CASE STUDY

# How Careworks Hit 87% Training Completion with SMS Lessons

*A COVID-era breakthrough that reshaped microlearning forever.*

## Executive Summary

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Careworks Health Services faced an urgent challenge: train 75+ field-based caregivers in COVID-safe protocols—fast. Traditional online modules had consistently underperformed, with less than 5% completion rates over a decade.  
  
A radical experiment changed everything. By sending daily bite-sized microlessons and quizzes via SMS, the company saw an 87% completion rate within one week. No reminders. No hand-holding. Just results.  
  
This case explores how a simple delivery shift—text-first learning—triggered high engagement, rapid knowledge transfer, and lasting behavior change. The success directly led to the creation of Brasstacks LMS, a platform built on that very principle: training should fit into people’s lives, not interrupt them.

## The Challenge

Careworks Health Services provides in-home care through a dispersed team of caregivers who operate entirely in the field. These employees often work long hours across varied locations and don’t have regular access to computers or office space. This created a persistent barrier to training—especially when the format required logging into online portals or attending scheduled sessions.  
  
COVID-19 escalated the problem. As front-line caregivers, employees needed up-to-date safety training on handwashing, masking, and social distancing. But the urgency of the moment collided with the same old limitations: time, tools, and attention.  
  
Despite good intentions, traditional training methods had a near-zero completion rate—hovering under 5% for years.

## The Breakthrough

In early 2020, a company emerged offering a novel concept: daily COVID safety lessons delivered by text message. Each lesson was a short burst of content, followed by a quiz. Over the course of five days, participants could complete their full training—one text at a time.  
  
The deployment was equally simple:  
- A single mass SMS was sent to 75 caregivers.  
- It informed them they’d begin receiving COVID safety lessons by text.  
- No app download. No follow-up reminders. No tech support.  
  
Caregivers could respond to each message directly on their phones, anytime, anywhere.

## Why It Worked

This wasn’t just a format shift—it was a behavioral unlock. The real success came from how well the delivery matched human behavior:  
  
- 📲 No login required — reduced friction  
- ⏱ <1 minute per day — fit into their day  
- 🎯 One simple action — minimal cognitive load  
- 🔁 Daily repetition — reinforced learning  
- 🤳 Familiar medium — texting felt natural  
  
This delivery model activated key meta-skills from Harvard's Nitin Nohria:  
- Discernment  
- Self-confidence  
- Judgment  
- Curiosity

## The Results

Engagement Funnel:  
- SMS Sent: 75  
- Opened: 70  
- Quiz Started: 68  
- Completed All Lessons: 65 (87%)  
  
✅ No follow-ups or reminders were required  
✅ Knowledge was retained and applied in real-world settings  
✅ Time and cost to deliver training dropped dramatically

## The Unexpected Breakthrough

This wasn’t just a successful experiment. It was a turning point.  
  
After over a decade of struggling with training completion, Careworks had stumbled into a model that actually worked—because it worked with employees, not against them. That realization led to the founding of Brasstacks LMS: a modern, lightweight training platform built around mobile-first delivery, text-based microlearning, and behavior-aligned design.

## Implications for the Industry

This case raises a deeper question for every company managing frontline teams:  
  
> What if the problem isn’t the people—but the platform?  
  
Brasstacks LMS is built on that insight. When training delivery matches the way people actually live and work, engagement isn’t forced—it’s natural. Texted microlessons aren’t just more convenient. They’re more effective.

## Conclusion

Careworks didn’t just increase compliance—they discovered a scalable, sustainable model for training the modern, deskless workforce.  
  
\*\*Microlearning doesn’t have to mean micro-impact.\*\* When you remove barriers and meet learners where they are, you unlock potential at every level of the organization.