2055 From Perspective to Product The PreOpening Build

Product Book · https://kb.jeffreysummers.com/docs/2055-from-perspective-to-product-the-preopening-build/

Every section in Perspective asked you to examine how you see the business. Your market. Your competition. Your own blind spots. The filter you run decisions through. That work was not theoretical — it was the prerequisite. Because the operator who doesn't know how they see the business will make the same mistakes in pre-opening that they make every day once they're open, only the pre-opening mistakes are permanent. You cannot un-sign the lease. You cannot un-spend the capital. You cannot get back the six weeks you lost because the sequence was wrong.

This is where the thinking becomes the building.

Pre-opening is not a countdown to opening day. It is the construction of the entire operating system of the business — its culture, its financial architecture, its physical reality, and its people. The 12 months before you open are the only months in the life of your restaurant where you have something genuinely rare: the luxury of time. You will never have it again in quite the same way.

Most operators spend it wrong.

They spend it on the things that are visible and exciting — the design, the name, the logo, the menu font — and away from the things that are hard and uncomfortable: the numbers, the legal structure, the site fundamentals, the capital stack. They treat pre-opening as a to-do list they are working through toward a target date instead of as the one moment in the life of the business where every decision still has options attached to it.

Opening day is not a beginning. It is a report card on every decision you made in the 12 months before it.

What follows is the judgment behind the sequence — the places where smart operators cut corners and pay for it in the first 90 days, the dependencies that most people don't see until they've violated them, and the difference between an operator who opened well and one who just opened.