

## TRAINING COURSES

**SEPTEMBER 15**  
**Construction in the food industry**  
**Chipping Campden**  
 Contact: CCFRA,  
 tel: 01386 842 104

**SEPTEMBER 15**  
**Developments in modified atmosphere packaging,**  
**Leatherhead**  
 Contact: LFI,  
 tel: 01372 376 761

**SEPTEMBER 16**  
**Certificate in packaging Workshop**  
 (Course run every Friday until January 20 2006)  
 Contact: North Nottinghamshire College,  
 tel: 01909 504 744

**SEPTEMBER 20**  
**Food law – basics**  
**Chipping Campden**  
 Contact: CCFRA,  
 tel: 01386 842 104

**SEPTEMBER 20-21**  
**Guide to using gelling and thickening agents**  
**Leatherhead**  
 Contact: LFI,  
 tel: 01372 376 761

**SEPTEMBER 21-22**  
**Ice cream technology course**  
**Nantwich**  
 Contact: Arkarius,  
 tel: 01270 624 719

**SEPTEMBER 22**  
**Frozen food: technical aspects**  
**Chipping Campden**  
 Contact: CCFRA,  
 tel: 01386 842 104

**SEPTEMBER 27**  
**Value stream mapping**  
**Leamington Spa**  
 Contact: Smallpeice Enterprises,  
 tel: 01926 336 423

**SEPTEMBER 27-29**  
**Basic microbiology: practical applications**  
**Chipping Campden**  
 Contact: CCFRA,  
 tel: 01386 842 104

**SEPTEMBER 28**  
**Foreign bodies in food**  
**Chipping Campden**  
 Contact: CCFRA,  
 tel: 01386 842 104

**SEPTEMBER 28-29**  
**Nutrition for non-nutritionists**  
**Leatherhead**  
 Contact: LFI,  
 tel: 01372 376 761

**SEPTEMBER 28-29**  
**Reducing process costs**  
**Reading**  
 Contact: RSSL,  
 tel: 0118 935 7346

**OCTOBER 4**  
**Quality systems and the food chain**  
**London**  
 Contact: RSSL,  
 tel: 0118 935 7346

**OCTOBER 5-7**  
**Soft cheese course**  
**Reaseheath College**  
 Contact: AB Cheesemaking,  
 tel: 01949 842 867

**OCTOBER 8**  
**Manufacturing: Six sigma overview**  
**Southampton**  
 Contact: Smallpeice Enterprises,  
 tel: 01926 336 423

**OCTOBER 11**  
**Business continuity management – getting started**  
**Manchester**  
 Contact: Aon,  
 tel: 0207 882 0881

**OCTOBER 11**  
**Manufacture of spreads**  
**Leatherhead**  
 Contact: LFI,  
 tel: 01372 376 761

**OCTOBER 12**  
**Sensory profiling**  
**Leatherhead**  
 Contact: LFI,  
 tel: 01372 376 761

**OCTOBER 18**  
**Foundation certificate in food safety**  
**Workshop**  
 Contact: North Nottinghamshire College,  
 tel: 01909 504 744

**OCTOBER 18**  
**Traceability and identity preservation of raw materials**  
**Chipping Campden**  
 Contact: CCFRA,  
 tel: 01386 842 104

Learn at your own pace, says Halo Training founder John Craig



# Training on demand

Put people in charge of their own training and you can cut downtime and slash your maintenance bill, John Craig tells Elaine Watson

**T**o drive a car, you don't need to know how it works, says Halo Training founder John Craig. If something goes wrong, you can call the AA, or take it to a garage where someone that does know how it works will fix it. It's inconvenient and expensive, but that's the price you pay for not bothering to learn about how the internal combustion engine works yourself.

Unfortunately, this approach is less than ideal in a food manufacturing plant, where the simplest problems with a piece of equipment can lead to hours of downtime because the person that knows how it works isn't around till the next shift, says Craig, who has spent 20 years working in the food industry.

Poor understanding can also lead to equipment damage, he says. "If you don't have a basic understanding of how a dynamic checkweigher works, you won't realise that putting it on a vibrating floor is not going to do it much good. In other cases, machines work, but not very efficiently, because users don't understand the principles on which they work."

Typically, he says, training is provided by the machinery supplier or by the most technically proficient person in the factory. After that, staff are left to get by with the manual and the phone number of a service engineer.

The first is usually a waste of time and the second takes ages to arrive and then charges you through the nose for something that you could probably have done yourself if you had the faintest idea how the machine you use every day actually works, he says.

"I've always been aware of the need for, but lack of, first class training for production personnel, in particular, equipment operators. In

my experience, a machine is delivered and installed, a few hours of poorly communicated instruction given, and then the operator is left to get on with it. This has a negative impact on morale, efficiency and productivity."

To tackle this problem, Craig has developed a software training package that suppliers can sell with their machinery, enabling users to learn how to use equipment at their own pace.

Provided on CD, company intranet or the internet, the 'on demand training' package is accessible through an industrial PC or laptop on the factory floor, or a PC in the back office. It uses animation and video clips to demonstrate operating functions and procedures, cleaning and maintenance, troubleshooting and health and safety issues relevant to the piece of equipment in question.

Users simply touch the screen to open up animations, video clips and voiceovers (especially useful for staff that don't have a good grasp of written English), says Craig. "This puts you in charge of your own learning."

Halo Training, which he set up last year, has developed the first such package for a leading supplier of vertical bagging machines, chiefly as a means of helping it differentiate its products from those of its competitors, he says. "Similar packages can be developed for any piece of equipment in any industry."

He adds: "You hear people complaining about equipment all the time, which gives suppliers a bad name. Yet more often than not, the problem could be easily and quickly resolved on site without having to wait for the supervisor to show up or call a service engineer." **FM**  
 For more information, contact [johncraig@halotraining.co.uk](mailto:johncraig@halotraining.co.uk) 07766 141 614