

CHAPTER 3

PROBLEMS IDENTIFICATION AND SOLUTION

3.1 Problem Identification

In the process of fulfilling the internship program, the writer was expected to be a good representative of the company for potential clients. However, during the completion process, the writer encountered some hindrances such as:

1. When the writer first started her internship program, the company expected the writer to independently master the product knowledge in the company. Any form of assistance such as training sessions for interns were not given to the writer by the company. Due to the writer's lack of knowledge about the company's products during the initial phase of the internship, the writer faced difficulties in offering the products to the customers, especially to give explanation about the products and its complexities.
2. The writer faced difficulties in getting responses from the customers after she sent offer letter because of the writer's lack in product knowledge mastery. It resulted to the writer's poor delivery of product explanation, made customers question the product's credibility and reduce customers' purchase intention during the first-half of the internship program.

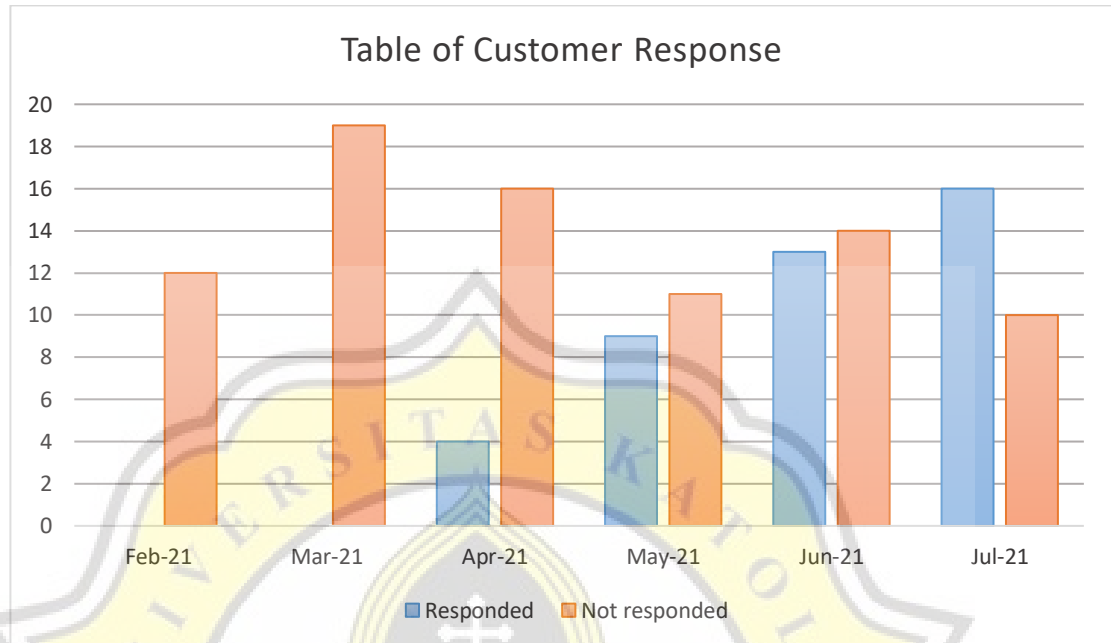


Table 3. 1 Number of Customer Response

(Source: The Writer's Customer Database)

Based on the table presented, it is shown that during the early phase of the internship program, the writer did not receive any response from the customers contacted. In contrast, during the second-half of the internship the table showed a significant increase in the number of customers that responded.

3. The writer encountered hardships when she searched for overseas distributors, both for stamping foil and window film due to the limited and exclusive source of information about distributor companies, unlike other types of companies targeted as potential customers.
4. When the writer was tasked to send offer letters to customers, only some of the customers from the database given by the sales staff were contacted. Before

contacting the rest of the customers listed, the writer sorted out the database first because the data given by sales staff is disorganized. Because of the writer's lack of product knowledge, she found it difficult to differ which customer belongs to each product type's market because the data mixed the stamping foil and window film customer list. The writer had to be careful and asked for other marketing sales staffs for guidance in arranging the database so it does not get swapped.

5. Due of the writer's lack of product knowledge in the early phase of the internship program, she found difficulties and confusion in determining the brochure's concept and design for the products offered to prospective clients. Since the writer created two types of brochure, the design and the displayed contents of the stamping foil was surely different from those of window film. The writer created the brochures according to her own knowledge first, and later she communicated the brochures with the marketing supervisor during the process for inputs and feedback.

3.2 Problem Solution

Despite all the difficulties mentioned in the previous section, the writer managed to overcome them by ways of:

1. being proactive

One of the skills needed within the workforce is being proactive.

Proactivity is a goal-driven and change-oriented process that involves internal

initiative. Proactivity is closely related to one's career success and work performance (Parker & Collins, 2010). Proactive people tend to actively look for knowledge and opportunities to gain progress and improve current situations rather than passively wait and expect the knowledge and opportunities to come first (Crant, 2000). Being proactive means that one should always be eager to move forward, be full of curiosity and not easily satisfied.

By being proactive, the writer was able to independently learn and master product knowledge of the company's goods. Actively asking other staff as sources of information to learn about product knowledge is one of the examples of the writer's implementation of her proactivity. In addition, the writer also asked the leaders of marketing department, such as the manager and head of department to give her further explanation about the company's products in form of short training for her to have a better understanding about the goods. It can be concluded that by being proactive, the writer can learn how to be independent and motivated to move forward, to make great changes for her career in the future.

2. mastering product knowledge and implementing AIDA method

Having difficulties in getting customers' response to the offer letter, the writer decided to learn more about the company's product knowledge. Mastering product knowledge comes very handy for the writer, especially in the marketing process. By mastering product knowledge, the writer was able to

give a more detailed and convincing explanation about the products. In addition, product knowledge also helped the writer in arranging customer database list; by understanding which company belong to which product market, and determining brochure concept. Based on the data presented in **Table 3.1**, the writer gained a significant increase in the number of customers that responded after she started to master the company's product knowledge. It can be concluded that product knowledge plays a prominent role in giving product credibility and assurance towards customers which increases customer's response rate and purchase interest.

Other than mastering product knowledge, the writer also used the AIDA (Attention/Awareness, Interest, Desire, and Action) method to approach the customers. A good sales strategy is one which does not only focus on internal mastery, such as product knowledge, but also takes external mastery into consideration, namely understanding buyer's needs. According to Budiawan et al. (2017), AIDA method is defined as a sales strategy that focuses on how to attract customer's attention, maintain their interest, create the desire to buy the product, and finally get their action to make a transaction. By implementing the AIDA model in the writer's copywriting during the marketing process, the writer was able to persuade the customer to buy the product by understanding the customers' point of view and needs.

3. having problem solving skills and critical thinking

Problem solving skill is a basic skill that we need in our daily life. It is the root of one's capability to look for a way out of a particular issue that occur. Problem solving often associated with critical thinking skill since the two are related to one another.

Critical thinking plays an important role in the work dynamics. Critical thinking can be defined as an individual's method of thinking that starts with the goal of solving a problem or providing a response to a question by considering choices that vary, and selecting the most reasonable one (Alsaleh, 2020). It can help an individual to observe and resolve problems occurring in the work environment. Critical thinker tends to think rationally and logically, and always puts various considerations in the decision-making.

One of the ways for the writer to implement her problem-solving and critical thinking skills in handling the limited source of information about overseas distributor companies is by switching methods from customer searching to customer hunting. The writer sought for any representative staffs of the targeted foil and or window film distributor companies and contacted them via one-on-one conversation in various job-related online media. By implementing her problem solving and critical thinking skill, the writer was able to attract several distributor companies from overseas.

4. being careful and conscientious

In the process of carrying out the internship program, the writer needed to be very careful in arranging the customer database list based on each type of

product's target market. Besides that, the writer also had to be careful in giving out product information towards prospective clients to prevent any misinformation. The misinformation prevention deems the writer to be conscientious in rearranging and grouping the database given by the sales staff before making any form of contact or offer. The key for perform both tasks (careful and conscientious in arranging database list and giving product information) smoothly, is by combining it with product knowledge mastery.

5. maintaining an open communication

Aside from mastering product knowledge, the writer needed to keep open communication with the other sales staffs in order for her to understand and determine the brochure's concept. Open communication is important for improving employee productivity. It can prevent and settle arguments by allowing workers from all positions to openly discuss about goals and conflicts related to the company (Adu-Oppong & Agyin-Birikorang, 2014).

Having an open communication, the writer could discuss and ask for any advice or input from other sales staffs about the brochure that would be made. In addition, the writer communicated openly with the sales staffs in order to know the company's current brochure needs. The writer made sure that the other sales staffs were always involved in the brochure-making process since they were technically more experienced in creating brochures and more aware of the product specifications that were mentioned in the brochure.