

A Training Calendar to Call Your Own

For Pete Walsh, owner of Walsh's Ace Hardware in Wisconsin, developing and redeveloping an effective, structured training program is an ongoing task. The company's current booklet system allows trainees to learn skills and achieve milestones at their own pace, while also staying within the operation's guidelines.

To help your new associates stick to a schedule during their first 30 days, consult this calendar to build your own booklet of training milestones. Determine what first steps are most important to your business, and consider making this calendar the first page of your booklet for reference. Download it at TheRedT.com/training-calendar.

Week 1

- Overviewing store policies and procedures with a human resources manager, training manager or independently.
- Meeting all team members, potentially as part of a store meeting or team-building activity.
- Touring the store with a training manager and learning the basics of each department from the training or department manager.
- Being introduced to industry-specific concepts, such as what a bin tag is and the different types of merchandisers (dump bins, endcaps, etc.).

Week 2

- Shadowing on point-of-sale system functions and reviewing cash handling best practices.
- Correctly putting away returned, unwanted or misplaced merchandise.
- Shadowing an employee performing a weekly inventory check.
- Assisting in cleaning or maintenance tasks, such as fronting and facing shelves or putting away a delivery.

Week 3

- Running the register with a training manager nearby.
- Answering the phone or greeting customers and sending them to the appropriate person or department.
- Shadowing and practicing department-specific tasks, such as cutting keys or mixing paint.
- Taking initiative to help other team members with stocking or cleaning tasks.

Week 4

- Learning more advanced POS tasks, such as processing a return or running a sales report, as appropriate for their role.
- Helping a customer from start to finish: Finding the appropriate product, asking if they need additional supplies and following through with the sale.
- Continuing to develop industry-specific knowledge by researching products and projects.
- Checking in with the training manager on any outstanding questions or challenges.