

FIRE SERVICES EXAMINATIONS BOARD

STUDY NOTE

EXAMINATION

STATION OFFICERS' EXAMINATION

PAPER

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

ITEM

THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF
TRAINING

STUDY NOTE No.

3313

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY NOTE

This study note has been prepared as the basis of study in connection with the qualifying examinations for promotion.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate knowledge of the information contained in the study note and understand how it should be applied:

The 'References' made at the end of the Study Note are included for information only and candidates will not be expected to study these as part of the bibliography.

THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRAINING

1. Introduction

The training and assessment of workplace performance should be consistent with the philosophy and objectives of the "safe person concept".

The use of a model can help to structure the training and development effort so that systems, procedures and methods can be effectively planned, organised, managed and operated. This study outlines the principles of such a model.

2. Purpose of Operational Training

The purpose of operational training is to support individuals and teams in the delivery of a competent, safe and effective Fire Service.

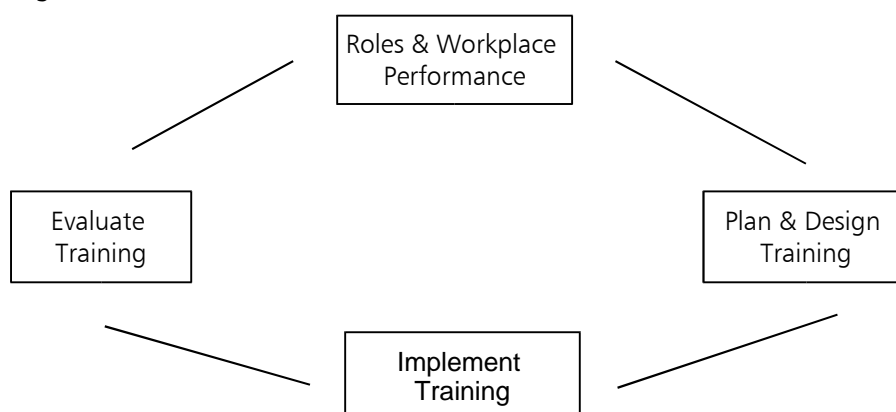
To ensure that Fire Service training is effective and able to meet both individual and organisational needs, all training must be based on an identified need and be:

- (a) In support of the aims and objectives of the organisation;
- (b) In accordance with the brigade training policy and plan;
- (c) Of a consistently high quality;
- (d) Carried out avoiding injury to participants;
- (e) Efficient in using the allocated resources; and
- (f) Effective in supporting the individual in achieving and maintaining competence in their role.

As a general principle, no training should be conducted unless there is a clear and obvious link to a workplace performance.

3. Four Stages of a Systematic Training Cycle

The model below illustrates the four stages required for the effective delivery of any training.



The model is an essential part of the "safe person concept", ensuring that identified training needs are followed by a process that examines how training can best address the need. It will enable everyone to demonstrate that they can consistently and competently perform their work to National Occupational Standards*.

4. The Planning and Design of Training

When planning operational training, it is vital that:

- (a) The training is derived from and linked to the National Occupational Standards* and operational risk assessments**;
- (b) The methods and resources used in training delivery are identified, prioritised, confirmed and allocated.
- (c) Learning is prioritised and programmed to meet the needs of the individual and the brigade.
- (d) Whenever practicable, learning events are designed to accommodate the learning styles of individuals and teams.
- (e) The realism required to achieve the training objectives is subject to a risk assessment and all relevant health and safety findings are actioned.
- (f) Whilst undergoing training the extent of the trainee's progress is assessed by demonstrated performance.
- (g) A process of workplace assessments continuously monitors the trainee's development.
- (h) Learning is validated and reviewed in the light of information gained from the evidence of workplace performance.

** National Occupational Standards have been developed from Firefighter, Crew Commander and Watch Commander role maps.*

These are statements of what is expected in terms of competent performance and have been constructed to:

- (a) Provide the foundation on which all training programmes are based; and*
- (b) Provide a comprehensive set of performance objectives.*

*** Health & Safety Guidance for the Fire Service Volume 3, Operational Generic Risk Assessments; and Brigade Operational Risk Assessments.*

5. Training Needs Analysis

A training need exists when:

- (a) The performance of an individual does not meet the standard identified for his or her role, whether measured in terms of knowledge, skills, attitude or understanding, and it is considered that a learning experience will overcome this deficiency;
- (b) It is anticipated that an individual will take on a new role; and/or
- (c) New equipment and/or procedures are introduced.

6. Training Methods

Risk assessments, together with the information gained from assessments of individual and team performance will influence the content and methods of training. The training requirement will continue to be addressed using a variety of learning providers, facilities and methods identified from the roles, functions and training needs of individuals. Whatever method is chosen, the following best practice should be adopted:

- (a) Content is chosen to meet the learning objectives;
- (b) The method of delivery is appropriate to the target group and delivered at a pace which sustains interest;
- (c) Learning resources are produced in a format which are easily understood;
- (d) Layout of the venue facilitates learning;
- (e) Underpinning knowledge and information is imparted at appropriate times during the practice of the skill;
- (f) Trainees are given the opportunity to clarify any issues arising from the session;
- (g) The time constraints of the session are realistic to the practical skill being taught;
- (h) Appropriate feedback is given on the trainee's performance;
- (i) Trainees are given adequate time to practise the skill; and
- (j) Content is accurate.

7. Transferability of Knowledge and Skills

Fire Service work demands that people are properly trained but there is a limit on the time that can actually be spent on training. It is also impracticable to provide detailed training for every type of activity firefighters may be expected to handle.

The ability to successfully transfer learning from one situation to another is of key importance for individual development and organisational flexibility.

In some cases the transfer and 'application' of knowledge and skills to non-learned activities are relatively straightforward, in others it may be necessary for some additional supportive learning to take place.

The way that learning is presented and delivered is of critical importance to the successful transfer of learning. If what is being taught is presented in a way that enables the individual to appreciate and understand the concepts and principles involved, then they are more likely to apply it in a flexible and responsive manner.

Theory and practice should be integrated and opportunities to explain the principles underlying a technique should not be missed.

8. Assessing Performance in the Workplace

The value of training to a brigade is not just measured by the fact that people are being trained, or that the training function is well resourced, but that it contributes to the effective management, operation and delivery of service. This can only be quantified by assessing Performance in the Workplace.

To be described as competent the individual will have satisfied the standard for four interrelated components, which are:

- (a) Task skills
The routine and largely technical components of a function.
- (b) Task management
The skills to manage a group of tasks and prioritise between them.
- (c) Contingency management
The skills to recognise and deal with things that go wrong and with the unexpected.
- (d) Role/job environmental skills
Ensuring safety, interacting with people and the ability to cope with the environmental factors required in fulfilling the wider role.

A main feature of the demonstration of competence is the quality and range of evidence produced to validate the achievement of competence.

In practical situations direct observation of performance is the preferred method. 'One off' demonstrations of proficiency are not a sufficient basis on which to make sound judgements.

9. Evaluation of Training

Accurate and relevant information on all aspects of the training is needed but in particular, information on how well trainees are performing as measured against the defined set of outcomes.

Evaluation will determine if the training has met the perceived needs and whether it has provided people with the knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable them to work effectively and safely.

If evaluation is to determine the overall effectiveness of the training by examining the planning, design, delivery, resourcing and management of training, it must not be just an internal exercise. The representative views of people, sections, departments, etc., who are involved in or affected by training should also contribute to the evaluation process. The information can then be used to:

- (a) Inform any decisions about brigade training policy and plans;
- (b) Keep trainers informed and motivated;
- (c) Give feedback about the content or delivery of a particular course;
- (d) Be proactive in meeting the demands facing individuals and the brigade;
- (e) Be flexible and responsive in dealing with issues that unexpectedly arise; and
- (f) Identify trends and developments and plan for the future.

10. The Competence of Trainers

Personnel responsible for supervising and or delivering operational training should be provided in sufficient numbers to ensure effective overview and control of all stages and areas of the training event. They must also be empowered to take any action that will prevent or mitigate accidents or injuries.

In order to ensure that operational personnel gain maximum benefit from the training they receive, trainers who deliver the training should be:

- (a) Aware of the aims and objectives of the brigade training plan and of the exercise to be undertaken;
- (b) Familiar with fire service drills and techniques;
- (c) Skilled in the identification and preparation of training scenarios that will progressively develop the knowledge and skills required;
- (d) Competent in the effective planning, preparation, delivery, conduct and evaluation of training;
- (e) Competent in the knowledge, skills, techniques and procedures to be taught; including the operation and use of any equipment;
- (f) Aware of the contribution that training makes to the safe person concept;
- (g) Competent in the risk assessment of training activities; and
- (h) Aware that risk exposure during training must reflect and be proportional to operational risk.

11. Suitability of the Training Environment

The training environment must complement the training events planned and the learning objectives.

Venues and facilities should not be used just because they happen to be available. The training area and facilities should be risk assessed and prepared prior to any training being carried out.

Any hazards or risks not required to achieve the training objectives should be eliminated or reduced as far as it is reasonably practical.

In the early stages of a firefighter's training, the desired learning must relate to the acquisition of key knowledge and skills associated with basic equipment. Practical training will usually be carried out at a purpose built facility where equipment can be examined and operated in a careful, controlled way. The environment must be conducive to effective and safe learning. Hazards should be known or easily identified, time should not be critical and close supervision should be maintained.

The logical extension of 'drill' is the application of acquired knowledge and skill to the learning and practice of techniques firefighters will be expected to apply effectively and safely in a potentially hostile and unpredictable operational environment. Initially these techniques should be practiced in the relatively safe environment of the drill ground.

As individual and team competence develops, the type of location and environment in which the training is conducted can be varied.

12. Span of Control

It is vital that there is a sufficient command structure for the training event. Specific arrangements will depend upon the events, nature and scale e.g. drills conducted on a retained station may require only one supervising trainer to control the entire event. Larger or more hazardous training events, however, will require a greater degree of control whereby sector command and specialist officers should be considered.

13. Design Checklist

The following checklist should be used to assist in designing operational training and could be applied both at a brigade and local level:

(a) The Identification of Training Need:

What must the training achieve?

What are the priorities?

What are the constraints?

Who requires training?

(b) Planning Considerations:

What training methods will be used?

What, if any are the alternatives to practical training?

Who will decide the lesson content?

Who will write the lesson plan?

Who will be involved in delivering and supporting the training?

How much time is needed, what time is available?

What resources are needed, human, physical and financial? Are they available?

What simulation, if any, will be required to achieve the objectives?

What procedures are in place to record changes in the training that may take place over time?

What skills and expertise are needed and available? Are they in-house, or must they be bought in?

(c) Managing Safety

Who will conduct the training risk assessment?

Who will be responsible for the safety control measures?

Who will prepare the practical venues?

Consider the health and safety of those who will prepare and clean up practical venues before and after each training events.

Who else will be involved?

(d) Evaluating the training:

How will the training be internally and externally validated?

What form will the assessments take?

Who will be assessed?

Who will assess?

What are the arrangements for post event training de-brief?

How will the subsequent information be fed back into brigade systems?'

Reference

Fire Service Manual - Training