

Strategic Plan Focused On Improving the Customer Service Process

CASE: COMMERCIAL STORE T.C.A., S.A. DE C.V.

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ABSTRACT: *The present study was carried out in the state of Tamaulipas, specifically in the conurbation area in the Commercial T.C.A., S.A de C.V.*

The investigation arises from the need to solve a problem that has been reinforcing in said company, the problem to be solved is the poor service provided by the collaborators to the clients, the latter being the ones who have explicitly made known the disagreements, complaints and demands required by them.

Among the most common conditions presented by poor service are low sales, customer losses, creating a bad image of the company, among others.

It is suggested that a viable solution would be the implementation of a strategic plan, which would improve the aforementioned deficiencies and those that could arise during the investigation.

At the end of the study, the strategic plan is proposed and the most appropriate solutions to the defined problem are presented.

KEY WORD: *Plan, strategy, strategic plan, continuous improvement, customer service.*

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I. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The present study arises from the concern of solving the basic needs of customer service, offering good service and treatment to it (Brown, 1992). The work of the regional company T.C.A. It is based on the direct relationship with the client.

Currently in the company the quality regarding customer service is neglected, so it is necessary to implement new strategies for the rapid solution of this problem (Cohen, 2001).

Today one of the important aspects in a company is the human resources area, in charge of the company's human capital, having an understanding of the needs of customers and the specific treatment that should be provided to each of them, in which all factors required by society must be covered, observing the behaviour of clients, who show a negative character or nonconformity in the service provided by T.C.A. (Gibson, et al., 2011).

T.C.A. is a commercial self-service store, characterized by being a solid company in the Tampico, Madero, Altamira region; clients generally belong to the low and medium level economic sector in the population. It is identified by poor customer service and in an uninhibited way to the consumer, thus obtaining low sales.

In an increasingly competitive environment in which the consumer becomes more demanding, it is complex to understand the needs that this poses, added to the fact that there is currently a global impact on business operations marked by innovation and good understanding of market changes, it is vital to generate strategies for the survival of companies (Jerome & Perreault, 1996).

The problem to solve is customer service; "The correct relationship with customers allows companies to know the changes in their attitudes and expectations in order to anticipate their needs" (Rivas & Esteban, 2010).

Due to the above, in this research work it is intended to generate the strategic plan focused on improving customer service in the commercial store T.C.A., S.A. DE C.V.

1.2 Problem Definition

In the commercial store T.C.A. several problems have been detected in relation to customer service, in the performance of the employee, in matters of offering a better service, and the lack of resources to improve the quality of the required attention.

It is reflected in the various signs of dissatisfaction that customers have in the treatment received from the staff in charge, in the cashiers, floor and grocery areas among its main areas with the highest number of complaints received, where the bad treatment of the staff can be identified. towards the client as the most common of the disagreements presented.

It is observed that the interaction with the consumer is not enough, which is reflected in possible unrealized sales, the problems manifested are varied, and all of them have the result of a negative relationship with the client.

Employee apathy has become a major cause of the problem due to poor or mistreatment of the buyer and a lack of attention to buyer performance.

The rotation of employees from different areas makes it difficult to offer a quality service, a grocery employee does not offer the same service as a cashier employee, which is why the rotation and abandonment of employment has become another problematic factor for the company, the employee only lasts a short time, and generates expenses for the company.

Through this study, we seek to improve the productivity of the T.C.A. S.A. de C.V., proposing a strategic plan according to your needs, focused on improving customer service.

1.3 General Objective

Develop a strategic plan that allows the employees of the T.C.A. S.A de C.V provide a quality service to the client and thereby improve the productivity of the company.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

- Prepare a SWOT analysis of the company.
- Identify the elements of planning strategies.
- Identify customer service processes in the company.
- Develop a diagnosis of the process in customer service.
- Evaluate results to design a strategic plan.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?
2. In what disadvantage is the current situation of the company?
3. What are the implications of implementing a new strategic plan in the company, with a focus on customer service?

1.5 Hypotheses

This study does not present a supported hypothesis; a specific problem implies the intervention of variables such as the quality of the service, so it is necessary to implement different options that allow a possible solution.

In addition, it should be considered that this is an exploratory type of research, based on quantitative results with unstable characteristics, through the analysis of different factors that may occur, becoming a descriptive research, in which the service process will be observed in detail. to the client, later a strategy to follow that best suits the investigation will be determined.

1.5.1 Research Variables

- Consumer satisfaction
 - A consumer survey is carried out to detect if the tools used are effective.
 - Attention in dealing.
 - Timely information.
 - Knowledge of customer service alternatives.

- Strengths

They are all those positive elements that differentiate from the competition.

- Opportunities

They are positive situations that are generated in the environment and that are available to all companies, which will become market opportunities for the company when it identifies them and takes advantage of them based on their strengths.

- Threats

They are situations or events external to the company or institution and that can be negative for it.

- Weaknesses

They are the present problems that once identified; and developing an adequate strategy, they can and should be eliminated.

- Service processes

They are the steps to follow in which the existing failures in each process and protocol carried out are determined.

1.6 Justification

According to the customer service problems that T.C.A. has; The need arises to implement a strategic customer service plan driven to improve staff, mainly towards employees who have direct contact with the consumer, to help maximize the productivity of the company.

Currently, companies are innovating strategies every day that allow greater performance of the same. (González & de la Torre, 2001). This is due to the change in society and in consumer demands; when observing that a service is deficient and is totally disliked, they will not visit that commercial store to make their purchases (Walker, et al., 2007).

Globalization is a determining factor that forces us to be innovating and above all in a process of updating depending on the demands of the society (Munuera & Rodriguez, 2020).

That is why it is necessary to encourage the company's employees to be trained in new and improved customer treatment strategies that will help to easily convince the consumer to buy (Kotler & Keller, 2006).

Based on the need and lack of improving sales strategies and an updated program for personnel working in the sales area, this study is carried out and the need to create an induction and training manual for the sales force is raised. of sales and in turn optimize the program that is currently carried out in the organization, aimed at increasing its productivity and taking a step forward in the search for excellence and competitiveness; For this reason, it is necessary to diagnose and develop an analysis of the effectiveness of sales strategies in the T.C.A. that allows you to have greater stability with your customers, suppliers that will ensure the service in a timely manner and in an efficient and effective manner.

Today it is important to create a good relationship with the client, to be able to satisfy their needs, since the client is a means of diffusion in advertising, the "word of mouth" advertising system is the most important and the most effective.

1.7 Delimitations

- The investigation will cover the strategies of said company.
- The study will be carried out in the municipalities of Tampico, Madero and Altamira State of Tamaulipas where the largest number of branches of the T.C.A.
- The system includes employees and end customers, both current and potential, in its development.
- Information is collected from customers who are consumers of the store.
- Data is collected from both sexes between 18 and 45 years of age.

In it, a proposal is made to the company to improve the customer service strategy plan in order to obtain a more productive sales force and thereby achieve an excellent program that increases the productivity of the organization.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Research Approach

The present study has a type of methodological research, since it has a quantitative approach, in this way customer surveys were carried out to obtain said information, as well as being non-experimental because the research was carried out without manipulating the variables. therefore, the existing ones were observed to later carry out an analysis. It is transversal, since its approach is mixed and its scope is exploratory and descriptive.

2.2 Type of Research

The present investigation is of an exploratory type, since it has different factors that determine the segmentation of the investigation, making it more viable, the analysis of the results is determined by means of the tool, since the needs of the clients are explored. The relevant characteristics of the process of induction, training and motivation of the sales department personnel in their different areas are sought.

2.3 Research Method

The investigation begins with the exploratory type, since it is a study that until now has not been applied within the T.C.A. Following the same order of ideas, it will be descriptive because it measures data on various variables or components of the phenomenon to be investigated.

During the present investigation, we participated in the areas of administration and supervision of the company, advertising and media, selection, hiring and training of personnel, marketing, project development, market research.

The methodology used in this research was:

1. Sampling was determined.
2. To customers who came to the company from 12 am to 5 pm; on a given day they were given the questionnaire inviting them to fill it out.
3. They were asked to deposit said questionnaire in the existing mailbox in the commercial store T.C.A.
4. At the end of the stipulated number, the surveys were withdrawn.
5. An analysis was carried out with the data obtained from the questionnaires.

2.4 Population and Sample

2.4.1 Population

The population to be evaluated is determined in the metropolitan area of Tampico, Madero and Altamira, where a diagnosis is made of the situation of clients and potential clients of T.C.A.; the needs they have and evaluate the quality of the service provided.

According to the 2010 population census of the INEGI, it is contemplated that in the metropolitan area of Tampico, Madero and Altamira there is a population of:

Tampico	297,554
Madero City	197,216
Altamira	212,001
Total =	706,771

Having a segmentation as follows:

Older adults (65 to 84 years old) are 17%	= 120,151
Children (0 to 19 years old) 39%	= 275,641
Adults (20 to 64 years old) 44%	= 310,979
Giving a total elderly and adults of	= 431,130

Of this population, it is estimated that the market share is 15% of the entire population. Therefore, the population subject to study for the investigation is: 64,669 clients.

2.4.2 Sample

According to what was suggested by Hernández, et al. (2010), the sample for the present investigation is non-probabilistic of an intentional type, which allows the adequacy of the study since it has an exploratory design.

This type of sample selects typical subjects that will be representative of the given population. The choice of subjects does not depend on everyone having the same probability of being chosen, but on the decision of a researcher or group of interviewers.

The agreed mass of the population are the potential customers and potential customers of the greater Tampico, Madero and Altamira area, knowing that the commercial store T.C.A. It does not have affiliated clients with memberships, that is, it is open to the general public.

The calculation of the sample size was determined using the formula for finite populations, without taking into account the population, since it is a non-probabilistic sample type, given below

$$n = \frac{(Z)^2 pq}{(e)^2}$$

z = Value of z corresponding to the confidence level;

A confidence level of 95% (we also express it this way: $\alpha = .05$) corresponds to $z = 1.96$

e = Sampling error

p = proportion of answers in a category (yes, correct answers, ones in the usual coding, etc.)

q = proportion of responses in the other category (that is, zeros in the usual coding).

The variance in the dichotomous items (two mutually exclusive answers) is equal to pq and the greatest variance (the greatest diversity of answers) occurs when $p = q = .50$ (half of the subjects answer yes and the other half answer no) so in this formula [1] pq is always equal to $(.50)(.50) = .25$ (it is a constant).

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 (.25)}{(.05)^2}$$

n = 384 surveys to be carried out.

2.5 Data Collection Techniques

To carry out this research in the T.C.A. commercial store, it was carried out through a survey.

Through this, through observations and annotations, the necessary information was obtained to measure the different parameters of the clients' needs, analyse said results and evaluate them, for the design of the strategic proposal.

Different reagents were made that allowed an optimal diagnosis, giving different types of options for the respondent to choose the one that suits him best. Based on observations at the time of conducting the survey, it was possible to question why the answers were given, obtaining secondary information regarding the main bases of the instrument.

In this way, the quantitative analysis of the results was carried out, providing a minimum margin of error in its diagnosis, for a simple handling of the proposal to be developed.

In addition, a SWOT analysis was included to know the real situation of the company.

2.6 Data Collection Instrument

The realization of this questionnaire is through simple understandable questions and easy reasoning, but at the same time concise, so that the respondent has an adequate perception of interpretation and not confuse with the purpose of a correct answer, it is what is sought in an investigation, veracity of it (see table 2).

A short survey for a short time. Since you cannot take much time from the person surveyed.

It allows to evaluate the performance carried out by the company and what can be expected, through the "what would you like" giving multiple options to the respondent.

This in order to obtain qualitative data to later express them quantitatively and be able to handle them in different ranges specified by the indicators, for easy interpretation (see table 1).

How to carry out the survey exercise

This survey was applied personally to the clients; these surveys were carried out in the areas with the greatest fluidity of individuals. At times also based on where there is a greater flow of customers: from 12:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the T.C.A. of the different branches established in the downtown areas of each city and the metropolitan area.

Purpose of the survey

Point out certain key factors that condition user expectations:

- Word of mouth communication, or opinions and recommendations of friends and family about the service.
- Personal needing.
- Experiences with the service that the user has previously had.

To carry out the SWOT study, the answers provided by the clients through the questionnaire were taken into account, in addition to the observation and analysis of the different processes that T.C.A.

Table 1: Indicators

Indicator	Question
Customer satisfaction	It is determined in questions 3,5,7,8,4,10 since through these the general state of the company towards the client is qualified
Product	In question 7.4 where questions are asked about the products offered by the company and their different characteristics.
Service process and strategy	Question 2,6,5,8 indicates if the process is fast or slow
Customer	Questions 9,10,11 determine the level at which the company is regarding customer satisfaction, and will provide guidelines for how to handle new strategies.

Table 2 Data collection instrument

Survey T.C.A.	
1.- Did you make purchases at the T.C.A. Commercial Store?	a) Yes b) No
2.- How many times do you go to the store per month?	a) 1 to 3 times b) 4 to 6 c) 7 to 9 d) 10 to 12 e) 13 times or more
3.- What qualifications do you give to the services of T.C.A.?	a) Bad b) Fair c) Good d) Excellent
4.- In what physical state are the grocery carts and baskets offered to customers inside the Store?	a) Poor condition b) Fair c) Good condition d) Excellent condition
5.- How do you consider the disposition and attitude of the employee towards you?	a) Bad disposition b) Indifferent c) Good disposition d) Excellent disposition
6.- What is the regular time that you spend in the customer service areas?	a) 3 min b) 5 min c) 10 min d) more than 10 min
7.- Do you find everything you are looking for in the T.C.A. store?	a) Yes b) No
8.- Is it easy to identify the products inside the store with respect to the aisle number and its content?	a) If they are visible to the naked eye b) They are very hidden c) It is difficult to interpret them
9.- Would you request the services of the T.C.A. store again?	a) Sure b) Possibly c) Maybe d) Possibly not e) No
10.- Would you recommend the store's service to other people?	

Survey T.C.A.				
a) Yes	b) Probably	c) Maybe	d) Probably not	e) No
11.- Would you like to receive some purchase suggestions and a more personalized attention offering you products according to your needs and budget?				
a) Yes	b) No			

2.7 Data Analysis Methods

A quantitative analysis was determined, in which certain scales of client acceptance towards the company were obtained, and the levels of satisfaction that the company provides towards the consumer. So that, with these results, the established strategies and procedures can be analyzed and verified and new opportunities identified, meeting the objectives of said company and defining the types of ranges in customer service; In addition, to be able to identify the possible deficiency of the implemented strategies or of the different procedures handled by the employees.

Always taking into account the concerns of customers, their opinion and the way they express themselves towards the company, each of the applied surveys was analyzed.

In order to analyze the data, the established variables were taken into account, the questions were analyzed and a relationship between the items and the variables was formulated, to facilitate the results analysis operation.

The base of the variables helped for the logical interpretation of the results that were obtained, it is essential to separate each dependent evaluation to its variable.

The results obtained were variable, with quantitative characteristics, the distribution was determined according to the established range, in which the interpretation of data is more reliable due to its specification.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Within the investigation, it was obtained that, in order to carry out the analysis of the customer service strategies in the T.C.A. commercial store, according to the variable that was selected, the importance of obtaining the opinion of the final consumers is necessary; therefore, a coding and analysis of the results obtained in the surveys is carried out.

The results obtained are shown below, with the aim of making a diagnosis that allows evaluating the performance of the sales strategies used in T.C.A.; customer attraction processes in the sales service; all around the series of questions applied to the sample of all T.C.A. in the area of Tampico, Madero and Altamira.

Taking into account the observation of the application of the surveys, a more appropriate diagnosis can be given to the evaluation of the results obtained; observing the performance of general store employees, as well as the attitude of cashiers and store floor employees; these include the area of groceries, bakery, general merchandise, delicatessen and meat.

The above allows:

- Evaluate the qualitative data and be able to convert it to quantitative data for a better analysis of the performance of the T.C.A. commercial store.
- Establish the analysis of interpretation of results based on conclusions to give certainty to the investigation and formulating a new strategy or plan to follow in the same synergy of recommendations to the commercial store T.C.A.

3.1 Data Analysis

Next, the analysis of the data collected from the survey applied to the clients of the T.C.A. Commercial Store is presented.

Figure 1 presents a SWOT analysis where the real situation of T.C.A. can be seen, considering the opinion, disagreements and demands expressed by the clients, as responses in the data collection instrument applied, the observation and the analyzes that were made from service processes.

Figure 1 SWOT analysis

SWOT Analysis		
Weakness:	Threats:	Strengths:
Poor procedures.	Opening of branches of other	Local company popular in the
Low quality of service.	Next change of government in the country.	Numerous template
Wrong job description	Unstable economy.	Easily accessible branch locations.
Inadequate audits.		

IV. STRATEGIC PLAN TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER SERVICE

4.1 Introduction

According to the analysis of data and results of the study, the problems that intervene negatively in the performance of the employees were obtained as relevant points, making a defective customer service and consequently low results in profits. The problems are:

- Customer satisfaction
- Employee attitude
- Advertising distribution inside the store
- Work procedures

Objectives of the strategic plan:

- 1.- Improvement of the current service provided by the company's collaborators.
- 2.- Raise and enhance the rate of sales through good customer service and offer promotions in which the consumer learns more about the benefits of buying products at T.C.A.
- 3.- Encourage employees to have better performance by implementing sales techniques and raising the utility of the company
- 4.- Being a leader in competition, maintaining a serious image and projecting reliability to the client

4.2 Determination of strategies

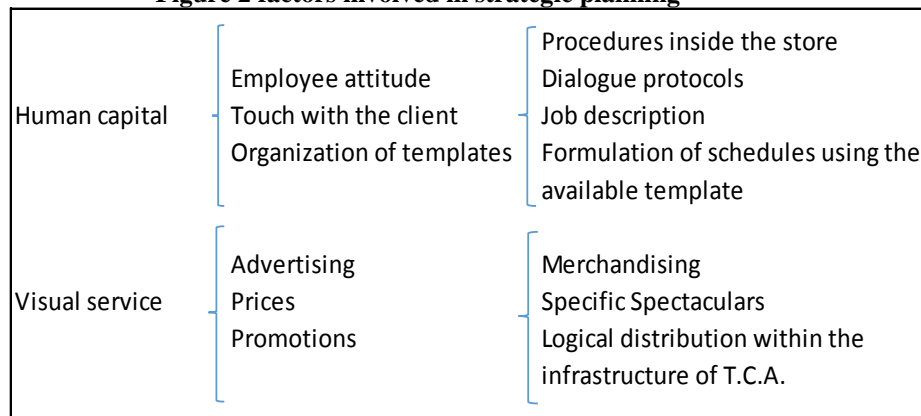
Promote up-to-date courses on sales techniques and personal satisfaction in employees, within working hours.

Emphasize all points related to sales techniques based on good service, from a good physical presentation, to offering the slightest benefit offered by T.C.A. as your best supermarket option.

4.3 Factors

The factors that intervene in the strategic planning in T.C.A., S.A. of C.V. can be seen in figure 2.

Figure 2 factors involved in strategic planning



4.4 Training

The TND (Training Needs Detection) is the process that guides the structuring and development of plans and programs for the establishment and strengthening of knowledge, skills or attitudes in the participants of an organization, in order to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the same.

A TND report must express what, who (s), how much and when to train.

4.5 Performing the TND

The reason why T.C.A. needs training is because it must meet the overt and covert needs of all staff, since this is the most important resource, it is essential that it function independently.

The training solves and detects the causes for which the company does not meet its expectations and these are reflected in the results such as the sales index, customer complaints and product returns.

The following aspects will be improved with the personnel training program:

- Efficiency and quality in work processes.
- Better functioning and coordination of activities.
- That the company meets the needs of the staff.
- Greater company-personnel relationship.
- Better customer service.
- That there is greater institutional identity.

The method that is recommended to be used for TND is the comparative method.

The Comparative Method consists of 4 stages:

- 1a. Stage. Determination of the ideal situation.
- 2a. Stage. Determination of the actual situation.
- 3a. Stage. Comparison between both situations.
- 4a. Stage. Determination of training needs and decision making.

Having results like:

- Job description
- Manuals of procedures and dialogues (protocol)
- Company expansion plans
- New or future performance needs (when there are plans for change).
- Description of the real situation. Knowledge, skills and attitudes that the staff has, according to their function or job performance. To obtain information that defines the ideal situation, it is advisable to obtain information on the performance of the staff (for each person) by:
 - Immediate boss
 - Supervisors
 - Personnel involved with the position.

These people must provide accurate, truthful and relevant data (in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes).

4.6 Solutions

A strategy used by the human resources department is continuous training, that is, one or more training sessions are carried out during a given period.

Usually and the most common is that the employee, upon being hired, is informed of the actions and activities that he will carry out during his working day, and is given a training course of estimated time of 2 to 3 weeks, this training is carried out on the same days, that is, a co-worker is assigned to him so that he learns the activities to follow.

That is usually wrong, as the employee is not fit to train another employee.

Therefore, the following proposal is formulated:

- Provide training courses
- Outside working hours with duration of 1 to 2 hours
- During a period of 6 months

4.7 Motivation

An employer that is already inside the store, but which is not having an effect on the employees is managing employee of the month, at T.C.A. is called "best collaborator" is assigned to the best performed employee, regardless of their area.

It is recommended:

Assign different bonuses to employees who perform well, separate them by areas and create a competitive environment that favors them mainly and in turn favors the general performance of the store.

Assign flexible hours to better-performing employees, if they so require, or find an accommodation between them.

4.8 Flow diagrams of procedures

Maintain optimal control, a sequence of steps that allows the employee to develop and perform in a better way, respect the points marked in the diagram, in order to be efficient and effective for customer compliance.

4.9 Protocols in the dialogue with the customer

Establish a fictitious dialogue, an initial greeting and a pleasant farewell with the client, to improve treatment and create a pleasant atmosphere for both parties.

Good morning: Thank you for your purchase, have a nice day

Good afternoon: thank you for your purchase, have a good afternoon

Good night: Thank you for your purchase, good night

a smile always

4.10 Human resources

Create an HR department closer to the employee in which continuous monitoring is carried out at a certain time, where the influx of clients is greater, in order to observe the employee evaluating their performance.

4.11 Merchandising

These are activities that stimulate purchase at the point of sale. It is the set of studies and commercial techniques that allow presenting the product or service in the best conditions, both physical and psychological, to the final consumer.

The basic objectives of merchandising are: draw attention, direct the customer to the product, facilitate the purchase action.

Its elements are:

Preferred product or promotional location. It is about placing the product in places where the possibilities of being acquired by the consumer increase. It will help improve the location of aisles and the products displayed in them.

Advertising at the point of sale. Permanent or temporary exhibitors, stands or product presenters; prices offer and promotions.

4.12 Diagnostics (control)

Good service (audits)

It is recommended to establish audits or evaluations that contain the following questions to facilitate the correct interpretation of performance by the employee. It is not necessary to implement this audit on a daily basis, it is recommended to do it monthly, and that the employee does not know the time and date. The name of the employee will be specified in each evaluation carried out. The global diagnosis can be seen in table 4.1 and its solution in table 4.2.

Wearing of Complete Uniforms

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Once the investigation was completed, alarming data was found related to the attention that the staff of the commercial store provides to customers and this was perceived in the results obtained through the survey carried out on T.C.A. consumers, as well as in the SWOT analysis and in the complaints and suggestions mailbox installed inside the commercial store.

The elements of the planning strategies for T.C.A., S.A de C.V. were identified; as well as customer service processes in the company.

A diagnosis of the process in customer service was carried out, which led to the determination of the proposal to implement the strategic plan presented in chapter 5 of this Thesis, which proposes a TND (training needs detection) with which The job description, the procedures and dialogues (protocol) that the collaborator must follow and of course constant training will be obtained in which the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the staff will be identified and in this way to be able to comply with the consumer requirements which are improvement of customer service.

With this implementation, benefits such as:

- Solve the company's need to quickly adjust to the drastic changes in the economic environment and that make it necessary for the executive administration to have available and updated information, so that an adequate use of it, they can make decisions effectively.
- With the availability of information throughout the enterprise, strategies can be improved, decisions can be made on a better basis, and operations are executed more efficiently.
- It is determined what must be done, how it will be done, and how it can be determined whether or not the objectives are met. Then, you can define the direction in which the organization is moving.
- The strategic planning of T.C.A., S.A. of C.V. provides consistent guidelines for the organization's activities. Using it, managers give the organization clearly defined goals and methods for achieving them. In addition, the planning process helps anticipate problems before they arise and deal with them before they escalate.
- Helps managers recognize safe and risky opportunities and choose between them. The careful analysis that strategic planning offers gives you more of the information you need to make good decisions.
- Minimizes the possibility of errors and unpleasant surprises, since the objectives, goals and strategies are subjected to rigorous study.

5.2 Recommendations

According to the implementation of Strategic Planning in the company T.C.A., S.A de C.V., it is recommended:

- Strategic Planning must be an exercise within a constant commitment towards the explicit and systematic determination of what the company should be doing and how it should be evaluated.
- The Strategic Plan should not only be prepared and filed on a shelf, since no result would be obtained from the effort invested in its preparation. With them, much of the impact of the plan would be lost and the next time you plan strategically, you will have to start from the beginning; therefore, it is recommended that it be constantly reviewed and evaluated.
- There must be feedback, since T.C.A. would not effectively evolve as time and needs change

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