

The Value of Stakeholder Analysis in the Processes of a Textile Company

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Abstract

In applying the Stakeholder Analysis approach in the logistics department of a textile company, all stakeholders involved in the development of receiving, storing, controlling, separation and delivery of raw material processes were identified. Stakeholder Analysis allows knowing what generates higher value for everyone involved and their respective exchange value compared to what the company gives. The Lean Enterprise tool created a holistic vision in the department and its function within the company and the productive processes, with a shared value to achieve a high-performing company.

Keywords

Stakeholder Analysis, Strategy, Logistics, Value.

1. Introduction

The first question would be, why a project for improvement was chosen for implementation on a textile company, its worth mentioning that the current situation in the textile and clothing industry is going through an important moment of transition in Mexico, changes are being done, and this indicates positive aspects for the industry, by implementing strategies and solutions that help re-establish this industry, that has been left behind for different reasons; as an example: not having clear working strategies, lack of innovation, little impulse from favourable initiatives by the government, poor decisions taken analysis, few or non-tariff barriers that allow merchandise to be imported at an unreasonable price, which is nearly impossible to compete within national market (Dirección General de Comunicación Social, 2016; Presidencia de la República, 2015).

Given the situation in Mexico's textile industry from 2007 until 2012, a fluctuation in their economic indicators was shown, in a way that generated a degree of uncertainty according with its tendencies, which didn't benefit this industry, affecting its production and more significantly its exports, national sales and employment (SE_sector_textil_ind_ligera, s.f.).

According with published data by ProMexico (2013), in 2012, Mexico had a growth that generated climbing a position to move into fifth place as a supplier for US textile industry and clothing products. This situation generated growth in jobs offered in the industry during 2012 and 2013. In 2013, 428 thousand direct jobs were already registered from which 312 thousand were from the clothing industry and only 116 thousand from the textile industry. Regarding export in 2013, at regional level 58% of the exports were sent to the US, 37% to Latin America and the remaining 5% was sent to Asian and European markets.

In the 2015's report from the Ministry of Economy from Puebla the most important industries in the state were mentioned, turning out to be: automotive and auto parts, metallurgy, chemistry, plastics, textile and confection

among others, 3 of these are of great tradition: automotive, textile industry and metallurgy which is why it's important to find a way to improve these key industries. Particularly, it's been planned to amplify and strengthen productive processes from textile and confection industry through identifying strategies that allow worldwide competitiveness increasing in the state (Delegación Federal de la Secretaría de Economía (SE) en el estado., 2015). According to the National Institute of the Entrepreneur (INADEM), currently the output produced by Puebla State is ranked 3rd place as a nationwide producer which provides 11% of total production in the country (Dirección General de Comunicación Social, 2016). Nevertheless, there is still lots of work to be done for the textile industry to be able to re-establish the same strength it once had.

However, once explained the importance of the textile industry in the state of Puebla, it was decided to implement a project for improvement in a company from the industry to contribute to its development and to increase its productivity. The selected company is a medium-sized family business, rooted 35 years ago in Puebla's textile tradition that presented problems in its logistics department.

This logistics department is responsible of receiving, unload, storing, controlling, separation and cleaning raw material to manufacture the ecologic yarn for the company. This department had a disorder and poor controlling in the reported information, storage and productive processes (raw material separation and pressing). Basically, the raw material is the waste of several textile factories (rag) that are delivered in plastic bags and packs. The raw material is the largest cost in the company and it is equivalent to 50% of all costs. This is the area that has the initial production process and having it uncontrolled contributes to some uncertainty in the subsequent areas. Quality and productivity are directly affected by it.

The selected methodology to address the problem was *Lean Company Transformation*. Starting point from such implementation is the Stakeholder Analysis, which happens to be the purpose of developing this essay.

In this analysis the main strategy to be observed was the launch of the implementation from the previously mentioned improvement project. This strategy was used to pair up interests and expectations from all parties involved to a company's global strategy to achieve a holistic vision and generate a horizontal structure by project that lead to achieve the established goals as improvement points.

After making the diagnosis from the area, company's management office approved the intervention, developing the project in a period of 5 months, starting out in April, 2015. Immediate actions were considered for the next 6 months and improvements were visualized as well as savings in a year time.

To be able to start such implementation in the logistics department processes for its improvement, it was also important to gather together "all" the involved parties, because it's a common practice that the leaders of the improvement, start out their progresses in an isolated manner, only applying Kaizen events that provide quick wins, however, this approach is merely a step back and proposes to have a holistic vision before starting implementing such tools. Many times the involved parties are unknown to each other, the main actors are unaware of their roles, value expectations from each one are minimized and such values are not being measured, the exchange value among employees and the company.

Which is why a proper explanation of the analysis tool has to be done and its appliance will be shown as well as its implementation in a real case at the referred textile company.

2. Stakeholder Theory and Implementation

The actual word *stakeholder* first appeared in the management literature in an internal memorandum at the Stanford Research Institute in 1963. The term was meant to generalize the notion of stockholder as the only group to whom management need be responsive. Thus the concept of the stakeholder was originally defined as "those groups without whose support the organization would cease to exist." The list of stakeholders originally included shareowners, employees, customers, suppliers, lenders, and society. Stemming from the work of Igor Ansoff and Robert Stewart in the planning department at Lockheed, and later Marion Doscher and Stewart at SRI, the original approach served an important information function in the SRI corporate planning process (Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, & de Colle, 2010, p. 30).

Based on Freeman's concepts (1984), *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, formally defines the term, therefore, the concept most common someone can find into the books and several papers about description stakeholder is as "those groups and individuals who can affect or be affected by their actions" (Hörisch, Freeman, & Schaltegger, 2014).

Stakeholder Theory “has been developed over the last thirty years. In particular, it has been developed to solve or at least re-conceptualize several specific problems” (Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, & de Colle, 2010, p. 4), one of these is value creation.

Creation of value through the involved is according with a process that generates different actions. “Business can be understood as a set of relationships among groups which have a stake in the activities that make up the business. Business is about how customers, suppliers, employees, financiers (stockholders, bondholders, banks, etc.), communities, and managers interact and create value. To understand a business is to know how these relationships work. And the executive’s or entrepreneur’s job is to manage and shape these relationships” (Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, & de Colle, 2010, p. 24).

Now, we can observe that “most business school programs emphasize shareholders. The so-called quality movement prioritizes the customer. Stakeholder centricity is a fundamental tenet of company thinking, but it should never mean the primacy of a single stakeholder group. Every enterprise, in fact, has multiple stakeholder groups whose needs must be met.” (Nightingale & Srinivasan, 2011, p. 60).

“The company is actually a network of stakeholders configured by the flow of value, which moves between the company—which is also a node in its own network—and its stakeholders. Within that value exchange network, the company must satisfy those stakeholder groups, that is, it must provide sufficient value so that the groups are able to participate in the network” (Nightingale & Srinivasan, 2011, p. 61).

By mean of the Stakeholder Analysis, an understanding of all the individuals and groups that influence or are influenced by the company’s developed (Nightingale & Rhodes, 2015, p. 61).

The process for the Stakeholder Analysis is a way to get knowledge about what generates the value in the company to the stakeholder and at the same time what this one generates for the company, originating a value exchange, which produces a transformation that benefits both parts creating a bigger commitment, that leads them both to a common goal that is making them keeping such changes inside and outside the company.

According to Nightingale & Srinivasan (2011), “the analysis not only brings to the forefront, the disconnects and misalignments in the company value proposition, but it also provides an opportunity for the company to reflect on whether its value proposition is correct” (Nightingale & Srinivasan, 2011, p. 61)

The process of the analysis it’s elaborated throughout the following 4 lineal steps: identifying the stakeholders, prioritizing stakeholder groups, eliciting stakeholder values, and assessing the value exchange, as shown in figure 1.



Figure 1. Stakeholder Analysis process (Nightingale & Srinivasan, 2011, p. 61).

The first step in gaining a holistic understanding of stakeholder value in a company is “to determine the stakeholder groups and the key individual stakeholders within those groups” (Nightingale & Srinivasan, 2011, p. 61).

At the identification phase it must generate a first-order list of the stakeholder groups relevant to the company, to articulate who within those groups (be they individuals, organizations, or even, in some cases, entire markets) are essential (Nightingale & Srinivasan, 2011, p. 62). Through the identification phase was possible to produce a stakeholder map the logistics department. This map presents the prioritization of each one of them, that represent the second stage, which are established accordingly with the colour code, as can be seen in figure 2.

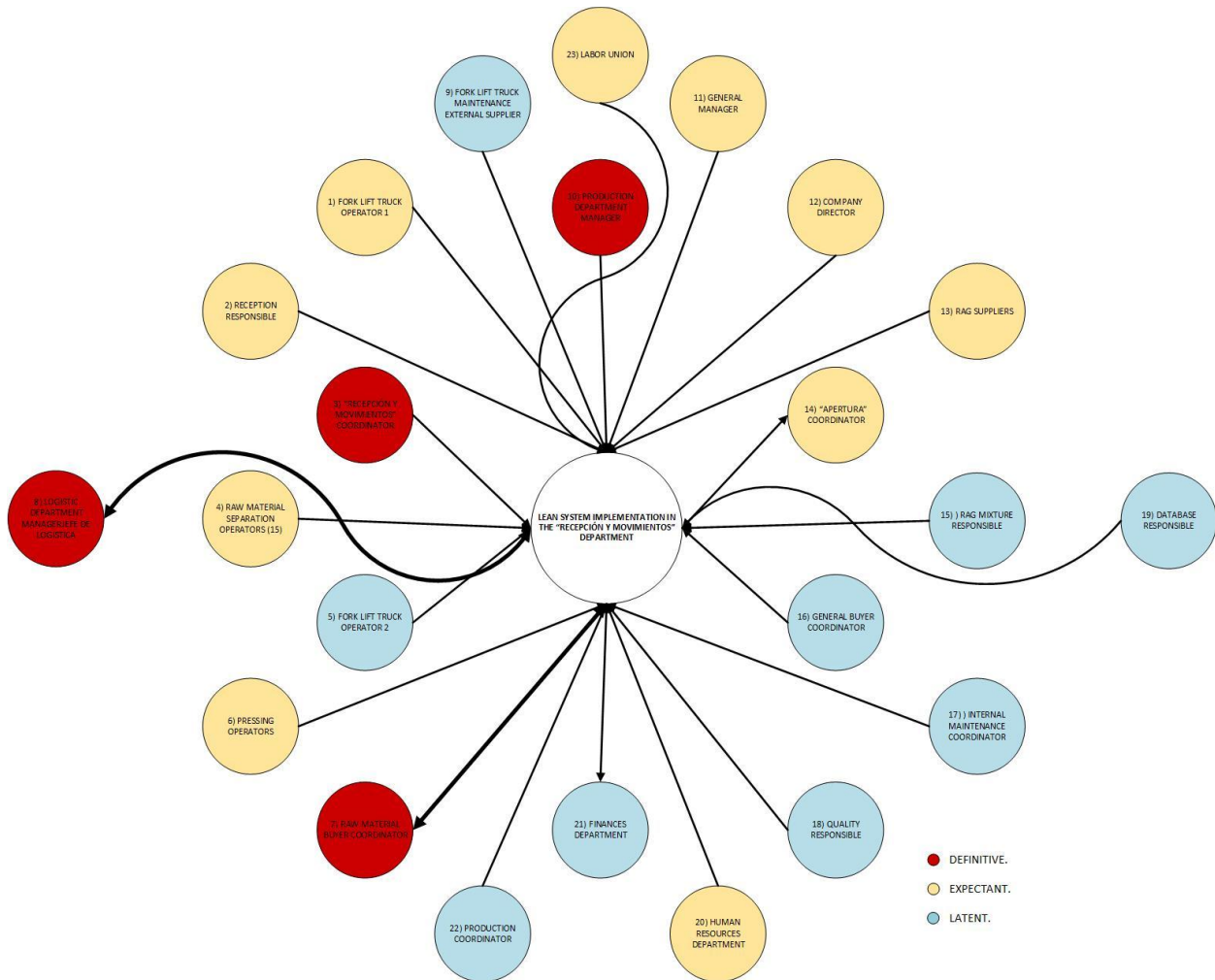


Figure 2. Identification and prioritization of stakeholders (2015). Self elaboration.

The company must understand that it does not have a responsibility to deliver value to all of its stakeholders equally. Therefore, this generates a list of stakeholder to allocate a prioritization. According to the different groups and individuals, an assessment of their relations among them had to be done, regarding the company systematically based on its relevance from all parties involved, based on the following attributes: power, legitimacy, and/or urgency¹, according to framework developed by Mitchell, Angle, and Wood (1997) in “Toward a Theory of Stakeholder Identification and Salience: Defining the Principle of Who and What Really Counts” (Weber & Marley, 2012, p. 628). In relation to the number of attributes that correspond to each involved party, it’s a way of categorizing them. Definitive stakeholders are those that possess all three attributes and are those whose values must be met. Expectant stakeholders possess any two of the three attributes and are those whose values should be met. Latent stakeholders possess one attribute and are those whose values could potentially be met (Nightingale & Rhodes, 2015, p. 51). Elaborating the prioritization of the parties involved is been shown in table 1, where you can observe the definitive (4), expectant (10) and latent (9).

¹ (Nightingale & Srinivasan, 2011, p. 67)

Power: Stakeholders possess power in their relationship to the company. It's presented in three forms: coercive (defined as a tool to inflict punishment, able to force control), utilitarian (seen in the materials, goods and services, or rewards of the stakeholder), and normative (understood as symbolic or in the forms of the stakeholder’s prestige or esteem) means by which they impose their will in the relationship. **Legitimacy:** Defined as "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions". **Urgency:** Defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as "calling for immediate attention" or "pressing"

Table 1. Stakeholders prioritization (2015). Self elaboration.

Stakeholder	Power	Legitimacy	Urgency	Type of stakeholder
“Recepción y movimientos” coordinator.	X	X	X	Definitive
Raw material buyer coordinator.	X	X	X	Definitive
Logistic department manager.	X	X	X	Definitive
Production department manager.	X	X	X	Definitive
Fork lift truck operator 1.		X	X	Expectant
Reception responsible.		X	X	Expectant
Raw material separation operators (15).		X	X	Expectant
Pressing operators.		X	X	Expectant
General Manager.	X	X		Expectant
Company director.	X	X		Expectant
Rag suppliers.		X	X	Expectant
“Apertura” coordinator.		X	X	Expectant
Human resources department.	X	X		Expectant
Labor union.	X	X		Expectant
Fork lift truck operator 2.			X	Latent
Fork lift truck maintenance external supplier.			X	Latent
Rag mixture responsible.			X	Latent
General buyer coordinator.			X	Latent
Internal maintenance coordinator.			X	Latent
Quality responsible.		X		Latent
Database responsible.			X	Latent
Finances department.		X		Latent
Production coordinator.		X		Latent

Once identified and prioritized each one of the involved parties that intervene in the logistics department, the next step in this case was to obtain the value that the company deliver to the employees, taking also into consideration the definitive.

In this step of value elicitation can be observed the value that stakeholders get from the Company; specifically evaluate the company, measuring what delivering value is giving to groups and individuals from stakeholder. Somehow the approximate efficiency in the delivery from involved parties it’s been measured and this has to be also taken into consideration.

So, it shall be kept in mind that, “value is the worth, utility, benefit, or reward that stakeholders expect in exchange for their respective contributions to the company” (Nightingale & Srinivasan, 2011, p. 72)

The obtaining of the delivered value was done through interviewing each employee that intervened in the logistics department, using a simple rank scale from 1 to 5 to point out the results from definitive and expectant, as can be seen in tables 2 y 3, respectively.

Table 2. Value delivery for the definitive stakeholders (2015). Self elaboration.

Assessing importance and value delivery for the definitive stakeholders		
	How well is the enterprise delivering this value?	How important is this value for the stakeholder?
Reliable information in the time needed	3	5
Commitments and necessities compliances	3	5
Teamwork and labour environment	2	4
Effective communication	3	5
Machinery, material and tools in good condition	2	5
Information technologies	2	4
Trained operators	2	5

Table 3. Value delivery for the expectant stakeholders (2015). Self elaboration.

Assessing importance and value delivery for the expectant stakeholders		
	How well is the enterprise delivering this value?	How important is this value for the stakeholder?
Have material available for program	3	5
Respect arrivals program	5	4
Supply the material banks on time	4	5
Have a better incidences format	5	5
Have baggage in good condition	3	4
Order and cleanliness in the area	5	5

Once obtained the results, which released the value exchange generated regarding the activities of interest, carried in the logistics department, then it proceeded to evaluate the data of definitive stakeholders.

Once the value was obtained through interviews with each interested party, it continues with an effective method of analysing the value delivered to each stakeholder is through quantifying the importance of each value to them as well as the performance of the company in delivering on each value. This is one of the most important roles to be performed by the Stakeholder Analysis, since it must be an “objective analysis” to the extent possible (Nightingale & Rhodes, 2015, pp. 50,44).

In this step the importance of delivering value that certain points -have in particular from collecting -relevant data of the company and the interviewed actors concerning the developed project was visualized and it shows how aligned or misaligned they were from each other from both party points and also know themselves had shared goals together.

In this project the value exchange of the definitive stakeholders was analysed. It has shown representative aspects for the improvement project, however it does not rule out for other ends to analyse the expected stakeholders, which also has an important role in the company.

According to collected data from the assessment to value it’s display in a graphic that forms a simple matrix of 2x2, as shown in figure 3.

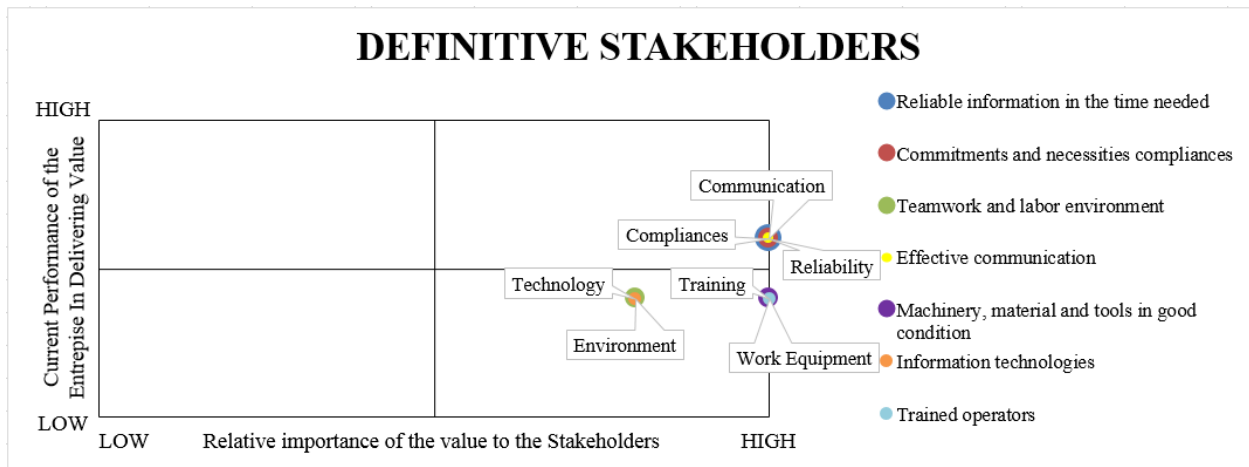


Figure 3. Value Exchange Analysis (2015). Self elaboration.

3. Analysis of results

In the analysis of the obtained results, you can observe a disconnection in the value exchange from the company towards definitive stakeholders, also certain misalignment of the relative data to the importance that it provides to each one of the selected involved points against what the company delivered.

The first point is *“reliable information in the time needed”*. There is a positioning value in the upper right quadrant, but it doesn't mean that an adequate value exchange could be found between the company and the stakeholder, which is confirmed in table 2 from the definitive ones. A variation that allows to verify the handling of the information reported of incoming raw material and storage in aisles should have not entirely be trusted, so when a certain amount of raw material with certain characteristics was required (according to requested client's specifications) to manufacture the product, it wasn't assured that it could be located accordingly to what it was reported in the system to which was unable to be found in the site. This causes in repeatedly occasions the purchase of merchandise that was already in storage and as a result of this an inadequate inventory or in some occasions the belayed delivery of client's requests, caused by not knowing an accurate lack of raw material in the storages. Therefore, this result supports one of the metrics yet to be improved in the company about confirming the reported entered raw material that will be storage in the company.

A value of importance for stakeholders was *“commitments and necessities compliances”*. This value is measured the same way as above mentioned, in the four quadrants graphic you could observe the same position, not having a connection between the involved parties and the company. The value in the logistics department and the company involves receiving, uploading, raw material storing, same as the provision of worked material, according to the client's specifications (based in colour, material texture) to comply the programming production in time, which implied a higher responsibility to each working sub-area. The derivate value from the exchange aligns, with one of the metrics from the production increase, favouring the established strategy as the following step of this improvement implementation.

A third value that emerged was *“teamwork and labour environment”*. To be found in the lower part from the graphic by the right quadrant. The observed given value provided by the company is low in response to the one given by the interested parties, resulting in a new valuation of it as a start point for improvement involving the labour environment, in this case, the order and cleaning of the sites from the sub-areas. Also using the same principal analysis from stakeholders developed in this project.

In regard to the given value of *“effective communication”* it's assessed with the same perception as the 2 first value exchanges, as shown in fig. 3 from the graphic. Effective communication is of high importance for personnel from the different sub-areas, since facilitates finding out the scheduled activities or those that happen at last minute, this will allow preventing or acting in case something might occur and sudden changes from specific task or extra activity that has to be performed. This point will be solved in next following steps of this investigation and implementing an improvement strategy of the department, using as a start the implementation of a horizontal structure in the company.

The next given value point was *“machinery, material and tools in good condition”*. This is drawn according with the result of the value exchange in the right low quadrant, until reaching horizontal edges from the graphic. According with the collected data from this value, a great lack of interest was observed regarding how the before mentioned logistics department activities were being developed, most of these are performed manually, however, this doesn't mean that the use of tools is required, as well as machinery and material to get the job done. Within the department is heavy duty machinery required to transport raw material from one aisle to another or from one sub-area to another, same as press equipment is needed to pack up raw material that is not being requested and could be stored. Use of cleaning material that also allows improving labour sites; it implies supporting the third point in the delivery value for definitive ones, which speaks to us about the labour environment same as the used material to secure their integrity (Industrial Safety equipment).

Among the points that also emerged in the delivering value *“information technologies”*, located in fig.3 in the graphic, low quadrant to the right, which means that it represents low interest in it from the company, not so for the involved parties since its considered essential to achieve a better control in the department. An accurate data base was not available on which you could add correctly the information, as well as periodically kept updated registers

and any other activity that took place, despite getting the desired value is of great support in order to achieve the goal of turning reliable information in the requested time.

At last in the evaluation of the value exchange “*trained operators*”, obtained a high result among the parties involved meanwhile the company gave it a low score, since they located it on the right lower quadrant. This indicates that the parties involved consider important to know more about their activities without considering the advantage that it will generate for their stakeholders because they will get larger knowledge in the developed activities as well as better feedback on working performance and also better development of the roles that they represent on each of their companies.

The results obtained in the execution of the analysis were taken as the basis for the strategic management of the implementation of a larger project, using the necessary methodology tools *Lean Enterprise Transformation* in the logistics department.

4. Conclusions

The creation of the value is not an easy matter within the environment of the company, since analysing the importance of the performed activity by each stakeholder doesn't imply that each of these same points of value exchange are of great relevance for the company. However, this demonstrates that in most cases, there are large disconnections and misalignments between involved parties and company, allowing noting that the spaces are sometimes gaps and they generate differences in many of the complicated situations in the environment of the organization, influencing the performance and commitment of those involved towards it. This also gives the opportunity for the company to reflect if the given value is the correct one – recalling that the concept of value is important to be able to think in holistic manner- where organization environment and their processes allow alignment with the involved parties, creating somehow a transcending sentiment that could develop potential skills in each one involved.

The stakeholders section must be carefully identified, because it could miss out the use of essential personnel for the organization or even take a greater number of stakeholders that do not affect or aren't affected by the activities to develop. As for prioritizing them, they should be properly studied, as this will considerably influence by giving relevance and proper classification to the number of attributes, which could influence within value exchange, and therefore generate incorrect changes that will turned out to give mistaken analysis of the involved parties (intern and/or external) in the organization or company. It's worth to consider important that stakeholders are dynamic, meaning that they could change their position between determinant-expectant-latent depending on environmental circumstances.

Another important aspect to note concerning value is not just about fulfilling expectations from all parties involved, this value exchange projects out of the company, positioning it in markets in which it participates; as previously mentioned in the introduction, markets vied for products that are imported legally but with prices on which it's nearly impossible to compete with, along with fraudulent goods, this type of companies place in a delicate position the permanence in the market. A correct interaction with stakeholders and making a common front would ease up dealing with these types of barriers.

Making the implementation of the performed analysis of the logistics department, from each of the relevant points, allowed visualization of the given value for them, also allowed noticing how far or aligned from main goal towards the organization was, as well as their involvement in it. Therefore, applying this analysis was of great aid not just for the department but to all involved parties.

As last point, participants should totally be considered as key part of the strategy in each one of the areas since they have larger knowledge about strengths and weaknesses from the department or from each area of the company, including external activities to it but equally related to, providing observations of great benefit to the organization, which will generate greater efficiency and effectively.

In this research they collected data, from which the obtained result aid to identify the value exchange between stakeholders and the company, allowing permeate the object from the project to obtain a holistic picture, opening

doors for implementation of other tools from *Lean Enterprise*; and at the same time to use a horizontal structure by roles, providing that no matter hierarchical position of the participants, but the role that they represent in the project with their responsibilities and duties towards the “project” itself and company’s productivity. Different working models would get established, depending on the needs that were noted in the research findings as well as the new challenges of the company and market.

From what is proposed in this practical implementation work, it is expected to be taken as a role model for companies interested in making transformation in their business.

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