

Leadership Consulting

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June 1, 2020

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**MGMT 414 Report:  
Leadership and the COVID-19  
Pandemic at Starbucks**



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# Report: Organization Pandemic & Leadership

## Organization: Starbucks

### Executive Summary

#### *Overview:*

Out of all the businesses in the world, Starbucks has made many strategic maneuvers during the COVID-19 outbreak that have impacted their business as well as other businesses. Starbucks is a worldwide business, so they have been responding to the outbreaks everywhere, before many people in the U.S. even knew about the Coronavirus. They have taken what they have learned from what happened when the first outbreak occurred in China to apply it to their business and strategic timeline everywhere else. Although each country (and even each state in the U.S) is reacting differently and taking different precautions, having business in China still has given Starbucks a plan for how the U.S. will probably implement different steps for reopening businesses and flattening the infection curve.

#### *Context:*

Early 2020, COVID-19 came to the U.S and soon became an outbreak that is out of control. States started to have stay-at-home orders, and eventually closed down all non-essential businesses to try to limit exposure and large crowds. For restaurants, take out and drive thrus are still allowed but no one can stay in the restaurant for longer than necessary. Starbucks has closed their stores all over the world, and has kept drive-thrus open in some states. Their employees are required to wear masks, and they have updated

their safety precautions in their stores. (this includes more cleaning and hand washing as the CDC has recommended all companies do).

*Summary:*

Starbucks has had many responses to the different COVID-19 outbreaks around the world, and is one of the few large businesses that has had this perspective. They have been taking steps to follow guidelines put out by the CDC and set an example for other businesses around them. After closing about half their stores in China, they have now opened most of their stores fully in China again due to their swift initial response. They predict the same will happen in the U.S. soon. The efforts made by Starbucks have shown exemplary leadership skills and they continue to be a company that puts their employees first. Their style attracts customers from all over and their consistency and reliability have certainly helped people through these troubling times.



## Introduction: Overview of Organization

### Brief introduction to Starbucks

Starbucks has over 30,000 locations around the world and makes about 61 million dollars every day. They are the largest coffee company in the world, and they pride themselves on practicing ethical standards and making many food items, coffee, tea, and other beverages as well as products for consumers to make their own coffee.

### Mission and Purpose of Starbucks

**Mission Statement:** “To inspire and nurture the human spirit -- one person, one cup and one neighborhood at a time.”

**Purpose statement:** “To establish Starbucks as the premier purveyor of the finest coffee in the world while maintaining our uncompromising principles while we grow.

**Values:** “Creating a culture of warmth and belonging, where everyone is welcome. Acting with courage, challenging the status quo, and finding new ways to grow our company and each other. Being present, connecting with transparency, dignity and respect. Delivering our very best in all we do, holding ourselves accountable for results.”

Starbucks is considered to be a very ethical company because of their supply chain, the wages and benefits they give employees, and the customer first mindset they have. Their values are very relationship-oriented and they do a lot to impact the community in good ways.

## History of Starbucks

Starbucks is the largest coffee chain in the world, but it started out as one coffee shop in downtown Seattle in 1971. The first location was actually at Western Avenue, and then in 1976 they moved to the Pike's Place location. The founders of Starbucks are Jerry Baldwin, Zev Siegl and Gordon Bowker with the goal of selling high quality coffee and high quality coffee equipment, so in the beginning they did equipment and coffee bean sales, they did not sell individual drinks like they do now. In 1986, Starbucks started to brew and sell coffee drinks (espresso drinks specifically), and in 1987, the owners of Starbucks sold Starbucks to Howard Schultz who expanded to more and more locations. In 1996, Starbucks opened its first store outside of North America, in Japan. Starbucks buys beans from farmers, roasts the beans themselves, and then distributes them to their stores. They have a Farmer Equity Practice that requires suppliers to tell the company what percentage of the price is being paid to the farmers.

## Why we chose to study Starbucks

*Allie*

Starbucks is a very well known company around the world, and it is consistent no matter what location you go to. Growing up in the Seattle area, Allie knows Starbucks very well, and she now works at a location that she regularly references in her work in this class. She sees first hand the leadership training and strategies that Starbucks has for every employee, and the way that they are committed to their customers and their employees.

Starbucks is one of the largest companies in the world, so their response to COVID-19 sets a precedent for companies everywhere, big and small.

*Kira*

Kira grew up in Colorado Springs, CO as the pay it forward movement was trending, a store near her house was always participating in the movement. She found this moving and always wondered why Starbucks was a hub for nice people to do nice things. When she was in high school, her brother, Scott, began working at Starbucks. He worked his way up to a team lead position and was always praised for his customer service. Kira would go there to do homework while he was working and observe the atmosphere. In her opinion, Starbucks creates an inclusive environment that is accepting of people from all walks of life. They are helpful, respectful, and driven in their commitment and mission and it is clear that while the work may be hard, at the end of the day the employees feel that they have done something to make a change in the world that day. Even a simple cup of coffee can change how someone feels, and after sitting for hours at Starbucks she learned to love it as well.

## Financial Overview

### Revenue Components

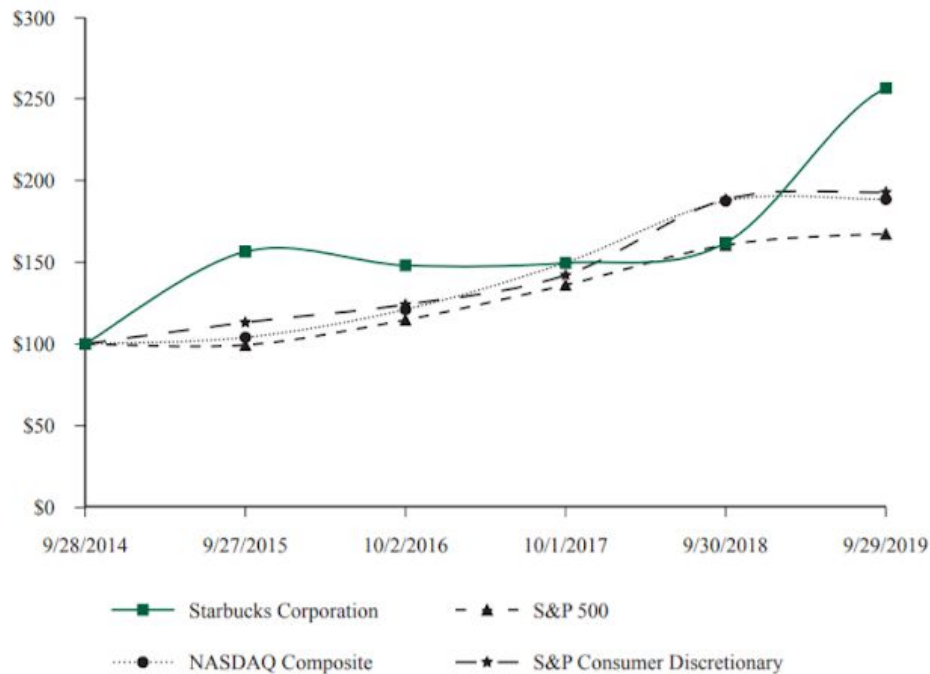
We generate the majority of our revenues through company-operated stores and licensed stores.

#### Company-operated and Licensed Store Summary as of September 29, 2019

	Americas	As a % of Total Americas Stores	International	As a % of Total International Stores	Total	As a % of Total Stores
Company-operated stores	9,974	55 %	5,860	44 %	15,834	51 %
Licensed stores	8,093	45 %	7,329	56 %	15,422	49 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,067</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>13,189</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>31,256</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Performance Comparison Graph

The following graph depicts the total return to shareholders from September 28, 2014 through September 29, 2019, relative to the performance of the Standard & Poor's 500 Index, the NASDAQ Composite Index and the Standard & Poor's 500 Consumer Discretionary Sector, a peer group that includes Starbucks. All indices shown in the graph have been reset to a base of 100 as of September 28, 2014, and assume an investment of \$100 on that date and the reinvestment of dividends paid since that date. The stock price performance shown in the graph is not necessarily indicative of future price performance.



	Sep 28, 2014	Sep 27, 2015	Oct 2, 2016	Oct 1, 2017	Sep 30, 2018	Sep 29, 2019
Starbucks Corporation	\$ 100.00	\$ 156.42	\$ 148.03	\$ 149.49	\$ 161.87	\$ 256.48
S&P 500	100.00	99.39	114.72	136.07	160.44	167.27
NASDAQ Composite	100.00	104.00	121.08	149.75	187.44	188.43
S&P Consumer Discretionary	100.00	113.18	124.09	142.10	188.34	192.78



Before COVID-19, you can see in the figure above that Starbucks was doing well. The graph shows the amount of money that was being returned to shareholders between 2014 and 2019. Starbucks licensed and company operated stores make up the amount of revenue made, but overall the graph shows that the company was doing very well especially in 2019. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Starbucks' earnings have halved, but they are still making a net profit. Their shares are usually 60 cents in earnings per share, but they dropped to 31 cents per share during the COVID-19 shut downs. They are still open for take-out and drive-thrus so they are still making money, but since many stores are closed for sit down customers, they are missing that money. Small businesses are being hit hard in the United States, but Starbucks is taking a loss too. They have donated over \$10 million to their employees through their disaster relief fund, and have donated more than \$3 million more to different COVID relief foundations.



## Organization and Leadership Structure

Starbucks wants to make sure their organizational structure matches the current needs of the business, so it is fluid and changing depending on what they think is most important for the company. They have a matrix organizational structure, meaning that it is not the typical hierarchical set up that most corporations have. They value their employees, and call them “partners” which is just one way they try to have a matrix structure. Starbucks tries to make sure their employees work with each other and report to more than one person for multiple perspectives and encourage working together in teams and in their departments as well. Their corporate structure is more of a functional hierarchy, and they have geographic divisions with their own hierarchies that eventually go to the top. In stores, they have some hierarchy, because there is normally a manager, an assistant manager, and even shift leads, but it is still teamwork and relationship focused. They prioritize teams and working together, and within their corporate structure they have their own product-based division. Howard Shultz is the CEO and is at the top of the company. Starbucks culture is super relationship-driven, and they think it is really important to put their employees and customers first. They emphasize collaboration, communication and openness, and train their employees about the importance of diversity and inclusion in every capacity.

Starbucks has online training for every barista where they emphasize their universal mission and culture. Employees have to get “barista certified” before they can make drinks, which means they have gone through training and have proven that they know how to make every drink on the menu. They emphasize the importance of sustainability

and ethical sourcing, as well as a customer relationship oriented experience. In the training for new hires, they also show the ways that Starbucks helps the community and how important the customers are in everything they do.



## Past Crisis Management Planning

One of the biggest cases where Starbucks had to do some crisis management is when they had an employee call the cops on a group of black people at their store that weren't buying anything. Even though loitering is not permitted in most businesses, this was an obvious example of racial bias because Starbucks is known for having people stay for long periods of time without buying anything to have work meetings, or school meetings, or just coffee dates. After being called out for the incident, Howard Shultz immediately issued an apology and a statement that included the quote, "We're better than this". Starbucks created a solution and shared it with the world: they would be closing many thousands of stores so that they could do racial bias training for their employees. Even though it is debated whether this was an effective solution or not, Starbucks still had an immediate response to the incident. Starbucks made sure they apologized quickly and did not try to defend what happened at all. They showed that they wanted to learn from the situation, and made sure they didn't make any excuses. The figure on the next page shows the timeline and details of this incident, and how Starbucks reacted.

Starbucks' crisis planning is not always apparent, but they have enough procedures put in place to respond to a crisis when it happens, even if they don't know exactly what it is going to be. They have plenty of people that can come together quickly and come up with a solution that is best for the company and for the community.



## How Starbucks Calmed a Brewing Crisis



On May 29, Starbucks will close all stores for racial-bias training for its 175,000 employees. It has engaged national and local experts to help develop the curriculum.

### **Overview of Organization Pandemic Response**

This pandemic has proved to be a time where cooperation and compliance can be life saving tools. The faster actions are taken the more lives will potentially be spared. As we learn more about Starbucks, we would like to commend them on their swift action as they showed strong leadership and self-awareness as a brand. When people think of Starbucks, they think of reliability and for them to take action by completely shutting down stores in China 16 days after COVID-19 was announced was a huge example for the rest of the world. Throughout this pandemic, they have proved to be on the right side of this fight. Their hearts and minds are thinking together and they are acting in the best interest of the general public, not just their company. Starbucks creatively worked to find solutions on how to navigate this situation while keeping their employees safe and healthy. They followed CDC and state guidelines appropriately and did a great job of modeling the way for other essential businesses. They have remained transparent and efficient in terms of communication and response efforts as they continue to adhere to the guidelines.

**Timeline:** *(January 1st-April 15th 2020)*

*January 4, 2020*

WHO posts about the first cluster of cases.

*January 12, 2020*

China reports the strain of the new coronavirus: COVID-19.

*January 28, 2020*

Starbucks closes down stores in China, but makes the decision to continue to pay their partners despite the stores being closed down. 2,000 stores in China close down which is about half of their stores in China. China is the second largest market for Starbucks. These stores have shut down completely.

*January 31, 2020*

The United States has 6 confirmed cases. China has 11,971.

*February 15, 2020*

China has 50,052 reported cases. The United States has 15.

*February 27, 2020*

Starbucks CEO announces that 85% of Starbucks in China have reopened. This comes after China announces that there is a recovery trend. Approximately 3,655 stores are currently open in China.

*March 1, 2020*

China has almost 80,000 cases, South Korea is at 3,736, and the United States is at 62.

*March 4, 2020*

Starbucks sends a letter to partners and community members to clarify the steps they are taking based on CDC recommendations, “We are taking guidance from the CDC and local health authorities, we have increased cleaning and sanitizing for all company-operated stores to help prevent the spread of all germs, adding paid time for our partners supporting this work” (Johnson, 2020).

We are pausing the use of personal cups and “for here” ware in our stores. We will continue to honor the 10-cent discount for anyone who brings in a personal cup or asks for “for here” ware. We have provided scenario-based procedural information to our store teams on how to report and support anyone that may express they’ve been impacted by the virus, including store closure decision making support” (Johnson, 2020). They also restricted all business-related air travel, domestic and international through March 31 and took action to modify or postpone large meetings across our offices in the U.S. and Canada.

*March 6, 2020*

Starbucks announces that over the past few weeks they, “have been preparing for the possible scenarios related to COVID-19 and ensuring the right plans and resources are in place, defined principally by guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local public health authorities” (Johnson, 2020). They are using “lessons learned” from how they handled the COVID-19 initial outbreak that occurred in China. Also on this day, Rossan Williams writes a letter addressing how Seattle took care of having a case of COVID-19 in one of their stores. The case was in Seattle and the



company took very swift action to shut down the store and have immediate cleaning procedures completed before being able to re-open.

*March 9, 2020*

Starbucks creates a COVID-19 Relief Fund to aid frontline workers in Seattle. They partner with other companies that are Seattle based including Amazon and Microsoft. The fund quickly raises \$2.5 million.

*March 11, 2020*

Starbucks announces that they will be paying for mental health resources and catastrophe pay for their employees. This includes free counseling through EAP and Headspace, a meditation app. At this point, over 90% of Starbucks stores in China have reopened. Kevin Johnson, CEO and president of Starbucks, sends out a letter to the community about precautions still being taken. A huge undertaking was met by this statement, “You have our full support when it comes to partner care, including access to catastrophe pay, benefits that support your physical and mental health, as well as a network of partners who are all here to help” (Johnson, 2020). This just goes to show how far Starbucks will go to take care of their employees from a top-down approach. If their employees are safe and healthy, then they can remain open.

*March 15, 2020*

Starbucks switches to only drive thru and to go orders in the US and Canada stores. They announced, “We are pausing the use of all seating, including both the café and patio areas” (Johnson, 2020).

However, customers can still walk up and order at the counter, and they can also utilize the “order ahead” feature in the Starbucks app and pick via the drive thru or have their drink delivered to their car. In addition, they will have a modified condiment bar in all stores and you may see modified “order ahead” handoff areas on a store-by-store basis. However, certain locations in high-social gathering places or communities with high clusters of COVID-19 cases will be temporarily closed.

*March 16, 2020*

China has 81,077 reported cases, followed by Italy with 24,747. The United States has 1,678.

*March 20, 2020*

Starbucks expands catastrophe pay and moves all US and Canada locations to drive thru only, “Starbucks will close access to cafes and reduce service to drive-thru and delivery only for two weeks in the U.S” (Johnson, 2020). Exceptions were made for stores in and around hospitals. In addition, “Starbucks will pay all partners for the next 30 days, whether they choose to come to work or not” (Johnson, 2020). They also extended catastrophe pay.

*March 23, 2020*

“It is the responsibility of every business to care for its employees during this time of uncertainty, shared sacrifice, and common cause. I hope to see many business leaders across this country doing all they can to retain jobs, pay employees, continue benefits, and demonstrate compassion as they make critical decisions. Not every decision is a financial one” (Johnson, 2020).

*March 24, 2020*

This is day 1 of Washington's stay at home order.

*March 25, 2020*

Starbucks begins offering free drinks to frontline workers through May 3rd.

*March 31, 2020*

The United States has 189,624 reported cases, followed by Italy at 105,792. China has 82,294.

*April 1, 2020*

Starbucks extends catastrophe pay to May 1 and announces they are making thermometers available for all stores. "The Starbucks Foundation today announced it will donate more than \$3 million to support global COVID-19 relief efforts around the world, designed to partner with key organizations in order to ensure those who need the most help get it" (Johnson, 2020).

*April 8, 2020*

Starbucks announces they are trying to take care of Starbucks workers all over the world. "As part of Starbucks commitment to taking care of our partners when they need it most, Starbucks is contributing \$10 million to establish the new Starbucks Global Partner Emergency Relief Program for partners facing extreme hardship as a result of COVID-19" (Johnson, 2020).

*April 15, 2020*

Today in the U.S. there are 609,516 reported cases. China is at 83,351.

*April 16, 2020*

“Today, in a letter to Starbucks partners (employees), CEO Kevin Johnson outlined the company’s transition to a new phase of operations in the U.S., best described as “monitor and adapt,” based on experience in China during COVID-19. As was the case in China, Starbucks will gradually expand and shift the customer experiences enabled in stores based on a clear decision-making framework.” Starbucks says that some stores in the US will continue to be drive-thru only but some will start to do some mobile orders soon based on the timeline that occurred in China.

<https://www.devex.com/news/covid-19-a-timeline-of-the-coronavirus-outbreak-96396>

This is a really important graphic that we think everyone should see right now.



## Applying Leadership Theories, Models, or Concepts

### 1: Servant Leadership

Starbucks is utilizing servant leadership to help reduce the impact of the pandemic. Servant leadership is centered upon empathy, listening, and self-awareness. These three characteristics allow a servant leader to know what is going on around them and how they can use their innate abilities to help bring others up. According to the Leadership textbook, “[Servant leadership] begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*” (Northouse, 2019, p.228). The hope and motivation behind servant leadership comes from what it can manifest into. We think that this a central aspect of Starbucks’ leadership team and has helped contribute to their efficient response to the pandemic.

During the pandemic, Starbucks has done what they can to help their employees as well as their customers while adhering to CDC and state guidelines. While they had to shut down the lobbies of their stores, they were still open for business through the drive-thru or drive up delivery. They were understanding of employees who could not or did not want to work during these times and continued to pay them. Starbucks went even further to help serve their communities by providing free drinks to frontline workers. This shows the community that they care about the people helping to save lives and it emphasizes Starbucks' ability to empathize with those around them. Starbucks is doing a good job at listening to accurately assess the needs of those around them and has implemented well thought out plans on how they can use their power and influence to show that compliance and respect for the knowledge of others are extremely important right now.

## 2: Modeling the Way

Modeling the way is a style of leadership where one acts and leads in the way that they wish to be led. Choosing this style of leadership means one has clear values and is ready to share those values through setting an example. This style saves time and energy because a leader does not have to explain with words every single expectation. They simply use their daily actions to display how they want things done and how they want others around them to respond.

Starbucks is doing a wonderful job at modeling the way for other companies to follow. On January 28th, they made a statement to the world that they were taking this virus seriously and that they were going to do their part in stopping the spread. By shutting down their stores 16 days after the virus was officially named, they showed their commitment to science and a respect for those who have been studying their whole lives and know much more than the average citizens. They acknowledged that while this situation was not ideal for their profits, they are committed to doing what is best for everyone involved. They are trying to lend a hand in any way they can and they are coming up with creative ways to put a stop to this virus. Starbucks created their COVID-19 relief and encouraged other large corporations to do their part by donating to help frontline workers. They are committed to setting the best example for their employees and their customers as well as other companies.

### 3: Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership is all about doing what you can to help the greater good. From the perspective of Starbucks this quote from Kevin Johnson really sums up their ethical leadership approach, “It is the responsibility of every business to care for its employees during this time of uncertainty, shared sacrifice, and common cause. I hope to see many business leaders across this country doing all they can to retain jobs, pay employees, continue benefits, and demonstrate compassion as they make critical decisions. Not every decision is a financial one” (Johnson, 2020). This really highlights that Starbucks not only cares about their customers, but they want to emphasize that they are able to help out in any way that they can with their employees. This level of care showcases how the organization as a whole approaches leadership. They believe in the top down approach, that if you have a CEO that cares about bettering the world and hires people who share his mission, then that mission will be broadcasted down the line to their employees, suppliers, and customers.



The graphic above shows the requirements of a Starbucks supplier and how they just go that extra step to showcase their ethical business model. They require that their supplier be compliant with their standards as a company and they do a lot of research into how and where their coffee is grown.

We think a great example of this is the record breaking practice of Starbucks' customers paying it forward by buying the person behind them a drink. This practice is seen at thousands of store locations across the world, but the store with the longest record of this is a store in St. Petersburg, Florida where 457 customers paid it forward. In addition, when the outbreak started in China, Starbucks was quick to close its doors and completely shut down stores there in order to do their part in stopping the spread of the virus. China was supposed to account for 10% of their sales in Q1 and Starbucks missed out on a portion of that profit. Starbucks is displaying ethical leadership qualities by continuing to pay people even if they are not working and paying for other services like mental health care and child care during the crisis. They realize that if they can help serve the communities they are a part of, then everyone wins.

#### 4: Power

“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power” (Lincoln, 1841). Professor Tyran used this quote in a lecture and we think it does a wonderful job at explaining how power impacts humans. Power can change how someone acts in good ways and bad ways, but the impact of power on followers is profound. People in positions of power can use it to encourage their followers to do a variety of different things. We see this in many different areas such as government,



religion, cults, and corporations. Usually with power comes money, and this is where the bad things tend to happen. Because humans are naturally greedy, power can cause individuals to only want more power as they test the boundaries of that power. However, power and money can be used for good and we see that through nonprofits and mindful companies.

Starbucks is an excellent example of how to use power for good. They reach a large number of people every day and they use their consistency to bring people together. A customer in China is getting the same beverage and store experience as a person in the U.S. and that in itself is powerful. There are not many businesses that use their power to bring people together in that way. Starbucks uses their power and money to invest in the communities they reside in because they know that it is not only marketing themselves as aware, but it also shows that they care about all people not just the ones that attend their establishments. We see with the COVID-19 Relief Fund that they are using their power to encourage others in positions of power to join the fight. They took initiative and became leaders in this pandemic while using their power in a respectful and responsible way.

### 5: Authentic Leadership

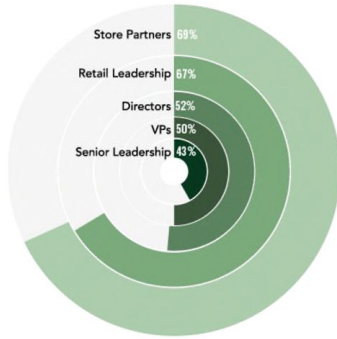
If someone leads in a way that comes naturally, then their leadership style is authentic. Leadership can be taught and practiced, however, authentic leadership is genuine. It is something that followers can feel is real and not rehearsed. Authentic leadership incorporates three different aspects: interpersonal perspective, interpersonal process, and developmental perspective. The interpersonal perspective is something that comes from

within a leader and draws on their experiences to allow them to lead based on things they believe to be right and wrong. The interpersonal process focuses on the interactions of leaders and followers. The third aspect of developmental processes highlights that people were not born to be leaders, but through their experiences they are learning an authentic style of leading.

If you have ever heard Kevin Johnson speak, you can clearly tell he is an authentic leader. He speaks in a way that clarifies his vision and shows that he just cannot think any other way. He cares about his company and his employees and he cares about how his company makes people feel. Starbucks does a great job of making people feel cared for and that they are important. A great example of this is their policy that states if you do not like your drink, you can tell an employee and they will make you something you like free of charge. This encourages people to step outside their comfort zone and try something new while knowing that Starbucks has their back. It also shows the organization's commitment to doing the right thing. The company is known for their compassion and empathy and incorporating those characteristics into their business model highlights Johnson's authenticity. The graphic below shows how committed Starbucks is to changing the way that business is run. They emphasize women in leadership as well as promote diversity from within their company. We also see here their commitment to authenticity through transparency. This is a core value of Starbucks and it sets them apart from other corporations.

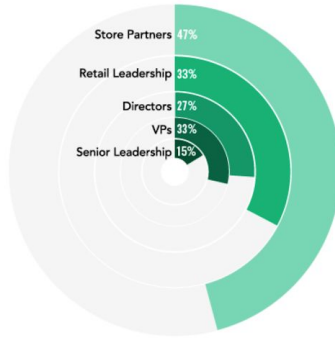
## Our Current Environment

### Female Representation



68% of our U.S. partners (employees) are women. Of our vice presidents (VPs), 50% are women. Of our senior leaders, 43% are women.

### Minority Representation



46% of our U.S. partners are people of color. Of our vice presidents (VPs), 33% are people of color. Of our senior leaders, 15% are people of color.

### Pay Equity



Starbucks has achieved 100% pay equity for women and men and people of all races performing similar work in the United States. In 2019 the median pay for women globally is 98.3% of the median for men. In the U.S., the median pay ratio is 100% for women and 100% for people of color.

## Recommendations

### Recommendation #1

We love that Starbucks was offering free coffee to the frontline workers in the U.S. This is a great way to boost morale and give thanks to those who are doing the hardest of jobs right now. We think that Starbucks should continue to offer free drinks to frontline workers for the rest of the year. This will show their commitment to science and acknowledgement that this pandemic is not going to be over anytime soon. We think this use of power will have a strong impact on the general public as they continue to recognize the efforts of those on the frontline. As the U.S. is slowly relaxing their response to the pandemic, it is more important than ever to think of the nurses and doctors that have been seeing the crippling effects of this virus first hand and let them know that we appreciate what they are doing.

### Recommendation #2

In addition to continuing to recognize the efforts of the frontline workers, we think that Starbucks should continue doing drive thru and delivery options only until the CDC says it is safe for them to re-open. They are currently following state guidelines when it comes to re-opening, however, we think that a good use of their power will be to show people they are committed to the cause. While people are beginning to return to normal life, a second wave of the virus is coming. The U.S. is currently not containing the virus and by taking a stand for the frontline workers, we think Starbucks should continue leading the socially responsible movement of continuing to close their cafes and only take drive thru

or orders through the app. We also think that they should continue to have the increased health precautions until the end of the year.



## Conclusion

Starbucks has promoted safe actions and principles through their statements already. We hope they continue to act as leaders in the corporate world and continue to make the right decision in terms of human lives. Starbucks is a great organization to work for and they truly care about the success of their employees. As a customer, we leave feeling caffeinated and satisfied knowing that Starbucks will always be there for us.

### **Allie's Reflection:**

Going into this project, I already felt like I had a lot of knowledge about Starbucks since I work for them. After researching the company more in depth, I learned a lot about the behind the scenes structure of Starbucks, which will lead me forward into how I want to run my own business in the future. Starbucks puts their employees and customers before anything else, and this leads to profits because people want to work for and buy from a place that puts their personal health before anything else. It has been evident from Starbucks' reaction to the pandemic that this is more clear than ever. I am happy to look up to Starbucks as a leader in coffee shops and food service suppliers everywhere, and I hope that I can model my business in the future off of their leadership strategies and mission statement.

### **Kira's Reflection:**

When I was beginning to do research on Starbucks, my personal opinions of them were clouding my judgment of the company. I learned that their business strategy is vastly different from other corporations and while I wish that they did not produce millions of single use cups every day, I realize that their commitment to other sustainable business

practices is admirable. The diversity of their leadership and the number of women in leadership positions really struck me. It helped me better understand their authenticity and servant leadership. They want to help as many groups as they can and they do that by being leaders in not only their industry, but for other corporations to look up to as well. I am very pleased with the way Starbucks has carried themselves during this pandemic and I hope they continue to be leaders through and through.



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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Project Contracts

Allie:

Student Project Contract for Research Paper

Leadership Practicum – MGMT 414 Spring 2020

Student Names: Allie Bowe and Kira Comfort

Student emails: bowa@wwu.edu and comfork4@wwu.edu

Organization student will study: Starbucks

Client Contacts and information:

Racheal. (Allie will contact her when needed), 425-449-0079

Scott (Kira will contact him when needed), 719-229-3735

Course Learning Objectives that apply to this project:

- To have an effective experience practicing leadership, management and facilitation.
- To improve writing skills related to leading and managing in organizations.
- To effectively use course concepts and terms to diagnose leadership and to diagnose and improve your own leadership experience.
- To develop and practice skills necessary for effectively leading teams and projects.
- To understand the implications of diversity and ethics on leadership in organizations.
- To develop written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills as a leader.
- To practice professionalism in a business context.

Student's *Individual learning objectives* in addition to course learning objectives:

I hope to learn about leadership styles that I can one day apply to my own business. I also hope to learn about the pandemic and how it is effecting a big chain, as well as applying what I learn to how to prepare crisis management for myself and my business in the future. I want to learn professional business report writing skills and memo writing skills as well as a comprehension of how to research a company's strategies and policies surrounding emergencies like the pandemic.

A brief description of the focus areas of the project:

The project is focusing on how Starbucks leads their employees through their mission, rules and leadership hierarchy. It also focuses on how they have responded to the COVID-19 crisis, and how their company has responded, changed and will change in the future because of it.

Specific Tasks Required for the project:

- Research and summarize (executive summary) the organization, the leadership structure and the crisis management planning.

- Make a timeline detailing everything that the company has gone through with the pandemic, and how it impacts HR, Sales, marketing, financials, production, operations, strategy, customer relationships, employee relationships etc.
- Speak with Racheal, my contact at Starbucks, about her experience with being trained as a leader in the corporation as well as Starbucks' response during the pandemic.

Specifically working on project learning objectives 1-4

- Organization Background:
  - Since I work at Starbucks, I know from personal experience what their mission/strategy and customer relationship looks like, but I want to learn why they have it structured the way they do. Starbucks is very specific and deliberate in everything they do, from interacting with customers, to measuring their drinks perfectly, but the reason they do the things they do escapes me. I hope to learn more about the background of where their mission and everything comes from, starting at the first Starbucks in Pike's place.
- Leadership Structure
  - The leadership structure at the Starbucks I work at is all over the place, and confusing at times. This could be because my location is inside Swedish hospital, so I want to do research and learn about how the corporate leadership structure compares to the Swedish one. I also want to know the reasoning behind the hierarchy, and how promotion works in corporate locations.
- Crisis Management planning
  - I have no experience with any Starbucks crisis management planning, and I have no idea if one exists, so I hope to learn if they have planning for that sort of stuff, and if it is specific to location or not. For example, do Starbucks locations in California have different crisis planning than a location in Amsterdam, or is it all similar?
- Pandemic Experience
  - Starbucks has been shut down for the most part with the pandemic, but all drive thrus are still open. They have been doing major social media marketing and outreach to customers, but I want to learn about the whole background behind why they are choosing to stay open and what has been the decision making process for everything done during the pandemic.

Kira will be working on other tasks to fulfill the requirements of the project.

I agree to fulfill my role as outlined in this document. I understand that the overall objective of this project is to accomplish the learning objectives outlined above.

Allison Bowe

Student Signature

Kira:

**Student Project Contract for Research Paper  
Leadership Practicum – MGMT 414  
Spring 2020**

Student Name: Kira Comfort    Student e-mail: comfork4@wwu.edu  
Organization student will study: Starbucks  
Client Contacts for information: Scott Comfort  
Client Contact e-mail & Phone #: [scotty.comfort@gmail.com](mailto:scotty.comfort@gmail.com); 719-229-3735

Course Learning Objectives that apply to this project:

- To have an effective experience practicing leadership, management and facilitation.
- To improve writing skills related to leading and managing in organizations.
- To effectively use course concepts and terms to diagnose leadership and to diagnose and improve your own leadership experience.
- To develop and practice skills necessary for effectively leading teams and projects.
- To understand the implications of diversity and ethics on leadership in organizations.
- To develop written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills as a leader.
- To practice professionalism in a business context.

**Student's *Individual learning objectives* in addition to course learning objectives:**

I want to learn how Starbucks is helping the crisis because they are considered an essential business. This experience is tough on everyone so I want to how Starbucks is helping people while remaining safe and healthy. I want to learn how Starbucks is using their leadership teams to come up with solutions to this problem. I want to use leadership theories and concepts from class to analyze their current response. I want to be able to understand how their approach is effectively moderating the situation and how their work is making an impact. I want to see based on what the organization has been doing, what they can continue to do or do better in the future. As the pandemic continues and hopefully comes to an end soon, how will they return to business as usual. I hope to encourage them to maintain an open mindset as they navigate through this pandemic and its aftermath.

**A brief description of the focus areas of the project:**

I will be focusing on how Starbucks is dealing with the pandemic as well as a timeline of events that have took place from Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>. I will then dive into how their leadership strategies and teams are helping mitigate the issues from the top down. I will follow up with some recommendations we have for Starbucks after learning more about the organization and the current situation.

**Specific Tasks Required for the project:**

- Go to a Starbucks and talk to employees in the drive thru about their experience during the pandemic
- Research how the decision was made to deem businesses essential
- Research what Starbucks has done differently since Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>
- Write and review
- Research how the economy is doing and predict how it will continue
- Make recommendations based on all the information collect on how Starbucks should continue business

Each party of this contract should retain a copy of this contract



I agree to fulfill my role as outlined in this document. I understand that the overall objective of this project is to accomplish the learning objectives outlined above.

Kira Comfort

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**Student Signature**

**Client Signature (optional)**

*Note: By signing this contract, clients are agreeing to evaluate the quality of the student's project work.*

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**Instructor Signature**

## Appendix B: Project Plans

Allie:

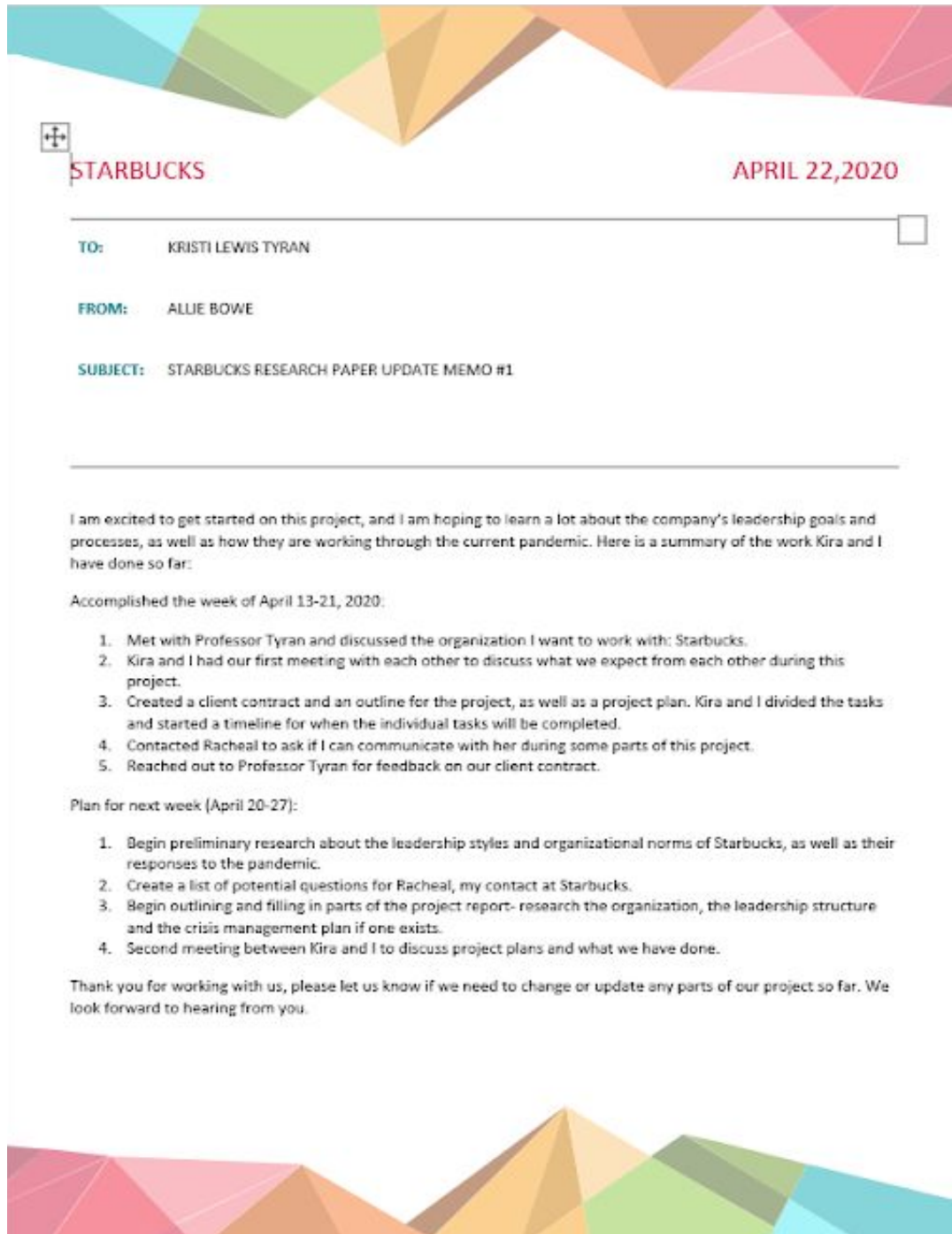
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Week 2</b>
4/22/20 Research: -Organization -Leadership structure and trainings -Crisis Management plans	4/29/20 Begin timeline of pandemic and it's effects on the company (January 1st to April 15th)
4/24/20 Reach out to Racheal, create a document with potential questions for her	5/1/20 Write separate paragraphs for how this effects each department
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Week 4</b>
5/6/20 Begin writing organization back-ground section	5/13/20 Write leadership structure section of the paper
5/7/20 Check in with Kira	5/15/20 Write the crisis mgmt planning portion of the doc
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Week 6</b>
5/20/20 Edit the document	5/27/20 Write Pandemic experience section, insert diagrams and timeline, etc.
5/20/20 Draft of portfolio due	5/29/20 Contact Racheal with follow up questions
5/20/20 Do more research	
5/22/20 Finalize pandemic timeline	<b>Week 8</b>
	6/10/20 Edit and turn in the final report
<b>Week 7</b>	
6/4/20 Find charts and graphics for my section of the paper	
6/6/20 Finalize writing executive summary and background	

**Kira:**

<b>Timeline:</b>	<b>Week 1 (April 20-27)</b>			
	-Research how Starbucks is addressing the pandemic			
	-Research how prepared they were			
	-Go to a Starbucks and talk to employees			
	<b>Week 2 (April 27-May 3)</b>			
	-Research where the pandemic is at			
	-Check in with Allie and talk about our collective research so far			
	<b>Week 3 (May 4-May 10)</b>			
	-Contact Scott with questions about Starbucks and their leadership			
	<b>Week 4 (May 11-May 17)</b>			
	-Write Leadership theories section using concepts learned in class			
	<b>Week 5 (May 18-May 24)</b>			
	-Create a timeline with Allie to show pandemic progress (Jan. 1st- April 15th)			
	<b>Week 6 (May 25-May 31)</b>			
	-Write about the pandemic experience			
	<b>Week 7 (June 1-June 7)</b>			
	-Write executive summary together			
	<b>Week 8 (June 8-June 12)</b>			
	-Make recommendations			
	-Add graphics			
	-Formatting			
	-Final edits			

## Appendix C: Copies of all Project Update Memos

Allie:







STARBUCKS

APRIL 27, 2020

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**TO:** KRISTI LEWIS TYRAN  
**CC:** KIRA COMFORT  
**FROM:** ALLIE BOWE  
**SUBJECT:** STARBUCKS RESEARCH PAPER UPDATE MEMO APRIL 27

---

I feel like I have already learned a lot about the company and am surprised by some of the things I have found. I am excited to continue to learn more and really dive into the details of Starbucks's crisis management plans and the timeline of what has occurred for all of their locations around the world where COVID-19 has hit.


Accomplished the week of April 20-27, 2020:

1. Began preliminary research about the leadership styles and organizational norms of Starbucks, as well as their responses to crises in the past and the current pandemic.
2. Contacted a couple people from the Starbucks I work at, Haley responded that she has been trained as a lead and can help answer and questions I might have.
3. Began outlining and filling in parts of the project report.
4. Had another meeting between Kira and I to discuss project plans and what we have done.

Plan for next week (April 27-May 3, 2020):

1. Create a timeline of what has been happening with the pandemic and how it has affected Starbucks around the world (January 1<sup>st</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>)
2. Write separate paragraphs for how the pandemic is impacting each department (HR, Marketing, etc.)
3. Continue adding to research and bibliography documents as well as the final report outline.
4. Another meeting with Kira to discuss progress and next steps, as well as compare the work we have done so far.

Thank you for working with us, please let us know if we need to change or update any parts of our project so far. We look forward to hearing from you.





STARBUCKS

MAY 3, 2020

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**TO:** KRISTI LEWIS TYRAN  
**CC:** KIRA COMFORT  
**FROM:** ALLIE BOWE  
**SUBJECT:** STARBUCKS RESEARCH PAPER UPDATE MEMO MAY 3RD

---

I have done a good amount of research so far and have learned a lot about the efforts from Starbucks to take care of their employees and customers during this outbreak. I have found that it is important to get primary evidence from Starbucks but to also look at other sources that are reporting on how Starbucks is doing to get the full objective story.

Accomplished the week of April 27-May 3, 2020:

1. Created a timeline of what has been happening with the pandemic and how it has affected Starbucks around the world. This timeline is from January-April 2020, but mostly about March and April since these are the months that impacted the U.S the most and that has the most written about it.
2. Began writing separate paragraphs for how the pandemic is impacting each department (HR, Marketing, etc.)
3. Scheduled another meeting with Kira

Plan for next week (May 4-May 10, 2020):

1. Check in with Kira
2. Finish writing separate paragraphs for how the pandemic is impacting each department (HR, Marketing, etc.)
3. Continue adding to research and bibliography documents as well as the final report outline.
4. Begin writing the *organization background* section of the report.
5. Check-in with Kira via Zoom.

Thank you for your time, let me know if you have any questions or comments.





STARBUCKS

MAY 11, 2020

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TO: KRISTI LEWIS TYRAN

CC: KIRA COMFORT

FROM: ALLIE BOWE

SUBJECT: STARBUCKS RESEARCH PAPER UPDATE MEMO MAY 11TH

---

This week I focused on adding to the paper that we are going to turn in as our final deliverable. I will continue to do this during this next week, and I am hoping to check in more with Kira to make sure we are both on schedule and don't need anything from each other.

Accomplished the week of May 4-May 10, 2020:

1. Wrote bullet points about how the pandemic is impacting each department of Starbucks (HR, Marketing, etc.)
2. Wrote the executive summary part of the report.
3. Checked in with Kira
4. Created E-Portfolio

Plan for next week (May 4-May 10, 2020):

1. Check in with Kira
2. Write leadership structure section of the paper
3. Write the crisis management planning portion of the document
4. Continue to add to the E-Portfolio

Thank you for your time, let me know if you have any questions or comments.



STARBUCKS

MAY 18,2020

---

**TO:** KRISTI LEWIS TYRAN  
**CC:** KIRA COMFORT  
**FROM:** ALLIE BOWE  
**SUBJECT:** STARBUCKS RESEARCH PAPER UPDATE MEMO MAY 18TH

---

This week Kira and I have accomplished a lot of the bulk work of the paper. We now need feedback and editing before we add more graphics and make it look nicer so we can turn it in.

Accomplished the week of May 11-May 17, 2020:

1. Added to the research paper in paragraph form all of the research that I have done.
2. Finished writing paragraphs for each department pandemic impact.
3. Checked in with Kira and made a plan for finishing the project.

Plan for next week (May 18 -May 24, 2020):

1. Finish the research paper completely (add graphics etc.)
2. Edit the entire paper, and have Kira do the same.
3. Turn paper into professor Tyran as a draft for edits.
4. Do the edits recommended and add anything else we need.

Thank you for your time, let me know if you have any questions or comments.





STARBUCKS

MAY 25, 2020

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**TO:** KRISTI LEWIS TYRAN  
**CC:** KIRA COMFORT  
**FROM:** ALLIE BOWE  
**SUBJECT:** STARBUCKS RESEARCH PAPER UPDATE MEMO MAY 25TH

---

This week we continued to add to the paper, and we are close to feeling ready to turn it in for edits. There is a lot in the paper, so we wanted to edit it once more before asking for edits from peers and the professor.


Accomplished the week of May 18-May 24, 2020:

1. Finished the research paper, started to add graphics.
2. Began editing the paper.
3. Checked in with Kira, made a plan to turn the paper into professor Tyran for edits when we are comfortable with the work we did.

Plan for next week (May 25 -May 31, 2020):

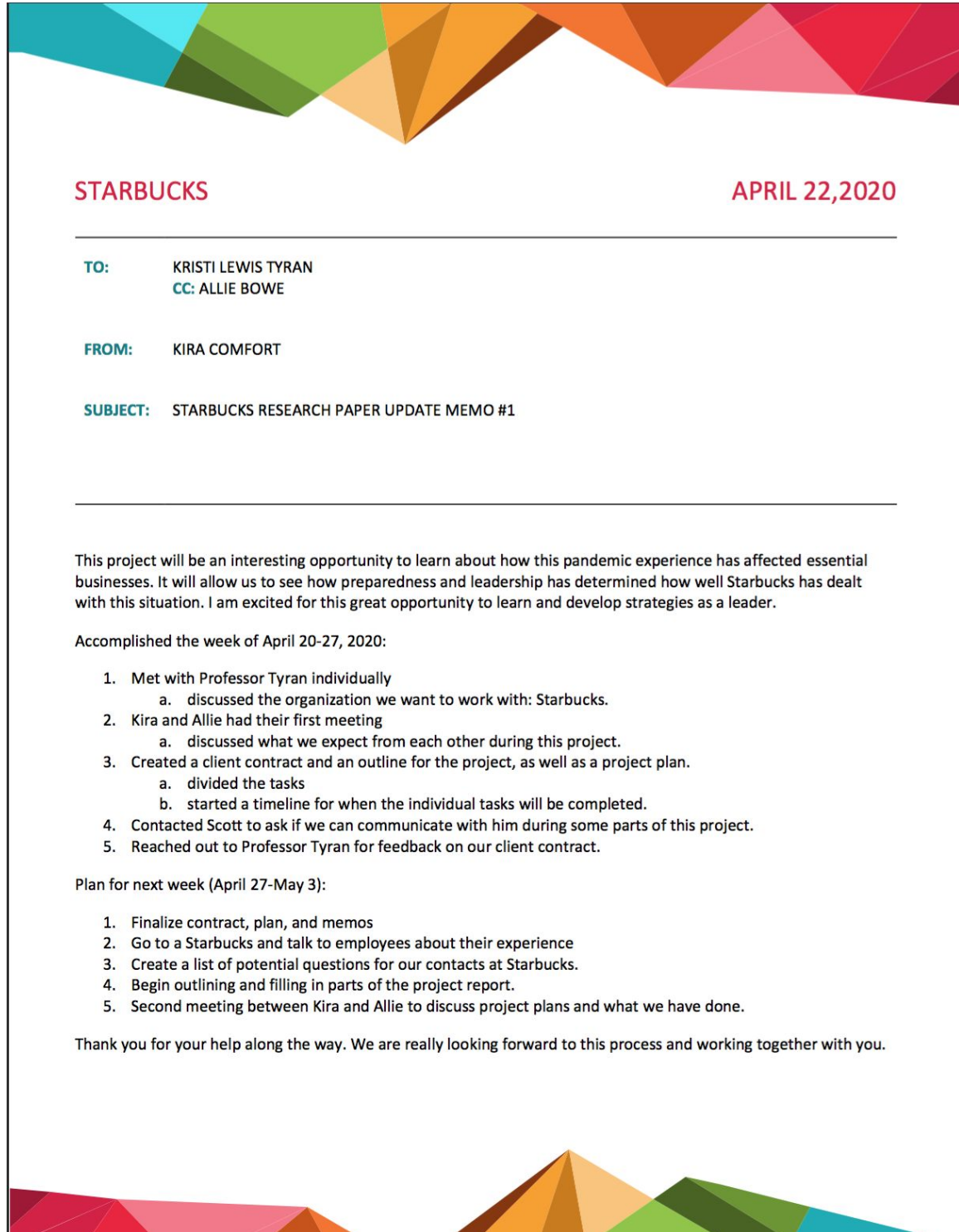
1. Edit the paper again, triple check for any issues.
2. Turn paper into professor Tyran as a draft for edits.
3. Do the edits recommended and add anything else we need.
4. Turn in final draft!

Thank you for your time, let me know if you have any questions or comments.





**Kira:**



**STARBUCKS**

**APRIL 22, 2020**

---

**TO:** KRISTI LEWIS TYRAN  
**CC:** ALLIE BOWE

**FROM:** KIRA COMFORT

**SUBJECT:** STARBUCKS RESEARCH PAPER UPDATE MEMO #1

---

This project will be an interesting opportunity to learn about how this pandemic experience has affected essential businesses. It will allow us to see how preparedness and leadership has determined how well Starbucks has dealt with this situation. I am excited for this great opportunity to learn and develop strategies as a leader.

Accomplished the week of April 20-27, 2020:

1. Met with Professor Tyran individually
  - a. discussed the organization we want to work with: Starbucks.
2. Kira and Allie had their first meeting
  - a. discussed what we expect from each other during this project.
3. Created a client contract and an outline for the project, as well as a project plan.
  - a. divided the tasks
  - b. started a timeline for when the individual tasks will be completed.
4. Contacted Scott to ask if we can communicate with him during some parts of this project.
5. Reached out to Professor Tyran for feedback on our client contract.

Plan for next week (April 27-May 3):

1. Finalize contract, plan, and memos
2. Go to a Starbucks and talk to employees about their experience
3. Create a list of potential questions for our contacts at Starbucks.
4. Begin outlining and filling in parts of the project report.
5. Second meeting between Kira and Allie to discuss project plans and what we have done.

Thank you for your help along the way. We are really looking forward to this process and working together with you.





STARBUCKS

MAY 4, 2020

---

**TO:** KRISTI LEWIS TYRAN  
**CC:** Allie Bowe

**FROM:** KIRA COMFORT

**SUBJECT:** STARBUCKS RESEARCH PAPER UPDATE MEMO #2

---

This project is starting to take shape and it is becoming easier to fully understand our scope. After this week, we should have some great clarity regarding our specific tasks on how to complete the project effectively and efficiently.


Accomplished the week of April 27-May 3, 2020:

1. Went to various coffee shops, including Starbucks, Dutch Bros, and Auto Mokka to see how demand has been affected
  - a. discussed with employees how the pandemic is affecting business
2. Created research questions
3. Scheduled meetings with Scott and Allie to discuss research
4. Outlined project paper
5. Began research on the pandemic for the timeline

Plan for next week (May 4-10):

1. Meet with Scott and Allie
2. Research answers to research questions
3. Begin outline for timeline of the pandemic

Thank you for your help along the way. Let us know if you have any comments or questions.





STARBUCKS

MAY 11, 2020

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**TO:** KRISTI LEWIS TYRAN  
**CC:** Allie Bowe

**FROM:** KIRA COMFORT

**SUBJECT:** STARBUCKS RESEARCH PAPER UPDATE MEMO #3

---

As the project and pandemic progress, we are learning more about how this situation is going to affect businesses and how by having an emergency plan in place already, a company can continue to navigate this pandemic effectively.


Accomplished the week of May 4-May 10, 2020:

1. Met with Scott
  - a. Talked about:
    - i. Starbucks' leadership strategies and formation
    - ii. Emergency preparedness
    - iii. Probable solutions to the current situation
2. Collaborated with Allie on the Pandemic Timeline
3. Answered research questions

Plan for next week (May 11-17):

1. Begin writing for the Leadership Theories and Practices section
  - a. Use resources like the books, lectures, and interview answers to assist
  - b. Ask questions if unsure about a theory or concept
2. Finish up Pandemic Response section

Thank you for your help along the way. Let us know if you have any comments or questions.









STARBUCKS

MAY 18, 2020

---

**TO:** KRISTI LEWIS TYRAN  
**CC:** Allie Bowe

**FROM:** KIRA COMFORT

**SUBJECT:** STARBUCKS RESEARCH PAPER UPDATE MEMO #4

---

After completing the Pandemic Timeline and overview, we are getting a better sense of how Starbucks is using their leadership and power to influence other businesses.


Accomplished the week of May 11-May 17, 2020:

1. Finished and edited the Pandemic Timeline
2. Wrote the Pandemic Overview section
3. Finished Leadership Theories sections

Plan for next week (May 18-24):

1. Begin future recommendations sections
2. Edit Allie's sections

Thank you for your help along the way. Let us know if you have any comments or questions.





STARBUCKS

MAY 25, 2020

---

**TO:** KRISTI LEWIS TYRAN  
**CC:** Allie Bowe

**FROM:** KIRA COMFORT

**SUBJECT:** STARBUCKS RESEARCH PAPER UPDATE MEMO #5

---

We now have a comprehensive knowledge about Starbucks and the ways they were prepared and actions they took to do their part. We will tie up some loose ends and finish our project on time.


Accomplished the week of May 18-May 24, 2020:

1. Finished future recommendation section
2. Edited Allie's work

Plan for next week (May 25-31):

1. Finish Executive Summary
2. Finish Conclusion
3. Add graphics
4. Edit entire document with Allie

Thank you for your help along the way. Let us know if you have any comments or questions.



## Appendix D: Log of Interactions with Contact(s)

May 15, 2020

Kira contacted Scott Comfort, a former team lead at Starbucks.

Questions asked:

- How do they train managers?
  - manuals (outlines expectations)
  - hands on training: how to handle returns and money things with POS
- What leadership traits does someone need to possess to be a manager?
  - socially dictated
  - combo of interaction of other employees and customers
  - consistency in work
  - quaza expectations (on top of it)
  - interview well
  - corporate perspective (individual response first: closing patios, then drive thru only, cycle back to letting people in)
- Did the organization have a plan in place before it was deemed an essential business?
  - They reacted as the situation progressed



Photograph above: This is a screenshot from Kira's FaceTime conversation with her brother Scott Comfort (he was told to smile and this is what we got).

### **Appendix E: Thank You Note(s)**

Kira would like to thank her brother Scott Comfort for taking the time out of his busy schedule to meet with her and answer her research questions.

Kira and Allie would like to thank their peer editors as well as Professor Tyran for providing feedback and enhancing their final product.