



An investment that works.

PARTICIPANT EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

DEVELOPED FOR: REDF

Flying Whale Strategies

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PURPOSE AND INTRODUCTION

This guidebook was created as a sample for ESE Leaders to develop their Participant Employee Handbook. We generated a hypothetical ESE called “Stacks Ventures,” a youth job training program in the context of a coffeehouse.

We think this will get you about 80% of the way there. Next steps for you would be to make it your own. You will want to customize the content to reflect your ESE’s particular culture, policies, procedures, structure.

A few things to keep in mind while customizing this:

Remember this is for participant employees. Choose a tone that is appropriate for and relevant to the particular type of participant employees in your ESE.

Ensure the language and style is reflective of your particular culture. For example, in this guidebook, we use the term, “Professional Development Shifts.’ But, we recognize the term ‘Professional’ can be problematic for some.

Building a Participant Employee Handbook doesn’t have to be boring or burdensome. The process can actually be engaging, and support your culture of learning and engagement. Instead of having Joe in HR create this in isolation, consider using this as a way to engage your staff and participant employees. Customizing this for your team can be an opportunity to

engage voices, can be a low-stakes leadership task for emerging leaders, and also create a culture of dialogue and co-creation. Consider building with your team over a three month period. Breaking staff into small groups and assigning them the task of customizing this for your org. Next, form a task force of participant employees (voluntary and paid, of course) to review what the staff created and put it into their own words and tone. At every step of the way, ask for feedback, suggestions, additions. And, be ready to listen.

Long story short, this could be a natural opportunity to engage your people and co-create an even richer culture.

Notes on Using this Participant Worker Guidebook.

Once the Guidebook is complete, you now have to consider how you will share and utilize it. We acknowledge that, although it is simple, it still requires a lot of reading. Getting participant employees to engage with and retain this is, well, this is where some more creativity can come in. This Guidebook can become a reference or structure, but you can share the info in a variety of ways.

Consider: Ask staff or participant employees to create a short video touching on the main points in each section. Or, have participant employees act out each section during orientation.

Or, simply present it via an accompanying slide deck.

A note on the format:

We created this example with a hefty narrative on purpose. It is not meant to be read like a book, but rather a reference tool. We included multiple headings for easy skimability. When a participant employee lands on a section, we want it to read with a conversational tone rather than a legal document. Thus, we took our time explaining concepts with a tone that reinforces your organizational culture rather than simply delivers information.

WELCOME + STACKS OVERVIEW //

For ESE Leaders: Notes on The Welcome + Overview Section

This is a critical introduction that sets the tone for the participant employee experience. In this section, you ensure participant employees know how much you value them and that that is front and center. You can also demonstrate how this is not a typical job and not a typical organization. You can share your ‘why’ about some of the big FAQ’s, like: why do we only hire 18-24 year olds, and what is an ESE.

WELCOME TO STACKS VENTURES.

We’ve been waiting for you! We are so excited that you have chosen to work here and to go on this learning journey with us. Before we get started, we wanted you to know a few things that are true:

Our team is so much better now that you are on it. We believe that each person in the world has immense greatness to contribute. That every person, including you, has a unique set of talents, perspectives, wisdom and heart that are needed in this world. And we know that when you share those with our team, we will be better for it. To be our best, we need you.

We also know that you, like all of us humans, want to be engaged in life. And, we know that you need money to live and thrive. So we designed Stacks Ventures to support you in these efforts. We provide the opportunity for people who are ready to engage meaningfully in life (you!), to do some of the most essential things in life: learn, teach, and care about people—all while getting paid. The only catch: you gotta show up, contribute and do your best. That's all we ask.

WHAT IS THIS GUIDEBOOK (AND NOT)?

This Guidebook is meant to:

- Support new participant employees/trainees/ (you!) to understand our unique organization.
- It is about who we are at Stacks and who we want to become.
- It is meant to get you the information you need to be confident as you join the team and contribute meaningfully.
- It includes an overview of Stacks' unique workplace.
- It includes information and resources to make sure you know how to do the basics, like how to get paid and what to do when life tries to get in the way of work.
- It also provides you with ways to think about your work, about your co-employees, about customers and about yourself, that will help you thrive here. We call these 'mindsets.'
- The guidebook is structured around a set of questions that many new employees have had in the past.
- At the end of this guidebook and throughout, are resources for you to find important things like policies, benefits, and links to employment laws.

We hope it's helpful to you. As questions come up that aren't answered here, don't hesitate to ask your manager.

This guidebook will not give you all the answers. It will not do the work for you. It is not a legal document. And, it is not set in stone. This is intended to be, well, like its name implies: a guide. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to show up, and engage with the support and guidance provided here, and by your managers, to ensure you follow employment laws and understand your rights as an employee.

HOW DO I DESCRIBE STACKS IN A SIMPLE WAY?

Stacks is a craft coffeehouse that hires and trains young adults to work and learn in a business for a year. We learn the craft of coffee and build skills for our future careers. Stacks is a community of people like me: We know we have greatness inside of us. Together, we are learning how to recognize and share that greatness with the world.

HOW IS STACKS DIFFERENT THAN A TRADITIONAL BUSINESS?

Stacks is an 'Employment Social Enterprise.' (It's called an 'ESE' for short). Basically, this means that we are a business with a social mission. We are a high-quality coffeehouse. (In fact, we strive to be better than traditional coffee shops). And, we make money in the coffeehouse by providing great products and customer experience. But, the point of having this amazing coffeehouse is to fulfill our social mission: support young adults through learning at work. At Stacks Coffeehouse, we make money to fulfill (this mission, not to fill people's pockets with money).

Stacks combines working, earning money and learning into one. It was designed to be a more engaging place to work than other workplaces, and a more effective place to learn than traditional schools. Most traditional workplaces don't do a good job of teaching, training and supporting people who have struggled at work in the past. Businesses often hire the most experienced people, or people with more education. Stacks is designed differently than that. We are designed to support you on your journey to contribute at work while balancing your desire to be treated well as a human. And, at the same time, when you share your gifts, you end up making us a better organization. Then, together we build a better city—one that is more vibrant, more human, richer with culture. As a next gen leader, you're helping create the city we want and need.

HOW IS STACKS A UNIQUE WORKPLACE?

Stacks is a real workplace. A very real workplace. In some ways it is harder, more complex and more demanding than a traditional workplace. But in many ways it is more supportive and attuned to the needs of people. It is a powerful step on your work journey.

Some ways we are different than a traditional workplace:

You get paid to learn. This is called a 'job training' model. Participant employees work in the coffeehouse, but also learn in the classroom and in the community. Both coffeehouse and learning shifts (we call these 'professional development') are built into your work schedule. Participant employees commit to hard work, deep learning, and treating people well. And, you get paid for it all.

This is not a permanent job. It is meant to support you over about a year to learn the craft of coffee and build the foundation to find meaningful employment outside of Stacks once you complete your job training. It is designed in a way that you work through different stages of learning and work and then complete the job training. (This also allows other youth in our community to have this amazing opportunity, too).

We focus on your greatness and do everything in our power to help you thrive. Some other workplaces operate on fear. Many times managers are looking for ways in which you have messed up. This creates a culture where employees are scared of getting in trouble or getting fired. You don't deserve this. You deserve a community at work that invests in you and wants to show you your greatness. That's what we try to do at Stacks. And when you aren't perfect (no human is!), we don't cancel you. Instead, we reflect with you, and then we co-create a plan to get you where you want to be. More like mentor and teacher vibes.

You are supported—a lot. Through our Employee Success Program, we offer support to help you be stable and grow. This includes connecting you with basic needs resources, like housing, childcare, healthcare, education, free mental health support. You also are supported with workforce readiness skills, like resume-building, job search, and interview prep. We help you secure internships and job shadows at other businesses and organizations. And connect you with potential employers when the time comes to transition into another workplace. Lastly, we are committed to your success at work.

WHO IS A GOOD FIT TO WORK AT STACKS (AND WHO IS NOT)?

Stacks was designed for people, like you, who have not found traction in a traditional workplace yet, who are ready to engage in life and work meaningfully. You don't have to have work experience or a resume. You don't need a diploma. Oh, and, don't worry...you don't have to know anything about coffee, or even like coffee to work at Stacks. We will teach you everything you need to know. (Although, it is our evil plan to get you hooked!).

Importantly, though, to be a Stacks participant employee:

- You have to be able to show up when you say you will, ready to work, learn and be a good teammate.

Some people come to us who aren't ready to work yet:

- They may have so much going on in their life that they can't show up reliable, dependably and engaged.
- They may need to practice some of the basics before we can hire them into the job training.
- They aren't a good fit for a Stacks job training...yet. If this is you, please know this: we will do our best to support you, and to get you here if you want to be here.

Also, if you're someone who can get a good job elsewhere today, high-five! That's amazing. However, you are likely not a good fit for Stacks job training because you don't need it. Let us help connect you to work opportunities outside of Stacks.

STACKS CULTURE //

For ESE Leaders: Notes on The Culture Section

Unless you have a strong way of articulating your organization's culture and values, this section is the one that might be hardest (but potentially the most fruitful!) to customize. This is your opportunity to dig into the 'why' of what your organization does, and set the tone for how you expect people to be treated. We have found that many ESE leaders have been doing this type of work for so long, that sometimes we forget to articulate these key elements of our organization. Or, we think it's obvious. We recommend taking this section as an opportunity to articulate (and discover / dialogue / emerge) your culture in a simple way. And suggest doing it over and over and over again. We can kind of never talk about this stuff too much. No such thing as overboard.

WHAT DOES 'CULTURE' MEAN?

Culture is a term that describes what a group believes, what they care about and how people treat each other. It's what we create by how we show up, how we relate to each other (on the good days and the bad). It's also how we express joy and sorrow together. It's like the air between us at work. The vibe.

WHAT IS STACKS' CULTURE?

There is one concept at Stacks that describes our culture– everything we try to be and do. We call it: 'Spiritual Hospitality.' This is not a religious term. It means: "We create space for people to be fully and authentically themselves."

- We care about people being able to be themselves–authentic. We welcome and honor you. We don't want you to try and fit yourself into a mold, and pretend you're someone you're not. We actually hope that you will learn even more about yourself while you're here.
- We care about people being fully themselves. We recognize that we are all human. We aren't robots and we aren't here to read a script. At Stacks we embrace the messiness and imperfections of people.
- We don't expect you to always be right.
- We don't expect you to be happy all the time.
- We don't expect you to be funny or stylish if you aren't. Bring your big, complicated self! (Or your quiet, simple self). We ain't scared. We love it. Let's figure out how to navigate the messiness of life together, while balancing the need to treat each other well and run an amazing coffeehouse for guests.

And, we care about creating a space for this to happen in real life. We aren't here to tell other people how to be and how to act. It's a No Judgement Zone. We are here to create space for everyone to step into themselves more fully and authentically.

Spiritual Hospitality is baked into everything at Stacks. We look at it in terms of how we treat ourselves, how we treat each other on the Stacks team. And, how we treat guests and people we interact with outside of our team. When you're a part of the Stacks team, you are committing to trying to create spiritual hospitality for yourself and others. We will talk a lot more about this in Pre-Apprenticeship training. And, basically, all the time.

HOW DO WE INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER AT STACKS?

We see Stacks as a place to practice creating the type of world we want to live in. In our small, everyday interactions with each other, we have the opportunity to be different from the sometimes cruel world around us. Here, we are:

- Encouraged to be ourselves, use our voices, have boundaries...and also to work through conflict, to not cancel each other.
- We support each other through the really hard things.
- We push each other and hold each other accountable.
- We trust our instincts.
- We focus on the goodness all around us, and to be grateful for the goodness.

In other words, we use the small, everyday interactions to practice creating a world that we want to live in. In this way, like a ripple effect or butterfly effect, we can change the world.

WHAT DOES STACKS BELIEVE ABOUT PEOPLE?

We said this at the top of this guide, but it's so important, we wanted to say it again:

- We believe that each person in the world has immense greatness to contribute.
- That every person, including you, has a unique set of talents, perspectives, wisdom and heart that is needed in this world.
- And we know that when you share those with our team, we will be better for it.
- To be our best, we need you. Our team is so much better now that you are on it.

The same goes for everyone we encounter—because every person is different. We embrace and honor difference. Diversity is a superpower.

We also know that not everyone acts right all the time. People are under a lot of stress right now in our country. People are confused. They are always still learning. People get scared, angry, and many people are sick. When folks (like customers or employees) don't act right, we recognize that they are experiencing an illness or are hurt. We don't judge them. We honor them as humans. But, we also have standards and boundaries. We address actions from teammates, customers and ourselves that are hurtful, and seek to repair harms. We protect each other.

WHAT DOES STACKS BELIEVE ABOUT CUSTOMERS?

You've probably heard the term 'customer service' in the past. Many businesses use this term to talk about how they interact with customers. At Stacks, we don't believe in 'customer service.' We don't believe you are here to 'serve' customers who have the money and the power. This is an out-of-date concept that creates an unequal power dynamic between you and the customer. We want you to understand that you are not here to 'serve' anyone. You are a full, capable person with equal worth to the customer.

You've probably also heard the phrase, "The customer is always right." Well, we don't believe that is true either. Most of the time, customers are incredible, and loving and understanding. But, there are many times the customer isn't right. They are human and make mistakes, too. Sometimes they order the wrong thing. Sometimes they actually treat us poorly. Sometimes they are downright mean.

What we do believe is that you have power and choice in these instances. You can choose, from behind the counter, to create an experience for customers to experience spiritual hospitality...especially when they are having a bad day. We call this 'customer experience.' And we ask you to choose this everyday.

Now, if customers' actions go too far, at Stacks we aren't afraid to ask a customer to leave the shop. Or, even fire them. You don't have to put up with inappropriate behavior from customers, or anyone. We got you. We will talk a lot more about how to handle these situations in our Orientation.

WHAT DOES STACKS BELIEVE ABOUT BUSINESS QUALITY?

Yes, we are a nonprofit. Yes, we care about people. Yes, we exist to support participant employees on their learning and working journey. But, that doesn't mean that we don't care about quality of service and product. In fact, because we care about you and our team, we hold each of us to high standards. In order to be the best version of yourself, to succeed at work and engage meaningfully in life, you should know what good looks and feel like. To do so, we teach you how to be an incredible boss at work, and how to be a leader. We also teach you effective business practices. That means, we expect high-quality work. But, you're not alone. It's the job of your team and your leaders to do everything we can to get you there.

WHAT DOES STACKS BELIEVE ABOUT TRUSTING PARTICIPANT EMPLOYEES?

We trust you. We believe that you are trustworthy. We believe this so much that we give participant employees the keys to the coffeehouses. Participant employees regularly open and close the shop without a staff member present. They work together to reconcile the sales for the day, and they make important decisions for the organization. With trust comes great responsibility. And, we need you to be responsible, trustworthy team members. The organization relies on it.

Yes, we verify things, and we pay attention. So, if it becomes the case that we can't trust someone, we address it. But, that's not really where we need to focus. We know it: We got each other.

THE JOB TRAINING STRUCTURE //

For ESE Leaders: Notes on The Job Training Structure Section

This section outlines the structure of your Employee Support Program and your workforce training model. We find that this is very important for participant employees to hear early on in their journey. Many of them (and us) are very anxious about the unknown. Laying out what participant employees can expect in their training and what success looks like can be medicinal. (And, it's just good teaching practice). Working in an ESE is confusing, because it is so unique. Many times as ESE leaders, we get so focused on supporting participant employees or helping them graduate or get a job, that we forget to articulate (or have a hard time articulating) that 'success' is not static, and takes multiple steps.

For this section, we suggest using the questions below as a guide. You can also reference your [Program Management toolkit](#) for details that you may have mapped out there.

WHAT IS STACKS JOB TRAINING PROGRAM?

As we said at the top, a job training program is where you learn and work for about a year, while getting paid for both. You work in the coffeehouse, but also learn in the classroom and in the community. Both coffeehouse and 'professional development' shifts are built into your work schedule.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE STACKS JOB TRAINING PROGRAM?

The goal of your time here is to work hard, learn deeply, and treat people well. It is designed in a way that you work through different stages of learning and work and then complete the training. Throughout your training, you will learn craft coffee and customer experience skills, but you also learn how to learn (this is an amazing asset you will have for the rest of your life!). You will also practice being an incredible teammate, discover more about your greatness, and build a foundation of skills that are valuable in any workplace.

The cool thing about all this is: if you want a career in craft coffee, this training will prepare you very nicely for a well-paying job in coffee after you graduate. Generally, most participant employees are able to be hired at the best coffee shops in the city, and be a strong, competitive co-employee. We actually have graduates working across the country as leaders in the craft coffee industry.

The other cool thing is: that if you don't want a career in craft coffee, this training will prepare you nicely for a different type of job as well. We don't care if you stay in coffee or not. We just care that you get to experience your inherent greatness, build belonging on our team, and can solve problems and communicate.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT IN MY TRAINING PROGRAM?

Peer Learning + Teaching. You do all this with other young adults in the community at the same time. You learn from and work alongside a crew of participant employees. Some of your teammates start on the same day with you in orientation. (We call this your 'cohort'). Some of your teammates started with us earlier than you. They will be teaching you the ropes along the way. And, once you get a few months into your training, you will be asked to teach newer participant employees what you know, with your own flair.

We have intentionally built your training flow into small chunks and phases so you know where you're headed, and can experience success at many points along the way. And, you can earn promotions and raises at key points in the training. The job training phases are outlined in this one-pager ([link if you have one](#)). But the basics are:

Orientation. Start with a 3-day orientation. Here we dive deeper into the concepts outlined in this guidebook. You also get to know your cohort—the crew of other young adults who start the training at the same time as you. All you need to do in this part is show up on time and engage in the learning activities we do together. Oh, and, as always, be yourself and care about other people.

Training + Participant Employee Shifts. When you work shifts in the coffeehouse, you will constantly be taught things, guided, praised, and challenged. This is where things are very different than most other retail and hospitality jobs. We do this on purpose, because learning while on shift is one of the most powerful and effective ways for you to become amazing as a barista in a short amount of time.

Once you get on the schedule for shifts in the coffeehouse, you will be shadowing and learning from more experienced participant employees, over the course of six training shifts. Once

those are complete, you start your shifts at different stations in the shop. Usually, you start at the register, taking orders from customers. In between shifts, you learn how to work on the espresso machine and do more complex tasks, so you're prepared for every station.

Certification. For your first three months or so, you'll be preparing for success on our Barista Level 1 Internal Certification. Here you will demonstrate knowledge, skills and reasoning at each of the coffeehouse work stations. Don't worry, it's not scary. We got you.

Professional Development. Throughout your entire training, you will be scheduled for professional development (PD) shifts, where you will continue to learn the knowledge and skills needed to be a strong participant employee in the coffeehouse, but in a classroom / meeting room environment. These PD shifts are essential to your success, and are required. Here you learn without the pressure of customers or the speed specs. It's actually designed like a tech school or college learning environment. It sometimes can feel like school, but in a good way, where it is relevant to your life and we treat you like the creative, complex, young leaders that you are.

During PD, we also learn and do things that are not necessarily related to coffee or business. We volunteer in our community, we learn about systems of inequality in our country, we practice using our voices, we work through conflict. We also do things to help you prepare for, find and secure employment, so you're excited to transition into another workplace after you graduate from Stacks.

Meetings. Every participant employee will be scheduled to meet one-on-one with different support staff. Sometimes you will meet with your Case Manager. Other times it will be with the Learning Director. Others with your coffeehouse Operations Manager. We also have All Staff Meetings once per month in the evenings. Each of these are required and included on your schedule. You are paid for attending and engaging.

Leadership Opportunities. Once you become certified at the Barista Level 1, this unlocks leadership development opportunities. When the time comes, your manager will help you figure out the best next steps for you, based on your skill set and interests. The biggest thing we need from you is to keep growing and learning and healing. You can see some of those options on the Job Training Overview One-Pager ([link if you have one](#)).

Bonuses and Milestones. Oh, and, another cool thing: along the way, you can earn bonuses for accomplishing some key milestones, like becoming certified by the Specialty Coffee Association or completing a semester of college or trade school, or working another job and keeping it for three months. Here's a look at the Bonuses and Milestones list ([link if you have one](#)).

Graduation. Throughout your job training, you will work with your manager and the Learning Director to determine when you graduate. Generally, we plan on a one year experience, where you learn and grow at a pace that is appropriate for your learning style.

HOW DO YOU PROVIDE SUPPORT TO PARTICIPANT EMPLOYEES?

Great question. Don't worry. We got you covered. Because we are so invested in you, we created an Employee Support Program. In addition to the paid work and learning outlined above, you have access to these:

Mental Health + Wellness. We provide group wellness activities where you learn about and practice how to take care of your mental health. We also offer and pay for any participant employee to meet with a licensed therapist one-on-one, outside of Stacks, through our partner organization. Most participant employees do this monthly, but we provide it every week for your entire job training if you want it. Optional, but such a good idea for you to consider.

Job Search + Readiness + Job shadows + Internships. Some of this we will cover in Professional Development shifts. But there's a lot more you have access to in the realm of helping you with the tools, skills, professional connections, and experiences to explore and secure a job after you graduate Stacks. Also, such a good idea for you to consider. Oh, and for most of these things, you get paid to do them. Just make sure you keep raising your hand for these opportunities.

Supportive Services + Case Management. We know that life happens. And that at this age, participant employees need support in all areas of life as you are transitioning into adulthood. At Stacks, there is a team of people that are here to help you navigate these key things in life. Although we may not provide it all, we can support with resources for things like: housing, healthcare, government benefits, navigating the juvenile justice system, child care, education, and many more things. Just make sure you share what your needs are and ask for support.

IS THE JOB TRAINING THE SAME FOR EVERY PARTICIPANT EMPLOYEE?

Short answer: no. Every participant employee comes to Stacks with a different background, set of experiences, perspective, work experience level, skill set, learning style, wisdom, talents, and different levels of community or family around them. Everyone also shows up with their own set of challenges, fears, doubts and shadows. Stacks was designed with this in mind.

We are committed to treating everyone equitably. This means that we are committed to acting in a way that provides the support and love and guidance and opportunity to each participant employee based on what that individual needs. Everyone gets treated fairly. But how we get you there may look different. For example, you may be late to work one day. And, another participant employee is late to work the next day.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

'Success' is a tricky word. There are many definitions of success. And, at Stacks, there are a multitude of things that happen throughout a job training that we consider 'success.' And success looks different for each participant employee. At the core, we want you to engage in work and learning and belonging in a team, over the course of a year. And, we want you to work toward your personal goals. The Learning Director will help you think through your goals and help you work toward achieving them throughout the job training.

- For most participant employees, a core goal is: by the time they complete their job training, they are hired into a good job in a good company doing work they like—a place they can continue to learn and thrive in.
- For some participant employees, they find that opportunity after 3 or 6 months, and they are ready to fly out of the nest. They may graduate before the year is up. That's fabulous. We want you to do you.
- For others, it takes longer. Some participant employees consider success as being promoted into a Shift Lead role at Stacks.
- For others, success is showing up and staying on shift for a full year, gaining strong work experience and references for your resume.
- And, still others, their goal is to move to Los Angeles and work in a roastery.

Long story short, success is different for everyone, and there are lots of possibilities. Let's figure it out together.

WHAT'S OUR RELATIONSHIP AFTER I'M DONE WITH MY JOB TRAINING?

When you complete your job training, you are automatically part of the elite group of Stacks alumni. A few amazing things come with this. First and foremost, you are welcome to come visit us anytime in the shops (you get a lifetime employee discount in all our coffeehouses!), to keep sharing your life with us. Secondly, we will always work to support you on your journey beyond Stacks. You can set up time to meet with us. As well, we also host alumni events 3-4 times per year, and you are invited to all of them. We may even ask you to help plan them. Finally, you also can earn bonuses (that's cold, hard cash), even after you graduate.

WORKPLACE LOGISTICS //

For ESE Leaders: Notes on The Workplace Logistics Section

This is more of the brass tacks answers to the very practical questions participant employees generally have. Pretty straight forward section here.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR A STACKS JOB TRAINING?

Stacks was created to support a specific group of young adults on their journey. Below are the requirements to be hired as an participant employee:

1. You must be 18-24 years old on Day 1 of Orientation. We do this because this is a critical time of life that requires a specific focus and expertise. We designed the job training to have an impact in the lives of young adults in this age group.
2. The job training is for those not finding traction in traditional school and work. We do this because of the design of our job training. As well, we have a limited number of participant employees we can hire at any given time in our three coffeehouses. We reserve spots for those who have had particular challenges with work so far. If you're

someone who can get hired by another employer and be successful there, great news. We can help connect you to employment options outside of Stacks.

3. And, you must be eligible to work in the United States. We do this because it's the law.

Note: For those who don't meet these eligibility requirements, let us know. We will try to help you find a job elsewhere, or at least a connection to someone who can support you better.

WHAT DAYS AND TIMES MUST A PARTICIPANT EMPLOYEE BE AVAILABLE TO WORK?

Our coffeehouses are open during the daytime hours, seven days per week. We need a team of participant employees to work during hours of operation. Also, we need you to be available for 'professional development' learning shifts. We understand you may have a lot going on in your life, so we tried to make this flexible as possible, while still doing what we have got to get done. Therefore, participant employees must be available for:

- At least 3 shifts per week in the coffeehouse and additional PD shift. This includes at least one morning shift (arrival by 6am) and one closing shift (until 5pm) per week.
- At least one weekend shift.
- Some evening hours required for All Staff Meetings once per month

IS THIS A FULL TIME, PERMANENT JOB?

Stacks' job training is not intended to be a fulltime job. The job training is an important step on your work journey. But it is not a job intended to be able to fully support your family. Many participant employees are able to have this as their only job, mostly because they share expenses with friends or loved ones. We commit to providing a minimum of 20 hours per week paid shifts. (This is a combination of coffeehouse shifts and PD shifts). We work with participant employees who need hours to find more shifts, but we cannot guarantee more than 20 hours per week. On average, participant employees work 20-30 hours per week. We are happy to work with you to build a schedule that supports you in this effort.

This is also not a permanent job. It is built to support you over the course of about a year.

WHEN WOULD I KNOW MY SCHEDULE?

We use an app called Homebase to build your schedule each week. You will be able to download this for free on your phone or printed out for you. We post your schedule ten days in advance. Your schedule will consist of coffeehouse shifts, professional development shifts, meetings, and can optionally include special events, internships, job shadows and more. Time-off requests must be made two weeks in advance.

WHAT IS MY PAY RATE?

- Participant employees are hourly employees.
- We start participant employee pay at the city's minimum hourly rate wage.
- For other paid hours, like Professional Development Shifts and All Staff Meetings, participant employee wage starts at the minimum hourly non-tipped wage.
- Participant employees also have the opportunity to work other shifts at higher rates, including private events and speaking engagements.
- We also offer the opportunity for multiple raises and promotions throughout your job training.

- Generally, the average hourly rate earned for a participant employee within six months is \$2/hour more than they began.

WHY DOES PARTICIPANT WORKER PAY START AT THE MINIMUM WAGE?

We understand that this is an expensive city to live in. Sometimes minimum wage, especially at 20-30 hours per week, is not enough to cover all things. We hear you. And, we want you to know that we value you, and agree that you are an important part of the team. So, we wanted to share how we came to the decision to start the pay rate at minimum wage:

- First, we hire young adults who have little to no experience working in a coffeehouse or in other workplaces. When you start work with us, you're not able to show up as an experienced craft coffee professional. So, we have to (and want to) invest substantially into your training and learning.
- We also provide a lot of support. Not only do we provide the Employee Support Program, Case Management, Job Support, Mental Health supports, Industry-Recognized credentials, and even bonding activities for free. But we pay you while you're engaging in these activities.
- Another important thing we considered is the job market outside of Stacks. We have found that it is important to not set unrealistic expectations for pay that young adults will receive when they get employed outside of Stacks.
- And, we will share it again here: we offer the opportunity for multiple raises and promotions throughout your job training. Generally, the average hourly rate earned for a participant employee within six months is \$2/hour more than they began.
- Also, don't forget the opportunity for bonuses we outlined above. Add-in tips (more info below) and now you're cookin with gas!

DO I GET TIPS?

Yes! Tips are earned during coffeehouse shifts. They are pooled across all shifts for all participant employees over a week's time. Participant employees start earning tips after their first six shifts in the coffeehouse. Each week, tips are collected and distributed based on how many hours each person worked that week. We pay out tips every two weeks on your paycheck. There is a specific line on your check that allows you to know exactly how much in tips you were paid.

Pro tip: We have found a few things participant employees can do to increase the amount of tips they see on their paychecks. We will talk about these a lot, but the main things: Give a warm welcome to every person when they walk in the door or pull up in the drive-thru. Make a true, human connection with that person. Know your product. And, work as a team to get drinks and food into their hands within our 5 minute or less goal. Oh, and great product quality also helps a ton! We actually have some quality specs we will share with you. Let's get them stacks.

WHEN DO I GET PAID?

All staff are paid every other week on Fridays. When hired, you will be provided with the pay schedule to make sure you know what days and what shifts at what rates you were paid. **Pro tip:** Make sure you always review your pay stub to ensure it is accurate. If you have questions or concerns, let's talk it out.

CAN I GET FIRED?

So, we have this saying at Stacks: "You cannot get fired. No matter what." For real. It's real. But, of course this doesn't mean participant employees get to do whatever whenever. We have expectations. And we don't lower them because we have a social mission. All participant employees have to show up, on time, engage in working and learning, and care for other people. Those are some of our basic expectations. And, we know that sometimes participant employees aren't always able to meet those expectations. Sometimes it's because they have so much going on in their lives, that they can't show up ready to contribute. Other times, they have a mental block or they sabotage themselves. And other times, participant employees just haven't figured out how to be sober at work. When this stuff happens, we will have a discussion. Unlike a lot of other jobs, we are excited to help you figure out a game plan. If things don't improve or something happens that makes others unsafe, we won't fire you.

But, what we have had to do in the past is take people off the schedule. Most of the time it is temporary, but sometimes, if things don't improve, it's permanent. Participant employees' life situations can be complex, sometimes so complex they aren't able to work. In this case, we encourage you to share and let us support you. Every once in a while participant employees sometimes choose to take a break from working to focus on getting stable. That's always an option. (That's actually a really responsible, mature way to respond, rather than just no-call, no-show to shifts).

Other times we make the decision to remove participant employees from the schedule. We then invite you into 'Restorative Employment.' (Basically, that means we make a plan together that will help you get to a place where you can show up, ready to work). When you complete that, we welcome you back onto the schedule. In fact, in almost every situation, if you had to take a break for whatever reason, but then want to come back and are able to work, you're welcome back. We absolutely want you here.

CAN I HAVE ANOTHER JOB WHILE I'M AN APPRENTICE?

Yes. As long as you are available for the days and times outlined above. Just let us know and we will do our best to build a schedule that supports your success in both jobs. If we can't, we will be up front with you about it.

WHAT ARE SOME OTHER IMPORTANT POLICIES I SHOULD KNOW ABOUT?

Just like all workplaces, there are quite a few policies and procedures that you should know about. We have them because some of them are required by law. Others are to keep people safe and engaged in their growth. We will review all of them in Orientation, and you will sign them with New Hire Paperwork, but we thought we would give a quick overview of some that you might be wondering about.

Dress Code. One cool thing is that we don't have uniforms. We actually want you to feel like you can dress like yourself. Another cool thing is that we do provide Stacks shirts for you to wear to work if you want. But, we do have a dress code because we are a food and drink establishment, and therefore have to comply with Health Code laws that keep you, co-employees and customers safe.

The big ones:

- You must wear closed-toed shoes
- No shorts
- No long fingernails
- Long hair must be pulled back

If you come to work dressed differently, you will be asked to go home to change. Or you will be asked to wear something from our uniform closet instead.

Drug and Alcohol Policy. No one at Stacks should consume drugs or alcohol at work (unless legal and specifically permitted at a special event) and should never perform work functions under the influence of drugs or alcohol. This includes all Professional Development shifts and meetings. The Drug and Alcohol Policy is extremely important to keep you and others safe. It protects you from being held liable if someone gets hurt on the job. It also is important because of the whole learning and engagement aspect of the job training. If you're here, we need you sober. And, as of now, we do not drug test you before you start. But, if we have reason to believe you are at work under the influence, we will take you off the schedule, and reserve the right to drug test you, as well as send you home. Hopefully that won't be an issue. (If you're struggling with drugs and/or alcohol, please share that with us. We would like to get you the support you deserve).

Late Policy. One of the main expectations of work at Stacks is that you arrive and clock-in to work on time, accurately. No matter what. Of course, we are humans and understand that life outside of work doesn't stop. But, we do expect that if it happens, you communicate with us and build a game plan to address it right away. In the past we've had to take participant employees off the schedule for being late. And we don't want to do that. We like it when you're here. After arriving late three times, your manager will schedule a performance review.

Break Policy. (Include your policy regarding breaks during shifts including timing, location, and what is/is not allowed during breaks).

Harassment Policy. (Include your policy regarding how workplace harassment is handled including how to report it and what to expect next).

EMPLOYEE MINDSETS //

For ESE Leaders: Notes on The Employee Mindsets Section

Most ESE's don't have a list of mindsets to support participant employees. We have found that creating these is a game changer.

If you don't yet have these, this particular section could be an incredible opportunity to ask your direct service staff to work with participant employees to create these. The framing questions: "What makes you such an incredible participant employee? What advice do you have for new participant employees in terms of how they approach working here? How do you get your mind set to come in and crush it at work every day?" There are a few examples below.

You can actually study and practice these in Professional Development shifts. One per week for six weeks.

HOW SHOULD I THINK ABOUT MY WORK?

Ooooo. This is one of the best questions! Thanks for asking. We will talk about 'mindsets' a lot during your Orientation and throughout the job training. Mindsets are ways of focusing your mind for work, in ways that help you feel engaged and contributing to the team. They aren't required, and certainly no one can do them all at once. But, we hope they are helpful to you, as a new participant employee, to be able to feel more comfortable and confident early on.

Here's a truth about life. You don't have control over many things that happen in the world or to you. But, you do have a choice in how you are going to approach a situation or respond to something. A mindset is how you choose to think about something. We have some guiding mindsets that were developed, in part by other participant employees. It's basically a cheat sheet.

Employee Mindsets are for new participant employees. (We also have some cool Leadership Mindsets that are helpful after you once you are in a leadership role). Take a look at them here ([link if you have this](#)). We hope they are helpful. If they aren't all good. Take what you need and leave the rest. If you aren't quite ready to embrace these, that's ok. We will explore and practice them together.

Some of the Employee Mindsets we would love for you to embrace include:

Stacks Mindset: "I believe I have exceptional abilities" and "I believe people will still love me if I make mistakes."

Learner Mindset: "I don't pretend I know answers when I don't" and "I am open to feedback."

Collaborator Mindset: "I have an 'I got you' mentality toward my team" and "I believe I have an important role to play on this team."

Problem-Solver Mindset: "I am creative and not afraid to try."

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THERE IS CONFLICT AT WORK?

We are all humans with different perspectives. As we said above, we think that is a superpower for an organization. But, we also know that humans don't always agree on things. And that conflict happens. This is very natural. And, conflict isn't always bad. It can be a healthy thing, if we can approach it in a healthy way that honors people who make mistakes and who are constantly growing. At Stacks, we talk through things and make things right where we can. We practice restoring relationships at work. And, in doing so, we practice creating a world we want to live in.

If you are experiencing a conflict with someone at work, we will notice. Our team will help you by facilitating a conversation with you and the other person. We will give each person guidance on next steps to resolve the conflict. You will both be held accountable to those steps.

HOW SHOULD I RESPOND WHEN PEOPLE GIVE ME FEEDBACK AT WORK?

We said this already, but wanted to share it again: when you work shifts in the coffeehouse, you will constantly be taught things, guided, praised, and challenged. We do this on purpose. We think of it as continuous learning and growth. It's a normal, everyday thing. And, we ask that you are open to it and expect it. When you get feedback at Stacks, it is not a sign that you are bad or wrong. It actually is a way that we are investing in you. It's a statement that we value and believe in you. Feedback and reflection are important aspects of the learning process. We also think that one of the most powerful things we can teach you is how to learn. (And, by the way, most schools don't actually teach you how to learn things well). Anyway, we believe this is so powerful because, once you learn how to learn, you can learn and grow and contribute and follow your passions your entire life. And no one can ever take away from you what you have learned.

MY TEAM //

For ESE Leaders: Notes on The My Team Section

Roles in ESE's can be very confusing for participant employees, because ESE leaders are constantly switching from support staff to teacher to resource navigator to meeting facilitator to mentor to manager to family support. Back and forth all day every day. Participant employees can (legitimately) get caught off guard (or even escalated) when we switch between these without acknowledgement or explanation. This section is meant to lay the groundwork for this ongoing conversation ESE leaders will want to have with participant employees.

WHO WILL I BE WORKING WITH?

There are a few people that you will interact with while working at Stacks. It's different from a traditional workplace, so we thought we'd outline the different roles here. Everyone is here to support you. But we have our specialty areas as well.

Full-time salaried staff include:

Operations Manager. Leader of the coffeehouse operations. They make a lot of the business decisions. They ensure the team is executing our business and customer experience goals, and hitting our quality specifications. When participant employees are on shift, this person is the main supervisor.

Contact information:

Assistant Operations Manager. You will interact with this person a lot on shift. They are responsible for the day-to-day operations. They make the schedule and support participant employees with effective open and closing checklists, ensure we have product, and most importantly, they, along with the Operations Manager, ensure quality product and customer experience is happening.

Contact information:

Director of Learning. Leader of learning craft coffee, and all the other learning that happens outside of shift. They work closely with the Operations Manager to ensure you are learning what you need to be a strong contributor on shift. They are also the leader for the Learning Manager and Case Manager.

Contact information:

Learning Manager. You probably met this person already. They are your point of contact for hiring and Pre-Apprenticeship. They support learning and professional development outside of shift. They will also help make sure you get what you need to earn the Barista 1 and other certifications.

Contact information:

Case Manager. Here to support you with finding and navigating resources in life. You will meet one-on-one with them often to ensure you are stable and safe and growing outside of work.

Contact information:

Executive Director. Leader of the entire organization. This person supports all the staff in their goals, ensures we have the funding to run the organization, and ensures we are meeting our social impact goals.

Contact information:

OK, THEN, WHO IS MY BOSS?

In a general sense, we all work together to get things done. And we support each other. It can get a little confusing, though, because folks in leadership positions both support participant employees and hold them accountable to expectations. So, the same person who supports you and talks with you about your feelings and your goals, might also be someone who holds you accountable. But, in general, who your manager is depends on what you're doing at that moment. When you are on coffeehouse shift, the Operations Manager and Assistant Manager are your go-to supervisors. When you are outside of shift, the Director of Learning, Learning Manager and Case Manager are your supervisors. And, the Executive Director supervises each of them. If you're ever confused, or getting mixed messages from staff, talk to any of us about it. We want to make sure it's the least confusing as possible for you.

BASIC WORKFORCE INFORMATION //

For ESE Leaders: Notes on The Basic Workforce Information Section

Most participant employees have never been taught employee rights or workplace basics. It's important that we provide resources for them that are simple and accurate. You may need to find these through a trusted partner, the economic development office. Or, you could create these internally. Regardless, one caution here is to ensure you don't take-on unnecessary liability. For example, ESE shouldn't be giving tax advice or trying to interpret employment law. We suggest using trusted partners as much as possible here.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AS AN EMPLOYEE IN THIS STATE?

Stacks is not able to provide legal advice, but we wanted to make sure you know that there are laws at the state and national level that protect you and ensure work conditions and pay are fair. The official place you can find up to date employment laws and rights is at the State Department of Labor and Employment.

As a participant employee, you are considered a temporary hourly non-exempt employee. This is a temporary job because it is job training, which is not meant to be a permanent position. Non-exempt means that if you work overtime on coffeehouse shifts, you are paid at the overtime hourly rate of 1.5 times your regular hourly rate.

All other paid shifts, including Professional Development, are paid at the regular hourly rate.

Below is a quick summary of some of the most frequently asked about rights as an employee.

WHAT BENEFITS AM I ENTITLED TO AS AN APPRENTICE?

(See the Benefits Overview here).

DO I GET PAID FOR SICK LEAVE, VACATION OR HOLIDAYS?

(See the Benefits Overview here).

WHEN I GET PAID, IT IS SOMETIMES CONFUSING TO UNDERSTAND WHY THEY TAKE OUT SO MUCH MONEY OR WHAT MY PAYSTUB MEANS. HOW DO I READ MY PAYSTUB?

We will review this on Day 3 of Orientation. But, if you want to get a jump start on understanding it, here is a link to an explanation (link to your city or state workforce explanation).

HOW DO WE STAY SAFE AT WORK?

(Include key safety protocols, including for the prevention of COVID 19).

RANDOM QUESTIONS //

For ESE Leaders: Notes on The Random Questions Section

Self-explanatory. Anything else that hasn't been said that needs to be said. And, other random FAQ's you have heard throughout the years.

Whew. We are almost to the end of this guidebook. Before we wrap up, there are a few additional things we want to share about your experience at Stacks.

WHAT ELSE CAN I EXPECT THAT IS DIFFERENT FROM OTHER WORKPLACES?

Other things that happen around here include:

Events. We host fun events for participant employees, like holiday parties and team bonding in the mountains. Or, invite family to share a meal with us. We also host events that bring community members together with participant employees, like our Latte Art Throwdowns and Stacks Birthday celebrations. We also host events specifically to thank the generous donors who support our fundraising. As well, sometimes other organizations use our shop after hours to host their own events. Apprentices will have the option to participate in events, with pay.

Photos + Video. In terms of getting your photo taken, we ask you to consider signing a media release. We love to take photos of participant employees and post them to social media, include them on our website, and in our Annual Report. If for some reason you are unable to do this due to safety or confidentiality, please sign this Photo Opt Out document ([link if you have this](#)).

Media. Also, sometimes the news or other media outlets want to share the Stacks story. We always let you know when that is happening, and you have the choice about whether or not you want to engage with them.

New Employee Paperwork + Informational Interview + Needs Assessment. At every job, as a new employee, you are required to complete New Employee Paperwork. Most of this is legal paperwork, like verifying you are eligible to work in the US. As well, you sign-off on the fact that you received information, like this Guidebook, and your benefits. At Stacks, you will do all of this. In your first month of employment, we also sit down with you to get to know you better. This is a conversation we call 'Informational Interview.' This is to learn more about your work and education experience, what kind of learner you are, and what challenges you might have at work. Another thing we do in the first month is a 'Needs Assessment.' Our Case Manager asks you questions to understand how we can best support you outside of work, related to ensuring you are stable and safe and supported. These are questions about things like housing and family income and health insurance. This information is not required for work, but we do hope you share with us so we can support you. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please talk with us.

Confidentiality. There are extra staff here dedicated to your wellbeing (insert their roles). As a result, we often share information with each other about your progress and challenges in order

to offer you the best support possible. (insert further details using the [Confidentiality toolkit](#) for support)

Communication. (Include communication expectations, such as whether the participant worker is expected to have a working cell phone and email address and to update staff with any changes in their contact information.)

RESOURCES //

Finally, we wanted to make sure you know where to find all of the policies and procedures and resources you will need throughout your job training. So, we created a Participant Employee Resource page on our website. It can be accessed here (link if you have this). We referenced many of these above, and will review many of them together in-person, but wanted you to have them here as a one-stop-shop. We hope you find it helpful. It includes:

- Stacks Staff Contact Information
- Benefits Overview
- Stacks Policies + Procedures
- Stacks Internal Certification
- Quality Specs for Product and Customer Experience
- [Colorado Labor Law and Guidance Information](#)
- How to Read a Paystub
- Bonuses + Milestones Overview
- Participant Employee + Leadership Mindsets
- New Employee Intake Paperwork Packet
- Videos to Watch, Books to Read

And, well, that's it for now. We can't wait to get to work and learn and take care of each other alongside you.