

WORKFORGE



**PROTECT YOUR EQUIPMENT
INVESTMENT WITH
A SAFETY-FIRST CULTURE**

WHY AN INVESTMENT IN TRAINING MATTERS

Investing in equipment for a food production facility is a significant decision that requires strategic planning. The cost of these machines commonly ranges between \$150,000 to \$500,000 for any new machinery or equipment used for food processing and packaging.¹ While technology and automation have created significant value from these machines, ensuring the safety of those operating the machine is a critical factor in increasing your output and sustainability.

Ineffective training, inconsistent standard operating procedures, and low accountability around complex machinery can lead to safety incidents, equipment failures, and cause significant downtime costs. In fact, Food Processing Magazine reports that a single hour of machine downtime can cost a facility an astounding \$30,000 per hour, not including maintenance expenses.² To minimize unforeseen expenses and maximize productivity, it's essential to prioritize safety, invest in training, and optimize procedures around your equipment. Here's a comprehensive guide to create a safety-first culture to protect your equipment investments.

A single hour of machine downtime can cost a food manufacturing facility \$30,000.



Invest In Accurate and Comprehensive Safety Training

Safety is key. When assigning employees to new equipment, ensure they've had proper operator and safety training. Every machine varies, requiring specific knowledge for operation and maintenance. Equip your team with the skills and confidence to handle machines safely and efficiently.

Make Training Engaging and Comprehensive

Instruct your employees on how to correctly do their job(s) through visual, engaging, and innovative training that appeals to a diverse audience. For the quickest path to proficiency, video-based training can capture your exact operation and train on a proprietary piece of equipment, for a specialized role, or on any subject matter that needs a repeatable training process. Offer training in multiple languages and include interactive quizzes that test retention to significantly increase proficiency. This can reduce DART and incident rates, decrease chances of an OSHA recordable, and limit workers' compensation legal expenses.

Ensure Easy Access to Training

Utilize QR codes to easily link to mobile training materials where employees can quickly learn what they need to know about a specific machine. Consider training that is available on multiple devices so learners can jump in at any time and from anywhere.

Provide Regular Refreshers

Schedule training updates to ensure your team is confident, compliant and competent. Consider a platform automatically enrolls employees in training based on job role, code, location, or line and where training content can be reassigned as frequently as needed for auditing and compliance purposes.



Prioritize Your People Safety

Employee safety is a top priority in any production facility. Employees want to trust that their leaders and employer will create an environment to keep them safe. Invest in implementing robust safety measures to protect both your equipment and your operators.

Protect Your People

Install basic safety measures on your machines like machine guards, Lock Out-Tag Out procedures, barriers, and eStops to prevent incidents. Personal protective equipment (PPE) is your employee's first line of defense against injury. Mandating proper PPE and training your people on how to correctly use PPE and report broken or faulty PPE is a low-cost way to save you big money in the long run.

// Did You Know?

Micro-Modules can offer the following benefits over traditional training methods:

- 20% Better Retention
- 22% Faster Completion
- 60% Accelerated Skill Acquisition

Don't Forget Ergonomics

Ergonomics is a vital part of workplace safety in manufacturing. This is highly important to protect people from both acute self-injury and long-term, repetitive motion injuries. Ergonomic solutions and training can make employees more comfortable, safe, and increase productivity.

Utilize Lock Out Tag Out Training

If a machine goes down, proactively prevent incidents and injuries with Lock Out Tag Out training. Custom Lock Out Tag Out training can be developed for proprietary or unique machines to offer a more realistic training experience.

Try Micro-Modules

Health and safety courses can be delivered quickly and efficiently in micro-module formats. Available in multiple languages, these courses can be completed in 5-10 minutes, allowing learners more flexibility and faster skill acquisition.



Implement Consistent Standard Operating Procedures

Continuity and consistency across facilities and shifts is critical. SOPs are essential to ensure consistent and correct operation of your machines. Develop detailed SOPs in multiple languages for all equipment and ensure they are easily accessible to all employees, at every plant.

Document. Document. Document

Address safety first at start-up and in production meetings. Utilize a simple documenting tool like a safety cross to create safety protocols that will safeguard employees and hold teams accountable. It's also important to carefully organize and track training acknowledgment forms and monitor employee education to know these records are safe and accurate. Store your training acknowledgment forms electronically to ensure records are easily accessible and organized for audit readiness purposes.

Provide Step-by-Step Instructions

Provide clear, step-by-step instructions for operating and maintaining each piece of equipment. Consider creating live training videos that can demonstrate the correct procedures and behaviors expected within the specific work environment. This modeling is crucial for setting standards and expectations, which can lead to consistent performance and adherence to safety protocols.

Regularly Review Content and Accessibility

Regularly review and update SOPs and offer refresher training to reflect any changes in equipment or processes. Ensure SOPs are readily available at the point of use, either in printed form or digitally.





Maintain and Inspect

Routine maintenance and inspections are essential to keep equipment in optimal condition and prevent unexpected breakdowns. Regular maintenance checks provide reassurance of continued machinery performance, and an opportunity for new software updates, reviewing safety systems, checking of guards, blades, belts, and more. Develop a maintenance schedule and adhere to it strictly.

Preventive Maintenance

Perform regular maintenance checks to identify and fix potential issues before they escalate.

Inspection Logs

Maintain detailed logs of all inspections and maintenance activities.

Professional Servicing

Engage professional technicians for complex maintenance tasks and ensure they are certified.

// Case Study Example The Impact of Training on Maintenance Time to Productivity

Investing in employee training reduced the time to run a specialized machine by 31%.

Foster a Culture of Maintenance Accountability

Encourage a culture of accountability in your workforce. When employees understand the importance of their role in maintaining equipment, they are more likely to follow procedures diligently.

Set Clear Responsibilities

Define and communicate the responsibilities of each team member regarding equipment handling and maintenance.

Reward Compliance

Recognize and reward employees and teams who consistently adhere to safety and operational guidelines. If they have a long streak of weeks with no reported safety incidents, celebrate it!

Promote Continuous Improvement

Promote a culture of continuous improvement where learning and development is encouraged. Utilize a solution that offers career pathways where employees can become well-rounded and advance their own professional education from entry-level learner to leader. This allows you to easily provide clear and consistent development paths for re-skilling and up-skilling your workers.

CONCLUSION

Prioritizing safety for your teams is an ongoing process that requires attention to detail, continuous training, and daily dedication. By creating a safety-first culture for your team, operational excellence and a return on your equipment investments will soon follow. Ultimately, a safe facility not only protects your capital investments but also fosters a more positive and higher-quality environment for your employees.

Sources:

1. "Food Manufacturing Startup Costs," FinModelsLab, from July 2024.
2. "Reducing Food Processing Plant Downtime," Processing Magazine, from March 2021.

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