Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills

of Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians

INSTITUTE OF
child nutrition

Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR

Keith Rushing, PhD, RD
Research Scientist
Applied Research Division

CO-PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR

Alice Jo Rainville, PhD, RD, CHE, SNS, FAND

INTERIM DIRECTOR

Marjuyua Lartey Gibson, PhD, RDN
Interim Director, Applied Research Division

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Shellie Hubbard, MA
Research Assistant, Applied Research Division

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Aleshia Hall-Campbell, PhD, MPH

Institute of Child Nutrition
The University of Mississippi

The Institute of Child Nutrition was authorized by Congress in 1989 and established in 1990 at The University of Mississippi in Oxford and is operated in collaboration with The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. The Institute operates under a grant agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.

PURPOSE
The purpose of the Institute of Child Nutrition is to improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

MISSION
The mission of the Institute of Child Nutrition is to provide information and services that promote the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

VISION
The vision of the Institute of Child Nutrition is to be the leader in providing education, research, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

This project was funded using U.S. Department of Agriculture grant funds. The USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

The University of Mississippi is an EEO/AA/TitleVI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA Employer.

For more information and the nondiscrimination statement in other languages: https://www.fns.usda.gov/cr/fns-nondiscrimination-statement

Suggested Reference Citation:
Institute of Child Nutrition. (2022). *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians*. University, MS: Rushing, K. & Rainville, A. J..

For more information, please contact helpdesk@theicn.org

05/23/22

Table of Contents

Introduction

WHAT ARE COMPETENCIES, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILLS (CKS)?

The Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills (CKS) series is the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) Applied Research Division's signature research-based resource for child nutrition (CN) professionals. The CKS resources identify the necessary competencies, knowledge, and skills needed by the majority of professionals employed in CN programs to perform their job functions effectively. These resources provide a foundation for developing job descriptions and staffing plans, and they are useful for creating performance plans and organizing annual training schedules.

The field of CN is continually changing, and CKS resources must be updated routinely to reflect the current needs of CN programs. This CKS resource for school nutrition (SN) assistants/technicians is an update of the 2006 resource, Competencies, Knowledge and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Assistants and Technicians (Nettles, M. F. & Carr, D.).

HOW THIS RESOURCE WAS DEVELOPED

For the purposes of this research, SN assistants/technicians are foodservice employees who work at a local school cafeteria under the direction of an SN manager. Due to the vast diversity of how SN programs function, the position of SN assistant/technician covers a broad range of job responsibilities related to food production, sanitation, and program accountability. Examples of these responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following: cooking and food preparation, setting up the serving area, serving meals, operating point-of-service systems, receiving food and supply deliveries, and conducting physical inventories. This research was conducted in three phases with a diverse group of SN professionals from all seven United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) regions.

- **Phase I** included a literature review, four case study site visits, and an electronic expert work group (via email) to identify the functional areas for SN assistants/technicians.

- **Phase II** included two face-to-face expert work groups tasked with developing CKS for the functional areas.

- **Phase III** included an electronic review panel who confirmed the CKS for each functional area via an online survey in Qualtrics, (an online survey platform). Additionally, during Phase III, an expert work group was asked to identify content for instructing users on how to best utilize this resource.

After the three phases, the expert work groups recommended six functional areas: Equipment Use and Care, Food Production, Food Safety and Sanitation, Personal Characteristics, USDA Meal Program Requirements, and Workplace and Employee Safety. The expert work groups reached a consensus to include 15 competencies and 36 knowledge and skill statements within the six functional areas.

DEFINITIONS

Researchers used the following definitions that were also used in the 2006 CKS resource:

School nutrition assistants/technicians are the foodservice employees who work at the local school cafeteria under the direction of an SN manager.

Functional areas are the broad groupings or categories of similar tasks that reflect job duties performed by assistants/technicians within the local SN operation. These categories serve as an umbrella for all tasks that are listed on a work schedule or are done on a daily, weekly, or seasonal basis within the school year.

Competencies are underlying characteristics within each functional area that lead to successful performance. They may include knowledge and skills as well as various levels of motivation.

Knowledge is the information a person has in specific content areas that is necessary for successful performance in a competency area.

Skills are the abilities to perform certain physical and/or mental tasks that are necessary for successful performance in a competency area.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians* resource can be used as a guide for writing job descriptions, conducting interviews, planning training sessions, mentoring SN assistants/technicians, and conducting performance appraisals. Links for electronic tools for job descriptions, interviews, mentoring, and performance appraisals can be found at https://theicn.org/research.

The USDA Professional Standards for All School Nutrition Employees (USDA) require at least six hours of annual training for SN staff who work 20 hours per week and at least four hours of annual training for SN staff who work less than 20 hours per week. Those who are hired after January 1 must complete half of the required training hours. The USDA Child Nutrition Program's Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT) is linked in the *Application Tools* section: https://pstrainingtracker.fns.usda.gov/.

Chapter 1 of this document provides competency, knowledge, and skill information that can empower SN professionals to strengthen their programs in a variety of ways:

- School nutrition administrators may use the information to identify and develop job position functions. This competencies, knowledge, and skills resource can be used to help identify job descriptions and interview questions for prospective staff.

- An SN administrator or manager can compare the characteristics of an SN assistant/technician's current, observed workplace practices against the recommended knowledge and skillsdescribed in the resource. Differences or shortfalls in job performance, which are identified in this comparison, can be used as teaching points.

- An SN administrator or manager can plan training opportunities that meet the USDA Professional Standards for SN assistants/technicians.

- An SN administrator may use the information to offer mentoring and educational opportunities for the SN assistants/technicians to effectively function in his or her role.

Chapter 2 of this resource provides tools to apply the competencies, knowledge, and skills information shared. This section is titled *Application Tools* and includes the following: a job description template (as a fillable form), a job interview template, an individual mentoring plan for SN managers form, and a competency-based performance appraisal (as a fillable form). Each tool has detailed instructions on its usage and on how to complete the document. To allow for ease of use, the full version of each tool shown in the *Application Tools* section is available for download at the following link: https://theicn.org/research:

Chapter 3 provides information on supplementary ICN training resources, which are helpful when applied to competencies, knowledge, and skills. This section includes a chart of the Functional Areas with suggestions of free, self-paced, online ICN courses that are applicable to the specific knowledge or skill statement.

CHAPTER 1

FUNCTIONAL AREAS: COMPETENCIES, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILLS

FUNCTIONAL AREAS

1. EQUIPMENT USE AND CARE

2. FOOD PRODUCTION

3. FOOD SAFETY AND SANITATION

4. PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

5. USDA MEAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

6. WORKPLACE AND EMPLOYEE SAFETY

FUNCTIONAL AREA I: EQUIPMENT USE AND CARE

This functional area is defined as the selection, operation, and maintenance of foodservice equipment.

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
1.1 Selection and Operation	**1.1a** Demonstrates the ability to select the correct foodservice equipment for the food product being prepared. **1.1b** Demonstrates the ability to operate foodservice equipment appropriately.
1.2 Maintenance	**1.2a** Understands the importance of routinely monitoring foodservice equipment and reports issues to supervisor. **1.2b** Demonstrates ability to take apart and re-assemble assigned foodservice equipment as appropriate for maintenance and repair.

FUNCTIONAL AREA 2: FOOD PRODUCTION

This functional area is defined as the production of high-quality food products using procedures for receiving, inventory, preparation, and service of safe, appetizing, nutritious meals to students.

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
2.1 Units and Measures	**2.1a** Knows units of measurement (pound, cup, etc.) used in preparation/production, and demonstrates the ability to make appropriate conversions and sizing adjustment, as needed.
2.2 Preparation and Production	**2.2a** Knows and demonstrates basic food preparation techniques used in producing large quantities of food items. **2.2b** Knows and demonstrates the ability to prepare food products following standardized recipes. **2.2c** Knows and demonstrates the ability to prepare meals for special diets according to recipes or other instructions provided by manager or supervisor. **2.2d** Understands the importance of and demonstrates proper portion control.
2.3 Quality Control	**2.3a** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for monitoring and evaluating all foods (received and produced) to ensure quality standards are achieved. **2.3b** Knows the importance of reporting quality issues to appropriate individuals and demonstrates the ability to identify plans to address the issues. **2.3c** Demonstrates proper procedures for monitoring plate waste and reporting observations to the supervisor.
2.4 Inventory Control	**2.4a** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for First-In-First-Out (FIFO) when managing inventory. **2.4b** Demonstrates proper procedures for taking physical inventory of food supplies to determine needed quantities for ordering.

FUNCTIONAL AREA 3: FOOD SAFETY AND SANITATION

This functional area is defined as the policies and procedures for keeping customers safe from foodborne illnesses by maintaining personal hygiene, safe food handling, and sanitary conditions.

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
3.1 Food Safety and Sanitation	**3.1a** Knows the importance of and demonstrates appropriate personal hygiene practices for SN operations. **3.1b** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for safe food handling. **3.1c** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces.

FUNCTIONAL AREA 4: PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

This functional area is defined as the attributes needed for success as an SN assistant/technician.

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
4.1 General	**4.1a** Demonstrates willingness to be flexible. **4.1b** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for maintaining confidentiality regarding school and workplace matters. **4.1c** Demonstrates ability to work under the pressure of deadlines and with interruptions. **4.1d** Knows the importance of and demonstrates the ability to work with a diverse school community.
4.2 Communication	**4.2a** Demonstrates effective oral and written communication. **4.2b** Demonstrates appropriate uses of lines of communication within the school and school district, including chain of authority and levels of job responsibilities. **4.2c** Demonstrates the ability to positively resolve conflict. **4.2d** Demonstrates a professional manner when interacting with co-workers, school staff, students, and others.
4.3 Customer Service	**4.3a** Understands the importance of being responsive to student preferences and requests and demonstrates timely and helpful feedback to supervisor regarding these interactions.
4.4 Basic Math and Technology Skills	**4.4a** Demonstrates ability to add, subtract, multiply, and divide accurately. **4.4b** Demonstrates the ability to utilize a computer to check email.
4.5 Judgement	**4.5a** Understands the importance of following the chain of command to report potential problems or unusual events.

FUNCTIONAL AREA 5: USDA MEAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

This functional area is defined as the responsibilities of accurately handling funds, following USDA meal patterns, and completing production records.

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
5.1 Reports and Records	**5.1a** Understands and demonstrates proper procedures for handling money and operating the point of sale/cash register. **5.1b** Knows meal pattern requirements for a reimbursable meal. **5.1c** Understands and demonstrates proper procedures for completing production records.

FUNCTIONAL AREA 6: WORKPLACE AND EMPLOYEE SAFETY

This functional area is defined as procedures for maintaining a safe and sanitary work environment.

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
6.1 Work Environment	**6.1a** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for maintaining clean and organized work and storage areas. **6.1b** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures related to the protection of the environment. **6.1c** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for using Safety Data Sheets.
6.2 Employee Safety	**6.1a** Demonstrates proper procedures for lifting and carrying.

CHAPTER 2

APPLICATION TOOLS

1. JOB DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE
2. JOB INTERVIEW TEMPLATE
3. INDIVIDUAL MENTORING FORM
4. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL TEMPLATE
5. THE USDA CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM'S

   PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS TRAINING TRACKER TOOL

Application Tools

This section of the resource provides customizable tools to apply the competencies, knowledge, and skills information. This section includes the following: a job description template (as a fillable form), a job interview template, an individual mentoring form for SN managers, a competency-based performance appraisal (as a fillable form), and the USDA Child Nutrition Program's Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT). The PSTTT is a free, web-based tool, designed to assist SN professionals in keeping track of their annually required training hours. Each tool has detailed instructions on its usage and on how to complete the document. To allow for ease of use, the full version of each tool shown in the Application Tools section is available for download at the following link: https://theicn.org/research.

Job Description Template

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Open the Job Description Template.

2. Go to the File menu and choose Save As.

3. Save the job description as the file name you prefer.

4. Delete the word Template from the file.

5. Add desired Educational Requirements.

6. Use the drop down menus to choose items under Essential Duties and Responsibilities and the Knowledge and Skill Requirements.

7. Save the customized job description.

8. Distribute the job description to prospective applicants.

9. Have new employees sign the job description during orientation.

[Insert School Name Here]
Job Description Template

| Company Name: |
| Company Logo: |

Job Title:
Work Location:
Division/Department:
Reports to (Insert name of supervisor here.)**:**

☐ **Full time**	☐ **Exempt**
☐ **Part time**	☐ **Non exempt**

Education Requirements

NOTE: Examples could include a high school diploma, an equivalent food safety certification, etc.

Essential duties and responsibilities:

NOTE: This section is used to describe the essential duties and responsibilities required of this position. Choose from the drop-down menu in each line the essential duties and responsibilities for this position. You can delete the red text once you complete this step. You can also delete a line by selecting the row(s) and pressing delete, or by right clicking and selecting "Delete Rows." You can also add rows by clicking the "+" by hovering the pointer over the left side of the row. Right click copy and then paste the drop-down menu into the row.

Choose an item
Choose an item
Choose an item

Knowledge and Skill Requirements:

NOTE: This section is used to describe the knowledge and skills required of this position. Choose from the drop-down menu in each line the essential duties and responsibilities for this position. You can delete the red text once you complete this step. You can also delete a line by selecting the row(s) and pressing delete or right click and selecting "Delete Rows." You can also add rows by clicking the "+" by hovering the pointer over the left side of the row. Right click copy and then paste the drop-down menu into the row.

Choose an item
Choose an item
Choose an item

Print Employee Name

_____

Employee Signature

_____   Date _____

Job Interview Template

The job interview template can be customized with your school name at the top. The interviewer can numerically rate the interview answers. The total score for each applicant can be used to assist in making hiring decisions.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Open the Job Interview Template.
2. Go to the File menu and choose Save As.
3. Save the job description as the file name you prefer.
4. Add the school name and delete the word Template from the file.

Job Interview Template [Insert School Name Here]

Date: _____

Applicant Name: _____ **Position Requested:** _____

Date Available: _____ **Salary Requested:** _____

Application Review

Does the applicant meet the following qualifications for the job?	Yes	No	Notes
Work Experience			
Applicable Skills			
Education			
Certification			

Rate answers 1–5 (1= lowest, 5= highest).

Observations	Rating (Circle One.)	Comments
1. Was the applicant clean, neat, and appropriately dressed?	1 2 3 4 5	
2. Was the applicant courteous and respectful with the interviewers?	1 2 3 4 5	
3. Did the applicant show enthusiasm about the job opportunity?	1 2 3 4 5	
4. Did the applicant answer your questions clearly and effectively?	1 2 3 4 5	
5. Did the applicant maintain good eye contact and listening skills, and exhibit appropriate body language?	1 2 3 4 5	

Rate answers 1–5 (1= lowest, 5 =highest).

Questions	Rating (Circle One)
1. What do you know about the position you are applying for?	1 2 3 4 5
2. Are you able to perform all the job duties/functions listed in the Job Description?	1 2 3 4 5
3. Why are you interested in this position and how does this position fit into your career goals?	1 2 3 4 5
4. What is the largest number of people you have cooked for? How did you organize yourself for the project?	1 2 3 4 5
5. In your previous work experiences, how do you believe those around you would describe your motivation? What motivates you at work?	1 2 3 4 5

[Insert School Name Here.]

Job Interview Template   Date: _____

Applicant Name: _____   **Position Requested:** _____

Date Available: _____   **Salary Requested:** _____

Rate answers 1–5 (1= lowest, 5= highest).

Observations	Rating (Circle One)
6. Is there anything that would prevent you from having perfect attendance at work?	1 2 3 4 5
7. How do you define exceptional customer service? How would you assist your team in achieving this?	1 2 3 4 5
8. A student comes to you and tells you that his food taste "gross." How would you handle this?	1 2 3 4 5
9. Why is it important to follow "standardized" recipes in a foodservice operation?	1 2 3 4 5
10. Do you have a food safety certification? Example "ServSafe." If not, tell us what food safety training you've had.	1 2 3 4 5
11. What do you like about the present or a prior foodservice position?	1 2 3 4 5
12. Do you have any questions?	1 2 3 4 5

Rate your skills in the following areas, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, and describe why you rated yourself as you did:

Skills	Rating (Circle One)	Comments
13. Customer Service	1 2 3 4 5	
14. Organization	1 2 3 4 5	
15. Cashiering	1 2 3 4 5	
16. Cooking	1 2 3 4 5	
17. Baking	1 2 3 4 5	

Total Score: _____

Individual Mentoring Form

Mentoring is a special partnership between two people who share mutual responsibility and accountability to achieve clearly defined goals. It can be an important and effective way to grow and develop an SN staff.

The Individual Mentor Plan allows SN managers to work closely with SN staff to identify career-related goals to move individuals along their identified professional path, using the competencies, knowledge, and skills resource as a guide. The Individual Mentor Plan should be completed by both a mentor (SN manager's supervisor, SN director, or another SN manager) and a mentee (SN Technician/Assistant).

INSTRUCTIONS

Part I. Enter the employee's name, position, timeframe for the mentoring process, and the mentor's name.

Part II. The mentor and mentee should work together to help the mentee identify short-term and long-term career goals. The mentor should help the mentee ensure that the goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). Once those goals have been identified and developed, they should be documented in part II of this form.

Part III: The mentor and mentee should utilize the goals established in Part II to complete Part III. Based on the short-term and/or long-term goals identified, the knowledge and skills needed to meet those goals must be identified. The mentor and mentee should work together to identify which knowledge and/or skill will be required to reach the goal, and to identify a path to successful achievement of the knowledge or skill. Building a developmental plan for the mentee requires the following actions:

1. In column one, choose from the drop-down menu the knowledge or skill that the employee needs to develop. You can delete any rows from the list not used by right clicking and deleting row.

2. In column two, describe the activity (i.e., training course, experience) needed to achieve the knowledge or skill. There may be more than one activity required to gain the knowledge or skill.

3. In column three, enter a realistic target date for completing each activity listed.

4. In column four, enter the actual date each activity was completed.

5. In column five, describe the outcome of your participation in the identified activity. For example, did the mentee gain or improve proficiency in the knowledge or skill?

Note: All the columns will not be filled out at the same time. Columns one (1) through three (3) should be completed during one session with the mentor. Column four (4) will be completed once each identified activity has been accomplished. To complete column five (5), the mentor and mentee should meet to discuss the outcomes of completing all the activities listed for a specific knowledge or skill identified in column one. Once that has been discussed, it can be documented on the plan.

Part IV: The mentor and mentee sign the document.

Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills for School Nutrition Technicians/Assistants Individual Mentor Plan

Part One: Employee/Mentor Information

Name:	Mentoring Time Period
Position:	Mentor's Name:

Part Two: Employee's Career Goals

Short-Term Goals (6 months–1 year)

Long-Term Goals (2–3 years)

Part Three: Employee's Developmental Needs

Knowledge or Skills	Developmental Activity	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Outcome
Choose an item				
Choose an item				
Choose an item				
Choose an item				

Part Four: Signatures

Employee Signature:	Date:
Supervisor Signature:	Date:

Performance Appraisal Template

Employee performance should be documented and periodically evaluated to ensure the job responsibilities are met and employees receive feedback on performance. The performance appraisal is also used to set goals for employee performance.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Open the Job Description Template.

2. Go to the File menu and choose Save As.

3. Save the performance appraisal as the file name you prefer.

4. Delete the word Template from the file.

5. Use the drop down menus to choose evaluated items under Essential Duties and Responsibilities and the Knowledge and Skill Requirements. These items should match those chosen in the job description.

6. Save the customized performance appraisal.

7. Complete all sections including Goals and Comments.

8. Employee and supervisor will sign and date the performance appraisal during the private meeting to review the appraisal.

[Insert School Name Here.]

Insert school
logo here.

Performance Appraisal Template

Employee/Reviewer Information			
Employee Name		**Department**	
Employee ID		**Reviewer Name**	
Position Held		**Reviewer Title**	
Last Review Date		**Today's Date**	

Performance of Essential Duties and Responsibilities

This section is used to describe the essential duties and responsibilities required of this position. Choose from the drop-down menu in each line of the essential duties and responsibilities for this position. You can delete the red text once you complete this step. You can also delete a line by selecting the row(s) and pressing delete or by right clicking and selecting "Delete Rows." You can also add rows by clicking the "+" by hovering the pointer over the left side of the row. Right click copy and then paste the drop-down menu into the row.

RATING:
5= Excellent
4= Good
3= Satisfactory
2= Needs Improvement
1= Poor

Item	Rating
Choose an item	
Choose an item	
Choose an item	
Choose an item	
Choose an item	

Knowledge and Skill Requirements

This section is used to describe the knowledge and skills required to perform a job. Choose from the drop-down menu in each line of the essential duties and responsibilities for this position. You can delete the red text once you complete this step. You can also delete a line by selecting the row(s) and pressing delete or by right clicking and selecting "Delete Rows." You can also add rows by clicking the "+" by hovering the pointer over the left side of the row. Right click copy and then paste the drop-down menu into the row.

RATING:
5= Excellent
4= Good
3= Satisfactory
2= Needs Improvement
1= Poor

Item	Rating
Choose an item	
Choose an item	
Choose an item	
Choose an item	
Choose an item	

Characteristics

QUALITY	Poor	Needs Improvement	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Quality of work					
Takes initiative					
Honesty					
Coworker relations					
Client relations					
Dependability					
Punctuality					

Goals

26

Achieved Goals in Previous Review

Goals for Next Review Period

Comments and Approval

Employee Signature:	Date:
Supervisor Signature:	Date:

The USDA Child Nutrition Program's Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool

The USDA Professional Standards for All School Nutrition Employees require at least six hours of annual training for SN staff who work at least 20 hours per week, and at least four hours of annual training for SN staff who work less than 20 hours per week. Those who are hired after January 1 must complete half of the required training hours. For additional information on Professional Standards, please visit the USDA Professional Standards site at www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/professional-standards. The USDA Child Nutrition Program's Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT) https://pstrainingtracker.fns.usda.gov/ is designed to assist SN professionals in keeping track of their annually required training hours.

CHAPTER 3

SUPPLEMENTARY INSTITUTE OF CHILD NUTRITION RESOURCES

1. FREE TRAINING RESOURCES
2. FREE ONLINE COURSES

Institute of Child Nutrition Training Resources to Meet Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians

The ICN has many free training resources that can assist SN managers in training SN assistants/technicians. The No Time to Train series (https://theicn.org/school-nutrition-programs/) provides 34 short lessons for SN assistants/technicians. The format for No Time to Train lessons includes an overview, preparation checklist, lesson at-a-glance (with timeline for conducting the lesson), references, and instructor's script. The manager/instructor uses the script to present each lesson to the participants. The script gives directions to the manager/instructor—DO, SAY, ASK, LISTEN, and ACTIVITY—to deliver each lesson. No special audiovisual or electronic equipment is needed to conduct the lessons. They can be presented in the cafeteria, media center, or classroom.

The ICN also has free, self-paced online courses that can be used to meet competencies, knowledge, and skills. The courses are available at https://theicn.org/icn-elearning/. The table on the following pages shows suggested ICN online courses, highlighted in green, to assist SN assistants/technicians in meeting the competencies, knowledge, and skills.

FUNCTIONAL AREA 1: EQUIPMENT USE AND CARE

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
1.1 Selection and Operation	**1.1a** Demonstrates the ability to select the correct foodservice equipment for the food product being prepared. Culinary Techniques Series (Introduction, Preparing Fruits, Vegetables, Salads, Preparing Entrée Items, Preparing Soups, Eggs, Dairy, Sauces, Preparing Breads and Baked Goods, Using Seasonings) **1.1b** Demonstrates the ability to operate foodservice equipment appropriately.
1.2 Maintenance	**1.2a** Understands the importance of routinely monitoring foodservice equipment and reports issues to supervisor. **1.2b** Demonstrates ability to take apart and re-assemble assigned foodservice equipment as appropriate for maintenance and repair.

FUNCTIONAL AREA 2: FOOD PRODUCTION

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
2.1 Units and Measures	**2.1a** Knows units of measurement (pound, cup, etc.) used in preparation/production and demonstrates the ability to make appropriate conversions and sizing adjustment, as needed. Basic Culinary Math Series: Operations with Whole Numbers, Operation with Fractions, Operations with Decimals, Measurement, Conversions, Scaling Recipes, Calculating Food Cost, Recipe Adjustments
2.2 Preparation and Production	**2.2a** Knows and demonstrates basic food preparation techniques used in producing large quantities of food items. Culinary Techniques Series (Introduction, Preparing Fruits, Vegetables, Salads, Preparing Entrée Items, Preparing Soups, Eggs, Dairy, Sauces, Preparing Breads and Baked Goods, Using Seasonings) **2.2b** Knows and demonstrates the ability to prepare food products following standardized recipes. FBG Model 2: Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW) **2.2c** Knows and demonstrates the ability to prepare meals for special diets according to recipes or other instructions provided by manager or supervisor. Food Allergies in SNPs–General Food Allergies Food Allergies in SNPs–Reading Food Labels **2.2d** Understands the importance of and demonstrates proper portion control. Portion Control

FUNCTIONAL AREA 2: FOOD PRODUCTION

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
2.3 Quality Control	**2.3a** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for monitoring and evaluating all foods (received and produced) to ensure quality standards are achieved. **2.3b** Knows the importance of reporting quality issues to appropriate individuals and demonstrates the ability to identify plans to address the issues. **2.3c** Demonstrates proper procedures for monitoring plate waste and reporting observations to the supervisor.
2.4 Inventory Control	**2.4a** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for FIFO when managing inventory Inventory Management–Controlling Costs **2.4b** Demonstrates proper procedures for taking physical inventory of food supplies to determine needed quantities for ordering. Inventory Management–Controlling Costs

FUNCTIONAL AREA 3: FOOD SAFETY AND SANITATION

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
3.1 Food Safety and Sanitation	**3.1a** Knows the importance of and demonstrates appropriate personal hygiene practices for SN operations. Best Practices in SFSP–Personal Hygiene **3.1b** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for safe food handling. Best Practices in SFSP–Time and Temperature Control Food Safety in Schools Introduction to HACCP for SNPs **3.1c** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces. Best Practices in SFSP–Cleaning and Sanitizing Norovirus for Schools

FUNCTIONAL AREA 4: PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
4.1 General	**4.1a** Demonstrates willingness to be flexible. School Nutrition Staff: You Are a Team **4.1b** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for maintaining confidentiality regarding school and workplace matters. **4.1c** Demonstrates ability to work under the pressure of deadlines and with interruptions. Effective Goal Setting Using SMART Goals **4.1d** Knows the importance of and demonstrates the ability to work with a diverse school community. Focus on the Custemer for School Nutrition Managers Civil Rights in Child Nutrition Programs
4.2 Communication	**4.2a** Demonstrates effective oral and written communication. Presentation Fundamentals–Tips for New Speakers Adult Learning **4.2b** Demonstrates appropriate uses of lines of communication within the school and school district, including chain of authority and levels of job responsibilities. Communication Skills for Managers **4.2c** Demonstrates the ability to positively resolve conflict. Human Resource Series–Dealing with Conflict in the Workplace **4.2d** Demonstrates a professional manner when interacting with co-workers, school staff, students, and others. School Nutrition Staff-You Are a Team Coaching
4.3 Customer Service	**4.3a** Understands the importance of being responsive to student preferences and requests and demonstrates timely and helpful feedback to supervisor regarding these interactions. Focus on the Customer for School Nutrition Staff
4.4 Basic Math and Technology Skills	**4.4a** Demonstrates ability to add, subtract, multiply, and divide Basic Culinary Math: Conversions Basic Culinary Math: Calculating Food Cost Basic Culinary Math: Operations with Decimals Basic Culinary Math: Operations with Whole Numbers **4.4b** Demonstrates the ability to utilize a computer to check email.
4.5 Judgement	**4.5a** Understands the importance of following the chain of command to report potential problems or unusual events.

FUNCTIONAL AREA 5: USDA MEAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
5.1 Reports and Records	**5.1a** Understands and demonstrates proper procedures for handling money and operating the point of sale/cash register. **5.1b** Knows meal pattern requirements for a reimbursable meal. Meal Patterns **5.1c** Understands and demonstrates proper procedures for completing production records. Meal Patterns

FUNCTIONAL AREA 6: WORKPLACE AND EMPLOYEE SAFETY

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL STATEMENTS
6.1 Work Environment	**6.1a** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for maintaining clean and organized work and storage areas. Food Safety in Schools **6.1b** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures related to the protection of the environment. **6.1c** Knows the importance of and demonstrates proper procedures for using Safety Data Sheets.
6.2 Employee Safety	**6.1a** Demonstrates proper procedures for lifting and carrying.

References

Nettles, M. F. and Carr, D. (2006). Competencies, Knowledge and Skills of Effective
School Nutrition Assistants and Technicians. University of Mississippi. National
Food Service Management Institute.

United States Department of Agriculture. Food and Nutrition Service. (n.d.) Professional Standards
for All School Nutrition Program Employees. Retrieved from: https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/
professional-standards

INSTITUTE OF *child nutrition*

RESOURCES • TRAINING • RESEARCH

Applied Research Division
The University of Southern Mississippi
Grant Year 2018 #1

800-321-3054

www.theicn.org