

Who Should Train Your Employees? - By Harry Nobles

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Unlike many questions, this one has a simple answer.

Bringing in an outside 'expert' to help identify and refine guest service standards, develop a training program, and prepare your staff through "train the trainer" sessions is an excellent idea. The ongoing responsibility for employee training should, however, rest with your managers and supervisors. This is, after all, an integral part of their jobs.

In my opinion, your managers and supervisors should conduct training. My experience with many clients over several years, show that the most effective long-term results come from in-house training. An effective in-house training program will include continuous reinforcement, on the spot corrections, follow-up training, and accountability. Only your managers and supervisors can provide this on a continuing basis.

One of the most important components of training is accountability. If your managers and supervisors are to be held accountable for training results, they must play a key role in the training process. Their understandable and predictable response to being excluded will range from apathy to resentment. While you may achieve excellent short-term results without the support of your management team, permanent success is unlikely.

Some of my clients have tapped another excellent trainer pool: line or hourly employees. These "designated" trainers provide outstanding support to managers' and supervisors' training efforts while gaining valuable experience that prepares them for positions of greater responsibility.

When establishing your training program, do not forget the "carrot and stick." I believe there must be rewards for things done correctly and consequences for things not done correctly. This emphasizes the need for accountability and on the spot corrections. Infractions not immediately addressed are perceived as condoned.

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