**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**POSITION TITLE:** Merchant – Seasonal  
**DEPARTMENT/LOCATION:** Sales & Merchandising

**JOB CODE:** 4806  
**CLASSIFICATION:** Exempt

**SALARY GRADE:** 11  
**APPROVED BY:**

**DATE:**

**REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS**

**POSITION REPORTS TO:** Senior Business Manager (GM/HBC)  
**POSTIONS SUPERVISED:** Not Applicable

**POSITION PURPOSE**

The Seasonal Merchant leads assigned categories applying merchandising disciplines including pricing, promotion, planograms and leading edge product assortment within an overall category planning process aligned with the company’s financial objectives. The Seasonal Merchant is responsible and accountable for the achievement of category sales, profit, market share and cost objectives within the categories. The Seasonal Merchant is supported by a replenishment function and must be fluent in that function, including direct importing, in order to identify opportunities and issues that can be negotiated with suppliers to minimize cost of goods. This job classification requires strong knowledge of retail operations as well as product knowledge of items in their categories. This critical function is the linkage between suppliers and consumers and requires strong understanding of category management principles to fully deliver required results.

**ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS AND BASIC DUTIES**

1. *Responsible for developing annual category plans based on a thorough understanding of the category, consumer, the marketplace and Raley’s objectives.*
   
   a. Creatively sources, selects and advertises seasonal and other general merchandise products including holidays, back-to-school, lawn and garden, and other annual events.
   
   b. Develops and executes strategic plans to support category sales and margin goals.
   
   c. Develops and executes efficient assortment plans with effective shelf merchandising plans to support sales and profit goals. Reports on performance improvements as a result of planned actions.
   
   d. Monitors raw materials and product costs and develops pricing strategies by understanding category and item price elasticity, evaluating competitive factors, and setting pricing rules to support sales and margin goals.
e. Develops and executes promotional plans for each category to drive sales and support margin goals. Reports on promotional performance in order to monitor effectiveness of the promotional plan.

f. Manages pricing through the development of pricing strategies and rules to optimize margin contribution including leveraging price zones based on competitive requirements.

g. Works effectively with cross-functional support groups to deliver results that improve category planning objectives and functional requirements.

2. *Responsible for regularly monitoring the performance of categories and accomplishing plan objectives.

a. Analyzes business performance through financial reports including category and department scorecards, budget to actual reports, P&L’s and market level reports.

b. Understands market trends, best buying practices, merchandising, and pricing of specified categories.

c. Conducts analysis of high and low performance at a drill-down level that allows problem identification; develops and implements required changes to increase overall performance.

3. *Responsible for building and maintaining collaborative relationships with suppliers.

a. Conducts or participates in meetings with manufacturers and suppliers to evaluate products, equipment, supplies, and promotional offers within an annual supplier planning process.

b. Develops excellent understanding of suppliers’ organizational structure, process and financial objectives including working relationships with their senior management to “tilt” resources from the market to Raley’s.

c. Applies understanding of cost drivers along with negotiating skills to effectively negotiate the best costs with suppliers.

d. Supports replenishment function when required to ensure product availability, consistency of supply and service level objectives and applies cost-of-goods insights to drive increased efficiency.

e. Integrates annual supplier planning into category planning process to maximize resources for Raley’s.

f. Delivers promotional funds objectives from manufacturers to ensure best possible costs. Collects all funds available to achieve or exceed net margin targets.

g. Identifies and develops new sourcing and procurement of products with the goal of enhancing assortments and driving sales.

h. Monitors and reports supplier performance with regard to price, quality, assortment and service. Scorecards supplier performance on a quarterly basis.

4. *Responsible for maintaining a high level of store awareness through store visits and communication focused on execution quality and efficiency for all merchandising disciplines.

a. Conducts regular store visits to a broad level of stores in each banner to ensure merchandising execution is at the required levels.

b. Assesses store conditions from a merchandising perspective to gain insights, identify opportunities, develop solutions, reinforce company and category programs, build rapport with operations and understand consumer behavior.

c. Assesses competitive retailers to understand their strengths and weaknesses and identify opportunities and threats, including retailers in other trade channels.

d. Communicates issues and solutions in a timely fashion to stakeholders and develops program enhancements to improve execution efficiency.
e. Prepares cross-functional sales documents to simplify program execution and support timely store planning.
f. Provides an open-door policy to obtain meaningful retail insight from vendors and store personnel.

5. **Responsible for participating in product research and development for specified categories.**
   a. Identifies and develops new products to enhance category assortments and improve the customer’s shopping experience. Presents findings to category management team.
   b. Investigates and pursues new distribution opportunities to reduce the cost of goods.
   c. Pushes vendors to develop new opportunities and partner with Raley’s to learn required marketing information to expand distribution.

6. **Responsible for integrating Private Label merchandising into the appropriate categories according Raley’s to strategic direction.**
   a. Works with the Raley’s Brands Team to identify new product opportunities or product enhancements.
   b. Develops an annual promotion plan within the structure of the category plan to improve Private Label performance.
   c. Supports and aids in sourcing and development of new products or product enhancements.

7. The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to this job. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required.

**PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS**

1. Clearly demonstrates market leading style and fashion, from color palettes to the use of personal handhelds, balanced with a strong sense of value and salability.
2. Develops timely, specific, actionable and measurable category plans.
4. Delivers financial objectives of sales, gross margins, net profit, promotional effectiveness, markdowns, advertising allowance, slotting allowance, category pricing, days-of-supply, marketing plans, merchandise mix, shelf merchandising performance, period results by category, cost of goods, and market share (as measured by AC Nielsen).
5. Demonstrated competitor knowledge; understanding of competitor growth within assigned categories; understanding of competitor merchandising, assortment, pricing, promotion and space allocation strategies.
6. Conducts annual supplier planning and integrates into category planning process. Maintains a scorecard of supplier performance.
7. Develops working relationships with senior management of leading suppliers.
8. Fully understands sales and growth opportunities of Private Brands within assigned categories.
9. Measures and reports on effectiveness of promotion planning.
10. Develops and executes effective pricing strategies.
11. Establishes assortment objectives and reaches targeted sales objectives.
12. Effectiveness of shelf management practices and development of planograms.
13. Thoroughly understands leverage points and decision-making processes to conduct effective negotiations with suppliers.
14. Fully utilizes the functionality of the financial reports and merchandising systems to maximize performance of each specified category.
15. Establishes positive business relationships with internal and external customers.
16. Accomplishes essential job responsibilities in accordance with established standard operating procedures.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE: Bachelor’s degree in business, marketing or a related field, plus five (5) years of related grocery category management and merchandising experience, including firsthand experience with direct importing and international business travel, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Extensive related work experience in seasonal and general merchandise industry.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE: Possesses and applies a broad knowledge of the principles, practices, and procedures of products within assigned categories. Applies advanced knowledge to complex business issues and is regarded as a subject matter expert both internally and externally. Previous management experience is a plus. Understanding of forecasting methods.

SKILLS/ABILITIES: Must demonstrate:

- superior financial and analytical skills
- ability to identify trends and quickly implement corrective action when plans are not being achieved
- demonstrated team building skills
- ability to teach others the departmental processes and procedures as well as coach and mentor others
- skills in managing P&Ls, promotions and increasing sales and brand equity
- leadership and motivational capabilities
- exceptional negotiation and decision making skills
- high level of computer literacy; advanced knowledge of related computer software packages; technically savvy with the merchandising system; understanding of the integration of new systems applications with the business function
- strong verbal and written communication skills
- strong prioritization skills; attention to details required
- ability to manage multiple assignments and meet tight deadlines
- self-initiative, a sense of urgency and innovation/creativity
- ability to maintain effective working relationships
- ability to work within established processes and influence improvements
- success in working through complex issues with senior management
- manage change processes while maintaining operating effectiveness

DEMONSTRATED COMPETENCIES: Decision Quality - Makes good decisions (without considering how much time it takes based upon a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience and judgment); most of his/her solutions and suggestions turn out to be
correct and accurate when judged over time; sought out by others for advice and solutions.

**Organizing** – Can marshal resources (people, funding, material, support) to get things done; can orchestrate multiple activities at once to accomplish a goal; uses resources effectively and efficiently; arranges information and files in a useful manner.

**Peer Relationships** – Can quickly find common ground and solve problems for the good of all; can represent his/her own interests and yet be fair to other groups; can solve problems with peers with a minimum of noise; is seen as a team player and is cooperative; easily gains trust and support of peers; encourages collaboration; can be candid with peers.

**Priority Setting** – Spends his/her time and the time of others on what’s important; quickly zeros in on the critical few and puts the trivial many aside; can quickly sense what will help or hinder accomplishing a goal; eliminates roadblocks; creates focus.

**Problem Solving** – Uses rigorous logic and methods to solve difficult problems with effective solutions; probes all fruitful sources for answers; can see hidden problems; is excellent at honest analysis; looks beyond the obvious and doesn’t stop at the first answers.

**Time Management** – Uses his/her time effectively and efficiently; values time; concentrates his/her efforts on the more important priorities; gets more done in less time than others; can attend to a broader range of activities.

**Written Communication** - Is able to write clearly and succinctly in a variety of communication settings and styles; can get messages across that have the desired effect.

**Integrity and Trust** - Is widely trusted; is seen as a direct, truthful individual; can present the unvarnished truth in an appropriate and helpful manner; keeps confidences; admits mistakes; doesn’t misrepresent him/herself for personal gain.

**Planning** - Accurately scopes out length and difficulty of tasks and projects; sets objectives and goals; breaks down work into the process steps; develops schedules and task/people assignments; anticipates and adjusts for problems and roadblocks; measures performance against goals; evaluates results.

**CERTIFICATIONS REQUIRED**

Current passport may be required for international travel.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS** - Employees may occasionally experience the following physical demands for extended periods of time:

Must be able to travel by car and airplane. Domestic and international travel required.
Depending on category supported, may need the ability to taste and consume product in category supported.
Telephone usage to communicate with internal customers, suppliers and manufacturers
Sitting; frequent sedentary work.
Viewing computer monitor; average, ordinary visual acuity necessary to prepare documents, enter data into computer system, read reports and from computer monitor
Keyboarding; use of fingers to make small movements such as typing
WORK ENVIRONMENT

Work is performed in a normal business office environment. Extended workdays are a frequent occurrence. Frequent travel to different store locations, manufacturing facilities, trade shows and competitor tours may be part of some categories.

*Denotes essential job Function