

INDIVIDUAL REPORT

Problem solving and decision making BMSW 4004

Adesawa Ajaya

Nataliya Virych 1909127

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Introduction

In order to have a successful career, it is necessary to have a good and reliable problem-solving skill. Problems are what most people face at work. They can be big or small, simple or complex, easy or difficult. A crucial part of any manager's role is finding ways to solve problems, so, being a confident problem solver is essential to your success. (Weiss, n.d.)

This report speeches the scope and effect of complex problems in the workplace on efficient output and how managers within that industry identify and attempt to solve those problems.

I will apply recognised problem-solving tools and techniques such as Fishbone diagram, SWOT and PESTLE Analysis to identify and propose a solution based on problems from my personal work experience in advance discussed and agreed with my lecturer.

Definition of complex problem and analyse information

An important step towards problem-solving and decision-making is defining and identifying the problem, including understanding the complicated situation in which the problem arises. The difference between a real and the desired case can be viewed as a problem. This means that the team must have a clear idea of where they are related to the problem and where they would like to be. It involves diagnosing a situation so that you can focus on the real problem rather than its symptoms. Often finding or identifying a problem is more important than solving it. There are four basic steps in solving a problem:

- Defining the problem.
- Analysing information on the problem
- Evaluatin and select alternative solution to the problem.
- Progressing of a plan for the implementation solutions.

Example: I work in a small accounting company as a bookkeeper. Due to the pandemic, we had to start work from home. Working from home provides many advantages such as: saving money, saving time spent on the road, working in comfortable and familiar conditions and more others. But working from home negatively affected the quality of the services provided by our company. Our company has encountered a number of problems: loss of documents, coordination difficulties resulting in delays in work, cancellation of online appointments, inability to connect online or bad connection.

By analyzing the situation, we can identify the problem. Working from home creates problems when working in a team and having to share information and documents, this creates a bad time management.

When we are able to identify a problem, we can establish objectives or parameters that allow us to reach a solution. Sometimes the problem can be complex and cannot be completely eliminated, in this case the goal will be to minimize the effects of the problem.

Decision making techniques

As described above, a typical decision-making process involves identifying a problem, gathering information, identifying alternatives and analysing/monitoring results. There are many different decision-making techniques by which a manager is guided in choosing alternatives to achieve the best results. (Vance, 2003) In this section, we will consider and apply such popular tools and strategies as Fishbone diagram, SWOT and PESTLE analysis.

Fishbone diagram

The cause-effect diagram is named after the Japanese researcher Kaoru Ishikawa, who developed it in the early 1950s. (Watson, 2004)

Fishbone Chart is a graphical analysis technique that creates causal relationships with the skeleton of a fish to determine the cause of a problem and then plot it.

Essentially, an Ishikawa diagram is a visual representation of a problem, where the large arrow indicates the name of the problem, and the lines extending from it represent the main categories of causes (solutions). Typically, the categories are divided into people, methods, materials and environment. (Yazdani & Moghaddam, 2012)

Here I am using a Fishbone chart to analyse the factors affecting service at the accounting company where I currently work.

Ishikawa diagram allows you to visualize the relationship between the current problem of the organization and the reasons for its occurrence.

The company's most significant problem is poor customer service. Our clients expect a long consultation with a specialist manager, have problems using our website, which indicates the slow work of the staff. The company's rating fell, and negative reviews appeared on social media. The factors influencing the quality of service are presented in the Ishikawa diagram in Figure 1.

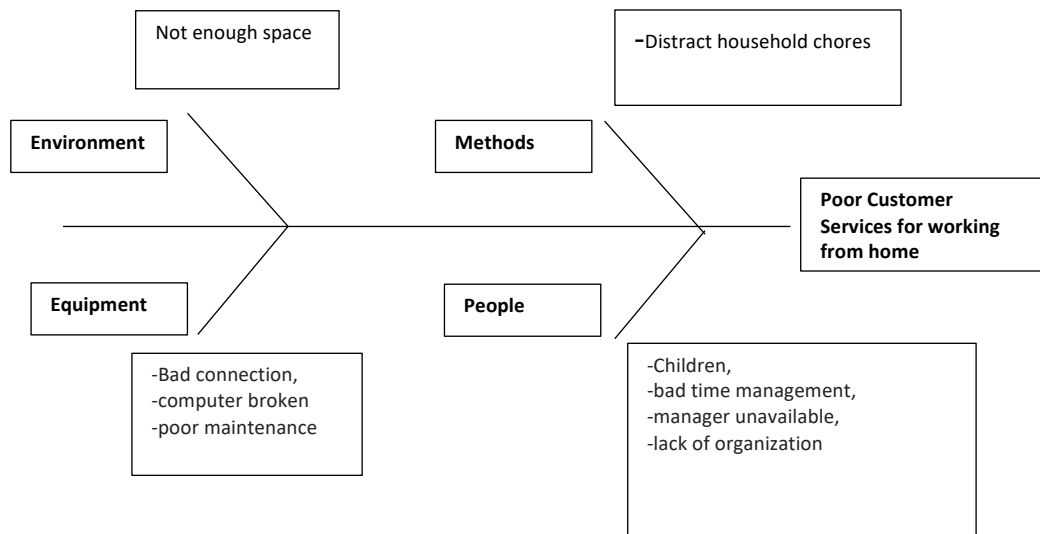


Table 1. Cause-effect Ishikawa diagram

When using diagram in work, the manager must take into account all the advantages and disadvantages of the method. Some advantages of the method are ease of use as it does not require special skills and profound knowledge; helps the team focus on the content of the problem. The biggest drawback of this method is a voluminous and difficult to find the time dependence of the reason.

For an Accounting company operating in a fast- paced modern business environment to be successful, managers must plan and set objectives, motivate staff, manage resources and deploy the human and financial assets properly. The Human Resource is the most important resource of any company. When employees not trained properly for their task at hand, this may result in poor customer service, poor productivity and poor profitability.

Various training programs should be implemented to improve customer service and increase productivity. In this case, it is necessary to conduct training on the effective time management, train staff to use a new IT technology.

SWOT analysis

The SWOT (Strengths - Weaknesses - Opportunities - Threats) analysis is an essential tool for strategic management. It was invented in the early 1970s by a management consultant named Albert Humphrey at the Stanford Research Institute. It is implemented in order to accurately identify and describe the strengths and weaknesses present within an organization and the opportunities and threats that exist in the external environment of the organization.

Since I am studying at UWTSD of Health and Social Care programme, it is fair to consider one of the problems facing social workers in health and care industry; the importance of ensuring the best possible assistance to guests. I take a nursing home as an example.

To get an idea of the company's activities, it is necessary to conduct a SWOT analysis.

As part of this analysis, the internal environment of the nursing home was considered, as well as the opportunities and risks for the company deriving from the market.

Therefore, according to the competitive position analysis, it can be concluded that the most influential threat to the company's operations is the customer threat. The main strategy of the company is the fight for the customer. According to the SWOT analysis, it has been established that the weak side of the company is the low quality of customer service, with more competition in this service sector. Therefore, in order to maintain a competitive position, an organization must work on the quality of customer service.

A SWOT analysis can help managers leverage the company's strengths and implement strategies to reduce weaknesses or turn them into strengths. Evaluating external threats and opportunities can aid in strategic decision making, as it allows managers to plan things like the presence of new competitors or the impact of new government regulations.

Strengths and opportunities were seen as building blocks.

Strengths included the positive outlook that service users generally had about public services, public service ethics, the internal service's ability to respond to the changing needs of the organization, and staff loyalty to service users together. to focus on promoting independence.

Opportunities included the Best Value review, hiring additional nurses and accompanying personnel, the ability to provide more services, government grant, new and modern ways of working such as partnerships and the drive to develop more alternatives to care home.

Weaknesses and threats were seen as challenges to be overcome:

Weaknesses included higher unit cost, reliance on manual systems, unqualified and insufficient staff, and failure to comply with corrective actions.

economic instability in the country

Threats included difficulty in recruiting, growing competition in this service sector, economic instability in the country.

Staff loyalty is an important issue. The figures need to be monitored as there are considerable costs associated with recruitment, induction, supervision and continuing education.

PESTLE analysis

The PEST analysis (Political - Economic - Socio-cultural - Technological) is an important strategic management tool through which the political, economic, socio-cultural and technological operational environment of an organization is comprehensively described.

After having deepened, through the SWOT analysis, the internal problems of the Nursing Home, we will now go to address the problems that causes external to the company can create.

We will address these issues external to the company through the PESTEL analysis.

This is a complex problem that affects the effective work of the organization, if left unattended it can lead to disastrous consequences such as loss of staff, the loss of our good reputation and ultimately business failure.

To understand what factors, influence business efficiency from the outside, I can use the PESTLE analysis. Its results can be used to make strategic decisions based on:

Political factors: Brexit could have a negative impact due to the non-arrival of new specialized resources from abroad.

Economic factors: One of the biggest consequences is a severe shortage of qualified personnel.

Sociological factors: The new communication systems (social media) have disseminated a large number of information creating great expectations in people, this has an important impact in raising the quality of the services offered.

Technological factors: New technologies have a positive impact in the health sector, both for the prevention of diseases and the treatment of people, but also for education.

Legal Factors: It is important to offer a great service to avoid complaints from patients or their families as this is an increasing problem.

Communicating with stakeholders

In this section, we will talk about the motivations and methods for engaging stakeholders in promoting patient care. The term involvement means the set of actions aimed at improving the quality of the service, and its responsibilities, evaluating the terms of prevention or management.

The main stakeholders for the promotion of safety are the citizens who use the assistance services, family members, local authorities, staff and managers of the healthcare company, suppliers, insurers.

Targeted services and interventions favour the correct use of resources, avoiding waste of time and money.

In defining plans and programs, those called to participate in choices must consider the quality of assistance a constant attribute in their choices, so they must be aware of it.

The methods of involvement can be:

- surveys conducted through interviews or questionnaires
- focus group, a qualitative survey methodology carried out through questions to a group of people who, based on their experience, tackle the problem in-depth
- briefing with staff to collect opinions and suggestions on perceived problems.

Conclusion

The ultimate goal to be a successful manager is to correctly apply problem solving and decision-making skills and technology at the right time, to be sure of the accuracy of the chosen action plan and the effective impact for a positive solution about employees and the situation.

I have analyzed the importance of involving stakeholders in promoting the improvement of customer service.

In conclusion, it is important to reiterate that this involvement must be an integral part of the corporate vision, adopting adequate skills, methodologies and tools.

It is essential to give importance to training in the insertion of new hires and the basic one and ensure continuous updates to operators.

Only synergistic actions will improve the quality of services for everyone: users, staff, visitors, and all those who frequent the services.

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