



WP2 - Best practices and Training Needs Assessment

Template for Best Practice Documentation (Case Study): SMEs in Apprenticeships with focus on role of intermediary organisations

Title	<p>What is the name that best describes the good practice?</p> <p>Pharmaceutical Company Apprenticeship – Best Apprenticeship Practice</p>
Publication date	<p>When (month and year) was the good practice documented/published?</p> <p>November 2016</p>
Source of Information	<p>Who (What) is your source of information?</p> <p>Interview with Human Resource Department</p>
Location (Region / Country)	<p>What is the geographical range where the good practice has been used?</p> <p>Limassol, Cyprus</p>
Context (appr. 500 words)	<p>What is the context (initial situation) and challenge being addressed? Provide a short description.</p> <p>The company is a leading pharmaceutical company based in Limassol, Cyprus dedicated to the development, production and sale of high quality generic pharmaceutical products.</p> <p>The company's main goal is the continuous development and increase of the number of the products that are made available to the market. This was the main challenge that had to be addressed with the hiring and training of a new person in the Research and Development department.</p> <p>The company identified the need for an apprenticeship position with the title of R&D Scientist, and created a job specification which invited chemical engineers or industrial pharmacists to apply.</p> <p>The apprentice's and now employee's main function in the company is to eventually replace the present Industrial Pharmacist as a team leader. A main issue was that the company preferred to find a local industrial pharmacist to replace the foreign team leader after the second one retires from action. So, the search focused on local industrial pharmacists who at this point it must be mentioned that are not easy to find, because most of the pharmacists in Cyprus are Commercial Pharmacists.</p>
Methodological Approach (appr. 500 words)	<p>What methodology has been used in order to address the initial issue and lead to a successful outcome and finally to the good practice? What was the process? Who are the beneficiaries or the target group of the good practice? Who are the users of the good practice?</p>

The methodology used to address the initial situation, was a combination of the company's standard operating procedures and the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) Standard that the company bases its operations.

A brief analysis of the process/methodology can be found below:

1. The company set new goals on its whole and then focused on the department that will be directly affected by the new strategy which was the Research and Development Department.
2. The company identified the need for a new person and performed a Job Analysis to help decide what would be the position of the new person on the organization chart.
3. The company created a Job Specification for the main specifications that the new employee should comply with, which in this case the candidate should hold a Chemical Engineer or Industrial Pharmacist degree.
4. The company created the Job Description document with the main duties and responsibilities of the new trainee/apprentice.
5. A company strategy was followed for the identification of possible candidates which follows the below structure:
 - a) The company first performs a search in the existing CV Database which are sent to it all the years before. If the pool of candidates is sufficient, then there is no need to provide more resources in order to search and identify new candidates for the position.
 - b) If the CV Database proved not to be sufficient, then the company invests resources to find potential candidates through job advertisement etc.
6. After the pool of candidates was created and interviews were performed by the company, the new trainee/apprentice was hired.
7. The training started with the first day dedicated to the orientation of the new apprentice during which the apprentice got informed about the Organisation, Contract, Job Description and Company policies.
8. After the orientation, the apprentice went through an induction period during which he learned about the following:
 - a) History, Status, Sector and Departments of the organization by the Human Resources Department.
 - b) Health, Safety and Environmental Issues by the Quality Assurance Department – Health and Safety Officer.
 - c) Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) Standard, Dress code, Health Protection and Contamination Dangers by the Quality Assurance Department.
 - d) At the end, the apprentice took a test according to company's procedures in order to show the level of understanding and what has been learned during the induction training.
9. Following the induction, a training period started for the apprentice with a 6-month probation period. The apprentice participated in several on-the-job and off-the-job training following a training plan supervised by the department manager, the team leader and the team members and included:
 - a) On-the-job training on company and team R&D activities.
 - b) Attendance in Seminars and Webinars.
 - c) Training under a more advanced company than the mentoring company abroad.

	<p>The beneficiaries of the good practice are the New Apprentice/ Employee, the R&D Department in which the new employee is included and the company as a whole.</p> <p>The user of this Good Practice is the company.</p>
<p>Impact and key success factors (appr. 500 words)</p>	<p>What are the lessons learned and the key success factors identified? What has been the impact compared to the initial situation / challenge addressed?</p> <p>The success factors of the good Practice that are identified in combination with the lessons learned are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The methodology followed by the company from the beginning which is proven as very effective and included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Set of new goals and identification of need of new person ○ Job Analysis ○ Development of Job Specification and Job Description ○ The company’s strategy of identifying, interviewing and hiring new Candidates ○ Orientation and induction training following Standard Operation Procedures ○ Job training following a training plan • The standards followed by the company (GMP Training standard) that provide a successful way of implementing training strategies to new employees and include full documentation and certification of all steps of the training. The lesson learned here is the prove of the effectiveness of the Standard and the reinforcement of the company procedures that have to do with training and apprenticeships by it. GMP Training is a leading Training and Quality Assessment Standard. • Another success factor is the extensive and high level of experience of the personnel that provided training and mentoring to the apprentice. The professionalism level is very high and the trainers viewed the apprentice as a future team member and team leader providing lessons, training, experience and mentoring throughout the training period. • Another success factor is the implication and the following of practices developed by the HR Department which include documentation and recording tools as well as training media and tools. Another procedure developed by the Department was the testing of the new apprentices/employees in order to identify strengths and weaknesses not only on the person but on the training program as well. <p>Overall, the challenges were addressed successfully and the apprentice, now an employee in the company, increased the quality of productivity in the R&D Department by leading his own team of researchers and the results of the team’s action was the increase of the number of products made available by the company.</p>

<p>Stakeholders and Partners (appr. 500 words)</p>	<p>Who are the institutions, partners, intermediary organisations involved in the good practice, and what is the nature of their involvement? Explain the different roles and benefits from the good practice!</p> <p>The company was the main organization involved providing the apprenticeship position and most of the training and assessment were performed in-house.</p> <p>The company provided and implemented all the methodology and procedures described above in order to prepare the apprentice for the job position he would fill. Especially the Human Resources Department identified early on, developed and implemented operations that would accelerate coaching and assessment procedures.</p> <p>Training companies and institutes were involved. These organisations provided the company and apprentice the opportunity to learn and train by attending in several seminars and webinars revolving around the position of the Researcher, Industrial Pharmacist and the role of the Team Leader.</p> <p>Another category of organisations that were involved are the external consulting companies that provided training with the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminars and Presentations during the induction period of the apprentice and especially on Health, Safety, Environmental and Contamination issues. • Job training and coaching by external consultants. <p>The last but not least of the organisations involved was the company abroad that trained for a period of time the apprentice as an employee in research activities. This company provided to the apprentice professional training that the mentoring company didn't have the capacity to offer in terms of scientific expertise and advanced research activities. This brought new knowledge to the apprentice and the mentoring company in general and opened new possibilities in the R&D Department.</p>
<p>Conditions (appr. 500 words)</p>	<p>What are the conditions (institutional, economic) that need to be in place for the good practice to be successfully replicated? Please mention funding and subsidies that were provided!</p> <p>The conditions that need to be in place for the good practice to be successfully replicated are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel to analyse the present situation of the company and its needs in different sectors and departments' future activities. • Analysis of the near future activities that the apprentice will be involved in and the department that will be part of. • Situation and Job Analysis • A job description for the apprentice appointing mentor/s and a supervisor. • Methodology/Strategy for recruitment has to be in place.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make budget available for a new apprentice/employee. • Create Time for training a new apprentice/employee. • A training plan describing all of the aspects of the training of the apprentice, on and off-the-job. The training plan must provide the opportunity to document and record all of the future training. • Dedicated personnel that will train mentor and supervise the new person of the organisation. • Standard Operating Procedures and Training Standard in order to guarantee the overall quality of the apprenticeship program, assess the apprentice’s development and document/record all progress. According to the implemented Standards and Procedures that the company follows, periodic audits are performed to ensure the quality in all of company’s activities including training. <p>No subsidies or funding were provided. The company invested part of its own resources in order to implement the present best practice.</p>
Materials / Tools	<p>What materials and tools were developed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Procedures Documentation and Recording. • Training Strategy documentation tools (Training Plans etc.). • New training tools and media such as Presentations and Videos. • Training assessment tools like testing procedures.
Replicability and/or up-scaling (appr. 500 words)	<p>What are the possibilities of extending the good practice more widely?</p> <p>The company cannot disclose any detailed information concerning its Standard Operating Procedures because Confidentiality Issues with upper management are in place and due to the fact that all procedures and documents connected to the best practice are intellectual property of the company.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the company is willing to help with providing information for the creation of general guiding manuals of the apprenticeship program that was implemented during this best practice.</p> <p>The manuals can offer guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the steps followed during job analysis, job specification and description development. • On the strategy that is followed for the recruitment of a mentoring organisation. • On the level of professionalism during the implementation of apprenticeship programs. • On the detail the future mentoring organisations will perform the program documentation, recording and assessment.
Conclusion (appr. 500 words)	<p>Conclude specifying/explaining the impact and usefulness of the good practice.</p>

	<p>The good practice itself is a continuously proven model for providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation analysis in a company and identification of department needs. • Recruitment strategy. • Training strategy. • Assessment strategy. • Procedure quality assurance. • Challenges addressing. • Professional mentality and culture building. <p>All of the methodologies, procedures and standards followed by the company during the apprenticeship program and mentioned in this report, played a key role and can be considered as the success factors of this best practice.</p> <p>These factors build good mentality and develop a culture of professionalism in the company and both ensure high quality of operation. That is why the company continuously seeks ways to improve its Standard Operating Procedures and especially the Quality Assurance and Human Resource Departments adjust and update their activities frequently. Due to this mentality, every practice is a best practice.</p> <p>During this best practice, the most benefitted party was the company because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It improved the Quality Assurance and Human Resource Departments because it updated its Procedures. • It improved the R&D Department by training a new research scientist and future team leader. • It brought new knowledge to the company by training the apprentice abroad. • It addressed its challenges successfully and increased the number of products. • Continued to build positive mentality and high quality professional culture. <p>The apprentice benefitted because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He received high quality training with embedded assessment of his progress. • He learned and brought new skills and knowledge from abroad. • He became part of a company with positive mentality and high quality professional culture.
Other remarks:	