Associate Training Guide

OVERVIEW

The training guide was created to give management and associates a general view of the responsibilities and expectations for the multitude of tasks that are required on a consistent basis at SummerWinds. The guide is designed as a roadmap for training, growth, and information for all associates as it influences their current position and future goals. Each of these topics is designed to assist the trainer in developing and strengthening skills using a consistent foundation from which to train.

In addition, the “training grid” is a general overview of the SummerWinds designations and the responsibilities that commonly exist within each designation. Associates are not limited to these responsibilities and need to work with the management team to understand their given role within the store that they work.

Finally, the guide will also assist management and associates who are interested in advancing within SummerWinds. Use the training grid and our Key Retail Operating Standards as a resource to plan a course of action for advancement.

Key Retail Operating Standards

SummerWinds®

We are in the business of pleasing people with terrific service and excellent plants. Your talents and enthusiasm play a key role in creating our customers' gardening success! We hope that you have fun, apply your good judgment and find your time here rewarding both personally and professionally.

Welcome to Our Garden

- Greet every customer with a smile and say hello within 15 feet.
- Offer to walk customers to a requested item, don't point.
- Make eye contact, smile and thank every customer at time of purchase and carryout.
- Learn to live our "We Guarantee Success" customer service mission.

Merchandising

- Buy only the best, sell only the best.
- Provide professional and informative signage (no hand-written signs).
- Price every item on the sales floor accurately and legibly with a price sticker or sign.
- Merchandise at least 1 tie-in on each end cap and table (via sign or product).

Beautiful Store Image

- Wear designated uniform in a clean and professional appearance during all working hours.
- Ensure stunning and well-maintained seasonally appropriate landscapes.
- Maintain sparkling clean and stocked bathrooms throughout the day.
- Practice good housekeeping throughout the parking lot, store and nursery.

Basic Elements

- Ensure proper and timely watering and fertilizing for all plant material.
- Be curious and be involved in on-going learning on customer service & product knowledge.
- Practice safety first with clear aisles and water hoses stored appropriately at all times.

SummerWinds Training Guideline for all Associates

Area	Associate Manager	Department Manager	Nusery Associate II+	Cashier / Bookkeeper	Nursery Associate I, II
KROS	X	X	X	X	X
Customer Service	X	X	X	X	X
Safety	X	X	X	X	X
Communication	X	X	X	X	X
Quality Watering	X	X	X		X
Product Knowledge	X	X	X	X	X
Merchandising	X	X	X	X	X
Receiving	X	X	X		X
Inventory Adjustments	X	X	X	X	
Register Operations	X			X	
Office procedures	X			X	
Ordering	X	X	X		
Financials	X	X			
Reports	X	X			
Associate Guidance	X	X		X	
Scheduling	X				
Reviewing	X				
Hiring & Recruiting	X				
Associate Handbook	X				
Opening / Closing	X				

Area Breakdown

KROS	Reference store poster and new hire packet
Customer Service	Carry-out Service, General Customer assistance, Special orders, Deliveries and Fountains
Safety	Monthly tips, General practices, Corrective action, Equipment, Certification
Communication	Chain of Command, Variety, Reasons, Benefit
Product Knowledge	Green, Dry
Merchandising	Seasonality, Process, Product moves, Tie-ins, Endcaps, Signage, Pricing, Condensing
Receiving	Paperwork, Product, Timing, Location, Condition
Watering	Timing, Quantity, Quality, Safety
Inventory Adjustments	Process, Routine, Timing, Participants
Reg.operations	General ringing, Returns, Sales, Offline, Power loss, Paid-in/out, Change, Media replacement, etc.
Office Procedures	HRB, ADP, Cash reports, Invoices, Filing, Incident reports, Email, General computer skills, Supplies, Labels
Ordering	Vendors, Product, Timing, Process, New vendors
Financials	KMI, Store Comp, Retail
Reports	Comparisons, Item Sold, POS, Daily, Markdown
Scheduling	Proper coverage, Adjustments, Budget, Holidays, Vacations
Reviewing	Timing, Purpose, Length, Variety
Hiring	Needs, Questions, Timing, Process
Associate Guidance	Forms, Timing, Process, Formats, Consistency
Policy Manual	Understanding of all policies
Opening / Closing	Process, Routine, Timing, Participants

This list is the majority of responsibilities that need attention on a daily basis within the nursery. The grid on top is to give direction to each of the associate designations as to what responsibilities they may focus on. You as an associate are not limited to these responsibilities and need to work with management to understand your given role within the store you work. The lower list is a further description of the types of tasks that are included within each responsibility. Remember this is a training guide to use as a resource. Additionally, if you are interested in advancing in the company you can use this grid to plan a course of action with your management team.

SummerWinds Garden Centers Inc.

Position Code Designations

Cashier Associates:

C I — Cashier in Training. Basic cashier, possesses basic register operation and customer service skills

C II — C I, plus cashier with knowledge of product line, operation of register, accurate cash box, ability to handle refunds and other higher-level functions.

C III — C II, plus head cashier duties, overseeing all cashiers, may assist with store administration by preparing daily deposits, training and monitoring of new cashiers, thorough knowledge of register operations, handling register emergencies and customer service issues.

Nursery Associates:

NA I — General purpose nursery worker, carryouts, stocking of all material, basic customer service, watering, and overall store/parking lot up-keep.

NA II — NA I, plus knowledge of product line, customer service/sales, custom planting, plant maintenance, department planning input. Purchasing knowledge in at least one division.
Sales ticket writing as required by specific stores.

NA III — NA II, plus in absence of department manager makes buying recommendations, scheduling, may assist with budget forecasting/monitoring, may carry keys depending on store location.

Department Management Associates:

DM I — NA II/NA III, plus detailed knowledge of at least two departments, responsibility for ordering and and maintaining specific subdivision of nursery. Ability to plan, organize and delegate tasks within at least one specific subdivision, pricing and paperwork associated with receivables, special orders, quality control, inventory management, some staff supervision, depending on store.

DM II — DM I, plus carry keys to the store, have a detailed knowledge and the ability to open and/or close the store.

DM III — DM II, plus ability to convey management instructions when management not present, as well as handle customer occurances in a professional manner. Assist with budgeting/monitoring.

Store Management Associates:

ASM — Salaried Position. Is the Acting Manager on Duty when Store Manager is not available.
Has all responsibilties of store manager when manager is not present. Is considered an associate with potential for future store management as opportunities arise.

SM — Store Manager. Hired by District VP. Compensation set individually by District VP based on store size and sales volume. Oversees complete store operations.

District Office Associates:

DO I — District Office Administration (Hourly)

DO II — District Office Management (Salaried)

CUSTOMER SERVICE

General Customer Service

Customer service can easily be thought of as "any associate lending assistance to a customer in the selection of products or services." There are many different types of customers in a given day, all of which have unique "service" expectations. The SummerWinds Customer Service policy (#1 in our policy handbook) states, "We Guarantee Success." Customer service can be thought of in the same way. Our goal with customer service must be to make customers successful in whatever it is they are trying to accomplish with their shopping experience. Therefore, as a SummerWinds associate, it is your responsibility to provide valued "service" to every customer that you have contact with. Customer service excellence is the responsibility of everyone in our company. The following are a few tips on how to accomplish this very important goal in our company:

1. Greet all customers you come across in a friendly manner (greet by name if possible). Just say "hello" policy.
2. When a customer is looking for a specific item, walk them to the item.
3. Put them at "gardening ease" (reduce jargon where possible and let them know we are here to make them successful).
4. If unable to answer their question, escort them to the appropriate person or radio for assistance.
5. Listen for what they need, avoid making assumptions; and let them know they are important.
6. Whenever possible understand what they are trying to accomplish.
7. Pay attention to past experiences.
8. Give them space when indicated, but check back.
9. Thank them for shopping with us and invite them back.

Using a simple process like this will allow you to provide excellent "service" to a wide array of our customers and will expand your own product knowledge and increase your confidence. No matter what our work responsibilities are, we all have a responsibility to ensure a successful shopping experience for our customers.

Carryout Service

Carryout service is defined as assisting our customer with any product to their vehicle. Generally, carryout service takes place from the checkout stations or from the large bag goods area (soil line), or maybe both. This service is a value-added service and is to be offered to every customer.

Frequency – This service should always be provided during all operating hours. Each day there will be designated associates who will be acutely aware of carryout service needs, but all SummerWinds associates are expected to assist with carryout service unless on restricted lifting duty.

Process – Handle all merchandise carefully so as not to cause any damage to the items. All customers are to be given the option of using SummerWinds trunk liners and/or any other "transportation device" (jumbo flat, unused box, carrying tray, etc.) necessary to ensure safe transport. Assist customer by carrying item[s] or pushing cart to customer's vehicle. Use care when placing items in a customer's vehicle so as not to cause damage to their merchandise or to the customer's vehicle. Upon completion of the task, always make sure to thank the customer for their visit and invite them back.

Carryout Tips:
1. Make appropriate small talk- e.g. the flowers you selected are beautiful.
2. Load heavier items first when possible.
3. Think about your load plan when working your way to the customer's vehicle.
4. Place soil bags, small garden tools, etc. inside pottery (when applicable).
5. Place soil bags around pottery to keep pottery from rolling around.
6. Keep the loose dirt off the customer's seats, trunk, etc.
7. Wrap tree canopy when possible to prevent flower/leaf loss.
8. Bring back extra carts with you on your way back to the store.
9. Always let the cashier know that you are doing the requested carryout.

Customer Request Forms (Special Orders)

We encourage special orders to enhance our customer service. Customer requests are taken from a customer when the product that they desire to purchase is not currently on-hand at any of the store locations within a district or specific store. Please inform our customer that due to vendor and especially grower availability, there is no guarantee that they will be able to get the product or that it will happen by the next week. Please refer all customer special order requests to associates who are familiar with product availability and our ordering process. Please fill out the form that will be used for timely follow-up with our customer. In some cases, there may be expensive items or large-quantity items that require the customer's payment in advance. If these orders are guaranteed to be delivered, the customer should be given a time frame for expected delivery. In these cases, managers must be involved in the process. A "Customer Request Form" is included on the next page and all information must be completed for every request.

Delivery and Plantings

Each SummerWinds district offers delivery and planting service for our customers. We strive to deliver and/or plant our customer's newly purchased merchandise within seven days of their purchase (during the peak of spring, it can be as long as 14 days). Every delivery, planting, and fountain set-up must be entered on the appropriate form and customers made aware of all limitations that exist from job to job. Only associates trained in dealing with delivery and plantings are to complete the form and arrange with the customer. There are a limited number of deliveries within each district on a given day or in a given week, as well as a specific day for deliveries in specific neighborhoods. Please see your store manager for additional details such as pricing, distance, and lead-times.

Customer Request Form

Date of Request:	Sales Associate:
Customer Name:	
Customer Phone:	

Paid? Yes / No
Ticket #:
Comments:

ALL SPECIAL ORDERS HAVE A RESTOCKING FEE OF 20%

ITEM	SIZE	QTY	COLOR	DATE AVAILABLE

FOLLOW-UP INFORMATION

DATE CALLED	ASSOC. INITIALS	COMMENTS (LEFT MESSAGE, SPOKE WITH CUST.)

Customer Request Form

Date of Request:	Sales Associate:
Customer Name:	
Customer Phone:	

Paid? Yes / No
Ticket #:
Comments:

ALL SPECIAL ORDERS HAVE A RESTOCKING FEE OF 20%

ITEM	SIZE	QTY	COLOR	DATE AVAILABLE

FOLLOW-UP INFORMATION

DATE CALLED	ASSOC. INITIALS	COMMENTS (LEFT MESSAGE, SPOKE WITH CUST.)

DELIVERY ONLY FORM
(EXCLUDING FOUNTAINS)

FAX TO
1 408 866 6903

STORE CITY: ____________ STORE # ____________

SALES DATE: ____________

REQUESTED DELIVERY DATE: ____________

SALES PERSON: ____________ MGR APPROVAL: ____________

NAME: ____________

ADDRESS: ____________

CITY: ____________ ZIP: ____________

Hm.Ph: ____________ Wk.Ph: ____________

MAJOR CROSS STREET: ____________

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: ____________

DELIVERY CHARGE:

0-5 MILES:	$30	____________
6-10 MILES:	$40	____________
11-20 MILES:	$50	____________
TOTAL CHARGE:		____________

ATTACH REGISTER RECEIPT:

Cross out all items *NOT* to be delivered

NORMAL DELIVERIES ARE TO DRIVEWAY ONLY

Merchandise can be delivered to backyard if gate clearance is sufficient with no steps or slopes and a concrete walkway is available.

☐ **INITIALS**

CUSTOMER WILL BE NOTIFIED BY 9:00 AM DAY OF DELIVERY AS TO THE TIME DELIVERY WILL BE MADE.

☐ **INITIALS**

I HAVE RECEIVED ALL ITEMS IN GOOD CONDITION.

SIGNATURE: ____________ DATE: ____________

FOUNTAIN DELIVERY and/or SET UP FORM

FAX TO
1 408 866 6903

STORE CITY: STORE #

SALES DATE:

REQUESTED DELIVERY DATE:

SALES PERSON: MGR APPROVAL:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

CITY: ZIP:

Hm.Ph: Wk.Ph:

MAJOR CROSS STREET:

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

DELIVERY CHARGE:		
0-5 MILES:	$50	
6-10 MILES:	$60	
11-20 MILES:	$70	
SET UP CHARGE:		
10% OF REGULAR FTN RETAIL.		
TOTAL CHARGE:		
ATTACH REGISTER RECEIPT:		

SUMMERWINDS ASSOCIATES MUST HAVE EASY ACCESS TO FOUNTAIN SET UP AREA:

1) GATE MUST BE WIDE ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE FOUNTAIN

2) LEVEL CONCRETE WALKWAY TO THE SET UP AREA PROVIDED.

3) NO STEPS

INITIALS

A LEVEL CEMENT PAD MUST BE AVAILABLE AT TIME OF INSTALLATION. NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR PROPER SET UP WITHOUT THIS PROVIDED.

INITIALS

ELECTRICAL HOOK UP MUST BE PROVIDED BY HOME OWNER TO CONCRETE PAD AREA.

INITIALS

CUSTOMER WILL BE NOTIFIED BY 9:00 AM DAY OF DELIVERY AS TO THE TIME DELIVERY WILL BE MADE.

INITIALS

I HAVE RECEIVED ALL ITEMS IN GOOD CONDITION.

SIGNATURE: DATE:

Summer Winds® Nursery

PLANTING ONLY FORM

PLEASE COMPLETE FRONT AND BACK SIDES AND FAX TO:
1 408 866 6903

STORE CITY: ______ STORE # ______

SALES DATE: ______

REQUESTED DELIVERY DATE: ______

SALES PERSON: ______ MGR APPROVAL: ______

NAME: ______

ADDRESS: ______

CITY ______ ZIP ______

Hm.Ph. ______ Wk.Ph ______

MAJOR CROSS STREET: ______

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: ______

ATTACH REGISTER RECEIPT:

Cross out all items *NOT* to be delivered

CUSTOMER WILL BE NOTIFIED BY 9:00 AM DAY OF DELIVERY AS TO THE TIME DELIVERY WILL BE MADE.

☐ **INITIALS**

I HAVE RECEIVED ALL ITEMS IN GOOD CONDITION.

SIGNATURE: ______ DATE: ______

SUMMERWINDS NURSERY PLANTING SERVICE TERMS & CONDITIONS

We at SummerWinds are committed to our customer's successful gardening experience.

PLANTING CHARGE

* NOTE - TOTAL PLANTING CHARGES MUST MEET OR EXCEED $50

SHRUBS:			QTY		TOTAL
1 GALLON	$7 EACH	X	______	=	______
5 GALLON	15 EACH	X	______	=	______
7 GALLON	$25 EACH	X	______	=	______
15 GALLON	$40 EACH	X	______	=	______

TREES:			QTY		TOTAL
5 GALLON	$30 EACH	X	______	=	______
7 GALLON	$50 EACH	X	______	=	______
ABOVE INCLUDES 1 STAKE WITH TIES					
15 GALLON	$70 EACH	X	______	=	______
24 BOX	$125 EACH	X	______	=	______
ABOVE INCLUDES 2 STAKES W/TIES AND DEEP HOLE WATERING TUBE					
ROOT BARRIER INSTALLATION	$40 EACH	X	______	=	______

TOTAL FROM ABOVE:		________
TOTAL DELIVERY CHARGE:		
0-5 MILES:	$30	________
6-10 MILES:	$40	________
11-20 MILES:	$50	________
TOTAL PAID:		________

DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT BETWEEN SUMMERWINDS AND PURCHASER:

CUST. INITIAL

☐ 1) MUST HAVE EASY ACCESS TO HOMEOWNERS YARD WITH SUFFICIENT GATE CLEARANCE AND PAVED WALKWAY TO PLANTING AREA.

☐ 2) PLANTING AREA CLEAR OF DEBRIS WITHIN A 3' RADIUS. NO STUMP REMOVAL

☐ 3) CUSTOMER MUST CLEARLY MARK ALL POWER, SEWER, GAS, AND WATER LINES WITHIN 5' OF PLANTING AREA. DAMAGE TO ANY UTILITIES OR WATER LINES WHILE DIGGING IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HOMEOWNER.

☐ 4) A DETAIL MAINTENANCE SHEET WILL BE PROVIDED FOR HOMEOWNER REGARDING PROPER CARE OF THEIR NEW PLANTINGS. FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE PROCEDURES NEGATES WARRANTY.

☐ 5) OUR PLANTING SERVICE INCLUDES SOIL AMENDMENTS, STARTER FERTILIZER, TREE STAKE(S) WHEN NEEDED, AND DEEP WATERING TUBE WHEN NEEDED.

☐ 6) OUR TREES ARE GUARANTEED TO GROW AND THRIVE WHEN USING RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES FROM OUR STAFF. IF YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH THE TREE(S) OR PLANTING SERVICES, WE WILL GLADLY EXCHANGE, REPLACE OR OFFER A REFUND (WITH RECEIPT).

☐ I HAVE READ ALL THE ABOVE AND ACCEPT THE TERMS AS STATED ABOVE:

SIGNATURE: ______________________________ DATE: ______________

SUMMERWINDS NURSERY IS NOT LICENSED BY THE CONTRACTORS' STATE LICENSE BOARD. STATE LAW REQUIRES ANYONE WHO CONTRACTS TO DO CONSTRUCTION WORK TO BE LICENSED BY THE CONTRACTORS' STATE BOARD. IF THE TOTAL PRICE OF THE JOB IS $500 OR MORE (INCLUDING LABOR AND MATERIALS). LICENSED CONTRACTORS ARE REGULATED BY LAWS DESIGNED TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC. IF YOU CONTRACT WITH SOMEONE WHO DOES NOT HAVE A LICENSE, THE CONTRACTORS' STATE LICENSE BOARD MAY BE UNABLE TO ASSIST YOU WITH A COMPLAINT. YOUR ONLY REMEDY AGAINST AN UNLICENSED CONTRACTOR MAY BE IN CIVIL COURT, AND YOU MAY BE LIABLE FOR DAMAGES ARISING OUT OF ANY INJURIES TO THE CONTRACTOR OR HIS OR HER EMPLOYEES.

SAFETY

Monthly Tips

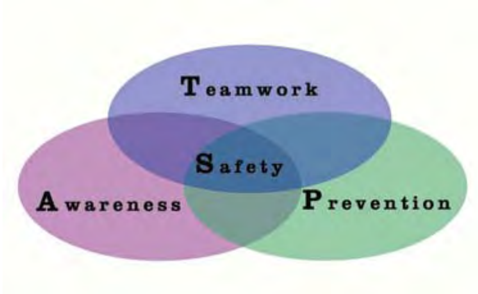
At the beginning of each month, a safety tip is emailed to the manager of each SummerWinds location and to the district office. These tips highlight a seasonally relevant topic, which is to be shared with every SummerWinds associate. Every associate is to be made aware of the current safety topic and "sign–off" on the tip sheet. Once all associates have acknowledged and signed the safety tip, a copy of the completed sheet must be sent back to the Boise office.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment is both the equipment that the store will provide to its associates, as well as equipment associates may want to have to ensure a safe and healthy working environment. Items that the store should provide are gloves (no more than two pair per year), hats (logo hats are provided, but associates may purchase a large brim hat if desired), and a support belt for your back. PPE should be in quality condition and should be used for all relevant applications. Items that associates may want to have are sunscreen, long-sleeved shirt (worn under required SummerWinds shirt) sunglasses (non-mirrored), and a neck scarf. Close-toed shoes are required at all times and are the responsibility of each associate.

Equipment Certification

SummerWinds locations have equipment that requires certification for any operator. The certification process is designed by the Boise Office with the guidance of our insurance company and is administered by either the district office or an approved store associate. The district office is responsible for training and approving store associate trainers.



SummerWinds

Safety Tip

Practice Garden Hose Safety

When in use, the hose should be placed over to one side of the aisle as far as possible to eliminate trip hazards.

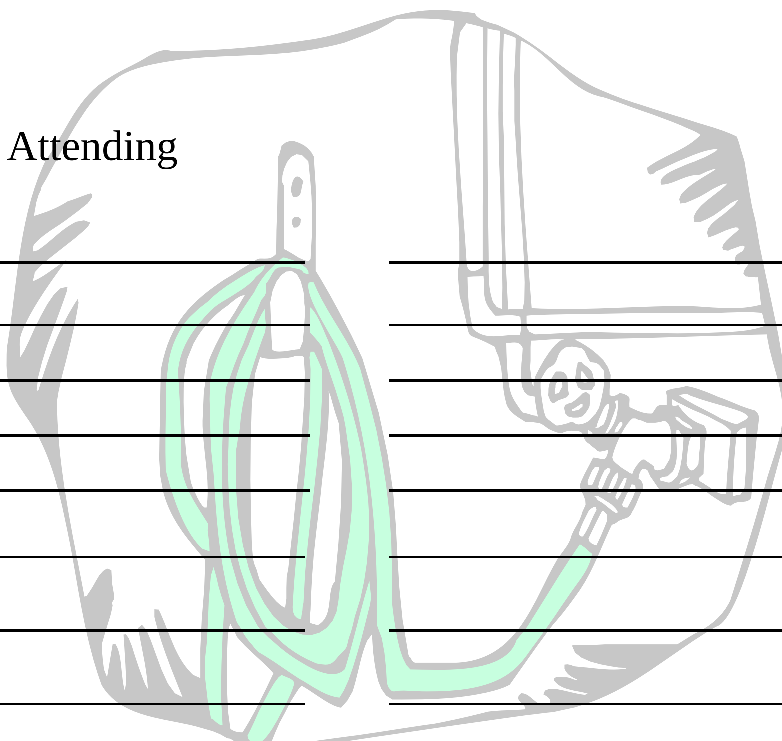
"Wet Floor" signs should be placed over part of the exposed hose.

Anytime a hose is not in immediate use, the water should be turned off at the faucet.

Any unused hose should be coiled on a hose holder or neatly on the ground in an area that is out of the way of foot traffic.

Avoid driving the forklift over a hose.

Any unattended hose can and has caused serious trip and fall injuries. Be aware of how you leave a hose unattended when helping customers.



Associates Attending

COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS

10/1/2007

Use Other Side As Needed

COMMUNICATION

Having the ability to get projects done through others is the mark of an effective leader. When you are able to convey your ideas and expectations to others and have them successfully accomplish tasks, you will have achieved a major leadership goal. A key ingredient in working with people and accomplishing your goals is quality communication. Quality communication can be accomplished with appropriate frequency, consistency, repetition, clarity, critique, timing, delivery method and valuing the individual.

- Frequency – the number of times you share information, how long between discussions, and how often you “check back”.
- Consistency – sharing same relevant information with each individual or group, or having consistent expectations no matter the task.
- Repetition – Number of instances you emphasize a point until it is understood.
- Clarity – All parties involved understand the desired end-result.
- Critique – Allowing input from parties involved to build ownership and checking for understanding.
- Timing – Communicate at the appropriate time and place.
- Delivery Method – Choose your delivery wisely (face to face, store meeting, a written note, email, etc.).
- Value the individual – Always be sincere and thorough.

Your choice of communication method can be just as important as what you are saying (especially your body language). The primary modes for communication are verbal and written. Both have their advantages and in many cases you may need both to complete the task. When you communicate verbally, you need to be aware of your tone and body language. Face-to-face communication also allows you to observe an associate’s reaction. By way of example (generally), if the person is looking up to her/his left, he/she is listening; if they are looking up to the right, she/he is thinking of what to say next; if the eyes go downward, you have likely hit a “nerve”; and if the eyes go straight up, she/he is doing a calculation or looking for an answer . The face-to-face communication is typically the most effective. A store meeting is a type of face-to-face but to a larger audience. The written communication method can be accomplished with notes you leave for an associate, in the form of an email, fax, or with official forms. Written communication will often give you more time to reflect on what you are saying and can reach a larger audience in a shorter amount of time. It is also a way to put your message in a form that allows for more thorough follow-up on tasks for each party.

Whichever type of communication you employ, always keep in mind the individual(s) to whom you are communicating. When communication is necessary to handle a task, make sure that the individual or group has the necessary skills and materials to accomplish the task you are assigning them. If you are passing along information to a larger group of people, make sure that the message is consistent, especially when delivered on an individual basis. By sharpening your communication skills and developing effective methods of communication, you will acutely increase your store’s organizational effectiveness as well as improve your delegation skills.

QUALITY WATERING

Plant care is as important as sourcing high quality plants from our local and regional vendors/growers. It is imperative that we train our valued associates on the following watering and, if applicable, fertilizing program.

Watering

Frequency – The frequency that plants need water is determined by the type of plant, the soil they are planted in, the container they are sold in, and the weather conditions.

Location – Managers and/or department heads should determine beginning and ending locations by **section** for watering each day. Scheduling of trained associates is the responsibility of the store manager. Department heads are responsible for overseeing and taking an active role to ensure that the appropriate watering schedule is accomplished daily.

Process – Plants that are in a gallon size or smaller need to be **soaked** twice during a **watering period**. Check with the department head to learn the exceptions to this rule. Plants that are in containers larger than a gallon need to be soaked well once daily. Apply water to the base of the plants to limit damage and the potential for disease to foliage and flowers. This also assures that water will reach the root ball of the plant. Appropriate water pressure should be used to allow for optimum soak and to minimize flower/foliage damage. Plants that are displayed indoors are to be either watered outside or inside with a portable watering device (such as our company provided Tanks-a-Lot or watering cans). You must place “wet floor” signs around the area being watered prior to beginning, during watering and they must remain until the floor is dry. It’s also recommended that you sweep the floor area before watering and after watering to remove puddles.

Storage – When finished using a watering hose or when leaving a section for an extended period, hoses are always to be neatly rolled up near **source valve**, out of the way of traffic flow. The hose is to be shut-off at the source valve and pressure released when not in use. Leaky source valves and damaged hoses need to be repaired or replaced in a timely manner.

Customer Service – All hoses are to be equipped with a shut-off valve. Hoses need to be moved from the center of the aisle when leaving a station to assist a customer. Prolonged absences require shutting off water from source valve to ensure proper hose life. Keeping our aisles free of hoses improves the shopping experience for our customers.

Quick Descriptors:
Section – Defined area of product within the nursery (shrubs, evergreens, cactus, etc.).
Soaked – Application of enough water to completely saturate (wet) a plant’s root ball.
Watering Period – A table or side of a table that is being watered together.
Source Valve – Location to attach the hose to a hard water line.

Fertilizing

Frequency – Products that are fertilized through the irrigation system are done so on a rotational basis and only during certain times of the year. Products that are fertilized with a slow release fertilizer are done so only once or twice a season.

Locations – Each area of the store is divided up by management or department leaders and identified as a section needing fertilizing during the watering process.

Process – Fertilizing a section through the irrigation system is accomplished either by attaching a nutrient delivery system to a watering hose or by utilizing a hose attached to an injection system. Slow release fertilizers may be applied directly to individual plants using the prescribed amount as listed by the product.

PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge of the various products within our stores is a key component to customer service. All SummerWinds associates are expected to participate in ongoing product-knowledge growth. SummerWinds provides a variety of avenues to increase an associate's depth of product knowledge. The following company-sponsored avenues are meant to be used in conjunction with continual self-learning and achievement:

- **Annual or Semi-Annual District Product Knowledge Trainings –** Each district will provide at least one training session for its associates to focus on the understanding of primary and newly-added products for the current year. These sessions will focus primarily on dry goods items. Dry goods are comprised of soil, fertilizers, gift, furniture, etc. and represent approximately 30% of store sales.
- **Seasonal Product Knowledge Trainings –** Supplemental training sessions will be offered at different times of the year as determined by each district. These sessions will focus primarily on green goods, which represent approximately 70% of store sales. These sessions may be sponsored by individual vendors/growers to focus on their products.
- **Informational Data Sheets –** Informational data sheets will be provided to the stores highlighting both green and dry items that are worthy of understanding by seasonality and sales figures.
- **Web Based Training Modules –** Associates will be able to follow web-based modules at their own pace and ability. Modules will include a "check for understanding" section and will be tracked for further evaluation.
- **Learning from Others –** "Sticking around" while another associate is helping a customer is a great way to increase knowledge.
- **"3-A-Week" –** Making a commitment to learn three products a week is a useful and consistent way to further your knowledge.

MERCHANDISING

General Practices

Merchandising can be defined as the act of placing product in a pre-determined location for the purpose of inspiration, organization, and maximum sell-through.

Merchandising is "first and foremost" about sustaining a well-organized and clean store. Organization is imperative to allow all associates the ability to easily and efficiently replenish and sell product. Each store has a unique floor plan, thus will have different merchandise placement. Each associate must be familiar with all major categories of product for efficient stocking and customer service. The constant focus on store maintenance (cleanliness, organization, traffic flow, etc.) of a store is just as important as the initial layout of merchandise. All associates must be familiar with the following list of categories:

GREEN	DRY
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.

A display that has "shopability" relates not only to cleanliness, such as clear aisles, absence of debris or standing water, but also to spacing between product, label and price facing, accessibility, weight, signage, and general layout. "Shopability" assumes that the intent is for the product on display to be taken by a customer for purchase.

Merchandising can also be used for the purpose of inspiring customers. These displays may be less shopable in nature, but should be used to demonstrate plant combinations and use of hardscape items that can help complete a garden setting. Placement of an inspirational display needs to be well thought out and supply materials need to be easily accessible.

Aisles and Vistas

Aisles – Aisles need to be wide enough to encourage positive traffic flow, yet narrow enough to encourage buying. As a general rules, it is des**i**red to have at least 6ft of aisle space for our customers (approximately the width of two shopping carts). The aisles are always to be free of clutter, weeds, and debris throughout all hours of operation. While there is not a "hard" rule for the length of an aisle, the aisle can generally be as long as customer interest can be sustained while browsing the aisle. The aisle must also provide a noticeable exit for the customer.

Vistas – A clear line of site or eye-catching **v**ista provides a reason for our customer to walk towards the end of an aisle and browse several shopping areas within our stores.
It is imperative to provide clear vistas for the inside and the outside shopping areas. An obvious example is why we place our "tree line" at the back and/or the perimeter of our outside selling space.

Displays

Displays are typically grouped into a variety of styles and purposes. Some of the most common displays are listed below:

- **Foundation –** Consistent displays that exist for the majority of the year. In the green goods division, items such as basic shrubs, gallon and four-inch perennials, jumbo-pack annuals, cactus and trees. Dry goods items would be the "solutions" wall, gardening accessories, tools, bird, and pottery.
- **End Caps –** End caps are feature displays at the end of any run/aisle that are expected to be sold quickly. End caps are used to merchandise no more than two products for impulse shopping. Merchandise on an end cap needs to attract attention and be monitored very closely to maintain an eye-catching, bountiful and attractive appearance at all times.
- **Feature Tables –** These displays are very similar to "end caps", but are "shopable" from all sides. Use the feature table to break up a large and/or deep aisle or to create an area with more of a free, meandering and indirect traffic flow.
- **Project Displays –** Project displays show our customer a variety of items to complete an entire project. These displays may include both green and dry items. Each display must have a clear "theme" or purpose and be easily shopped. Continual monitoring of project displays is required to keep stock levels full and in order. Proper signage is vital for these displays to share the relevance of how each item relates to the project and the desired outcome (e.g. – an earth box, tomatoes, organic fertilizer, SummerWinds potting soil and picture of fresh salsa and tortilla chips amongst friends).
- **Vignette –** These designed displays are for inspiration. The buying factor is less relevant than traditional displays; however, support merchandise must be within close proximity to the display to encourage purchases. Inspiring vignettes will draw customers down an extended aisle and help lead them around the nursery. Vignettes are more of a finished landscape picture that show what a garden can be.
- **Free Standing –** These displays often occur primarily in the dry goods division of the store. The items may be present in the store for the majority of the year, but are often displayed on the sales floor by purpose or use and, in most cases, the vendors can provide display units. The placement of these displays is critical to the flow of the store as well as to avert shoppers around safety hazards.
- **Seasonal –** Seasonal displays can be organized much the same as any of the above displays but have a finite amount of time they will be on display. These displays are planned in advance of the "season" and specifically for the projected floor space that the display will occupy.

Signage

Signage serves a number of functions and is exhibited in a variety of forms. Our **Key Retail Operating Standards** state that there will be no handwritten signs in our stores. Thus, all signs will need to be produced from a store computer or by a professional sign company. Additionally, there is to be no visible tape for displaying signs. Effective signage is a terrific silent sales person and is especially handy on those busy spring days.

While differing in purpose, all signs have the following in common:
Clean, Relevant, Accurate, Visible, and Promote our SummerWinds brand.

The associates responsible for keeping signage current throughout the department and the store should be clearly identified.

Types of signs that are used are as follows:

- Category – Defines a large group of merchandise (sun annuals, evergreens, cactus, etc.).
- Informational – These signs have pertinent information of a given plant or group of plants. These signs will generally include a picture and "at a glance" information (growth habits, where to plant, etc.)
- Price – Signs that list the price of a single item or group of items as its major attribute.

Product Moves

The store is constantly in motion and as such, product needs to be moved and reorganized on a constant basis. Reorganization of a consistent display is a process called condensing which is outlined later, however there are times when groups of product require relocation altogether. It is highly beneficial to have a plan and share the plan with your associates prior to moving product. Make sure that the new location of the product is clean and ready for the product. Move all products, including signage, to the new location and display it in the proper manner. Use this change to clean product and remove any poor quality merchandise. Then clean and adjust the newly vacated area to accommodate the new product.

Product Tie-Ins

Several types of displays will include more than one type of product. The most common of which are Project, Vignette, and Seasonal. Products placed in a display that support the primary project for our customer are known as "tie-ins". The general rule with tie-ins is that there should be no more than four in any display and there needs to be enough of each product for customers to shop throughout the day. When building a display with green goods make sure that all products in the display are accessible to customers and are consistent in environmental requirements (i.e. sun plants w/ sun plants, organic fertilizers with fruit, herbs and vegetable plants). Hard goods that are included in a display need to be contained in packaging that will withstand the elements when placed outside the building. "Tie-In" tip – Since we scan our merchandise at the register, you will need to ensure that the "tie-in" is priced accordingly.

Impulse Merchandise

The placement of impulse merchandise should typically be displayed at or near the cash register area. These products range from candy to gloves and generally are below a $9.99 price point. One of our best selling impulse items are ladybugs. In the spring and early summer, we display ladybug containers at the cash register to encourage impulse purchases of this product.

<u>Condensing</u>

The idea behind condensing is to bring fresh material onto the primary sales area to optimize precious floor, counter, shelf space. Remember to ensure that all tags and descriptive labels are face forward and double-check that the descriptive tag/label fits the actual merchandise. Bedding plants are especially important to condense every evening.

Frequency – Condensing is done on a continual basis during the day in all parts of the nursery and many sections need to be done as part of the closing procedures at the end of the day, especially areas close to the register. (i.e. fertilizer/chemical wall, indoor pottery, impulse rack, etc.)

<u>Green Merchandise</u>

Small Containers (4 inches and smaller)

Process – The majority of these items are in **flats** and each flat holds a given number of containers (6, 8, 12, 16, etc.). Condensing these items should be accomplished by reorganizing like product from partially used flats back into full flats, discarding empty flats into a shopping basket or other cart, and replacing empty spaces, or **holes**, with newer product until a given section is full. The removal of un-sellable or substandard product should also be handled at this time with the knowledge and/or participation of the department head for this section. All by-products of condensing (flats, plants, etc.) must be removed from the sales floor when you are finished with a given section and moved to the appropriate area for consideration at a later time.

Large Containers (one gallon and larger)

Process – Condensing for these items should be accomplished by rearranging all of a specific product back into straight rows that allow enough space for the foliage portion of the plant aiding watering and reducing damage and discoloration. At this time, a quick check of the signage for this given product needs to be done ensuring that both product and signage are consistent. Any substandard and/or expired merchandise needs to be brought to the attention of the department head of that section and moved to the appropriate area for consideration at a future time.

"**End caps**" and "**Feature Tables**"

Process – No matter the size of the merchandise on an "end cap" or "feature table", the purpose of condensing is to fill the holes in the display. This is accomplished in the manner described above. Product may be close by on a rack, on the ground around the display or in a product row within that section. These areas may need to be condensed more frequently due to the higher demand for the product.

Quick Descriptors:

<u>Flats</u> – shallow plastic trays designed to hold a given number of containers.
<u>Holes</u> – empty spots on a display table or in a row.
<u>End Cap</u> – featured area for merchandise that is expected to be sold quickly and is located at the end of any given row.
<u>Feature Table</u> – featured area for merchandise that is expected to be sold quickly and is accessible from all sides, usually located in an open space on the sales floor.

<u>Dry Merchandise</u>

Bagged goods - Palletized (Soils, Mulches, etc.) “soil line.”

Process – Merchandise that is displayed on a pallet are condensed when bags are below knee height, usually 10 or fewer bags are left on a pallet. Remove plastic wrap from full pallet of same product then place remaining items from used pallet on top of the fresh pallet in an orderly fashion. The new full pallet is brought to the front of the row. Empty pallets need to be neatly stacked out of our customers’ path. Once completed, move all empty pallets to the pallet stacks located away from the sales floor. For obvious safety reasons, empty pallets are never to be left flat on the ground.

Bagged goods – Loose (Fertilizers, small bags of soil, amendments, etc.)

Process – Loose bags are stacked one on top of another facing the same direction in neat rows. Each product is given a pre-determined number of **facings** and should not be spread beyond this space. Bags on platforms should be stacked no higher than is safe, nor is obstructing a store vista, and the depth of the stacks determined by the width of the table. On-shelf items are to be stacked to a height that allows enough room for your hand to fit between the top bag and the bottom of the next shelf.

Containers – Boxes and Bottles (Fertilizers, Herbicides, Baits, etc.)

Process – Containers need to be pulled forward, label facing out, on the shelf so that all facings of that product are at the front of the shelf, this is known as “face”. Top shelves, six feet and higher, are reserved for overstock and discontinued product. Top-shelf product is to be used first to backfill all like product on lower shelves. One set of facings should be left on top to keep display looking full. Products that are displayed on the lower shelves only are simply pulled forward and placed face out. Product existing in a “**case stack**” that also exists on a shelf can be used to fill empty spaces on a shelf. This process of “face” should be done a minimum of once per day.

Peg Hooks – Gloves, Hand Tools, Trellis Supplies, etc.

Simply pull product to the front of the hook and ensure that the price point/description label match the product.

General – It is always a good habit while condensing to make sure that the product shelf label and/or the product sign is consistent with the product being condensed. Notify the department head of the given section if this is not the case. It is also good housekeeping practice to dust shelves and merchandise to present our dry merchandise in the best light.

Often, you will run across bagged product with ruptures or holes. If so, immediately re-seal w/clear protective tape. In some cases, bags of potting soil can be placed in the customer creations area for planting.

Customer service – Customers always come first, so all condensing needs to be put on hold when a customer is in need of assistance. Be sure the section is free of clutter prior to leaving the area.

Quick Descriptors:
Facing – left to right, face out, on a shelf or table. Facings are determined by product volume and desired carrying capacity. Facings initiate by the product shelf label left to right and extend to the beginning of the next product/shelf label.
Face – Moving product forward at each facing to give the product a full appearance at each facing.
Case stack – Large volume of a given product that is displayed on the open sales floor using the cases the product arrived in as the display feature. In some instances, vendor-supplied racks are used in this area. When feasible, it is preferred to merchandise case stacks without the pallet (improves the look and feel of the sales floor).

RECEIVING

Receiving Merchandise

Receiving merchandise is the process of promptly and accurately unloading product from a distributor or other carrier. It is imperative to verify accuracy and ensure our quality standards are met. All merchandise that enters a store location must be properly received no matter how large or small an order to maintain proper inventory information.

Location – The area in which a given product will be received will depend on the store design, the nature of delivery, the product type, the location of the product within a store, or any combination of these factors. The important thing to keep in mind is, no matter the location or nature of the product, all items need to be received properly. Your store management or key personnel will give you an overview of the many delivery locations.

Frequency – Each product line carried at SummerWinds is different in how it is shipped. Our large plant and hard goods vendors in most cases will deliver product the same day each week. Some vendors will have multiple locations that arrive on different days of the week depending on the time of year. Overall, there are deliveries to our locations almost every day.

Process –

A. All delivered items must have a packing slip that accompanies the shipment. The **packing list** for green goods lists each plant type and size that is shipped. Hard goods that are brought in on a pallet will have a **shipping document** that will list either the number of pallets, the number of boxes on the pallet or both. The packing slip for palletized shipments will be attached to one of the boxes in the shipment. It is vital to verify the following information on the packing slip or shipping document prior to unloading the merchandise:

1. Verify that the shipping address is indeed your store location.
2. Double check that the "**Purchase Order**" number begins with your store number.

If one or both of these are not true, you need to inform a supervisor prior to unloading the merchandise.

B. Once proper documentation has been verified, you can proceed to check in the shipment. The following is the process when you only have a packing slip and is primarily used for green goods.

   All items are to be unloaded from the delivery vehicle and placed in an organized and checkable manner, preferably onto carts or pallets – this is more efficient for moving the product to its "section". When all appropriate items have been removed, then all items need to be cross- checked with the packing slip. A check mark must be placed to the right of the quantity that was received on each line if the quantity on the packing list exactly matches the quantity of the item removed from the truck. Items received in quantities other than those listed on the packing slip need to have the quantity circled and the actual total written to the left of the quantity. Items not received at all due to a quality issue or an item was not shipped need to have the entire line crossed out. Items that are refused at time of delivery need a short reason written as to why (size, health, condition, etc.) above or below the refused item. Once all items have been received and checked in, the associate doing the checking needs to sign and date both the driver copy and the store copy. The store copy then needs retail price added beside the cost. Some vendors include retail price on their packing slip so look for that first.

C. The following is the process when you only have a packing slip (primarily used on dry goods):

   Items that are palletized are initially checked in with the shipping document listing the number of pallets and/or the number of boxes on the pallet(s). If the number of boxes is listed, you must count the boxes prior to signing for the shipment. You may only offload the pallets if you are forklift certified. The items may then be checked in. When you sign as the receiver, you are validating the number of items shipped. Any items not present when unpacking will still be considered received. Once the shipping documents are signed, the driver is free to leave and the remainder of the checking process will be finished using the packing list as described in item #1 above.

D. Items that are shipped from freight companies (UPS, DHL, FedEx) need to be checked in much the same as above. These items are often received by the cashiers and care needs to be paid to inform the relevant individuals of the delivery.

E. The final step to checking product into the store's inventory is to deliver the signed copy of the packing slip and the shipping document, if applicable, to the designated location where these documents are stored. Each shipment is then logged into the receiving log with all of the relevant information and a completed header sheet is attached to all the paperwork.

Receiving tip – Notify the respective department head and or manager of any major variances. One example is product that is damaged or refused for quality standards. While not always possible, the complete check-in process is matched up against the actual order that was placed by the buyer. This is especially important if we are out of a basic product or perhaps we are expecting a special order shipment for a customer.

INVENTORY ADJUSTMENTS

Markdowns

Items that are permanently taken from their received retail to a lower retail are considered “markdowns”. These items must be entered onto the proper form (Price Change Report) and price labels changed in conjunction with a POS system change (if applicable).

Markdowns are usually the result of a decision by the district or a regular part of the selling process of certain merchandise (except Orchids). In some cases, markdowns are the result of an advertised discount or in-store special and therefore the reduced retail is captured at the POS and no paperwork is required.

Write-Offs

Items that are being removed from inventory completely are considered “write-offs”. These items must be entered onto the proper form (Price Change Report) or via POS system (if applicable) and discarded promptly.

A strict process for identification, placement, and process of write-off items must be established at each store location and is the primary responsibility of the department head for a given category of product.

Credits

Items that are being removed from inventory and being charged to a vendor are considered “credits.” Credit items are only those that vendors have agreed to be financially responsible for in advance or for specific reasons (i.e. bad crop, guaranteed sale, etc.). These items must be entered on the proper form (Merchandise Return) and signed by the vendor representative prior to being submitted to your district office.

Store Transfers

Items that are being removed from your inventory and sent to another store location or being used by the store (gloves, brooms, tree ties, etc.) are considered “store transfers”. These items must be entered on the proper form (Inter-company Transfer) and each store involved, as well as, the district office must get a copy.

Summer Winds™ Nursery

List items by merchandise category. If all items are in the same category, enter the totals on the Ⓑ Category total line and leave the Ⓐ Category total line blank.

SUBMIT TO REGIONAL OFFICE EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT.

SUBMIT SEPARATE REPORTS FOR
❒ MARKDOWNS ❒ MARK-UPS ❒ WRITE-OFFS

PRICE CHANGE REPORT NO.

STORE # / DEPT # ____________

WEEK ENDING DATE ______/____/______

SKU	ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	VENDOR STOCK NO.	UNIT MEAS.	OLD RETAIL PER UNIT	NEW RETAIL PER UNIT	RETAIL DIFFERENCE (OLD MINUS NEW)	QTY	TOTAL (DIFF x QTY)	MARKER'S NAME
Ⓐ Category Totals For ❒ Green ❒ Dry ❒ Specialty								CATEGORY TOTAL		
Ⓑ Category Totals For ❒ Green ❒ Dry ❒ Specialty								CATEGORY TOTAL		

PREPARED BY ____________

MGR. ASST SIGNATURE ____________

DIST. MGR APPROVAL ____________

OFFICE USE

❒ WHITE - ACCOUNTING ❒ YELLOW - STORE

IBF F PCR (R-9-06)

IBF GROUP • IDAHO BUSINESS FORMS • (208) 342-3676 • 1-800-388-3650

SummerWinds®
Garden Centers, Inc.
390 E. PARKCENTER BLVD. • SUITE 140
BOISE, ID 83706

SummerWinds® Nursery

MERCHANDISE RETURN

ALL CORRESPONDENCE MUST REFER TO

MR NO.

REFER P.O. # ______ TERMS: ______

REASON FOR RETURN:

❒ DAMAGED ❒ DISTRESSED ❒ MISSING PARTS ❒ MDSE RECEIVED NOT ORDERED

❒ OTHER ______

PREPARED BY ______ DATE ______

MGR. APPROVAL ______ DATE ______

FROM: STORE # ______

ADDRESS: ______

CITY/STATE/ZIP: ______

TO: VENDOR # ______

NAME: ______

ADDRESS: ______

______
CITY STATE ZIP

VENDOR: Please Check One of the Following:

❒ Return for Credit. Do Not Replace SHIP VIA ______

❒ Destroy Merchandise. Credit will be issued.

❒ Other ______

VENDOR'S SIGNATURE ______ DATE AUTHORIZED ______

SKU	ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	VENDOR STOCK NO.	PCS PER PACK	UNIT MEASURE	QTY RETURN	COST		RETAIL	
							UNIT COST	TOTAL	UNIT RETAIL	TOTAL

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: ______

Merchandise Picked Up: DATE ______

CARRIER ______ BY: (Signature) ______

OTHER CHARGES						
FREIGHT CHARGES		SUBTOTAL				
DROP CHARGES		OTHER				
PALLET CHARGES		SALES TAX		TOTAL		
		TOTAL		GP%		

MRET 3/06 WHITE - VENDOR YELLOW - ACCOUNTING PINK - STORE

REORDER FROM ibf@ibf-group.com • (208) 342-3676 • 1-800-388-3650

Summer Winds GARDEN CENTERS, INC. 390 E. Parkcenter Blvd. #140 Boise, ID 83706	**One Category Per Page (Green, Dry or Seasonal) List items by merchandise category.**	**INTERCOMPANY TRANSFER NO.**

REORDER FROM ibf@ibf-group.com • (208) 342-3676 • 1-800-388-3650

SKU	ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	VENDOR STOCK NO.	UNIT MEAS.	QUANTITY			COST		RETAIL	
					ORDERED	SHIP'D	REC'D	UNIT COST	TOTAL	UNIT RETAIL	TOTAL
Category Totals For ❒ Green ❒ Dry ❒ Specialty							CATEGORY TOTALS				

Office Use:

Transfer from Store # / Dept # ____________
Location ____________
Manager's Signature ____________
Date Product Physically Transferred ___/___/___

Transfer to Store # / Dept # ____________
Location ____________
Received By ____________
Manager's Review ____________

INT-TRAN (R-07-06)

REGISTER OPERATIONS

All SummerWinds Nurseries operate on a register system. Each system is designed to maximize the ability to produce reports on categories and items sold in addition to tracking the financial end of the sale. Information on how to operate the register is passed along by a store trainer using a training guide and past experience. Aspect of register operations that need to be emphasized include:

1. **Rewards Program –** Every associate must understand the basics of the Rewards Program and how it should be explained to customers.
2. **Customer Transactions –** SummerWinds has a variety of customer "types" that make purchases at the store. Our most common type of customers are Rewards, Business (Contractor), Garden Clubs, and General Guests. Each type of customer is given different incentives and each needs to be understood by all operators.
3. **Returns\Exchanges –** Any item that is brought back to the store, either for a refund of money or exchange for substitute item is considered a Return\Exchange. These must be run through the register and only by approved associates.
4. **Store Credits –** Store Credits are issued when merchandise is returned, it is confirmed to have been purchased at SummerWinds, and the customer is unable to produce a receipt.
5. **Gift Cards\Certificates –** Selling and redeeming gift cards\certificates needs to be done carefully to ensure proper handling of documents.
6. **Money Exchange "Change" –** When a register is in need of exchanging larger bills for smaller ones or more coins are needed for the register drawer, make sure the exchange is handled all at once to reduce the risk of misplaced money.
7. **Power\Communication Loss –** A process must be established for the event of power\communication loss on the registers.
8. **Customer and Associate Interaction –** Cashiers spend most of their time interacting with our customers and need to be able to process their purchase efficiently and accurately at the same time. Things to keep in mind are;
   a. Have a consistent process for ringing each type of shopping cart so items are not missed.
   b. Be prepared for customers to want to help with the process and how you will deal with it.
   c. Remember to mention relevant Tie-In products (soils and fertilizers are usually the easiest for plant sales).
   d. Remember to thank the customer for their visit.

OFFICE PROCEDURES

1. **Cash Reports –** Each day the registers must be counted down to, separate the beginning till for the next morning and the money received during the day. This information along with the POS reports must be entered into the database each day. A deposit that will be sent to the bank must also be made each day.
2. **Packing Slips –** All items that are received at the store are present on packing slips. Each of these packing slips must have been checked off prior to being placed in the office. At this point, the packing slips need to be double-checked for correct information. This is also a time for management to monitor what product is being delivered currently and if product is being received correctly. The checking of packing slips needs to be done no less than weekly.
3. **Email –** Each manager and associate manager has an email address. The email addresses need to be checked twice daily when you are working. There is also a general email address for each of the stores that is for the use of department heads and this needs to be checked daily as well.
4. **HRB –** This is the database that is used to enter new associates into the payroll system, track reviews, and make status changes.
5. **EZLM –** This web-based program is utilized as the time-clock system for associates as well as the management tool for time and attendance by management.
6. **Incident Reports –** All accidents, thefts, and other activities that take place at a store location need to be logged into an incident report. All entries need to be followed up or preceded with a call to both the district office and Boise office.
7. **Filing –** Every piece of paper that passes through the office that will remain in the office has a place in a filing cabinet. Filing should be done on a regular basis and associate information must be kept in a locked cabinet.
8. **Supplies –** There are a variety of supplies needed for the store and office. A responsible associate should be in charge of the maintenance of those supplies. Supplies include pens, paper, paper clips, labels, signs, toner, etc.
9. **Labels –** Products within the store are in constant need of labels that can be produced at store level and any associate who is responsible for product should be instructed on how to produce labels.
10. **General Computer Skills –** Any associate who manages a department should possess the ability to use the computers within a store as a resource. Programs to know include Excel, Word, Adobe Reader, Internet, and Email.

ORDERING

Ordering Process

All orders placed by stores need to be made through pre-approved vendors. Vendors are approved through the district office of each division. Each order placed must have a valid purchase order assigned to it. Purchase orders are obtained in two ways:

1. Companies that we do consistent and frequent ordering from will be assigned a vendor code to be used on their purchase orders.
2. Infrequent or irregular orders need to have purchase order numbers assigned to them in a sequential order, based on the **division** of the store making the order.

   Purchase order numbers must include the following:
   (Store#), i.e.50; (current date mm/dd/yy). i.e. 041708' (vendor code – assigned, sequential), i.e. 22

   Example: 5004170822

   An example of vendors that have assigned codes is on the following page.

   Open purchase order numbers are listed below:

Department	**Number Range**

A vendor information sheet follows and should be filled out for each category of merchandise.

ORDERING

Vendor Information

Vendor	Sales Rep	Contact Info	Normal Ordering Day(s)	Normal Delivery Day(s)	Remarks (continued on back)
		Phone: Cell: Fax:			
		Phone: Cell: Fax:			
		Phone: Cell: Fax:			
		Phone: Cell: Fax:			
		Phone: Cell: Fax:			
		Phone: Cell: Fax:			
		Phone: Cell: Fax:			
		Phone: Cell: Fax:			

Remarks Continued

Vendor	

FINANCIALS

Each month, the Boise Support Office sends financial reports to store management based on the results during the preceding accounting period. Below is a list of those reports and a general overview of the purpose of each.

Note: There are 12 accounting periods in a year and each period is roughly a calendar month (give or take). See the "Accounting & Payroll Calendar" for each period's beginning and ending date.

Profit & Loss Statement

This four-page report shows the amount of income produced by the store during the previous month and on a year-to-date basis. It shows in detail the sales by category, i.e. green, dry, specialty and by sub-category within each category, i.e. bedding plants, vegetables, gift, etc. Also shown is the gross margin for each sales category—gross margin is simply the amount of sales produced minus the cost of the merchandise sold. The report also shows the amount of merchandise on hand (also referred to as inventory or stock level) at the beginning of the period and the amount of merchandise purchased and sold to arrive at the amount of merchandise on hand at the end of the period. Finally, the report shows store expenses in some detail. Expenses are broken down into six major categories of which "Personnel Expenses" and "Occupancy Expenses" are the largest. Each of the six major categories of expense is further broken down. For example, Personnel Expenses is broken down into salaries paid, wages paid, bonuses, holiday pay, etc.

The real power of the Profit & Loss Statement is the ability to compare performance for the prior month or so far for the year against the amounts budgeted and the amounts for the prior year. This information is helpful to measure whether the store is performing as expected (the budget) and whether the store's performance is better or worse than that of the prior year. Because the income produced is broken down into so many pieces in the profit and loss statement, it is generally possible to understand why income is greater than or less than plan or prior year.

Store Comparison

This report looks much like the Profit & Loss Statement, but it shows all of the stores in a region side by side. This is a powerful tool because it allows managers to compare performance across stores to see where their store is performing better or worse than other stores in the region. This is most useful to compare sales mix. Sales mix refers to the amount of each sub-category that makes up total sales for a store (which is shown as a percentage for each sub-category on both the Profit & Loss Statement and the Store Comparison). If, by way of example, perennials are 25% of store volume and most other stores in the region show 30% of total sales in the perennial sub-category, this could indicate that there is an opportunity for the store to increase it's perennial sales.

The store comparison report is produced to show the current month and separately to show the comparison on a year-to-date basis.

Rolling 13-month income statement
This report looks much like the Profit & Loss Statement, but it shows each of the last 13 months of profit & loss statements for a store as well as a summation of the last 12 months.

Key Management Indicator (KMI)
This report is intended to capture the most meaningful measures of performance for each store and to compare those measures across stores and is therefore perhaps the first report a manager should look to each month to measure performance. Key management indicators are measured for each month and on a year-to-date basis.

The first column shows the net gross margin percent. As described above, gross margin is essentially the amount of sales minus the cost of the merchandise sold. The net gross margin percent increases as the initial margin increases. The net gross margin percent declines as discounts and merchandise write-offs increase. Each of these items is measured on the KMI.

Another very important measurement on the KMI is the average sale compared to the average sale in the prior year. It is also very useful to compare average sale across stores to determine if a particular store is performing better or worse than its peers.

As a way to measure the productivity of the store staff, the KMI shows the Sales Per Labor Hour or SPLH. SPLH is the amount of sales generated by the store for each hour of staff labor. Again, this measurement is most useful when compared to results in the prior year to other stores. SPLH will tend to be lower in stores that have higher sales, so when comparing one store to its peers, it is best to select a peer that has about the same sales volume.

Key Factors –

Expenses:

1) Salaries – look at sales per labor hour and wages for the month and year. Are they in line with sales increase/decrease? This is the most important because most of your expenses are in this category.
2) Store controllables – review briefly, touch only on something way out of whack

Sales:

1) Margin – is it in line? Look at components of margin – discounts, markdowns and initial margin to determine where you stand and why.
2) Sales – Drill down by department month/year to see how they are doing and then make recommendations on how to improve.
3) Inventory – very important to know compared to past year. Where do I need improvement?
4) Average Sale

PROFIT: All factors lead to bottom line profit.

REPORTS

Depending on the capabilities of the POS system at your location there will be a variety of reports that you can access, as you need them. The types of reports that are available and what information they convey are listed below:

1. **Daily Sales –** This report is produced as a function of the daily cash report or via the POS system.
2. **Weekly Sales –** The Boise Office produces this report each week and emails it to management. The Boise report also includes month to date, as well as, year to date. The sales database that is part of the daily cash reports will also give current and past weekly sales information.
3. **Category Sales –** Category sales are available in a variety of platforms. These reports show a store's sales for a given time period by pre-defined category. These sales may be used to compare same time period last year, prior week, or consistency among stores within a district.
4. **Item Sold Reports –** These reports are available through POS systems (where applicable) as well as via the web database. These reports can be used to look up sales on particular items, groups of items, or vendors for a given period of time.
5. **Write-Off Report –** This report is used to track the amount of merchandise that a store is discarding. The reports are generally available for a weekly, monthly, or yearly period.

ASSOCIATE GUIDANCE

Coaching

Coaching is the process that you use to achieve desired results from all your associates in their given function. Coaching is an ongoing and progressive process that allows associates to achieve success throughout their career with SummerWinds. In order to coach effectively you will need to:

1. Define your expectations for your store as a whole.
2. Define your expectations for each department within your store.
3. Define your expectations for each of your associate positions/people.

Expectations are the cornerstone for successful coaching. The expectation will define for you and the associate what the end goal is that you wish to reach together. Expectations can be short term, (i.e., every item that is delivered today will be received and merchandised by the end of the same day.) On the other hand, they might be achieved over a longer period of time, (i.e. we are going to increase sales in our bedding department for the year.) Expectations are also defined by the degree to which you want something done, (i.e. by received I mean that all paperwork is properly filled out and filed; when I say merchandised, I mean all of the tables are condensed and signed; end of day means thirty minutes before closing so that we can do our normal closing procedures.) In whatever you are coaching, you and the associate must understand the goal.

When expectations are understood, you may then move on to the process to attain the goal. Collaboration is a beneficial way to define the process of how to reach a goal. When associates are involved in the process of how to accomplish a goal, they are more likely to participate enthusiastically. Steps that you will need to define clearly in order to accomplish a goal are:

1. Who will be involved in the process and who will lead the project?
2. What role will each participant play?
3. How long will the process take?

As the initiator of the process, you will need to check back in with the leader of the process to give advice, steer the project back on track if needed, and show encouragement. Upon completion of the project or task, make sure to give a brief review of the finished product.

The coaching process must be used for occasional projects and consistent tasks that are done every day. When you approach consistent tasks with a coaching mindset and are diligent in your expectations, you can turn that task into a habit, which will require less supervision from you and build further confidence in our valued associates.

Counseling

STOP
Call your Vice President of Operations and
The Boise Office Human Resource Manager
Prior to any associate termination.

Counseling is quite different from coaching in that it deals mostly with behaviors and attitude that negatively affects the store's performance and ultimately the SummerWinds brand. Counseling is required when a counterproductive behavior or attitude is encountered with an associate. Counseling has varying levels of severity, but always must be done with the utmost respect for the associate. The two most important parts of counseling are clarity and consistency. Prior to any counseling session, you need to make sure you are clear about what behavior or attitude you want to correct. A list of clarity points are:

1. Question whether or not to call Boise Office, Human Resource Manager for assistance and talking points with the associate
2. What specifically is the behavior/attitude you want corrected?
3. What is the frequency of the behavior/attitude?
4. Provide specific examples of when behavior/attitude was demonstrated.
5. Describe the effect it has on the store's operations and future success of the associate.
6. What specifically needs to change and how soon?
7. What you can do to help?

Clarity is important due to the likelihood that an associate who is being counseled may sidetrack the conversation at various moments. The counselor needs to have a very clear understanding of what they want to accomplish with each session if it is to be successful. The counseling session is best delivered in a very short time frame and with as few words as possible. It is recommended to have two supervisors present. The counseling is always done in private, (i.e. away from other associates and customers).

Consistency is equally important when counseling associates. There are guidelines that all associates must follow in order to ensure proper store function. These guidelines need to be clear when hiring new associates and current associates need to adhere to them as well, no matter whom the associate or what function they provide. Behaviors and attitudes that associates need to be expected to perform are:

1. Embracing and delivering on our Key Retail Operating Standards each moment.
2. Being ready to work at their scheduled time every day.
3. Treat customers, vendors and fellow associates with respect.
4. Calling management ahead of time when late or ill.
5. Clearing vacations in advance writing with management.
6. Inform management on shift changes.
7. Take breaks and lunches when appropriate.

The type of counseling action that you engage in will depend on the severity of the behavior or attitude. There are neither mandatory guidelines on how many warnings an associate must receive before termination is in order, nor are there guidelines that state that the warnings must be in writing. However, a written warning is far more structured and difficult to dispute than a verbal session. In general, a verbal counseling session is warranted when the behavior or attitude is first displayed. Making a written note of this action to be kept in the associates personnel file is recommended. When the behavior or attitude becomes part of a pattern, then a more formal, written counseling session is in order. It is management's decision to determine what needs to be corrected, when it needs to be corrected, and at what point the associate has become a negative influence in the store and thus termination is the proper course. In any case, when you are in a situation where counseling is required and you have clarified what it is you want to cover, you will need to make time to sit down privately with the associate and conduct your session. Never initiate counseling on the sales floor, especially when other associates or customers may be able to listen in. Follow these general guidelines for conducting a counseling session:

1. Gather your facts and plan of action before meeting with the associate.
2. Conduct your session as quickly as possible from the time the behavior or attitude was witnessed. Waiting too long will weaken the effect of the session.
3. Have the session away from the sales floor and other people.
4. Have a witness, preferably your associate manager or district personnel, if possible, especially in employment termination situations.
5. Talk with a district or corporate resource person for advice if needed.
6. Take turns talking.
7. Agree to a solution and time frame.
8. Encourage the associate as to his/her importance at the store.

Whether you choose to simply talk to an associate or use a more formal written form during the counseling session, you must make a note in the associate's file in order to keep track of patterns. Written counseling forms need to be filled out prior to your session so that you can focus on the discussion. A sample of the form is included and you should familiarize yourself with it so you can fill it in properly and send copies to the appropriate person.

SummerWinds™
GARDEN CENTERS, INC.

DOCUMENTATION OF COUNSELING ACTION

1. CHECK TYPE OF DOCUMENTATION

❒ SUSPENSION ❒ WRITTEN REPRIMAND ❒ CORRECTIVE INTERVIEW

❒ DEMOTION ❒ TERMINATION

2. ASSOCIATE NAME: ______________________ POSITION: ______________________

ASSOCIATE NUMBER: ______________________ OPERATING LOCATION NAME/NUMBER: ______________________

STATEMENTS OF ACTION TAKEN
(Actual Advisement of Associate)

3. STATEMENT OF IMPROPER ACTION: ______________________

4. STATEMENT OF CORRECT ACTION (FUTURE EXPECTATIONS): ______________________

5. STATEMENT OF PREVIOUS WARNING(S) ON SAME OR RELATED OFFENSES: ______________________

6. STATEMENT OF ACTION COMPANY WILL TAKE IF ASSOCIATE DOES NOT MEET LISTED EXPECTATIONS: ______________________

7. PRINTED NAME OF SUPERVISOR OR MANAGER COMPLETING FORM: ______________________

Position

Supervisor/Manager Signature Date

PRINTED NAME OF WITNESS (If Applicable): ______________________

Position

Witness Signature Date:

8. ASSOCIATE'S COMMENTS: ______________________

9. ASSOCIATE STATEMENT ACKNOWLEDGING UNDERSTANDING AND RECEIPT:

"I acknowledge that the above written notice, of the type checked above, has been presented to me this day, and I understand its contents."

Associate Signature Date:

WHITE (PERSONNEL FILE) **YELLOW (PAYROLL)** **PINK (SUPERVISOR)**

SCHEDULING

Scheduling Process

SummerWinds has created a custom scheduling spreadsheet for each store, access it through: _____________(user)_________________(folder)_____________(file name). Each scheduling file is protected with a password, which is given to the manager of that location. Instructions on how to use the scheduler are included on the last tab of the worksheet. An updated schedule for the upcoming week must be posted for associates to view no later than Wednesday of the prior week. It is beneficial to group associates on the schedule by primary responsibility in order to ensure proper coverage for the week. The printed schedule should show associate names and scheduled work hours only. We like to be as flexible as possible with our associates on her/his schedule. The "schedule writer" is encouraged to work with associates to accommodate the needs of the store and its associates.

Proper Coverage

Proper coverage can be defined as having enough of the right people to cover all basic tasks throughout the day, which allows for both breaks and lunches. That means having enough cashiers, carryouts, key personnel, and water-personnel to handle the projected amount of business for that day, time of day and week. Factors that need to be considered are:

1. Number of customers expected for a given day and week.
2. Number of registers you will need to run during the day.
3. Coverage for each division within the store.
4. Amount of product to be received.
5. Coverage for opening and closing.
6. Completion of office processes.
7. Vacation days that are taken.
8. Holidays and expected weather patterns.

Adjustments

Adjustments to the schedule will happen for a number of reasons, including sickness, holiday, vacations, no shows, budgetary, or balance. All changes to the schedule need to be made to give the associates advance notice where it is feasible to do so.

Budgeted Dollars/Hours

Comparison of the finished schedule to the budgetary numbers agreed upon during the previous year is a good double check. It is likely that there will be adjustments each week and perhaps daily in some cases. The actual work hours are driven by several factors, the primary being actual sales trends. The bottom of the scheduler conveniently tabulates the hours and dollars you are allocating for a given week.

REVIEWING

Performance Review Purpose

Performance reviews are held several times during the year for a variety of reasons with a multitude of deliveries. A "review" happens any time a manager/supervisor meets with an individual associate or a group of associates to discuss work performance, department performance, or future planning of a department. As a rule, the performance review is more effective when it is focused on simplicity, frequent interaction, the future and "self-tracking," (i.e. accountability).

Reviews will generally fall into two different categories, those that are formal (keep these to a minimum) and those that are informal. Formal reviews will usually be done with the associate in a private setting with written official documentation. Informal reviews may be done individually or in a group, usually only verbal and more frequent. Even so, "best practice" is to type the notes for the associate's file in our HRB payroll system, "raves and rants," or use your "coaching logs."

Continual and frequent informal reviews (Tens) will ensure more steady progress and increase the efficiency of more formal reviews.

Timing of Reviews

Timing of a review is defined as the time of day, the day of the week, the number of times during a year, and the physical location in which a review takes place. In regards to formal reviews, all parties involved should determine the time of day, day of the week, and physical location. By setting a time, date and location for the review, you will enhance the ability to focus on the "task at hand" as well as give everyone the ability to prepare. In some cases the review may need to be held offsite and/or during non-business hours. Tens can and should be done on-site and preferably within the department or area being discussed. These reviews need to be conducted on a regular basis to reinforce desired results and production. A list of types of reviews and their purpose and timing follow this section.

Review Questions

Reviewing is a process that entails giving information, asking questions, getting information, and formulating a plan. The outline below will give examples of each of these categories.

1. Giving information – Information that is given needs to be relevant to the review that you are giving. Financial reports are good for reviews on product and merchandising, while shoppers' reports, observed behavior, and overall feel and/or look of a department is good for personal growth. Both are needed for department growth as a whole.
2. Asking questions – It is important to have questions to ask during a review in order to better understand the associate(s) being reviewed. Questions need to be open ended so that the associate has a chance to let you know what they are thinking.

3. Getting information – To get information, you need to actively listen to what the associate is saying. If all you want is for him/her to come to the same conclusion that you have already reached, then you should be giving direction instead of doing a review. Use your questions to get them to focus on an area that you feel will have the most impact, but be open to his/her ideas.
4. Expectations from the associate – Ask her/him to answer the following in writing, but let her/him know that those notes are theirs and they are free to share or not to share with you.
    a. What actions has she/he taken since we last met?
    b. What discoveries has she/he made?
    c. What partnerships has he/she built?

These answers will usually lead to formulating a more introspective and useful performance plan.

Formulating a plan – Plans must be designed in order to meet the goals agreed to during a review. For formal reviews, these goals need to be written down and revisited from time to time. Goals need to be as specific as possible. Plans should be action items instead of desired results. For example (Goal = Increase unit sales in lavender by 7% over same period for prior year – Action = Buy more end cap material from ABC grower on a regular basis because they have the products that offer greater customer appeal).

Informal Reviews

While these type of reviews are generally not a "sit-down" review, they are just as important, if not more so. These performance discussions are high-frequency by their very nature and help to ensure that actions are on course for the desired result. (It is analogous to a pilot flying towards her target destination. She plugs in her coordinates based on the current available data she has on distance, cargo weight, weather etc. to reach her destination. Along the way to her goal, she continually checks for new weather patterns, flight patterns of other airplanes etc. and makes adjustment along the way.) A goal is rarely reached with a straight line.

Type	Frequency	Length	Purpose	Form
Season Readiness Review	Twice a Year January thru Mid February August thru September	Primaries - 45min to 1hour General - 10min to 20min	Focus this review on the performance of a given department and or the support needed from a job category. Use this time to cement plans for implementation of any changes to a given department. With general nursery help they also need to know the plans and what role they will play. The **"Budget Goals Review"** from the previous year should be a major factor in this review.	√
Wage Review	Once a Year End of June	Primaries - 15min to 20min General - 5min to 10min	This review is designed to inform your associates about any adjustments to their current wage. You should be able to explain the change based on specific examples of work performance and or category performance. The results from the **"Season Readiness Review"** should be included. In addition, the "General Tasks List" may be used as a guide to improve job status and or wage level.	
Budget Goals Review	Once a Year August	Primaries - 30min to 45min	This review is designed for the purpose of setting monetary and design goals for each department within the nursery. The "Spring Readiness Review" should be used along with sale reports to measure the level of success of past programs. The **"Budget Review"** may also be used to reinforce plans for the upcoming fall season.	√
Year End Review	Once a Year Late October thru November	Primaries - 45min to 1hour General - 10min to 20min	Use this review to cover general practices of an associate within a specific department and or job category. Reviews should be focused on store process, work habits, work attitude, talents, support needs, scheduling changes, and future personal goals.	√
Tens	Throughout the Year	All - 10min max	**"Tens"** trainings are any on the spot training that you conduct with an individual or group of associates on any subject. It could be in reference to product knowledge, task implementation, routine expectations, customer service, or any other topic.	

SummerWinds GARDEN CENTERS, INC.

Season Readiness Review and Critique

Department Name	Season Planing For -
Plan	
Results	
Plan	
Results	
Plan	
Results	
Plan	
Results	
Plan	
Results	

SummerWinds GARDEN CENTERS, INC.

Hourly Associate Appraisal

Associate Name:	**Associate Title:**
Store No.:	**Date of Last Review:** / /

Manager Name:	**Witness:**
Review Date: / /	

POLICY OVERVIEW STATEMENT

It is the policy of SummerWinds that all associates are offered the uninhibited opportunity to develop and grow their careers within the company.

Our appraisal policy is intended to give the associate and manager a yearly opportunity to formally meet, discuss and rate the work performance of the associate. It also allows the associate to participate in goal setting for career advancement.

This appraisal is in addition to the regular communication process which takes place throughout the year. Please refer to your goals often with your supervisor during the course of the year.

Associate's Comments: Please share cost savings or customer service improvement ideas.

What one thing could your supervisor do which would improve the way he/she does his/her job and benefit you and the company?

Goals and Future Activities: (Describe both short and long-term work-related goals you wish to pursue during the future. Consider areas of training and personal development, skills you plan to develop, etc.)

Manager's/Appraiser's Comments:

"Attitude determines our altitude in life."

Doing your best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment.

Hourly Associate Self Appraisal

Associate Name	**Review Date: / /**

We are in the business of pleasing people with terrific service and excellent plants. Your talent and enthusiasm play a key role in creating our customer's gardening success! The following is our key retail operating standards and expectations:

Welcome to Our Garden	**Exceeds Expec.**	**Meets Expec.**	**Needs Improv.**	**N/A**
I greet every customer with a smile and say hello within 15 feet.				
I assist customers to a requested item, I don't point.				
I make eye contact, smile and thank every customer at time of purchase and carry-out.				
I learn and live our "We Guarantee Success" customer service mission.				
I show "sense of urgency" to meet and exceed customer expectations.				
Merchandising				
I buy only the best, sell only the best.				
I ensure professional and informative signage is displayed on all applicable merchandise.				
I ensure every item on the sales floor is priced accurately and legibly with a sticker or sign. (No hand-written signs.)				
I show creativity in store displays.				
Beautiful Store Image				
I wear our designated uniform in a clean and professional appearance during all working hours.				
I ensure stunning and well-maintained seasonally appropriate landscapes.				
I help maintain sparkling clean and stocked bathrooms throughout the day.				
I practice good housekeeping throughout the parking lot, store and nursery.				
Basic Elements				
I offer appropriate "tie-in" sales to all of my customers.				
I work well with others and strive to be considerate of fellow associates and management.				
I ensure proper and timely watering and fertilizing of all plant material.				
I am curious and involved in on-going learning on customer service and product knowledge.				
I practice safety first such as clear aisles and water hoses stored appropriately at all times.				
I am reliable and show up on-time for my work-shifts.				
I share appropriate and accurate product knowledge with customers.				

I am signing this appraisal to indicate I have read the content:

Associate Signature:	Date:
Manager Signature:	Date:
Witness:	Date:

SummerWinds GARDEN CENTERS, INC.

Supplemental for Cashier/Head-Cashier/Bookkeeper

Basic Cashier Elements	Exceeds Expec.	Meets Expec.	Needs Improv.	N/A
I answer the phone in the appropriate manner when I am not with a customer.				
I mention all relevant programs to customers upon checkout.				
I ensure that I am aware of any and all special pricing at the start of each shift.				
I am careful to scan all merchandise and alert my supervisor when there are items that do no scan or ring-up incorrectly.				
I am accurate in ringing customers up and counting back change.				
I maintain a well stocked and organized register station.				
I have acceptable over/shorts on my cash report.				
I ensure the register drawer is closed except during immediate use.				

Basic Head-Cashier Elements	Exceeds Expec.	Meets Expec.	Needs Improv.	N/A
I am aware of the manner that I and other cashiers are answering the phone.				
I make all cashiers aware of relevant programs that are being offered to customers and make sure they fully understand the program.				
I ensure that all special pricing is clear to each cashier and appropriate material is on hand at the registers in a timely fashion.				
I communicate about items that do not scan correctly with the appropriate person in the proper form.				
I ensure well stocked and organized register stations.				
I identify areas of training need and see that the necessary training takes place.				
I ensure that register drawers are closed except during immediate use.				

Basic Bookkeeper Elements	Exceeds Expec.	Meets Expec.	Needs Improv.	N/A
I maintain a well stocked, clean, and organized office.				
I handle the ordering of supplies for the register stations on a regular basis.				
I make sure the daily deposit is done accurately and in a timely fashion.				
I ensure that all relevant materials are turned in on time and accurately.				
I maintain appropriate cash level in safe during year.				

Answer Yes or No to the following (circle your answer)		
I check the proof daily to identify errors on the cash report.	Yes	No
I notify my manager if the Over/Short is $25.00 or more on any day.	Yes	No
I accurately account for all manual return slips.	Yes	No
I ensure all physical media matches reported amounts.	Yes	No
I ensure that all store safes are locked when not in immediate use (no daylock).	Yes	No

It's not what you have, it's what you do with what you have.

Store #

Department Manager / Buyer ______________________ **Time Period For Review** ______________

Category ______________________ **Sub-Cat / Area** ______________

	Store		**District**	
Department % sales volume increase/decrease from prior year same period.	________	**%**	________	**%**
Department % of sales to total store sales for same period.	________	**%**	________	**%**
Dollar volume of department write-offs.	**Prev. $** ________		**Curr. $** ________	
Department % and $ increase for next year	________	**%**	**$** ________	

Factors that contribute to Departments Performance (positives/negatives).

What can I do to improve the Department's Performance? (Excluding more help.) (Please give specific ideas, i.e. location changes, product mix.)

Revised 11-03-05

HIRING/RECRUITING

Attracting "talent" is a year-long endeavor, but is most critical prior to the store's busy season(s). Applications come from a variety of locations (associate referrals, walk-ins, websites, job boards, schools, etc.). Having in-store signage and street banners, where permitted, can be helpful to maximize foot traffic applications. As such, it is important to have a ready supply of applications on hand (and it is the law to offer an application or to refer to our website for an application all who inquire about employment).

Hiring is done in relation to the needs of the store and an applicant's talents, skills and knowledge. The store's needs may fall into a variety of areas or may encompass a number of areas at the same time.

Here is a list of potential store needs:

1. Job tasks that are not currently being filled.
2. Classifications where there is a need or more support is required.
3. Days on the schedule that need filling for a certain classification.
4. Personalities you wish to promote.
5. Attitudes you wish to foster.

The ultimate goal is to hire associates that fit both the needs of the store and have the personal traits that fit the given job as well as a supportive attitude of the store. Training an associate on the skills and teaching them the knowledge required to accomplish a given job is much easier if they have the right attitude for the position. Here are some traits for you to ponder and questions you might ask:

1. Work Ethic – Motivation to work (describe a time when you felt a sense of accomplishment)?
2. Play in your mind, or in writing, the talents of your best associate in the role you are recruiting for and form questions around those talents, skills and knowledge of that person.
3. Talents (i.e. a knack for running customers through a POS all day) come natural. Skills and knowledge are taught and acquired through experience on the job.
4. Loyalty – Can they get through the tough times? (What was the longest time you ever committed to something and what was it?)
5. Sense of humor – What is your general outlook on life?
6. Respect – First impressions are important. (What types of people drive them crazy?)
7. Judgment – What level of common sense do they have? (Given a task, what would your thought process be in order to get the job done?)
8. Flexibility - How do they deal with change?
9. Integrity – How do they handle a question when you think they do not know the answer?
10. Maturity – What level of responsibility can they handle? (What have they been responsible for in the past? In addition, to what level?)
11. Dependability – How was their attendance at school or last job?
12. Initiative – How likely are they to take a project on without constant direction?
13. Enthusiasm – Are they upbeat and connected with people?

Another part of hiring is where and when the interview is conducted. Timing of the interview is critical. Prospective associates are to be interviewed when management has the time to make a decision. Having one or two other people in on the interview can also be helpful in making a decision. It is also useful to have one of your "key" associates do a second interview (your associate will appreciate being involved).

Once the decision has been made and you are ready to add your new associate(s), follow these guidelines to ensure a smooth transition into your store environment:

1. Allow ample time to review our new hire packet thoroughly.
2. Be prepared to reiterate wage (wage range is to be determined during the first interview) and status designations.
3. Present her/him the written plan for what they will be doing for the first two weeks. This assists them and their mentor(s).
4. Make sure they understand their work schedule.
5. Make sure management is present on at least their first day of work and that there is a management check-in daily during her/his first week of work and at the end of two weeks.
6. Involve other associates in their orientation.
7. Give them extra attention for the first two weeks. It can be the difference of them jumping ship or staying on board and it gives you insight on who you just hired.

Date:

EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION FORM

Store No.:

Employee Name: Facilitator's Name:

REQUIRED FORMS: Must be completed before work is started

❒ Drug Test ❒ W-4 Form ❒ I9 Form

All of the above items must be checked, in order for hiring process to continue!

STORE ORIENTATION: A general look at the company mission, store layout, and staff introduction.

❒ Mission Statement of the SummerWinds Garden Centers (Summary)

A. Customer Service – A desire that all employees would make an effort to help customer have a pleasant experience.
B. Value – Meeting the customers entire gardening needs, with advice and quality merchandise.
C. Teamwork – Working well with others, and expanding relevant knowledge to better server the customer.
D. Integrity – Being honest with our customer, fellow employees, and suppliers.

❒ Facilities Tour

Each employee should be made aware of all of the store facility locations. This must consist of a walking tour of the grounds to see where essential items are located. The following items are important to identify during the tour:

A. Parking lot and the appropriate use by employees
B. Employee lounge and location of policy handbook
C. Major store divisions (perennials, annuals, shrubs, etc.)
D. Storage containers and usage
E. Waste management procedures
F. Information booth (if applicable)
G. Bathrooms
H. Emergency exits and rendezvous point
I. Fire extinguisher

Date of Tour: ______________ Person giving tour: print name: ____________________ sign name: ________________

❒ Introduction to Staff

A. Department heads have been identified and introduced
B. Other key employees have been identified for questions

General Store Policies: Areas that all employees should be aware of.

❒ Workplace conduct

A. SummerWinds has an open door policy – All employees have the right to discuss issues with managers at the appropriate time.
B. SummerWinds is a Drug Free workplace – Testing for drugs may occur during employment when warranted.
C. Summerwinds has a ZERO Tolerance for Sexual Harassment – This applies at work and for company functions.

❒ Safety Introduction

A. All employees will be instructed on how to maintain a safe workplace prior to beginning work.
B. Each employee must have a signed copy of the employee Safety Manual on file.

❒ Phone/Intercom Usage

A. The phone is meant as a business tool, and is not to be used for personal business without previous approval from the manager on duty. Incoming calls may be received for emergencies only. **Failure to comply with these rules may result in termination.**
B. Employees that are in charge of answering the phone should be courteous and helpful to customers. Each call should be answered in the following manner: (Facilitator, enter greeting on line below)

____

C. The public address system in each store is also a means of communication for our staff and customers. Message should be brief and to the point. Only employees who have been instructed to do so should be utilizing this tool.

❒ Cashing Payroll Checks/Personal Checks/Advances: SummerWinds Nursery will not cash any payroll or personal checks, without approval of management. Advances on wages may be done with management approval and written verification that employee will surrender paycheck on arrival to cover current debt. Advances may not be done for employees have direct deposit.

Job Specific Items: Responsibilities of employee and general information

The employee is: A. Part Time B. Full Time C. Full Time Seasonal (circle one)
Wages discussed: A. Yes B. No (circle one)

❒ Employee's Schedule: for the next two weeks

Days	Times	Days	Times

❒ General responsibilities will include:

____
____
____
____

These items will be used as part of the review in 90 days. **Review set for:** __________________

❒ Uniform check out: these items must be worn at all times and in the appropriate way while at work.

A. T-Shirt Size: ____ No. given out: ______
B. Polo Shirt Size: ____ No. given out: ______
C. Sweatshirt Size: ____ No. given out: ______
D. Jacket Size: ____ No. given out: ______
E. Apron No. given out: ______
F. Closed toe shoes
G. Long pants or Khaki shorts
H. Name badge

❒ Clocking IN/OUT procedures:

Clocking In/Out must be done at the time the employee is ready to start working. Each employee must clock out and then back in for lunch. Only employees who work over six hours, in any given day, are given lunch. Each four hours of work warrants one ten-minute break.

❒ Benefits: Employees who work full time will receive different benefits than those working part time.
The benefits for each are as follows:

PART TIME	FULL TIME
401(k) Plan (at one year of employment)	401(k) Plan (at one year of employment)
End of the year profit sharing	End of the year profit sharing
Bonus Program	Bonus Program
30% Employee Discount	30% Employee Discount
Flexible Schedule	Medical/Dental/Vision Insurance (at 90 days + 1st of next month)
	Long/Short Term Disability
	Flexible Schedule
	Vacation/Personal Days

❒ Associate Discount: The employee discount is meant to give our staff the opportunity to purchase the products we sell at a reduced price. The amount of the discount is 30%, and is intended for the use of the employee only. The discount must be approved by the manager at the time of the sale; and is non-transferable.

❒ Hire Packet Contents: Each of the following has been discussed and/or collected

- ❍ Application for Employment (collect back)
- ❍ History of Company
- ❍ Direct Deposit Enrollment Form (voluntary)
- ❍ EEOC (voluntary for employee, but must be on file)
- ❍ Emergency Contact form (collect back)
- ❍ Statement of Meal Breaks (collect back)
- ❍ Associate Status Change form (fill out)
- ❍ Employee Safety Handbook (collect signature page)
- ❍ Fact about Worker's Compensation handout
- ❍ Other ________________________________

ASSOCIATE HANDBOOK

See the SummerWinds Associate Handbook (policy manual) which is located in the break room for a thorough understanding of our company policies.

If you cannot locate a copy, please see your manager.

OPENING/CLOSING

Daily Store Opening

Opening a SummerWinds store each day is divided into two parts:

1. Open the store for associates and make final preparations for the day
2. Open the store to our customers.

Complete these steps for a successful opening each day:

1. Arrive at your store location at least one half hour prior to the posted opening time.
2. Always have one or more associates present when opening the store.
3. Upon arrival, do the “10 minute walk around” on the perimeter of the store and the parking lot taking note of any anomalies and to mentally reinforce your goals for the day (such as what needs watered first, what displays need re-merchandised, etc.).
4. Unlock primary door and enter establishment taking care not to leave door open once inside.
5. Proceed to sign yourself in for work (if applicable) and then disarm the store’s alarm system.
6. Continue with the internal “walk around” for the rest of the store.
7. Illuminate the store as needed and begin unlocking remainder of the store in order to allow associates to begin their day.
8. Enter office and retrieve **tills** for the day, counting of base money may need to be done at this time. When placing tills in registers, be sure to have a designated person up front from that point forward.
9. Turn the Muzak system on (if applicable).
10. Ensure that all aisles (inside and outside), entryway, parking lot and restrooms are clean and organized to begin the day.
11. Check your email, VM (if applicable) and fax machine.
12. Check your numbers - sales from the prior day, including specific top sellers and labor hour productivity.
13. Process all “Write Offs” at the register from the previous day.

Steps to open the store to the public include:

1. If applicable, change the store sign from “closed” to “open”.
2. Front doors and/or parking gates need to be opened.
3. Merchandise that needs to be brought to the front can now be placed there.

Quick Descriptors:

Tills – Use the designated drawer for the respective register with an accurate sum of money for the start of each day.

Daily Store Closing

The preparation for daily store closing starts approximately one half hour to an hour prior to the end of our posted store hours. We often do "soft" store closing. This term refers to allowing customers to finish their shopping feeling relaxed, even if it is beyond our posted store hours, (in very few cases will our store close earlier than our posted store hours- only a store manager and VP of Operations will make that decision). The following tasks need to be completed as part of the closing procedure:

Start these tasks one hour before closing:

1. Condensing/Facing – all areas within the nursery will need to be condensed and faced at the end of the day. For instructions on condensing see the condensing sheet.
2. Cleaning – Sweep/vacuum the front of the store and high traffic areas at the end of the day. Empty all trashcans and replace with clean trash bag liner (tip – put spare liners in the very bottom of the trashcan to save walking for a clean liner each time). Clean and re-stock bathrooms daily.
3. Closing Registers – This process can start before all customers have left, but at least one register must remain open until there are no customers in the store. Use the provided instructions to close the registers. The process ends with counting down the days till and separating it into the till and cash report media.
4. Product Retrieval – Any product that is being displayed outside the secured perimeter of the store needs to be brought back in at night.
5. "Go-Backs" – Return all "saleable" merchandise to its respective area.
6. Ensure that radios and hand-held's (scanners and PDAs) are in recharging stations.

Tasks that need to be started just before posted closing and may continue beyond are:

1. Closing call – Make the closing announcement no more than 5 minutes to posted closing to inform customers of our operating hours and that we are closing for the day. Announcements should only be made with the consent of the manager on duty.

Final Steps – These are to be accomplished only after all of the above are completed:

1. The "10 minute walk-around" – The closing supervisor is to perform a ten-minute tour around the entire store and make sure all customers and associates have left the store.
2. Check your email, VM (if applicable) and fax machine.
3. Leave notes/expectations/happenings for the on-duty manager the next day if you will not be there.
4. Lock up – During your tour make sure every external gate and door is properly locked.
5. Power Down – turn off all the appropriate lights and Muzak, if applicable.
6. Sign Out – Ensure that all associates (including you if applicable) have signed out for the day. There should be at least two people present for final store closing.
7. Security – Alarm the building/store and exit through the appropriate door making sure to lock it behind you. Also, ensure that all security systems (if applicable) are working properly.
8. Final Survey – Look around the parking lot and front of building making sure all shopping carts and baskets are put away neatly, monument signs are working, external merchandise has been put back and there are no suspicious cars left in the parking lot.