Types of Registered Apprenticeship programs

The length of an apprenticeship program depends on the complexity of the occupation and the type of program (Time Based, Competency Based, or a Hybrid). Apprenticeship programs range from 1 year to 6 years. During the program, the apprentice receives both structured, on-the-job learning (OJL) and related classroom instruction (RTI).

Time-Based Requirements

A time-based occupation requires a minimum of 2,000 hours, which includes an outline of the specific work processes and the approximate time requirement for each individual work process under that occupation.

Competency/Performance Program Requirements

Competency/performance based apprenticeship programs are premised on attainment of demonstrated, observable and measurable competencies in lieu of meeting time based work experience and on-the-job learning. However, these programs still have to comply with the requirement for the allocation of the approximate time to be spent in each major process. Therefore, work experience process schedules and related instruction outlines must specify approximate time of completion or attainment of each competency, which can be applied toward the 2,000-hour requirement (competencies demonstrated not withstanding and assuming no credit for previous experience). In competency/performance based programs apprentices may accelerate the rate of competency achievement or take additional time beyond the approximate time of completion or attainment due the open entry and exit design. Competency is defined as, “An observable, measurable pattern of skills, knowledge, abilities, behaviors and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform work roles or occupational functions successfully.”

Competency/performance based training programs have the following characteristics:

- Competencies should be identified and defined through a job/task analysis and directly related to the job/role.
- Organized learning activities should be structured and wherever possible, self-paced with open entry and open exit.
- Measures or tests of competency attainment should be observable, repeatable and agreed to in advance.
- Work experience process schedules and related instruction outlines should include the approximate time/hours or minimum - maximum times/hours for each competency attained in order to document successful completion.

Hybrid Program Requirements

In addition to time-based programs which have a fixed set time for completion (i.e., 2,000, 4,000, 6,000 hours) and competency/performance based programs, a third alternative has evolved which, in effect, is a “hybrid” of the two types of programs previously mentioned. This third type of program is basically a combination of time and performance considerations whereby work processes are developed with a minimum - maximum time/hours for each task or job requirement (i.e., minimum 200 hours maximum 400 hours).