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STELLAR
SENIOR LIVING

CULTURE
DECK

September 2026



Why Culture Matters

Culture is the shared beliefs and behaviors that shape how we make decisions and work together toward our shared vision. At Stellar, culture is not accidental—it's intentionally built and protected.

“Culture eats strategy for breakfast.”
—Peter Drucker

“Culture determines and limits strategy.”
—Edgar Schein

Culture Deck Purpose

The purpose of this Stellar Culture Deck is to clearly define why we exist as an organization and how we operate, so every team member can align their behaviors, decisions, and contributions with the culture we are building together. It serves as both a guide for daily actions and a shared standard for measuring cultural alignment across our organization.

Why We Exist

Our vision, mission, and aspirations.



Vision

Our vision is **to do and be the best in all we undertake, and to provide a Stellar Life for our residents, their families, and our employees.** This vision serves as our guiding star—our supreme goal—and we will never stop striving to reach it.

Mission (2035)

Our mission is to progress toward our vision in measurable ways. To that end, Stellar is committed to **providing a Stellar Life for 20,000 residents and employees by the end of 2035.**

Aspirations for the Future

By 2035, Stellar is more than just a senior living company – it's the gold standard. Ask anyone in the industry who they admire, and the answer is always the same: Stellar.

RESIDENTS & FAMILIES

Families who entrusted their loved ones to Stellar communities still speak of the experience with heartfelt gratitude. Residents come alive at Stellar — embraced by community, inspired to pursue new adventures, and surrounded by joy. Families get the chance to be daughters and sons again, not caregivers.

CULTURE & TEAM

Stellar is known as the best place to work in senior living. Team members feel purpose, growth, and belonging. Friends and family are proudly referred — and Stellar hasn't needed to post a help-wanted ad for a key leadership role in years. The waitlist to join just keeps growing.

MISSION & IMPACT

Adults with special needs hold cherished roles throughout the organization, some serving for decades. Nationally, Stellar is recognized for groundbreaking programs that uplift seniors, empower employees, and create meaningful opportunities for all.

The future isn't just bright – it's brilliant!

How We Operate

Our values and expected behaviors.



Values



Serve First. We put residents and team members first. We help each other before we are asked, leading with care, compassion, and love. We are service oriented.



Build Trust. We act with honesty, consistency, and transparency. We lead with respect and invite feedback. Integrity is our foundation.



Own It. We take responsibility for our actions and results. We stay committed, even when it's hard. Accountability starts with us.



Deliver Excellence. We pursue the highest standards. Details matter, and improvement never stops. Excellence today creates a legacy tomorrow.



Spread Joy. We uplift with kindness and optimism. We help one another, every day, to smile, be happy, and enjoy life. We are joyful!

"Values are not something you have; they are something you live." –Jim Collins

Serve First

We put residents and team members first. We help each other before we are asked, leading with care, compassion, and love. We are service oriented.



Expected Behaviors

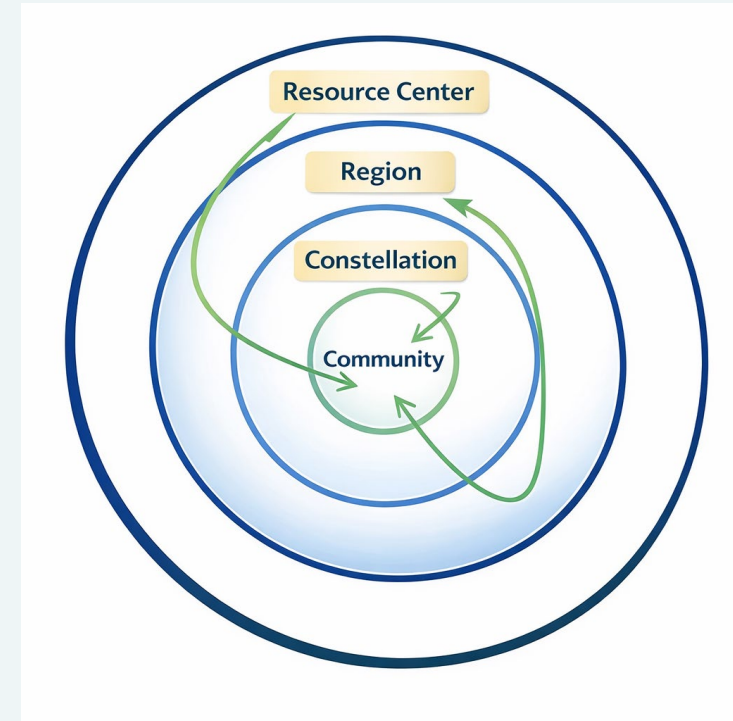
You **Serve First** when you...

- Adopt a community first approach.
- Start with “yes” and seek solutions.
- Anticipate needs before being asked.
- Connect with others as people—not tasks.



Adopt a Community First Approach

- Set priorities and focus your efforts based on what will best support the community.
- Empower those closest to the work to make informed decisions and act within their roles.
- Lean on the people, tools, and resources that surround each community.



Start with “Yes” and Seek Solutions

- Focus on solutions, not obstacles.
- Start with a mindset of “How can I help?”
- Consider every possibility before saying “no.”
- Follow through to ensure the need is fully met.

Starting with “yes” doesn’t mean overpromising. It means being committed to finding a way to help. “No” may end up being the right answer, but it is never our starting point.

Anticipate Needs Before Being Asked

- Take initiative to solve problems.
- Step in to help before being asked.
- Own the outcome, not just the task.
- Look for what others might need next.
- Pay attention to what's happening around you.

Great service is proactive, not reactive. We don't wait to be told what to do. We observe, then serve.

Connect with Others as People—Not Tasks

- Build meaningful relationships.
- See the person, not just the need.
- Be fully present in each interaction.
- Take time to listen and understand.
- Engage with empathy, care, and respect.

People are not checklists, transactions, or interruptions to our work. They *are* our work.

Build Trust

We act with honesty, consistency, and transparency. We lead with respect and invite feedback. Integrity is our foundation.



Expected Behaviors

You **Build Trust** when you...

- Avoid friendly fire.
- Act like a “somebody.”
- Lead with principles, not rules.
- Earn your “keeper” status every day.
- Seek and give feedback with humility.



Avoid Friendly Fire

- Don't badmouth teammates. Address issues directly, not behind their backs.
- Don't gossip. Gossip erodes trust and weakens the team.
- Don't withhold help. We support each other, especially when it's not convenient.
- Protect the team. What you say and do should build others up, not tear them down.

We operate as one team. We don't take shots at each other. We trust each other and have each other's backs.

Act Like a “Somebody”

- Step in to help when someone needs support.
- Solve problems instead of waiting for someone else to act.
- Take pride in the environment and experiences you create.
- Take initiative when you see something that needs attention.

It's easy to notice a problem and think, “Somebody should take care of that.” Don't wait for somebody. Be a somebody!

“The most difficult thing is the decision to act. The rest is merely tenacity.” –Amelia Earhart

Lead with Principles, Not Rules

Principles...

- Facilitate better decisions
- Encourage the use of judgment
- Enable innovation
- Focus on outcomes

Rules...

- Prescribe specific actions
- Require unnecessary approvals
- Limit flexibility and innovation
- Focus on process

We trust team members to use good judgment and act in the best interest of residents, teammates, and the organization. Principles provide guidance and clarity, even when there isn't a rule. We focus on the “why,” not just the “how.”

“Instead of trying to make the rules for every situation, build principles that help people make good decisions.” –Reed Hastings

Lead with Principles, Not Rules

Our standard is to lead with principles, but there are times when rules are necessary:

When a team member is new or developing. Clear rules and structure provide appropriate guardrails until team members fully understand the principles behind the work.

When there is an emergency or safety is at stake. In situations involving resident or team member safety, risk prevention, or emergency response, rules are non-negotiable.

When compliance is required. Regulations, legal standards, and Stellar policy must always be followed.

When rules are necessary, we still try to help others understand the “why” of their work. Our goal is always to grow into principle-based thinking and decision-making. This builds trust with teammates and our stakeholders.

Earn Your “Keeper” Status Every Day

Our managers regularly consider the Keeper Test:
If one of my team members told me they were leaving, would I fight hard to keep them?

Our Expectation:

You should strive, every day, to be the type of team member your manager would fight hard to keep by strengthening our culture and delivering desired results.

Our Commitment:

It is crucial that we have a roster full of keepers. When necessary, we will respectfully cut people from the team to make room for keepers.

Earn Your “Keeper” Status Every Day



Seek and Give Feedback with Humility

- Praise in public, admonish in private.
- Give feedback directly and respectfully.
- Act on helpful feedback to become better.
- Focus on learning and improvement, not blame.
- Assume positive intent when receiving feedback.

The 4 'A's' of Feedback

- | | | |
|----------|---|---------------------------------|
| Giver | { | 1) Aim to assist |
| | | 2) Make it Actionable |
| Receiver | { | 3) Appreciate the candor |
| | | 4) Accept or discard it |

We build trust by how we give and receive feedback.

Own It

We take responsibility for our actions and results. We stay committed, even when it's hard. Accountability starts with us.



Expected Behaviors

You **Own It** when you...

- Do the hard things.
- Set and achieve goals.
- Develop self-awareness.
- Think and act above the line.



Do the Hard Things

- We take ownership by doing what others typically avoid.
- Have the hard conversation. Say what needs to be said, with clarity and respect.
- Address issues early. Don't let small problems become big ones.
- Hold yourself and others accountable. Standards matter.
- Choose what's right over what's easy, even if means you must stand alone.
- Follow through when it gets tough. Finish what you start.

Set and Achieve Goals

- Set SMART goals.
- Ensure alignment with Stellar's vision and mission.
- Prioritize the "Rocks."
- Measure progress with milestones.
- Have a cadence of accountability.



"When you learn to master the principle of setting a goal, you will then be able to make a great difference in the results you attain in this life." –M. Russell Ballard

Develop Self-Awareness

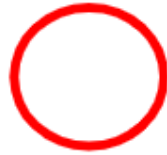
- Seek feedback regularly.
- Understand that your actions impact others.
- Adjust and make changes that lead to growth.
- Know your strengths and use them intentionally.
- Acknowledge your gaps and take ownership of improving them.

“Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom.” –Aristotle

Develop Self-Awareness

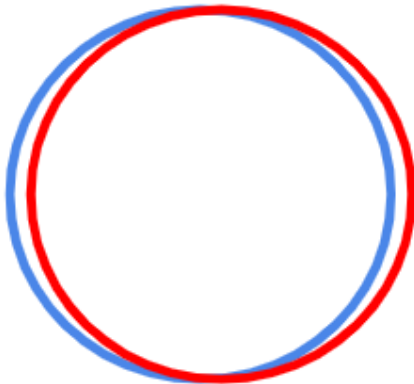


How you see yourself

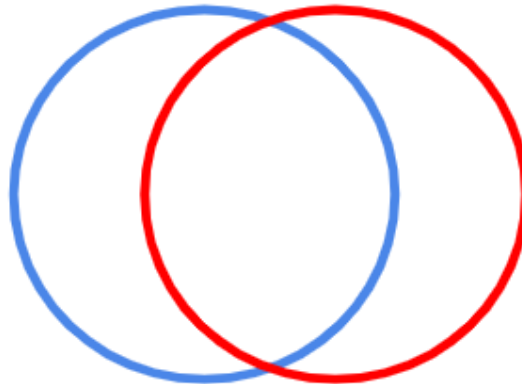


How others see you

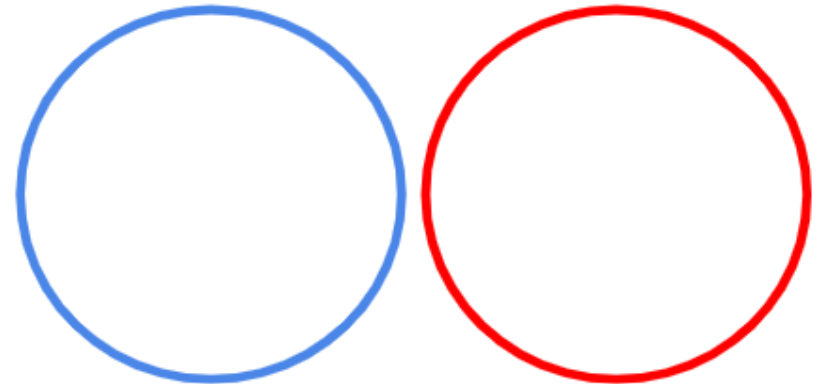
Self-aware



Needs Improvement



Oblivious



Think and Act Above the Line

- Take responsibility for your actions and results.
- Focus on solutions, not blame.
- Address challenges directly rather than avoiding them.
- Learn from your mistakes and move forward.
- Support one another to achieve shared success.



Think and Act Above the Line

Avoid BCD Behavior:

- **B**laming others and shifting responsibility.
- **C**omplaining without contributing to solutions.
- **D**efending actions and being resistant to feedback.

BCD is not...

- Raising concerns when something isn't right.
- Speaking up about risks, safety, or the resident experience.
- Offering constructive feedback to improve outcomes.

We don't BCD. We own it, solve it, and improve it.

Deliver Excellence

We pursue the highest standards. Details matter, and improvement never stops. Excellence today creates a legacy tomorrow.



Expected Behaviors

You **Deliver Excellence** when you...

- Use resources wisely.
- Act like a professional.
- Practice great hospitality.
- Continuously improve how work gets done.



Use Resources Wisely

- Treat Stellar resources like your own.
- Avoid shortcuts that compromise standards.
- Make decisions with both quality and cost in mind.
- Eliminate waste and look for more efficient ways to operate.

Wise stewardship isn't about spending less—it's about creating more value with what we have.

“Waste neither time nor money, but make the best use of both.” –Benjamin Franklin

Act Like a Professional

Stellar is family owned and operated, but we operate as a professional team, not a family. Families are unconditional; professional teams are built for high performance.

- Maintain a positive attitude.
- Show up prepared and on time.
- Follow through on commitments.
- Communicate clearly, respectfully, and appropriately.
- Present yourself in a way that reflects pride and credibility.

Practice Great Hospitality

- Wear your name tag and keep it visible.
- Keep your environment clean and orderly.
- Take time to genuinely connect with residents.
- Escort guests and residents rather than pointing.
- Offer help when you see someone who needs it.
- Respond to expressions of gratitude with, “My pleasure.”
- Greet others by name and acknowledge everyone warmly.

“Hospitality is simply an opportunity to show love and care.” –Danny Meyer

Continuously Improve How Work Gets Done

- Act on what you learn.
- Challenge the status quo.
- Look for better ways to do things.
- Share ideas that make the team stronger.
- Simplify and streamline wherever possible.

“Continuous improvement is better than delayed perfection.” –Mark Twain

Spread Joy

We uplift with kindness and optimism.
We help one another, every day, to smile,
be happy, and enjoy life. We are joyful!



Expected Behaviors

You **Spread Joy** when you...

- Celebrate everything.
- Act like a “bucket filler.”
- Always assume positive intent.
- Give back to support those in need.
- Approach challenges with optimism.



Celebrate Everything

- Celebrate the wins—big and small.
- Recognize effort, progress, and improvement.
- Be generous with expressions of appreciation.
- Create moments of fun, laughter, and connection.

We don't wait for special occasions to celebrate. We celebrate each other, and we celebrate often.

“Praise every improvement. Be hearty in your approbation and lavish in your praise.” –Dale Carnegie

Act Like a “Bucket Filler”

You **fill** someone's bucket when you:

- Show kindness and encouragement.
- Offer help and support to teammates.
- Speak positively about others.
- Look for ways to make someone smile.

You **drain** someone's bucket when you:

- Engage in “friendly fire” like gossip, criticism, or bad-mouthing others.
- Speak negatively about teammates instead of helping them succeed.
- Withhold help when someone clearly needs it.

Every interaction either fills someone's bucket or drains it.
Be kind to others. Don't be mean, even in jest.

Always Assume Positive Intent

- Give others the benefit of the doubt and choose to see the best in them.
- Pause before reacting. Seek to understand before making judgments.
- Assume your teammates are doing their best with the information and resources they have.

“I want to assume the most generous thing I can about your thoughts, your actions, your words, and your behaviors.” –Brené Brown

Give Back to Support Those in Need

- Support efforts to elevate your community.
- Look for opportunities to uplift outside of your role.
- Give your time, energy, and resources to make a difference.
- Recognize that you are part of something bigger than yourself.

Our care and compassion go beyond our walls. We give back, spread joy, and lift others wherever and whenever we can.

“Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve.” –Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Give Back to Support Those in Need



One of the ways you can give back is by supporting the Stellar Living Foundation, our very own 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your generous contributions support the Foundation's Four Pillars:

- **Local Love:** This community fund supports individuals in need, local non-profit organizations, and humanitarian efforts.
- **Milo's Project:** Providing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, celebrating their superpowers.
- **Moments that Matter:** Preserving memories and honoring legacies through storytelling and meaningful final wishes with Wish of a Lifetime.
- **Stellar Scholars:** A scholarship program supporting higher education and skill-building for the next generation.

Approach Challenges with Optimism

- Embrace and find joy in change.
- See challenges as opportunities to grow.
- Encourage and uplift others during tough moments.
- Choose a positive outlook, even if things are difficult.
- Focus on what you can influence, not what you can't.

“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.” –Winston Churchill

Building a Legendary Culture

Every Decision. Every Interaction.



Your Part in Building a Legendary Culture

No one experiences our culture by reading about it. The truth is, they'll experience it through you. As a Stellar employee, every decision you make and every interaction you have with a resident or team member either strengthens our culture or erodes it. There is no neutral ground.

We invite you to embrace your part in building a legendary culture with us.

"Great cultures don't happen by accident. They are built intentionally, day by day." –Patrick Lencioni

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