

## **MIT 510: Harry and Jean's, LLC Macro-Level Design Project**

### **Context**

This project entitled “Enhancing Employee Skills and Confidence with Menu Descriptions and Complementary Food and Beverage Pairings” was completed as part of the course requirements for MIT 510: Design and Development of Instructional Technology. This course was completed during the spring of 2005 under the supervision of Dr. Mahnaz Moallem.

I worked with a three person team for this project that included fellow MIT students Kristen Lee, Renee Corcoran, and myself. We worked collaboratively to design and conduct a front end analysis and use the data gathered during this process to make recommendations for a new instructional package.

### **Conditions**

In conducting the front end analysis for this project our team had access to Harry and Jean's restaurant in Charlotte, NC for conducting observations as well as the official training package, a key employee, and information about the company provided by the corporate offices. One of our team members traveled to Charlotte to observe the current conditions at the restaurant. In addition, We interviewed a key employee who had worked in multiple capacities within the restaurant including front and back of the house positions.

We also defined the operating system through an operating systems analysis and found gaps in “what is” and “what should be” in various areas of the restaurant's operation. Based on these gaps and the causes of the problems, we recommended appropriate instructional solutions with supplemental materials that could be developed and utilized in order to close the gaps in the operation.

Our instructional package proposal included design specifications for instructional materials that would need to be developed and produced as well as a management plan developed using Microsoft Project. The management plan included a task management plan, staffing plan, and budget plan.

### **Scope**

After gathering data and analyzing what gaps existed, we identified problems in the areas of menu knowledge and food and beverage pairings among the wait staff. Problems within the existing training structure as well as training materials were identified. Through analysis some side effect issues concerning strained relations among staff became apparent and were seen as directly related wait staff's ability to inform customers of the menu. The results of these problems were evident in the profit loss over time, customer loss over time, attitude of employees, and the high turnover rate among staff. Based on our analysis of the

problem, we submitted our proposal and recommendations to the owner of Harry and Jean's, LLC in May 2005. Although he and other members of the corporation were positive about the changes we had recommended, the funds were not currently available at the time.

## **Role**

I played various roles within this project. In the initial stages, I developed the list of interview questions for the key employee and conducted the interview. I also work with other team members on the data analysis and was heavily involved in the preparation of the proposal. Our team worked as a collaborative unit in planning the front end analysis, formatting the proposal, and developing the management plan.

## **Reflection**

This project was helpful in allowing me to see instructional technology in practice within the business and industry sector. My previous experience and work had all been in the educational field and I enjoyed having an opportunity to immerse myself in the business world on a macro-level.

In retrospect, I would have liked to be more involved in collecting observational data and I think our team would have benefited from an observational tool such as frequency counts for food and beverage recommendations in addition to the narrative data we collected.

I did gain experience in working with Microsoft Project to develop management, staffing, and budget plans. This experience has allowed me to work on management projects more efficiently.

Overall, I think the most important experience I gained during this project was working with a team. Our team consisted of three very different individuals and we worked effectively to overcome differences of opinion and focus on the needs of the organization. We worked to highlight everyone's strength by utilizing their skills where they could best serve the team and then collaborating in compiling the needed data and submitting the proposal. I feel that because of this experience I am able to work more effectively in a team setting.