3415 The Culture Replication Problem

People Book · https://kb.jeffreysummers.com/docs/3415-the-culture-replication-problem/

Every operator who has ever opened a second location and watched it fail while the first one thrived has said some version of the same thing: "It just didn't have the same feel."

That's not bad luck. That's a culture transfer failure.

The feel of a great restaurant is not magic. It is the sum of a thousand specific decisions — how Guests are greeted, how problems are handled, how the team talks to each other, how standards are enforced, what happens when a new person joins and has to find their footing. Every one of those decisions has a right answer in your business. The question is whether those answers live in a document that can be handed to a new team — or whether they live only in your head and the heads of the people who've worked for you long enough to absorb them.

If it's the latter, your culture cannot travel. And a second location without your culture is just another restaurant. There are plenty of those.

Document it. Not as a manual. As a standard. As a clear, specific, demanding description of exactly what the Guest experience at your concept looks and feels like — what the team does, how they do it, and what "not good enough" means.

The only culture that travels is the one you've been explicit enough to export.