

Problem Solving and Decision-making Report
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Hecylian Augusto Puerta Rivero (2008328)

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Report About Problem-solving and Decision Making

Introduction

In this report I am going to explain what means problem solving and decision making, I am going to give my vision of the meaning of each concept that I understand in this topic. I am going to talk in the context of the workplace to approach at the situation that happen in the role play.

Continuing with the context of workplace, I am going to identify the steps to develop the problem, bolding the factors and the reason of each factor. I addition, there are several tools to analyse and choose the better options to solve the problem or problems that occurs in the company.

The case I am going to explain is real, the facts have occurred but no effective solutions have been implemented so far that could lead to a total solution of the problem and therefore to a stability in the company with regard to the present problem.

The Pizza Room Company is made up of several shops located in different neighbourhoods of London, the workforce amounts to a total of 80 workers spread over 4 restaurants and three cafeterias. In this case, I am going to focus on one of the restaurants which is located in New Cross, it would be the third with the largest clientele, although it disputes the second place due to its increase in sales due to the crisis of the Covid virus pandemic.

It is a small restaurant, with few tables inside and little use of the tables on the terrace. Its sales are mostly focused on take-away deliveries. As there are capacity restrictions in the food service premises, this made the population choose to order pizzas at home, either to be delivered by intermediary delivery companies or to simply pick up the food at the restaurant. (Global Food Security, 2021)

Problem at Workplace

The sudden increase in take-away sales caused the workload to rise significantly, forcing the staff to work under increased pressure, creating an unstable working environment and directly impacting on the restaurant's employees. The existing chefs feel stressed by not being able to cope with the large number of orders at the same time. The wear and tear is reflected in the drop in quality of service, such as mistakes in ingredients when making pizzas, burnt or undercooked pizzas. Failure of communication between waiters, chefs and managers, bad behaviour of delivery drivers waiting to pick up the order and deliver it on time and some other situations.

Referring to how the staff feel, they believe that there is a lack of support, i.e. more manpower, the salary is low for the amount of work and the training is insufficient for any new recruitment of staff carried out.

Decision Making content

I will use different tools to specifically identify the problems that are generated at work and why they occur. What external and internal factors are driving these problems in order to make the most appropriate decision to solve the root of the problem. At the same time, highlight the opportunities and strengths that allow the business to continue to grow smoothly.

The first tool I will use is the PESTLE analysis that will lead me to understand from a general and external point of view to the company. Furthermore, which factors are conditioning factors for the problem we must solve.

PESTEL Analysis

Regarding of the current situation of the restaurant, I am going to explain which point represents the PESTEL analysis that has direct relation with what affects the company.

On the political side we can identify that during the pandemic the government took measures to protect workers so that, even if businesses had to close to stop the spread of the virus, workers could continue to receive a salary that would allow them to pay the debts of daily life. In the company, it is possible to identify certain workers who, although they continued to work, also received the Furlough, so that the effort to work longer hours, as required by the increased volume of take-away work, was minimal. On the other hand, there were some new hires where these new workers did not have access to this government pay, so they were forced to do longer hours or full-time work for what was already low pay. So, we could identify one group of workers with the privilege of having Furlough and another small group who did not have this privilege. This already created rifts and made the quality of the working environment more tense.

Regarding the economic aspect, we can identify something that has a direct impact on the welfare of the workers. The most relevant factor was the low salary they had in general, which did not correspond to the increase in sales or the quality of life that was managed at that time up to the present day.

According to the sociological aspect, the population of the area in which the restaurant is located has become massively fond of take-away orders or home deliveries. The volume of work is increasing exponentially.

In technology that is directly linked to the business. We identified that companies offering their digital applications to simplify the payment and ordering process has become very strong and is here to stay in the hospitality business. Applications such as UBER eats or Deliveroo.

If I have to name one factor that is related to legality, it would be the rules imposed for catering establishments that limit the capacity with respect to the square metres that a restaurant is made up of, which has to be complied with by law.

Finally, the environmental aspect is not highly relevant to the problem we are going to address and make decisions about. But it can be said that there have been important changes since the fact of the increase in sales for take-away and home delivery, eco-friendly containers are used so as not to generate excessive pollution.

In relation to each of the points developed above, the most relevant ones affecting the problem occurring in the restaurant are the political and the economic.(Unicef, 2020)

SWOT Analysis

Now, there is another tool that is important to use at the same time with PESTEL analysis, the SWOT analysis is a tool which is going to analyse the internal factors in the company mostly. It shows the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The strength of the company is the increase and adaptation to take-away and delivery sales. As it is a small establishment, it is not hard hit by the restrictions on the space of

the premises, as this was not a relevant issue in the past. However, it has been easier to adapt to the increase in sales compared to the take-away mode.

On the other hand, having increased the volume of sales, it is true that the company has adapted technologically through the use of a delivery sales app. The weakness lies in the quality of specialised workers, as they have had to adapt as the volume of sales increases without prior training. This means that the quality of service is affected to some extent. It also creates some demotivation in the workers as they are overworked by the constantly increasing volume of work.

The opportunity arises from the increase in delivery sales as the population is adapting to this new method of ordering and adopting it as a habit that will remain with them for a long time.

The nearest threat is the lack of workers who are properly trained to cope with and provide excellent service to the customers who demand delivery services.

After having made use of the PESTEL and SWOT analysis tools, it is very clear which factors are causing the problems in the company and we can identify them in isolation, even though they affect the overall functioning of the business.

Fishbone Analysis

The next tool that we are going to use is the fishbone diagram, with which we are going to use to identify the problem of low customer satisfaction as a direct cause of low wages. Although several causes can be detailed according to certain factors that are reflected in the diagram. Having identified the problem, I will now explain the causes.

From the business management point of view, marketing is insufficient and not much emphasis has been placed on it until now, as this factor has not been sufficiently invested in since the Pandemic period.

Incoming workers do not receive adequate training and make many mistakes when making pizzas. The working environment has become tense and unfriendly due to stressful working hours. The working hours are long, and the workers work double shifts for many days in a row, without even receiving any bonus or extra compensation.

The different causes are due to low pay of the workers which results in poor service and therefore also in low customer satisfaction. (Lean, 2022)

PMI tool and Solution Implementation

In this step, the tool I will use to make the right decision is the Plus Minus Interesting strategy. Based on a brainstorming process, I take the options that, given all the information gathered from the previous analysis, are the best to create the solution that fixes the main problem in the restaurant.

The decision taken is to opt for a wage increase for the workers, in the Plus column the points to highlight are that the workers are motivated to give a good service, a necessary stability is created in the work environment and that the workers will not leave shortly after being hired. In the Minus column we find that there may be a financial risk of loss, a budget readjustment must be made and the price of certain products in the business may be increased. Finally, the Interesting/Implications column highlights that there will be more experienced candidates wanting to join the team, the creation of new products for sale will be boosted, and there may be a number of customers who may be dissatisfied with the price increase of certain products. To

conclude with this section and this tool, in the PPT that is attached in the report, you will see the scores of each point in each column of the PMI tool and in total it comes out positive to be able to take the risk and implement the solution that has been agreed, this will lead to the permanent eradication of the problem in the business. (Innovation-Creativity, 2020)

Throughout the process of implementing the solution, the stakeholders who are affected by the solution have been kept informed, meetings are held on a regular basis to keep track of how the well-being of the company is evolving and how this influences the good acceptance by customers in general, as the service is noticeably improved.

Conclusion

“Nothing worth having comes easy. Relationships (of all kinds) take work. Customers take work. Building a team takes work. If it’s easy, it’s often not worth having and almost never a competitive advantage.” —Rand Fishkin, Founder and CEO of Moz.com

In conclusion, all this process in which we have followed a path guided by the different tools that have helped us to see the weak and potential points of the company, I want to leave as a reflection, the importance of knowing how to capture all the information that is important to reach the goal we want, which is to locate the root of the problem and implement the appropriate and necessary solution or solutions, always keeping track of all the steps and progress so that the company can always be in constant positive evolution.

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