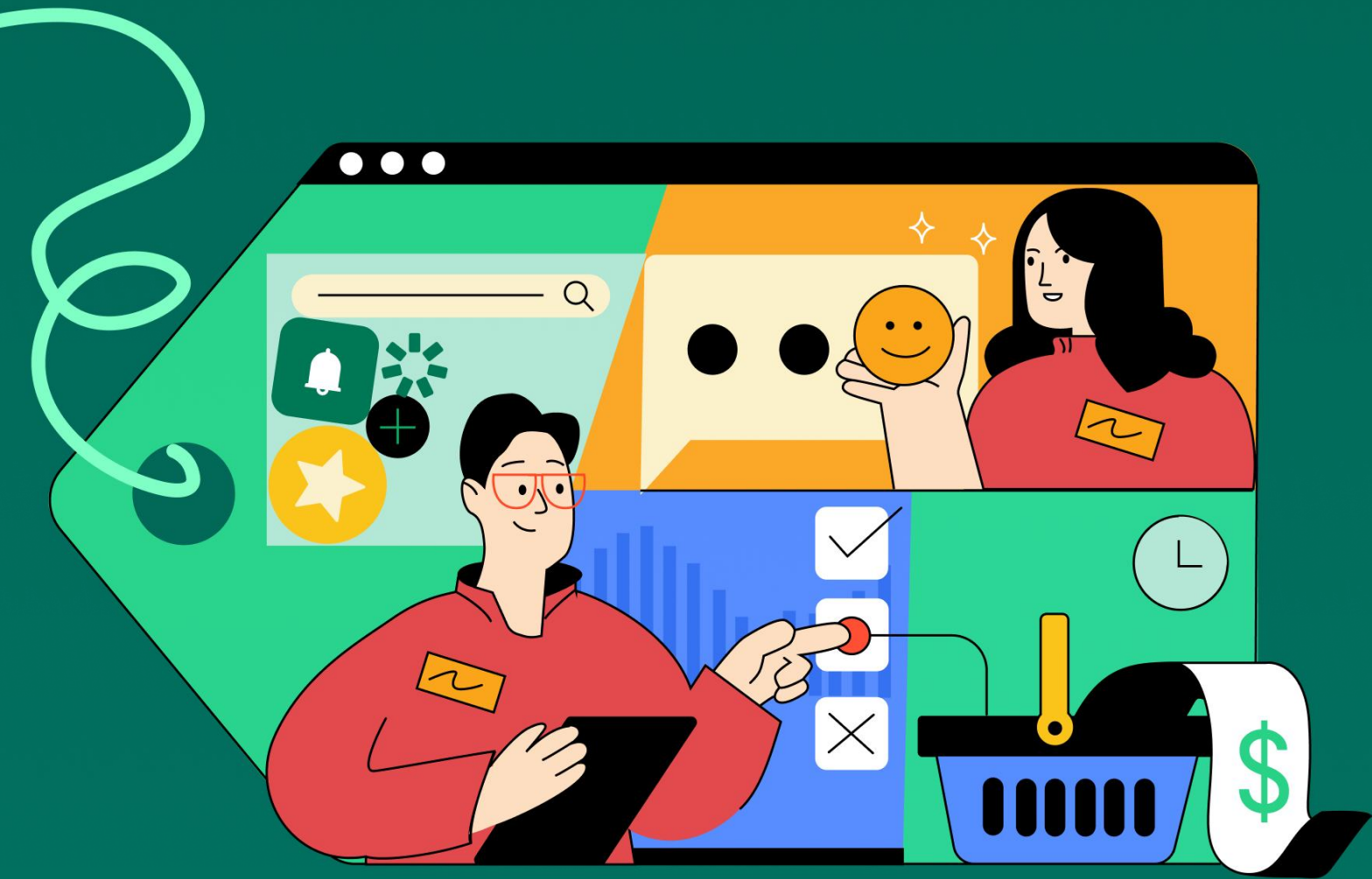# iSpring

OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE LMS:

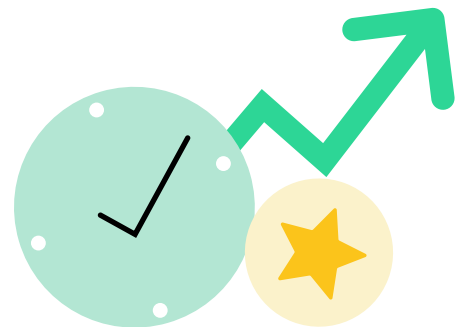## How to Grow Your Retail Business with Frontline Employee Training

If you're in the retail business, you know that frontline employees are the face of your brand. They greet customers, answer their questions, help them find products, and handle transactions, essentially shaping the entire customer experience. But what if they don't receive quality training? On the surface, this affects the first impression customers have of your brand. On a deeper level, this translates into crucial business metrics like lower sales and poor customer retention. In other words, bad training can ripple through your entire business and undermine its growth.

In this guide, we'll walk you through major mistakes retail businesses keep making when training their frontline employees, explain how these mistakes impact your bottom line, and show you how to build an effective, results-driven online training strategy with a learning management system (LMS). Let's dig in!

Overview

# Why your retail business hinges on frontline employee training

A bustling retail store where frontline employees must perform at their best, but they're stuck with text-heavy paper manuals, sporadic training sessions, and ineffective assessments. With minimal time for proper training, hires are left to struggle and figure things out on their own.

The result? Employees experience difficulties with basic tasks, like finding the right product information or handling returns correctly, misunderstanding the point-of-sale system – you name it. This leads to frustrated customers, longer wait times, and inconsistent service. And this is bad news for your retail brand.

Have you experienced the issues described above and not realized that poor training might have been the culprit? Then let's take a closer look at how inadequate or inconsistent frontline employee training can hurt your retail business performance:

Retail business metrics affected by inadequate or inconsistent training

Employee turnover rate

Customer satisfaction

Sales performance

Brand reputation
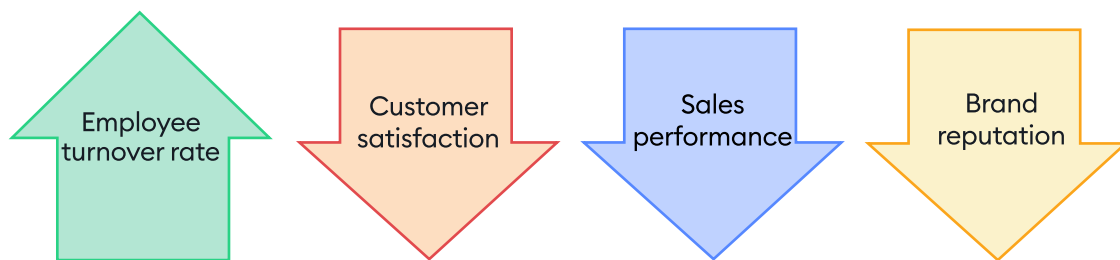
Employee turnover. When frontline employees don't receive sufficient quality training, they're more likely to feel overwhelmed, unsupported, or disengaged. This is a surefire recipe for pushing your workers to seek professional opportunities elsewhere. High turnover, in turn, means additional costs and time spent on recruiting and training new employees. Diverting resources to these tasks can disrupt your operations and hurt your bottom line.

Customer satisfaction. It's no secret that well-trained employees are crucial for delivering consistent, high-quality service. If your team isn't properly trained, you risk miscommunication, slow service, or poor product knowledge. Customer satisfaction levels will inevitably suffer: you'll experience fewer repeat visits and negative word-of-mouth, which will manifest in lower sales.

Sales performance. Sales employees who aren't confident in their roles may miss opportunities to upsell, cross-sell, or handle customer inquiries or objections effectively. These missed revenue opportunities and slower transaction times will hurt your store's profitability in the long run.

Brand reputation. Your brand's strength is closely tied to the customer experience. Poor customer service training can lead to inconsistent levels of service quality. A brand that cannot maintain service standards is perceived as unreliable and will struggle to build customer loyalty, which is a must for long-term success.

In other words, inadequate training doesn't just affect your employees – it directly impacts your business success.

Signs that your frontline employee training might not be cutting it

To prevent a decline in your retail business metrics, it's essential to spot the warning signs of ineffective frontline employee training.

Signs of poor frontline employee training

Outdated materials and formats   Inefficient assessment practices

Difficulty accessing key information   The lack of hands-on training

Inconsistent training quality   The lack of continuous training

The lack of allocated time for training

- **Outdated materials and formats.** You're using obsolete formats like printed manuals, lengthy PDFs, or static presentations that don't engage employees.

- **Difficulty accessing key information.** Your staff struggles to find information quickly because resources are scattered or limited across channels, platforms, or cloud drives.

- **The lack of allocated time for training.** Your employees don't have enough time for training: they have to skim new manuals or guides during a lunch break or quickly review them on the sales floor between assisting customers.

- **The lack of hands-on training.** Your training doesn't include real-world scenarios or hands-on practice so employees have trouble applying what they learn to real interactions with customers.

- **Inconsistent training quality across different stores/branches.** Different stores or teams receive varying levels of training so you cannot achieve standardized service quality.

- **The lack of continuous training.** Employees only receive training at the start with no ongoing development.

- **Inefficient assessment practices.** Your assessment practices are inconsistent and inefficient. You can't evaluate how well they have understood the material and whether they use it in their work effectively.

Does any of this sound familiar? Then you might want to reconsider the way you approach training your frontline employees.

Giving your retail training a makeover with an LMS

Wouldn't it be great if you could address all the issues of ineffective frontline employee training with just one neat solution? Well, you can – and this solution called a learning management system (LMS), is just a click away.

An LMS is a digital platform that allows you to create, manage, and deliver training content to your employees in a centralized, efficient way. The tool simplifies and automates the entire training process for both trainees and managers. Your employees will enjoy effective training while you can focus on improving performance and driving business growth, rather than getting bogged down in administrative tasks.
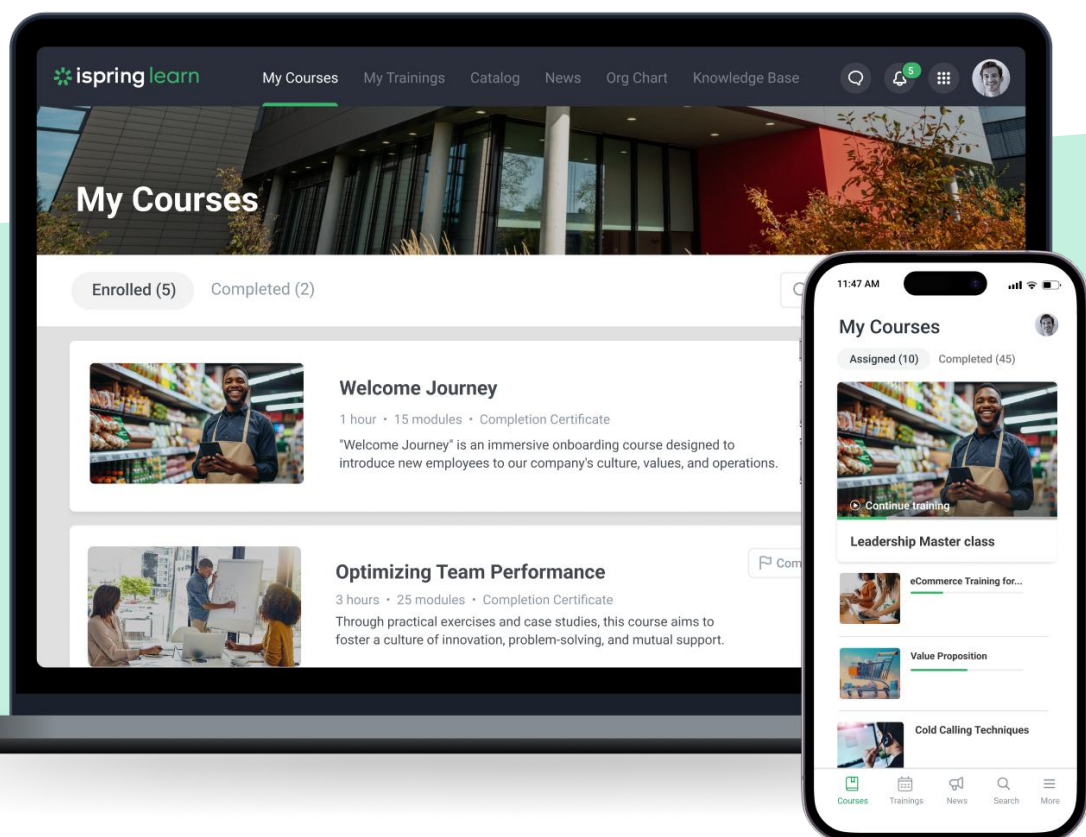
A good LMS has a range of features designed to perform tasks and projects specifically for retail training, such as on-the-job training, employee attestations, or product training.

Expert insight

Adopting an LMS can become a confusing experience even before you launch the platform – there are simply too many vendors to choose from. My recommendation for retail organizations that want to switch to digital training: **go for an LMS with a simple, intuitive interface and a clear-cut feature set.** Otherwise, you'll have to invest in extensive onboarding for your frontline employees and managers just to be able to take advantage of the new tool – and you already have enough on your plate, don't you?

iSpring Learn is a great example of an LMS that combines powerful training automation and management capabilities with a user-friendly interface. You can launch your frontline employee training in less than a day, even if you're a first-time LMS user.

Natalie Taylor,
Senior eLearning Consultant

Let's take a closer look at how an LMS can solve specific issues in your frontline employee training, using iSpring Learn as an example. We'll guide you through the process of the LMS setup and explore four excellent LMS capabilities that will help you turn training into a real business asset.

01 Laying the groundwork: How to launch an LMS in one day

With iSpring Learn, you can launch a training program for your retail company in a matter of hours, by following 4 simple steps:

1 Set up your account

🕐 **Time:** 30 minutes

Customize your portal, choose security settings, and tailor the appearance of the LMS to match your brand book.

2 Invite users to the LMS

🕐 **Time:** 5 to 30 minutes

Add users manually or simply import them in bulk from an Excel file.

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3 Publish and assign a course

🕐 **Time:** 15 minutes

Upload your training content and assign it to employees with a set deadline.

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4 Start tracking progress

🕐 **Time:** Instantly – automatic in real time

Evaluate learners' engagement and completion rates with visualized reports.

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As you can see, you can go from opening the LMS for the first time to delivering a course to your employees in just an hour. On top of that, iSpring Learn automates all repetitive tasks, like course enrollment, reminders, and reporting, giving you more time and resources for high-value tasks and responsibilities. The intuitive interface makes the entire process smooth and hassle-free: you can use iSpring Learn effectively from day one for any scenario – from onboarding to compliance and certification.

Now that your LMS is up and running, let's see how iSpring Learn's key features will completely change the way you upskill your retail team. It will help you overcome the most demanding training challenges and directly impact key business metrics like employee retention, customer satisfaction, sales performance, and overall profitability.

02 Say goodbye to scattered resources: Building an internal knowledge base

One of the most common issues that retail business managers face when it comes to frontline employee training is dealing with **scattered resources spread across various platforms and in different formats**. Fragmented training materials and information make it much harder for employees to quickly access the knowledge they need.

This problem can lead to a few issues:

- Your sales associates struggle to find the right information, leading to inconsistent product knowledge.

- Cashiers are unsure how to apply the new promotions tied to the product, resulting in delays at checkout and customer frustration.

- Store supervisors spend excessive time tracking down the correct materials to train their teams, pulling them away from their core responsibilities.

- Your business shows inconsistencies in service and operational inefficiencies.

To address this issue in a comprehensive manner, you need to concentrate all of the key knowledge and resources in one place. This will help your frontline employees feel prepared and confident that they can access the right information quickly.

An internal knowledge base is an excellent solution: you can build a unified repository where employees can easily find, share, and manage company information and resources.
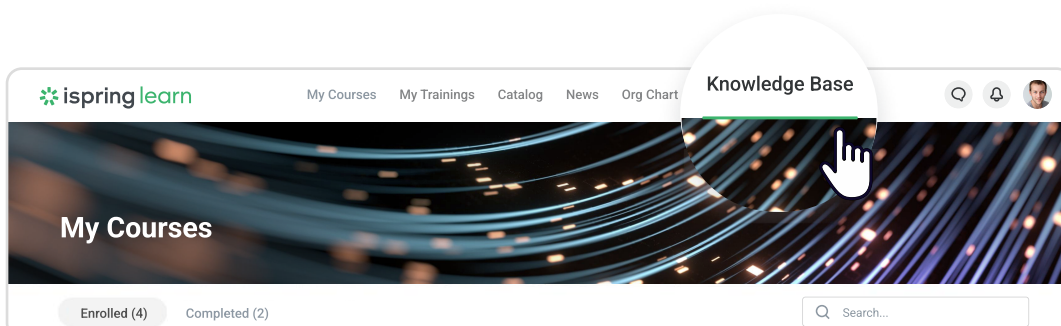
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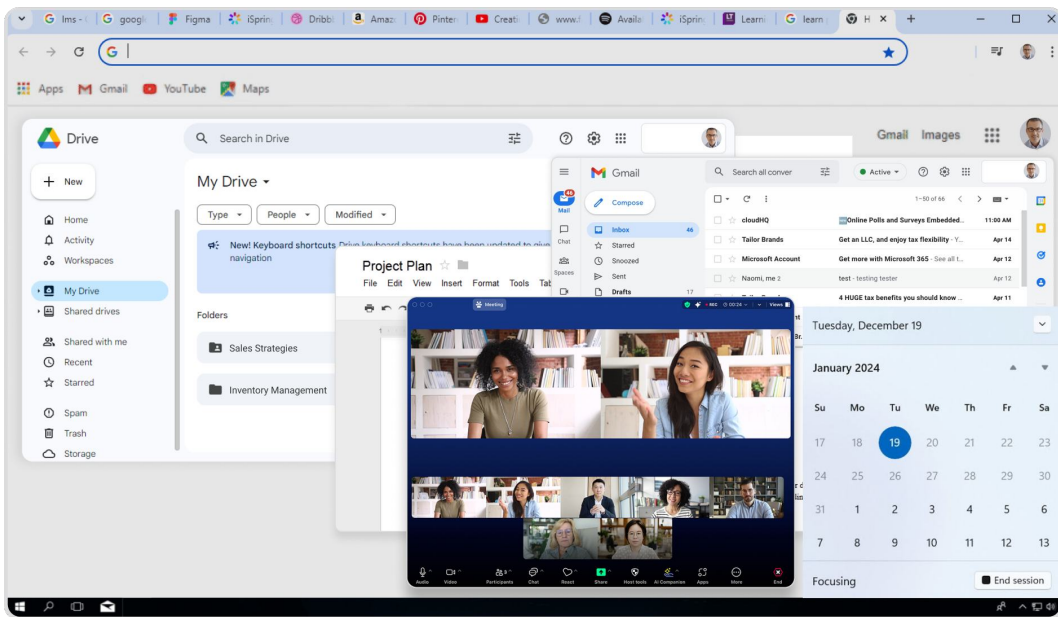
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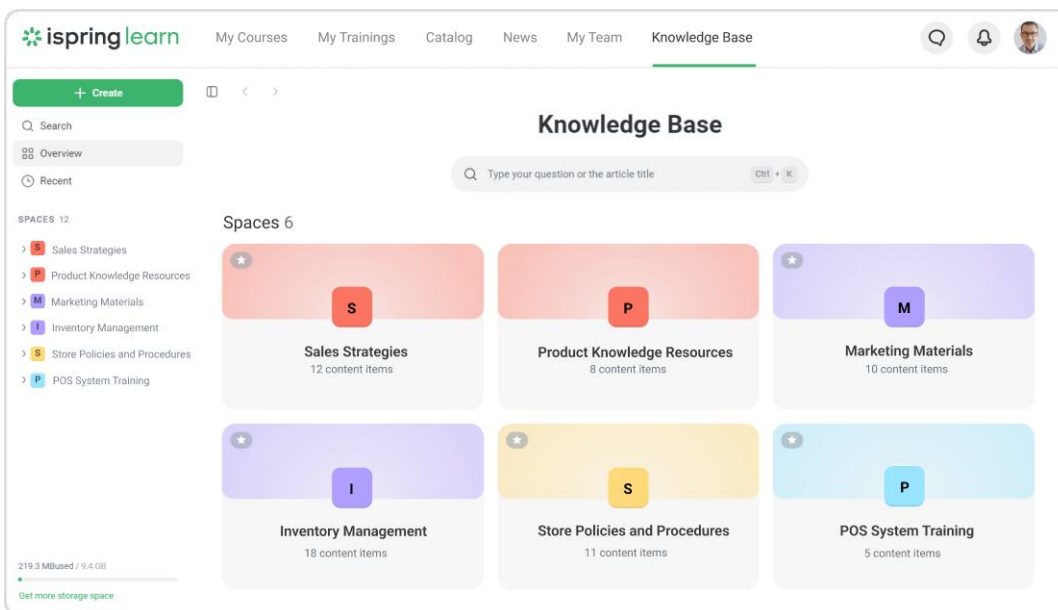
Easy, round-the-clock access to crucial information with a knowledge base will help you achieve several results:

Benefits of an internal knowledge base

- Improved product and service knowledge
- Streamlined store-to-store communication
- Fewer errors and miscommunications
- Less time spent on repetitive customer inquiries
- Higher sales floor efficiency
- Accelerated new employee onboarding

- **Higher sales floor efficiency.** With quick access to product information, your team can serve customers more effectively and speed up the sales process.

- **Streamlined store-to-store communication** thanks to maintaining consistent messaging across all locations.

- **Less time spent on repetitive customer inquiries.** Your employees will be able to find answers on their own, reducing the need to constantly ask managers for help.

- **Accelerated new employee onboarding.** New hires can quickly get up to speed by accessing all the training materials they need in one place.

- **Improved product knowledge and service** follows, which ultimately leads to reduced checkout errors and other mistakes.

In iSpring Learn, you can create and maintain a robust internal knowledge base with ease. Simply go to the user portal and click on Knowledge Base in the main menu ribbon.

![iSpring Learn interface screenshot showing My Courses page with navigation menu: My Courses, My Trainings, Catalog, News, Org Chart, Knowledge Base. Enrolled (4), Completed (2) tabs and a Search field.]

You'll find yourself on an intuitive, easy-to-navigate page where you can collect, structure, and add all the necessary resources and information that your frontline employees might need.
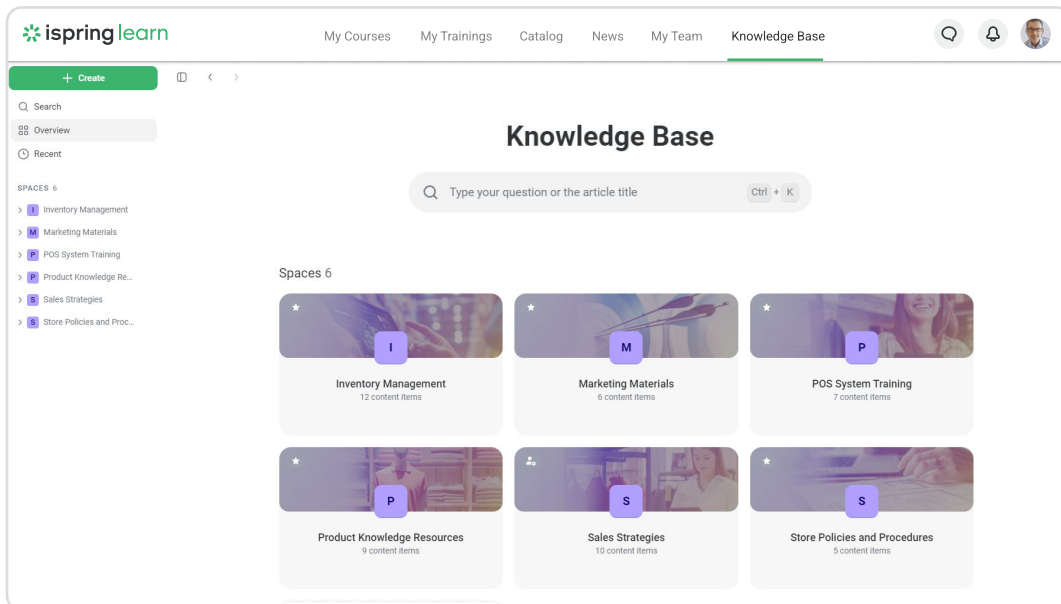
Knowledge Base consists of Spaces – collections of materials based on tailored categories, like Product Information and Updates, Customer Service Protocols, or Sales Techniques and Tips. You can add written manuals, videos, webinar recordings, PDF files, and other content formats to a relevant space with a couple of clicks. Your employees can open and go through the content online – there's no need to download the assets.

> iSpring Learn provides a **robust, enterprise-grade security protocol**, so you can be sure that your data, regulatory documents, sensitive employee records, and client information are safe.

To make sure your frontline personnel have access to the right resources, you can set up custom access controls. Your employees or team members will only see the assets they need, while administrators can curate and organize materials for supervisors, senior management, and other stakeholders. Don't worry about employees getting lost in all the documents, files, and resources. Advanced search functions make finding the right asset incredibly easy.

Expert insight

Encourage your frontline employees to share their unique expertise with the team by adding useful information to Knowledge Base. Whether it's a successful sales strategy, a creative solution to a customer issue, or insights into the latest product trends, every contribution counts. Also, **ask department heads and team leaders to update their spaces** and keep important materials fresh and relevant.

Natalie Taylor,
Senior eLearning Consultant

Pro-tip: A great way to improve your company resources is to collect employee feedback. In iSpring Learn, anyone can leave their input and opinions on the Knowledge Base assets in the form of comments. Managers and team leaders get automatic notifications when new comments come in, allowing them to quickly update or improve the resources in question.

That's it! Now your frontline employees are equipped with a solid knowledge base. This makes it much easier to organize effective knowledge transfer and maintain performance standards.

03 Effective skills assessment: Taking advantage of On-the-Job Training modules

Many retail businesses still use traditional manual methods to assess employee skills and evaluate compliance. Managers rely on paper forms or spreadsheets, manually checking off tasks and behaviors observed during shifts. Handwritten notes from these evaluations often get transcribed into other systems – or worse, lost along the way.

Expert insight

One of the biggest problems with this manual approach is the lack of standardization. The way evaluations are done can vary widely from one store to another, depending on how each manager interprets the guidelines. On top of that, the manual process is prone to errors and delays. Feedback can be slow, and keeping track of progress over time becomes a real challenge. Without real-time insights, it's difficult to maintain and improve performance standards effectively. If it sounds like something your company is doing, it might be time to give your evaluation methods a complete makeover.

Michael Keller
Chief Product Officer at iSpring

Once again, an LMS comes to the rescue by providing a solid way to observe and evaluate your frontline employees' performance, skills, and compliance with standards and regulations. In iSpring Learn, you can check all these boxes with on-the-job training modules.

Use the On-the-Job Training Module in iSpring Learn to:

- ✓ Develop targeted checklists for various job roles and tasks
- ✓ Lead observation sessions to assess adherence to work standards
- ✓ Provide feedback to all team members
- ✓ Monitor employee performance

- **Develop targeted checklists for various job roles and tasks.** For example, a checklist for a frontline sales associate might focus on tasks like greeting customers as they enter, helping them find the right sizes, restocking items, and making sure the fitting rooms are tidy. You might also add specific standards, like helping a certain number of customers per hour. By customizing these checklists, you make it easy for employees to understand exactly what's expected of them each day.

- **Lead observation sessions to assess adherence to work standards.** Use these checklists during a mentorship program, certification period, or when upgrading employees to new roles. You'll have a transparent evaluation system that works across the entire organization.

- **Provide feedback to all team members.** As the employee works through tasks, you can check things off and quickly see where they're doing well and where they might need a little more help. You can then give immediate, helpful feedback, so the employee knows exactly what they need to work on.

- **Monitor employee performance.** Get detailed reports on each on-the-job session to see how well your employees are performing in their roles. Use the results for effective grading and employee certification.

Pro-tip: You can easily organize and schedule on-the-job training sessions for your employees right in iSpring Learn. To do this, go to the OJT Sessions section of the LMS and click on New Session.

Select an observer (this can be a supervisor, manager, or mentor) and an employee to be trained and evaluated. Then, choose an observation checklist you want to use, schedule the date and time, and you're ready to go! All participants will receive email notifications about the session right away.


Once your employees complete their OJT sessions, they will see the observers' feedback as well and make a note of their areas for growth. Supervisors and managers can then use the results of the sessions to make informed decisions about promotions or role adjustments.

## 04 Helping management stay in the loop: Supervisor Dashboard

Speaking of informed decisions, it's crucial to keep upper management up to date on all things training. This includes employee progress, training effectiveness, and overall compliance with performance standards across the entire company.

This is especially important for larger retail chains, where reporting to upper management can get complicated. In a company with dozens of stores nationwide, tracking employee progress and training effectiveness across all locations can create a logistical nightmare. The sheer volume of data, along with different systems, schedules, or methods for tracking training, makes it hard to analyze data in a unified way.

You can say goodbye to all these headaches with iSpring Learn, which brings everything together into one convenient supervisor dashboard. You can allow managers to easily monitor training performance and access relevant data on employee progress without separate reports or shared LMS administrator access.
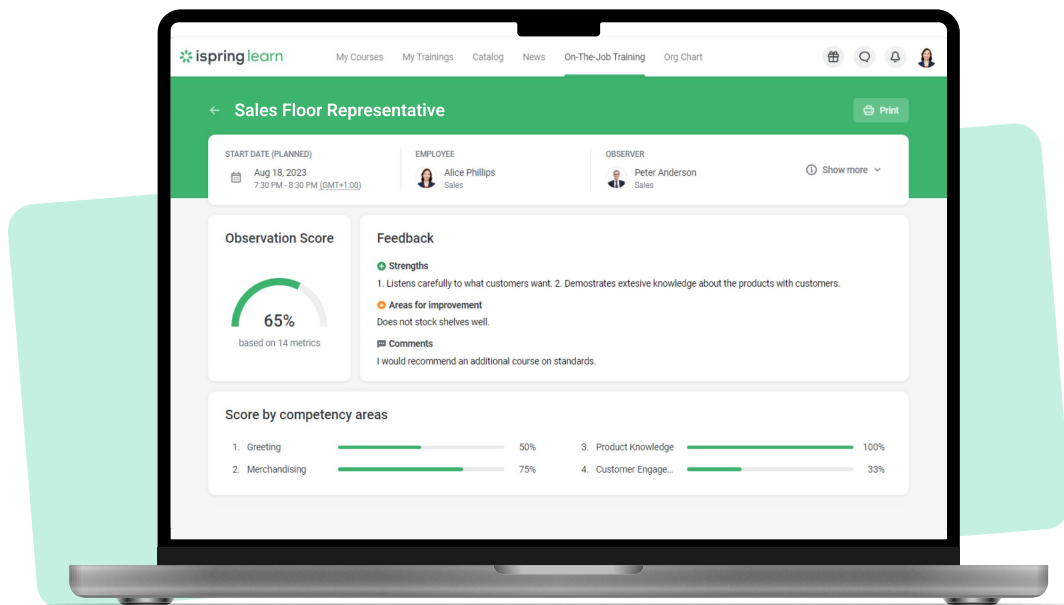
Once you've assigned relevant users a supervisor role, they'll see a new My Team tab with Supervisor Dashboard on their panel. This is what it looks like:
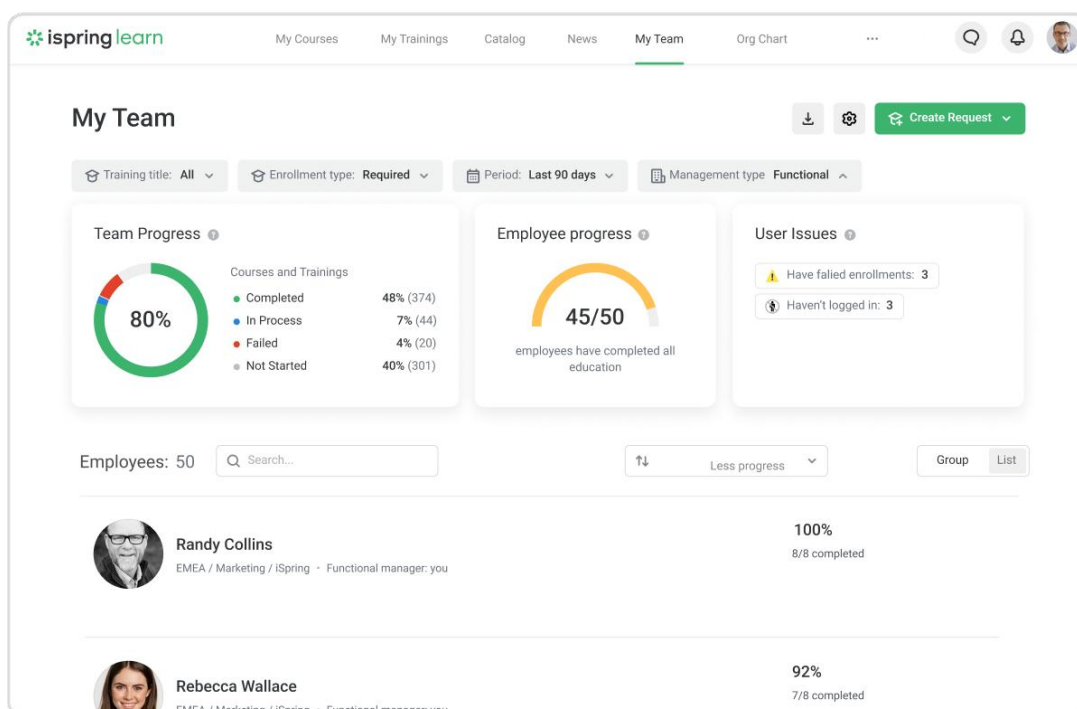
The Summary section includes three categories: Team Progress, Employee Results, and User Issues.

The dashboard shows you how many employees have completed a training program, and how many haven't started it yet. You won't have to gather this detailed information from different reports – iSpring Learn will collect all of the most essential data in one place.

The User Issues block will tell you which employees forgot deadlines or failed a test. Supervisors, along with training managers, will be informed in time to fix this. For example, they can remind their team about the test they've been assigned, or find out why they haven't visited the learning portal for a long time.

The My Team section offers learning statistics on all employees: the date of their last visit and the number of completed, failed, overdue, and expired courses. With this input, managers can see who makes excellent progress and studies extra materials and recommend them for the talent pool.

Supervisors can also see their team's overall progress as a percentage, helping to identify employees who meet company standards and perform their job duties well. This progress metric can serve as an additional KPI for line managers. To track their team's success, they simply need to access iSpring Learn.

Besides, it's easy to track intern and new employee progress with Supervisor Dashboard. In User Profile, you can see which topics an employee has already completed and which ones have not been started. This will identify the status of the internship and let managers know what tasks an intern can already take on.

And there you have it! Now your management can stay up to date with employee training and performance without leaving their desks.

05 Effective Training in Your Employees' Pockets: Enabling Mobile Learning

Since we live in a time when smartphones have almost become extensions of our hands, it makes sense that training and other important updates should be accessible when you're on the go. This is a must for frontline employees who are constantly on their feet, juggling customer interactions, restocking, and managing tasks throughout the store.

With the employees' needs in mind, iSpring Learn provides a native mobile app for online training that's available for both iOS and Android devices.

With mobile learning, they can complete courses, review product information, or brush up on customer service skills right from their phones, whether they're on a break, commuting, or even between helping customers.
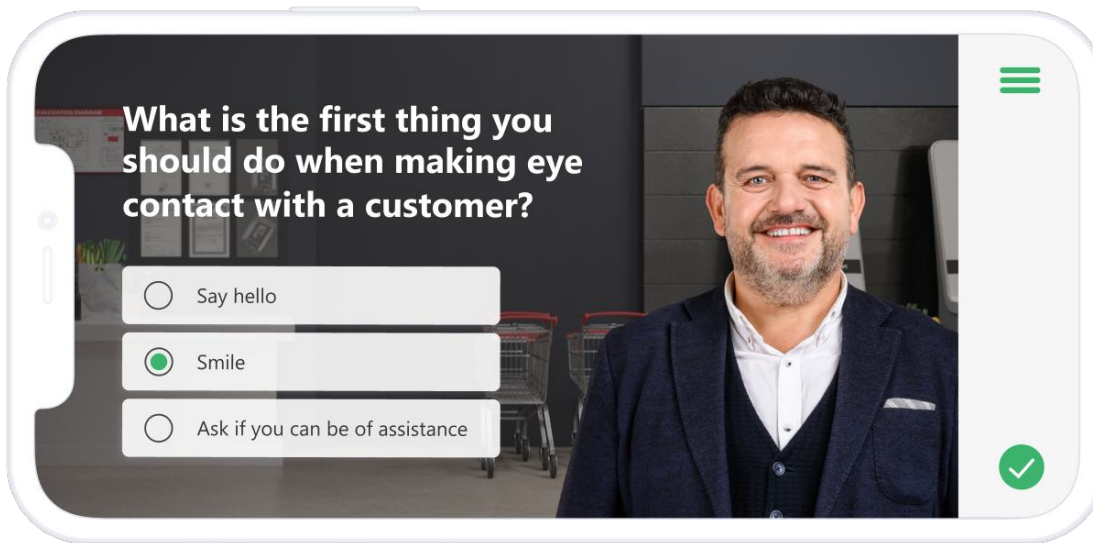
To enable mobile learning, download the iSpring Learn mobile app from Google Play or the App Store. The app has all the key capabilities that the desktop version of iSpring Learn provides: you can train, supervise, and track your employees' progress with your mobile device.

Expert insight

What makes the iSpring Learn app a true must-have for frontline employees is **the ability to learn offline**. Workers can download a course or asset and then engage in training whenever they have time, even without an internet connection. This flexibility is a game-changer, especially for those situations where Wi-Fi isn't great, such as during a commute or in large malls where the signal can be patchy.

Natalie Taylor,
Senior eLearning Consultant

All progress and performance reports are available in the mobile version of the LMS, so trainers and managers won't miss any critical updates and can track employee development in real time. And offline training doesn't disrupt the tracking process in any way – once the employee is back online, their progress is automatically synced with the platform.
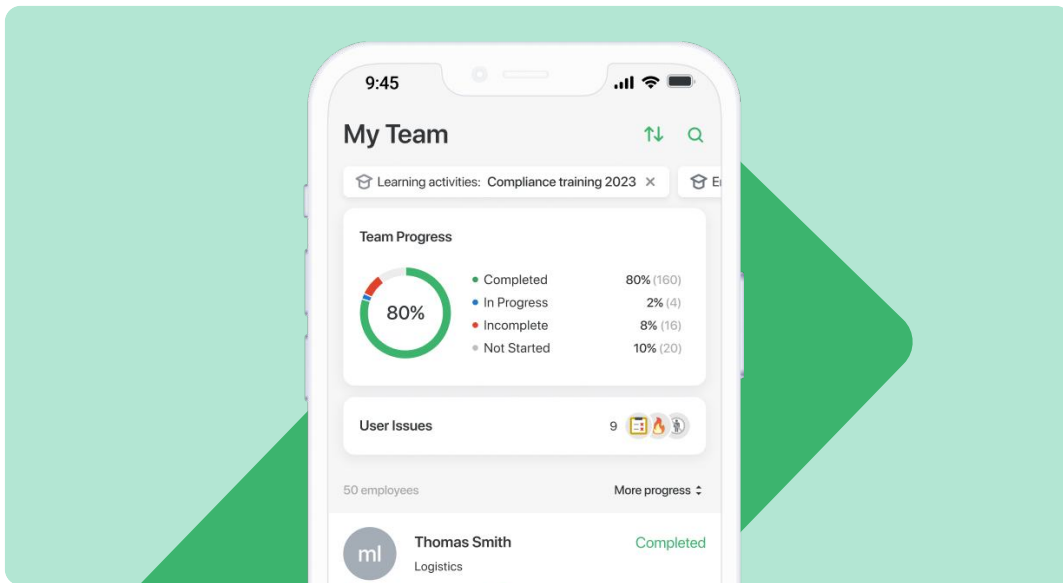
The iSpring Learn mobile app also solves the problem of employees missing out on important updates or training sessions due to varying schedules. You can inform workers about deadlines, announcements, training assignments, and upcoming events with push notifications that they'll see on their phones or tablets right away.
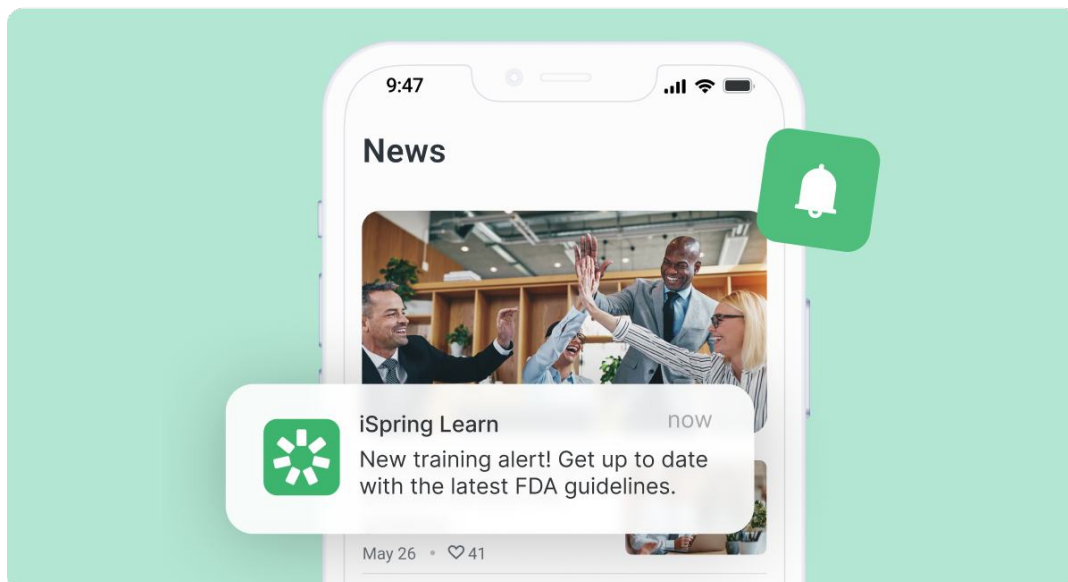
Pro-tip: you can customize your mobile LMS to mirror your company's unique identity. Simply request a custom mobile LMS app design with your logo, color scheme, and branded elements.

With all the essential knowledge and resources in their pockets, your frontline employees will feel more confident, be better prepared to assist customers, and perform their roles more effectively every day.

06 Wrap up: What you get when you get an LMS

Let's review why an LMS is a must for quality frontline employee training:

Benefits of training frontline personnel with an LMS

- Effective training automation
- Quick access to key information and assets
- Structured skill and performance evaluation mechanisms
- Insightful training analytics
- Online and offline mobile learning

- **Effective training automation** saves time and ensures training consistency across all locations.

- **Quick access to key information and assets** helps employees stay prepared to assist customers and perform their duties well.

- **Structured skill and performance evaluation mechanisms** enable you to easily conduct on-the-job training and attestations.

- **Insightful training analytics** give you the data you need to refine your training programs and close skill gaps.

- **Online and offline mobile learning** means that your employees can learn anytime, anywhere, to make sure that they stay up-to-date, even when they're on the go.

To experience these benefits first-hand, don't hesitate to say goodbye to dated, ineffective methods and switch to online training. You'll be excited to see how employee training success will consistently translate into happier customers, higher revenue, and better brand reputation.

Are you interested in trying **iSpring Learn** to launch effective, results-driven retail training? Start a 30-day free trial or book a demo with our eLearning expert, who will walk you through the platform and help you take full advantage of it.

Contact us – we're always here to help you with all things eLearning!

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