

Week 1 - Meeting: Identify Mutual Benefits

Below is a meeting transcript with the following people:

- Peta (Project Manager)
- Gilly (General Manager, North)
- Zane (Kitchen Manager, North)
- Alex (General Manager, Downtown)
- Larissa (Kitchen Manager, Downtown)
- Seydou (Restaurant Consultant)
- Carter (Executive Chef)

Peta (Project Manager): Hi everyone, thanks for meeting with me. Hi, Zane and Larissa—nice to meet you both! Deanna was just telling me about you the other day. I'm looking forward to hearing your thoughts on the project.

Larissa (Kitchen Manager, Downtown): Hello! Nice to meet you too!

Zane (Kitchen Manager, North): Hi Peta, thanks for including us. Happy to be here!

Peta: It looks like everyone is here except Carter, who will be joining us a little later. Let's go ahead and get started and we'll fill him in when he gets here. I've had a request from Omar to expand the tablet rollout to include all of the restaurant dining sections, not just the bar area. As Omar is the owner of Sauce & Spoon, I want to make every effort to consider the feasibility of this change. I have a number of reasons for pushing back on this request and keeping the rollout to just the bar, but I'd like your input as well. Perhaps there is a way to make this work, and if not I want to be able to provide a thoughtful rationale for the push back. I thought we could go around and do a brainstorm session to get everyone's input. Would anyone like to start?

Larissa: I think expanding sounds like a good idea, especially if we're trying to meet larger revenue goals. But since I'm new to the project team, can you provide some background for why just the bar area was selected in the first place?

Peta: Sure thing, thanks for asking. We selected the bar for a couple of reasons. First, we felt that bar patrons are more likely to want a speedier dining experience. Second, since the rollout only focuses on one section of the restaurant, we can make any necessary changes to the training process and address any issues without majorly impacting the entire restaurant before scaling further.

Seydou (Restaurant Consultant): Also, Larissa, in my experience with other clients, piloting at the bar is usually lower risk than other areas. Bar diners tend to be less particular about their experience than, say, a family celebrating a special occasion in the main dining area.

Larissa: Thanks for explaining. Well, I have lots of experience with high-demand kitchens, so I'm up for it! But, I'll defer to Alex since you're newer to the restaurant industry. Would you feel comfortable with an expanded rollout at our location?

Gilly (General Manager, North): I think my restaurant can handle it! I've helped with large-scale initiatives before and can guide Zane with the kitchen. Alex, what do you think? Larissa's a great teammate to help you through this.

Alex (General Manager, Downtown): Hmm...honestly, I'm not sure I agree. I have full confidence in your abilities, Larissa, but I'm definitely hesitant about leading the downtown location through an expanded rollout. There are so many variables to account for—I'm just not comfortable with the risks if anything goes wrong. I've worked really hard to restore and maintain staff morale and the quality of customer service. Something like this, even with a small issue, could be hard to recover from.

Larissa: That's a good point, Alex. In that case, I think it does make sense to start with a smaller rollout, then we can expand from there once we have a sense of the effort involved and the data reports.

Peta: Zane, what's your initial response? Do you think you'd be prepared to lead your staff with a full restaurant rollout?

Zane: Well, I trust Gilly, so with her guidance I'd be open to an expansion. As long as it makes sense once everything else is taken into consideration.

Peta: Thanks for that input. I've made a note of it. I see Carter just joined—hi, Carter!

Carter (Executive Chef): Hi everyone. Sorry to miss out on the first part of the discussion. Any chance I can get a quick recap?

Peta: Sure! Omar has requested we expand the rollout to include all dining sections, not just the bar area. I think it's outside the scope of the project at this point, but I wanted to get more input before making a decision. Gilly and Zane feel they could handle an expansion at their location, but Alex and Larissa are concerned about the potential risks. And Seydou, can you say a little more about your experience with these types of initiatives?

Seydou: Well, there are pros and cons to both options. Expanding the rollout would provide you with more accurate metrics and, if successful, could lead to a greater revenue increase. However, as much as I'd like to sell you more tablets, I really don't think piloting across the entire restaurant is a good idea. Like I said, a bar-focused rollout is less risky. Also, we've observed that diners in sections with tablets really do tend to order more, and it might make sense to let the kitchen scale up their operations more gradually to meet the increased demand.

Peta: Thanks, Seydou. Carter, what are your thoughts on expanding the rollout to the entire restaurant?

Carter: I know Omar wants to meet these sales goals, but I don't think expanding the rollout is a good idea. I've already expressed concerns about needing to hire more kitchen personnel and maintaining employee and customer satisfaction just with the bar rollout! I think Seydou makes a good point: from an operational standpoint, this rollout needs to happen incrementally.

Peta: Okay, thanks everyone. I really appreciate your input. What I'm hearing is that even though expanding the rollout will yield more accurate metrics and generate much larger profits if successful, the benefits may not outweigh the risks. And as far as the project plan is concerned, an expanded rollout would require pushing back the timeline, paying for more tablets and wiring, and definitely more back of house hires. Limiting the rollout to the bar area will make it easier to ensure high levels of customer satisfaction and keep the project within the original scope. A more limited rollout will also give the kitchen time to scale up its operations and allow us to deal with any problems that arise more discreetly.

Gilly: Yeah, when you consider all those factors it does seem to make the most sense to pilot the tablets in just one area first.

Carter: But Omar and Deanna really want this change. They've both been pushing to meet these growth and expansion goals. They're also really into having a digital presence—and they expect the rest of us to be on board. I've already tried making my case with them; I'm not sure they'll back down so easily.

Peta: I hear you, Carter. I'll definitely need to be strategic about how I present our case to stick to the original plan. Well, thanks everyone. It looks like we're out of time, so I'll share the notes in a bit and keep you posted on the final decision.