JULIAN MERCER

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Operations executive with 22+ years in grocery retail, now leading regional operations for 120 stores and about 8,000 team members at a public company. Delivers store productivity, labor and shrink control, and supply chain reliability. Reports results to senior leadership and partners with finance and real estate.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Vice President, Regional Operations Mar 2023 - Present
Sprouts Farmers Market, Phoenix, AZ

- Lead store operations for 120 stores and about 8,000 team members through 8 district managers, with annual sales of about $1.6B.
- Improved regional store operating margin by 70 basis points over two years through labor scheduling, shrink reduction, and tighter ordering.
- Reduced produce shrink from 7.8% to 6.4% of sales by changing delivery cadence and ordering parameters with the supply chain team.
- Supported the opening of 14 new stores with an average ramp to target sales of under 18 months, working with real estate and construction.
- Report operating results and the regional plan to senior leadership each quarter, covering labor, shrink, and capital spend.
- Implemented a store manager development program that lowered regional store manager turnover from 22% to 15%.

Senior Director, Store Operations Feb 2019 - Feb 2023

- Oversaw 6 district managers and 85 stores, with a $1.1B annual sales base across Arizona and neighboring states.
- Rolled out a labor model that increased sales per labor hour 6% without lowering customer service scores.
- Introduced weekly store-level scorecards for sales, labor, shrink, and out-of-stocks used in every district meeting.
- Opened three fresh-prep fulfilment hubs that supported online order pickup in 30 stores.

Director of Operations Jun 2015 - Jan 2019

- Managed 40 stores in the Southwest, growing comparable sales by an average of 5% a year.
- Reduced work-related injuries by 28% through a field safety audit program run by district managers.
- Reset produce and bulk departments across the region with merchandising, lifting department sales 9% in the first year after the remodels.

District Manager Jan 2010 - May 2015
Safeway, Pleasanton, CA

- Directed operations for 14 stores across the East Bay with 1,900 employees and $520M in annual sales.
- Cut controllable expenses 3% over 3 years by standardizing store labor schedules and tightening supply ordering.

Store Manager Jul 2004 - Dec 2009

- Managed a $48M-a-year store with 190 employees, ranking in the top 10 of 160 stores in the division for sales growth in 2008.
- Grew perishables sales 12% over two years by remodeling the produce and deli areas with the merchandising team.

CORE SKILLS

Retail operations strategy | P&L and capital planning | Retail labor productivity | Shrink reduction | Supply chain and distribution | Store development and openings | Executive reporting | Multi-site leadership | Talent development | Operating scorecards | Safety and risk management | Merchandising partnership | Change management

EDUCATION

Master of Business Administration, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Six Sigma Black Belt (CSSBB), American Society for Quality (ASQ)