The usage of competitions in tourism education

Katarzyna Lesniewska
Tomasz Napierala
University of Lodz
Main goal of the presentation

Purpose:
• To evaluate the effectiveness of usage of competitions as an educational tool in tourism higher education.

Questions:
• Which social competencies can be improved or developed by the usage of competitions in tourism education?
• Whether and how contests can be used to improve or develop knowledge on tourism?
• Which organizational skills can be achieved by participating contests referring to tourism phenomena?
• How competitions are perceived by the participants?
#24HOURS contest

- Organized on 14-15 November 2014 in Lodz, Poland by University of Lodz and Lillehammer University College.
- Participants: 7 teams representing 6 universities from Poland and Norway. Each team = 4 students + 1 tutor.
#24HOURS contest

- **Task:** Strategy for development MICE tourism in Lodz metropolitan area.
- **Time limit:** 24 hours.
- **1st prize:** Week study visit in Lillehammer, Norway. Weekend stay in fabulous medieval city Gdansk, Poland (by Novotel).
Methodology

Quantitative:
• Two questionnaires with all students and their tutors participating #24HOURS contest.

Qualitative:
• Individual in-depth interviews with selected participants of #24HOURS contest.
Social competencies
Social competencies

Detailed questions:
• What was achieved thanks to individual work / cooperation / competition during the #24HOURS contest?

Responses:
• *It showed us that we can cooperate effectively with each other. Each of us was responsible for particular part of the project and had to focus on this. And then, we had to talk about it and go to the conclusion or compromise.* (Student)
Social competencies

• It was the first time for me to compete with the other international teams. So, that was an aspect of a competition that I appreciated. (Student)

• We made a lot of jokes during the contest. For example, we talked „we put some poison to the food and everybody will be seek”. It was so funny that we have been joking all the time about it. (Student)
Knowledge
Knowledge

Detailed questions:
• What was the students’ knowledge improved before / during the #24HOURS contest?
• What was the brand new knowledge developed by the students during the #24HOURS contest?

Responses:
• *I learned a lot about the subject, about MICE tourism. ... When I came back, I actually used a lot of the information that I got in Poland on my exams.* (Student)
• *We searched the web for an information about Lodz. But, there was nothing in English. Thus, I developed the idea of a page called “Meet in Lodz”. (Student)*
Organizational skills
Organizational skills

Detailed questions:
• What were the students’ roles / tutor’s role in the team during the #24HOURS contest?

Responses:
• The tutor was our leader of course. She had a lot of knowledge. She was our authority. (Student)
• I know by now that I should have been to lead. But, the leader was definitely A. She took the leading role in the team immediately. And then, B was coming like the next voice. (Tutor)
• I remember that we didn’t want to have a leader for the project. (Student)
Individual perception
Individual perception

Detailed questions:
• What kind of feelings did students and tutor reveal during the #24HOURS contest: fun / frustration / networking?

Responses:
• Being with them, seeing them struggle and trying to help them without forcing my voice on them made me very uncomfortable. ... my students looked at me and they were terrified. ... I figured that I should be far more involved. So, it was pretty uncomfortable. (Tutor)
• When I had to speak English – it was the biggest problem for me. (Student)
I was very happy. „Happy” is not a proper word because the prize was amazing. ... I have never dreamed about it. When I heard that we won the study visit to Norway and stay in Gdansk, I just started crying. I didn't believe it. (Student)
Conclusions

Positive aspects:
• improving the knowledge during the contest
• developing methodological skills
• participating in outstanding event
• networking

Negative aspects:
• not improving the knowledge before the contest
• getting extremely exhausted
• being frustrated and stressed during the presentation of the results
Thx! Takk!
Dziękujemy!