FACT SHEET

FOOD SAFETY CULTURE

Food Safety Culture drives compliance for excellence!

What is Food Safety Culture?

"The shared values, beliefs and norms that affect mindset and behaviour towards food safety in, across and throughout an organization." (PAS 320: 2023)

> *A behavior based food safety culture model is designed to encourage behaviour change and continuous improvement by keeping food safety at the forefront*

Why is Food Safety Culture Important?

Food Safety Culture will influence how individuals within an organization value food safety, their attitude towards standards compliance, and their willingness to discuss concerns and do what is right when no one is looking.

Elements of Food Safety Culture

- Management Commitment & Involvement, leading Food Safety at the front
- Communication of Food Safety Culture to build awareness
- Structured training to develop and execute Food Safety Culture initiatives
- Employee engagement and feedback for continuous improvement
- Assessment of effective implementation of Food Safety Culture throughout the organization

Process Map for Implementing a Food Safety Culture



Examples of Food Safety Culture Initiatives

- Evidence of Management Commitment through resource allocation, continuous involvement, and facilitation of scheduled food safety audits.
- Implementation of a cross functional, multifaceted, qualified Food Safety Team or Task Force.
- Food Safety Training for new hires. Periodic refresher training and certification.
- Communication of food safety campaigns to build awareness. Strategic placement of signage, daily Toolbox Meetings on food safety topics, engagement activities (e.g., food safety quizzes, song, poetry, poster competitions) and employee reward and recognition programs.
- Incorporation of food safety requirements in: an established and current food safety policy, vision

and mission statements, job descriptions, key performance indicators, the discipline matrix, and incentive programs.

- Development and communication of a Whistleblower Policy that facilitates appropriate reporting of food safety concerns without fear or favor.
- Partnership with Suppliers for compliance through an established Supplier Management Program that addresses Food Safety, Food Fraud and Food Defense.
- Customer engagement and communication to build trust for food safety at the organization.
- Active pursuit of Food Safety Compliance and Certification with Third Party Certification Bodies. Align with international standards.
- Supported brand positioning with food safety at the forefront.

Benefits of Food Safety Culture

1. **Increased Employee Engagement, Confidence and Retention**

   We can expect increased morale as employees are trained and engaged in a food safety culture. They feel valued and are more likely to be satisfied with their work environment, thereby contributing to lower employee turnover and increased support for food safety compliance.

2. **Enhanced Operational Efficiency and Reduced Cost of Quality**

   Proper food safety practices minimize spoilage and waste, leading to cost savings and economic benefits. A culture that emphasizes food safety encourages standardized procedures, effective documentation, monitoring, validation, and verification, for overall improvement in operational efficiency.

3. **Proactive, Not Reactive Risk Management**

   A strong food safety culture helps identify potential risks early, allowing for proactive measures to prevent issues before they arise. Organizations are better prepared to handle food safety crises effectively, thereby minimizing risks to their customers and potential damage to their brand reputation.

4. **Improved Regulatory Compliance for Excellence**

   Strong food safety culture ensures that organizations comply with local, regional, and international food safety regulations, thereby reducing the risk of legal penalties and fines. Organizations are in a better position for food safety certification such as Codex HACCP, ISO 22000 and GFSI.

5. **Increased Consumer Confidence**

   When food safety is prioritized, consumers have greater trust in the safety of the food they purchase and consume. Organizations known for their commitment to food safety have built a positive reputation, which can differentiate them from competitors. Consistent food safety practices contribute to customer satisfaction and loyalty, encouraging repeat business.

6. **Improved Public Health**

   A robust food safety culture helps prevent contamination and ensures proper food handling, leading to fewer incidents of foodborne illnesses. Improved food safety practices contribute to better health outcomes within the community, aligning with broader public health goals.

7. **Sustainable Development & Food Security Initiatives**

   A strong food safety culture contributes to reduced food waste and improved efficiency, thereby supporting environmentally sustainable practices. Organizations with robust food safety practices are also more resilient to disruptions, ensuring a stable and safe food supply for consumers and contributing to overall food security in the region.

8. **Market Growth and Expansion**

   Organizations with strong food safety practices can access new markets and export opportunities, boosting economic growth. For tourism-dependent regions, a strong food safety culture enhances the safety and quality of dining experiences, attracting more visitors. Tourists are more likely to leave positive reviews and recommend destinations with a reputation for excellence in food safety compliance. Overall, organizations attract more business because of high food safety standards and a positive culture.

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