

8 tips for successful retail training

 By [Michael Hanly](#)

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A retail business is only as good as its employees. Essentially it is staff who represent the brand since they are on the front lines dealing with customers.



Image source: Ketut Subiyanto from [Pexels](#)

While some business owners might shirk investing in workers to save money, they do so at their peril. With so much competition in the retail space, even the hint of sloppy service will drive consumers elsewhere.

This makes retail training a priority in any firm, particularly in light of customers wanting more choice in how they make their purchases. Today's employee needs to be as proficient in e-commerce as they are in the physical store, and this requires a commitment to upskill them.

We at New Leaf Technologies have decades of experience in retail training, and over the years have arrived at some basics all businesses should adhere to.

Below are our top tips for business owners, managers and learning professionals in the sector:

1. Have clear objectives

Training ultimately needs to benefit the business, so be clear on your specific goals and outcomes you want to achieve. The question needs to be asked: What knowledge and skills do you want your employees to acquire?

2. Customised training for your business

Every business has its own unique challenges so training needs to provide insights on how to address them. Incorporate scenarios that happen on the shop floor so workers will know exactly how to respond.

3. Product knowledge

There is nothing worse than a sales representative staring blankly at a customer when questioned about a product. Accordingly, employees should be equipped with in-depth knowledge about all products and services.

4. Drive home a customer-centric approach

Excellent retailers possess soft skills as well as sales ability. They need to understand customers and be prepared to not only listen but understand what they are saying. A little empathy goes a long way.

5. Welcome, don't resist, technology

Technology is a retailer's friend because it enhances engagement and efficiency. Certain e-learning platforms can be customised to fit an employee's specific career development requirements by using an algorithm that identifies their knowledge gaps.

6. Learning must be ongoing

It's all very well having a workshop here and there, but chances are very good that employees will remember very little once these sessions are over. For this reason, learning must be continuous so they can continue to grow as professionals and benefit the business.

7. Feedback, feedback and more feedback

The effect of training needs to be measured. There is absolutely no point holding five seminars with no way of knowing whether an employee is progressing. This is why it is vital to use a platform equipped with moderator and quantifiable metric functionality that can give you information like how much time is being spent on training and whether staff members are doing what is required of them.

8. A supportive training environment

It is important for workers to feel like they are being given the necessary support. A "my way or the high way" attitude very seldom yields desired results, so employees need to be mentored and have the freedom to ask questions.

ABOUT MICHAEL HANLY

Michael Hanly is the Managing Director of New Leaf Technologies. Michael has been in the e-learning industry for almost 10 years and has overseen many projects in the corporate training space, working on a multitude of well-known brands such as Bidvest, Nando's, Allan Gray, Nissan, and the Emirates National Oil Company.

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