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### *Introduction*

In 2011, a group of undergraduate students at James Madison University (JMU), were required to complete a semester-long performance improvement project in order to fulfill the requirements for the Human Resource Development (HRD) Minor. A team of four student consultants happened upon Kokamo Tan, a brand new tanning salon in Harrisonburg, Virginia that was struggling to get their feet off the ground. They conducted an in depth needs assessment, and implemented many performance improvement strategies including online marketing plans, interior decorating tips, and a previously unseen view into the JMU students' perspective on expectations for local tanning salons.

Presently in 2013, graduate students at JMU in the Adult Education/Human Resource Development Program (AHRD), must complete a semester-long performance improvement project. The student consultants think it is interesting to revisit Kokamo Tan to see which performance improvement strategies are implemented and are continuing three years later, and to also find and help them fill in any leftover performance gaps. While this performance improvement plan does include some data from the 2011 project, it is solely there for the purpose of providing a foundation of comparison to see where Kokamo Tan has improvements and where they still need to improve to meet customer demands. The student consultants' overall goal is to show the areas that Kokamo Tan demonstrates successfulness their first year in business and to reveal any areas that need attention from the dedicated owners.

### *Organizational Background*

In 2010, after a family friend, Tommy, retired from the tanning salon industry and closed his popular nationwide chain of Caribbean Tan, Tommy offered Ronnie Campbell an unbelievable deal to open his own tanning salon in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Tommy and Ronnie

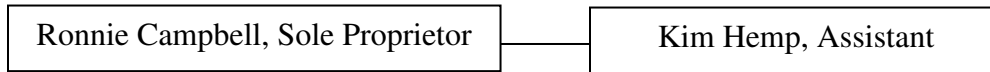
were so close, that although Ronnie only really knew how to maintain tanning beds, Tommy offered to teach him everything he knew from his 20 years of experience along with cutting him an all-inclusive deal of \$1000 per tanning room. So Ronnie, along with long-time girlfriend Kim Hemp, went to work researching and learning everything that they possibly could about the tanning salon industry. They then picked out their location and began building their dream salon, to open it to the public in 2011.

### *Mission, Vision, and Values*

In 2011, Kokamo Tan had no clear vision of what exactly their purpose in the Harrisonburg and JMU community would be. However, through intense facilitation from the student consultants, Kokamo Tan was able to craft their values and principles which led to their vision of an ideal Kokamo Tan, which also encouraged the creation of an original mission statement. In the owner's own words, "Kokamo Tan's mission is to provide safe, affordable and high quality tanning in order to always satisfy our customers" (Campbell, personal communication, 2013). Similarly, their values include remaining "dedicated to providing each and every customer with a quality tan beyond your buck, in an inviting, clean and safe environment" (Campbell, personal communication, 2013). Following the mission and values that make up their culture, Kokamo Tan's long-term vision is to create and maintain "loyal and regular customers, expansion to a better location, to be the most popular and affordable tanning salon in Harrisonburg, for Ronnie to be a more creative and knowledgeable advertiser" (Campbell, personal communication, 2013).

### *Organizational Chart & Job Descriptions*

Kokamo Tan is a sole proprietorship. Ronnie Campbell is the owner and sole proprietor, and Kim Hemp is his assistant. The organizational chart is visually represented below:



Due to the fact that Kokamo Tan only has the two employees, Ronnie and Kim both wear many hats for the organization. According to Hughes, Ginnet, and Cuphy (2012) this is characteristic of an interdependent leadership culture in which organizational members collaborate on almost every aspect in the organization.

As the sole proprietor, Ronnie is the only employee of Kokamo Tan with an official job description. “As the sole proprietor of Kokamo Tan, I Ronnie Campbell, am responsible for upholding all values and principles of Kokamo Tan, while constantly providing a clean and welcoming atmosphere for each and every customer. I am responsible for cleaning and maintaining all tanning equipment, as well as all cashiering duties. Overall, I am responsible for ensuring the successful and timely completion of the operation checklist of Kokamo Tan” (Campbell, personal communication, 2013). His assistant Kim picks up in any areas that he lacks, she wears many different hats for the organization, but does not have an official job description (Hemp, personal communication, 2013).

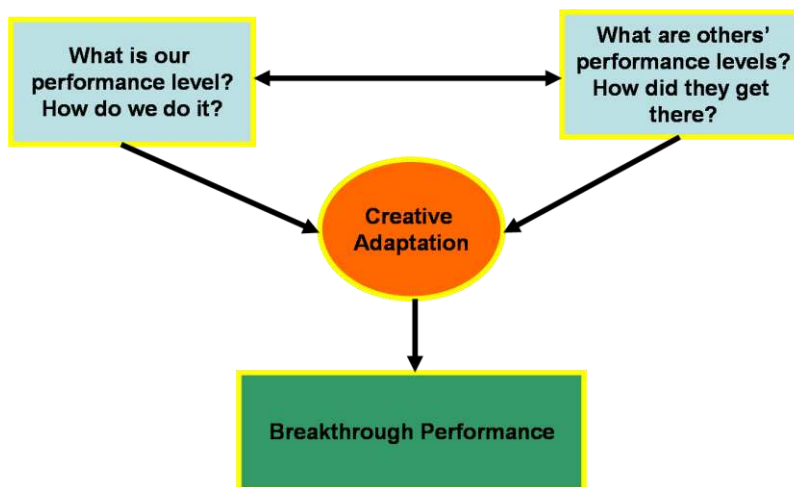
### *Organizational Analysis*

Upon identifying Kokamo Tan’s mission, vision, and values, the consultants’ next step is to analyze the organization as a whole. A SWOT analysis is the first step. SWOT analysis stands for analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the organization. According to Leigh (2006), SWOT analyses identify strengths as enhancers of desired performance and weaknesses as inhibitors of performance, and both are within an organization’s control. The results of the SWOT analysis of Kokamo Tan are visually represented below:



The SWOT analysis confirms Kokamo Tan's strengths as an organization, as well as the opportunities that they are capitalizing on to constantly improve their business. It also confirms some fears of the organization that their upstairs location above Clucker's Chicken Shack makes some customers uncomfortable. This encourages Kokamo Tan to create an environment that transforms their customer's state of mind to a tropical paradise. In regards to threats to the organization, some customers are apprehensive by the fact that Ronnie, a man, is running a predominantly female industry. This generates certain customer bias in stereotyping Ronnie as an unknowledgeable source of information in the tanning industry, when actually he is now a subject matter expert at Kokamo Tan. Simpson writes, "little is known about the motivations and experiences of men in 'female' occupations and how men manage any potential conflict between the 'feminine' nature of the job and their gender identity" (2004, p. 3). Ronnie is aware of this potential gender conflict and handles himself in a very professional manner with the customers. Data shows Ronnie's professionalism pays off because customer service at Kokamo Tan was rated an average of 9.7 out of 10.

SWOT analysis is a common tool to assist consultants in identifying “best practices.” Best practices is “a method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means, and that is used as a benchmark.” Establishing best practices is a major part of the Total Quality Management Model that “helps develop cultures of continuous improvement and incremental achievements in performance” (Zairi, 1999, p. viii). A conceptual framework of the Total Quality Management Model is below (Besterfield, Besterfield-Michna & Besterfield, 2003):



Through personal communication with Ronnie Campbell and his assistant Kim Hemp, the student consultants facilitate the identification of Kokamo Tan’s current performance levels in the areas of affordability, cleanliness, atmosphere, customer service, and overall quality. The consultants then research other Harrisonburg tanning salons to analyze their performance level on these characteristics. Through creative adaptation the student consultants are able to pinpoint several performance gaps and improvement strategies. The student consultants discuss the performance gaps and improvement strategies in further detail in the performance improvement proposal.

*Performance Diagnosis Matrix*

Next, the student consultants utilize the performance diagnosis matrix as a resource to further reveal any other performance gaps (Swanson, 2007, p. 52).

Performance Variables	<i>Organization Level</i>	<i>Process Level</i>	<i>Team Level</i>	<i>Individual Level</i>
<i>Mission/Goals</i>	Mission, vision, and values are in place and implemented	The mission and goals are applied into the daily processes of Kokamo Tan	Kokamo Tan is a sole proprietorship	The owner of the company is the sole employee, therefore the goals are all cohesive
<i>System Design</i>	The organization is in the learning process of forming a more efficient system	<b>The processes within the system are acceptable, but show room for improvement</b>	Kokamo Tan is a sole proprietorship	The owner of the company is responsible for the success within the overall system
<i>Capacity</i>	<b>The organization does have leadership to achieve its goals, however, this could be improved by hiring someone to be the “face” of the company</b>	Quantity- has the capacity to perform numerous orders for customers Quality- work is well designed and crafted Timeliness- work is always conducted in a timely manner	Kokamo Tan is a sole proprietorship	The owner of the company has the mental, physical and emotional capacity to perform all necessary duties
<i>Motivation</i>	Yes, the policies and culture support the organization’s goals	There is a high level of motivation to improve and expand the salon	Kokamo Tan is a sole proprietorship	The owner of the company is willing to do whatever it takes to satisfy the customer
<i>Expertise</i>	The organization does not have training policies because the owner works solely	All Kokamo Tan employees are both subject matter experts in	Kokamo Tan is a sole proprietorship	The owner of the company has gained enough experience to be

	with his assistant	the tanning industry		considered a subject matter expert
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### *Task Analysis*

The student consultants receive a detailed task analysis that details the responsibilities it takes to open the salon, run the salon effectively, and to close down the salon.

1. Upon arrival turn on all lights, and open signs.
2. Close door in back room that leads to attic.
3. Turn heat up, open all doors in the rooms.
4. Turn on computer, get tanning program running.
5. Count register.
6. Display sign in sheets.
7. Check Quantity of Consent Forms, if needed print off more.
8. Go through rooms to make sure all have towels and goggles.
9. Check your disinfectant bottles, refill if needed.
10. Water plants.
11. Clean lotion display case as needed.
12. Dust equipment.
13. Have packaged customers sign in and assign them a room, and enter into system. "New customers" need to sign in, fill out consent form, provide ID, build them in a system, and assign them a room.
14. When they are done tanning, clean the bed, chairs, and tables with disinfectant. Then dispose of any trash, and replace towels and goggles.
15. When not busy, make price changes, and signs if needed. Update Facebook page.
16. When day is done, perform a batch on credit card machine, staple all receipts to print out, put date at bottom, and place them in the register. Count register drawer, and place all daily totals into safe.
17. Recheck rooms for anything left behind, clean mirrors, sweep, and mop; remove all trash from rooms and bathroom work stations. Also, vacuum work station, staircase and seven tanning rooms.
18. Clean bathroom.
19. Turn off computers.
20. Turn heat down and open the door that leads to attic.
21. Close all doors to rooms and turn off all lights and open signs.
22. Take laundry home and wash.
23. Double check to make sure entry door is locked.
24. Be at salon at 10:00am to repeat the process.



*Task Inventory*

Office	Extra Parts for Beds	Cleaning Supplies	Equipment	Misc
1- Cast Register	4- Timers	1- Mop & Bucket	4- Super Beds w. Fans	14- Plants
1- Credit Card Machine	40- Light Receptors	Brooms & Vacuum	2- Bronzer Beds w/ Fans	1- Refrigerator
1- Driver's License Scanner	4- Acrylics	3 gals - Barbosol	2- Basic Beds w/ Fans	1- Microwave
2- Computers	4 (rolls) 8ga Romex Cable	Windex, 409, Lysol, Lysol Wipes	424- Bulbs	
2- TV/ Monitors		Bathroom Cleaner, Brush, Plunger	2- Box Fans	
2- Printers		Trash Bags, Toilet Paper, Paper Towels	16- Chairs	
4- Ink Cartridges		Floor Stripper, Wax & Pads	11- Tables	
1- Calculator		9 Spray Bottles	5- Neon Signs	
2- Computer Desks			2- Portable Signs	
2- Chairs			700- Sample Lotion Packets	
1- Stereo			55- Bottled Tanning Lotions	
1- DTV Receiver			5 (rolls) Body Stickers	
1- Paper Shredder			50- Goggles	
2- Lotion Cases			15- Pillows	
1- Filing Cabinet			100- Towels	
1- Cork Board			1- Disinfectant Canister	
1- (bx) Staples			2- Laundry Totes	
1- (bx) Ink Pens			11- Trash Cans	
Wipes			7- Wall Mirrors	
1- (bx) Chalk			8 (Tubs) Hand/ Facial	
1 (bx) Markers				
1 (bx) Dry Erase Markers				
2- Pencils				
2- Scotch Tape				
3- Sticky Notes				
1- Scissors				
1- White Out				
8 (pks) Various Paper				
2 (bx) Various Folders				
2- Clocks				
1- Business Phone				
2- Cell phones				

*Focus Group*

Per Kokamo Tan's request, student consultants gather together a small focus group to come and observe Kokamo Tan, and take a tour of their facilities. The focus group members then fill out a short questionnaire. The focus group members are selected from the AHRD cohort and one outside community member also participates in the focus group. Transcriptions of the focus group responses are below:

Kokamo Tan Focus Group Questions- Participant 1

1. Upon arriving to Kokamo Tan, what was your first impression?

Couldn't tell there was a tanning place inside. No sign. Awkward again walking through Cluckers to get in. It would be nice if they had their own entrance. After walking in, I liked everything inside a lot. Great ambiance, like a different world from the outside and downstairs.

2. What was your least favorite thing about Kokamo Tan?

Just the outside/lack of visibility. Would be hard to find on my own. Also, the seat in the bathroom was up!

3. What was your favorite thing about Kokamo Tan?

Everything was very clean, even the mirror. Good hygiene would be imperative for me to feel comfortable tanning and they had that. No dirt or grime.

4. Have you heard of Kokamo Tan prior to this visit? If so, what type of reviews did you hear?

I hadn't heard of it.

5. After this experience at Kokamo Tan, do you have any suggestions on areas that the organization could improve upon?

It seemed like a very professional place, they had a lot of options and variety. I think they should find another option other than charging for their glasses/goggles because I think I would get annoyed with not having them. Even though you can buy them, you might forget them. Maybe have a check in/out policy if they keep losing them.

6. How likely would you be to go to Kokamo Tan for their tanning services?

On a scale from 1-10, 1 being very unlikely, 10 being very likely. Please circle your answer:

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   **10**

7. How would you rate Kokamo Tan on the following characteristics?

**1= Lowest   5=Average   10=Highest**

→ Affordability:   9  

→ Atmosphere:   9  

→ Cleanliness:  10 

→ Customer Service:  10 

→ Overall Quality:   9

Kokamo Tan Focus Group Questions- Participant 2

1. Upon arriving to Kokamo Tan, what was your first impression?

I have never been to a tanning salon that I had to walk through another business. Not very well advertised.

2. What was your least favorite thing about Kokamo Tan?

The location.

3. What was your favorite thing about Kokamo Tan?

The price included every type of bed.

4. Have you heard of Kokamo Tan prior to this visit? If so, what type of reviews did you hear?

No. Besides hearing about prior projects.

5. After this experience at Kokamo Tan, do you have any suggestions on areas that the organization could improve upon?

-Atmosphere, look/feel (chairs, fans, etc.)

-Maybe hire students to give a more personable vibe.

6. How likely would you be to go to Kokamo Tan for their tanning services?

On a scale from 1-10, 1 being very unlikely, 10 being very likely. Please circle your answer:

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   **10**

7. How would you rate Kokamo Tan on the following characteristics?

**1= Lowest   5=Average   10=Highest**

→ Affordability: 7

→ Atmosphere: 5

→ Cleanliness: 6

→ Customer Service: 9

→ Overall Quality: 7

Kokamo Tan Focus Group Questions- Participant 3

1. Upon arriving to Kokamo Tan, what was your first impression?

In parking lot- this is a gas station..?  
In salon- very nice- cool beach theme

2. What was your least favorite thing about Kokamo Tan?

Location (ok that its ok Port, but awkward to walk through Cluckers)  
Lower quality beds

3. What was your favorite thing about Kokamo Tan?

Great prices- especially for lotion  
Not much of a wait

4. Have you heard of Kokamo Tan prior to this visit? If so, what type of reviews did you hear?

Yes- good prices, but beds are as good as Beach Bum

5. After this experience at Kokamo Tan, do you have any suggestions on areas that the organization could improve upon?

More advertising of the prices and specials (via social media, The Breeze, etc.)  
More signs outside building. Also, maybe hiring some college students to work—can serve as testimonial (kind of odd to see the same two older people working)

6. How likely would you be to go to Kokamo Tan for their tanning services?

On a scale from 1-10, 1 being very unlikely, 10 being very likely. Please circle your answer:

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    **9**    10

7. How would you rate Kokamo Tan on the following characteristics?

**1= Lowest    5=Average    10=Highest**

- Affordability:   9
- Atmosphere:   8
- Cleanliness:   8
- Customer Service:   9
- Overall Quality:   8

*Focus Group Data Analysis*

The focus group members had in many ways, similar perspectives and opinions after visiting Kokamo Tan, while in other aspects they were very different. Regarding the location, all three focus group members remarked that it was unusual for them to walk through another business to get to Kokamo Tan's entrance. One participant even said, "this is a gas station..?" (Anonymous, 2013). Affordability was highly rated by all three participants for not only the tanning specials but also for tanning products such as lotion. However, recently Kokamo Tan has had a problem with lending their goggles for customers to return after use, so they have implemented a new policy that customer must bring in their own goggles or buy a pair on location for \$3.00. One participant noted that "I think they should find another option other than charging for their glasses/goggles because I think I would get annoyed with not having them. Even though you can buy them, you might forget them," (Anonymous, 2013). They even suggested "maybe have a check in/out policy if they keep losing them," (Anonymous, 2013). The consultants agree and have suggested this as a performance improvement proposal.

A highlight of the focus group participants was that customer service at the salon was the most highly rated area. This is significant because it is stated in Kokamo Tan's values include remaining "dedicated to providing each and every customer with a quality tan beyond your buck, in an inviting, clean and safe environment" (Campbell, personal communication, 2013). Customer satisfaction is also mentioned in Kokamo Tan's mission statement and vision, and is woven throughout their organizational culture and interdependent leadership culture. Another suggestion a focus group member had was to do "more advertising of the prices and specials (via social media, The Breeze, etc.)," (Anonymous, 2013).

*Customer Satisfaction Survey*

Following the protocol of the 2011 student consultants, the 2013 student consultants use the exact same survey format to survey Kokamo Tan’s customers. The student consultants deliver the surveys to Kokamo Tan for distribution and collection over the course of one week. The consultants collect the completed surveys in order to analyze the data. The actual survey and a comparison of the survey data and visual representations of the 2011 and 2013 data are below:



Kokamo Tan Survey

Please rate on a scale of 1-10

1= lowest    5 = average    10 = highest

How would you rate the:

- ❖ Affordability/Price of your session: \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Cleanliness: \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Atmosphere: \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Customer Service: \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Overall Quality: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about Kokomo Tan?

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Please feel free to add any addition comments:

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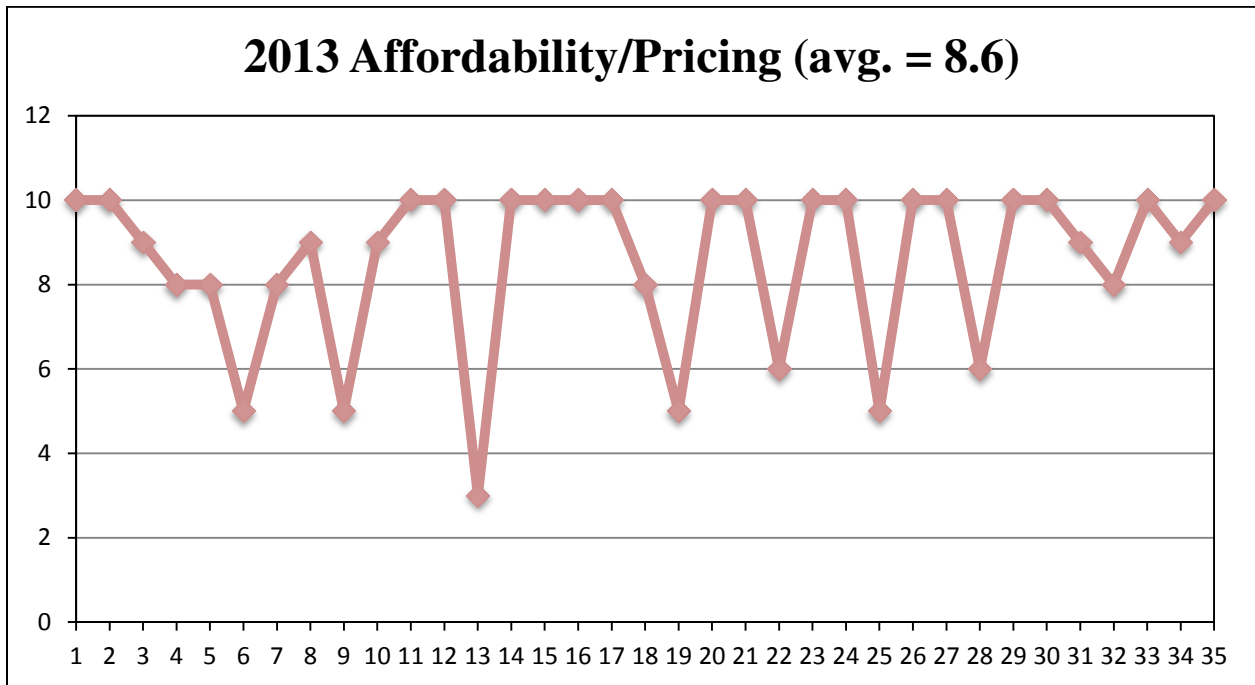
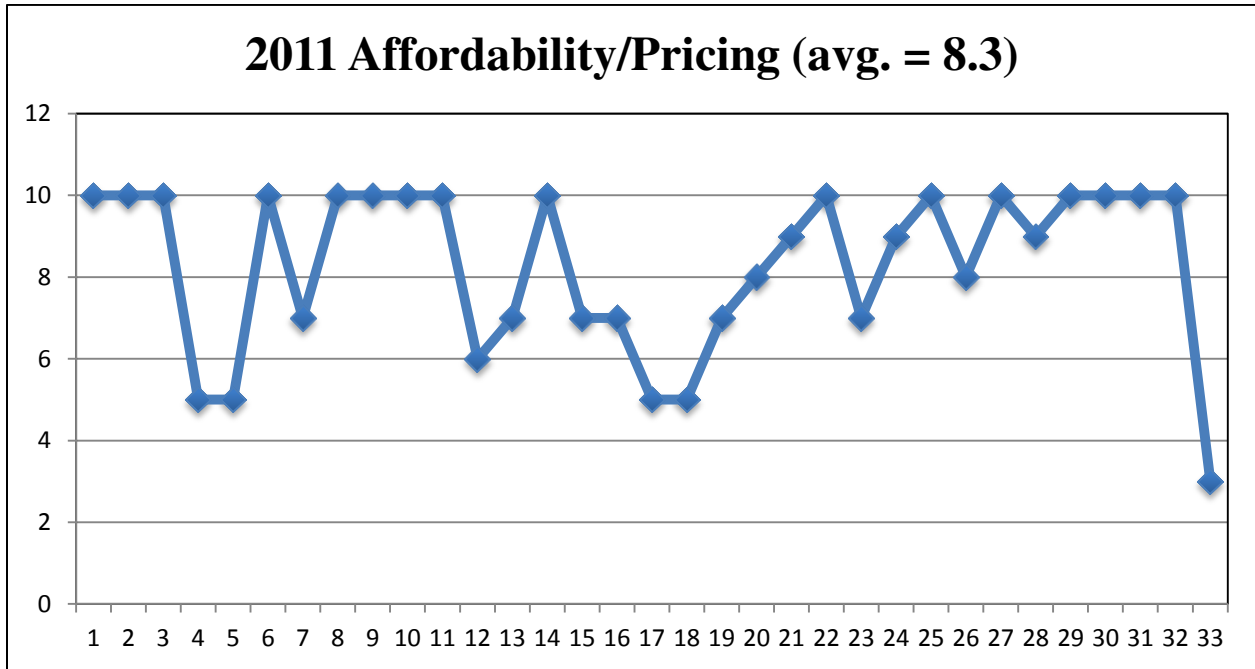


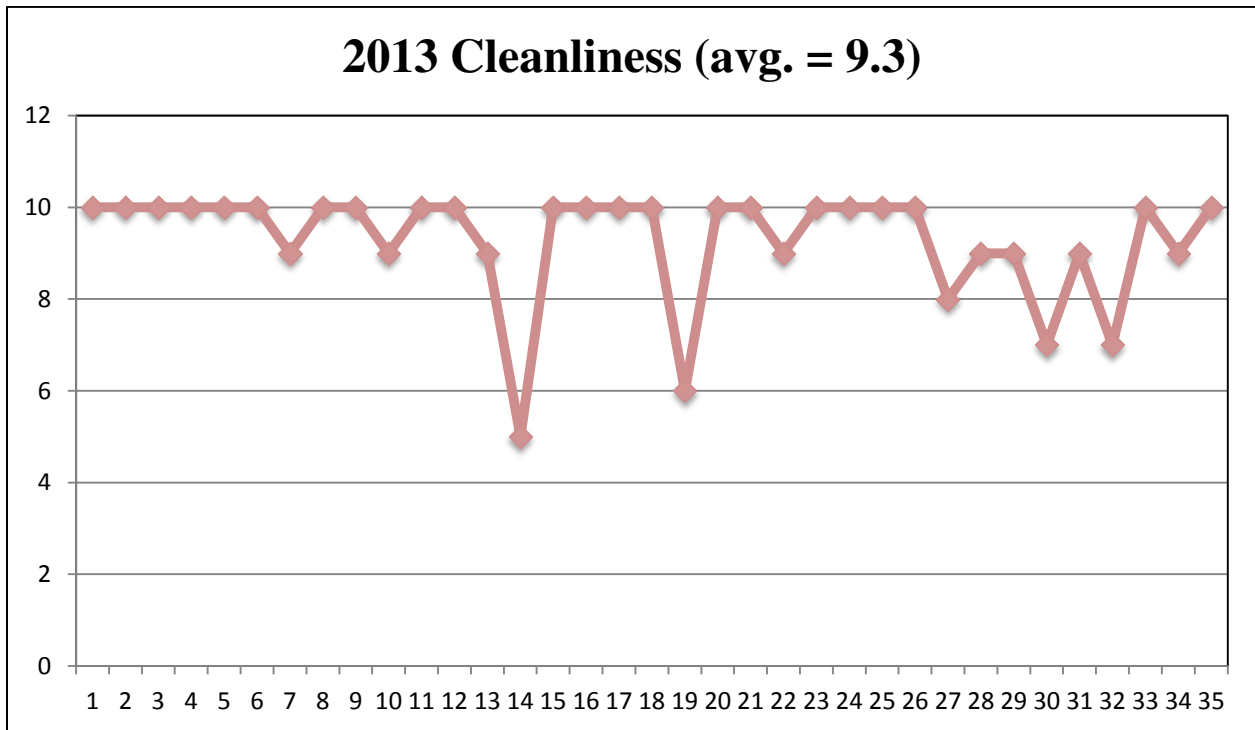
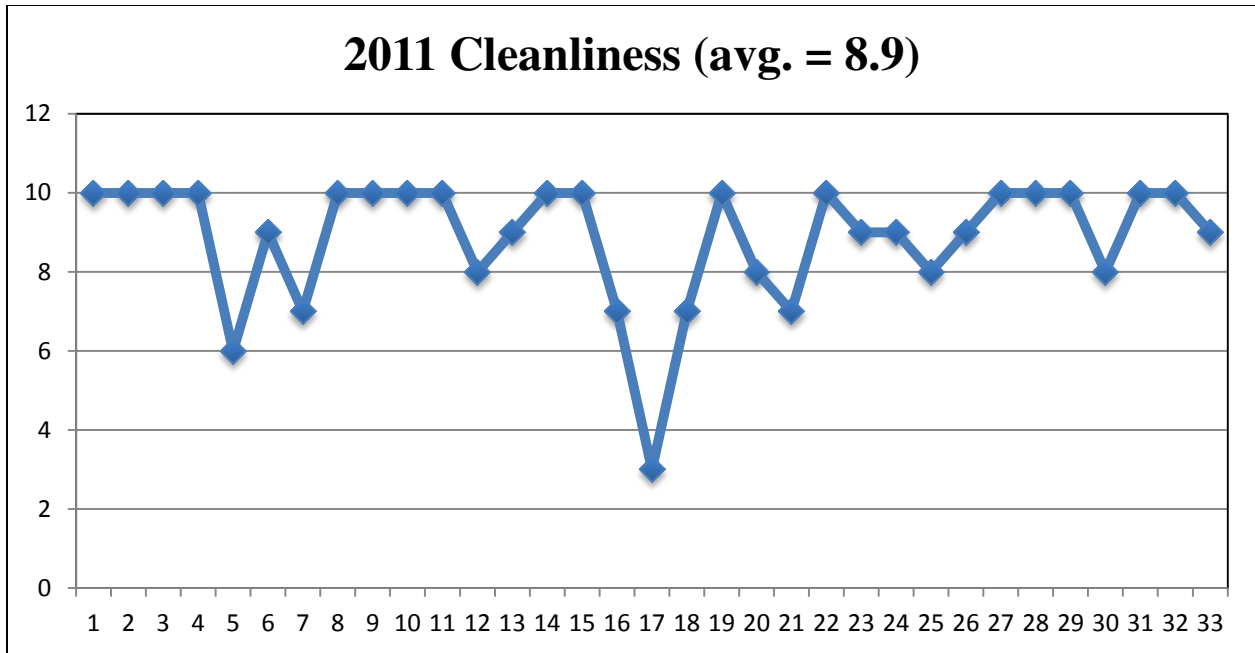
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Thank you for completing the survey ☺

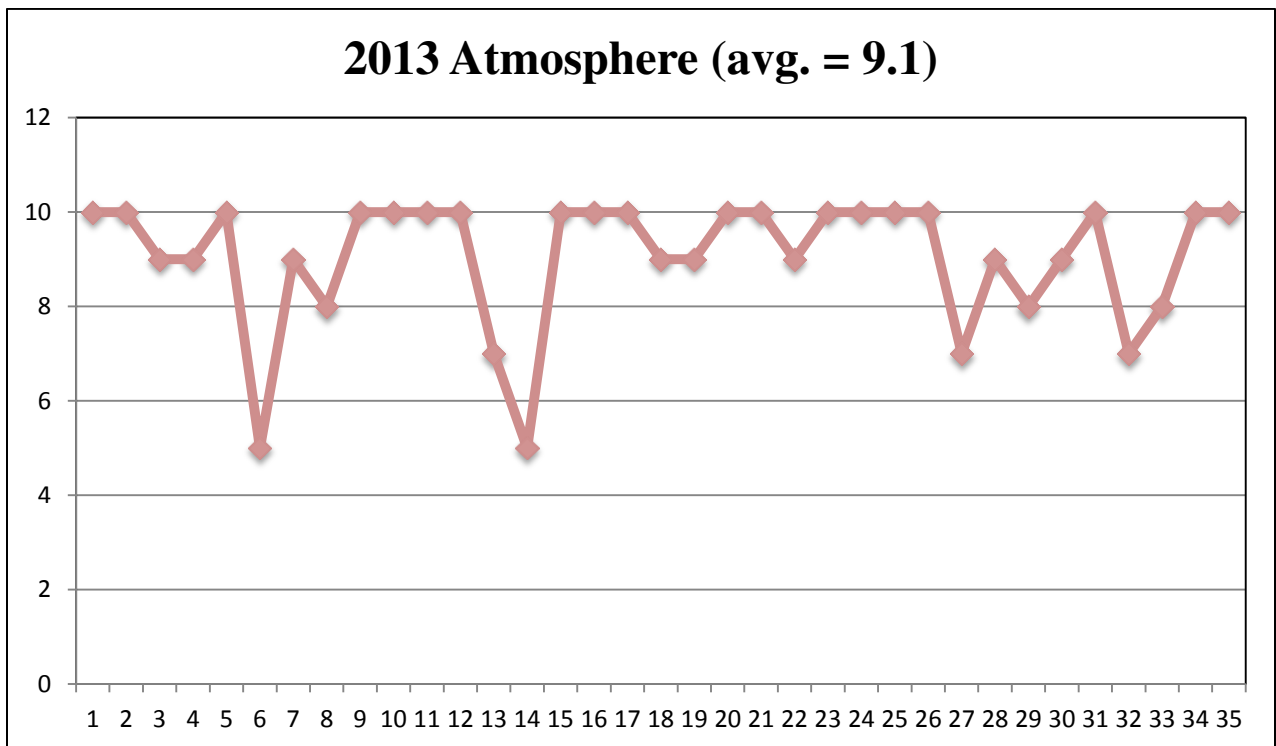
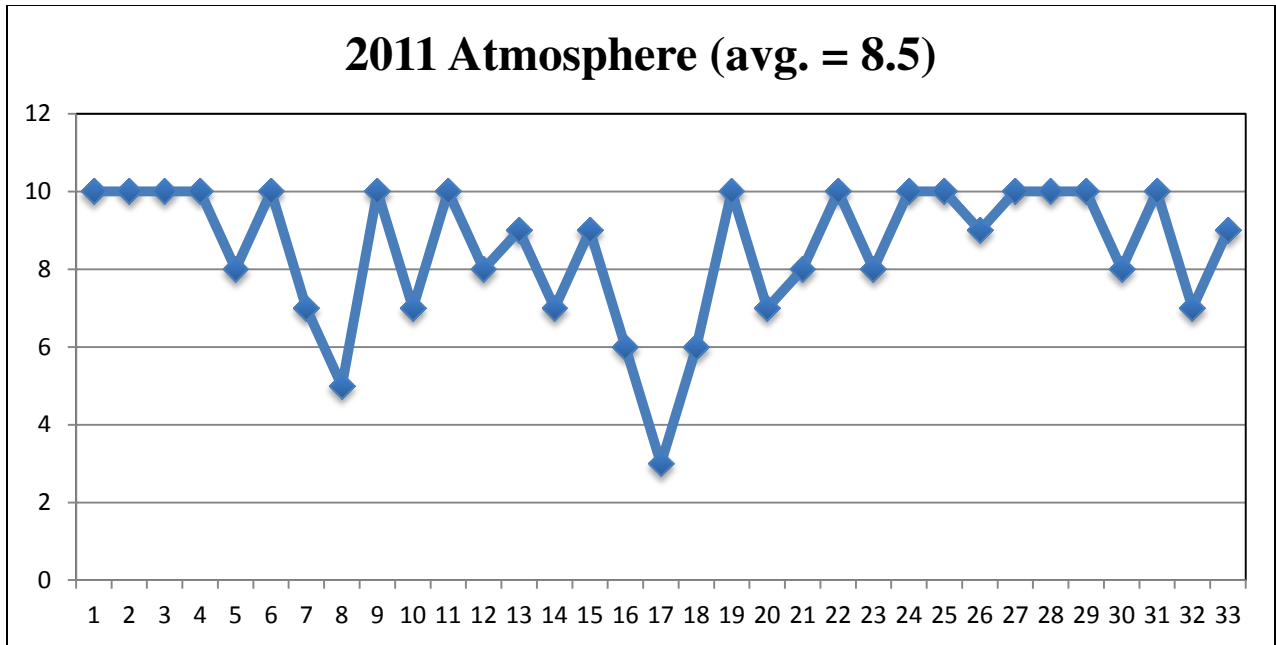
Survey Results

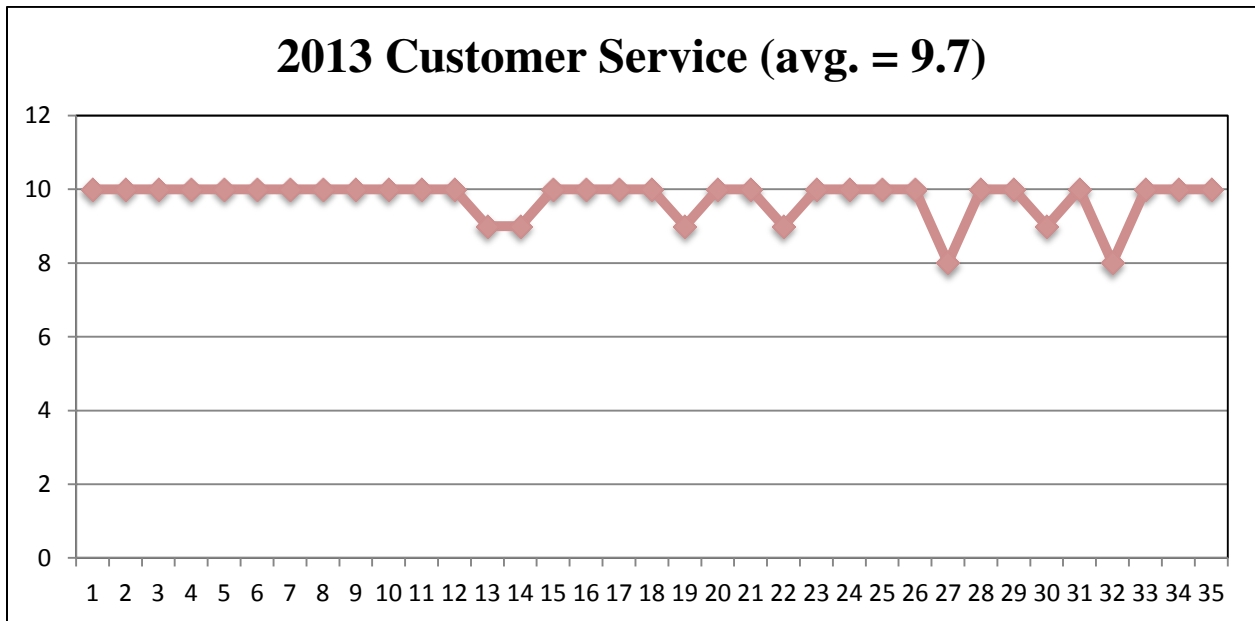
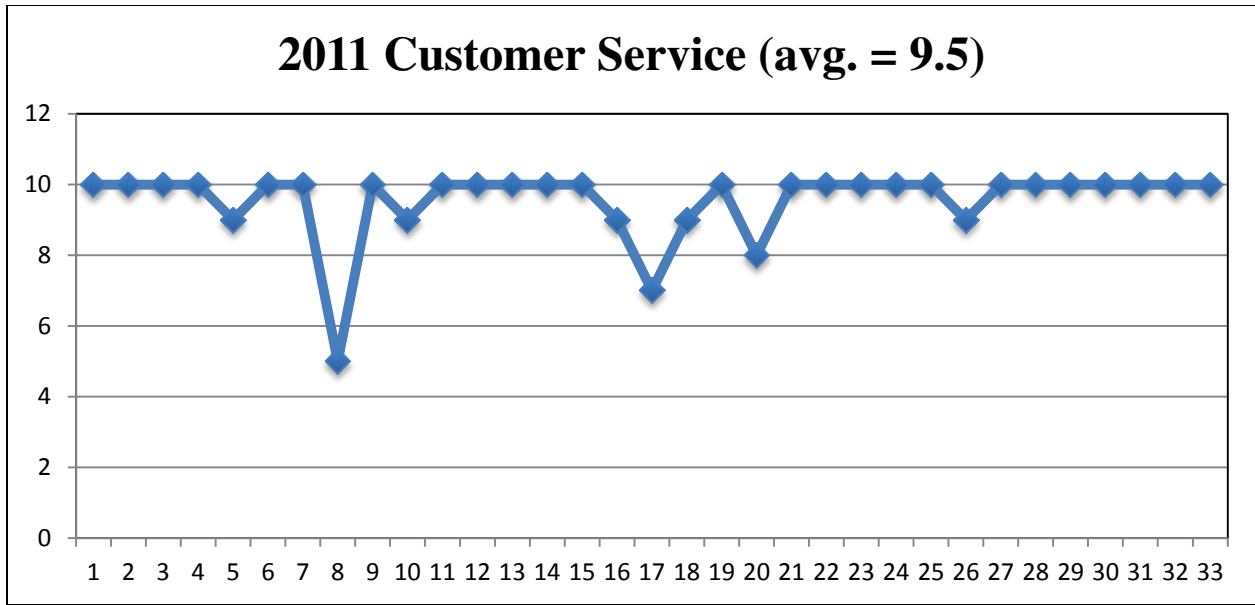
Kokamo Tan 2011 and 2013 Survey Results Comparison

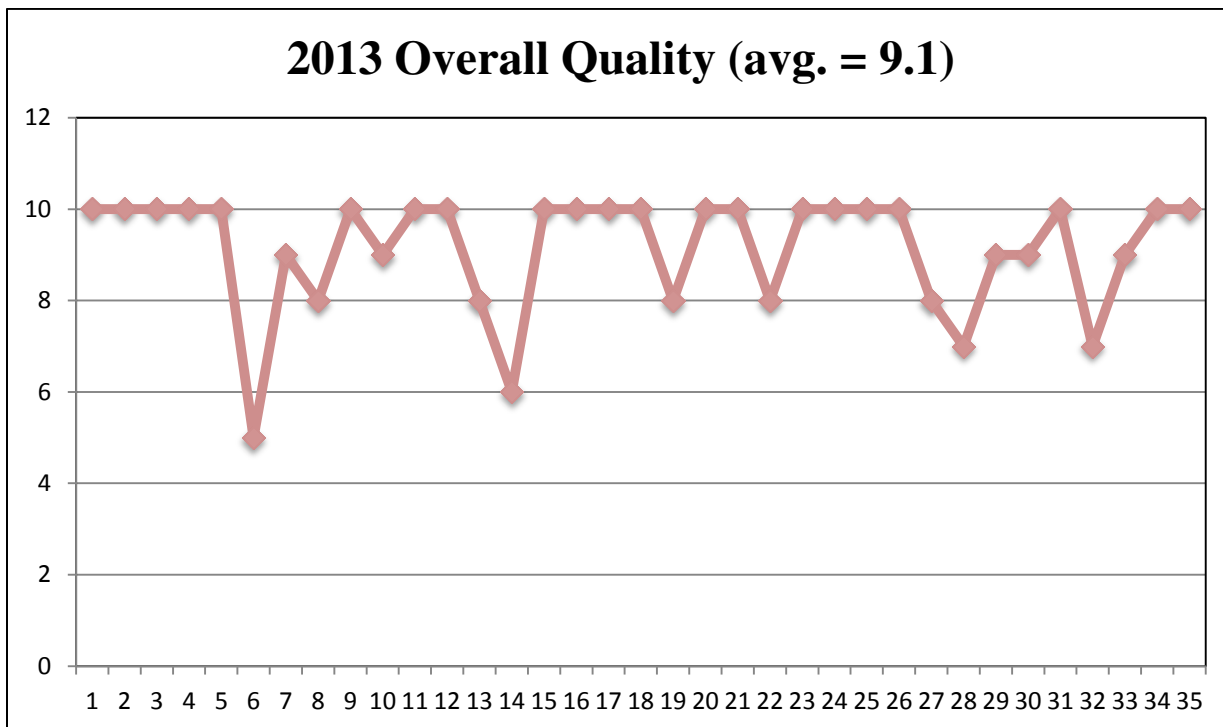
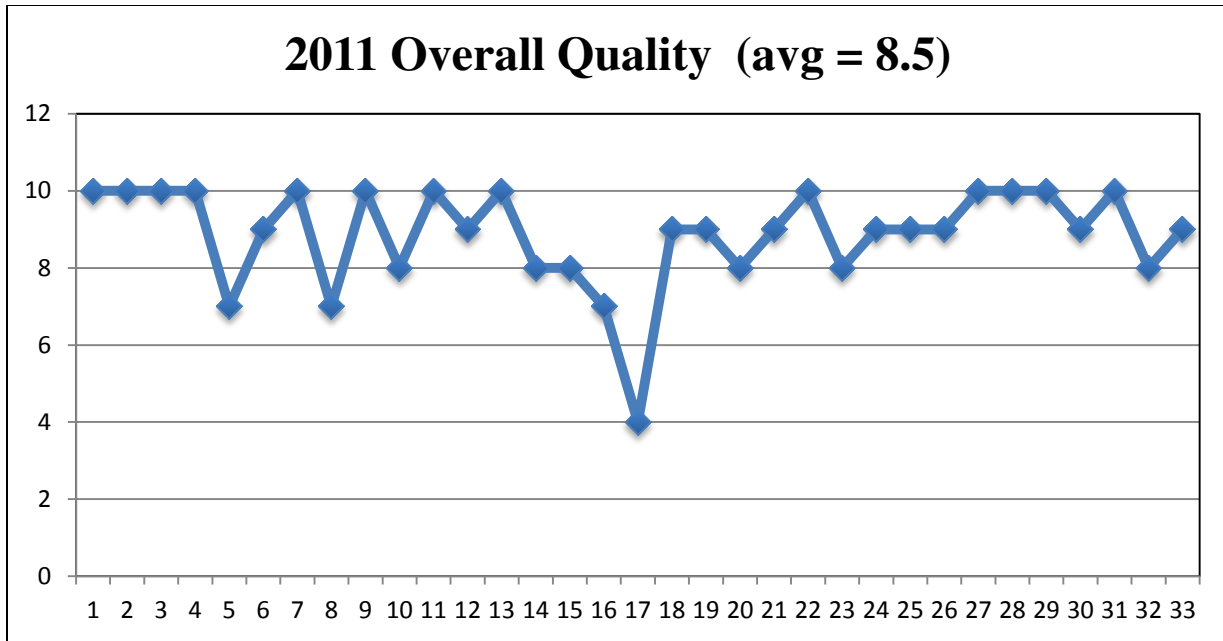


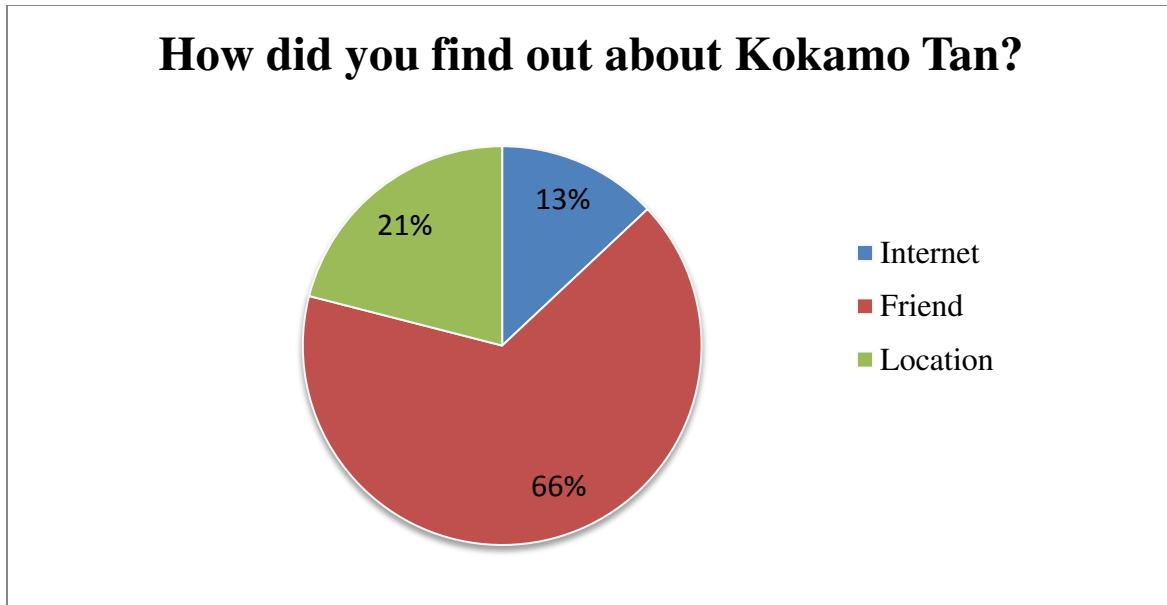












#### *Survey Data Analysis*

The data above, gathered from 2011 and 2013, shows that over the period of 2 years Kokamo Tan has improved in the five key areas which are affordability/pricing, cleanliness, atmosphere, customer service, and overall quality. The largest areas of improvement for Kokamo Tan are in atmosphere and overall quality. According to this data, Kokamo Tan needs to focus on enhancing affordability/pricing; however, comparisons to their Harrisonburg competition demonstrate that their prices and specials are consistently lower. After further consideration, the consultants identify that the gap is not in regards to affordability; rather, it demonstrates a gap in advertising and marketing strategies because customers are not aware of the affordability that Kokamo Tan offers compared to their competition.

The survey data also establishes that 66% of Kokamo Tan's clientele are referring their friends to the company. This is a significant finding that leads consultants to suggest a "refer a friend policy" at Kokamo Tan, that student consultants discuss in further detailed in the performance improvement plan. The survey data also shows that Kokamo Tan can improve their

internet presence on Facebook and Twitter. Finally, this data encourages the salon owner in his choice of location for Kokamo Tan because many clients list the convenient location as what draws them into the salon for their services, even with the minor confusion of the upstairs location in the building shared with other businesses.

### *Performance Gap*

Through the data analysis of our observations, focus group members, and customer surveys, we identify the following performance gaps:

1. The atmosphere is more casual and less luxurious than customers expect.
2. While cleanliness was highly rated, some customers noticed a few minor cleanliness errors.
3. Customers would like more specials to keep Kokamo Tan's affordability as competitive with other Harrisonburg salons as possible.
4. Advertising and marketing strategies leave room for improvement.

### *Performance Improvement Proposals (PIP)*

1. Change salon décor to look more professional as a tanning business. While the tropical paradise theme is consistent, some customers have mentioned a more luxurious style would be nice. The current theme is shown in a picture below:



2. To remove the 80's posters and replace them with subtle beach theme wall decorations. A picture of the posters in the entry-way is below:



3. To replace the plastic chairs with a leather couch to make the salon have a more stylish feel.
4. Implement a “bring a friend” special which should be advertised on Facebook.
5. Keep a rigorous cleaning schedule to avoid any minor cleanliness errors.
6. Change entrance and sign
7. Instead of having customers pay for goggles, use a check in/check out sheet when lending goggles to customer. Having to buy them could deter some customers, as other Harrisonburg tanning salons provide them for free to customers.

In order to offer further detail for the performance improvement proposal, the student consultants referred to Rothwell (2009) in how to prepare performance improvement proposals. Four of the improvement proposals: Change salon décor to look more professional as a tanning business, removing the 80's posters and replacing them with subtle beach theme wall decorations, replacing the plastic chairs with a leather couch to make the salon have a more stylish feel, and keeping a rigorous cleaning schedule to avoid any minor cleanliness errors stem from the data results of Cleanliness 9.3 and Atmosphere 9.1. The student consultants derive these conclusions from this data that a change in salon décor creates a more professional

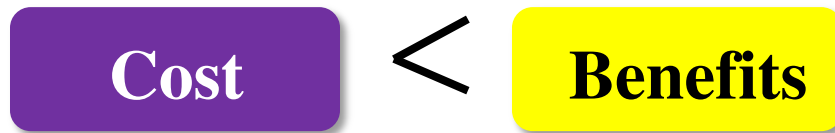
atmosphere and make the salon space appear cleaner, fresher and brighter. The focus group indicates that the current décor, which include the poster selection in the main walkway, is gaudy and does not positively contribute to the client's overall experience. The removal of the mentioned posters and replacement of beach décor supports the overall beach theme and is less offensive to the clientele. Comfortable seating, specifically a leather couch, gives the salon a more modern feel and look. If customer numbers increase and there is a short wait, this ensures that customers feel comfortable. The high number of JMU students that frequent Kokamo Tan appreciate modern furniture, calming visuals, and attention to atmosphere. The implementation of a more rigorous cleaning schedule ensures organization and sanitation. As one focus group member reports, "the seat in the bathroom was up!" (Anonymous, 2013).

The remaining two proposals focus on advertising and increasing clientele numbers. Implementing an advertisement "bring a friend" special on Facebook and changing the entrance and sign advances Kokamo Tan's marketing and social networking. The student consultants recommend a "bring a friend" policy, because data shows that 13% of clients hear about Kokamo Tan from a friend. JMU is a very social community and word spreads by mouth very quickly. Tanning can be a communal activity and this policy incites customers to tell a friend. Sprucing up the outdoor parking lot sign gains more passerby attention and notice. New members to the JMU community see the sign and are more likely to become customers. An outdoor neat appearance is a positive indicator of how the indoor space is.

### *Cost-Benefits Analysis*

The Performance Improvement Proposals have a minimal budgetary effect on Kokamo Tan. While making a few changes to the style of the salon will lessen profits in the beginning,

the benefits of gaining new customers, will highly outweigh what is spent to update the salon's look. This is visually represented below:



### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, data from 2011 provides a solid basis for the 2013 student consultant group in the adult education/human resource 600 course. The group introduces Kokamo Tan as a local successful and growing business that has specific areas of improvement. The organizational analysis of Kokamo Tan details a SWOT analysis, performance diagnosis matrix, task analysis, and task inventory. The organizational analysis shows specific details and inventory at Kokamo Tan to help inform the reader of company expenses and procedures. The data collection and analysis provides focus group data, focus group data analysis, customer satisfaction survey, customer satisfaction survey data, customer satisfaction data analysis. The data collection and analysis provides rationality for our Performance Improvement Proposal. The 2011 and 2013 data show progression and improvement at Kokamo Tan. The performance improvement section delivers the performance gap, performance improvement proposals, and performance improvement proposal specifics. This section gives the gap and the future plan and recommendations from the student consultants which include changes in décor and marketing updates. The cost-benefit analysis explains the effect the performance improvement proposals have on Kokamo Tan. The expectation is that ultimately Kokamo Tan will benefit greatly from the proposed changes.



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