

The ABC University Cafeteria

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A new student center has just been completed and opened for business at ABC University. It contains a bookstore, a barber shop, a cafeteria, a bowling alley, and meeting rooms and offices. The building is two stories high and is located at the center of the campus adjacent to the library. The cafeteria occupies part of the first floor of the building. There is no other major cafeteria on campus. However, there are two small snack bars located in the basement of the buildings that house the colleges of business and engineering.

The university is a private one with an enrollment of about 20 thousand students. Its campus occupies an area of 1,500 acres. The university is a comprehensive one that is considered a major educational and cultural center in its state. Usually, there are many visitors to the campus attending major sports events (the university has an excellent reputation in both football and basketball), seminars, and cultural events.

The cafeteria layout is illustrated in Figure 1. The food serving area is circular in shape and consists of five counters. Counter A is a salad bar that also contains desserts and fruits. Counter B is for beverages and condiments. Hot plates (meat, fish, vegetables) are served at Counter C. Counter D is known as the international food counter and contains very few simple items (Mexican, Chinese, and Middle East food). The fifth counter is known as the grill and serves pizza, hot dogs, hamburgers, bread, and some pastries (Counter E).

Counter B is circular in shape and in its middle are the beverage tanks surrounded by the condiments. Counter E contains a microwave oven for heating bread, pastry, slices of pizza if the customer desires. The heating is done by the attendant while the customer is waiting in front of the counter. There is also a large electric oven for the pizza that is located beside the grill. The kitchen

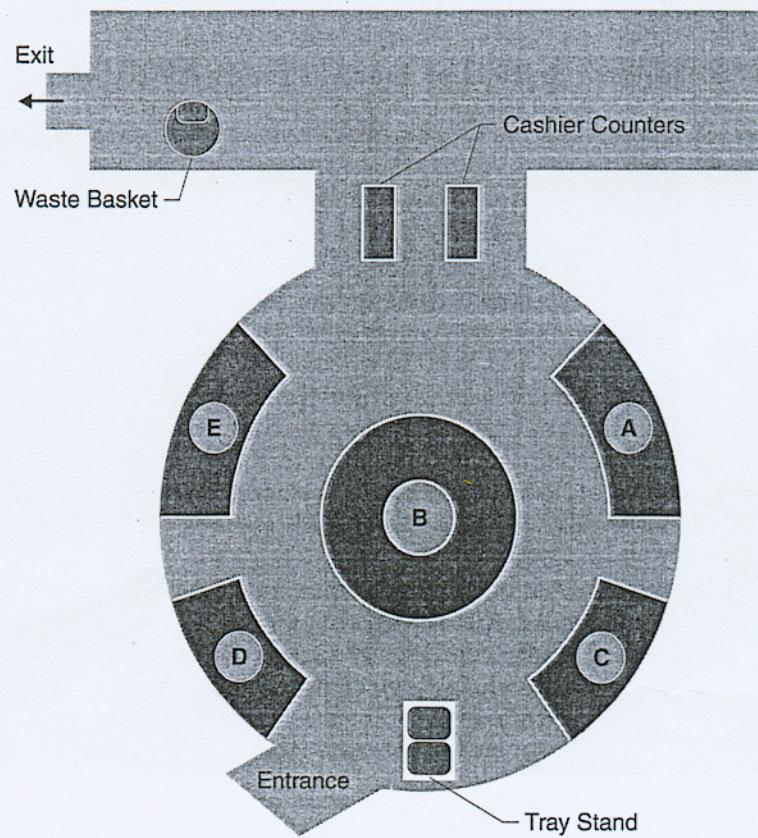
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door is behind Counter C. The size of the food serving area is reasonable and no space problems are detected. The five food counters are not identified by signs and customers have first to look at what is in each counter before deciding on what to choose. Further, there is no menu anywhere in the food serving area or near the entrance.

The check-out counters are located and arranged as shown in Figure 1. There are two counters each occupied by a cashier. At the entrance to the cafeteria two stands for trays and utensils are located adjacent to each other as shown in the figure.

Near the exit of the eating area, there is a conveyor belt where the customers are supposed to place their trays after finishing eating. This belt was not operating when the cafeteria opened for business and is expected to stay like that for three months. In the mean time, customers have to stay in line near the exit in front of a worker who takes the tray from the customer and empty it in large waste baskets. There are two such workers each working at \$5/hour. The eating area is divided into two sections; smoking and non-smoking. There is only one entrance to the food serving area and one exit in the eating area.

FIGURE 1 Current Cafeteria Layout



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the consequences of the current arrangement of the cafeteria?
2. Can the cafeteria layout be improved? How?
3. Whose responsibility is the current layout: the cafeteria manager or the architect?