

Training

One of the features of working life today is that whatever education and training is obtained at the start, it will almost certainly become redundant or obsolete during one's working lifetime. The need to train, and to acquire new knowledge, new skills and new attitudes has become an everyday aspect of each individual's working life. In some cases this may merely be an updating process, but in others it will require a complete change from one occupation to another.

Some jobs and whole industries will disappear and others will emerge. Fortunately for the hospitality industry, there is no likelihood of the main services it provides becoming redundant in the immediate future. Some types of jobs will disappear either through technological change (e.g. telephonists) or through outsourcing. Other jobs within the industry will change, but the industry itself is predicted to continue to flourish.

The responsibility for ensuring that working people are equipped to cope with these changes is threefold. First, the state carries part of the responsibility, particularly in providing education and training for school leavers and for those who need retraining due to the decline of their own industries, nationally or regionally.

From the hospitality industry's point of view the government was instrumental in a number of important initiatives aimed at improving the industry's



standards. The most important probably was the establishment in 1966 of the Hotel and Catering Industry Training Board (HCITB), now known as the Hospitality Training Foundation (HTF). Though many industrial training boards were disbanded in the 1980s, the government decided for a number of reasons to retain the hospitality industry's training board. These reasons included the obvious growing, even vital, importance to the economy of tourism, and also the tremendously fragmented and still predominantly untrained workforce in hospitality generally. The Education and Training Advisory Committee for the hotel and catering industry demonstrated that less than 40% of the workforce, including management, had any appropriate training and that the output of all the college courses would not keep pace with replacement needs, let alone the needs generated by the growth of the industry. This shortfall persists today with a 2001 estimate by the HTF that 21% of the hospitality workforce hold no qualification of any sort. In April 2002, there were 93,360 reported vacancies across the industry (HTF, 2003).

Apart from the traditional training work of industry training providers, the government also set up a national scheme for the development of open access and distance learning programmes, such as Learn Direct, designed for anyone wishing to acquire technical expertise without having to have prior qualifications and without having to attend conventional college courses. A number of courses have now been developed for the industry. Secondly, employers, too, have their share of responsibilities and they discharge these by providing training intended to suit their individual needs. Some employers provide excellent training, whereas others are quite content to recruit trained individuals from the labour market without putting any trained people into the market themselves.

Within some sectors of the hospitality industry staff training is steadily becoming more effective. However, the generally high labour turnover still reduces the effectiveness of the training effort, although companies such as several of the branded fast food operators cope well with the challenge of high labour turnover. They do this by using extremely well-thought-out and well-supervised training programmes. In addition, like many of the best of the large retailers, they budget for and plan training time into all recruits' work. Their 'crew members' only progress to more responsible roles when they have satisfactorily completed the preceding training.

In addition, the industry's leading trade body, the BHA, has taken a lead in a range of training initiatives including the Excellence through People scheme. The BHA has also taken a lead in consultation with government on a range of human resource issues. The Hospitality Network is a forum for various of the industry's sectors to influence the future provision of hospitality training and education.

Many of the industry's traditional employers, particularly the smaller, privately owned businesses, do not implement proper training for a number of reasons:

- 1 Many proprietors and managers have had no formal training themselves and, therefore, are unaware of the standards that can be achieved and of the benefits of training.
- 2 Many employers are concerned constantly with immediate operational problems and do not plan ahead.

- 3 Many are undercapitalized and cannot afford the investment.
- 4 Many believe that it is the responsibility of others, such as colleges, to provide them with trained staff.

At the same time, however, there is a constant upgrading in the industry and a move towards both 'high tech' (modern technology and costly capital investment) and 'high touch' (high customer contact and high wage costs), each demanding more training, with the leading employers now putting more resources into training.

The third part of the responsibility rests with individuals. No amount of training will be effective unless an individual wishes to make the most of what is available. The state and employers may provide facilities, but it remains ultimately for individuals to make the most effective use of these facilities for the benefit of themselves, their employers and the community.

A fourth participant in training and development are the professional bodies. These, such as the Hotel and Catering International Management Association (HCIMA) and the British Institute of Innkeeping (BII), take responsibility for setting professional standards and today many such professional bodies expect their members to participate in continuous professional development (CPD), which can involve annual attendance at various forms of professional updating.

Industrial training is concerned primarily with bridging the gap between individuals' and groups' actual performance and the performance required to achieve an undertaking's objectives. These objectives may include such things as expansion, obtaining repeat sales, increasing sales, increasing profitability and improving standards. On other occasions training may be needed merely to maintain the employer's position in the market. However, there are some useful signs, or symptoms, that may indicate a need for training and these include

- 1 failure to attain targets such as gross profit on food or liquor, turnover and net profit
- 2 dissatisfied customers
- 3 slow service
- 4 high labour turnover, low morale
- 5 friction between departments such as restaurant and kitchen, or housekeeping and reception
- 6 high accident, breakage and wastage rates
- 7 staff unable or unprepared to adapt to changes.

In one case, the then Forte Hotels, a survey conducted by Mori showed the following (*Caterer and Hotelkeeper*, December 1998):

- 1 Guests recommending the hotel brand to others:

Meridien	82%
Heritage	71%
Posthouses	68%
- 2 Staff recommending the hotel brand as an employer to others:

Meridien	61%
Heritage	51%
Posthouses	41%

The managing director of the company stated that he wanted a 95% 'advocacy' or recommendation rate. The findings led to the development of the company's Commitment to Excellence programme, a 16–20 week training programme for all staff including temporary staff. This illustrates how training should be developed in order to achieve companies' objectives.

It is not suggested that training alone can solve all problems. If a hotel or restaurant is badly planned or wrongly situated, no amount of training (apart from training the executive responsible) can rectify this. However, training can often provide the solution or part of the solution.

Training should also consciously try to help individuals to extend their competencies to reach the limits of their capabilities and realistic aspirations – so long as these do not conflict with organizational goals.

The main components of training

There are three main components that an individual requires in order to do a job effectively: knowledge, skills and attitudes. Each of these can be developed or improved upon (from the organization's point of view) by effective training. Each component, however, needs a different training approach. Knowledge, for example, can be imparted by talks, lectures and films, but these techniques would prove almost valueless in imparting the second component, skills such as handling a knife. In this case, practice is necessary. The third component, a person's set of attitudes, is the most difficult to impart or to change, even with soundly based training, and it requires deep understanding of human behaviour among those responsible for training. Training techniques in this field may include discussions, case studies and role playing. It is agreed, however, by many behavioural experts that because attitudes are extremely difficult to modify, it is better to select people with the right attitudes rather than attempt to train people who have attitudes that conflict with those of the employer.

In order to design effective training programmes the following principles should be known and understood:

- 1 Training can only be successful if it is recognized that learning is a voluntary process, that individuals must be keen to learn and consequently they must be properly motivated; for example, if trainee waiters are losing earnings in the form of tips in order to attend a course, they may well begrudge the time and therefore may be unwilling to participate actively.
- 2 People learn at different rates and, particularly in the case of adults, often start from different levels of knowledge and skill and with different motives and attitudes.
- 3 Learning is hindered by feelings of nervousness, fear, inferiority and by lack of confidence.
- 4 Instruction must be given in short frequent sessions rather than a few long stints; for example, if a trainee is being instructed in the use of kitchen equipment, ten lessons lasting forty-five minutes are obviously far better than one lesson lasting seven and a half hours.

- 5 Trainees must play active roles – they must participate; for example, lecturing puts the trainees into a passive role, whereas discussions or practical work gives them active roles.
- 6 Training must make full use of appropriate and varied techniques and of all the senses, not just one, such as the sense of hearing.
- 7 Trainees need clear targets, and progress must be checked frequently.
- 8 Confidence has to be built up by praise, not broken down by reprimand. Learning has to be rewarding.
- 9 Skills and knowledge are acquired in stages marked by periods of progress, standstill and even a degeneration of the skill or knowledge so far acquired. Instructors must know about this phenomenon (the learning curve), as it can be a cause of disappointment and frustration for many trainees.

These principles of learning illustrate and emphasize that it is both difficult and wasteful to treat individuals as groups. So far as possible, training needs to be tailored to suit individual needs. The techniques to be used depend on a variety of factors, including whether it is knowledge, skills or attitudes that are to be imparted and whether individuals or groups are to be trained. The two main approaches are 'on the job' and 'off the job' training.

'On the job' training

In the hospitality industry much of the staff's work is performed in direct contact with customers. For this reason much of the training of new staff has to be performed 'on the job' so that experience of dealing with customers can be obtained. 'On the job' training, therefore, plays a vital part in the industry's approach to training. In one large survey conducted in the USA 'experiential learning' was ranked as the most effective form of training. If handled correctly, it can be very effective for the teaching of manual and social skills, but it requires that training objectives are clearly defined and that those responsible for instruction are proficient in training techniques.

Unfortunately, newcomers are often attached to experienced workers who are not in any way equipped to train others. This is often referred to as 'sitting next to Nellie'. Apart from not having a suitable personality, the trainer may not even have been told what to instruct and what not to instruct. Instead, if experienced workers are to be entrusted with the training of newcomers, they should be chosen because of their ability to deal sympathetically with trainees, not just because of their knowledge of the job itself. They should then be given appropriate instructor training before being asked to train newcomers. The progress of trainees should be checked from time to time by the person responsible for training. Responsibility for training should not be abdicated to the instructor. An example of an 'on the job' training programme for a cocktail bartender is shown in Figure 8.1.

Note that the programme in Figure 8.1 is in progressive stages. It requires each phase to be completely covered before the next is started. In addition, this particular programme is only a checklist and therefore presupposes that the instructor

already has the detailed knowledge. Because of this, in many cases it will be necessary to expand this type of list by specifying in a document such as a training manual exactly what has to be instructed under each new heading.

First stage	
1 Bar preparation and cleanliness	(a) Washing down of bar counter, bottle shelves (b) Polishing of mirrors, glass shelves (c) 'Bottling up' (d) Use of counter towels, drip mats and trays (e) Preparation of accompaniments including lemon, olives, cherries (f) Use of beer dispense equipment
2 'Cash'	(a) Price lists (b) Use of cash register (c) Cheques and credit cards (d) Charging to customer accounts (e) Computation of costs of rounds and 'change giving'
3 Main points of law	(a) Licensing hours and drinking-up time (b) Hotel residents and guests (c) Adulteration (d) Weights and Measures Act
4 Service of simple orders	(a) Beers, wines by the glass (b) Spirits and vermouth with mixers (c) Use of accompaniments such as ice, lemon, cherries (d) Cigarettes, cigars
Second stage	
1 Bar preparation and cleanliness	(a) Requisitioning of stock (b) Cleaning of beer dispense equipment (c) Preparing weekly liquor and provisions order
2 'Cash'	(a) Checking float (b) Changing till roll (c) 'Off sales'
3 Further law	(a) Betting and gaming (b) Young persons (c) Credit sales of intoxicating liquor
4 Service of simple mixed drinks	(a) Shandies (b) Gin and Italian, gin and French
Third stage	
1 Bar preparation and cleanliness	(a) Rectification of faults such as 'fobbing beer', jammed bottle disposal unit (b) Preparation for stock taking
2 'Cash'	Cashing up
3 Service of all drinks contained in house list	(a) Knowledge of recipes (b) Use of shaker and mixing glass

Figure 8.1 Example of an 'on the job' training programme for a cocktail bartender – basically a list of duties and tasks

'Off the job' training

'Off the job' training takes place away from the working situation. A variety of methods and techniques may be used but the particular choice will depend on what is to be imparted. The main methods are listed below:

- 1 Talks are best used for imparting knowledge such as company history and policies, legal matters, regulations, recipes, and outlines of methods and procedures. In giving a talk, progress must be checked frequently by the use of questions and answers.
- 2 Discussions are best used to elaborate on and to consolidate what has been imparted by other techniques.
- 3 Lectures often mean little more than talking at trainees and are therefore to be avoided, as there is usually little trainee participation.
- 4 Case studies, projects and business games are best used to illustrate and to consolidate principles of management such as planning, analytical techniques, etc.
- 5 Role playing is best used to develop social skills such as receiving guests, handling customer complaints, selling, interviewing or instructional techniques. Ideally this should be supported by tape recordings and closed circuit television recordings.
- 6 Films, charts and other visual aids should not normally be used as instructional techniques by themselves, but should support talks, discussions, case studies and role playing. Films on a variety of hotel and catering subjects are obtainable from several training organizations.
- 7 Programmed texts, interactive videos, CD-ROMs and internet-based on-line programmes satisfy many of the principles of learning. In addition, they can be used by individuals at any convenient time – not requiring the presence of an instructor. They cannot, of course, be used to teach something such as manual skills, and they can be very expensive to design.

An example of a fairly typical 'off the job' programme for cooks is shown in Figure 8.2. Figure 8.3 ranks the effectiveness of different forms of training.

Training-needs analysis

Having looked at what training attempts to do, the main principles of learning and the main techniques available, the next step is to consider the design of training programmes. Figure 8.4 gives a simple overview of the complete process. This starts with an identification of training needs, sometimes referred to as a 'training needs analysis', which is conducted by the person responsible for training in consultation with line management. It should attempt to identify those problems and opportunities that line management could solve and exploit with the assistance of appropriate training. It should be produced by studying the training needs of individuals as identified in 'appraisal reports', and by detailed discussions with the line managers. The individual's job description, actual performance and potential should be the basis for these discussions, together with organizational plans for the future. One useful approach is to adopt the 80/20 principle, e.g. What is causing most problems? Which is the largest category of staff? In the commercial context it is always vital to concentrate limited resources on areas that will give the biggest rewards.

Time	Subject matter	Method of instruction
9.00–9.45	Company history Present organization and objectives Personnel policies	Talk, discussion and film
9.45–10.30	Kitchen equipment; cleanliness, safety, uses	Demonstration and discussion
10.30–11.00	Hygiene	Film and discussion
11.00–11.15	Coffee	
11.15–12.00	Principles of cookery; grilling	Demonstration and discussion
12.00–1.00	Portioning, preparation and presentation	Demonstration and practical work
1.00–2.00	Lunch	
2.00–4.00	Practical cookery	Practical preparation of simple dishes
4.00–4.15	Tea	
4.15–5.00	Costing and portion control	Talk and discussion
5.00–6.00	Clearing up	

Figure 8.2 Example of first day of an ‘off the job’ training programme for cooks employed by a firm, with many establishments, offering standardized service

- 1 Personalized experiential learning; e.g. on job training, ‘mentor’ supervision
- 2 Textual material; e.g. text books, manuals
- 3 Self-directed learning resources; e.g. resource area, programmed learning
- 4 Observational learning; e.g. exhibits, working models
- 5 Interactive simulations; e.g. games, role play
- 6 Visual lecture aids; e.g. flip charts, OHPs
- 7 Expert formal presentations; e.g. lectures, panel presentations
- 8 Impersonal passive electronic media; instructional TV and radio

Figure 8.3 Rank order of training effectiveness for non-supervisory jobs

Source: CHRIE conference paper 1988, Dr R. Foucar-Szocki, Syracuse University, USA.

From the consolidation of individual training needs will emerge organization or corporate training needs. Some will be ‘essential’ and some ‘desirable’. These priorities should be laid down by the senior management and will consequently fit in with the undertaking’s business objectives.

In the case of an industrial catering contractor or a group of restaurants, for example, there may be plans to expand the number of units and in order to do this a variety of key staff for the new units will be needed over a given period of time. It will be important, therefore, to identify those people who can be

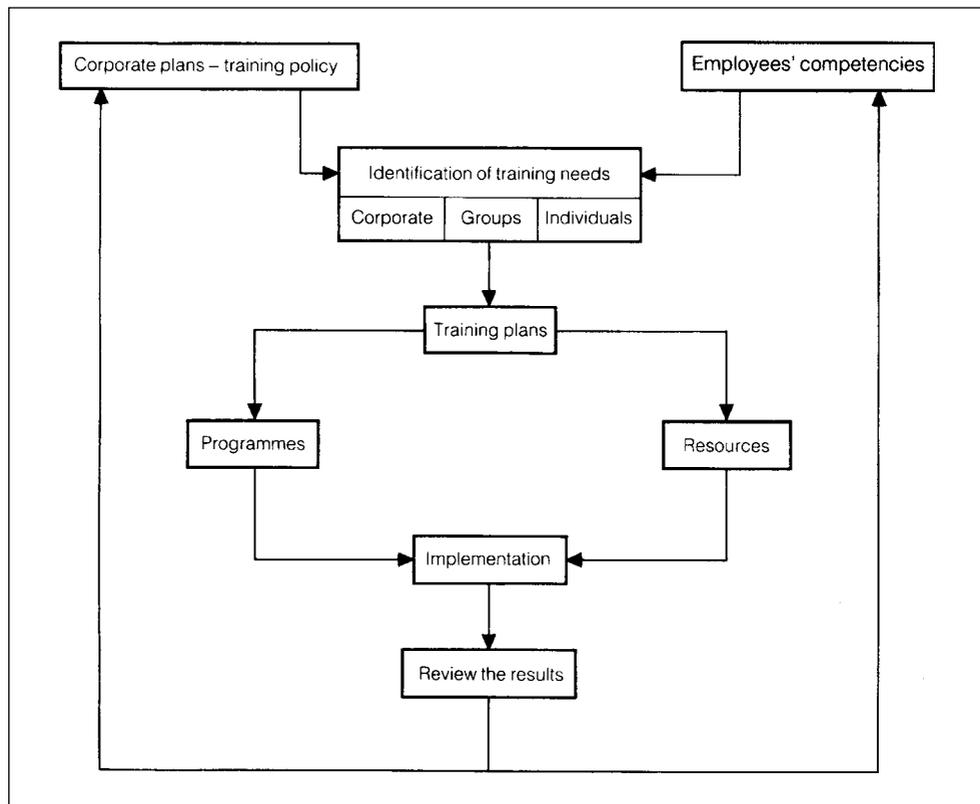


Figure 8.4 Meeting training needs

transferred or promoted and the training that will be needed in order to prepare them. This may range from preparing some assistant managers for full management, to preparing junior kitchen hands to take over more skilled responsibilities such as cooking.

The question of having sufficient trained personnel to fit into expansion plans is a critical one to the successful growth of an organization and it is one area where the training function together with effective recruitment can prove to be of considerable value to a company.

Obviously not all training needs emerge from the annual training-needs analysis. They also arise from unexpected changes in trading conditions or business emphasis; for example, many restaurant operators do not pay sufficient attention to the profits that can be generated by liquor sales. In this case, if a company decides that sales of drinks are to be promoted, effective training of waiters and waitresses in product knowledge, service and selling techniques can play a big part in boosting sales and profits. Likewise, a brewery may change its emphasis from running tenanted houses to running managed houses. In this case it will have to recruit and train managers to run the public houses; it will also have to train district managers in the supervision of managed houses.

Training needs may be identified in three broad areas. The first is the organization's needs; for example, improved customer relations. Such a need may affect all employees. The second need is a group need; for example, a particular group of employees such as receptionists may need training in yield management techniques. The third is that of individuals; for example, the proposal to computerize the payroll could result in the need for the payroll clerk to be trained in appropriate computer skills. Figure 8.5 shows one company's off-job annual training plan.

GROUP TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR 1999												
COURSE NAME	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
FRONT OFFICE INDUCTION	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RECEPTION SALES				✓			✓				✓	
RESERVATIONS MANAGEMENT			✓			✓				✓		
CRAFT TRAINER AWARD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
GROUP TRAINING TECHNIQUES		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	
HEALTH AND SAFETY NETWORK		✓		✓			✓	✓		✓		✓
SALES AND MARKETING			✓				✓			✓		
ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION				✓								
THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF TIME		✓				✓					✓	
NEGOTIATION TACTICS					✓				✓			
SERVICE EXCELLENCE WORKSHOP	✓		✓			✓			✓			
CONFLICT AND CONFRONTATION					✓				✓			
LEADERSHIP AND MOTIVATION			✓			✓			✓		✓	
COMPANY OPERATING PROCEDURES				✓	✓		✓			✓		
F.A.D.S.1 FURTHER ADVANCEMENT		✓				✓		✓			✓	
F.A.D.S.2 FURTHER ADVANCEMENT				✓					✓			
INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES		✓				✓		✓			✓	
APPRAISAL SKILLS				✓					✓			
PERSONNEL OPERATING PROCEDURES				✓								

Figure 8.5 Example of a company's off-job annual training plan
 Source: Reproduced by courtesy of Choice Hotels.

Effectiveness of the different forms of training

A survey conducted by Syracuse University in the USA on the effectiveness of different forms of training in the hospitality industry found that the most effective form of training for both management and non-supervisory staff was ‘personalized experiential learning’. The next most effective in the case of management grades was self-directed learning and in the case of non-supervisory staff it was textual material, e.g. books. The fuller findings are shown in Figure 8.3.

An article states that ‘the two most effective activities of management development are planned experience and performance management’ (Robert Craven, *Management Consultancy*, March 1998).

Line management support

It is vital that line management is seen to support training by participating in it as far as possible, because if all training and instruction is left to the training staff an undesirable gap can develop between the line management and the trainers. The best way to overcome this is to ask line management, such as unit and departmental managers, and the most skilled operators, such as chefs and wine waiters, to be trained in training skills to take some training sessions. This ensures that the instruction given is in line with working requirements, practices and conditions, but, of more importance, it persuades line management that training personnel are working with and for line management.

Training is one of the tools of management that should be used to increase an employer’s efficiency. It enables the undertaking’s goals to be achieved by properly equipping its personnel with the competencies, knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to achieve those goals. But at the same time training should also enable individuals, through increased competence and confidence, to achieve whatever realistic aspirations they have in their work.

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Questions

- 1 Describe the objectives of systematic training and the various steps or phases that you would normally expect to find in its operation.
- 2 Discuss which you consider to be the most important elements in training and why.
- 3 Discuss what changes are likely to be made in the future to improve training and what areas employers are most likely to concentrate on.
- 4 Discuss the relationship between training and approaches to management, such as management by objectives (see Chapter 3).
- 5 Evaluate the approach to training used by an employer you know well.