

# Franchising USA

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## VETERANS IN FRANCHISING

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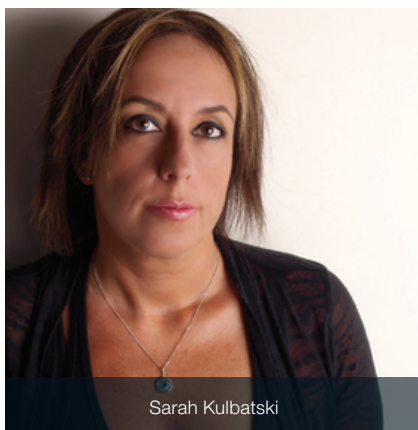
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# RECEIVE GOOD TRAINING

TECHNIQUES FRANCHISORS USE TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE READY TO OPERATE YOUR NEW BUSINESS



Franchisors use the operations manual, along with other tools including, equipment manuals, software manuals and PowerPoint presentations, to train franchisees on the day-to-day operations.

When prospective franchisees begin to separate one franchise opportunity from another, one of the items they need to examine closely, is the training the system will provide them. Running any business is a complex undertaking. Besides having to know how to prepare your products or deliver your services to your customers,

you need to understand how to manage the business, how to hire and fire employees, how to advertise, how to do the books, how to make deposits, and a thousand other small details. As a franchisee you will also have to do everything in compliance with the consistency standards of the franchisor. But, not all franchisors provide the same level of training to their franchisees or prepare their franchisees for success.

On the surface, when it comes to training, many franchisors look alike. On average, they will be providing between one to five weeks of training to you as a franchisee. But, what if those five weeks of training are no more than working in an existing operation? Who trains your management team and your line staff? What happens when new products are launched, or some of your management team quits and you need to replace and train your other personnel? This is when the difference between a great training program and a surface training program becomes critical.

You can tell the difference between great franchisors dedicated to your success and the ones only interested in selling you a franchise by their dedication to training. Great franchisors make certain that before the first customer comes through your door, not only are you prepared, but so are your manager, assistant managers and your entire staff. Equally important to the great

franchisors is that as the system changes and new products and services are added, they make sure you and your team have the new skills required to be a success.

You should always try to meet with your future franchisor at their headquarters and plan to spend considerable time with their training department, prior to committing to the franchise. Some of the questions you should be concerned with (answers to some can be found in the franchisor's disclosure document) are:

- Where does the training take place? How long is the initial training program and what, if any, are the additional costs that you will need to pay in addition to your franchise fee?
- Who does the franchisor require to attend training? Are there criteria established for ensuring that you are prepared to operate the business once training is completed? Simply spending time in the franchisor's training program may not be sufficient. The best person to tell you if you are ready for the challenge of operating the franchised business is the franchisor.
- Can you bring your initial staff to training? If they are not on board with you yet (which is fairly typical), can they attend training classes after they are hired? How much will this additional training cost you?

- What is in the training curriculum? How much of your time will be spent in the franchisor's headquarters in classroom training, and how much time will you be spending in an operating location? What subjects are covered and in what depth? Will you only learn how to make the product or deliver the service, or is the program comprehensive enough to teach you the financial, marketing, and operational aspects of the business? If you are preparing food, will you be trained in safe food handling and preparation, and will your franchisor provide CPR training? How much management training will you receive?
- Who conducts the training? Are they line personnel brought in for the day or week, or have they been trained to be teachers? Remember, the goal of training is not for you to be impressed by the trainers; the goal is for the trainers to provide you with knowledge, and to do this, they must know how to teach. You need to find out the background of the training team and their qualifications.
- How comprehensive is the training material? If you will be expected to train your staff before your business opens, what tools does the franchisor provide you? What training in teaching techniques does the franchisor provide you? Don't forget that the business will change over time and products and services will be added or modified. Is your franchisor prepared to provide you and your team with training as the system changes? How will they do it, and at what cost?
- What happens once the business is ready to open? Franchisors dedicated to training understand there's a difference between classroom training, working in a training facility, and actually operating your own business with your own customers. During the initial days or weeks after your franchise is open, they'll have a training team working with you and your staff, honing your skills, reminding you of the lessons you learned at franchise headquarters. It's



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an invaluable extension of the initial training program as there's nothing more valuable than learning the business in the real world.

### Now Comes Your First Crisis

A crew person quits and you have an operating business, customers coming through the door, and a warm replacement body just won't do it. How is the new replacement staff going to be trained to the standards you need? Most franchise systems expect you to train your new staff. But the good ones, in addition to providing you with training techniques to ensure you have the necessary training skills, also provide you with training tools. Those on the cutting edge of technology have Web-based learning that allows you to sit your new crew member in front of a computer to learn many of the necessary skills to do their jobs. Others provide you with similar training modules on CD-ROM. But learning online or through the use of a CD-ROM can only provide them

with some of the necessary knowledge. Good franchisors also provide you with written training tools for each skill the new staff members will require. These written tools not only provide new staff with the necessary information, but also break the tasks into small steps that can be measured to ensure that your employees are really prepared. When the franchisor provides training to your entire staff, they reduce their costs for providing support services later on because your staff, once trained, has less need to continually ask questions that were covered during the initial training.

### Training Never Ends

Training is ongoing, thorough and measured for you, your management team, and your crew. Great franchisors regularly hold advanced training programs for management, giving them skills that can only be learned once they have real world experience. They provide regional and system-wide training programs when



new products or services are introduced. They expect their field consultants to observe your staff during their periodic visits to your location and help you assess the quality of your employees and, when necessary, help you improve their performance.

Training is the hallmark of great franchise systems. Hopefully, as a franchisee, you selected well and found a system that dedicates its resources to training. But as a franchisee, it's also your responsibility to take advantage of the training provided by the franchisor, look for training programs outside of the system that will benefit you and, most important, make sure your staff is trained, too. The goal isn't only to provide you with information on

how to run your business to the system's standards, but also to provide you with an understanding of the system's philosophy so you'll intuitively know what's right and what's wrong.

Remember, just because one franchisor has a longer training program than another doesn't mean that their training is better. You need to understand what is provided to you in the initial training and what happens after your business is up and running.

**Sarah Kulbatski is director of JT Corporation, a company specializing in franchise consulting and risk management. For more information contact her: via email at [jtfranchising@me.com](mailto:jtfranchising@me.com) or visit [www.jtfranchising.com](http://www.jtfranchising.com).**

### Expect Your Initial Training Program to Cover:

- Standards and procedures contained in the system's operating manuals
- Technical information on products and services you'll provide under the brand
- Food safety and CPR (for food franchisors)
- Leadership and business management, including problem solving
- Training the trainer (techniques for ensuring your staff is trained)
- Managing the customer experience and brand positioning (how the customer should feel when they hear the brand name)
- Marketing, advertising and communications
- Merchandising and pricing methods
- Safety, security, cleaning and maintenance
- Labor management (recruiting, hiring, firing, supervision, and motivation)
- Vendor relations (purchasing, receiving, stocking, and inventory management)
- Financial management and the use of the company's point-of-sale and management information systems

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For more information:

Email: [jtfranchising@me.com](mailto:jtfranchising@me.com)

Web: [www.jtfranchising.com](http://www.jtfranchising.com)