

# Training Tips

Simply presenting "the facts" will probably not result in improved food safety knowledge. More importantly, it probably will not result in the adoption of safe food handling practices.

The foundation of all effective training is an excellent educator. An excellent food safety educator:

- Makes a continuous effort to improve their knowledge about foodservice regulations and food safety topics that are crucial to foodservice operations.
- Truly believes in the importance of food safety.
- Respects all training participants.
- Has excellent communication, interpersonal, and listening skills.
- Uses interactive and creative training methods.
- Actively seeks feedback during training.
- Understands how adults learn.

## PREPARATION

- Know the subject matter inside and out and be able to explain it in a logical, sequential order.
- Read all training materials and be familiar with all exercises.
- Arrive early and check that all of your equipment is working properly.
- Make sure that the room is large enough to accommodate your audience and will enable to move around during activities.

## STRUCTURING THE TRAINING

- Regardless of how long the total training is break it out into short sessions. Short sessions (15-60 minutes) are most effective. Participants tend to lose interest if the session is too long.
- Take a break every 60 minutes or so. This allows participants to get up and stretch.
- Vary the method of presentation so learners will not be bored. Use slides, videos, blackboards, handouts, etc.
- Try to include an activity/exercise/demonstration during each session. This gives participants an opportunity to practice the knowledge that they are learning.

## TEACHING

- Reinforce correct responses by praise and rewards.
- Treat all participants with respect. There is no such thing as a "dumb" question. If more information is needed, perhaps the meaning was not clear. Adults embarrass easily and need positive feedback to overcome feelings of inadequacy.
- Explain acronyms -- do not assume that participants will know what you are talking about.
- Use few words and more actions. Don't act like the expert by going on and on and on. This is boring.
- Give the what, why, and how. If participant's buy into the reason, they are more likely to remember and apply.
- Ask and encourage questions along the way to ensure that trainees are digesting the information. This also encourages participation.
- If you do not know the answer to a question, do not pretend. Tell the group that you will get back with them.
- Develop an inside joke. Look for opportunities to seize on a situation or statement that especially binds the group and gives everyone that special insider feeling.
- Be enthusiastic, animated, and walk around the room.
- Use real world examples.
- Have fun! One way is through the use of skits or team presentations. The benefit to this approach is that the employees will probably make it more realistic and easy to understand to the rest of the audience. It also allows employees to work together and promotes teamwork.
- Use real-life examples to demonstrate that foodborne illness outbreaks really do happen.

## WORKING WITH MULTI-LINGUAL AUDIENCES

Use a bilingual instructor to ensure that participants understand the food safety requirements. However, it is sometimes not feasible or practical to hire a bilingual instructor to meet all of the language needs within a community. Therefore, if you have limited or non-English speakers in your training:

- Keep training materials simple.
- Use visual aids such as signs, pictures, symbols, graphics, posters, and videos.
- Demonstrate practices, such as proper dressing procedures, handwashing steps, equipment setups, or cleanup operations.
- Have the training materials available in other languages. While the participant may not "hear" their own language they can at least follow along in their language.

**If you have questions, contact [Dr. Angela Fraser](#), Associate Professor/Food Safety Education Specialist, Clemson University, Clemson, SC.**

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