

5.1.14: Gap 3- Quality Specifications vs. Service Delivery

Learning Objectives

- Outline how a retailer can close the quality specs and service delivery gap

Gap between service quality specification and service delivery: This gap may arise in situations pertaining to the service personnel. It could happen due to poor training, incapability or unwillingness to meet the set service standard. An example would be when a doctor's office has very specific standards of hygiene communicated but the hired staff may have been poorly trained on the need to follow these strict protocols.

The third gap in the model is the performance gap, reflecting the difference between service quality specification and service delivery. Given that service is largely a function of human rather than robotic resources, resources versus robotics – at least to date – service quality may be affected by a range of factors including training, aptitude, attitude and health and cultural factors. The interactive nature of the customer service situation is a factor as well, with customer changes, special requests and the attitude and communication skills they bring to the situation impacting a service representative's ability to deliver to an established standard.

In a performance gap situation, the issue is generally not the lack of specific service policies but a failure to consistently and reliably meet those service expectations. In order to close this gap, companies should review financial and operating assumptions to ensure that service specifications are achievable. Human Resources-related activities from job analysis and job descriptions to candidate screening, selection, training and evaluation should be reviewed to ensure new employees are capable of and willing to meet service position demands. Developing a well-structured onboarding process, providing product/service training and cultivating a customer-centric team environment can help new service employees get up to speed with a minimum of stress. Indeed, onboarding is a topic onto itself, contributing to productivity, engagement and retention. And, speaking of retention, one critical way to mind the performance gap is to recognize and reward top performers. To summarize:

Validate service quality expectations and align people, processes and culture to support those goals.

practice questions

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...essments/9321>

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