

The Lasting Impact of Foodborne Illness

A Discussion Guide for Frontline Leaders



Essential Question

Who is responsible for making sure food is safe?

Objectives

After viewing an Alliance constituent story, frontline leaders will be able to:

1. Evaluate their personal role in keeping food safe through small group discussion
2. Assess ways in which they and other leaders can collaboratively support positive food safety culture going forward through small group discussion
3. Create up to three personal goals for engaging with food safety culture through personal reflection

Materials

- Alliance video: "The Lasting Impact of Foodborne Illness: For Frontline Leaders"
- Computer, screen/projector, or other method of presenting video
- Discussion questions
- Pens or markers
- Discussion Notes printout
- Tape or tacks

Motivated, Educated, and Engaged

To promote a strong, positive food safety culture throughout your organization, all employees—from frontline to senior leaders—must be motivated, educated, and engaged. We designed this module to address the **motivated** portion by building personal connections with the real-life consequences of foodborne illness.

Background Information

- **This module is designed to guide frontline leaders** in assessing their personal motivations and teams' motivations for promoting and protecting positive food safety culture within the organization. To modify for frontline employees, senior leaders, or other audiences, please find additional resources in the Alliance Toolkit, including tailored discussion questions.
- This module is written for an in-person session. However, the post-video discussion could be modified to take place asynchronously in an online forum with frontline leaders commenting in response to each discussion question.
- We strongly recommend the use of a facilitator—such as a manager or site director—who works regularly with the frontline leaders, to guide the module and moderate discussion. Have the facilitator view the video and familiarize themselves with the questions in advance of the group discussion.
- Provide your facilitator with a basic understanding of your organization's policies and standards related to food safety. They should know who to contact if questions arise they are unable to answer. Consider creating FAQs with information specific to your organization's FSQA personnel and systems.
- The constituent video features JR Binam, his wife Melissa, and their daughter, Piper. As a food industry professional, JR knows how important food safety is. He and his family were food safety aware and cautious, but after Piper contracted E. coli around her second birthday, JR and Melissa wanted to share their story in the hope they can help prevent others from going through what their family experienced.

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Discussion Questions

The following questions are designed to encourage discussion and synthesis for frontline leaders:

1. Who is responsible for making sure food is safe?
2. How did JR and his family's trust in the food industry change because of their experience? Why is it important we build and maintain our customers' trust in our food?
 - a. What processes and procedures do we have in place to help prevent illnesses like Piper experienced?
 - b. What could be some of the consequences if something went wrong in those processes and procedures? How do those consequences change if the problem is seen and corrected before versus after the product leaves the facility?

Module

Part One: Video Viewing

Within the context of a larger staff meeting or town hall:

- Provide a brief introduction to the video.
- Watch the video from start to finish. Allow a few moments of silence for viewers to reflect before progressing to the discussion questions.

Part Two: Initial Reactions, Discussion Questions 1-3

Before entering the formal discussion portion of the module, ask frontline leaders if they have any initial thoughts they wish to share about JR and Piper's story.

Divide the frontline leaders into small groups of 2-5 individuals for a "Think-Pair-Share" discussion. Provide the Discussion Notes form and writing implements to each group.

Share Discussion Question #1 and allow time for thought and discussion in the small groups. Have each small group share one element of their discussion with the whole group.

Share Discussion Questions #2 and #3 and allow time for thought and discussion in small groups. Have each small group share a few elements of their discussion with the whole group.

Part Three: Food Safety Culture, Discussion Question 4

Ask each small group to collectively create a definition for food safety culture and write it on their group's form. Once they are done, have each group post their paper at the front of the room. Once each group has provided their definition, read them aloud. Identify key words or themes common across most or all of the definitions. Using the key words and themes, come together to define food safety culture.

Ask the group to consider how food safety culture is different from food safety. Use the Discussion Notes form to help brainstorm and discuss the differences.

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Discussion Questions

(continued from page 2)

3. What role do you play in keeping our products safe? What are the roles of others on your team? At your facility? Across the company?
 - a. What could prevent someone from acting if they notice a food safety issue? What can we all do to help remove those obstacles?
4. How would you define "food safety culture"? How would you define our company's food safety culture?
 - a. How do you set the tone for a strong food safety culture within your team?

Part Four: Setting Culture Goals

Have each frontline leader consider their daily work routine. Where within that routine do they interact directly with food? Where do they interact with team members who interact directly with food? Where do they interact with members of other departments?

How can food safety culture become a positive, integrated part of their daily routine? Are there opportunities to recognize and reward employees who champion food safety? Chances to engage higher-level leaders in food safety? Or even a way to remind themselves why food safety matters?

Have each frontline leader think of up to three personal goals for engaging with the organization's food safety culture. These will ideally be small goals which they can consistently follow. These goals may also provide opportunities to inspire other, more substantial goals related to food safety culture.

For example, one individual in the Alliance carries a picture of a victim of foodborne illness in their pocket. Others keep a note with a food safety culture mantra on their desk or computer. These small actions are reminders of the "why" behind food safety and can spark conversation with others in the organization.



This module is a result of collaboration between Alliance members and partners across the food industry. For more resources, visit the Alliance's Food Safety Culture Toolkit at: <https://stopfoodborneillness.org/toolkit/>

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A Discussion Guide for Frontline Employees

1. Who is responsible for making sure food is safe?

2. How did JR and his family's trust in the food industry change because of their experience? Why is it important we build and maintain our customers' trust in our food?
 - a. What processes and procedures do we have in place to help prevent illnesses like Piper experienced?

 - b. What could be some of the consequences if something went wrong in those processes and procedures? How do those consequences change if the problem is seen and corrected before versus after the product leaves the facility?

3. What role do you play in keeping our products safe? What are the roles of others on your team? At your facility? Across the company?
 - a. What could prevent someone from acting if they notice a food safety issue? What can we all do to help remove those obstacles?

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A Discussion Guide for Frontline Employees

4. How would you define “food safety culture”? How would you define our company’s food safety culture?

a. How do you set the tone for a strong food safety culture within your team?

Food Safety	Food Safety Culture
e.g., compliance practices	e.g., values & beliefs