

# Poka customer Coty reduces new hire onboarding time by 57%

**Poka**  
An IFS company

As the skills gap caused by employee turnover and a retiring workforce continues to intensify, the need to onboard new operators as quickly as possible becomes even more critical for keeping production lines running and driving operational excellence. That's why forward-thinking manufacturer, Coty, took proactive measures by investing in a Connected Worker app.

## L&D Improvements



57%

Reduction in  
onboarding  
time



50%

Increase in  
assessment  
scores

As a global manufacturer of beauty products for world-renowned brands, including Sally Hansen, Vera Wang and Gucci, Coty recognized they needed to modernize their training system and program to be more agile and effective. At the same time, they saw an opportunity to digitally connect all factory workers with the resources and information they need to contribute to continuous improvement.

In this interview with Zach Bouren, Coty's Senior Operation Excellence Manager, Zach shares how the manufacturer reduced the time to onboard new hires by 57% and increased their RFT (right-first-time) assessment scores by 50% using Poka's connected worker app.

## About Coty

Zach Bouren is Senior Operation Excellence Manager at Coty, a multinational cosmetics company that produces a variety of consumer, luxury and professional beauty products across eight plants for brands including Sally Hansen, Vera Wang and Gucci. Zach's responsibilities include driving continuous improvement, Lean Six Sigma projects, rapid improvement events, and Industry 4.0 initiatives.

[www.coty.com](http://www.coty.com)

**COTY**  
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## Q What drove Coty to invest in a connected worker app to improve its new hire onboarding and training program?

A I'm responsible for driving continuous improvement, lean Six Sigma projects, and rapid improvement events, among other things. And one of our rapid improvement events at Coty was linked to our training and onboarding program, which sits in our operational expenditure (Opex) branch. Our two on-site trainers, operators, quality warehouse and the entire training management system and tracking is all under our scope. We recognized that we needed to move our training into the future. It was taking our trainers too much time to onboard new hires. This took their focus away from developing new technical training and addressing gaps in our training plan. So, our goal was to automate onboarding for our operators.

## Q How did you onboard new hires before, and how has that improved since implementing Poka's Connected Worker app?

A Before we began using Poka, operators took a two-week course where we trained them on how to use our systems, how to log into computers, how to navigate around, how to order components for the line, stuff like that. It also covered our general safety and quality requirements, what their responsibilities are, and other things linked to the production floor. Then they would get a print-out exam that our trainers would have to grade. It was very much an old-school, classroom learning environment. After that, they would get a week of shadowing on the floor, followed by a formal, on-the-floor assessment proving that they could perform the tasks.

We now do full onboarding in Poka. All our PowerPoint modules, work instructions, one-point lessons, and other training content are now available in Poka as part of the skills operators must learn. So, we don't need to have trainers dedicated full-time in the classroom giving the training. Instead, the management team sends us a notification that a new employee is starting, we give them a Poka log-in, and new hires review all training content in Poka. We still do the floor assessment afterwards, but basically everything before then is done in Poka. It's fully autonomous now. We then provide managers with statistics and feedback on how they're performing during their onboarding and during their skills.

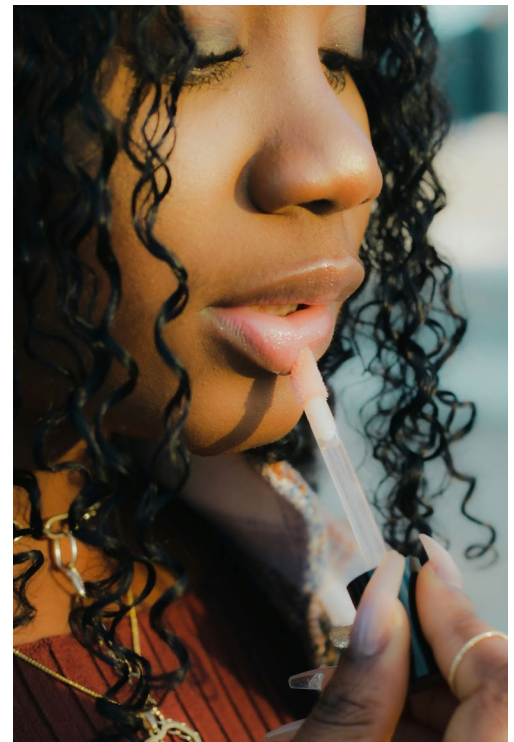
Since moving our training to Poka, we've reduced the time to onboard new hires from 84 hours to 36 hours. New hires are now trained 4 hours a day over nine days. We've also seen our RFT (right-first-time) assessment scores jump from 60% to 90%.

## Q How is your training more engaging and effective now?

A I used to have a ton of statistics on the effectiveness of classroom training versus on-the-job training versus hands-on, hands-off. Everyone has a different learning preference, so it's hard to say with all certainty, but what I do know is that our assessment and exam scores have gone up since we began using Poka.

## Benefits seen using Poka

- Reduced onboarding time
- Improvements in assessment scores & knowledge retention
- Complete visibility over the status of each operator's skills
- By digitizing tracking, eliminated reliance on paper forms



And I think that's attributed to their focus. After sitting there for two to three hours at a time and getting the same person speaking to you about a different subject, eventually you're going to get bored and distracted. You're going to stop paying attention. It's almost too much information for one person to absorb at one time.

But when you do the training in Poka, those four hours are broken up into different modules. So, it will be completely different subjects and it forces the operator to bounce around in terms of ideas and what they're learning in a given day. I'm not just sitting, talking to them for four hours straight. And then they get four hours on the floor to end the day where they have a shadowing checklist they complete, linked to the four hours of training that they did earlier in the day. So, it's far better for them. They're far more alert.

### **Q** What has the feedback been like from operators? How do they like using Poka?

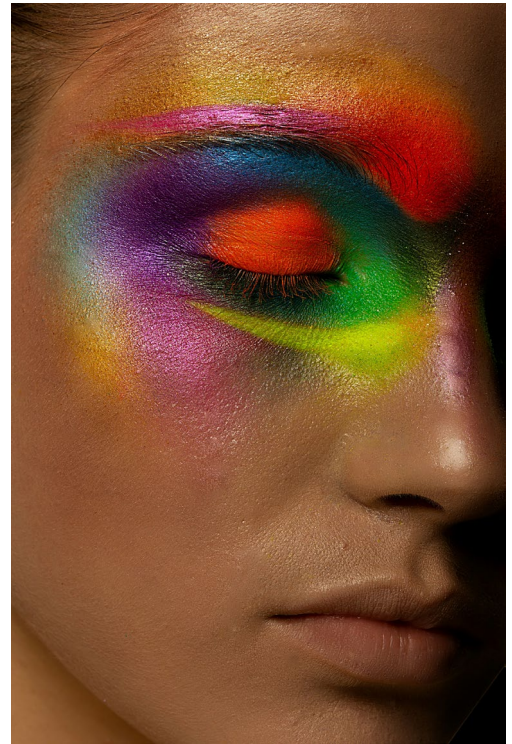
**A** We have a feedback form directly in Poka and we've had 70 people fill out the form over the last year or so for different types of skills. And we consistently get really, really good feedback about the solution from operators. They said that the training platform is great. The information is very good. The presentations are very informative and the time allotted for the training is just right.

Also, in speaking to people in general on the floor, people really love having this tool. They feel like it's much more applicable to the type of learning that they want to perform. We're at an age where if someone wants to learn something, they go to Google, type it in, and a YouTube video pops up showing them exactly what they want to know. That's exactly the kind of application we wanted when we came to Poka. Everything is quickly searchable. People have information at their fingertips. That's the feedback that I'm hearing.

I'm also excited because we're rolling out iPads. When we first went live with Poka, we were using desktops on the floor. Now operators will be able to scan the QR code on the equipment with their iPad and then access information about that piece of equipment and get technical training on it.

### **Q** How are you more agile now, and how does that help you to keep up with current and future training needs?

**A** The year before we implemented Poka, we did 15 onboarding sessions, so we were averaging one per month. Training was 96 hours long, so our trainer basically spent two full weeks of their time dedicated to the classroom regardless if there were multiple people or a single person in the training. During that time, the trainer wasn't developing new training which is why we had such a big gap in our technical training plan. But it was required because we were hiring so frequently. We couldn't have new hires on the floor waiting to be trained. So, Poka enables us to be more agile. We can get new hires set up quickly and they can access their skills and training content on day one.



I don't need to have a trainer on-site and ready. I don't need to organize it. I don't need to make sure that all of the production managers are working on hiring operators at the same time. There's so many benefits that we've seen from this that I could go on and on. But the main thing is it's flexible for production. It's flexible for the training staff. Our time is being freed up so that we're able to continue to develop extensive training in the right areas where we had gaps before.

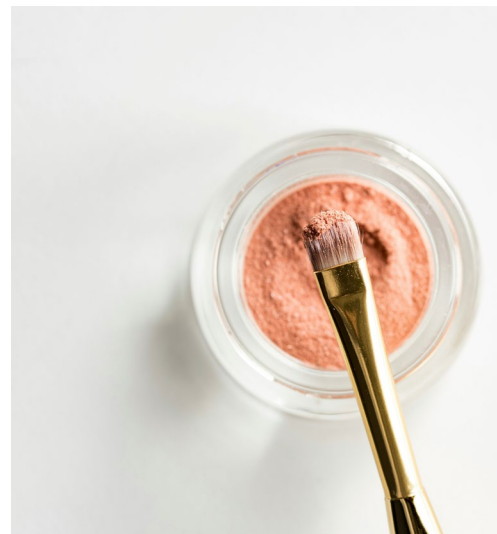
### **Q** How long did it take to build new skills in Poka and roll them out to operators?

**A** We didn't just transfer our existing content or copy and paste PowerPoint slides over to Poka. We rebuilt the training using the existing content as a reference. We created 70 new skills from scratch that were a 100% video-based, quiz-based, etc. Which is why it took us eight months to build the program. The first five or six months, we had to manage both things at once. So we were still performing the two-week in-classroom training while we were building all of our skills in Poka. And then there was a three to four-month stretch where we shut down the old training and made sure that we were staffed appropriately. That enabled us to stay 100% focused on developing the new system and have two full-time trainers dedicated to the project.

### **Q** How many skills do you currently have in Poka and what are your plans for getting SMEs to help create new ones in the future?

**A** We have over a hundred skills already built into the system so far, and we can easily add more. Over the last few months, we have been working on technical training. We're basically mapping out all our technical training needs. Examples of this would be how to perform a flush on our equipment, how to change pistons out, how to check nozzles. It's really equipment-focused training, which is really what Poka was intended to do and is strong at.

We're sourcing some support functions from the production areas to help us develop new content and giving them training on using video editing software. The idea is that we want to develop a Poka committee here on site, and everyone that's a member can go in and create materials, like a skills development video, etc. versus it just being one person's full-time job. For now we have four or five people. And then as we continue to expand into additional functions, we'll probably add a few of our planning team members, quality team members, etc. to build the training for their appropriate departments. So it's giving all subject matter experts the ability to create training content.



## Q How is the skills matrix helping you to better track operators' skills and improve your quality audit scores?

A Poka's skills matrix gives us complete visibility over the status of each operator's skills, the last time they completed each skill, and what their scores were. We also have the ability to automatically assign new skills to people. We don't have to manually search and figure out who is where and make sure that certain people are included in training versus not. Because everything is role-based now, it's really easy for people to get their skills automatically assigned to them. I can push a notification to say, "Hey, go complete your skill at your earliest availability."

So, it's been extremely easy for managers to help drive the skill plan. The two trainers were basically in charge of our Excel matrix and they had to go in once a month and look through everything manually, which meant that there were always gaps. We never knew when training was completed because it was all manually signed off on a piece of paper. So, to figure out who was actually at the training, they had to go back and pull the paper form. So it's made everything in terms of traceability, far, far, far better. And I think that that should show in our quality audit next year. We're on-track to be better than in any previous years.

## Q What key performance indicators (KPIs) are you using to measure the success of your Poka investment?

A Our initial project goal was to automate onboarding, so I feel like we've been pretty successful with reducing training time by 57% and improving assessment scores by 50%. So we didn't have very deep targets. Now that we've accomplished that goal we're going to continue to develop the system, and implement some new goals that will be more linked to the capability of our operators. There should be some kind of traceability between the operator's performance and training. We should be able to know that when we're training on Poka, we saw an operator capable of running a line at 85% OEE with 0% loss.

## Q How did you determine that Poka was the right solution provider for Coty's needs?

A We felt Poka was best suited for our needs because of its flexibility. We wanted a solution that allows us to build our training programs using video content, and that had everything in one place. We looked at other solutions, including Parsable. But what we liked about Poka is that it's more flexible in terms of how we set up our training and how it's used. We can have a video and then an exam right afterwards, or a PowerPoint included in a photo, making it really interactive. Also, Poka is completely automated when it comes to tracking the LMSs and skills matrix. That was the major selling point. It gives us a flexible base to build on, and everything can be fully automated no matter how we design the skill.



### Find out more

Learn more about Poka and how you can replicate Coty's success story: [learn more and request a demo](#)

