training<br><input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't meet requirements | Comments: |
| <b>Motivation for the Job:</b><br>The candidate expressed interest and excitement about the job.  |           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meets requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Needs further training<br><input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't meet requirements | Comments: |
| <b>Problem Solving:</b><br>Demonstrated the ability to design innovative solutions and solve problems.  |           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meets requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Needs further training<br><input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't meet requirements | Comments: |
| <b>Skill Needed</b><br>List an additional skill specific to the job you are filling.<br>Comments:   |           |
| <b>Overall Recommendation</b>   |           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Meets requirements<br><input type="checkbox"/> Needs further training<br><input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't meet requirements | Comments: |



---

## Appendix 15: Sample Job description for a multinational hotel chain general manager

### Job Description

**Job Title:** General Manager

**Department:** Administration

**Reports to:** Regional Vice President of Operations

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B/R:** \_\_\_\_\_

Company  
Logo

**Summary:** Administers, directs, and controls the operations of the Hotel. Accountable for achieving budgeted revenues/profits, while maintaining the operational and service standards prescribed by the company.

#### Standard Specifications:

Requirements are representative of minimum levels of knowledge, skills and /or abilities. To perform this job successfully, the incumbent will possess the abilities or aptitudes to perform each duty proficiently. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

#### Qualifications:

##### Essential:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ years of experience within a hotel environment as head of or managing various departments including Engineering, HR, F&B, Front Desk, Housekeeping, Accounting, Sales
- 2) Ability to satisfactorily communicate in English with guests, management and co-workers to their understanding.
- 3) Ability to provide legible communication.
- 4) Ability to do basic arithmetic.
- 5) Ability to read and interpret various forms and reports.
- 6) Be fluent in the following computer programs.
- 7) Education level must be at least a four year degree.

#### Skills:

##### Essential:

- 1) Carry out specific oral and written instructions.
- 2) Communicate with different types of people to comprehend what they want and to provide them with information.
- 3) Operate a calculator and computer.
- 4) Ability to enforce hotel's standards, policies and procedures with assigned staff.
- 5) Ability to prioritize and organize work assignments; delegate work.
- 6) Ability to direct performance of assigned staff and follow up with correction where needed.
- 7) Ability to motivate assigned staff and maintain a cohesive team.
- 8) Ability to ascertain staff training needs and provide such training.
- 9) Ability to be a clear thinker in pressure situations and exercise good judgments.
- 10) Ability to focus attention on details, speed and accuracy.

---

11) Ability to maintain confidentiality of hotel guests and pertinent hotel information.

12) Ability to ensure security of guest room access and hotel property.

**Essential Duties and Responsibilities include the following.**

**Other duties may be assigned.**

- ✓ If available, trains associates in the various departments how to perform their job duties to the best of their abilities while in accordance with established objectives, policies, and procedures.
- ✓ Keep “open communication” between managers and associates.
- ✓ Provides disciplinary action when, and if, necessary.
- ✓ Provides associates with the tools they need to perform their jobs.
- ✓ Takes immediate actions on problems that are encountered in the Hotel.
- ✓ Participates and conduct the following:
  - a. Weekly Leadership Team meetings
  - b. property MOD program
  - c. weekly staff meetings
- ✓ Promote teamwork and associate morale.
- ✓ Ensures the proper recruiting, interviewing, screening, reference checking, and hiring procedures are followed.
- ✓ Ensures accurate records of necessary federal, state, and local reports as required by the applicable laws, franchise SOPs, and Concord/local SOPs.
- ✓ Ensures accurate records and reports all OSHA information required by law.
- ✓ Responsible for generating annual hotel budget and monitors period profit and loss statement.
- ✓ Monitors department salary and hourly wage structure.
- ✓ Coordinates Management Orientation Program.
- ✓ Interviews and hires new personnel as last interview in process.
- ✓ Reviews, approves, and makes final decision on all terminations.
- ✓ Evaluates assigned staff performance on a, ninety day, and annual basis.
- ✓ Conducts self to reflect the high standards of professionalism within the company.
- ✓ Learns, understands, and refers to the Standard Operating Procedures.
- ✓ Knows department fire prevention and emergency procedures.
- ✓ Follows safety and security procedures and rules.
- ✓ Adheres to all policies and procedures.
- ✓ Project enthusiastic, optimistic, helpful attitude.
- ✓ Assist other Leadership Team members and/or managers when needed.
- ✓ Each associate will be required to follow the rules as found in the company’s Associate Handbook.
- ✓ Monitor service trends by speaking with guests and reviewing written guest comment cards and guest tracking information to ensure brand and the company’s service standards are achieved.
- ✓ Resolve all service issues via written communication or phone calls to the complete satisfaction of hotel customers.
- ✓ Recognize associates for demonstrating outstanding service initiative with guests and fellow associates.
- ✓ Ensures Accounting Manager follows up on billing problems.

- 
- ✓ Understand competitive market conditions and communicate this information with the Director of Sales and Catering.
  - ✓ Participate in developing hotel's direct sales plan/pricing strategy. Ensure group-meeting arrangements are completed and executed.
  - ✓ Investigate lost or turndown business.
  - ✓ Represent the hotel in the market and develop relationships with key accounts.
  - ✓ Review inventory control and selling strategy daily.
  - ✓ Oversee comp rooms and charity donations inquiries.
  - ✓ Handle local media inquiries regarding advertising, questioning, and representation.
  - ✓ Oversee coding and signing of hotel promotion rebate charges along with process of check requisitions.
  - ✓ Ensure budgeted revenues and profits are achieved.
  - ✓ Ensure accounting policies are in place.
  - ✓ Perform hands-on duties as needed to deliver guest services.
  - ✓ Ensure meal service meets proper food handling sanitation requirements.
  - ✓ Responsible for sanitation standards via monthly inspections of 25 guest rooms, public areas, grounds, storage/work areas and all kitchen areas.
  - ✓ Ensure that preventative maintenance programs are completed on schedule and meet the brand's quality standards.
  - ✓ Ensure that energy conservation programs are in place.
  - ✓ Responsible for management systems - i.e.: accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, and restaurant micros system.
  - ✓ Become involved in community affairs and government - i.e.: Councils, local hotel associations and local charities.
  - ✓ Check call accounting system regularly. Review phone charges to ensure proper billing.
  - ✓ Assist Engineering Manager by planning redo projects; determine recommended scope for work outside of the general redo; resolve redo related problems with Engineering Manager.
  - ✓ Assist in development of requests and budgets for CAPEX; complete MSR's; ensure CAPEX projects have proper authorization.
  - ✓ Review invoices for major projects; resolve problems as necessary.
  - ✓ Negotiate service contracts with vendors, review bids and make recommendations; periodically check on service quality; track expiration of local contracts and license renewals.
  - ✓ Solicit and review bids for improvement projects; secure approval of funds.
  - ✓ Work to resolve legal issues related to standard warranty process for building damage.

### **Managerial Responsibilities**

Directly manages \_\_\_\_\_ employees in the Hotel. Carries out managerial responsibilities in accordance with the organization's policies and applicable laws. Responsibilities include interviewing, hiring, and training employees; planning, assigning, and directing work; appraising performance; rewarding and disciplining employees; addressing complaints and resolving problems.

---

**Language Skills**

Ability to read and interpret documents such as safety rules, operating and maintenance instructions, and procedure manuals. Ability to write routine reports and correspondence. Ability to speak effectively before groups of customers or employees of organization.

**Mathematical Skills**

Ability to add, subtract, multiply, and divide in all units of measure, using whole numbers, common fractions, and decimals. Ability to compute rate, ratio, and percent and to draw and interpret bar graphs.

**Reasoning Ability**

Ability to apply common sense understanding to carry out instructions furnished in written, oral, or diagram form. Ability to deal with problems involving several concrete variables in standardized situations.

**Physical Demands**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to stoop, kneel, crouch, talk or hear. The employee frequently is required to stand; walk; sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; and reach with hands and arms. The employee is occasionally required to climb or balance. The employee must frequently lift and/or move up to 30 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include ability to adjust focus.

**Work Environment**

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those employees encounter while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations maybe made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is occasionally exposed to moving mechanical parts, fumes or airborne particles, toxic or caustic chemicals, and outside weather conditions. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

**Note:**

A review of this description has excluded the marginal functions of the position that are incidental to the performance of fundamental job duties. All duties and requirements are essential job functions. This job description in no way states or implies that these are the only duties to be performed by the employee occupying this position. Employees will be required to perform any other job related duties assigned by their supervisor. This document does not create an employment contract, implied or otherwise, other than an “at will” employment relationship.

---

Associate Signature Date

**Appendix 16:**  
Sample evaluation form for Greek national hotel chain  
(translation)

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| <b>Performance Evaluation Form<br/>for Senior Management<br/>Positions</b> | Name (appraisee): |
|  | Department:       |
|  | Position:         |
| Time Period: From _____ To: _____  |                   |
| Initially hired in (Date): _____   |                   |
| Occupy current position since (Date): _____                                |                   |

| Criteria                                | Marking |   | x Weighting                  | = | Total |            |           |  |
|---|---------|---|------------------------------|---|-------|------------|-----------|--|
|   | A       | B |                              |   | A     | B          |           |  |
| 1. Adequate knowledge of work           |         |   | 9                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 2. Programming & organising skills      |         |   | 9                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 3. Delegation                           |         |   | 9                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 4. Contribution in targets achievement  |         |   | 10                           |   |       |            |           |  |
| 5. Critical thought & decision making   |         |   | 9                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 6. Leadership                           |         |   | 10                           |   |       |            |           |  |
| 7. Financial Management                 |         |   | 8                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 8. P/C & hosp. software knowledge       |         |   | 7                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 9. Productivity-Efficiency              |         |   | 8                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 10. Quality orientation                 |         |   | 8                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 11. Teamwork & co-operation             |         |   | 10                           |   |       |            |           |  |
| 12. Communication with customers        |         |   | 9                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 13. Responsibility – consistency        |         |   | 9                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 14. Adaptability - flexibility          |         |   | 7                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 15. Enthusiasm for work                 |         |   | 8                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 16. Work under pressure                 |         |   | 7                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 17. Training orientation                |         |   | 7                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 18. Ability to accept criticism         |         |   | 7                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 19. Initiative                          |         |   | 9                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 20. Perception                          |         |   | 8                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 21. Personality                         |         |   | 7                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| 22. Appearance                          |         |   | 7                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| <b>Foreign Languages</b>                |         |   |                              |   |       |            |           |  |
| German                                  |         |   | 5                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| English                                 |         |   | 7                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| French                                  |         |   | 5                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| Italian                                 |         |   | 2                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| Russian                                 |         |   | 2                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| Other foreign languages                 |         |   | 2                            |   |       |            |           |  |
| Date of Evaluation: .... / .... / ..... |         |   | Total                        |   | A=    | B=         |           |  |
|   |         |   | Appraisee (Signature): ..... |   |       | Final Mark | (A+B)/2 = |  |
|   |         |   |                              |   |       |            |           |  |

**Marking criteria**

- (5) Excellent:** performance that constantly exceeds very much the standards/requirements of work (refer to employees that can cope with higher ranking demands, meaning that they are ready to get promoted)
- (4) Very Good:** performance that constantly exceeds the standards/requirements of work
- (3) Satisfactory:** performance that easily achieves the standards/requirements of work
- (2) Average to Poor:** performance that barely meets the standards/requirements of work

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>(1) Inadequate:</b> performance that fails to meet the minimum requirements/standards of work (in this case action must be taken in order to make sure that the manager will improve his/her performance).<br>In case marking is lower than 1 (inadequate) the assessors (judge) must explain why the managers remains in this position until today: _____ |   |
| <b>Potentials and proposals for career development</b>  |   |
| Appraiser A   | Appraiser B                                   |
| <b>1. Direct promotion</b>  |   |
| From – To (Dept. & Position): _____   | From – To (Dept. & Position): _____           |
| <b>2. Pay rise</b>  |   |
| YES ___ NO ___<br>If yes, from: .....to.....€   | YES ___ NO ___<br>If yes, from: .....to.....€ |
| <b>3. Training / work experience required</b>   |   |
| YES ___ NO ___  | YES ___ NO ___                                |
| <b>4. Change of position / department</b>   |   |
| From – To (Dept. & Position): _____   | From – To (Dept. & Position): _____           |
| <b>5. No other alternatives</b>   |   |
| YES ___ NO ___  | YES ___ NO ___                                |
| <b>6. Other proposals</b>   |   |
|   |   |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Employee Training and Development</b>  |
| 1. List the seminars and/or training programs that the appraisee has participated during the past year (include Topic/Place/Date)<br>_____  |
| Has the appraisee's performance improved after the participation in the above programmes?<br>_____  |
| 2. If necessary, suggest a suitable training and/or development initiative in order to improve specific competencies _____  |
| 3. If you believe that the assessed manager can be promoted after the attendance of a suitable training/development programme, then specify this for the following 1-2 years<br>_____ |

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>General Comments (Final Assessment)</b> |             |
| Appraiser A                                | Appraiser B |
|  |             |

|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Appraiser A</b> | <b>Appraiser B</b> |
| Name:              | Name:              |
| Position:          | Position:          |
| Signature:         | Signature:         |
| Date:              | Date:              |

---

**Appendix 17:**  
**Sample Performance Evaluation Form for MNC hotel chain**  
 (original size: 9 pages)

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Company Logo

Management Development Programme Logo

**IMPORTANT - PLEASE READ BEFORE THE ANNUAL REVIEW MEETINGS**

**ANNUAL REVIEW GUIDELINES  
 LINE MANAGERS/HEADS OF DEPARTMENT**

The Annual Review is important. It may be the only time during the year that a quality discussion takes place between a manager and their boss about performance and career potential.

The new Annual Review form requires limited written information. The reason for this is to encourage you to focus more on the quality of the face to face discussion, which should be in-depth and rich in content. The discussion itself is more important than filing in the form!

The review has 5 clear aims:

1. To review and evaluate performance against agreed objectives - The Balanced Scorecard
2. To review and evaluate performance against the 9 competencies
3. To agree an overall performance rating for the year based on the Balanced Scorecard objectives
4. To agree development needs and make plans to address them
5. To discuss and agree level of future potential

**BUSINESS OBJECTIVES**

Linking objectives to the Balanced Scorecard ensures we focus on the 4 key business areas of:

- Customers                      - People                      - Profit                      - Quality

The number of performance objectives within each of these may vary according to an individual's job and priorities. However a balanced spread across the 4 is essential. Objectives are set at the beginning of the year and should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time bound and agreed.

When reviewing performance at the end of the year it is important to discuss what the individual was aiming to achieve, what actually happened and why. To help focus the discussion on results, refer, where relevant, to the existing measures that are currently used in the business, e.g. GSTS, Plan, employee opinion survey.

In the right hand column, 'Rating', you should enter the appropriate colored symbol as follows:

| Green – exceeds objective | Amber – Meets objective | Red – Does not meet objective |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ●                         | ●                       | ●                             |

---

## **COMPETENCY REVIEW**

Each competency has been broken down into a number of indicators. Evaluate each indicator as a Key Strength, Strength, Acceptable, Development Need, Key Development Need. When discussing the performance objective consider how the indicator of each competency has been demonstrated (or not) over the year. Review the effect (good and bad) on the 4 areas of the Balanced Scorecard. Conclude the discussion by giving an overall evaluation for each of the competencies based on an integration of the relevant indicators.

## **SUMMARY OF KEY STRENGTHS AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS**

List the key strengths and development needs based on the competency review and link this to the Personal Development Planning discussion which may happen at the end of the PDR review or at a later date.

## **OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING**

Objectives across the Balanced Scorecard have been exceeded, met or not met. Mark the overall performance rating to indicate the level of achievement and provide a short narrative that gives a business/personal/property context to the performance.

## **CAREER POTENTIAL**

Discuss future career potential. Consider appropriate roles, timing, mobility, language abilities and geographical restrictions. The information recorded should be realistic and agreed. The most appropriate description of future potential should then be agreed.

## **ROAD (Resourcing Opportunities & Development)**

Having evaluated all of the evidence gained during the PDR you need to agree a ROAD symbol. This symbol represents someone's potential (i.e. suitability for future role) and capability. It must reflect the PDR conversation and the evidence discussed. The ROAD symbol is different to mobility e.g. someone might be a star rating in terms of their performance and capability but for personal reasons is not mobile at the moment. This person should still receive a star rating but with a note in the PDR form, under mobility, to state that they are unable to move him at present.

## **APPRAISEE COMMENTS**

The appraisee is encouraged to comment on the completed PDR form and share any feedback with the appraiser. The form should then be signed by both parties and passed to the appraiser's manager for final endorsement.

## **BUSINESS OBJECTIVES \_**

This section should be used to record agreed business objectives for the 2007 Balanced Scorecard. These objectives will be reviewed at the interim and next years annual review discussions.

## **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Based on the development needs (DNs) and key development needs (KDNs) identified in the competency review, select the competency that requires further development. Identify a SMARTA goal, the actions required, support needed and a timescale for achievement.



## 200\_ Business Objectives Review Line Managers/Heads of Department

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date (in  
company): \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date Current  
Role: \_\_\_\_\_

| Key Result      |                       |        |                 | G / A / R |
|-----------------|-----------------------|--------|-----------------|-----------|
| Area            | Performance Objective | Target | Actual Achieved | Rating    |
| <b>People</b>   |                       |        |                 |           |
|                 |                       |        |                 |           |
|                 |                       |        |                 |           |
| <b>Customer</b> |                       |        |                 |           |
|                 |                       |        |                 |           |
|                 |                       |        |                 |           |
| <b>Quality</b>  |                       |        |                 |           |
|                 |                       |        |                 |           |
|                 |                       |        |                 |           |
| <b>Profit</b>   |                       |        |                 |           |
|                 |                       |        |                 |           |
|                 |                       |        |                 |           |

| <b>Evaluation Key*</b>   | <b>KS:</b><br>Key Strength | <b>S:</b><br>Strength | <b>A:</b><br>Acceptable | <b>DN:</b><br>Development Need | <b>KDN:</b><br>Key Development Need    |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Competency Review</b> |                            |                       |                         |                                | <b>Evaluation Indicator Competency</b> |

|   |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>People Management</b>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducts performance reviews, identifies training needs, offers constructive feedback and ensure colleagues have development plans in place</li> <li>• Coaches the individual and the team in order to support career progression and facilitate succession plans for the department</li> <li>• Takes care of colleagues and sensitively, resolves issues and problems within the team, maintaining team stability</li> <li>• Identifies what motivates colleagues, adapts style accordingly in order to bring out and capture the best in all team members. Recognises and rewards achievement</li> </ul> |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Influence</b>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents logical opinions in an assertive way when trying to persuade and convince others.</li> <li>• Has confidence to constructively challenge peers and managers and face up to resolve conflicts</li> <li>• Is visible and has a strong impact in own department</li> </ul>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Communication</b>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicates clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing</li> <li>• Is open and honest and encourages two way communication, briefing their team on a regular basis</li> <li>• Is confident when speaking with a variety of customers, colleagues and peers, pitching information at the right level</li> </ul>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Developing Relationships</b>   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to gain and build trust and respect from colleagues and suppliers and other departments. Keeps their word and delivers what they promise.</li> <li>• Aware of cultural differences and adapts style accordingly</li> <li>• Diplomatic in difficult situations. Shows passion and empathy for customer service</li> <li>• Proactively makes regular contact, adapts appropriately to their needs and requests</li> </ul>   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Planning</b>   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets short medium and long term plans breaking large tasks into manageable pieces</li> <li>• Sets departmental action plans / objectives, with clear deadlines, allocating resources appropriately</li> <li>• Continually reviews plans to ensure deadlines are met</li> <li>• Is focused, organised and able to juggle different priorities in order to meet deadlines</li> </ul>   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Analysing Information</b>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controls costs, wastage and effectively manages payroll and expenses against budget</li> <li>• Able to analyse departmental results and data, drawing logical conclusions</li> <li>• Proactively seeks out and researches all relevant information when trying to resolve a problem</li> </ul>   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Decision Making</b>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confident in making sound decisions with minimal guidance</li> <li>• Takes calculated risks, considering all relevant factors &amp; has contingency plans in place</li> <li>• Demonstrates an inspirational and innovative approach to problem solving</li> <li>• Learns from mistakes and is open to new ideas, embracing new processes and change</li> </ul>   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Business Development</b>   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports the delivery of the hotel business plan, using a balanced scorecard approach</li> <li>• Keeps up to date with trends, technology, new legislation, local market and world events that may impact hotel and department</li> <li>• Proactively creates new opportunities to drive sales and maximise profits</li> </ul>   |  |  |  |  |  |

| <b>Drive and Resilience</b>  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes ownership and accountability of own department</li> <li>• Reacts quickly with determination and energy, whilst remaining calm and level headed in order to deliver results</li> <li>• Creates a focused, fun atmosphere where the team is hungry for success</li> <li>• Takes personal responsibility for developing own skills and ensuring continuous learning is taking place</li> </ul> |  |  |

### Summary of Key Strengths & Development Needs

| <b>Key Strengths</b>  | <b>Development Needs</b>  |
|---|---|
| Overall Performance Rating  | Commentary on Performance in 200__                                |
| <b>Exceeds Balanced Scorecard target</b>  |   |
| <b>Meets Balanced Scorecard target</b>  |   |
| <b>Does not meet Balanced Scorecard target</b>  |   |
| <b>Career Potential</b>   |   |
| Mobility Rating<br>(IM: Internationally mobile, NM: Nationally mobile, RM: Regionally mobile, X: Not Mobile,) | Languages & Level<br>(Beginner, Conversational, Business, Fluent) |
| Geographic preferences for future moves   | Describe potential upward, lateral or functional moves            |

Based on the achievement of agreed objectives across the Balanced Scorecard, the business/personal/property context to the performance, and the positive demonstration of the competencies select one of the statements below to indicate future career potential

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | Capable of moving <b>to the next level</b> within 12 months                                   |  |
|  | Capable of moving <b>to the next level after 12 months but within 3 years</b>                 |  |
|  | Capable of moving to a job <b>at the same or similar level</b> in the next 12 months          |  |
|  | Stable - <b>should remain in current position and location</b> for at least 12 months         |  |
|  | <b>Needs to develop</b> in current position or too new to comment                             |  |
|  | <b>Poor performer</b> in current position who needs to improve to meet the required standard. |  |

|                                      |                   |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Appraisee Comment:                   |                   |
| Name Appraisee:                      | Name Appraiser:   |
| Signed Appraisee:                    | Signed Appraiser: |
| Date:                                | Date:             |
| Name Appraiser's Manager:            | Date:             |
| Signature Appraiser's Manager: _____ |                   |

## 200\_ Business Objectives Line Managers/Heads of Department

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date (in company): \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date Current Role: \_\_\_\_\_

| Key Result Area                          | Performance Objective<br>(different in positions/depts.) | Target | Actual Achieved | G / A / R<br>Rating |
|--|--|--------|-----------------|---------------------|
| <b>People</b>                            |  |        |                 |                     |
| TMOS / Viewpoint Job Satisfaction        |  |        |                 |                     |
| TMOS / Viewpoint Training & Development  |  |        |                 |                     |
| <b>Customer</b>                          |  |        |                 |                     |
| GSTS                                     |  |        |                 |                     |
| GSTS HHonors                             |  |        |                 |                     |
| <b>Quality</b>                           |  |        |                 |                     |
| Company International Brand Standards    |  |        |                 |                     |
| <b>Profit</b>                            |  |        |                 |                     |
| Total Revenue Vs Plan                    |  |        |                 |                     |
| Target GOP Vs Plan                       |  |        |                 |                     |
| Yield Premium / Market Penetration index |  |        |                 |                     |

## Personal Development Plan

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

| Competency Area | Development Goal | Action | Support Required | Timescale |
|-----------------|------------------|--------|------------------|-----------|
|                 |                  |        |                  |           |
|                 |                  |        |                  |           |
|                 |                  |        |                  |           |

## Appendix 18: Examples of Internet based HR activities in Greece

### On-line recruitment in Greek National Chain Hotel

Source: <http://www.classicalhotels.com/el/employment/> (accessed: 3/4/2007)

Source: [www.aldemarhotels.com/default.asp?pid=357&la=1](http://www.aldemarhotels.com/default.asp?pid=357&la=1) (Accessed: 3/4/2007)

## On-line recruitment in Greek local chain hotel

**St. GEORGE**  
LYCABETTUS BOUTIQUE HOTEL

We are always looking for people with a drive for excellence and eager to achieve career objectives.

**Please submit** your personal details through the use of this form. (CV's will be sent as attachments)

Our Human Resource department will contact you for further arrangements.

**Current Vacancies**

| Job Title               | details>> |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Bar tenders             | details>> |
| Maid                    | details>> |
| Telephone Operators     | details>> |
| Waiter                  | details>> |
| Sales Executive         | details>> |
| Προκτική Λοκλή          | details>> |
| Front Office Receptions | details>> |

**CONTACT FORM**

\*Name:  \*Surname:   
 Address:  City:   
 \*Phone:  Fax:   
 \*e-mail:

home e-mail Travel professionals only | Partner hotel

style location palette experience media club one of us

2 Kleomenous Street, 106 75 Athens, Greece  
 tel: (+30) 210 7290711-19 | fax: (+30) 210 7290439  
 e-mail: info@sglycabettus.gr

Go Green Go! YouTube facebook myspace media

design and hosting by aboutnet

Source: <http://www.sglycabettus.gr/site/content/view/8/8/> (accessed: 30/10/2007)

## On-line recruitment in Greek family owned hotel

Rhodes - Greece

**ForumHotels.com** Home • Rates • On Line Booking • Booking Conditions • Job Vacancies • Rates for Agents

**Job Vacancies ~ 2005 SUMMER POSITIONS COMING SOON... It's not too early to send your CV and the position you are looking for.**

**Ialyssos Beach**  
GR 85101 Rhodes, Greece

Tel: 003022410 94321  
003022410 96601  
Fax: 003022410 94327  
003022410 96655

contact us by e-mail  
forumhtl@otenet.gr

Design & Hosting by cyhex

Name   
 Surname   
 Full Home Address   
 City   
 Country   
 Age   
 Email   
 Position Applied for   
 Curriculum Vitae Paste HERE   
 Submit

Source: <http://www.forumhotels.com/en/jobs.asp> (accessed: 3/4/2007)

## On-line recruitment & career development in multinational chain hotel

HYATT high expectations | high rewards | hyatt Language English EMAIL RESUME OR CV

explore hyatt  
employee rewards  
diversity & inclusion  
career options  
campus  
hyatt earth  
search careers  
media center

WATCH THE HYATT EXPERIENCE

Hyatt Career Search Hyatt Employee Testimonials

Social Networking Hyatt QuickConnect

Connect to Hyatt and in minutes learn about career opportunities.  
North America International

web design by Intellect2 Mobile Enhanced | Press Room | Hyatt.com | Privacy Policy | Terms & Conditions | [+]  
Contact Us

Source: [http://www.explorehyatt.jobs/index\\_flash.php](http://www.explorehyatt.jobs/index_flash.php) (accessed: 3/4/2007)

HILTON WORLDWIDE English GO

Careers at Hilton  
UK & Ireland  
Europe  
Middle East & Africa  
Asia Pacific  
USA  
Canada  
HRCC  
Latin America & Caribbean

A Career with the Hilton Family of Hotels opens up the world of hospitality to you

Hilton Hotels' global presence provides a terrific range of career opportunities in some great locations. We already have over 100,000 team members worldwide who have access to a wide range of benefits, training and development support, and job opportunities where they can work with the best teams in the business.

Hilton Hotels Corporation is the leading global hospitality company with more than 3,000 hotels and 500,000 rooms in over 74 countries. We own, manage and franchise a hotel portfolio of the best known and highly regarded brands in the world including Hilton, Conrad Hotels & Resorts, Doubletree by Hilton, Embassy Suites Hotels by Hilton, Hampton by Hilton, Hilton Garden Inn, Homewood Suites by Hilton, and The Waldorf-Astoria Collection.

We have one of the most enviable records of consistent international growth and will be adding over 1,000 hotels in the next 10 years. Whether you are a seasoned professional or just starting out in this very exciting industry, we would be delighted to welcome you to our family.

Graduate Opportunities - if you are a graduate and want to fast track your career in hospitality with the world's most famous hotel company, then take our "Elevator". Find out more about Hilton's dynamic, award winning Elevator graduate programme and join our growing network of talent.

UK & Ireland Europe Middle East & Africa Asia Pacific Latin America & Caribbean

Source: [www.careersathilton.com/index.php](http://www.careersathilton.com/index.php) (3/4/2007)

## Appendix 19: Sample of outsourced management training programs for Greek national hotel chain



### TRAINING PROGRAMS

**Duration:** Depends on the program

**Number of participants:** Depends on the program

**Methodology:** Training methodology that encourages participation and interactive communication:

- Pre-work booklets
- Focus groups
- Modern presentation methods (power-point presentations)
- Individual and group activities
- Extensive role playing and practical sessions (when applicable)

#### ① Service Leadership

Supervisory and executive development seminar, which aims to teach and equip the participants with the appropriate skills in order to effectively manage their teams and departments, within a customer focused environment.

**Training includes:**

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| ■ The Leader's Role                             | ■ Problem solving         |
| ■ The difference between a leader and a manager | ■ Performance measurement |
| ■ The characteristics of a Leader               | ■ Management cycle        |
| ■ The dimensions of efficient leaders           | ■ Management styles       |
| ■ The Vision and the Goal                       | ■ Motivation              |
| ■ Internal and external customers               | ■ Personal communication  |
| ■ Leadership capabilities                       | ■ Team building           |
| ■ Informing the staff                           | ■ Staff training          |
| ■ Action plans                                  | ■ Quality standards       |

#### ② Coaching & Delegation

Effective coaching and delegation are some of the most important skills required for managers. This seminar stresses the importance of coaching and delegation, the benefits and also indicates ways of building strong effective teams.

**Training includes:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ■ What is coaching;                                 | ■ Delegation obstacles   |
| ■ My role as a coach                                | ■ Effective delegation   |
| ■ Needs for coaching                                | ■ Choosing «the most appropriate» person or team to delegate «the most appropriate» activities |
| ■ Analysis of «what happened and how»               | ■ The art and technique of delegating  |
| ■ Using questions                                   | ■ Monitoring the progress and the results  |
| ■ Transactional analysis                            | ■ Action Plans   |
| ■ Mentor  |  |
| ■ Delegation Principles: responsibility, authority. |  |





## Appendix 20: Quality Assurance

### a) Example of Local Chain Hotel in Rhodes

**RODOS PALLADIUM**  
LEISURE & WELLNESS  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Gold Medal**  
Best Summer Sun Accommodation  
Overall Winner Hotel Rodos Palladium Rhodes

**HARMONY RESORTS**

[ LOCATION ] [ ACCOMMODATION ] [ DINING ] [ BARS ] [ RELAXING LEISURE ] [ GUESTS' SERVICES ] [ BOOK ONLINE ]  
[ ROMANTIC GATEWAYS ] [ YOUR DREAM WEDDING EXPERIENCE ] [ AWARDS ] [ ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPHY ]  
[ PHOTO GALLERY ] [ VIDEO & 360° PHOTOS ] [ CONTACT US ] [ HOME ] [ HARMONY RESORTS ]

**With focus on excellence**  
With an aim to emerge as Rhodes finest hotel, Rodos Palladium commenced its operation in August 1998. Since then, our focus on quality and excellence of service converted from a corporate philosophy to daily practice.  
As an award to our efforts, Thomson Holidays, the famous British tour operator, based on guests' opinion, presented us, for the fifth time, the Gold Medal Award for 2007, rating Rodos Palladium as an Gold Winner, among all 5 star hotels worldwide featured in its prestigious "Platinum" program. Other tour operators, such as the German TUI and NUR, presented us similar awards such as the TUI Holly 2008 2007, 2006 & 2004 award, the Holiday Check Award 2007 as one of the 99 most popular hotels worldwide, and the NUR Primo 2002.  
A clear evidence that Rodos Palladium is a place for those who deserve the highest standards of personal service.  
Rodos Palladium is an ISO 9001:2000 and an ISO 22000 (ex. HACCP) certified hotel by TUV Hellas (TUV NORD)

**THOMSON PLATINUM**  
Overall Winner  
2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002  
Best 5 star hotel worldwide in Thomson's Platinum Program

**THOMSON PLATINUM**  
Gold Winner 2007  
Best 5 star hotel worldwide in Thomson's Platinum Program

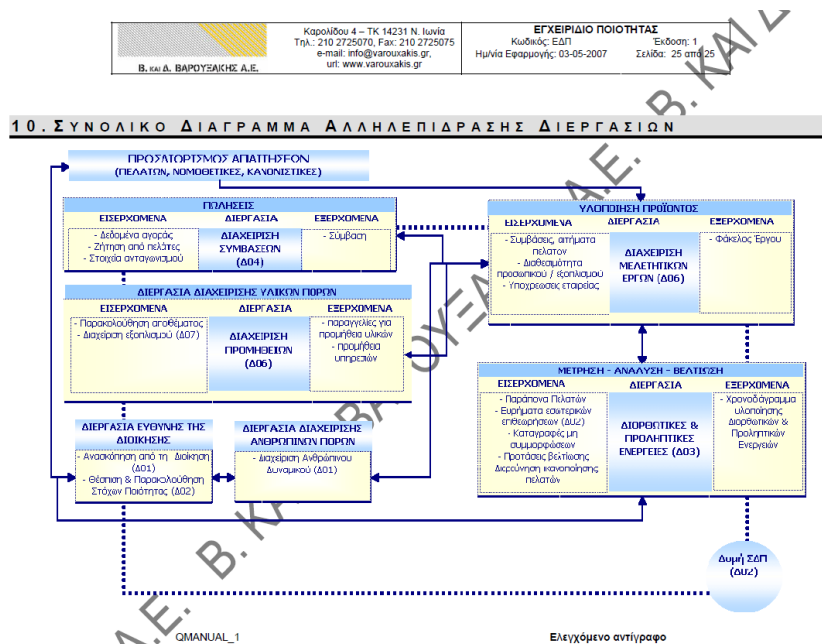
**TUI HOLLY 2008, 2007, 2006 & 2004**  
Among TUI's top 100 hotels in the world

**NUR PRIMO 2002**  
Among Neckermann's top 100 hotels in the world

**THOMSON SUMMER SUN**  
Overall Winner  
2001, 2000, 1999  
Best 5 star hotel worldwide in Thomson's Summer Sun Program

Source: [www.harmonyresorts.gr/en/RP\\_Awards.php](http://www.harmonyresorts.gr/en/RP_Awards.php) (Accessed: 30/5/2008)

### b) Overview of ISO 9001 procedures for small & medium hotels in Greece



# Appendix 21: Sample Quality Audit Report Local Chain Hotel – Crete (2007)

(Translated from the original Greek document)

| ΕΣ. ΑΝΑΦΟΡΑ ΕΞΙΤΗΡΙΩΣ ΕΠΙΘΕΩΡΗΣΗΣ  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Όνομα Επισκεπτή/Επισκεπτών:  | Με Τίτλο: JEF         |
| Όνομα/Κατάστημα:   | Μονάδα: 14-25/07/2007 |
| Ημερομηνία επίσκεψης:  | Από: 14/07/2007       |
| Ημερομηνία έκδοσης:  | Μέχρι: 20/07/2007     |
| <p><b>Παρατηρήσεις &amp; Σχόλια:</b></p> <p>1. <b>Εισαγωγή:</b> Το θέμα αφορά το θέμα της αντιστάσεως. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση.</p> <p>2. <b>Εισαγωγή:</b> Η ΟΕ 12 αφορά το θέμα της αντιστάσεως. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση.</p> <p>3. <b>Εισαγωγή:</b> Η ΟΕ 12 αφορά το θέμα της αντιστάσεως. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση.</p> <p>4. <b>Εισαγωγή:</b> Η ΟΕ 12 αφορά το θέμα της αντιστάσεως. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση.</p> <p>5. <b>Εισαγωγή:</b> Η ΟΕ 12 αφορά το θέμα της αντιστάσεως. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση.</p> <p>6. <b>Εισαγωγή:</b> Η ΟΕ 12 αφορά το θέμα της αντιστάσεως. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση.</p> <p>7. <b>Εισαγωγή:</b> Η ΟΕ 12 αφορά το θέμα της αντιστάσεως. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση.</p> <p>8. <b>Εισαγωγή:</b> Η ΟΕ 12 αφορά το θέμα της αντιστάσεως. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση. Η ΟΕ 12 για το θέμα αυτό είναι η πρώτη και είναι σε καλή κατάσταση.</p> |                       |

## Observations & Recommendations

**Recommendation 1** to work instructions (WI) based on pictures: The WI10 for the rooms is very good and this work can and should extend to other departments.

**Recommendation 2:** The second level control that is conducted by the Assistant Director (GM) in rooms, kitchen, etc, must be supported by a brief comment (in a different color ink, e.g. red) in the corresponding control forms of the Housekeeping Manager, the Exec. Chef, the Maitre D., etc. In general we should not be "afraid" to write comments. Potential negative comments are not "problems", simply record the path for the identification and solution of everyday problems that one might occur in any area.

**Recommendation 3:** An important element of communication with customers, in addition to the questionnaire is to record all requests by the client in the guests' book at the Reception. Also, the recording of any kind of customer complaints in the existing form that is already in use (and which must be incorporated into the system) is a very positive step and may be used gradually and by all managers and staff who come into direct contact with customers. The recommendations and customer minor complaints recorded in a systematic way, but only by the Assistant GM. Yet even this approach offers-first-documented knowledge about what issues were addressed and how customers were treated. The systematic study of these can lead to recurrence, or even the correct and timely response.

**Recommendation 4:** To be updated and approved by the Director (GM), the file on the sights and operation of services on the island; this must contain any information that may be requested by customers (e.g., aircraft departures, opening hours of museums and archaeological sites, hiking trails, restaurants recommended by hotel etc).

**Measuring customer satisfaction.** The number of questionnaires completed so far is small, and should make every effort to have enough completed questionnaires, at least 15-20 per month (min.). A significant number of answered questionnaires reveals the picture of customer satisfaction in this hotel; also identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the hotel's departments.

**Management:** At the end of the season to activate the process of evaluating personnel and managers. It is suggested to conduct the performance evaluation the last few days of the hotel's operation, before the season closing.

**Staff Training:** Train all staff so that in any case they do not answer in a "dry" no (negative) to customer requests, but to seek alternatives to satisfy them. The event was detected in the tavern, but during the second visit the situation was improved.

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## Appendix 22: Customers and Quality, Comments from Trip Advisor

### Local Hotel Chain / Rhodes



We spend a lot of time researching our hotel choices and always set off a little apprehensive: however the Rodos Palladium exceeded all our expectations. We have very high standards and have stayed in many of the Thomson Platinum hotels on family holidays, as well as a few which were supposedly better, a lot more expensive and with medals and awards galore but few beat the Rodos in terms of overall top standards and incredible value for money.

We had a superior room with sea room, had welcome gifts plus slippers and bathrobes. Fantastic view of the bay, pool and also the entertainment area. Service was always competent and friendly both at the reception desk and from the maids - our rooms were kept immaculate. The dining room staff were a joy, we sat at the same table every night and looked forward to asking about the Greek dishes, wine recommendations, our waitress was lovely and told us about her family, and was very friendly with our youngest. Food excellent .... fresh, hot, continually replenished even later in the evening, beautiful puddings all immaculately set out. You can either eat from the buffet (all courses available), or try the set meal. I liked the set meals, my husband who has a big appetite enjoyed going backwards and forwards to the buffet. The children's set meals were lovely, and the staff took our little girl's cheese allergy very seriously - they only needed to be told at the beginning and they double checked everything with us.

There is a mini market at the hotel, and as everyone else says is very well stocked - you can easily put lunch and soft drinks for the day together - it's not expensive. Having said that the sandwich bar at the main pool was really good - fresh sandwiches made up for you and not too pricey at 5 Euros.

Guests are a mixture of British, German, Spanish, French, Dutch, Swiss, Russian - no one nation dominates and this makes it all really friendly. Animation team were pretty good, children young and older had fun with dancing during the day, pool competitions, etc.

The Spa, which is newly opened is brilliant. Such a range of treatments on offer! My husband and I went for the couples package - including full body scrub and massage, moisturising, plus a rasual, use of steam room and sauna and tropical showers. We were treated extremely well and though it was worth the money.

The whole place is spotless, and the public areas are lovely, Marble prevails with comfy sofas. Very good internet room, we never had any problems logging on and it kept the teenager quiet.

We drove to Rhodes and thoroughly enjoyed wandering around the streets. (it was hard to find a parking space though, probably would recommend taking a taxi and spending the day there). If you like Greek pottery, then you will find lots of factory shops along the main road to Falaraki and Lindos. We got a few lovely, quality handmade items ... and more amazing got them home in one piece.

We are trying a different platinum hotel in Kos next year and hope it will be as good as this one. If not we will be back in 2008!

Source: [www.tripadvisor.com/ShowUserReviews-g1012852-d292353-r6171104-Rodos\\_Palladium-Kalitheia\\_Rhodes\\_Dodecanese.html#REVIEWS](http://www.tripadvisor.com/ShowUserReviews-g1012852-d292353-r6171104-Rodos_Palladium-Kalitheia_Rhodes_Dodecanese.html#REVIEWS) (Accessed: 29/12/2007)

## Family Hotel / Rhodes



Well, where shall we start? As per the other reviews, the Forum Beach has several big problem that cannot justify it being a 4\*. However, there were some redeeming qualities that are worth noting too. So, to the 'BAD THINGS' first. This includes:

- 1) Room was unavailable on arrival (we arrived at 1400Hrs, room was not ready until 1900Hrs) and even then it was more an apartment than a hotel room. This was a recurring theme with other guests.
- 2) Although we were 'Ultra-All Inclusive', we were still expected to pay for Air Con (@ €9 per day) and a safe (@ €50 for the 2 weeks). Mini-golf and pool tables cost too. Not so All Inclusive after all!
- 3) Severe limitations on food range and of poor quality (e.g. same food everyday, no Greek food!!!! and catered for a German/Dutch clientele). This also includes the pool bar snacks (Only had hotdogs, burgers, pizza [sometimes] and toasties). The a/i wine tastes like a bad vinegar, the cola isn't pepsi/coke and don't expect to see a cup of tea until your on the plane home. If you are lucky enough to stumble across a teabag and hot water, I hope you enjoy condensed milk!!!!!! I cannot rant on enough about the food aspect of the hotel - we went out almost every other night to eat out which kind of defeats the purpose of all inclusive. And if I see another frankfurter sausage or slice of ham for breakfast as enjoyed by our European friends I will scream. If you go, do Room Only.
- 4) Being situated on a final approach flight path [low enough to read the serial numbers on the undercarriage!!!!!!!!!!] was interesting and on occasions noisy, but it's strange how you get used to it!!!
- 5) Although the 4 pools appear clean, the pool sides are unpleasant and in need of replacing (e.g. mouldy, litter-stained and ill-fitting).
- 6) The free water sports (pedaloes & canoes) were never seen. Each time we asked to use them we were fobbed off with some lame excuse (e.g. sea too rough, it's a day ending in Y etc) and told to return later....this is a total con!.
- 7) Beware of the frequent power cuts - They don't last long, but we avoided the lifts just to be safe.
- 8) The free gym was nothing more than a unairconditioned (!) box room with a couple of old cycling/running machines that some kids play on during the day out of boredom.
- 9) If you find another British person, congratulations and get that towel on the lounge early..we have warned you (ja!)
- 10) BINGO BINGO I LOVE YOU...This song is a form of conditioning and mental torture played every night after mini-disco by the compare that is the double of the brother in 'Everybody Loves Raymond'. If you're stuck with the kids its okay, but it's not good for couples.

And now to the GOOD THINGS: This includes:

- 1) The Spa treatments (at reduced rate if Ultra A/I) were very good
- 2) The main bar, although you have to pay for drinks, was good and Demetri the barman was great.
- 3) The entertainment team were great, albeit aimed at the kids. Catherine, Hayley and Co worked very hard
- 4) You get CNN and check out Channel 9 for the dancing
- 5) 'Raymond's Brother' can speak 6+ languages and is very impressive

SUMMARY: Although these comments may seem harsh, we genuinely believe this is a fair and honest review and hope it is useful to others. Best Wishes A+J

Source: [www.tripadvisor.com/ShowUserReviews-g635614-d557027-r6916042-Forum\\_Beach\\_Hotel-Ialyssos\\_Rhodes\\_Dodecanese.html#CHECK\\_RATES\\_CONT](http://www.tripadvisor.com/ShowUserReviews-g635614-d557027-r6916042-Forum_Beach_Hotel-Ialyssos_Rhodes_Dodecanese.html#CHECK_RATES_CONT)  
(Accessed: 29/11/2007)

## Family Hotel / Thessaloniki

Source: [www.tripadvisor.com/ShowUserReviews-g189473-d630215-r10630502-Porto\\_Palace\\_Hotel-Thessaloniki\\_Macedonia\\_Region.html#CHECK\\_RATES\\_CONT](http://www.tripadvisor.com/ShowUserReviews-g189473-d630215-r10630502-Porto_Palace_Hotel-Thessaloniki_Macedonia_Region.html#CHECK_RATES_CONT)

### “ A nice city hotel in a magical city ”

#### Porto Palace Hotel



rolandDusseldorf 9 contributions  
dusseldorf

Nov 6, 2007 | Trip type: Business

Save Review

4 people found this review helpful

I stayed at this brand new property in November 2007 for some business purposes. The hotel is brand new with an impressive lobby, modern accommodations and excellent service. Everybody is so quick and efficient. We ordered breakfasts in the room, which it was a simple continental breakfast, but I heard from the some other guests that the buffet was a gem. The establishment is only five minutes with a taxi from the center and the port. Elli at the front desk was extremely helpful by giving us nice restaurant and spot recommendations to visit, ordering taxis and generally by assisting us with the most professional and friendly way. I would definitely go back to Thessaloniki and at this nice property.

**Liked** — quality of service and room

**Disliked** — that the spa was not ready yet

#### My ratings for this hotel

Value Service  
 Rooms  
 Location  
 Cleanliness  
 Check in / front desk

**Date of stay** November 2007

**Visit was for** Other

**Traveled with** Business colleagues

**Age group** 25-34

**Member since** January 27, 2007

**Would you recommend this hotel to a friend?** Yes

**I recommend this hotel for** Young singles, An amazing honeymoon, A romantic getaway, Girlfriend getaway, Older travelers, Families with teenagers, Tourists

## MNC Hotel Chain / Crete

### “ A Nice break - Hotel 3 star staff 5 star ”

#### Louis Creta Princess Beach Hotel



fredtheredManchester 19 contributions  
Manchester, United Kingdom

Nov 2, 2007 | Trip type: Friends getaway

Save Review

2 people found this review helpful

We stayed at the Louis Creta Princess (3 couples) from 9th Oct to 23rd Oct. The main building of the complex is tired and distressed, the bungalows off the main building are a better option with more space. The pool area is good, the eating area's are ok. The food is predictable and repetitive. With the time of year being close to the end of the season it seemed that everything was coming to a halt. The hotel staff though are the exception they are most helpful and pleasant. Effi at the front desk was brilliant with a lovely smile, and most of the bar staff were great. The animation team worked very hard and you could get involved only if you wished too. Aliali, and gulia, were fantastic fun. The trip to Chania town is worth it to see the venician harbour, and also the great beach and sea at effalonissi. All in all it was ok. We used to go to the bar in the next door complex to watch the football and the family who run this bar were great. Top marks to andreas and mike! we would have like to have stayed there. Louis Creta Princess marks out of 10 = 6.

**Liked** — The Staff

**Disliked** — The accomodation

#### My ratings for this hotel

Value Service  
 Rooms Business service (e.g., internet access)  
 Location  
 Cleanliness  
 Check in / front desk

**Date of stay** October 2007

**Visit was for** Quality time with friends

Source: [www.tripadvisor.com/ShowUserReviews-g189415-d253906-r64966907-Louis\\_Creta\\_Princess\\_Beach\\_Hotel-Chania\\_Town\\_Chania\\_Prefecture\\_Crete.html#CHECK\\_RATES\\_CONT](http://www.tripadvisor.com/ShowUserReviews-g189415-d253906-r64966907-Louis_Creta_Princess_Beach_Hotel-Chania_Town_Chania_Prefecture_Crete.html#CHECK_RATES_CONT)  
(Accessed: 2/12/2007)

## Appendix 23: Examples of hotel general managers' official networks

### a) National Hoteliers' Association (Π.Ο.Ξ.)

Source: <http://www.hhf.gr/> (Accessed on 24/10/2007)

### b) Rhodes Hotel Association

Source: <http://www.rodosland.gr/en/rha.html> (Accessed on 24/10/2007)

## c) Cretan Hotel Managers' Association

Source: <http://www.hotelmanagers-crete.com/index.php> (Accessed on 24/10/2007)

## d) EHMA's 31<sup>st</sup> General Meeting: Athens 2004



Where could be more appropriate for European hoteliers to discuss the world hotel trade than Greece, the link between East and West?

It is rare to find a venue where one can appreciate the history, monuments and myths of ancient Greece while experiencing the vibrancy and fast pace of modern life. Athens, what better city to host the EHMA's 31st General Meeting, from 22-25 January 2004.

The Athenaeum Intercontinental Hotel, with its well established reputation and uncompromisingly high standards in conference organisation and friendly Greek hospitality, hosted the conference. During the meeting elections took place for the new President of the Association. The newly elected President is Jean-Henri Antoine from France, first Vice-President Johanna Fragano from Italy and Vice President Chris Tzianos from Greece.

The official opening of the three-day event took place at dinner in the Hilton Hotel where the Mayor of Athens, Mrs. Dora Bakoyanni welcomed the members and their escorts. The Mayor underlined the importance of tourism

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and the contribution of professionals, such as the prestigious Managers of the European Hotel Industry. She briefly explained the infrastructure works presently carried out for the Olympic Games, the organizational activities involved and the benefits for the country's tourism.

For the first time ever, a "University Day" was held with the participation of over sixty members. Russel Kett of HVS International elaborated on the subject of Hotel valuation and the influence of the GM in this respect.

Friday's programme commenced with the traditional welcome by outgoing President, Joern U. Sroka and the presentation of the Olympic Games by Spyros Capralos, Executive Director of the "Athens 2004" Organization who explained the complexity of such a unique and international event and the challenges it presents to the organising committee and to the state in general. The workshop continued with IMHI Professor Tom Cullen on "The most interesting forces driving change in the Hospitality Industry for the next decade".

Professor Crist Inman of Cornell spoke about the 21st century GM's greatest challenge, a very interesting analysis of balancing Hospitality Management and Yield Management. The Hotel Benchmark team of Deloitte, presented the European Year-End 2003 results, which to no one's surprise, was another challenging year for the European Hotel Industry due to the war in Iraq, the outbreak of SARS and the economic conditions in Europe. Dean Van der Hoek of CHN University in Holland presented the "strategy in practice" whereby the participants observed that the biggest pay-off of the Strategy Process is competence development and performance improvement.

Chris Tzianos president of the meeting's organizing committee happily commented that participation in this year's Congress surpassed everyone's expectations, thus rendering the event lively and interesting with enhanced networking and co-operation among members. The 31st general meeting was concluded on Saturday with a visit to the Acropolis and the Gala Dinner at the historical newly restored Grande Bretagne Hotel during which the "European Hotel Manager of the Year Award 2004" was presented to Francisco Alcaraz (Gran Hotel Bahia del Duque, Tenerife, Spain).

At the same time, during an emotional retrospective of the services and devotion to EHMA by outgoing President Joern U. Sroka, he was presented with a fairwell present and a warm and cheerful THANK YOU in many languages from the participants who gave him an extent applause and a rightful standing ovation.

Source: [http://www.ehma.com/general\\_meetings/gen\\_meetings.lasso?-database=ehma&-table=gen\\_meetings&titolo=Athens%202004&-search](http://www.ehma.com/general_meetings/gen_meetings.lasso?-database=ehma&-table=gen_meetings&titolo=Athens%202004&-search) (Accessed on 24/10/2007)



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## Appendix 24: Example of MNC hotel chain code of conduct

### Introduction

In IHG, we believe that strong ethics and good business should go together naturally. We are committed to operating our company with integrity and in accordance with the highest ethical standards. Our reputation is built upon the trust and confidence of all our stakeholders, and is an integral part of our vision to make IHG one of the very best companies in the world.

The following Code of Ethics and Business Conduct ('The Code') sets out the principles and standards describing how we should work and behave, wherever we are in the world. It applies to all directors, officers and employees of IHG, and should be read together with the company's core values (our 'Winning Ways').

All employees have a responsibility to behave ethically and protect the reputation of the company. These principles lie at the heart of who we are, and nothing should ever compromise our commitment to honesty and integrity.

### Responsibility for Compliance with the Code

All directors, officers and employees are responsible for abiding by the Code. This includes responsibility for the failure to exercise proper supervision and the responsibility to report a violation by subordinates. Disciplinary action may, when appropriate, include dismissal.

The standards set out in the Code are necessarily general and do not address each and every situation that may confront employees throughout the world. Where appropriate, guidance should always be sought from management. In addition, the Company Secretary and Group Internal Audit are available on a confidential basis as independent sources of advice.

### Health and Safety

We are all responsible for helping to maintain a safe and healthy working environment in line with local laws and regulations and in accordance with our internal standards.

### Equal Opportunities

We recruit and promote individuals based solely on their suitability for the job without discriminating on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, marital status or disability unrelated to the role. In some countries these principles may be modified by national legal requirements on affirmative action.

### Harassment

We will not tolerate harassment of any employee by any person, for any reason.

### The Environment

We are committed to preserving and protecting the environment and to economic growth and prosperity. These goals are not only consistent but mutually reinforcing. Protecting the environment is an investment in all our futures. We are also committed to constructive participation with all stakeholders in the ongoing process of sustainable growth.

### Conflicts of Interest

We must always act in the best interests of IHG and avoid any personal preference or advantage. This includes situations where personal, family or financial interests conflict with those of IHG, or where an employee holds an interest in an organisation seeking to do business with the Group. If you encounter a potential conflict of interest you must disclose the details and stand back from any related decision-making process. In addition, you should avoid apparent conflicts of interest which occur where a reasonable observer might assume there is a conflict of interest and, therefore, a loss of objectivity in your dealings on behalf of the Group.

### Relationships with Business Partners

It is in IHG's best interests to establish mutually beneficial commercial relationships with our guests, suppliers and business partners. Offering or accepting gifts, entertainment or personal favours is only acceptable if their value is modest and the practice is consistent with local business culture. You should not accept gifts, entertainment or favours which might place you under any obligation or which would reasonably be viewed as influencing business transactions. Any gift or hospitality of more than token value must be reported to senior management who will determine whether it can be accepted.

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## **Competition**

The Group is committed to open, free and fair competition in all our markets. We will compete vigorously but honestly, observing all competition and anti-trust laws. Guidance on competition and anti-trust compliance can be found in regional competition law and anti trust compliance manuals and guidelines.

## **Fraud**

We will not tolerate fraud of any description. You have an obligation to report any suspicions of fraud in accordance with the Disclosure Procedures detailed at the end of this Code.

## **Property, Assets and Resources**

IHG resources must be protected and must not be used for personal gain. This includes tangible assets such as stocks, equipment and cash, in addition to intangible items such as intellectual property, computer systems and confidential information. Information held within the Group such as business plans, pricing, financial data and guest details remain the property of IHG and must not be disclosed outside the Group without prior permission. The storage and use of guest data may be further subject to data privacy regulations which must be complied with.

## **Political Activity and Contributions**

We are all free to take part personally in political activities in our own time. However, we must not create the impression that we represent the Group in these matters. In dealing with regulatory and public policy issues that affect the Group, we do not make party political donations but deal with the government of the day on matters which concern the business.

## **Records, Disclosure and Communications**

As a publicly listed Group, we are required to comply with the rules relating to disclosure of material and price-sensitive information under the relevant UK and US legislation, and the rules and guidance of the United Kingdom Listing Authority and the New York Stock Exchange.

In accordance with our disclosure obligations, financial communications and reports will be delivered in a manner that facilitates the highest degree of clarity of content and meaning so that readers and users will be able to quickly and accurately determine their significance and consequence. Matters relating to the activities and performance of the Group must not be discussed with representatives of the media unless specifically authorised as part of your role. Our Group Communications department will co-ordinate any announcements, statements or responses to questions from the media, particularly those which relate to share price or commercially sensitive information.

## **Insider Information**

If you are in possession of confidential price-sensitive information which has not been made public and could affect our share price you may not buy or sell shares in IHG, or provide such information to third parties for that purpose. In addition, certain employees may not deal in IHG securities at any stage during pre-defined 'close' periods. The full details of this policy can be found in the Code of Practice for Dealing in IHG plc Securities.

## **Legal Compliance**

We are committed to compliance with the laws and regulations of the countries and jurisdictions in which we operate. In the unlikely event that a local law or regulation conflicts with the Code, you should continue to comply with the law but you must report the circumstances of the conflict according to the Disclosure Procedures detailed at the end of this Code.

## **Disclosure Procedures**

The Group provides a stepped approach for raising questions or concerns over interpretation or violation of the Code. This includes provision of a confidential disclosure line which is operated by a third party. We do not permit retaliation against employees making good faith reports of suspected breaches of the Code.

Source: [www.ihgplc.com/index.asp?pageid=244#top](http://www.ihgplc.com/index.asp?pageid=244#top) (Accessed: 19/9/2010)

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## Appendix 25: Related research published by the author

### 1) Papers in refereed journals

Giousmpasoglou, C. (2010) Global Hospitality Managers: Myth or Reality? [Tourism Issues](#), Vol.13, pp. 47-74

Giousmpasoglou, C. (2010) A contextual approach of the Greek Management, [Tourism Issues](#), Vol. 11, pp. 32-58

Giousmpasoglou, C. (2009) A Cultural Perspective of the General Managers' work: the Greek 4 & 5\* hotels' case, [Tourism Issues](#), Vol.8, pp. 38-59

### 2) Conference Papers

Giousmpasoglou, C. (2011) Managing the hotel managers: HRM practices in Greek luxury hotels, paper for The International Conference on Tourism ([ICOT2011](#)): "Tourism in an Era of Uncertainty", Rhodes Island, Greece, 27-30 April 2011

Giousmpasoglou, C. and Stavrakis, D. (2011) National Culture and Management: the Greek luxury hotel GMs' case, paper for [The 2011 Athens Tourism Symposium](#), an "International Scientific Congress on Current Trends in Tourism Management and Tourism Policy", Athens, 2-3 February 2011

Giousmpasoglou, C. (2010) Implementing Europe 2020: A cultural approach, paper presented in the [16<sup>th</sup> Regional Development Conference](#) on "The Regional Dimension of the new EU strategy, Europe 2020", Harokopeio University, Athens, 15 October 2010 (in Greek)

Giousmpasoglou, C. (2010) The Global Hotel Manager: Myth or Reality? paper for the "[2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Tourism and Hospitality Management](#)", T.R.I. - Tourism Research Institute (ΔP.A.T.T.E.), 22-23 May 2010, Athens

Giousmpasoglou, C. (2009) Roles and Competencies of the General Managers in Greek 4 & 5\* hotels, paper presented in the [6<sup>th</sup> National Conference on "The role of the Hotel Manager"](#), T.R.I. - Tourism Research Institute (ΔP.A.T.T.E.), 7-8 March 2009, Athens (in Greek)

Giousmpasoglou, C. (2008) The GMs' Roles and Competencies Framework in Greek luxury hotels, paper presented in the "[International Workshop on Performance, Skills, Competences in the 21<sup>st</sup> century](#)", 11-12 Dec. 2008, Lisbon

Giousmpasoglou, C. (2008) A Cultural Perspective of the General Managers' work: the Greek 4 & 5\* hotels' case, paper presented in the "[1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Tourism and Hospitality Management](#)", T.R.I. - Tourism Research Institute (ΔP.A.T.T.E.), 13-15 June 2008, Athens

Giousmpasoglou, C. (2008) GMs' roles and competencies in Greek 4 and 5\* hotels: A cultural approach, paper presented in 1st Scientific Conference on "Education, Development and Production", 17-18 April 2008, Amfissa



Created by Charalampos Giousmpasoglou