

Introduction

**“Train people well enough so they can leave,
treat them well enough so they don't want to.”**

Sir Richard Branson

In any kitchen, training is the foundation for success and as such is an essential part of every chef and manager's responsibilities.

As a leader, it is your duty to pass on knowledge, ensuring both individual and operational success, building a pipeline and motivating employees along the way. Well-trained staff not only perform better but exude pride in their work - something that guests immediately notice.

This book, "*A Chef's Guide to Effective Training*" is the compilation of many years' experience, and the basic structure has evolved from the way that it was organised when I was a trainee.

These fundamentals haven't really changed from the days when Escoffier re-organised the structure of kitchens, and although with the technology available today, for instance, video training, an organised and focused approach is necessary.

I firmly believe that sitting in front of a screen to learn can't replace a skilled chef, working directly with his team, demonstrating techniques.

Of course, all resources available have their place and should be embraced but remember, a much more powerful lesson is delivered by those you respect in your working environment.

Those moments, stay with people their whole career and can in fact be life changing!

The following content is designed to support chefs and hospitality leaders in building and delivering a structured and effective training programme with the minimum of disruption in their busy operations.

The materials which are available on my resource website facilitate the tracking and recording of investments made in developing staff, ensuring a well-documented and effective training process

I wish you all the best on your journey to becoming a memorable mentor to your team as you see the impact on your operation

Mark J French



London March 2025



Why Training?

"What if I train them and they leave?" "What if you don't and they stay?"
- W. Edwards Deming, Business Theorist

Training is an essential part of every manager's responsibility. A structured training programme allows staff to expand their skills, gain confidence, and contribute more effectively.

Once initial human resource introductions and orientation training are completed, a wise chef will continue developing staff in their respective roles. This isn't just about skills - it's about mindset, motivation, and developing future leaders.

A strong process of developing people and providing opportunities can reap dividends.

Those who show particular promise should be nurtured for future opportunities, creating a pipeline of talent that strengthens the operation's morale and long-term success.

Whilst training every employee for their specific jobs, these are the people that you should make extra effort in developing.

This not only motivates the individuals directly affected, but other staff recognise and see the results if you apply yourself to responsibilities as well as the positive impact this has on guest satisfaction.

Aim to rotate staff to broaden their experience and have a working "bench" from which to promote internally as your first option when openings occur. Recognising and rewarding development motivates the team, fosters a culture of excellence, enhances guest satisfaction and transforms an operations morale.

This guide is provided to outline the steps of the "Culinary Training Programme" and guide you through the implementation of an effective and successful initiative.

The material enclosed presents a process for you to follow as you or your designated chef, train cooks personally, sharing your knowledge.

It is important to note that all the materials can be adapted and customised to meet the exact requirements of your operation.

If you already have a programme in place, you will find that the materials can dramatically help training become more focused and sustainable.

Content is presented in a logical, progressive way, with tools to support you for

each step.

Do not underestimate the power of this material and approach. Sceptical operations with veteran cooks of 25 years, have been shocked by the opportunities revealed, when re-visiting training and techniques with their teams.

Adding to employee's skills in the workplace by providing knowledge and certification, is a benefit that should be promoted and celebrated, as a part of your culture that sets you apart.

Benefits of a Solid Training Programme

- **A cleaner, safer operation**
- **Better food quality**
- **Better service**
- **Improved morale**
- **Supporting staff development & pipeline**
- **Improved guest satisfaction**
- **Improved financial performance**



Components of the Training Programme

Key Training Key Areas

Topics identified in this comprehensive training programme include:

-  Basics of Hygiene
-  Basics of Safety
-  Cleaning & Sanitation
-  Product Handling & Storage
-  Basic Culinary Skills

-  Fundamental Cookery Techniques
 -  Seasoning and Flavours
 -  Core Menu Competencies
 -  Specialist Segments
-

The following materials are reviewed in this book:

1. Culinary Training Programme Index
2. Chef's Guide to Culinary Training.
3. Self-Review to establish your current status.
4. Welcome Kit and Orientation
5. Culinary Training Implementation Checklist
6. Training Process Flow Chart
7. Job Skills Training Grid
8. Employee Development Plan
9. Progressive Training Outlines
10. Planned Training Sessions
11. Multiple-Choice Quizzes & Practical Testing
12. Certification Materials
13. Resource Materials and Recommended Books

Additional Support Materials:

Some useful materials are included in the reference section of this book, and a full adaptable training kit, is available to subscribers on my *ChefsNotebooks* website.





Execution of the Training Programme

The programme starts with the basics and grows in complexity according to cook's positions and responsibilities as they progress.

Included in the records, in addition to specific skills or tasks that they are trained on, is a space for the cook to sign and the chef to verify and date. In this way, an ongoing record can be developed as their training progresses.

Due to additional paperwork and time necessary for training, this may appear to be a burden for some chefs, where in fact, training is critical for a successful operation. Adjusting this mindset, will ultimately save time in more efficient operations and less issues to correct.

It is important that the chef embraces and supports the training of his or her staff, and coordinates with human resources where applicable.

Self-Review

This document enables an approach that will provide you with a realistic review of your operations training effectiveness.

Use this as the starting point for developing your operations training programme and identifying opportunities.

Training Self-Review

Example Document to Adjust & Customise

Current Status:

The hotel training programme is disorganised with no overarching governance resulting in various departments running their own programmes. Certain departments have no training in place, ineffective training being executed and failed audits in critical areas such as food safety due to the lack of training.

Desired Status:

Develop one training programme with a strong orientation, incorporating departmental specific modules to cover all operational training needs. Institute a cohesive approach, where all training is coordinated with HR and there is a firm calendar of mandatory training organised and adhered to. Base actions taken on the "Culinary Training Checklist".

Develop Action Steps:

Action	Responsible	Due Date	Comments
Gather and receive input from all departments to identify necessary and mandatory training.	Exec. Chef		
A listing of annual training or re-certification necessary for all associates with dates and completion tracking, issued monthly as an update with red flag warnings to avoid any oversights.	Human Resources		
Institute a comprehensive orientation plan	Exec. Chef		
A matrix by discipline identifying positions against mandatory training levels (levels 2 and above).	Exec. Chef		
Comprehensive job specific training levels for each discipline.	Sous Chef		
A master folder containing all training material available under each individual training topic.	Sous Chef		
Resource folders by discipline with relevant material to support training on departmental levels.	Sous Chef		



Welcome Kit & Orientation

When bringing a new team member on board, put effort put into providing them with a warm welcome.

Together with a thoughtful gift and information relevant to their job and the company, this can make a huge, lasting impression, especially when they arrive in unfamiliar surroundings.



An example of an international relocation welcome, to adjust for your operation.

This is the cover to a folder for a new arrival that contains other relevant information to support their transition.

Dear *(Insert Name)*,

First of all, a warm welcome to our new team as we embark on what is, without doubt, going to be a memorable journey!

We have an exciting time ahead with, not only a new hotel, built to the highest specifications but also the rebirth of a country.

There can be great satisfaction gained from being a part of these new beginnings as well as great challenges. During the coming months, we are going to need to come together as a united team to work through what at times may be daunting circumstances but if we keep our focus on the goal and back up each other with one common vision, nothing will stop us.

I encourage an environment of openness and everyone's input and opinion is valued. Our team comprises of a very mixed bag of different nationalities and cultures which should bring us to some very dynamic decisions and approaches regarding how we operate the hotel.

The brand is the pinnacle of the *(Insert Operation Name)*, company and as such we have the opportunity to really make a strong statement both personally and as a first-class operation in terms of our offering in the market.

We will be at a remote location and must operate without relying on neighbourhood resources which is another opportunity for all of us to show what we are made of and position us for excellent opportunities in the future as success will certainly be recognised and appreciated.

Last but certainly not least, it is understood that all of us are making compromises in terms of our families and personal relationships and whatever happens, we need to be empathetic and supportive of each other through the inevitable ups and downs.

You are here because you are, without question, capable of excelling in the aforementioned environment so all that remains is to once again wish you a very hearty, welcome!

Yours sincerely,

(Insert Name),

(Insert Position)

General Notes

- Office Address is xxxxxxxxxx
- Pre-Opening Office located at: xxxxxxxxxx
- Transportation to leave for office at 8am daily. Return at 6pm....maybe!
- Breakfast buffet available.
- Meals and Laundry at accommodations are provided.
- Office attire business suit, no tie.
- Weekends are Friday and Saturday.
- Beverage/break rooms are located on 5th and 6th floor.



In addition to the standard human resources orientation, the “*Departmental Orientation*”, ensures a clearer view of expectations and their impact on the big picture. This is a good opportunity to start employees off with clear communication of your standards and expectations.

I have found that taking ownership of this step is very helpful in engaging new team members immediately.

Below is an example that covers key points of an orientation.

EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

EMPLOYEES NAME: _____ FIRST DAY OF EMPLOYMENT: _____

EMPLOYEES POSITION: _____ ORIENTATION SUPERVISOR: _____

ITEM

DISCUSSION COMPLETE
(SUPERVISORS INITIALS)

I. WORDS OF WELCOME

II. TOUR OF THE ENTIRE WORK AREA

III. INTRODUCTION TO MANAGEMENT AND CO-WORKERS

A. Introduction to:

- 1. Management _____
- 2. Department head(s) _____
- 3. Immediate supervisor _____
- 4. Other supervisors _____
- 5. Trainer _____
- 6. Co-workers _____

B. Reporting/help process

- 1. During training/probationary _____
- 2. After training/probationary period _____
- 3. When designated individual(s) are not available _____

IV. EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION

- A. Work area _____
- B. Function of department _____
- C. Relationship of job to department _____
- D. Relationship of department to other departments _____
- E. Relationship of department to overall hotel _____

V. DISCUSSION/REVIEW OF JOB DESCRIPTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Basic duties and responsibilities _____
- B. Basics of hospitality _____
- C. Job performance standards _____
- D. Guest relations standards _____
- E. Safety practices and safe work methods _____
 - 1. Special equipment/clothing requirements _____
 - 2. JSA'S (Job Safety Analysis) & HACCP information _____
- F. Empowerment _____
- G. Basic of the Day and Pre-Shift Huddles _____
- H. Reporting of Safety/ Engineering Issues _____

VI. DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A. Department policies and administration _____
- B. General cleanliness of work areas _____

VII. WORKING CONDITIONS

- A. Starting & finishing times - time cards or sheets _____
- B. Absenteeism policy and procedure _____
- C. Late to work policy and procedure _____
- D. Schedule change policy and procedure _____
- E. Break periods and location _____
- F. Meal periods and cafeteria _____
- G. Rest rooms _____
- H. Personal use of telephones & cell phones _____
- I. Overtime policy and requirements _____
- J. Payday and method of payments _____
- K. Uniforms _____
- L. Employee entrance _____
- M. Employee use of elevators _____
 - 1. Service _____
 - 2. Guest _____

N. Parking facilities _____

VIII. BASIC STANDARDS

A. Hotel standards and policy for reporting, communicating, and solving:

- 1. Performance of duties _____
- 2. Attendance _____
- 3. Punctuality _____
- 4. Behaviour _____
- 5. Appearance _____
- 6. Uniform & standards of appearance _____
- 7. Problem solving & grievance procedure _____

IX. SEQUENCE OF REPORTING TO WORK

- A. Employee entrance _____
- B. Back door security system _____
- C. Time clock _____
- D. Uniform room _____
- E. Locker room _____
- F. Getting to work area _____
- G. Sign-in/out in department _____
- H. Daily work routine _____

X. ON-THE-JOB TRAINING / ON-BOARDING

- A. Job training sequence _____
- B. Onboarding Process & Training period _____
- C. Probationary period _____

The items on this checklist have been explained to me. I understand and agree to comply with all of the items listed herein.

(Print Name)

(Sign Name)

(Date)



Introduction To Training Letter



Introduction to Training

Dear

Congratulations! You have been selected as a valuable employee, to be provided with a structured training programme, developed over many years which will guide you as a cook, to be successful in your job.

The goal is to provide you with a means for enhancing your knowledge and skills in your present role, thus enabling you to provide our guests with an outstanding experience.

The focus is on specific jobs and relevant skills, compiled in a progressively more complex order, much in the same way that you progress by building on your experience and skills in readiness for more responsibility and promotion.

A key feature is the “*Employee Development Plan*” which your Chef will create in collaboration with you. The purpose of this document is to outline the training path that will ensure excellence in your current position and lead you towards future positions based on your personal and professional goals.

The first stage of your training is Level 1, This level covers “*Orientation and Basic Hospitality Knowledge*”, as an understanding of the standards and principles of the company culture, will give you the basic foundation that you need to be successful.

With this knowledge in place, you will subsequently embark on further training for your current job through the detailed outlines (Levels 2 and up) and which will ultimately enable you to master your chosen profession.

Your Responsibilities

There is a large commitment on behalf of the company to invest in your development, however there is a responsibility that rests on your shoulders, in order for you to realise your potential.

As with many endeavors, you will reap benefits, directly in proportion to the amount of effort that you put into the programme.

Key Actions that will affect your success:

- Read the *“Chef’s Guide to Effective Training”* to understand the contents of the programme and ask any questions that you may have.
- Make the most of the *“Development Plan”* sessions to communicate your personal ambitions and challenges.
- Take detailed notes when being trained. These will become an important point of reference throughout your career. It is also an indication of your professionalism when you don’t need to be given the same information multiple times.
- Use all of the resources at your disposal. – This can include, but is not limited to use records and SOP’s, reading books, such as The Larousse Gastronomique, web information or your senior colleagues in the kitchen.
- As you master techniques, you should also develop your palate. A refined sense of taste, and knowledge of how to enhance flavours through your cooking, will set you apart, in readiness for future responsibilities.
- Develop the habit of tasting and seasoning everything as you cook and checking finished dishes.

As your mentor for the training programme, I would like to reinforce that I am here to guide and help you with anything I can do to support your successful completion of training levels required of your job.

Please feel free to let me know if I can be of assistance at any time.

I wish you all the best success in your journey.

Yours sincerely,

Name:

Executive Chef (or designate):

Date:

TRAINING IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

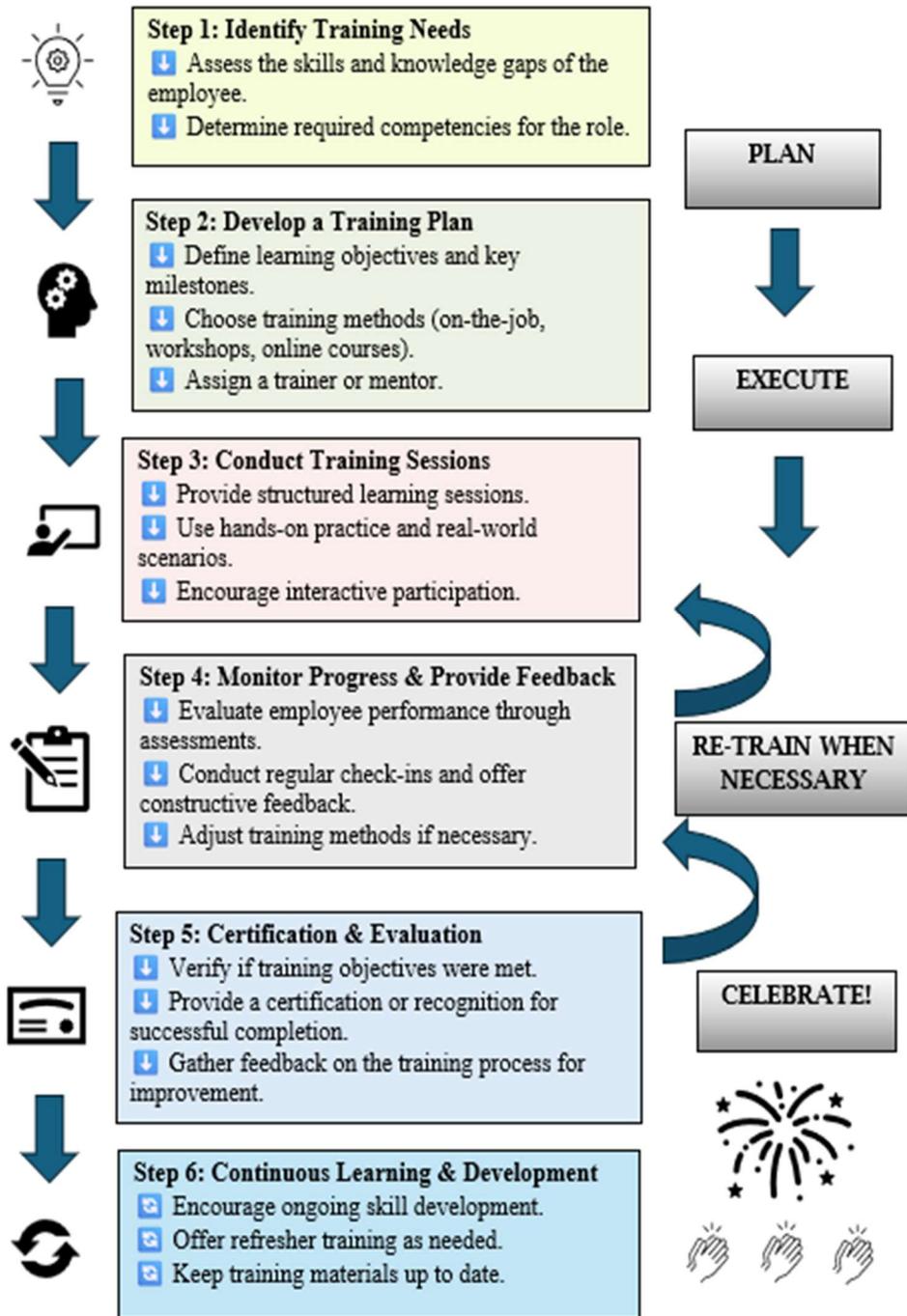
STEP #	ACTION	COMPLETE [✓]
1.	Identify a Department Leader to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Champion the Culinary Training Programme.• Monitor and track the process.• Maintain the programme.	
2.	Review the Facilitator's Guide and Training Documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training Planning Sheet.• Employees training requirements.• Review training documents and customise materials as needed.	
3.	Meet with HR/Training Mgr. to collaborate on the process for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implementing Level 1 – Orientation for new hires• Implementing the “Employee Orientation Checklist” for all employees.• Tracking employees’ training progress.	
4.	Determine your Departmental Training Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop Training Sessions based on individual/group needs, focusing on training areas specific to each discipline level.• Begin by determining the essential skills required of your current staff. Use the matrix in identifying the level of training that is appropriate for specific positions.	
5.	Meet with Individual Employees to complete “Employee Development Plans” <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compile a folder for the training records of each individual.• Compile a master listing of all employees’ training and levels achieved.	

STEP #	ACTION	COMPLETE [✓]
6.	<p>Make sure that the following documents are <u>Kept Current</u>, signed and checked off by both the employee and manager throughout the training journey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee Orientation Checklist. • Employee Development Plan (ongoing update and used during reviews). • Employee Training Records (for each level undertaken). 	
7.	<p>Identify a Process for Administering Certification Testing.</p> <p>All tests must be supervised by any one of the following from start to finish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Chef, Sous Chef, HR or Training Manager. 	
8.	<p>Review and Implement Certification Testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess employees' skills and knowledge of a specific level (e.g., Level 2) • Identify areas for improvements, if scoring is below 85%. • Proceed with final Multiple-Choice Quizzes to verify understanding and to complete certification for each level. 	
9.	<p>Develop a Forum for Recognising, Celebrating & Awarding Employees upon successful completion of each level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award certificates at team meetings such as 'Town Hall's. • Take photographs of groups and individuals to post or publish. 	



Culinary Training Process

Training Process Flow Chart





Job Skills Training Grid

This document identifies positions held in most operations and the relevant training to implement. The initial focus should be on an employee's current jobs and skills, then on to further levels in the matrix.

COOKS POSITIONS	Steward / Dishwasher	Apprentice	Commis	Breakfast Cook	Cold Cook	Hot Line	Hot Bqt.	Pastry Cook
Essential Skills & Knowledge								
Level 1: Orientation and Basic Hospitality	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Level 1B: Department Orientation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Level 2: Culinary Basics & General Knowledge	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Level 3: Breakfast Cookery		X	X			O	X	O
Level 4: Vegetable Cookery		X	O	X		X	X	O
Level 5: Cold Cookery		X		X	X	O	X	O
Level 6: Soup and Sauce Cookery		X	O			O	X	O
Level 7: Hot Cookery		X	X			X	X	O
Level 8: Pastry Cookery (Basic)		X	O			X		X
Level 9: Purchasing Basics & General Knowledge		X	O					
Level 10: Stewarding Basics & General Knowledge	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Level 11: Food Allergies	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Level 12: Foodbourne & Pandemics	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

STEWARDING POSITIONS	Steward/Kitchen Porter	Dishwasher	Potwasher	Steward Supervisor
Essential Skills & Knowledge				
Level 1: Orientation & Basic Hospitality	X	X	X	X
Level 1B Department Orientation	X	X	X	X
Level 2: Stewarding Basics & General Knowledge	X	X	X	X

Level 2B Stewarding JSA Training Log	X	X	X	X	
Level 3: Food Allergies	X	X	X	X	
Level 4: Foodbourne & Pandemics		O	O	X	

X = Required / O = Optional - depending on position or if an employee is on a fast-track training programme.



Development Plan

A well organised programme will document each staff member and their required training, appropriate to their current job and future development completed based on their potential.

The planning of this can begin with a one-on-one discussion with each employee on what they have done in the past and what they hope to aspire to in the future.

This conversation should be open, honest, and constructive, reviewing their realistic pathway according to their commitment, abilities and desires at that time.

The training plan should be developed accordingly and used as an important part of regular performance reviews.

The document developed, should be signed by the employee and chef and kept in their HR file, regarded as a contract, committed to by all participants.

The form below, is a way to capture this information and set the groundwork for their personal development.

Employee Development Plan

Name of Employee:	
Name of Operation:	
Name of Department:	
Current Position:	