

Using “Division Training Officers” for Successful Implementation of Training Processes and Functions

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At Oak Ridge National Laboratory a network of 57 “Division Training Officers” (DTO) has successfully been used to implement training and qualification processes and functions. DTOs, for example, perform a key role in management of staff qualification requirements in this facility’s heavily regulated work environment. This session will describe the DTO role and responsibilities in five primary areas, training and ongoing assistance to support the role, established communication mechanisms, and assessment results.

Organization Background

The Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL):

- Is the Department of Energy’s (DOE) largest science and energy laboratory.
- Is managed and operated for the DOE by UT-Battelle, LLC, a partnership of the University of Tennessee and Battelle,
- Has a staff of more than 4,400 and annually hosts approximately 3,000 guest researchers who spend two weeks or longer using the facility’s resources.
- Has six major mission roles: neutron science, energy, high-performance computing, systems biology, materials science at the nanoscale level, and national security
- Performs operations and activities in a heavily-regulated environment.

Defining the Division Training Officer Role

Note: See Attachment 1 for “Role, Responsibilities, Accountabilities and Authorities”

- The Division Training Officer (DTO) serves as the division point-of-contact for matters related to training and qualification of staff in five areas:
 - Identifying and managing staff qualification requirements
 - Monitoring status of staff training qualifications
 - Coordinating staff participation in training events
 - Training information management and flow
 - Managing division training records
- DTOs have access to transactions in the ORNL learning management system (SAP) to:
 - Book/cancel training event attendance for persons other than themselves
 - Assign training and qualification requirements to the positions held by persons and remove those requirements
 - Create and “follow-up” training events in the Training Catalog

- Some training initiatives require a significant level of coordinated effort by all ORNL organizations. DTOs serve as points of contact that ORNL Training Management relies upon for this needed coordination in training program implementation and commitment response.

Implementing the DTO Function

A company-level procedure “Division Training Program Management” requires the following actions:

- Each Level 1 and Level 2 Manager (the Division Director) considers the Roles, Responsibilities, Accountabilities and Authorities (R2A2s) for DTOs and designates a person to serve in the role of DTO for the manager's organization.
 - A Level 1 Manager considers DTO support needed for her or his immediate organization only.
 - DTOs for subordinate divisions are designated by the Division Director (Level 2 Manager).
 - A Level 1 Manager may choose to assign DTO responsibilities to a person in this role for a subordinate division.
- The Division Director defines any additional responsibilities that are needed to supplement and/or expand those defined by the R2A2s for DTOs for her or his organization's operations and activities.
- The DTO completes training for the role and executes responsibilities defined by the R2A2s for DTOs and her or his Director.
- 57 staff are currently assigned the DTO role for their organization
 - DTO responsibilities require full-time effort for some
 - For others, DTO effort is ancillary to their primary job.

Supporting the DTO Function with Training

- “DTO Training” is required for anyone assigned the DTO role.
- Training is a 4-hour classroom course delivered in a computer learning lab to provide hands-on instruction related to key learning management system transactions, reports, and other available tools.
- The ORNL Training Manager is the instructor and uses this opportunity to establish a continuing relationship.
- Design of the course began with a workshop involving persons with years of experience as well as persons recently assigned to the role.
 - Duties and tasks were defined by the group with the aid of a facilitator.
 - Analysis data was used to develop objectives for the course as well as define the “R2A2s” for DTOs
 - As a result, there is excellent alignment between expectations for the role and the training course that supports the role.
- Content of the course is organized to align with the five primary duty areas identified by the R2A2 for DTOs.
- A comprehensive booklet provided to participants in the training program later serves as a desk-top reference.

- Additional customized, informal instruction may be scheduled for some DTOs having a need to use higher-level learning management system functions.

Conducting Bimonthly DTO Forums to Maintain Knowledge

- DTO Forums are conducted by the ORNL Training Manager on the 3rd Tuesday of every 2nd month from 1:00-2:30 p.m.
- Meetings inform DTOs of changes in qualification requirements, new courses that are available, additions and enhancements to supporting tools, implementation strategies, assessment results, management issues, etc.
- A topical agenda is announced in advance of the meeting.
- A detailed agenda is prepared as a handout for the meeting.
 - This agenda serves as means of updating those DTOs who cannot attend.
 - Following the meeting, this agenda is e-mailed to DTOs and posted on the “Training” web site.
 - DTOs indicate that these agendas are greatly appreciated and used as reference information.
- Average attendance at meetings is about half of the DTO population—typically DTOs from those organizations having the greatest need for support.

Using the DTO as Point-of-Contact for Training Information

In addition to the bimonthly DTO Forum, ORNL Training Management uses e-mail as the primary means of keeping DTOs up-to-date regarding implementation of the ORNL training program. E-mail messages are routinely sent to a distribution list of current DTOs with the following subject headers:

TRAINING ANNOUNCEMENT

- Used primarily to announce a course schedule or new course offering.
- Intended for general distribution. (DTOs forward these to division staff based upon their assessment of need and interest.)

Division Training Officer Update Message

- Used primarily to provide notice of significant changes in elements of Laboratory training program implementation, such as
 - new qualification requirements
 - course implementation strategies, or
 - changes in procedures and guidelines.
- Primarily intended for DTOs (DTOs do not forward these messages to division staff without editing).
- Gives DTO “detailed” information so that they will be able to guide program implementation and address staff questions.

Providing Continuing Personal Support

- As a result of training, DTOs learn that there are two persons in the ORNL Training Management (OTM) that they may contact for information and assistance with their task:
 - ORNL Training Manager
 - System Administrator / Information Point-of-Contact

Note: Because the learning management system functions of the ORNL SAP System are so intricately associated with training and qualification processes and functions, a system administrator providing user support naturally becomes a source of general training program information.
- Just as division staff recognize their DTO as a source for training information, the DTO recognizes ORNL Training Management as their single point-of-contact for support in this area. DTOs should contact Training Management for:
 - Interpretation of training and qualification procedures and guidance
 - Resolution of problems or issues in training program implementation.
 - Correction of identified errors or inaccuracies in training program information or records.
 - Training needs not addressed by current course availability.
 - Needed assistance with use of training data management system, tools, or resources.
 - Fixes for functional problems identified with the learning management system or electronic training tools.
- Through experience other OTM staff members become regular points-of-contact that DTOs call or email for specific needs
- Responsiveness to DTO needs is viewed as an important measure of OTM's response to their organization as a whole.
- Assessment results and customer satisfaction surveys have shown that this point-of-contact service is highly valued by the training community.

Relying on DTOs for Management of Staff Training Requirements

- More than 220 training requirements related to 155 job functions and assignments and are defined in more than 700 company-level procedures.
- Currently more than 81,000 training requirements are assigned to staff through the learning management system.
- Identification of staff training and qualification requirements is one of the most important functions of the DTO. This process and supporting tools is a primary focus of the DTO Training program and continuing support.
 1. The DTO, supervisor, and/or staff person identify the qualification requirements for the specific staff person based on her/his position.

Note: This step of the process is supported by the ORNL "Institutional Training Requirements Matrix" and a companion "Requirements Development Form."
 2. The supervisor approves the qualification requirements to be assigned to the staff person's position.

3. The DTO verifies the approved requirements and creates an individualized qualification requirements profile for the person in the ORNL SAP System.
 - A flexible, user-friendly web-based interface is provided to execute these actions.
 - Each identified qualification is related to the person's position as a requirement.
 - Each required qualification must be "fulfilled" by the person as a "holder" of the position.Note: Some training qualifications are automatically assigned to positions through the ORNL SAP System.
4. The DTO assists the supervisor with maintenance of qualification requirements at appropriate times:
 - Transfer of staff person from one position to another.
 - Significant change in job responsibilities for a person in an existing position.
 - A change in workplace conditions indicating that a new or increased hazard exists.
 - Assignment of ancillary roles and responsibilities that have associated training requirements
 - Changes to institutional or local training qualification requirements.

Assessing the DTO Function

Results from a 2007 management system "maturity evaluation" showed that:

- The Division Training Officer network is a useful mechanism for system implementation and a strong means of communication.
- Communications between ORNL Training Management and the DTOs and other customers are recognized as a strong means of obtaining information and assistance.
- The capabilities and levels of commitment among DTOs are inconsistent.
 - A few DTOs continue to require a great deal of assistance
 - Some DTOs do not have frequent need to use knowledge/skills and, as a result, are not motivated to maintain competencies

ORNL Training Management has planned responsive actions to:

- Provide expectations for DTO performance to managers for incorporation into FY2009 performance plans.
- Visit selected Division Directors to offer DTO services for those organizations that have a limited need for the role.

Results from a May, 2008 independent management system assessment included these "strengths":

- Division level customers indicate a high degree of satisfaction from the support provided by ORNL Training Management.
- DTOs demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and exhibit a high degree of competency and ownership and have established effective (local) systems for monitoring required training and personnel qualifications.

Results from a May, 2008 customer satisfaction survey revealed these positive program elements:

- Knowledgeable and helpful ORNL Training Management staff
- Helpful and communicative Division Training Officers.

Attachment 1

ORNL Division Training Officer Role, Responsibilities, Accountabilities, and Authorities (R2A2)

ROLE:

The Division Training Officer (DTO) serves as the division point-of-contact for matters related to training and qualification of staff in five areas:

- Identifying and managing staff qualification requirements
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RESPONSIBILITIES:

Specific responsibilities are assigned by the Division Director as appropriate to the needs of the organization. In any case, however, DTOs have the following responsibilities:

- Work with supervisors to identify staff training needs and qualification requirements.
- Manage training and qualification requirements for each staff member's position within the division.
- Monitor status of staff qualifications.
- Coordinate staff participation in training events
- Assist the Division Director in the development of a documented training plan appropriate for organizational needs and requirements (as necessary).
- Represent the Division Director as the primary interface with Laboratory training organization for information flow, program implementation, commitment response, and resolution of training issues and concerns.
- Monitor training information and announcements and provide this information to staff according to their organization's needs.
- Complete training designed for role.
- Be familiar with training records managed by the division organizations and provide support for maintenance and storage of these records.

ACCOUNTABILITIES:

- To Level 2 Manager for execution of defined responsibilities.
- To Level 3 Managers and Immediate Supervisors for assistance in identification and management of qualification requirements.
- To Level 3 Managers, Immediate Supervisors and Staff for training information and assistance with staff participation in training events.

AUTHORITIES:

- Execute SAP system transactions limited to the "Division Training Officer" role on behalf of division staff, supervisors, and managers.
- Access division training records.
- Recommend appropriate actions/responses to training issues or questions based on accumulated knowledge and experience.