

The Chair's Forum with Kroger's Tim Massa

MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2025



Formerly
Known As
HR Policy
Association



Timothy A. Massa

*Executive VP and Chief Associate
Experience Officer*
The Kroger Company



Timothy J. Richmond

Former EVP, CHRO, AbbVie
Chair, CHRO Association



Timothy J. Bartl

President and CEO
CHRO Association

Tim Massa

EVP & Chief Associate
Experience Officer



"I recognize that the foundation of any great company is its people. I see the proof every day. I am proud to lead them and prouder still to serve them. Together, we are the best."

Feed
Your
Future



1987

Various HR Business
Partner Leadership
Positions
Charlotte, NC • Dallas, TX
• Atlanta, GA • Chicago,
IL • Cincinnati, OH



1989-
2003

Central & Eastern European
HR Associate Director



2003

Global Human
Resources Director of
Global Business Services



2006

Global Human
Resources Director of
Customer Business
Development



2009

Corporate Vice President of
Human Resources
Talent Development



2010

Group Vice
President of Human
Resources & Labor
Relations



2012

Senior Vice
President &
Chief People
Officer



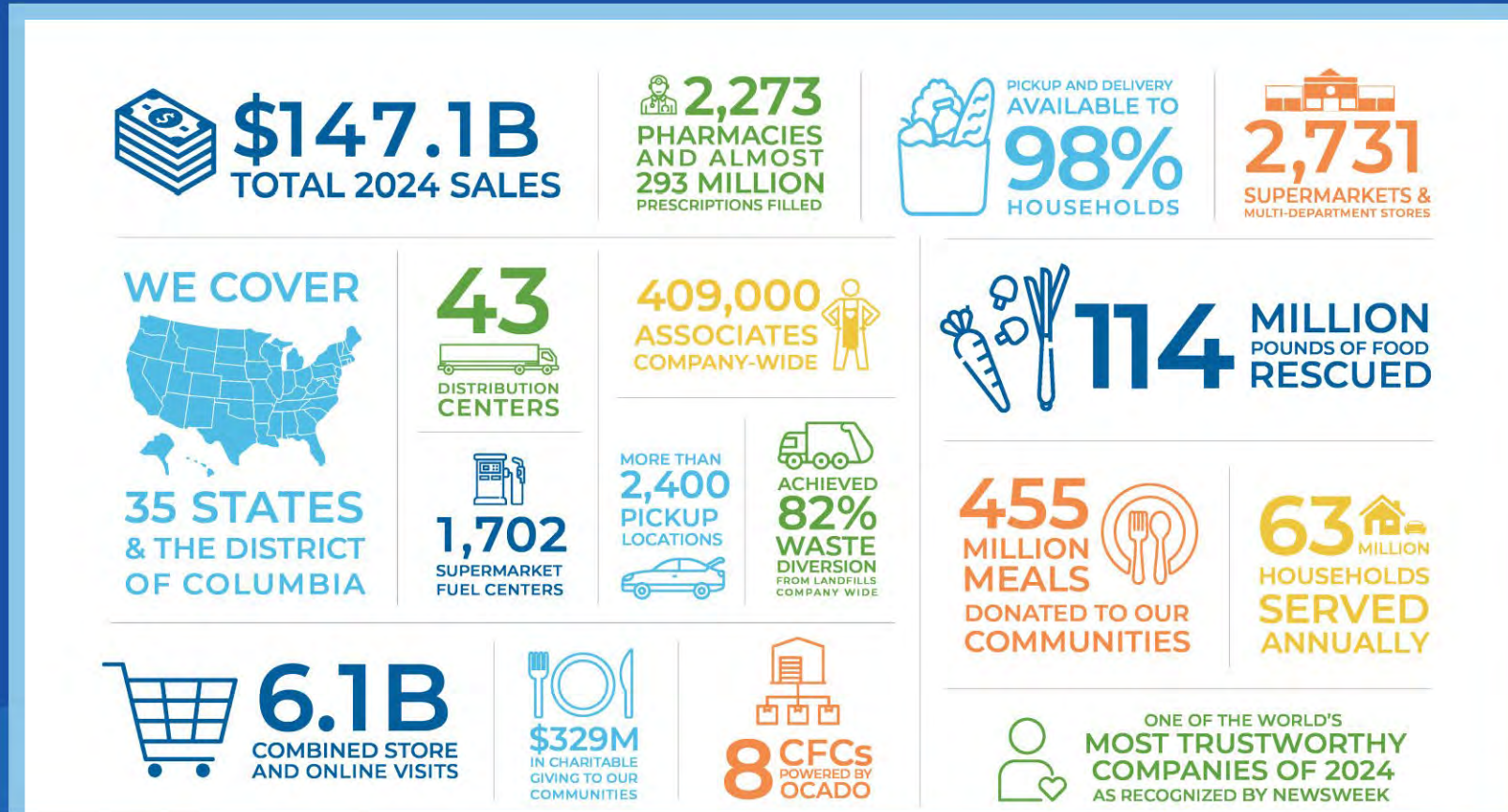
2014

Executive Vice President
& Chief Associate
Experience Officer

2025



The Kroger Co.



The Kroger Co. (NYSE: KR), headquartered in Cincinnati, OH, is one of the world's largest food retailers, with fiscal 2024 sales of \$147.1 B.



World-Class People Leadership Team Model



DIVISION'S LEADER OF HUMAN CAPITAL

- Plan and support critical role succession; focus on top value creators
- Partner to build appropriate division compensation strategy
- Surface and respond to external and local trends

CREATOR OF TALENT STRATEGY

- Ensure critical role staffing, skillsets and Gig workforce (10X talent)
- Champion talent and performance management processes
- Enable strategic workforce planning/org design

ENTERPRISE CHANGE LEADER

- Challenge the status quo
- Embrace strategic enterprise changes
- Manage stakeholders and advocate for associates

DRIVER OF CULTURE AND PURPOSE

- Link purpose to culture
- Measure and communicate the culture
- Hold leadership accountable for culture promise and diversity

TRUSTED ADVISOR AND COACH

- Advise and coach the Division President
- Maximize division leadership team effectiveness
- Coach and develop key division talent

Business Acumen - Understands the business model, financials, external markets, customers and workforce

Business Strategy Development - Shape and influence business strategy, and partner with peers to move the organization forward

Functional Business Leader - Create a future-focused, financially disciplined, high performing team to run the HR function

Our People Strategy

TO SUPPORT OUR FUTURE GROWTH

Guided by **Our Purpose & Our Values**, we are building a **best-in-class Associate Experience** led by **Experience Makers** who enable our associates to **come for a job and discover a career that you LOVE.**



Champion Talent

TO ATTRACT, DEVELOP &
RETAIN BEST FIT TALENT



Develop Effective Leaders

WHO ARE TRUSTED, CREDIBLE
AND GROW TALENT



Advocate For Our Associates' Well-Being

TO IMPROVE THE PHYSICAL,
EMOTIONAL, AND FINANCIAL HEALTH
OF EVERY ASSOCIATE



Create a High Performing Culture

TO DELIVER A LEADING
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND ARE
RECOGNIZED AS AN EMPLOYER
OF CHOICE



Listening for
Understanding



Maximizing HR
Tech Solutions



Operationalizing
Like to Love



Maximizing HR Tech Solutions

Sage, our Digital HR Assistant

Hello, I'm Sage!
How can I help you today?



One Front Door for all common HR, Pay, Timekeeping, Scheduling interactions across the enterprise delivering a **Seamless Associate Experience**, "every associate, every time!"



from **Assistant...**

Solving common pain-points, creating a seamless, best-in-class associate experience



...to **Coach...**

Action-oriented, **personalized recommendations driving standards** to meet key HR and labor metrics



...to **Digital Worker**

Handling the mundane to **empower associates** to focus where their talents and time matter most

How AI is Driving Change in Daily Life & Work

DIGITAL ASSISTANTS

Everyday Helpers

Co-pilot, ChatGPT, Alexa, or **tools like Sage** (e.g., "View my Paystub", "Total Schedule Review").

CONTENT CREATION

AI Tools

Generate marketing copy, job descriptions, training materials, or product visuals.

AGENTIC 'DIGITAL WORKERS'

AI Agents

Perform **structured tasks** (e.g., screening applications, auto-generating reports, auditing data and correcting errors).

AI is moving from "assisting humans" → "working alongside humans."



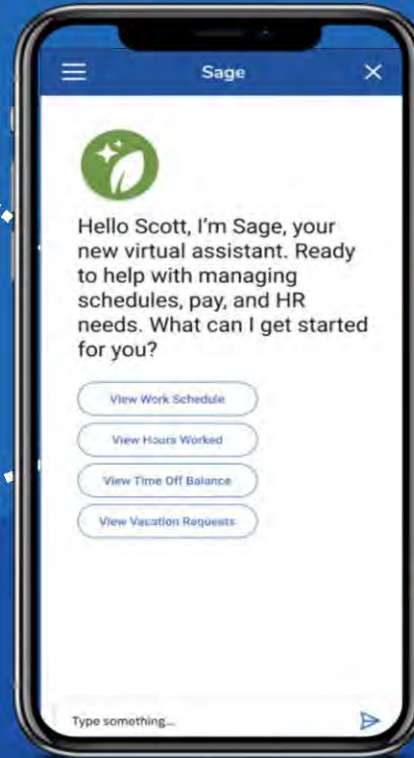
AI - Sage as an Assistant | Available in 2025

Answering HR Questions

- AI-Powered Interactive Q&A
- Self-Service Support 24/7
- Ex. Policy Repository

Decisions Based on Schedule & Availability

- GenAI generated insights into unfilled shifts, unapproved requested shifts, etc.
- Improved coverage
- Empowers associates to request additional shifts.



Systematic Attendance Tracking

- Consistent execution of attendance management to improve staffing.
- New levels of attendance reporting analyzed using GenAI to help leaders turn insights into action.

Role-Based Personalization

- Delivers focused suggestions & workflows tailored to each associate's role and access level.

AI – Sage as a Digital Worker | 2026 Roadmap

Automated Talent Acquisition Processes

- Utilizing scheduling and timekeeping data to determine hiring needs
- Suggesting requisitions and automatically analyzing candidate pools for open roles.

System-Enabled Associate Leave Support

- Leveraging AI to eliminate or minimize complex admin work and manual audits.

Enabling ‘Digital Workers’ as First Tier of Support

- Expedite responses to common questions
- Assistance completing frequent HR transactions
- Gives capacity back to HR experts as second tier of support for more complex issues



Sage will offer a seamless experience for associates, allowing them to access and use various tools without needing to learn each one individually.

Identifying, Developing & Preparing Future Company Leaders

Succession Planning Overview

At Kroger, we take a holistic approach to **career and succession planning** focusing on **identifying, developing** and **preparing** robust pipelines of talent to ensure we have **three or more viable successors** for every opening. Succession planning is foundational to delivering against our **business** and **company strategy**, ensuring we have the right leaders in the right role at the right time, for today and for tomorrow.

Identifying Leadership Potential

During annual talent review, we assess ~30K associates in leadership roles across multiple criteria points to develop talent pools, evaluate potential and determine future role fit.

Potential	High Potential	Emerging Talent	Top Talent
High Potential	Evaluate Further Not meeting performance expectations, may lack capacity in a different role. Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider role fit and consider development. Develop and enhance role of performance. Identify development opportunities. 	Emerging Talent Consistently meets expectations, may require additional support to perform in a higher role. Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider development in current performance. Develop capacity to take on more complex assignments and increasing responsibilities. Identify development opportunities and resources. 	Top Talent Consistently exceeds expectations, may require additional support to perform in a higher role. Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider development in current performance. Develop capacity to take on more complex assignments and increasing responsibilities. Identify development opportunities and resources.
Medium Potential	Evaluate Further Not meeting expectations, may lack capacity in a different role. Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider role fit and consider development. Develop and enhance role of performance. Identify development opportunities. 	Valued Professional Consistently meets expectations, may require additional support to perform in a higher role. Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider development in current performance. Develop capacity to take on more complex assignments and increasing responsibilities. Identify development opportunities and resources. 	Emerging Talent Consistently meets expectations, may require additional support to perform in a higher role. Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider development in current performance. Develop capacity to take on more complex assignments and increasing responsibilities. Identify development opportunities and resources.
Low Potential	Under Performer Not meeting expectations, may lack capacity in a different role. Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider role fit and consider development. Develop and enhance role of performance. Identify development opportunities. 	Valued Professional Consistently meets expectations, may require additional support to perform in a higher role. Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider development in current performance. Develop capacity to take on more complex assignments and increasing responsibilities. Identify development opportunities and resources. 	Valued Professional Consistently meets expectations, may require additional support to perform in a higher role. Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider development in current performance. Develop capacity to take on more complex assignments and increasing responsibilities. Identify development opportunities and resources.
	Needs Improvement / Does Not Meet Expectations	Consistently Delivers Expectations	Exceeds Expectations / Significantly Exceeds Expectations
		Performance Over Time (2 Years)	1

Developing & Accelerating Leadership Readiness

Personalized development plans, bench readiness programs and Great People Review talent showcases are consistently utilized to accelerate leader readiness.

Development Planning – VP Readiness
 Actions Taken During Quarter 2 & Upcoming Plans for Quarter 3 and Beyond

Development Focus Areas:

- Resilience Presence
- Professional Learning
- Succession Planning

Expanded Leadership Readiness Program
 Actions Taken During Quarter 2 & Upcoming Plans for Quarter 3 and Beyond

Store Leader Bench Readiness Program
 Actions Taken During Quarter 2 & Upcoming Plans for Quarter 3 and Beyond

Preparing Leadership to Lead the Future of Our Company

Through succession planning, we take an intentional approach to build organizational continuity. Plans are actively worked for sr. manager and executive roles to ensure we have best-fit talent ready for future openings.

District Manager Succession Plan – SAMPLE DIVISION PLAN Overview

Ready Now

- MELODY MARRIN**
 District Manager, District 1
 Actions: Review and update succession plan, identify and develop potential successors.
- EMMA DEAN**
 District Manager, District 2
 Actions: Review and update succession plan, identify and develop potential successors.

Ready in 1-2 Years

- CHRISTINE**
 District Manager, District 3
 Actions: Review and update succession plan, identify and develop potential successors.
- CHRISTOPHER**
 District Manager, District 4
 Actions: Review and update succession plan, identify and develop potential successors.

Ready in 3-5 Years

- BRUCE A. KINGS**
 District Manager, District 5
 Actions: Review and update succession plan, identify and develop potential successors.

Demographics of Pipeline: 34 Leaders

- 50% Female
- 50% Diverse
- 50% People of Color
- 50% Age 50 and under

Plan Health Indicator: Strong

Plan Diverse Indicator: Strong

Plan Updates: Strong

My Leadership Lessons



Leaders
bloom
where they
are planted.



Leaders
develop the
next
generation
of talent.



Asking for
help is a
sign of
strength.



Be guided
by your
values.



Leaders are
experience
makers.

