

STRATEGIC FIT BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL REQUIREMENTS & INDUCTION TRAINING AND INNOVATIVE PARTICIPATIVE TRAINING

After conducting a TNA Survey, the Induction Training for IRS officer trainees at NADT was modified from the 63rd batch onwards, to align it with the changing role of IRS officers and through developing participative training methodologies

The Department, in recent times, has aspired to become a facilitator of voluntary compliance in addition to being an enforcement agency. Accordingly, efforts have been undertaken to shift the Induction Training process of the 63rd Batch of the Indian Revenue Service (IRS) onwards from just imparting knowledge and skills in the areas of tax laws to inculcating attitudes and skills required for quality taxpayer services and enhancing understanding of compliance behaviour.

2. This shift was made on the basis of the recommendation of a Committee constituted by the DGIT, NADT, which decided to carry out a scientific study by way of Training Needs Analysis, keeping in view the changing roles of the IRS Officers. A detailed questionnaire containing two parts was prepared. In the first part, statistical response of the participants was sought through carefully designed questions, while the second part was more of the nature of invitation of suggestions for improvements in 'free-format'. Statistical analysis was done for the 260 responses received from three Groups viz. (a) Present and Past Trainers at NADT and RTIs (39 responses), (b) Officer Trainees (OTs) of the last five batches trained at NADT (164 responses) and (c) Other IRS Officers (43 responses).

3. The Committee analysed the responses, had extensive discussions with the present Faculty Members at NADT and after considering the Committee members' own experience and deliberations, made a number of recommendations for improvement in the training process at NADT. The Report of the Committee was approved by the CBDT in its meeting held on 29th December, 2009 and consequently, the revised Rules for Departmental Examinations were notified on 19th February, 2010.

4. The thrust of the reviewed training process was to identify and state, in clear terms, as to what the Academy sought to achieve from the training process. After a lot of deliberations, the training objectives have been identified, which among other things, includes providing a platform for self-learning and continuous acquisition of skills by the OTs.
5. The syllabus of the Induction Training was modified by including topics such as general overview of economy and finance, basic quantitative and statistical methods, basic concepts of laws and principles of taxation, which are now being covered before embarking on a journey to understand and assimilate tax laws. The level of the paper on 'Book Keeping' (now known as 'Advanced Accounting and Finance') has been enhanced to match the job requirement of the AO as an investigator and not as an Accountant. It is necessary to align with the changing requirements such as switching over from manual mode of accounting to computerized accounting and also to make the input on accountancy more oriented to actual practices. Two new papers on 'Information Technology and Operations' and 'Management and Administration in the Tax Department' have been introduced to equip the OTs with skills necessary for becoming effective tax administrators.
6. The other changes include increasing the period of On-the-Job Training, conducting it in two parts and under supervision and guidance of the RTIs, making 'Industrial Attachments' more meaningful and increasing attachments with other Institutes during the Induction Training.
7. Efforts have been made to modify the curriculum so as to reduce the number of classroom sessions and increase the number of sessions on practical inputs by adopting self-learning devices through E-learning mechanism. This is done increasingly through additional project work and continuous assessment. The classroom sessions are now utilized more for problem solving and doubt resolution rather than knowledge based training. Thus, the training methodology is increasingly being shifted from the age old lecture method to participative and experiential learning methods to create a learning environment in which the active participation and involvement of the trainees is maximized.
8. In the revamped process of 'Induction Training', the weightage of 'Internal Assessment' has been increased from 33.33% to 50%. In the detailed

guidelines issued for awarding marks, it has been ensured that the OTs give equal importance to developing leadership skills and creativity in addition to maintaining consistently high levels of discipline, attendance and punctuality during classroom sessions and morning activities.

9. Further, since a large number of trainees had prior work experience in many functional areas like Information Technology, Human Resource Management etc., a systemic plan has been drawn up to identify internal talents and empower them to provide solutions to some of the issues faced at the Academy. Initiatives taken in this regard include development of online training module for Tax Deduction at Source, development of an automated assessment and evaluation system called “E-track system” which was integrated in the NADT website, and creation of engaging training materials.

10. Through the above unique participative training method, young talents are nurtured and cutting edge projects are given to them. Execution of such projects would enable a trainee to understand the complex thought process among the top brass, their vision for the organization and give an exposure on the bigger role of the Department in the entire civil services.

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