

**PGDM (IB) 2014-16
Services Marketing
IB310**

Trimester – III, End-Term Examination: April 2015

Time allowed: 2 Hours 30 minutes

Max Marks :50

Roll No: _____

Instruction: Students are required to write Roll No on every page of the question paper, writing anything except the Roll No will be treated as **Unfair Means**. In case of rough work please use answer sheet.

Sections	No. of Questions to attempt	Marks	Marks
A	3 out of 5 (Short Questions)	5 Marks each	3*5 = 15
B	2 out of 3 (Long Questions)	10 Marks each	2*10 = 20
C	Compulsory Case Study	15 Marks	15
		Total Marks	50

Section A

- A1. Compare and contrast the implications of customer's involvement in service performance in the following –
A Home Painting service
A Weight Loss Program
- A2. You are responsible for recruitment of hotel staff at a reputed chain of 3 star hotels. How will you test and verify the applicants 'service competencies' and 'service inclination' ?
- A3. What do you think are the main reasons of including 'physical evidence' in the marketing mix for services? Give examples to support your answer
- A4. A product like milk and a service like a seat in an airplane are both perishable. Is there a difference in their perish ability? Explain
- A5. . Non-monetary costs are other sources of sacrifice perceived by customers. What are these? Give examples

Section B

- B1. All market offerings can be placed on a continuum ranging from 'easy to evaluate' to 'difficult to evaluate' depending upon whether they are high on search, experience and credence attributes. Explain

B2. What is the 'recovery paradox'? Would you recommend its usage as a strategy towards customer satisfaction? Justify

B3. Taking the example of service organizations like airlines, insurance companies and hotels identify the strategies they adopt to tangibilize their intangible services.

Section C

Case Study

Read the case on the attached pages and answer the following questions. Each question carries 5 marks.

- C1.** List down the service failures that you can spot in the article.
- C2.** Trace the cause, as per your opinion, of each of the service failure you have listed.
- C3.** What can you suggest as a solution (long term) so as to avoid each of the listed service failures.

PTO

MINT, Fri, Aug 5 2011.

The vexations of flying
Vandana Vasudevan

Clueless crew is just one of the many annoyances of flying, which has become a tiresome, mind numbing activity because of the drill we undergo between departure and arrival

It was less than an hour since the Jet Airways morning flight had left Mumbai airport for Delhi. I was watching soft cotton candy clouds floating along on a grey monsoon sky when the airhostess' voice broke my contemplative mood.

"Are you Mrs Aggarwal?" she asked looking at me. The food trolley was next to her and she was holding an airline meal wrapped in gold foil.

I stared blankly at her. What if the airhostess knew something I didn't? What if in fact I was Mrs Aggarwal in another time-space dimension that I was not aware of? One can never be sure about these things.

"Have you booked for a special meal?" she asked me. "No," I muttered. The airhostess looked distraught. That's when the man in the aisle seat spoke up and identified himself as Mr Aggarwal. The special meal was a Jain meal he had ordered for himself and his brother in the middle seat.

She asked if we had exchanged seats and we said we hadn't. The seat number and the gender of the passenger for the special meal were listed wrongly in the printout she held. While that could be an error, there was more to come.

She went ahead to distribute the special meals and said she would return to give the regular ones. Ten minutes turned to twelve. The Aggarwal brothers next to me were digging into their paratha and paneer with relish. The smell of hot *sambaar* wafted in the air. It was an early morning flight and the breakfast hunger pangs were getting more pronounced. But it would be a few more minutes before my meal tray was finally handed over to me.

I am missing some operational detail of in-flight service, one would think it makes more sense to keep all the meals on the trolley and keep offering both the special and the regular meals simultaneously, instead of doing this sequentially. As Mr Aggarwal said to me empathetically, "It is not nice to keep someone hungry and waiting, while the passengers next to them are eating."

Another lady steward brought the coffee. When she reached our row, the decanter was nearly empty but she poured some dregs into my cup. Ideally she ought to have estimated whether there is enough for a full cup before pouring, but she didn't, so she left me with quarter cup of dark, residual coffee and went off to get some more. And then she never returned. For a very long time. It was as though she was sourcing coffee beans from a plantation. When she did return, the previous dregs were completely cold and in her haste she took out another decanter from her trolley and began pouring, only to realize that it was...tea! The Aggarwal

brother next to me shook his head in despair and said in Hindi: "All of them still seem to be under training. They have no clue what to do in a flight."

Clueless crew is just one of the many annoyances of flying. Another is the slow ID checker at the airport entrance. There is a class of people (of which I could be the leader), which is forever late and rushed. There you are, breathless at the gate, clutching the printout which you got from the ticket counter and rummaging into the purse for an ID. The counter will close in two minutes and you are reciting powerful mantras in your head to help you check in before they shut down the system.

You hand over the PAN card or credit card or driving licence to the security personnel at the gate. An old lined face, which belongs to a time when life was gentle and not so frenetic, squints at the ID. Seconds tick by, feeling like minutes. Is he matching the names letter by letter? Shouldn't this be over in a glance, if he was trained to divert his eyes to the right place?

Then, there is the confounding SMS. I received one from Jet, while I was en route to the airport with no printout. This is what the SMS said: "Kindly report 60 minutes prior departure for flight 9Wxxx/30 JUL for checking in at terminal 1b". But what time? I wanted to shout back at the SMS. Sixty minutes before 7 or 7.05, or 7.15? Time of flight is vital information in any communication about the flight. Besides, like I said, there is a class of people for whom every minute before check-in matters. I estimate this to be a significant population, because last year when I missed my early morning flight from Delhi to Chennai at the start of a vacation, the Air India officer said consolingly that every day he got at least 8-10 people who missed the day's first flight to different destinations.

One reason for that could be that Air India doesn't send any flight communication on SMS. Last week my Delhi-Mumbai Air India flight at 8am was pushed to 9am because the crew didn't turn up. To escape from the unsavoury presence of a controversial Uttar Pradesh politician sitting across me in the waiting area, I wandered off to explore Terminal 3 and came back at 8.50am. Then, they said it was delayed by another half hour, which they could have messaged, so that passengers seeking solace in retail therapy can come to the gate only when required. But that's probably expecting too much from an airline that doesn't believe in SMS as a medium. Perhaps Air India feels that the few paise per SMS will add to its mounting losses.

Modern-day flying has become a tiresome, mind-numbing activity largely because of the drill that one has to undergo from departure to arrival. Locating a trolley, endless security checks, flight delays, swaying dangerously in the airport bus locating one's baggage, etc., have all ensured that flying has longlost its excitement quotient. Ironing out kinks like the ones described will at least help alleviate the stress for passengers.

Vandana Vasudevan is a graduate from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and writes on mass urban consumer issues.
