
DEVELOPING PUBLIC SPEAKING AND JOB INTERVIEW SKILLS FOR HOSPITALITY STUDENTS

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Abstract

The main issues this article tries to address are vocational students' self-development skills. As a part of the tourism and hospitality industry, vocational schools and university students and lecturers are working on how the next generations contribute to supporting the government's aim to have sustainable business growth. Many vocational schools cover hard skills with low attention to students' soft skills development. There is a massive gap between their self-preparations and their capabilities in technical management. This reality makes students less motivated and confident to compete in the workforce. This method employed pre-evaluations, workshops, a coaching clinic, and post-event evaluation to ensure the fulfilment of students' needs. From the first to the second quarter of 2022, this program was made to develop students at Public Vocational School 7 Tangerang, Indonesia. With a total of 110 students with teachers involved, the workshop fulfilled students' needs in the pre-evaluation questionnaire. Most of the students were satisfied and rated that this workshop supported their preparation before join to the hotel industry. This article contributes to hotel vocational school literature, especially in soft skill development. Moreover, issues addressed in this article can be an insight for vocational school management.

Keywords: *Public Speaking, Job Interview, Vocational School, Soft Skills.*

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INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted many sectors globally, including education and the hotel industry. With travel restrictions and viruses spreading throughout the globe, the covid-19 pandemic has dealt the hotel industry a fatal blow, forcing it to change its crisis management (Choirisa & Ringkar, 2021). Since the Indonesian Government officially announced Covid-19 in March 2022, the restricted policy was applied, and students were adapting the study from the home scheme. The IHRA (Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association) shared that 1,226 hotels were closed, and many employees had been laid off. This situation made vocational schools struggle to compete in the hotel industry. Human resources are more likely to hire people with experience in a similar sector than fresh graduates. Choirisa (2021) found that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has altered several aspects of the hotel industry, including human resources management tightening the number of people hired or employed, and the operations system. With restrictions and low demand from the hotel industry, people need to equip themselves with strong hard and soft skills. The lecturers and students in the hospitality industry came with the energy to boost future hotelier generations to prepare them to compete in fierce competition during and after the pandemic.

According to Yoanita and Choirisa (2021), a study found that online learning has a positive impact on satisfaction but not loyalty. On the one hand, students were fully aware that the pandemic had destroyed their school experience to naturally develop their interrelationship skills such as communication, problem-solving, and motivation. On the other side, students understand that online

learning is the only method that can effectively run during pandemic circumstances. Therefore, students were not continually supported by online learning as a hope of getting back into regular activity as an onsite class. This community outreach aims to contribute to vocational schools to develop students' soft skills in the particular skills that might decrease during a pandemic. Moreover, this workshop aims to explore students' capability in job skills interviews to make them feel more confident in the human resource hiring process.

Soft skills development is essential for students to thrive in their future careers. For young generations in the range 18 – 23 years old as Generation Z, communications are needed to strengthen their characteristics. Based on surveys and literature, the workshop has identified that students are currently in a crisis of self-confidence due to a lack of opportunities to practice their abilities and government restriction. Lecturers and college students were prepared hotel vocational students' urgency to prepare them before their internship or applying for job vacancies. At the beginning of the community outreach program, the lecturer spread the online questionnaire to explore students' perspectives on their urgency. The result is that public speaking and job interviews are the most aspect that they need.

1. Public Speaking

People can have a more significant opportunity if they have adaptability skills in a new environment (Hennessey, 2019). Students tend to feel embarrassed and confused about starting a recent conversation. Moreover, a vocational school tends to have fewer arguments and is more likely only to follow instructions without encouragement. This potentially came from vocational schools' scheme to produce humans with hard skill focus. Hence, this program aims to develop students' capabilities and understanding of public speaking strategies.

2. Job Interview

Before the internship, students must pass the job interview process. Students in the second level of senior high school will join the hotel industry as interns. Meanwhile, students already in their last year of school will prepare their application, knowledge, and skills to compete with many vocational schools and experienced staff. Therefore, they need these skills to comprehensively understand how job interviews should be held for better results. (Kent, 2021).

3. Output

The activity reported in this article is a workshop and coaching clinic. Firstly and foremost, the output would be a module. This module developed public speaking implementation and job interview skills for vocational schools. The target participants of this module are the beginner level who can grasp the material more accessible than basic knowledge. The output is the lecturer's article published in an academic journal on soft-skills management in hospitality study. The speaker of each category is also certified in their particular topic so that students can have a strong and better experience.

4. Outcome

Soft-skill development, particularly public speaking and job interview skills, enhances students' confidence to compete in the hospitality industry. All promotional content, book, and poster materials have been created to stimulate students' intention to extend their willingness to thrive.



Figure 1. The module on soft-skills development for vocational school

METHOD

1. Pre-workshop

This workshop was where lecturers found out about the vocational school's needs. Through the google form, lecturers have prepared many soft skills topics such as:

- a. Interpersonal (communication)
- b. Problem-solving
- c. Public speaking
- d. Creativity
- e. Leadership/teamwork
- f. Presentation
- g. Job interview

A total of 110 students responded. The top three were Public Speaking, job interview, and presentation skills.

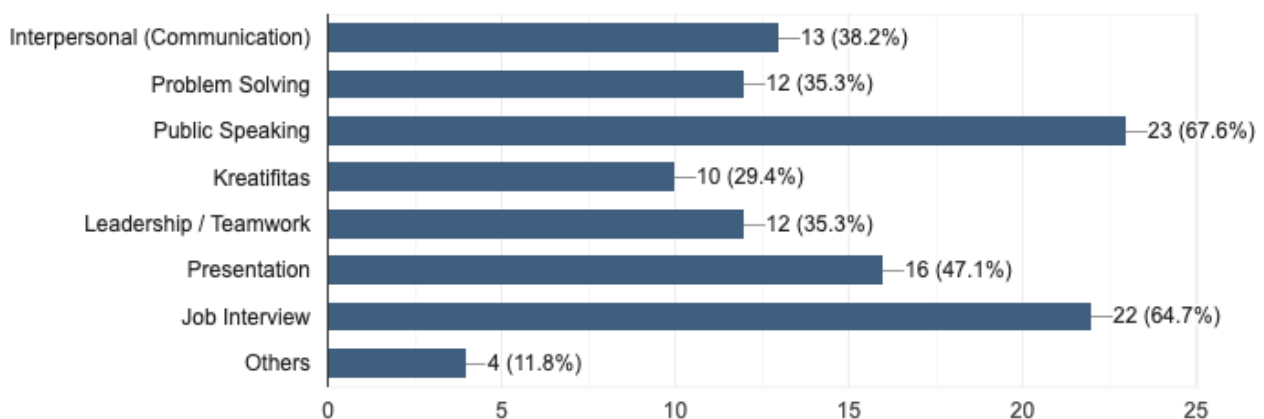


Figure 2. Students' responses (data sources)

2. Workshop

The workshop was held on May 27th, 2022, in public vocational school 7 Kabupaten Tangerang, Indonesia.



Figure 3. Lecturers, Speakers, and College Students as workshop mentors



Figure 4. All workshop attendees

3. Post-workshop

The coaching clinic has offered students to extend their understanding and practice in job interviews and, at the same time, sharpen their public speaking skills.



Figure 5. A student wrote about public speaking challenges in the workshop module

4. Evaluation

This stage was an activity where lecturers conducted an evaluation. The evaluation survey spread after the workshop date to analyse students' perspectives on the effectiveness and satisfaction of the program. Students must fill in the online form before their mentors distribute the workshop certificate through email. Most participants have submitted their evaluations which will be discussed in the next chapter.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Public Speaking

This program has offered a basic level of public speaking skills. Classes were created with a specific method, such as main class and grouping. Students were divided into six rooms after a comprehensive explanation from the speaker certified in public speaking skills. The objectives are to enhance students' knowledge and public speaking skills and implement soft skills to equip themselves for their future careers in the hotel industry. Three specific aspects of this activity support vocational school ability and capability (Connolly, 2018).

2. Confidence

This aspect has an enormous effect on students' characteristics. During the Covid-19 pandemic, students have limited access to interact directly with their classmates, teacher, or the public. However, confidence is a vital part of public speaking. Many students experience a lack of self-confidence that might be affected by students' general speaking skills. Several questions are shared with students to change their point of view, such as: who am I to give my opinion should be changed to have a different perspective on this subject matter? Therefore, students need to turn the question of "who am I" into a list of the reasons they are the person to take on the challenges at hand.

Moreover, this workshop gave papers to students to list and appreciate their qualifications. For example, I know a lot about, what I learned, I am concerned about it, and I am hopeful about it. Tips for adequate emotional and mental preparation after being discussed in the workshop, namely, surrounding the environment with positive energy, asking for help, getting regular exercise, taking breaks, and having an adequate sleep.

3. Body Language

The impact of non-verbal communication is critical. Communication is a toolbox for humans to transfer messages to their recipients. This workshop has explained how students feel they should perform their personality and the positions inextricably connected, such as: standing up straight, facing forwards, standing still and avoiding slouching, hands in pockets, and arms crossed.

4. Vocal

The vocal quality is also impactful to public speaking. One of the methods to produce good vocals is breathing; vocal variety includes pitch, pace, pauses, and volume. The quality of breathing affects verbal expression for the resonance, sense of calm, excitement, panic, and ability to think clearly. Moreover, students can vary pitch, pace, pauses, and volume during speaking. During the workshop, students have also been taught that pauses during public speaking can help to highlight a specific point, build excitement, give audiences a moment to absorb what has just been said, and allow students to catch their breath.

5. The Presentation

Students need to know their audiences during public speaking. During the presentation, students need to write a talk to ensure the context of their materials. Students must understand 5W+1H. 5W includes whom they are writing for, why they are writing it, what they need to get across, such as the problem and solution, and when and what students want people to do after audiences listen to and see all they share. 1 H is to best explain the problem and solution using stories, examples, ideas, facts, figures, and images. This activity also shares tips for effective presentation. Eight pieces of information have been shared with students. Firstly, open the presentation by connecting the audience to their own experiences. Secondly, use humour wisely. Thirdly, use eye contact to engage. Fourthly, be sure to avoid jargon. Fifthly, humanise facts and figures when possible. Next, use fewer words on the slides, show their smiles, and rehearse.

This workshop is to inform us what is in and out of control. The various part that can be controlled, such as attitude, planning process, writing process, whether or not you ask for help, the creation of slide deck, rehearsal, physical and verbal habits (pacing too much, using filler words, and visiting the room that students are presenting before they present. Moreover, students ask for feedback during the writing and rehearsal processes, clothing choice, planning for things that go wrong with technological components, food and beverages before the presentation, sleeping hours, and how students respond to feedback after the presentation. Meanwhile, there are several things that students cannot control, such as what the audience thinks about them, the technology, unplanned interruptions, the weather, and last-minute schedule and room changes.

6. Clothing

Students also suggested wearing proper clothes or dresses suitable for the circumstances. The clothing recommendations such as wear colours and styles that match the occasion, wearing clothes that make them feel good, ensuring to be a bit more dressed up than their attendee, trying a new outfit on and rehearsing in it, and practising wearing shoes that students choose.

This section continues to ask students to write about their challenges in public speaking implementation. As their biggest fear, students mostly shared their opinion through class discussions. One of the difficulties such as nervousness and stammering. Therefore, this workshop allows students to practice their skills and challenge themselves in practicum sessions. Three steps in a job interview have been given to students for a comprehensive understanding.

7. Job Interview

This idea is to solve students' problems with job interview skills, as explained in the background. A job interview is a primary step in recruiting and selecting prospective employees. In this workshop, the candidate can get to know the company better, and vice versa; the company can better understand the candidate's qualifications and competencies (Doyle, 2021). There are four job interview cycles: situation, task, action, and result. In the situation part, students are required to introduce themselves to the employer. Next, in the task cycle, students can describe the task they need to complete, including the expectations and challenges. After that, the action part is where the student can explain what they did and how they did it. Lastly, in the result sections, students can end the result of their efforts, including accomplishments, rewards, and impacts. Furthermore, there are three steps in a job interview as follows.

8. Pre-job interview

Students are being prepared to thoroughly equip themselves for getting ready in terms of material and self-preparations. Looking for information about the company and learning about the job applied are mandatory stages before students attend the job interview. Moreover, students need to understand how to face an effective interview, know what they write on a CV during the interview, and practice discovering their potential.

9. During job interview

Students must be on time and ensure their attire is proper with hotel standard grooming. Their confidence should be formed with positive body language and also present their pleasant face. Furthermore, students must answer the interviewer's questions honestly and recommend choosing weaknesses unrelated to the job vacancy. Students should explain the value they can provide to the company and prepare probability questions. There are also tips for students during this workshop to answer challenging questions, so students can easily find the best answer for themselves.

The point of the interview has been shared in the context of the interviewer and interviewee. The interviewer aspect can be seen in students' first impressions, grooming, preparation, communication skills, language capabilities, experiences, skills, personality, integrity, and attitude. However, the interviewee can be seen from the students' introduction, family, passion, goals, experiences, skills, educational background, hobby, strengths and weaknesses, and health.

The evaluation of the interview is potentially determined by attitudes, grooming and presentation, quality and professionalism, language skills, service orientation, teamwork, and openness to innovation. Moreover, there are tips and tricks to boost students' confidence in the hospitality industry, such as dressing for success, having a great personality or attitude, enthusiasm, and confidence, maintaining personal branding on social media and practising job interview skills (The Muse Editor, 2021).

10. Post-job interview

Students need to wait for the result patiently. They also can ask after two weeks; if there is no more answer, students need to be sincere. The important thing is that students must avoid publishing any social media content about the interview process and results.

11. Evaluation Outcomes

Once the workshop was done, and before the coaching clinic, students were required to complete the online questionnaire, and we presented the results as follows:

Table 1. Demographic Profile

Demographic Profile		
Gender		
Male	22	20%
Female	88	80%
Prefer Not to Say	0	
Department for Internship		

Front Office	17	16%
Housekeeping	50	44%
FB Product	13	12%
FB Service	22	20%
Management/Executive office/Back Office	8	8%

Source: Authors Data (google form) - SMKN 7 Kabupaten Tangerang (Vocational Public School)

Table 2. Online Questionnaires Outcomes

Survey Result		
I understand soft-skill development in the context of Hospitality Industry.	Strongly Agree	32%
	Agree	52%
	Neutral	16%
I have an opportunity to develop my soft-skills for my future career in the hospitality industry.	Strongly Agree	64%
	Agree	32%
	Neutral	4%
I understand benefits of soft-skills development in hospitality industry.	Strongly Agree	40%
	Agree	52%
	Neutral	8%
I believe this workshop is crucial for self-development in the hospitality industry.	Strongly Agree	52%
	Agree	48%
This workshop run effectively and efficient	Strongly Agree	52%
	Agree	48%
I feel satisfy to join this workshop.	Strongly Agree	60%
	Agree	36%
	Neutral	4%
The workshop committee and mentors are professional.	Strongly Agree	56%
	Agree	44%
The speaker of public speaking session is professional.	Strongly Agree	64%
	Agree	36%

The speaker of the job interview skill session is professional.	Strongly Agree	60%
	Agree	40%
This workshop is useful for me and my future career.	Strongly Agree	68%
	Agree	28%
	Neutral	4%
In general, this workshop has done a great job and running smoothly.	Strongly Agree	60%
	Agree	36%
	Neutral	4%

Source: Authors Data (google form)

The table depicted that majority of students are females in proportions of 80% and the rest are male students. Almost half of the students were intended to choose housekeeping as their preferable department in the hotel industry, followed by Food and Beverages (FB) services which accounted for 1 in 5. In the third place, the front office was 16%, and FB product was 12%, and lastly, the management/executive office/back office was less than one-tenth.

In the survey content of the workshop itself, most of the students agreed and strongly agreed that this workshop has given their understanding of soft-skills development in the hotel industry. Moreover, students can have an opportunity in this event to develop skills that are potentially valuable for their careers. Then, by following this workshop, students can grasp beneficial materials, and all students trust that this workshop is essential.

In terms of event workflow, all students agreed (48%) and strongly agreed (52%) that the committee had set up the workshop effectively. This has reflected in students' satisfaction which 60% of students strongly agreeing and 36% agreeing. All of the students were also satisfied with the speakers provided by the committee since they believed that they have the capability in their field, especially in a vocational context. In summary, most of the students were satisfied with this workshop not only for the whole concept of the event but also for the value which can upgrade their current skills to the other level. Furthermore, to get comprehensive feedback, we encourage them to complete the suggestion part in the online questionnaire. Here are the results:

Table 3. Participants' Feedback

No	Participants	Statement
1	Participant No. 7	
	<i>"Mungkin tidak panjang kata tentang pemberian Saran workshop"softskill kemarin, Karna pelajaran Dan materi Yang Kita dapat Begitu luar biasa Dan cukup memuaskan</i>	Maybe not long words about giving advice on yesterday's soft skills workshop, because the lessons and materials that we get are so

	<i>karna Yang Kita dapat bukan hanya tentang materi perhotelan melainkan Cara Kita memberanikan diri Dan bertanggung Jawab,mungkin Saran sedikit agar bisa memmberikan banyak materi lagi tidak hanya job interview Dan public speaking, melainkan materi materi Yang bisa anak muda jadikan contoh untuk orang Di sekitar”</i>	extraordinary and satisfying because what we get is not only about hospitality materials but the way we are brave and responsible, maybe a little advice so we can give a lot The material again is not only job interviews and public speaking, but material that young people can use as examples for those around them.
2	Participant No. 18	
	<i>“saya harap kegiatan workshop ini ada secara berkala, dengan pembahasan-pembahasan yang menarik setiap saatnya, dan lebih diperpanjang lagi saat praktek, untuk lebih meningkatkan kemampuan para siswa dan siswi”.</i>	I hope that this workshop activity will be held regularly, with interesting discussions every time, and further extended during practice, to further improve the abilities of the students.
3	Participant No. 19	
	<i>“bingung mau kasih saran apa, soalnya pengajaran dari UMN udah keren banget, cuma aku nya aja yang emang susah percaya diri.. pengajaran dari UMN tentang soft skills udh keren banget”</i>	I'm not sure about what advice to give, because the teaching from UMN is really cool, I'm the only one who really has a hard time being confident. workshop from UMN about soft skills is really cool.
4	Participant No. 13	
	<i>“Alhamdulillah degan adanya acara ini saya bisa mendapatkan tambahan soft skills saya yang sangat berguna ada publik area speaking dan interview sangat puas sekali”.</i>	Thank God, with this event, I am be able to get additional soft skills which were very useful in the public speaking and interview areas, very satisfied.
5	Participant No. 12	
	<i>“Saya merasa puas dengan kakak-kakak yang sudah mengajarkan-skills Development for Hotel Vocational School kepada saya:)”</i>	I am satisfied with the mentors who have taught me Development for Hotel Vocational School skills.

Source: Authors Data (google form)

CONCLUSION

Vocational students are currently facing an unpredictable pandemic situation. Most schools were forced to conduct online schemes while probably many schools were not ready to prepare their technology advance to accommodate students' needs. Particularly for vocational schools that equipped their students to be ready as an employee in the hospitality industry faced many challenges to prepare their students in hard and soft skills. By contributing to the appropriate target, this program

can be helpful and valuable to the community in public. Passing the pre-test, monitoring, and evaluations, this community outreach has run smoothly and effectively for vocational schools. Many students have practised and discussed their challenges in public speaking and job interview with maximum feedback from mentors and speakers. This activity is continuously held to support young hoteliers generations for their future careers. As previous experience in similar schools, this program was prepared better from pre- to post-event. Before the onsite event, the online event was held during the pandemic, which gained greater attention from many vocational schools (Choirisa & Anton, 2021).

The lecturers and committee designed this program to evaluate the material for almost a semester. Students and speakers were involved to ensure the workshop was also well managed. The output has been submitted as a module to get the ISBN and HKI (copyright) while waiting for the academic paper to be published. Lecturers and committees hope that vocational schools, not only in public schools but also in private schools, will be hand in hand to build future hoteliers' generations' characteristics of being ready for the hotel industry.

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Berikut beberapa contoh cara penulisan referensi berdasarkan *APA Style*

<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/magazine-article-references>

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APPENDIX