029 The Frame Youre Reading Through

Perspective Book · https://kb.jeffreysummers.com/docs/029-the-frame-youre-reading-through/

Before you read the business, you frame it. The frame is invisible to you — it feels like reality — but it is not the business. It is the lens through which you have decided, usually without knowing you decided, to see the business.

The frame determines what you look for. What you look for determines what you find. What you find determines what you conclude. What you conclude determines what you do. By the time you are acting, the frame made most of the decisions — and you called it a read.

The operator who frames declining covers as a market problem looks outward — competition, economy, demographics, daypart shifts. The operator who frames the same declining covers as an experience problem looks inward — what changed in the building, what the cast is delivering, what the Guest is feeling. Same data. Different frame. Completely different actions. One of those operators is solving the right problem. The other is solving the problem their frame allowed them to see.

Most operators inherited their frame. It was built from accumulated experience, reinforced by the industry's dominant language, and shaped by what the people around them noticed and named. The operator who came up through cost control sees every problem as a cost problem. The operator who came up through marketing sees every problem as an awareness problem. The operator who came up through the kitchen sees every problem as a product problem. The frame feels like expertise. It is expertise — applied through a lens that excludes everything the lens wasn't built to see.

Framing Effect runs at this level before it runs anywhere else. The operator cannot read accurately through the wrong frame. No amount of data, no pre-shift discipline, no shift arc rigor corrects a frame that was set before the read began. The frame is not downstream of the data. It is upstream of it. It shapes what counts as evidence, what gets noticed, what gets dismissed, and what conclusion feels obvious.

The operator who wants accurate reads has one prerequisite: examine the frame before running the read. Not after the data disappoints. Before. Three questions:

What am I looking for in this situation — and what am I not looking for because my frame doesn't include it?

What would this situation look like through a different frame — and does that version reveal something the current frame hides?

Who built this frame — and do I still agree with the decisions they made when they built it?

The frame that has never been examined is the most dangerous frame in the building. Not because it is wrong — it may be right. But because the operator cannot know. The unexamined frame feels like clarity. It is certainty about a picture that may be incomplete.

[By Design Or By Default] applies here exactly: the frame is either examined and chosen, or it is running on whatever accumulated experience left behind. The operator who has never questioned their frame has defaulted the most important seeing decision they make.

What Changes Tomorrow

Before you read tomorrow's numbers or a Guest complaint, name the frame you're reading through: are you looking to confirm what you believe, to find what's wrong, or to actually understand what happened? The frame decides what you'll find before you even look. Check the frame before you trust the conclusion.