The Sponsorship Packet

The Pass HQ Kitchen Leadership Program · v1.1 · November 2026
The Kitchen Leadership Program levels up a cook or sous chef's training so they are ready, armed and prepared, to grow into a bigger role with more responsibility. It also gives a property or chef a clear way to develop a candidate they believe can grow: six months, twelve units, on real work, with the chef in the room.
Free. Ungated. Download it, fill it out, use it.
Four parts: The Ask (you write it) · What It's Worth (you write it) · Sponsor Goals (your chef or GM writes it) · The Commitment Conversation (you have it together). Plus a one-page version for a chef who reads one thing.

Before you start

What this packet is for

You want to learn how your kitchen really runs: how plates get costed, how ordering and receiving work, how the schedule and labor fit, how the numbers your kitchen is measured on are read, so you can support your chef better and be ready when a bigger role opens. This packet helps you ask for that support in a way your chef and GM can say yes to.
It is not a pitch to fix anything. Your chef runs the kitchen. You are asking to learn it from the inside and take more off their plate as you do.

Most people don't pay for this themselves

Properties have training budgets. Most are underspent, and most of what does get spent goes to conferences that produce a tote bag and a hangover. What almost never happens is someone asking for a specific thing, with a number attached, and a reason the kitchen benefits. That's what this packet is.

How to frame it

Do not walk in asking for training. That's a favor, and favors get deferred.
Walk in asking to learn the job and do the job before you get the job. That's an offer, and it puts something on the table: a more useful person on the line, starting now.

One rule before you do anything else

Your chef sees this before your GM does. Always. If your chef is the sponsor, that's automatic. If your GM controls the budget, you still start with your chef: bring them the packet, ask for their support, and go up together or let them take it up for you. Going around your chef for development money reads as an angle for their job, whether you meant it or not.

The honest part

Writing this is uncomfortable. You're asking your employer to spend money on you, and a no stings. Two things worth knowing: a no is usually about timing or budget, not about you. Ask when the next budget cycle opens. And you can start on your own: Self-Study is the same curriculum on the teaching set, with no one's permission needed. See "If the answer is no."

What it costs

	Self-Study	Sponsored	Guided
Price	$97 a month for six months, or $549 paid up front	$1,495	$4,995
Full curriculum, worksheets, Lever Inventory, The Food Cost Formula System	✓	✓	✓
Weekly Schedule & Labor Planner (two versions)	✓	✓	✓
You work on	The teaching set (a fictitious club)	Your own property	Your own property
Sessions with your chef or GM, 12 × 30 min, every other week	N/A	✓	✓
Capstone	An exercise, self-scored	Real, chef-signed, goes to your GM	Same, plus reviewed by Chef Lockard
Development Plan call with Chef Lockard (30 min)	Not included	Not included	✓
Progress Check (30 min)	Not included	Not included	✓
Capstone and Next-Role Plan with Chef Lockard (30 min + written notes)	Not included	Not included	✓
Program length	6 months	6 months	6 months
How you get it	Buy	Buy	Buy

Six months is set by study time: about an hour a day, five days a week.
Ask for the one you can actually get. A property that will fund $1,495 and not $4,995 is still a property that will fund you. Sponsored is the same curriculum and the same capstone.
Guided: Sponsored, plus me.
Your chef or GM runs the 12 sessions on their schedule. I'm in the candidate's corner for the whole six months. Three calls with me: a Development Plan at the start, a Progress Check at the midpoint, and a Capstone and Next-Role Plan at the end. Written notes after the Progress Check and the Capstone, shared with the sponsor. Between calls, direct access to me by email on the work and on where your career goes next. No sponsor yet? Start with Self-Study. If you pay up front, your $549 counts toward Guided within 30 days. Guided seats are limited.

When The Pass HQ Chef's Office opens, your sponsor gets 2 months included (Guided: 6 months). You earn 2 months yourself, with your certificate, when you finish the program and pass the completion quiz. The Kit credits toward the System. The System credits toward any program. Both within 30 days of purchase. Say so in your ask. It lowers the number.

Paying for it

- If your property pays, your chef or GM buys it at checkout and names you as the learner. Paid in full by card; the receipt goes to whoever pays.
- If you pay and get reimbursed, forward your Gumroad receipt to accounts payable.
- Reimbursement is not sponsorship. A property that pays for Self-Study has reimbursed a purchase. Sponsorship means your chef or GM is in the room thirty minutes every other week and signs your capstone. Make sure everyone knows which one they're agreeing to.
- Ask your employer whether this qualifies under their educational assistance plan.

If your chef wants to develop more than one person

- Sponsor a team: $1,495 for the first seat, $997 for every seat after, now or later. Each learner gets their own seat, materials and welcome, and owns their own work.
- Your chef or GM chooses who sponsors each learner. We recommend no more than six learners per sponsor.
- A cook and a sous can build the same event for their capstones, the sous costs and staffs it, the cook plans the prep and the line.
- Building a program for the whole property? thepasshq.com/inquire

The thing your GM will worry about and won't say out loud

No property financial data is submitted, uploaded, or stored. All coursework is completed on your own documents, on your property's own systems. Neither the platform nor the instructor sees your P&L, invoices, or vendor pricing. There is nowhere in this program to put that information, by design. The Guided Capstone and Next-Role Plan call uses an indexed or method-only version, no property names, vendor names, or contracted prices, and your chef approves it before it goes anywhere. Put this in front of them early. It's the first objection and nobody ever says it.

Part 1: The Ask

One page. Hard cap. If it runs to two, you haven't finished thinking.
This is the first time most cooks put an ask in writing with a number on it. That's not a side effect. It's the first lesson in the program, and it starts before you've paid for it.

Section A: Where I want to grow

Name the part of the job you want to learn from the inside. One thing, not five. Frame it as what you want to understand and be able to carry, not as something wrong with the kitchen.
Weak: "I want to learn the financial side."
Strong: "I want to understand how our food cost number gets built each period, so when Chef is working the number I can pull the pieces together instead of waiting to be told."
Mine: _____

Section B: What I can't do today

Name the gap honestly. This is the part that makes the rest credible. A chef reading a list of comfortable weaknesses knows exactly what you did.
Weak: "I could learn more about the business side."
Strong: "I can't build a food cost number from inventory and purchases. I've never read our P&L. I've never built a schedule against a labor target."
My gaps. Three, honestly:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Section C: What I'd be able to take off Chef's plate in six months

Concrete and observable. Not "understand the business better."

- Explain our food cost movement between two periods, out loud, without notes
- Read our departmental P&L and say which lines are the kitchen's
- Draft a week's schedule to the labor target for Chef to review before it's posted
- Cost an event before we cook it, and reconcile it the day after
- Write up a request for something the kitchen needs, in dollars, for Chef to take forward

Mine: _____

Section D: What the property keeps at the end

Two things. First, Your Operating Plan, a one-page plan for this kitchen, built one unit at a time. Second, a capstone on something this property actually needs, chosen by Chef: costing our recipes, building an upcoming event, or building an event all the way through, food cost, order, prep, and the labor schedule, then checking it against what actually happened. Three pages of analysis with it: the number, the three biggest drivers, and five recommendations with dollar estimates.
I build it with Chef, and Chef decides what goes in it before it goes anywhere. That work exists whether or not anything changes for me. It's work the property keeps.

Section E: What I'm asking for

All four. Don't leave one out and hope.

Item	The ask
The fee	$_____ (Sponsored $1,495 / Guided $4,995)
The time	30 minutes every other week with my chef or GM, 12 sessions over six months. My study is on my own time, outside scheduled hours.
Access	Permission to see what the work needs, our departmental statement, closed-period numbers, invoices, at whatever level Chef is comfortable with. Where that's not possible, I'll run that unit on the teaching set.
The conversation	A conversation at the end about what this means for my role. Not a promise, a conversation.

Section F: The close

Two sentences. Your own words. The shape that works:
I'm not asking for a course. I'm asking to learn the job and do the job before I get the job, and to be more useful to you either way.
Mine: _____

Part 2: What it's worth to the property

One rule: no number you didn't pull from your own property. Industry averages read as filler and a GM knows it on sight. If you don't have the number, write "I don't have this". That's more credible than an estimate you can't source.

The cost

Item	Amount
Program fee (less any upgrade credit)	$_____
Sponsor time, 12 × 30 min	6 hours over six months
My study time	My own, outside scheduled hours
Total cash outlay	**$_____**

The return: pick two or three, not all of them

A focused case beats a comprehensive one. Every anchor below is about bench depth and Chef's time, not about fixing a number that isn't yours.
Anchor 1: Chef's time back. Hours a week Chef spends on scheduling, costing, ordering and period close that a trained sous could draft: ____ hrs. What that time is worth to the property: $_____. What Chef would do with it: _____.
Anchor 2: Turnover avoided. Cost to replace me, recruiting, training, the months at reduced output: $_____. Say the quiet part: people who see no path leave. That costs multiples of this program.
Anchor 3: Coverage. Days last year the kitchen ran without a second person who could cost an event, build a schedule or close a period: ____. What a bad week of coverage costs: $_____.
Anchor 4: Something specific to us. Our number: $_____. Why it matters here: _____.

The arithmetic

Line	Amount
Program cost	$_____
Conservative annual value (anchors above)	$_____
Pays for itself in	**_____ months**

One line that carries more weight than the math: a single conference for two people costs more than this and produces nothing the property keeps. Use it if it's true where you work. Most places, it is.

Part 3: Sponsor Goals

Your chef or GM fills this out. Not you. Hand it over blank. Then read what they wrote.
Why this matters more than it looks: at the end of the program, this same sheet comes back as the scoring rubric. Your sponsor grades the capstone against what they wrote here. Their words, their number, their verdict.
Candidate: _____ Sponsor: _____ Date: _____

1. What do you want this person doing in twelve months that they can't do now?
   _____
2. What's the one number you'd want to see move?
   _____
3. What have you already tried with this person that didn't take?
   _____
4. What would make you say this was a waste of money?
   _____
5. Are you prepared to promote or expand this role if they complete it? Not binding. But an honest answer is worth more than an encouraging one, to both of you.
   _____

Notes for the sponsor

This program exists for exactly one reason: to develop the person you believe can grow, on your terms, inside your kitchen. You pick the capstone. You keep the work.
Your answer to Question 1 picks the capstone. If you want this person running events without you, the capstone is an event built all the way through, food, order, prep, schedule, labor. If you want them owning costing, it's recipes or an event menu. If they're a cook stepping up, it's the prep build for an event.
Question 4 is the most useful on this sheet. Failure defined at the start is failure you can avoid. Question 5 matters more than it looks: the most likely bad outcome isn't a failed program. It's someone who completes it, nothing changes, and they leave. If there's no path right now, say so. They'd rather know in week one.
Some goals are out of scope. This program teaches how a kitchen runs on the numbers side and the judgment that goes with it. It does not fix attendance, attitude, or reliability.
Your time is capped. Each session takes 30 minutes, and preparing for it takes 20 minutes or less, a one-page guide per unit tells you what to look at. If you miss three sessions, the candidate can finish on their own; the capstone just won't carry your sign-off.
Give this to the candidate on day one. Half the value is them finally hearing, in plain words, what you actually want.

Part 4: The Commitment Conversation

Read this first: this is not a contract and it is not a template for one. It's a list of things worth agreeing on out loud before anyone spends money. The Pass HQ is not a party to any agreement between you and your employer. If either of you wants something in writing, that's between you, your employer, and your own advisors.

What the candidate is committing to

- Complete the curriculum within six months
- Come prepared to every session
- Produce the capstone

- Take everything to my chef first, never around them
- Treat everything I see as confidential to this property

What the sponsor is committing to

- The fee
- 30 minutes every other week, 12 sessions
- Access to what the work requires, the departmental statement, closed periods, invoices, and for an event capstone the event's menu, price, guarantee and a blended labor rate by position or the department labor %, never individual pay, at the level you're comfortable with
- A conversation at the end about what it means for the role

The access commitment is the one that gets skipped, and it's the one that stalls programs. A candidate who can't see an invoice can't do that unit on your numbers. Sort it now, not in month two.

Say out loud what you can't share

Some numbers may be above what your chef can hand over, and that's legitimate. Better said in week one than discovered in month three. Agree on what's available and work within it: every unit can run on the teaching set instead.

Two things to be careful about

The program is built for your own time, outside scheduled hours. If a property chooses to require it during work hours, how that time is paid is the employer's decision.
Repayment agreements. Some properties ask employees to repay training costs if they leave within a period. These are heavily regulated, vary by state, and some are unenforceable. The Pass HQ takes no position and provides no template. Both sides should have any such agreement reviewed by their own counsel.

If the answer is no

Ask two questions before you leave the room: "Is it the money or the timing?" If timing, ask when the next cycle opens and put it in your calendar. And: "What would I need to show you to make this an easy yes next time?"
Then keep moving. Self-Study is the same curriculum on the teaching set, $97 a month for six months, or $549 paid up front, no one's permission needed. Pay the $549 in full and it credits toward Sponsored within 30 days. Monthly payments earn no credit. Or start smaller: the $49 Plate Cost Kit or the $297 System, and come back in a few months having already done something on your own. That's a much better second conversation.

The one-page version

If your chef reads one thing, make it this.
What I'm asking for: $_____ and 30 minutes every other week for six months.
What it is: A six-month program on how a kitchen runs behind the line: plate costing, ordering and receiving, labor and the schedule, and reading the P&L. About an hour a day on my own, on our numbers. Every other week we meet for 30 minutes, both score the same questions, and talk about where we disagree. Your prep is 20 minutes or less.
Why: So I understand how our kitchen works and why we do things the way we do, can support you better and take more off your plate as I learn, and am ready for more responsibility when the time is right.
What you get: A one-page operating plan for our kitchen, and a capstone you choose, costing our recipes, building an upcoming event, or running an event all the way through including the labor schedule, with three pages of analysis and five recommendations in dollars. Built with you. You decide what's in it before it goes anywhere.

What it costs you: Six hours over six months, and access to the numbers the work needs, at the level you're comfortable with.
Our data stays here. Nothing is uploaded, submitted, or stored anywhere. There's nowhere in the program to put it.
What I'm not asking for: A promotion, a raise, or a promise. Just the chance to learn the job and do the job before I get the job, and to be more useful to you whether or not anything changes.
P.S. It's built for properties that want to develop someone they believe can grow.

Not legal advice. Any agreement between candidate and employer is theirs alone. Planning tools are educational and not payroll advice.