



# HOW TO CHOOSE A MOBILE LEARNING PLATFORM

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# Let's Try Something Different.

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Look up a few of your favorite stores and restaurants. Now check out the most positive and the most negative Google or Yelp reviews. What do most of them have in common?

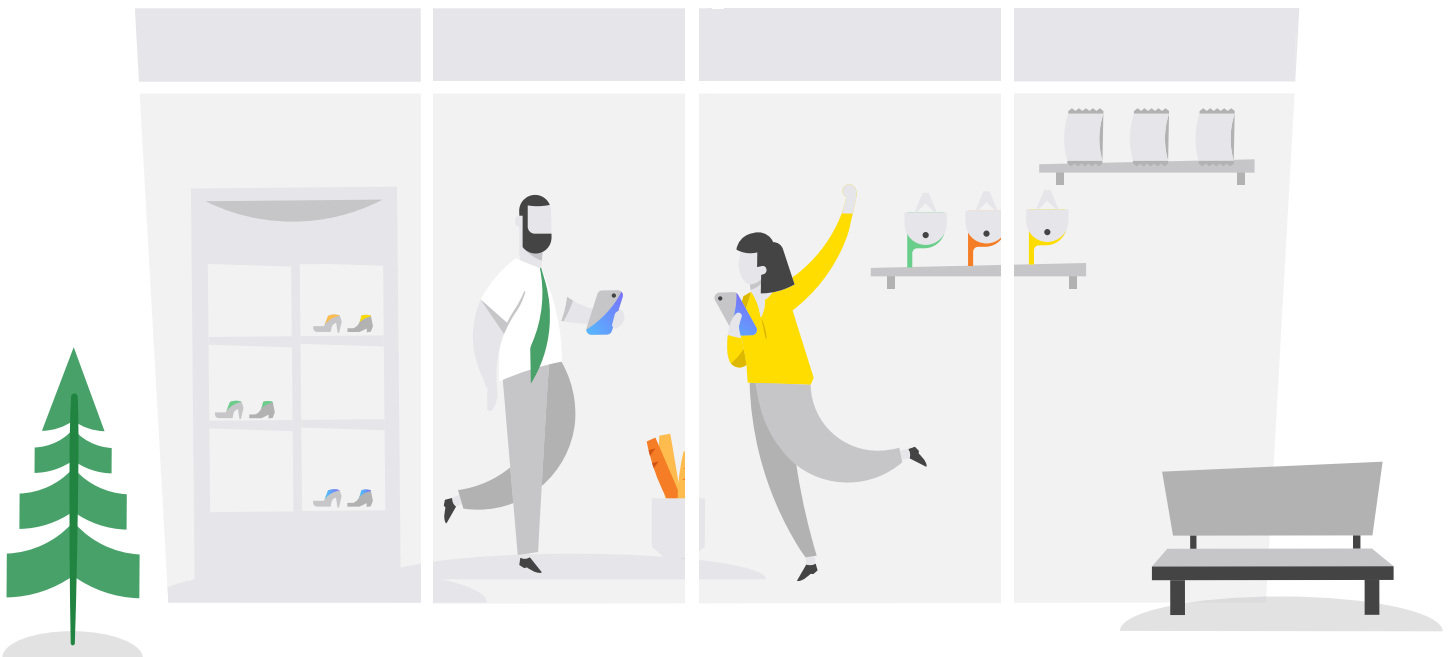
Frontline employees. What they did or didn't do, what they said or didn't say, and what they knew or didn't know.

And whether they be sales associates, beauty advisors or servers, training is ultimately responsible for all of the above.

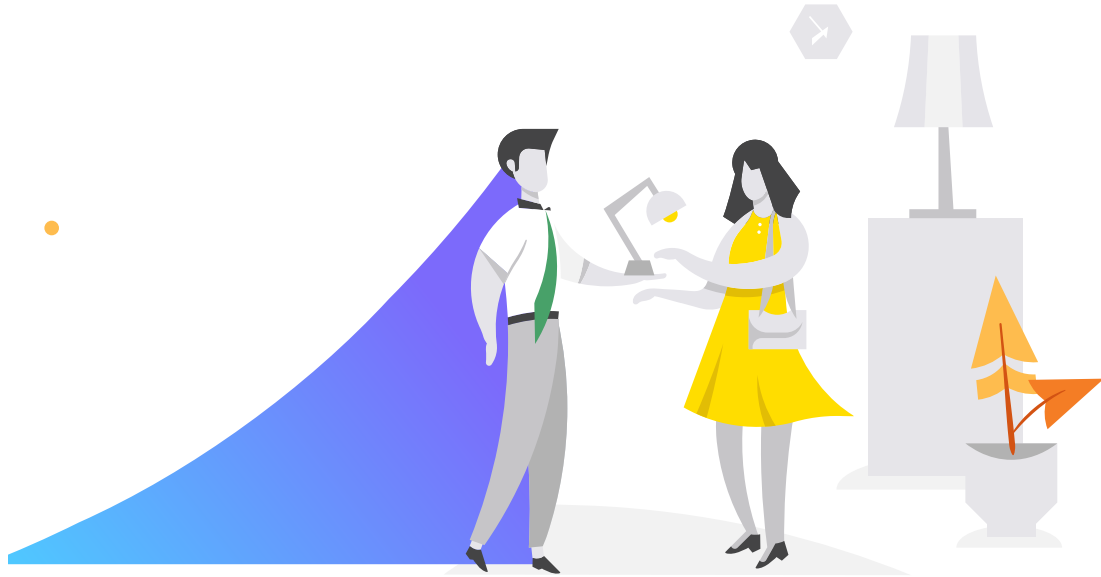
To effectively deliver training, every business with frontline employees needs a **mobile learning platform**.

## Why?

Since frontline employees don't have regular access to a computer, mobile is the perfect way to deliver frequent, continuous learning that's also short and manageable.



Busy frontline employees who spend the day on their feet helping customers have a set of very specific needs when it comes to learning.



Here are 5 of them:



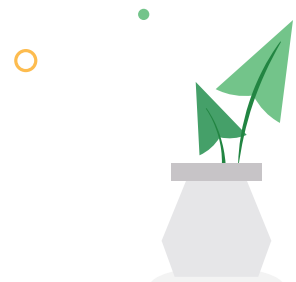
**Learning must be consistent.**

Employee knowledge and skills are part of an employer's brand, just as much as the logo and interior design are. Branding must be consistent to be effective.



**Learning must be accessible.**

Frontline employees are geographically dispersed and usually don't have access to a computer or company email address on the job.



**Learning must be fast and efficient.**

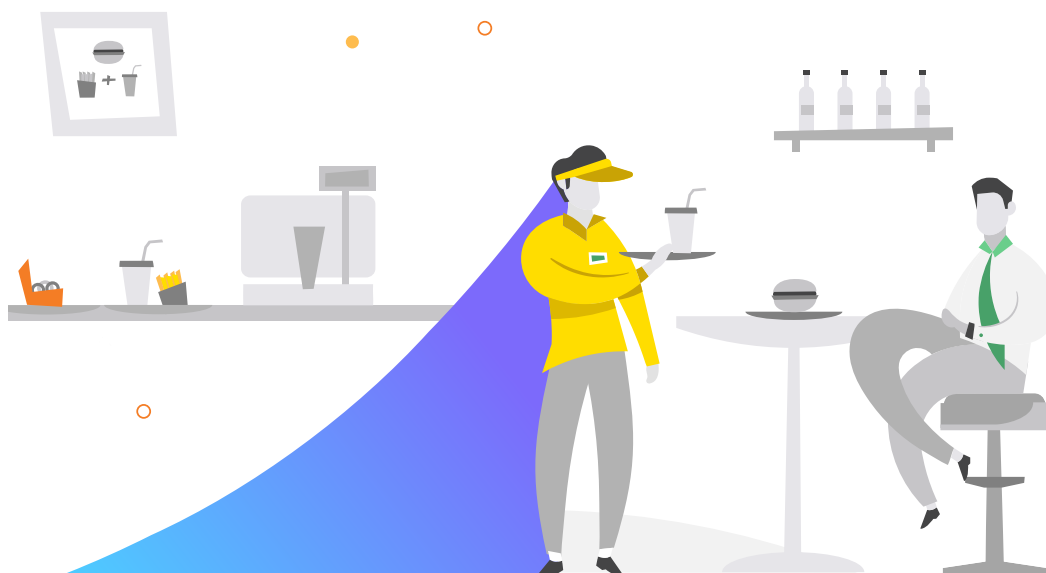
Frontline employees need to be onboarded and ready to confidently interact with customers ASAP.

**Learning must generate measurable results.**

It's vital to demonstrate the quantitative and qualitative value of training internally, and measurable results are critical for this. Measuring and analyzing the impact of your training will help you understand what works and what needs improvement, empowering you to make data-driven decisions.

**Learning must improve the employee experience.**

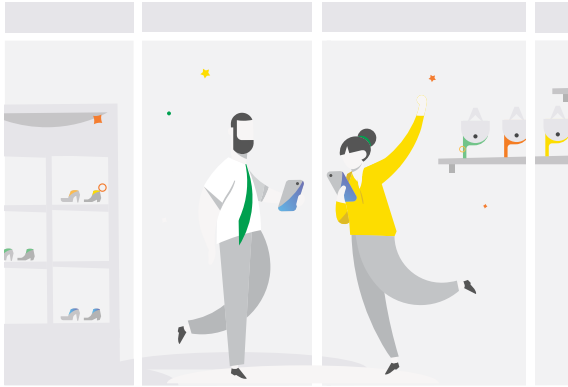
Retail and hospitality workforces have some of the highest turnover rates out there. Continuous, frequent employee learning and development opportunities are crucial for retaining these workforces.



# How Can You Decide on the Right Mobile Learning Platform?

The right choice will help your organization:

## 1. Effectively Train Your Frontline Employees



## 2. Help Your Business Meet Strategic Goals



With the sheer volume of choices out there, making a decision can seem like reading a dinner menu with way too many options. Sure, they might all look amazing, **but which one is right for you?**

**This guide will help you discover what you need from a mobile learning platform, take concrete steps to make the right choice and successfully implement that choice.**



# 4 Ways to Train Frontline Employees and Their Pros and Cons

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A mobile learning platform is the most efficient, scalable and cost-effective way to give your employees the training they need to meet and exceed consumer expectations.

That being said, learning doesn't happen only online. A blended approach to learning has been proven to be more effective than using only one approach. A study on social learning divided university students into 2 groups. One group learned in classroom sessions only, while the other group spent 70% of their learning time in the classroom and 30% in informal peer discussions. The blended learning group had higher test scores and reported enjoying the learning more than the classroom-only group<sup>1</sup>.

Here are the options most retail and hospitality employers turn to for training their frontline employees - and the good and bad things that go with them.

## In-Person Training - Classroom onboarding, offsites, and training manager visits.

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### Pros:

- + **Learning directly from an expert.** Employees learn from a pro who's seen it all.
- + **Human connection** and the chance to ask questions and network.

### Cons:

- **Time-consuming.** Getting frontline, shift-working employees in the same place at the same time is like a game of whack-a-mole.
- **Information overload is likely** because sessions tend to be longer.
- **Passive learning style vs active learning style.** Passive learning doesn't help employees apply knowledge or retain it long-term. It's not the best option for employees who actively interact with customers every day.
- **Expensive.** Costs from the trainer's gas, hotel and phone bills all add up.
- **Success is dependent** on the presentation style and personality of the trainer.
- **It's not scalable** across hundreds or thousands of locations.
- **Difficult to measure engagement** unless you're filming the participants to see how they're participating in the training (which we would *definitely* not recommend).

**Take-Home Materials** - Paper onboarding manuals, binders, product or menu specs, that employees typically take home to review out of working hours.

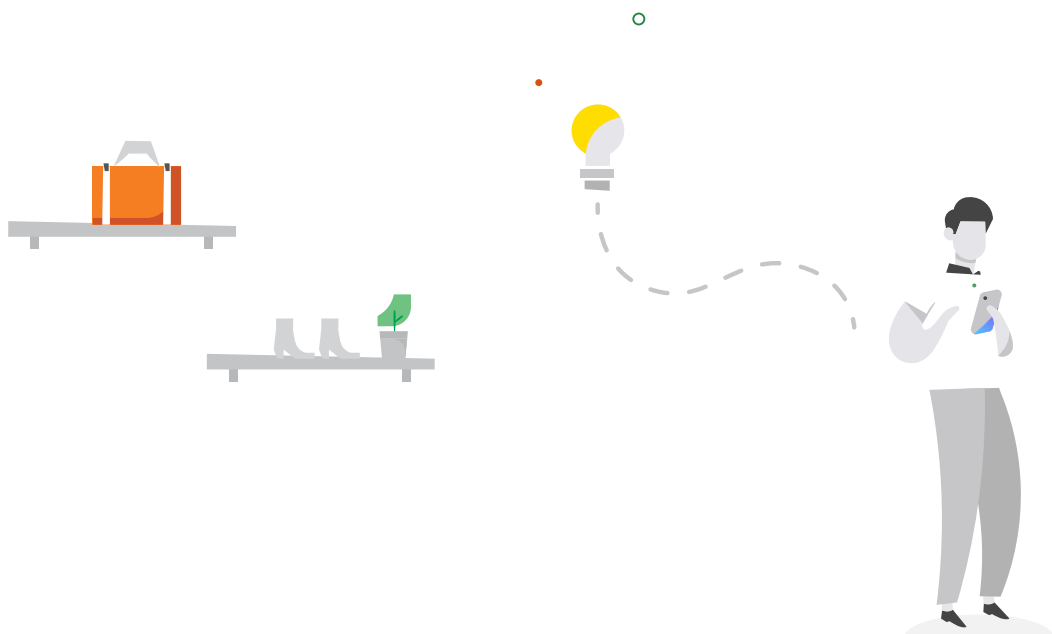
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**Pros:**

- + **Learning in environment of choice.**
- + **Little involvement from manager required.**

**Cons:**

- **Cost and complexity.** Printing is expensive, not to mention the environmental cost.
- **Passive learning instead of active learning** means that employees don't actively apply what they've learned, so retention of information will be minimal.
- **Lack of social interaction** can be isolating for employees in an innately social role.
- **Making changes is costly and slow.** The speed of reprinting and redistributing new materials to every location means that some employees will continue learning from out-of-date materials.
- **Low engagement with training,** since employees don't have to actively participate in learning.
- **Limited incentive for continuous learning** since reading isn't the most rewarding activity for many people.
- **Low information retention and low likelihood of training completion.** Studies have shown that passively reading notes is one of the least effective ways to retain information.





**E-learning** - Online self-paced or instructor led training, typically completed out of working hours and accessed via a URL on desktop or mobile.

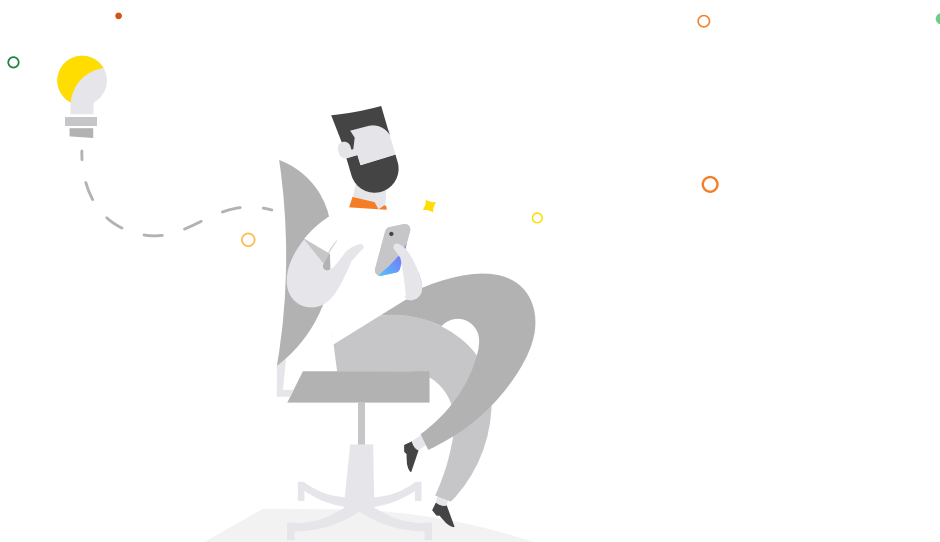
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#### Pros:

- + **Learning is more engaging** since different training formats like video, audio and quizzes are used.
- + **Self-paced learning** makes completing training more manageable for employees who don't have time to train on the job.
- + **More control** over the standardization of content and how it's presented.
- + **Making changes online is easier** and more cost-effective than paper training materials.

#### Cons:

- **Lack of social interaction**, since training is typically completed alone.
- **Cost and complexity**. Deploying the system and uploading new content can be costly and complicated.
- **Desktop-dependent** unless the e-learning system is mobile-friendly. Remembering login details and making time after work is a deterrent to completing the training.
- **Low engagement** since it's easier for employees to zone out if there's no manager watching.
- **Limited opportunities and incentives for continuous learning** if employees aren't given enough recognition for their achievements in training.



## Mobile Learning - learners access courses using personal or in-store mobile devices.

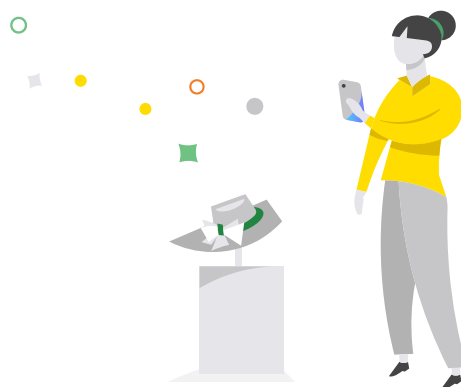
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### Pros:

- + **It's accessible.** Frontline employees have personal mobile devices with them, and equipping staff with tablets and phones to assist customers is becoming increasingly ubiquitous.
- + **It's a scalable option** for companies with hundreds or thousands of deskless employees.
- + **It's more engaging.** Over half of Generation Z spend more than 6 hours per day on their phones.<sup>2</sup> The best way to engage younger workers is to reach them where they already are.
- + **Fewer barriers to continuous learning** because learning doesn't require a huge time commitment.
- + **It's more social.** But only if the mobile platform supports social interactions and facilitates knowledge sharing.
- + **It's easier to measure.** If mobile learning platforms include interactive ways of testing and applying employee knowledge, head office can track completion, engagement and make adjustments where necessary.
- + **It combines formal learning with informal learning** which boosts information retention.

### Cons:

- **Dependent on having a reliable internet connection,** unless the mobile learning platform has an offline mode.
- **Steeper learning curve** for non tech-savvy employees.
- **Employers need a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policy** or in-store devices to make mobile learning work.
- **Employees might get distracted** by other apps or notifications. One way to circumvent this is to make training modules short and interactive.



# How to Assess Your Current Training Program: 10 Questions to Ask

1. What types of training are being used?
2. What do employees think of the training? Tip - ask them for their feedback!
3. How are employees performing? Another tip - ask area and site/store managers for their feedback!
4. Is there a correlation between training completion rate and sales?
5. How do employees access the training?
6. Is training standardized across regions?
7. Can groups be targeted with specific training?
8. How many times can employees revisit training information on their own time?
9. If you were a frontline employee, would you actually want to do the training?
10. Do employees have to collaborate with peers during training?

## What an Effective Mobile Learning Platform Should Provide

What deskless employees need to learn effectively	How the right mobile learning platform can meet these needs
 <p><b>Short, contextual and easily digestible</b> learning sessions that facilitate quick and in-depth information retention.</p>	 <p><b>Microlearning</b> with sessions preferably no longer than a few minutes.</p>
 <p><b>Access to training anywhere, anytime,</b> without a desktop.</p>	 <p><b>Made-for-mobile platform</b> accessible via an app.</p>
 <p><b>Informal learning</b> with their peers, discussion of what they've learned and sharing of their own knowledge.</p>	 <p><b>Social learning platform</b> that connects geographically dispersed teams and leverages team and individual knowledge.</p>
 <p><b>Active application of knowledge</b> and core concepts to real-life situations in a way that's fun and rewarding.</p>	 <p><b>Gamification of learning</b> through quizzes, competitions, leaderboards and more game-like features.</p>
 <p><b>Reasons to continue learning independently</b> and continuously after initial onboarding finishes, and access training content whenever they need answers or a refresh.</p>	 <p><b>Incentives to learn continuously</b> like individual and group challenges and an easily accessible, updated knowledge base with everything employees need to know.</p>

# Important Questions to Ask When You're Choosing a New Mobile Learning Platform

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- ▲ **Could I start using this platform with little to no training?**
- ▲ **What formats can training content be presented in?**
- ▲ **How easy is it to create content?**
- ▲ **How broad or detailed is reporting on training impact KPIs? (e.g. global engagement rate vs. store engagement rate)**
- ▲ **How does it integrate with routines, systems and tools my employees already use? (e.g. internal communications system)**
- ▲ **How can learners share information and ask questions?**
- ▲ **How does it integrate with other data sources? (e.g. sales, conversion rate, guest lifetime value)**
- ▲ **Will the vendor share guidance and best practices for change management as part of deployment?**

## How to Implement a New Training Program

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### 1. Tap into your “why” to understand your needs.

Why do changes need to be made? Keep asking why and you'll also be on the right path to setting up your goals for your new learning platform. Your **why** could be something like:

- We're going through a rebrand and one of the strategic initiatives is to present our employees as knowledgeable experts.
- We need to improve our employee experience to attract the right talent, and we haven't updated our LMS since 2007. In some of the older videos, trainers may or may not be sporting mullets.
- We don't have any visibility or reporting on training, so having it is more of a box-ticking exercise. It's getting increasingly difficult to justify the expense of having field trainers.



## 2. Understand your audience.

How comfortable are your employees with new tech? Are they engaging with the current training? Helpful hint - the best way to understand your audience is to talk to them. That includes frontline employees, their managers and field teams - anyone who accesses training.



## 3. Understand your content.

What formats are most commonly used? Do these work? What other formats could training be presented in?



## 4. Set measurable goals.

So you know why changes need to be made, and what needs to change, but how will you know when you've reached your goals? That's where deciding on metrics comes into the picture.

- **A good metric:** Average employee scores on quizzes after they finish training
- **A better metric:** % change in average employee score on quizzes over time, to track progress and identify areas for improvement
- **A good metric:** Overall engagement of store/site network with training
- **A better metric:** Engagement of store/site network with training by country, region, city and location



## 5. Explore your options.

After you've analyzed your needs and created measurable goals, create a list of requirements and nice-to-haves for your new learning platform. Explore vendors who meet your requirements.



## 6. Make a decision.

Create a scoring system with your requirements and rank vendors.



## 7. Involve your employees.

Forcing a new tool on employees without providing a listening ear results in incomplete adoption. A useful approach to change management is Kotter's 8 Step Process for Leading Change<sup>3</sup>:

1. Create a sense of urgency
2. Build a team to provide guidance
3. Solidify your strategic vision and plan
4. Find your champions
5. Remove barriers to enable action
6. Generate short-term wins early and often
7. Sustain acceleration
8. Institute change and connect it to your organizational culture



## 8. Measure and monitor.

Things to measure:

- **Completion rates**
- **Engagement rates** (What percentage of people watched a video? Who watched it? Which quiz questions did most people get right, and most people get wrong?)
- **Employee feedback**
- **Correlation with sales KPIs**
- **Correlation between completion rates and turnover** at a site/store, regional and overall level

# Key Takeaways

A mobile learning platform is the best option for ensuring knowledge and skills are consistent across your frontline workforce. To choose the right one:

## 1. Assess current training limitations.

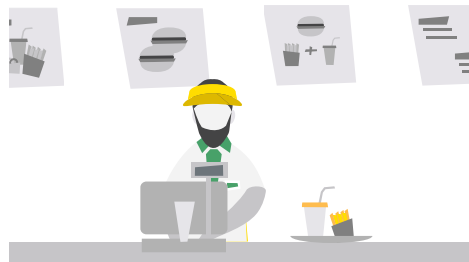
The best way to jumpstart this is to ask frontline employees, area managers and any field employees for their feedback.



- ## 2. Find your “why” for making a change, use this to create a list of requirements, and set measurable goals.



- ## 3. Put yourself in your frontline employees’ shoes to ask strategic questions about each option, and rank your choices.



## About YOOBIC



YOOBIC is an all-in-one platform that helps multi-site businesses such as retailers, restaurants and hotels deliver the perfect customer experience across every location. With YOOBIC’s collaborative, easy-to-use training app, every employee is empowered to continuously improve skills and knowledge and always be at their best.

GET A DEMO

# Resources

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1. [Barhoumi, C. The Effectiveness of WhatsApp Mobile Learning Activities Guided by Activity Theory on Students' Knowledge Management.](#)
2. <https://wengine.co.uk/resources/marketing-to-gen-z/>
3. <https://www.kotterinc.com/8-steps-process-for-leading-change/>