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### Measuring and Improving the Customer Service at Della Nonna

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**Measuring and Improving the Customer Service at Della Nonna**

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### **Abstract**

The main purpose of this project was to measure and improve the state of the customer service provided by Della Nonna, a local pastry shop from the city of Santiago, Dominican Republic. The business opened its doors in 2008 and since then it has been providing customers with delightful desserts made using secret recipes. That said, in order to provide a consistent quality in their products, the owners serve not only as managers, marketers, and immediate supervisors but also as cooks. This project intended to answer three important questions through the use of surveys and interviews with the owners, the employees, and the customers of Della Nonna. The results indicated that: the owners do not have a strategic plan for the business, employees lack adequate training, there are some aspects of the customer service that can be improved, and the customer perceive that they are receiving a very good customer service. These findings open the doors to new questions regarding the role of culture in the process of expecting and evaluating service quality. Recommendations were given so that Della Nonna could improve the quality level of the customer service provided.

*Keywords:* Customer Service, Service Quality, Customers

### **Problem Statement**

Quality is essential in order to provide a good product or service (Goncalvez & Samapio, 2012). From this, companies are able to establish good business relationships with their customers by fulfilling their needs and expectations. Nowadays, companies have to understand that customers are able to choose where to give their patronage, and probably will do so if they are not satisfied. They might turn to another service provider, particularly in competitive markets such as the pastry industry, the focus of this study.

Della Nonna is one of the most popular pastry companies in Santiago, Dominican Republic. The Company was founded by Alina Hernández and Jennifer Hernández in 2008. They had the idea of creating a place where people could try and enjoy delightful desserts, all made by them. By the time this study was conducted, the company operated with two establishments: one located at Mauricio Alvarez Street, and the other at Plaza Paseo; both in the city of Santiago.

Up to this point, Della Nonna's customer service is limited since the owners serve multiple roles, including managers and cooks, at the same time. As result of this, employees lack adequate supervision and training. This does not allow the company to provide customer service with the quality level required and might constrain its' possibilities of growth.

## Research Questions

- ❖ What is the perception customers have of the customer service provided by the company?
- ❖ For employees of this organization, what is it the company does that provides quality service?
- ❖ For the owners of this organization, what is it the company does that provides quality service?

## Study Significance

The pastry market in the Dominican Republic has become very popular in recent years and thanks to the constant demand for biscuits, cakes, donuts, and other type of sweets, it has become a way to generate revenue for many independent small and medium-sized companies, especially in the city of Santiago (Medina G. & Mena A., 2011). As result, the city of Santiago is now populated by many shops that provide pastry goods. Fifa Sudejer, Sugar Treats Bakery, Karma, María Elena Noboa, Karens Candy Bar, and Evelyn Cakes are just some of the most known pastry shops, apart from Della Nonna, that are located in the city of Santiago.

As the pastry market has grown, the competition has increased as well. More companies have emerged impacting upon Della Nonna. Also, in this sector many people have started an informal pastry business, selling desserts at cheaper prices. In addition, Santiago consumers are prone to try new things. Every time a new business opens its doors, they want to try it

immediately. Therefore, it is essential for Della Nona to ensure that their customers are happy and satisfied, allowing them to keep their actual customer base and expand beyond.

Customer service plays an essential role in the company as it creates a relationship between the customer and the company. Therefore, the company should measure the perception of the quality of customer service to recognize the performance level achieved. It is well known that a single bad customer experience can damage the company's public image and could lead to losing actual and potential customers.

### **Literature Review**

Understanding and procuring customer's satisfaction is essential for every business of any kind in order to attract and retain customers (Goncalvez & Samapio, 2012). That said, customer service is all about understanding customers and meeting their satisfaction providing a good service experience. According to statistics, 3 of 5 Americans would try a different company for a better service experience and 7 out of 10 are willing to spend more with a company that provides excellent customer service (American Express Survey, 2012).

If customers receive a quality service from a business, they could potentially spread the word about their experience, refer possible customers and they, themselves, are likely to return to that business. On the other hand, if customers receive poor customer service, they will usually tell others about it, which could prevent prospective customers from trying the products or services offered by the business in matter.

Richard Gerson (1998) explained in his book 'Beyond Customer Service' that the cost of losing a customer is five to six times more than acquiring new customers. According to the author, bigger profits come as result of customer retention, loyalty, and repurchases rather than new customer acquisitions. By providing outstanding customer service, companies not only realize the benefits described above, but they can also competitively differentiate themselves from other business (Tschohl, 1997).

George Paajanen (1997) explained that having there are three pillars that sustain good customer service: the right employee, solid practices, and training. If businesses rest their efforts on just one of these pillars, the result would undermine customer service efforts.

Being diligent, friendly and helpful with customers, transmitting confidence, recalling customers' faces, names, favorite dishes or desserts, making convenient offers, ensuring the environment is attractive, following up with customers, avoiding negative phrases, actively listening to what customers have to say. These are all examples of ideal practices that lead to good customer services, most of them can be transmitted to the workforce through adequate employee training.

According to Paajanem (1997), some employees are better working with people than others. A situation like this cannot be regulated, as no matter the amount of service training or practices given to employees, some people bring natural skills, strengths and limitations to customer service. This might be good or bad, depending if these natural skills allow them to work with people. Some qualities are difficult to change, no matter how much training is done

or how supportive the company is. Having the right employee is, of the three pillars, the most critical and the most often overlooked.

One way to measure the quality of the customer service provided is through the SERVQUAL model. This model investigates 10 determinants into five specific components: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Cronin & Taylor, 1992). However, some authors (Kang & James, 2004) have suggested that SERVQUAL as an instrument to measure service quality is insufficient in gathering the complete panorama of the service process, and that other methods, including Grönroos' model might be a more appropriate in measuring all the dimensions of service quality.

There are many reasons for focusing organizational attention and resources on continuous service improvement (Leevob & Scott, 1994). The lack of a customer service philosophy is one of the most common reasons for poor customer service (Gerson, 1998), this is why adopting a customer orientation philosophy and the implementation of the main principles of continuous service improvement is essential for every business according to Grigoroudis (2010), and is enough reason to justify the constant evaluation and analysis of customer satisfaction.

By committing towards the same goal, providing a good customer service, management can easily realize an increase in satisfaction and referrals on the part of the customers, an increase in productivity from employees that feel identified with customers, and an increase in profitability for the business (Gerson, 1998).

## **Methodology**

The purpose of this project was to measure and improve the customer service that Della Nona provides to its' customers. Therefore, we explored in many levels the way customer service was delivered, how the customers perceived the service provided by the company, and how the personnel understand the service quality was achieved.

This research project was conducted through a mixed method approach. We collected data by surveying the customers and interviewing the employees, employers and customers; then, this data was used to answer the research questions of this study.

Since the population of the city of Santiago de los Caballeros, according to the IX Population Census (2010), was 942,509 and we didn't know which ones were customers, we planned to survey a random sample of one hundred customers, which were identified as soon as they made any purchasing of products in Della Nonna. From this sample, we also interviewed a selection of twenty random customers, ten from each location of Della Nonna. This provided more in-depth information about what specifically the customers would like to see enhanced in customer service. These customers were given with one of the products offered by Della Nonna in return for their participation.

With the customer surveys we ascertained the demographic characteristics of Della Nonna customers, nevertheless, it also helped to determine the strengths of the company and the things that could be improved. All of these things are important for Della Nonna in the near future. A copy of the survey can be seen in Appendix A.

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As mentioned above, twenty random customers were selected for an in-depth interview. The customers were chosen two per hour and per location and were also part of the hundred that were surveyed. These interviews were focused on providing more in-depth information about the level of service quality at Della Nona pastry shop. A list of the questions that were asked can be seen in Appendix B.

Employees and employers were interviewed to identify their knowledge about customer service and to know what they were doing to ensure the provision of good service to customers. We also interviewed all the employees and one of the owners. By the time this study was conducted, Della Nonna had sixteen permanent employees. Three of them worked from Monday to Saturday in the kitchen which was located in the main shop. Four worked behind the counter at the main shop from Monday through Saturday, four worked behind the counter at the shop located at Plaza Paseo Santiago, also from Monday to Saturday. Sundays were covered by two employees at the main shop and two employees at shop in Plaza Paseo Santiago. A list of the questions that were asked to the employees can be seen in Appendix C.

Finally, only one of the two owners, Alina Hernández, was interviewed –this because Jennifer Hernández was in postpartum period by the time the study was conducted. The purpose of this interview was to gain insightful information regarding the perceptions and personal views of the administration regarding their own business. The interview questions the owners of Della Nonna were asked are listed in Appendix D.

## **Evaluations and Outcomes**

In the development of this research we determined the quality of the customer service offered by Della Nonna in both locations. Also, this research determined the perceived quality of services from customers, and the ability of the company to achieve it.

The results from this research were obtained by applying surveys to customers that visit to Della Nonna and by interviewing the staff and owners of the company. This was vital in helping us to determine how we could improve the customer service experience offered by Della Nonna. The results of the study were used to develop the enhancement plan for customer service at the Della Nona. This plan is included in the conclusion and results of the research.

## **Results**

### **Customers Surveys**

From the results obtained, we could observe that 62% of the customers are below the age of 25 years old. Also, 46% of the customers are students while the 38% are private employees. 76% of the customers are single and 49% visit the restaurant occasionally. In addition, the surveys showed that 70% of the customers are females while only 30% are males. These results suggest that Della Nonna's customers are mostly young-single female students that visit the restaurant occasionally.

According to the surveys conducted on this study, 95% of the customers consider that it is easy to purchase products at Della Nonna. This could be influenced by the fact that many schools are located nearby the restaurants. In addition, college students do not have any

difficulties going to the pastry shops because they are located in two convenient locations. Hence, it is reasonable that they find it easy to acquire Della Nonna's products.

The customers (93%) surveyed considers the selection of the products is adequate for their needs. This could be because the bakery has salty and sweet snacks as well as very popular hot and cold beverages. Moreover, customers are able to pre-order, paying when they pick the order up at the pastry shop. Nevertheless, it could be understood that 86% of the customers are satisfied with the variety in the selection of the product (52% agree and 34% strongly agree). This comes from the high variety of cheesecakes that Della Nonna offers that are popular. Also, 86% of the customers consider that their cost is competitive (75% agree and 11% strongly agree). Satisfaction could stem from the different portion sizes in which products are offered. In fact, 100% of the customers consider that the quality of product is outstanding.

The quality of Della Nonna's physical space ranks very well. In fact, 88% of the customers find that the facilities are convenient and 26% consider the quality is excellent. Also, 82% of the customers find that table availability is good while 61% agree that the waiting time to be served is adequate. In addition, all the customers surveyed consider that the cleanliness of the restaurant is good while 60% find the furniture comfortable. Additionally, 77% of the customers consider that the employees are well uniformed.

According to the surveys, 71% of the customers respond that the employees greet them when they arrive and 79% believe that the employees make visual eye contact with them; however, 80% of the customers consider that they do not received any recommendations from the employees. On the other hand, 69% of the customers consider that the employees are

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somewhat helpful and 20% consider that they are very helpful; 76% of the customers consider that the employees are courteous. In addition, 77% of the customers find that the employees react well to their complaints and suggestions, 77% believe that the customer employee interaction is genuine. In fact, 72% of the customers consider that the customer service experience is good and 22% claim that it is excellent. All this data suggests that the customer service at Della Nonna is outstanding added to the fact that 99% of them would recommend the bakery.

Although the customers ranked Della Nonna's customer service very well, 69% believe there is room for improvement. Some of the factors mentioned include the customer service could be more personalized and empathic, the employees should be better trained, they should be able to make suggestions, and improvement in the billing.

### ***Customer Interviews***

From the results obtained in the customers' interviews, we find 60% of the customers have gone to Della Nonna since it first opened. Furthermore, these customers believe that the bakeries product quality is very high including the following characteristics: portion size, freshness, appropriate temperature, healthiness, variety, and cost. Nevertheless, they wish that Della Nonna could offer customizable products in their menu. In addition to this, they agree that while employee attention and treatment are the most important aspects of customer service, they think that the employees are often slow and could perform better and be more empathetic.

### **Employee Interview**

From the results obtained in the employees' interviews, we could find there is a high employee turnover as 75% of the employees have been in the company for less than one year. There are some team-work environment issues; none of the employees has been trained in customer service nor do they use any customer service practices and they don't feel identified as part of the business. In addition, through the interaction with the employees, we can infer that employees don't feel committed to the company as they are not treated as spokes-persons for the company.

### **Employer Interviews**

From the results obtained in the employer' interviews, we found that, in a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 is the highest, they believe that their customer satisfaction level is only at 8 as it is difficult to find qualified staff. The staff consists mostly of students who hold Technician Degree and must be taught the basics, once this happens they do not receive any further updates. Also, they believe that if they had qualified staff they could provide better customer service and they recognize that few employees last more than a year. Therefore, the employees are not a stable group, worth investing in training. They further understand they cannot have people with college degrees as they cannot afford to pay them.

The owners recognize that Customer Service is what differentiates a business from another; as anyone can eventually make a dessert. So far, they have received few direct complaints related to the customer service they provide, when they do customers have mainly complained about the way they have been treated by employees.

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They are aware that most of Della Nonna customers are young students. They do not have plans to expand Della Nonna to other cities. They consider that they don't have the organizational structure to expand their business and have realized that managing employees is not as easy as they thought. They can barely provide a basic training to their current staff, and currently do not want to delegate managerial or operational functions to the employees.

## Conclusion

With this study we sought to measure the quality of the customer service provided by Della Nonna and to provide practical solutions on shortcomings found. As we mentioned before, the competition in the pastry shop market has been increasing in the city of Santiago and because of this pressure it is very important that Della Nonna is able to maintain their current customer base as happy and satisfied by offering outstanding customer service. As Alina Hernández previously said in her interview: “anyone can make a sweet, it’s the service that differentiates a company from other”. The response to the research questions are as follows:

- ❖ What is the perception customers have of the customer service provided by the company?
- ❖ For employees of this organization, what is it the company does that provides quality service?
- ❖ For the owners of this organization, what is it the company does that provides quality service?

RQ1: What is the perception customers have of the customer service provided by the company?

According to the results of the study, the customers’ perception of the customer service provided by the company is very good although they recognize there are some areas to improve, such as customer compliance, employee formality, customer empathy and personalization. In addition 100% of the customers expressed that they would return to the

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restaurant and that they would recommend it to other ones. We concluded that customers really appreciate the product quality, variety, and price over the service offered.

In spite of good rankings some customers expressed the company can improve the attitude the employees have when delivering their service.

A possible reason of why customers rated the customer service of Della Nonna in such a positive manner might be influenced by the Dominican culture of product preference over service. According to Seo (2012), culture can have a strong impact on expectations and evaluation of service quality. Customers from different backgrounds are accustomed to their standards of service quality; therefore, it is important to look at the service culture in their country. This helps to understand Dominican's that give more importance to the quality of the product that they are receiving than the quality of the service. In these results the customers gave the bakery positive results, but they did suggest improving the quality of the service provided by Della Nonna.

This preference of quality product over quality service could potentially be an area for those interested in research in this area. There is the potential to investigate Dominican consumer's reactions on quality of customer's service and how they rate the service that they are receiving without relating it with the product.

RQ2: For employees of this organization, what is it the company does that provides quality service?

According to the results of the study, the employees try to do their best to satisfy the customers. They try to give fast responses, to ask for feedback, and to be empathic. But, there is no clear direction in the company about what they are supposed to do in order to provide quality service. These customer service problems are influenced by the fact that the employees have not received good training. Also, they are not being properly monitored by the management, and they are not receiving constant feedback from the management on the quality of their customer service as well. In addition, as Della Nonna has a high employee rotation customers are constantly encountering new faces. Therefore, with the passage of the time, it will be more difficult for management to ensure good customer service if the rotation of personnel and lack of monitoring and training continues in Della Nonna.

RQ3: For the owners of this organization, what is it the company does that provides quality service?

According to the results of the study, the owners of the organization do not have any strategic or action plan to coordinate their operations. Furthermore, they only provide the employees with feedback and advice after a problem reaches them. In addition, they do not have any integration of the customer service into the value proposition of Della Nonna. Therefore, they cannot guarantee a good execution of the operations since they are involved in every aspect of the company so they do not monitor the customer service provided by the employees day by day.

### **Limitations**

The study had some limitations. First of all, the Della Nonna customers usually prefer pick up instead of eating at Della Nonna, which means they didn't have much time to answer the customer's surveys; this could have affected the results of the study because they could have answered them without concentrating on each question. Another possible limitation of the study was that many of the customers that attend to Della Nonna are very young that sometimes don't have the knowledge to answer the questions in the correct form.

### **Recommendations**

The study's results lead us to recommend to Della Nonna that they should start providing training programs to their employees, which will help them improve the quality of the service that they are providing to customers. A well designed program should cover enough material so that employees can master all the products and services, techniques to properly serve and autonomously satisfy customers need in every situation. We also recommend employers to start giving well trained and capable employees more responsibilities, which will help the employees to not be so dependent on the employers. Another recommendation is to create a CRM program that will help providing customers a more personalized service; this will help maintain the current customers and to attract new customers to Della Nonna.

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## Appendix A

### Customers' Survey Questionnaire

We are students of the Service Leadership and Innovation Master program from Rochester Institute of Technology in partnership with the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra; we are conducting a Customer Satisfaction Survey on Della Nonna. We kindly request you to fill the questionnaire and provide us the necessary information below.

The end goal of this survey is to enhance the customer service provided in Della Nonna. All information obtained from this survey will remain confidential and its results would be only disclosed with the management when the project has been successfully analyzed.

Instructions: Choose one option for each question.

1. What is your age group?
  - a. Below 25
  - b. 26 – 35
  - c. 36 – 45
  - d. Above 45
  
2. How frequently do you visit Della Nonna?
  - a. Daily
  - b. Weekly
  - c. Monthly
  - d. Occasionally
  - e. Rarely
  
3. What is your current marital status?
  - a. Single
  - b. Married
  
4. What is your current occupation?
  - a. Student
  - b. Self-employed
  - c. Private employed
  - d. Public Employed
  
5. Please, indicate your gender

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- a. Male                      b. Female

6. Is it easy to purchase products at Della Nonna? If the answer is No, please indicate why.

- a. Yes                      b. No, why \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do the employees of Della Nonna ask you to try any product?

- a. Yes                      b. No

8. Do you find the selection of products in Della Nonna adequate for your needs? If your response is no what more would you want?

- a. Yes                      b. No, what would you want \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you find the days and hours Della Nonna is open adequate?

- a. Strongly disagree    b. Disagree    c. Agree    d. Strongly agree

10. Do you think the cost for Della Nonna products is competitive?

- a. Strongly disagree    b. Disagree    c. Agree    d. Strongly agree

11. Is the wait time for service appropriate?

- a. Strongly disagree    b. Disagree    c. Agree    d. Strongly agree

12. Are you satisfied by the current variety of products offered?

- a. Strongly disagree    b. Disagree    c. Agree    d. Strongly agree

13. Are tables and seats comfortable?

- a. Strongly disagree    b. Disagree    c. Agree    d. Strongly agree

14. How helpful are Della Nonna employees when you have questions?

- a. Not helpful at all    b. Not very helpful    d. Somewhat helpful    e. Very helpful

15. From a scale of 1 to 10, how courteous are Della Nonna employees to you?

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

16. From a scale of 1 to 10, how well are Della Nonna employees dressed?

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

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17. How is the customer service experience provided by employees?  
a. Poor b. Fair c. Good e. Excellent
18. Do feel that your interaction is completely genuine?  
a. Yes b. No
19. Do the employees make visual contact with you?  
a. Yes b. No
20. Do the employees greet you when you entered to the location?  
a. Yes b. No
21. How clean do you find the store of Della Nonna to be?  
a. Poor b. Fair c. Good e. Excellent
22. How do you rate the quality of food products you receive at Della Nonna?  
a. Poor b. Fair c. Good e. Excellent
23. Rate how well employees of Della Nonna react to complaints and suggestions?  
a. Poor b. Fair c. Good e. Excellent
24. How do you rate the area facilities? (Wi-Fi, TV, bathrooms, electrical outlets, etc.)  
a. Poor b. Fair c. Good e. Excellent
25. How do you rate the payment options?  
a. Poor b. Fair c. Good e. Excellent
26. Rate the availability of the tables and seats at Della Nonna?  
a. Poor b. Fair c. Good e. Excellent'
27. Do you think the Customer Service could be improved?  
b. Yes b. No
28. Would you recommend this place? If not, please say why  
a. Yes b. No, \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your time and your honest responses.**

## Appendix B

### Customer Interview Questions

We are students of the Service Leadership and Innovation Master program from Rochester Institute of Technology in partnership with the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra. We are conducting a Customer Satisfaction Survey at Della Nona. The interviews would be handled privately and individually.

- 1) How long have you been a customer of Della Nonna?
- 2) Please rate the quality of the products provided at Della Nonna?
- 3) What to you is important in customer service?
- 4) Do you think that the customer service provided in Della Nonna is poor, good or excellent? Please explain your answer.
- 5) Please describe your customer service experience at Della Nonna. Specifically please describe your satisfaction with:
  - a. Timeliness of service provided, What do you think about the time the service
  - b. Satisfaction with the environment of Della Nonna was provided?
  - c. satisfaction with the pricing of food products
  - d. Satisfaction with the hours of operation
  - e. Satisfaction with the variety of products offered
- 6) Please rate Della Nonna's products in the following areas
  - a. Portion size
  - b. Freshness

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- c. Appropriate temperature
  - d. Healthiness
- 7) Do you have suggestions for how Della Nonna can improve the quality, variety or presentation of their products?
  - 8) Do you have specific suggestion on how Della Nonna can improve their customer experiences? Please tell us what these ideas are.
  - 9) Do you have any other suggestions you can make about how to improve customer satisfaction at Della Nona? If yes, what are these?
  - 10) Would you recommend Della Nonna to your Friends and relatives?
  - 11) Will you continue visiting Della Nonna?

## Appendix C

### Employees Interview Questions

We are students of the Service Leadership and Innovation Master program from Rochester Institute of Technology in partnership with the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra. We are conducting a Customer Satisfaction Survey at Della Nona. You will find a list of questions below for all the employees of Della Nonna. The interviews would be handled privately and individually.

1. How long have you worked for Della Nonna?
2. Do you enjoy working for this company? Please explain what you like about your job and what you don't like?
3. Do you feel empowered to make decisions to satisfy customer's needs?
4. Define what good customer service at Della Nonna is to you?
5. What good customer service techniques do you practice?
6. Have you received any training in customer service? If yes, what specifically
7. Do you feel confident answering all the questions a customer asks about Della Nonna's products and services?
8. Are there any limitations/ barriers that prevent you from providing great customer service? If yes, please identify what they are.

## MEASURING THE CUSTOMER SERVICE AT DELLA NONNA

9. If you had the opportunity of changing any aspect of Della Nonna in favor of clients, what would you do and why?
10. What do you think the employees of Della Nonna can do better to provide excellent customer service?
11. Do you think that Della Nonna customers are highly satisfied with the customer service provided? Please explain your answer.
12. What are the most frequent customer complaints?

The customers will be surveyed to measure their satisfaction with services and the quality of the customer service offered by Della Nonna. The surveys will be anonymous, and completed while they are waiting for the products, or when they are spending a quality time in the store.

## Appendix D

### Employers Interview Questions

We are students of the Service Leadership and Innovation Master program from Rochester Institute of Technology in partnership with the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra. We are conducting a Customer Satisfaction Survey at Della Nona. You will find a list of questions below for all the employers and owners of Della Nonna. The interviews would be handled privately and individually.

- 1) On a scale of 1-10, ten being highest, rate the level of customer service you feel is provided by Della Nonna. Please explain what you considered when you did the rating. How do you feel with the Customer Service that Della Nona is providing?
- 2) Describe the customers that visit Della Nona. –If you had to categorize these customers what categories would you use to describe these customers? Example Homemakers, college students and so on.
- 3) Is there a time during the day and or day during the week when you experience more customer traffic? If yes, please provide the times and days.
- 4) Do you use training programs in customer service to train your employees? If yes is this a prepared program or on-the-job training? If no skip to question 6.
- 5) Do you see the results of training employees in customer service? Please describe how.
- 6) What are the most common complaints you have about customer service? How do you resolve these complaints?
- 7) Are you planning to expand Della Nona to other cities of Dominican Republic?

## Appendix E

### Training Program

#### *Della Nonna – 101*

#### *Training Program*

Della Nonna 101 is a Training Program specifically designed to serve as an introduction and working guide for the newer members of the organization. The program consists in five modules of both, theory and practice, in order to provide employees with a learning process that is seamless integrated with their daily tasks. Each module will be imparted weekly, during designated business hours, for a total duration of five weeks. The Modules will be delivered by two groups of trainers, owners and lead employees. In some cases external help will be hired to handle some of specific topics.

After finishing with this program, new employees will be welcomed as official organization members and will be able handle essential information regarded to the products and services that Della Nonna, as well how to engage with customers in different scenarios.

#### **Module 1: About Della Nonna**

##### Composition (100% Theory) (Practice 0%)

In this module the employees will get to know the essentials about Della Nonna, the organizational culture, memorable stories, business plan, identity and more. This module will be imparted by the owners of the organization.

At the end of this module new employees will familiarize themselves with the organization on the following topics:

- **What is Della Nonna?**

*Information about the business and their value proposition.*

- **History**

*Information about the beginnings of Della Nonna and how is the organization doing today.*

- **Mission, Vision and Values**

*What is their purpose, where they want to be and what identifies Della Nonna.*

- **Who are our Customers?**

*A description of the type of customers that frequently visit Della Nonna.*

- **Why are the Customers Important?**

*Stories about meaning of keeping customers in order to make a company grow profitable and the importance of customer satisfaction and the cost of losing customer.*

● **What are our products and services?**

*A detailed description of all the products and services that Della Nonna offers.*

● **Who are our Competitors?**

*A list of the top competitors in the city of Santiago, and what are they offering.*

## Module 2: Understand your Product

### Composition (70% Theory) (Practice 30%)

In this module the employees will get to know all the products that Della Nonna offers, and they will receive techniques to help the customers buy more products. The theory of this module will be imparted by the owners and the practice by a group of lead employees. New members will discover at first hand all the flavors that Della Nonna has to offer to their customers.

The content for the module is the following:

● **The Cheesecake**

*A detailed description of the most important product of the Della Nonna. How they taste, what are its ingredients and what the different presentations are.*

● **The Sweets**

*A detailed description of all the other sweets that the company offers apart from the cheesecakes.*

● **The Salt's**

*A detailed description of all the salty snacks that the company offers.*

● **The Beverages**

*A detailed description of the alcoholic and no alcoholic's drinks that Della Nonna offers.*

● **Cross-Selling**

*The employees will learn how to mix all the elements from the menu in order to increase the sales of those products.*

● **Product Handling**

*The employees will learn how to keep all the products in the properly climate conditions, what are the expiration dates for each product and how to move products from the kitchen to the front display.*

### Module 3: Customer Satisfaction Module

#### Composition (50% Theory) (Practice 50%)

In this module the employees will learn how to satisfy the customers, how to create unique relationship with them, identify the customer's needs in order to provide an outstanding customer service and all the benefits the company receives providing it. The theory for this module will be imparted by the owners, while the practice will be delivered alongside the lead employees.

All of this theory of the section will be put into practice during the module:

- **What is Customer Service?**  
*A definition of the meaning of customer service and how it applies to Della Nonna.*
- **What are the Customer Service Principles?**  
*A detailed description of the main principles of customer service.*
- **Consumer Behavior**  
*A description of numerous cases that illustrates different types of behaviors that customers may exhibit.*
- **Tips and Tricks to Provide Fantastic Customer Service Experience**  
*A detailed description of what is good customer service for Della Nonna, lists of examples of good customer service cases and how it can be provided.*
- **Consequences of Bad Customer Service**  
*Cases and examples that happen when the employees provide bad customer service.*
- **Benefits of Excellent Customer Service**  
*Cases and examples that happen when the employees provide an excellent customer service.*

### Module 4: Ethics and Protocol

#### Composition (40% Theory) (Practice 60%)

This module will instruct the new employees in the art of handling all the types of plates and cutlery, how to properly remove plates from customers, how to efficiently take orders from customers, and how to maintain a great environment conditions. The practice of this module will be delivered by the lead employees.

- **How to Serve your products**  
*All the techniques the employees need to serve the products of Della Nonna.*
- **How to manage the cutlery**  
*All the techniques the employees need to handle the cutlery of Della Nonna.*
- **Ethics on handling your Customer**

*A description and examples of all the techniques to handle the customer's reactions on the different situations.*

● **Customers' Orders and Request**

*A description and examples of all the techniques on how to handle the customers all the customers' orders and request properly.*

● **Environmental Conditions**

*How employees can properly manage the environment of the store.*

## Module 5: Role at Della Nonna

### Composition (100%Theory)

The final module of the training program will allow new employees of Della Nonna to understand their place in the organization, the commitment that the owners have with all of them, what is the image that is expected employees' to project to customers and why teamwork is vital for Della Nonna. This module will be imparted by the owners.

● **Management Commitment**

*A description on why the employees are so vital for their business success and that the owners care about them.*

● **Providing and Outstanding Customer Service Experience**

*A detailed description on the importance of providing an outstanding customer experience in Della Nonna.*

● **Represent the Company**

*A detailed description of the dress code, the corporal language to use and the ways to project a great image to the customers.*

● **Team Work**

*Techniques to create strong bonds between other employees of the organization and how this will be translated to the success of the company.*