



An analysis of quality in services: a case study at L'amitié restaurant

Uma análise da qualidade em serviços: estudo de caso no restaurante L'amitié

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ABSTRACT

The service sector is constantly growing around the world. The quality of services is a differential for organizations to stand out from the competition. Today the market is not only about new technologies and new products, but also about the strengthening and innovations brought to the existing process. The objective of this work is to analyze the processes used by the restaurant L'amitié, to complement the studies carried out on Quality in Services. A case study was carried out at the site, where it was possible to analyze the restaurant's operation and the services provided. For this analysis, a visit to the restaurant took place, where conversations were held with the owner and the administrator to learn more about the history and the environment. After compiling all the data collected and comparing it with what was learned in theory, it was possible to conclude that the work was carried out in a clear way and reached the objectives proposed in the beginning.

Key-words: Quality in service, restaurant, L'amitié.

1 INTRODUCTION

Since the early civilizations there was a concern with quality, even if in prehistoric times this concept did not exist. Cave men knew that they had to build their tools and weapons correctly, otherwise they would have problems while using them, among them the loss of their own lives.

Over time, the knowledge and need for quality evolved, but it became primordial during the Industrial Revolution, and especially after World War II, when he started the techniques of continuous improvement, so that companies had a standard and a differentiated quality. Since then, quality has become necessary to attract customers and gain credibility in the labor market, taking into account the high competitiveness.

Quality in service does not refer to the best or the most expensive, but to the most appropriate to meet customer needs, with the purpose of maintaining trust, appreciation,



satisfaction and meeting customer expectations. It is estimated that 70% of the gross domestic product is in the services sector, being the largest segment to generate employment in the country.

In order to better understand the concepts and analyze in practice how quality in service is achieved, a case study was carried out observing step by step the execution of the service, and the communication between the service provider and the customer.

2 WHAT IS SERVICE?

It is difficult to characterize what service is, and many authors define what service is not in order to get a concept, and then, to define it. Service is a word of Latin origin, meaning the act or the effect of serving, that is, being subject to/being helpful to someone for whatever reason, doing what that person wants or asks.

Formally, the U.S. government defines the service sector as residual, i.e. uncoupled from agriculture or industry. (For some, this also means uncoupling it from the public sector.) Typically, therefore, the service sector includes hotels, restaurants, and general maintenance and repair stores; (SCHMENNER, 1999, p. 15).

In the service operation it is necessary for the supplier and customer to meet, unlike what happens in a factory or in manufacturing where this meeting is practically impossible. The place where this meeting takes place is called the front office, and because of this, all kinds of situations and variability can occur, making control difficult.

In view of this, Schmenner (1999) states that it is in industrialized countries that the service sector is most developed. When there were different rates of productivity growth in an economy where it could invariably be seen that the sector whose productivity grew rapidly, created jobs that would later be taken by the slower growing sector. For example, North American productivity growth is higher than that of the service sector, so jobs in the manufacturing sector were eliminated and much of the labor force was absorbed by the service sector.

Schmenner (1999) pointed out that the service industry in industrialized countries is more developed. When there are diverse growth rates the productivity in an economy, it is always possible to find sectors where productivity is growing rapidly, productivity growth in North America higher than that of the service sector resulted in the elimination of manufacturing jobs and the absorption of much of the labor force into the service sector.

According to Schemenner (1999, p. 20) "Countries that have historically succeeded in creating manufacturing jobs are now creating the most service jobs.

In other words, the higher the productivity sector of the countries, the greater the growth of the service sector will be in the future.



2.1 SERVICE FEATURES

With the difficult precision of the real meaning of service, several authors identify characteristics related to it. Garcia Martins and Piero Laugeni (2005) highlight a series of characteristics, which are:

- High customer contact: The presence of the customer is part of the process. There are two forms of service delivery: front office, where there is direct contact between customer and supplier, and back office where there is low contact between customer and supplier;
- Customer participation in the process: Services are divided according to the degree of customer participation: quasi-manufacturing, customer as participant, and customer as product. In the customer-as-participant service, the customer participates in the process, as in a department store or in banks. In the customer as product service, the customer suffers the action of the service provider, as in a hair salon;
 - Perishability: highly perishable service; if not consumed on time, it is lost;
 - Non-stock: Similar concept to perishability, service must be consumed as soon as it is provided;
 - - Labor intensive: Even though the number of automated service delivery systems is large, today, the cost of labor still dominates the rest;
 - Short lead time: Customer service time cannot be long, because the customer would soon get tired of it;
 - - Variable and non-standardizable output: It is difficult to achieve standardization when it comes to people. So the same service provided by different people, will have a greater variability than the same product manufactured by different machines;
 - - Intangibility: Service is a tangible good;
 - Difficulty of measuring productivity: With the difficulty of evaluating outputs and inputs of the systems involved, the measurement of productivity in services is more difficult;
 - Difficulty of measuring quality: Five gaps is one of the most studied approaches to quality in services that is highly subjective. In doing this analysis, one looks for the comparison between what the customer really evaluates and what the supplier thinks would be ideal.



2.2 SERVICES SECTOR

To check the quality of a service, consumers consult people or websites before purchasing it. It can be seen then that a customer evaluates not only the tangible aspects of a product or service, but also the intangible aspects attached to it. Therefore, it is important to highlight that the provision of services is not restricted only to the moment of sale, but to all stages of the product.

In the face of competition, companies have been trying to overcome the needs of customers and, with this, they seek to improve productivity in services. To achieve the necessary objective and eliminate problems with the services provided, it becomes essential that companies have a management structure focused on Quality of Services.

3 PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT

For a significant improvement in productivity and quality of services provided, the use of integrated management software has been important as it eliminates rework and improves customer service. The automation of services and technology help to obtain a superior performance, and with this it is necessary a superior qualification and training of employees. With this, total quality programs are becoming more and more frequent in several companies.

4 QUALITY SETTINGS

With a greater participation of the Japanese industry in the market in 1980, which used the lean production system, where product quality and reduced prices were its main objectives, there was a major change in the market: consumers became more critical and started to analyze not only the price, but also the quality.

The companies then realized that there was no possibility of surviving in the market without quality, and in this context, Garcia Martins and Piero Laugeni (2005) highlight five relevant definitions of quality:

- Transcendental: quality is understood to consist of the highest, universally recognized standards;
- Product-focused: quality consists of variables and attributes that can be measured and controlled;
- User-focused: the concept that the product is what the customer buys makes one understand the importance of this definition of quality for maintaining the company's competitiveness;



- Focused on manufacturing: definition that leads the company to seek improvements in product and process design techniques and in the establishment of standards. Care is needed in the establishment of these standards, since the company may generate products that are not necessarily well accepted in the market, but that meet only the specifications set internally in the company;
- Value-focused: Feigenbaum enunciated this concept by saying that, for the consumer, quality is a matter of the product being fit for purpose and price.

5 QUALITY COSTS

To obtain a product the customer evaluates its quality and cost, so quality improvement was associated with increased costs, and Deming showed that this was not true, constantly citing that by increasing quality, you increase productivity. However, it was not very clear what was meant by "quality-related costs" or by "costs of quality".

It was not clear what was meant by quality costs, so experts adopted it as the costs arising from lack of quality.

Garcia Martins and Piero Laugeni (2005, p. 499) classified quality costs in: prevention; evaluation; internal failures and external failures.

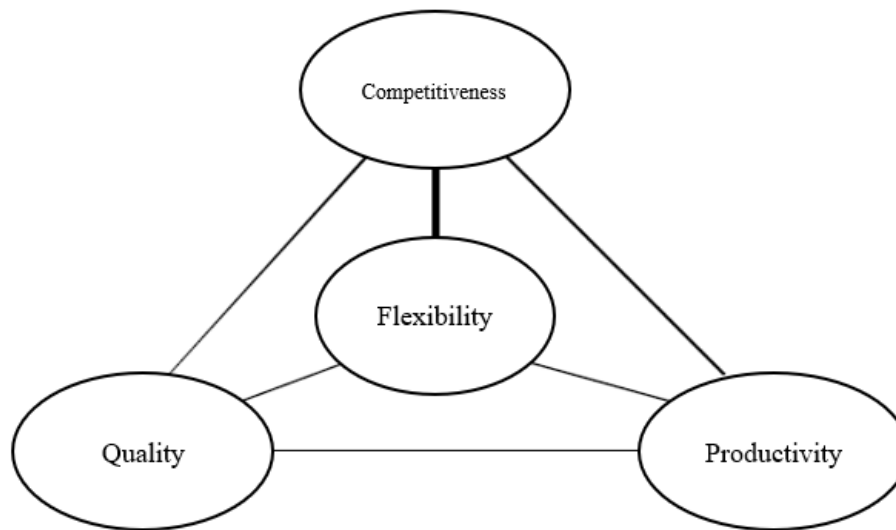
6 QUALITIES OF A SERVICE

In the late 60's, consumers became more critical about the products and services received, evaluating not only the price, but also the quality of the product or service received, due to the use of lean production in industries, which means the production of high quality products for reduced prices.

Due to the production of several models, the high costs of logistics and the emergence of large inventories of products, in the mid-1970s, industries were overwhelmed by the high demand.

Still in this phase, competitiveness among companies became based on the trinomial of Productivity x Quality x Flexibility. (FREITAS, 2005, p.3).

Figure 1: The trinomial of Productivity x Quality x Flexibility.



Source: Article published in the magazine produção online¹.

¹ Available at: <<https://producaoonline.org.br/rpo/article/view/321/418>>

According to Freitas (2005, p.3), the organizations had one more concern, besides the price and the quality of their products, because they should also be flexible to:

Develop/produce new products faster than the competitors;
Adjust production and inventory control, avoiding oscillations between lack of products in the market and excess of products in stock, and;;
Adapt the production processes quickly in face of the new market trends. (FREITAS, 2005, p. 3).

However, starting in the 1980s, organizations realized that the service sector began to represent a significant role in the world economic scenario. As a consequence, the search for Service Excellence has become a constant for organizations.

According to IBGE data, Brazil's GDP in 2022 was leveraged by the increase in the service sector (4.2%), which together with the industry sector represents about 90% of the indicator. In other words, it is a sector that demonstrates its high contribution to the country's economy.

The customers' point of view is of total relevance for the management of the quality of a service provided. Consumers select their service providers through the perception that the service received exceeded the expected service expectation and also, through measurable criteria, the service being complex and intangible. In particular:



The physical appearance of the place and the people;
The price - the demand for quality increases proportionally to the price;
The perceived risk in choosing the service, itself linked to the image and reputation of the company. (HOROVITZ, 1993, p. 39).

Another important aspect for the consumer to know the quality of the service is the feedback from people who have already experienced a specific service/product. According to Freitas (2005, p. 5) it is possible to note that customers evaluate all possible aspects of a product/service, whether they are tangible or intangible aspects attached to it.

It is also worth noting that the buyer, in addition to the price, quality and technical performance of the product, also evaluates the activities involved in the after-sales in terms of maintenance, technical assistance, time, effort and money. Basically, the customer measures:

- The delivery in the expected time;
- The possibility of choice;
- The availability;
- The attitude of the service personnel (kindness, courtesy, helpfulness, initiative) during the provision of the service;
- The other customers;
- The personalization of the services;
- Obtaining an error-free invoice;
- The more or less understanding reaction to complaints; and
- Finding a responsible person quickly in the event of a problem.

In addition, the customer assesses the value that the supplier adds to the product or service provided. The value added can be mentioned as social status, being this through the product acquired or the service used and, also, this value compares the help for the solution of problems. We can define value added according to Horovitz (1993, p.27) as being flexible or agile: agile for delivery or manufacturing and flexible for any changes in ongoing demand.

In response to competitiveness, organizations have the challenge of ensuring customer loyalty, overcoming competition and proposing innovations for the service provided according to the needs presented by their customers.

According to Horovitz (1993, p. 29), the impact that the first contact has on the service is extremely important, since the quality of the service is more important than the comfort found and the choice made by the customer.



Each company has different focuses to obtain the quality of its product or service provided. For the service, these elements are:

- Reliability;
- Courtesy;
- Communication;
- Ability to understand the client's needs;
- Ease of use;
- Credibility;
- Be competent;
- Security;
- Speed of response;
- Visible aspects.

These elements are not totally independent from each other, but they cover what customers expect in the provision of a service (MARTINS; LAUGENI, 2005, p. 531).

According to Freitas (2005, p.7), because of the intrinsic characteristics presented by services, it is necessary to create a management model focused on the service focus, which is the actions that understand the real desires of customers. The employees who must be prepared to perform the service assigned to them, aiming at service excellence and considering that the customer is what the company needs to obtain its success.

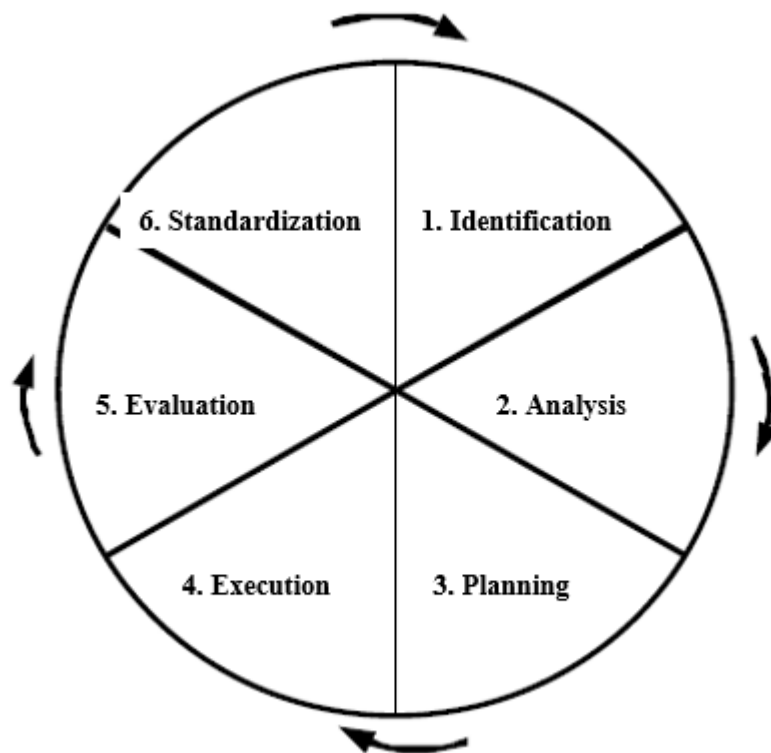
We can see that the human resource is a very important factor in service provision. More specifically, according to Freitas (2005, p. 8) the organization's employees become the organization's real representatives, since administrators and managers cannot witness at all times the actions that are taken by their employees. In this context, the following conditions are observed to obtain excellence in customer service:

- Measuring the degree of satisfaction of employees and customers in relation to the services provided. This activity is capable of identifying eventual points that do not please the customers and even the employees;
- Motivating and making employees more committed to the quality of the service provided through proper training, remuneration according to the function performed and positions related to competence and skills;

- The organization must promote to its employees the knowledge of its functional structure, its attributions and the products/services offered;
- The employees must try to solve problems immediately or else direct them to the correct person for resolution, remembering that this way they will avoid eventual complaints, which can interfere with the company's image, also leading to loss of customers;
- Employees must be flexible to adapt to each customer's profile.

However, continuous improvements are necessary in relation to the quality of services, because of this it is necessary that the organization has a process of knowledge of all the people involved for the solution of problems. According to Freitas (2001, p.15) the process can be basically in 6 steps, as illustrated below:

Figure 2: Process for service quality improvement.



Source: Freitas (2001, p.15)

- Identification: in this stage the problems and/or opportunities for improvement are defined, aiming to increase customer satisfaction. Among these, those that cause the greatest impact on the client and those that are quickest and easiest to solve should be



prioritized;

- Analysis: through the analysis based on data and facts about the selected problems and opportunities, we seek to determine the causes of these problems and assess their effects on the desired improvements.
- Planning: in this step potential actions to solve the causes of the problems or a list of actions to increase customer satisfaction are listed. These actions should be evaluated for risk, cost and resources required for quality improvement, and also for possible side effects of each selected action.
- Execution: in this stage the planned actions must be implemented according to previously established procedures.
- Evaluation: through the evaluation or monitoring of the implemented actions it is possible to verify if they are really being effective in solving the problems or achieving the desired improvements.
- Standardization: if the implemented actions are really being effective, they must be standardized, in such a way that the problems will no longer occur and the customers will remain satisfied. Otherwise, the problem still persists and must be solved. (FREITAS, 2001, p. 16)

Therefore, there are several strategies for continuous improvement and evaluation of the quality of services provided, it is up to each organization to seek the factors considered determinant to maintain customer loyalty and service quality. More specifically, the gastronomy strategy according to Horovitz (1993, p. 70) is the most particular one, which is aimed at captivating and involving the customer, so that its high level of personalization and excellence remains constant in the market.

Based on what Horovitz says, there are several ways to improve and captivate the customer, but you must call the customer by the taste, and the high level in the quality of your products and dishes, make your dish different within the market by the quality.

7 THE FIVE GAPS MODEL

In order to perform and acquire a quality service it is necessary that it presents the elements mentioned previously in topic 3.1, but for this it is necessary to identify and remove the five gaps.

Gap is the difference between expectation and perception of performance, besides being a method for the customer to measure the degree of their satisfaction with the service received, it is



also a way to measure and certify the elements of quality. According to Martins and Laugeni (2009, p. 531) gaps are the divergences that exist within the company and between the company and the customer that result in poor service quality.

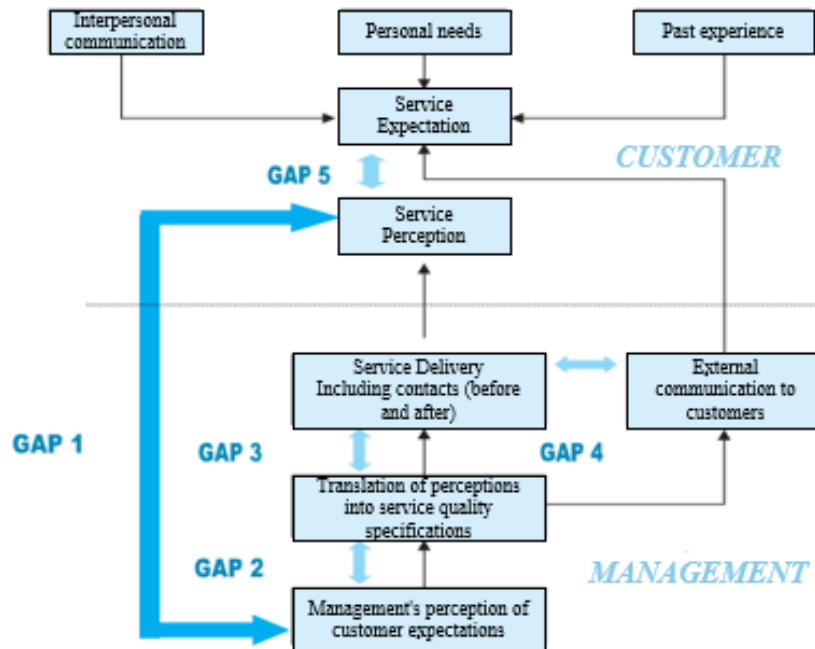
7.1 THE FIVE GAPS

According to Martins and Laugeni (2009) to eliminate the Gaps it is necessary:

- Gap 1: understand what has been ordered and show it to the customer, so there is no divergence in the information;
- Gap 2: Clearly and objectively pass on all data necessary for the execution of the order and pay attention to the quality specifications;
- Gap 3: Establish a standard method for the product realization process to meet the quality specifications;
- Gap 4: Deliver the product with the quality and in the timeframe that was offered;
- Gap 5: Make sure that the service provided is within the customer's expectations.

7.1.1 The 5 Gaps Diagram

Figure 3: Service Quality Gap Model



Source: PARASURAMAN et al. 1985

7.2 REASONS FOR THE OCCURRENCE OF THE 5 GAPS

The main reasons for the occurrence of the 5 Gaps are:

- Gap 1: Error in the investigation of the customer's needs and failure in the communication with the customer and between those responsible for the execution of the service.
- Gap 2: Lack of commitment to quality; absence of methodological standard and difficulty to perform the service;
- Gap 3: Lack of knowledge of the method to perform the service, no commitment from work teams, lack of motivation, and interpersonal problems.
- Gap 4: Low knowledge about the process during the execution of the service; low operational control and lack of communication among all involved.

The above reasons result in what is the Gap 5.



The consequences of these problems directly affect the service provider, who becomes disqualified, unreliable and devalued in the environment in which he operates, losing his clients and decreasing the company's competitiveness. Therefore, it is necessary to eliminate the Gaps reported in item 4.2.1.

To eliminate the Gaps in quality, mechanisms and tools are used that can identify customer needs and offer services that meet expectations. It needs to be well planned, so that the proposals, control, and continuous quality improvement are clear, eliminating any distortion in communication.

In order to achieve successful planning, it is necessary to evaluate and measure quality in services with satisfaction surveys and quality consultancies.

8 PROCESS AND INFORMATION FLOW

Generally service industries have a short time between producing and delivering the service to be consumed, i.e. most of the time you cannot stock a service, at least not for a long time. Therefore, it is necessary to have a process flow chart, to estimate the time for each operation.

Having a flow pattern directly influences the time the customer can wait for the service. With the flow defined it is possible to investigate gaps that can be improved, existing bottlenecks, facilitating the whole process and ensuring the quality of the service.

8.1 BOTTLENECK

Bottlenecks are usually considered temporary difficulties encountered with the increase of the process. They can arise at any point of the operation, whether in the increase of demand, lack of labor, broken machine, or bottlenecks that migrate from one part of the process to another (MARTINS; LAUGENI, 2005).

Considering the process flowchart and the information, it is possible to find the bottlenecks in order to seek solutions for them, maintaining a continuous improvement of the process and quality.

Basically there are two types of bottlenecks: the chronic and the episodic.

8.1.1 Episodic Bottlenecks

The episodic bottlenecks are unpredictable situations such as machine breakdowns, lack of materials, employee absence, increased demand.



8.1.2 Chronic Bottlenecks

Chronic bottlenecks are those caused by process and material problems.

8.2 SOLUTION FOR THE BOTTLENECKS

The solution depends on a careful analysis, looking at the associated costs and the process as a whole. In order not to generate other problems.

9 5S

The 5S method emerged in Japan to rebuild the country after the Second World War. For this reconstruction, they received guidance from American specialists who in the 1950s were already using *housekeeping*, which can be translated as "*house cleaning*". The Japanese improved this method and called it 5S, which is divided into:

- Seiri – Storage
- Seiton – Organization
- Seiso – Cleaning
- Seiketsu – Health and Standardization
- Shitsuke – Self-discipline

We can separate them into two forms, the first into physical actions, where users perform actions to suit themselves, and this form would include Seiri, Seiton, and Seiso. The second form would be "psychological" actions, because people would have to get into the habit of performing them, and this would leave Seiketsu and Shitsuke.

In Brazil, we call 5S the 5 senses, which are described as follows:

9.1 SENSE OF ORDER

It consists of separating items into necessary and unnecessary, getting rid of the latter. Experts also suggest that if in doubt, the item should be discarded. What remains should be organized according to the frequency of use..

9.2 SENSE OF ORGANIZATION

It consists of separating and storing materials. All materials must be organized properly, in demarcated locations and that are easily located, removed and used. One way to avoid confusion when identifying items is to use colors, codes, containers, etc..



9.3 SENSE OF CLEANLINESS

It consists of keeping items and the workplace clean. In this case, cleaning is eliminating any and all traces of dirt and acting preventively, eliminating all possible causes. In this sense, what matters most is not the act of cleaning, but that of not getting dirty.

9.4 SENSE OF HEALTH AND STANDARDIZATION

It basically consists in preserving the environment in a healthy way. Creating favorable conditions for all employees, preserving their physical and mental health, having a non-aggressive environment free of any polluting agents, and also keeping the common areas (bathrooms, kitchen, restaurants, etc.) in good condition. In addition, the employees must collaborate, taking care of personal hygiene.

The standardization comes in so that everything accomplished so far is not lost. So you must keep standardized the generation, storage and search of everything necessary.

9.5 SENSE OF SELF-DISCIPLINE

It consists in following and improving the standards, creating a habit of all the previous senses in the employees, so it is implemented through the maintenance of the methodology. Everyone has their responsibilities and must do their part, constantly improving according to their own evolutions.

"We only do better what we repeatedly insist on improving. The pursuit of experience should not be a goal but a habit." Aristotle (365 BC)

If some fault has been found in some process in which 5S becomes necessary, solutions and corrections can be sought through the PDCA methodology, which means:

- **Plan** – Planning: planning action plans;
- **Do** – Doing: putting into practice what has been planned;
- **Check** – Verify: analyze if what has been done is in accordance with the process;
- **Act** – Action: correct possible errors that may have remained from the process..

With the help of the cycle, it is simpler and faster to find the problem and its correction happens more quickly as well, thus preventing the quality of the service provided from being affected.



9.6 VERIFICATION OF THE 5S IMPLEMENTATION

To help you see if 5S has been implemented in a correct way, we can ask a few questions for each sense, as shown below:

- Sense of Organization:
 - Are there excessive or unnecessary materials and objects at the workstation?
 - Are there reserved spaces for circulation and are they unobstructed?
 - Have the materials removed in the cleaning been disposed of?
- Sense of Organization:
 - Is the work area demarcated and/or identified?
 - Are there exposed pipes/wires preventing passage or making accidents possible?
 - Are personal objects kept in a specific place?
- Sense of Cleanliness:
 - Are the work tools clean?
 - Are the waste receptacles and disposal centers cleaned regularly?
 - Are the main sources of dirt known and controlled?
- Sense of Health and Standardization:
 - Does personal hygiene demonstrate neatness?
 - Are the safety standards known by the employees, when applicable?
 - Are unsafe conditions observed in the work area and are they reported?
- Sense of Self-Discipline:
 - How motivated are the employees with the 5S practice?
 - Does everyone know their 5S's responsibilities?
 - Is there root cause analysis for the non-compliance of the outstanding items in the month?

10 LAYOUT

It is the arrangement of work equipment - which can be machines, hydraulic and electrical installations, means of locomotion, people - in an industry or in service locations. The determination of a good layout can, for example, reduce process time and reduce transportation costs, giving you a competitive advantage in relation to other companies..



10.1 LAYOUT ELABORATION

In the elaboration, some initial considerations must be made, such as planning everything first and then the parts, or planning the ideal and then the practical.

The first thing that must be considered in the elaboration of the layout is the quantity that will be produced, to define the number of equipment, the amount of stock, etc. After the number of equipment is decided, the type of layout is established, which are:

10.1.1 Layout by process or functional

Everything is developed in the area itself and similar operations or assemblies are grouped in a specific area.

10.1.2 Inline Layout

The workstations are placed according to the sequence of operations, where the process cannot be executed through alternative paths, but rather using the previously determined path.

Indicated for processes that have little or no diversification.

10.1.3 Cellular Layout

It is the arrangement, in one place, of the different equipment that produces the entire product.

10.1.4 Layout by fixed position

The product remains fixed and the equipment moves to it, carrying out the necessary procedures for its finalization.

Advised for single products, in small quantities.

10.1.5 Combined Layouts

Deploying to take advantage of functional and assembly line layout, only in certain processes.

11 CASE STUDY - L'AMITIÉ

L'amitié is a French restaurant, opened on 08/05/2009, located at 233 Manuel Guedes street, having as owners Yann Corderon and his partner Roberto. In Brazil, it is the only restaurant that has a French owner and chef, thus making it a faithful environment to the French culture.



During a meeting between the partners and their manager about what would be the name of the establishment, Chef Yann Corderon had the idea of associating the name of the restaurant to a word that had an important meaning. It was then that he associated that moment with the word friendship, which in French is *amitié*.

With capacity for 65 people, the restaurant is in a discreet and cozy space, leaving a rustic atmosphere with the bistro concept. The result is a small and well-lit place, which makes good use of mirrors and wood to generate an intimate and pleasant place. Besides serving clients on a daily basis during opening hours, *L'amitié* holds weddings, christenings, corporate meetings, anniversaries, and events. Every year a special event is held on July 14 to celebrate France's birthday.

It is open for lunch from Monday to Friday from noon to 3 pm and for dinner from 7 pm to 11 pm. On Saturdays it is open at noon and closed only at 00h. On Sundays the restaurant is open at noon and closed at 5pm.

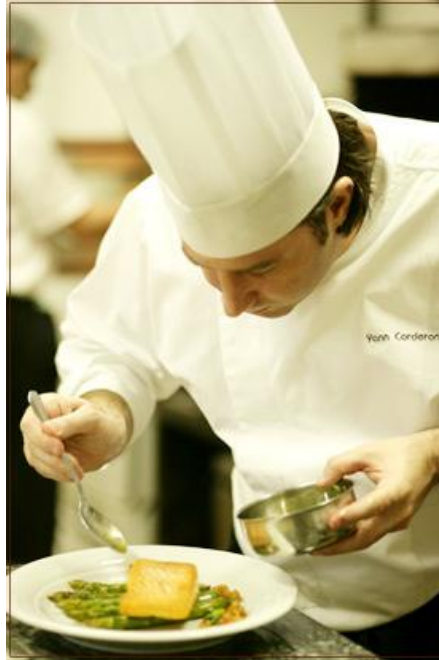
11.1 YANN CORDERON

Born in the town of Fecamp (Normandy, France) in 1971, Yann Corderon showed curiosity for flavors, ingredients, and their preparation from an early age. At the age of seven, he moved with his family to the city of Blois, a region rich in culinary traditions due to its aristocratic cuisine. There he took a course in gastronomy, graduating at the age of 17. Always restless, he enlisted in the French Infantry and served in several African countries as a cook.

Back in France, he worked in several restaurants on the west coast for two years until, in 1994, he decided to get to know South America and chose Brazil to live in. He worked in Rio de Janeiro before settling in São Paulo, where he made a successful career. He worked in restaurants such as *Azaït* and signed the kitchens of famous hotels, as well as private dinners and parties, thus forming his loyal clientele.

Currently, Yann is in charge of the kitchen of *L'amitié*, with the objective of rescuing the classic French cuisine so present in his childhood.

Figure 4: Chef Yann Corderon



Source: L'amitie restaurant website ⁴

⁴ Available at: <<http://lamitie.com.br/index.html>>

11.2 TECHNICAL VISIT

The technical visit to the restaurant L'amitié took place on September 29, 2016. The visit was accompanied by the administrator Marcos Alves, who presented the entire operation of the restaurant, covering several topics, such as the history of the restaurant and the qualities of the services provided.

Secondly, we were invited to learn how the customer service is provided, from the moment the customer arrives at L'amitié, settles at a table, orders his starter, main course and drinks, and ends his visit.



11.3 STOCK AND DEMAND

In the restaurant the stock needs to be carefully controlled, since to maintain quality, the food needs to be fresh, within the expiration date and properly stored.

L'amitié has a high control of its demand and stock, and this, besides being done by the administrator, is also done by the employees who have the duty and the ethics of not letting any food go to waste. To have this efficiency, a spreadsheet is made available where it is controlled by the bar, kitchen and cleaning employees. This spreadsheet is supervised by the manager before ordering from the suppliers.

According to the manager and to our knowledge, this spreadsheet has reduced the losses of food, products and expenses suffered by the restaurant.

The suppliers must deliver their products at stipulated times, which is from 8am to 11:30am and from 3:30pm to 6pm. These schedules were programmed so as not to disturb the customers' schedule, where the restaurant is only for them.

We observed a large list of suppliers, where the restaurant can choose the best service and price. Thus, having the opportunity to increase the quality of these services.

Figure 5: Inventory control spreadsheet

Please order only what is necessary - we need to reduce our costs

BEVERAGE STOCK ORDERS				RESPONSIBLE									
				02/10/2016		09/10/2016		16/10/2016		23/10/2016		30/10/2016	
Beers	Initial	Count	Order	Count	Order	Count	Order	Count	Order	Count	Order	Count	Order
Cerpa Beer													
Stella Artois Beer													
Butter (Couvert)													
Tangerine Juice													
Grape Juice													
				02/10/2016		09/10/2016		16/10/2016		23/10/2016		30/10/2016	
Distillates	Initial	Count	Order	Count	Order	Count	Order	Count	Order	Count	Order	Count	Order
Absolut													
Amaretto													
Aperol													
Bacardi													
Bailey's													
Black Label													

Source: Restaurante L' amitié



11.3.1 Food Storage

To ensure the quality of your food, it is necessary that it is stored correctly.

During our visit to the restaurant, we saw that each food has its own compartment in the kitchen. Refrigerators, freezers and shelves are organized according to the need of each one and each refrigerator/freezer has a type of food. After opening, all uneaten food is vacuum-packed and labeled with the expiration date.

Considering the importance of not having any kind of problem with the food storage, L'amitié restaurant has hired a nutritionist that goes to the restaurant twice a week to check how the food and storage quality is.

11.4 L'AMITIÉ MENU

In view of the crisis that our country is facing and the competition in the gastronomic market, innovations are necessary to win new clients without the company losing its excellence.

At L'amitié Chef Yann prepares a new executive menu every week, and new *à la carte* menus are prepared every season. With the high competition, Chef Yann looks for innovations in which he can adapt French dishes to Brazil, which is not easy, since some ingredients are hard to find here and he cannot modify the dish without losing the French identity, so he is always taking courses and traveling around the world to discover new recipes.

The executive menu has a fixed price, which includes a starter, main course, and dessert. This menu has a more accessible price, so that people of any class can go to the restaurant.

For the restaurant's innovation and marketing, some events are held, such as the vernissage of the artist Daniel Bordi, the vernissage of the artist Larissa Tacoli on Women's Day, Mother's Day special, France's anniversary, and Restaurant Week Brazil. In view of all these events, the restaurant has different menus and accessible prices. During our visit we saw the Friends' Wednesday, where women who were accompanied by their friends to the restaurant won a glass of red wine, white wine or sparkling wine.

The *à la carte* menu features both French classics, such as steak tartar with raw filet mignon cut on a knife's edge, coq au vin, and cassoulet, and more authorial creations such as poelon de champignon, a mushroom stew with poached egg and truffled olive oil, or truite au roquefort, a grilled trout filet with roquefort cheese served with mashed potatoes. Another strong point are the desserts, especially the tarte tartin (traditional apple pie served warm with ice cream) and the crème brûlée (egg-based cream, heavy cream, and fresh vanilla with a thin layer of caramelized sugar on a blowtorch).

Figure 6: New executive menus created by Chef Yann.



Source: L'amitie restaurant website ⁶

⁶ Available at: <http://lamitie.com.br/index.html>

Figure 7: Special dinner to commemorate the fall of the Bastille in France



Source: Restaurant's Instagram page ⁷

⁷ Available at: https://instagram.com/lamitie_bistrot_pariense?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>

11.5 EMPLOYEES

To achieve success in the service provided, the companies' employees need to be well prepared and motivated to perform this service, since the employees are the companies' representatives. Below we mention two actions that the restaurant does that helps to maintain the quality of the service:

- Every 20 days meetings are held where all employees meet together with the administrator and Chef Yann to solve problems that have occurred in the company, thus occurring a Kaizen once action plans are created according to the problems.



- For hiring new employees, L'amitié restaurant does a 10-day trial period and adapts the person according to the restaurant's needs.

During our visit we had a good example from administrator Marcos Alves and chef Yann of what it is to be a leader and not just a boss, once it was clear the work of treating others with kindness, of listening actively, of having and expressing consideration, of praising, of recognizing, of establishing the standard of the services that should be provided, of making clear the expected expectations, of giving people the conditions to maintain the standard established in front of a large team. We saw in person, the teamwork being well accomplished.

At times when the restaurant is open for customers and during events, the administrator and Chef Yann are always present to coordinate the problems that may occur during the restaurant's opening hours. Because of their presence, we noticed that the employees feel more attentive and secure when doing their jobs.

All employees are motivated both in the bonus part, where they receive it for good service and performance during working hours, and in teamwork, where the poor execution of an employee can harm the service of another.

The L'amitié team today is composed of 15 employees: three cooks, a salad maker, two kitchen assistants, a maitre d', a barmaid, five waiters, a hostess, and a cleaning assistant. Among these three cooks, we have the sous-chef, who is the employee responsible for the kitchen in the absence of Chef Yann, and the others are subdivided into squares, where each one is responsible for the pre-preparation and preparation of the dish, from starter to dessert. The waiters are divided into squares, where each one is responsible for the cashier of his or her table. To help in the intermediation between the kitchen and the customers, we have the boqueteiro, who is responsible for taking the finished dishes from the kitchen to the waiter.

We observed during our visit that due to the restaurant's layout it is not possible for them to have a place to rest, but when the company is not working for the customers, they feel free to enjoy their free time in the best way possible. And for this to happen, they usually go to parks or gyms. In the restaurant space, the employees use their own bathroom, where there is a shower and privacy for them to do their hygienic needs.

11.6 GAPS

To add quality, it is necessary for the organization to present a service with basic elements such as good communication, competence, ability to understand the customer's needs, and



responsibility. However, there is a method that the customer can measure his degree of satisfaction with the service, known as the Quality Gap analysis model. Gap has as its concept the difference between the expectation and the service received by the customer.

As mentioned in this paper, there are 5 types of GAPS that must be eliminated to achieve excellence in service quality. In the restaurant analysis, we identified:

Regarding Gap 1, we did not verify any complaint about L'amitié regarding the non-compliance of the request made by the customer. One fault that could occur is that the customer receives a dish that he or she requested with items that belong to the dish missing.

After the workday was over, we were invited by Mr. Marcos Alves and Chef Yann Corderon to get to know the house specialties, from the starter, to the main course and dessert. We tasted a starter composed of Tartine de chèvre à la Tomate Fraiche (a portion of toast with goat cheese and chopped tomato) and Camembert Tartine with Mbee Gourmet Honey (camembert cheese, truffled olive oil and Mbee gourmet honey), as a main course Mr. Marcos suggested we try his famous Petit Gateau. When preparing the dessert, the team had difficulties with the cooking time and the decoration of the dish, due to the absence of the chef and his sub-chef Luis.

At Gap 2, we noticed that the waiters are able to extract and pass on in a clear way to the kitchen team the complete request of the customer's order.

We observed that the kitchen team is able to perform and deliver the dishes that are on the menu according to the standard established by the chef and sous chef.

However, we examine that all of the above GAPS are being successfully performed in a way that L'amitié enhances service excellence.

In general, we can mention that it is common to find in several restaurants, the following GAPS: bad service, bad presentation of the dish, food temperature out of the ideal, dishes diverging from what is presented on the menus, and delays in the receipt of the dishes.

The consequences caused by GAPS directly affect the service provider, which becomes disqualified, unreliable and devalued in the environment in which it operates, losing customers and reducing the competitiveness of the company.

Figure 8: Goat Cheese Tartine with Fresh Tomato and Camembert Tartine com Mel Mbee Gourmet.



Source: Group photo on the day of the visit

11.7 FLOW

The service sectors have a narrow timeframe for the production and delivery of the service to be consumed. Thus, it is understood that it is not possible to anticipate possible failures and even to stock this service. Therefore, the process flowchart helps the team to be aware of all the steps and the time required to perform them.

At L'amitié, as soon as the client finalizes his or her order, the kitchen starts the pre-preparations and the Hostess is responsible for controlling the time for the production and service that will be consumed.

After the customer's order, the entrée is served by the waiter in charge, which takes no more than 3 minutes. The Hostess signals the waiter before the customer finishes his appetizer so that he communicates to the kitchen that the main course can be finished, so the customer doesn't wait too long for his dish and his food comes at the ideal temperature. We have observed that in a maximum of 11 minutes the main course is already being served to the customer after he finishes the starter.

With the high demand and consequently high flow generation, we observed that one of the tables requesting the executive menu took more than 11 minutes for the arrival of its main dish.

11.7.1 Bottlenecks

Bottlenecks are usually considered temporary difficulties encountered during the process. They can be characterized by lack of manpower, raw material, system breakdown, or even delays.

It is possible to detect bottlenecks through the process flowchart. After detecting them, solutions must be sought to maintain quality and continuous process improvement.



Basically, there are two types of bottlenecks: the chronic ones and the episodic ones.

In the restaurant, we witnessed an episodic bottleneck due to an employee having messed with the system and left it inoperative. Because of this, the waiters had to manually place the orders and take them to the kitchen, as it was done before the system was implemented.

As a chronic bottleneck, we were faced with the delay in delivery by the meat supplier that was made outside the permitted time and within the restaurant's working hours.

According to the manager, there were episodes that he and even the chef Yann, had to go after the purchase of materials to meet the demand, since the supplier was not committed to the correct delivery and the established deadline.

11.7.2 5S

In our case study we observed the application of the 5S methodology, from the main service hall to the kitchen where the preparation of the service to be provided is done.

Every day the cleaning assistant is the first employee to arrive at the restaurant at eight o'clock in the morning. She is responsible for opening the restaurant, cleaning the main hall and organizing the tables, where the customers are welcomed.

Next comes the "Hostess", who is called Nelma. She does the daily inspection of the restaurant, following a predetermined check list. In this inspection she checks that the lights are working, the air-conditioning is working, that all lamps are in perfect condition, and all details in the hall that might be out of the specified organization.

Two cooks and the cook's assistant come in earlier, in order to certify the correct cleaning and organization of the kitchen, because the team that works at dinner time is responsible for leaving the kitchen clean for the morning team, keeping the 5S standard, following the cleaning sense and the organization sense.

11.8 LAYOUT

Layout is defined as the disposition of work equipment and/or people in service locations and even in industries. Redesigning the layout of an organization can continuously improve its production flows, so that it reduces the time of the process and reduces transportation costs, giving it a competitive advantage in relation to other companies.

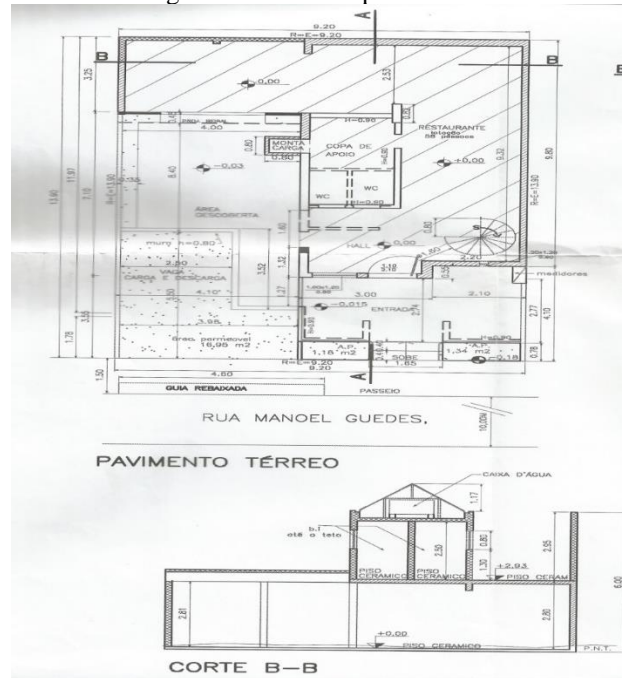
In restaurants, it is important to point out that the best arrangement of workstations increases operational efficiency, and that the layout used can directly influence sales decreases or increases.

To design a proper layout, one should plan first everything and then the parts, or plan the ideal layout and then the practical one.

In relation to L'amitié, they use the Functional Layout, the layout allows ease of circulation in all their environments, both for customers and waiters.

L'amitié's Layout is composed of six squares, kitchen, bathroom, and wine storage cellar. The squares are divided as follows: bar, which is strategically located in the middle of the squares, main hall or hall of mirrors, composed of cozy tables and sofas, internal deck where events are held, external deck where cocktails are held, table 10 or round table, which is a table with a capacity of 10 seats ideal for family or friend gatherings, and table 29, which is composed of external tables.

Figure 9: First floor plan L'amitié



Source: L'amitié Restaurant

Figure 10: Main hall or hall of mirrors



Source: Restaurant's Instagram page ¹⁰

¹⁰ Available at: <https://instagram.com/lamitie_bistrot_pariense?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>>

Figure 11: Internal Deck



Source: Restaurant's Instagram page ¹¹

¹¹ Available at: <https://instagram.com/lamitie_bistrot_pariense?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>>

Figure 12: External Deck



Source: Restaurant's Instagram page ¹²

¹² Available at: <https://instagram.com/lamitie_bistrot_pariense?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>>

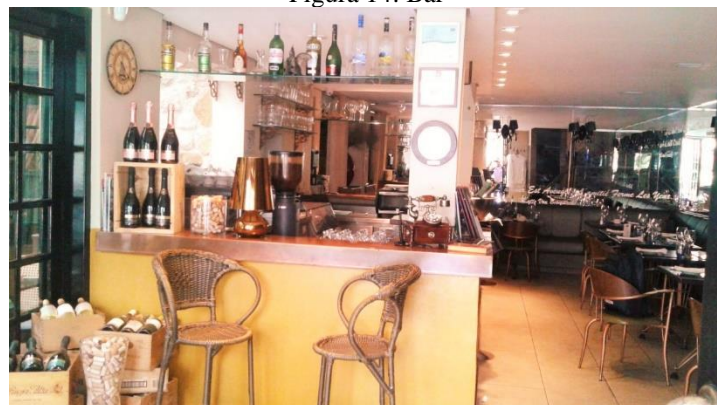
Figure 13: Table 10 or round table



Source: Restaurant's Instagram page ¹³

¹³ Available at: <https://instagram.com/lamitie_bistrot_pariense?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>>

Figura 14: Bar



Source: Restaurant's Instagram page ¹⁴

¹⁴ Available at: <https://instagram.com/lamitie_bistrot_pariense?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>>

Figura 15: Table 29



Source: Restaurant's Instagram page¹⁵

¹⁵ Available at: <https://instagram.com/lamitie_bistrot_parisiense?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>>

12 CONCLUSION

In the current scenario the drop in sales is directly linked to the economic crisis that the country is facing. The high competitiveness among restaurants requires the development of new dishes with coherent prices, which will become increasingly competitive advantages in relation to its competitors. The main focus inside the restaurants is the conquest and loyalty of the customer through the quality that the service is provided.

It is necessary to keep the focus on the quality of the service, to improve, enhance, or create new dishes in order to guarantee good results over time.

In this context, L'amitié restaurant has an organized structure focused on the quality of the service provided, and to manage it, it uses spreadsheets to control stock, new dishes every season, and prices according to the location and clients.

It was observed, during the development of this work, that the employees are able to continue to serve the customers, even if there are some gaps during the hours of high demand.

The main objective of this work was achieved; we complemented our technical and theoretical knowledge. With the acquired knowledge, we aim to improve the restaurant's layout, since, in order to go to the bathroom, it is necessary for the customer to climb the stairs and change environment at the same time that the "boqueteiro" performs his service. Possibly this change will only occur in case of change of location, since the environment is rented and there is no space for such change.



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