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PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING BMSW4004

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Introduction

A-B-C Holding Ltd is a company that deals with customer assistance in the hospitality sector, with the aim of solving problems caused by natural phenomena deriving from government choices or from the trend of the country's economy. The importance of problem solving is knowing how to give correct support to companies and professionals, providing ideas and alternative solutions to the challenges they face every day. Problem solving plays a key role, as it must adapt to the different situations that characterize today's complex market. It consists in the ability to find a solution to any type of problem, which cannot be obtained either by applying already known procedures or with the instinctive and intuitive way. *(Williams, 2002)*

In this report, we will analyse how to collaborate and work with various types of people, from different countries avoiding one of the main problems presents in all restaurants, the communication problem.

The workplace problem

Based on the events of the lack of communication in the workplace, we asked the hospitality companies, which are the major problems encountered during a job performance, or during a meeting. Most of our interviewees state that they have encountered a common problem which is language, as people from different countries and with different cultures they have a hard time learning the language, and during a work shift many obstacles and difficulties arise and this creates enormous negative repercussions on their business.

The main effects are manifested in a large loss of customers, as many of the time, employees do not understand customer requests and therefore revenues are reduced. Many of our clients have experienced an extreme reduction in booking by phone, as the receptionists could not understand their requests well. The main problem they face are the constant layoffs of staff, short-term unsold products in stock and learning difficulties during weekly training courses.

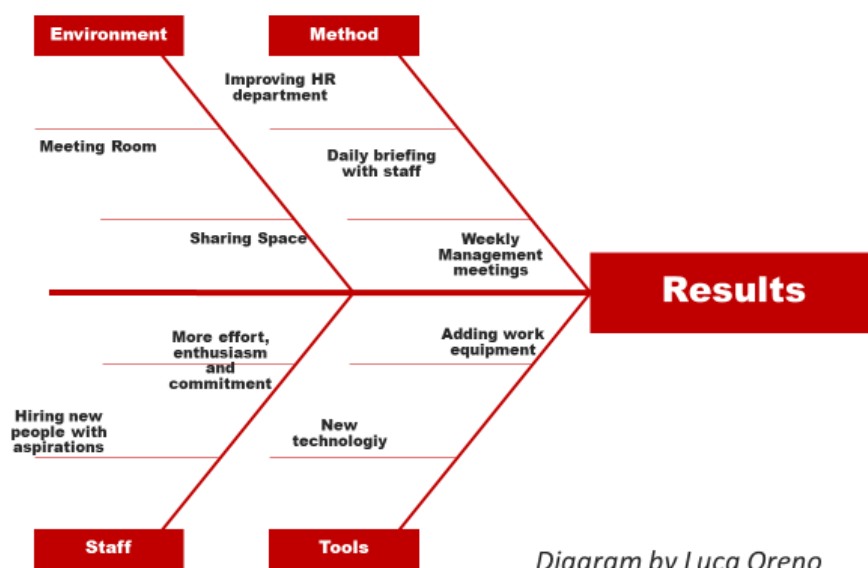
Analysing information

As a consulting company we must evaluate different problem-solving approaches, some easy to develop but others a little more complex, and this is why the problem solver figure is really important in the company, as it develops several characteristics such as:

- good listening skills
- think outside the box
- attitude to do
- ask for commitment from all staff members
- look for winning solutions

To better understanding the causes of communication problems in the workplace, we should submit to the management some questions such as: Has any intervention already been done? If yes, what result did you get? Have you delegated someone to take control of the situation? What was the feedback, and how did the employees react?

To get a clear picture, we should analyse the causes and effects or better known also as Input and Output. This is a technique that allows us to identify all the possible causes related to a specific problem, and then place them at a specific address. This process is also known as the Fishbone diagram, and is illustrated here:



Also known as the Ishikawa diagram, it serves to define the potential causes of a problem, in order to then implement corrective actions. *(Best, 2008)*

Let us see together the strengths of this model:

1. Simplicity of application: A mental scheme for approaching problems
2. Graphic comprehensibility
3. Effectiveness in directing attention to the problem
4. Application flexibility

In the head of the fish, the effect to be analysed is described, the problem encountered. Along the major thorns, analysis of the causes is developed, grouping them into 4 main categories. Often this type of analysis is conducted through Brainstorming. It is a much-loved group technique for coming up with ideas based on spontaneous, unfiltered creativity. *(Chaneski, 2019)*

The brainstorming method aims at the quick and unfiltered collection of ideas, for example by asking the participants to simply "throw their ideas on the table". As a discipline of finding ideas, brainstorming includes different aspects, forms, phases, and dynamics and consist of four main rules:

1. Quantity comes before quality
2. No criticism, discussion, or comment
3. Log properly
4. Think crosswise and be inspired by each other

Range of alternative solutions

Taking the Fishbone diagram as a reference, we can see that in the workplace we should add a room where employees will have the opportunity to get to know each other better, and therefore not just working and then leaving. This could be one of the possible alternative solutions to make them have a better approach with the language, moreover, create a meeting room to ensure that the staff is constantly guided to updates and if they demonstrate any gaps in communication, correct them along the way.

By following and teaching the staff constantly, we can ask them for more sacrifices and commitment during the work shift. It is also advisable to never lack equipment in the workplace, so that the staff does not waste time wondering where they can find what they need to work. With the new technology it is advisable to use iPad, tablets and everything that can make communication a strength and not a weakness. Finally, it is necessary to strengthen the recruitment department, since the selection of employees with a high knowledge of the language, can only bring benefits to the company and above all to sales, since another problem revealed was the failure to sell products with short deadlines.

At this point, as a consulting company we have identified two possible solutions.

The first is "**Avoiding Conflicts**", communication can be taught through training courses, it can be useful in making people understand each other better. However, conflicts do not arise only from business issues. Even in the workplace, emotions are often at the root of problems. Putting aside your negative emotions by verbalizing them sooner than they become real disagreements are component of a positive communication plan. If an employee has the feeling that his colleagues, or his superior, listen to him and understand him, there is no reason to expect that a malaise will grow slowly until it explodes, you can easily confront and solve the problem in phase embryonic.

The second is "**Motivate your Employees**", If an employee is happy with his work environment, and has a good harmony with his colleagues and his managers, he will certainly be more motivated to give his best, he will sacrifice more to achieve his successes and those of the group., unlike what happens if he considers himself a lone warrior. This works in a small work group as well as in the entire business context. If everyone communicates openly with each other, interpersonal barriers disappear, and the journey is shared. A positive general atmosphere leads everyone to give more

Evaluation of alternative solutions

The evaluation and selection process are very delicate since the implications must always be calculated.

Avoiding Conflict - If communication between colleagues or between superiors and subordinates is inadequate, problems are likely to arise in a short time. On the contrary, if you take the time to confront and communicate openly, it is almost impossible for misunderstandings and conflicts arising from them to arise. But it is already sufficient that only one side expresses itself in an unclear way to arrive at conflicts, even without there being any bad intentions. In situations of this type, it is not only an increase in communication that

helps, but also an improvement. Communication can also be taught, and often a training course can be helpful in making people understand each other better.

Motivate your Employees- If managers had the opportunity to spend more time with employees, making short daily meetings, they would have the advantage of understanding the problems and the strengths and weaknesses in a faster way. In this way, tasks can be better distributed, targeted training and talent can be promoted. Work teams can also be better assembled if you have a detailed overview of individual employees. This way you can perfectly combine different characters with different abilities. In the medium term, these adaptations improve the productivity of the entire company.

Implementing the solution

To implement the plan, the PMI-Decision Making Tool was used, developed by Dr. Edward de Bono, and focused on four phases.

1. Plus

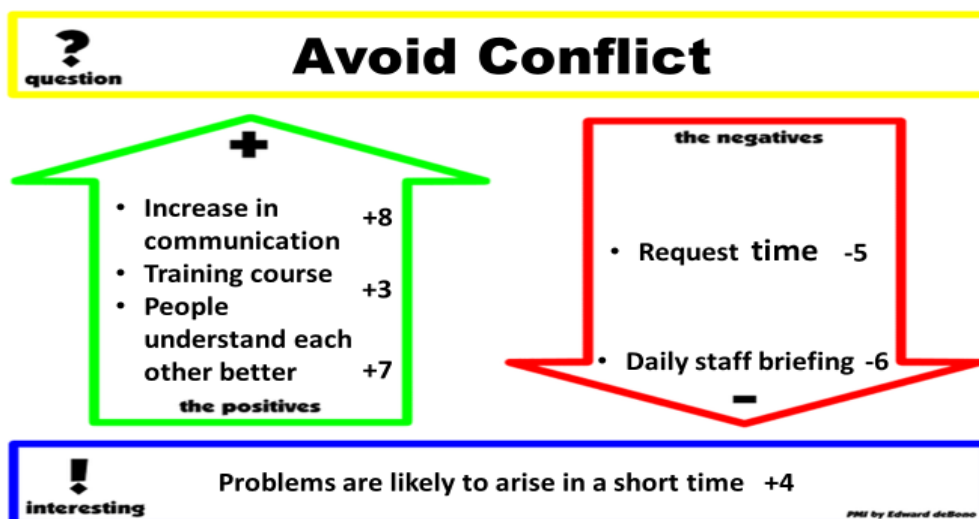
All the positive aspects of the decision made

2. Minus

All the negative aspects, obstacles and difficulties that can be encountered in making any decision.

3. Interesting

They are simply points of interest to focus attention on.



Template by Luca Oreno

4. Conclusion

In this phase, the final judgment given by the arithmetic operation between the plus, minus and interesting. The result or also called "bright lights", shows a total of +11, and therefore strongly positive, and confirms that "avoiding conflict" is the best choice to adopt. (Tools, 2020)

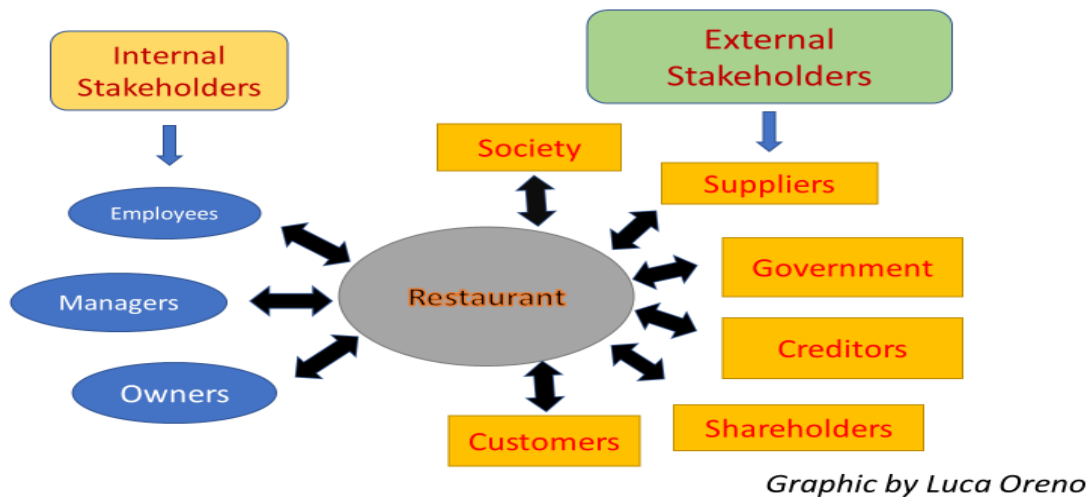
The implementation process consists in transforming a strategy into action, to date there is no single plan but several, they depend on the specific company.

Implementation planning determines the outcome, and therefore the achievement of success, without a plan you risk a business disaster. To set up a project you need the right resources and people in the right place, without them it is not possible to meet the needs of the company and therefore the success of the project itself. A good strategy requires several practices, first of all you must not waste time in acting, you must never give up at the first obstacle and considering that all plans are based on hypotheses, decision making must be a tenacious and flexible person. (*Bedford, 2006*)

Communication plan to stakeholders

At this point, the stakeholders must be identified.

A group of individuals belonging to the same organization, with the aim of achieving their goals, these figures can be identified as: customers, suppliers, financiers etc; Employees, shareholders and managers are part of the category of internal Stakeholders, without them the companies could not exist as they cover fundamental roles, subject to contracts. Unlike external Stakeholders also known as Shareholders, such as customers, suppliers, associations, trade unions and who at the same time could have contractual relationships. In short, we can conclude that the difference between Stakeholders and Shareholders is that those who invest money, or the shareholder, as a partner of the company, he seeks only and exclusively to derive its advantages, obtaining as much profit as possible. (Palmer, 2020)



As can be seen from the graph, the stakeholders are communicating with each other, that is, they all have the same interest, namely that of solving a communication problem between the staff, to ensure that there are no conflicts and automatically aim to increase sales. Once you have decided that the main influence rests with your staff, questions like:

What are the biggest problems to solve? Could giving bonuses to staff make them work better, so that external stakeholders will be more cooperative? Could focusing on certain areas change the appearance and perception of customers towards the restaurant?

These types of questions are essential as they create a communication channel between the company and the stakeholders, without hindering and creating further damage to turnover. (Hutt, 2015)

Monitoring and review techniques

The most delicate phase after having implemented an implementation plan is monitoring and evaluation. Here it is necessary to understand if progress is progressing, or if you need to change strategy.

Managers set staff targets, objectives, and goals through which they can understand if there are improvements. It is advisable to attend this type of techniques routinely so as not to lose concentration to reach the required goals. Only managers have the power to decide, in the event of a negative result, to try to change the way work is performed. (Gareth R. Jones, 2008)

Conclusion

A-B-C Holding Ltd is pleased to conclude by stating that the technique used to solve one of the most common problems in companies is one of the best. Although the communication problem is highly present today, we would like to advise you not to underestimate it and continue to try other types of plan implementation as long as it benefits the company and above all for the staff themselves.

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Appendix

Making things better – A Philips case study



Without customers there is no business. Therefore customers' needs influence all of Philips' decisions and actions. Within the organisation today there is a strong recognition that everyone contributes to the satisfaction of customers as part of a process which supplies value to the customer. Hundreds of customer surveys are carried out every year. All of this is made possible by creating a highly motivated workforce. 'Philips people are the company.' Dedication, imagination and creativity bring competitive advantage. Philips recognises that people contribute their best when they know that they are

appreciated for what they do. By setting up work teams, individuals have scope for growth and development within a framework of mutual support. Employee surveys have been carried out throughout Philips from 1994 onwards. Philips has set out to create excellent value for customers by setting up a detailed quality framework to systematically assess business performance. In terms of profits, financial results are checked at every level and in all units of the organisation. In terms of enterprise, Philips is continually finding new ways to serve customers, improve quality and make money.

Communications strategy

In September 1995 Philips introduced "Let's make things better," its new global communications strategy. Philips' image as a provider of technically advanced, quality products remains relatively strong. The company believes, however, that its new "Let's make things better" campaign can further strengthen brand image in the eyes of tomorrow's consumer. An essential aspect is that this strategy is not about communicating differently: it is about thinking and acting differently as a company and as individuals.

The words "Let's make things better" embrace a duality: a desire to make better things through innovations and products so that people will say "I want to buy that".

Paragraph	Styles
needs of the balance sheet.	
that they accept that Philips must continually evolve to meet the changing needs of customers and that they are prepared to put themselves and their reputation on the line to do so.	
"Let's make things better" is the new company theme worldwide. From now on Philips will speak with one voice and show one face to all target audiences across all product groups and regions.	

Q1 – Identify different problems at different stages in the Philips and how it managed to solve those problems?

They weren't prepared for the cutting edge of technology and to save time and cut costs they decided to cut staff. I would say that the best solution could have been to look for investors, focus on finding competent personnel who already had knowledge on the development of the new technology and integrate weekly briefings that gave the staff the opportunity to learn how to develop what the public required at that time. Instead they introduced the Centurion program and focused on customer requests by putting them first.

Q2 – What do you understand of employee empowerment? How did Philips empowered its employees.

Empowerment is certainly an excellent strategy to give more importance and responsibility to employees, but you have to be very careful. First of all, good personnel management must be set up, giving different roles and qualifications. A good manager must follow step by step all the work he has delegated to team members. In the case of Philips, I think it has been handled in an excellent way for what is written in the article, but obviously we do not know the details and above all how long it took to ensure that the ideas and responsibilities given to the employees, produced excellent results.

Paragraph	Styles
Today, Philips operates in a way which is quite different from the way it did in 1990. Today the emphasis in Philips is very much on its people, who are the driving force behind an organisation which is geared towards the customers and providing quality products. Today it is not technology but people who are at the heart of Philips. Its advertising is, therefore, more than just a campaign. It is not surprising that the advertising centres on the people who personally "make things better" in their work; the story is that of Philips as a whole – the values and beliefs of a winning company, with an unequalled record of innovation. People today have begun to look at Philips not as just another manufacturer, but as an organisation made up of people with a mission, with know-how and ideas that make a positive difference in their everyday lives.	

Conclusion

After five years of focusing on internal restructuring to make Philips lean and competitive, it was felt that the time was right to "go public" with a simple, hard-hitting expression - "Let's make things better." What this statement says about Philips is that at Philips:

- they strive to be the best at what they do and refuse to accept that their best efforts cannot be bettered.
- they value the contribution of each individual and the power of a team with shared ideas and beliefs to make a real difference.
- they recognise that as a world-class company, Philips has a wider responsibility to customers, partners, local communities and shareholders, than simply meeting the needs of the balance sheet.

SWOT ANALYSIS

To get a broad picture of the situation, it is right first of all to consult the strengths, weaknesses, opportunity and treats that each company is facing during this really difficult moment and that is why we have designed a SWOT analysis, to allow us to exploit the negative points with the aim to make them positive.

It is obvious that situations change according to the size of the business, which is why our research is based on the entire sector, making no distinction between location, size, number of workers, and value of the restaurant itself.

3.1 Strengths

It is undeniable that the hospitality industry, with the restrictions imposed by the government, has become a safe place since the distancing takes place between one customer and another and without it for the customers, such as tourists, workers and staff themselves, tourism and entertainment would no longer exist. And this is why customers will continue to frequent restaurants, even if only for the pleasure of being served, which they cannot do alone at home.

3.2 Weaknesses

The high prices to face what will be a tax increase in the future, as we all know there are restaurants that offer different standards from each other with different price ranges and many will lose customers due to competition. A downward competition will then begin and only those with great economic potential will survive this crisis.

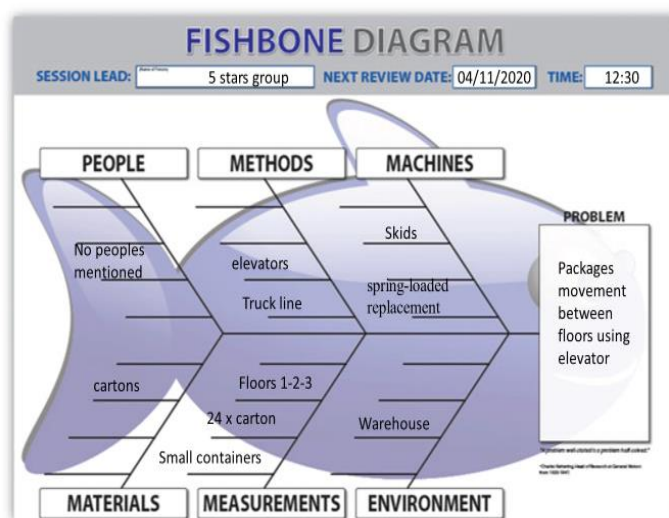
3.3 Opportunities

Fortunately, the hospitality industry has the opportunity to enjoy an influx of customers all year round, and thanks to the new technology it is possible that the customer with a simple click from his phone can book without calling, and therefore, restaurants must take advantage of these new apps that allow you to sell products to consumers even if they are comfortably at home

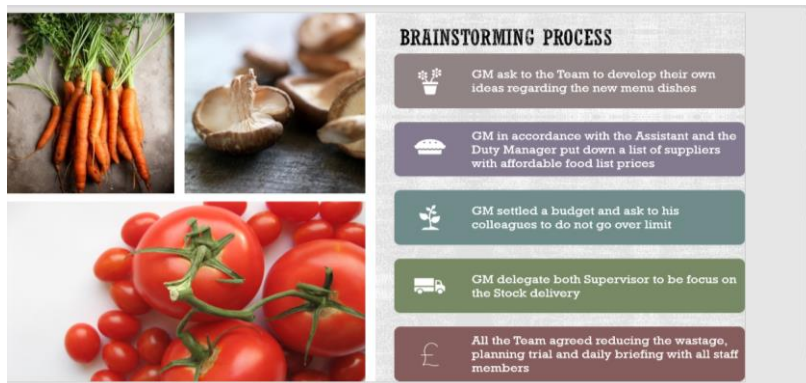
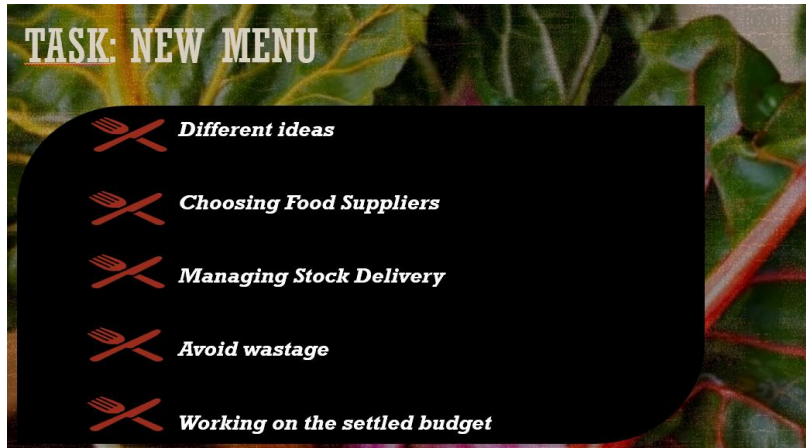
3.4 Threats

It is well known that consumer behaviour is changing. Augmented reality and virtual reality offer consumers the opportunity to enjoy a dining experience, or a simple drink without having to travel a lot and find out what a restaurant can really offer live. This can have a direct impact on the hospitality industry, such as reducing the flow of money such as tips and table service percentages.

PPT Fishbone Diagram In-Class Exercise



PPT Data Collection In-Class Exercise “New Menu Creation”



DATA COLLECTION

- **Coustmers Analysis**
Students-Workers-Families-Travellers
- **Location**
Others Fast food present in the same area
- **Clock in/Clock out**
Compulsory as other shops
- **Vegan and Vegetarian Options**
Wide Chooses



After several research using the Data Collection Process, the 5 Stars Fish and Chips Team has published the seasonal menu, based on the location, on the different types of customers and at an affordable price that can increase profits.

THANK YOU

ANY QUESTIONS?

