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The following are items that should be covered with each new employee within his or her first two days on the job. Generally, the supervisor or some other designated individual is responsible for covering these items. To assure complete coverage, a checkmark should be placed on the appropriate line at the time each item has been completed.

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<table>
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<tr>
<td>1. Welcome to the department.</td>
<td>6. Explanation of departmental hierarchy including responsibilities of unit supervisors and department head.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Introduction to coworkers.</td>
<td>7. Explanation of the employee's job title, job description and specification (provide copies of both the description and specification), job duties, accountability, and goals.</td>
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<td>3. Tour of the department, showing location of work area, department equipment, supplies storage, lunchroom, conference room, mail, and so on.</td>
<td>8. Explanation of how the employee should get answers to various types of questions he or she may have.</td>
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<td>4. Explanation of important departmental functions and the general flow of work through the department.</td>
<td>9. Explanation of how tardiness and absences are to be reported and handled.</td>
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<td>5. Explanation of departmental policies and procedures regarding time cards, work hours, overtime, vacation time, personal days, sick days, work breaks, lunch hour, salary review, promotions, and so on.</td>
<td>10. Explanation of departmental and organizational policies and procedures regarding safety, health, and security matters.</td>
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<td>11. Explanation of pay period and fringe benefits including insurance, retirement, vacation days, and holidays.</td>
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Computer, most likely as self-paced instruction, and computer-driven multimedia presentations (viewed in a large-group setting).

To ensure the exposure of all new employees to each element of the orientation process, many organizations use a checklist to keep a record of the topics each employee has covered. The checklist is especially useful when the orientation process lasts for more than a day and when more than one person is involved with the orientation of the new employee. A representative checklist is illustrated in Figure 1.

**Orientation Kit**

An increasing number of companies are developing orientation kits that supplement the employees' formal orientation experiences. Although the materials in the kit will vary, some of the commonly included items are the following:

- Organization chart
- Map of the premises (if the premises is large)
- Copy of the employee handbook
- Copy of the union contract (if the organization is unionized)
- List of fringe benefits
- Copy of insurance plans
- Copy of performance appraisal form and outline of appraisal procedures

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**Orientation Kit:**
Compilation of materials given new employees that aid them in becoming acclimated more readily to their new situation.
Employee orientation is designed to help employees become quickly acclimated to their new jobs. Source: Pressmaster/Shutterstock.

- Copy of emergency and evacuation procedures
- List of names and telephone numbers of key organizational employees and units

In many organizations, except for the smallest ones, both a human resources specialist and the new employee’s supervisor will likely be included in the orientation process. The human resources specialist will often present information that all employees throughout the organization need, including such information as working hours, vacation, sick days, and so forth. The supervisor is generally responsible for orienting the new employee to his or her job and work environment.

Some organizations have found that the employee handbook distributed as part of the orientation process is interpreted by the courts as an employee contract. If the organization does not intend for the handbook to be an employee contract, a disclaimer stating such should be included in the handbook.

Training

Training is a vital organizational function because it provides new and present employees with directed experiences, enabling them to perform their job tasks more effectively. Well-designed training experiences will bring about changes in employees’ attitudes, work habits, and performance levels. The advantages of effective training are illustrated in Figure 2.

The focus of training programs has changed somewhat over the years. Previously, training was primarily concerned with the technical skills that comprise employees’ jobs. Today, a certain amount of training may be of a remedial nature, and some will likely be devoted to such general topics as team building and communication skills. And depending on the situation, some training may be devoted to the effective use of technology and computer applications.

From a psychological standpoint, new employees tend to want to be as productive as possible as quickly as possible. For that reason, providing them with an
Employee morale is improved. Employee turnover is lessened. Employee errors are reduced. Employee self-confidence is increased. Employee productivity is increased. Employee adjustment to his/her jobs is quicker. Employee supervision is needed less.

Figure 2  Advantages of effective training.

extracted orientation program and/or training program that lasts for several days may be less productive in the long run than providing them with several shorter programs spread over a period of several weeks. Accordingly, providing the employee with just that information he/she needs to know immediately and then deferring additional orientation and/or training until an appropriate time may be the preferred approach. Obviously, delaying critical information, the absence of which is likely to create problems for a new employee, is not recommended.

Development of Training Programs

The development of training programs consists of the following six well-defined steps, including those illustrated in Figure 3.

**Step 1: Determine Need for Training Program.** Several factors are helpful in determining the need for a training program. The degree to which new employees are qualified for their jobs is a primary consideration. By examining the jobs new employees have been hired to fill and dividing each job into its components, new hires can readily identify the areas in which they may need to be trained. Accordingly, if a significant number of employees is marginally qualified, training experiences are needed.

Providing current employees with training experiences is not a panacea in all situations. Therefore, a determination will have to be made as to whether training is a viable solution. For example, if employees are uncertain of how to perform particular job tasks, providing them with training will likely be beneficial. On the other hand, if the problem is found to result from a lack of motivation or uncertainty about what is expected of them, then training is not a viable solution.

Employee attitudes about the development of a training program might also be considered. In addition, supervisory feedback is often useful when determining program need, as are the results of employee performance appraisals. Areas in which performance is generally regarded as weak or deficient are typically considered as being suitable for training.

To help determine the need for a training program, answers to the following questions will be helpful:

- What are employees not doing that they should be doing?
- What are employees doing that they should not be doing?
- What key expectations are the employees not achieving?
- What are the nature of customer complaints that are employee related?
- Are employees fully apprised about what is expected of them?
- Do employees get regular feedback regarding expectations?
- How far is the organization deviating from key measurable aspects of employee performance, including such aspects as error rates, manufacturing standards, employee turnover rate, operating expenses, and so forth?

Several specific types of analyses are also useful in determining the need for employee training. Included in these analyses are job content analysis, employee performance analysis, employee attitude surveys, and population needs analysis.
The **job content analysis** examines the content of present and anticipated openings. This analysis provides information about the tasks to be performed by employees, the skills employees need to perform these tasks, and the minimum acceptable employee performance standards.

The **employee performance analysis** determines whether a discrepancy exists between the employee’s actual performance and the minimum acceptable performance standards determined in the process of analyzing job content. This analysis is generally performed on each specific job dimension.

The **employee attitude survey** is useful for determining the attitudes of employees regarding their perceived need for training. A strongly perceived need for a training program probably should be addressed. The organization’s failure to address the training issue will likely result in diminished employee morale, increased turnover, and decreased productivity, all of which can result in the waste of financial resources. Although some employee attitude surveys are quite general, others solicit information about specific job dimensions.

The **population needs analysis** is used to determine the specific training needs of specific populations of workers. To illustrate, an organization that hires many new high school graduates may need to offer specific training experiences in areas in which this segment of its employee population is deficient. Different employee populations often have different training needs that have to be addressed. As employee diversity increases within many organizations, population needs analysis becomes more important.

**Step 2: Define Objectives of Training Program.** Before determining the nature of training experiences to provide employees, the objectives of the program have to be defined. While some training programs are designed to provide job-entry experiences, others provide retraining experiences designed to help employees improve their effectiveness.

**Step 3: Determine Type of Training Program.** On the basis of the perceived need for a training program and the stated objectives, determining the type of training program needed is quite simple. Following are common types of training programs provided to office employees:

- **Basic knowledge.** Training experiences of this type are designed to help new employees qualify for the positions for which they have been hired. In many instances, employees who are exposed to such training programs have very little,
if any, knowledge about the activities that constitute their jobs. Training experiences of this nature are often seen as being remedial.

- **Job exposure.** This type of training program is also frequently used for new employees. Individuals who are offered job exposure training programs typically have basic knowledge about their jobs but need training in certain areas. Such programs frequently involve training employees to perform certain job activities or tasks.

- **Refresher training.** This type of training is designed to help employees maintain a desirable level of effectiveness in performing their jobs. Changes in procedures, new technology, or in jobs make frequent refresher training desirable. In some instances, refresher training is used to upgrade employees to qualify for other positions.

**Step 4: Determine Appropriate Training Techniques.** Once the need for training programs has been established and the areas suitable for training have been determined, the training techniques should be selected. Important principles of learning should be considered in selecting the appropriate training technique for the material/information being presented.

**Step 5: Provide Training Experiences.** After the training technique has been devised, the next step is to offer the training experiences. In some cases, these experiences might be provided by an employee of the organization. In other situations, they are provided by an outside agency through a contractual arrangement. Depending on the training techniques used, provisions may have to be made for frequent assessment of employee progress. In addition, achievement levels will have to be determined, as well as an appropriate method for measuring achievement. Without this information, the success of the training program cannot be fully realized.

**Step 6: Conduct Follow-Up Studies.** Upon completion of their training experiences and return to their jobs, follow-up studies of the trainees’ performance should be conducted, perhaps at six-month intervals. This type of training involves explaining unfamiliar procedures to new employees so they will become knowledgeable about job expectations. Source: David Pirvu/Shutterstock.