



Launch Checklists and Post Launch Reviews

For Healthy Food & Drink
Products

 **Interreg**
Atlantic Area
European Regional Development Fund



 **A H F E S**

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Thank You

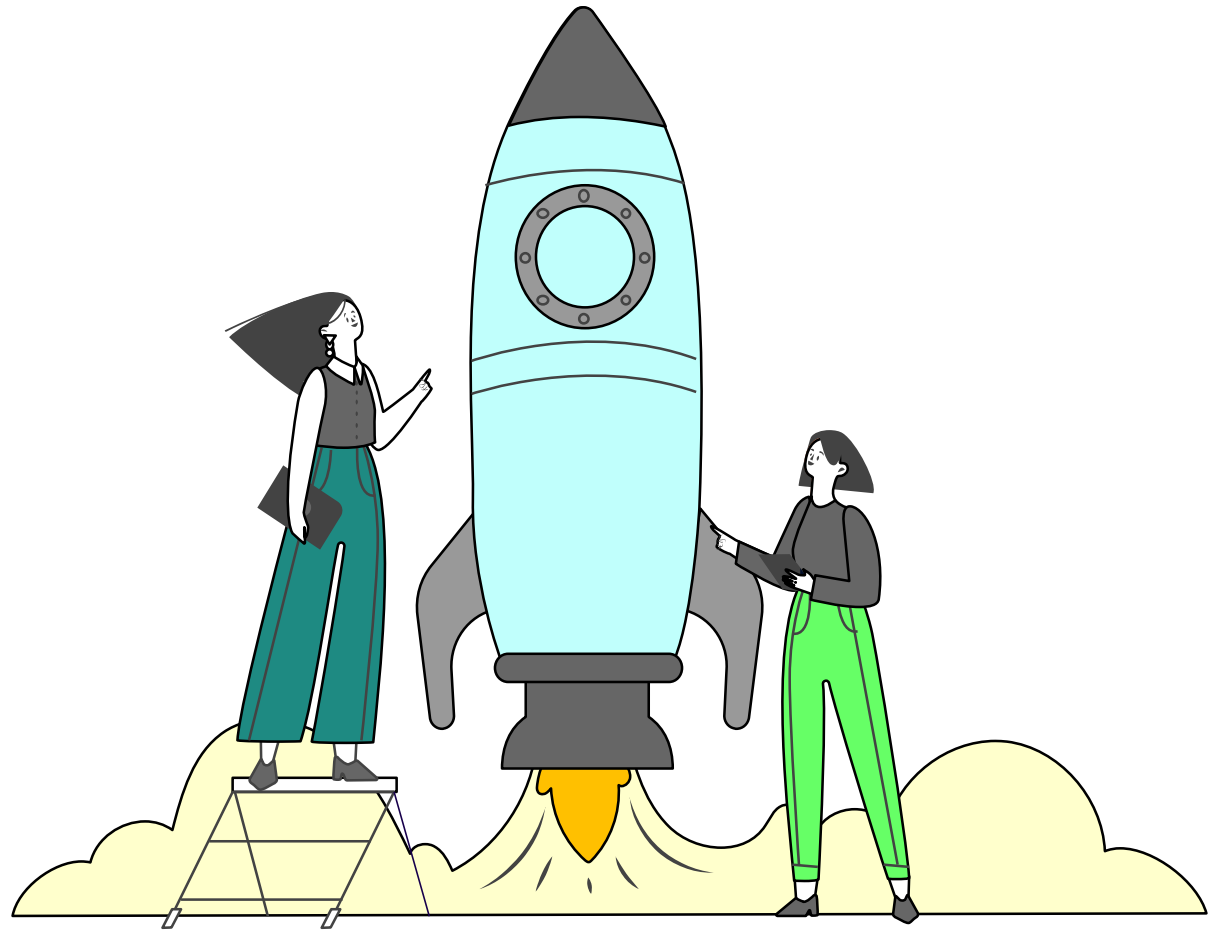
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Scope of this Training Module

It's been a long journey to reach your product launch and this final training module **P5-M14** aims to support you in **the final steps to launching your new products into the world successfully.**

Also, no matter how many products you launch, **every product launch is unique and has something to teach us**, so we will also be considering best practice in how to carry out post-launch reviews.

Whilst this short training module cannot cover every aspect or scenario that may arise with regards to your product launch, we hope it will provide some **useful ideas and a start point for you to build your own checklists, working practices and analysis methods** to continue to launch successful products in the future.



It's Been Quite A Journey – Now the Last Push to Launch!

Validation from
Market &
Consumer
Insight

Sourcing &
Process
Development

Launch Ready?



Product
Strategy, Ideas
& Concept
Development



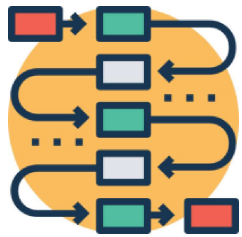
Product, Branding &
Sales Strategy
Development



Factory Trials
& Product
Testing



Final Launch Preparations



The last thing that you want to happen after all your careful research, idea generation, product development, brand positioning, trialling, testing and validation, pack design and customer engagement is for something to be missed or go awry at the last hurdle.

So **robust planning and careful organisation** of the final steps to launch is very important.

Over the next few slides we will look at some of the key areas to consider.



TIP : Creating and using a checklist of all the key factors that you need to be in place before your launch with associated deadlines is a helpful and methodical way to ensure nothing is missed

Implications of Introducing New or Reformulated Products

A well-run food or drink business will already have all the elements of **good manufacturing practice, quality management systems and food safety protocols** in place.

However introducing a new product - or making changes to one already in production – is a crucial moment at which a wide range of considerations need to be revisited and appropriate actions taken.

The Importance of Good Communication

As we have explored during the previous modules, **bringing a product to launch is a collaborative effort**, involving a mixture of internal colleagues and people from external organisations including suppliers, service providers and customers.

This means that **effective and timely communication** to all the stakeholders within your own business, in your supply chain and onwards to customers is critically important to achieving a smooth running and successful launch.

Different people respond best to different forms of communication, and the nature of the information and level of detail to be communicated may also lend itself to delivery routes and styles.

So **consider the best way to communicate with individuals or groups** – this may be in via in person or virtual meetings, hands on training workshops, by telephone, by email or other written formats.

Key people involved need to know :

- What is happening
- When – key dates and times
- What is required from them
- If anything changes



TIP : Create a list of the **key names and contact details** of everyone involved in the launch and a plan of what information needs to be communicated to whom and when

Count Down to Launch

The launch time line will vary depending on the nature and needs of your business and the product involved.

So decide the optimum time frame for you and assign the launch checklist tasks accordingly

1 Month Before

Ensure orders have been placed and actions are underway

3 Weeks Before

Check activities are on schedule – take action if any aspects are delayed

2 Weeks Before

Check activities are on schedule – take action if any aspects are delayed

1 Week Before

Confirm launch plans to teams involved

1 Day Before

Conduct last checks and preparations

Launch Day

Everything needs to be in place – but see the TIP opposite!

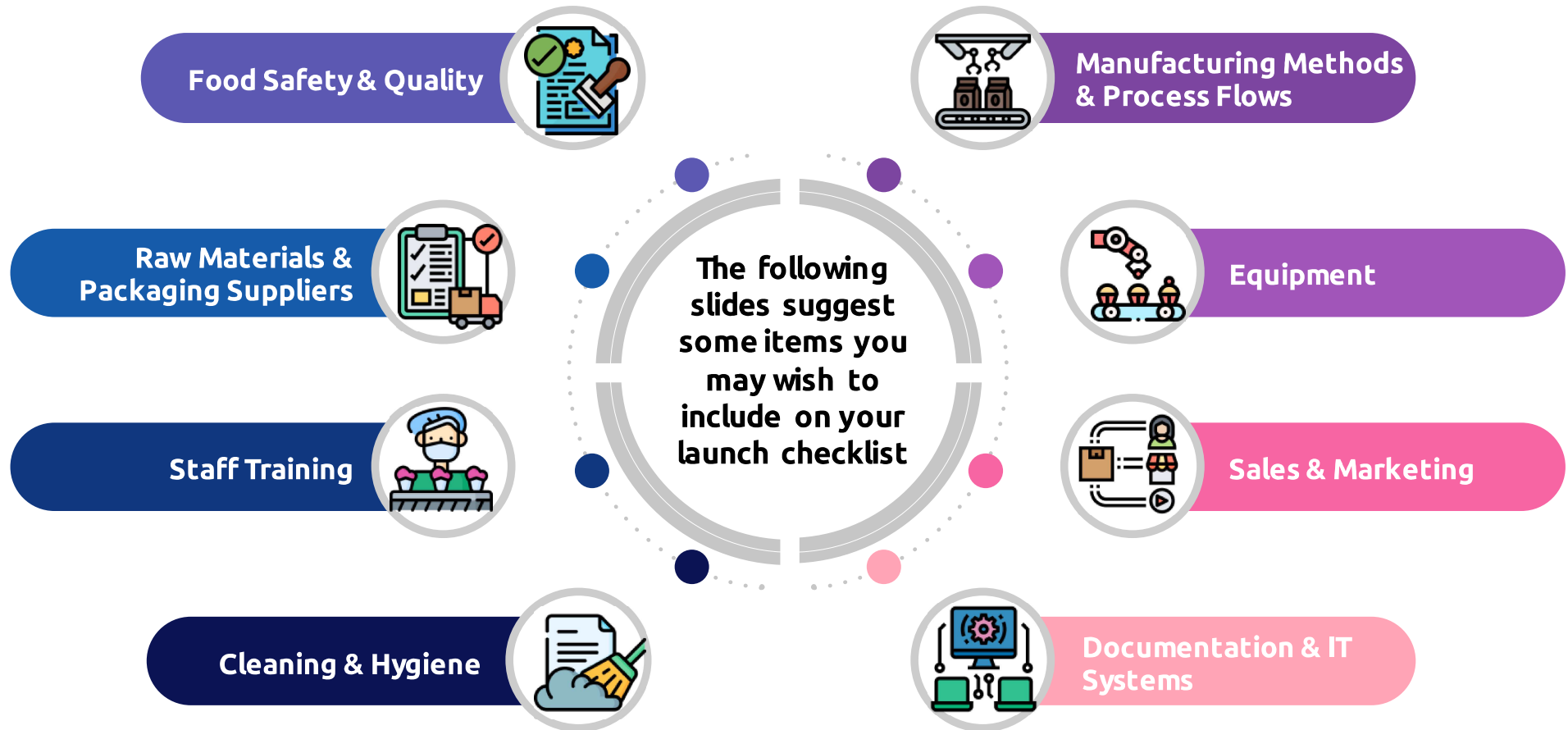
Tip : Don't forget that **the term "Launch" may mean different things to different people**, depending on their role and perspective.

The "Launch Day" for team members physically involved in the manufacturing, engineering set up and technical or quality aspects of making the new product is likely to be different to the day it is delivered to a customer, which may be "Launch Day" in the mind of the Sales team.

Equally the actual day the product goes on sale may be different again, especially for products which have an extended shelf life and are not highly perishable.

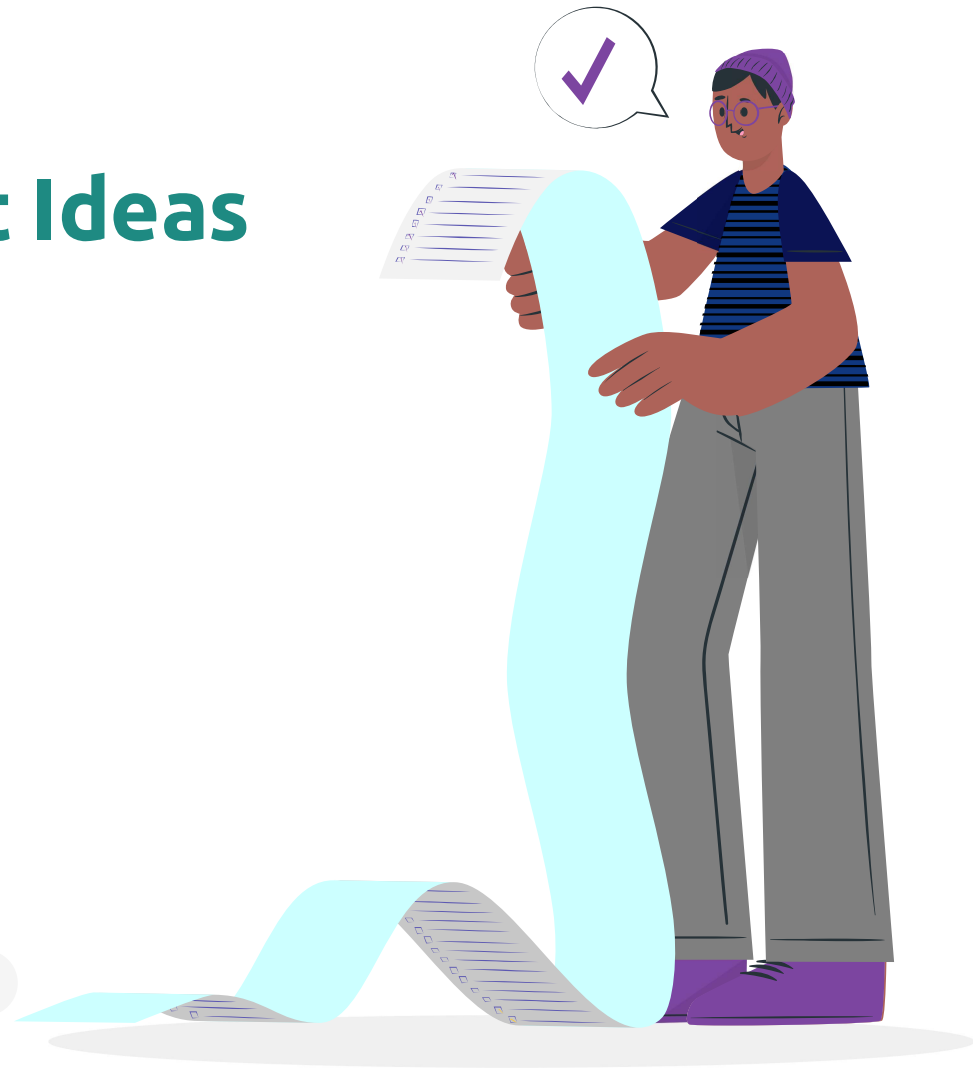
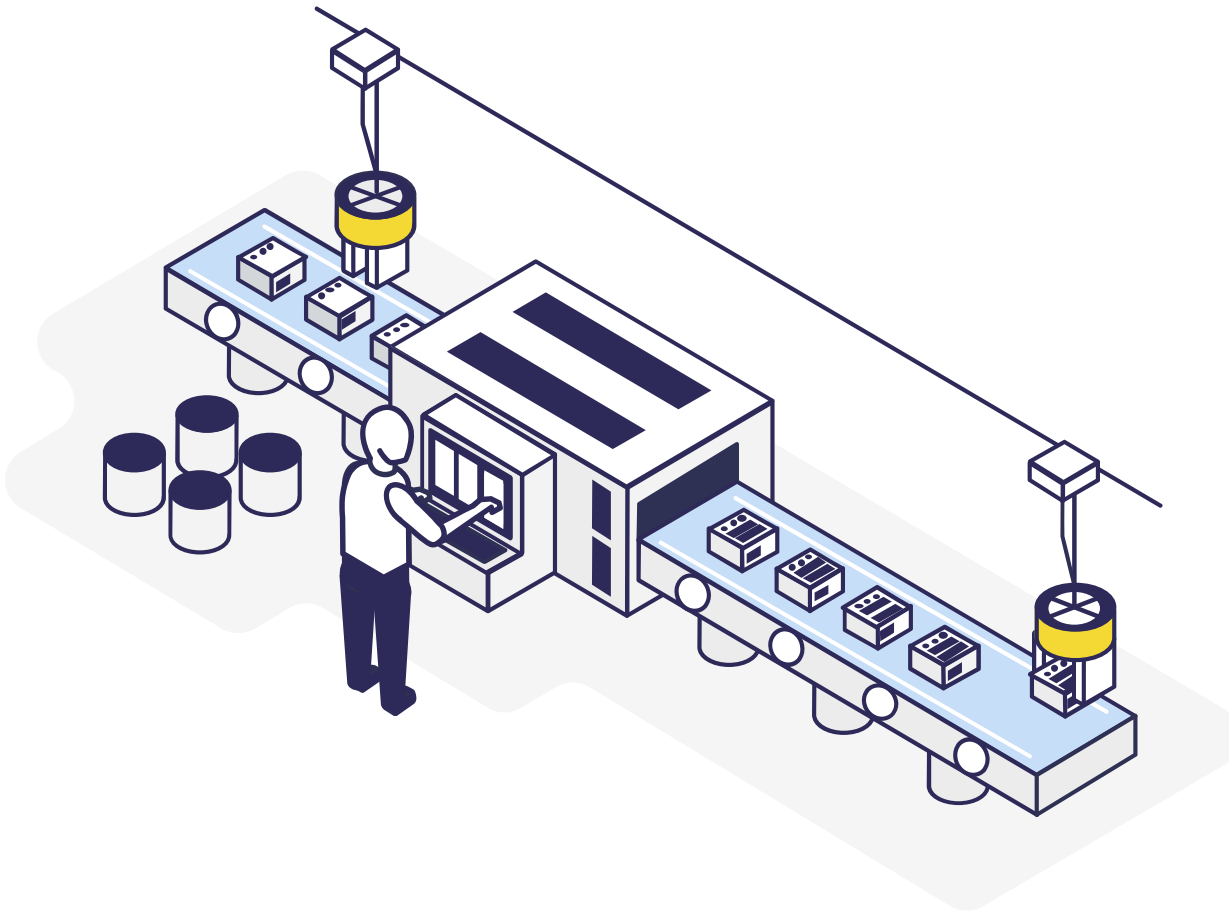
So for customers, consumers and the purposes of the marketing campaign, the "launch day" may be different again.

Some Key Launch Considerations



TIP : Construct your own personalised checklist incorporating the relevant points from the following Launch Checklist Ideas and add or amend specific points to suit your business needs. Don't forget to **assign tasks and set key dates and deadlines**, so you can be sure everything is in place for the launch date.

Launch Checklist Ideas



Launch Checklist Ideas

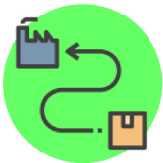
Raw Materials and Suppliers



Raw materials and primary packaging specifications received, reviewed & approved to come on site



Inspection and acceptance criteria for raw materials and primary packaging set, documented (ideally with reference photographs) and trained to staff



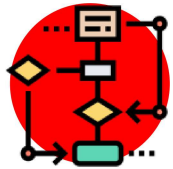
Suppliers audited and approved to be used, traceability standards tested and confirmed as acceptable



Food fraud, vulnerability and authenticity risks reviewed with chain of custody and authenticity confirmation methods agreed and implemented

Launch Checklist Ideas

HACCP, Licences, Allergen Management & QAS



HACCP review conducted, CCP's, control measures and critical limits identified with the product approved to launch by the HACCP team and HACCP Plans/ Flows updated and reissued if necessary



New or reformulated products, and processing methods, confirmed as being within the scope of any site licences to operate and compliant with externally audited approval schemes



Allergen management implications and cross contamination risks assessed and protocols implemented and trained to staff



Work in progress and finished product Quality Attribute Standards defined, agreed, documented (ideally with photographs illustrating targets and tolerances) and trained to staff

Launch Checklist Ideas

Cleaning & Sanitising : Hygiene Protocols & Materials



Hygiene, cleaning and sanitising protocols defined, tested and confirmed as effective



Any new or altered cleaning materials and equipment sourced, approved for use in either CIP or manual cleaning as appropriate



All cleaning materials, equipment and/or swabs to release lines ordered for delivery in time for the launch



Critical limits and procedures for checking cleaned lines or equipment agreed, documented and trained to staff

Launch Checklist Ideas

QA Checks, Product Testing, Process Flows & Factory Layout, Rework



Nature and frequency of QA checking procedures for products both during production & packing and as finished products defined, documented and trained to staff



Ongoing product testing regimes defined (e.g. for evidence to verify shelf life, composition, provenance or “free-from claims) included on site plans and actioned



Process flows and factory layout alterations actioned and verified as food safe and optimised for production efficiencies



Levels of permitted rework defined and protocols documented and trained to staff

Launch Checklist Ideas

Manufacturing Specs, Work Instructions and Procedures, Finished Product Handling



Manufacturing specifications written and issued to production and packing teams



Work procedures and instructions defined and documented - with reference photographs used to improve clarity of understanding for production staff



Production staff trained in any new procedures and quality standards targets and tolerances permissible



Any new or revised arrangements for despatch, storage and haulage confirmed as food safe and protected from risks of food fraud or theft

Launch Checklist Ideas

Equipment



Delivery dates for any new equipment or equipment adaptations confirmed with a schedule in place for services to be installed, commissioning and set up to be conducted and clearance as safe and ready for use to be approved



Equipment settings confirmed, documented and staff nominated who will have authority to amend settings; those staff trained in the equipment functionality and quality standards being targeted



Any process monitoring protocols established and method for checks, recording of data and corrective actions defined, with appropriate equipment or documents in place



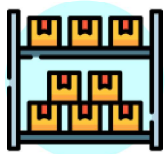
New or modified equipment included on ongoing and/or preventative maintenance schedules

Launch Checklist Ideas

Ensuring Everything Needed Is On Site For Launch



Systematic checklist of new raw materials created to include – quantity of stock ordered (referencing MOQ's), prices paid, lead-times, delivery due dates, stock arriving on site, inspection & approved for intake



Stock locations allocated for stock received, referencing best practice in allergen management and stock rotation, with date codes recorded



Any appropriate certificates of analysis or certificates of conformance received, reviewed, approved as acceptable and retained in records for future reference



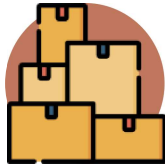
Similar checklists created and implemented for all packing components including primary, secondary and tertiary packaging items and any ancillary items such as interleaving sheets, retaining bands or absorbent pads

Launch Checklist Ideas

Packaging Approval and Management



Printed packaging or labels inspected and approved as being correct to meet legal requirements of consumer information and other food law obligations; also barcodes confirmed as scanning effectively



All packaging components inspected and approved as the correct material composition and micron or other relevant measure of robustness and compatible with on-site packing machinery



Any previous and now obsolete packaging to be withdrawn and disposed of in a responsible manner to prevent risk of the wrong packaging being used during production and packing of the new or reformulated product



Packaging items allocated storage locations and approved for release to production and packing lines

Launch Checklist Ideas

Health & Safety, Environmental Considerations and IT Systems



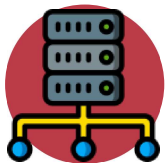
Health & safety risk assessment conducted and management controls agreed, implemented and trained to staff



Environmental impact risk assessments conducted and product approved to proceed



Environmental monitoring regimes agreed, monitoring documents created, issued and trained to staff



IT Databases and systems updated including procurement, customer ordering, stock management, WIP stock holding, production planning, despatch, invoicing, environmental monitoring

Launch Checklist Ideas

Sales, Marketing and Customer Interactions



Customer orders for initial production runs secured and fed into production planning processes



All relevant and required sales information communicated to customers to allow them to set up on their systems to ensure stock can be received and sold - such as code numbers, pricing, barcode scanning verified, online shopping details



Marketing campaign launch and activity dates aligned with stock reaching stores or food service outlets or being available for direct ordering online



Accurate information in place to ensure all delivery notes, invoicing and other communications to customers can be produced correctly and in a timely manner



- ✓ Checklists Complete
- ✓ Launch Plan In Place
- ✓ Ready to Launch

Good Luck !

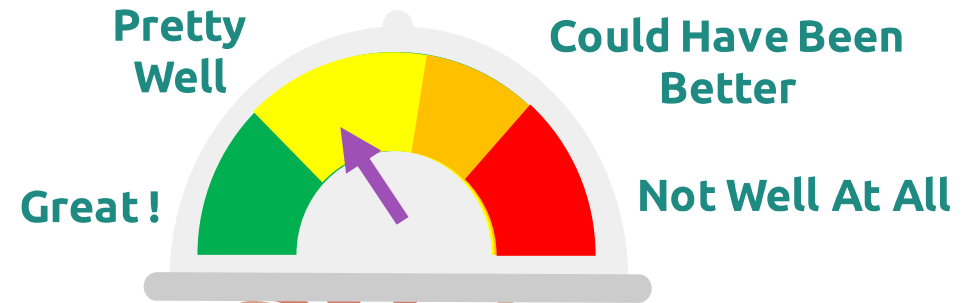


Review & Improve

Reflecting and Planning for the Future



So How Did The Launch Go ?



Innovating and bringing new products to market is a **complex process** and product launches can often be **stressful and challenging**.

If things went well, **celebrate your success** – it will give you energy and enthusiasm for the next project !



Even for teams with considerable experience of Product Development **the unforeseeable can happen** and things can go wrong, despite careful planning.

Every product development project can be mined for new learnings and contribute to continuous improvement.

Post Launch Reviews

Conducting a **review** of the product development project after the launch **is a valuable exercise**.

Everyone's experience is likely to be different based on their perspective and the nature of their involvement, so a review offers the opportunity to **seek a range of viewpoints** and **constructive ideas** to improve the way future product development projects are undertaken.

The review should **consider the various stages of the development process and the launch**, as these elements may have different learnings to offer.

What Went Well ?

Was this due to the strength of existing ways of working ?
Does this validate your current procedures or could you still make improvements ?

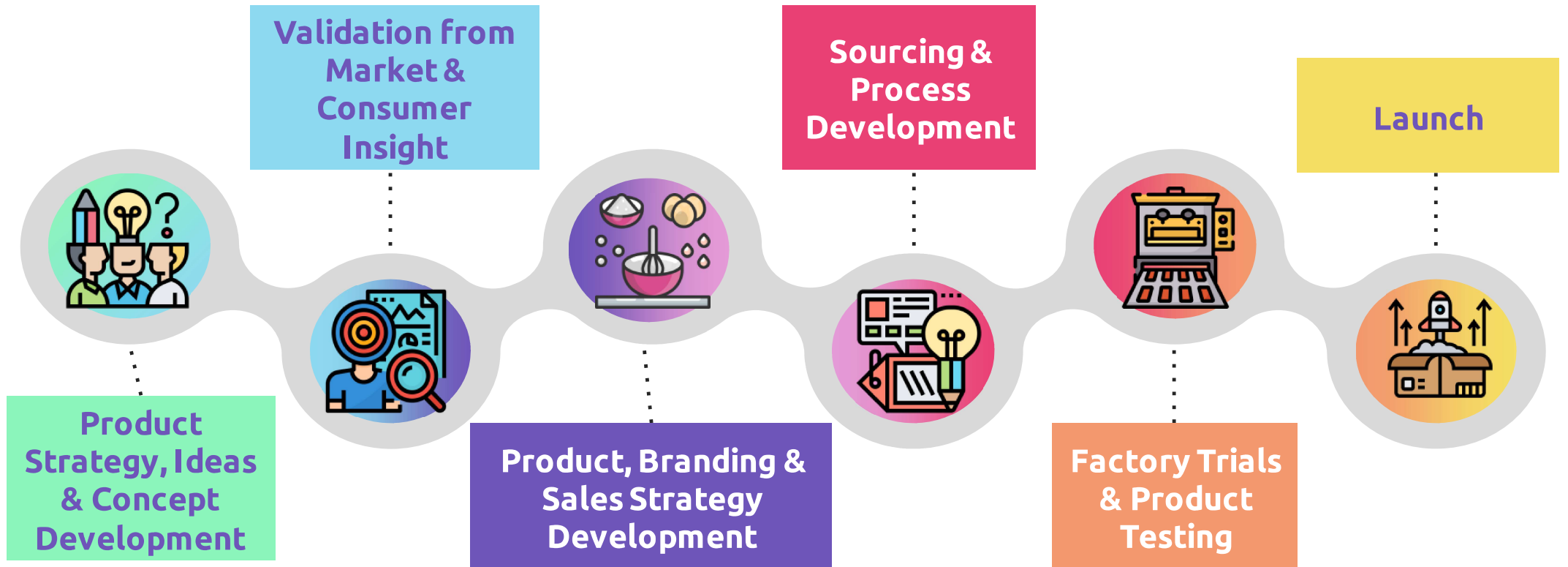
Did you use new methods and ideas ?
How could these become best practice for future projects ?

What Went Badly ?

What went wrong ?
Can you identify and understand the root cause of the issue ?

What actions and changes are needed to improve the effectiveness and good outcomes of future projects ?

Structuring the Post Launch Review



TIP: Splitting the review down into the steps along the product development critical path makes it less overwhelming. Identify who were the key stakeholders at each stage & include their views in the review. A **step by step approach** is helpful in identifying strengths and where success stemmed from, as well as tracking issues back to their root cause.

Conducting the Post Launch Review

How you approach the review will depend on the number of people involved, their personalities and preferences as to how and when they participate and the time you have for the task.

Even a short & snappy review to gather a few key points is better than letting the opportunity to improve future ways of working slip through your fingers.

So consider if the review should be in the form of a meeting or 121 conversations with key stakeholders – or a mixture of both.

Take a **positive and constructive approach** and be mindful that **the purpose is not to be negative or to promote a blame culture**, or even just give people an opportunity to have a moan !

You are looking for **insightful contributions which will contribute to continuous improvement** in your processes, which in turn will **lower product development costs** and **improve the financial return** on those successful products which are selling well in your target markets.

TIP : An hour spent on a review which proactively considers what can be improved and leads to the implementation of new ways of working could save considerable time and money in the future !

TIP : Create specific actions with defined timelines and tasks allocated to the people who can best deliver the improvements.

All talk and no action benefits no-one !

Tracking & Reviewing Costs of Development

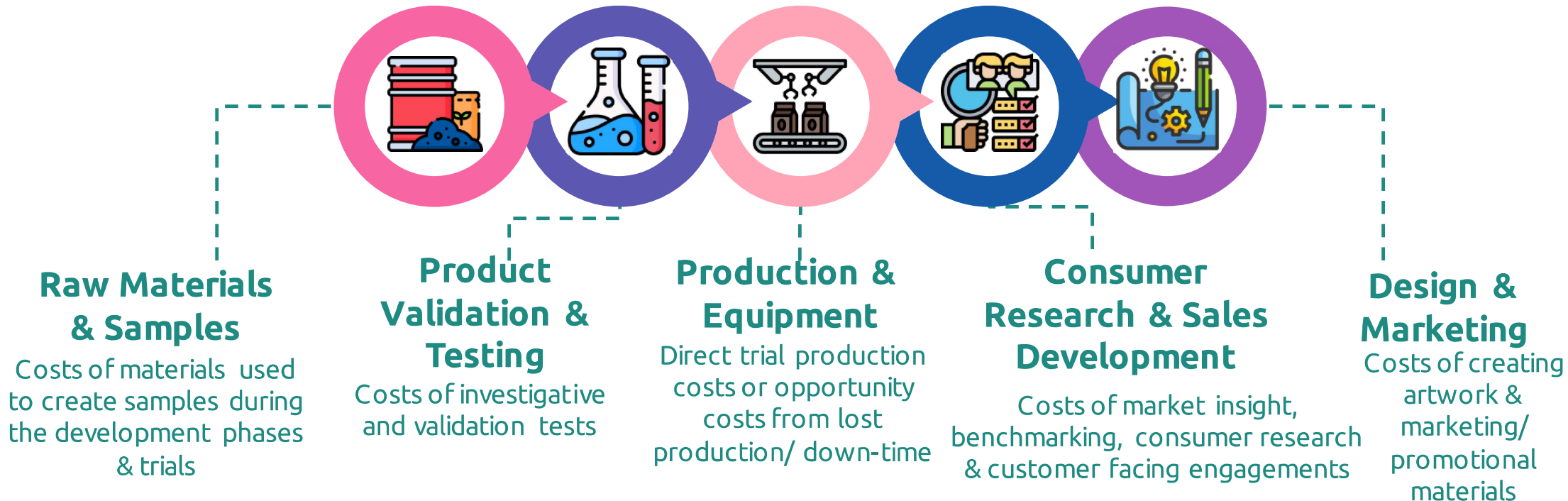
Developing new products or reformulating existing lines always requires investment and comes at a cost.

By reviewing & attributing costs to each product developed, you will **build up valuable information** over time allowing you to **manage & control your expenditure** and **highlight opportunities to seek cost reductions**.

This visibility can contribute to your decisions over which projects to pursue in the future, by permitting you to **predict costs of development versus the likely return on investment**.

Also, you can **determine if certain products or ranges are more expensive to develop than others**, or whether **some customers are more costly to serve** with new products and factor this into your decision making.

Some ideas of what to capture are below but you might also include **staff, travel, consultancy, courier & training** costs.



Strategy and Project Reviews

As we considered in previous training modules, such as P1-M6 Defining Your Brand Values and P2-M3 Creating A Product Strategy, **the product development process may only be one component of a much bigger business strategy.**

After the launch of products which are key to the delivery of a project or the overall business strategy, senior managers in the business may find it valuable to take the opportunity for a **comprehensive review of progress against business objectives.**

What were our objectives ?

What activities have we delivered ?

Have these activities achieved what we expected ?

If not, have the outcomes been better or less favourable than anticipated ?

Have market conditions and consumer needs and behaviours changed ?

Have our competitors offer and activities altered ?

What do we need to retain from our original plans – and what needs to be updated and refined ?

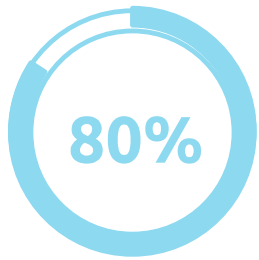
What are our action plans, timelines and SMART goals now ?

TIP : Analyse facts, figures and insight – but leave space for innovative thinking.

Combining analysis and innovation with judgement based on experience can inform the next steps for the business , set you apart from the competition and fuel your future success ...

Track Your Performance on a KPI Dashboard

Presenting the information which your business considers important **simply and clearly in a highly visual way** using a **dashboard format** can bring clarity to your review process and aid better decision making.



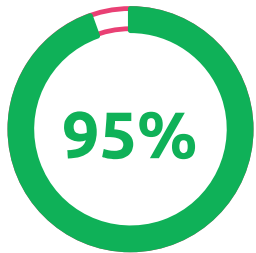
Sales Performance

Are sales tracking on target for the time frame under review?



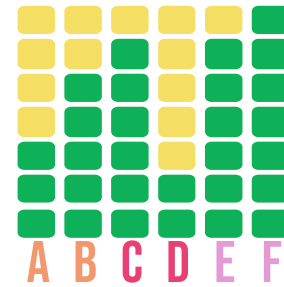
New Listings or Customers

How are new listings and new customers tracking against your targets?

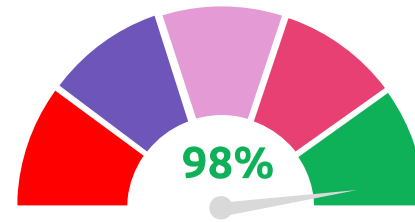


Profit Contribution

Are costs and the profit margin and as anticipated?



Sales Performance By Customer



Order Fulfillment

% of On Time, In Full Deliveries



Average time from invoice to payment



1.32 (0.99 - 1.49)
Average (and range) of selling prices achieved per unit

Thank You !



Thank you for your interest and participation in the AHFES Project training.

This is the final module in our **5 programmes of training** and throughout we have aimed to share the knowledge and experience of the multi-national AHFES team to **support small and medium sized businesses to bring new and innovative healthy foods to market successfully.**

By **helping to build the skill set** within your business, we hope that your healthy new or reformulated products will enjoy successful and profitable sales, whilst also **boosting the choices of healthy food options** for consumers in our partner countries of Wales, Northern Ireland, France, Portugal, Spain and Ireland, **contributing to better diets overall.**

Access to delicious, affordable and nutrient dense foods is a fundamental part of tackling the current issues of obesity. Education and products which are easy to choose, prepare and consume are needed to help address the challenges of populations who are overweight, or obese, due to overconsuming calories but are at the same time deficient and under-nourished in the key nutrients which are critical for human health.

The AHFES team sincerely hope that the training provided by the AHFES project will both **contribute to positive outcomes for consumers' health and well-being** and **support the success of our talented and ambitious food and drink businesses.**



We hope that you have found this training module a useful and helpful support to your healthy food and drink innovation.

This training module is one of a number of training opportunities, organised into themed training programmes to support SME's (small & medium sized enterprises) in the participating regions of Wales, Northern Ireland, Ireland, Spain, Portugal and France to successfully bring new and reformulated healthy food and drink products to market.

The training was created by the partners within the AHFES project which is a quadruple helix Atlantic area healthy food eco-system for the growth of SME's funded by the European Union under the Interreg Atlantic Area Funding Programme.

This programme promotes transnational cooperation among 36 Atlantic regions of 5 European countries and co-finances cooperation projects in the fields of Innovation & Competitiveness, Resource Efficiency, Territorial Risks Management, Biodiversity and Natural & Cultural Assets.

For more information about other training available [please click here](#).



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