

GP HOSPITALITY PARTNERS

# THE OWNER DETOX WEEK GUIDE

How to Step Back Intentionally · What to Watch For · The Ride or Die Leadership Circle

## WHAT IS OWNER DETOX WEEK?

Owner Detox Week is a structured five-day experiment in intentional absence. You show up — but you do not run the operation. Your team does. Your job is to observe, resist the urge to intervene, and pay attention to what the business reveals about itself when you are not holding it together.

This is not a vacation. It is a diagnostic. By the end of the week you will know exactly which systems are solid, which leaders are ready, and where the operation still depends on you to function.

### GREG'S NOTE

*The hardest part of Owner Detox Week is not staying away — it is watching something go wrong and not fixing it. That is also the most important part. When you step in every time something slips, you teach your team that they don't need to figure it out because you will always show up. When you let them solve it — and then debrief it — you teach them that they are capable. The discomfort you feel during Detox Week is the feeling of your organization growing.*

## BEFORE YOU START — THE PRE-DETOX CHECKLIST

Do not start Detox Week without completing this list. These are the conditions that make the experiment safe and useful.

### LEADERSHIP READINESS

- You have at least one manager or shift lead who has run a shift independently before**  
*They do not need to be perfect — they need to have done it.*
- Your team knows the standards — not just because you enforce them, but because they understand why**
- There is a clear chain of command for the week — one person is unambiguously in charge each shift**
- That person knows they are in charge and has agreed to it**

### SYSTEMS READINESS

- The opening and closing checklists exist and are being used — not just known about**
- Scheduling, ordering, and basic vendor communication do not require you personally**
- There is a clear protocol for handling common guest issues without escalating to you**
- The team knows what to do in the three most common emergencies at your location**

### YOUR READINESS

- You have told the team what you are doing and why — no secrets, no ambiguity**
- You have defined what 'stepping in' looks like — under what circumstances you will intervene**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>You have a place to be that is not the operation — you cannot observe properly if you are hovering</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>You have a debrief scheduled for the end of each day — 20-30 minutes with the shift lead</b>

# THE FIVE-DAY FRAMEWORK

Each day has a different focus. Each day builds on the last.

## DAY 1 — MONDAY · Observe

You are present but silent. Watch everything. Say nothing unless there is a safety issue.

### OWNER DOES

- Arrive after the opening team has started
- Stay off the floor — find a vantage point
- Take notes on what you see — do not intervene
- Let problems develop — watch how the team responds
- Evening debrief with shift lead: 20 minutes

### TEAM DOES

- Runs the opening without direction from you
- Makes decisions in real time
- Handles the first issue of the day without calling you
- Does not know you are watching as closely as you are

**WATCH FOR:** Are they waiting for you to appear before they act? Or are they already moving?

## DAY 2 — TUESDAY · Measure

You are still not running the operation. Today you are looking at the numbers — comparing what you observe to what the data shows.

### OWNER DOES

- Pull yesterday's sales, labor, and any complaint data
- Compare to a normal Monday under your watch
- Identify any gaps — where did performance slip?
- Resist the urge to call a meeting about what you found
- Evening debrief: share one specific observation, ask one question

### TEAM DOES

- Runs Tuesday with full ownership
- Begins to feel the weight of the week
- Either rises to meet it or shows you where the gaps are

**WATCH FOR:** What do the numbers tell you that your eyes didn't? What do your eyes tell you that the numbers don't?

## DAY 3 — WEDNESDAY · Test

Today you introduce one deliberate challenge. Something that requires a decision — and you will not make it.

### OWNER DOES

- Choose one scenario to introduce: a staffing gap, a vendor issue, a guest complaint escalation
- Surface it to the shift lead and step back
- Watch how they handle it from a distance
- Do not rescue them unless there is a real safety or legal risk
- Evening debrief: how did they handle it? What would you have done? What does the gap tell you?

### TEAM DOES

- Encounters an unexpected challenge
- Either makes the call or stalls waiting for you
- Learns something about themselves as a leader

**WATCH FOR:** When they hit the hard moment — do they freeze, escalate, or solve?

## DAY 4 — THURSDAY · Reflect

You step further back today. Minimal presence. This is the day the team either holds or reveals the gaps.

### OWNER DOES

- Do not come in during the opening rush
- Arrive midday — observe for 60-90 minutes, then leave
- Let Thursday run without your physical presence for most of the shift

### TEAM DOES

- Runs the operation with minimal owner presence
- The culture either holds or it doesn't
- Team members reveal who they actually are when you're not watching

- Be available by phone for genuine emergencies only
- Evening debrief: longer today — 45 minutes. What did you learn about your systems?

**WATCH FOR:** What held without you? What fell apart? That is your diagnostic — not your failure.

**DAY 5 — FRIDAY · Debrief**

You return fully — not to take over, but to close the week. The conversation today is more valuable than any shift this week.

**OWNER DOES**

- Be present for the full shift
- Do not immediately take back control — observe how the team responds to your presence
- Run the full Detox Week debrief with your shift lead (use the guide below)
- Recognize the team publicly in the huddle — name specific things you observed
- Document everything you learned before the weekend

**TEAM DOES**

- Feels the weight of what they accomplished
- Gets specific recognition from you based on what you actually saw
- Understands what the week revealed about them and the operation

**WATCH FOR:** How does the team behave when you return? Do they hand it back immediately — or do they keep leading?

# THE DETOX WEEK DEBRIEF GUIDE

Run this conversation on Friday. 60-90 minutes. No phones. Just the two of you.

## PART 1 — THEIR REFLECTION (30 MINUTES)

Ask these questions in order. Let them answer fully before you respond. Take notes.

<p><b>1. What was the hardest moment of the week?</b> Follow-up: "What did you do? What would you do differently?"</p>
<p><b>2. What are you most proud of from this week?</b> Follow-up: "Why does that one stand out?"</p>
<p><b>3. Where did you feel most confident? Where did you feel in over your head?</b> Follow-up: "What does that tell you about where you are as a leader?"</p>
<p><b>4. What did you learn about the team this week?</b> Follow-up: "Who surprised you? Who disappointed you?"</p>
<p><b>5. What would have been easier if we had a better system for it?</b> Follow-up: "What would you build or fix first?"</p>
<p><b>6. What did you learn about yourself?</b></p>

## PART 2 — YOUR OBSERVATIONS (20 MINUTES)

Share what you saw. Be specific — not evaluative. Start with what worked before you share what didn't.

<p><b>Three things I saw that I want more of:</b> Name them specifically. This is recognition with evidence.</p>
<p><b>One moment that stood out as exactly what we're building toward:</b> Share it in detail. This becomes part of the culture story.</p>
<p><b>One area where I saw a gap:</b> Not a criticism — a gap. State it factually and ask what they think caused it.</p>
<p><b>What this week told me about your readiness:</b> Be honest. Name specifically what you believe they are ready for and what they are not yet ready for.</p>

## PART 3 — COMMITMENTS (10 MINUTES)

Close with two mutual commitments — one from them, one from you.

<p><b>THEIR COMMITMENT</b> One specific behavior or habit they will build on from this week.</p>	<p><b>YOUR COMMITMENT</b> One thing you will do differently based on what the week revealed.</p>
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# READING THE SIGNALS

What you observe during Detox Week tells you exactly what to work on next.

IF YOU SEE THIS	IT MEANS THIS	YOUR NEXT MOVE
<b>Team waits for direction before acting</b>	They have been trained to wait for you — intentionally or not	Create decision-making frameworks so they know what to do without asking
<b>Standards hold without you</b>	The culture is real — it doesn't live in you, it lives in the team	Celebrate it loudly and specifically. Name what you saw.
<b>Standards slip the moment you're gone</b>	Standards are being enforced, not understood. Compliance, not ownership.	Go back to the Mission Huddle. Focus on why the standard exists.
<b>One manager shines, others coast</b>	You have one leader and a group of followers — uneven development	The shine-ers go to the Leaders Lab. The coasters get a direct conversation.
<b>Every problem escalates to you by phone</b>	No decision-making framework exists — or the team doesn't trust themselves to use it	Build a tiered escalation guide: what they handle, what they escalate, what waits for you
<b>Guest complaints go up</b>	Your presence was compensating for a system or training gap	Find the specific gap — don't just increase your presence again
<b>The operation runs fine without you</b>	You have built something real. This is the goal.	Do Detox Week again in 90 days. Raise the bar. Go longer.

## AFTER DETOX WEEK — WHAT COMES NEXT

The week is data. What you do with it is the work.

<b>This week</b>	Write down every gap you observed. Prioritize the top three. Build a plan for each one.
<b>Next 30 days</b>	Address the top gap with a specific system, training session, or direct conversation — not more of your presence.
<b>Next 90 days</b>	Run Detox Week again. Compare. What held? What improved? What is still broken?
<b>Ongoing</b>	The goal is to make Detox Week unnecessary because the operation runs at this level all the time — not just when you are testing it.

The goal is not to be needed less.  
**The goal is to be needed differently.**  
 Less operations. More leadership.

Part of the Ride or Die Leadership Circle — Tools & Resources Library

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