The Gaps Model of Service Quality

- The Customer Gap
- The Provider Gaps:
  - Gap 1 – not knowing what customers expect
  - Gap 2 – not having the right service designs and standards
  - Gap 3 – not delivering to service standards
  - Gap 4 – not matching performance to promises
- Putting It All Together: Closing the Gaps
Figure 2.1

The Customer Gap

Expected service

Customer Gap

Perceived service
Gaps Model of Service Quality

- **Customer Gap:**
  - difference between customer expectations and perceptions

- **Provider Gap 1 (The Knowledge Gap):**
  - not knowing what customers expect

- **Provider Gap 2 (The Service Design & Standards Gap):**
  - not having the right service designs and standards

- **Provider Gap 3 (The Service Performance Gap):**
  - not delivering to service standards

- **Provider Gap 4 (The Communication Gap):**
  - not matching performance to promises
Key Factors Leading to the Customer Gap

- **Provider Gap 1:** Not knowing what customers expect
- **Provider Gap 2:** Not selecting the right service designs and standards
- **Provider Gap 3:** Not delivering to service standards
- **Provider Gap 4:** Not matching performance to promises
Key Factors Leading to Provider Gap 1

- **Inadequate marketing research orientation**
  - Insufficient marketing research
  - Research not focused on service quality
  - Inadequate use of market research

- **Lack of upward communication**
  - Lack of interaction between management and customers
  - Insufficient communication between contact employees and managers
  - Too many layers between contact personnel and top management

- **Insufficient relationship focus**
  - Lack of market segmentation
  - Focus on transactions rather than relationships
  - Focus on new customers rather than relationship customers

- **Inadequate service recovery**
  - Lack of encouragement to listen to customer complaints
  - Failure to make amends when things go wrong
  - No appropriate recovery mechanisms in place for service failures

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*Figure 2.2*
Customer-Driven Service Designs and Standards

- Poor service design
  - Unsystematic new service development process
  - Vague, undefined service designs
  - Failure to connect service design to service positioning

- Absence of customer-driven standards
  - Lack of customer-driven service standards
  - Absence of process management to focus on customer requirements
  - Absence of formal process for setting service quality goals

- Inappropriate physical evidence and servicescape
  - Failure to develop tangibles in line with customer expectations
  - Servicescape design that does not meet customer and employee needs
  - Inadequate maintenance and updating of the servicescape

Management Perceptions of Customer Expectations
Deficiencies in human resource policies
- Ineffective recruitment
- Role ambiguity and role conflict
- Poor employee-technology job fit
- Inappropriate evaluation and compensation systems
- Lack of empowerment, perceived control, and teamwork

Customers who do not fulfill roles
- Customers who lack knowledge of their roles and responsibilities
- Customers who negatively impact each other

Problems with service intermediaries
- Channel conflict over objectives and performance
- Difficulty controlling quality and consistency
- Tension between empowerment and control

Failure to match supply and demand
- Failure to smooth peaks and valleys of demand
- Inappropriate customer mix
- Overreliance on price to smooth demand

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**Figure 2.4**

Key Factors Leading to Provider Gap 3
Service Delivery

- Lack of integrated services marketing communications
  - Tendency to view each external communication as independent
  - Not including interactive marketing in communications plan
  - Absence of strong internal marketing program
- Ineffective management of customer expectations
  - Absence of customer expectation management through all forms of communication
  - Lack of adequate education for customers
- Overpromising
  - Overpromising in advertising
  - Overpromising in personal selling
  - Overpromising through physical evidence cues
- Inadequate horizontal communications
  - Insufficient communication between sales and operations
  - Insufficient communication between advertising and operations
  - Differences in policies and procedures across branches or units

External Communications to Customers
Figure 2.6
Gaps Model of Service Quality

CUSTOMER

Perceived Service

COMPANY

Customer-Driven Service Designs and Standards

Expected Service

Service Delivery

External Communications to Customers

Gap 4

Gap 1

Gap 2

Gap 3

Customer Gap

Company Perceptions of Consumer Expectations