

Exam in Personnel Psychology, Bachelor, Autumn 2017

Course code: PSY2407

Formal issues:

- If you have **formal** questions during the exam period, you can post these questions in the blog in the Fronter room of this course. I will answer them once a day during the exam period.
- The maximum length of your exam assignment is 3000 words. Report the word count on the front page of the assignment.
- Note your candidate number that you find in StudentWeb (do not use your name) and course code on the front page of your assignment.
- Please submit the exam assignment through Inspira within the indicated deadline.

Use APA style for all references that you use in the exam:

www.sv.uio.no/english/studies/resources/sources-and-references/APA-guide-summary

www.apastyle.org or www.apastyle.org/learn/index.aspx?tab=2

How Nick's Pizza Delivers Training Results

At first glance, Nick's Pizza & Pub sounds as ordinary as a company can be: a pizza restaurant with two locations, each in one of Chicago's northwest suburbs. But when you take a look at the company's performance measures, something special seems to be going on. In an industry where 200% employee turnover and operating profits around 6 1/2% are normal, Nick's has to replace only 20% of its employees each year and enjoys operating profits of 14% or more. These results are amazing, especially for a business in which 4 out of 10 employees are high school students.

What makes the difference? It could be the culture at Nick's. Rather than hiring expert managers and laying down a lot of rules, Nick's is choosy about who

gets hired for every position and then provides them with enough training to operate skillfully and exercise sound judgment. The whole training program emphasizes ways to develop trustworthy, dedicated employees.

Training at Nick's begins with a two-day orientation program. Trainees learn the company's purpose, values, and culture, and they participate in role-playing activities to practice those lessons. Then it's on to skills training, beginning with a course called simply 101. During that four-hour hands-on lesson in the kitchen, all the new employees—regardless of what their future job will be—learn to make a pizza. From there, the trainees divide into work groups for

the next level of training. In 201, these groups of trainees embark on longer-term training to be certified in performing a particular job. For example, an employee might train in pizza making for a few weeks until he or she earns a certification as a pizza maker.

Class 201 ends the mandatory training, but Nick's provides incentives for further learning. An employee can participate in additional 201 courses to learn more jobs and earn a pay increase. An employee who earns two more certifications (say, one in salad making and one in sandwich preparation) enjoys a wage increase of 75 cents an hour—and the prestige of exchanging the uniform's tan hat for a red hat. Some employees earn nine certifications, after which their pay rises another \$2 an hour, and they get to wear a black hat with their uniform.

Yet another level of training prepares employees to be trainers themselves. This level—301—prepares employees to earn a top skill rating in their areas of certification. Besides these task-oriented skills, the employees receive training in communication and leadership and study a book called *Mastery: The Keys to Success and Long-Term Fulfillment* by George Leonard. Employees who complete these requirements receive a Leadership 301 Passport, which includes a checklist of behaviors they are expected to model for the employees they lead. During the weeks that follow, they watch for situations in which they or others are exhibiting each behavior, jotting down descriptions of what they witnessed. When the listed behaviors have all been observed and noted, the participants take a course in training, and they finally are ready to be named trainers themselves.

Along with these formal training programs, Nick's provides further on-the-job learning through coaching by managers and trainers. The goal is to provide feedback in the moment, not waiting for performance appraisal meetings. For example, at the end of each shift, trainers will ask trainees to identify one thing they did well that day and one thing they would like to improve. In addition, managers are taught to observe employees' behavior on the job and ask themselves whether what they see would make them want to hire the employee. If yes, the manager is expected to give immediate positive feedback. If no, the manager is expected to coach the employee on how to do better.

Answer all questions:

1. "Nick's is choosy about who gets hired": Present suggestions on how Nick's should proceed when selecting new staff.
2. Discuss the training and development at Nick's. In what additional ways, besides those described, could training and development be delivered?
3. Employees are rewarded with higher pay for each training completed. Is this a useful way of rewarding? Discuss advantages and disadvantages of such a reward.

You can also use information you find on www.nickspizzapub.com. Please cite this page according to APA standards.