

FRANCHISE EDUCATION



Practical training to build better business people

The franchise sector has come of age. In these days of strong competition between products and services, business skills can mean the difference between success and failure. Growing numbers of franchisors are recognising that formal education, tailored for the franchising sector, is not only useful, but arguably essential to establish a healthy future for a franchise network.

But where will it come from?

The Franchise Council of Australia has taken the lead. Recognising the need for specific, industry-based vocational education and training, the FCA has developed its own Franchise Academy. This is a clear indication of how seriously leadership at the FCA is taking the issue of education for the sector.

Franchising is one of Australia's most dynamic business sectors. Growth in the past 10 years has been astonishing, as more and more Australian entrepreneurs have chosen the franchise route to grow their business ideas. Today, more than 1000 franchisors have developed business systems, each one unique to its brand. There are now more than 69,000 franchisees operating their own small businesses within the brand of their choice.

And the sector attracts all sorts – from young budding hopefuls to mature age workers with money to spend; male, female, young and old. The franchising industry has accommodated people from all walks of life, with a range of business skills to match.

While in the past it may have been accepted that system operations manual training was the only necessary education, it is now understood that the more successful

franchisees usually have a greater understanding of broader principles – the principles of business management and of the franchising model.

Filling the gap

The Franchise Academy is a response to the realisation that more needs to be done and more needs to be offered to franchise systems looking to lift their skills and their competitiveness.

To help ensure it brings the best expertise available to address the need, the FCA has collaborated with existing sector experts such as Greg Nathan's Franchise Relationships Institute. The William Angliss Institute provides the necessary Registered Training Organisation status, as well as complementary course content in hospitality, food and beverage, hairdressing and other retail disciplines.

To run the courses, the Franchise Academy has turned to the franchise-specific expertise of Business Essentials, whose team of facilitators offers comprehensive business management training including the Diploma in Franchising and Certificate IV in Small Business, targeted at franchisees.

Cert IV in Small Business supplements what a franchise system already provides in terms of operational support and guidance, with sound, small business management practices that can be learned through competency-based vocational education. If you're a franchisee without bookkeeping or staff management experience, Cert IV would be a valuable course for you to undertake.

Course outlines

The courses with modules run over one

or two days each. The facilitators work with small groups of participants to ensure maximum effectiveness. The course content covers subjects that include establishing a franchise operation, management of an operation, site selection and territory planning. Also covered are people management and skills, budgets and workplace environment creation.

The courses are run on a regular basis from state-of-the-art facilities at the William Angliss Institute in Melbourne and around the country, as the Institute extends its reach to major centres interstate.

But that's not all. Another important educational step for the Franchise Academy comes with the development of a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program, currently being finalised, so that FCA members can access ongoing professional development. This will underpin the Franchise Academy's strong commitment to lifting professional standards and achieving best practice within the sector.

Pathways to growth

So much is changing now in the provision of vocational education and training in franchising. As the Franchise Council makes big strides into education, the government too is lending a hand, offering financial support to business leaders who commit to investing in vocational education and training.

The horizons look good for smarter franchise businesses across the sector. Franchisors and their franchisees will all be winners as they access an expanding range of educational pathways to sound and sustainable business growth.