

Checkers & Rally's Owner Donnell Thompson to FoodSided Reporter Cristine Struble

1. After leaving the NFL, how hard was the transition from athlete to businessman?

It was a smooth transition for me to walk away from the NFL. I worked for one on my mentors early in life in high school in his textile company in all job codes. This was a great base for me to learn business. I was blessed again to work in a training program for McDonalds Corp. To learn how to become a Franchisee. I worked during the off season for many year. I worked 40 hours a week for Free! I worked 6 months a year. I worked in a few of my mentor stores. They trained me how to run a McDonalds. This was the very best training anyone can ever complete. They are the very best!

2. What skills did you learn as a professional football player that helped you open your franchise and/or be successful in business?

Some of the skills that are required in sports to be successfully are the very same for any business. You must work as a team, You must have great people, you must have leaders, you must follow the training manual, you must buy into the system, you must praise the good and fix the opportunities. There is so much more!

3 Why did you choose your particular franchise? Why did this particular restaurant/food concept appeal to you?

Everyone has dreams and you pick what best fit your dreams and knowledge at the time. Everything has a season.

4. What advice would you give a current NFL player who is nearing the end of his career and looking to be a successful franchisee?

Do the best job you can to understand the culture of the leadership of the brand you choose. The same brand you choose today may have a leadership change and that can change your position with the brand. That's life.

5. What is your ultimate goal with your franchising business endeavor?

I like to work and grow people, I will work until the day I die. But it's not work to me! One day someone in my family will pick this up!