



Southwest

 COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

PROBLEM STATEMENT



December 2022 Holiday Meltdown



- Planes grounded across the enterprise
- **16,000+** cancelled flights
- **100,000+** passengers stranded
- **\$800+ million** in damages

METHODS



APPROACH

PILLARS OF STRUCTURED KM



ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS



OUTLINE

I	Meet Leadership Stakeholders	Surveys Focus Groups	V
II	Gather Background	Data Analysis Summary	VI
III	Analysis Model	Identify Gaps Barriers	VII
IV	Comprehensive Review	Action Plan Implementation	VIII

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS



Mission

- Maximize profit
- Remain the largest low-cost carrier

Method

- Low operating costs & fares
- Quick turnaround schedules
- High frequency short trips

Network

- 60,000 personnel
- 121 airports
- Operates the most flights in the United States
- 134 million annual customers

Hierarchy

- Rigid vertical hierarchy
- High formalization
- Central decision-making
- Operational control

Structure

Unitary-form:

- Departments directed as single units
- Specialized along functional lines
- Managers group functions, resources, & tasks toward shared objectives (Sherman)

I

Meet Leadership | Stakeholders

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS



Stakeholder Groups				
Internal Stakeholders				
Stakeholder	○ Directors	○ Managers	○ Employees	○ Shareholders
Role	Organization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stability ○ Direction ○ Long term goals ○ Decision-making benefiting org & stakeholders 	Director approval: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Planning ○ Executing strategy ○ Delegate throughout organization 	Perform daily operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flights ○ Customer service ○ et cetera 	Supply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Investment value & capital ○ Voting & feedback on organizational elements
Expectation	Stakeholders needs Maintain competitiveness Overall consistency	Effectiveness of operations Alignment to objectives	Equal pay & treatment Benefits Safe environment	Maximized ROI Competitiveness Best practices Profit

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS



Stakeholder Groups				
External Stakeholders				
Stakeholder	○ Customers	○ Government	○ Community	○ Suppliers
Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Key business motivation ○ Payment for services ○ Providing needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regulations ○ Policy ○ Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General economic infrastructure & employment 	Service & products: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equipment ○ Food ○ Supplies
Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Execution of services ○ Reliability ○ Standards ○ Customer service offerings ○ Safety ○ Fair pricing 	Observe law: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employment ○ Taxes ○ Fare prices ○ Air space operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Responsibility to locals & environment ○ Energy sustainability ○ Low noise pollution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proper business practices ○ Communication ○ Purchasing
<div> <div>II</div> <div>Gather Background</div> </div>				

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS



Strengths

Service capability

Low cost fares

Vast Network

Weaknesses

Complexity

IT & Software

Knowledge Access

Opportunities

KM Implementation

Technology Overhaul

Customer Notoriety

Threats

Competitors

Recovery

III

Analysis Model

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS



Comprehensive Review

Key areas: Map structure & goal alignment

Business Components

Strategic Goals
Organization Chart
Organization Values
Business Operations
IT & Technology Systems
Communication Network
Financial Goals & Metrics
Company Vision & Mission
Current Structure & Practices

Organizational Network Analysis

Insight: Communication style, information flow, & collaboration pattern

Network Visualization

Maps relationships
Data analyzed via visual tools
Graphs relationships & communication patterns to help decision-making

Innovation Gauge

Innovation Driver: analyzes relations & measures impacts
Build network necessary to create innovative teams

Surveys | Focus Groups

Feedback

Leaders & Employees

Insight to spot inefficiencies & drivers
Unique feedback, pain points, improvement ideas, value adders, and barriers
Outline new functions

III

Analysis Model

IV

Comprehensive Review

V

Surveys | Focus Groups

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS



Analysis Summary

Full scope view of entire organization & processes

Gaps & Barriers

Strengths vs weaknesses

Highlight issue areas & key barriers

Action Plan

Align relevant plan
Create a rich map
Relevant action plan



Action Plan Component Areas

Realign Structure
Job Functions Descriptions
Operating Norms & Procedures
Root Causes & Improve Operations

Knowledge Hub
Comprehensive IT System
Customer Service Training
Employee Support Systems

KM Drivers

IT
Collaboration
Competition
Decision-Making
Internal Efficiencies

VI

Analysis Summary

VII

Identify Gaps | Barriers

VIII

Action Plan | Implementation

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY



Action Plan Component Areas

Flight Operations

Safety and Maintenance
of Hardware and
Software Systems

Reduced Staff Burnout
and Higher Personnel
Retention

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY



Flight Operations

- Encourage collaboration across several departments
- Develop a system of checks and balances
- Foster a knowledge-sharing culture

Safety and Maintenance of Hardware and Software Systems

- Transparency about safety practices
- Ensure staff are adequately trained
- Create a knowledge repository
- Regular training

Reduced Staff Burnout and Higher Personnel Retention

- Extensive quality of life parameters for pilots and crew
- Utilize a modern scheduling software
- Run regular surveys to collect input from its employees

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



Learning Programs

Prevent repeat mistakes

Embed knowledge and
lessons learned

4I Framework

Training Programs

Tactical, tailored, and
targeted

Develop competencies

Engage SMEs

Technology

Knowledge repository and
exchange

Communities of Practice

Share ideas and
knowledge

Increase innovation and
responsiveness

Improve skills and reduce
duplication

Monitor, Evaluate, & Readjust