

# **The Impact of an Organizational Development Intervention on Service Quality in a Travel Agency to Reduce the Gap between Employees Perceptions and Customers Experience of Services Performed**

**Foedjiawati**

Petra Christian University, Indonesia

**Lynne Yeanakis**

W.A. Kraus Associates, USA

## **Abstract**

This paper aims to evaluate the impact of an organization Development Intervention on Service Quality of a Travel Agency (XTT) in Surabaya, Indonesia. The research was designed based on five dimensions of service quality developed by Parasuraman (1990); namely, tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy as a strategy to differentiate among travel agencies. The OD interventions on service qualities were conducted in several activities; such as: coaching, training, dialoguing, and providing feedback. They were carried out to improve the service quality performed by employees in order to provide high quality customer service. It also disclosed action research and questionnaire feedback approach in three stages of Pre-ODI, ODI, and Post-ODI. The result of the measurement showed the gaps and differences between employees perception about the service quality and customers experience of service performed. Therefore, the researcher chose to explore Gap 4 out of 5 gaps from Parasuraman, since it explained most directly on service delivery and communication with customer; hence, it focuses on the service quality discrepancy when promises do not match delivery. It has the purpose of improving the internal service quality within the employees in order to perform excellent service to customers.

In support of the need for behavior change on the part of employees, the researcher introduced the Whole Brain Literacy (Tayko 2014, 2017) approach to help shift the employees' mindset into four thinking abilities namely: open-ended thinking, precision thinking, aim thinking, and feeling power thinking. The results of the *t*-Test after the interventions indicated that coaching, training, dialoguing, and providing feedback on service quality had a significant impact in developing the employees perception on the services perceived. Through OD interventions on service quality, employees at XTT were able to improve their service performance which could bring more positive rating from what customers experienced.

**Keywords:** Service Quality, SERVQUAL Dimensions, Customer Satisfaction, Organization Development Intervention, Whole Brain Literacy

## **Introduction**

This study takes an Organization Development Intervention perspective using both action research and questionnaire feedback approaches with a purpose of reducing the gap between employees perception at XTT, a travel agency in Surabaya and their customers experience of services performed. Spillane (2012) stated that one of the tourism industries which can increase the economy growth is travel industry and it is indeed one of the world's most significant economic sectors. Obviously, the fast economic growth has made this industry considered by many to be the biggest business in the world; both in developed and developing countries. Therefore, XTT needs to be different from others by creating services as a competitive strategy. Service quality plays an important role in retaining customers. Parasuraman et al. (1985) mentioned that service quality is considered as the difference between customer's expectations for the performance of a service before the service is rendered and their perceptions on the service received. Result of the previous research, which supported Parasuraman, was conducted by Roger Hallowell, Leonard A. Schlesinger, Jeffrey Zornitsky (2002). They suggested that companies seeking to differentiate themselves on the basis of customer satisfaction may succeed by delivering what front-line employees and managers need to serve their customers based on the promises made and customers will assess the service quality performed.

Travel agencies are growing rapidly in Indonesia. According to Ministry of Tourism and Creative Industry, Jakarta the capital city of Indonesia, has the most travel agencies followed by Surabaya, the capital city of East Java Province (the second largest province) which has a population of approximately 2.9 million. Surabaya becomes the second biggest metropolitan city in Indonesia after Jakarta. The dense population has formed a large market for business performer in travel industry. Data from Association of The Indonesian Tour and Travel (ASITA) mentions that there are more or less around 400 travel agents in East Java that have become ASITA members since 2015. Surabaya itself has around 170 travel agents that have been ASITA members. With the growing of leisure and holiday's demand, as well as the populations' growth; travel agencies will be a popular business option for those who would like to set up a new business. As a result of the increasing number of holiday demand by both individual or family travelers, the competition among travel agencies is getting stronger and stronger. They have to distinguish themselves by making some strategies to make customers choose and trust them when they want to travel. Strategy is the determination of the path (how?) for achieving objectives or goals (what?) at corporate, business or operational level. Habib, Khurram & Idress (2010) mentioned that the foremost crucial thing for managers is to be expert in implementing different strategies to make boost the firm's performance. Hence, in order to be competitive, travel agents should create a workable agency and loyal customers which requires great skill and excellent management. One of the strategies is considering service as an advantage value for sustainable competitiveness. Value is what buyers are willing to pay. As what Michael Porter (1985) mentioned there are 3 competitive strategies in order a service company perform its competition; namely, cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. When the company uses differentiation as a competitive strategy, this means that the company creates a service which is perceived as being unique to customers. Having a clear service quality framework will eliminate complaints from customers.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To assess and measure the current situation of the focal organization on service quality and identify gaps between the service as perceived by employees and what customers actually experience before the intervention.
2. To develop and conduct an Organization Development Intervention (ODI) on Service quality and to improve employees performance when serving customers.

3. To see whether the Organization Development Intervention (ODI) will improve the service performed by the employees in serving customers after the intervention.

## **Research Questions**

1. Is there a Service Quality gap between employees perceived and customers experience before the intervention?
2. Will ODI improve the employees' understanding of service quality?
3. Will employees' understanding of service quality be able to improve the customer experience of service quality performed?

## **Literature Review**

This literature review explains an overview of theoretical foundations which discusses an Organization Development, Service Quality, Service Performance, Customer Satisfaction, Organization Development Intervention and Whole Brain Literacy.

### **Organization Development**

Cummings and Worley (2009) wrote several definitions of Organization Development conveyed by the early researchers such as Burke (1982) who defined OD as a planned process of change in an organization's culture through the utilization for behavioral science technology, research, and theory. French in 1969 wrote Organization Development as a long range effort to improve an organization's problem solving capabilities and its ability to cope with changes in its external environment with the help of external or internal behavioral scientist consultants. Followed by Beckhard's definition in 1969, that Organization Development is an effort planned, organization wide, and managed from the top to increase organization effectiveness and health through planned interventions in the organization's processes using behavioral science knowledge. In 1980, Michael Beer conveyed that Organization Behavior is a system wide process of data collection, diagnosis, action planning, intervention, and evaluation aimed at enhancing congruence among organizational structure, process, strategy, people, and culture. Besides, OD also develops new and creative solutions, and organization's self renewing capacity. It happens through collaboration of organizational members working with a change agent using behavioral science theory, research, and technology. Later definition by Burke and Bradford (2005) mentioned that Organization Development is a system wide process of planned change aimed toward improving overall organization effectiveness by way of enhanced congruence of such key organization dimensions as external environment, mission, strategy, leadership, culture, structure, information, and reward systems, and work policies and procedures.

From the above definitions, there had been slightly different definitions of OD. For instance, Burke emphasized on the culture as the target of change; whereas, French focused on OD's long term interest and the use of consultants. Beckhard's and Beer's definitions addressed the process of OD and more recently, Burke and Bradford's definition broadened the range and interests of OD. Cummings and Worley (2009) draw together most of the previous views and therefore, OD is a system wide application and transfer of behavioral science knowledge to the planned development, improvement, and reinforcement of the

strategies, structures, and processes that lead to organization effectiveness. This definition is used in this research study and linked it to the service quality.

### **Service Quality**

The concept of service quality has become a topic of special interest in the service sector since 1980s. The contributors who developed and extended the concept of service quality from previous researchers were Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988, 1990). Among the other major frameworks, SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) is a widely used model for measuring service quality in the service industry. The five dimensions which were proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1990) are: (1) **Tangibility**, appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials (2) **Reliability**, ability to perform the promised service dependable and accurately (3) **Responsiveness**, willingness to help customers and provide prompt service. (4) **Assurance**, knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to deliver trust and confidence. (5) **Empathy**, caring, individualized attention the firm provides its customers. Those are the five general dimensions which customers use in assessing service quality delivered by the employees. Hence, the key to deliver high quality service is to balance customers' perceptions and experiences, identify the gaps between the two and minimize the gaps. By using the SERVQUAL tool, it can help to recognize problems quickly and to better assess customers satisfaction.

There are total of 5 gaps developed by Parasuraman of which gap 1 to 4 are the gaps pertaining to the perception of service quality and the tasks associated with service delivery to customers. While gap 5 is about the discrepancy between the expected and perceived service from the customers' standpoint. In this study, the researcher is using gap 4 which focuses most directly on service delivery and communication with customers. Since only customers are the final judges of satisfaction, therefore, it is necessary to identify service quality gap between what employees perceive about the service quality and what customers experience during the transaction by using the five dimensions to assess the feedback from the services customers receive. Below is the diagram that shows clearly all the 5 gaps.

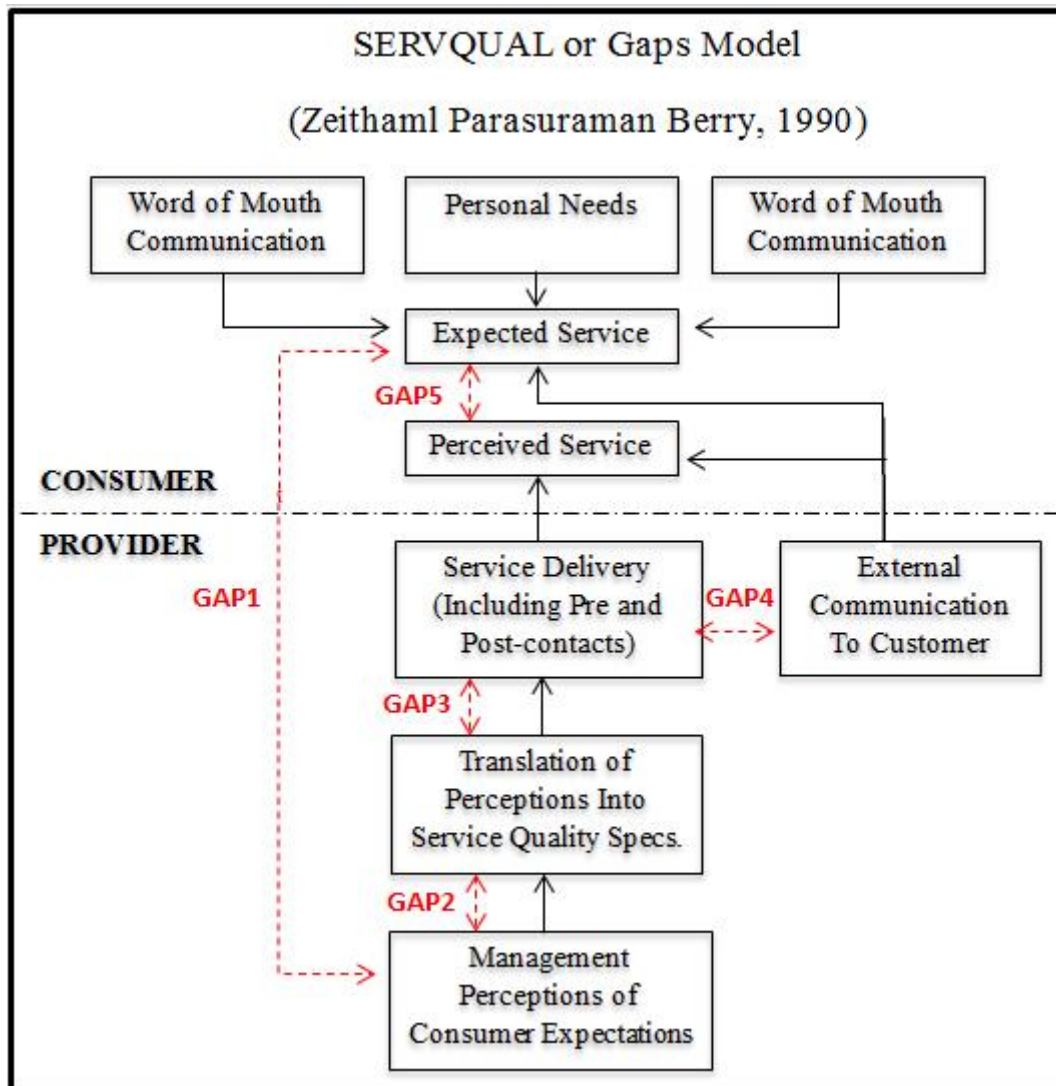


Figure 1 Parasuraman's Service Quality Gap model

The five gaps revealed in the effort to achieve effective service quality control are:

- Gap 1 : Between customers' expectations and management perceptions of customer expectations.
- Gap 2 : Between management's perceptions of customer expectations and service quality specifications.
- Gap 3 : Between service quality specifications and service delivery.
- Gap 4 : Between service delivery and external communications to customers about Service Delivery.
- Gap 5 : Between expected service and perceived service.

From figure 1, it can be concluded that gap 1 to 4 are the service-provider gaps which contribute to gap 5. Gap 5 is commonly used to represent the potential discrepancy between the expected and perceived service from the customers' point of views. The key determinants of the service expected by customers are word-of mouth communications, personal needs, past experience, and external communications from the service provider. However, the researcher is using gap 4 which is considered as the major cause of low service quality perceptions between what a firm promises about a service and what it actually delivers.

## **Service Performance**

Czepiel et al. (1985) wrote that service performance takes place in what so called service encounter; from the time customers directly interact with service providers. It involves all elements of an encounter; such as, the physical facility, waiting times, and service personnel are also involved. Service performance is divided into a technical and functional dimension. Technical performance is what customer receives, the core service, while functional performance is the way in which a customer receives the technical service, the how, why, where, and when of the service (Hill, 1986). For example, a travel agency's core service is described as a one stop service in purchasing travel products; while its functional components include a responsive and reliable staff or easily accessible office. Therefore, services are not the 'what' a customer is purchasing but both core and peripheral service performance (Lovelock, 1991).

## **Customer Satisfaction**

Whoever owns a business must think of how to satisfy his or her customer. Mohsan, Nawaz, Khan, Shaukat, Numan (2011) conveyed the significance of customer satisfaction in all businesses. There are a lot of researchers using customer satisfaction as one of organization performance's dimensions (Vorhies & Morgan, 2005). Several researchers use customer satisfaction as one of the dimensions of organization performance which relates to the feeling or judgment by customers towards a product or service (Jamal & Nasser, 2003). Customers evaluate the product or service after they consume and customer satisfaction happens when the fulfillment of the consumers' consumption goals is based on the experiences. Therefore, a company must be able to satisfy their customers.

Other theories of customer satisfaction have been conveyed by many scholars through their researches. Oliver (1997), Jamal & Naser (2003) defined customer satisfaction as customers' judgement about whether the state of satisfaction (cognitive judgement) was delivered at a pleasurable level (emotional judgement). Customers "can be satisfied if they feel good about a product or service comparing to another product or service." In addition, Oliver (2006) mentioned that customer satisfaction will happen if the fulfillment of the customers' consumption goals is based on the experiences.

Tracy and Tan (2001) have found four kinds of customer satisfaction; competitive pricing, product quality, product variety, and delivery service. But Yee, Yeung, and Cheng (2010) said the most significant thing to achieve customer satisfaction is by delivering service. According to Yi (2000), in his summary on customer satisfaction from many researchers, he summed up that "it is as the cognitive state or emotional response from customers in terms of the extent to which they consider the price should be reasonable, while in term of the process, customers will see customer satisfaction as an evaluation that a given consumption experience should be better than the expected or as a comparative analysis of pre purchase, expectations, and post purchase satisfaction." So if what customers experience exceed their expectation or at least the same as their expectation, they will be satisfied; whereas, when customers experience does not match to their expectation, they will not be satisfied. By better understanding of service quality, employees at XTT will be able to deliver the service to customers.

## Organization Development Intervention

Organization Development, stated by Worley (2009) is a process that applies a broad range of behavioral science knowledge and practices to help organizations build their capacity to change and to achieve greater effectiveness; covering increased financial performance, organization member engagement, and customer satisfaction. In this study, OD is applied at XTT to improve the quality of service from the human resources and to achieve customer satisfaction; therefore, the implementation of the interventions and the subsequent reinforcement of change are designed.

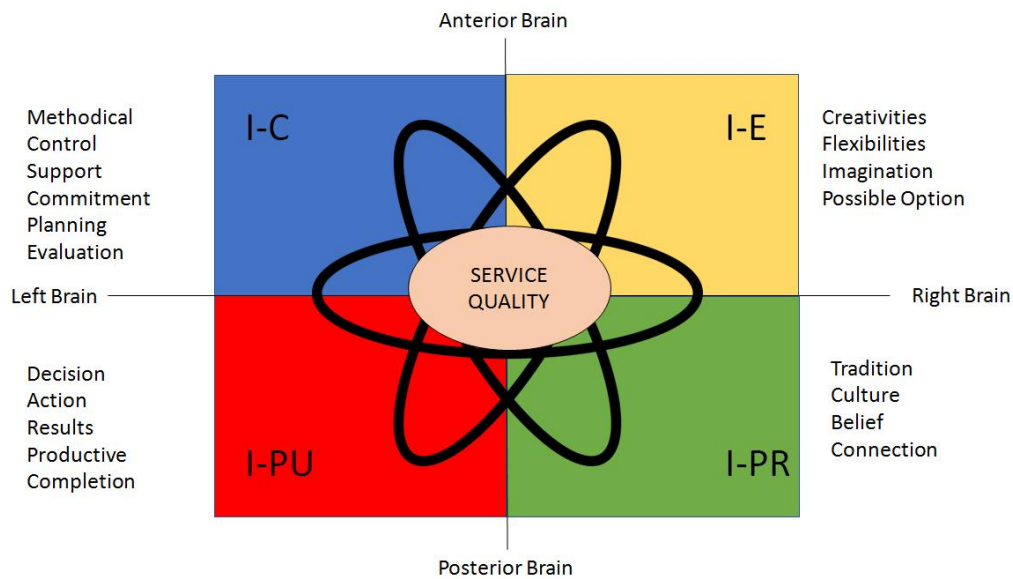
OD interventions need to pay careful attention to the needs and dynamics of the change situation and designing a change program to get an effective result of interventions. According to Worley and Cummings (2009), there are two things which will affect the success of the interventions as discussed in the OD literature; namely, the OD practitioner who has to do with the change situation and those related to the target of change. The target of change at XTT, employees who are the target of change are the main focus of interventions. There are two keys contingencies related to the success of the OD interventions; they are, organizational issues and the organizational system at which the intervention is expected to have an impact. Within the organizational issues, there are four interrelated issues that are key targets of OD interventions: (1) Strategic issues, which are issues among the most critical ones facing organizations in today's changing and highly competitive environments. (2) Technological and structural issues which concern about how to divide work into departments and how to coordinate among those departments to support strategic directions. (3) Human resources issues, which are issues about how to attract competent people to the organization, setting goals for them, appraising and rewarding their performance, and ensuring their careers (4) Human process issues, which have to do with social processes occurring among the organization members; such as, communication, decision making, leadership and group dynamics.

In this study, the researcher focuses the intervention on the human process issues which derives from the disciplines of psychology and social psychology and the applied group dynamics and human relations. It fits to XTT's main problem about service quality which deals with employees as the human resources. It usually values human fulfillment and expects that organizational effectiveness follows from improved functioning of people and organizational processes. In order to make the interventions on the human process succeed, whole brain literacy (Tayko, 2014) is used as a strategy to help employees at XTT shift their mindset and use the four thinking patterns as a whole human process.

### Whole Brain Literacy

Dudley Lynch (2004-2006) is the expert in human brain functioning. He introduced the framework of human brain map with its four quadrants which are the left brain, right brain, anterior brain, and posterior brain. He elaborated each quadrant focus to specific situation in a different way which depends on the individual's primary orientation. He also mapped out the various human brain functions into the four quadrants which he gave the names according to each quadrant's key behavioral characteristic. They were described as: **I CONTROL**, **I EXPLORE**, **I PURSUE**, and **I PRESERVE**. In particular, the left brain orientation of the human brain functioning is aimed at regulating and directing (I Control) and getting things done (I Pursue). While the right brain orientation aims at connecting things together (I Explore and I Preserve). Whole brain literacy proposed a holistic way to think through the four thinking abilities in balance continuously, a way to think-learn-create-care-connect in thinking through every perspective,

every aspect of the situation (Tayko, 2012), including a way to improve employees' service quality at XTT. Each quadrant needed to be used in a good balance in order to be able to perform the best result in serving customers.



*Figure 2 Functional Characteristics of the Four Thinking Abilities Model of Lynch With Service Quality as the Purpose*

WBL as an approach to improve the employees' service quality performance becomes a timeless wending or iterating from one quadrant of the brain to the other. Figure 2 shows one wends in and out a quadrant and iterates through the entire quadrant. The Purpose center is the space at the center of all the four quadrants where the thinking process focuses on, "I Live on Purpose" (Tayko, 2012, 2017).

### **Methodology**

This study uses mixed methodology by comprising quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative method is applied during the Pre-ODI and Post-ODI stages which are performed through statistical test (Statistical Package for Social Science / SPSS software and *t* Test) mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through questionnaires; whereas, qualitative data collection method was applied at the intervention stage by using primary and secondary data. The primary data was data collected from direct information by having an in depth interview with the director of XTT, and observations. Questionnaire was also developed in two kinds, for employees and customers. There were two parts on the questionnaire, first one was the demographic information of the employees and second one was the employees' perception of service quality. There were also two parts on the questionnaire for customers, first one was the demographic information and second one is the customers' experience of the service performed. The second part was measured by 20 items and used a five-point likert scale to evaluate the responses. There were 45 employees who fill out the questionnaires and 100 questionnaires were distributed to the customers but the researcher received 87 respondents who purchased at XTT and inside the 87 questionnaires of



the customers, there were 28 the same customers who filled out the questionnaires before and after the ODI. The data was then analyzed according to the mean, and independent samples *t*-test for the 87 respondents and paired samples *t*-test for the 28 respondents.

Whereas secondary data is used from related literature such as, journals, books, and documents needed from XTT included its vision and mission, organization structure, and service guidance. Observations on the employees service quality behavioral changes are also conducted after the ODI. The qualitative analysis has the function to support the quantitative analysis.

The action research framework consists of three components; they are: Pre-OD Intervention (Pre-ODI), OD interventions (ODI), and Post OD Intervention (Post-ODI). **The first stage** is to diagnose the current service quality delivered by employees and also measure what customers actually experience of the service delivery before intervention. The measurement is conducted in order to identify any service quality gaps. **The second stage** has a purpose of identifying gaps and reducing the gap by conducting OD intervention on coaching, training, dialoguing, and giving feedback as an OD process to improve the quality of service performed to customers. **The third stage** is to measure the result of the intervention activities conducted after the ODI.

### Result Findings

#### Gap analysis between employees perceived about service quality and customers experience before intervention (Pre-ODI stage)

Service quality gap analysis is measured from the difference between means of what employees perceived about service quality and customers experience. Figure 3 shows there is a service gap between what employees perceived and customers experience of service performed before the intervention. It indicates the highest mean scores which were on the dimension of ‘Reliability’ and followed by the dimension of ‘Responsiveness’.

Items	Means (Employees Perceived)	Means (Customer Experience)	Gap CE-EP	t	Sig
<b>Tangibility</b>					
XTT has a modern office design.	3,89	2,87	-1,02	-6,35	,000
XTT provides complete travel products such as domestic and International tickets, hotel reservations, documents : Passport & Visas, inbound and outbound tour packages.	4,04	3,14	-0,91	-6,38	,000
XTT has attractive brochures	3,82	2,64	-1,18	-8,34	,000
XTT’s employees are neat looking	3,84	3,62	-0,22	-1,49	,141
Total 4 items					
<b>Reliability</b>					
When XTT promises that to do something by a certain time, they should do so.	3,78	2,77	-1,01	-6,28	,000

When customers have problems, XTT must show a sincere effort in solving them.	4,07	2,54	-1,53	-9,96	,000
XTT should show sincere efforts to meet customers' needs.	3,91	2,83	-1,08	-6,96	,000
XTT should provide service without making any mistakes	3,44	2,76	-0,69	-4,45	,000
Total 4 items					
<b>Responsiveness</b>					
Employees at XTT should provide customers with all necessary information	3,98	2,66	-1,32	-8,90	,000
Employees at XTT should provide customers prompt services	3,91	2,62	-1,29	-8,67	,000
Employees at XTT should always be willing to help customers.	3,98	3,06	-0,92	-5,75	,000
Employees at XTT should never be too busy to respond to customer's requests	3,91	3,15	-0,76	-4,90	,000
Total 4 items					
<b>Assurance</b>					
Employees at XTT should have the knowledge to answer customer's questions.	3,76	3,22	-0,54	-4,04	,000
Employees at XTT be consistently courteous with customers.	4,22	3,83	-0,39	-3,26	,002
The behavior of employees at XTT should instill confidence in customers	4,24	3,31	-0,93	-6,89	,000
Customers of XTT should feel safe in transaction	4,24	3,34	-0,90	-7,08	,000
Total 4 items					
<b>Empathy</b>					
Employees at XTT should give customers individual attention	3,60	2,49	-1,11	-7,44	,000
Employees at XTT should understand particular needs of their customers	3,76	2,52	-1,24	-10,34	,000
Employees at XTT should consider their customers' best interest in mind	4,27	3,01	-1,26	-10,50	,000
XTT should provide convenient operating hours to all customers	4,07	4,23	0,16	1,40	,167
Total 4 items					
Overall 20 items					

## Organization Development Intervention Strategy (ODI)

In this stage, the researcher carried out intervention to change the knowledge of the employees from service guidance to 5 dimensions of Parasuraman's service quality. The OD intervention used coaching to perform the change of mindset about service quality, training about service quality and whole brain literacy as an approach to self improvement on the quality of service performed, and observation as ways of the strategy to help the employees improve better by dialoguing and giving feedback.

The summary outcome of the 'Service Quality' training and coaching was:

- Employees learnt about the Service Quality concept with its 5 dimensions developed by Parasuraman et al. They understood which area of Service Quality they had to deliver to customers and the practical problems they often neglected when serving customers and under which dimensions they neglected most. In addition, they were able to memorize and mention the five dimensions which had been simplified and translated from English to Indonesian. The last was they made a commitment to improve their quality of service delivery to customers.

The summary outcome of the "WBL / Four Thinking Abilities affect the Quality of Service was :

Topics	Outcomes	Responses
Thinking Abilities and Tangibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees understood the importance of using the four thinking abilities</li> <li>• Employees learnt how the four thinking abilities influenced their service delivery in 'tangibility'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees agreed to practice to balance the four thinking abilities to improve their visual performances both XTT office and their well dressed appearance</li> </ul>
Thinking Abilities and Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees learnt how the four thinking abilities influenced their service delivery in 'reliability' as the dimension of service quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees agreed to practice using their four thinking abilities to improve their sincere effort in solving customers' problems</li> </ul>
Thinking Abilities and Responsiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees learnt how the four thinking abilities influenced their service delivery in 'responsiveness' as the dimension of service quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees agreed to practice using their four thinking abilities to improve the highest gap on providing customers with all necessary information</li> </ul>
Thinking Abilities and Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees learnt how the four thinking abilities influenced their service delivery in 'assurance' as the dimension of service quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees agreed to practice using their four thinking abilities to improve the highest gap on being confident</li> </ul>
Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees learnt how the four</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees agreed to practice</li> </ul>

Abilities and Empathy	thinking abilities could optimize their service delivery in 'empathy' as the dimension of service quality	using their four thinking abilities to improve the highest gap occurred on considering customers' best interest in mind and followed by understanding the specific needs of customers.
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The summary outcome of the 'Service Quality' observations was:

- Having attended the training, the researcher gave them homework to make them practice the application of the five dimensions of the service quality. A service quality checklist was given to them and they were asked to make commitment by checking themselves daily after they finished their working hour. The execution of the service quality checklist was practiced for a month. During this period the researcher went to XTT to observe how the employees applied the five dimensions in serving their customers. It was expected that the employees changed their concept of service quality guidance and shifted their mindset of performing service based on the five dimensions.

The summary outcome of the 'Service Quality' checklist was:

- 62,2% of the employees participated in doing the service quality check list as a commitment card for 1 month. They felt they were much improved in delivering the services to customers.

**Gap analysis between employees perceived about service quality and customers experience after intervention (Post-ODI stage)**

- Improvement in employees perceptions of service quality after the intervention.

There was an improvement of the employees' perceptions about the service quality after attending the training, coaching, dialoguing, and using the service quality checklist as the feedback. They were clear with the service quality concept from Parasuraman et al. with its 5 dimensions. Figure 4 shows the comparison of the mean scores from the employee ratings before and after the interventions which indicated there was improvement about their understanding of service quality concept which make them evaluate themselves clearer based on the service quality dimensions.

*Figure 4  
Service Quality Gap Pre & Post - Employee Ratings*

Items	No. of items	Pre ODI	Post Means	Gap	t	Sig
		Mean Employee	Mean Employee	CE-EP		
<i>Tangibility</i>	4	3.9	3.83	-0.07	-.634	.530
<i>Reliability</i>	4	3.8	3.67	-0.13	-1.010	.318
<i>Responsiveness</i>	4	3.94	3.76	-0.18	-1.708	.095

<i>Assurance</i>	<b>4</b>	4.12	3.82	-0.30	-2.480	.017
<i>Empathy</i>	<b>4</b>	3.92	3.67	-0.25	-2.272	.028
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>					

- There is improvement in customer experience of service performed by **the different customers** after the interventions.

There are 87 customers before and after the interventions who participated in filling up the questionnaires. Although most of the customers are not the same after the interventions, it still shows that customers are quite happy with the service performed by the employees. Figure 5 indicates the comparison of the mean score from customer ratings before and after the interventions have shown that there is an improvement in service quality delivered by the employees which make the customer experience ratings increase

*Figure 5*  
*Service Quality Gap Pre & Post - Customer Ratings*

Items	No of items	Pre ODI Mean Customer	Post Means Mean Customer	Gap CE-EP	T	Sig
Tangibility	4	3.07	3.61	0.54	5.906	.000
Reliability	4	2.72	3.78	1.06	7.053	.000
Responsiveness	4	2.87	3.58	0.71	7.796	.000
Assurance	4	3.43	3.48	0.05	3.873	.000
Empathy	4	3.06	3.68	0.62	5.584	.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>					

- There is improvement in customer experience of service performed by **the same customers** after the interventions.

There are 28 the same customers out of 87, before and after the interventions who participated in filling up the questionnaires. It is hard to find the same customers who re-purchase travel products at XTT within four months. However, there are 28 the same customers of whose feedback also shows that there is improvement in service quality delivered by the employees. Figure 6 shows the comparison of the scores from the same customer ratings before and after the interventions. It shows the same result as evaluated by the different customers that There is an improvement on the service delivery performed by the employees towards their customers who purchased the travel products before and after the ODI. The same customers were satisfied because they experience good service delivery.

*Figure 6*  
*Service Quality Gap Result on Paired Samples of Customers: Pre & Post ODI*

Items	No. of items	Pre ODI Gap (CE-EP)	Post ODI Gap (CE-EP)	Remarks
Tangibility	4	(0.80)	(0.46)	Better

Reliability	4	(0.82)	(0.51)	Better
Responsiveness	4	(0.78)	(0.40)	Better
Assurance	4	(0.58)	(0.20)	Better
Empathy	4	(0.71)	(0.27)	Better
<i>Total</i>	20			

### **Conclusions**

The service quality gap before the intervention was because employees were unclear about the present service quality guidance provided for them. As a result, the measurement before ODI shows that there is a service gap between what employees perceived and customers experience of service performed. The highest gap shown from the mean scores were on the dimensions of ‘reliability’ and ‘responsiveness’ in serving customers

Training on Service Quality and the four thinking abilities has proven to be able to improve employees’ service quality. Coaching also improved the employees’ service performance to customers. Through coaching and training, the Director and employees at XTT became aware of the service quality’s basic concept with the 5 dimensions and they realized the importance of re-framing and developing their current service quality guidance to the concept of service quality from Parasuraman.

Finally, this study shows that most companies think they have got their own service quality standards which they make, but they seldom measure the effectiveness from the customers point of view. This research study gives an insight that companies should provide training and coaching on service quality training to the employees as an intervention to make them aware of the significance of the service quality concept and afterwards to improve their service performance. Besides, dialoguing and providing feedback are also important to find out the implementation as well as the obstacles that might occur during the process of change to a better quality of service.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are based on the result findings and are aimed for the development of the service skills.

1. Training and coaching on Service Quality should regularly be conducted related to its 5 dimensions and service skill. The improvement of the service performed using the four thinking abilities must be maintained in order to make them have service oriented mindset and to improve their confidence in delivering the best service to the customers; so customers will encounter good service from the beginning they are served.
2. The OD intervention which has been tested to be successful should be repeated again since this research study was conducted one time to the employees due to the limited time. The result is their awareness of the right concept of service quality and that they have four new abilities which give them the potential to use them "inside out".

Therefore, it is recommended that there is another intervention as the continuation of the first ODI to improve the quality of the employees' service skills. So, the result from the first was the intervention increased employees awareness of good service quality and some basic skills in delivering it and the second intervention has the purpose of measuring the improvement they make after they gain more skills over a longer period of time.

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