



Mini Case Study – Strategic HCM in Practise

Last week in my local pub...

If you keep your eyes and ears open, you find lessons about the importance of good HCM every day. These stories are most impressive, when you are involved as a customer, while you often may not see their significance from inside, if your own organisation is affected.

Last week my brother and I were sitting in a small pub. The only member of staff, the barwoman, was friendly and fast enough, but certainly didn't have a huge workload.

There was a little board on the wall and written on it with chalk: "Available again: Walkers Crisps". I asked for pack of crisps and she answered: "Sorry, we ran out of crisps a while ago. We ordered some more, but they haven't been delivered yet." Responding to my obvious disappointment she added: "Actually, I don't really know why this note is still on the board". I couldn't help murmuring "the reason for this might just be that nobody could be bothered to wipe it off" – but she didn't even seem to think this reply meant actually her.

Could customers have a similar experience in your company?

Why do these things happen? It would be easy to blame the barwoman for not being motivated or engaged. She did a good job – within the boundaries of what she obviously thought *was* her job. Her just being lazy would be only one possible explanation. Obviously she didn't feel a sense of ownership regarding that board. We cannot tell why, but a general lack of empowerment could as well be the reason as laziness. Maybe she had been told off for doing tasks beyond her "job description" before.

While we don't know the reason for her behaviour, it is obvious that it destroys value and should therefore be changed. Look out for ownership issues in your organisation! Find out whether it is an exception based on the individual's attitude, a bigger problem coming from a manager's leadership style or an issue deeply rooted in your organisation's culture.

In any case, things like this show, how poor people management can easily spoil the customer experience.

Have you encountered other cases where the human part of the equation was missing thus seriously reducing performance? Let us know – we are on the lookout for mini case studies like this for further issues of the newsletter: contact@iproconhcm.co.uk