WRAY EXECUTIVE SEARCH

TITLE OF JOB: Director of Operations

LOCATION: Arkansas

SUMMARY:

We are a fast-growing Quick Service Restaurant concept with five successful locations and an ambitious growth strategy to double the business over the next two years. While our brand has been built through entrepreneurial leadership and exceptional guest experiences, we are entering a new phase that requires stronger operational infrastructure, greater consistency, and scalable systems.

We are seeking a Director of Operations to become the operational leader of the company, someone who can assume ownership of the day-to-day business, allowing the owners to focus on strategic growth while ensuring every restaurant consistently delivers exceptional operational and financial performance.
This is an opportunity for a builder. Someone who enjoys creating structure, developing people, and laying the operational foundation for the next stage of growth.

The Director of Operations will have primary responsibility for leading the company's daily and weekly operations across all locations while building the systems, processes, and leadership team required to support future expansion. This role demands a highly autonomous leader who is comfortable making decisions, solving problems independently, and driving execution without requiring constant direction. Working closely with ownership, this individual will help shape operational strategy while serving as the primary leader responsible for translating that strategy into consistent execution throughout the organization.

The successful candidate will build operational discipline, improve financial performance, strengthen leadership at every level, and create a culture of accountability that prepares the company to successfully grow from five locations to ten and beyond.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Operational Leadership

- Assume ownership of day-to-day and week-to-week restaurant operations across all locations.
- Lead operational execution with minimal oversight, allowing ownership to focus on strategic initiatives and company growth.
- Ensure consistent execution of operational standards, food quality, hospitality, cleanliness, and brand expectations.
- Drive operational consistency through accountability, coaching, and continuous improvement.

Build Operational Infrastructure

As the company prepares for expansion, this leader will build the operational foundation necessary to support sustainable growth.
Responsibilities include:

- Develop and implement standardized operating procedures (SOPs) across all restaurants.
- Create scalable operational playbooks, reporting structures, and performance standards.
- Improve back-office processes that increase efficiency, communication, and accountability.
- Establish operational systems that create consistency while supporting future growth.

Leadership Development & Talent

A key measure of success will be building a strong leadership pipeline throughout the organization.
Responsibilities include:

- Recruit, coach, and develop Restaurant Managers and future operational leaders.
- Build succession plans and promote internal talent whenever possible.
- Strengthen leadership capabilities through coaching, accountability, and professional development.
- Foster a culture where employees understand expectations, feel supported, and are inspired to grow their careers.

Financial Performance

Partner with ownership to improve operational and financial performance across the business.
Responsibilities include:

- Drive improvements in sales, labor, food cost, profitability, and overall unit economics.
- Monitor operational KPIs and identify opportunities to improve restaurant performance.
- Ensure financial discipline through effective scheduling, inventory management, and cost controls.
- Translate financial results into actionable operational improvements.

Strategy Execution

While ownership will continue establishing the company's long-term vision, this individual will become the leader responsible for bringing that vision to life throughout the organization.
Responsibilities include:

- Translate strategic initiatives into practical, executable action plans.
- Lead implementation of new operational programs, systems, and initiatives.
- Ensure organizational alignment through clear communication and consistent follow-through.
- Serve as the operational bridge between ownership and restaurant leadership.

Culture & Organizational Influence

The Director of Operations will have significant influence on the culture and future direction of the company.
Responsibilities include:

- Build a culture centered on accountability, teamwork, professionalism, and continuous improvement.
- Lead with humility, integrity, and an ownership mentality.
- Influence leaders through credibility, coaching, and strong relationships rather than positional authority alone.
- Create an environment where operational excellence and people development are equally valued.

Leadership Characteristics

- The ideal candidate is an entrepreneurial operator who thrives in growing organizations where they can make a meaningful impact.
- They are energized by building systems, simplifying complexity, and helping people succeed. They naturally earn trust through credibility, consistency, and follow-through, and they understand that lasting operational excellence begins with strong leadership and a healthy culture.
- This individual doesn't wait to be told what to do, they anticipate challenges, develop solutions, and execute with confidence. They take ownership of outcomes, influence through collaboration, and are passionate about leaving the business stronger than they found it.

Success in the First 24 Months

Within the first two years, the successful Director of Operations will have:

- Transitioned ownership out of the day-to-day operation of the business.
- Built standardized operating procedures and scalable systems across all locations.
- Improved operational consistency, customer experience, and financial performance.
- Developed a strong bench of future restaurant and area leaders through internal promotion.
- Created a disciplined operating culture centered on accountability and execution.
- Successfully supported the company's growth from five restaurants to ten while maintaining operational excellence.
- Positioned the organization with the infrastructure, leadership, and operational maturity required for continued expansion.

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QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE:

- 8–12+ years of progressive multi-unit restaurant operations leadership experience.
- Demonstrated success leading multiple QSR or fast-casual restaurants with full P&L responsibility.
- Proven ability to build systems, processes, and operational infrastructure in a growing organization.
- Experience developing restaurant managers and building leadership benches through internal promotion.
- Strong financial acumen with experience improving labor, food cost, profitability, and operational efficiency.
- Experience working in entrepreneurial or founder-led companies preferred.
- Comfortable operating with significant autonomy and making sound business decisions independently.
- Exceptional communication, coaching, and relationship-building skills.
- Hands-on leadership style with the ability to balance strategic thinking and operational execution.

FOR POSITION REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS PLEASE CONTACT:

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