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Experts have started demystifying GST regime to tax officials from across India

By [Sachin Dave](#) & [Saloni Shukla](#), ET Bureau | Updated: Nov 05, 2016, 01:41 AM IST[Post a Comment](#)

MUMBAI: After finalising the goods and services tax (GST) rates with the consensus of all the states, the central government has taken on another equally challenging task: to train nearly two million officers to handle the new tax mechanism.

The [Centre](#) has roped in senior tax experts from the industry and from the government mechanism to train about 1.8 million [tax officers](#) across the country in four phases in line with their ranks, and training sessions are being carried out in various cities since September, a senior tax official said.

Besides familiarising tax officials — who until now were only familiar with several indirect taxes — with the new framework, the government has to train them on the nitty-gritty of implementing GST. This, industry insiders said, could pose some problems.



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Crash Course

EXPERTS TO train 1.8 mn tax officials in four phases on GST

TRAINING has already started from September

TAX OFFICERS being taught about new tax framework and nitty-gritty of GST

OFFICIALS will need technology training too

INDUSTRY INSIDERS said it is essential tax officers understand how the web of GST works

INDIA WILL START the GST regime with four slabs – 5%, 12%, 18% & 28%

New rules around GST would mean tax officers have to not only learn the current regulations and taxpayer-friendly approach but also unlearn what they were practicing thus far

SACHIN MENON,
HEAD OF INDIRECT TAX, KPMG

“GST is not just a tax, it’s a new framework where everything would change,” said the tax official quoted earlier. “Officers, especially the junior ones, are used to dealing with current system. They have to be not just trained but also handheld for some time initially.”

Industry insiders said it is essential that tax officers, who would be responsible to not just understand but also implement GST, understand how the complex web of GST works.

“The new rules around GST would mean that tax officers have to not only learn the current regulations and taxpayer-friendly approach but also unlearn what they were practicing thus far to effectively implement GST and the adopt the concept of e-enabled [tax administration](#),” said [Sachin Menon](#), head of indirect tax at KPMG.

“Also in some way GST would reorganise the structure of the tax department so that GST is implemented smoothly and the efforts of state and central GST officers are not duplicated in assessment, audit and adjudication proceedings,” said Menon, a former [IAS officer](#) with the revenue department.

There are fears that there could be a turf war between the Centre and states over collection of GST although the government has already said they are trying to iron out such problems. "More clarity is also required as to which part of the GST would be handled by the tax officials in the state and what would be looked after by the Centre," a tax officer said.

Another area where tax officials will need training is technology. "Not just the data would be collected online, tax officers would have to learn absolutely new concepts," said an industry expert.

India will start the new tax regime with four GST slabs — 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%. While this multi-layered system drew flak from some tax experts, it was mainly done to overcome the fear of inflation. Experts said that wherever GST has been implemented, inflation has jumped for the first two to three years along with boost in growth.

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