COO JOB DESCRIPTION

Do you have a passion for breaking new ground to lead social change? Do you think hospitality can be a tool for social justice? Are you ready to use your professional super powers to leverage social impact?

Drive Change is a leading agent of food and social change in NYC. Drive Change recently secured a $2.6M dollar grant from the Criminal Justice Investment Initiative to grow our impact over the next 3.5 years. With this funding, and the right leadership (YOU), we will build a network of like-minded food businesses that reshape the hospitality sector and simultaneously employ hundreds of talented young adults who are coming home from jail.

About Drive Change:

Drive Change was founded in 2014 by Jordyn Lexton, a former teacher on Rikers Island. They launched Drive Change in response to the race and class injustice of our criminal justice system. Inspired by a culinary arts course inside of the school on Rikers, Jordyn and other co-Founding members decided to start a food truck business as the platform for a paid Fellowship for young adults coming home from jail. From 2014-2017 the food truck and Drive Change’s model gained recognition: the truck won the Vendy Award for Best Food Truck in NYC in 2015 and Drive Change received awards/Fellowships from Echoing Green, the New School, Forbes, Zagat, Harvard Social Enterprise and others.

In 2018, Drive Change was awarded $2.6M dollars by the Criminal Justice Investment Initiative to scale our impact by partnering with like-minded restaurants we call our Hospitality for Social Justice Partners.

At Drive Change, we are tapping into the talent of young New Yorkers. Drive Change utilizes the food truck and restaurant workplace to run a premiere Fellowship for returning citizens (formerly incarcerated people) ages 18-25. We do this through a bi-directional workforce development Fellowship called Hospitality for Social Justice (HSJ): a program that trains/coaches both the talent (young adults returning from jail and entering the food workplace) and the employer (managers from our partner restaurants). We believe that it is not enough to only invest in training staff/talent: workplaces environments (policies, procedures, culture, management, economic development practices) must evolve so that employees can access their potential and develop their full impact. We proudly launched our HSJ pilot in 2018 with Union Square Hospitality Group, the Marlow Collective, and Ovenly Bakery. In 2018, we hope to expand from partnering with 7 restaurants to over 20 restaurants; we also hope to expand from working with 11 Fellows in 2018 to working with 32 Fellows in 2019.

With the right talent on our leadership team, we will build the right infrastructure to ensure that our growth is stable and our impact is exponential.
About the COO Position:

The Drive Change COO is process minded, strategic, mission-focused, and seasoned. Your ability to skillfully scale the organization, lead and provide daily structure and support to the entire team, and develop a performance culture among a group of diverse, talented individuals is key to your part in a successful experience at Drive Change.

Drive Change’s CEO is also its Founder. The organization requires balanced leadership to allow for the organization to maximize its potential; in our early stages, Drive Change’s leadership has worn multiple hats and, as a result, lacked the focus necessary to scale. With our influx in funding, we are in a position to hire the leadership talent that will bring the organization to the next level. Our COO must be diligent, they must love process, having some experience with start-up culture / energy is a plus but not necessary, they must be driven by justice, and know the power of food.

Responsibilities:
Reporting to the Founder and CEO of Drive Change, the COO will lead all internal operations and will have the following responsibilities:

- Working in partnership with the Founder/CEO, create a strategic one-year and five-year plan and implement new processes and approaches to achieve it
- Serve as the internal leader of the organization:
  - Coordinate the annual operations plan and budget
  - Lead the performance management ‘Check In’ process that measures and evaluates progress against goals for the organization
  - Provide for all staff a strong day-to-day leadership presence; support an open-door policy among all staff
  - Cultivate the values of Drive Change within the organization
  - Spearhead human resources functions including: training, development, compensation and benefits, employee relations, performance evaluation and recruiting
  - Instill a human capital development and “coaching” culture within the organization
  - Analyze the current organizational and team infrastructure and implement the next level of systems that support the growth of team members, specific programs and the organization overall
  - Communicate and promote the Drive Change branded message and mission internally and externally
  - Manage and communicate with all external vendors, ensuring receipt of all needed documentation, and timely payments (with support from Bookkeeper)
In this role you will need to already be/have:

The COO must believe in the core values of Drive Change and be driven by the mission. This candidate should demonstrate a passion for breaking new ground to lead social change. Beyond that, we are seeking a candidate that has proven experience in scaling an organization and a demonstrated ability to both lead and build the capabilities of a driven, bright, diverse team.

The successful candidate will most likely have had management experience with a for-profit organization. As noted, this is an organization driven by the values of its people, so experience in managing a “values-driven” organization will be highly prized. Additional requirements are:

- Results-proven track record of exceeding goals and a bottom-line orientation; the ability to balance the delivery of programs against the realities of a budget; and problem solving, project management, and creative resourcefulness
- Ability to think strategically, anticipate future consequences and trends, and incorporate them into the organizational plan
- Capacity Building—ability to effectively build organization and staff capacity, developing a top-notch workforce and the processes that ensure the organization runs smoothly
- Exceptional capacity for managing and leading people
- Ability to connect staff both on an individual level and in groups; capacity to enforce accountability, develop and empower top-notch leaders from the bottom up, lead from the top down, cultivate entrepreneurship, and learn the strengths and weaknesses of the team so as to put people in a position to succeed
- Action Oriented; enjoys working hard and looks for challenges; able to act and react as necessary, even if limited information is available
- Thorough understanding of finance, systems, and HR; broad experience with the full range of business functions and systems, including strategic development and planning, budgeting, business analysis, finance, information systems, human resources, and marketing
- Solid educational background—undergraduate degree required; MBA or similar advanced degree highly desired

Are you our COO? If so, please email a cover letter and CV/Resume to people@drivechangeny.org

Please also answer the following questions:
1. Tell us about your first (or first-ish) job, what did you learn from it? What did you like about it? How could it have been a more fulfilling experience for you?
2. Explain a specific procedure you implemented at work to address a challenge / inefficiency that your current company was facing. What was the problem? What solution did you develop; walks us through the process of your implementation.
3. Why do you want to do this work? Why now?