Core & Non Core Processes

Technology refers to the work processes, techniques, machines and actions used to transform organizational inputs (materials, information and ideas) into outputs (products and services).

Core Technology

Core technology is the work process that is directly related to the organization's mission.

For an organization like Beanster's the core technology begins with the raw material (e.g., various foods, fruits and raw meat required for making food items). Employees take action on these raw materials and use to prepare various food items and thus transforming the raw material into the output that is sold to the consumers. The core work process Beanster's consists of food processing, quality assurance of the food items prepared and finally food packaging for sale to the end consumers.

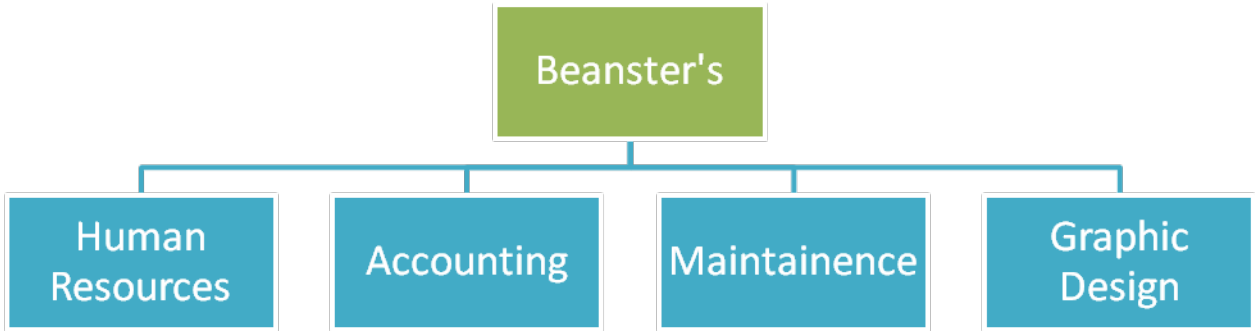
Non Core Technology

Non Core Technology is a department work process that is important to the organization but is not directly related to its primary mission.

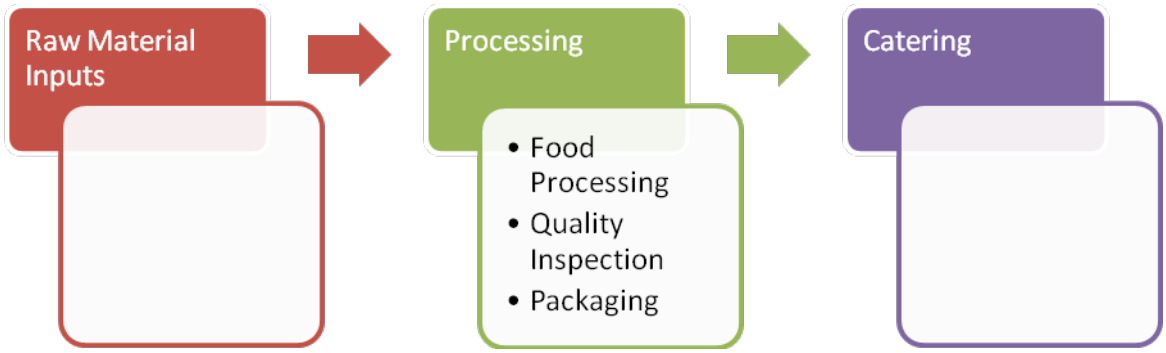
For Beanster's the noncore processes are illustrated by the departments like

1. Human Resources: The output of HR department is to hire right kind of people for the available jobs.
2. Accounting Department: It provides accurate statements about the organization's financial conditions.
3. Maintenance: The maintenance department keeps a check over the entire technological aspects of the organization and ensures proper functioning of all the systems.
4. Graphics and Design: The output of this department is designing the café with respect to layout and ambience for service optimality and customer attraction.

Non Core



Processes



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Core Processes

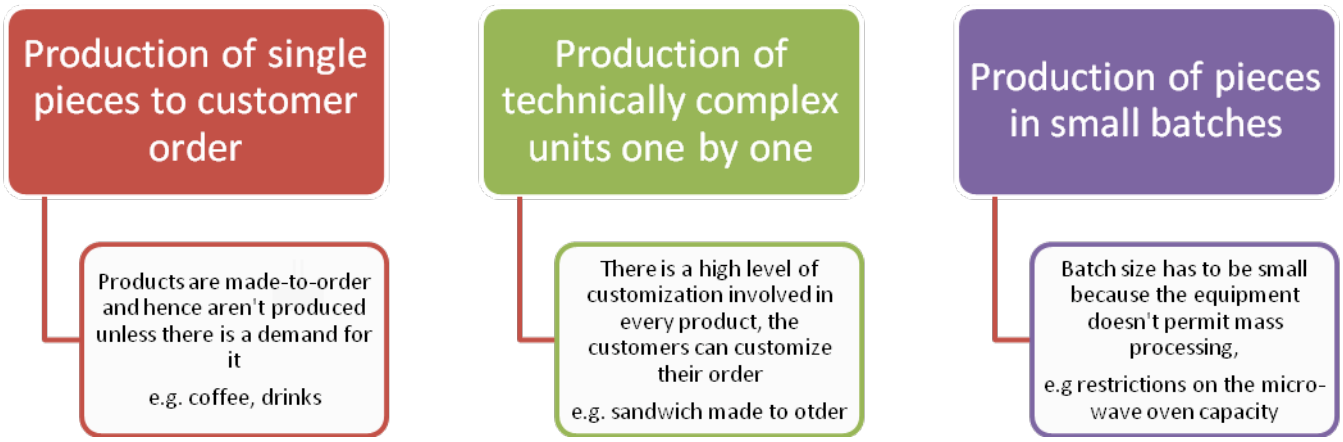
Woodward's Classification:

Technical complexity is the extent of mechanization of the manufacturing process. If a large amount of the work is automated and executed by machines, it figures on the higher levels of technical complexity. An organization employing workers who constitute the production process would figure on the lower levels. According to the classification, Beanster's would fall in the Group 1, i.e.

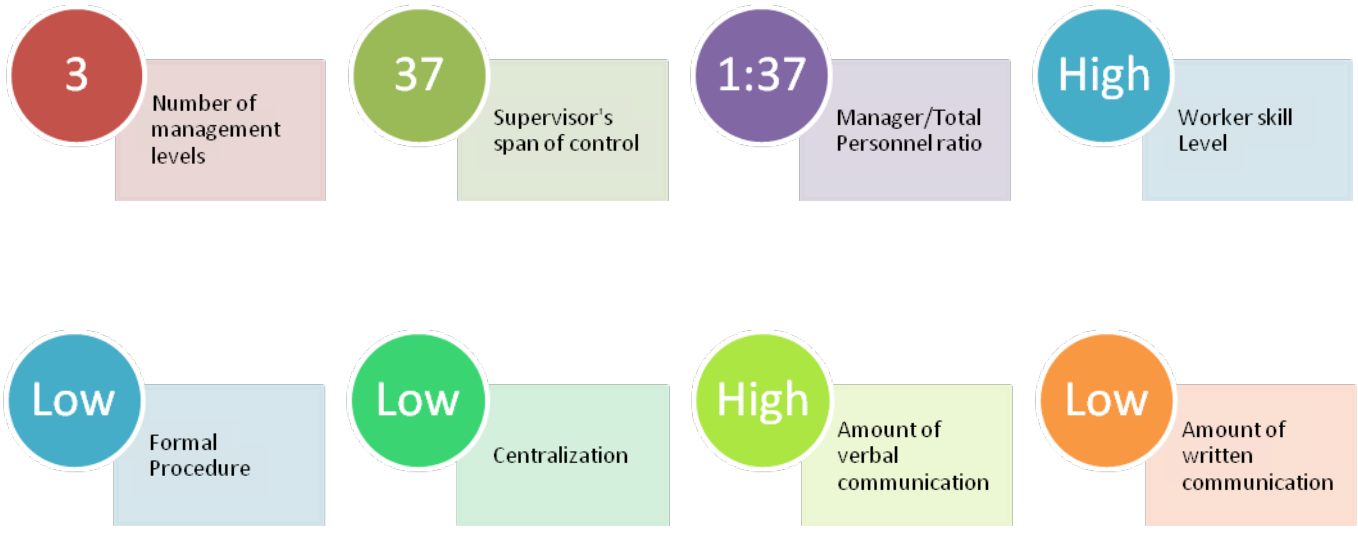
Small-Batch and Unit Production:

Beanster's operates on a small scale, catering mostly to UofM students. They manufacture and assemble small orders to meet the specific needs of customers. There is a high level of customization as most of the products are made-to-order.

Woodward's Classification: (Group 1)



Relationship between technical complexity and structural characteristics:



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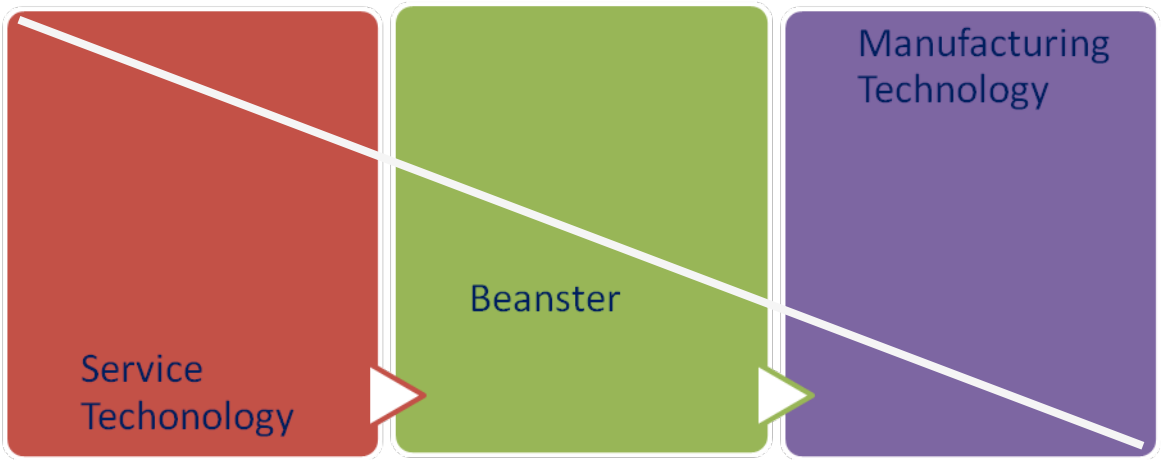
Product & Service Technologies:



Beanster's café can be classified as Product and Service firm as it exhibits characteristics of both firms to a certain extent.

The structural characteristics of Beanster's which resemble that of a Service organization are:

1. Production and consumption takes place simultaneously. As majority of food and drink items are customized, they are prepared only if there is a demand for the specific item.
2. Direct interaction between the customer and the employee is high. Even though they do not interact with the employees preparing their food directly, they interact directly with the employee taking their orders and the employees serving them. The treatment they receive from these employees, apart from food quality affects the perception of service received and customer's level of satisfaction.
3. Rapid response time is an extremely important factor that affects the level of customer satisfaction. For Beansters, serving the food in timely manner during rush hours (such as lunch hour) is a critical issue. They have to be fast and uncompromising with their products and services so as to avoid long queues and cut down on waiting time for the customers.
4. Site and facilities is extremely important for Beanster's as it should be located at the most easily accessible location. Hence it has separate outlets at the North and Central campus so that they can provide their services where the customers want it.

The structural characteristics of Beanster's which resemble that of a Product organization are:

1. Beanster's café, being into food sector produces tangible products like coffee, sandwiches etc.
2. The quality of their products is measure directly by the customers. Quality factors like taste, freshness of the products and hygiene of employees and food preparation methodologies are stressed upon to ensure high level of customer satisfaction.

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Departmental Technology:

Departments in Beanster's can be classified as consisting of a distinct technology. This part of the report analyses this nature and its relationship with the departmental structure.
The departmental activities can be classified into two dimensions; Variety and Analyzability.

VARIETY: The task variety refers to the number of exception in work or the frequency of unexpected and novel events that occur in the conversion process. When the manufacturing process encounters a large number of unexpected situations with frequent problems, the 'variety' is high. If the process tends to be repetitive with little variation in day-to-day jobs, as is the case with Beanster's, the 'variety' is considered low. The production process in Beanster's is quite routine and repetitive. The customer orders tend to be invariably the same and have no deviation from the products displayed in the catalogue.

ANALYZABILITY: The conversion process is analyzable, the work can be reduced to mechanical steps and the workers follow an objective, computational procedure to solve a problem. In case a problem is encountered, its solution involves simple or well-defined procedures, instructions which can be found in a handbook or manual.

Employee Response:

An employee of Beanster's was interviewed and asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 7 the following:

VARIETY	
To what extent would you say your work is routine?	7
Does everyone in this unit do about the same job in the same way most of the time?	6
Are unit members performing repetitive actions in doing their jobs?	6

ANALYZABILITY	
To what extent is there a clearly known way to do the major types of work you normally encounter?	6
To what extent is there an understandable sequence of steps that can be followed in doing your work?	6
To do your work, to what extents can you actually rely on established procedures and practices?	7

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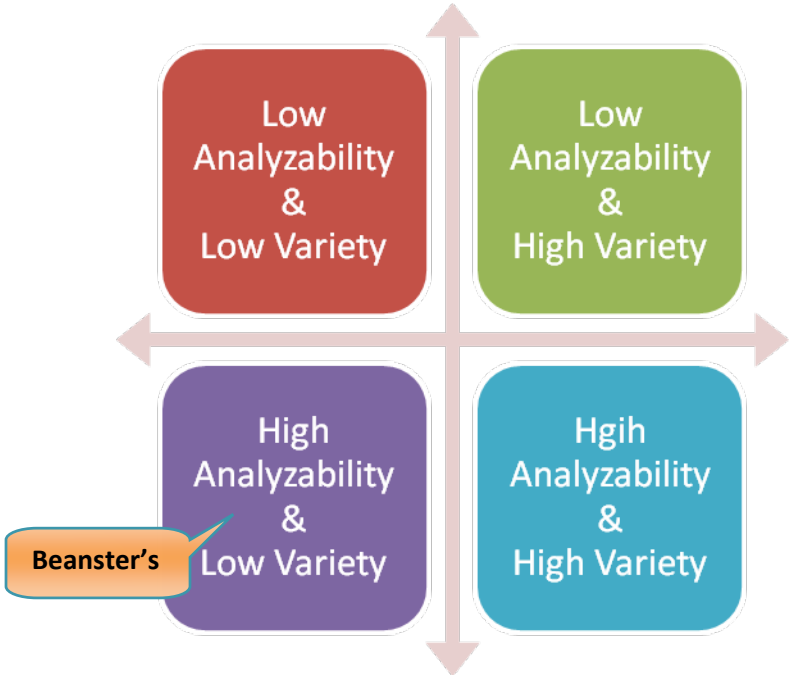
Framework for Departmental Technology:

Based on the findings of the survey and the information provided by the managerial entities, we can classify Beanster's according to the framework.



Beanster's figures in the 3rd quadrant with high analyzability and low variety. The departmental technologies are routine.

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Impact of Technology on Job Design:

Job Design

Job design includes the assignment of goals and tasks to be accomplished by employees

At Beanster's all the employees in various departments have been signed their jobs and boundaries clearly. They follow the policy of Job Enlargement. The workers are involved in performing boring, repetitive task and hence the policy of job rotation is implemented to give them a greater variety of task. Apart from that employees are cross trained and are well acquainted with each job so that they can fill in other's shoes in case of absentees. The managerial policy is to trigger job rotation whenever any employee starts getting too comfortable with any job. By doing this it is ensured that employees has through knowledge and skills of his existing duties and work environment and will perform efficiently in all departments. E.g. person in charge of preparing food for a week is assigned to work as a cashier for the next week so that in case that cashier is absent anytime in future the other employee will perform the task without compromising on the quality and efficiency.

Socio-technical Systems

It acknowledges the interaction of technical and human needs in an effective job design. The needs of the people should be combined with the organization's needs. The organization must be designed for joint optimization. It will function best only when the social and the technical systems are designed to feed the needs of one another.

Recommendations:

As stated earlier, the Supervisor controls about 37 student workers at a time. This may result in huge amount of work pressure on the supervisor. It also leads to confusion in some circumstances. Instead, the number of supervisors can be incremented to 3 or 4 so each one has to manage a small number of workers. This will lead to improvement interaction between the workers and the supervisors. As majority of the communication is verbal, flow of information throughout the organization will be better. The workers will feel more comfortable working in such an environment. The workers will have a better sense of belonging to the organization.

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