WORKFORGE

From Records to Readiness

The HR & L&D Playbook for SQF Edition 10

Today, you manage the training records. Tomorrow, you'll need to prove your workforce can demonstrate competency. Here's how HR and L&D can make the shift.

workforge.com · info@workforge.com

THE AUDIT MOMENT

The auditor turns to QA. QA turns to you.

Under Edition 10, the question shifts from “did they take the training?” to “can they actually do the job?” That proof lives in your system, and three things auditors will ask for don't exist in most learning management systems today.

Demonstrated capability

Not a completion checkbox – evidence that this worker can perform this task correctly under real conditions.

On-the-job validation

A supervisor sign-off tied to a specific person, task, and date – linked to the training record, not on a clipboard in a drawer.

Role-filtered evidence

Records pulled by role, line, shift, and topic in minutes – not a weekend of cross-referencing spreadsheets.

WHY NOW

Three pressures are converging on your function

The audit pressure

Edition 10 makes capability – not attendance – the standard of proof. The deficiency surfaces in QA's audit, but the records that must answer for it are yours.

The workforce pressure

60% Food manufacturing has higher injury rates than in other manufacturing sectors

61% Of food manufacturers report a shortage of skilled frontline workers

The business pressure

Certification gates retail contracts. Losing SQF status can mean losing shelf space – which turns training from an HR cost line into a revenue-protecting function.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

What Edition 10 requires of your system

These are not just new training topics. They are things your system needs to prove.

Competency Validation

Not: "run a competency course"

But: your system must capture proof that a named worker performed a task correctly – assessment plus on-the-job sign-off.

Role-Specific Pathways

Not: "assign everyone the same modules"

But: training must be mapped to role and risk, so an operator, a maintenance tech, and a QA lead each follow a distinct, documented path.

Food Safety Culture

Not: "post a policy on the wall"

But: leaders need training data they can use to show whether the "why" is actually reaching the floor.

SYSTEM CAPABILITIES

Six capabilities your system must deliver

These are Edition 10 evidence requirements first and the backbone of any platform that can satisfy them.

LEARN

Give each worker training that fits their role and is easy to consume.

ENGAGE

Make the biggest risks stick before they show up on the floor.

ASSESS

Check what each person understands, not just who was in the room.

VERIFY

Confirm the worker can perform the task correctly on the job.

TRACK

Maintan a live skills matrix by role, shift, line, and location.

AUDIT

Pull the records auditors need in minutes without chasing spreadsheets.

THE MATURITY MODEL

Where does your system sit today?

Your assessment score puts you at one of four levels. At each level, the question is the same: can you show who is ready, who confirmed it, where gaps remain, and what leaders should do next? Find your score band below, then turn to that level's page for the moves that come next.

1

STARTING LINE

Documentation Mode

You can prove training happened, not that anyone is capable.

2

BUILDING FOUNDATIONS

Role-Aware

Training is mapped to roles and risk, but proof of capability is still thin.

3

ON TRACK

Competency-Validated

You can prove a named worker is capable of a named task.

4

EDITION 10 READY

Culture-Integrated

Capability data drives decisions and feeds a documented culture plan.

MATURITY MODEL · LEVEL 1

Documentation Mode

1

> You can prove training happened. You cannot yet prove anyone is capable. When the auditor asks for evidence, you produce attendance.

What's observably true at this level

- Completion is tracked; capability is assumed
- Everyone gets broadly the same training
- Records live in spreadsheets or a basic LMS
- Audit prep means a scramble of printing and calls
- Critical knowledge sits with a few veterans

What moves you to the next level

- → Audit one critical SOP – can workers perform it, or just describe it?
- → Pick one role and map what “capable” actually means
- → Add a single on-the-job sign-off step, documented
- → Get L&D, QA, and Ops in one room on definitions

MATURITY MODEL · LEVEL 2

2

Role-Aware

Training now reflects that an operator and a QA tech don't need the same thing. You've started designing for role and risk – but proof of capability is still thin.

What's observably true at this level

- Training paths differ by role and risk
- Content includes the “why,” not just the rule
- An LMS holds records you can search by role
- Some assessments exist, but mostly group-level
- Multilingual content exists for key topics

What moves you to the next level

- → Map which roles need hands-on competency vs. baseline awareness
- → Design one intervention for a risk moment (changeover, restart, new product)
- → Pilot individual (not group) competency assessments
- → Begin tracking who has demonstrated, not just completed

3

Competency-Validated

You can now point to a named worker and prove – with assessment plus on-the-job sign-off – that they are capable of a specific task. This is the Edition 10 bar.

What's observably true at this level

- Capability is validated per person, per task
- On-the-job sign-offs are captured in the system
- A live skills matrix shows gaps by shift and line
- Audit evidence pulls in minutes, filtered by role
- Only validated workers perform high-risk tasks

What moves you to the next level

- Use skills data to drive scheduling and coverage
- Connect competency gaps to your culture-plan KPIs
- Make training a standing input to root-cause analysis
- Tie demonstrated competency to advancement and pay progression

MATURITY MODEL · LEVEL 4

Culture-Integrated

4

Capability data isn't just audit-ready – it drives operational decisions and feeds a documented food safety culture plan. Training is a strategic function, not a cost line.

What's observably true at this level

- Skills data informs scheduling, hiring, and continuous improvement
- Culture-plan KPIs are supported by live training data
- Training is part of every deviation's root-cause review
- Career pathways are built on competency levels
- The program is a retention and recruiting asset

How you stay here – and lead

- Audit continuously for Edition 10-level evidence
- Find where hands-on capability is still inconsistent
- Position training as a competitive differentiator
- Share your framework across sites and with leadership

THE MULTILINGUAL REALITY

Your evidence has to speak their language – literally

Edition 10's competency bar assumes workers genuinely understood the training. If a worker was taught in a language they don't fully read, a completion record doesn't prove comprehension – and "evidence of multilingual delivery" is on the auditor's list.

Comprehension, not translation

A bilingual coworker relaying instructions isn't documented evidence. The system must deliver and record training in the worker's language.

Where it breaks today

Most programs have "some Spanish materials." Edition 10 expects consistent multilingual delivery across the roles and modules that carry risk.

What good looks like

Role-relevant content available in every language on your floor – with assessment results that prove understanding in that language.

Training that proves readiness can also help people stay.

This is HR and L&D's strategic argument. The same gaps that create audit risk often create workforce risk too: unclear expectations, inconsistent training, and limited paths to grow. Don't sell training to leadership as audit insurance. Sell it as a workforce investment that also supports Edition 10 readiness.

Visible pathways

Workers see a skills ladder and a path to advance.

Earned mastery

Validated competency feels like progress, not paperwork.

Reasons to stay

Investment in growth is a top driver of retention.

Lower risk

Tenured, capable workers cause fewer deviations.

Reframe training from "audit insurance" to "workforce infrastructure" – the kind of investment HR, L&D, Ops, and Finance can all support

HOW WORKFORGE DELIVERS IT

Every worker. Every step. Every record audit-ready.

The six capabilities from page 6, delivered as one connected system. WorkForge helps evidence build as training happens – so your team is not rebuilding the story right before the audit.

LEARN
Role-relevant 3–5 min micromodules

ENGAGE
Interactive assessments on critical risks

ASSESS
Individual knowledge, verified

VERIFY
On-the-job competency sign-off

TRACK
Auto-built skills matrix

AUDIT
Instant audit-ready reporting

KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION & ENGAGEMENT

VERIFICATION, TRACKING & AUDITING

From baseline knowledge all the way to demonstrated, documented capability – one connected record.

TAKE THIS TO THE TABLE

What to bring to your next cross-functional conversation

Edition 10 readiness is not an L&D solo project. Walk into the room with the right question for each partner.

Ask QA

- Which roles and tasks will auditors probe hardest for competency?
- What evidence format do you actually need from us at audit?
- Where did our last audit flag training as a contributing factor?

Ask Operations

- Which moments (changeover, restart, new hire) carry the most risk?
- Where do you see capability gaps that training never catches?
- Can supervisors realistically capture on-the-job sign-offs?

Ask the CFO / CHRO

- What is a lost SQF certificate worth in at-risk revenue?
- What does frontline turnover cost us per role, per year?
- Would you fund a system that protects both at once?

WORKFORGE

Ready to move from records to readiness?

Before the next audit asks, build the system that proves your people are ready, supports Edition 10, and helps your workforce grow.

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Schedule a demo