

GP HOSPITALITY PARTNERS

THE SUPERPOWER LUNCH GUIDE

The Ride or Die Leadership Circle · Tools & Resources Library

WHAT IS THE SUPERPOWER LUNCH?

The Superpower Lunch is a structured 45-60 minute one-on-one conversation you have with every new team member within their first two weeks. It is not a training session. It is not a performance review. It is the conversation that tells your new hire: we see you as a person, not just a position.

The goal is simple: discover what this person does better than almost anyone else — their superpower — and then find a way to use it intentionally in your operation.

GREG'S NOTE

The Superpower Lunch is the single most underused retention tool in the restaurant industry. Turnover peaks in the first 90 days — not because people can't do the job, but because they don't feel seen. One conversation, done right, can change that. I have watched operators cut first-90-day turnover in half by doing this consistently. The cost is 45 minutes of your time. The return is a team member who shows up tomorrow because someone actually cared enough to ask.

WHY IT WORKS

Most onboarding is transactional. Here are the steps. Here are the standards. Here is the POS. Sign here.

The Superpower Lunch is relational. It communicates four things that no training manual can:

- 01 You matter as a person, not just as a labor unit.
- 02 We are paying attention to who you actually are.
- 03 Your strengths have a place here — we will find it.
- 04 This is not just a job. It is a place that invests in people.

THE STRUCTURE — FOUR STAGES

Run every Superpower Lunch in this order. Don't rush Stage 1 — it is the foundation for everything that follows.

STAGE 1 THE SETUP · 5 minutes

PURPOSE: Get them comfortable and establish the tone. This should feel like a conversation, not an interview.

Choose somewhere away from the floor — a back office, a quiet table before service, a coffee shop if possible.

Put your phone away. Close your laptop. Give them your full attention — this communicates the value of

the conversation before you say a word.

Opening line: "I do this with everyone who joins our team within their first two weeks. I'm not here to talk about the job — I want to learn about you. There are no right answers and nothing you say here goes in a file."

STAGE 2 THE DISCOVERY · 20-25 minutes

PURPOSE: Ask the core questions. Listen for themes — not just answers. What lights them up? What do they keep coming back to? What do they say with energy versus obligation?

Use the question bank on the next page.

Take brief notes on a notepad — not a laptop or phone. Analog feels more personal.

Your job is to listen, not to fill silence. Let them think. Let them ramble. The gold is often in the tangents.

Look for: what they describe as effortless, what they do when no one is watching, what they wish more people knew about them.

STAGE 3 THE REFLECTION · 10-15 minutes

PURPOSE: Feed back what you heard. Name the superpower. Connect it to your operation.

"Based on what you've told me, here's what I'm hearing..." — reflect the themes back in your words.

Name it directly: "I think your superpower is [specific thing]. Here's why that matters here..."

Connect it to the team: "The way I want to use that is..." — give them a specific, immediate way their strength will show up in the work.

This moment of being named and seen is what they will remember six months from now when they are deciding whether to stay.

STAGE 4 THE COMMITMENT · 5-10 minutes

PURPOSE: Close with a mutual commitment. You have learned from them. They should leave with something too.

Ask: "What would make this a great place for you to work — not just a good one?"

Ask: "Is there anything you need from me to do your best work?"

Share something about yourself: one thing you're working on as a leader. This builds trust and models vulnerability.

Close: "I'm glad you're here. I meant it when I said we want to use what makes you great. Watch for it."

THE QUESTION BANK

You do not need all of these. Pick 4-6 that feel natural and follow the energy of the conversation.

IDENTITY QUESTIONS — Who are they outside of work?

Q1 "What do you do when you have a completely free day — like no obligations at all?"

WHY THIS QUESTION: This reveals what they are drawn to when nobody is watching. You are looking for what gives them energy, not what sounds impressive.

FOLLOW-UP IF NEEDED:

- "What do you love about that?"
- "How long have you been into that?"

Q2 "What's something you are genuinely good at that most people don't know about you?"

WHY THIS QUESTION: This is the direct superpower question. Most people have never been asked this at work. The answer is often immediate and specific.

FOLLOW-UP IF NEEDED:

- "How did you figure that out?"
- "When does that show up for you?"

Q3 "What kind of work puts you in a state where you lose track of time?"

WHY THIS QUESTION: This gets at flow state — the work that feels effortless because it aligns with natural strengths. Pay close attention to this answer.

FOLLOW-UP IF NEEDED:

- "What is it about that work specifically?"
- "Does that happen for you here yet?"

WORK HISTORY QUESTIONS — What have they learned?

Q4 "What's the best team you've ever been part of — at work or anywhere else? What made it great?"

WHY THIS QUESTION: This tells you what kind of environment they thrive in and what they value in a team. It also tells you what they will miss if you don't provide it.

FOLLOW-UP IF NEEDED:

- "What did the leader of that team do well?"
- "What would have made it even better?"

Q5 "Tell me about a time you did something at work that you were genuinely proud of."

WHY THIS QUESTION: Pride is a signal. What they are proud of tells you what they care about — which is different from what they are good at.

FOLLOW-UP IF NEEDED:

- "What made that feel meaningful to you?"
- "Did anyone recognize that at the time?"

Q6 "What's the most important thing you've learned from a manager — good or bad?"

WHY THIS QUESTION: This reveals their leadership philosophy and what they need from you. The 'bad' version is often more useful than the 'good' version.

FOLLOW-UP IF NEEDED:

- *"How did that shape how you work now?"*

FUTURE QUESTIONS — Where are they going?

Q7 "Where do you want to be in two years — in work or in life?"

WHY THIS QUESTION: You are not making a promise. You are learning what they care about so you can be intentional about whether this role serves their path.

FOLLOW-UP IF NEEDED:

- *"What would need to be true for that to happen?"*
- *"Is there anything about this role that helps or doesn't help with that?"*

Q8 "What would make this a great place for you — not just a good one?"

WHY THIS QUESTION: This is the most important question in the conversation. The answer tells you exactly what you need to provide to keep this person.

FOLLOW-UP IF NEEDED:

- *"Is there anything I can do right now to set you up better?"*

SUPERPOWER LUNCH — PREP & NOTES

Complete before and during each conversation. Keep this in their personnel file.

Team Member Name	Position	Date / Start Date
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

BEFORE THE LUNCH — What do you already know about this person?

What have you observed in their first days? Any early signals about strengths, attitude, or fit?

QUESTIONS I PLAN TO USE

Circle or list 4-6 questions from the bank that feel right for this person based on what you already know.

WHAT CAME UP — Key themes from the conversation

Don't transcribe. Capture the 3-4 things that stood out most. What lit them up? What did they keep returning to?

THEIR SUPERPOWER — As I named it

Write the exact language you used to name their superpower back to them. This becomes part of how you refer to them in huddles and spotlights.

HOW I WILL USE IT — Specifically in the next 30 days

What is one specific way you will intentionally deploy their superpower in your operation? Name it and schedule it.

WHAT THEY NEED FROM ME — Their answer to the last question

What did they say when you asked what would make this a great place — not just a good one?

30-DAY CHECK-IN DATE _____	DID I USE THEIR SUPERPOWER? Yes / No / Not yet — here's why:
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WHAT TO AVOID

DON'T	DO THIS INSTEAD
Turn it into a job review	Keep the conversation completely off-topic from performance — this is identity, not evaluation
Do it at the host stand or on the floor	Find a private space with no interruptions — the setting communicates the value
Take notes on your phone	Use a notepad — analog is warmer and less distracting
Promise things you can't deliver	Be honest about what you can and can't do with what you learn
Skip the 30-day follow-up	The follow-up is where trust is built — reference something specific from the conversation
Do it late — past week 3	First 90 days are critical. Week 1 or 2 is ideal — before they form habits about whether anyone cares

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