

# Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority

## Entry Level Trainee Program



**By Rita Ohaya  
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X26976**

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# ***Background***

- June 2008 Metro implemented an Entry Level Training Program (ELTP)
- Offers college graduates an opportunity to gain professional work experience in public transportation
- Participants receive assignments and provide assistance to several transit professionals while gaining experience to build a career in public transit
- Completion of the program does not guarantee a full time position with Metro

## ***Bac***

- ELTs work up to 40 hours per week and are paid \$20 an hour
- The program last year had 15 participants, the department has 100 Level Trainee (ELT)
- From 2011 – 2014, 15 (17%) trainees were promoted to permanent positions and 27 (17%) trainees were promoted to permanent positions.

***Prediction - The s  
increase in turno***

# ***Background***

- ELTs work up to 40 hours a week and they are paid \$20 an hour.
- The program lasts one to four years; at anytime, the department has the option of hiring the Entry Level Trainee (ELT) full time.
- From 2011 – 2014, Metro hired 160 trainees, and 27 (17%) trainees have been promoted to permanent positions. 133 (83%) are still Metro trainees.

***Prediction - The slow growth rate may lead to increase in turnover thus retention challenges in the future.***

# Study

*Rita Ohaya conducted a qualitative research, which investigated the potential reasons for high turnover in the ELTP.*

- Data was collected from ten Trainees
- The interview started with a quick survey that captured participants' demographics, and attitudes towards some general questions
- Followed by a semi-structured discussion
- The interview focused on open-ended questions that capitalized on expanding the participant's initial survey responses.

#### Sample Interview Questions

- Demographics
  - Are you currently in the ELTP Program?
  - What department or unit do you work for?
  - How long have you been on ELTP?
  - What were some of the expectations you had of the program?
- Did the ELTP Program meet all your expectations?
  - If high expectations did the ELTP not meet?
  - What expectations did the ELTP meet?
  - There are no easy questions that regular aspects of my job
  - What are the positives?
  - What are the negatives?
  - What aspects of the job bother you enough to make you consider leaving it?
  - Reasons that will cause you to consider leaving
    - Job security
    - Number of work, tasks or responsibilities



## ***Sample Interview Questions***

- Demographics
- Are you currently in the ELT Program?
- What department or unit do you work for?
- How long have you been an ELT?
- What were some of the expectations you had of the program?
- Did the ELT Program meet all your expectations?
- Which expectations did the ELTP not meet?
- Which expectations did the ELTP meet?
- There are more positive than negative aspects of my job
- What are the positives?
- What are the negatives?
- What aspects of the job bother you enough to make you consider quitting?
- Reasons that will cause you to consider living
- Reasons that will cause you to stay
- Job security
- Nature of work, tasks or responsibilities

# Findings

The findings revealed three potential reasons for turnover:

- Expectations are not being met
- Lack of STRONG job embeddness to Metro
- Working conditions did not show the trainees that they are valued for the work they perform

## Quote

"I am still in the same place I was a year ago and that's not fair because I have been working my butt off to make sure that I put in the maximum effort in order to get all my tasks done. I have also been taking on more projects because I want to show that I am capable and competent. But this hasn't been the case. Rather, I am treated like an intern. And this definitely does not align with my initial thought of an ELT. So trust, if someone from another company came up to me today and asked me to work for them, and they offered me growth and benefits, I will go – in a heartbeat."

## Quote

"Honestly one of the only things I care about is not being able to ride these trains for free anymore because everywhere you go in LA parking is expensive and to drive everywhere is like wasting money. So, if I leave Metro I will be heart broken."

## *Quote*

“I am still in the same place I was a year ago and that’s not fair because I have been working my butt off to make sure that I put in the maximum effort in order to get all my tasks done. I have also been taking on more projects because I want to show that I am capable and competent. But this hasn’t been the case. Rather, I am treated like an intern. And this definitely does not align with my initial thought of an ELT. So trust, if someone from another company came up to me today and asked me to work for them, and they offered me growth, and benefits, I will go – in a heartbeat.”



## *Quote*

“Honestly one of the only things I care about is not being able to ride those trains for free anymore because everywhere you go in LA parking is expensive and to drive everywhere is like wasting money. So, if I leave Metro I will be heart broken because I can't easily get on the train and go wherever I want without worrying about where I will park my car.”

### *Overall*

- Lack of growth
- Unsatisfactory Environment
- External pressures
- Lack of work-life balance
- Lack of recognition for the work performed
- Lack of commitment and motivation

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## ***Why Should Metro Care?***

- Employee turnover can be understood as the rate at which employees are quitting their jobs against the date employees are hired.
- Turnover has many consequences for employees, management and organizations or agencies.
- The individual and agency cost of leaving a job are often very high.” The cost of replacing an employee can range from \$15,000 to \$20,000.

*Why Should Metro Care?*

• *Strategic and Innovative Development*

• *No Return on Investments*

• *Change in the workforce (Retirement)*

For Example - ARA's Current Situation

## ***Why Should Metro Care?***

- ***Strategic and Innovative Development***
- ***No Return on Investments***
- ***Change in the workforce (Retirement)***

*For Example - Rita's Current Situation*

## ***Entry Level Trainee Retention and Engagement Action Plan***

- Go back to the drawing board and strategize the program - Forbes 100 Companies (Name Change - *Emerging Leaders*)
- Encourage intrapreneurship and internal innovation.
- Communicate and Track Progression and development
- Support work/life balance and flexible schedules
  - Recognize and reward ideal performance
  - Perform exit interviews and collect data



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