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EXCELLENCE

EHL CASE STUDY



# How to overcome the Hospitality Industry skills gap in India?

Development of industry-aligned  
training programs



Confederation of Indian Industry



# Development of Industry-Aligned Training Programs

Every person deserves the opportunity to make the most of their talents through formal and hands-on education, which should be a core objective of every country's educational system. The hospitality industry is vast in India and is projected to grow over the next decade.

However, the industry is facing challenges including lack of trained staff and suffered drastically during the global pandemic. Here, we'll discuss the skill gap in the industry and how partnerships between training programs, tools and locations are breaking down these barriers.

## The Hospitality Industry in India

Before COVID-19 shut down global traveling, the hospitality sector in India contributed to 6.8% of the country's GDP. The continued growth in this sector is vital to the nation's economy, especially since India has become popular for foreign and domestic travelers seeking exceptional scenery and historical sites.

However, India's hospitality sector faces numerous obstacles. These include regulatory complications, limited infrastructure, high taxation rates, environmental concerns and a trained labor shortage. Another challenge (which caused many of the above obstacles) is the economic woes of COVID-19 and subsequent following variances.

Due to the Pandemic, many people also missed out on two years of working at their craft and honing their skills, which pushed them to consider solutions for re-skilling and up-skilling their staff quickly, hence curtailing 'churn-out'.

## The Skill Gap in India

One of the primary challenges of the Indian hospitality industry is the substantial skills gap between the availability of experienced skilled workers and demand. Currently, only 2.3% of the Indian 'Hospitality' workforce as a whole has undergone skills training. This is problematic in the Indian hospitality sector with a shortfall, with nearly 80% of staff working with little to no training.



While the industry has high standards due to its reliance on customer satisfaction, employers are finding that the workforce is being supplied with workers lacking education, skills and real-world experience. India is in dire need for globally recognized vocational education training programs to create a pool of qualified and talented professionals.

## An International Partnership to Bridge the Skill Gap in India

ITC Hotels is a highly acclaimed hotel chain in India. ITC operates more than 115 hotels in 80 destinations under six distinct brands. With 'Namaste' as the symbol of ITC's brand experience and commitment to 'Responsible Luxury', ITC Hotels has been awarded a LEED® Platinum grade due to their environmental efforts.

CII is the Confederation of Indian Industry, a non-governmental organization that represents the interests of the Indian business sector. It works to create a conducive environment for the growth and development of the industry in India. It also provides various services and initiatives to its members, such as policy advocacy, business networking, skill development, innovation, and social responsibility.

To help address the hospitality skill gap issue, ITC Hotels and the CII (Confederation of Indian Industry) partnered with EHL. In culmination, they launched the VET by EHL Professional Diploma Programs. This industry-aligned apprenticeship format is aimed to meeting the needs of targeted individuals with a high school diploma. The VET by EHL program is already helping to bridge the skill gap, which will strengthen India's position as a leader in global hospitality.

The VET by EHL Swiss Professional Diplomas encompasses 18 months of training and is divided into three levels of learning that build upon one another to culminate into a professional diploma. The course levels include foundation, intermediate and advanced course segments that include: Culinary, Food & Beverage Service, and Rooms Program.





All programs and training sessions follow the stringent quality assurance standards of VET by EHL. Students are guaranteed 100% placement after completing the program, and they will be top candidates for fine hotels and restaurants around the world. This type of innovation aspires to build a pipeline of exceptionally qualified hospitality workers that can meet the expansion of the hospitality sector in India.

## Developing Successful In-House Hotel Training

One thing that makes this partnership so unique is that The VET by EHL Programs are a combination of online or in-person courses that are implemented and practiced with hands-on experience in the restaurant and hotel. Students have the chance to show their best during real-world interactions with the guests and their teammates.

Being able to shadow more experienced employees gives them an edge that cannot compare to non-interactive experiences. Select operations managers have been certified by EHL to facilitate the program, and have certified instructors, and have developed one of the most successful in-house hospitality training programs in the world.

“This program provides students with a splendid opportunity to skill and re-skill themselves with an international curriculum closer to home and contribute to the immense hospitality and tourism potential of the state. This Swiss Professional Diploma Program will place them on par, if not above, with students from leading hospitality schools in India, with the benefit of On-the-Job training.”

Nilesh Mitra, Vice President, Talent Management, ITC Hotels

# Key Advantages of In-House Hotel Training

There are several advantages to having an industry-aligned training program for the hospitality industry. Beyond narrowing the skill gap, The integration of the VET by EHL program, into the ITC Hotels' operating environment benefits students and the economy while saving owners' money by having in-house training that leads to consistency in performance, staff retention and guest satisfaction.

## 1. Cost Savings

In-house hospitality training eliminates the need for expensive outside vendors for educational and training solutions.

## 2. Time-Efficiency

Students can access training materials immediately with in-house training. This saves time for students and teachers, who can avoid ordering from outside vendors, which can also be costly.

## 3. Customizability

While ITC has a solid foundation for comprehensive training to bridge the skills gap in India, each program has been adapted to fit the needs of the operations at ITC Hotels. This lets hospitality organizations to develop an in-house program that best meets their specific needs.

## 4. Consistency

Staff should be uniformly trained to follow the same procedures and protocol in the employee handbook. In-house training allows students to exhibit consistency in their work that meets their employers' standards.

## 6. Efficiency

In-house training allows students to have direct access to the educators and facilitators of the program. Immediate guidance helps prevent the development of habits that don't mesh with the company's standards.

## 7. Quality

With the hands-on practices in-house, educators can provide each hotel with quality staff training that allows them to provide top-notch customer experiences.



# The Future of VET by EHL in India

By the end of 2023, an estimated 500 students will be enrolled in ITC's VET by EHL professional hospitality diploma program to help bridge the skills gap in India.

Students will acquire soft skills through simulations that help them develop a strategic mindset that can be useful in pursuing jobs in an array of hospitality endeavors and junior consulting. EHL uses a combination of skills and thought leadership, including autonomous thinking, respect and caring about guests' satisfaction.

The VET by EHL Professional Diploma aspires to become the next significant HR and L&D innovation within the hospitality industry to promote innovative ideas that are transforming the future of education. Essentially, it has the potential to revolutionize the training and develop of India's hospitality sector.

"The Swiss professional diploma in hospitality training program was a great initiative for enhancing the skill set of enthusiastic hospitality students. They enjoyed the interactive sessions and gained valuable skills that they can apply to their daily work. They also felt more confident, empowered, and motivated after completing this program."

Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General, CII



# Solving the Skill Gap in India with In-House Hotel Trainings

If you are in the hospitality industry and want to be a part of overcoming the skill gap in India, check out ITC Hotels' industry-aligned in-house training programs. These programs were developed by EHL group under the name 'VET by EHL' and give students the chance to learn and work at luxurious ITC Hotels in India and at other VET by EHL Centers around the world.

Having a post-graduation job guarantee from CII lets certified students have confidence that those who meet the program success-criteria are in for a recipe of success. This success is not only personal, but is also a big win for the industry as a whole. The VET by EHL program has proven to be an effective solution for addressing India's shortage of skilled workers in the hospitality industry.

The success of the VET by EHL program is evident with over 10000 applications received from aspirants. This has paved the way for ITC Hotels to integrate the program into many other hotels within their portfolio. These initiatives and programs have significantly contributed to the strengthening of India's hospitality sector by educating enthusiastic learners on how to provide exceptional service.

Bridging the skill gap through in-house education will ensure a qualitative pipeline of passionate individuals, that will contribute to the country's talent pool of hospitality professionals.



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