



February 8, 2007

## **An open letter to Starbucks partners from Howard Schultz**

Dear partners,

Over the last several weeks, there have been an exceptional number of comments about Starbucks in the media and online, many of which have not been positive. At times, partners have asked about my feelings when Starbucks is criticized. Given the tone of the coverage recently, I wanted to reach out to you and share my thoughts.

I don't feel the need to address these issues specifically. We've done that previously and that's not my primary concern. My focus is on you – the partners who have made Starbucks such a trusted presence around the world. And my focus is on preserving the trust that we have built with our customers and each other over the years. I want you to know that you can be proud of the company we all work for and that you can continue to trust the foundation it's built upon.

Starbucks isn't perfect; we make mistakes. No individual or company gets everything right all of the time. But I want to assure you that we're committed to living by our values and our Guiding Principles. They provide the framework for each and every decision we make as a leadership team. You have my personal commitment that as Starbucks grows we will continue to embrace our values. Our success and future growth will not dilute our commitment to the Mission Statement.

Like many of you, I feel it personally when misperceptions about our company or our intent are circulated. We must understand that with success comes criticism be it from media, activists or concerned customers. In fact, we have to welcome that discussion for the essential role it plays in society. But we don't have to let it get us down.

Each and every day, you create something special in the world. You create a place where people feel comfortable and welcome. A place that cherishes quality and puts the highest value on people and their contributions to everything from growing the finest coffee to providing benefits for partners.

Please know that I am deeply grateful for all that you do, and all that we have built together. Our journey began in 1971 with a single store in the Pike Place Market in Seattle, and today we touch millions of lives around the globe.

The story of Starbucks is about leading with our hearts and nurturing the soul. We're in the early chapters of that story, and the best is truly yet to come.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Howard".

Howard Schultz  
chairman