



# DM & MULTIUNIT OPERATOR BEST PRACTICES

We asked WFA members with organizations of all sizes and the Brand to share their best practices for DM development. If you have more to share, please send them to us at [wfa@dc-kansascity.com](mailto:wfa@dc-kansascity.com).

- ✓ **Start with People.** Take the time to assess the development level of your team and provide the right leadership style and resources to help them grow. Make sure your team is well-trained, motivated, and having fun.
- ✓ **Develop a consistent Pattern of Management.** Be consistent in your approach to restaurant visits and how you prioritize and schedule your time. Be where you need to be to lead and support your team. Develop a consistent walk-through pattern that you execute during every restaurant visit and covers all the key touch points that will help you assess the restaurant operation.
- ✓ **Be a Coach.** Remember the C.O.A.C.H. acronym?
  - **Care.** Demonstrate you care about the success of your team. Invest in them!
  - **Observe.** Observe and watch full cycles to understand the underlying cause of what you're seeing so you can reward or correct the behavior accordingly.
  - **Act.** Get engaged, ask questions, provide feedback, teach.
  - **Challenge.** Give them something to shoot for and express confidence they can achieve the desired results.
  - **Help.** Remember a core piece of your role is to help them grow. The more they grow into their role, the more confidence they gain to get results in their current role and beyond.
- ✓ **Use positive reinforcement and lead by example.** Encourage the GM to fix things that are incorrect and provide immediate feedback, followed by positive reinforcement. For example, if the top of the fry machine needs to be wiped down, point it out, make sure they take care of it, then offer encouragement. You'll earn your team's trust and respect by how you treat them, how you communicate with them and your willingness to help them be successful.
- ✓ **Shadowing.** New DMs can learn a lot by shadowing a successful DM. Pair a new DM with someone on your team and let them experience how to interact with GMs and management team. It helps them understand your organization and your expectations. If you have a small organization, ask another franchise owner in your division for a shadowing experience for your DM. Get DMs together regularly (in person when appropriate or via virtual meetings). Encourage them to challenge each other and share their best practices.
- ✓ **Identify trends and patterns.** By noticing trends and patterns across their restaurants, DMs can be more consistent in their training and coaching. They may identify a lack of understanding for a new process, so they can focus on it with all restaurant teams. If you notice a trend in your restaurants, consider sharing the information with other owners in your area as they might be having the same issues.
- ✓ **Follow-up with Action Plans.** After a DM finishes a development conversation, they should work with the GM to create an action plan based on what they learned and what the GM needs to work on. Consistent follow-up on action plans to keep the momentum going.
- ✓ **Use Wendy's Systems.** While some of the systems and tools for GMs and DMs overlap, DMs will use these tools at a higher level. Take the time

to review the tools to fit the role. And then, whether you're looking at food costs or labor, use the same process consistently, every week. The tools provide valuable information about couponing, manager voids, and so on.

✓ **Finding Future DMs.** Through conversations and assessments, identify GMs who have the skills and interest in the role of DM. Have them shadow you for a few days so they can see how you interact with other restaurant teams. It may also help your GM to see what another well-run store looks like. Test their observation skills by visiting a restaurant to observe behaviors they are seeing. Have them point out what they see, allow them to draw parallels to their restaurant and look for ways they can improve their operations.

✓ **Super GM Concept.** The Holland Group uses something they call a Super GM concept where new DMs are given three restaurants to manage. Store 1 is already at a B level with good employees and results; this is their base store. The other two units may be more challenging. DMs run two shifts in Stores 2 and 3 every week and one shift in their base store. They rotate back and forth with one day set aside for meetings and administration. If they're "the boss" in three stores, they should get stronger assistant managers who are promotable.

Being a "Super GM" forces them to follow specific time management sequences with no deviation and set core objectives for the three units. Let the DM grow out of it gradually. When they pick up their fourth restaurant, they work one shift per store until they get to know the team, and so on.

✓ **Ongoing DM & Multiunit Training.** Consider planning regular meetings with DMs and DAOs that include training events and situations where they solve a specific problem. For example, ask multiunit participants to set up a sandwich station for the first shift, or give them a tray with paper goods – sandwich wrap, cup, fry box – used to serve a combo. Their task is to agree on where to put the paper goods on the tray in the proper configuration for a combo. Did everyone agree?

A simple test like this may show a need for retraining to get everyone on the same page. Consistency is important across all shifts. Teach everyone on your team the core procedures of the job so they can teach their teams, and service is consistent across the organization. This is also an opportunity to partner with other franchisees in your division on training and DM meetings.

✓ **Cascade Training Approach.** Everyone in the organization, starting with DVPs, should go through the same or similar training so that everyone from the top level through the GM level understands what's going on and is speaking the same language.

*These best practices came from franchisees, operators, and the brand. Thanks to Brad Blankenship and Wendy Thomas, Dave Thomas Family Restaurants; Jim Kelly, Wendy's VP of Restaurant Services; Phil Stanton, The Holland Group; Carl Hauch, Keene Curtis and Ryan Eason, NPC; Pete Souch, Wendico; Bob VanVliet, Wendy's Project Manager, Restaurant Services; and Kelly Dunn, GFWW Management.*

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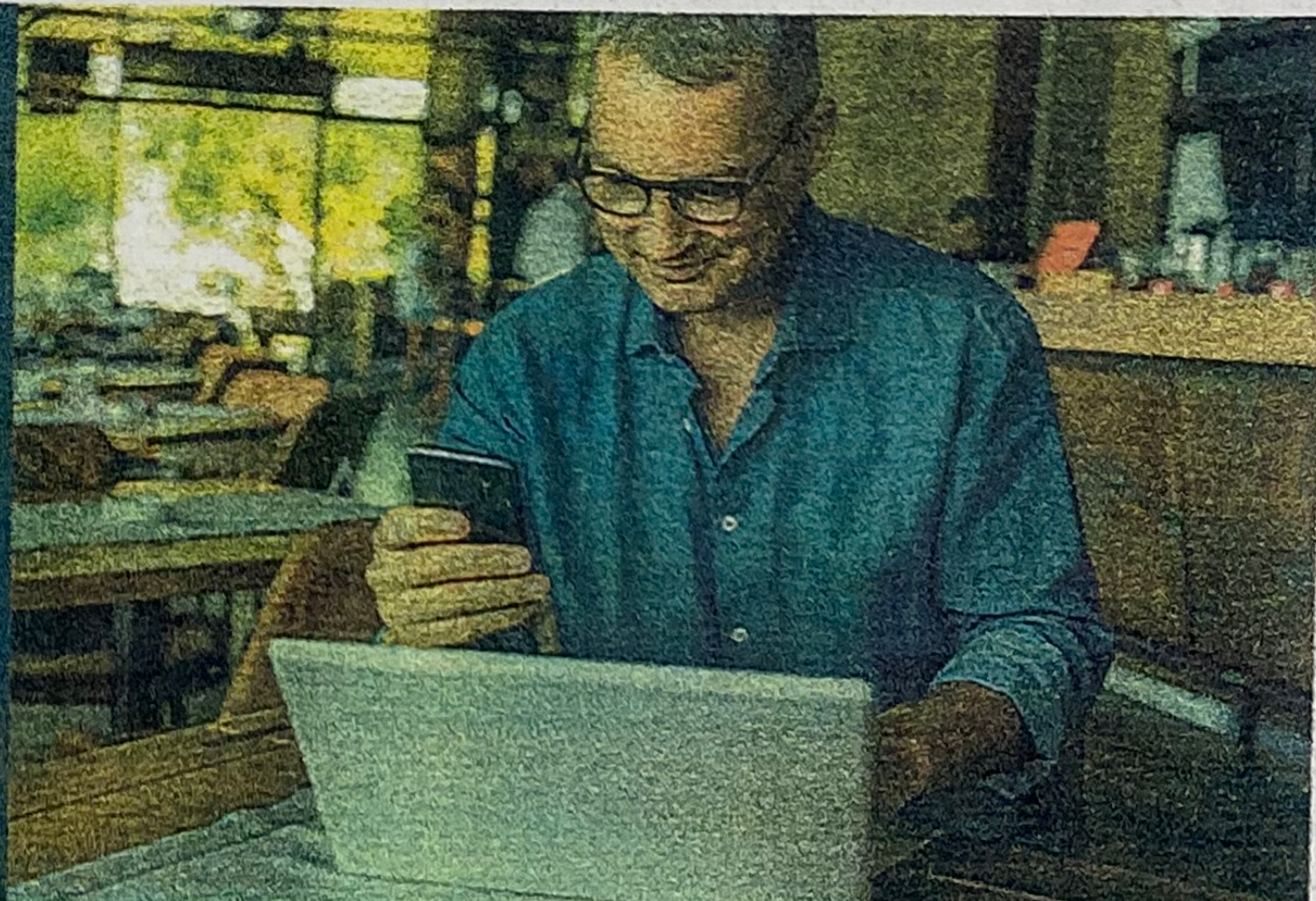
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Michele Geile, National Sales Manager  
404-673-1373 | [mgeile@netspend.com](mailto:mgeile@netspend.com)