



BUILDING FORMALISED AND EFFECTIVE ON THE JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN WINE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

What is *On the Job Training* (OJT)?

When OJT is used, employees learn in the workplace through actual working conditions under the supervision and guidance of their manager and/or peers, who are the “job knowledge experts” and who are what you might call ‘coaches’. The employee learns by observing the coach performing the job and trying to imitate their behaviour.

OJT Methods

The following are the most commonly used OJT methods:

Job Instruction:

The coach explains to the employee the way of doing the job step by step, the necessary knowledge and skills required and allows him/her to perform the job. Then the coach evaluates the employee’s performance, provides feedback and if necessary corrects the employee.

Job Rotation:

The employee is moved from one job to another, gaining knowledge and experience in each one of the job assignments. As the employee moves to each job they are assigned to another employee who is the designated coach who will take them through the process of learning the job.

Job rotation can be **within-function** or **cross-functional**:

- When within-function rotation is used, the employee rotates between jobs with similar levels of responsibility and in the same functional or operational areas.
- On the other hand, cross-functional rotation usually involves a sequence of positions, often with increasing levels of job responsibilities.

Job rotation can provide a number of benefits for employees and employers:

- It can be used to prepare employees for future positions by increasing their knowledge and skills;
- Help managers explore ‘hidden talents’;
- Better identify knowledge, skills and attitudes, this can assist with identifying further training and development needs;
- It can help to motivate employees and prevent job dissatisfaction by giving them the opportunity for personal and professional growth.

**South Australian Wine
Industry Association
Incorporated**
ABN 43 807 200 928
1st Floor, Industry Offices,
National Wine Centre,
Botanic Road, Adelaide SA
5000

(08) 8222 9277

Contact:

Sarah Hills
sarah@winesa.asn.au

Egon Schwidder
egon@winesa.asn.au

Henrik Wallgren
henrik@winesa.asn.au

So why have OJT – the Risks of Unstructured & Informal OJT:

Although On the Job Training is a great alternative for businesses, if it is too informal and unstructured employees may be poorly trained and will learn to use ineffective or hazardous methods to perform the task.

The main risks of using unstructured OJT are:

Coaches may not have the necessary skills or may not be experienced enough to train:

Although On the Job Trainers (or coaches) are job knowledge experts, this does not necessarily mean that they are skilled at training others. If the coaches do not have the training and skills needed to train employees properly, they will conduct the training the way they believe it should be done and may miss some important elements of the learning process for the OJT to be effective.

Training is not systematically organised and based on standard processes:

On the Job Trainers (coaches) may not use the same process to complete a task each and every time and therefore if training is not systematically organised and based on a standard process, coaches will train the employee the only way they know how to perform the task. As a consequence the employee may learn useful skills as well as bad habits.

Additionally, if there are different coaches performing the same job and the OJT is not based on adequately documented procedures, each of these coaches could be teaching different ways for performing the same job tasks. Furthermore, this may result in products or services that vary in quality.

Key Elements for Formalised and Effective OJT

1. Structure and Consistency:

For OJT to be consistent, training content must be based on standard processes and adequately documented procedures.

Training content should be stated in a training guide using process descriptions, including clear training sessions, learning objectives and learning indicators.

Training guides are essential to assist the OJT process. They help coaches to ensure that all the necessary information has been provided to the employee they are training and also that the information provided is consistent with the required standards.

An OJT session should include:

- Training topic
- Employees accountable for conducting OJT - the coaches
- Training duration / number of sessions
- Content / process description
- Learning objectives: knowledge and/or skills to be taught
- Learning outcomes: What is expected from the employee in terms of performance once the OJT session is concluded

2. We have developed an example template of what your Training guide should contain – Refer to the **Training session guide**

It is important to train with a clear goal in mind

This means that OJT efforts should be aligned to the following elements:

Support employees' performance in their current job responsibilities:

- OJT can be used for training newly hired employees, upgrading experienced employees' skills when new technology or process is introduced and orientating transferred or promoted employees to their new jobs.
- Developing employees to prepare them to advance to future responsibilities: To ensure the continued effective performance of a business, department or job group, training and development programs must be integrated to succession planning.

Succession planning helps the business to ensure that all employees are trained, experienced and ready to assume future positions. This means 'having the right people in the right place at the right time for the right

job'.

Future positions are based on high risk jobs and critical skill areas such as:

- ◆ Incumbents of key positions that are critical for the business
- ◆ Employees that are subject matter experts and possess knowledge and skills that are critical for the business
- ◆ High potential employees that occupy other positions in the mid/long term
- ◆ New positions and /or skills required as a result of workforce planning to support future business needs (expansion plans, etc)

To build a succession plan the business should take the following aspects into account:

- ◆ Identify the persons that are experts and have critical knowledge for the business.
 - Which persons have that knowledge?
 - Is there any risk of losing them? Eg are they going to retire in the mid-term?

Identify critical positions for the business operations:

- Is there any risk of losing the current incumbents ?
 - Due to lack of opportunities, retirement, poaching by other businesses or extended leave plans?
- Are there new critical positions going to be created in the mid-term as a result of a pending business decision?
- ◆ Who could replace the persons identified?
- ◆ Who could occupy the positions identified?
- ◆ What knowledge and skills do they need to learn to be ready to take on a new role?
 - Additionally, OJT is an important tool for businesses to preserve the institutional (or generational) memory:

OJT can be a valuable tool for businesses to

prevent the loss of valuable knowledge if an employee (including the owner) leaves the company.

Generational memory means that knowledge is not only in the job experts' memory but it is also registered in the business' memory and therefore it becomes a knowledge asset. When knowledge becomes an asset it can help businesses to avoid repeating mistakes, using lessons learned from previous similar experiences and ensure the continued cultivation of intellectual talent.

OJT is a great tool to turn the knowledge of job expert employees into institutional memory, because their knowledge is being transferred to other employees and is registered in standard processes that are used to plan the OJT sessions.

3. Train the Trainers:

Being an On-the Job trainer/coach is not just about showing the employee how the job is done, it is about developing an effective training style and working with the employee to build job skills.

To build job skills, on-the Job instructors need to become coaches, not just trainers. To be a successful coach it is important to have a clear understanding and skills about how to **communicate** effectively, how to **give directions** and how to **provide feedback**.

Access the **Trainers Guide** tool on the web page to help you to make the best of your trainers.

4. Keeping a record of the training you are doing:

Keeping a register of training makes it easier for the business to communicate and promote training efforts as well as to build training metrics if necessary.

Training metrics assist a business to:

- Monitor the effectiveness of training to support succession planning actions
- Show impact of training in terms of investment (hours, cost, etc) which can help the business to

communicate its efforts to the workforce and show that OJT also has value for the business

- It can help to reward the efforts of trainers and recognise their expertise, this can be used as a motivation strategy
- Identify areas of the business that need training
- Show compliance with legislation, standards, etc.
- Individual forms can be used to record individual training. Before archiving the individual training record forms into the employee's file, the training details should be entered into the company's training register

Access the **Training Record form** and the **Training Register template** located on this web page.

References:

Hartley, C, 'The Australian Wine Guide', Hospitality Books (2011)

Grape growing guide, <http://www.grapegrowingguide.com/index.html> (2009)

Molnar, J & Watts, B, 'Structured On-the-Job Training. Effectively Training Employees with Employees'. Center for Entrepreneurial Studies and Development, Inc (2000).

Noe, R, 'Employee Training and Development', McGrawhill (2010).

South Australian Wine Industry Association Incorporated

ABN 43 807 200 928

1st Floor, Industry Offices, National Wine Centre, Botanic Road, Adelaide SA 5000

Contact

Sarah Hills (08) 8222 9212 or sarah@winesa.asn.au

Egon Schwidder (08) 8222 9273 or egon@winesa.asn.au

Henrik Wallgren (08) 8222 9270 or henrik@winesa.asn.au