On the Job Training Blueprint

How to build an effective training program that increases performance

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Introduction

Any employee new to a position needs training. On the Job Training (OJT) is a valuable tool used to quickly transfer and measure new knowledge and skills. The purpose of this paper is to outline how to design and implement a new OJT program.

Outline

1. Identify the objectives
2. Identify the position(s)
3. Identify the competencies
4. What does "Good" look like?
5. Build a tracking process
6. Deploy, Review, Adjust, Launch!

What is On-the-Job Training?

On-the-Job Training, or OJT, is a method of training employees while they are in their normal work environment. It is made up of several components, but always contains a list of tasks that the employee needs to be able to perform to successfully operate in their position. A Mentor should be assigned to the employee to coach, monitor, and evaluate their progress. The Mentor (and possibly Jobsite Manager) should also verify the employee is able to complete all the tasks assigned.

1. Identify the objectives

What are you trying to do with this program? What is the purpose of it? What is the need that prompted you to say "We really need an OJT program!"

The answer is usually focused on improving performance issues. Some examples include:

- Brining new employees up to speed,
- Reducing the learning curve,
- Quickly training newly promoted employees on their new job functions.

But not all performance issues can be solved by training.

Is training the answer?

Anytime a training program is proposed, you should ask two questions:

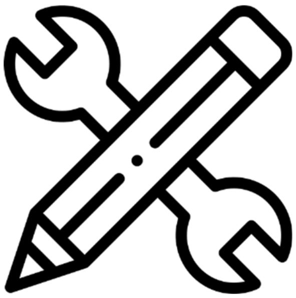
- "What is the problem/pain-point that the organization is trying to solve?"
- "How will training solve this problem?"

You need to ask why OJT is being proposed, and if it will in fact solve the issues being faced. If the objectives for the training are not clarified from the beginning, how will you be able to measure the progress/success of the program? If the main problem you are trying to solve isn't a "training issue", then no amount of training will improve it.

Performance Barriers - Skill, Will, or Hill?

If the main problem you are trying to solve isn't a "training issue", then no amount of training will improve it. So how do you know if it is in fact a training issue?

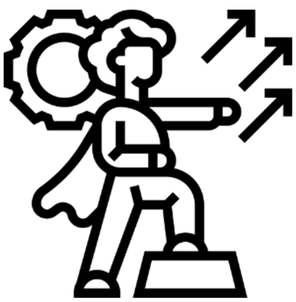
Performance barriers can be classified into three categories – Skill, Will, or Hill.



Skill

Employees do not possess the knowledge or ability to perform the tasks needed.

This is the category that training is meant to address!



Will

Is the lack of internal motivation restricting performance? Employees know what needs to be done, and know how to do it, but just do not want to.

Hill

Are there limitations outside of your employees control restricting performance? This is usually seen as a process that is too difficult or cumbersome, but could also be:

- Technology barriers: Employees do not have enough access or permission.
- Resource limitations: there is not enough time, man-hours, or equipment to complete the needed tasks.
- Cultural barriers: A toxic work environment will always limit productivity.
- Environmental barriers: Factors outside the company may be limiting performance.

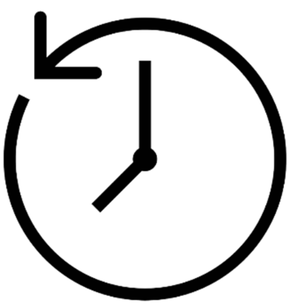
2. Identify the position(s)

Identify specific positions that you will be developing OJT for. This should be narrow in scope, with one or a few positions identified at a time. You should start with positions that contain fewer job responsibilities. This will allow you to streamline the OJT development process, and allow for a faster turn-around time. If there are variations of job expectations between employees with the same job title, this should be noted and addressed. (For example, employees with the same job title working in different regions, countries, departments, etc.)

3. Identify the competencie

Once you have identified the positions you are building the OJT for, the next step is to determine the daily job duties that employees need to be able to perform. To do this, talk to:

Employees that currently hold this position



Employees that formerly held this position

Managers of employees in this position

This will develop a list of tasks that will need to be explained and/or demonstrated.

4. What does "Good" look like?

For each of the tasks, talk to a Subject Mater Expert (SME) about how the task should be completed. For operational tasks, this will include current or former employees in that position. You should always make sure to talk to multiple people about how to complete each task. Once your list of task completion steps is built, make sure this is reviewed by a wide variety of people. If there are discrepancies about how a task should be completed, focus in on these and determine WHY different parties feel they have the correct method to complete it. This review process will also take you outside of just operations (or the department you are building OJT for). You will most likely need to involve a variety of departments about how to properly complete these tasks. For example:

HSE	Technical Services	HR	Legal	Other
Safety-related tasks and processes might include a review by someone in the Health Safety and Environment (HSE) department.	Any tasks related to equipment maintenance and upkeep should be reviewed by the Technical Services or Equipment Maintenance department.	If there are any policies or procedures an employee needs to be able to explain, then make sure to confirm with Human Resources on the appropriate course of action to take.	If there are any laws, statutes, codes, etc. that employees must follow, then check with your legal department to verify you are instructing them to do so in the right way.	Many of our job duties require us to wear different hats. The list above are a few examples of different departments to include, but depending on the position you are building training for, there may be many others. Determine who is the authority in your company for the task you are building a competency for, and seek out advice and material reviews from them.

5. Build a tracking process

Once you have identified all of the competencies and determined how they can be observed successfully, you need a way to record and track the progress and completion.

Tracking progress – It is unlikely that an employee will be able to demonstrate competency in all assigned tasks at one time. So how will you track what they have been able to complete, and what they are still working on? A checklist or workbook is a simple way to keep up with this. You can also use a digital method of tracking progress. A blended approach that uses both analog and digital solutions will also work.

Tracking completion – Once an employee has successfully demonstrated all of the On-the-Job Training competencies for their position, what is the next step? How will you keep track of those completed and those still in progress? A Learning Management System is usually the best option for recording completion of this, just like any other training an employee has completed. It should be a part of their permanent training record. If you don't have a LMS, then some other database or digital tracking method is recommended. You need a way to easily run exception reports to see which employees still have outstanding training left to complete. Automating these exception reports takes it one step further and removes one more manual task you need to keep track of.

6. Deploy, Review, Adjust

Deploy

Launching an OJT program takes clear communication about the process to everyone involved. Items that will help clarify the process to those deploying the program include:

- Checklists
- Process Flowcharts and Timelines
- Instruction guides

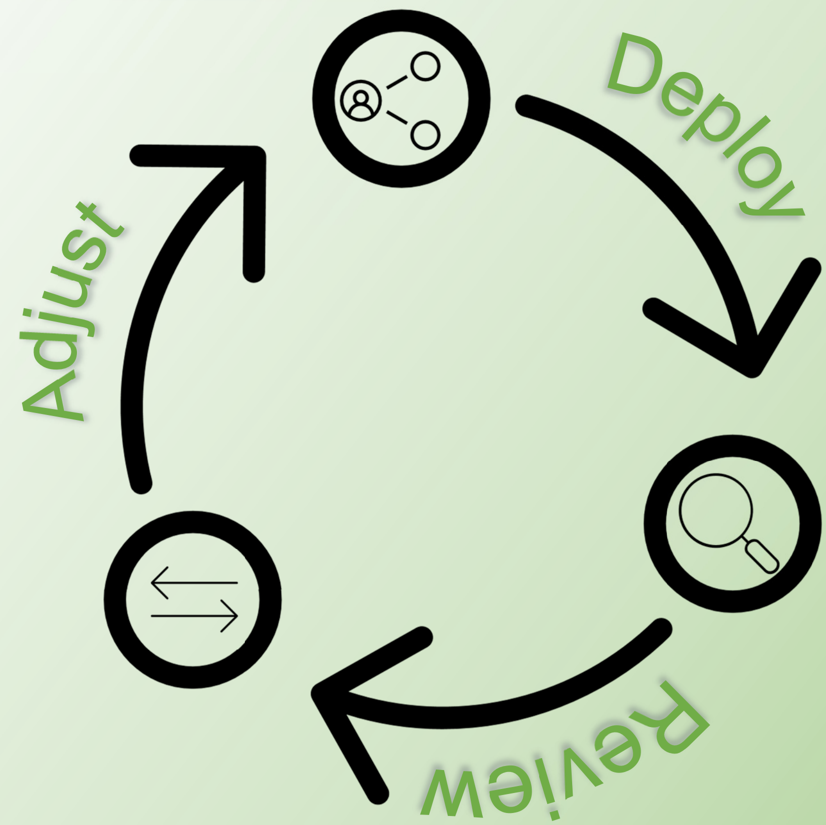
A pilot program with a small subset of the target population will help identify issues on a much more manageable scale.

Review

Part of the deployment should include a method of collecting feedback. It is important to identify the following as soon as possible:

- Uncertainty about the process
- Roadblocks with the technology
- Inadequate tracking metrics or processes

You can use a survey to quickly collect feedback from all parties involved in the pilot. It's important to remember the measurable objectives you set at the beginning of the program. Are they being measured effectively?



Adjust

After data and feedback are collected from the pilot program, make any needed adjustments to processes, materials, or technology. Once this is completed, send out communication to all that will be involved in the new program, and deploy your new OJT program.

But you are not done yet! Periodically review the program, adjust content, processes, or technology as needed, and redeploy.

For more information on developing OJT programs, and other employee development, visit

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