General Manager Job Description

Vancouver Food Co-op Seeks General Manager to Lead Store Expansion

Founded in 1975, the East End Food Cooperative (EEFC) is Vancouver’s only member-owned grocery store. It specializes in meeting the community’s desire for organic, fair trade and locally grown food, welcoming member and non-member shoppers. It is open 12 hours/day, 7 days/week with 21 full- and part-time unionized staff, and with gross annual sales exceeding $2.5 million.

With financial challenges arising from the small scale of the current store, the EEFC Board has identified storefront expansion and modernization as essential measures to realize the EEFC’s unique potential as a thriving, people-driven food co-op. The Board has completed a market assessment and member survey, while rekindling the Co-op’s channels for member engagement.

Over the next two years, the focus will be on improving its management of costs, personnel resources, and marketing strategies, followed by community-driven rebranding and storefront expansion. We are seeking a General Manager with the proven skills, experience, enthusiasm, and capacity for risk-taking to guide the Co-op through this transformation.

Job Summary
The job of the general manager is to lead the co-operative so that it achieves the goals and objectives developed by the board of directors.

Qualifications:

Organizational Change & Leadership

• Ability to articulate a vision and get group members to buy into it
• Experience in organizational transformation, growth, and/or expansion
• Entrepreneurial spirit with demonstrated creativity & innovation in business
• Strategic Planning Experience

Personnel Management

• Ability to manage labour costs and deliver high productivity from staff
• Ability to motivate, lead, and coordinate people to gain co-operation
• Experienced in setting clear expectations and holding staff accountable

Industry Knowledge & Experience
• Experience with Operating, Capital, & Cash Budgeting
• Retail and/or food sector management experience
• Commitment to co-operative values and principles
• Food system sustainability literacy- in general and specific to Vancouver

Reporting Relationships
The general manager reports to the board of directors which is elected by the members of the co-op. The general manager has the authority, in accordance with the collective agreement with the union, to hire, direct, structure and evaluate all other staff.

Specific Responsibilities

Financial and Planning
• Develop and recommend to the board of directors long- and short-range plans to achieve co-op purposes
• Prepare annual budget for approval by the board and be held accountable for control of resources
• Direct all financial operations of the cooperative
• Investigate new business opportunities and make recommendations to the board of directors on expansion, relocation, and acquisitions; conduct negotiations as agreed upon
• Prepare monthly and annual financial and management reports to the board
• Participate in regional and national co-op and industry events

Operations and Merchandising
• Ensure a profitable, growing business
• Maintain knowledge of natural, fair trade, organic and local foods retailing and industry trends
• Maintain appropriate relations with wholesale distributors, local markets, and other industry sources
• Ensure the establishment and maintenance of a product mix that meets member needs.
• Plan and execute a margin strategy designed to be price competitive and maintain adequate profit for growth
• Maintain and update equipment and systems
• Maintain and update inventory, receiving and stocking procedures
• Ensure compliance with all applicable laws: licenses, permits, health regulations, employment, etc.

Personnel
• Oversee compliance with the collective agreement between the co-operative and the union
Hire, supervise, evaluate, and fire management staff
- Develop a staff organizational structure in accordance with the collective agreement and maintain maximum service to customers
- Prepare a yearly payroll budget that meets operating budget constraints
- Ensure a safe, healthy workplace for employees
- Ensure adequate training of staff and promote a culture of professionalism, enthusiasm and high quality of performance.

Marketing and Member Engagement
- Develop an advertising and marketing strategy to increase co-op memberships, sales and public awareness of the co-op’s products and services
- Execute the advertising and marketing plan within budgetary guidelines
- Communicate information about the co-op to members through its website, social media, newsletter and an annual report
- Ensure displays, signage, and other promotions are prepared to maximize marketing impact
- Maintain and update contact with the City of Vancouver, Commercial Drive Business Improvement Association, community organizations and responding to media contacts
- Engaging co-op members and developing strategic community partnerships

Strategic Planning for Modernization and Expansion
- Develop a business plan for modernization and expansion that includes
  - options for expansion in current location or relocation of the business
  - options for additional services and/or product areas that would meet the needs of members and shoppers
  - options of management and personnel structures suitable for modernization and expansion
- Collaborate with consultants and other professionals in the planning and implementation of modernization and expansion
- Perform other duties assigned by the board of directors

Please send your resume and cover letter to eastendfoodcoophiring@gmail.com no later than January 6, 2014. Applications will be reviewed as they are received, so get yours in today!