

SETTING UNIFIED METRICS: TO MEASURE THE PROJECT'S PERFORMANCE IN THE INDUSTRIAL CATERING FIELD FOR A PROPER ASSESSMENT AND DECISION ANALYSIS

Abdallah ELIAS

University Of Balamand
(Lebanon)

University Of Jean Moulin Lyon 3
(France)

ABSTRACT:

Purpose: This paper aims to set unified metrics in order to measure a project's performance in the industrial catering field for proper assessment and decision analysis

Design/methodology approach: The unified metric will be created to provide an insight for better analysis and understanding on the functionality of the project to identify quality performances and be able to trace progress while maintaining in parallel staff motivation and providing them a bonus scheme linked to the metric. To achieve the desired metric several parameters will be used to make and allow the approach to be scientific and free from subjectivity.

Findings: In my experience, industrial catering has several variables and aspects. Each project has a different scope from another, and each project scopes' parameters are different from the others. Once the commercial department is preparing the bidding for the sake of taking a key project in the Saudi market, and to have a presence in certain areas with various clients such as Aramco, and SABIC, they take projects with reduced prices thus making it difficult for the operations department to operate and compete with other projects.

Research limitations and implications: Several papers which I have illustrated in this document has addressed the topic of measuring the business performance from one certain angel. In their methodology and the way of presenting their cases they did not take all the factors into consideration like; Employees, Customers, Company Procedures, and Financial figures. In the paper of Sainaghi, Ruggero. (2010). Hotel performance, he has discussed and elaborated on the power of balance scored Card and the effective way of using it.

Practical implications: This module can be used in several businesses, however in the paper it is used in the industrial catering field to prove its functionality, it addresses all the factors related to a business success and since it is linked to the KPI and a Bonus scheme to the various players, it ensures that all the different players will be on board.

Originality/value: The module will increase the team performance and will oblige them to work together to achieve the target while linking the company mission, vision and cultural values to the day-to-day activity

Keywords: Lean Balanced Scorecard, Key performance Indicators, Profit & Loss, Schedule Performance Index, Cost Performance Index, Flow Thru

INTRODUCTION

“What gets measured gets managed” a famous statement by Peter F Drucker that summarizes the main concern for several leaders to understand better their company performance through the productivity of its employees and their efficiency and effectiveness in delivering the right service to the right customer at the right time with the right price.

One of the ways to check the company credibility lays on how its mission, vision and cultural values are tailored with their actions and day-to-day activities.

Industrial catering is called the business of cents where every cents saving count as they operate in Bulk.

The company display several projects each with different scope of service and various volume scale and does not have a methodology to monitor properly the performance and compare it accordingly. Moreover, the distribution of KPI creates clans in various department thus resulting that every department will work to secure its target even though it will be against the company best interest.

Industrial Catering is my field, where I have worked for four years in a senior position, with two major companies in this domain in Saudi Arabia: Occupying the position of Operations Manager over Riyadh operations with NESMA Catering and another two years as Country - Operations Manager for Saudi Arabia with Gulf Mahmal Support Services. This field offers several variables from which comparing the project performance to another is a challenging task due to the independence of each project and the various scope that it provides against the others. Therefore, in my paper I will be tackling this matter to create and to set unified metrics to measure the project’s performance in the industrial catering field for a proper assessment and decisions analysis. This will be done through a process of combining Balanced Scorecard and Key Performance Analysis metrics along with several factors to reach to one unite that summarizes the project performance and gives the ability to compare one project to another. The module gives an edge as it forces the associates to work together to achieve the company target despite the role they occupy. The module assists the project manager to identify and look for hidden costs generated in their project and find opportunities to eliminate unnecessary expenses and maintain customer satisfaction while maintaining the company mission, vision and cultural values.

The module is a scientific approach free from subjectivity and it will allow the project team to see the evolution of the progress and result of the action plan. It gives empowerment to the associates to create and come up with ways of improving the project performance, while following the company guidelines and standard operating procedures.

In the unified metrics, I will be using the following criteria:

- Schedule Performance Index
- Cost performance index
- Flow thru %
- Employee satisfaction
- Customer satisfaction
- Financial metrics
- Standard operating procedures audit

The above module will be adapted on an existing industrial catering company in Saudi Arabia; “LIGABUE” to test the theory.

Methodology of the industrial catering operation

In-Industrial Catering and following my experience with Nesma catering and Gulf Mahmal Support services, the scope of service is summed up to the following service:

- Compound owned by the catering company and which offers Housekeeping, Laundry, three meals. Preventive maintenance for the camp, pest control and compound management (Check in, Check out, facility management)
- Caterer operates in the client premises and operates three meals a day with housekeeping and laundry
- Caterer operates in the client premises and operates three meals and either service housekeeping or laundry
- Caterer operates in the client premises to offer three meals only
- Maintenance scope for the equipment can be also under the scope of Caterer in any scenario listed above

The terminology 'Man-days' is equivalent to the number of people the service is done in one of the above scenarios and the rate per Man-day will include all the services that are required.

An important factor to consider is that for each required service, there are four categories, which should receive their service individually, and in different locations respectively, those categories are:

- **Executives** are the CEO and Vice president of the project and consultant. This category they have furnished luxurious apartments with one-bedroom, private kitchen, receiving area and toilet. It could be a “port a cabin” or concrete. Their mess hall is equivalent to five-star restaurant service and they have their own facility. Their rooms require daily cleaning, and the Laundry is unlimited. All the raw materials used in the cooking are fresh and with an “A” grade.
- **Seniors** are the project managers and senior engineers. They live in a furnished apartment could be a “port a cabin “or concrete, it is a luxurious apartment with the same specifications as the executives, with their kitchen and receiving hall in one room. Their rooms require daily cleaning and the Laundry is unlimited. All the raw materials used in cooking are fresh and with an “A” grade or grade “B”, it varies from a client to another.
- **Juniors** are supervisors, each two share one apartment, their room does not have a kitchen, it requires daily cleaning, and the laundry is limited to two pieces per day.
- **Workers** are the labor that operate and execute the projects, they live four to six people in one room, the toilets and showers are common, and they are allowed one piece per day for their laundry

For all the above categories, it is important to consider the nationality when preparing the food so each associate will have his ethnic food, below are the different types:

- Filipino food
- Arab food
- Continental and western food

- Indo Pack food to cover the following nationalities: Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi, and Nepali nationality, as they eat the same food with different method of cooking

The process will start with the client inviting the catering companies for a BID proposal, they send detailed documents specifying the scope required with the entire element that the caterer is responsible for to determine the responsibility of the caterer, which can vary from a scope to another. The following is the detailed criteria in question:

- Utilities charges: Gas, Electricity, Sweet Water, Raw Water
- Sewage control
- Kitchen, Mess hall and laundry equipment
- Light equipment
- Pest control
- Wastage control
- Janitorial services for the public areas and facilities
- Camp management
- First aid clinic
- Transportation and logistics for parcels if required as well for the associates to the site
- Histogram for the whole period for the different categories and nationalities
- Maintenance and preventive maintenance
- Security System for the camp or compound
- Fire safety system and alarm system
- Hood extraction and mechanism in the kitchen

After a thorough review of the requirements, the contracting department prepares a budget template to determine; the costs of goods sold based on the menu presented for the different categories and nationalities, the number of staff needed with their salaries, overtime and benefits, and the various expenses that will occur based on the detailed scope as well the list and value of the assets. The budget will be prepared with the operation department's input.

Based on the budget template the commercial proposal is built and presented to the client. Upon approval of the commercial proposal, another meeting will be set to validate the scope required and the capacity of the caterer to perform the task required, and from that point, a negotiation will take place to agree on the final prices. Following the negotiation, the final prices are set, a contract is prepared for approval by the authorized signatory and it passes to the chamber of commerce for an endorsement.

Several times depending on the location of the project and the client that the caterer is dealing with, prices offered are competitive prices thus offering low margin of profit. The addition of this client will leverage the caterer performance in the market. Based on this factor the caterer accepts to go with low prices and low margins.

Once the commercial proposal is approved, Operation team launches the mobilization process by preparing a Gantt chart, reviewing the menu and determining the target cost for the menu presented, as well to allocate the

required staff for the project with their leader, prepares the site requisitions for the material and equipment and assign the starting date.

Previous research in the measurement of business performance

Business performance has several dimensions as per the research done by Sebahattin Yildiz and Adem Karakas in 2012; they have classified the dimensions as being four.

1. Business growth,
2. Profitability,
3. Image and
4. Customer loyalty and product service innovativeness.

The business growth is aligned with the profitability while customer loyalty and innovativeness are not directly presenting direct measurement. The Balance sheet and income statements are known for measuring the performance of business while failing to capture non-financial parameters. Measuring the business performance can be done through several ways; subjective which is measured in insightful choices according to the company expectations and competitors (Dess and Robinson, 1984), objective through a quantifying methodology and process as one method as well financial and operational criteria, and a third through primary and secondary database (Venkatraman and Ramanujam ,1986: sang, 2004). It has been shown that when combining objective and subjective measurements, we will have a better performance measurement tool (Venkatraman and Ramanujam ,1986).

In the paper of Sebahattin Yildiz and Adem Karakas in 2012, 116 articles were taken into consideration where 57 articles were published in Turkey and another 59 were published outside Turkey between the years 2000 to 2012. Furthermore, in the paper of Ajay K Garg, R.J.O Joubert & Rene Pellissier in 2004, 15 articles were discussed in the subject of measuring business performance, a case study that was prepared to create an instrument to be used in the South African banking sector.

In addition to the above articles, I have conducted the research to review 71 additional articles from 2013 up to 2020, discussing and listing the business performance measurements in several countries and in different fields.

Below you will find a detailed summary for the outcomes:

Criteria type	Sebahattin Yildiz and Adem Karakas 2012	Ajay K.Grarg, R.J.O Joubert & Pellissier 2004	Abdallah Elias Research from 2012-2020/ 71 articles	Total	%
Subjective Criteria					
New product launch success	29		3	32	4.11%
Entire business performance	19	1	4	24	3.08%
Customer satisfaction	17		7	24	3.08%
Providing good services of good	15		23	38	4.88%

quality					
Reputation and image	15			15	1.93%
Competitive advantage	15		5	20	2.57%
Others	213	4	65	282	30.08%
Objective Criteria				0	0.00%
Return on Assets	25	1	5	31	3.98%
Return-on-sales	18		4	22	2.83%
Sales and sales increase	60		1	61	7.84%
Profitability and probability increase	46	1	1	48	6.17%
Market share and market share increase	46		2	48	6.17%
Return-on-investment	18		2	20	2.57%
Return on Equity	9			9	1.16%
Tobin Q ratio	9			9	1.16%
Market value and Book value	6			6	0.77%
Return on Sales	4	1	3	8	1.03%
Revenues	4			4	0.51%
Capital expenditures	3			3	0.39%
Return per share Ration	3			3	0.39%
Market Value	3			3	0.39%
Sales /Total assets	3			3	0.39%
Others	38	4	17	59	13.75%
Economic value added		1		1	0.13%
Data Envelopment analysis		1		1	0.13%
Operational Competitive rating procedure		1		1	0.13%
Balanced Scorecard		1		1	0.13%
Sales Growth and innovation		1		1	0.13%
Return on investment/ return of equity		1		1	0.13%
Grand T.	618	18	142	778	100.00 %

Table 1: Criteria used in the evaluation of Literature

Measurement method	Sebahattin Yildiz and Adem Karakas 2012	Ajay K.Grarg, R.J.O Joubert & Pellissier 2004	Abdallah Elias Research from 2012-2020/ 71 articles	Total	%
Only Subjective measure	73	5	23	101	50%
Only Objective measure	37	8	14	59	29%
Both Objective & Subjective measure	6	2	34	42	21%
Grand Total	116	15	71	202	100%

Table2: Objective vs Subjective measure in Literature

Following the above findings, I will use the principle adopted by the enterprise “Lean Six Sigma” in Belgium to be the foundation to build my unified metric. Lean six Sigma, Belgium, are specialized in the Six Sigma approach and it is managed by Lorenzo Del Manuel. In their approach, they have combined the Balance Scorecard with the Six Sigma principles. Figure 1 illustrates the principle and models they are using.

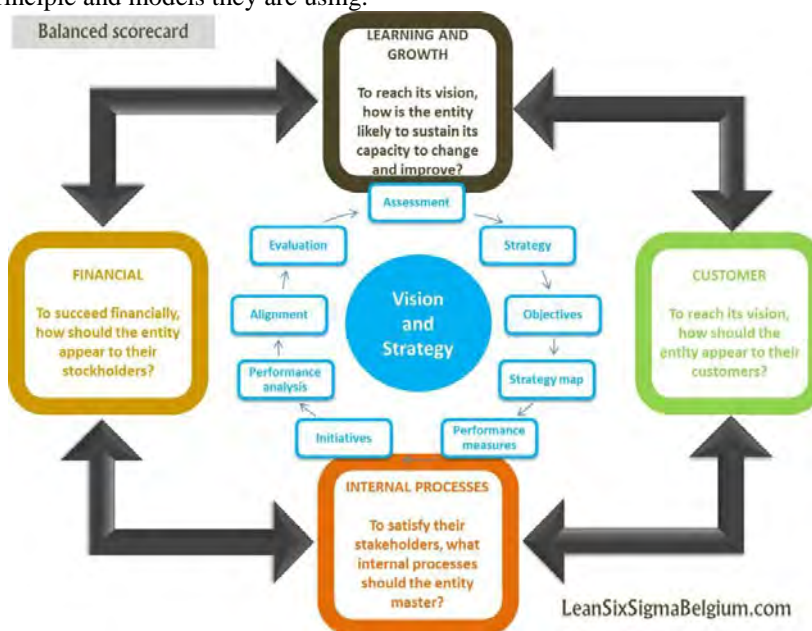


Figure1: Model used in Lean Six Sigma Belgium

<https://leansixsigmabelgium.com/tools-dmaic/balanced-scorecard/>

They do an assessment of the mission and vision of the company as well an evaluation for their cultural values; they come up with elements of the organizational strategy taking into account customer needs and the organization's value proposition. They decompose the strategic elements into strategic objectives, and they narrow down to each section to create objectives to follow in order to help achieve the mission vision and endure the cultural value. In the approach they use while adopting the principles of Lean Six Sigma they manage to:

- Increases the productivity
- Reduces the wastage
- Improve customer service
- Eliminate-overstocking and decreases the risk and supplies issues

Financial ratios, Balance sheet, income statement, cash flow statement, profit and loss statement are excellent metrics to track and measure the company performance. However, they are not sufficient, as they will not be able to highlight and take into consideration all the parameters to understand and evaluate the business performance. Thus, when we sum up to the analysis and comparison of two different projects in industrial catering which does not have the same scope it will be difficult to measure their performance taking into consideration that there are several factors that can affect and impact the measurement. The module that I will be developing will allow me to set an objective Key Performance Indicator for the staff to work together to achieve the required results thus ensuring company improvement and ensuring creativity and thinking outside the box while controlling the hidden costs. Along with this Key Performance Indicator, I will be able to identify a unified metric from which I can compare two different sets of projects by having similar and typical factors. This scope was not covered before as most of the articles are limited with their selection and they depend on certain metrics. Most researchers consider that measuring business performance is combined with several dimensions. It is very crucial to determine realistic measurements and criteria in order to compare appropriately and be able to build forward.

From the criteria that I will be using to calculate the unified metrics for the project performances, below are the categories:

- Schedule Performance Index (SPI)
- Cost performance index (CPI)
- Flow thru %
- Employee satisfaction
- Customer satisfaction
- Financial metrics
- Standard operating procedures audit

Only the financial metrics were used in the calculation of the measurement for the business performance. None of the 202 articles presented in this Literature have approached employee satisfaction, analyzed the customer satisfaction level, nor to control and ensure that the operating procedures are in place and being followed accordingly. Most importantly, none-have presented an analysis on the flow thru percentage, nor measured the SPI and CPI index to see how efficient the project is doing in its deliverables over a period.

All the above will be used as a major weight of unified metrics to determine the associate's performance thus resulting in determining their annual bonuses and

yearly increases. The beauty of the model is that it obliges all the associates to work together as a team to achieve a good rating on the metrics to benefit simultaneously at the end of the set period.

Approach with Ligabue and the objective of the approach

With Ligabue I will be doing the following interventions:

- Horizontal Intervention;
It will include associates in the head office among various department
- Vertical Intervention;
It will include associates working in the projects inside the client premises

The main objectives of this approach is defined in setting a unified metrics to measure the project's performance in the industrial catering for better assessment and decision analysis for the following:

- Identifying the unnecessary costs to improve the financial performance of the projects through the horizontal approach
- Upgrading the collaboration and communication process between the departments
- Offer an accessibility to get a dashboard to assess and highlight areas which require to address on highly importance

Finding the right metrics to measure the various project with different scope and volume is a main challenge for any industrial caterer and applying the best bonus scheme to support the growth of the business is considered a break through. This hypothesis is broken down into three parts:

- -Descriptive hypothesis: we will identify the major dysfunction in the company through the interventions to highlight the challenging point where we need to emphasize in our calculation to the hidden cost.
- -Explicative hypothesis: hidden costs will have a major impact on the business as it is considered the business of cents, and it will facilitate to introduce SEAM tools and emphasize on the importance of the proposed module to measure the business performance.
- -Prescriptive hypothesis: The proposed business model will be a guideline a dashboard that fit and address the above concern with the possibilities of highlighting the critical line to address on a matter of urgency among the project following their results and performances.

Work in progress

I have finalized my interventions horizontally and vertically, I did the interviews in the head office and selected few projects with different scale and met with the associates in the company head office residence. All the comments already has been allocated to themes and sub themes, and now I am in progress to prepare for my meeting to identify and do the calculation of hidden cost.

Table for deadline and progress

Description	May-21	June 21	October 21	December 21	October 22	June2023
Horizontal and vertical intervention	Done					
Meeting to identify the hidden cost						
Meeting to present the module to top management						
Training for various department and associate						
Implementation						
Applying SEAM TOOLS and training						
Evaluation of the module						
Finalizing the paper						
Presentation						

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Strategic Management									9	7				16
Academy of Management		1												1
Organization science									2					2
Management Science									1					1
Omega						1	1		1					3
Journal of Intellectual Capital	1					1								2
Journal of Business ethics										3				3
The electronic journal knowledge management							1	1						2
Expert Systems with applications									2					2
The British Accounting review						1								1
Jour.of Civil Engineering & Management								1						1
Industrial Marketing Management					2									2
Journal Operation Research Society										1				1
Health Policy									1					1
Safety Science									1					1
International Journal of information Management							1				1			2
International Journal of Production Economy						1		1						2
Hospitality Management						1		1						2
Technovation			1							1				2
Journal of Operation management		1				1			1					3
Journal of Global Strategic Management								1						1
Journal Of Global Marketing				1	1									2
Information Society						1								1
Technology Analysis & Strategic Measurement								1						1
Maritime Policy & Management				1										1
Journal Of Business Research				1										1
Benchmark International Management Knowledge Based System					1	1							1	3

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Names of Journal/Years	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
Istanbul University Journal Of Management					2				1		1			4
Ataturk University Jrn of Eco.Admi.Scienc.Facul					2	1	1	1	1	1	1			8
Marmara University Of Social Science Institution					1	1	1							3
Anadolu University Journal of Social Science											1	1		2
Journal of Dogus University				1		1		1		1				4
Ege Akademik Review									1	2	1	1	1	6
Hacettepe University .Jrn of Eco.Admi.Scienc.Faculty							2			1				3
Dokuz Eylul Univ.Jrn of Eco.Admi.Scienc.Faculty			1	1		1								3
Gazi University Jrn of Eco.Admi.Scienc.Faculty						1								1
The Journal of Accounting and Finance							1			1				2
Istanbul Tech.University Journal of Engineering					1									1
Suleyman Demirewl University Jrn.Eco.Admi.Scienc.Faculty										2				2
Cukrova uni.Journal of Social Sciences			1											1
Selcuk University University of Social Sciences										1				1
16th Management and organization Congress									1					1
Kocaeli University of Journal of Sos Scien.Institute									1	1				2
Anatolia:Journal of Tourism Reaserch									1					1
Instanbul Commercial Uni.Journal of Social Sciences						1								1
METU Studies in Development				1										1
Bogazici Journal										1				1
Zonguldak Uni.Journal of Social Sciences								1	1					2
Journal Of Economic and social reaserchers								1						1
Dumlupinar University Journal of Social Sciences											1	1		2
Gaziantep University Journal of Social Science institute												1		1
Osmangazi University .Jrn of Eco.Admi.Scienc.Facul.												1		1
Afyon Kocatepe University Journal of Soci.Scienc.									1					1

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