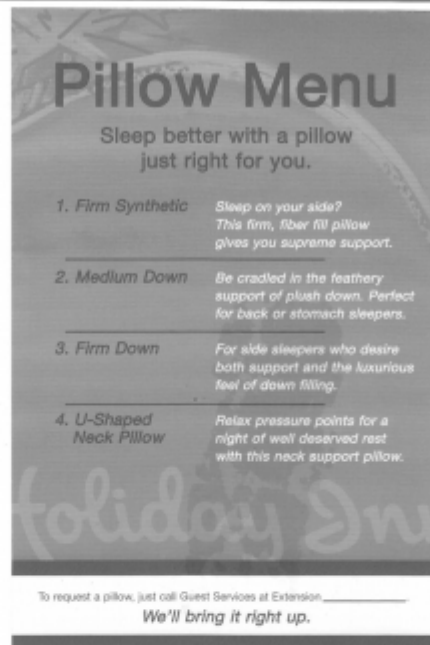


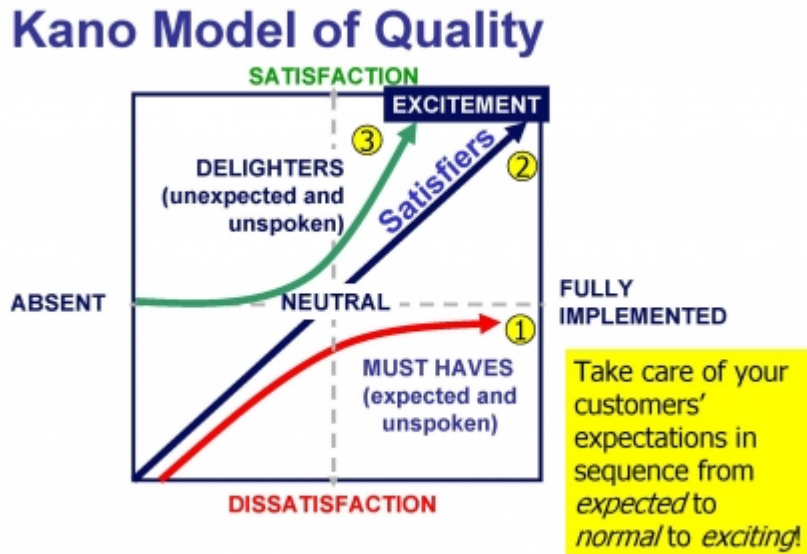
Our family traveled to Florida over the Holidays to introduce our new grandson to his great-grand mother, my wife's mom. She is 93, still living on her own, but we all are aware that she is getting slower and a little more frail everyday. So, my daughter, her husband, my younger daughter on break from her 2nd grade teaching position in NYC and my wife and myself hopped on a plane to West Palm Beach.

We stayed at a Holiday Inn near the West Palm Beach Airport. We had an un-eventful flight, a horrendous experience with Hertz (I'm saving this for a later blog) and upon checking in were "delighted" to find a simple card (see below), which was our "Pillow Menu." We called and our custom pillows were brought right up. How amazing, how fun, HOW COMFORTABLE and how delightful.



The Pillow Menu

Later I thought, “I wonder if the Holiday Inn knows they are using one of the Six Sigma tools, the Kano Model?” The Kano model describes (see the page on my Blog-Beyond Customer Satisfaction) three fundamental ways to VIEW and MEASURE customer



satisfaction.

The Kano model above is a framework for considering, implementing, measuring and implementing activities to not only provide customer satisfaction, but bring delight.

So a “must have” at the Holiday Inn would be clean sheets, an accurate bill, etc. Nobody is going to get extra praise for this, but there will be “hell to pay” if they are not present and fully implemented.

“Satisfiers” are activities that please or displease. The more the better. The more amenities and services provided, the more happy the customer, right? Well, yes and no. Only if they really meet customer needs, are executed flawlessly and are free.

“Delighters” are things that are ‘unspoken and unexpected.’ The Pillow Menu is a fantastic example.

Now there are several lessons here. First, you have to take care of the basics, your ‘must haves’, execute them flawlessly and keep the costs low.

Next you need to determine what ‘satisfiers’ your customers really want, what they cost and what you can afford. You don’t want to spend a lot of money on services they don’t really value. You also need to keep an eye on your costs.

Finally, you may find something as simple as your ‘pillow menu,’ which if implemented will not cost you much and will really distinguish your product or service in the eyes and

experience of your customer. I can tell you, the next hotel I book, I will be asking if they have a ‘pillow menu’ and I’ll be looking for the next experience of ‘customer delight.’”

So what does this have to do with Six Sigma? This is a big subject, whom I won’t answer at one time, but here is how I see and use it. By definition, Six Sigma measures variation of processes. It uses the process of DMAIC, or Design-Measure-Analyze-Implement-Control to improve processes. It is also a set of tools, like the Kano Model, which, when applied as in the case above really makes a difference for the customer and is not hard to implement.

Most people think this is only for manufacturing and really big companies like Boeing, Air Products or Merck. Within Six Sigma, there are lots of wonderful tools, like the Kano Model which can be implemented by any business whether it is delivering a product or service, large or small.

The DMAIC process allows you to figure out what satisfies your customers; how to measure this; how to collect and analyze data into meaningful information; how to implement this in your specific situation and how to control, maintain and improve upon this, over time.

We all need to learn how to find and implement our own ‘Pillow Menus.’”

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