

# Efficient Human Resource Management Methods to win the 'War for Talents' in Spa Management Positions

Claudia Rumpf



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# Agenda

- Problem statement
- Research questions
- Theoretical background
- Methodology
- Results
- Limitations and outlook for further research

## Problem statement

- Spa industry expands rapidly in size and scope  
→ Increased need for qualified employees
- Industry is facing difficulties finding qualified staff  
→ Lack of people with right skills for management positions

## Research questions

- 1) What does the employment situation regarding management positions in the spa industry look like?
- 2) What are the main criteria of current and future spa managers for choosing and staying with a spa as an employer?
- 3) What human resource management methods are best suited for a spa to become an employer of choice?

# Theoretical background

- Scope of the term spa management
  - Spa management in charge of:
    - Product development
    - Human resource management
    - Marketing
    - Business development
    - Financial aspects
  - Demands on spa manager highly diversified
    - Good blend of hard and soft skills needed
    - Interpersonal skills tend to be more crucial → highly personalised nature of work

# Theoretical background

- Career paths for spa managers
  - No one-and-only correct pathway for a career in spa management
  - 3 approaches:
    - Spa employee is promoted into a management position
    - Person from outside the spa industry is hired
    - Recruit managers for lower-levels directly from college or university

# Theoretical background

- Types of education for spa managers
  - 2 main types of spa management education and training
    - School-based educational programs → before entering the labour force
    - Further education
      - Training on the job
      - In-house formal training
      - Formal education by a school or an educational institution
      - Self-directed learning

## Theoretical background

- Human resource management in the spa industry
  - To reduce high fluctuation of qualified staff and to attract well-educated people → status of 'preferred employer'
  - Status can be achieved with several human resource management methods
    - Career development opportunities
    - Financial remuneration
    - Incentive programmes
    - Work environment
    - Corporate culture



# Methodology

- Secondary research
- Primary research

# Methodology

- Secondary research
  - Lately published research reports and statistics
  - Articles
    - Recent spa industry journal edition
    - Human resource management journal editions
  - Books
    - Spa management
    - Human resource management

# Methodology

- Primary research
  - Interviews
    - 12 experts of the spa industry
    - 13 current spa managers
    - 12 students in spa management education
  - Reasons for qualitative research
    - Limited amount of secondary data
    - Building exploratory theory instead of testing theory

# Methodology

Primary research – Expert interviews



Raoul Andrews-Sudre

Susie Ellis

Su Gibson

Jeremy McCarthy

Jim Root

Judy Singer

Mary Tabacchi

Anna Bjurstam

Dieter Buchner

Verena Lasvigne-Fox

Andrew Gibson

Marc Cohen

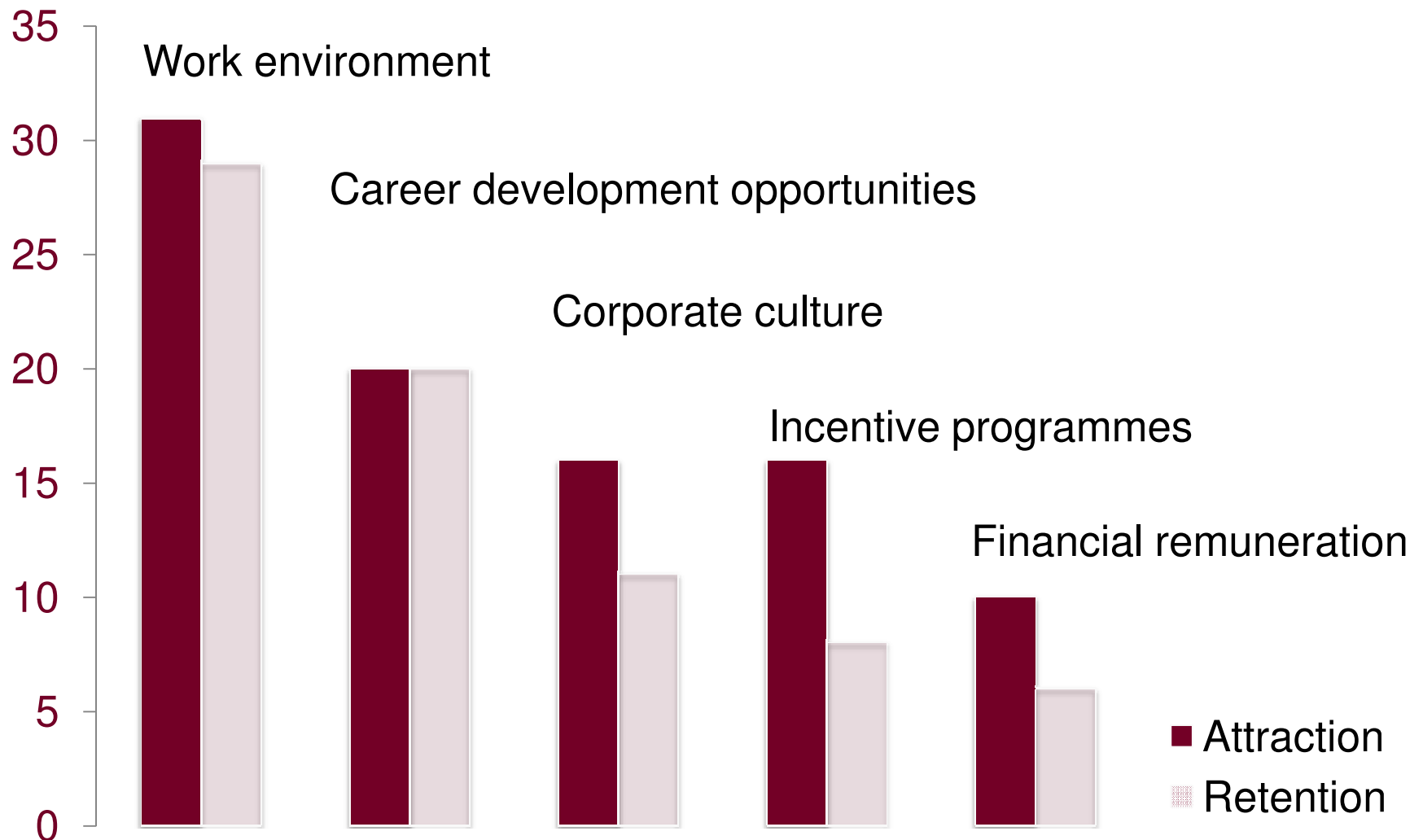
# Results

## Employment situation in spa management

- Spa industry expands rapidly in size and scope  
→ Necessity for more qualified spa managers
- Disequilibrium leads to a 'war for talents'
  - Demographic change
  - Job mobility
  - Skill sets
  - Education and training providers
  - Spa businesses
  - Career paths

# Results

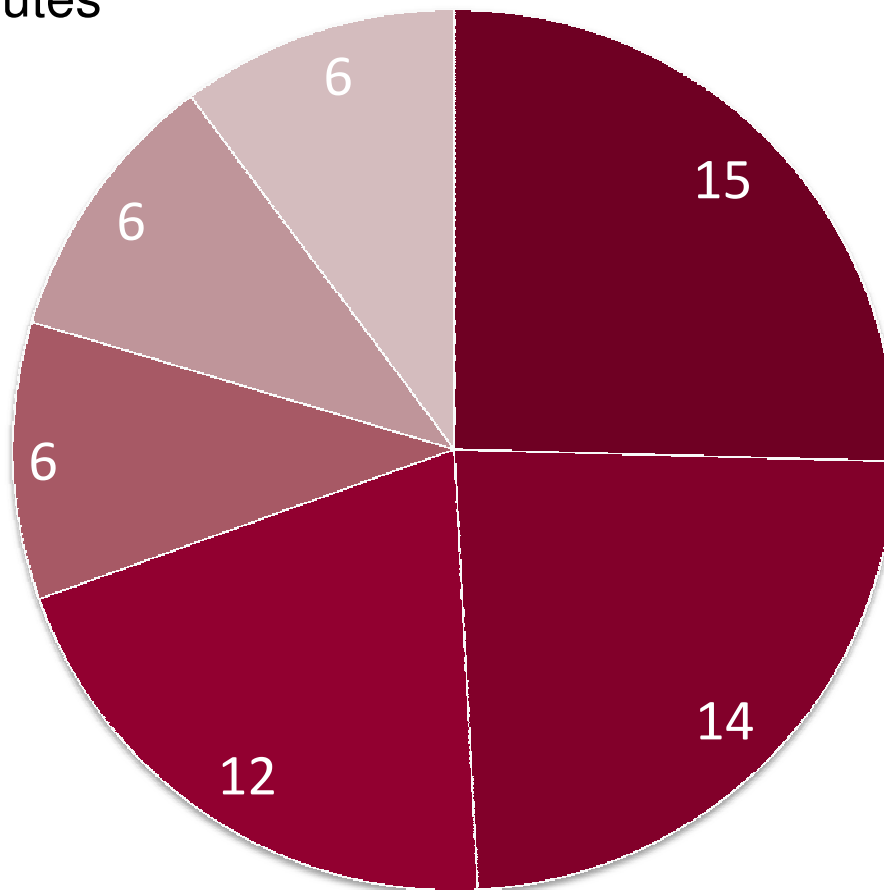
## Managers' criteria for choosing and staying with a spa



## Results

### Managers' criteria for choosing and staying with a spa (cont.)

Attributes



- Career development
- Constant training
- Salary
- Work environment
- Transfer to other spas
- Support

## Results

### Benchmarks for attracting and retaining spa managers

- Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts
- Glen Ivy
- Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group
- Red Door Spas
- Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas



# Results

## Human resource management methods

- Work environment
  - Physical work environment
  - Overall atmosphere in the spa
  - Responsibility transfer
  - Support
  - Work-life balance
  - In a resort/hotel: understanding for the spa

# Results

## Human resource management methods (cont.)

- Career development opportunities
  - Career plans
  - Guidance or a mentor
  - Constant training and continuing education
  - Internships and spa management trainee programmes
  - Branded companies
    - Possibility to be transferred to different locations
    - Network between managers from various properties

# Results

## Human resource management methods (cont.)

- Corporate culture
  - Clear definition of mission and vision
  - Commitment to values based on the highest ethical standards
  - Conduction of corporate social responsibility activities

# Results

## Human resource management methods (cont.)

- Incentive programmes
  - Standard benefits
  - Spa related benefits
  - Person specific benefits
- Financial remuneration
  - Competitive salaries
  - Performance-based pay

## Limitations & further research

- Limitations
  - Lack of standard definitions in the spa industry
  - Extent of conducted interviews
  - Administration method
- Further research
  - Research in conjunction with challenges concerning 'war for talents'
  - Findings are well suited for descriptive or causal research
  - Creation of more benchmark profiles

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## Results

### Benchmarks for attracting and retaining spa managers (cont.)

- Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts
  - Identified spas as important part of portfolio
  - Well established corporate culture
  - Positive work environment
  - Individual career planning
  - Management training programs
- Glen Ivy
  - Seeks to be a 'career of choice'
  - Encourages people to move on in the spa industry
  - Reputation for strong focus on sustainability
  - Offers several perks and benefits

# Results

## Benchmarks for attracting and retaining spa managers (cont.)

- Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group
  - Regards spas as important part of the company
  - Appreciates the work that is carried out in the spas
  - Good career program
  - Offers several incentives
- Red Door Spas
  - Have established very good training program
  - Performance management
  - Career plans



# Results

## Benchmarks for attracting and retaining spa managers (cont.)

- Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas
  - Renowned for responsibility and caring attitude towards:
    - Employees
    - Local communities
    - Sustainable operations
  - Career development opportunities
  - Good work environment
  - Great corporate culture