



The Competency of Undergraduates in Air Cargo Management Program of Civil Aviation Training Center as Perceived by a Business Organization

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Abstract

This research was to study the competency of the undergraduates in Air Cargo Management Program of Civil Aviation Training Center. The tools was an in-depth structured interview by interview from key informants management and a sample population was the management from aviation-related companies which were composed of supervisors, managers, directors, or partnerships, airlines of department manager or deputy supervisors or deputies or vice presidents or deputies, chiefs or heads of or supervisors of twenty people. The sample was selected by using purposive sampling and which covered three areas: 1) knowledge, 2) Skills, and 3) Attributes. The result of the research indicated the competency of undergraduates' companies considered was divided into three areas: 1) knowledge which included English communication for air cargo transportation and aviation technical English, air cargo management, accounting and marketing in air cargo transportation, laws, regulations, rules, air cargo regulations 2) Skills comprised of English for air cargo skills, air cargo management skills, accounting – marketing in air cargo skills, technology for air cargo skills and 3) Attributes comprised of interpersonal relationships, responsibility, ethics, leadership and creativity.

Keywords: *The undergraduate in air cargo management program, Knowledge, Skills and attributes*

1. Introduction

The Civil Aviation Training Center is a training center that provides undergraduates the knowledge to work in air traffic control management, airport management, and air cargo management in accordance with requirements of the Department of Civil Aviation and the International Civil Aviation Organization (Civil Aviation Training Center, 2012). The requirements of the curricula also comply with the National Education Act of B.E.1999 and the announcement of Ministry of University Affairs for the standard of undergraduate programs B.E.1999 (The Ministry of University Affairs, 2000). Along with the Thai Government's policy for Thailand to become the ASEAN regional hub and the World for air cargo transportation as specified in the country strategic plan of the Office of the National Economic and Social Advisory Council, as well as being a part of ASEAN Economic Community (National Economic and Social Advisory Council, 2012). Economic growth also has an impact on the increase of airfreight. The result is the higher demand of personnel in air cargo transportation according to the expansion of air cargo transportation business and the increase of number of air cargo flights. However, career capability, English language, ethics, and personality are the essential quality workplaces. Quality Learning Foundation (QLF) commented that the development of workforce in Thailand has never been able to fill the needs of job market or workplaces (Quality Learning and Foundation, 2013). The workers lack of language skill, analytical skill, technological skill, marketing skill, and tolerance. The workers in air cargo transportation were required a good knowledge of transportation as well as skills and good attributes in performing their duty. Responsibility, attention in performing their duty, and mindfulness good attributes the Department of Civil Aviation has specified (Department of Civil Aviation, 2012). The comment concurs with a research made by Naret Surasit and his team, which indicated that the capability of undergraduates in air cargo management did not catch up with the winds of change of the aviation industry and the intense competition of the industry itself (Nares Surasit and team, 2011). They lack of adaptability to the multiple nature of the workplace, time keeping, hardworking, English communication skill, comprehensive view of work as a whole, analytical skills, endurance, discipline, participation, and public consciousness. The research also



found that the knowledge of undergraduates in air cargo management did not align with the changes of the aviation industry. The researcher was interested in the competency of the undergraduates who completed Air Cargo Management Program from Civil Aviation Training Center and have the competency required by companies in domestic aviation industries.

2. Objective

2.1 To study the competency of undergraduates who completed the Air Cargo Management Program from Civil Aviation Training Center in relation to the opinion given from aviation-related companies

2.2 To Study the guideline and suggestion for improving the characteristic of the undergraduates in Air Cargo Management Program

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Research Concept

The concept of research in studying the competency of undergraduates in Air Cargo Management Program from Civil Aviation Training Center comprised a framework on the competency of David C. McClelland (Rusameethammachot, 2002) and the concept of knowledge and an ability of undergraduates in Air Cargo Management Program from Civil Aviation Training Center (Civil Aviation Training Center, 2000) in relation to the concept of knowledge and ability according to the International Federation of Freight Forwarder Association (FIATA) (International Federation of Freight Forwarder Association, 2015) and Thai Airfreight Forwarders Association (TAFA) (Thai Airfreight Forwarders Association, 2012).

Research Methodology, Population and sample

The population and sample were the management of companies which the undergraduates in Air Cargo Management Program went to their internship. The management was composed of supervisors, managers, directors, or partnerships, airlines of department manager or deputy supervisors or deputies or vice presidents or deputies, chiefs or heads of or supervisors of units of twenty people selected by using purposive sampling method.

Tool used in research

The tools used in the research was an in-depth structured interview that asked administrators of companies as key informants in the competency of the undergraduates in Air Cargo Management Program from Civil Aviation Training Center in three areas consisting of knowledge, skills, and attributes.

Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed and synthesized data from the interviews with the management of companies using content analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

Analyzing and synthesizing data from the interviews with the management of companies concluded the competency of the undergraduates in Air Cargo Management Program from Civil Aviation Training Center comprising knowledge, skills, and attributes as follows:

Knowledge,

1) Communication

1.1 English in air cargo transportation, which comprised technical terms for air cargo transportation, abbreviations, symbols, acronyms used in air cargo transportation, correspondent, and debates on shipping activities.

1.2 Aviation Technical English, which comprised technical terms of airplane structure, the airplane technical terms for air cargo working area, technical abbreviations, symbols, and airplane cargo compartments.



2) Air Cargo Management

2.1 Air transport systems comprised cargo transportation, issuance of air bills, rules or regulations for documents pertaining to the regions, agency systems, transshipments, rates of air cargo charges established by IATA, import and export logistic systems, and freight agents.

2.2 The Aviation Safety comprised obtaining the certificates of airworthiness and personnel licensing for safety & security

2.3 Air cargo procedures comprised goods inspection procedures, goods characteristics, identification of goods, weight and volume readings, standardized warehousing and warehouse inventory management systems, transportation of goods, transportation of goods by joint agreement, knowledge of export and import processes, and knowledge of payments between carriers.

3) Accounting and marketing in air cargo transportation

3.1 Air cargo proration comprised the revenue sharing agreement for collaboration between freight forwarders, bilateral and multi-lateral agreements of air freight forwarders, scope and multi-lateral agreement on the allocation of revenue.

3.2 Accounting and marketing comprised the revenue collection, accounting principle practice, service payments, trading knowledge, pricing, knowledge of accounting and marketing, negotiation as in market function and sale representative, negotiation and maintaining good relationships between the operator and customers.

4) Laws, regulations, rules, guidelines for air cargo transportation

4.1 International air cargo rules and regulations comprised laws that govern the international transportation and American transportation, terms of the International Air Transport Association, the Convention of International Civil Aviation and Appendixes, agreements of the International Civil Aviation Organization, fee rate guidelines and fluctuations of air cargo transportation according to IATA and Annexes.

4.2 Thai air cargo rules and regulations comprised the requirements from Thai Airfreight Forwarders Association (TAFA), the requirements of air cargo transportation from each airline, Thai aviation laws, laws on financial activities, and the terms for export representatives in air cargo.

5 Technology for air cargo transportation comprised the knowledge of computers, Microsoft Office for presentation, the use of NPS program for shipping and computer program for logistic application, such as, CHORUS.

Skills

1) English language skill for air cargo transportation comprised English language usage skill, reading, writing and communication using electronic documents, technical terms of air cargo transportation, communication between workgroups, Interactive communication skill in both Thai and English languages.

2) Air cargo management skills comprised the following skills: cargo shipping, calculation of cargo space, price calculation per unit of area, freight rate, documentation, goods declaration, and report of shipment status.

3) Accounting and marketing of air cargo skills comprised negotiations, investments, guidelines, rates and fluctuations of air cargo transportation, accounting method.

4) Technological skills for air cargo comprised computer, Microsoft Office applications, usage of Chorus program, interactive electronic documents, presentation using PowerPoint program.

Attributes,

1) Interpersonal relationship comprised being able to work with others constructively, having good interpersonal and socialized skills.

2) Responsibility comprised the responsibility to oneself, others, and the society, attention to one's duty, getting work done within the specified time, being on time.

3) Ethics comprised principle of respect to and trust of oneself, the respect the rights and dignity of human beings, being professional in one's profession, and having public consciousness.



- 4) Leadership comprised a positive attitude, adaptability to changes, politeness, loyal to the company, having a set goal for work and personal life, being a role model of having good personality for others.
- 5) Initiative comprised enthusiasm, learning of work and new things, making observations, attention to details, intelligent thought, rational expression, creativity, and embracing changes.

4.2 Discussion

The results of the analysis and synthesis of the data from the key informants that is the administrators of aviation-related companies addressed the competency of the undergraduates in the Air Cargo Management Program which determined requirements in the three areas of knowledge, skills and attributes. The Thai Airfreight Forwarders Association (Thai Airfreight Forwarders Association, 2012) stated that the shipper should have the knowledge of the air cargo, regulations, Customs Act, Investment Promotion Act, logistics technology, knowledge of customs formality, Internet business skills, and leadership in both changes and competition. The relationship between individual and the organization, punctuality, and social responsibility, the similar are stated in the Higher Education Development Plan No. 11 (2002-2016)(Higher Education Development Plan No. 11, 2015) that covers five areas including intellectual skills, interpersonal skills and responsibility, numerical analysis skills, communication and information technology skills, and ethics. The results of the analysis and synthesis of data from interviews with the management of aviation related companies found that the competencies of undergraduate students in the Air Cargo Management Program were as follows:

4.2.1 Knowledge

Knowledge comprised English communication for air cargo, aviation technical English, air cargo management, air transport systems and aviation safety, air cargo procedures, accounting and marketing of air cargo, cargo proration, the laws, rules and regulations relating to the international air cargo, Thai air cargo rules and regulations, and technology for air cargo. The draft of the air Transport Act recommends that persons who are working in the air transport system shall have good knowledge of air cargo as well as change and competition for the growth of the logistics industry. In accordance with the findings of Andreea Popescu, Pinar Keskinocak, and Issam al Mutawaly addressed the growth of air cargo industry in all regions (Andreea Popescu, Pinar Keskinocak, and Issam al Mutawaly, 2010). Personnel must be knowledgeable in airport management, warehouse management, temporary storage of goods, being flexible, maintaining a high level of performance, and be knowledgeable in the calculation of areas, goods, and weights to be transported. They must be knowledgeable in marketing, transport planning of goods to the airport, expediting shipping with airline networks. Furthermore, they must be knowledgeable in technological management to reduce overlapping, in the demand and supply chain, strategic planning, Commerce, inventory systems, warehouse management, pricing and revenue management.

4.2.2 Skills

Skills comprised English language for air cargo, the air cargo management, accounting and marketing of air cargo, and technology for air cargo (Thai Airfreight Forwarders Association, 2012). Due to the Thai Airfreight Forwarders Association, shipper should have the skills to do business over the Internet, communication skills for competition in the air cargo business. Create relationship to have a network skills, technology for air cargo, in accordance with the findings of Chiang Poached (Powchit, C., 2010), it was found that the competency of the undergraduates' skills in the opinion of employers greatly needed three skills are communication skills, performance skills, and technical skills (Thai Airfreight Forwarders Association, 2012)

4.2.3 Attribute

Attributes comprised the interpersonal relationships, responsible, ethical, leadership, initiative, and comply with the standard qualifications incumbent on the recipient of a bachelor of logistics degree defines the characteristics of the undergraduated have ethics in their profession and society, can work creatively with others, high discipline and integrity (Office of The Higher Education Commission, 1999). The International Federation of Freight Forwarder Association: FIATA. Noted the desirable characteristics of



responsibility, punctual service, leadership, interpersonal relationships, agencies and competitors should be ethical and professional (International Federation of Freight Forwarder Association, 2015). These are consistent with the findings of Thitima AtsawaPromtada and Team found that the undergraduates, whose executive companies required that they must be proud of their profession, listen to the opinions of the others, are able to adapt to other people, honor the others, and possess creative thinking (Thitima Atsawapromtada and Team, 1999).

5. Conclusion

The outcome of this research discovered that these competencies are vital and that to the education management of the education institute should instill such competencies mentioned in this article within their students. This will have a direct influence to the undergraduate student as graduates with the above-mentioned skills, knowledge and attributes perform well in work and are highly valued by aviation companies. And the researcher has suggested further research, as follows.

1. The results of the competency of the under graduates in air cargo management program has useful information below:

1.1 Civil Aviation Training Center will be able to inform curriculum development in air cargo management program to meet the aviation companies' requirement.

1.2 Institutions that handle air cargo management program can use the result to develop graduates to meet the aviation companies' requirement.

2. The recommendations or the guideline for improvement.

2.1 There should be close cooperation between educational institutions and enterprises in development, curriculum and learning experience training.

2.2 Students should be prepared for themselves. They must search and actively seek technology various related services to be adapted to work in the hotel business or the other related fields.

3. The results to conduct the next research topics are as follows:

3.1 The development competency model of undergraduates in air cargo management program of Civil Aviation Training Center.

3.2 To study the satisfaction of aviation's companies to the competency of undergraduate student in the air cargo management program.

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