



Skills for the Workplace

Module Assignment Submission

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Executive Summary

The study will discuss the cultural aspects of Four Seasons Hotel and Resort. It is a Canada based company. It operates 83 hotels and resorts in 35 countries (fourseasons.com, 2018). The study will address its workplace culture and identify its effectiveness for meeting the demand of customers. In this study, it has been identified that the company follows a customer-centric culture which leads them to value the customers and society at large. Thus it takes many cultural and social initiatives which help to develop different brand value among consumers' mind. In this study, a SWOT and PESTLE analysis will be provided to assess its cultural aspects under the influence of organizational and external factors. In the end, from the perspective of individual culture, value and ethos, the workplace culture of the company will be assessed.

Introduction

The beginning of Four Seasons Hotels and Resort was in 1961. Canada based Luxurious hotel began in the enormous way as it expanded gradually through various countries of the World. As an international Hotel, it has opened Hotels Worldwide with its unique Philosophy of exceptional standard Customer Service. For over 50 Years it has established its high reputation for leisure and Business Travellers.

The founder of Four Seasons Hotel and Resort Isadore Sharp decided to construct his dream hotel from the support of his father. In the 70's the Hotel opened its Door in the City of London and also in few cities of United States of America. It opened more Doors during the 80's in America cities like Chicago, Boston, Dallas and more.

From the 90's The Hotel started to open its door to more Hotels in Europe and Asia. It became the Hotel for the new generations for its high-class Service and Standards. It opened globally with the philosophy of four seasons Hotel. The Hotel extended to Middle Eastern Countries from 90's and also opened Private Residence, Clubs etc. Till this present time, the Hotel has more and more Hotels opening as it also gained the brand name of Four Seasons hotel. Customers nowadays have the faith in the Brand of the Hotel. It has generated the High Class Customer service and invented the Leadership in Luxury Hotels.

Critically assess the workplace culture of the organisation

The organizational culture of an organisation plays a key role in ensuring success or failure of the company. It helps to assess if the company is performing effectively or it requires to change its organizational system based on the effectiveness of the culture to meet customer demand effectively. In this context, it is required to evaluate the workplace culture of Four Seasons Hotel and Resort. The evaluation is put forth as below.

Organizational culture, ethos and values

As the company is operating globally, it requires changing its operational culture based on the trends and consumer demands of other countries. However, the organisation follows basic ethos and value to ensure a high degree of customer satisfaction. The company puts the customer at the focus for developing any corporate strategies (Pirani & Arafat, 2014). It ensures that all the customers are being respected and offered valuable services. The basic value practised in providing customer services is by becoming empathetic while delivering effective services to its target group. This way it focuses on achieving the high degree of competitive advantages. It helps the company to ensure the high brand value of the company in its target market.

The company operates globally; however, operating within the UK makes the company liable to follow legislative rules and norms of the country. The organisation recruits highly diversified team members in its workplace. This creates various issues within the team. However, the company is bound to manage the diversity under the purview of Equality Act 2010 (Jones, et al., 2016). This act ensures that no employees in any organisation will be discriminated based on diversity. Thus the company is bound to value the demand of its employees also. It is required to follow that all the need of employees are effectively met and the company develops more happy employees. This will help the employees to become motivated and provide effective services to the customers.

The company also follows ethical norms within its workplace by safeguarding the need of its employees and customers. Under the legislative purview of Employment Rights Act 1996 and National Minimum Wage Act 1998, the company is bound to provide services to the needy sector of various communities of UK (Kandampully, et al., 2015). This way the company provides a source of income to many needy groups. However, while recruiting people, the organisation does not compromise on the quality of human resources. This helps the company to deliver better services to its customers. This way it considers the need of customers, business and the individual while conducting recruitment procedure.

Establishing a culture of sustainability within the workplace:

The company takes various initiatives to maintain sustainability in its workplace. It harvested 10 million trees across its 85 offices around the globe (fourseasons.com, 2018). This helped the company to foster value environment while operating its business profitably. The company also launched green meeting rooms considering the need for water preservations, donations, recycling and reduction of carbon footprint. This way the company maintained its operations as per ethical norms and environmental regulations (Bharwani & Jauhari, 2013). However, this information helped the consumers to perceive the operations of the company in contrast to operations of other hotel and resorts. Many hotel and resorts in the UK struggle to ensure high profitability by investing in customer service and internal operations. These companies fail to focus on maintaining a culture of sustainability. This is what makes Four Season Hotel and Resort different from other companies operating in the hospitality sector of UK.

The company also engages in providing effective training and deprived sectors of various communities. The training provided by the company helps employees to enhance their service approaches. It also helps them to enhance various aspects of their professional journey. The training provided to the needy segment of the society also enhances their degree of employability. This way the company serves the society while maintaining its own operations. Thus the company follows a culture of sustainability in its workplace.

Corporate social and environmental responsibility

The company has been successful to develop its effective operations across various countries. Thus it makes the company respond to its various social responsibility. The CSR program of the company helps to meet this objective. The company provide funds for various cause. This can be included as the educational funds for needy children, celebrating occasions with needy people and many others. In 1995, the company started donating teddy bears to the less fortunate children to brighten up their holidays (fourseasons.com, 2018). The event became popular. Even after few decades the teddy bear tea even is still popular. This way the company imbibed culture of involving with the society to help them. Many other hotel and resort companies fail to become this much integrated into the society. These companies put the business aspects as the key goal while operating the CSR program. Thus, the outcome of various initiatives become restrictive. However, Four Seasons Hotel and Resort focuses on uplifting the needy segment and ensure their betterment. Thus, the company offer its services to diverse social causes such as wildlife preservation, reducing water consumption, reducing carbon footprint and others. As an instance, the company helped in revitalizing Alexandra Channel in Singapore (Prud'homme and Raymond, 2013). The company took initiative to protect sea-turtle in Nevis. It also takes initiative to preserve the elephants of Thailand. This way, the company develops high value in the mind of its customers and employees. It helps the company to reduce the amount of turnover and develop an effective human resources.

Communication channels for sharing information and building relationships

The company operates a highly diversified team. Thus it is required that effective communication is maintained within the team. This will help the company to reduce the gap in service deliveries. The company follows effective vertical and lateral communication channel. It operates the business by following a tall organizational structure. Thus it has various management levels within the operations. Through its vertical communication system, the sales executive deliver various information related to the consumer need perception to the top management level (Martínez, et al., 2013). Whereas, following the downward communication system, the top level management provides guidance and strategies to meet the need of the customers effectively. Thus, the decision-making process of the company is slow and it takes time to make any changes in its present operating system.

In contrast to this, many small and medium scale companies operate the business based on flat operational structure. These companies follow effective communication system by reducing the steps in decision-making system (Köseoglu, et al., 2013). Thus, these companies implement changes faster than large hotel chains such as Four Seasons Hotel and Resort.

The lateral communication system of Four Seasons Hotel and Resort helps to develop effective communicational measures across a diverse team of the company. This communication process helps the employees to engage in informal communication and sustain team integrity. This way the company foster teamwork and ensure the high degree of team integrity (Fakharyan, et al., 2014). However, the company faces many issues to manage the diverse team and sustain high

value for the team. In that context, various social media such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp help to develop effective communication within the team.

Provide a critical evaluation of an organisation and the broader environment in which it operates.

The environment in which the company operates puts a broader impact on developing a specific culture within the organisation. In this context, to assess the cultural aspect of Four Seasons Hotel and Resort, it is required to evaluate its organizational and broader environmental influence. To meet this objective SWOT and PESTLE analysis is provided as below.

SWOT: SWOT is the abbreviation of strength, weakness, opportunity and threat. These factors of the analysis are described below.

Strength: The company puts forth the meeting, the need of customers as the key focus. It knows its customers effectively. The vast operations of the company over past decades helped to develop high asset leverage. The company has the high financial strength to invest in any key project. The organisation also became successful to develop high consumer loyalty by providing high-quality services to its wealthy target market (Šerić, et al., 2014). This consumer loyalty ensures that the company successfully generates its business and make a high profit. This gives a considerate strength to the operations of the company. It completely owns its supply chain. Thus the company does not make any delay to get any necessary raw materials. Thus, it helps to enhance its quality of service delivery.

Weakness: The company failed to develop effective communication system within its operations. This caused the company to make slow progress in the decision-making process. It also faces internal issues to implement any changes within its system. Apart from that, it has diseconomies of scale of its operations (Li, et al., 2013). The company has a large number of employees but less number of tasks. This increases its cost of human resources. This also results from frequent unnecessary conflicts within the organisation. The key reason for this is the company has the strength to invest in human resources. Thus, it recruits a large number of employees. In contrast to this, medium scale hotels and resorts have been successful to operate their business with the help of a small team. This helped those companies to develop economies of scale (Bendoly, 2013). Thus the cost of operations remained medium.

Opportunity: The Company has partnerships with many international airways. This provides an opportunity to the company to offer low-cost travel services across various locations. This makes the company offer travel coupons and gifts on the airfare. Thus, it helps the company to enhance its competitive advantage. Better economic performance of countries in Asia such as India, China and other countries provide better purchasing power to its customers (Li, et al., 2013). Thus creates the opportunity for the company to expand its business in these target market effectively. Thus facilitating expansion and growth become a key cultural aspect for the company.

Threat: The high competition becomes a key threat for the company to operate its business. There are many small and medium hotels and resorts which provide low-cost services. By integrating technology into its operations, many hotel and resorts have been successful to reduce their operational cost. It ensured high profitability (Jayawardena, et al., 2013). The poor economic performance of various western counties reflects currency fluctuation. Thus the profitability of the company becomes highly affected. This acts as another key threat of the company.

PESTLE: This analysis will help to identify the external influence on the culture of Four Seasons Hotel and Resort. PESTLE is the abbreviation of political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental factors. These factors are discussed below.

Political: Four Seasons Hotel and Resort is operating across various counties. Thus, it requires following the political norms of those countries. The company also requires implementing those changes into its services delivery. Different norms for operating business, tax norms, changes in government and others severely impact on the operations of its business (Wang, 2014). Thus, it fails to become a global company which follow a standard norm. This way the success of its businesses various across the opportunities available in different countries. But, the company focuses on maintaining high brand value.

Economic: Different performance of economies in diffident countries, provide different purchasing power to its consumers. The recession in the UK impacted severely on the profitability of the organisation. Whereas, developing countries such as India and China provides better opportunities for the country to expand its business profitably (Jayawardena, et al., 2013). Thus the company successfully diversify its operations across countries as it has strong financial assets and scope for investment. This way the company reduces the impact of economic factors.

Social: The social factors of UK develop different needs of different customers. In UK people from various social and cultural background resides. This requires the company to follow different needs of its different customers. However, since it is a global company, it also requires following different social needs of people from different countries. Due to high market exposure and vast experience help the company to provide a high degree of customized services to its different customer segment (Wu & Ko, 2013). Thus, it shows considerable strength to respond to various social issues for operating its business. But, the small and medium-sized hotels and resorts fail to get this market knowledge. Thus this segment reduces the competitive threats in this aspect.

Technological: Technology plays a key role in the hospitality industry. With the help of high-cost technology the company successfully made its Hotels and Resorts environment-friendly. Due to the presence of various countries, the company also successfully access many technological solutions of various countries. This way it successfully operates its business. However, the company failed to automate its operations through the intervention of technology (Boone, et al., 2013). It also takes lack of initiative to make its operations technologically intensive. This resulted in diseconomies of scale of its operations. However large Hotels and Resorts such as Hotel Marriot and others have been successful to integrate technology into its operations for providing food and accommodation services.

Legal: For operating the business across various countries, the company requires to follow legal norms of that country. For operating in the UK, the company requires following the norms of Equity Act 2010, Pensions Act 2008, National Minimum Wage Act 1998 and others. However, it does not require to follow these acts while operating in India and China (Bharwani & Jauhari, 2013). Therefore, the organisation follows different norms for operating its business across various countries. These impacts on the cultural aspect of its workplace. Since many teams work based on different work rules across different countries. This way the legal norms increases the risk of operating its business effectively.

Environmental: The Four Seasons Hotel and Resort invests in many environmental causes through its CSR program. According to the norms of Global Warming Summit 2017, the company requires following the norms for water and carbon consumption. Thus, in its CSR program, the company develops eco-friendly meeting rooms and take measures to reduce water consumption and carbon footprint (Boone, et al., 2013). However, in many developing countries such as India and China, these environmental norms are not followed effectively by other companies (Kandampully, et al., 2015). In that aspect, the company sets an example for operating business in a more eco-friendly measure.

Recommendation

The SWOT analysis identifies that completion and economic changes act as the key obstacle for ensuring high profitability of the business. As the company focuses on meeting the need of customers, it becomes successful to bring innovativeness in its service delivery. However, it should also make the competition as the key culture for operations. Focusing on the competitive aspects will help the company to invest more in advertising and promotions. In every aspect, the company will be able to outperform its competitors. Thus it will be able to reduce the negative impact of competitive threat effectively.

The PESTLE analysis shows that various initiatives taken by the company for making the business environment-friendly have helped to set examples for other companies. As it does not follow any strict measures for operating its business, the company is able to make changes in its operations based on the political, economic, legal and other norms of those countries. This way the company successfully implements many changes in its operations. However, several norms and legal processing create conflict among teams across different countries. This way it required focussing to follow a standardized process to operate its business effectively. This will help to reduce organizational conflict and foster better workplace culture.

Critically evaluate the cultural and ethical behaviour present in the organisation and evaluate your own cultural and ethical behaviour in relation to the organisation.

Personal ethical standards, values and beliefs

The company offers its products and services to the wealthy customer segments. By leveraging its brand value, the organisation charges high cost for its services. However, it also provides the required comfort and accommodation to its customer segment. But there are many unsatisfied customers who provide the bad review for the services offered. Many times the company personnel fails to meet those demands. However, they charge high cost from the customers. This identifies that the company fails to provide services ethically.

As per my personal values and beliefs, I consider that being a global company, it should recruit local people who have the expertise to communicate in the local language. However, in many hotel operations, the company focuses on English as the medium of communication. In multilingual countries such as India, it is required to communicate in more than one language. In that context, the company personnel fail to do that. This identifies as the company does not put enough concern for the cultural aspect of consumers (Bharwani & Jauhari, 2013). Thus, they fail to follow the need of customers. This results in poor service delivery. Thus, the company fails to follow its customer-centric cultural norms. This shows the failure of maintaining the workplace culture effectively.

As the company operates with a diverse team, the team members show different workplace needs. This can be identified as wearing hijab, communicating in different languages and others. Due to this diversity conflict arises within the team. This negatively impacts on the operational aspects of the company. However, the company manages these conflicts through negotiations and leadership influence (Bendoly, 2013). Thus, it thrives to sustain its own culture of diversity and expansion by implementing strategies which provide stratify the need for both management and employees.

Barriers to effective functioning in the organisation and ways to overcome them

The poor communication and large number of employees are key barriers to effective functioning of the company. The organisation operates its business through a highly diversified team. Thus, it creates barriers to communication for communicating within the team and also with customers. It is highly required for the company to ensure that all the need of the team is met to ensure better functionality (Jayawardena, et al., 2013). The company should also foster a moderate level of competition within the team to reduce the development of any potential conflict. The management must also engage in proper communication with sales and house-keeping team to identify the demand of customers and reasons for the failure of operations.

However, the organisation must also recruit team members based on specific requirements. The company must provide enough work to its employees so that economies of scale is achieved. This way Four Seasons Hotel and Resort will be able to reduce its operational cost. The company will also be able to judge its human resources effectively (Jones, et al., 2016). This will help to ensure the moderate level of work pressure, competition and conflict within the organisation. Thus, the company will be able to operate its business effectively.

Conclusion

The study identified various cultural aspects of Four Seasons Hotel and Resort. It identified operating the business in a customer-centric approach is helpful for the company to ensure a high degree of success of the business. The customer-centric approach is a key cultural norm for the company. In this context, the ethos and value of its workplace have been discussed. It values its customer and focuses on the well-being of the society. However, diversity in the team creates issues in communication within the company. The SWOT and PESTLE analysis identified that the company has enough strength and opportunity to expand its business in other countries. The diversified team will be helpful for the company. However, it has been identified; many times the company fails to provide effective services to its customers. In that context, no necessary action is taken to make corrective measures. In that context, the company fails to follow its workplace culture effectively. Thus, few recommendations have been provided to enhance the effectiveness of workplace culture of the company.

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