

OPERATOR TOOL

15-Point Restaurant Profit Audit

A practical self-assessment for independent restaurant owners who want to understand whether the biggest leak is the numbers, the menu, the shift, the management team, or owner dependence.

Use this after a real operating week.

Score what actually happens - not what the SOP says should happen.

How to use the audit

Score each statement from 1 to 5. Circle the five lowest scores. Those are not automatically the first five projects; they are the places where evidence and on-site observation should begin.

60-75	Strong operating foundation. Focus on specific constraints and growth readiness.
45-59	Working restaurant with material inconsistency or owner dependence.
30-44	Multiple systems are leaking margin or execution. Prioritize; do not change everything at once.
15-29	Operating triage is needed before growth initiatives.

Restaurant: _____ Date: _____ Owner hours/week: _____

Numbers & Prime Cost

1

Weekly visibility

You can see sales, guest count, spend per guest, labor, food cost, comps, voids, and recooks before the month is over.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

2

Prime-cost control

Food and direct labor targets are defined, reviewed weekly, and connected to corrective actions.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

3

Cash versus profit

Ownership understands why the P&L, bank balance, debt service, and distributions may tell different stories.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

Menu & Purchasing

4

Current recipe costs

Every major item has a current plate cost using live purchase prices, standard yields, portions, and reusable prep recipes.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

5

Contribution, not just food cost

Menu decisions consider dollars contributed, sales mix, prep burden, waste, and guest demand - not only food-cost percentage.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

6

Purchasing discipline

Vendor prices, pack sizes, product specs, substitutions, and receiving controls are reviewed rather than assumed.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

Shift Execution

7

Prep matches demand

Pars, batch sizes, station setup, and staffing reflect actual sales and daypart demand.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

8

The rush has ownership

Host, bar, kitchen, expo, and floor handoffs are clear; managers know what to watch and when to intervene.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

9

The close protects tomorrow

Waste, comps, cash, sidework, inventory, and unresolved issues are recorded and handed off consistently.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

Leadership & Accountability

10

Managers make routine decisions

Normal guest recovery, cuts, deployment, and service corrections do not require the owner every time.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

11

One issue, one owner

Material actions have a named owner, measure, due date, and review cadence.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

12

Feedback moves upward

Employees and managers can surface guest and operating feedback without fear, gossip, or defensive shutdown.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

Owner Dependence

13**The business can operate without the owner present**

The restaurant can open, run a busy service, close, and recover from normal problems without the owner becoming the shift plan.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

14**The owner works on the business**

Protected time exists for financial review, hiring, strategy, vendor work, marketing, and growth - not only coverage.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

15**The restaurant returns energy and income**

Ownership compensation, time, stress, and risk are producing an acceptable return and a sustainable life.

Score 1 2 3 4 5 Notes: _____

What to do with your five lowest scores

Do not fix all five at once. Ask three questions:

- 1. What is the financial or guest impact?**
- 2. What evidence confirms the cause?**
- 3. What is the smallest operating change that can be measured on the next shift?**

The numbers tell us where to look. The shift tells us why.

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