

Laker Food Company Student Employee Onboarding Guide

Grand Valley State University

Introduction:

Created in collaboration with Human Resources and Operations, this onboarding and training tool helps set student employees up for success. A series of meetings to brainstorm initial concepts were followed by sessions to refine the final product through design and delivery.

Essay:

As students onboard, they receive the guide and careful instructions about the program. On the first day of work, location managers revisit the guide and assist students through the steps. The guide walks students through everything they need to know. This includes information on being legally authorized to work, uniform requirements, a location manager organization chart and specific job duties. The final portion of the program revolves around student employees establishing personal and professional goals and allows managers to help them achieve their goals throughout their employment. During their first day of employment, location managers walk them through each step. The program covers training resources from the students' first day through their first month. For many student employees, this is their first job or English is a second language. The guide serves as a road map to help students connect to their work environment. Additionally, managers can benchmark student employee's progress and remaining training needs. Each training section includes checklists that must be acknowledged with a signature from both the student employee and manager. To motivate student employees to complete the entire process, a final sign off at the end of the guide enables students to enter a prize raffle.

Introduction:

The intention of the program is to standardize training, leading to higher employment satisfaction and reduced employee turnover rates. It also increased guest satisfaction because of workforce consistency. Guest satisfaction improved from 47% to 84% vs. same period, prior year.

Essay:

Retention Results

Student employee retention during the 2024-25 fall and winter semesters was 92%. During the same period, prior year, before the program was implemented, the retention rate was 88%. This program netted an increase in retention of 4% equating to 35 more retained students.

University Impact

The University Student Employment Office was so impressed with the organized training and delivery method, that they asked Laker Food Co.'s permission to mimic the program. Their hope is to develop it into a campus-wide, multi-departmental program.

Introduction:

Student employees learned about the program during recruiting events during summer orientation, move-in week and job fairs. For the first time since Covid in 2020, Laker Food Co. filled all student job openings during the time period.

Essay:

The Employee Onboarding Guide is exclusive to the student workers supported through Grand Valley State University and can be credited with maintaining a consistent student staff. Laker Food Co. has seen an increase in return student workers and promotions from within. Students feel appreciated and are excited to move up in the working structure when they feel like they have the tools for success.

Introduction:

One of the biggest highlights of the program is an increase in full-time employee and student employee working relationships. The guide provided formalized and increased student training and in turn, improved overall full-time employee morale. The HR manager of Laker Food Co. states this program led to more consistent and thorough training across campus. "We have seen a direct decrease in student employee complaints surrounding inadequate workplace training."

-Will Silvey

Essay:

Lasting Impact; We have seen an increase in student retention throughout the 2024-2025 academic year which has led to increased student employee tenure. Laker Food Co. will enhance and expand the program to include resources for student manager development, further driving an increase in student employee tenure.

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