Overview of Franchisor Provided Training

Training is an essential part of franchisee support provided by every franchisor. In order for a franchisee to succeed, they must learn the business of the franchise. Franchisors teach franchisees how to operate their units according to the detailed operations manual; furthermore, many franchisors train their franchisees in general business practices.

Training programs often begin with the initial commitment from the franchisee. The franchisee must successfully complete hours of training before opening a unit. In many business models, store managers must also attend. Finally, most franchisors provide some level of touch-up or on request training support post opening.

The age, size, and business model of the franchise affects the formality of the training in many cases. While a smaller, younger franchise may simply have a support person work on site for the first two months of operations of a unit, larger brands may set up "universities" that their franchisees need to graduate from in order to open up.

For each franchise, the training programs are a different compound of specific subjects, modes and duration.

Subject

While some aspects of training apply across all industries, such as training for operations and general business practices, other parts of the franchisor's training package are industry and in some cases even brand specific.

For example, within the Pet-Related industry, a brand that provides services for dog owners will include dog handling and similar subjects in the training program. Franchisees that prepare themselves for the operations of a unit in the Pizza sector may find themselves spending hours learning about cheese and pepperoni, whereas another new franchisee, who is getting ready to run a pretzel shop within the Baked Goods industry, will have to master the art of shaping pretzels with dough.

Specialty training accounts for about 10% of the three broad areas of training, while operations and general business practices take up about 45% each.


Percent of Training Hours by Category

- General Business — 46%
- Operations — 44%
- Specialty — 10%
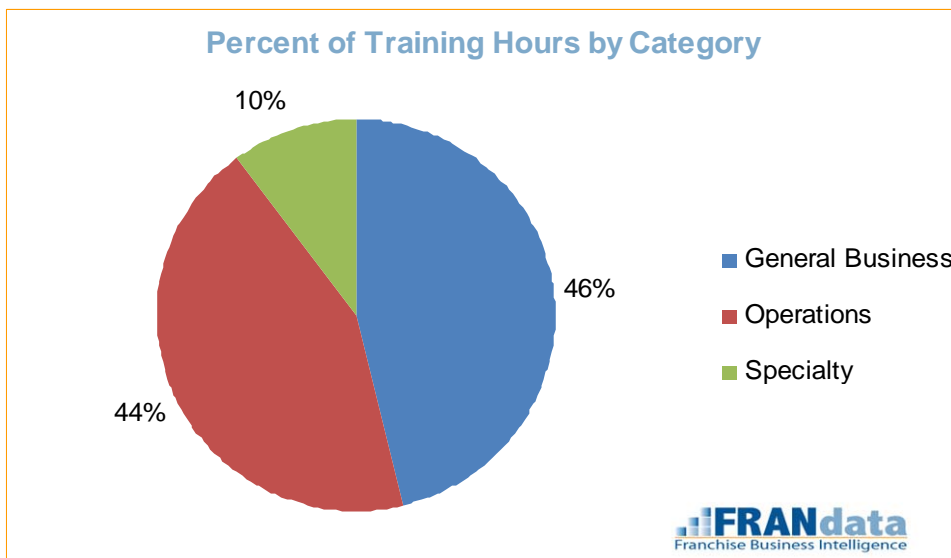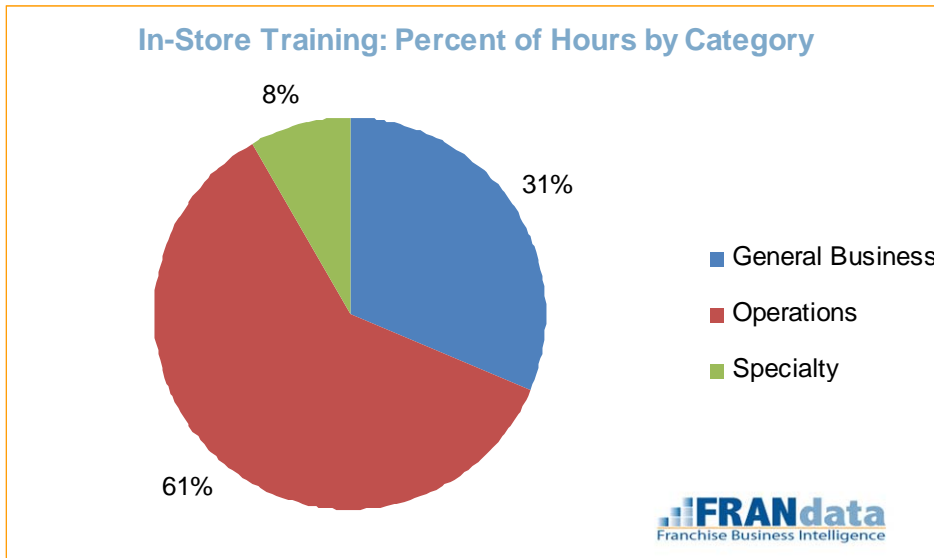
Franchisors teach a wide range of subjects. They can include:

- Operations
- The brand's history
- An industry overview
- Marketing
- Customer Care
- Management
- HR-related challenges:
    - Recruiting
    - Staff training
    - Staff retention
    - Leadership
- IT and POS systems
- Accounting/Book Keeping
- Unit reporting
- Safety
- Hygiene

Mode

Some modules of a training program require new franchisees to train "in-store", while others will be taught within a classroom format. Some subjects lend themselves to more practical training, based in an in-store type setup, while others, such as marketing and accounting, are taught in a classroom environment.

Classroom Training: Percent of Hours by Category

- General Business 53%
- Operations 31%
- Specialty 16%
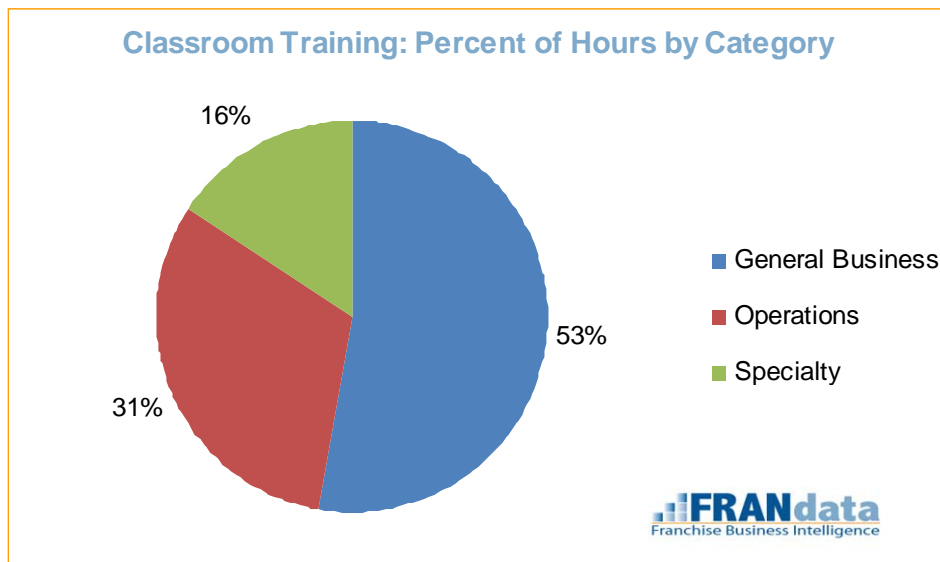
With regards to industry or brand specific subjects, some are classroom-based training hours, e.g. basic chemistry for commercial carpet cleaners, while others will be taught in-store, e.g. battery installations, etc. Yet another procedure may involve online training and will not require a franchisee to spend time and money at a training facility.

In-Store Training: Percent of Hours by Category

8%

31%

61%

- General Business
- Operations
- Specialty

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Training facilities themselves can range in their sophistication. The range is between a retreat style get together "somewhere nice" to franchisor established universities with mock-up stores to provide a realistic environment similar to the one in which franchisees will be operating.

Duration

The average training program duration is 78 hours, consisting of 50 hours of classroom and 28 hours of in-store training per system. Training length varies widely among the franchise systems, depending on the level of sophistication required to operate the business. Certain franchisors' training support consists of a week of intensive training either at a headquarters' facility or training center. Others may encourage their franchisees to find part-time work in order to finance an 18-month training period.

The major part of the training occurs before opening of the business. Some franchisors provide post-opening training support, upon franchisee request or at franchisor's discretion.