



Revolutionizing Training and Efficiency with IFS Connected Worker



How Nestlé's Mount Sterling Site Digitized Training and Reduced Unplanned Stops

Nestlé, the world's largest food and beverage company, adopted Poka's IFS connected worker platform to modernize and streamline training. Faced with inconsistent processes and knowledge gaps often resulting in unplanned stops and downtime, Nestlé's Mount Sterling facility digitized skills management, enabling faster onboarding, improved productivity, and standardized operations. With better access to real-time training and support, frontline workers were empowered to drive efficiency and performance.

With a portfolio of more than 2,000 brands, Nestlé's global operations are vast and complex. At their Mount Sterling, Kentucky facility, where the iconic Hot Pockets® are produced, streamlining training processes across intricate operations became a critical priority.

The team faced significant challenges with outdated methods and rising operational costs, ultimately prompting them to seek a solution that could meet the needs of a modern manufacturing environment.

To overcome these challenges, Nestlé implemented IFS's Connected Worker platform, initiating a digital transformation that fundamentally reshaped their approach to training and operational efficiency.

The results have been transformative, showcasing the power of digitization to address both immediate and long-term business objectives.

The Challenge: Costly, Inefficient Training Processes

Before adopting IFS Connected Worker, training processes at Nestlé's Mount Sterling facility were heavily reliant on manual and paper-based systems. These outdated methods were not only inefficient but also prone to inconsistencies that impacted overall operations.

About Nestle

Nestlé, one of the largest and most recognizable food companies in the world, operates in 188 countries and employs a diverse workforce of over 270,000 people.

nestle.com



Training records were maintained on spreadsheets, leaving room for inaccuracies and a lack of real accountability. This approach often led to inflated training hours and varied standards across teams, making it difficult to ensure consistent performance.

Heather Grant, Training Manager at the Mount Sterling site, spoke candidly about the limitations of the previous system. “We were telling people, ‘Let us know when you’re ready to sign off,’ but it just didn’t work,” she explained. Without a streamlined process or clear metrics for assessing skill proficiency, the training program fell short in equipping employees with the tools they needed to succeed.

In addition to inefficiencies in training, the facility faced another significant challenge: unplanned stops and downtime. These operational disruptions were frequently linked to skills gaps among workers, highlighting the urgent need for a comprehensive solution that could address both training and performance issues. The stakes were high—Nestlé needed a solution that could reduce downtime, improve efficiency and create a more accountable and effective training process.

The Solution: A Data-Driven, Digital Approach with IFS

Nestlé’s Mount Sterling site took a bold step forward by digitizing its training processes with the help of IFS’s Connected Worker platform. Recognizing that the factory’s most significant losses were tied to unplanned stops, the training team partnered with their Manufacturing Excellence (ME) department to identify areas where training improvements could have the greatest operational impact.

IFS Connected Worker quickly became the centerpiece of the site’s efforts to modernize and optimize their training system. The transformation was guided by three main pillars:

1. Digitalizing Training Content

Within just seven months, the Mount Sterling team digitized more than 300 work instructions and 75 skills, making them accessible to employees through IFS Connected Worker’s platform. This extensive digitization effort replaced cumbersome paper-based materials with streamlined digital resources, ensuring that critical information was readily available when and where it was needed.

2. Empowering Learners

A fundamental shift occurred in the way training was approached. Instead of relying on supervisors to dictate training milestones, accountability was shifted to the operators themselves. Workers were encouraged to take ownership of their development by requesting endorsements for specific skills only when they felt confident in their abilities. This learner-driven approach fostered a culture of responsibility and trust, empowering employees to actively engage in their growth.

Benefits seen with IFS Connected Worker

- 2.9% reduction in unplanned stops
- Reduced onboarding time by over 50%
- Increased skills visibility and audit readiness
- Real-time access to procedures and troubleshooting content
- Boosted operator engagement and ownership
- Shortened training cycles and improved shift handovers
- Captured tribal knowledge before retirement or turnover
- Empowered frontline participation in continuous improvement



3. Leveraging Integrated Dashboards

IFS Connected Worker's real-time dashboards provided supervisors with a powerful tool to monitor team skills and align training efforts with operational priorities. The dashboards eliminated the need for manual checks, streamlined audit processes, and made it easier to track progress at both individual and team levels. By using data to guide decisions, Nestlé was able to focus its resources on areas with the greatest impact on performance.

The Results: Driving Efficiency and Reducing Downtime

The implementation of IFS Connected Worker at the Mount Sterling site yielded impressive results, demonstrating the tangible benefits of a digital transformation.

1. Reduction in Training Hours

By digitizing and streamlining training processes, the site achieved a remarkable 27% reduction in training hours. This not only saved time but also translated into significant cost savings, allowing the facility to reallocate resources to other critical areas.

2. Minimizing Downtime

One of the most striking outcomes was a 2.9% reduction in unplanned stops. By addressing skills gaps and prioritizing training in high-impact areas, the facility was able to improve overall productivity and minimize costly disruptions.

3. Complete Digitalization of Training

As of today, 100% of production and warehouse training at the Mount Sterling site has been digitized. Sanitation training is also on track to be fully digitized as of Q1 2025, ensuring that every aspect of operations benefits from the streamlined processes enabled by IFS Connected Worker.

Heather Grant underscored the transformative power of data in driving these outcomes. "Training data has been a game changer," she said. "Now, we can quantify training and make data-driven decisions that directly impact operations."

A Culture Shift: From a Support Function to a Key Business Partner

The impact of IFS Connected Worker's implementation extended beyond operational improvements—it also sparked a cultural shift within the Mount Sterling facility. Historically, training was viewed as a necessary but routine support function. However, the integration of IFS Connected Worker elevated the role of training to a strategic business partner.

Heather Grant emphasized this shift, stating, "With IFS Connected Worker, we have a seat at the table. Providing actionable, data-driven insights has transformed how training is perceived. We're now actively involved in decision-making, not just supporting it."

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By delivering measurable results and actionable insights, the training team gained credibility and influence within the organization. This newfound status allowed them to play a more integral role in shaping strategies and driving continuous improvement.

Key Takeaways for Manufacturers

Nestlé's success with IFS Connected Worker offers valuable lessons for other manufacturers seeking to enhance their training and operational efficiency:

1. Focus on Impactful Metrics

IFS Connected Worker enabled Nestlé to prioritize training efforts in areas that had the highest operational impact, leading to measurable reductions in both downtime and training hours.

2. Empower Learners

Shifting accountability to workers fostered greater engagement and ownership, creating a more motivated and capable workforce.

3. Streamline Processes

Real-time dashboards eliminated redundant tasks, making audits faster and more efficient while giving supervisors the tools they needed to make informed decisions.

Transform Your Workforce with IFS Connected Worker

The story of Nestlé's Mount Sterling site highlights the incredible potential of a connected worker platform to drive efficiency, engagement, and measurable business results. If your organization is ready to embark on a similar journey, IFS Connected Worker is here to help.

Discover how IFS Connected Worker can empower your workforce, transform your training processes, and take your operations to the next level.



Find out more

For more information, contact your local IFS office or visit ifs.com

