

HOWTO LAUNCH ROI-EFFICIENT MANUFACTURING Sispring TRAINING

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Introduction

In manufacturing, training programs are crucial to ensure a skilled workforce, improve efficiency, and maintain safety standards. Yet, only 35% of manufacturing companies rate their training initiatives as "highly effective." This relatively low percentage indicates a gap between training goals and actual outcomes.

At the same time, as new generations enter the workforce, expectations for training are changing, putting pressure on manufacturing companies to rethink their approach.

In this guide, we'll explore common workforce development challenges in manufacturing, the key reasons for investing in training, and offer a seven-step framework to help organizations build ROI-efficient online learning programs.

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What's holding back effective manufacturing training?

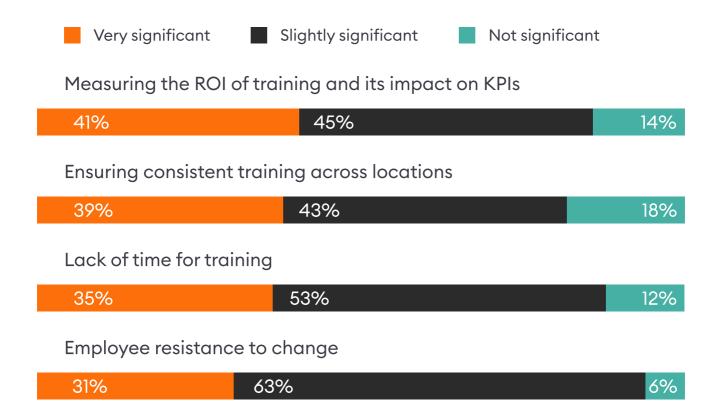
Current methods of training delivery, administration, and content creation are placing increasing demands on companies' already stretched resources. As manufacturers strive to provide more training for new hires while upskilling existing employees, they face significant challenges.

Poka's Report on the State of Training in Manufacturing reveals the most common of them:

How significant are the following challenges when implementing training?

Very significant Slig	ghtly significant	Not significant		
Budget constraints				
61%	31	1%	8%	
Limited access to training materials				
53%	24%		24%	
Tracking and maintaining training records				
51%	33%		16%	
Keeping employees engaged and motivated				
49%	43%		8%	

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As economic pressures rise with increasing costs, including energy prices and labor shortages, it's no surprise that 92% of companies see training budgets as a major concern. Limited access to training materials and challenges with tracking progress are also key obstacles for more than two-thirds of organizations.

These issues, along with things like ensuring consistent training, measuring ROI, and keeping employees engaged, are all closely connected. In response to these challenges, manufacturers are increasingly turning to online learning solutions that can provide streamlined and scalable training administration.

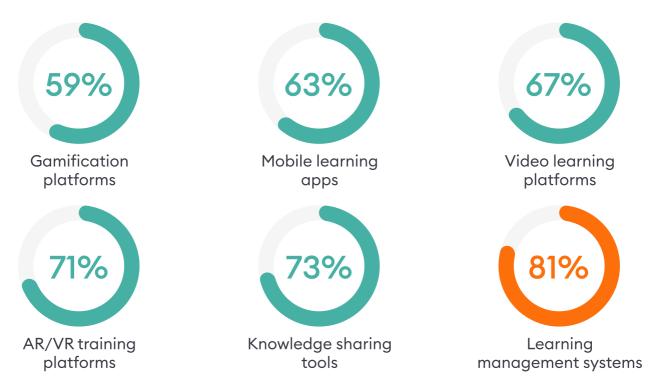
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PART 1

Six reasons to prioritize online manufacturing training

Many companies have already adopted or are in the process of implementing a variety of learning solutions, some of the most common being gamification tools, mobile learning apps, video learning, AR/VR, and knowledge sharing platforms.

The adoption of digital learning technologies in manufacturing



The clear leader in adoption, however, is a <u>learning management</u> <u>system (LMS)</u>, with 81% of companies using or planning to implement one to streamline their training programs.

The reason for its popularity is simple: LMSs shine with their comprehensive functionality – consolidating knowledge sharing, training tracking, course delivery, and employee engagement into a single, centralized platform.

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Here are six key manufacturing training goals an LMS can help with:

Why invest in a manufacturing LMS? Standardize training Reduce training costs across branches Avoid the risks Onboard and upskill of non-compliance new talent quickly Eliminate the manual Develop an internal training routine talent pool

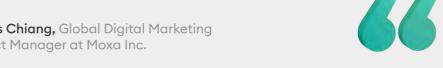
1. Standardize training across branches

For manufacturers with dispersed branches, maintaining consistent training is a real challenge. Different teams might end up using different instructions or approaches. This inconsistency can result in mistakes, inefficiencies, and unnecessary risks, like safety and compliance issues.

With an LMS, you have a centralized place where training content is standardized and accessed by all employees, regardless of where they are. Whether it's on machinery, safety standards, or company procedures, you can be sure that everyone is learning the same SOPs and guidelines. Plus, you can easily update the training content once and push it out to all branches simultaneously.



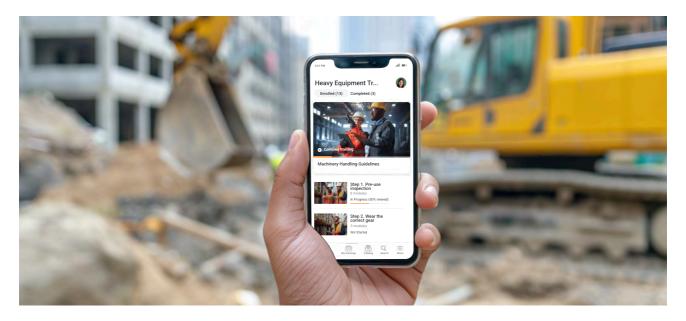
James Chiang, Global Digital Marketing Project Manager at Moxa Inc.



"With iSpring, we are able to provide training to multiple teams around the world simultaneously." **∷ispring** 7

2. Reduce training costs

By moving training online, you save on travel expenses and instructor fees and avoid the logistical nightmare of coordinating face-to-face sessions for employees across different time zones, states, or countries.



The iSpring LMS, for example, comes with convenient mobile apps, allowing learners to take courses when and where it works for them. Important guidelines are always at hand, even when offline.

Besides reducing direct costs, <u>mobile learning software</u> can also minimize downtime, allowing employees to quickly check SOPs, troubleshooting guides, or compliance updates right on the shop floor when needed.



Jesse L. Dukes, Training and Safety Manager at Castle



"We could potentially save thousands of dollars in costs associated with downtime thanks to iSpring."

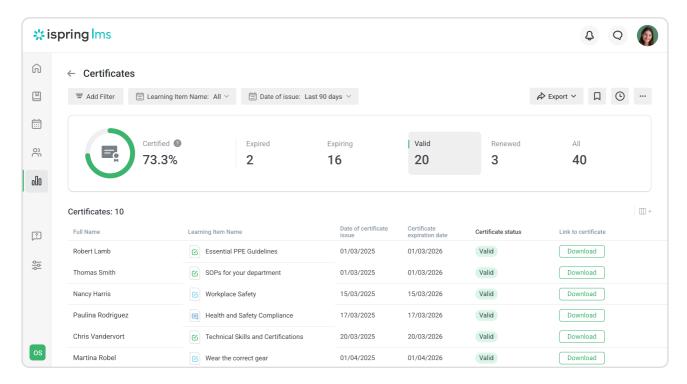
Explore the success story of Castle \rightarrow

3. Avoid the risks of non-compliance

Non-compliance with safety protocols, environmental laws, and operational guidelines can result in costly fines, reputational damage, or even shutdowns. When adhering to industry standards and regulations is non-negotiable, nothing works better than an LMS.

It allows you to store all training records in one place, conduct online assessments, track employee progress, and ensure that everyone has completed mandatory training.

Additionally, you can assign and track <u>compliance training</u> certifications, easily monitor expiration dates, and keep employees up to date with their qualifications. With robust tracking features, you'll readily identify employees who need retraining, know which certifications are due for renewal, and be able to quickly pull up the data you need to prove compliance during audits.



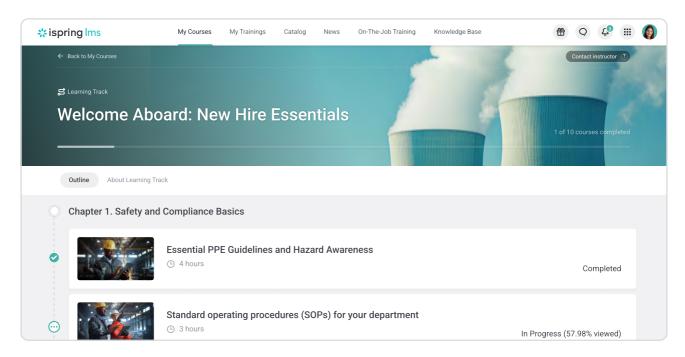
The Certificates report in iSpring LMS helps training specialists manage employee certifications, track their expiration dates, and reassign necessary training in advance.

4. Onboard and upskill new talent quickly

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, a quarter of the manufacturing workforce is over 55, with a third of those aged 65 or older. With an aging workforce and high turnover rates, manufacturers must integrate new employees quickly to ensure minimal disruption to operations.

In addition, 71% of companies identify new hire onboarding as a high priority, and nearly half of organizations report that the time spent onboarding new employees has increased.

Fortunately, with an <u>onboarding LMS</u>, you'll be able to maintain a high level of productivity and fill critical skill gaps faster. It allows you to create sequential learning paths packed with all the information newcomers have to know from day one: key policies, workplace safety standards, emergency procedures, role-specific guidelines, sustainability standards, etc.



In the iSpring LMS, you can create learning tracks organized by chapters and courses. Thanks to a strict completion order, learners progress to the next chapter only after they have completed the current one.

Self-paced learning allows employees to absorb information step by step, without waiting for instructors and disrupting workflows.

Managers, in turn, can track progress in real time and ensure that every new hire completes induction training successfully.

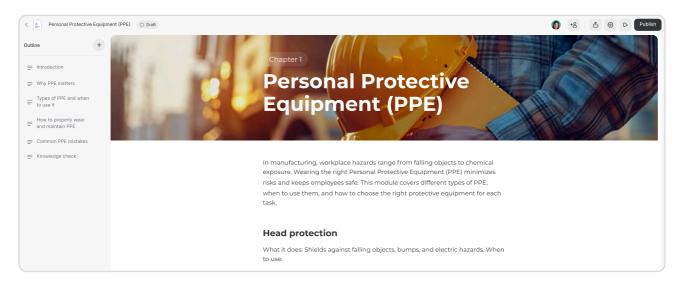
5. Eliminate the manual training routine

- Automate tedious tasks.
- Sync training data across systems.
- Create learning content with minimum effort.

Despite the widespread adoption of LMSs, for many manufacturers, training still involves endless spreadsheets, scattered files, and manual tracking. Managers assign courses via email, employees mark completions in Excel spreadsheets, and certificates are printed and logged by hand. All these approaches lead to hours of unnecessary admin work, inconsistent processes, lost data, and human errors.

An LMS automates the entire training process. You just set up rules once, and the platform handles course assignments and reassignments of expired certifications automatically. You can also create employee groups, so whenever a new employee is added, they're instantly placed in the "New Hires" group and enrolled in induction training – no manual steps needed. Employees, in turn, get notified about new courses, scheduled events, and upcoming training deadlines.

Beyond <u>automated training</u>, advanced LMSs also allow you to build courses quickly right on the platform instead of spending days assembling PowerPoint presentations and printing training materials. For example, in iSpring LMS, you can quickly create well-structured scrollable courses with strict navigation rules, embedded videos, PDF files, knowledge checks, and interactive flashcards:



With iSpring LMS's built-in course creation tool, anyone from your company can easily create a page-like course with no initial training.

Moreover, you can integrate your LMS with tools like PowerBI, BambooHR, MS Teams, and ProctorEdu to eliminate duplicate data entry, automatically update training records across platforms, and free up administrators' valuable time.

6. Develop an internal talent pool

Building a strong workforce doesn't stop at hiring the right people. It largely depends on whether you can retain them for the long term. A disorganized onboarding process and a lack of <u>continuous learning</u> often lead to high turnover – seasoned employees don't see a future in the company and leave due to frustration.



Natalie Taylor, Senior eLearning Consultant at iSpring

"In manufacturing, we often see skilled employees leave simply because there's no clear path for growth. Without structured training and upskilling, companies struggle to develop internal talent and end up hiring externally, which costs more and takes longer."

An LMS provides a structured approach to employee development, making it easier to cultivate talent from within. Personalized, role-based learning paths ensure that employees receive targeted learning experiences tailored to their specific roles, skill levels, and career goals.

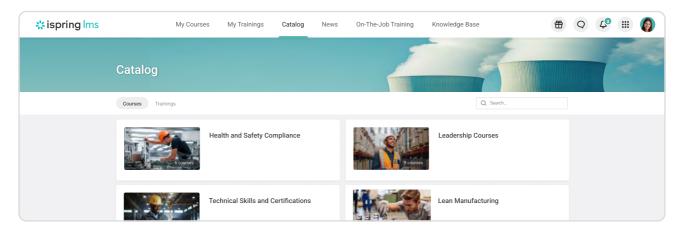
Also read:

Employee Development Plan Examples →

How to Create an Employee Development Plan →

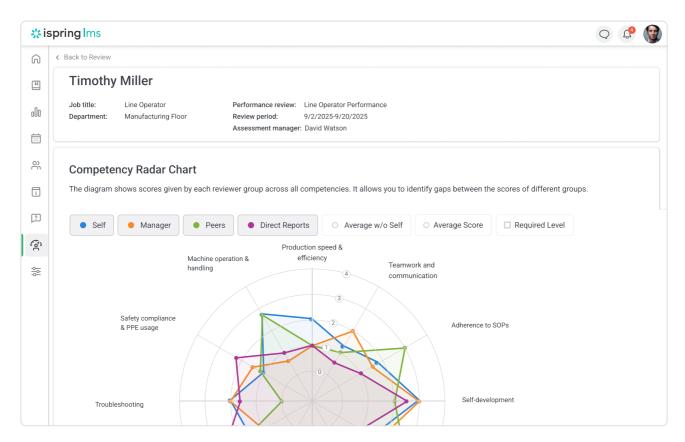


Beyond mandatory assigned training, with an LMS, employees have the flexibility to enroll in plenty of professional development training in a course catalog. Whether they want to improve technical skills, revise product documentation, explore leadership opportunities, or cross-train for promotion – they can access relevant content anytime without waiting for a manager's approval.



In iSpring LMS, you can create a catalog of courses available for self-enrollment and give access to categories to specific departments.

Advanced learning management systems go further to include tools for employee performance evaluation. For example, with a 360-degree performance appraisal, you can create competency models and automatically collect anonymous feedback from an employee's inner circle, including team members, subordinates, supervisors, and even external partners:



A competency radar chart in iSpring LMS shows the difference between self-perception and other people's views.

This helps reveal an employee's strengths and areas for improvement and allows you to make more informed decisions about promotions, succession planning, and future training investments.

Thus, a structured learning framework, online upskilling, and cross-training make employee development more consistent and help organizations build a strong internal talent pipeline.

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PART 2

How to build ROI-efficient manufacturing training programs

We spoke with the iSpring Learning and Development (L&D) department and prepared step-by-step recommendations that will help launch result-driven manufacturing training online.

1. Perform a training needs analysis

Before rolling out any training program, you need to be sure it actually addresses real gaps. A solid <u>training needs analysis</u> helps manufacturers pinpoint skill shortages, compliance gaps, and inefficiencies that impact productivity and safety.

Here's how you can do that:

Review production metrics

Identify areas where efficiency drops and pinpoint potential training gaps.

Conduct skills assessments

Evaluate employees' competencies to determine skill gaps.

Consult supervisors and team leads

Gather insights on recurring issues affecting productivity.

Assess compliance records

Look for recurring safety violations or missed certifications.

Analyze equipment downtime

Check if a lack of training contributes to frequent breakdowns or improper use.

Monitor employee turnover rates

High turnover might indicate inadequate onboarding or upskilling.

Also read:

Training Needs Analysis Template →



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2. Set training goals, KPIs, and objectives

Once you've identified skill gaps and training needs, the next step is setting clear goals and measurable KPIs. Without them, you're just throwing training at employees and hoping something sticks. Instead, define what training success looks like.

Start by aligning training goals with business priorities. Are you looking to reduce safety incidents, speed up new hire onboarding, or improve machine operation efficiency? Whatever the case, make sure each training initiative has a purpose that directly impacts productivity, compliance, or workforce performance.

Then, set measurable KPIs to track training efficiency:

X Decrease the time it takes for new machine Reduce new hire onboarding time. operators to reach full productivity by 30% within six months. X Lower operational Reduce machine setup errors errors in production. by 15% in the next three months. X Improve workplace Increase post-training assessment scores on safety procedures from 70% to 90% within safety compliance. three months and achieve full compliance with OSHA standards by the next quarterly audit.

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3. Implement reliable learning software



Choosing the right learning platform is another responsible step that affects the efficiency of your training programs. To ensure you select a system that meets your industry's unique demands, Natalie Taylor, a Senior eLearning Consultant at iSpring, has shared a checklist of key LMS requirements manufacturers should prioritize:

Clean and intuitive LMS interface

A complex system can generate more problems than it solves, so a straightforward, user-friendly interface is a must-have in manufacturing. A well-designed interface ensures that workers can easily navigate training materials, complete courses without frustration, and get the knowledge they need without IT support.

Security and compliance

Next, pay critical attention to the LMS's security. Training platforms handle sensitive employee data, certifications, and sometimes even proprietary operational procedures. Make sure an LMS vendor offers excellent security measures and is compliant with industry standards, such as ISO 27001, GDPR, SOC 2, or OSHA.

Additionally, look for features like role-based access control and single sign-on (SSO) integration to prevent unauthorized access to sensitive training materials.

Or, consider the option of a self-hosted LMS installation, which will allow you to handle everything, from installation and configuration to updates, backups, and security measures.

Also read:



Training automation

Manufacturers operate in fast-moving, high-risk environments where training can't afford to be a slow, manual process. Prioritize strong training automation capabilities, including automated:

- Course assignments that ensure that every new hire is automatically enrolled in onboarding and safety training the moment they join.
- Learner notifications, deadline reminders, and reassignments that help maintain compliance by prompting employees to complete mandatory certifications before they expire, and preventing lastminute scrambles and potential non-compliance risks.
- Progress tracking and scheduled reporting that will eliminate the need for manual record-keeping and allow managers to see who's on track and who needs additional support.

Advanced reporting

When it comes to training initiatives, you can't just hope it's working. You need the data to back it up. That's where having solid reporting features in your LMS makes a huge difference. Otherwise, you're left guessing whether that training budget is really being put to good use.

Also read:

The 16 Best LMS Reports to Ensure Your Training Success →



Look for a customizable <u>LMS dashboard</u>, report scheduling and emailing, drill-down analytics, predictive insights, and integrations with tools like PowerBI or SAP.

Accessibility

Chances are that you're dealing with a diverse workforce – employees across different shifts, locations, and even countries. Here's what really matters in terms of a platform's accessibility:

- Multi-language interface and tech support. Let learners navigate
 the platform in their preferred language and reach out for technical
 support when it's needed with no communication barriers.
- Inclusive LMS features. Choose a platform that supports features like screen reader compatibility, closed captions, keyboard navigation, and adjustable text sizes.
- Mobile-friendly learning with offline access. Make sure your LMS is available on any device (desktop, tablet, or mobile), so employees can complete courses whenever it fits into their schedule.

Reasonable pricing

Some corporate eLearning platforms charge per user, meaning you pay for everyone in the system, whether they use it or not. Others charge per active user, which is more budget-friendly.

To avoid hidden fees, always check what's included in the base plan. Opt for learning solutions that offer a rich feature set with transparent pricing. Some platforms may look affordable at first, but you might find out later on that essential features are only available through costly add-ons.

Also read:

How to select a learning management system →



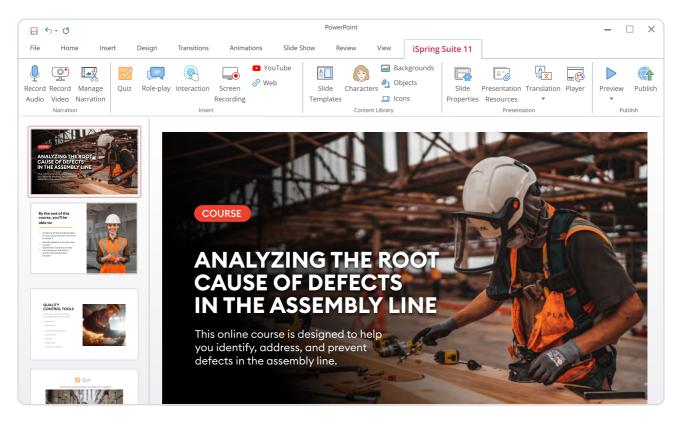
4. Select training methods based on your goals

Selecting the right <u>training methods</u> means making sure employees actually gain the skills they need in a way that has a desired effect. Different goals call for different approaches, and here are the most common ones for manufacturing:

Asynchronous courses

<u>Asynchronous learning</u> works best for standardizing knowledge about compliance, SOPs, and safety protocols. Employees can go through content at their own pace without disrupting operations, and you get consistent training quality across locations.

To create such courses, you'll need an authoring tool, such as <u>iSpring Suite</u>, allowing you to create training modules quickly in a familiar environment and easily upload them to any LMS.



iSpring Suite works right in MS PowerPoint, allowing you to create slide courses quickly or turn pre-made slides into eLearning modules with no prior skills.

With a single tool, you can create well-structured courses, training videos, interactive quizzes, cheat-proof knowledge checks, and role-play simulations that your learners will easily access through mobile devices.

Also read:

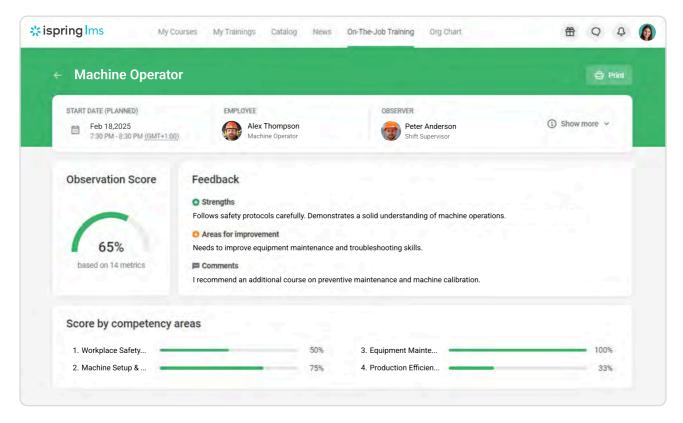
How to choose the right eLearning authoring tool \rightarrow



On-the-job training

On-the-job training (OJT) remains the dominant training method in factories, with 59% of organizations using shadowing to deliver over 40% of their training, and 62% of manufacturers expect their reliance on OJT to increase over the next two years.

Why? Because nothing beats real-world practice. OJT ensures that employees gain a deep understanding of job requirements, safety protocols, and quality standards by learning directly on the production floor.



After completing the OJT session in iSpring LMS, an employee can view a detailed report with instructor feedback.

Many companies now pair OJT methods with an LMS to gain more in terms of productivity and consistency. In the OJT module in iSpring LMS, trainers can use structured observation checklists to assess skills consistently, instead of relying on scattered notes or verbal feedback.

In <u>iSpring LMS</u>, you can create an observation checklist with required competencies, schedule training sessions, and leave comments about the employee's strengths and areas for improvement.

With a visual dashboard, supervisors can track individual employee results, get an overview of their team's general performance, or even compare the results of different departments.

Also watch



How on-the-job training works in iSpring LMS →

Peer-to-peer learning and mentoring

<u>Peer-to-peer learning</u> is one of the most underrated forms of training that is super-efficient if you want to spread best practices across various shifts or departments quickly.



Natalie Taylor, Senior eLearning Consultant at iSpring

"When employees learn from each other, they're able to share real-world experiences and practical tips that aren't always covered in formal training. This builds a collaborative culture and can be especially valuable for knowledge transfer, particularly in industries facing high turnover or an aging workforce."

Pairing a seasoned employee with a newer one helps create an ongoing relationship that's focused on continuous development, so mentoring works best when you're looking to foster long-term growth and leadership within your team.

It creates a two-way relationship where both parties benefit: mentors get to reinforce their own knowledge while guiding someone else, and mentees gain a deeper understanding of their role and the business at large.

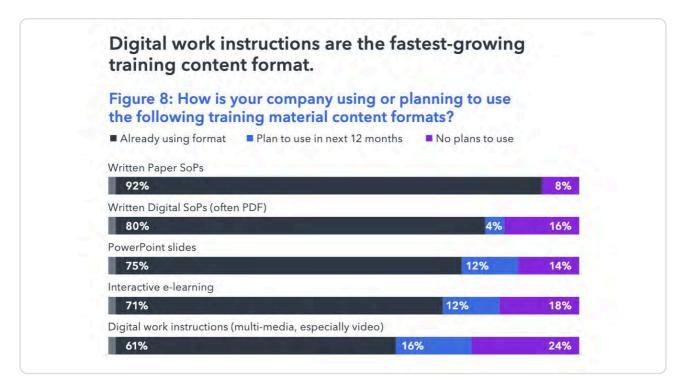
5. Make sure you get learner buy-in

There are two must-haves to ensure the success of your training programs:

- Provide the relevant content aligned with employees' actual needs.
- Engage employees in a way that makes them want to complete this training.

Simply put, no one benefits from a course that feels too monotonous. And this is a huge problem in many manufacturing training programs that still rely heavily on written documents, plain PowerPoint slides, and traditional paper-based materials.

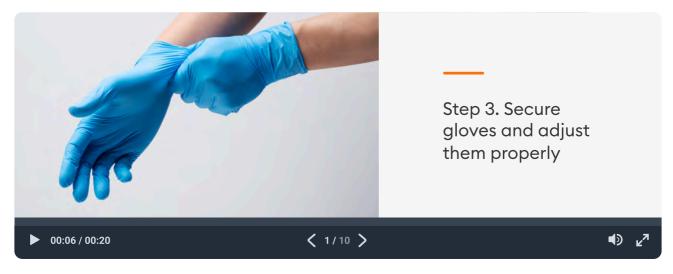
Fortunately, survey data shows that companies are increasingly investing in formats like digital work instructions and interactive eLearning:



Source: Poka's Report on the State of Training in Manufacturing

Dynamic and interactive content allows employees to connect with the material in ways that go beyond simply watching or reading. When learners can actively participate, whether through decision-making scenarios or simulations, it's much easier for them to understand and retain the knowledge.

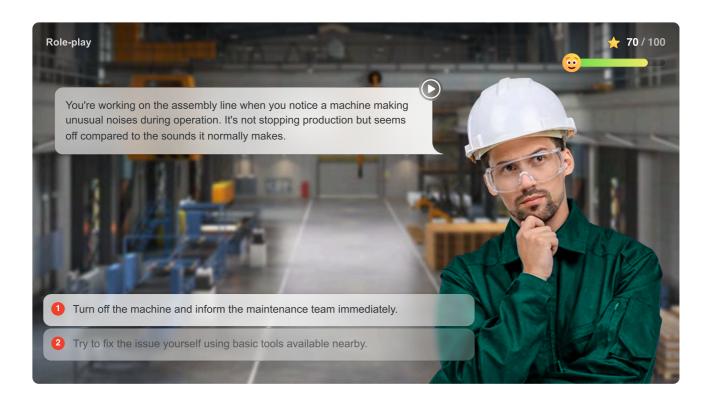
For example, you can use training videos to show real-life demonstrations of safety procedures, infographics to break down complex concepts visually, and quizzes for self-checking.



With iSpring Suite, you can quickly record video tutorials with a screencast, talking-head video, annotations, hints, and more.

Another highly dynamic activity is role-playing simulations.

These are branching scenarios that evolve based on the learner's choices in each scene.



Such activities are great for practicing handling hazardous situations in a risk-free environment and seeing the consequences of one's behavior.



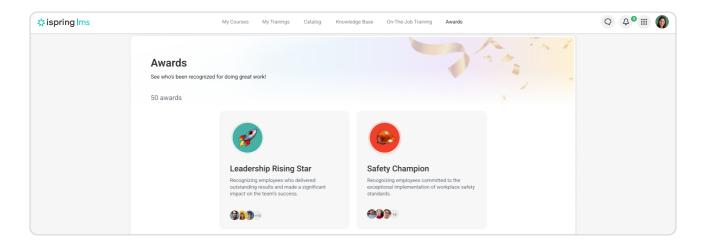
Anna Poli, Senior Instructional Designer at iSpring

"While role-play simulations won't fully replace hands-on training, they're an excellent way to reinforce knowledge and fine-tune behavior – all before stepping into the real-world workplace."



Also read:

Workplace Safety Training in Manufacturing: how to build a practical online course → Additionally, LMSs allow you to gamify the entire learning process by awarding points for completing training modules, allowing employees to compete for top spots on leaderboards, and earning badges for hitting specific milestones:



Contrary to some skepticism, gamification doesn't diminish the seriousness of the material – rather, it creates a more engaging, enjoyable, and ultimately effective learning environment, helping you achieve higher completion rates.

Also read:

eLearning Gamification: How To Apply It and Win the Game \rightarrow





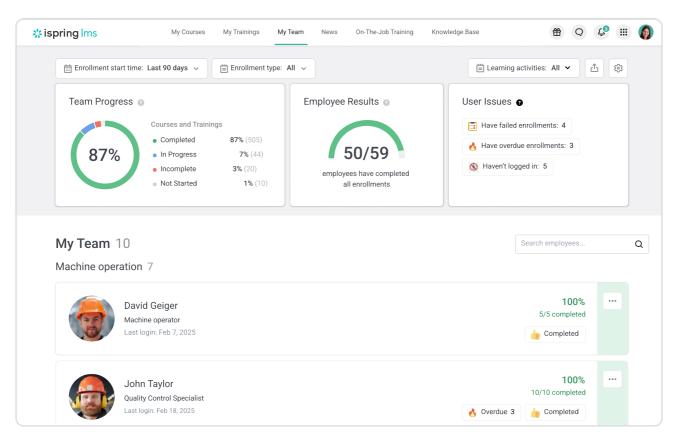
6. Monitor training effectiveness regularly

While manufacturing seems to be all about precision, it's surprising that more than half of organizations still rely on manual spreadsheets to track training. Of course, this adds to managers' workloads and leaves room for errors.

57%
of manufacturers rely on spreadsheets for tracking training

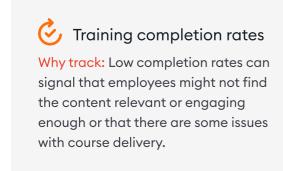
LMS reporting and analytics allow managers to track training programs from all angles and always have fresh data at hand.

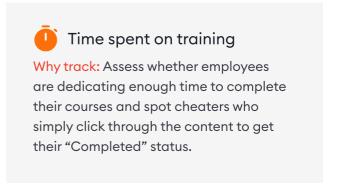
iSpring LMS, for example, provides manufacturers with 25+ detailed reports on individual, group, and department progress, along with a visual supervisor dashboard:



A supervisor dashboard in iSpring LMS provides a snapshot of key metrics and simplifies complex data into clear visuals, which helps you make smarter decisions about your training initiatives.

Learning management systems can offer plenty of data and insights you can track over time. Here are the most critical metrics you should focus on:







Certificate report

Why track: Monitor formal qualifications or compliance training. It ensures that employees are not only completing the training but also gaining recognized credentials that could be useful for audits or performance reviews.



Assessment (or quiz) report

Why track: Quickly spot where the training needs adjustment to make sure everyone's on track. If the scores are low, it's a sign that certain areas might need more attention or a different approach.

Additionally, remember to evaluate how the training progress is translating into real on-the-job performance.

For example, if you've rolled out safety training, track whether it leads to fewer incidents or higher safety compliance on the floor. Some LMSs allow you to link training results to real-world metrics like productivity, error rates, or compliance, so you can see the true impact of your training programs.

7. Keeping critical knowledge accessible and relevant

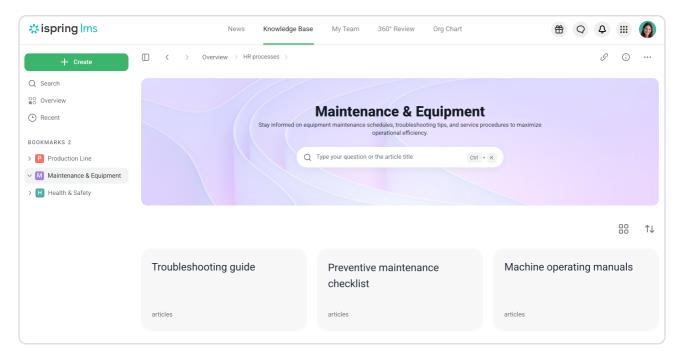
As we mentioned in the first part of the guide, for over 75% of organizations, limited access to training resources is a significant challenge when implementing training.

Any knowledge is only helpful if it's easy to access when you need it most. Without convenient storage, you risk spending too much time and resources creating training modules that no one can find.

Having a well-organized knowledge base in an LMS makes things much easier with secure, 24/7 access to all resources employees might need right at their fingertips.

In iSpring LMS, for example, managers can create an easy-to-use content hierarchy by organizing materials into spaces dedicated to

a particular department, project, or topic. Moreover, you can create and update instructions without leaving the platform.



In the iSpring LMS knowledge base, you can set up flexible access permissions to choose which employees can view or edit a specific space, folder, or document.

Regular updates will help you ensure the knowledge base remains a dynamic tool that meets the changing needs of your organization and keeps employees informed and effective in their roles.



Natalie Taylor, Senior eLearning Consultant at iSpring

"To keep training materials relevant and accurate, often the easiest and most effective way is to assign someone to own this process – a responsible person in each department or team who will manage their space or a specific folder in the knowledge base."

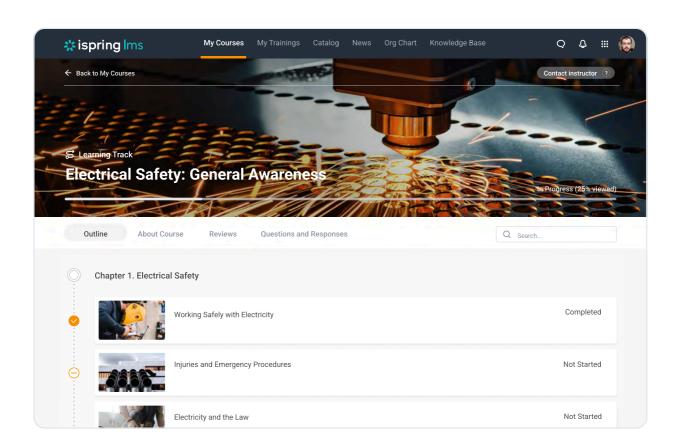
Conclusion

Effective employee training is an ongoing process that requires significant time, effort, and budget. But it's an investment that pays off in terms of higher productivity, compliance, and employee loyalty.

We hope this guide has provided you with thought-provoking ideas and promising strategies that you'll implement in your learning initiatives.

And if you don't know where to start or want expert advice, book a free consultation with our eLearning expert to discuss your training challenges and see how **iSpring** can help.

Book a free consultation



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