



7 Ways

to Breathe New Life into Your
Food Safety and Compliance Training

A Restaurant Quick-Guide by

 HotSchedules®

Foodborne illness outbreaks are no joke. Just ask any brand that endures an outbreak among customers... and the national media feeding frenzy that ensues when that outbreak hits the news. With a string of recent and highly-publicized foodborne illness incidents in the last few years, food safety is top-of-mind for owners and operators across the restaurant industry. But here's the thing:

Food safety should always be top-of-mind.

We're talking about the safety and well-being of your customers. One foodborne illness incident can cost a business thousands of dollars or even result in closure. But those are just the financial costs — the human costs are even worse. Food safety lapses cause illnesses, which incur medical costs, lost work and even long-term disability.

In today's hyper-competitive, social-media-driven marketplace, restaurants have to protect themselves.

According to the CDC, there are roughly 48 million illnesses caused by contaminated food per year. In order to keep your brand from becoming part of that statistic, you need to reduce risk in the workplace.

It's here that employee training is key: your company needs to have a culture of food safety. Staff must understand foodborne illness and cross contamination prevention, proper personal hygiene, and food temperature management. And since this training is mandated by many states, compliance is also tracked by state regulators.

Unfortunately, this mandated food safety training isn't always the most exciting material. In fact, it's often pretty boring. But it doesn't have to be!



Your company needs to have a culture of food safety.



The truth is, training can be engaging, entertaining, and memorable. When it is, it significantly lowers the risk that your restaurant will be the next foodborne illness headline in the national news. This ebook shows you how to breathe new life into food safety training with four lessons on making training more impactful, and several pro-level tips to create training programs that pack a punch.

Get Creative to Get the Most Out of Your Training

A food safety training study conducted by three universities, including Texas A&M, found that simply training managers in traditional sit-down training sessions did not translate into an educated staff. The reality is that the employee training environment is evolving to one where content is delivered in short bursts that are engaging, fun, highly visual, and memorable. You can achieve this through:



Brief, bite-size training sessions



Gamification to make courses more interactive



Delegation of training content to subject matter experts within the business

The Centers for Disease Control reported that there were 902 foodborne illness outbreaks in the USA with Norovirus being the most confirmed cause – 60% percent were traced to restaurants.

3 Features of Engaging, Effective Food Safety Training

The trick to creating an engaging and functional food safety training program is hitting the right mix of state-required and engaging, self-created content. You need to be sure that employees are up to date on their certifications, from food handler training to HACCP training. But you also need an easy way to see records of those certifications, for auditing and accountability purposes. Plus, you also need to make sure that your employees are actually retaining those courses. That's a lot of needs... so, how do you do it?



“Micro-learning forces you to eliminate the fluff, and deliver the most meaningful and critical content in a condensed format that is designed to be snackable, and accessible in the moment of need.”

- Matthew Brown, *Director*
HotSchedules Clarifi Talent Development



1. It's Mobile and Bite-Sized

Getting your employees to stay engaged in training isn't always easy. Just look at the numbers:

- Humans have an average attention span of 8 seconds — that's shorter than a goldfish.
- Student engagement levels drop sharply after 6 minutes.
- On average, learners forget 70% of what is taught within 24 hours of a training experience.

Regardless of these statistics, your business can't afford to have employees forget or tune out of food safety training.

Blame YouTube, or Twitter, or SnapChat. The days of traditional, sit-in-your-seat-for-six-hours training are over. Today, 94% of the workforce says they want small, bite-sized training lessons customized to their needs.

Furthermore, they want it on their phones! Everything is going mobile — including employee training! Over 74% of today's hourly workforce values a mobile, connected, flexible, and predictable work environment.

Here are some ways your restaurant can leverage mobile micro-learning:

- Break up lectures into six minute or less segments
- Create mobile games and quizzes
- Record short videos from 30-second tutorials to 5-minute deep dive guides
- Use whiteboard formats where the instructor writes while speaking
- Make every lesson laser-focus on the topic at hand

TL;DR? — Think: Short and Sweet!

Learning management systems have the capability to to deploy accredited food safety and alcohol compliance training courses that employees can access from the convenience of their mobile and web-based devices, cultivating a social, e-learning environment and a culture of food safety within your organization.



2. It's Gamified and Competitive

If you haven't heard about gamification, it's time to get on board. Gamification takes the essence of games — fun, play, transparency, design, and competition — and applies them to learning.

Gamification in Action: KFC's Virtual Kitchen Training

The objective here is to inspire and encourage employees to engage in online job training. And it's getting results. Part of the onboarding process for new cooks at KFC is an Oculus Rift VR headset with a game that requires them to escape a virtual reality room by correctly progressing through the five steps of the KFC cooking process. Colonel Sanders himself heckles them throughout the process. KFC says it takes players an average of 10 minutes to beat the game, while the previous teaching method took 25 minutes.

Innovation Doesn't Have to Break the Bank

Gamification can be used as a creative and engaging way to reinforce food safety training and certifications within a workforce, bolstering the culture of food safety in your business.

- Quiz employees on where germs are most likely to gather in the kitchen to help them retain their food safety and prep training.
- Recognize employees who get recertified.
- Showcase those who complete the training courses the fastest.
- Reward employees who catch food safety issues in real life situations.

Here are a few important elements of gamified training programs:

- **Leaderboards** — They show employees how they rank in comparison to their peers. Over 62 percent of people said they would be motivated to learn if leaderboard peer competitions were included.
- **Badges and certificates** — 89 percent of people say they would be more engaged in online learning if a point or reward system was involved, such as badges and certificates.
- **Discussion boards** — They keep employees engaged in multiple ways, such as sending kudos on learning accomplishments, providing training clarification, and announcing new training sessions.



3. It's Collaborative

Employee training falls under the HR department. But that doesn't mean the HR team has to be solely responsible for course creation. Branching out to pull from the knowledge base of your restaurant's own subject matter experts can make your training program more interesting and impactful. For food safety training, this promotes ownership and pride at the store level, which can help instill a culture of food safety and compliance buy-in from the whole organization.

Flix Brewhouse took this approach with excellent results. When the combination movie theater and brew pub created its first online training program, it tapped into its well of subject matter experts to create lessons that covered their unique knowledge base — including everyone from the brewmaster to the executive team. For example, the brewmaster created lessons on the establishment's vast selection of beers, including its specialty in-house beers.

While some companies struggle to get their executives interested in team training, Flix has its full support. In fact, the Director of Marketing and Sales launched his own marketing group on the platform, where he shares vital information about Flix growth and future promotions with team members.

Leverage your subject matter experts with flexible online training capabilities:

- Update content or propose content as needed
- Upload lessons on the fly to train employees on overlooked, easily forgotten rules
- Post short videos to explain the details of a current promotion or dish of the day
- Create groups to stimulate communication, file sharing, and collaboration among peers

"I call our subject matter experts the 'instructor team.' They have complete access to their employee training courses — from lesson creation to tweaking to posting on our training dashboard."

— Lindsey Moon-Lenggenhager, *Director of Learning and Development, Flix Brewhouse*

7 Ways to Breathe New Life Into Your Safety and Compliance Training

1 Find a Solution that Makes Food Safety Training Mobile

Mobile training increases participation, because your employees can learn from anywhere at their convenience, whether they're at work or at home.

To maximize for mobile, look for online training apps with these capabilities:

- Partnerships with compliance training course providers like 360training.com for easy and cost effective deployment of content across stores.
- Responsive design tools that automatically adjust the layout and orientation based on different mobile devices — smartphones, laptops, or tablets.
- Conduct surveys and polls to learn on which devices employees prefer accessing online training.
- Create accessibility reports to save time and money by narrowing your list of mobile learning breakpoints.



2

Track and Document Employees' Online Training Certifications

Are all of your employees compliant with state food safety regulations? A food safety training program is not complete without documented certification. This ensures that staff members have proper safety training and licenses to serve food in compliance with the law. Restaurants need to track certification compliance across all locations and manage employee certification renewal dates.



Shannon Carpenter, managing director at Gramercy Bakery, is a Clarifi Talent Development by HotSchedules customer, and the documentation features within the solution have been a big benefit for her business.

“Because we are a third party audited food manufacturing facility, we have both formal certifications... and monthly trainings on subjects such as food safety, GMPs, pest control, allergen control, HACCP and sanitation,” she said. “Being able to have a record easily accessible for each employee to prove to our auditors and keep those employees up to date with training is invaluable as an organizational tool.”

Make it easy on yourself by deploying a learning management system with these training certification management capabilities:

- Track, organize, and report on training participation, certification, achievements, and compliance for each employee.
- Receive 30/60/90 day notices when employees need to retake their certification courses and assign training dates.
- Set up certification criteria based on profile requirements to include all relevant employees.

3 Reward Employees to Motivate and Encourage Training

In a perfect world, employees would consume training modules with gusto. But in reality, they need a gentle nudge. Enter cool rewards that supercharge their motivation and make it impossible to resist the lure of learning. Rewards work! And employees will change their behavior for a desirable reward — and bragging rights.

Ideas for rewarding your team include:

- Badges to recognize key accomplishments
- Gift certificates for hitting milestones
- Branded t-shirts, hats, koozies, etc.
- Employee of the week or month recognition

4 Track the Food Safety Workflow with Task Lists

To be effective, executing food safety practices needs to follow a prescribed workflow. Training employees to perform their jobs according to a specific task list that upholds food safety standards will help reinforce the specific level of detail needed to meet standards. Learning management systems like Clarifi Talent Development feature on-the-job checklists as part of courses. Users build courses to include on the job checklists to take knowledge team members gained in the training and use it on the job. Those courses and checklists can always be accessed if an employee needs a quick refresher.

5 Don't Just Train Employees – Develop Them

Continuous learning opportunities help keep employees from feeling stagnant, bored, or stuck in their careers. Restaurants can leverage all employee training programs, including food safety, to inspire staff members to cross train for other positions and move up in the organization. The right employee training program will support employee advancement by tracking the skills they gain along their training path. What's more, managers can create personalized learning paths for individual employees to acquire the skills and knowledge they need for their preferred job. Helping them move forward creates a win-win for everyone.

6

Have a Plan for the Safety of Customers with Allergies

Allergen training laws are making their way across the U.S. — and the right online training program can help your establishment stay ahead of the trends, such as creating courses that ensure staff members understand your menus! With the right training application, you can establish a food allergy protocol, and build courses and quizzes that train all team members to follow it. Easily upload your own branded content or utilize third-party content to ensure your staff knows what to do to protect guests with food allergies.

7

Well Done! Brag About Your Employee Training Success

You've worked hard to create the best possible food safety training program for your staff. Every employee is now 100% compliant with regulatory requirements and your establishment's policies. Don't let your Herculean efforts go unseen. Create reports to share with upper-level management that show training data, including how many courses you created, how many team members participated in the training program, and how many achieved full compliance? Sharing the complete picture of your success will deliver the satisfaction, peace of mind, and recognition you deserve for a challenging job well done.

Effective food safety goes beyond a stiff, bland training program. To cultivate a culture of food safety in your restaurant, you need buy-in throughout your workforce from engaged employees.





Learn more about how Clarifi Talent Development can help breathe new life into your food safety training program.

Talk to a Specialist Today



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