

# Management techniques used in mcdonalds stores

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This report was produced to look at the management and motivation methods that are used in McDonald's fast food restaurants, and was requested by the Senior Executive of McDonalds. The main findings were that there are influences of the theories of F. W. Taylor and George Ritzer and was concluded that upon observation of the activities in McDonalds, there are evident uses of scientific management used in McDonalds restaurants, and that this does have a knock-on effect on the motivation of staff there. The recommendations of this report are that the managers need to engage the staff and try to 'revamp' the processes that they have in place, and give them a more direct motivation as to the rewards that they receive.

### **Terms of Reference**

This report is has been requested by the Senior Executive of McDonalds in September 2010, in response to a claim made by Wilson (2010). Wilson suggests that there are close links between the scientific management principles and the strict routines and procedures found in McDonald's fast food restaurants. This report will look into scientific management principles and to see if they do actually have an effect on the management principles that are used McDonalds fast food restaurants and will briefly look at the motivation methods of McDonald's employees, and will include observations of these methods.

The basic problems found in the observation of staff, was that the observation was limited, and only observed the activities of the 'front-line' employees, serving the customer, and was not able to extend this to the 'beginning' of the process to where the food is made on the premises. This report has been compiled by an independent researcher, who will consider

through observation and research whether Wilson's suggestion does support the daily routines a customer would find when visiting such fast-food restaurants.

## **Procedure**

The following procedures were undertaken in order to analyse the case study organisation.

### **Primary Research:**

The primary research undertaken was to observe the staff of various McDonalds restaurants, these were observed from September 2010 to December 2010 to try and obtain a more varied view of the procedures staff at McDonalds use. This is found under section

### **Secondary Research:**

The secondary research undertaken was through websites, books and online articles.

This research was used for the use of theorists used in the Findings section of the report.

## **Findings**

Scientific management is a theory that was initially developed by Fredrick Winslow Taylor and this theory was published in 1911. In his publication, 'The Principles of Scientific Management', Taylor addresses the "importance of the larger question of increasing our national efficiency" (Taylor, 1911). His theory sets out to 'Prove that the best management is a true science, resting

upon clearly defined laws, rules and principles as a foundation' (Taylor, 1911).

Taylor believed that workmen would do as little work as possible, and would produce one-third to one-half of their ability, and believed that this was universal, yet he wanted to counter this and increase the productivity of workers. Taylor suggests through his own research that many jobs, including skilled professions can be broken down into smaller tasks, meaning the less need for skilled craftsmen to complete jobs, and make their own decisions. He conducted this research in the steel industry with Time Studies; he observed worker's sequence of motions to determine the best way for jobs to be performed.

The drawbacks of this method, although it does increase productivity, are that it de-humanises the job role, and doesn't allow for any thought of the worker to be involved. The four main principles of Taylor, also known as Taylorisms, are:

1. Replace 'rule of thumb' work methods with methods based on a scientific study of the tasks.
2. To scientifically select, train and develop each worker rather than leaving the workers to train themselves.
3. To co-operate with workers to ensure that the scientific developed methods are being followed.

To divide work nearly equally between management and workers, so managers apply the scientific management principles to planning and the work, and the worker to actually perform the tasks. These principles were

adopted mainly in factories and industrial settings, including Henry Ford's car production factories. McDonaldization is a term that was created by George Ritzer based on the findings of Max Weber's theories of bureaucracy, in his publication 'The McDonaldization of Society' (1995).

George Ritzer explains that the fast food restaurant is an extreme example of rationalization process, where the main focus is that of efficiency and predictability. Ritzer's four main principles of McDonaldization are:

1. Efficiency - The fastest method of completing a task.
2. Calculability - In terms of McDonald's customers, this means to serve the customers a large amount of food in a short period of time, in terms of McDonalds staff, it is the quantity of work they do and not the quality in that they do it.
3. Predictability - Meaning whatever McDonalds restaurant a customer will go to, they would know what to expect, this applies to the product and the service that they receive.
4. Control - This is the control over the employees, everything is standardized and wherever possible, human interaction is replaced by technology.

### **Individual Investigation**

On conducting an investigation into what a customer would experience upon visiting McDonald's restaurants, it was found that the experience does support the views of Ritzer, and Taylor's scientific management principles can be applied.

On being served, a customer is asked the same routine question, and the customer's answer will be, again, another script-written question, i. e. What drink would you like with that, would you like to have a large meal? The employee that is serving will then either collect the order that the customer has placed, or there will be another member of staff there to carry out that particular task, so that the person 'stationed' at the till can go on to serve the next customer, whichever may be more efficient, with tasks being broken down.

This experience alone can cover three of the four principles used by Ritzer, quite clearly; efficiency, fastest method of completing the task, calculability, serving customers with large amounts of food in a short time and also the quantity of work that they do. The third principle of Ritzer is supported by visiting a few various McDonalds restaurants, the customer will know what to expect, as stated earlier with the 'script-written' questions upon ordering food, to knowing the McDonald's 'menu' and what you will get.

The fourth principle of Ritzer's, control, from going to McDonalds has been perceived from this observation that the managers will control the staff, ensuring that tasks are carried out correctly, as when observing the activity behind the counter, there is always a manager present, constantly going back and forth between points, and 'checking over employees shoulders'.

### **Motivation**

To look at the benefits that may motivate a McDonald's employee, it has been researched on what promote the vacancies that are available in McDonalds. From accessing the McDonald's website [www.mcdonalds.co.uk](http://www.mcdonalds.co.uk),

<https://assignbuster.com/management-techniques-used-in-mcdonalds-stores/>

the company advertises that the vacancies are not just short-term jobs, but the opportunity offers great training and development schemes from apprenticeships to foundation degrees, yet, they do not move away from the actual realization of the job. A very brief breakdown of a crew-members role is stated as, customer service - expected to provide customers with a quick and accurate service. The website also promotes the 'rewards and benefits' of being a McDonalds employee, these are; 28 days paid holidays, free private healthcare (after three years service), stakeholder pension scheme, an employee is able to exchange ? 10 directly from their pay to childcare vouchers, saving on National Insurance and Tax, and also appealing to possibly single parents, and also discount cards for large retailers, including HMV and Marks & Spenser's. However, although all these rewards and benefits may seem appealing, there is also a short video clip on the website, titled 'Think Again'. This is a short video, where a McDonalds employee has approached people 'off the street' to ask their views on people who work in McDonalds.

Some answers given are that McDonalds employees are uneducated, people 'filling in between real jobs' and that a job at McDonalds is a last resort, however, the employee who was conducting the short 'interviews' was a university student, currently studying law, when this was told to the people who she was talking with, mostly all of them looked surprised, and afraid that they had offended her, but it further backed her point, of 'think again', not all McDonalds staff are what they appear to be, and the majority of them are studying in university for degrees.

This video is a realistic view of what McDonald's staff are considered to be, and McDonalds have tried to turn this in their favour, yet, it will be off-putting for some to apply for these jobs, and from visiting McDonald's restaurants, the staff do not seem entirely enthusiastic and motivated, and seem to find it a struggle to offer 'service with a smile'. 4. 0 Conclusion In conclusion, Wilson's suggestion is a true statement of the management techniques and working procedures that are used in McDonalds.

From researching the scientific management principles, and observing the activity in McDonalds, it can be seen that these principles do apply; the tasks are broken down into small tasks, to enable efficiency. All staff are trained on the job role that they are doing, and are trained to the method that fits best with the structure of the restaurant and environment that they will be working in, and managers are constantly overseeing what the employees are doing.

The findings have also shown that Ritzer's views of McDonaldization are again, quite true, and again from observation of staff working at McDonald's, have fitted with the principles that Ritzer claim McDonald's function on. 5. 0 Recommendations The recommendations that are found from the findings of this report are that there needs to be a more direct motivation for the staff at McDonalds. As said under the findings, the staff seem to lack an enthusiasm for the job that they are doing, even though the training and development opportunities and the rewards available are quite impressive.

However, this lack of 'awareness' may be to the mundane and repetitive processes that the organisation have in place, and if so, McDonald's managers need to look at this again. The processes that are in place do offer



efficiency, which is essential for a fast-food restaurant, but they need to get their staff more engaged and offer more variety in the way that these processes are carried out, and while doing this, possibly include the staff that are carrying out these ' processes' to share their input into what they feel can be done better, this will then have a ' boost' factor to the way that they feel they are valued in the organisation.

### **Reference list**

1. " importance of the larger question of increasing our national efficiency' (Taylor, 1911, Introduction, The Principles of Scientific Management)
2. " Prove that the best management is a true science, resting upon clearly defined laws, rules and principles as a foundation" (Taylor, 1911, The Principles of Scientific Management, Pge 3)
3. both accessed from forgottenbooks. org

### **Bibliography**

1. www. mcdonalds. co. uk (9/12/2010) \* www. netmba. com (8-11/12/2010)