Tessa Halstead

Business Operations · Strategy & Execution · Team Builder · Bilingual (English/Spanish)

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SEE TESSA'S WORK
tessahalstead.com

From developing financial models at Goldman Sachs to founding and running an award-winning chocolate company, I am at my best taking on new challenges. I develop teams and processes that play to each person's strengths, break complex problems into actionable steps, and prioritize what matters most under real constraints. I am seeking a Business Operations & Finance role within a growing company.

ACHIEVEMENTS

15+
INTERNATIONAL CHOCOLATE AWARDS

Built Chocolaterie Tessa from a cottage kitchen into one of Eater's Best Chocolate Shops in America (2017, 2018).

60%+
SALES GROWTH IN TWO YEARS

Grew sales more than 60% from 2015 to 2017, led by a seasonal second shop, on a 12-month cash plan that came within 3% of actual sales.

$3B
PORTFOLIO AT GOLDMAN SACHS

Lead Analyst on hotel, office and retail assets and $50 million of debt closings, ranked Top Analyst every year.

5 → 20+
SEASONAL TEAM BUILT AND LED

Hired for character and built skills on the job, and managed 30+ staff at a now Michelin-starred restaurant.

EXPERIENCE

Southern Junction Ventures — *Strategy & Business Development Advisor* 2025–Present

Austin, Texas

- **Strategic Advisory:** Serve as the founder's chief advisor for an advanced manufacturing development company, guiding strategy, legal entity structure and partnerships as the business takes shape.
- **Partnership Structuring:** Advised on the partnership agreement with a family investment partner and on profit-sharing splits with the operating partner, weighing how each option would divide risk, control and returns.
- **Business Development:** Shape the pitches and value proposition that win over prospective clients and partners.

Career Break & Community Leadership 2020–2024

Austin, Texas · stepped away from full-time work to raise my two sons

- **Event Leadership:** Created MAHJOPAUSE!, a 40-person women's wellness fundraiser. Curated the event from concept to execution: speakers, venue, food and beverage donors (Clark's Oyster Bar, Good Spirits, Austin Wine Merchant), brand sponsors, and attendee experience (2026).
- **School Leadership:** Lead for Highland Park Elementary's Literati Book Fair. Managed school-wide communications for a week-long event; analyzed sales trends year over year to drive growth; merchandising, volunteer staffing, banking & POS operations (2025, 2026).

Chocolaterie Tessa — *Founder & Owner* 2012–2020

Austin, Texas

- **Business Formation:** Launched as a cottage food business to test recipes, pricing and demand, then raised about $375,000 through an SBA loan and owner equity, negotiated the lease, and managed the architect, contractor, permitting and build-out to open a retail shop with in-house manufacturing (2014).
- **Multi-Channel Sales:** Grew sales more than 60% in two years across retail, wholesale to hospitality and specialty grocery, online, and corporate gifting for clients including Kendra Scott and DLA Piper; a seasonal second shop at Domain NORTHSIDE (2017–2019) drove the biggest jump.
- **Forecasting & Cash Planning:** Ran the business on a 12-month cash plan; my 2016 forecast came within 3% of actual sales. Built worst, base and upside cases to win a $35,000 seasonal credit line, drawn for each holiday and

repaid by June every year.

- **Supply & Inventory Planning:** Turned forecasts into production, purchasing and staffing plans, and cut peak packaging stock by more than half by moving to forecast-sized orders from a U.S. supplier with lower minimums.
- **Strategic Sourcing:** Managed more than a dozen suppliers in dairy, ingredients and packaging, negotiating pricing, volume tiers and payment terms, and keeping backups for critical ingredients.
- **Perishable Operations:** Made a fresh, all-natural product with a three-week shelf life, which meant continuous small-batch production, fast inventory turns and temperature-controlled shipping.
- **Cost & Margin:** Built the standard cost model, repriced or resourced when commodity costs moved, and implemented the point-of-sale, inventory and accounting systems the team ran on.
- **Debt & Wind-Down:** Made every SBA loan payment on time for more than five years; when COVID hit in 2020, closed the business in an orderly way and repaid the loan and every other obligation in full.
- **Team Building:** Recruited and developed a tenured core team of women, hiring for character and building skills on the job; scaled from five to more than twenty each season, promoted from within to Head of Production and Head of Retail Sales, and retained one team member all eight years.
- **Food Safety & Compliance:** Built the food safety, sanitation and allergen programs and wrote labeling to code, with no health inspection score below 97/100 in eight years.

Azafrán Restaurant — *General Manager* 2010–2012

Mendoza, Argentina

- **Customer Experience:** General Manager of a now Michelin-starred fine dining restaurant, overseeing the full guest experience for an international clientele in Spanish and English.
- **Staff Management:** Managed staffing (30+), payroll and scheduling, and ran daily pre-service tastings and staff training in collaboration with the Head Chef.

Archon Group, L.P. (Goldman Sachs) — *Associate, Structured Finance and Portfolio Management* 2007–2010

Dallas, Texas · working closely with Goldman Sachs in New York

- **Debt Transactions:** Supporting analyst on a $2 billion debt closing with the seller and lenders, then Lead Analyst on $50 million of subsequent closings.
- **Portfolio Management:** Lead Analyst across more than $3 billion in Whitehall Funds assets, including 135+ limited and select service hotels, 30 office buildings and multiple shopping centers.
- **Financial Modeling:** Pulled data from the hospitality, retail and office teams into the leveraged cash flow models and reporting the investment committee relied on.

EARLIER ROLES

- **Morgen Chocolate Inc., Dallas, Texas:** Family chocolate business, from the retail counter to back-office sales, payroll and customer service.

EDUCATION

Georgetown University — *BBA, Finance Major, Spanish Minor · Washington, D.C. · Dean's List and National Dean's List*

SKILLS & CERTIFICATIONS

- Expert-level Excel and PowerPoint; QuickBooks; point-of-sale and inventory systems selected and implemented from scratch.
- Certified Food Manager; licensed food manufacturing to Texas DSHS, City of Austin, FDA current Good Manufacturing Practices and federal allergen labeling rules.
- Fluent with current AI tools, including building Claude projects and skills.
- Bilingual in English and Spanish.