



Questionmark Case Study

Perception Dishes up Results for Restaurant Chain

Scenario

Established in 1972, today the Cheesecake Factory, Inc. operates more than 93 full-service, casual dining restaurants, a foodservice operation, and a bakery production facility.

In the restaurant industry turnover rates often exceed 100% so the company developed programs to support the success of new hires, help improve retention, and ensure future growth to ensure consistent operations.

The Cheesecake Factory currently employs 22,000 people. All newly hired hourly staff members receive on-the-job training, and some staff receive classroom training and all take quizzes and undergo the certification process. Managers are trained, quizzed and certified in all areas of the restaurant. They are then brought to the company's corporate center in Los Angeles for leadership, food sensitivity, and other "soft skills training" at the Cheesecake Factory Institute.

Training Program

The Cheesecake Factory delivers most of its training via paper—this includes station-specific booklets, quizzes and certifications for staff, and training binders with modules and certifications for managers. Because of its commitment to work-life balance, the company requests that trainees read material during designated study time while in the restaurant. Some locations have training rooms used for reading, group training, and staff meetings.

Choosing Questionmark

The Cheesecake Factory decided to use Questionmark™ Perception™ assessment software for manager training and development. They say the program provides them with fair and accurate scoring, self-paced reviews of incorrect answers, time-savings for managers, greater accuracy and efficiency, and the ability to track training and development and to update quizzes immediately.

Aiming for Consistency

The Cheesecake Factory, Inc. currently employs over 1000 managers and hires as many as 500 new managers each year. According to Management and Technology Specialist Darrin Cockle, "As we continue to grow, we must ensure our training process is accurate and consistent." Managers and other key staff, such as lead trainers, take quizzes on computer terminals in each restaurant. Although most hourly staff members don't use computers to take their quizzes, The Cheesecake Factory, Inc. uses Perception's question bank to create conventional quizzes for all staff.

High Stakes & Low Stakes

The Cheesecake Factory certifies its managers using on-the-job demonstration—performance. These elements are recorded on paper. As part of the certification process, managers must also take "high stakes" quizzes and pass within two attempts. When a manager fails the first attempt, he or she is coached and reviews missed questions. The mentor then tracks the individual's completed certification in Questionmark.

In addition, all managers complete ongoing quizzing and certification as part of their continuing development—either Career Roadmap development for front-of-house managers, or Kitchen Toolbox development for kitchen managers. These ongoing development programs are self-paced and considered "low stakes." Therefore managers have multiple opportunities to pass.

More information

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