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Applied Leadership and Management Outreach

Module Assignment Submission

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Table of Contents

Define a complex problem in the workplace, including its scope and impact 3

Analyse information on the identified problem, to help inform the decision making process..... 5

Propose a range of alternative solutions to the problem..... 7

Using a decision making technique, evaluate a range of solutions to identify the most appropriate option..... 8

Develop a detailed plan for implementing the solution..... 10

Communicate the plan to relevant stakeholders 14

Assess appropriate monitoring and review techniques to ensure successful implementation of solution 14

References 16

Appendix 1 18

Define a complex problem in the workplace, including its scope and impact

A children's party business has its own unique set of challenges, and missing messages can cause multiple complications. Including:

1. Scheduling Conflicts: If a booking confirmation message goes missing, the business might double-book parties or might not be prepared for a scheduled event.

2. Incorrect package booking. If details about party package, entertainment requests, or chosen characters are missed, the party might not meet the client's expectations.

3. Additional need requirement. Messages about children with additional needs are vital. Missing such messages could result in inappropriate opening to a party or visit and could have a detrimental effect on the experience the children receive.

4. Inaccurate Headcounts. If a message detailing the number of attendees is missed, there could be too little or to many staff.

5. Financial Discrepancies: Missing messages related to payment, deposits, or other financial details can lead to disputes and potential loss of income.

6. Location Errors: If there's confusion about the party's location due to missed messages, the entertainment or services might arrive at the wrong address or not at all.

7. Safety Concerns: Especially for businesses that offer discos and children’s entertainment such as mascots with poor visibility, missing safety guidelines or potential hazards could lead to legal liabilities.

8. Reputation Damage: Word of mouth is crucial for local businesses like children's party services. Unmet expectations or mistakes due to missed communications can harm the business's reputation.

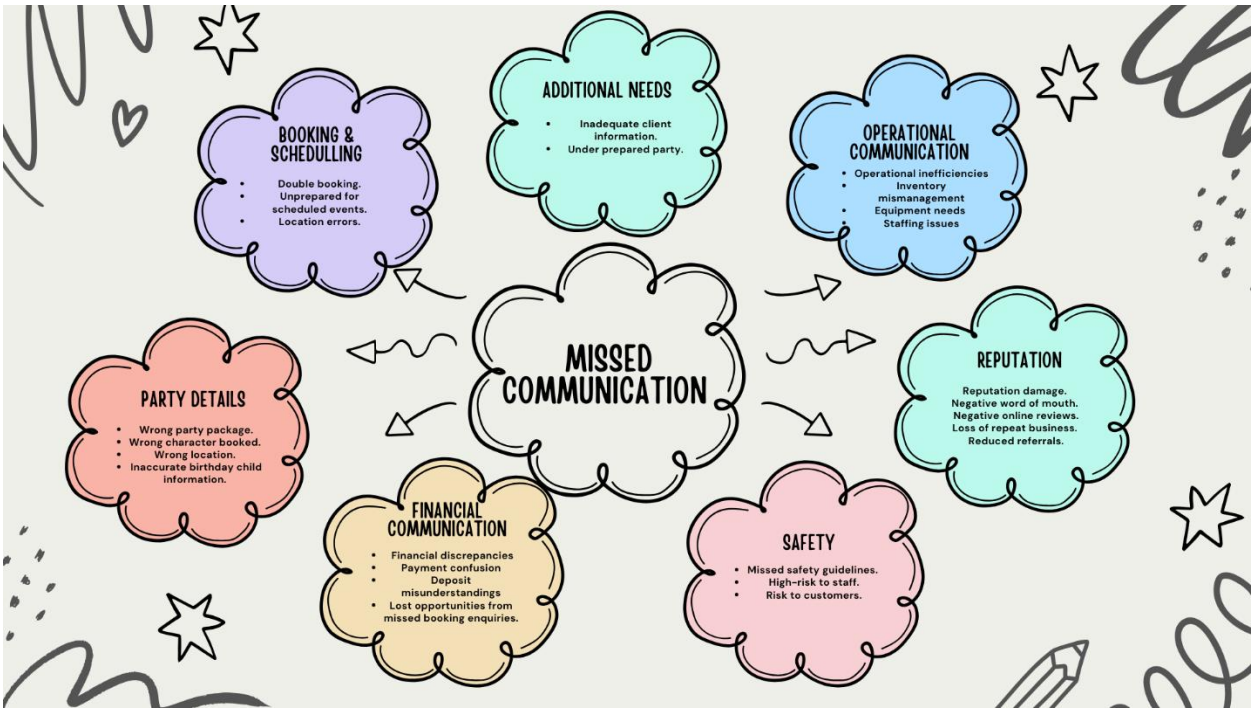
9. Relationship Strain: Continuous communication failures can damage relationships with clients, leading to loss of repeat business and referrals.

10. Operational Inefficiencies: Missing messages about inventory, equipment needs, or staffing can result in operational hitches, leading to increased costs or unavailability of key resources.

11. Lost Opportunities: If inquiries or requests for bookings are missed, it can lead to lost business opportunities.

13. Increased Costs: Mistakes due to missed messages might require the business to offer discounts, refunds, or complimentary services as compensation, leading to increased costs.

In a children's party business, ensuring client satisfaction is paramount, given the emotional significance attached to children's celebrations. Missing messages can compromise the quality of service, leading to unhappy clients and potential business losses. Implementing robust communication systems and regularly checking for missed or pending communications can mitigate these risks.



Analyse information on the identified problem, to help inform the decision making process.

1. Booking & Scheduling

- Impact: Double bookings can cause dissatisfaction for both parties involved. Arriving unprepared for a scheduled event looks unprofessional and can harm the reputation of the business.

- Countermeasure: Implement a robust booking system, possibly digital, that automatically avoids double-booking. Regularly review and confirm bookings to ensure preparedness.

2. Party Details

- Impact: Incorrect party bookings or incorrect character information can lead to disappointed children and parents. Inaccurate headcounts can result in wasted resources or unmet needs.

- Countermeasure: Develop a detailed party request form ensuring all necessary details are captured. Regularly communicate with clients for any updates or changes.

3. Financial Communication

- Impact: Financial misunderstandings can lead to cash flow problems and potential legal issues. Missed booking inquiries directly translate to lost revenue.

- Countermeasure: Send invoices with clear breakdowns of costs. Consider an online system where clients can check their financial commitments. Ensure prompt responses to booking inquiries.

4. Additional Needs

- Impact: Overlooking additional need correspondence can have serious implications for children party experience and will reflect badly on the business.

- Countermeasure: Emphasize the importance of detailing additional needs in communications.

5. Operational Communication

- Impact: Operational inefficiencies increase costs and can result in unavailability at crucial times.

- Countermeasure: Regularly update and review bookings and character lists. Schedule periodic team meetings to discuss staffing and operational concerns.

6. Safety & Legal

- Impact: Safety oversights can result in injuries, leading to legal action and tarnished reputation.

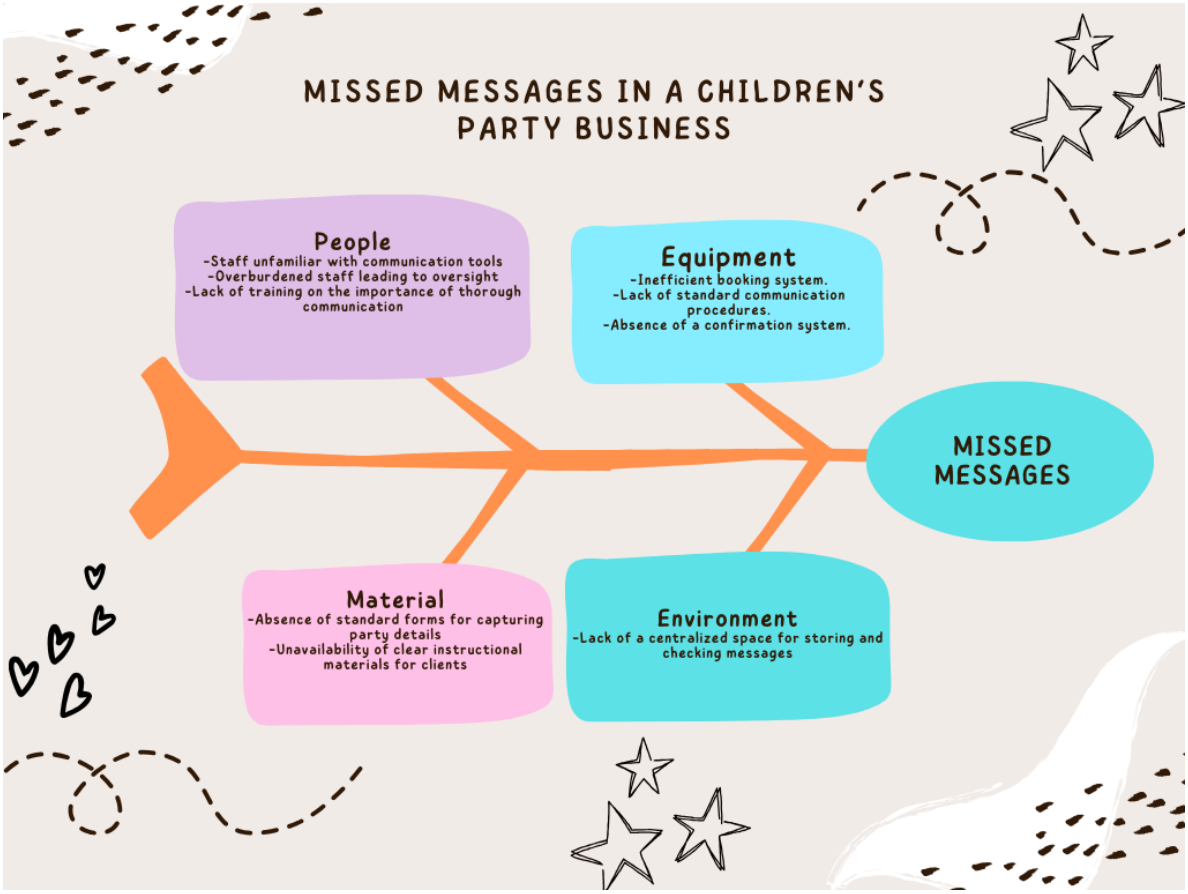
- Countermeasure: Always include safety guidelines in communications. Ensure waivers and permissions are signed before the party. Consider digital forms for better tracking.

7. Reputation & Relationships

- Impact: A damaged reputation can result in decreased business over time. Strained relationships can lead to a loss of repeat customers.

- Countermeasure: Prioritize customer feedback and address any concerns promptly. Engage in relationship-building activities, such as loyalty programs or feedback surveys.

In the decision-making process, the business should prioritise implementing strategies that address the most critical impacts first, like safety concerns and financial communications. Adopting digital tools for bookings, feedback, and financial management can also streamline processes and reduce the chance of missing messages.



Propose a range of alternative solutions to the problem

1. Upgrade Communication Tools:

Introduce an online booking system that will not allow double bookings, will send customers reminders and allow the customer to log in and confirm or check their booking.

Use a platform that would integrate email, messenger and phone calls in one place so all communications are in one place.

2. Standardise Communication.

Create templates for party enquiries, bookings and confirmations to ensure all information is captured.

Automatic responses so the customer knows that their enquiry has been received and will be dealt with providing a time frame.

3. Tracking enquiries.

Introduce a customer relationship management system (CRM) to track customer communication and ensure follow-ups.

4. Collaborative Tools.

Use shared calendars that are accessible to all relevant staff where bookings are clear with all special requirements clearly marked.

Cloud storage for any necessary forms or responses needed that is accessible to relevant staff.

5. Emergency protocol.

Ensure we have multiple ways to contact the customer to confirm bookings or if we need to contact on the day of the event if there is ever a problem.

Confirmation message the day before any event to reconfirm nothing has changed and the event is going ahead.



Using the “5 Whys," the business can strategize and implement solutions to address main issue, which, in this scenario, involve investing in more advanced communication tools, conducting regular operational reviews, and implementing standardized processes to handle inquiries and bookings.

Using a decision making technique, evaluate a range of solutions to identify the most appropriate option

Possible Solutions:

1. Upgrade to a digital booking system.
2. Implement one communication platform.
3. Establish a dedicated communication space.
4. Implement a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system.

I will assess each solution using the Grid Analysis technique.

Criteria for Evaluation (with weighted importance on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is most important):

Decision to evaluate:	Evaluate solutions for the problem of missed communication within a children's party business					Score	Multiply by
Factors:	Cost	Ease of implementation	Reducing Missed Communication	Scalability	User Friendliness		
Weights:	4	5	5	4	4		
Digital Booking System	2	3	5	5	4	19	84
Unified Communication Platform	3	4	5	4	4	20	89
Dedicated Communication Space	3	4	3	2	4	16	71
Introduce a CRM System	2	3	5	5	4	19	84

From the above evaluation, it's clear that a unified communication platform is the best solution, with the 2nd best both scoring 84 being a CRM & a digital booking system.

Develop a detailed plan for implementing the solution

Plan for Implementing a Unified Communication Platform.

1, Assess our need.

- Identify current communication challenges and problems.

2, Research and selection:

- Research available unified communication platforms.
- Compare features, costs, scalability, and user reviews.
- Schedule demos with top 3 platforms.
- Select the most suitable platform based on business needs.

3, Budget and Funding.

- Determine total cost of implantation and ongoing costs.
- Allocate a budget.

4, Training:

- Allocate time to learn the chosen platform.
- -Download all documentation, manuals and online resources.

5, Implementation:

- Begin set up of the new system with the chosen provider.
- Transfer existing customer communications to the new system.

6, Soft Launch:

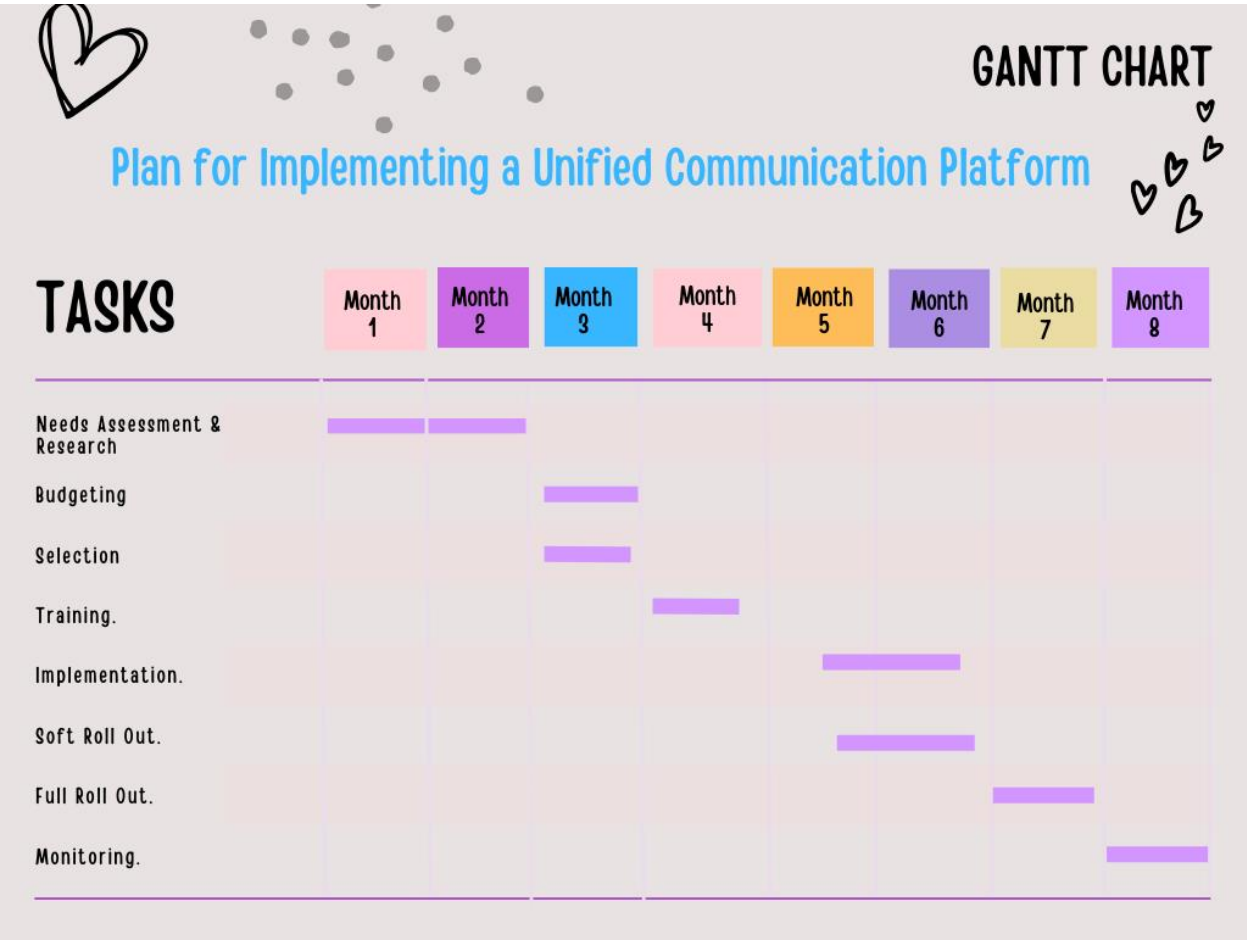
- Initiate soft launch by running the old and new system side by side to look for any problems.
- Address any issues identified.
- Full roll out.

7, Monitoring:

- Monitor use to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the business.

8, Improvements:

- Stay up to date with platform upgrades and trainings.



Timeline:

Months 1-2: Needs Assessment and Research.

Month 3: Budgeting and Selection.

Month 4: Training.

Months 5-6: Implementation and Soft Rollout.

Month 7: Full Rollout.

Month 8 onwards: Monitoring, Feedback, and Continuous Improvement.

By following this plan, the business will successfully implement the unified communication system that will address the problem of missed messages and will improve operational efficiency.

Communicate the plan to relevant stakeholders

n/a There are no stakeholders.

Assess appropriate monitoring and review techniques to ensure successful implementation of solution

Monitoring and reviewing the new unified communication platform is needed to ensure it runs seamlessly and without problems.

Here's some monitoring and review techniques:

1. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

Benefits: They provide quantifiable measures to gauge performance over time. Common KPIs might include the percentage reduction in missed messages and the average response time,

Challenges: KPIs need to be updated as business goals change, and they must remain relevant. Over-relying on them can also lead to overlooking other business aspects.

Customer Feedback Surveys:

Benefits: They offer a direct insight into customer satisfaction, areas for improvement, and potential issues. Can be tailored to get detailed feedback.

Challenges: Response rates might be low. The quality of feedback might vary.

Usage Analytics:

Benefits: Provides data-driven insights into platform utilization, helps to identify features that are underused or those that are most valuable.

-Challenges: Requires setting up tracking systems. Data can be overwhelming if not filtered or interpreted correctly.

Issue Log:

Benefits: Offers a systematic approach to record and address challenges. It can help in identifying recurring problems.

Challenges: Requires diligent updating. Might become inefficient if too detailed or too vague.

Audit and Review:

Benefits: Ensures adherence to best practices and guidelines. It can help identify gaps in the system and areas that need help.

Challenges: Can be resource intensive.

Post-Implementation Review (PIR):

Benefits: A structured review after the implementation phase to assess if objectives were met and to document lessons learned.

Challenges: Requires commitment. Should be comprehensive,

10. Continuous Monitoring Tools:

Benefits: Software tools that offer real-time monitoring of system performance, user activity, and other critical metrics.

Challenges: Might be expensive. Needs dedicated personnel to interpret data and act on information gained.

Conclusion:

Selecting the right mix of monitoring and review techniques is crucial. While some methods provide measurable data, other techniques offer in-depth insights. A balance between the two, tailored to the specific needs of the children's party business, will ensure an effective monitoring and review process. It's also essential to adjust these techniques based on evolving needs and feedback from customers.

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Appendix 1