

# The "How To" Guide

## Choosing a Career in the Hospitality Industry

### Thinking about a career option in the Accommodation and Food Services sector?

*This industry can offer a wide variety of careers - but what does this mean to you? Where do you start? What types of careers are available?*

With the right skills and education there are lots of opportunities for diverse and challenging careers. Share this with staff that may be looking for opportunities regarding career progression within your organization or growth within the industry.

### **So, it is time to decide what you will do with your life. What will you choose?**

Perhaps you might consider a career in the Accommodation and Food Services sector.

**What is the Accommodation and Food Services Sector?** This sector is defined as the activity of providing lodging and food and beverage services, which include but are not limited to hotels, resorts, casino hotels, bed and breakfast accommodation and restaurants. The Accommodation and Food Services sector employs 7,060 people across the Grand Erie Region (Brant, Norfolk and Haldimand Counties); and offers a wide range of employment and career advancement opportunities. Locally the Food Services and Drinking Places sector represents a significant portion of all business located in Grand Erie, it is the largest source of SME (small and medium enterprise) employment in Brant, and second largest source in Haldimand-Norfolk. During discussions with local employers it was identified that very few new entrants in this sector are aware of the diverse career paths or entrepreneurial opportunities.

**If you've ever thought about becoming a chef on a famous cruise liner, or dreamed about managing a chain of restaurants, the hospitality industry might have what you're looking for. If you are entertaining the idea of a career in the hospitality industry, there is a good chance that a course or program exists somewhere in Ontario that will provide the education, skills and training necessary to get you started. Hospitality-tourism is one of Canada's largest and fastest growing industries. For those considering a career in food services, bartending, cruise, airline and travel-related services, colleges are often the best place for introductory and advanced training.**

The courses offered at the college level cover a wide range of education and training, from part-time courses on bartending or cake decorating to three-year diploma programs on culinary hotel administration with industry internships. "Many students realize that without a proper education, they won't go anywhere," says Robert Lebrun, co-ordinator of the School for Hospitality at Canadore College of Applied Arts and Technology in North Bay. "A solid education with practical experience will give students the skills and training they require to move ahead in their careers."

Graduates often go on to fulfilling careers in restaurants, food and beverage management, banquet and catering, hotels and many other exciting fields. More than 90% of today's hospitality graduates usually land a job in their chosen field of study within six months.

Although the hospitality industry is expanding, the search for skilled staff remains a challenge for restaurant and hotel owners. To address labour shortages and changing work requirements, the hospitality industry regularly consults with colleges about new job skills and requirements.

"One of the key employment trends over the next five years will be in the area of chefs and management positions," says John Walker, dean of faculty of Hospitality and Tourism at George Brown College. "Excellent employment opportunities will exist in those areas for students who possess the right skill sets and work experience."

"Employers in the hospitality industry today are interested in moving people up," says Peter Wells, professor at Seneca College's Centre for Tourism and Leisure, King Campus. "There is a much greater emphasis on multi-skilled managers, and 'soft skills' such as dealing with co-workers and customers, teamwork abilities and communications skills."



The following descriptions outline the different levels of hospitality positions you might enter into.

**Entry-Level:** This is where you start; the experience and skill you will gain in these positions can prepare you for advancement in your career. Typically the tasks are related to your position and are a valuable component to the success of the hospitality entity.

**Skilled-Level:** This is the next step where you will develop specific skills and capabilities that can be transferred from one position to another (you are on your way).

**Managerial-Level:** This is when your experience, training and initiative are combined to create your ability to lead employees and manage business.

The following are specific career opportunities you can obtain in the hospitality industry:

**Accommodation Services Subsector:**

Accommodation Service Managers, Hotel Front Desk Clerks, Chefs, Cooks, Restaurant and Food Service Managers, Recreation Sports and Fitness Program and Service Directors

**Food Services and Drinking Places Subsector:**

Restaurant Manager, Food Service Supervisor, Banquet Manager, Chef, Cook, Bartender, Food and Beverage Server, Bar Manager, Butcher, Baker

**The hospitality industry, like many other industries, seeks and requires a certain personality to be successful, you must:**

- Like people and work well with others
- Be reliable and a hard worker
- Have strong communication skills
- Be willing to sacrifice – you may be required to work split shifts or weekends
- Maintain a professional appearance
- Have “Common Sense” (Be able to think on your feet to respond to guests’ needs)

## Do you have someone on staff looking for some EDUCATION OR TRAINING in hospitality?

- You can search Ontario colleges that offer various food, accommodation and hospitality training at:  
[www.ontariocolleges.ca](http://www.ontariocolleges.ca)
- A list of Ontario registered private career colleges that offer programming can be found at:  
[www.ontario.ca/en/services\\_for\\_residents/053263](http://www.ontario.ca/en/services_for_residents/053263)
- Find out about the range of postsecondary qualifications available in Ontario colleges and universities at:  
[www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/postsecondary/schoolsprogramms/](http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/postsecondary/schoolsprogramms/) or contact them by phone at, 1-800-387-5514
- Look information on employment, career planning, education and job opportunities at: IWIN  
[www.iwin.on.ca/english/index.cfm?lb=14](http://www.iwin.on.ca/english/index.cfm?lb=14)

Source: Employed Labour Force, 2006 Census, Statistics Canada

Source: Gregory L. DeShields, Editorial; Associate Director of Industry Relations, Temple University School of Tourism and Hospitality Management

Source: Ross Fattori, Toronto Freelancer (<http://jobboomcc.canoe.ca/News/2002/04/10/1224893-sun.html>)

Source: Learn Hub; <http://hotel-industry.learnhub.com/lesson/13362-choosing-a-career-in-the-hospitality-industry>

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