



Perspectives on OJT in France

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OVERVIEW

1. The French context
2. Changing organizational expectations
3. Employees' expectations
4. OJT in France
5. Conclusion

THE FRENCH CONTEXT

Hiring model used to value diplomas, moved to a model that increasingly values competencies

Increasing importance of questions of EDI but no positive discrimination like in Canada or the US

Progression based on seniority → Progression based on merit

THE FRENCH CONTEXT

Newcomers (including white-collar workers) are less likely to be hired on a permanent basis (Cappelli and Keller 2013)

→ Increasing use of temporary contracts (internships, co-op programs or limited-term contracts) to screen new workers

In France, employee tenure averages 7 years versus 4.4 years in Canada (Europe 1 2016; Randstad, 2021)

THE FRENCH CONTEXT

Big divide in terms of:

Population

- Blue-collar workers tend to stay in their companies
- White-collar workers tend to change regularly

Age

- Employees between 24-35 years old stay 3 years on average
- Employees 60 years old or more stay 15 years on average

CHANGING ORGANIZATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Newcomers' tasks, workgroups and projects change frequently
(Meister, 2012)

→ Newcomers are increasingly judged by supervisors on their ability to stand out (vs. ability to fit in)

Increasing focus on newcomers' "metacompetences"

→ ability to create value for the company in the long-term
(DeFilippi and Arthur, 1994)

CHANGING ORGANIZATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Apprentices are judged by their supervisors based on (Dufour et al. 2021):

- their ability to innovate
- their ability to self-promote

EMPLOYEES' EXPECTATIONS

Careers (especially for white-collar workers) are increasingly “boundaryless” (Greenhaus et al. 2008)

Little attachment to the company or to a position

→ Focus on the career

Employees tend to change companies because:

- They no longer have the impression to progress or learn
- They did not develop strong attachment to the organization

→ OJT training is a managerial tool to overcome these obstacles

OJT IN FRANCE

Inexperienced employees (apprenticeship, internship)

→ OJT increasingly used and increasingly structured

Experienced employees

→ OJT rarely used and insufficient amount of time dedicated to it

Supervisors tend to consider that experienced employees have been hired for a position and that they already have the required competencies

OJT IN FRANCE

Big Firms and Multinationals

→ OJT structured and allocated time, supervisors trained to deliver OJT

Small and Medium Firms

→ OJT unstructured with little or no time allocated

OJT IN FRANCE

In France, mentalities are slowly evolving but OJT is perceived too frequently as a waste of time because it means:

- Training people, whereas they could produce
- Training people that likely won't stay

OJT is also sometimes perceived as a lower form of training and classic, classroom-based training is preferred

CONCLUSION

The two main reasons French employees are dissatisfied with their work:

- Inadequate management
- Lack of recognition

OJT is a managerial tool that can help advance the three main reasons why employees stay:

1. An interesting job
2. Collaboration with colleagues
3. Alignment with the organizational mission


OJT can contribute to these three parameters and new generations are much receptive to OJT

ANY QUESTIONS ?



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Lucas Dufour (Phd from ESSEC-IAE d'Aix en Provence and post-doc from MIT-Boston College) is an Assistant Professor at University of Windsor in Canada, Affiliate Professor at University of Toronto and co-founder of Performance Lab.

His main domains of expertise are the socialization of newcomers and creativity/innovation. He has published 14 peer-reviewed articles, 8 book chapters and has co-authored three books. His research has been featured in several French newspapers in AOM insights and on the French radio.

Lucas Dufour is also the co-founder of Performance Lab (<https://performancelab.fr/?lang=en>), a company which provides customized scientific surveys in Human Resources and general management for companies. He has worked with more than 17 companies including Michelin, The French Army, Arcelor Mittal and Bank of the West.

He also has many years of experience in executive education and has designed customized sessions for companies like Air France, EDF and the World Health Organization.