

May 18, 2006
Learning Session VI
Strategies: Getting Ideas from Outside the Field

The Improvement Café will provide a forum for identifying hearty main courses of change for every aim. The session offers a menu for the whole family. No reservation necessary. This session will apply business strategies from other industries to the business of treatment and vice versa.

If your organization were a restaurant, how would you handle reservations?

1. Balance reservations with walk-ins
2. Offer a functional waiting area
3. Free appetizer
4. Repeat customer's name when greeting
5. Always have a live person answering the phone
6. Person answering the phone has the power allocate reservations
7. Put menu on the Internet
8. Always offer an alternative if customer's first choice not available
9. Offer daily specials
10. Offer transportation
11. Concierge referral
12. Give customer a pager—to alert when table is ready
13. Offer online reservations
14. "How many people will be joining you in your party tonight?"

Ask: how does your reservation system differentiate you from your competitors?

If your organization were a restaurant, what would be on your menu?

1. New dishes (new medicines)
2. Having a menu
3. Offering appetizers, side dishes
4. Wait staff greets customer saying, "I'll be *taking care of you* tonight."
5. Make the menu accessible (people with disabilities; language barriers)
6. Offer a "picture" of the menu item or a sample
7. Variety of side-dishes—auxiliary services
8. Bundle services—free dessert with entrée
9. Special accommodations
10. Use plain language
11. Wait staff fully knowledgeable of all menu items
12. Two-for-one special (couples treatment)
13. Health-healthy
14. Home delivery or take out
15. Wait person asks: "How was your experience?"

If your organization were a restaurant, what dessert items would you offer?

1. Low calorie
2. Incentive—free dessert with every entrée
3. Make your own sundae buffet
4. Free coupon for other provider (who offers auxiliary services)

5. Reduce the entrée size to make room for dessert
6. Individualized dessert (individualized treatment)
7. Finishing touch
8. Show outcome studies
9. Sugar-free options
10. Entire staff thanks you for choosing the organization
11. Share dessert with staff
12. Tailor dessert to population your organization serves

If your organization were a restaurant, how would you build customer loyalty?

1. Consistent, predictable quality product
2. Contingency management—gift card
3. Payment options
4. Membership discount
5. Perks with membership (newsletter, special alumni events)
6. Prepaid card; discount for paying in advance
7. Gift basket upon arrival
8. Offer treat from company store in exchange for random act of kindness
9. Priority seating for repeat customers
10. Membership rewards—retreats, picnics, newsletters, alumni group sessions
11. Incentivizing the staff—“highest retention rates”
12. Everybody knows your name “The Cheers Effect”
13. Express services for certain populations
14. Attraction vs. promotion (like AA)
15. Family member benefits
16. Personalized service
17. Example: Boston restaurant owner invited all taxi drivers to a free dinner
18. Repair a mistake successfully—way to create a more loyal customer

**If your organization were a restaurant, how would you seat your customers?
(Access, how to manage census; capacity)**

1. Instantaneously knowing availability
2. Turnover team
3. Same table, same server—relationship building
4. Assembly line—bill/coffee/dessert
5. Scheduling by demand—more capacity at dinner time; consider special events
6. Example—expand staff and seating on football weekends
7. Make seating comfortable
8. Advertise immediate seating
9. Have a lot of desirable seating—every seat is a quality seat
10. Drive-through window (get list of 12-step meetings)
11. Offer a take-home menu; list menu in yellow pages
12. Ejection seats – “firing the client”

If your organization were a restaurant, how would you choose your location?

1. Offer multiple locations (Don in the Box)
2. One-stop shopping; centralized services
3. Terminals-kiosks
4. Catering—do group meetings/therapy in other locations
5. Accessibility
6. Good parking and bus routes
7. Clean and well-light
8. Internet and telephone services

9. Online services
10. Valet parking
11. Go to your clients live
12. Locate service where your clients and providers are
13. How does your marketing represent your services to your clients?