INTERNATIONAL
PERSONALIZATION
EXPO

February 24–27, 2026 ✦ Horseshoe Las Vegas




# FROM GREEN TO GREAT

## Training New Employees in the Awards & Personalization Industry

MEGAN RAYMOND
Raymond's Trophy & Awards

Session 133

# SESSION OBJECTIVES

1. Build a Repeatable On-boarding System for New Hires
2. Train Technical Skills Without Stopping Production
3. Establish Clear Quality Standards Early
4. Reduce Mistakes, Redos, and Frustration
5. Build Employee Confidence and Accountability

## This system works best for:

Small, mid-size and mid to large shops

Shops training entry-level and cross-trained staff




INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas

# THE REALITY OF HIRING IN OUR INDUSTRY

- Most New Hires Have Zero Engraving Experience
  AND THAT'S OK
- Multiple Machines, Materials, and Processes
- Production Deadlines Don't Pause for Training
- Knowledge often lives "In Someone's Head"
  meaning – they have not been written down, recorded,
  or made into an easily accessible format

- High customization means high margin…
  BUT also high margin for error




INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas

# SHIFTING THE MINDSET

## Training Is a System, Not a Person

### Old Way of Thinking

- ✗ “They’ll figure it out”
- ✗ “Just watch me”
- ✗ “Ask if you have questions”





INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas

# SHIFTING THE MINDSET

## New Thinking

- ✓ Training is Documented
- ✓ Skills are Sequenced
- ✓ Expectations are Visible
- ✓ Progress is Measurable



*Good employees fail when systems are unclear,*
*not because they don't care.*




INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas

# 4-PHASE TRAINING FRAMEWORK
## How We Structure Training

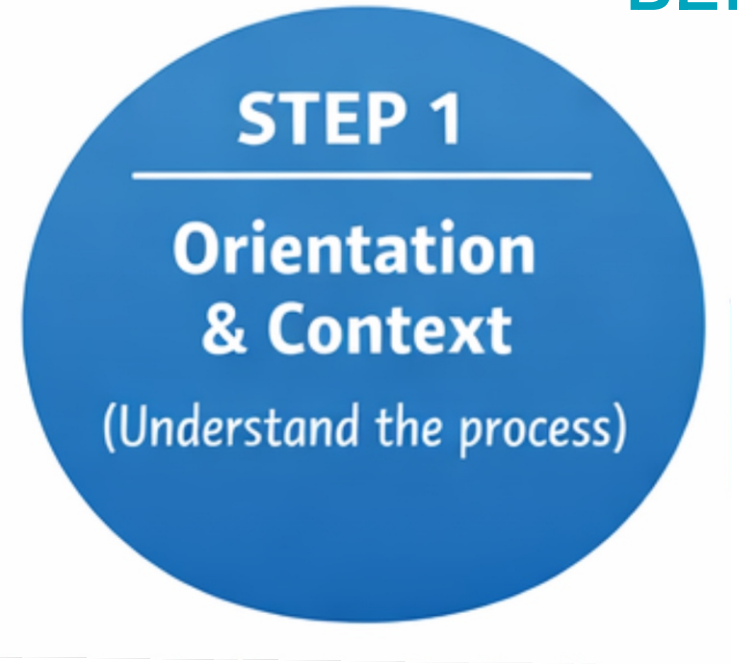



People don't fail in Step 2 or 3
they fail because
**Step 1 was skipped**

INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas

ORIENTATION & CONTEXT

# BEFORE THEY TOUCH A MACHINE




## Focus Areas:

What We Make & Why it Matters

Overview of Products
(plaques, acrylics, medals, trophies, etc.)

Basic Terminology
(vector vs raster, proof, setup, jig, fonts, etc.)

Shop flow:
order → proof → production → QC → delivery

*When people understand the why, mistakes drop dramatically*

INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas

ORIENTATION & CONTEXT

# SETTING QUALITY STANDARDS EARLY

## Define “Good” on Day One

### Show Examples of:

- Acceptable engravings
- Unacceptable engravings
- Common beginner mistakes

### Create standards for:

- Design, Fonts, Customer Service
- Cutter Depth / Burnishing
- Spelling & proof checks
- Cleanliness & Product Cleaning

*Post Physical Examples Near All Machines*



FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS




# LEARN THE BASICS

## Starting Small, Builds Wins

Material handling

Loading/unloading safely

Running pre-approved files

Using fixtures and jigs

Cleaning and finishing basics

INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas

FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

# TEACH TECHNICAL SKILLS EFFECTIVELY

## The Watch → Do → Explain Method

1. Watch (trainer demonstrates)
2. Do (employee repeats)
3. Explain (employee explains back)

## Why This Works:

Reveals gaps immediately

Builds confidence

Prevents silent mistakes



GUIDED PRODUCTION




# TRAIN WITHOUT STOPPING THE SHOP

Assign low-risk jobs

What does a low-risk job looks like in your shop?

Combine similar tasks

Pair with a mentor (not a rescuer)

Limit choices early

*Train the End Result — Not Every Step*



INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas

GUIDED PRODUCTION

# BUILDING CONFIDENCE WITHOUT CUTTING CORNERS

## Confidence Comes from Clarity

Checklists per machine / Area

Setup guides..... “If this happens, do this”

Show Clear Approval on Jobs/Tasks Well Done

## Avoid:

Just fix it

Taking over too quickly



INDEPENDENT CONFIDENCE

# WHEN ARE THEY READY TO FLY SOLO




## Know the Signs

They self-check work

They catch errors before QC

They ask better questions

They follow systems consistently

Now.....Transition Them to Bigger and More Complex Tasks



INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas

# COMMON TRAINING MISTAKES

## What Slows Everyone Down

- Teaching everything at once
- Skipping documentation
  - Keep It Simple & Visual – If it's longer than one page, it won't get used
- Inconsistent standards between trainers
- Fixing mistakes silently
  - Think of a mistake being fixed silently – and what would change if stopped
- Assuming silence = understanding




INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas

# MEASURING PROGRESS

## How Do You Know Training Is Working?

Track.....

Error Rates

Amount of Redos

Are the Same Questions Being Asked

Employee Confidence Level

Better Efficiency Without Quality Loss

Ask Yourself / Employee:
Do you feel unsure about anything?




INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas

# MONDAY MORNING...new employee, Now What?

- ✓ Start with one machine
- ✓ Document one checklist at a time
- ✓ Don’t build the whole system at once
- ✓ Be open to change



# THE BIG PICTURE

- ✓ Training is an investment
- ✓ Clear Systems protect quality and sanity
- ✓ Confidence is built – not assumed
- ✓ Clear expectations = better employees

*The goal isn't faster employees — it's consistent ones.*




INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas

# Please Complete Your Session Evaluation

Scan this QR code with your cell phone camera

This Is Session Number 133

## FROM GREEN TO GREAT

Training New Employees in the Awards & Personalization Industry

Tuesday 1/24 – 2:30pm

Thank You

Megan Raymond
Raymond's Trophy & Awards
megan@raymondstrophy.com




INTERNATIONAL PERSONALIZATION EXPO
February 24–27, 2026 • Horseshoe Las Vegas