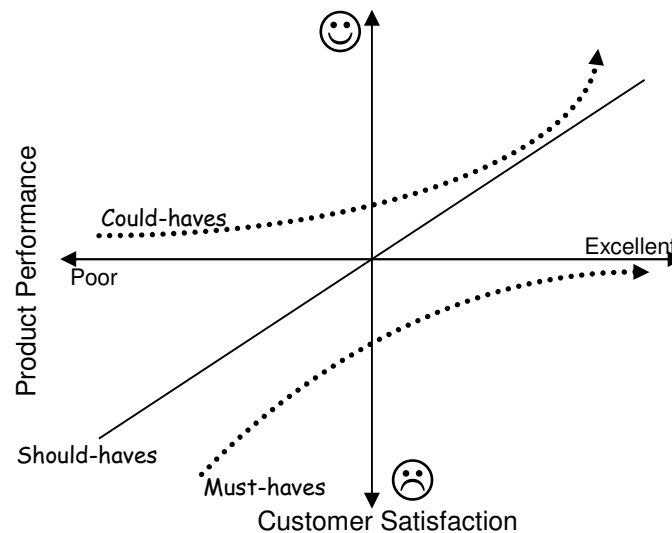# Basics of the Kano Model

The Kano model helps businesses understand which product attributes are <u>perceived</u> to be important to customers. The Japanese quality expert, Dr Noriaki Kano, developed the model. It relates three attributes "Must-haves," "Should-haves" and "Could-Haves" to their degree / level of implementation.

A Must-have attribute is something that a customer simply expects to be present. If it's not the customer will be annoyed. If it's there, the customer will neither be annoyed or delighted, e.g. clean sheets in a hotel; radio in a car. They should not be taken for granted and if you don't get these basic Must-have attributes right you will lose your customers.

The Should-haves can result in a feeling of neutrality if they are there, but annoyance if they aren't. They are usually already in your product / service, but are unseen, causing neither disgust nor delight. You need to think about how your company can improve these attributes to delight your customers e.g. fast check-ins at hotels; low fuel consumption in cars.

Could-haves are the attributes the customer does not expect, but if there may cause delight, e.g. flowers and wine in your hotel room when you arrive; a radio / iPod docking station in cars. These Kano factors though are not static, what is a Could-have today, may be a Should-have next year and a Must-have the year after. There are also international variations - what may be a Could-have attribute in the UK might be a Should-have attribute in the USA, for eaxample.

When using the Kano model, list the attributes of your product / service and for each one talk to your customers, (through customer surveys, interviews even complaints), and ask two questions:

1. Rate your satisfaction if the product / service has this attribute?; and
2. Rate your satisfaction if the product did not have this attribute?

Give the customers the following options for reply:
   a. Satisfied
   b. Neutral (its normally that way)
   c. Dissatisfied
   d. Don't care

For example, the following list was developed for a hotel:

Attribute	Customer expectation
Price	Must-have
Wireless internet	Should-have
Restaurant	Should-have
Breakfast	Should-have
Comfortable bed	Must-have
Gym	Could-have
Cleanliness of rooms	Must-have
Flowers in room	Could-have
Express check-in/out	Could-have

Must-haves generally receive a "neutral" response to question 1 and a "dissatisfied" response to question 2. These are the attributes you need to be careful of, (if it's there, the customer will neither be annoyed nor delighted, but if it's not they will be annoyed.)

Any attributes receiving a "don't care" response need to be treated with caution. They will neither delight nor annoy your customers, but they could play a critical role to the functionality of your product / service.

Once you have completed the list assess how strong or weak the company is against customer expectations, and how you can bridge the gap between what the customer expects and what you are delivering.

Growing a Lean Business

If you would like more information on the Kano model, and how you can use it as part of a long-term Lean programme to grow your business, please visit www.nicholsonconsultancy.com, contact us at info@nicholsonconsultancy.com, Telephone UK +44(0)1325 328 855 or follow us on twitter @nicholsonlean
– we look forward to hearing from you!