

Hotel companies should offer at least 20 to 30% over minimum wage at campus placements: FHRAI

In an important suggestion to the hotel management institutes and colleges, Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) has said that the colleges should “discourage hospitality establishments” from offering salaries below the minimum wages to students during campus placement drives. On the other hand, the hotel companies should try to offer 20 to 30 percent above the minimum wages to candidates to motivate them to consider hospitality jobs over other competing industries.

The hospitality companies should also provide “structured support and guidance” in the form of mentoring, skilling and enabling environment to new career aspirants to facilitate their successful transition into the industry, it says.

FHRAI has come out with clear actionable points at institute level, at the industry level and finally at the policy level to overcome the current mess in the human resource front comprising workforce shortage, skill gap in the industry, talent retention challenges, low enrolments to hotel institutes, mismatch in education and industry requirements and policy related gaps in the sector.

On the policy front, one of the important suggestions is establishment of a joint advisory board between industry, academia, and the government (ministry or NCHMCT) for curriculum design to enhance hospitality courses and ensure alignment with evolving industry needs, the establishment of joint advisory boards comprising representatives from industry, academia, and government can serve as a powerful mechanism. It will bridge the gap between education, workforce demands, and societal needs.

FHRAI also suggests regular review and revision of the hotel education curriculum to keep it relevant to the changing dynamics of the industry. Like other professional courses, hospitality programmes should also offer specialisation in various streams of hospitality like marketing, finance, F&B, housekeeping and catering. Specialisation will ensure students are equipped

with in-depth knowledge in specific areas of the industry, catering to diverse career paths.

It also suggests “restructuring of allotment of seats” for various hospitality programs to produce a balanced supply of managerial and frontline professionals. At present, majority of IHM students are being trained and prepared for managerial positions, and hence there have been noticeable shortage of front-line personnel. Therefore, there is need to reduce the number of seats for managerial professional courses and increase/introduce the seats to prepare staff for frontline operations. This will also make the managerial courses more competitive, it observes.

It also expects the industry to play a more proactive role in employee retention. For an image maker, long working hours and resultant burnout of employees should be avoided. Employers can promote better work-life balance by adopting shift-based scheduling and promoting realistic workload management.

There should be structured career progression and growth opportunities for employees by offering planned career paths, establishing fair hiring policy, including transparent promotion policies and opportunities for higher education or specialised certifications, FHRAI suggests.