Chapter 10

Training and Evaluation of Mystery Customer and Customer Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

This chapter increases the customer service level by expanding the method of application used by mystery customer (MC) and resolves practical and concrete problems concerning the status of the chain stores. The survival of organisations can often be dependent on their customer service level; therefore, there is an immediate need to form a permanent measurement to act as an indicator of that performance. A use case of MC method was applied in order to observe the level of quality service in a large retail network placed in Greece. The results suggested an explicit determination of the factors of satisfied customers through the application of MC method. Action diagrams were used as a performance-importance map to indicate the strong and weak points in terms of criteria and to define the required improvement efforts. MC data showed the points or issues that service activities performance is likely to cause dissatisfaction and enables proactive measures taken on employee performance and classifies the improvement areas determined by the analysis and used as a benchmarking tool.
INTRODUCTION

In an ever-changing environment, companies must create new products, services and processes to compete and survive (Avlonitis et al., 2000). The element of differentiation is not only the benefit that exceptional quality of products or services brings, but also excellent customer service (Kafchehi et al., 2016).

In this respect, satisfaction of customers is a very important key element for organizations. The expression “satisfied customer” in practice means high-exceptional quality, loyal customers and positive reputation due to increased customer satisfaction (Homburg and Rudolf, 2001). “Customer loyalty can only be earned and cannot be bought” (Berry and Gresham, 2001). Experts estimate that most North American companies spend about 3% of revenues on customer satisfaction measurement. Customer Satisfaction (CS) surveys addresses the end product of the production line, revealing expectations and perceptions in total. In contrast, Customer Service Measurements (CSM) reveal performance at each identified stage of the production process. Clearly, both methods are important, but different (Buxton, 2000). According to Buxton (2000), both CS and CSM (figure 1) affect each other.

Currently, Mystery Customer (MC) is used by many private and public organizations (Wilson, 1998; Anderson et al., 2001; Douglas & Davies 2007; Douglas 2015; Jankal & Jankalová 2011; Kehagias et al., 2011; Wiele et al., 2005)). The use of MC is dated roughly from the 40s, when, naturally, it served different objectives and needs of organisations. Substantially it covers the need for control of

Figure 1. The cycle of customer satisfaction and customer service measurement (adapted from Buxton, 2000)
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