



# Operations Apprenticeship Program

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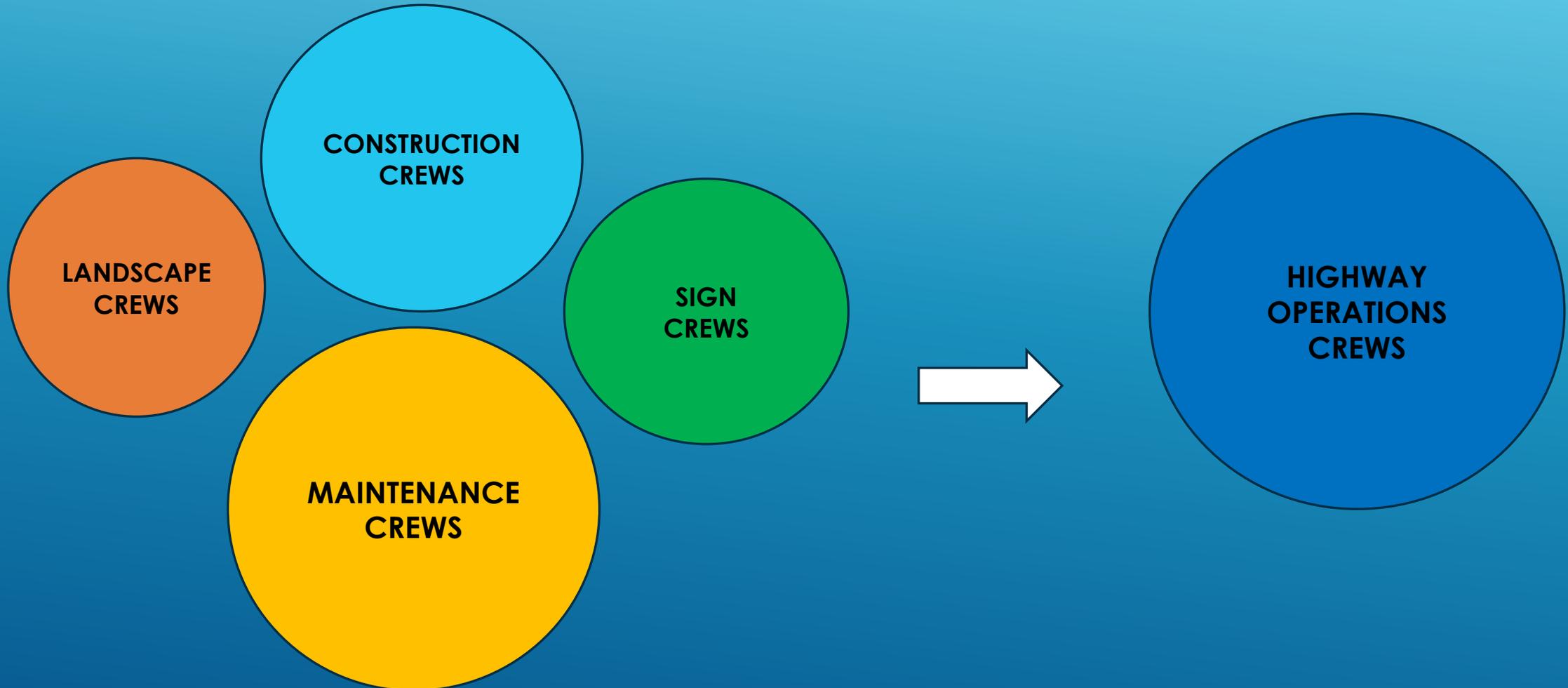
# NJDOT HIGHWAY OPERATIONS “APPRENTICESHIP”



- ▶ **Why did NJDOT develop the apprenticeship?**
  - ▶ **Lack of qualified job applicants**
  - ▶ **Inconsistent skill sets through the crews**
  - ▶ **Insufficient resources to perform meaningful specialized work**
  
- ▶ **What did we do?**

# NJDOT HIGHWAY OPERATIONS “APPRENTICESHIP”

## STEP 1 - CONSOLIDATE



# NJDOT HIGHWAY OPERATIONS “APPRENTICESHIP”

## STEP 2 – DEVELOP A TITLE STRUCTURE AND STAFFING PROFILE

TITLE	QUANTITY
Crew Supervisor	1
Assistant Crew Foreman	1
Highway Operations Technician 3	2
Highway Operations Technician 2	3
Highway Operations Technician 1 / Trainee	3
<b>Total crew size</b>	<b>10</b>

# NJDOT HIGHWAY OPERATIONS “APPRENTICESHIP”

## STEP 3 – TRAINING

### ▶ **Developed a Training Team**

- **Sourced experts from within the organization to serve as trainers**
- **Developed a training curriculum**

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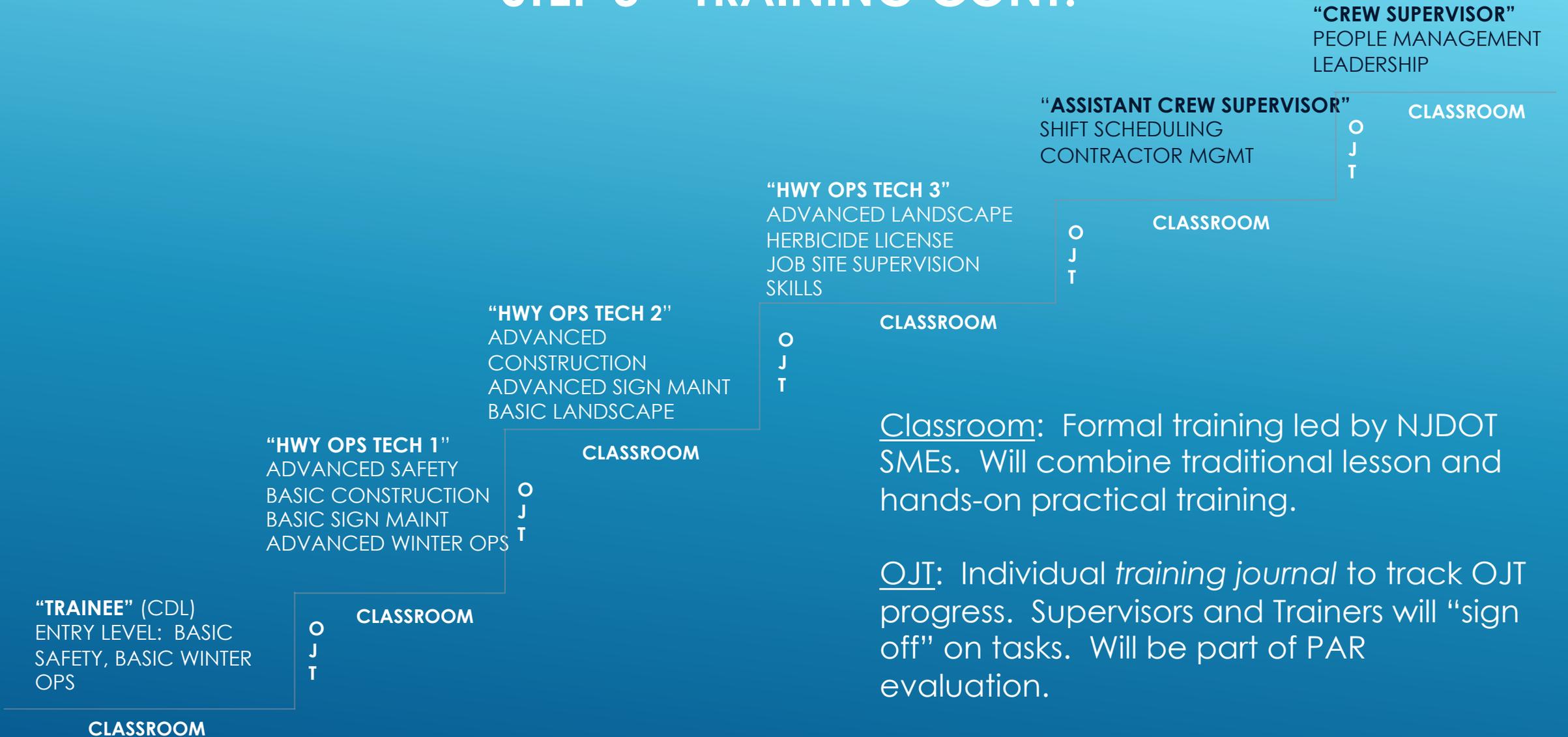
## STEP 3 – TRAINING CONT.

### ▶ “Level Set” the workforce

- Trained all levels of highway maintenance personnel on the basics of the work they would be expected to perform
- Opened advancement training thereafter

# NJDOT HIGHWAY OPERATIONS “APPRENTICESHIP”

## STEP 3 – TRAINING CONT.



Classroom: Formal training led by NJDOT SMEs. Will combine traditional lesson and hands-on practical training.

OJT: Individual *training journal* to track OJT progress. Supervisors and Trainers will “sign off” on tasks. Will be part of PAR evaluation.

# NJDOT HIGHWAY OPERATIONS “APPRENTICESHIP”

## STEP 4 – WORKING WITHIN THE CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

- ▶ **NJ’s Civil Service System placed limits on a traditional apprenticeship**
  - ▶ **Developed a notional apprenticeship**
    - **Hired into the Highway Operations Technician Trainee (no Civil Service Exam)**
    - **Advance to Highway Operations Technician 1 after one year (no Civil Service Exam)**

# NJDOT HIGHWAY OPERATIONS “APPRENTICESHIP”

## STEP 4 – WORKING WITHIN THE CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM CONT.

- ▶ **Highway Operations Technician 2 and 3**
  - ▶ **Requires Civil Service Testing**
  - ▶ **Vacancy must exist based on the crew staffing profile**

# **NJDOT HIGHWAY OPERATIONS “APPRENTICESHIP”**

## **STEP 4 – WORKING WITHIN THE CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM CONT.**

- ▶ **Developed a unique practical examination**
  - ▶ **Administered by NJDOT’s Training Team and Human Resources**
    - ▶ **Test in a more comfortable environment**
    - ▶ **Familiar test content**

# NJDOT HIGHWAY OPERATIONS “APPRENTICESHIP”

## WRAP UP

- ▶ **What are some of the valuable takeaways from this experience?**
  - ▶ **1. Develop a “Grow Your Own” strategy**
  - ▶ **2. Think outside the box and use resources wisely**
  - ▶ **3. Remember that change takes time**
  - ▶ **4. Listen to the employees**
  - ▶ **5. Communicate frequently**
  - ▶ **6. Don’t stop**