

CHAPTER 11

TRAINING TO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

If you go to a good hotel and ask for something, you get it. If you go to a great hotel, you don't even have to ask.¹

John Collins, human resources director, the Ritz-Carlton, Boston Common

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you will be able to

- Distinguish between training and development.
- Identify how training benefits employees, management, and the company.
- Recognize that an effective training program should include performance standards and needs assessment.
- Describe the performance management cycle.
- Determine the essential tasks associated with a particular job and develop performance standards for each task.
- Define needs assessment and describe approaches to conducting an effective needs assessment.
- List and describe the five learning principles.
- Identify factors to consider when selecting a particular training method.
- Distinguish between on-the-job and off-the-job training methods.
- Describe key training methods and the major learning principles associated with each method.
- Develop an evaluation process to assess the results of training and development.

**HRM IN ACTION**

Hospitality managers and supervisors must invest a substantial amount of time and money into the **training and development** of their employees, if they hope to create a positive work environment where workers are motivated to consistently produce quality products and deliver exceptional service. In hospitality operations, both large and small, the lack of proper training and development is one of the leading causes of employee turnover. When employees do not know what is expected of them in terms of their job responsibilities, they get frustrated, and frustrated employees are the employees most likely to make a mental decision to look for another job. Sadly, in many operations, employees tend to become frustrated at the workplace within the first 30 to 60 days of employment if their manager never clarifies their job responsibilities. Assuming that the manager has made the proper hiring decision during the employee selection process, the manager owes it to himself, as well as to the new employee, to provide the employee with ongoing effective training and development to ensure job satisfaction as well as professional development.

TRAINING NOW AND DEVELOPMENT LATER

When management effectively qualifies a new employee and ensures that the right applicant has been hired for the right position, and then provides the new employee with a proper orientation, the employee will still not be able to perform her job duties in a satisfactory manner. New employees and even experienced workers need proper training to ensure that their job performance matches company standards. Some hospitality managers attempt to take short cuts by hiring only workers who have previous hospitality industry experience.

Requiring previous hospitality industry experience for upper-level employees in positions such as sales and marketing or food and beverage management may be logical, but the practice makes little sense when selecting entry-level workers, especially if management's goal is to make an end run around the training process. Figure 11.1 provides some reasons given by hospitality managers for why they provide little to no training.

Training is the process that provides employees with the knowledge and the skills required to operate within the systems and standards set by management. While training can be extremely in-depth and enormously demanding, it is essential to ensure employee job satisfaction and productivity. Lack of training or training that is poor contributes to high employee turnover and the delivery of substandard products and services.

Training helps employees do their current jobs more effectively. While the benefits of training may contribute to the quality and effectiveness of an employee's performance in her current position, **development** helps the employee

The following are reasons some hospitality managers have given for providing little or no training:

1. "It's too demanding when we get busy, so we overlook it or just cancel it altogether."
2. "We don't have anyone here who knows how to train."
3. "We don't train new employees; they don't stick around long enough."
4. "It's too expensive to do it right, so we just rely on the 'shadow system.'"
5. "We can't afford the downtime; all new employees need to be productive from day one."
6. "No one here speaks Spanish well enough to be a trainer."
7. "We tried that once, but we lost the training manuals, so we just never restarted it."
8. "Everyone here already knows how we do things."
9. "I hate it, but when times are lean, training is always the first thing cut from my budget."
10. "Our purveyors provide most of our training for us."

Figure 11.1

Reasons some hospitality managers give for providing little to no training.

to gain knowledge and skills to help prepare her to handle future responsibilities, with less emphasis on her present job duties. The ultimate goal of training is to focus on an employee's present job, while development focuses on the employee's potential future advancement within the company.

BENEFITS OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

As the hospitality industry becomes more and more competitive, having competent, well-trained employees is essential at all levels of employment. Not only does an effective training program teach new employees important skills and knowledge about their positions within the company, but it also helps to encourage employees to have a positive attitude toward customer service. Training is expensive, both in a monetary sense and also with regard to productivity because workers who are learning their job responsibilities are not yet fully productive. As a result, if a company encounters tough times and costs are reduced, training and development budgets are often the first to disappear. This is a mistake. Hospitality managers must treat training and development as investments in their organizations' futures, not just as a line-item expense. A hospitality

Training Benefits the Employee

1. Increases job satisfaction and recognition
2. Moves employee closer to personal goals
3. Encourages self-development and self-confidence
4. Helps the employee become an effective problem solver
5. Allows employee to become productive more quickly
6. Sustains a positive attitude toward customer service

Training Benefits Management

1. Improves communication between managers and employees
2. Improves morale and builds cohesiveness between managers and employees
3. Aids in evaluating employee performance
4. Makes policies and procedures viable
5. Aids in sustaining systems and standards
6. Helps to identify employees for promotions or transfers

Training Benefits the Organization

1. Leads to improved profitability
2. Reduces accidents and safety violations
3. Helps create a positive corporate image
4. Aids in organizational development
5. Assists in developing employees for internal promotions
6. Helps employees adjust to change
7. Reduces costly employee turnover

Figure 11.2 The benefits of employee training.

organization's commitment to the training and development of its employees not only benefits the employees but also management and the company. Figure 11.2 highlights some of these key benefits.

Hospitality organizations that devote themselves to training and development enhance their employees' capabilities and strengthen their own competitive advantage over other competing operations. Effective training also furthers the employees' personal and professional goals and enhances their abilities, increasing their value to the overall success of the organization. Another important stakeholder who benefits from employee training is the organization's valued guests and customers. These individuals benefit because they receive quality products and services and, as a result, become repeat customers.

TALES FROM THE FIELD

As the new general manager of a nice, privately owned restaurant, I had a lot of respect for the lovely couple who owned the business because they actually let me do the job that they hired me to do: manage the restaurant. These owners put aside nearly 2 percent of the restaurant's annual sales for marketing and advertising. In some years, this could amount to nearly \$50,000. Our efforts were pretty successful because we almost always attracted huge crowds and lots of new business anytime we launched a promotion. Unfortunately, our staff was not always that well trained, so more often than not, we ended up losing business in the long run. This loss of business was not only a result of having to comp free meals when we got overrun and just messed things up, but it was also due to the negative word of mouth we were getting because our staff just couldn't execute to meet our customer's needs. I talked to the owners and got them to agree to reduce the advertising budget by 50 percent and to increase the training and development budget by 50 percent, so over half the money that used to go to advertising was now being devoted to training instead. The results were remarkable; we still attracted large crowds, but now our staff could actually execute with superb food and service. Now, almost the entire budget originally intended for advertising goes to training and development. We learned that satisfied customers were our very best form of advertisement.

Greg, 31, Akron, Ohio

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Training is not a magic wand that will provide a universal solution to every company need. The jobs within the company also need to be properly designed with clear and objective **performance standards**, which provide benchmarks against which employee performance is measured. And managers must also work diligently to match the right applicant with the right position; the best training in the world is of no use whatsoever if the employees who are being trained are not well suited for the positions they've been hired to fill. Managers must also assess the needs, objectives, content, and **learning principles** associated with the training. This **needs assessment** is an important step when determining the training necessary because it assesses the needs of the organization in order to identify the goals that should be achieved as a result of the training.

UNDERSTANDING PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

We will first focus our attention on an effective performance management program, because this is essential to the training process. Managing employee performance is one of the most important functions of a hospitality manager. **Performance management** is an ongoing, continuous process of communicating and clarifying job responsibilities, priorities, and performance expectations in order to ensure mutual understanding between supervisor and employee. Performance management occurs on a continuous cycle and enables a manager to encourage employee development by providing frequent feedback and fostering teamwork among his staff. This particular function of management emphasizes communication between management and employees and focuses on adding value to the hospitality organization by promoting improved job performance and encouraging employees to develop their skills and knowledge. Figure 11.3 details a performance management cycle.

As Figure 11.3 illustrates, the performance management process requires that a manager clarifies job responsibilities; defines performance standards; trains employees to performance standards; and documents, evaluates, and discusses performances with employees.

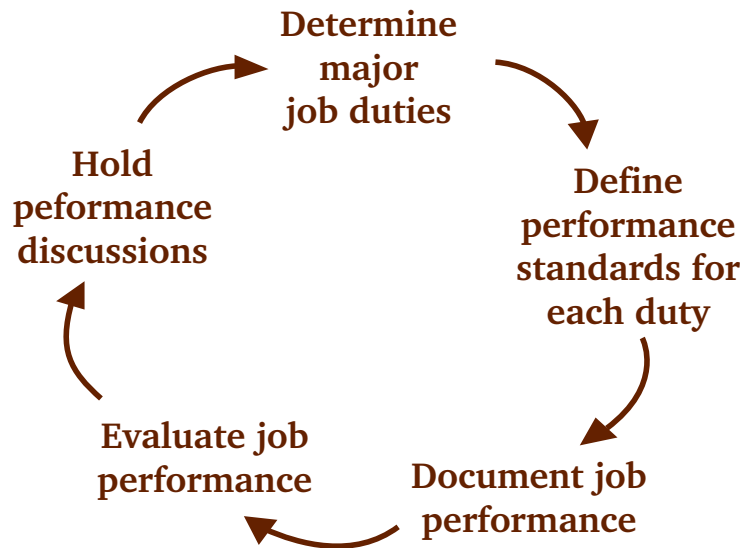


Figure 11.3 The performance management cycle.

ethical dilemma

Jeremy was recently hired as a bartender at a posh, downtown hotel, and he has been on the job for a little more than four months. He is beginning to really like his coworkers, and his work schedule fits perfectly with his class schedule at the local university. The hotel has just adopted a policy that imposes sanctions on those employees found to be working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, and Jeremy is worried about his supervisor, Alex, who is the hotel's beverage manager. Alex is responsible for training Jeremy, and frequently during training, Jeremy thought he detected alcohol on Alex's breath when they were beginning work in the afternoons and sometimes after work breaks later in the evening. But until the new policy was announced, it never occurred to Jeremy that he should say anything to Alex, let alone tell anyone else about it. Alex has been really nice to Jeremy, and Jeremy is not the kind of person who feels comfortable discussing such matters with others.

Two days before the announcement of the new alcohol and drug policy, Alex tells Jeremy that he is being considered for the position of food and beverage director for the entire hotel. Although pleased at the prospect of Alex's promotion, Jeremy wonders if Alex's drinking will get in the way of meeting his responsibilities. Jeremy worries that, with additional job pressures, Alex's drinking problem will worsen. Should Jeremy talk to Alex about his drinking, or should he keep quiet and mind his own business, leaving the problem up to Alex and those who have the responsibility to select someone for the job? If Jeremy decides to keep quiet, will he be in violation of any of the *10 Ethical Principles for Hospitality Managers*, and, if so, which ones? How will Jeremy's decision affect his relationship with hotel management? With Alex? What would you do? Why?

IMPORTANCE OF PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Developing effective performance standards is an important part of the performance management cycle. Effective job performance standards serve two important functions. First, they become targets for employee efforts, and second, they are criteria against which job success is measured. For hospitality managers and supervisors, they are indispensable. You first encountered this concept in Chapter 6 where you learned that some organizations' job descriptions break down each task into a performance standard, or the *what, how, and to what standard* each task within the job description is to be accomplished. This concept will be repeated in Chapter 12, where you will learn the important

role that objective performance standards play in the overall effectiveness of the hospitality organization's performance appraisal system. Unclear performance expectations and poor employee feedback are two of the primary reasons for poor employee job performance.

In order to be effective, performance standards should be

- Attainable
- Specific
- Observable
- Meaningful
- Measurable
- Stated in terms of quality, quantity, timeliness, or cost

Employee involvement in the development of performance standards is also important. It is often said that if you want to know how to best complete a task, ask the employee who does it every day. It is important that the *established standards describe the conditions that will be met when performance is satisfactory*. For example, how well, how much, and at what speed is the standard expected to be performed? Measurable standards should also provide for ranges of acceptable performance. There should be several levels of performance so that excellent performers can be differentiated from satisfactory performers, poor performers, and so forth.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND TRAINING

Performance standards are not only the basis for performance evaluation, but they are also essential to effective training because they clearly state how you and the employee will recognize when expectations have been met, exceeded, or not met. When an employee's performance meets or exceeds standards, it is safe to assume that training to that standard has been effective. Additional training and coaching is necessary when an employee's performance does not meet established standards.

HOW TO SET PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Some hospitality operations break down each job into its essential tasks. These tasks or job duties are normally listed within the position's job description. Here are some essential tasks or job duties that may be listed in a job description for the position of hotel switchboard operator:

- *Answer* incoming calls.
- *Take* messages for guests when they do not answer their room phones.
- *Record* guest messages in the appropriate logbook.
- *Provide* guests dialing instructions for local and long-distance calls.
- *Enter* wake-up call requests into the wake-up call system.
- *Balance* call accounting data at end of shift.

Notice that the first word in each of the above six tasks is in capital letters and that each of these words is an action verb. These tasks tell the employee *what* to do. This list does not, however, provide information regarding *to what extent* each task should be performed. This information will be provided in the task's performance standards. The example below provides performance standards for task number one: Answer incoming calls.

TASK: ANSWER incoming calls

Performance standard: Performance will be satisfactory when the following occurs:

- Telephone is answered in three or fewer rings; employee has a smile on his or her face, and employee uses appropriate address such as “sir” and “ma’am.”
- Employee does not leave callers on hold for longer than 30 seconds without acknowledging they are still waiting.
- Information provided to callers is correct and complete.
- Customer complaints do not exceed two-per-annual rating period.

In some cases, once developed and communicated, the standards may need to be modified as a result of feedback from the employees who work in the position. This is especially true in the case of a newly created position. In other instances, performance standards may need to be revised for particular positions as the focus of the hospitality organization changes. Some organizations may choose to set a range of behaviors as follows:

- *Excellent performance.* Answered in one ring or less
- *Good performance.* Answered in one to two rings
- *Satisfactory performance.* Answered in two to three rings
- *Marginal performance.* Answered in four to five rings
- *Poor performance.* Answered in five or more rings

Performance standards may also measure a task by more than one standard. An example from a hotel housekeeping department follows:

TASK: Meet daily room-cleaning quota

- *Quantity standard.* Clean no less than 18 rooms per day.

- *Quality standard.* No more than 1 percent of the rooms cleaned are found to have deficiencies by the housekeeping inspector.
- *Effective use of resources standard.* Work is completed with no more than an average of 5 percent overtime in a one-week pay period.

In all instances, the performance standards should accurately reflect the skills, behaviors, and goals that the organization values.

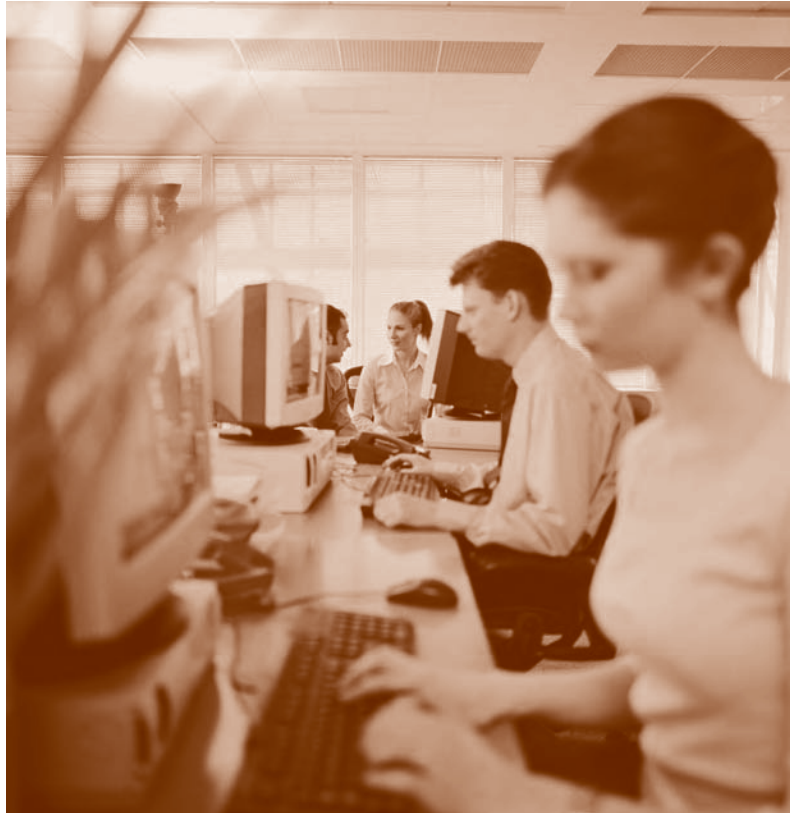
DETERMINING TRAINING NEEDS

Large, chain-affiliated hospitality organizations allocate great sums of money to training and development. Hard Rock Cafe, for example, spent as much as \$4.5 million per year educating and training workers prior to September 11, 2001.² They have since reduced their training budget somewhat, but the organization still devotes considerable financial resources to training and developing the employees who staff and manage its 115 restaurants located in 44 different countries.

For a large chain such as McDonald's, it takes qualified and talented managers and employees to sustain such a global food service retailer. Hamburger University, McDonald's worldwide management training center, is a 130,000-square-foot facility on an 80-acre campus located at the corporation's headquarters in Oak Brook, Illinois. The facility includes 17 teaching rooms, a 300-seat auditorium, and four special team rooms for interactive education. Hamburger University translators can provide simultaneous translation of more than 27 different languages. Twenty-two full-time international resident professors teach students from more than 199 countries. Hamburger University has graduated more than 70,000 McDonald's restaurant managers.³

In these examples, some money goes to train workers for new jobs, and other expenditures update the knowledge and skills of current workers. Still other expenditures prepare managers and workers for future challenges. If these large hospitality organizations are to get maximum benefit from these staggering expenditures, their training and development efforts must concentrate on the people and the situations that will benefit most. To best determine what training and development is needed, human resources professionals in these organizations perform a needs assessment by assessing both company and individual needs.

While smaller hospitality operations can only dream of the megabuck training budgets enjoyed by their larger counterparts, the small amounts of financial resources they *can* devote to training are just as valuable. To ensure their smaller budget is properly targeted, these smaller operations must conduct needs assessments to ensure their training and development investments produce the desired results. Conducting a needs assessment helps to diagnose current prob-

**Photo 11.1**

Large operations have the financial resources to provide state-of-the-art corporate training centers for their managers.

lems within the organization and future challenges that the organization might face, and then it helps to determine ways to meet those challenges with the help of training and development. Challenges can be external or internal. An example of an **external challenge** occurred in 1990 when Congress passed the ADA. You learned about this important federal law in Chapter 2. As a result of this law being passed, managers and supervisors who interviewed job applicants needed updated training to ensure that they would not ask the kinds of questions that might violate this new federal law. Sometimes changes within an organization's strategy can create a need for additional training. This kind of **internal challenge** occurred in the early 1980s when the Holiday Inn hotel chain rolled out a fully computerized reservation system for use in each of the chain's one thousand hotels worldwide. All Holiday Inn employees had to be trained so they could successfully navigate through the reservation system when dealing with their guests.

APPROACHES TO NEEDS ASSESSMENT

One approach to assessing the training needs of a hospitality business is simple **observation**. Supervisors see their employees on a daily basis; therefore, day-to-day observation is perhaps the best source of recommendation for employee training. A more refined approach is **task identification**. This occurs when management evaluates a particular job description to identify the essential tasks that the job requires. Then, specific plans are developed to provide the training necessary for employees to perform these essential tasks.

Another approach involves **employee surveys**. Management surveys potential trainees in an attempt to identify specific areas about which they want to learn more. When surveys are conducted, one benefit is that the trainees are more likely to be receptive to the training because they have helped to determine its focus and find it to be more relevant to their day-to-day jobs. **Exit interviews** are another valid source for assessing training and development needs. Exit interviews occur when an employee separates from the organization for any reason. A human resources employee normally speaks with the departing employee in an attempt to determine exactly *why* the employee is leaving the organization. In smaller operations where no human resources department exists, it may be necessary to have the exit interview of a departing employee conducted by someone other than the employee's immediate supervisor.

Needs assessment is not only a valid diagnostic tool that helps a company to identify training needs, it also helps to reveal shortcomings that can be traced to other management activities like job placement, orientation programs, or ineffective recruiting. By uncovering repeated shortcomings, managers and supervisors can modify these activities to ensure a better fit between job applicant and job performance.

DETERMINING TRAINING OBJECTIVES

After specific challenges are identified and training needs are diagnosed, the hospitality manager must develop **training objectives**. Training objectives should always conform to performance standards. In other words, objectives should state the desired behavior and the conditions under which it should occur. Training objectives, like performance standards, will serve as the standard against which individual performance and training programs will be measured. Consider the following performance standards that may be associated with a typical task listed in the job description for a hotel reservations clerk:

TASK: *Process call-in hotel reservation requests*

Performance standard: Performance will be satisfactory when the following occurs:

- Hotel availability information is provided to call-in customers within 30 to 60 seconds.
- A one-party room reservation is completed within one to three minutes after all information is obtained from caller.
- Confirmation information provided to callers is correct and complete.

Objectives such as these give both the employee and the trainer specific goals that can be used to evaluate their success. If the objectives are not met, management can use this information to assess the effectiveness of the training program, the quality of the trainer, and the ability of the trainee.

LEARNING PRINCIPLES

As a manager, you should recognize that people learn differently. **Learning principles** represent the ways in which people learn most effectively. The more these principles are reflected in training, the more effective training is likely to be. The five primary learning principles are repetition, participation, relevance, transference, and feedback. Although the rate at which people learn varies from person to person, incorporating the following learning techniques will help speed up the learning process for all those involved in a particular training session. Consider the examples provided, which relate to each of the techniques that follows:

Repetition. Perhaps you learn things best by repetition and memorization. If this is the case, when you study for a big exam, you may repeat key ideas to yourself so that you can remember them during the test.

Participation. Some individuals find learning to be easier when they are actively involved in the learning process. Consider how long it may have taken you to learn how to ride a bicycle, if you did not actively participate in the process.

Relevance. Most adult learners need relevance. In other words, it is easier for them to learn if they consider the material to be meaningful and important to their current situation. For example, some culinary students attending a large university were not thrilled to learn that a new curriculum change would require them to take Spanish until they discovered that the course would focus on words and phrases that would be useful in a kitchen or back-of-house hotel setting. Many realized that after a day or so of instruction, they would be able to go to their jobs that evening and actually converse with their Spanish-speaking coworkers.

Transference. Some learners need transference, or a close match between the training conditions and the real world. Airline pilots are often trained in flight simulators because the simulators closely resemble the actual cockpit and flight characteristics of the plane. Culinary students receive instruction in labs that closely resemble real-world kitchens. The closer the demands of the training program match the demands of the actual job itself, the faster the person will learn.

Feedback. Feedback from a trainer provides learners with information regarding their progress. Without feedback, learners may become discouraged. Proper feedback encourages learners to adjust their behavior so that training goals are met and training is considered effective. When you receive an exam grade, you have received feedback on your academic performance from your instructor. Your grade may or may not be an accurate reflection of what you *know*, but it is usually an accurate reflection of your study habits. A good grade will encourage you to continue the same study habits, and a poor grade will indicate that you have to adjust your study habits to achieve a more acceptable grade on a future exam.

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN SELECTING TRAINING TECHNIQUES

There are a number of training delivery techniques the hospitality industry may use for the training and development of employees. No single technique is always best; in fact, the best method will often depend upon the following circumstances:

- *Cost-effectiveness.* Hospitality managers must judge the cost of the training technique in relation to the expected outcome.
- *Desired training content.* The information that is to be delivered will sometimes determine the best training technique to utilize.
- *Facility.* Whether the hospitality operation has space dedicated to training will often dictate the technique that will work best.
- *Trainee and trainer preferences.* The preferences and the capabilities of both the trainee and the trainer need to be considered.
- *Learning principles.* Not all training techniques incorporate all the learning principles, but some techniques do come close.

A particular hospitality operation's circumstances will help to determine the importance of each of these five factors. For example, cost-effectiveness may be a minor factor when kitchen staff is being trained on how to react during emergency fire procedures.

TRAINING METHODS

On-the-job-training, or **OJT**, is probably one of the most commonly used training techniques for hospitality industry front-line employee. Sometimes this method is called **job instruction training**, or **JIT**. This type of training is delivered directly to the employee while on the job. It is effective when used to teach employees the tasks they need to perform in order to effectively do their jobs. In this case a trainer, a supervisor, or even a coworker serves as the instructor. When this training method is properly planned and executed, it is very effective because it is one of the few training techniques that incorporates each of the five learning principles. Unfortunately, this method is often botched to the extent that it is rendered completely useless. We will discuss the reasons for this in a moment.

In order to be effective, proper OJT should consist of the steps that follow. Note that when one of the five learning principles is incorporated, that principle appears in *italics*.



Photo 11.2

On-the-job training (OJT) is common in the hospitality industry.

STEPS TO TAKE WHEN CONDUCTING OJT

1. *Tell* by providing the employee with an overview of the task, its purpose, and its desired outcomes. Emphasize the relevance of the training.
2. *Show* or demonstrate the task so that the employee has a model to copy.
3. *Do* the task; trainer and employee demonstrate, practice, and repeat the process until the employee has mastered the task.
4. *Review* with the employee by providing feedback.

Figure 11.4 Steps in the OJT method.

1. The trainer gives the employee an overview of the task, its purpose, and its desired outcomes, with emphasis on the *relevance* of the training.
2. The trainer demonstrates the task to provide the employee with a model to copy. Because the employee is shown the actual actions that the job requires, the training is *transferable* to the job.
3. The employee is allowed to do the task. The trainer demonstrates the task and the employee *participates* by repeating the task until she actually masters the task. Repeated demonstrations by the trainer and practice by the employee provide the *repetition* and *feedback* for the trainee.

Sometimes this training method is called *Tell, Show, Do, and Review*. Figure 11.4 illustrates each of the steps that should be taken when providing OJT.

Problems Associated with OJT

As noted earlier, this training method is quite effective when properly planned and executed. Problems can occur, however, when managers try to take short cuts. Some of these problems are as follows:

- *Poor choice of trainer.* Whether a manager, supervisor, or coworker is delivering OJT, it is important to choose the individual wisely. The person selected to conduct the training should be patient, have adequate job knowledge, be a good communicator, and have an outgoing personality. Be sure the individual you have selected wants to train others; you'd be surprised how many do not.
- *Lack of trainer preparation.* Allow the trainer time to prepare a timetable for instruction and to assemble and set up any needed materials or supplies. No responsible trainer wants to hear: "Hi, this is our new employee, Lisa. You'll be training her tonight during dinner rush."
- *Poor choice of place and time.* OJT means on the job, so it is normal to attempt to conduct training during regular business hours. This presents a

challenge to hospitality business managers because regular business hours usually mean customers and guests need to be served at the same time the OJT is taking place. *Management should ensure adequate labor is scheduled so that the trainer and trainee can have their training session without constant interruptions.*

Job rotation or **cross-training** is another effective training method that is widely used in hospitality operations. To cross-train employees in a variety of jobs, supervisors will often move the trainee from job to job. Each move is normally preceded by OJT. This method of training is effective because it gives workers the ability to perform a variety of jobs at the workplace and sometimes helps to eliminate the potential for boredom. Housekeeping employees can be cross-trained in laundry, hotel bell-staff may be cross-trained as lifeguards or as front-desk agents, restaurant food servers can be cross-trained to work the cashier/greeter station, and kitchen grill workers can be cross-trained to work in the pantry. Each of these examples helps to provide employees with exposure to a variety of jobs and provides management with greater flexibility when assigning tasks. Cross-training also enables management to run a smooth operation when employees are on vacation or absent, because cross-trained employees can step in and perform the tasks of the absent employee. Cross-training employees also helps employees to develop skills and acquire knowledge that may lend themselves well to potential career advancements.

Problems with Job Rotation and Cross- training

Perhaps the greatest problem associated with cross-training is that employees sometimes see the process as nothing more than job loading. If this is the chosen training method, it should benefit *both* the employee as well as management. Another problem occurs if the hospitality business is operating under a union's collective bargaining agreement, or contract. We discussed the union contract in Chapter 5, so you will recall that these contracts may have provisions that prohibit cross-training.

TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAMS

Training the trainer means that the hospitality organization identifies an existing employee—or several employees—who has the desire and some talent for teaching others, and then teach this person to train other staff members. By training one key person to train others in the organization, you distribute the knowledge and create a repository of knowledge within the organization. A train the trainer program could involve sending one staff member to an outside training class to learn about training techniques, or an experienced manager could train the trainer in-house. An effective train the trainer program will

teach inexperienced trainers such skills as how to facilitate a training session, how to deal with employees who are having trouble learning, and how to utilize different training techniques based on learning objectives or outcomes desired. Given the budget constraints that many smaller hospitality operations experience, it is not always possible to send many staff members to outside training. Developing an internal training program can be empowering, and it allows smaller organizations to become more self-sufficient.

OFF-THE-JOB TRAINING METHODS

Job rotation and OJT are **on-the-job training methods** in which instruction is delivered directly to the employee while on the job. **Off-the-job training methods** do not necessarily occur entirely away from the workplace, but this sort of training is usually provided in a traditional classroom setting or similar venue. Off-the-job training includes lectures, video presentations, computer-based training, role playing, case studies, simulation exercises, and **self-study**.

Lecture and **video presentations** tend to rely more heavily on communications than on the modeling approach presented in OJT and job rotation. Providing employees with a lecture is cost-effective when a large amount of information needs to be delivered to a sizeable group of trainees. Often, lectures occur during new-employee orientation when management wishes to cover the information contained in the employee handbook with new hires. Video presentations are similar to lectures and are an effective way to deliver information. Many chain restaurants utilize CD-ROMs and videotapes to deliver basic information about corporate culture as well as more specific, job-related training. These video presentations are usually available in Spanish and other languages, which is quite beneficial considering the cultural diversity of today's hospitality industry employees.

INCREASED USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Advances in technology have brought about substantial changes regarding the delivery of training within many organizations. **Computer-based training** can be delivered via CD-ROM or over the Internet, using **E-learning** techniques such as traditional, computer-based instruction, videoconferencing, and even satellite communications. The Educational Institute of the American Hotel & Lodging Association provides subscribers access to **streaming videos** via the Internet. The program, called Cyber Cinema, consists of an online library that contains hundreds of training videos produced by the organization. Subscribers need only log on to the Internet, enter a username and password, and choose

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|  Housekeeping | <i>Housekeeping: Quality Guestroom Cleaning</i> <i>Stay Safe: Awareness Training for Housekeepers</i> <i>Housekeeping: The Deep Cleaning Process</i> <i>Housekeeping Communication and Motivation</i> |
|  Food and Beverage | <i>Smart Service for Great Banquets</i> <i>Room Service</i> <i>Food and Beverage: Suggestive Selling</i> <i>Food Safety the HACCP Way</i> |
|  Guest Services | <i>Delivering Quality Guest Service</i> <i>Courtesy Rules! Better Telephone Skills Now</i> <i>Hosting International Guests</i> <i>Improving Communication Skills</i> |
|  Front Office | <i>Guest Relations: Aiming to Please</i> <i>Handling Reservations Properly</i> <i>Providing Professional Bell Service</i> <i>Exceeding Guest Expectations</i> |
|  Human Resources | <i>Diversity Works</i> <i>Recruiting and Interviewing</i> <i>Train the Trainer: Preparing for Training</i> <i>How to Train with Video</i> |

Figure 11.5

Partial list of AH&LA Cyber Cinema training videos. (Courtesy of American Hotel & Lodging Association Educational Institute.)

the video that they want to view.⁴ Figure 11.5 lists some training video titles available through Cyber Cinema.

Many hospitality organizations have discovered that when training is delivered via the Internet or a company **Intranet**, it is more cost-effective than the more traditional, on-the-job training methods. Other benefits of utilizing technology for training include the following:

- Employees can take control of their own learning.
- Training is delivered at the convenience of the trainee.
- Training results can be tracked and monitored.
- More people can be trained in less time.
- It saves money on training expenses.

OTHER TRAINING METHODS

Other training methods available to the hospitality manager include internships, role playing, case studies, and self-study, sometimes called **programmed learning**. The overall effectiveness of any one of these methods will depend largely upon who is being trained, the level of the trainee within the organization, what the expected outcomes are, and whether there are appropriate materials available and/or skilled trainers to support the training method chosen. We'll look at each method in a bit more detail.

Internships Many college students who are preparing for future careers in the hospitality industry are probably already familiar with this term. An internship involves learning from a more experienced employee or employees within the industry. This approach to training can be very effective because it requires high levels of participation from the trainee and provides the trainee with high transferability to the job. Often, employees who have been selected for future advancement are put into formal management training programs in which, ideally, the trainee will be introduced to a wide variety of jobs in the organization. A trainee in a hotel organization's management training program may spend a month or so in the housekeeping department and the front office, a month or so in food and beverage operations, and perhaps another month or so in accounting or in sales and marketing so he or she is exposed to the various job opportunities within the organization.

Role Playing **Role playing** is a process that forces trainees to assume different identities. It is a training method that is sometimes used to change employee attitudes. For example, a male worker may assume the role of a female supervisor, and the supervisor may assume the role of a male worker. Both trainees would be given a typical work situation and told to respond as they would expect the other to do. This training technique involves participation and feedback. Hospitality sales and marketing professionals sometimes utilize this training method to help fine-tune their sales presentations before presenting to an actual client. One trainee would play the role of the sales manager, and another individual would play the role of the prospective client.

Case Study When trainees study case situations related to the workplace, they learn about real or hypothetical situations or circumstances and the actions others have taken when faced with these situations. Aside from learning about the content of the case, a **case study** helps trainees to develop decision-making skills. In most cases, this approach to training provides some transference as well as participation through discussion and feedback.

| METHODS | Repetition | Participation | Relevance | Transference | Feedback |
|--------------------|------------|---------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| <i>On-the-job</i> | | | | | |
| OJT | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Sometimes |
| Cross-training | Sometimes | Yes | Yes | Sometimes | No |
| Internships | Sometimes | Yes | Yes | Sometimes | Sometimes |
| <i>Off-the-job</i> | | | | | |
| Lecture | No | No | No | Sometimes | No |
| Video | No | No | No | Yes | No |
| E-learning | Yes | Sometimes | Yes | Sometimes | Sometimes |
| Role playing | Sometimes | Yes | Sometimes | No | Sometimes |
| Case Study | Sometimes | Yes | Sometimes | Sometimes | Sometimes |
| Self-study | Yes | Yes | Sometimes | Sometimes | Sometimes |

Figure 11.6 Training approaches and associated learning principles.

Self-Study The self-study training method is also called programmed learning. This is a useful training method when employees are scattered geographically or when learning requires little interaction. Carefully planned instructional materials can be delivered either online via the Internet or company intranet, or in books and manuals, or even via CD-ROMs. Well-designed materials will provide learner participation, repetition, relevance, and feedback. Transference, however, tends to be low. Figure 11.6 lists all of the training methods discussed in this section and the learning principles associated with each one.

As Figure 11.6 reveals, some techniques make more effective use of the training approaches than others. However, even those techniques that use fewer learning principles, such as lecture, can be effective depending upon the hospitality operation's circumstances.

EVALUATING TRAINING

The purpose of training and development is to teach untrained employees new skills or to prepare current employees for future responsibilities. In order to determine whether the hospitality manager's efforts have been successful, training and development activities need to be systematically evaluated. Managers and those involved in delivering the training often assume that the training has value because to them the content seems important. The question most often ignored is "Did the training achieve the objectives?" In other words, the criteria used to evaluate training effectiveness should focus on outcomes. The hos-

pitality manager can normally rely on a number of guidelines to determine the effectiveness of training. These include the following:

- *The reactions of the trainees to both the content delivered and the method used to deliver it.* Sometimes this information is obtained by asking trainees to fill out an evaluation form once the training is complete.
- *The knowledge or the learning acquired through the training experience.* A pre- and post-test can be given to determine what the trainees have learned and retained.
- *Changes in employee behavior as a result of the training.* Because behavioral changes are sometimes the best indicator of success, the evaluation criteria should be stated in behavioral terms whenever necessary.
- *Measurable results or improvements in the individuals or the hospitality business overall.* Examples might include things like lowered turnover, fewer guest complaints, or fewer accidents.

SUMMARY

- The lack of proper training and development of new and existing employees is one of the leading causes of hospitality industry turnover. In order to ensure consistent quality in products and services, managers must provide effective and ongoing training and development.
- Training is of little use if management has made an improper hiring decision; managers must work hard to ensure that they are matching the right person with the right job.
- New and even experienced employees need proper training to ensure that their job performance matches company standards; hospitality managers should not take improper training shortcuts by hiring only those with previous hospitality industry experience, if the goal is to make an end run around proper training.
- Training helps employees perform their current jobs, and development helps employees handle future responsibilities, with less emphasis on present job duties.
- A hospitality manager's commitment to training and development pays dividends to the employees, to management, to the company, and to the guests and customers.
- In order for training to be effective, jobs must be properly designed with clear and objective performance standards.
- Before offering training, management should conduct a needs assessment to diagnose the problems or challenges that the training should address. Once a needs assessment is conducted, management should determine training objectives.

- Performance management is an ongoing, continuous process of communicating and clarifying job responsibilities, priorities, and performance expectations in order to ensure a mutual understanding between the supervisor and employee.
- A needs assessment may be performed through observation, task identification, and employee surveys.
- People learn differently, so it is important to choose a training method that reflects as many of the five learning principles as possible. These learning principles include repetition, participation, relevance, transference, and feedback.
- Training methods include OJT, cross-training, lecture, video presentation, computer-based training, internships, role playing, case studies, and self-study. OJT is the most popular method of training line-level employees in the hospitality industry.
- In order to determine training effectiveness, outcomes should be systematically evaluated by hospitality managers to ensure that designated knowledge was acquired and that changes in behavior occurred as a result of the training.

**PRACTICE
QUIZ**

1. Training focuses on employees' current positions, and development helps employees handle future positions.
A. True B. False
2. The employee selection process and new-employee orientation process have no real impact on training effectiveness.
A. True B. False
3. Because training is costly, when times are tough, some hospitality operations reduce their training budgets in order to save costs.
A. True B. False
4. Developing performance standards is the process of diagnosing present and future challenges which the hospitality operation may face so as to ensure that training objectives meet desired outcomes.
A. True B. False
5. Transference is a learning principle best achieved when employees are allowed to repeat tasks over and over until they are able to accomplish those tasks according to company standards.
A. True B. False
6. When properly planned and executed, which training method best achieves all of the five learning principles:
A. Case study
B. Video presentations
C. On-the-job training (OJT)
D. Lecture

7. Training effectiveness should be evaluated according to all of the following guidelines except:
 - A. Knowledge and skills acquired by the trainee
 - B. How the training fits into the performance management plan
 - C. Changes in employee behavior as a result of training
 - D. Measurable results or improvements in the hospitality operation overall
8. Which of the following is not an approach for conducting a needs assessment?
 - A. Observation
 - B. Case study
 - C. Task identification
 - D. Employee surveys
9. Which of the following represents an external challenge that a hospitality business may choose to address through training?
 - A. A new dishwasher hired in the hotel food and beverage division has difficulty keeping up with workflow when the restaurant is busy.
 - B. The on-the-job injury rate of housekeeping employees has exceeded company standards.
 - C. A local ordinance that bans smoking in all bars and restaurants will go into effect three months from now.
 - D. The restaurant's general manager and its executive chef have created an entirely new wine list that has considerably more breadth and depth than the previous wine list.
10. Which of the following conditions would not enhance cross-training or job rotation as a training technique?
 - A. The employee to be trained has hopes for a future job advancement.
 - B. Management wishes to groom the employee for future job advancement as well as achieve flexibility in scheduling.
 - C. The employee scheduled for training is bored with his current job duties.
 - D. Management needs to be able to call on this employee at any time, because the operation has high turnover and high absenteeism.

**REVIEW
QUESTIONS**

1. Which training technique would you recommend for a new dining room cashier? Which technique would you recommend for an inexperienced kitchen supervisor? Explain your reasons in detail.
2. Discuss the personal qualities and characteristics that may make one trainer selected to conduct OJT more effective than another trainer. Be specific and use examples.

3. A hotel front-desk agent's job description contains the following task: *Greet arriving guests in a friendly, courteous, and efficient manner.* Rewrite this task so that it contains objective and measurable performance standards.
4. Your restaurant has traditionally allowed patrons to smoke at the bar as well as in a small, designated smoking area located in the main dining room. A new city ordinance that bans smoking in all restaurants and bars will go into effect in three months. The ordinance requires the physical removal of all ashtrays as well as posting required signage at the restaurant's entrance. Do you feel that this situation requires training? If so, why? If not, why not? What kind of training, exactly, would you implement if you chose to do so? Why? Which restaurant employees would need the training? Why?
5. You manage a small hotel or restaurant, and the local hospitality college has contacted you about their desire to place interns in your facility so they can each secure a 400-hour internship that is required for graduation. Devise a written plan that would identify the skills, knowledge, and behaviors you would want the interns to achieve while working in your facility. What kind of training and development plan would you implement in order to ensure a successful internship program? Would you pay the student interns or would you insist that their compensation would be the experience they gain from the internship itself? Why or why not? Be specific.

HANDS-ON HRM

Merry has just been hired to work the 3-to-11 shift at the front desk of a large, 450-room downtown hotel. She is thrilled to have been offered the position, even though it meant leaving her previous job where she had worked as a bellhop at a luxury hotel on the other side of town. She held that position for nearly two years, and her employee evaluations and her customer comment cards were excellent. Every time a front-desk position became available at her previous job, she would eagerly apply for it, but for some reason, management always seemed to select another candidate. When Merry saw the advertisement for the current position, she jumped on it, and she landed an immediate interview with the hotel's front-office manager, Alice.

When Alice offered Merry the position, she explained that the hotel does not have a "formal training program." She said that Merry would be "shadowing" Mark, her strongest 3-to-11 clerk, and that after a week or so, she would be ready to work shifts by herself. Alice also explained that the hotel had a rather busy period coming up soon, so Merry's training would be swift. "After this busy period and when you're through training," Alice said to Merry, "we'll get you set up for orientation."

When Merry arrived the next afternoon to begin training with Mark, none of the other front-desk clerks knew who she was. After a few moments, Alice came out of her office. "Hey guys," she said, "this is Merry." "Mark is training her tonight on the 3-to-11 shift." "Be sure to introduce

Mark to Merry when he gets here; I have to run to the bank, and I won't be coming back on [the] property tonight."

Mark came into the back office as the last 7 to 3 clerk had just clocked out and was leaving. "Hey Mark, gotta run," she called out. "Your new trainee is out front, her name is Sherry." "Trainee?" Mark exploded. "Alice didn't say anything about a trainee." "She seems nice," the clerk said, "but I hope she catches on fast; you've got 184 arrivals tonight."

As Mark came behind the front desk, he introduced himself. "I'm Mark," he said. "You must be Sherry." "Actually, it's Merry," Merry replied. She offered her hand. "Well, whatever," he said, ignoring her hand and going directly to the cash drawer to begin counting his bank. "I hope you've got some experience," he said, as he counted money. "We're going to be really busy tonight, and it's just me and you." "Oh yes," Merry said eagerly. "I was with the Fountain Court Hotel for nearly two years." "Well, we'll see," said Mark. "That's a much smaller hotel; I doubt they ever got as busy as this place gets." Merry explained that even though the Fountain Court was smaller, the level of service and demanding guests kept everyone on their toes. "As a bellhop," she began, but Mark cut her off. "Bellhop!?" he yelled. "That's it?" How in the hell does Alice expect me to train a former bellhop all by myself when we have nearly 200 arrivals tonight? What a joke!"

QUESTIONS

1. Depending upon how things go during this first night of training as Merry "shadows" Mark, do you think that Merry will continue to feel good about her choice to work for this hotel, or will she begin looking for another job? Explain your answer. Should Merry decide to leave within her first 90 days of employment, what are the direct and indirect costs that the hotel will incur?
2. What mistakes has Alice made with respect to setting up Merry's training program with Mark? What specific changes should Alice make to the overall front-desk training program?
3. Do you empathize with Mark, or do you feel that he simply has a bad attitude and has no business training new employees. Explain your answer in detail.
4. If Mark is indeed the proper person to be conducting the training for new 3-to-11 desk clerks, what things could Alice do to ensure that Mark is able to approach his training duties with a more positive attitude? Explain.

KEY TERMS

Training The process that teaches employees the knowledge and the skills they need in order to operate within the systems and performance standards set by management. Training puts more emphasis on an employee's present job duties.

Development Programs designed to help employees develop skills and knowledge necessary to handle future responsibilities.

Performance standards Benchmarks against which performance is measured.

Learning principles Guidelines that provide information concerning how people learn most effectively.

Needs assessment An evaluation conducted to diagnose an organization's current problems and future challenges and determine ways to meet those challenges through employee training and development.

Performance management An ongoing, continuous process of communicating and clarifying job responsibilities, priorities, and performance expectations of employees.

External challenge Challenges the organization faces that come from outside the organization such as new government rules, laws, or regulations.

Internal challenge Challenges the organization faces that come from inside the organization such as a change in company strategy.

Observation approach An approach to conducting a needs assessment in which supervisors observe employee performance and make training recommendations based upon observations.

Task identification An approach to conducting a needs assessment in which managers evaluate the job description to identify the essential tasks that the job requires.

Employee surveys An approach to conducting a needs assessment in which employees are surveyed in an attempt to determine training needs.

Exit interview A conversation held with a departing employee in an attempt to learn their views of the organization.

Training objectives The outcomes desired from the training and development process; objectives should state the desired behavior and the conditions under which it should occur.

Learning principles Guidelines that indicate how people learn most effectively.

Repetition learning principle Repeating or memorizing information as a method for learning.

Participation learning principle An active, hands-on approach to learning.

Relevance learning principle Information that the trainee deems relevant and meaningful to his or her current situation.

Transference learning principle A close match between the training conditions and the real world.

Feedback learning principle Learners are provided with information on their progress.

On-the-job training (OJT) Training that is delivered directly on the job.

Job-instruction-training (JIT) *See* on-the-job-training (OJT).

Job rotation Moving employees from job to job; each move is normally preceded by OJT.

Cross-training *See* job rotation.

On-the-job-training methods Training methods in which the instruction is delivered directly on the job.

Off-the-job-training methods Training methods in which instruction is delivered away from the actual job, perhaps in a classroom setting either onsite or offsite.

Self-study A training method in which employees guide their own training, individually, without the presence of other trainees or a trainer.

Lecture presentation A training method in which the trainer, or lecturer, delivers a large amount of information to either a single trainee or a group of trainees.

Video presentation The use of a videocassette or DVD to deliver training content.

Computer-based training The use of a computer to deliver training content either via CD-ROM, Internet, or corporate intranet.

E-learning Computer-based training in which content is delivered via the Internet or corporate intranet.

Streaming videos Media is sent in a continuous stream and is played as it arrives so a Web user does not have to wait to download a large file before seeing the video or hearing the sound.

Intranet A private, computer network that is intended for internal use only within an organization.

Programmed learning *See* self-study.

Role-playing A training method in which individuals assume different identities, or roles.

Case study A situation or circumstance relating to the workplace described in writing in which the trainee is asked to read and respond either verbally or in writing.

NOTES

1. Paul Hemp, "My Week as a Room Service Waiter at the Ritz," *Harvard Business Review* (June, 2002).
2. Donna Hood Crecca, "School of Rock," *Chain Leader* (November 2004).
3. Paul DeVeaux, "Life at Corporate U.," *E-Learning Magazine* (February 2001), 28.
4. For additional information on the AH&LA, visit their Web site at www.ei-ahla.org.