An Examination of New Employee Orientation and

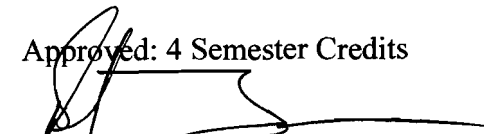Training Programs in Relation to

Employee Retention Rates

by

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between employee orientation and training programs and employee retention rates. To facilitate this, a 20 question web-based survey instrument was created using SelectSurvey by the researcher with assistance from subject matter experts. The survey was distributed to the 7,700 members of a Wisconsin professional council by that council's President. The returned data was then examined using SelectSurvey, Microsoft Excel, and SPSS. The frequency and percentages of each survey item were analyzed. Cross tabulation and Pearson Chi-Square analysis were conducted to determine if there was a relationship between certain survey items and organizations' turnover rates.

Significance was found with a few of the orientation program components. Tour of the organization and departments and introduction of fellow team members were found

to have a level of significance. When looking at the amount of time spent of each of the orientation components, introduction of team members was found significant. When identifying reasons employees go through training, to improve performance was significant. Finally, whether or not employees go through a performance review process also was significant.

Some recommendations were made for improvement of this study's methodology and for future research. Improvements should be made in regards to increasing the return rate through use of pre-survey and follow-up correspondence. Future studies could include researching the effects of employee socialization and organizational communication of company goals on retention rates.

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Chapter I: Introduction

An employee's first year with an organization can be a difficult time for everyone involved (Gray, 2005). First year challenges and struggles can lead to numerous problems for the employee including lack of job satisfaction, poor performance, and work withdrawal. These employee challenges, in turn, lead to challenges for the employer, the biggest of which being employee turnover.

"In today's volatile economy, more than 25% of all workers in the United States have been with their company less than a year and more than 33% less than two years" (Rollag, Parise, & Cross, 2005, p. 35). Dealing with such staggering statistics can have detrimental effects on an organization. Turnover is a huge unwanted expense for employers and will disrupt employee production, stretch remaining employees thin, and can cause a breakdown in a company's efficiency and effectiveness. This current study will attempt to identify a relationship between this crucial business problem and new employee orientation programs and employee training programs.

More organizations understand that human capital is crucial to their success, thus making the case for learning easier (Sugrue, 2004). This investment in learning can greatly reduce employee turnover, which is an important business issue. To achieve competitive advantage, organizations must focus on employee development (Lee & Bruvold, 2003). Sugrue agreed by writing, "Studies that focus on learning variables generally find a positive correlation with organizational outcomes" (p. 76). This commitment to the employee will affect the organization's workforce, keeping it strong. Supporting employees will increase their chances of staying with an organization long term (Hacker, 2004).

The remainder of this chapter will identify the purpose of the study, its assumptions, and limitations will also be discussed. Important terms related to this study will be defined for the reader as well. The conclusion of this chapter will outline the methodology used to conduct this research and will outline the remaining chapters of this paper.

Statement of the Problem

This study is concerned with examining the relationship between employee orientation and training programs, and their effect on employee retention rates. If a relationship is identified, employers can use that information to improve their retention rates by reducing employee turnover which is a major cost saver for business. Job seekers can also use this information to better understand the business world that they are entering.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose and objectives of this study are as follows:

1. Identify the common orientation and training practices of Wisconsin employers.

2. Correlate orientation and training practices with employee retention rates.

3. Seek to understand if any of these orientation or training practices are "best practices."

4. Educate employers on the orientation and training best practices.

5. Inform job seekers of common orientation and training practices to prepare them for entering the work force.

Assumptions of the Study

There are assumptions understood with this study. First, it is assumed that a relationship already exists between employee development and retention rates within an organization, and that an organization with orientation and training programs will have a lower turnover rate. Second, the researcher assumes that those participating in this survey will have the knowledge necessary to properly complete the survey instrument. This survey does not make the distinction between the levels of employees; therefore, a third assumption is that all of an organization's employees go through relatively similar orientation and training programs.

Definition of Terms

Employee orientation. "Orientation programs are a form of employee training designed to introduce new employees to their job, the people they will be working with, and the larger organization" (Klein & Weaver, 2000, 48).

Turnover. "Turnover, on the other hand, is most often used to describe the unplanned loss of workers who voluntary leave and whom employers would prefer to keep" (Frank, Finnegan, Taylor, & Talentkeepers, 2004, 13).

Human Capital. "Human capital represents the knowledge and skills of the workforce" (Sugrue, 2004, 75).

Socialization. "Organizational socialization or "people processing" refers to the manner in which the experiences of people learning the ropes of a new

organizational position, status, or role are structured for them by others within the organization" (Van Maanen, 1978, 19).

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to employers in Wisconsin who are members of a professional organization; therefore, this study cannot be generalized to employers outside of the Wisconsin geographical area, or to employers who are not members of this professional organization. The assumptions associated with this study may also provide certain methodological limitations.

Methodology

After conversations with employees of the Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (SVRI) and executive members of the Wisconsin Safety Council, and examining literature on employee orientation and training programs and their relationship to retention rates, a 20 question electronic survey was developed using SelectSurvey with input from subject matter experts (SMEs). This survey and its accompanying implied consent form will be sent by e-mail to members of a professional association in Wisconsin by the association's president. This population includes approximately 7,700 individuals.

The completed surveys will be examined by this researcher using various statistical analysis tools to determine if any significant correlation exists between different orientation components and training programs, and the organization's employee retention rates. The results will be examined and the researcher will make interpretations and recommendations related to the objectives and scope of this study.

Summary

This study is interested in examining the relationships between employee orientation and training programs, and the important business issue of employee turnover. The problem statement and details of this study were identified. The remaining chapters of this paper will give an overview of the related research, explain the process used to conduct this current research, will disseminate the results, and, finally, will make conclusions and recommendations based on those results.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter will introduce the problem of employee turnover and its relationship

with new employee orientation programs and employee training programs. Literature

supports an assumption of this study that there is a relationship between orientation and

training programs and retention rates. Components for success of orientation and training

programs, along with arguments for their incorporation into company practice, will be

examined. This chapter will conclude with a brief look at employee review programs

which were found in the literature to also play an important role in the retention of

employees.

The Problem of Employee Turnover

Organizations incur significant financial burdens due to employee turnover (Lee

& Bruvold, 2003). It has been reported that this important business issue can also lead to

other significant factors affecting the organization. According to Rollag et al. (2005),

when a highly productive newcomer leaves, the organization not only loses its investment

in that individual but also suffers from a loss of momentum as the remaining employees

struggle to compensate for the absence of that person and then have to readjust to that

worker's eventual replacement. Experts identify employee longevity as a business goal

and benefit to the organization. Paul and Anantharaman (2003) wrote: "Organizations

that are interested in a long-term relationship with employees reap the rewards in

financial terms through increased productivity and long-term affinity of the employee

with the organization" (p. 1261).

There are recommendations organizations can follow to ensure employee retention. Parrish (2006) offers the following suggestions. Employees have to be given an orientation to the organization, and training should be provided to employees so they have the necessary tools in place to perform their job. Employee confidence and satisfaction may be correlated to the length of time they stay with an organization; therefore, it is important for organizations to create an environment that advances those feelings within an employee. Finally, it is important that employees feel good about the work they are doing.

New Employee Orientation

For new employees, the first 90 days is a crucial time period (McKersie, 2003). As stated before, and reiterated by Hacker (2004): "It costs money – lots of money when you lose good people, sometimes because they got off to a rocky start" (p. 90). Orientation programs concentrate on why employees perform their duties (Ragsdale & Mueller, 2005). Ragsdale and Mueller identified benefits of employee orientation programs. They discovered that formal orientation programs are essential in retaining and motivating employees, lowering turnover, increasing productivity, improving employee morale, facilitating learning, and reducing the anxiety of new employees. Hacker (2004) cautioned that substandard orientation programs can affect an organization's present and future recruitment efforts.

New employee orientation programs have the power to do two positive things: increase employee satisfaction and improve employee retention (McKersie, 2003). Klein and Weaver (2000) conducted a study focusing on evaluating the impact of formal organizational-level orientation programs, which they identify as a common tactic for

socializing new hires. Their research was conducted in a large educational institution and studied 116 newly hired employees. Of these 116 employees, 55 attended a voluntary orientation program and 61 did not. One of study's key findings was directly related to the purpose of this current study. It was observed that orientation was significantly related to organizational commitment ($r = .25$, $p < .01$).

One way to ensure orientation programs are successful and helpful in reducing turnover is to design the program components accordingly. Organizations should be aware of employee retention rates when they construct their orientation programs (Reese, 2005). When Hacker (2004) reviewed research on new employee orientation programs, he found that just by improving the orientation program, organizations had the ability to increase their retention rates by up to 25%. When designing widespread orientation programs, there are three things organizations should think about: (a) their adult learners, (b) creating programs that allow information to be shared, and (c) providing opportunities for that information to be implemented in the organization (Ragsdale & Mueller, 2005). The design of the program is important because orientation programs have the power to shape employees' attitudes about their job duties and their function within the organization.

First impressions and the components of an orientation program are important to the program's success. Parry (2005) suggests "...mapping out your orientation process with every attention to detail to make a great first impression" (p. 9). Hacker (2004) cautions that the essence of new employee orientation programs should be more than providing group introductions and completing paperwork. Ragsdale and Mueller (2005) state that "new employees need to be introduced to the structure, culture, and standards of

the hiring facility" (p. 268). It will be beneficial to employees to understand their role within the company and be given a big picture break down (Hacker). Also important is providing employees with the information necessary so they know what is expected of them and what they can be expecting as well (Ragsdale & Mueller). Hacker advises, however, for organizations not to create information overload for their new employees.

One of the purposes of an orientation program is to explain a new employee's role and duties which will aid in the employee's commitment to the organization. Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003) conducted research related to employee commitment and work withdrawal. This was a longitudinal study with an initial pool of 1,532 participants. These subjects were recently hired at seven different various organizations. Their occupations were made up of a variety of white-collar professions. The participants were surveyed during the first month and then every four months after that. One of the study's key findings determined that role clarity was substantially related to both commitment and withdrawal.

Besides role clarity, other components are equally important in the orientation process. McKersie (2003) suggests employees get introduced to "the company's long-term goals, key projects in progress, the organizational structure and how the new employee's role contributes to the overall strategy for success" (p. 10B). What new employees do not need, however, is to be bombarded with every little detail about the organization (Hacker, 2004). New employees usually have a list of questions, and the more organizations can anticipate those concerns, the quicker the employee can get on board (Parry, 2005). Mentorship can also be a beneficial element of the orientation

process. Providing a new employee with a group of individuals they can go to for advice and direction should be a necessary component of the orientation process (Gray, 2005).

Just as important as the content of the program is the way the program is presented. The lecture-based format will not be the best method for every aspect of the program. For instance, it may not be "…effective as the primary or predominate mode for inculcating values, enhancing critical thinking, and encouraging individual participation" (Ragsdale & Mueller, 2005, p. 268). Ragsdale and Mueller sum this up by stating, "To be successful, a new employee orientation program must be comprehensive, interactive, and thought-provoking, and provide and environment in which assimilation of organizational values culture, and standards can occur" (p. 268).

> Hacker (2004) summarizes the important aspects of an orientation program. Orientation in its most ideal form is ongoing. It starts with recruitment and selection, and continues throughout the new employee's first year on the job. Many successful companies mix and match mentors or buddies with new hires, including those from departments outside their own. (p. 91)

Effective orientation programs have a number of benefits. New employees will quickly be able to get up to speed, have rational expectations, and exhibit positive attitudes. These programs can also cause turnover rates to reduce and be a time saver for employee supervisors (McKersie, 2003).

Employee Training Programs

Along with orientation programs, training programs play an important role in the retention of employees. Paul and Anantharaman (2003) believe that career development directly influences an employee's commitment to the organization. That commitment

affects employees' retention and productivity levels, resulting in increased financial performance. Sugrue (2004) explains the importance of learning. "Learning is the vehicle through which the knowledge and skills are developed and maintained. Recognizing learning as the primary vehicle for building human capital is the logical argument for the value of learning" (p. 75). When an employee has the chance to grow within an organization, feelings of attachment develop which cause the employee to want to remain with that organization and contribute to its success (Paul & Anantharaman).

Lee and Bruvold (2003) also believe that employee development leads to employee commitment and satisfaction.

> Employee development is vital in maintaining and developing the capabilities of both individual employees and the organization as a whole.... In fact, investing in employee development may create a dynamic relationship where employees may work harder because they have a greater sense of job satisfaction and commitment to the organization. (p. 981, 994)

Another of the key findings of the previously mentioned study by Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003) was that task mastery was unrelated to organizational commitment but was related to reduced work withdrawal. That supports the argument for training, which is often conducted to improve an employee's ability to perform their assigned duties.

The importance of training programs on employee retention rates is evident. Employees will have a higher level of satisfaction and commitment when their organization is committed to their development (Lee & Bruvold, 2003). This fact is supported by the Society of Human Resource Management who also found in a survey

they conducted that employees are more likely to stay with their organization if they are offered professional development opportunities ("Professional," 2006). Similar results were noted by Adamson (2006) who found studies that showed training and development programs impacted loyalty, self-esteem, and morale. These results were very encouraging to Paul and Anantharaman (2003). "It is really inspiring to observe that expenditure on employees is not an overhead, but a long-term investment for greater long-term returns" (p. 1261).

The implications of training are clear according to Lee and Bruvold (2003). When an organization is committed to its employees' development, those employees will feel valued. Those feelings will increase employee commitment and satisfaction, and decrease an employee's desire to leave the organization. Organizations providing employee development opportunities will experience success in terms of productivity, growth, and innovation (Sugrue, 2004).

Employee Reviews

Organizations should recognize what employees do well and where their performance improvement areas lie (Gray, 2005). It is crucial for employers to recognize the importance of employee reviews and feedback on retention rates (Parrish, 2006). According to Paul and Anantharaman (2003), employees who are active participants during their review process will have an increased level of commitment to the organization, a higher level of competence, and increased customer orientation. They are also a tool to increase the level of fairness and justice an employee feels.

Chapter III: Methodology

This study is concerned with examining the relationship between employee

orientation and training programs, and their effect on employee retention rates. The

purpose of this methodology is to identify common orientation and training practices of

Wisconsin employers, and to determine if there is a correlation between these programs

and retention rates. From the data analysis, any "best practices" will be identified.

Sections addressed in this chapter include subject selection and description,

instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analysis, and limitations.

Subject Selection and Description

The subjects selected to participate in this study include Wisconsin employers

who are members of a state professional council. The council's entire membership will be

the population; no sampling method was conducted. The number of subjects who were

asked to participate in this study was 7,700. Subjects represented a variety of industries,

and, according to the president of the council, were employed in various positions within

their organization. The participant contact information was obtained from the president of

the council who had an e-mail distribution list of these members. The president was

responsible for the dissemination of a cover letter (Appendix A), which included the

Internet survey link, and the consent form (Appendix B).

Instrumentation

A survey instrument was created especially for the purposes of this study. After

reviewing literature on orientation and training programs and employee retention and

turnover, the researcher drafted the initial survey. The questions on this initial instrument

included demographics, orientation components, training practices, and employee review

practices. This instrument was then sent to SVRI where SMEs reviewed and made revisions to the survey questions. The finalized survey was also sent to an SME in statistical analysis at UW-Stout and aesthetic changes were made.

After changes by the aforementioned SMEs, the intended population for this survey was changed to the current population which includes members of a Wisconsin professional council. The paper survey was then converted to become an electronic survey that would be administered via the Internet using SelectSurvey, a web based survey software program. Again, SMEs from SVRI reviewed that version of the instrument. An updated paper copy of the Internet survey was sent to SMEs at the professional association who would be responsible for the distribution of the instrument. After various edits that included the rewording of existing questions and the inclusion of two additional questions pertaining to safety, the final electronic version (Appendix C) that included 20 questions was sent to the SMEs at both SVRI and the professional association. No additional changes were made to the instrument.

Data Collection Procedures

A 20 question survey was administered through e-mail by the president of a Wisconsin professional association to the 7,700 members of that association. The intent of sending the survey through the president was to increase the participation rate. The members received a cover letter from the researcher that included the website link to the internet survey. They were also asked to read the consent form which identified the risks and benefits of participating, as well as the procedures for keeping their participation voluntary and confidential. Participants were given the contact information of the researcher, research advisor, and review board official. Those who choose to participate

were given eight business days to complete the survey. The data from the completed surveys was collected by SelectSurvey.

Data Analysis

Various statistical analyses were used in this study. First, the data collected by SelectSurvey was exported to Windows Excel. The text responses of the participants were then given a numerical alias. This data was again exported, this time to Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS was used to obtain the frequency, percent, and valid percent of each survey item, as well as performing Pearson Chi-Square analysis on selected items.

Limitations

Three limitations to this methodology were identified. The first two limitations deal with activities to increase return rates. Before the participants were given the cover letter and survey information, an introduction letter could have been sent to inform them that they had been chosen to participate in a study. By informing the subjects beforehand, they may be more inclined to contribute. Second, a follow-up letter could have been sent after the survey deadline to remind those in the population who had not yet participated that they had the opportunity to do so. Again, follow-up letters may help in increasing return rates by providing a friendly reminder.

The third limitation was the survey instrument itself. While the instrument's questions did address this study's subject matter, some questions or question answer choices, could have been reworded to make the data clearer and more straightforward. Instead of using check-box answers for all questions, other styles like Likert Scale and

answer ranking could have been used to provide a clearer picture. This would provide a more concise review of the data while being easier to interpret.

Summary

This chapter explained this study's methodology. The subjects of this study were the 7,700 members of a Wisconsin professional association and represent a wide variety of industries. After reviewing literature related to the subject matter of this study and consultation with SMEs a survey software program was used to create a web-based survey instrument. SelectSurvey, Microsoft Excel, and SPSS were all used for data collection and analysis of the participant responses. Frequency and percents of each survey item were collected, and Chi-Square analysis was performed on selected questions. Finally, three limitations to this methodology were identified. They included ways to improve return rates and the survey instrument itself.

Chapter IV: Results

This study is concerned with examining the relationship between employee orientation and training programs, and their effect on employee retention rates. This was done by developing a 20 question web based survey that was sent to the 7,700 members of a Wisconsin professional council. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the first three objectives of this study by providing the statistical results of the survey. The objectives are as follows:

1. Identify the common orientation and training practices of Wisconsin employers.

2. Correlate orientation and training practices with employee retention rates.

3. Seek to understand if any of these orientation or training practices are "best practices."

Of the 7,700 subjects who were asked to participate in this survey, 318 choose to participate, resulting in a return rate of 4.12%. The remainder of this chapter will examine the results of each survey item and the Chi-Square analysis of applicable items.

Question 1: What field best describes your company/organization?

All participants (n = 318) were asked to answer Question 1 pertaining to the industry they are employed in. The category most participants identified with was manufacturing with 143 respondents choosing this option. Other (n = 98) and health care (n = 24) came in second and third, respectively, in regards to frequency. The complete breakdown of Question 1 is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Fields of participants

Field	Frequency	Percent
Health Care	24	7.5
Social Service	2	0.6
Professional Service	17	5.3
Manufacturing	143	45.0
Agriculture	2	0.6
Transportation	7	2.2
Construction	18	5.7
Finance	4	1.3
Retail Sales	3	0.9
Other	98	30.8
Total	318	100.0

Question 2: How many workers does your organization employ?

Again, all participants (n = 318) were required to answer this question. Eight participants chose 1-10 positions which is equal to 2.5% of the total. Thirty-three participants chose 11-50 positions which is equal to 10.4% of the total. Forty-one chose 51-100 positions which is equal to 12.9% of the total. The most frequently chosen category was 101 or more positions with 74.2% (n = 236) of the participants choosing this option.

Question 19: What is your annual turnover rate?

Question 19 was asked of all survey participants and was the main focus of this study. It asked participants to identify their organization's turnover rate. Generating the highest frequency (n = 140) was 0-5% turnover. Ninety-eight individuals chose 6-10%. The third highest frequency (n = 52) was 11-20%. Seventeen participants chose 21-30%. Finally, a turnover rate of 31% or higher was chosen by 3.5% (n = 11) of the participants. Cross tabulation and results from the Pearson Chi-Square analysis was used to compare Question 19 with various other questions in this study's survey.

Question 3: Do you have an orientation program for new employees?

Every participant (n = 318) was required to answer Question 3 regarding whether or not they have an orientation program. Most participants (n = 311) chose yes, while only mere 2.2% (n = 7) chose no.

Cross tabulation was performed on Question 3 and Question 19. Based on the Pearson Chi-Square, no significance was found. The value was 3.033, the degree of freedom (df) equaled 3, and asymptotic significance was .387. Four cells had an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count was .62. Table 2 presents the cross tabulation data.

Table 2

Questions 3 and 19 cross tabulation data

			Question 3		
			Yes	No	Total
	00-05%	Count	135	5	140
		Expected Count	136.9	3.1	140.0
		% within Q19	96.4%	3.6%	100.0%
	06-10%	Count	96	2	98
		Expected Count	95.8	2.2	98.0
		% within Q19	98.0%	2.0%	100.0%
Question 19	11-20 %	Count	52	0	52
		Expected Count	50.9	1.1	52.0
		% within Q19	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	21% or Higher	Count	28	0	28
		Expected Count	27.4	.6	28.0
		% within Q19	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Total	Count	311	7	318
		Expected Count	311.0	7.0	318.0
		% within Q19	97.8%	2.2%	100.0%

Question 4: How would you classify your orientation program?

Those individuals who chose yes to Question 3 (n = 311) were required to answer

Question 4 which attempted to identify the formality, or informality, of orientation

programs. The majority of those answering this question (n = 252) identified with a

formal program, while 59 identified with an informal program.

When analyzing this question and Question 19, no significance was found. Using

Pearson Chi-Square the value was 3.626, the df was 3, and asymptotic significance was

.305. No cells had an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count was 5.31.

Table 3 show the total cross tabulation data.

Table 3

Questions 4 and 19 cross tabulation data

			Question 3		
			Formal	Informal	Total
	00-05%	Count	107	29	136
		Expected Count	110.2	25.8	136.0
		% within Q19	78.7%	21.3%	100.0%
	06-10%	Count	76	19	95
		Expected Count	110.2	18.0	95.0
		% within Q19	78.7%	20.0%	100.0%
Question 19	11-20 %	Count	47	5	52
		Expected Count	42.1	9.9	52.0
		% within Q19	90.4%	9.6%	100.0%
	21% or Higher	Count	22	6	28
		Expected Count	22.7	5.3	28.0
		% within Q19	78.6%	21.4%	100.0%
	Total	Count	252	59	311
		Expected Count	252.0	59.0	311.0
		% within Q19	81.0%	19.0%	100.0%

Question 5: Please identify the components of your orientation program.

Only those answering yes to Question 3 (n = 311) were required to identify the components of their organization's orientation program. "Completion of human resource paperwork and forms" was the highest frequency (n = 299), followed by "safety procedures" (n = 286), and "tour of organization and departments" (n = 275). Only 62 participants (19.9%) chose "welcoming social gathering" as one of their orientation

program components. The frequency and valid percent of the orientation program components are outlined in Table 4.

Table 4

Question 5: The components of orientation programs

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Tour of Organization and Departments	275	88.4
Introduction to Fellow Team Members	254	81.7
Introduction to Company Goals and Mission	256	82.3
Welcoming Social Gathering	62	19.9
Completion of HR Paperwork and Forms	299	96.1
Safety Procedures	286	92.0
Other	125	40.2

Cross tabulation was performed on each component of Question 5 in terms of their relationship with Question 19. According to the Chi-Square analysis, "tour of organization and departments" did prove significant. The value was 8.897, the df was 3, and the asymptotic significance was .031. One cell (12.5%) had an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count was 3.24. "Introduction to fellow team members" proved significant as well. For this component, the Pearson Chi-Square value was 9.416, the df was 3, and the asymptotic significance was .024. No cells had an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count was 5.13. Table 5 shows the cross tabulation results of these two items in relationship with Question 19.

Table 5

Tour and introduction cross tabulation data

			Tour			Introduction		
			Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Question 19	00-05%	Count	127	8	135	118	17	135
		Expected Count	119.4	15.6	135.0	110.3	24.7	135.0
		% within Q19	94.1%	5.9%	100.0%	87.4%	12.6%	100.0%
	06-10%	Count	83	13	96	78	18	96
		Expected Count	84.9	11.1	96.0	78.4	17.6	96.0
		% within Q19	86.5%	13.5%	100.0%	81.3%	18.8%	100.0%
	11-20 %	Count	43	9	52	40	12	52
		Expected Count	46.0	6.0	52.0	42.5	9.5	52.0
		% within Q19	82.7%	17.3%	100.0%	76.9%	23.1%	100.0%
	21% or Higher	Count	22	6	28	18	10	28
		Expected Count	24.8	3.2	28.0	22.9	5.1	28.0
		% within Q19	78.6%	21.4%	100.0%	64.3%	35.7%	100.0%
	Total	Count	275	36	311	254	57	311
		Expected Count	275.0	36.0	311.0	254.0	57.0	311.0
		% within Q19	88.4%	11.6%	100.0%	81.7%	18.3%	100.0%

Question 6: Of the "orientation program" components you identified in question #5,

please indicate the percent of time spent on each component during the orientation

process.

Those answering yes to Question 3 (n = 311) were asked to answer Question 6

which asked participants to identify the percent of time their orientation program spends

on each of the various components. Only 307 participants chose to answer the question.

The mean, median, and mode were identified for each component. Those answers

equaling 0% are included in these statistics. The component that generated the highest

percent of time spent was "safety procedures" with a M = 26.79%. The component

generating the least percent of time spent was "welcoming social gathering" with a M =

2.01%. Table 6 outlines the mean, median, and mode of all the orientation components.

Table 6

Question 6: Percent of time spent on orientation process components

	Mean	Median	Mode
Tour of Organization/Departments	12.00%	10%	10%
Introduction of Fellow Team Members	8.36%	5%	5%
Introduction to Company Goals/Mission	10.30%	10%	10%
Welcoming Social Gathering	2.01	0%	0%
Completion of HR Paperwork/Forms	22.72%	20%	10%
Safety Procedures	26.79%	25%	25%
Other	14.45%	0%	0%

An ANOVA was performed to see if significance occurred between Question 6

and Question 19. "Tour of organization/departments" came close to significance at .097,

however, significance was found at .028 with "introduction of fellow team members."

Table 7 outlines the ANOVA data for this question.

Table 7

Question 6 ANOVA Data

Response		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Tour of Organization/Departments	Between Groups	753.730	3	251.243	2.125	.097
Introduction of Fellow Team Members	Between Groups	374.145	3	124.715	3.074	.028
Introduction to Company Goals and Mission	Between Groups	563.154	3	187.718	1.735	.160
Welcoming Social Gathering	Between Groups	18.111	3	6.037	.243	.866
Completion of HR Paperwork and Forms	Between Groups	634.972	3	211.657	.826	.481
Safety Procedures	Between Groups	1223.031	3	407.677	.937	.423
Other	Between Groups	1566.782	3	522.261	1.259	.289

Question 7: Do employees go through regularly scheduled skill training sessions?

All participants (n = 318) were required to answer this question to identify the employers who have regularly scheduled training sessions. The majority of respondents, (n = 237) 74.5%, chose yes while 25.5% (n = 81) of respondents chose no. This question was not significant when cross tabulation was performed with Question 19.

Question 8: Please indicate the reasons employees go through training sessions?

Only those subjects choosing yes in Question 7 (n = 237) were required to answer Question 8 which was asked to identify reasons employees go through training sessions. More than one reason could be identified by the participants. "Improve performance" was chosen by 81.9% (n = 194) of the participants and was the most frequently chosen reason. The second highest reason chosen was "meet federal/state mandates" (n = 176). "Learn new components of the job" was chosen by 173 subjects, equaling 73%. "Introduce new company policies" was chosen by 67.5% (n = 160) of those answering this question. "Fit mission and goals of the organization" was chosen by 60.3% (n = 143) of participants. "Facilitate promotion" had a frequency of 65. Finally, 46 participants chose "other."

Cross tabulation analysis showed only one reason for training, "improve performance," to be significant when examined with Question 19. Using Pearson's Chi-Square, "improve performance" had a value of 15.874, a df of 3, and an asymptotic significance of .001. One cell (12.5%) had an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count was 3.63. Table 8 displays the cross tabulation data

Table 8

Questions 8 and 19 cross tabulation data

			Improve Performance		
			Yes	No	Total
Question 19	00-05%	Count	90	13	103
		Expected Count	84.3	18.7	103.0
		% within Q19	87.4%	12.6%	100.0%
	06-10%	Count	63	14	77
		Expected Count	63.0	14.0	77.0
		% within Q19	81.8%	18.2%	100.0%
	11-20 %	Count	31	6	37
		Expected Count	30.3	6.7	37.0
		% within Q19	83.8%	16.2%	100.0%
	21% or Higher	Count	10	10	20
		Expected Count	16.4	3.6	20.0
		% within Q19	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	Total	Count	194	43	237
		Expected Count	194.0	43.0	237.0
		% within Q19	81.9%	18.1%	100.0%

Question 9: In what format is training presented?

Again, only those participants answering yes to Question 7 (n = 237) were required to identify the format their training program is presented. More than one format could be chosen. "Train-the-trainer" was chosen by 48.5% (n = 115), "PowerPoint presentation" was chosen by 75.9% (n = 180), "lecture" was chosen by 70.0% (n = 166), and "mentoring" was chosen by 55.3% (n = 131). The most frequently chosen format was "on-the-job training." This was chose by 82.7% (n = 196) of the participants. "Other" was chosen by 21.1% (n = 50).

When cross tabulations were performed on Question 9 and Question 19, no format in which training is conducted was significant, although one, "train-the-trainer" did come close with a Chi-Square value of 6.910, a df of 3, and an asymptotic significance of .075 which does comes close to a .05 level of significance.

Question 10: In What Location is Training Presented?

Those participants answering yes to Question 7 (n = 237) were asked to answer Question 10. This question identified the location where employee skill training was presented. Participants were allowed to choose more than one answer. "On-site" was the most frequently chosen location with 98.3% (n = 233) choosing this option. "Off-site" was chosen by 40.5% (n = 96) participants. Only 92 participants (38.8%) reported conducting training online. Fifteen participants chose "other" for a location option. When cross tabulations were conducted with Question 10 and Question 19, no levels of significance were found.

Question 11: Please identify your use or future use of online training sessions?

The 237 participants who answered yes to Question 7 were asked to identify their use or future use of online training sessions. One eligible participant did not answer this question. "Currently using online training sessions" was the most frequently (n = 102) chosen option. Table 9 outlines the frequencies and valid percents of this question's option. Cross tabulation was conducted on Question 11 and Question 19. No significance was found.

Table 9

Question 11: Use or future use of online training sessions

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Currently Using Online Training Sessions	102	43.2
Will Use Online Training Sessions in the Future	55	23.3
Do Not Anticipate Using Online Training Sessions	79	33.5
Total	236	100

Question 12: How often do employees participate in training sessions?

Only those participants answering yes to Question 7 were asked answer Question 12 concerning the frequency of employee training programs. Two eligible participants chose not to respond. "Monthly" was the option generating the highest frequency (n = 85). Table 10 outlines the frequency and valid percent for this question.

Table 10

Question 12: How often employees participate in training sessions

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Weekly	17	7.2
Monthly	85	36.2
Quarterly	57	24.3
Yearly	35	14.9
Other	41	17.4
Total	235	100.0

Again, cross tabulations with Question 19 were performed. The Chi-Square results were as follows: value = 23.921, df = 12, asymptotic significance = .021. While the asymptotic significance value is at a level of significance, five cells (25.0%) had an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count was 1.45. This implies that significance cannot be inferred.

Question 13: In the period of time indicated in question #12, how many hours do employees spend in training sessions?

The 237 participants who answered yes in Question 7 were asked to identify the time employees spend in training. Most participants (n = 174) chose 01-05 hours. This was followed by 06-10 hours (n = 35). Only five participants chose 11-15 hours. Twenty-three participants chose 16 hours or longer. Cross tabulations with Question 19 were performed. The Pearson Chi-Square showed a value of 6.852, a df of 9, and an asymptotic significance of .653. Seven cells (43.8%) had an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .42. Significance did not occur.

Question 14: Please identify the safety and risk management objectives impacting your organization's operation?

All participants of this study (n = 318) were required to complete Question 14 regarding safety and risk management objectives affecting their organizations. Participants were allowed to choose more than one option. "Employee health and wellness" ranked high with 88.1% (n = 280) of the population identifying this as a factor for their organization. "Organizational asset security" ranked towards the bottom with 138 participants choosing this option. "Environmental hazards" was chosen by 205 participants. "On-the-job accidents" also ranked high with 88.4% (n = 281) of the

respondents choosing this factor. About a third of the population (n = 109) chose "off-the-job accidents" as a factor. Other factors accounted for 6.3% (n = 20).

Question 15: What programs, services, or activities would improve your organization?

The study's participants (n = 318) were required to complete Question 15 identifying all the safety related resources that could improve their organization. Training resources were the three most frequently identified with "employee training programs" (n = 196), "executive training programs" (n = 131), and "train-the-trainer workshops" (n = 131) holding the top three spots. Table 11 outlines the frequency and valid percent of all the resources.

Table 11

Question 15: Programs, services, or activities that would improve participants'

organizations

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Employee Training Programs	196	61.6
Executive Training Programs	131	58.8
Online Tutorials	93	29.2
Train-the-Trainer Workshops	131	41.2
Industry Newsletters	69	21.7
Use of Various Communication Mediums	124	39.0
Statistical Analysis	124	19.8
Resource Library	100	31.4
Other	32	10.1

Question 16: Do employees go through a performance review process?

The entire study population (n = 318) was required to identify if their employees

go through performance reviews. The majority of respondents (n = 282) answered yes

and 36 participants answered no. Cross tabulations with Question 19 were performed.

The Pearson Chi-Square did show significance. There was a value of 12.638, a df of 3

and an asymptotic significance of .005. One cell (12.5%) had an expected count less than

5. The minimum expected count was 3.17. Table 12 presents the cross tabulation data.

Table 12

Questions 16 and 19 cross tabulation data

| | | | Question 16 | | |
			Yes	No	Total
	00-05%	Count	119	21	140
		Expected Count	124.2	15.8	140.0
		% within Q19	85.0%	15.0%	100.0%
	06-10%	Count	92	6	98
		Expected Count	86.9	11.1	98.0
		% within Q19	93.9%	6.1%	100.0%
Question 19	11-20 %	Count	50	2	52
		Expected Count	46.0	5.9	52.0
		% within Q19	96.2%	3.8%	100.0%
	21% or Higher	Count	21	7	28
		Expected Count	24.8	3.2	28.0
		% within Q19	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
	Total	Count	282	36	318
		Expected Count	282.0	36.0	318.0
		% within Q19	88.7%	11.3%	100.0%

Question 17: How often do the performance reviews occur?

The participants who answered yes in Question 16 (n = 282) were required to categorize how often employees are subject to performance reviews. Two eligible participants did not answer this question. Only 2.5% (n = 7) of respondents said their reviews occur monthly and 10.7% (n = 30) of this population's reviews occur quarterly. The most frequent response was "yearly" (n = 190). Other times accounted for 67.9% (n = 53). Cross tabulations with Question 19 were performed. The Pearson Chi-Square did not show significance. The value was 10.512, the df was 9, and the asymptotic

significance was .311. Six cells (37.5%) had an expected count less than 5. The minimum

expected count was .50.

Question 18: Do employees actively participate in their performance reviews?

Again, only those participants who answered yes in Question 16 (n = 282) were

required answer this question. Question 18 asked participants if employees are active in

their performance reviews. Most participants (n = 249) chose yes, with 30 participants

choosing no. Again, cross tabulations with Question 19 were performed. The Chi-Square

results showed a value of 2.487, a df of 3, and an asymptotic significance of .478. One

cell (12.5%) had an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.34. No

significance was found.

Question 20: Are there any other comments you would like to make regarding new
employees?

Sixty-one individuals choose to write additional comments regarding this survey.

Those comments are included in Appendix D.

Chapter V: Discussion

This study examined the relationship between employee orientation and training programs, and their effect on employee retention rates. The purpose and objectives of this study were as follows:

1. Identify the common orientation and training practices of Wisconsin employers.

2. Correlate orientation and training practices with employee retention rates.

3. Seek to understand if any of these orientation or training practices are "best practices."

4. Educate employers on what the orientation and training best practices are.

5. Inform job seekers of common orientation and training practices to prepare them for entering the work force.

Certain assumptions were made. First, it was assumed that a relationship already existed between employee development and retention rates within an organization, and that an organization with these programs would have a lower turnover rate. It was also assumed that those participating in this survey would have the necessary information at their disposal to efficiently and accurately answer the survey questions. Finally, a third assumption was made that all of an organization's employees go through relatively similar orientation and training programs.

Literature involving the problem of employee turnover was examined. Consequences of employee turnover were discussed as was the need to reduce turnover through orientation and training initiatives. The benefits, design process, and necessary components of employee orientation programs were also discussed. The importance of employee development, the components of employee training, and the relationship

between employee development and employee turnover were studied. Finally, employee reviews and its relationship to retention rates was discussed.

To meet the objectives of this study, a 20-question web-based survey was developed by SMEs and the researcher through the use of SelectSurvey. This instrument went through multiple revisions to best obtain the data. The population for this study was the 7,700 members of a Wisconsin professional council. They received a notice to participate and the necessary documentation via e-mail from their council's president. The data was then analyzed through by SelectSurvey, Microsoft Excel, and SPSS. Frequencies, percents, cross tabulations, and the Pearson Chi-Square were the statistical analysis tools used to review the data.

Limitations

This study was limited to Wisconsin employers who are members of a professional organization; therefore, this study cannot be generalized to employers outside of the Wisconsin geographical area, or to employers who are not members of this professional organization. The assumptions of this study also brought limitations to the study as a whole.

Limitations were noted in the methodology and design of the study. Three limitations to this methodology were identified. The first two limitations deal with activities to increase return rates. Before the participants were given the cover letter and survey information, an introduction letter could have been sent to inform them that they had been chosen to participate in a study. By informing the subjects beforehand, they may be more inclined to contribute. Second, a follow-up letter could have been sent after the survey deadline to remind those in the population who had not yet participated that

they had the opportunity to do so. Again, follow-up letters may help in increasing return rates by providing a friendly reminder.

The third limitation was the survey instrument itself. While the instrument questions did address this study's subject matter, some questions or question answer choices could have been reworded to make the data clearer and more straightforward. Instead of using check-box answers for all questions, other styles like Likert Scale and answer ranking, could have been used to provide a clearer picture of the respondents' answers. This would also provide a more concise review of the data, while being easier to interpret.

Conclusions

The first objective of this study was fairly straight-forward and was conducted by examining this study's data. Most of the employers have a formal employee orientation program in place. The majority of these orientation programs include tours, various introductions, explanation of the organization's goals and mission, completion of human resource (HR) paperwork, and safety procedures. Safety procedures and HR necessities account for approximately half of the employees' time spent in orientation.

About 3/4 of the employers who responded also make use of employee training programs. Improving performance, meeting federal and state mandates, and learning new components of the job were listed as reasons for going through training by these employers. On-the-job training and PowerPoint presentations are the most common ways this training is presented. Training is almost always conducted on-site, and very few of the employers (38.8%) with training programs use an online method.

Employee safety and wellness, and on-the-job accidents are a concern for the majority of employers participating in this study. Over half of the employers feel employee or executive training could be beneficial resources. Most of the employers in this study conduct employee reviews, and most of those happen on a yearly basis. The employees play an active role in those performance reviews.

Not a lot of significance was revealed when correlating orientation and training practices with employer turnover rate. Some of the orientation program components such as "tour of the organization and departments" and "introduction of fellow team members" were found significant. "Introduction of team members" was also found significant in terms of time spent on this activity. Only one reason why employees go through training, "to improve performance," was found to be significant. Whether or not employees go through a performance review process was found significant too.

Finding significance on whether or not employees go through a review process is not a surprising fact. The research presented in conjunction with this study showed that there indeed is a relationship between employee retention and reviews. The researcher was surprised that no significance was found between turnover rates and whether or not employers have orientation or training programs. Research leaned towards showing a positive relationship among these variables and this study did not support that. The items that were significant factors in employee turnover rates could prove to be best practices with further study.

Recommendations

From this study, two main recommendations have been identified to assist in bettering the process of this current study, and one recommendation has been made for

future research endeavors. First, to improve this current study, items should be put in place to increase return rates. A pre-survey letter could be sent to the study population enlightening them about the upcoming survey. Follow-up letters are also useful tools to send out shortly before or after the survey due date to give the study's population a reminder of their opportunity to participant. Care needs to be taken to impress upon individuals the importance of their participation. If those invited to participant do not see the benefits or importance to them, it is unlikely that they will contribute.

Secondly, the methodology of this study could be improved through enhancement of the survey instrument. Questions and answers could be reworded to obtain more accurate and meaningful data. Asking participants to rank answers or narrowing the scope of the questions could provide a clearer picture into the actual behaviors and actions of employers. Narrowing the scope of who the survey is pertaining to may also be of benefit. Currently, this study is concerned about employees in general. Focusing instead on a certain work group, for example office personnel or machine operators, may allow generalizations to be made about retention rates of those various work groups. Finally, monitoring who receives the survey, and recording their position within their organization, could provide additional insight and more accurate answers.

The third recommendation is the need for future research. As explained in Chapters 1 and 2, employee turnover is a crucial business issue. Ways to reduce turnover can provide an immense benefit for employers. Studying one aspect of this issue at a time could produce important results. Introductions of team members and the amount of time spent on that activity proved significant in this study. Socialization and its effect on turnover could be important to examine. Improving performance as a reason for training

was significant as well. Organizations that function as high performing usually do

exceptional work in communicating the objectives and goals of the organization. How

clearly organizations communicate the relation between employees' job duties, their

performance, and the performance of the organization may also be related to turnover

rates and should be the subject of future studies as well.

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Appendix A: Cover Letter

Dear Wisconsin Safety Council Member:

Your knowledge concerning employee orientation and training programs is valued; therefore, you have been selected to participate in a survey concerning this very topic. The responses you can provide will give helpful information in the area of employee retention that can and will be used to better understand this important business issue.

Please use your experience with the new employee orientation and training programs at your organization to answer the survey questions. It should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete this survey and your responses will be completely anonymous. The results will be shared with Bryan Roessler and the Wisconsin Safety Council, along with the Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute at UW-Stout.

Before completing the survey, I ask that you review the consent information included after this introduction. To access the survey, please go to the following website http://www2.uwstout.edu/GeneralSurveys/TakeSurvey.asp?SurveyID=l5l754012p22G. Please complete the survey by Wednesday, October 4, 2006.

Your participation in this endeavor is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, you may contact me by e-mail at kaisersa@uwstout.edu.

Thank you for your time!

Sally Kaiser
Graduate Student
M.S. Training & Development
UW-Stout

Appendix B: Consent Form

Consent to Participate In UW-Stout Approved Research

Title: An Examination of New Employee Orientation and Training Programs in Relation to Employee Retention Rates

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Description:

The objectives of this study are as follows:
1. Identify the common orientation and training practices of Wisconsin employers
2. Correlate orientation and training practices with new employee retention rates
3. Seek to understand if any of these orientation or training practices are "best practices"
4. Educate employers on what the orientation and training best practices are
5. Inform job seekers of common orientation and training practices to prepare them for entering the work force

The significance of this study is to understand the relationship between new employee orientation and training programs to discover if there is a correlation on retention rates for those employees. This is important because if a relationship is identified employers can use that information to improve, if needed, their employee retention rates which is a major cost saver for business. Job seekers can also use this information to better understand the business world that they are entering.

Risks and Benefits:

The perceived risks by participating in this study are minimal. You will be asked to complete questions about your organization; none of the questions will be personal or misleading in any way. No physical risks, harassment, invasion of privacy, or risk to dignity or self-respect is expected to occur by participating. Psychological, emotional, and behavioral risks are expected to be nonexistent.

There are anticipated benefits by participating in this study. Best practices will be identified that can help reduce turnover, which in turn saves your organization time and money, and can boost productivity. These factors can then have a positive ripple effect on the organization, which means there could be numerous unidentified benefits.

Time Commitment:
This survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete

Confidentiality:
Your name, nor the name of your organization, will appear anywhere on the survey. The researcher will not be able to identify you or your organization by examining the completed survey.

Right to Withdraw:
Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you choose not to participate in this study, no negative consequences will occur. Should you choose to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time. Once you complete this anonymous survey, there will be no way for the researcher to identify your responses.

IRB Approval:
This study has been reviewed and approved by The University of Wisconsin-Stout's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study meets the ethical obligations required by federal law and University policies. If you have questions or concerns regarding this study please contact the Investigator or Advisor. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the IRB Administrator.

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Statement of Consent:

By completing the following survey you agree to participate in the project entitled, An Examination of New Employee Orientation and Training Programs in Relation to Employee Retention Rates.

Appendix C: Survey Instrument

Employee Orientation and Training Programs

Directions: You will be asked a series of questions concerning new employee orientation and training programs at your organization. For each question you will have two or more answers to choose from, please mark the answer or answers that best describe the current situation at your organization. Thank you.

Please complete the following questions (#1-#2) concerning the demographics at your organization.

1. What field best describes your company/organization?

☐ Health Care

☐ Social Service

☐ Professional Service

☐ Manufacturing

☐ Agriculture

☐ Transportation

☐ Construction

☐ Finance

☐ Retail Sales

☐ Other, please specify _____

2. How many workers does your organization employ?

○ 1-10 position(s)

○ 11-50 positions

○ 51-100 positions

○ 101+ positions

Please complete the following questions (#3-#6) concerning new employee orientation programs at your organization.

3. Do you have an orientation program for new employees?

   ⊙ yes (continue with question #4)

   ⊙ no (skip to question #7)

4. Would you classify your orientation program as formal (structured and uniform), or informal (in place program is not uniformly structured)?

   ⊙ formal

   ⊙ informal

5. Please identify the components of your orientation program.
   Check all that apply

   ☐ Tour of organization and departments

   ☐ Introduction to fellow team members

   ☐ Introduction to company goals and mission

   ☐ Welcoming social gathering

   ☐ Completion of Human Resources (HR) paperwork and forms

   ☐ Safety procedures

   ☐ Other, please specify _____

6. Of the "orientation program" components you identified in question #5, please indicate the percent of time spent on each component during the orientation process.

	Percent of Time Spent
Tour of ogranization/departments	
Introduction of fellow team members	
Introduction to company goals and mission	
Welcoming social gathering	
Completion of HR paperwork and forms	
Safety Procedures	

Other

Please complete the following questions (#7-#13) concerning employee training programs at your organization.

7. Do employees go through regularly scheduled skill training sessions?

○ Yes (continue with question #8)

○ No (skip to question #14)

8. Please indicate the reasons employees go through training sessions.
Check all that apply

☐ Improve performance

☐ Facilitate promotion

☐ Learn new components of the job

☐ Introduce new company policies

☐ Meet federal or state mandates

☐ Fit mission and goals of organization

☐ Other, please specify _____

9. In what format is training presented?
Check all that apply

☐ Train-the-Trainer

☐ PowerPoint Presentation

☐ Lecture

☐ Mentoring

☐ On-the-Job training

☐ Other, please specify _____

10. In what location is training presented?
Check all that apply

☐ Onsite

☐ Offsite

☐ Online

☐ Other, please specify _____

|

11. Please indentify your use or future use of online training sessions.

○ Currently using online training sessions

○ Will use online training sessions in the future

○ Do not anticipate using online training sessions

12. How often do employees participate in training sessions?

○ Weekly

○ Monthly

○ Quarterly

○ Yearly

○ Other, please specify _____

|

13. In the period of time indicated in question #12, how many hours do employees spend in training sessions?

○ 1-5 hour(s)

○ 6-10 hours

○ 11-15 hours

○ 16 hours or longer

Please complete the following questions (#14 - #15) concerning safety issues at your organization.

14. Please identify the safety and risk management objectives impacting your organization's operation.
Check all that apply

☐ Employee health and wellness

☐ Organizational asset security

☐ Environmental hazards

☐ On-the-job accidents

☐ Off-the-job accidents

☐ Other, please specify _____

15. What programs, services, or activities would improve your organization? ·
Check all that apply

☐ Employee training programs

☐ Executive training programs

☐ Online tutorials

☐ Train-the-trainer workshops

☐ Industry newsletters

☐ Use of various communication mediums

☐ Statistical analysis

☐ Resource library

☐ Other, please specify _____

Please complete the following questions (#16 - #20) concerning employee performance review processes at your organization.

16. Do employees go through a performance review process? ·

○ Yes (continue with question #17)

○ No (skip to question #19)

17. How often do the performance reviews occur?

○ Monthly

○ Quarterly
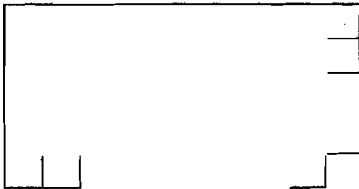
○ Yearly

○ Other, please specify

18. Do employees actively participate in their performance reviews?

   ○ Yes

   ○ No

19. What is your annual turnover rate?

   ○ 0-5%

   ○ 6-10%

   ○ 11-20%

   ○ 21-30%

   ○ 31% or higher

20. Are there any other comments you would like to make regarding new employees?

Done   **Cancel**

Appendix D: Question 20 Comments

20. Are there any other comments you would like to make regarding new employees?

1. Most of our employees are seasonal so turnover is high.

2. We identified that more than half of our accidents/incidents were happening to employees who were employed less than 6 months. We implemented a safety orientation checklist that the Supervisors go through with new employees, and is a hands on process. Showing the employee e-stops, where safety equipment is located, and reporting unsafe conditions are part of the activities. It has made a huge impact, our recordables are less than half of last year.

3. Most of our turnover occurs with new employees (here six months or less).

4. performace reviews are done on new employees more frequently - in the beginning daily then weekly then monthly for about the first 2 years

5. New employee training / orientation is a very important process. As you can see we have a limited orientation program which can be vailidated in our turn over rate. New employees want to do well. If they do not recieve the training or understanding of what we are doing, they will not be satisfied and leave or worse yet, not care and get injured. Line leaders are sometimes forgotten in the mix of training programs and they need the most precise people skills of all managers.

6. All new employees go through a post-offer functional capacity evaluation, drug screen, T.B. and physical prior to hire.

7. Performance reviews are only conducted with exempt and non-exempt associates. The manufacturing associates do not have a performance review process.

8. Experience and/or training of new employees by former employers varies greatly as it relates to environmental, health, & safety. Many of them are lacking experience/education in these areas.

9. Need help setting up a program that allows us to touch all new employees in a timely manner. We have 500+ employees.

10. I feel that the company I work for would increase moral and as a result the turnover rate would decrease if they would increase the frequency of performance reviews or just communicate more about the goals, expectations and especially letting employees know how they are doing on a more regular basis. With more open communication I think employees would have a better sense of what is expected of them and it would clear up any problems as they arrise instead of waiting for review time
to address these concerns.

11. We have inmate workers, there is a high turnover of workers.

12. I'm afraid my answers to your survey may skew your results. Construction has major differences vs industrial settings. Employees hired from a union hall may be on the job one day and gone. Sometimes I don't know we hired them. At this company we have a "core" of long-time employees who received initial and refresher training on various construction subjects on a continuing basis. New hires are first at the next training session. Classes are also conducted on a case-by-case basis and to meet owner requirements. Field personnel do not receive formal performance reviews, but are evaluated on job /
skill performance. Those who do not meet standard expectations for the skill level aren't continued. Q7 is confusing because the training we do conduct is not "skill" training, but informational on standard rules and practices (OSHA Regs for example). For Q8, employees are trained to Improve performance, Meet federal standards, state requirements as they apply. For Q9, training format is a combination of powerpoints, videos, lectures, audience participation, followed by on-the-job application. For Q10, training location, Project Superintendents conduct weekly foreman's and crew briefs (called "toolbox talks"). More formal information sessions are conducted at the HQ office. For Q11: do not anticipate on-line training from the field - one phone line per office trailer. A possibility for future classroom

settings only. For Q12: There are no refresher training requirements, but generally, a refresher is desirable every 4 to 5 years. For Q13: Minimum training time is mandated at 10 hours. Other classes general are 2 to 4 hours long.
So as you can see, including construction in your data may skew the results. A thought would be to have construction a separate category from general industry.

13. no

14. no

15. I answered questions 7 -19 for all employees when the word new employee did not appear. We have several different types of employees and I would have answered some questions differently for differenet sub-groups. ie Cooks, bus drivers, social workers, office staff, administrative staff, degree teachers, non degreed teachers, classroom aides, support staff etc.

16. N/A

17. no

18. The salaried staff has a lower turnover rate than the union craft personnel. The orientation procedures are somewhat different between the two groups. The union craft personnel have more emphasis placed on safety than anything else.

19. Since Safety is the top priority in our orginization, the first 12 months of employement include monthly new employee safety meetings specially designed for those with less than one year of service.

20. Our New Orientation of new employees is roughly 1-2 hours, which may be a reason our turnover rate is so high. Because of this, we have been looking into online training sessions and/or improving our New Orientation of new employees.

Our new employees are temporary employees through temp agencies, and this is where we have the highest turnover, figuring to about 16-25%, of the 21-30% for our annual turnover.

21. We have a formalized two-day orientation class and are working on developing a skills, training lab and an additional third day of orientation to specific departments.

22. It's hard to find good skilled employees and important to keep the good ones you do find.

23. My answers are regarding our "general" orientation. Employees also have a department orientation at which they are shown job specific duties and are then given a tour of their work areas which can be several buildings.

24. Qualified employees are becoming difficult to find. Employers now and in the future must work extremely hard at selecting the best qualified employees and managing their work forces with care to retain employees. Our site's new hire orientation is 5 days long (40 hours). Good luck with your graduate program. Please note, you are going to get different results from the manufacturing sector vs. the service sector (apples and oranges) (i.e. manufacturing of widgets vs. a call center. My graduate thesis involved employee retention.

25. For salaried employees we outline their goals, objectives and milestones for their first 90 days. We scheule out at least their first month of meetings, locations, people etc...for our hourly employees we have a mentor program where we have tenured employees assigned to helping them learn about the job, culture and safety aspects.

26. I am the Environmental, Health, and Safety Officer, so my focus is New Employee Safety Orientation only. I do not know the turn-over rate.

27. We used completency based hiring so new employees have the basic skills to do the job. We enhance their basic skills through training and also offer career development incentives to advance their education for the possiblity of promotion or move to a different division within the organization.

28. On the job training over and over to insure qualityin their work.

29. Key to being a good employee is knowing and understanding expectations, accountability, and knowing that there are opportunities that lie ahead for with employees with desires for more

challenging positions and responsibilities.

30. Turnover depends on line of service and whether staff are part-time or full-time. Many part-time staff are students who will leave for full time positions in their field of study following graduation.

31. None

32. Employers are responsible to educate new employees for success in their new roles, including verifying comprehension and performing safely. Policies need to be readily available for reference, we have several hard copy manuals throughout our institution as well as on-line access for quick reference. Success is dependent upon a well organized and thorough new employee orientation program which is mandatory for all new hires.

33. not sure about annual turnover rate... just guessed it's between 6-10%. Despite our comprehensive orientation, training, and on going evaluation/mentoring programs, we still see higher than desired turnover rates.

34. No

35. Recently started our mentor program and are hoping that it will offer the extra support that a person may need while starting a new job; Continual feedback of both + and - progress for seasoned associates as well as new hires is essential so that everyone knows where they're at and where they're headed.

Thanks for your time!!

36. Have safety manger participate in interview process.

37. The company I work for is an excellent company. If you are not happy with your job it usually is not the company's fault it is the individuals. We strive to get people in this mode from day one and it seems to work.

38. the other percentage of time I identified is union business.

39. We use online training in Ergonomics for all employees, train on various topics at quarterly staff meetings, encourage outside education and have ongoing training in-house for various departments.

40. We are a manufacturing facility with both blue collar workers and white collar workers. The training, review, and turnover rates vary between parts of the workforce.

41. I'm able to get much of the needed training for staff through association affiliations.

42. New employees seem to have no conception of what a manufacturing plant is all about. They also seem to think that just by coming in the door, they should be paid more than we are structured to pay. They are in need of the awareness of what manufacturing is about. The 12 hour shift, the night shift, the team spirit needed to succeed even though others may not be to their liking. They are not willing usually to work very hard or to become loyal employees.

43. Additional time spent with new employee's in the beginning will pay off greatly over their years of employement.

44. Have trouble finding qualified individuals.

45. We hire employees on a Supplemental Basis. This means they receive a lower wage and no benefits. This group suffers about 35% turnover, but when they reach full time, benefit eligible status – the turnover rate is < 1%.

46. We are currently preparing our company to apply for the OSHA VPP program. Safety is very important to our organization. Many of our training are safety focused.

47. Good employees are hard to find!!!

48. Our industry is a more dangerous industry, so that safety and training is one of the three legs: power/electric, quality of service, and safety

49. Would like employees that are skilled in sales

50. High turn over rates due to union craft construction business

51. Oour largest benifit has come from work hardening - to "train" new employees how to do proper lifting and handling of material. Also, because so much information is thrown at a new employee the first few days on the job, we have a 4 to 6 week review of all safety and qualilty training. This review time is also used to get direct feedback from employees on how they feel about their job and how it applies to safety and quality.

52. Not sure if my survey should count - I'm self employed as a sole propreitor with me as the only emplyoyee.

53. The orientation process gets very overwhelming when too much information is thrown at a new employee. I have found that by meeting with those employees again after the first 30 days, gives them another chance to ask more questions after they once get a fell for the workplace.

54. Seasonal new hires with language differences are a challenge. Participation in improvements is a struggle.

55. Mentoring and daily contact with the individual to make him/her welcome and you are providing a resource for question's that come up and procedures to explain division policy and best practices that have proven positive results. Everyone is their to learn from each other and find the best way to meet mission goals and accomplishments in the safest means possible. Networking can not be stressed enough to get the individual up and running, with a high degree of comfort and a resource base.

56. The first day on the job is when you set the tone and have the best chance to instill a safety culture in a person.

57. In our environment, the orientation includes both administistative/facility staff, and care staff. The requirements are radically different.

58. None

59. # 19 is a guess. I work in the field and have no idea.

60. Our new employee orientation is always a working in progress - building on previous procedures or best practices. We also have an orientation for those employees who move to a new position. Our formal training program was started a little over a year ago and has made great strides.

61. We take our employees through 4 half day sessions of orientation and then the specific department orientation.

62. The questions I did not answer, I do not know the response.

63. The biggest issue we face is the balance of getting employees through orientation in a time frame that is appropriate and assuring they are actually getting the training they need. I feel that a lot of what we do in orientation is overwhelming for new hires and very little gets absorbed or learned.

64. Face to face interaction is the best, however, sometimes that is just not possible. We utilize online, televideo and conference calling in addition to the more formal, traditional trng sessions.