Retail 2000

Fullemploy Training

M
MACMILLAN

Retail 2000

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About Fullemploy

Fullemploy aims to improve the employment prospects of minority ethnic communities in England and Wales. Current priorities focus on people of Caribbean and Asian descent. The organisation provides training for young adults, supports community and economic development among black communities, offers equal opportunities consultancy and training and produces its own publications. *Fullemploy* carries out its programmes in partnership with voluntary and community-based organisations, with central and local government and with the private sector.

The organisation was founded in 1973 by a group of businessmen from the City of London who wished to bring the goodwill and resources of the private sector to bear upon the problem of the inner cities. In particular, they were concerned with the high levels of unemployment and alienation among young people of minority ethnic origin. Since 1973, *Fullemploy* has developed both geographically and in its methods of training. There are now eighteen separate centres throughout the country, with several associated companies. Instruction in commercial skills and small business start-up has, in the past, formed the main focus of *Fullemploy's* training. In the future the organisation aims to increase the number of skills areas it offers course members and the production of the retail pack is an important step in this development process. All courses are oriented towards the world of work and approximately 70% of all students gain employment or start their own business on completion of their time with *Fullemploy*.

Fullemploy's training is all about learning from experience. It is about giving people situations to work through and learn from. It is not about giving them large amounts of text to digest. It is not about saying that there is a strictly defined right and wrong way of going about something. It gives them the opportunity to find out for themselves, to recognise that they have relevant experience and skills which they can use in the world of work.

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Structure of the Pack

INTRODUCTION TO RETAIL 2000

This pack provides a comprehensive teaching resource for tutors and trainers in retailing. It comprises broad-based activities for the retail industry which is applicable to the increasing range and variety of outlets in existence.

The development of *Retail 2000* has been funded by The London City Action, as part of a programme to develop training schemes in the inner city.

lack of concrete resources when each secondment ends. To counteract this The London City Action team has funded the development of this pack, as part of a programme to develop training schemes in the inner city.

Developments in retailing

Retailing is a rapidly growing part of the service industries which make up a large proportion of the British economy. Urban areas in particular are continually expanding and changing their range of retail outlets, and there is a corresponding growth in the need for a trained and effective workforce.

Use of the pack

This pack is intended to be used to promote a positive image of retail work and to counteract its often low status. It is shown to be what it should be: employment which can develop into a satisfying career, involving the attainment of a great deal of knowledge and understanding, a large number of practical skills and proficiencies and the development of a wide range of social and inter-personal communication skills.

The approach of the pack is modular. It divides into three basic units which may be used in a continuous form or as independent units. It relies on the instructor using the pack to suit the learning needs of the client group. The pack is not a detailed and finely structured course to be followed from beginning to end. It provides a broad base for teaching for any type of retail outlet by developing the basic knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes which employers would like employees to possess. An important factor in its development was consultation with employers, some of whom have kindly provided their existing training material for inclusion in the pack.

There are three main elements for trainers. **Objectives** which should be attained within each module, suggested **basic procedures** for achieving these and a comprehensive **resource list** for development of further tasks depending on the needs of the individual course members. It is hoped that the pack will give the instructors a reference point through which they may become aware of the vast number of currently available resources. This will be of particular use to instructors who are non-specialists. It will also be suitable for providing accreditation requirements as set out by the Retail Consortium and approved by the National Council for Vocational Qualification in terms of its aims, objectives and content. Details of the accreditation requirements are contained in Appendix 1.

The training pack is integrated in that it promotes equality of opportunity, although not all the currently available materials and resources mentioned in the pack necessarily take this

approach. It also includes relevant literacy, numeracy and personal development exercises. *Fullemmploy* has its own literacy and numeracy open learning materials which are available for purchase [see Appendix 7].

It was, however, felt vital to include some exercises within *Retail 2000* so that the course member could see the relevance of these skills in the retail context. Similarly, the development of a sense of confidence in course members was fundamental to the aim of the pack.

In this way *Retail 2000* is not solely teaching skills, it is enabling participants to develop the personal qualities to both gain and retain employment.

A CAREER IN RETAILING

Retailing is a dynamic industry which is rapidly changing. In 1981 in the United Kingdom retailing accounted for 8.9% of all jobs. In March 1987 this had increased to around 10% with figures of 2.05 million people working in the industry - not including part-time posts. (Figures available from the British Retail Association). In the United Kingdom retailing has often been perceived as a low status job, but this is not reflected in other European countries where retail staff are given training which demonstrates commitment to retailing as a career. In West Germany 76% of people in the retail trade serve apprenticeship as compared to 5% in the United Kingdom. (*National Institute of Economic and Social Research 1988*).

In Britain there is a general misconception that retailing comprises working at the check-out of a large store and filling shelves. It is essential that this pack is used to emphasise the career structure available within retailing and also to encourage course members to understand and take advantage of this structure and aim for promotion within the industry. It is important to reinforce that retailing is not a servile industry but a service industry and does not need to be just a job but a developing career, in which the participants should have pride and enthusiasm! It is the aim of this pack to encourage in the course members a positive viewpoint of themselves as future contributors to the retail industry.

THE CAREER LADDER

Progression up the ladder of success can be a result of hard work and gathering experience. You do not have to have lots of qualifications.

CASE STUDY

Yolande Beckles is a Sainsbury's employee who was seconded to Fullemploy Kensington to train staff for a new Sainsbury's store. This is the background to her career development.

I joined J. Sainsbury's Holloway branch in May 1980, whilst studying for 'A' levels at school, and in need of a part-time job to give me extra pocket money. I was employed as a Saturday student on the checkouts, and was promoted, after three months, to supervisor.

After I had taken my 'A' Levels, I decided to take up a career in banking. Although short-listed for many positions, I was never the successful candidate - normally a man. I was therefore pleased to be offered the position as grocery clerk which was offered to me by Sainsburys.

I found it difficult to come to a quick decision: at school it was considered unsatisfactory to apply for a job in a supermarket if you had above average qualifications. I decided to go home and discuss it with my parents who thought it would be a good idea to accept the job and continue looking for other work.

I found working in a supermarket totally different to the preconceived ideas one had about it at school. It was physically hardwork - getting the products onto the shelves, meeting customer demands, learning how to operate the computer, completing all the manager's paperwork on time, daily.

School certainly does not prepare you for the pressures of the commercial world but if you make up your mind to work hard, success can be achieved in a short space of time, especially at Sainsburys. Alternatively, there is always the option to remain exactly as you are.

Sainsburys training package for new staff is aimed at making sure that:

- 1 they have all the skills necessary to meet the needs of the business;
- 2 the training and development of each individual is completed;
- 3 promotion is encouraged where possible.

After three months of being a grocery clerk, I was promoted to store instructor, which meant training all new and existing staff to Sainsbury's requirements. At the Holloway branch I was regarded as a valuable part of the team. After a year I felt I had gained as much as I could. I discussed this with my branch manager, which resulted in his nominating me for the Management Training Scheme.

Once nominated, I had to undergo a series of tests and an internal assessment. I was selected and started at Golders Green branch as a trainee manager.

The scheme is usually 18 months but I was fortunate in only having to complete a period of 9 months, partly because I knew many of the basics from my previous experience in the company. At the end of the scheme I met a second panel, headed by two branch managers, plus the personnel manager in charge of trainee managers and was graduated successfully from the scheme.

I was transferred to West Ealing branch, becoming the first black, female member of the

management team. As an assistant manager, my role became more demanding, because staff expected me to have the answers to all questions. Gaining the respect of people of all ages and levels of experience is very important in Sainsburys. Being responsible for training staff enabled good working relationships to be established.

This policy was carried forward into my role as departmental manager, of the provisions department. I was in this post for one and a half years. The provisions department is one of the largest perishable food departments in the store. The areas that this department covers are:

- dairy
- cheese
- frozen foods
- pies and sausages
- ready meals
- cooked meats
- bacon
- delicatessen counter.

I was responsible for all ordering, stock control, deliveries, date coding, rotation, display replenishment, hygiene and preparation.

There were 35 members of staff, ranging from students to trainee managers. One of my main duties was the training and development of these people and it was very high on my list of priorities.

I was then seconded to *Fullemploy*, running retail training courses to correspond with the opening of a new Sainsbury's store in Ladbroke Grove, Kensington. My new position is an extension of what I enjoyed most in the store training. I am currently a management development and training officer.

I have now worked for Sainsburys for 8 years. There were moments when I questioned why I stayed, but I think that during my time with the company I have followed a very progressive course, as can be seen. This is one of the big advantages in the retail business - if you have what it takes, you can make it!!

Yolande Beckles

Management Development and Training Officer

J. Sainsbury plc.

HOW TO USE THE PACK

This pack is aimed at the tutor or trainer rather than the course member, and provides a structure for retail training. Developed within a training organisation, it is immediately relevant to courses in schools and further education colleges. As such, it is necessary that trainers should use the pack in a way which suits themselves and the needs of their course members. It is not intended that the pack should be followed rigidly from beginning to end, although it can provide a comprehensive structure from which to work, particularly for trainers who have had little or no retail experience. The modules are numbered for reference purposes, but this is not intended to suggest an order of priority. Trainers are encouraged to use the pack in any order that they wish and to omit modules where necessary. There are also sections at the end of each module to which they can add additional information of their own.

Throughout, course members should be encouraged to discover ways of doing things at their work placement which they can feed back to the group in an informal way. For instance, rights and obligations at work, what makes a conscientious employee in terms of time-keeping, personal appearance and manner. They should be enabled to discover, record and communicate their findings in a way which they, themselves, can initiate and develop. e.g. talking, observation, work experience diary. In this way the course member takes an active responsibility for their own learning and is not just a passive recipient of information.

There are three main units, each of which is divided into a number of modules. Cross references between modules may provide additional supplementary materials. This is particularly the case for Unit 3, much of which depends on Unit 2 as a resource.

Each module provides a section of *key ideas*, *suggested procedures*, *resources* and *skills*.

The *key ideas* are statements outlining the main points to be covered in that module. Trainers should use these as their point of reference, referring back to them after the module has been taught to check that they have been covered.

The section of *suggested procedures* provides just that - ideas for ways in which the key ideas can be taught and learned. They are not the only ways in which these key ideas may be tackled, but provide a back-up for trainers. Again, trainers may wish to deal with the topics in their own way and using their own methods. For easy and speedy reference, this section contains the symbols for the kinds of teaching and learning strategies used.

The *resource section* lists the relevant resource sheets. Appendix 6 lists additional resources such as textbooks, videos and training packs which it is strongly recommended trainers obtain. The matrix in Appendix 7 shows which resources are relevant to which modules. However, trainers may wish to use resources of their own. The *skills section* outlines the main skill that each module encourages.

The resource sheets within each module are of two types: those which provide **information** for the trainer to be used as reference or as a basis for discussion or adaptation to the individual course member's needs, and those which are **task sheets** enabling the course members to carry out the tasks either alone or in groups. Trainers may wish to give the information sheets to course members as handouts - this again is down to personal preference, but if this is the case, the language and terminology should first be checked for level

of appropriateness for the course members. As it is in a loose-leaf format, trainers can insert their own information sheets and task sheets into the relevant section.

Trainers will use the pack in different ways depending on their client group size and composition, and the length of time available for the course. Shorter courses of only a few days will need to prioritise areas for consideration, but essential modules are:

Unit 1 - Modules 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5

Unit 2 - Modules 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6

Unit 3 - Modules 3.1, 3.6

It cannot be emphasised enough that use of this pack must be geared to the needs of the course members attending each training course. With experience trainers will be able to identify their own preferred training strategies built around personal preference and initiative.