

Max's company culture continued to be based on nine core values handed down by the restaurant's founder:

- The Golden Rule: Always treat customers and co-workers as you would like to be treated.
- Customer Focus: Our success is directly tied to how customer focused and attentive we are. Always remember that the customer is the reason we are here.
- Professionalism: We honor co-workers and ourselves by prohibiting the use of profanity in the workplace.
- Work Performance: Promotion and pay raises are based on work performance, teamwork, and customer service skills rather than seniority.
- Investment: Investing money in our facilities is important; investing in employee training is ten times as important.
- Diversity: We create a work environment in which everyone can do their best regardless of race, religion, or sexual orientation.
- Caring: We exhibit care and concern for our fellow workers.
- Cost Control versus Product Quality: Controlling costs is important to our business success. However, we will never compromise product quality for the sake of saving money.
- Simplicity: Our systems and procedures must be simple to permit consistent, flawless execution.

Employment Practices at Tastee Max

Tastee Max restaurants were open for service from 10:30 A.M. to 9:30 P.M. (9:00 P.M. in stand-alone stores) Monday through Saturday, and from 11:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. on Sundays. Mall stores were required to keep longer hours during the busy holiday shopping season, staying open until 10:00 P.M. on Mondays through Saturdays and 8:00 P.M. on Sundays. To staff these hours every restaurant had 25–30 employees, with 5–9 employees comprising a shift crew. With the exception of supervisory employees, most workers were under the age of 20 years and worked 26 hours or less per week. Supervisory employees (shift supervisors, assistant managers, and head store managers) worked between 30 and 50 hours during a five-day work week. Average wages for supervisory and nonsupervisory restaurant workers were consistent with those in the quick service restaurant industry (see Appendix: Table 2, p. 7). New workers at Tastee Max earned approximately \$7.25 per hour, the minimum wage in New York State. Workers typically received a wage increase of \$.25 per hour at the end of their probationary period with the company, provided that their performance was satisfactory. The average wage earned by Tastee Max crew members was \$7.75 per hour.

Upon hire, all employees were supposed to attend a four-hour group orientation session designed to acclimate them to the company. During the orientation—which was offered most Saturdays—new employees were introduced to the rules and policies in the employee handbook, the company's mission and culture, the restaurant's menu, and procedures for taking customer orders and handling cash; employees were also given the opportunity to complete paperwork needed for their employment. New employees were then assigned to a restaurant for two or three weeks of on-the-job training. Although all new employees were required to attend the orientation and complete on-the-job training, many did not. Ronda knew that the orientation and training was largely done at the discretion of store managers. While some store managers dutifully oriented and trained their employees, others favored a “sink or swim” approach of