

# 6

## Quality management in the spa environment

According to Matthews and Wells (2008: 169) "If quality is to be delivered in the operations, then the 'systems must fit the philosophy' of the spa". In other words, the spa's mission, vision and values should be the starting point for producing a quality guest experience.

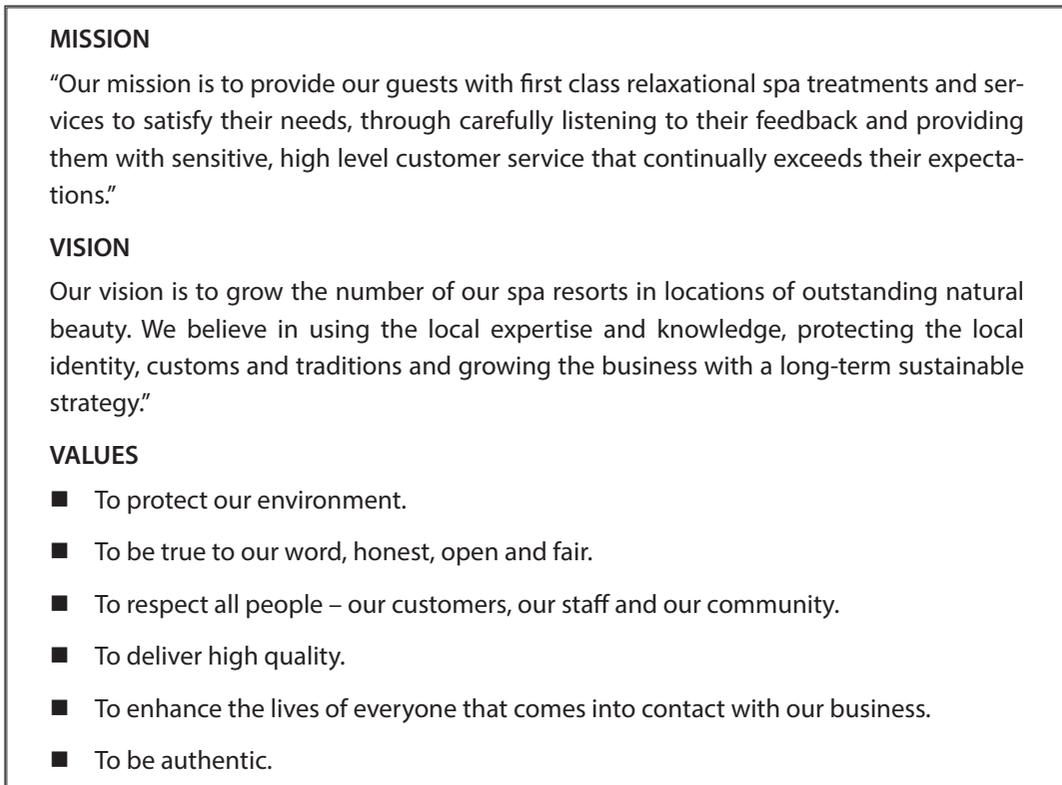
- **The mission statement** is the reason for the organization's existence. A mission statement does not describe a specific outcome and should contain no time limit or measurement. The mission statement provides the basis for the setting of the company's goals.
- **The vision statement** should define what the organisation seeks to become. It should generate human energy and engagement. In other words, it should provide direction and a focus for the organisation.
- **The values** are the beliefs behind the organization's vision and mission. Values give dignity and direction to the mission.

(Wittington, 2016)

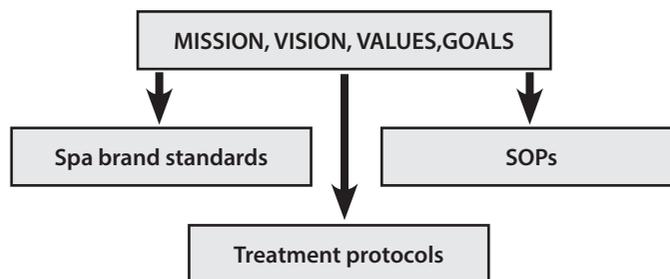
In short, a mission states what a company is about, a vision where that company wants to go in the future, and its values are the beliefs. Figure 6.1 is an example of a typical spa mission and vision statement.

Elements of the mission, vision and values statements are then combined to provide a more detailed statement of the company's purposes and goals. Some of these goals will be actualized through integrating them into the quality systems, others will be incorporated into the developmental strategy of the spa – "the role and function of operations management involves a broad range of spa processes and procedures in an effort to meet the needs and interests of the consumer" (Samkange, Simba & Baker, 2017: 83).

If the starting point for a spa quality system is the mission and vision, there are certain systems that are essential in both the delivery of quality service and the continuous and ongoing improvements needed to meet the expectations of the spa goer.



**Figure 6.1:** Example of a typical spa’s mission, vision and values.



**Figure 6.2:** Spa brand standards, SOPs and treatment protocols are all derived from the mission, vision and values.

## Spa brand standards

The mission, vision, values and goals are the building blocks for a spa brand, but for the brand to have meaning there must be clear, concise standards to ensure that the services deliver a consistent and uniform spa experience. Brand standards are normally written, then approved by the directorship and released to the team

in the form of a brand manual. What has been written into the brand standards and manual is expected to be realized in the operation.

Brand standards are essential as they:

- **Ensure operational and brand continuity:** this means that in each department the guest should experience the same level and quality of services and treatments. If it is a spa chain with several locations, the brand standards will ensure that the level of quality in spa X will be the same as in spa Y.
- **All staff are clear on what is expected:** once the standard has been written, approved and communicated, it is then set. For example, if it is written into the standard that all therapists must wear their name badge on the right-hand side of the chest, from that point on there is no need for any discussion or debate about it. On the other hand, if this is not written into the standards, then staff will have free range to make their own choices. A name badge is just one small example, but when it comes to room presentation, guest communication etc, the necessity for logical and uniform standards becomes essential for both the service delivery and smooth communication between the manager and staff. The more detailed and specific the standards the higher the chances of a quality operation.
- **Ensure that the operation is being checked according to the set standards:** brand standards will set the expectations for what should be delivered in the operation. There will also be a regularity of when these standards are checked. By having regular checks that are written and recorded, the management can be assured that the operation is being run professionally. Of course, the level to which these standards are delivered will depend on the quality of the standards and the checks themselves (for which there are control systems which will be discussed later in the chapter).
- **For training purposes:** lastly, the spa brand standards will form the backbone of what will be delivered in the staff training. Training courses will be built around the various standards and incorporated into the staff induction, orientation and ongoing training.

## ■ **Maintaining the brand standards**

Sometimes the brand standards will just provide a written expectation of what should be delivered at a specific moment in time in a specific location in the spa. Other times they might include work processes as well or they may be a combination of both.

Figure 6.3 shows the brand standards of a treatment room. In this particular example, at any time of the day, the treatment room in this spa should be adhering to the points listed in the figure. The standards have been broken down into what is expected with regards to the staff, the technical elements, the state and maintenance of the fixtures and fittings, the cleanliness and the presentation.