

# Howard Schultz

## Founder of Starbucks

I grew up in federally subsidized housing in Brooklyn. I was part of a generation of families that dreamed about the American dream. My dad had a series of blue-collar jobs, a World War II veteran who had great aspirations about America. But his dream was not coming true.

When I got into a position of responsibility at Starbucks, what I wanted to try to do was build a kind of company that my father never got a chance to work for.

We at Starbucks have been trying to create an industry that did not exist, and a kind of brand that was very unusual. When we did this, we had a couple hundred employees and fewer than 50 stores. Today, we have close to 50,000 employees, whom we call partners, and we will open up our 3,500th store at the end of this month. We have built, I think, an enduring business upon a premise that says the experience that we create inside our company will be the defining mechanism of building our brand. We said we must first take care of our people.

Think about all our experiences every day. How often does anybody honor us as a consumer? Rarely. But when it does happen, the power of the human spirit comes through. At the end of the day, when business is really good, it's not about building a brand or making money. That's a means to an end. It's about honoring the human spirit, honoring the people who work in the business and honoring the customer.