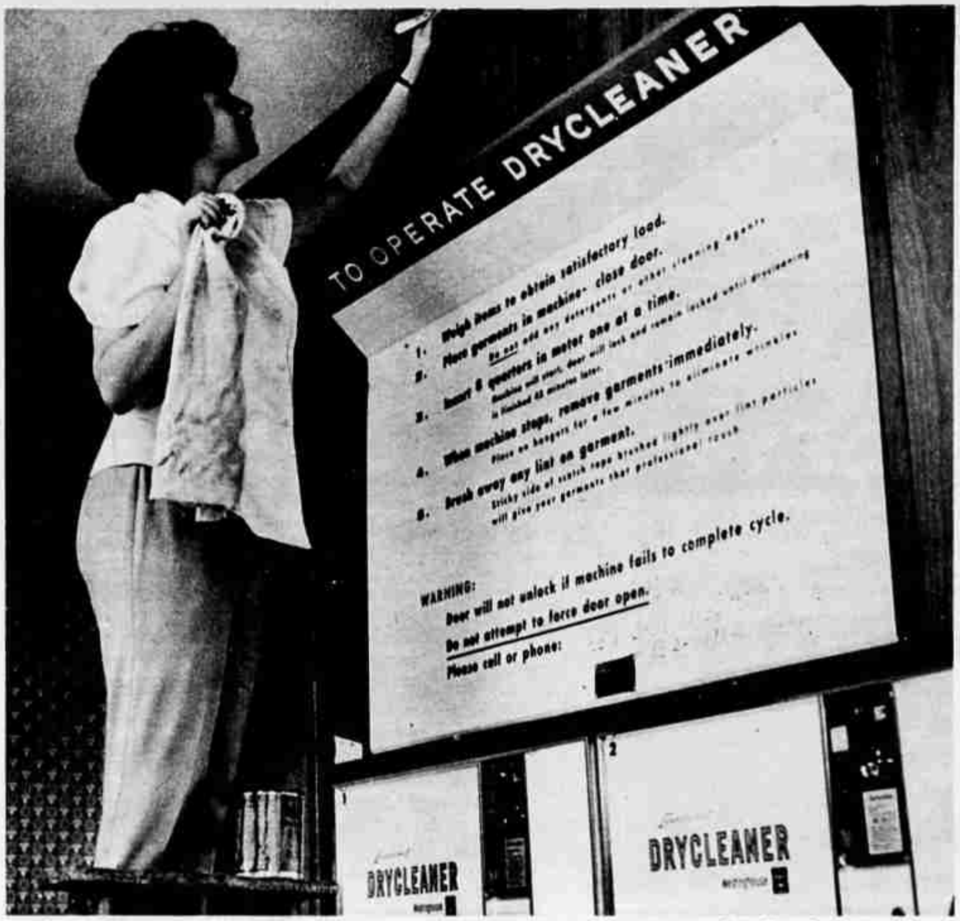

Sandra Yudelevitz applies finish to walls of Laundromat she owns with two other Cleveland secretaries.

Tunick, founder of the highly successful "Chicken Delight" chain, "is that the man who owns his business finds the 25th hour in the day to make it work."

As a rule, however, the average franchisee is in business for himself because he wants to be independent and make more money. In the "Chicken Delight" chain, selling precooked carry-home dinners, a glittering example of hard work and success is Werner Maahs, a former policeman from White Fish Bay, Wis.

In 1954, then 27, married, and on the police force five years, Werner hungered for a chance to better his lot. His duty frequently took him to a corner where there was a franchised "Chicken Delight" store, one of the first in the chain, operated by two young partners. Impressed, Werner made inquiries, applied for a franchise, and with family help raised the cash he needed to get a "Chicken Delight" store of his own.

Today Werner has an interest in several "Chicken Delights"—and is a vice president in the parent firm.

The average small-business franchise, according to Roger Sherwood, publisher of "National Franchise Reports," requires cash investments ranging from about $4,000 to $6,500. But the amount invested in a franchise is no indication of how much you can make. It really depends on how hard you're willing to work and whether you want to plow profits back into the business for expansion.

The first challenge in a successful franchise is knowing where, when, and how to choose your new business. There are no set patterns in financing or locating a franchised business. Many parent companies will assist you directly in the financing, others will refer you to banks and will assist indirectly by guaranteeing part of the loan.

Some companies will find suitable business locations for you while others prefer that you find the location first, and then they will check it out.

The most important part of choosing a franchise is to be certain that you are dealing with a reputable parent company, especially now that some sharpies and outright gyps are getting into the act. To protect yourself, here are five important rules:

1. Never sign a franchise contract without legal counsel or expert opinion.

If you can't afford a lawyer, at least seek the advice of close friends and family, especially if one of them is an accountant or is experienced in business. Above all, beware of the fast-talking smoothy who wants you to sign on the dotted line immediately.

2. Investigate the parent company's reputation and credit standing.

You can do this through your local Better Business Bureau, Chamber of Commerce, and banker. The National Better Business Bureau headquarters in the Chrysler Building, New York City, and the Small Business Advisory Service of the Bank of America issue free public bulletins on how to evaluate a reputable franchise offer.

3. Try to visit the parent company's home office before signing.

Some franchising companies insist on this. All reputable companies will welcome your desire to do so. Most of the phony outfits will discourage such visits because they are obviously not equipped to provide the assistance they may claim to offer.

4. If nothing else, be sure to visit two or more of the franchisees already in business under the parent-company name.

Ask these people how they get along with the parent company; whether they are satisfied that the business is all it was said to be; and don't be afraid to ask how much they invested as well as how much they are grossing.

5. Be sure that the franchise contract truly gives you the right to be your own boss with the continuing help of the parent company.

This means that you must have the right to sell the business at whatever capital gains (profit) you may care to make, and while you are in business the parent company must *continue* to offer you assistance in such matters as promotion, publicity, advertising, product improvement, and proper management of the business. Some companies offer business opportunities under the name "franchise," but actually all they do is help you get started in business merely to sell their equipment to you.

Finally, remember that real franchising is a two-way street: you will be successful only because the parent company needs you in order to sell its products and services through you. Together, you can follow the franchise road to financial independence.

Where to Look for Franchise Opportunities

1. Many advertisements for franchises appear in the classified columns of daily newspapers under "business opportunities."

2. Another source of current franchise opportunities is "National Franchise Reports," a monthly newsletter, $12 a year, published at 333 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 1, Ill. The same publisher also sells a "Franchise Annual," $1.

3. A "Directory of Franchising Organizations," $2, is sold by Pilot Publications, 42 W. 33 St., New York 1, N.Y.

4. Franchise offers also appear in the advertisements and stories of the industry's trade magazine, "Modern Franchising," 549 Washington Blvd., Chicago 6, Ill.

5. Periodically, the franchising industry holds "trade shows" in key cities, where franchises are offered to the public. For information about forthcoming shows, write to: The International Franchise Assn., 549 W. Randolph St., Chicago 6, Ill.

6. Franchise consultants and marketing agencies also offer opportunities through direct interviews. A complete list of these firms appears in "The Franchise Boom: How You Can Profit in It," by Harry Kursh, Prentice Hall, $5.95.