

# Large chain of department stores



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

NEXT Ltd. is a large chain of department stores that has three hundred stores all over the country. These include London, Manchester, Lakeside, Romford and Grays. NEXT sells a wide range of clothes for men, women and children, which are both formal and casual. In addition some of the stores have a home department, which caters for everyone's house, and garden needs. As well as people coming in to the store to buy goods, there is a mail order catalogue and also ordering over the Internet at their website [www. NEXT. co. uk](http://www.NEXT.co.uk). Next deals with over 20, 000 a day and this is during the quiet times of the year.

This rises up to 900, 000 a day the closer to Christmas that you get. NEXT have a number of employees starting from the sales consultants, to the floor managers, to the assistant managers, to the shop manager. The hierarchy of the store is set out below: - Outside the store the hierarchy is similar. This is shown below: - The Strategic level of management is the managing director. This person is the one who decides if new stores should be opened over parts of the county. The Tactical level of management is the store manager and the area manager.

This person/people deal with selecting new lines of clothes and accessories on the different floors. The operational level of management is the floor manager. This person sorts out the timetables and makes sure that enough staff are rotated on for the coming weeks to make sure that there are enough staff working. NEXT is committed to equal opportunity in employment. The company does not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion, sex, marital

status or sexual orientation. The company will also not tolerate any form of discrimination.

Any employee that breached the Equal Opportunity policy will be subject to disciplinary action. NEXT still likes to use formal instructor-led training courses this is because training is sometimes done in large or small groups and the employees can then voice their own opinions and views and still share ideas. Furthermore at NEXT they encourage teamwork in certain activities and this gives the employees a good starting base. NEXT also uses videos to help get information across to employees. This is usually for the health and safety videos, as well as security.

Again this can be used for a large group or a single person. NEXT also produces step-through guides to some health risks. This can include carrying crates correctly. This is usually done with single and not as part of a group. Employees do not only need training when they start the company; there is a need to keep updating and refreshing their skills. Some of the training may not be given to the newer employees because the employers would like the employees to practice some of the skills first of all. When employees get promoted then additional training may need to be given to the employees.

1. 2 Overview of the Problem Staff training needs to be updated every few years and all training is completed in all areas within the space of a week.

This is so no training is left out. This is due to the ever-changing health and safety laws and security laws. At present all training information is kept in folders on shelves in an office. These are hand written by the trainer who also writes a progress report on how each employee is doing and including

the training they have had up to date. To save time all training, whether it is re-done every two years or every year is done yearly.

This is because, Mr. Kelly wants the staff to have a greater knowledge of information and be able to do a better job on the shop floors. Only one copy is kept and the record cards are in no particular order. The system works well at the moment but as technology is becoming a major factor in the company. Mr. Laurie Kelly feels that the current system has some major flaws. He has these following concerns: - 1. ) Some long term staff and new employees to the company don't get trained up to the right standard. This is because employees are not set a deadline to complete their new/updated training.

In addition new staff should complete basic training within the first month of joining the company. From my research into the current system I can see that no form of computer is being used at all. All record keeping is on paper in files in an office that is rarely locked. There is only one copy of the training record cards, so no back up. Individual staff training cards can often be lost due to the lack of security as anyone could walk away with the files. Only training staff and high level managers look at the cards. Managers only look at the training record cards to discuss promotion prospects.

Due to them being lost, decisions can not be made correctly. All of the input is done by pen and this is sometimes unclear and hard to read. The output is on the paper of the record training cards that are usually lost. Observation as well as doing a questionnaire I observed a day with the training team and discovered what really happens. First of all I noted that there wasn't a proper timetable of when training would be done. This was done on the chance of

whether there was enough time to take employees off of the floor and management were not happy with that arrangement at all.

This meant that sometimes not enough staff would be on the shop floors. None of the record training cards were kept in a safe place. They were just left on a shelf in an office, which was not even kept locked. During my observation I also saw the training cards and half of the information on them was not legible-this meant incorrect decisions were made. Some of the training cards had hardly any notes on them and I could see no notes about the training done on a few of the employees who had started at least a month ago.