



MANAGEMENT CONNECTION

TRAINING AND DEVELOPING YOUR TEAM USING 6 Cs

BY KRISTIN KLINEFELTER, MS, RDN, LDN

IT'S IN-SERVICE DAY! You have set the agenda, reserved the board room, printed the sign-in sheets and handouts, and informed the team that this is a mandatory meeting. Everything is ready to go. As a trainer, you know the proper steps to conduct in-services. You can train on hand-washing in your sleep. You document attendance and keep records. No problem. Quarterly in-services on the calendar? Check! Employee files updated? Done. You have your trainer responsibilities down.

Now let's take the trainees' perspective. Is this process effective for them? What if they don't feel comfortable in the situation? The end-goal of training and developing your team is for the information to be heard, understood, and utilized in daily work.

Training and developing teams consists of initial onboarding, on-the-job training, in-service/classroom education and continuous education, and follow-up. Most likely you have a training style that works for you and a preferred delivery method. Some managers thrive when they are training one-on-one. Others get a microphone and projector in front of them and they shine.

To be completely effective, it is important to utilize a variety of training methods and develop a robust, diverse team that is confident in their skills. Use this checklist of "Cs" to see where you can hone your current skills and stretch your comfort level by building new training techniques.

COMMUNICATE THE WHY

Communicating the *what*, *when*, and *where* for the training is an easy step. Have you communicated the *why* as well? We know that this is important stuff, but team members may not see the reason they need to learn the information. The *why* simply states the reason for the process. It can be

as simple as, "because it saves time" or as important as "we need the temperature to reach 165 degrees so the bacteria is killed and our clients do not get sick." Friedrich Nietzsche, a German philosopher, stated: "He who has a 'why' can endure any 'how'."

So *why* do we need to train and develop our team? Staffing crises are happening in many industries right now. According to the Job Opening and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS), the foodservice industry had a 5.2 percent unemployment rate in September 2022 and 4.5 million Americans quit their jobs in October 2022. A LinkedIn Learning survey found that 94 percent of employees would stay at their current job if their employer invested in their long-term learning.

COMFORT, CONNECTION, AND COMMUNITY FIRST

Take a minute to reflect: *Do you recall a time when learning was fun for you? What was the environment like? Who were your fellow trainees? What was the subject matter?*

{Pause here to think about this for one minute.}

{Welcome back to your article!}

We all have different answers to these questions because we are individuals. The common thread to our learning memory might be the *comfortable connection* we have to it. When we have a fond memory of a learning situation, we recall feeling comfortable and connected to the trainer and/or our fellow trainees. Even if you recall an independent learning experience, you most likely were comfortable in the setting and the content delivery fit you.

Why is it important for a trainee to feel comfortable and connected before learning? Quite simply, if a person



6

THE 6 Cs

1. Communicate the Why
2. Comfort, Connection, and Community First
3. Create Clear Content
4. Cater to Communication and Learning Styles
5. Check for Comprehension
6. Continuous Competency Check-Ins

is not comfortable or does not feel connected to a learning community, they will not be in the right brain space to learn. How can we create this comfort level to create community and connection? First, recognize that people have stressors, life situations, and history that they bring to the learning environment. Showing empathy for them and their situation can begin to create that connection.

As a trainer, how do you build community for your learners? This can be achieved in different ways. A simple way to open your group training sessions is to take 10 minutes for everyone to connect with each other and the situation. Here are some options:

- Arrange the room so everyone can stand or sit in a circle.
- Play energizing music when people enter.

- Have everyone turn to another person and state what they are nervous or anxious about today. It can be silly like: "I am nervous that I will drop the fire extinguisher on my toe" or more serious like: "I am anxious about the volume of material being covered today."
- Tell a story or a joke about the subject matter.
- Move and breathe: guide the group through three deep cleansing breaths and a basic stretch.
- Play an icebreaker game.
- Do a Question Whip: "whip" around the circle with a question of the day such as:
 - What was your favorite job ever?
 - Why did your parents name you _____?
 - If you could be in any sport in the Olympics, what would it be?

- Who is your favorite Disney character?
- What is a food that begins with the same letter as your first name?

Once the learners are comfortable in the learning environment and connected to the trainer and/or co-learners (i.e., they are not stressed), their brains will be ready to learn!

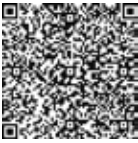
CREATE CLEAR CONTENT

The content that we present when training and developing the team might be the easiest “C.” Often, we do not have to create the content or handouts, as there are programs



TRAINING TOPICS

SUBJECT	TRAINING TOPICS
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Therapeutic Diets• IDDSI• Homemade Supplement Workshops• Diabetes, Heart Healthy, or Renal Diets
Safety and Sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire Safety• Kitchen Ergonomics• Knife Safety• Handwashing• ServSafe or Similar• Time and Temperature Training• HACCP• Cleaning and Sanitizing Equipment
Leadership and Team Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication Styles Workshop• Games/Competition-Based Training (example: “Minute to Win It,” Cooking Contests)• Room Service Server Skills
Foodservice Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Server Training• Plating Workshop• Knife Skills• Roasting Veggies• Preparing Pureed Food• Standardized Recipes• Stocking Coolers• Receiving Deliveries



REFERENCES

Scan QR code to view the list of resources for this article.

available for free download or purchase. Your company may also have access to approved training programs and materials. To stay focused on the topic at hand, create one objective for every 15 minutes of content. Simplify objectives using a verb or action word. For example: *create, understand, verbalize, demonstrate, review, assess, or perform* can be trainee objectives. Other tips for writing an objective include to focus on the learner, establish a time frame, and to be specific. For example, “At the end of this training, each participant will demonstrate proper use of the fire extinguisher by using the PASS technique.”

CATER TO COMMUNICATION AND LEARNING STYLES

We are training humans, not robots, so we need to remember that individuals have different learning styles. The chart at right identifies four basic learning styles and how to train to their characteristics. The key for most of your group training will be to cater to all four learning styles with delivery of your material. For example, if your in-service topic is handwashing, you will want to *demonstrate* proper handwashing, use a black light to show real-time “germs,” have visuals such as posters and charts, *tell* learners *why* we need to properly hand wash (include facts, bacteria counts, number of seconds, temperature of water, and diseases spread by improper hand washing) and have the learners *demonstrate* their understanding. If you are doing one-on-one training, you can cater to the individual’s learning style.

CHECK FOR COMPREHENSION





A critical step in training is to check for comprehension. Post-assessments highlight important pieces of the training that learners need to remember or practice. Using the example of this article, you might need to refresh the information by rereading the content in order to correctly answer a question. It is OK if you don’t remember every piece of information the first time. You can assess by verbal, written, or kinesthetic (doing) recall. It can be fun (for the trainer and the trainee) to do a pre- and post-test to show learning. You can also have the group train their peers, because when we teach something to others, the information is better learned. This is called the protégé effect.

CONTINUOUS COMPETENCY CHECK-INS

The pendulum in professional education is swinging towards the concept of *continuing competency* versus *continuing education*. Education is the act of learning, whereas




LEARNING STYLES

LEARNING STYLE	CHARACTERISTICS	TRY THIS
Visual: Learn By Seeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn by seeing • Infographics and visuals are helpful • Color coding is useful (equipment, smallware, documents, storage) • “Do you see what I mean?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post infographics and informational posters • Use food models, nutrition labels, order guides, equipment when training • Encourage note-taking • Have them demonstrate their understanding and point out visual instructions as they perform tasks
Auditory: Learn by Hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy music, podcasts, talking • Learn by hearing or teaching • Will get distracted with background noise • Self-talk • “I’m hearing you say...” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train in small groups where the learner can teach and learn with peers • Offer additional resources (YouTube videos or podcasts) • Teach by storytelling • Record trainings for future access • Use music to pump up or teach • Ask for verbal confirmation to verify understanding
Kinesthetic: Learn by Doing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine and gross motor skills • Like to move around • Learn by doing • “Can you feel how that cuts smoother?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a knife skills workshop • Provide PASS training • Do a handwashing exercise with black light • Conduct mock surveys • Assemble dummy trays • Provide thermometer calibration clinic • Have them demonstrate their understanding
Logical: Learn by Reading/ Writing/Understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn from charts, graphs, numbers • Enjoy problem-solving, calculating, and analyzing • Like patterns and data • “I have a question. How did you get that number? This temperature is too low.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show calculations on spreadsheets (for food cost, labor, etc.) • Train on systems, policy and procedure • Have data to back up instructions (ex. Show bacteria counts at 37 degrees and 100 degrees) • Allow learners to use software or apps • Establish concrete action plans • Use post-assessment quizzes

competency is true and complete understanding of the material. Dictionary.com defines competency as: *The ability to do something successfully or efficiently*, which is the goal of training and developing our team! We are looking for individuals who are confident in their job-related skills. Attending a 20-minute in-service does not instill confidence about a person's ability to perform a skill or recall knowledge. Continuous

practice, being redirected as needed, and reassurance from trainers is what builds this confidence. We can achieve this by in-depth onboarding programs, working side-by-side shifts with them, conducting mock surveys, utilizing peer-to-peer training, or conducting multi-part in-service training where the skills are taught and practiced on a regular basis. The training certainly is not complete when the sign-in sheet goes in the HR file.

SUMMING IT UP

Where do you excel on the "C-List"? Where do you need to amp up your game? Remind yourself that it is OK to feel a little bit uncomfortable and that the trainees will appreciate that you took the time to invest in them and their abilities to get the job done well. As always, leading by example speaks volumes. Finally, a genuine smile, "thank you," and a "C" you tomorrow" is a great way to end the training session. 



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Kristin Klinefelter works in various capacities in the nutrition and foodservice field. She gets to teach and train a variety of individuals, discovering their learning styles and encouraging them to implement the skills for life and career.



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CE QUESTIONS | MANAGEMENT CONNECTION



This **Level II** article assumes that the reader has a thorough knowledge of the topic. The desired outcome is to facilitate application of knowledge into practice by drawing connections among ideas and using information in new situations.

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1. A LinkedIn Learning survey found that what percentage of employees would stay at their current job if their employer invested in their long-term learning?
 - A. 41 percent
 - B. 65 percent
 - C. 94 percent
2. What 'Cs' need to be established before learning can take place?
 - A. Comfort, connection, and community
 - B. Collaboration, creation, and correction
 - C. Counting, checking, and comparing
3. Your training material needs to be original and created in-house.
 - A. True
 - B. False
4. A trainee who says, "I see what you mean" is probably a/an _____ learner.
 - A. Auditory
 - B. Kinesthetic
 - C. Visual
5. To cater to an auditory learner, what resources can you offer?
 - A. Charts and graphs
 - B. Podcasts and audiobooks
 - C. Models and equipment
6. What type of learner might ask a lot of detailed questions?
 - A. Logical
 - B. Visual
 - C. Kinesthetic
7. A garnish and plating in-service with practice stations will cater to what type of learner?
 - A. Logical
 - B. Visual
 - C. Kinesthetic



LEARN MORE ABOUT TRAINING YOUR TEAM

Want more information on this topic? **Training & Developing Your Team: Beyond Sign-Ins and Certificates** is a new webinar presented by Kristin Klinefelter, MS, RDN, LDN now available in the ANFP Marketplace. Earn 1 CE hour for participating. Visit www.ANFPonline.org/market