



CORE-VET

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Athens | 23 October 2014

skills  
sharing  
gathering

European Project CORE-VET: Provision and enhancement of professional development opportunities and training in tourism and hospitality

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# CORE-VET

CORE-VET  
tips 4 skills

## table of contents

1. CORE-VET project.....	4
2. “Tips 4 Skills: Skills Sharing Gathering” Agenda.....	6
3. The innovative public speaking model True Talks® .....	7
4. «Tips 4 Skills» speakers.....	8
5. Contributions - Articles	
• Vaso Kollia, General Secretariat for Gender Equality.....	13
• Olga Stavropoulou, Militos Consulting S.A.....	14
• Vicky Branika, Hellenic American Union.....	16
• Dimitrios Laloumis, Technological Educational Institute of Athens.....	17
• State Scholarships Foundation.....	18
• Aimilios Karamanlis, Knowl for Education and Lifelong Learning.....	19
• Jens Koslowsky, Militos Consulting S.A.....	20
• Anestis Anastasiou, AA&Partners & OESYNE Thessaloniki & Central Macedonia.....	22
6. Notes.....	23

## CORE-VET project

The European project CORE-VET started out in November 2012 with the aim **to provide VET possibilities and better employment opportunities in the tourism and hospitality sector for unemployed people and underperforming employees with limited qualifications, by improving their skills and competences** in three occupational areas: Reception and Front office Services, House Keeping Services, and Restaurant and Bar Services. The deliverable of the project is a training tool targeting the core skills and competences needed in the three occupational areas, including teaching and learning material, and a user friendly e-learning platform.

CORE-VET aims to facilitate the process of adapting a training module to the necessary basic skills in the tourism and hospitality sector, which is targeted directly at the risk-group of low-skilled employees and workers. The project promotes the recognition of smaller segments of learning, and can be a powerful motivator for underemployed who are oftentimes neglected in the VET systems.

In order to create the project's educational material, the research team conducted a European survey during the first months of the project, in order to clearly define the skills, competencies and training needs of the target group, and assess existing training models, in order to identify and analyze the needs of the end-users.

The consortium partners of CORE-VET in Croatia, Greece and Cyprus initially recorded the current situation in the tourism industry, and outlined the current needs of the employees in tourism enterprises. The main message conveyed by the respondents was the need for educational material that will meet their needs. Meanwhile, the target group participated actively in the formation of the educational material via focus groups that took place in the participating countries. The results of the focus groups discussions were analyzed by the consortium partners, in order to prepare basic content and material for the training tools of CORE-VET.

Subsequently, the views and recommendations of the participants were incorporated in the final development of the educational material in order for the training provision to respond optimally to the educational needs of the industry. When the preparation of the training material and the online platform were completed, the CORE-VET partners invited unskilled workers in Croatia, Greece and Cyprus to take part in the pilot test of the program, evaluating in this way the of the educational material, and above all, its performance in improving professional services in the sector.

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CORE\_VET

The specific objectives of CORE-VET are to:

- Enhance the work performance of low skilled workers and improve their employability.
- Offer a flexible, interactive and user friendly e-learning platform to unskilled workers, enabling them to improve their skills and take advantage of opportunities to improve their position in the labor market.
- Provide SMEs employers in the tourism sector, who more than often lack the proper training schemes, with a flexible and easy to use training tool in order to enhance the skills and competences and potentially the productivity and performance of their staff.
- Provide VET trainers with adequate innovative tools and resources – in terms of methodology – to address the needs of semiskilled and low-skilled workers and employees.

CORE-VET has been funded with support from the European Commission within the framework of Lifelong Learning Programme of the Education and Culture Directorate General and is implemented by eight partners in five European countries (Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Romania and Austria).



militos



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At a time when employment positions are very limited, tourism and CORE-VET's outcomes may constitute a path away from unemployment by offering new jobs.

CORE-VET  
tips  
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# “Tips 4 Skills: Skills Sharing Gathering” Agenda

- 11:30-12:00 Arrival & Welcome Coffee
- 12:00-12:15 Leonidas ANTONAKOPOULOS Head of the European Parliament Information Office in Athens
- 12:15-12:30 Glykeria ANYFANDI General Secretariat for Gender Equality Associate, Ministry of Interior
- 12:30-12:45 Vicky BRANIKA Chief Operating Officer, Hellenic American Union
- 12:45-13:00 Zrinka MARUSIC IZTZG Institute for Tourism
- 13:00-13:15 Dimitrios LALOUMIS Associate Professor / Department of Tourism Management -Technological Educational Institute of Athens
- 13:15-13:30 Tatiana RIZOPOULOU North Tree, Horeca Skills Expert
- 13:30-13:45 Giorgos DROGOUDIS Senior Project Manager, Militos Consulting S.A.
- 13:45-14:00 Diamantis KITRIDIS Social Media Skills Expert, Citrine Marketing Communication
- 14:00-15:00 Lunch Break



- 15:00-15:15 Dimitris PITOULIS Executive Director, Olive Press Hotel in Lesvos
- 15:15-15:30 Dimitrios BALIS Journalist / TV &Radio Producer
- 15:30-15:45 Nektarios NIKOLOPOULOS Owner, Albion Bar & Restaurant
- 15:45-16:00 Anestis ANASTASIOU General Manager & Senior Trainer AA&Partners & President of OESYNE Thessaloniki & Central Macedonia
- 16:00-16:15 Tina TORIBABA Communications Manager, Hilton Athens Hotel
- 16:15-16:30 Thodoris KOUTSOVOULOS Owner, MomixBar Molecular Mixology
- 16:30-17:00 True questions by the audience

Conference Moderator Mrs. Olga Stavropoulou President, Militos Consulting S.A.

## Innovative public speaking model True Talks®

The innovative public speaking model True Talks®, an inspiration of the team of Militos Consulting S.A., was created as a conference presentation tool for achieving productive public training through direct communication with the professionals in the field of tourism and hospitality.

The purpose of the model is focused on the ability of the audience to develop and demonstrate skills via the unique and practical advice (tips) given by professionals.

The use of examples and practical advice are the key-elements that could serve as future tools for the professional development of the participants of the conference.

Specifically the model is divided into three parts of five minutes (5') each:

- **True story 5'**  
Every story is different and no career path is the same. The speakers are invited to share their unique and compelling stories with the public! In this section, the audience will draw on the speakers' experiences and possibly identify some common elements and as a result encourage its professional development.
- **True skills 5'**  
The professionals are the ones who know better what skills are required for their profession. The speakers will share this knowledge with anyone interested in learning what skills are actually needed in tourism and hospitality. They will transfer their expertise that is directly related to their profession.
- **True tips 5'**  
Education and training are equally important as practical experience. The speakers will give some personal tips about their profession. This could be the key to success for others who have not thought about it, or experienced it.

Leonidas Antonakopoulos



Head of the European Parliament Information Office in Athens

Political Scientist, he studied Public Law and Political Science in Athens Law School and has Post-graduate Degrees in Political Science from Strasbourg's University Law School as well as from the European Studies Institute of Brussels University. He is an official of the European Union since 1990, and has a long working experience in Public Information and Political Communication. Since November 2010, he is the Head of the European Parliament Information Office in Athens.

## Glykeria Anyfandi

Special Adviser to the Secretary General for Gender Equality, Ministry of Interior



Glykeria Anyfandi holds a PhD in Social and Educational Policy (University of Peloponnese), MA in Communications Studies (Institute of Communications Studies, University of Leeds) and BA in Sociology (Pantion University, Athens). Head of Communication and Coordination of Project Development at the Eugenides Foundation from 2002 to 2013; Lecturer Adjunct at University of Peloponnese, Department of Social and Educational Policy from 2009-2011; Advisor to the Minister of the Aegean and later to the Alternate Minister of the Exterior on issues of political communication; Journalist, specialising in audio-visual issues. She has been involved in various research projects on non-formal learning, science communication and policy initiatives related to participatory science governance and development. Active evaluator of the European Commission (FP6, FP7, Horizon 2020).

## Vicky Branika

Chief Operating Officer, Hellenic American Union

Vicky Branika holds a Master in Business Administration by the Hellenic American University and a Bachelor degree in marketing by Deree College. She has been working at the Hellenic American Union since 1987, while since 1995 she has been appointed to executive positions. At present, she holds the position of Chief Operating Officer and, through this role, she is responsible for the total operation of the Hellenic American Union and its affiliated organizations, their strategic and operational planning and development, the management and development of human resources, the implementation of corporate strategy as well as the supervision of communication, marketing, sales and professional training.



*"Greece holds many advantages, from history and culture to its wonderful landscapes and the quality of agricultural products. However, the most important asset was, is and will be its people. People who possess the hospitality in their DNA, and despite the difficulties they face, they keep trying, and provide quality touristic services. Any attempt to the further development of tourism in our country will be incomplete and fragmentary if it won't take into account the human capital, and if it won't help people's own improvement through education, training and skills enhancement. Furthermore, the enhancement of the tourism's human resources is necessary to include, not only the technical knowledge that is related to specific structures or specific job profiles and transversal skills, such as the development of critical thinking, but also problem solving, decision making and social and communication skills. To this end, with the help of CORE-VET, we send out an open invitation to all directions that there should be continuous and close cooperation between the tourism stakeholders and the lifelong learning operators, so that all together will create the conditions for further development of the tourism sector, with all the positive effects on the economy, employment and growth".*

## Advice, experiences, knowledge transfer to enhance your skills!

Zrinka Marusic | IZTZG Institute for Tourism, Croatia

Zrinka Marušić is the expert adviser at the Institute for Tourism, Zagreb, Croatia. As a master of mathematics and statistics and university specialist in business economics, she is mainly engaged in setting the methodology of scientific and market research in tourism and application of statistical methods in data processing and analysis. She is the leader of the Institute's team for conducting longitudinal research on attitudes and expenditures of tourists in Croatia and the author of numerous scientific and professional papers. Her main interest includes estimation of contribution of tourism to national economy using the Tourism Satellite Account approach and methods for valuation of public goods in tourism.



Dimitrios Laloumis

Associate Professor / Department of Tourism Management –Technological Educational Institute of Athens

Dr Laloumis Dimitris is Associate Professor at the Tourism Business Management Department, School of Management and Economics, at the Technological Educational Institution of Athens. Dr Laloumis is the president of A.DE.T.T.E. as well. Dr Laloumis can demonstrate a considerable amount of studies. He is a Ph. Doctor at Pantion University, School of Sociology, in Organization and Management of Hotel Animation, he has a Business Management Degree from the University of Piraeus and a Hotel Management Degree from the Higher Tourist School of Rhodes. Dr Laloumis has been the General Manager in several hotels all over Greece and during the 80's has displayed a remarkable entrepreneurial activity at Corfu and Athens districts. Dr Laloumis has written a number of books concerning hospitality management, while taking part in numerous scientific comities and research activities.



Tatiana Rizopoulou M.Phil, LSE, UK | North Tree, Managing Partner



Tatiana Rizopoulou is a consultant. She is specialized in the analysis, design and project management in the field of education, business consulting and mentoring. For twenty years she was involved in various management positions and worked with companies and bodies both in Greece and in 25 different countries. After coming back from London in 2002 where she was cooperating with Andersen Consulting and the UK's QAA, she founded North Tree with the vision to reconcile her various scientific fields and professional experiences. She is a mathematician and holds a second undergraduate degree B. Sc (Hons) from the University of Surrey as well as M.Phil/M. Sc in Analysis, design & management from the London School of Economics. She graduated from Anatolia American College in 1990.

*"Tourism has always been, for our country, a service industry in which the human factor played and continues to play a leading role in the customer experience and satisfaction, as well as in the financial results of HO.RE.CA. Businesses. While nowadays, both of these factors are proved to be more contemporary than ever, they seem also to clash with the social and professional education executives who work in the same industry. Thus, HO.RE.CA. businesses in Greece face great difficulty to compensate for any infrastructure development, with similar quality services".*

Senior Manager, Militos Consulting S.A.

Giorgos Drogoudis is Senior Manager & Experienced Financial Analyst. He has a proven ability to multitask economic models and manage several projects concurrently. He is seasoned certified corporate trainer with extensive experience in projects of international scope – operate large budgets – impeccable record of delivering on time and on budget - trained more than 15.000 executives in over 800 domestic and multinational corporations. He is a results-driven individual who has developed proprietary financial applications and provided ad hoc financial analyses and business forecasting across multiple sectors. As a senior business consultant with more than 14 years of expertise, he has provided services developed custom financial applications and management tools for company executives. He is a goal-motivated team player with excellent presentation and relationship management skills. He holds an outstanding knowledge in Microsoft products and delivery of corporate professional training.



Diamantis Kitridis has more than 10 years of experience in: Word Of Mouth campaigns design & creation, developing strategies for social media, brand development & PR, blogging & community development, statistical analysis and evaluation of data from the Social Networks and optimization of search engines. He has specialized in design and development of integrated

strategies to promote companies, products, public figures and politicians in Social Media. He was initiator and creator of some of the first Facebook campaigns in Europe, 2007. In one of his assets is the book of Social Media Facebook Marketing which has written from him. Social Media Facebook Marketing is the first comprehensive book on the Facebook Marketing in Greek and foreign literature. Beyond, Diamantis Kitridis is Course Director and basic academic Dr. of Diploma in Social Media, which is done in collaboration with City Unity College.

*“How do Social Media contribute to the promotion of tourism? Catering companies, hotels, airlines and other businesses involved in the tourism industry are increasingly active in social networking services, in order to enhance their business image, gain access to more potential customers and ultimately increase their sales. During the speech various hints and tips will be developed concerning how the social media and the Internet can enhance the tourism product”.*



### Dimitris Pitoulis

Executive Director, Olive Press Hotel, Mytilene

Dimitrios Pitoulis graduated from Athens College and studied Business Administration at Athens Financial College - BCA. He followed a successful career in tourism services as a travel agency owner. He has also been involved with the management of ferries as a major shareholder at a ship owning company. From 2010 to 2014 he was elected as a Counselor at the Municipality of Palaio Faliro. He run for Mayor of Palaio Faliro at the 2014 elections with the “WE FOR FALIRO” party and was recently elected again as counselor for another five years. At the present he holds the position of executive director of the hotel complex “Olive Press Hotel & Appartments”, which is located in Molivos Lesvos. He is also a sales consultant to travel agents and a real estate manager.

*“The tourism sector constitutes the mirror of Greece to all foreigners. Unfortunately, many actions are done without any professionalism neither from the state nor the people who work in this field. There is no flexibility in hiring and firing the personnel and in many cases, labor law creates bureaucratic obstacles and problems for the employer”.*

### Dimitris Balis

Journalist / TV&Radio Producer



Dimitris Balis was born and lives in Athens. Educated in journalism, he has worked in many Greek TV channels and radio stations initially in sports broadcasts. He has been the producer of automotive and tourism broadcasts for twenty years. Specifically, “STREETS OF RESISTANCE” and “DRIVE & TRAVEL” are being broadcasted by many radio and TV stations in the Greece.

### Anestis Anastasiou

General Manager & Senior Trainer  
AA&Partners & President of OESYNE  
Thessaloniki & Central Macedonia



Anestis has worked for various International Companies at a series of managerial positions. He holds many academic diplomas in various sectors from the biggest universities of the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Greece. He is a Certified Hospitality Trainer from the American Hotel & Lodging Association and Certified Performance Consultant from World Training Conference (Atlanta, Georgia, USA in 2008). Currently he is doing his PhD in Performance Management at the University of Macedonia. In 2001 he founded and since then runs “AA&Partners” ([www.training.gr](http://www.training.gr)), a corporate training and human resources services provider, mainly focusing towards the hospitality, leisure and retail industry. He is President of the Young Entrepreneurs Association of Northern Greece.

### Nektarios Nikolopoulos

Owner,  
Albion Bar & Restaurant



Nektarios Nikolopoulos was born in Athens in 1974. He is the owner of various restaurants in Greece such as “Albion” in Psichiko, “Chanel” in Halandri and “Ftelia” in Mykonos. He also owns “Deksameni” tavern and “Homeless” café-bar in Kolonaki. In addition, he is also the owner of the island Hydrousa in Vouliagmeni, Greece.

### Tina Toribaba

Communications Manager, Hilton Athens



Tina Toribaba was born and raised in Volos. She studied Journalism and Mass Media at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and holds a postgraduate degree (MA) in Communications and Cultural Studies from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She was an Erasmus exchange scholar at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan where she attended courses of Communications and Italian Literature.

She holds a proficiency and teaching license in three foreign languages: English, French and Italian. She fulfilled her traineeship at the European Parliament Office in Greece as a Robert Schuman scholar and then worked at the Public Relations Department of EASE (Association of Chief Executive Officers). Since 2006 she has been working in the Marketing Department of the Hilton Athens. She currently holds the position of Communications Manager and is responsible for the Press Office, Public Relations and Advertising of the hotel while acting as editorial consultant for the Hilton Athens Magazine.

### Thodoris Koutsovoulos | Owner, MomixBar Molecular Mixology



Thodoris Koutsovoulos was born in 1985 at Zografou Attica. He studied at the TEI of Athens, Department of Electronics and trained in public relations. He organized various artistic musical events mainly as dj Diodoro. He created the group Unique (2008) to promote musical events and alternative forms of art. From 2011 to 2014, he worked as IT at IP Expert and he implemented the project “IT Manager” at the National Institute of Labor and Human Resources (EIEAD). In 2012, he was one of the founders and creators of the innovative project MoMix (Molecular Mixology), then of MoMix bar Kerameikos and a year later of another bar in Glyfada. Currently, MoMix Lab was also created that gives another dimension and perspective to the idea and concept of Molecular Mixology.

### Olga Stavropoulou

President Militos Consulting S.A. / Ambassador Women's Entrepreneurship Day



Olga Stavropoulou is the **Founder & President of Militos S.A.**, and a **founding member of knowl Social Enterprise** for Education & Lifelong learning. Among others, she is the **Ambassador for Greece for Women's Entrepreneurship Day**, the **Chair of Entrepreneurship Alliance** for the European Center of Women and Technology, **General Secretary** of the Governing Committee of Women's Organisation of Managers and Entrepreneurs (TOGME/EEDE), Coordinator of the Hellenic Unit of the European Network of Mentors for Women Entrepreneurs (Business Mentors), **Vice President** of the Hellenic Association of Young Entrepreneurs in Athens, Piraeus and Province (E.SY.N.E) and a member of the Board of the Global Entrepreneurship Week for Greece. Olga is a certified Practitioner in strengths approach and holds the certified Advanced Diploma in Personal and Executive Coaching. She has developed models and professional development and knowledge transfer workshops such as «STARS success yourself<sup>®</sup>», «knowledge shots<sup>®</sup>» και «true talks<sup>®</sup>». She received her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and Sociology (Northeastern University, USA) and her Master's degree in International Politics (University of Brussels).

conference moderator



## Vaso Kollia, Secretary General for Gender Equality

### Digital Alliance for Women's Employment in Greece

A broad alliance started with the basic pursuit of reinforcing the digital skills of Greek women, and their role in technology. This initiative is the first and largest of its kind in Greece.

In this initiative, there are participating partners from the public sector, the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (Coordinator), the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning, the General Secretariat for Youth, the General Secretariat of Media and Communication, the Manpower Employment Organization (O.A.E.D.) and the National Certification Agency Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (E.O.P.P.E.P.). From the academia, the National Technical University of Athens, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and the University of Patras. From the private sector, the companies CISCO SYSTEMS HELLAS, GOOGLE, Microsoft Hellas, ORACLE HELLAS, Manpower Group S.A. and FOUNDATION. From the European Union, the European Centre for Women and Technology (ECWT), the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), the European Schoolnet (EUN) and the Network "Europe" of the EU Delegation in Greece (TEAM EUROPE). Finally, organizations such as the Association of Information Technology and Communications of Greece (APR) and the Department of Development of Women Managers and Entrepreneurs "TOGME" of the Greek Management Association, further complement the Digital Alliance.

This is a standard way of enhancing the competitiveness of a country, based on the balanced representation of women and men in the digital economy. To achieve this objective, the Digital Alliance for Women's Employment, the General Secretariat for Gender Equality in collaboration with the European Centre for Women and Technology, established the basis to develop a functional ecosystem for companies, policy makers and the academic community, both to strengthen women to pursue a career in ICT, and to distinguish the best and brightest talents among Greek women.

The initiative focuses its efforts on:

- the use of the accumulated knowledge, strategies, best practices and policies, that are applied in Europe for the promotion of women in ICT
- consulting and guidance offer on professional careers based on the latest technology,
- raising the awareness of women choosing a career in ICT
- strengthening female entrepreneurship through ICT, and
- encouraging a balanced representation of gender in making economic decisions.

The Digital Alliance for Women's Employment in Greece started on April 4, 2014 under the Greek Presidency of the European Union. The National Action Plan, including specifications, impact indicators and initiative monitoring, will be presented by the end of the year.

## Olga Stavropoulou Militos Consulting S.A., Ambassador Women's Entrepreneurship Day

Tourism, Culture, and (Women) Entrepreneurship

Economies, industry, income, money, jobs, businesses, consuming, goods, services...quite a number of economic terms which gets even bigger when we think about the whole spectrum of tourism and hospitality affordances such as hotels and accommodation, travel agencies, restaurants, tourist shops and artefacts, catering. A mix of people, enterprises, specialised professionals and personalised services satisfying needs and preferences of millions of visitors, day and night around the clock and around the year. So, there seems to be a clear connection between tourism and entrepreneurship, at least when speaking in strict economic terms. Especially now, when emerging and popular approaches of tourism, like cultural, religious, medical, alternative and other forms of tourism, highlight numerous entrepreneurial opportunities for existing entrepreneurs and new-comers, women and men.

I am especially stressing “women and men”, as new trends in the tourism and hospitality sector are steadily leading to a rejuvenation of well-known entrepreneurial models and practices, such as small-scale, specialized tourism businesses, where women traditionally thrive in, especially in rural settings. We should also keep in mind that women make up 34% of entrepreneurs across the European Union, a percentage that should grow as it is more than evident that women entrepreneurship is a key for development of both the Greek and European economies making them more competitive.

A shift of a very large proportion of tourists from mass tourism to different forms of tapping leisure and entertainment, strongly influenced by culture, but also the conceptualization of tourism as a way of life, provides a great opportunity to women entrepreneurs in the tourism sector to fully exploit their accumulated knowledge and wisdom on local cultural production (e.g. products, customs, etc.). More than this, women's collective action in social settings is heavily relying on networking, while their ability to successfully combine interpersonal and professional skills exposes certain strengths for the development and management of entrepreneurial initiatives in the highly human - centred sector of tourism and hospitality.

**Tourism is entering thus a new era, where a conjunction rather than differentiation of male and female activities is much needed, involving active participation of women and men, young and old - the way that entrepreneurship should be approached in the first place, freed from restrictions and stereotypes.**

Tourism, Culture, and (Women) Entrepreneurship - a connection was maybe always there, but alternative ones were beyond our horizon. Isn't exactly that what we expect from an entrepreneurial mind? To connect the dots differently, trying to come up with a different figure, one that works better, and to much bigger economic and most importantly cultural value for entrepreneurs, the society and culture they live in and share with fellow humans.

## Tourism, Culture, and (Women) Entrepreneurship

Along the same lines, we are all too often hearing about creative economies and cultural industries focusing on new ideas and not products or machinery - on ways of doing things, and how people want to live, work, learn, and get entertained. These are fast growing sectors encompassing the cultural and intellectual production of a nation, a community or region. These new notions make up a whole new ground for exploring new connections between tourism, culture, and (women) entrepreneurship. Ground-breaking entrepreneurs are already seeing the seeds of this new way of thinking of culture as an untapped source of creativity and development when it comes to tourism especially.

This year, for the first time, the 19th of November 2014 is launched as the Women's Entrepreneurship Day (WED) in the United Nations in collaboration with the Global Entrepreneurship Week and the Department of State of the USA.

The Women's Entrepreneurship Day (WED) aims to inspire and empower 250 million girls living in poverty. It is the world's largest celebration of women innovators and job creators who launch startups that bring ideas to life, drive economic growth and expand human welfare in 144 countries.

The potential of women entrepreneurs in the tourism and hospitality sector, their talent and capabilities, is a first class opportunity to highlight women entrepreneurship, but also to get inspired and understand that the role of women in the new creative economies is our chance to achieve the ever lagging behind gender equality in the process of economic, social and cultural production of our lives.

The key message of the campaign that we will dynamically lead in Greece is "We are all entrepreneurship ambassadors". The young and the old, those who are thinking to start-up, and those who already run a business, small, medium or large, in the big city, or a remote place. Each of us is an ambassador for all of us, an ambassador of women and men entrepreneurship.

**Because the precondition of entrepreneurship is not gender, but creativity and forward thinking.**





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## Vicky Branika Hellenic American Union

Everyone recognizes that tourism constitutes a key pillar of our national economy, and according to SETE (Association of Greek Tourism Enterprises) estimates, the participation of the Greek tourism in GDP will range to around 20% in 2014. The high increase in international arrivals (approximately 21.5 million.), but also the high percentage of satisfaction of tourists, which rose during January-August to 84.1% compared to the average 81% of the competing countries, create optimism for the future of tourism in our country and the employment prospects in the sector.

However, we must not forget that the overall positive result does not cover the entire country. Tourism continues to move at two speeds. There are popular destinations that exceed all expectations, while others that could constitute an area of tourist attraction, seem stalled. This is of course the result of an intensive, or not, promotion of an area, and highlights the inability of some regions to promote their advantages abroad.

Moreover, the goal set in the last few years for the prolongation of the tourist season has not been achieved. The vast majority of tourists continues to visit our country between May and September. It is therefore obvious that the standard recipe sun-sea-hospitality exhausts its dynamics in a limited period of time, specific destinations and limited seasonal employment of workers in the tourism sector. It is also clear that if we want to emerge as a tourist destination throughout the year, the mix of our strategic promotion should be changed directly using all the comparative advantages of our country.

In this direction, the contribution of alternative tourism is significant. Health tourism, religious tourism, rural tourism, congress tourism, cultural tourism, sports tourism, are only some examples that show great potential, and can exploit the total of natural resources and historical and cultural wealth of our country and attract high-value visitors who seek innovative experiences. Moreover, the strategic shift of our country to this direction reinforces not only the synergies between the public and private sector but also the autonomous business and creates new permanent and well-paid employment positions, especially for professionals with high level of education. This contributes to the balanced development of all the regions of the country, their economic development and the permanence of young people in their home country.

In conclusion, we can say that tourism can truly become, and not only just in words, the heavy industry of our country if all the actors directly or indirectly involved, work systematically and cooperatively in the right direction.

## Dimitrios Laloumis Technological Educational Institute of Athens

### Specific characteristics of work in the tourism industry

In the modern socio-economic structure there is a large number of people who seeks for employment daily, while also employers look for new employees. The set of processes and areas where employers and employees agree to work together is called labor market.

Tourism businesses differ from those of other industries. Some specific features of working in the tourism sector are the following:

In the tourism industry, quantitative and qualitative productivity depend on personal ability and effort. Consequently, there are large individual differences in the performance of the employees and therefore an increased importance of workers in these enterprises.

Reflections on "hospitality", "service", "cleanliness" are subjective. This means that each employee understands differently the obligations of the other employees and the administration. As a result of such subjectivity is the reduced qualitative business communication and the subjective satisfaction of the employees, which has a large impact on the relations between employers and employees.

The high efficiency of established tourism industry executives increases their demand which leads to an increased mobility. It is now a tradition that the majority of hotel managers switch hotels often. But the nature of some unskilled operations specifically assists in the occupational mobility space.

The tourism occupations don't have a continuous streaming, such as the production of manufacturing plants. The work needs constantly present fluctuations in monthly, weekly, daily and even hourly basis. For the employee, this means an abnormal flow in the work demand. For the business, it means a problem in determining appropriate staff levels, and in the payment system.

Tourism is a process of relaxation and search of entertainment. The tourism employees do not face desperate patients and people with negative mood, as the hospital workers do. Typically, they work in a pleasant atmosphere due to the positive mood of the clientele, because according to Golleman, emotions are contagious.

Tourism creates jobs that are in continuous touch with people who feel refreshed and therefore the workers in the industry rarely face routine. Tourism workers obtain an international mindset and have friends all over the world, many of whom they visit during off season.

Tourism occupations belong to the tipping professions. Gratuities increase the income of many tourist occupations.

Workers in seasonal hotels combine work with holidays and hotel executives are allowed to accommodate their family. In addition, travel agencies offer free or low priced vacation packages to their employees.

These are the main characteristics of employment in the tourism industry. An industry that requires flexibility and sociability more than the others.

## State Scholarships Foundation

The State Scholarships Foundation (SSF) was established in 1951 in Greece and since then it is contributing the most in the promotion of education, sciences, arts, language and the Greek culture.

The SSF plans and implements thirty fellowship programs in Greece and abroad on a yearly basis. The beneficiaries of these scholarships are Greeks, expatriates and foreigners, ranging from students and researchers to scientists and artists wishing to gain further skills in Greece or abroad and be distinguished in the academic and professional field. In the sixty-three years long life of the SSF, tens of thousands of scholars were funded for education and studying. The SSF, for over twenty years (since 1987), is responsible for the management, implementation and dissemination of the European Educational Programmes. The SSF is the National Agency for Greece for the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of Education and Training.

The SSF remains an important institution for the development of research partnerships that contribute to the progress and development of the country and shape educational policy. It associates with the European Institutions (Academic Cooperation Association - ACA, Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst-DAAD, European Space Agency-ESA, and European Organization for Nuclear Research-CERN) with the aim to develop various programs that strengthen research mobility, as well as policies on international academic cooperation.

Last year, the SSF has entered a period of restructuring and expanding its horizons. During the next period, it is expected to come into force a new program by the SSF and the Ministry of Labor, directly linking Higher Education honors with recruitment in the labour market. The program is similar to the 2+2 program that is currently in progress by the SSF and the National Bank.

More specifically, the SSF will grant scholarships for two-year master's degrees in Greece to 300 top students and then, under a framework agreement with the SSF, the fellows will be hired by firms for full-time employment for at least two years. In this way, the SSF contributes directly and practically to the biggest problem of our country, which is the fight against youth unemployment.

Finally, the SSF is emerging as one of the most important institutions that support knowledge, creativity and innovation by creating options and opportunities for young people. By launching new forms of communication, we keep up open dialogue with young people aiming at direct dissemination of information on the new possibilities offered by the Foundation. The SSF holds a Facebook account, and is also represented in LinkedIn, Twitter and even YouTube where it has created an Alumni Group for the people who benefited from the SSF either via undergraduate, graduate, postdoctoral and other scholarships or via other European programs (Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius, Grundtvig, European Language Label, etc.).

**In alliance with our fellows we are changing and building together the new SSF of Excellence, Innovation and Equal Opportunity!**



STARS Success Yourself®

## Aimilios Karamanlis Knowl for Education and Lifelong Learning

**Strengths: A tool, available to all, in the interest of all**

The development of the tourism and hospitality industry in our country, not only for the benefit of the SMEs, but also for all employees who want to join in order to strengthen the sector and benefit from its dynamics, is closely linked to the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes that the professionals are expected to have in order to be effective and productive. In addition, this development is also linked to the extent to which each professional takes part in activities where she/he can express, use and exploit hers/his strengths.

Strengths are an extension of our innate talents. They are about a pre-existing tendency to a particular mode of behavior that is authentic and gives energy to anyone who uses it, while also supporting better operation, development and performance. This is something different from available skills, that is, a person's ability to achieve a particular desired result with minimum effort and time. Strengths, for the person using them, apart from high frequency usage and implementation performance, also involve high and positive energy. A typical indication of the energy we draw when using strengths is the feeling of losing track of time, due of the extent to which we are absorbed in a particular activity and the high speed at which we gain new information, get involved in activity courses, and adopt approaches that are related to one or more strengths.

Despite the fact that there are very specific and effective approaches with which we can identify and use effectively our personal strengths as well as the strengths of our staff and partners (scientific tests, observation, self-assessment, coaching sessions, STARS model, etc.), only one out of three of us knows and uses them in our personal and professional lives, in order to be as productive as possible and achieve our goals. At the same time, the approach of these strengths, both in staff selection, as well as in delegating tasks among human resources technically speaking, is becoming increasingly important worldwide.

Strengths may refer to our values and beliefs (e.g. responsibility and authenticity), to the way we provide and receive information (e.g. courtesy and / or humor), to what motivates us in our work and our lives (e.g., enthusiasm, love for learning, work ethics), to how we create relationships with others (e.g. being the leader, fostering teamwork or expressing our concern for others) and of course to the way we approach situations, plan and / or solve problems (e.g., by focusing on the details, with optimism, by developing strategic thinking, etc.).

Although there isn't a specific number of "top strengths" that people possess, nor a specific number of possible strengths to focus our attention on, any specific professional activity, apart from the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes with which it is linked, will be carried out with even greater success and more positive mood, if the person or the group of people who undertake it, use or combine during the activity's performance, one or more of their personal strengths.

According to the research literature, the employees who recognize and use their strengths, express greater satisfaction and sense of the meaning and commitment towards their job, and an overall satisfaction with their lives. In particular, the use of specific strengths contribute positively to the satisfaction that is derived by the employee from his job, as well as to a healthy and optimistic work behavior, increased energy and enhancement of self-esteem.

Especially in the field of tourism, where the indicator of the quality of the services provided to customers is directly affected by the ability of workers to respond effectively, pleasantly, and efficiently to their desires and complaints, the proper identification, utilization and combination of the strengths of those who take this responsibility becomes even more important on the basis of a sound knowledge of the process involved in providing those services.

STARS® model is developed on the state of the art of scientific research on human capacity and development, talents and strengths, positive evaluation and visualization, targeting and planning actions and on the evaluation of the success that is completed within five defined, interconnected and interactive phases (Strengths awareness and spotting, trial and success, appreciative self-talk and visualization, roadmap forward, and success yourself), that are complemented by a dynamic 'mapping' of awareness (Reality Check).



Jens Koslowsky  
Militos Consulting S.A.

Tourism & Hospitality: More than just an economic sector

The Tourism & Hospitality sector is one of the most important economic sectors in Europe, accounting for a high percentage of employment, and having immense impact on other economic sectors like manufacturing, construction and other services. It is generating over 10% of EU GDP (Gross Domestic Product), while employing 9.7m citizens and 1.8m businesses alone! This is the equivalent of the populations of Austria, Greece, or Hungary.

But apart from the purely economic aspects: Tourism is also a social phenomenon. It is mobilising millions of people not only within Europe, but also around the world. Tourism is about inter-cultural communication, building relationships between citizens, expanding your horizon and creating an understanding of the cultural and social diversity.

### **Mobility: One key to success**

But first and foremost: Tourism is about mobility. Mobility of people - but also of jobs and services! Mobility of all who make up the entire sector, tourists and professionals alike, service recipients and service providers. High-quality training for tourism professionals should therefore be an international affair by nature. Spending a substantial amount of time in another country and culture, should become a systemic part of any formal training and education, especially in any tourism-related profession.

While I am quite certain that this will become ever more common and normal, it is not reality yet. But even today there are opportunities that enable each and everybody, worker and student to work and learn abroad.

Therefore, if you are looking at becoming a more skilled professional, you should consider to spend and work a limited time abroad. Expose yourself to a foreign language, and gain skills and competences that can only be acquired by living in a different culture, outside of your usual environment. Get familiar with different philosophies, practices and approaches, and make use of existing initiatives to equip yourself with the formal and informal qualifications that are especially needed in such an international, global sector as tourism & hospitality to build a successful career and become an excellent professional. But what is more: it will also help you to become a more open-minded and self-confident person.

### **What is out there for you?**

Mobility is a cornerstone of the modern European Union without borders. The European Commission therefore strongly supports mobility by providing many opportunities for on-the-job training abroad. The **Erasmus+** Programme the EU Commission alone aims at providing over **4 Million mobility opportunities** in the years until 2020.

But there are also plenty of other EU and national initiatives and opportunities that can be used to gain experience and knowledge, also for **entrepreneurs! Militos Consulting S.A.**, is currently part of the **DG Enterprise “Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs”** action, and create the “Biz-on-Board - Project”. Through this action, young entrepreneurs are given the unique opportunity to acquire new skills by working with an experienced entrepreneur in another EU country for 1 to 6 months. There is no age limit and the (future) company or activity can be in any sector, including Tourism & Hospitality. Learn from an experienced entrepreneur in another EU country how to best start and manage an SME and **receive practical and financial assistance** for your stay abroad! If you wish to apply and learn more about the action, please visit the project website <http://www.bizonboard.eu>.

But there are also national initiative all over Europe that provide you with the chance to get high-quality training abroad. One example is the **Job of My Life** initiative (<http://www.thejobofmylife.de/en/home.html>) of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Federal Employment Agency (BA), offering vocational education and training in Germany, with the support of private and public institutions, companies, training providers, research institutions, and associations.

Last, but not least I would also like to point out other helpful tools that the EU has created to find jobs all over Europe: The European Job Mobility Portal EURES (<https://ec.europa.eu/eures/page/homepage>) provides lots of useful information and tools supporting your move to another country.

Moving abroad and finding ways to improve your skills and qualifications shows **motivation, initiative, independence, maturity and adaptability**. All of these attributes are extremely valuable to any type of employer. HR managers will also see that you are not afraid to get out of your comfort zone and face challenges. Not only from personal experience I can highly recommend and ensure you that one of the most important result of your experience will be that you grow as a person. This is because the perspectives and values that you have inherited from your home will be challenged, and sometimes rejected, leading to a more holistic perspective that encompasses different viewpoints. Therefore: Take a chance, use the opportunities that exist, spend some time abroad and start investing in yourself, as a professional and more importantly, as a person!

## Anestis Anastasiou AA&Partners & OESYNE Thessaloniki & Central Macedonia

In the continuous struggle of tourism and hospitality entrepreneurs to deliver the service excellence and the true value for money for their customers, the implication of humans is of crucial importance. The recognition that employees play a pivotal role in delivery of service quality, successful service recovery, and retention of satisfied and loyal customers in the hospitality industry is prevalent among researchers and practitioners.

Over a decade of professional experience and a number of studies have reported that retention and development of frontline employees who can have high quality performance in the workplace is as important to business success as customer loyalty and profitability. Hence there is a proven positive relationship between high performance policies and practices, the overall organisational performance and customer satisfaction.

Organisational commitment on the one hand and job satisfaction on the other become two very important parameters in the equation. And the level of formal and tacit knowledge, academic education and vocational training are a priority in the development of contemporary human resources in the tourism and hospitality industry.

The skillset that a true professional should possess is a key towards career advancement for the individual and superior performance for the organisation. The skills and competences that a professional should possess are continuously evolving. Hence the new trends and developments in the tourism sector as well as the demands and satisfying factors of today's customers, do lead the personal development path of each professional. That may include contemporary academic syllabi, newly designed vocational programs, onboarding and induction trainings, in-house continuous trainings, open seminars etc.

More specifically, frontline employees should acquire technical and interpersonal skills to have solid knowledge about service delivery process and deal with customer requests and complaints. The lack of ongoing and effective training programs in tourism and hospitality firms leads to a pool of employees who do not have the requisite skills or are not willing to respond to customer requests and problems.



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