

PLANIRANJE KVALITETA I ANALIZA: ISPITIVANJE I RANGIRANJE KRITIČNIH POTREBA KORISNIKA INTEGRACIJOM TEHNIKA MYSTERY SHOPPING I KRITIČNI INCIDENTI

QUALITY PLANNING AND ANALYSIS: IDENTIFYING AND RANKING CUSTOMER NEEDS THROUGH TECHNIQUES: MYSTERY SHOPPING AND CRITICAL INCIDENTS

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U ovom istraživačkom radu su prikazane tehnike koje se koriste za ispitivanje potreba korisnika radi planiranja kvaliteta. Akcenat je stavljen na kombinaciju tehnika za planiranje kvaliteta: mystery shopping i tehnika kritičnih incidenata. Pomenute tehnike su primenjene na primeru maloprodajnog objekta, koji se bavi prodajom i servisiranjem ručnih satova. Rad sumira pomenute tehnike i na praktičnom primeru pokazuje kako se kombinacijom tehnika dolazi do dvodimenzionalnog upitnika, koji na detaljan način ispituje potrebe i očekivanja korisnika u odnosu na važnost i zadovoljstvo. Cilj primene ovih tehnika, jeste da se nakon prepoznavanja kritičnih incidenata, potrebe rangiraju po njihovoj kritičnosti. Ove tehnike su veoma pogodne za korišćenje, jer se mogu generički primeniti na sve B2C organizacije, bez obzira na veličinu i delatnost te organizacije.

Ključne reči: planiranje; kvalitet; potrebe; kritični incidenti; korisnik

This research paper describes techniques which are being used for examination of customers needs in order to plan quality. Focus is put on combination of quality planning techniques: mystery shopping and critical incidents technique. These techniques are used on example of a retail shop, which is selling and servicing watches. This work sums up these techniques and it shows on a practical example how combination of these techniques can help in order to make twodimensional questionnaire which questions in detail needs and expectations of customer relating importance and satisfaction. The goal of using this techniques is, after recognizing critical incidents, to rank customers needs according to their criticality. These techniques are very suitable for using because they are generic and can be used on all B2C organizations, no matter on the size of the organizations and what they do.

Key words: planning; quality; needs; critical incidents; customer

1 Background

The quality planning process and its associated methods, tools, and techniques have been developed because in the history of modern society, organizations have rather universally demonstrated a consistent failure to produce the goods and services that unerringly delight their customers. (Juran, Coletti, & Early, 1999) The idea that the needs of the customer are primary and that quality products and processes can be continually improved through the use of statistical tools and a team approach to problem solving was introduced in postwar Japan by two Americans, statistician W. Edwards Deming and engineer Joseph M. Juran. (Haas & Holkeboer, 1993)

“Quality planning,” as used here, is a structured process for developing products (both goods and services) that ensures that customer needs are met by the final result. The tools and methods of quality planning are incorporated along with the technological tools for the particular product being developed and delivered. (Juran, Coletti, & Early, 1999) Quality planning can be a part of business

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planning or treated as an independent entity depending on the organisational structure and decision of the top/quality management of the organisation. (SCOPE Joint Action, 2016)

Standard ISO 9000:2015 defines **quality planning** as the part of quality management focused on setting quality objectives and specifying necessary operational processes, and related resources to achieve the quality objectives. Quality management is the management with regard to quality. (ISO 9000, 2015) The primary focus of quality management is to meet customer requirements and to strive to exceed customer expectations. (ISO, 2015) Use of the terms ‘user’, ‘customer’, ‘consumer’ or combinations thereof (e.g. ‘user-customer’) is becoming more widespread. These lexical changes are not only anecdotal, but bear witness to a ‘well advanced process of revolution of the foundations of public action, whose implicit model is now the customer’. (Jacob, Schiffino, & Biard, 2016)

To determine customer needs, there are a lot of tools and techniques, some of which are SERVQUAL, Kano model, Quality Planning Spreadsheet (below is a brief overview of these techniques) and also techniques whose integration is accentuated in this paper - mystery shopping and critical incident techniques.

SERVQUAL. Customer service within service industries continues to gain in importance. Consumers are becoming more aware of the alternatives on offer, and rising standards of service prompted by competitive trends, have increased customers' expectations. (Lewis & Mitchell, 1990) Service quality is defined as ‘a global judgment or attitude, relating to the overall superiority of the service’. (Parasuraman, Berry, & Zeithaml, 1988) The SERVQUAL proposes a gap based conceptualization of service quality where the gap indicates the extent to which the service obtained confirms to expectations. In SERVQUAL, both - store service performance and consumer expectations of the store service, are explicitly measured to assess the ‘gap’. Conceptually, this gap assessment assumes that the statement of desired attribute levels is the yardstick a consumer uses to assess store service performance. (Carman, 1990)

KANO model. The model of customer satisfaction, proposed by the Japanese professor Noriaki Kano and his colleagues, divides product attributes into three categories: threshold or must be, performance and excitement or delighter. A competitive product meets basic attributes, maximizes performance attributes and includes as many excitement attributes as possible. (Chen & Chuang, 2008) The Kano model is used to determine the customer expectations regarding product – it is used for analyzing customer needs and determining product requirements. The main focus of customer needs abbreviates from the product quality properties. (Južnik Rotar & Kozar, 2017)

Quality Planning Spreadsheet. The spreadsheet is a highly versatile tool that can be adapted to a number of situations. The quality planning process makes use of several kinds of spreadsheets, such as customer needs spreadsheet, needs analysis spreadsheet, product design spreadsheet, process design spreadsheet, process control spreadsheet. Besides recording information, these tools are particularly useful in analyzing relationships among the data that have been collected and in facilitating the stepwise conversion of customer needs into product features and then product features into process characteristics and plans. For most planning projects, simple matrix spreadsheets will suffice. (Juran & Godfrey, Juran's Quality Handbook, 1951)

The explanation of mystery shopping and critical incidents techniques, as well as their practical application and integration are given in the next chapter.

2 Determining Customer Needs

In order to define customers' requirements, organization has to ask them a certain set of questions and listen to their opinions related to different aspects of a product or service i.e. quality characteristics of a product or service. The set of questions that is going to be asked must be based on the goal of the research – what does the organization want to accomplish with research and organization's data that it collected prior to research.

2.1 Mystery Shopping Technique

The mystery shopping technique involves putting a person in contact (e.g. visit, telephone call) with an organisation to evaluate the quality of service provided by the latter. By focusing on ‘the

ability of local units to meet the requirements of an “extraordinary” customer, it makes it possible to evaluate the quality of service offered and the capacity of local units to make the offering and production more flexible. (Jougleux, 2008) Given the popularity of the use of this technique in private and public organisations, specialised agencies offer their expertise in this area. (Calvert, 2005) Mystery shoppers are central and essential actors of this method of evaluation. They are recruited and motivated in different ways. (Allison & Severt D, 2012) The cost of recruiting and training mystery customers is relatively high. This induces a limitation in the number of contacts with the evaluated organisations, which does not always make it possible to observe any evolutions. (Ford, Latham, & Lennox, 2011)

To conduct the evaluation, several conditions must be met. Mystery shopping must preserve the ethical duty of confidentiality of the customer. Next, a specific scenario must be written and scrupulously followed by the customer during their mission. This scenario is carefully prepared to ensure its quality and credibility. Finally, the evaluation – using the same criterion-referenced grid for all organisations studied in the same survey – must take place immediately after the mission. (Jacob, Schiffino, & Biard, 2016)

Mystery shopping can be used for various purposes. Most of the time the goal is to measure the quality of the service delivery to the customer. In this situation the mystery guest can be focused on the compliance to specific standards, guidelines or demands, or the mystery guest can be instructed to position the quality of the service on a scale. If a mystery guest is also used to visit not only the own service locations but also locations of competitors, benchmarking becomes a way to judge your own activities against those. (Hesselink & der Wiele, 2003)

In order to find out which aspects of service are most important to customers, we conducted a method called Mystery Shopping. The method was conducted in four most crowded watch stores in Belgrade. Four different Mystery Shoppers went to each of those stores and focused on predefined aspects of service (the look of shop window, the look of the store, atmosphere in the store, staff, service customization, additional services, assortment, duration of the service, overall satisfaction). After conducting the research, Mystery Shoppers had to fill the reports in which they wrote about their observation of different aspects of the service. Reports made by Mystery Shoppers were used to conduct next step of the research – defining the quality characteristics that the average customers pays attention to.

2.2 Critical Incidents Technique

The critical incident technique (CIT) is a qualitative research method that is used to obtain a depth of knowledge and understanding of subjects’ responses to selected situations. The method was first developed by John C. Flanagan in 1954 in his work to identify pilots suitable for combat missions. Since that time, the CIT has been further developed and applied to a range of contexts, including growth of small businesses in the service sector, the service firm life cycle in the hospitality industry, and various marketing and management issues in service contexts. This entry describes the CIT method in more detail, showing how it may be used in research and describing the important features of reliability and generalizability. (Gremler, 2015)

Its creator John Flanagan described it as: a set of procedures for collecting direct observations of human behavior in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles. The critical incident technique outlines procedures for collecting observed incidents having special significance and meeting systematically defined criteria. (Flanagan, 1954)

As its name suggests, critical incident technique involves the study of critical incidents - or significant instances of a specific activity - as experienced or observed by the research participants. Detailed analysis of critical incidents enables researchers to identify similarities, differences and patterns and to seek insight into how and why people engage in the activity. (Hughes, Lipu, Willimason, & Lloyd, 2007)

Reports made by Mystery Shoppers were used to conduct this step of the research. The methodology used in this study for analysis of Mystery Shopping reports, using CIT is based on steps fully explained in text book of Mijatovic (Mijatovic, 2019). The sentences in the reports in which Mystery

Shoppers stated their perception of certain aspect of the service were extracted and carried over into Table 1. For each of these statements, we defined whether it was positive or negative statement about an aspect of service.

Table 1: Critical incidents extraction

<i>Experience</i>	<i>Critical incident</i>	<i>Positive/Negative</i>
The shop window was clean at first sight. When I came near the window, I could see a few stains and scratches. The part of the window with men's watches looked nicer than the women's – better lighting and prettier watches. All additional services were transparently highlighted and visible.	I could see a few stains and scratches	-
	The part of the window with men's watches looked nicer than the women's	-
	All additional services were transparently highlighted and visible.	+
As soon as I came in the store the staff members greeted me. When I came to one of the shelves, a staff member asked me if I wanted anything in particular. He asked me about my preferences, and offered me three watches. After that, he asked me about the price range that I want and narrowed the choice afterwards. Also he told me about the models that were on sale. The staff tries their best to adapt to customer preferences, and they also take the price range into consideration.	As soon as I came in the store the staff members greeted me	+
	When I came to one of the shelves, a staff member asked me if I wanted anything in particular	+
	The staff tries their best to adapt to customer preferences.	+
	They also take the price range into consideration	+
One stand in the middle of the store wasn't illuminated well enough, and the wooden edge was making a few watches unobservable. It is allowed to try out the watches. While I was considering one watch, the staff member looked for other models and offered me another one. When I refused he didn't insist. When I asked about additional services I didn't get the answer the first time. When I asked again he gave me all necessary information.	One stand in the middle of the store wasn't illuminated well enough, and the wooden edge was making a few watches unobservable	-
	When I asked about additional services I didn't get the answer the first time	-
There are not many women's watches exposed in the shop window. Also, additional services were transparently highlighted and visible. The staff came to me as soon as I entered the store. The staff member listened to me and offered a considerable number of watches that I might be interested in. After I chose which one I shall buy, he didn't try to persuade me to buy it immediately but offered other models that might be interesting to me.	There are not many women's watches exposed in the shop window	-
	The staff came to me as soon as I entered the store	+
	Also, additional services were transparently highlighted and visible.	+

<i>Experience</i>	<i>Critical incident</i>	<i>Positive/Negative</i>
I entered the store which wasn't crowded. The staff member was sitting and looking at phone but after I entered the store, she stood up and greeted me. When I said I was looking for women's watches she pointed at the direction where they are exposed. She didn't ask me about preferences and didn't help me choose. After that, when I asked if they have a silver option for one of the watches she answered they don't, after which she showed me other silver models. She told that one of the watches looks very nice and that they are selling it well. I kept looking for a while after which I leaved the store.	I entered the store which wasn't crowded	+
	The staff member was sitting and looking at phone	-
	She didn't ask me about preferences and didn't help me choose	-
I entered the store which wasn't too crowded. The store is located in the hall of the mall so it didn't door or shop window which looks very elegant. The store was clean and neat and very well illuminated. One of the staff members greeted me as soon as I came close. The watches were placed in lockers based on the brand. The assortment was very big but few lockers had too many watches inside and I couldn't see prices of few models because they were very small. When I told the staff member about my preferences, she showed me a few models that might suit my needs. Staff members were very polite and answered all my questions but they looked bored and disinterested.	I entered the store which wasn't too crowded	+
	The store is located in the hall of the mall so it didn't door or shop window which looks very elegant	+
	The store was clean and neat and very well illuminated	+
	One of the staff members greeted me as soon as I came close.	+
	The assortment was very big few lockers had too many watches inside and I couldn't see prices of few models because they were very small.	-
	Staff members were very polite and answered all my questions	+
	They looked bored and disinterested.	-

After this, we defined quality characteristic categories based on defined critical incidents and appointed each incident to matching category, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Appointing critical incidents to quality characteristic categories

Quality Characteristic Category	
Staff member behavior	As soon as I came in the store the staff members greeted me
	When I came to one of the shelves, a staff member asked me if I wanted anything in particular
	The staff tries their best to adapt to customer preferences.
Staff member behavior	They also take the price range into consideration
	When I asked about additional services I didn't get the answer the answer the first time
	The staff came to me as soon as I entered the store
	The staff member was sitting and looking at phone
	She didn't ask me about preferences and didn't help me choose
	One of the staff members greeted me as soon as I came close.
	Staff members were very polite and answered all my questions
	They looked bored and disinterested.
Adequate informing of customers	All additional services were transparently highlighted and visible.
	Also, additional services were transparently highlighted and visible.
	When I asked about additional services I didn't get the answer the answer the first time
Assortment	One stand in the middle of the store wasn't illuminated well enough, and the wooden edge was making a few watches unobservable
	The assortment was very big
	Few lockers had too many watches inside and I couldn't see prices of few models because they were very small.
Shop window	I could see a few stains and scratches
	The part of the window with men's watches looked nicer than the women's
	There are not many women's watches exposed in the shop window
	The store is located in the hall of the mall so it didn't door or shop window which looks very elegant
The look of the store	The store was clean and neat and very well illuminated
Crowd	I entered the store which wasn't crowded
	I entered the store which wasn't too crowded

After this, the next step is to translate critical incidents and quality characteristic categories to general customer requirements, shown as primary requirements in Table 3. Primary requirements are further specified as secondary requirements, which are then further specified as tertiary requirements.

Table 3: Separated customer requirements

<i>Customer requirements</i>		
<i>Primary requirements</i>	<i>Secondary requirements</i>	<i>Tertiary requirements</i>
Adequate behavior of staff members	Politeness	Polite staff members
	Hospitality	Staff members greet customers upon entrance
	Competence	Staff members recognize customer preferences
	Behavior	Staff members behave pleasantly
	Responsiveness	Staff members deliver in short time
Adequate informing of the customer	Additional services information	Additional services are transparently and visibly highlighted
Assortment	Assortment size	Big assortment
	Neatness of exposed assortment	Offered products are exposed neatly and visibly
	Price visibility	Prices are exposed next to the products
Shop window	Clean glass	Glass of the shop window is clean
	Assortment exposed in the shop window	Men's and women's watches are equally exposed
	Attractive shop window	Shop window looks elegant
Look of the store	Cleanliness	The store is clean
	Neatness	The store is neat
	Lighting	The store is adequately illuminated
Crowd	No crowd	The store is not crowded
		A queue is not long

2 Analysis and Results

After ranking incidents by critics, we created a two-dimensional questionnaire, which questions in detail needs and expectations of customer relating importance and satisfaction. The results of the questionnaire were analyzed using the IBM SPSS Software.

Total sample size is 101 respondents. Crosstabulation that describes respondents based on their gender and age is shown in the Table 4 below. It can be seen that 25 of them are men and 76 of them are women. They are split in five categories based on their age.

Table 4: Gender * age crossstabulation

			Age					Total
			18-25	26-30	31-40	41-50	51+	
Gender	Man	Count	13	5	2	4	1	25
		% within Gender	52,00%	20,00%	8,00%	16,00%	4,00%	100,00%
	Woman	Count	62	3	5	5	1	76
		% within Gender	81,60%	3,90%	6,60%	6,60%	1,30%	100,00%
Total	Count	75	8	7	9	2	101	
	% within Gender	74,30%	7,90%	6,90%	8,90%	2,00%	100,00%	

In the Table 5 we can see mean and std. deviation for both importance and satisfaction with every variable that respondents were asked about. Mean is the most important column because it is used in order to calculate criticality indicator.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation		Mean	Std. Deviation
Importance kindness	3,62	,614	Satisfaction kindness	2,96	,677
Importance preferences	3,64	,576	Satisfaction preferences	2,88	,725
Importance additional services	3,38	,811	Satisfaction additional services	2,58	,778
Importance assortment	3,49	,657	Satisfaction assortment	2,95	,726
Importance visible prices	3,88	,355	Satisfaction visible prices	3,01	,843
Importance shop window	2,87	,945	Satisfaction shop window	3,17	,584
Importance neatness	3,72	,550	Satisfaction neatness	3,50	,577
Importance waitingtime	3,64	,672	Satisfaction waitingtime	3,17	,722

Criticality indicator (table 6) for every variable is calculated dividing mean of importance with the mean of satisfaction. It can vary from 0,25 to 4, with 0,25 being the least and 4 being the most critical. Every variable gets rank based on the criticality indicator, from most critical to the least critical one.

Extreme value 4 means that it is very important for the customer, but that he is not satisfied at all. This is a problem, because when a customer is not satisfied with a certain aspect, there is the possibility of losing that customer. The second extreme value of 0.25 means that the customer is satisfied with a certain aspect, but that does not matter to him. It's not good because company wastes resources in vain. For example, if the width of the assortment is not important to the customer at all, company needlessly work on it.

Table 6: Criticality indicators for every variable

Variable	Mean - importance	Mean - satisfaction	Criticality indicator	Rank
Kindness	3,62	2,96	1,222973	4
Preferences	3,64	2,88	1,263889	3
Additional services	3,38	2,58	1,310078	1
Assortment	3,49	2,95	1,183051	5
Visible prices	3,88	3,01	1,289037	2
Shop window	2,87	3,17	0,905363	8
Neatness	3,72	3,5	1,062857	7
Waiting time	3,64	3,17	1,148265	6

In the table 7 we can see criticality indicator for every quality characteristic for each age category. It can be very useful for organization to calculate these because it helps them to better understand their customers and it can be easier for them to satisfy and target the categories of customers that are their target groups. Criticality factor is calculated by dividing average importance (on scale 1-4) of a quality characteristic with average satisfaction (also on scale 1-4) with that characteristic, for each group of customers. The criticality factor could be anywhere within the range from 0.25 to 4. The higher the criticality factor for certain quality characteristic, the greater is the urgency to improve that.

Table 7: Criticality indicator for every variable based on the age

	Kindness	Preferences	Additional services	Assortment	Visible prices	Shop window	Neatness	Waiting time
18-25	1,20	1,26	1,32	1,17	1,27	0,85	1,05	1,14
26-30	1,36	1,29	1,40	1,19	1,43	0,96	1,11	1,17
31-40	1,19	1,37	1,28	1,25	1,44	1,08	1,17	1,18
41-50	1,29	1,16	1,12	1,25	1,36	1,18	1,07	1,30
51+	2,00	2,00	1,60	1,40	1,14	1,00	1,00	0,86

For example, we can conclude that the greatest criticality for the 18-25 are additional services. If that group is an important target market for a retail facility, attention should be paid to this characteristic. But if the majority target group for a retail object is between 31 and 40 years old, then according to the table, from the highest to the lowest, we can rank criticality in following order: visible prices, preferences, additional services, assortment, kindness, waiting time, neatness and the least critical - shop window. The organization can decide on which aspect of service it wants to focus on, depending on its target group and general goals it wants to achieve.

3 Summary

Understanding the customer's situation and need together with the right offering of products leads to high customer satisfaction and in turn a better running business. Bridging the gap between a firm's internal quality improvements and external measures of customer needs and satisfaction is an important aspect for the success of a business. In view of these facts, it is not surprising that there is much importance in understanding the link between customer needs and customer satisfaction which affects the profitability of a business. (Rahman & Safeena, 2016) Quality planning involves creating preconditions for satisfying the needs and expectations of stakeholders and interested parties, as well as preventing dismissal.

Since quality is defined as the degree to which a set of inherent characteristics of an object fulfils requirements, it follows that any planning is, in fact, quality planning. A man plans only to achieve his goal - in relation to his own or a request imposed on him by some of the stakeholders and interested parties. (Filipovic, Djuric, Ruso, 2018) To determine customer needs, there are a lot of tools and techniques - some of them are mystery shopping and critical incident techniques, whose integration is accentuated in this paper.

The fundamental idea of the mystery shopping technique is to look at the process(es) under scrutiny from the outside and measure their efficiency from a number of viewpoints. (Ograjnshek, 2008) Reports from mystery shopper we used as basis for the next technique - the critical incident technique.

That is a tool used to gather information (war stories) on behaviors that contribute to the success or demise of performance. When performed correctly, this front-end analysis tool will:

- identify tasks or behaviors that lead to ineffective job performance;
- identify tasks or behaviors that lead to effective job performance;
- uncover overall skills, attitudes, knowledge or values that contribute to effective or ineffective job performance. (Gordon, 2014)

After analysis and ranking incidents by critics, we created a two-dimensional questionnaire, which questions in detail needs and expectations of customer relating importance and satisfaction. The results of the questionnaire were analyzed using the IBM SPSS Software and concluded which needs are critical in relation to the target groups. These techniques are very suitable for using because they are generic and can be used on all B2C organizations, no matter on the size of the organizations and what they do, because each organization has a customer, whose needs and satisfaction should be in focus.

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