



2006 Staff Induction Programs - Gain the most out of your new, and also existing employees.

Managing staff in the retail industry presents one of the largest challenges for store owners. Not only do you need to have the best product range, the right store location and most attractive store, you also need to have staff that are excellent in sales, merchandising, and of course customer service.

The front counter of a retail store is the most critical area of the store. It is this area that is either a make or break when it comes to converting stock into sales. With the retail industry being so broad, it commonly has a reputation for high staff turn-over. For employers having to deal with transitional staff, what is the best way to quickly upskill new staff, educate them on "your" specific business operation, but then retain this valuable knowledge across the business?

Current Retail Induction Programs Issues

Some retailers have good staff induction programs. However in many other cases, induction usually consists of an introduction to an existing employee, and time spent working by their side to learn the basics. Problems quickly occur when the trainer either does not have the time to train the new employee in detail, or passes on less than desirable skills or techniques that adversely affect store retail performance. The opportunity to improve skills and develop a positive staff attitude is lost, and this may show up later in staff turnover, and lost sales opportunities.

Managing Director of Retail E-vironment Pty Ltd (retail e-v), an Australian business that provides a range of retail services, explains some of the issues that retail chains currently face with store level staff skills "Our company has been providing services to retail chains for a number of years. We have identified that staff turnover is one of the key issues when it comes to a successful retail chain" said Mr Durrant. "Good staff ensure the store is clean, merchandised correctly, stock turns over, sales increase, and overall customer satisfaction"

Induction PLUS Program

retail e-v has recently launched their practical **Induction PLUS** Program. Induction PLUS combines staff training with store improvement and is a self run theory and practical format. The program believes that staff should be trained "on the job", but be professionally managed so that all **store participants become multi skilled by completing a defined program**. This managed approach or mentoring, and is a key element to the success of the program, and ensures that all employees within the organisation are educated in the same company standards and principles.

Mr Durrant also detailed that whilst most companies see that training is essential, most think that programs are either too expensive or not designed for their specific operation. "Our programs have been structured to be a step-by-step guide for employees and their line managers. Each program is also tailored to suit the requirements of the chain with corporate colours, logo and terminology" said Mr Durrant. "The Induction PLUS Program is affordable for even the smallest of retail chains, and can be customised to suit specific budgets and requirements"

The Induction PLUS program results speak for themselves - Induction PLUS Program is currently being implemented in two major high profile Australian retail groups, with a combined total of more than 1,000 stores. Currently, there is no other program available that is as comprehensive, and provides a self run training process under the direction of a mentor.

Introduction Self Evaluation Worksheet

retail e-v has designed a FREE self evaluation worksheet to help you assess their own induction program. It provides a great insight to just how powerful programs can be, and highlights areas within your business. To obtain a copy of the free self evaluation worksheet, please contact

sales@retail-e-v.com.au