

**UNIVERSITY OF MACAU  
FACULTY OF BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION**

**A STUDY OF THE CORE COMPETENCIES OF  
EFFECTIVE MANAGERS IN THE GAMING  
INDUSTRY OF MACAU**



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**M-A7-5732-7**

Thesis presented to the

Faculty of Business Administration  
University of Macau

In partial fulfillment for granting the MBA degree

2010

## Abstract

The aim of this study is to find out the core competencies of effective managers in gaming industry of Macau. The research included a literature review on the characteristics of effective management in general and in particular to the casino gaming industry. Structured interviews with fifteen effective managers in leading casino resorts in Macau were carried out. An analysis on the interview data is provided to comprehend the competencies needed to effectively manage casino gaming operations in Macau.

Among the interviewed managers, all of them meet with people inside and outside the organization on a typical day. People outside the organization are usually vendors or suppliers that managers keep in contact to ensure the quality of services or products provided to the organization. On the other hand, people inside the organization are colleagues and subordinates whom managers in this study claimed to spend the most time with. Besides regular team meetings, a typical day of the managers is filled up with mostly ad hoc conversations on ad hoc issues which they are required to attend. During the interviews, some managers even expressed that they do not have enough time to be with their subordinates. Overall, interviewed managers claimed that they rarely acquire their management skills, knowledge and ability through training courses. Rather, they learn the skills, knowledge and ability through observing their colleagues and bosses.

Among the managers interviewed, almost all managers exercise empowerment in managing their subordinates. The reason might be due to the 24-hour operations of casino resorts, which require senior managers to delegate authority to duty managers during overnight shifts. Good communication capability is also very important for

effective managers in Macau's casino gaming industry because the industry is exceptionally labor intensive. Managers in this study find that the gaming industry requires them to practice much more communication capability than other industries in Macau. Moreover, in such a small city, the casino gaming industry is always experiencing lack of talents. This put more pressure to managers in casino operations to select the right talent for the right position. A few of the managers interviewed put emphasis on mutual respect between internal organization members as well as external organization members. The ability to make decisions is also one important part of the managerial job.

Besides the competencies to being an effective manager, this study also attempts to find the cause of the common phenomenon in the Macau casino gaming industry – most of the managerial positions being taken by foreigners instead of local talents. Most of the interviewed managers agreed that there are areas where Macau employees are less competitive than those in other countries. During the beginning of the gaming industry liberation, there are very limited big-sized corporations in Macau. Locals are not exposed to many working experience in large corporations and make them less desirable to start up the business for leading casinos. The Chinese culture and education also make Macau people less willing to speak up and express their own ideas. Results of this study should be helpful for gaming executives and academics to identify and develop local talents to better manage the gaming operations in Macau.

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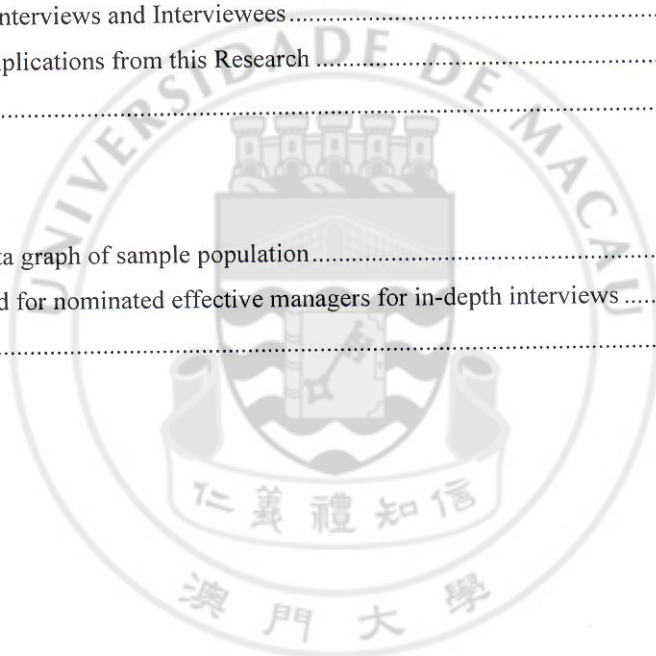


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