

Problem Solving

Skills for tackling a problem: part 1 Scenario 1

The delivery for a the retail company I work for (Harrods) has come up as a late delivery and this is just before the christmas weekend. Turns out the delivery has been stuff in traffic due to poor weather conditions, what this now means is that the inventory for the store to open with full stock available at hand while not be possible. So as a delivery manager it is your responsibility to make sure that the shop floor is stocked and ready to trade the following day when open at 7am.

What this complex situation can do to the human mind and health psychologically and mentally can change a persons behaviour and manner towards working. Mentally you will feel like theres a load on your shoulder and it is your responsibility to fix the issue at hand. These kinds of daily problems can cause a lot of stress to the mind and body and make you feel demotivated at times. With situations like this a store Manager has to have the ability to critically assess the situation and make a decision on what to do next and how to fix the problem. You need to weigh out the pro's and con's and come to an understanding of the problem and how to solve it affectively.

What is critical thinking?

A person with critical thinking skills is able to understand the logical connections between ideas and come up with a solution, they also identify, construct and evaluate an argument to make decisions under the circumstances. Detecting inconsistencies and common mistakes in reasoning plays a part in problem solving and critical thinking as it also requires you to think systematically. You also have to be able to identity the relevance and importance of ideas within a working team to come up with an unbiased opinion and conclusion.

Critical thinking is not a matter of accumulating information. A person with a good memory and who knows a lot of facts is not necessarily good at critical thinking. A critical thinker is able to deduce consequences from what he knows, and he knows how to make use of information to solve problems, and to seek relevant sources of information to inform himself.

Critical thinking should not be confused with being argumentative or being critical of other people. Although critical thinking skills can be used in exposing fallacies and bad reasoning, critical thinking can also play an important role in cooperative reasoning and constructive tasks. Critical thinking can help us acquire knowledge, improve our theories, and strengthen arguments. We can use critical thinking to enhance work processes and improve social institutions[1].

The importance in critical thinking is being able to thinking rationally and clearly and being able to problem solve and think well is an asset to any given career. The economy is now driven by technology and new ways of innovative management skills and working ethic which means the employment requirements are higher and changing on a regular. Thinking critically enhances our ways of communicating and expressing ideas, also in learning how to analyse the logical structure of texts improves comprehension abilities and develops our learning skills.

Critical thinking is that term of thinking about any subject, content, or problem, in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skilfully analysing, assessing, and reconstructing it for it to be a better situation and tackling it for future reference

Understanding Organisational analysis & communication skills: part 2

Identifying the key influencing factors to an organisation: PEST analysis

Political factors that influences the work environment; Harrods.

There are many different factors that can affect your business. It is normal for managers to assess each of these factors closely and ensure they are being taken care of and looked into. The aim is always to take better decisions for the firm's/companies progress. Some common factors are political, economic, social and technological (PEST). Companies also study environmental, legal, ethical and demographical factors. Factors such as minimum wage and setting increases or decreases on tax rates such as VAT or Corporation Tax. Below, is a list of political factors affecting business: [3]

- Corruption level
- Freedom of the press
- Tariffs
- Trade control
- Anti-trust law
- Employment law
- Discrimination law
- Data protection law
- Environmental Law
- Health and safety law
- Competition regulation
- Regulation and deregulation
- Tax policy (tax rates and incentives)
- Government stability and related changes
- Government involvement in trade unions and agreements
- Import restrictions on quality and quantity of product
- Intellectual property law (Copyright, patents)
- Consumer protection and e-commerce
- Laws that regulate environment pollution

And there are also 4 major main effects of these political factors on business organisations;

Impact of economy: The political situation of a country affects its economic setting. The economic environment affects the business performance.

Changes in regulation: Governments could alter their rules and regulations. This could in turn have an effect on a business

Political stability: Lack of political stability in a country effects business operations. This is especially true for the companies which operate internationally

Mitigation of risk: Buying political risk insurance is a way to manage political risk. Companies that have international operations use such insurance to reduce their risk exposure. [4]

Economical factors that may affect the work place. Economic factors play a large part in deciding and problem solving of how a company makes its decisions mostly their financial ones. Examples of economic factors affecting business include:

- Interest rates
- Exchange rates
- Recession
- Inflation
- Taxes
- Demand / Supply

There is no doubt that in this day and age the social media platform has become hugely a part of most high profile companies and corporations. The use of Facebook, twitter and instagram has become very popular for the younger consumers and this generation. Its adapted to become a aspect in most businesses these days as it helps profit the company in many ways.

The social factors that may occur to affect the workplace or company would be from the following:

- Consumer Preferences
- Generational Differences
- Social Responsibility
- Religious Beliefs

External factors in technology that impact business operations. Changes in technology affect how a company will do business. A business may have to dramatically change their operating strategy as a result of changes in the technological environment.

General examples of Technological Factors affecting business include:

- The existence of 3D technology.
- Computer calculation speed/power.
- The ability of computers to create truly 'random' numbers.
- Engine efficiency.
- Internet connectivity.
- Wireless charging.
- Automation.
- Security in cryptography.

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AC 2.2 - Letter to the Line manager

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing this letter to explain to you the impacts that a PEST analysis can do for the company (Harrods) and its profit for the future. The political, economical, social and technological factors that affect the business have their pros and con's.

The political factors that affect the business are ranged from taxes, government fees and trade union agreements meaning the company has to pass these laws in order to trade and keep the company going. The economical factors that affect the business would be the exchange rates, the recession and the cost of demand and supplying for the inventory.

The social factors that influence the company would be the rise in social media platforms for the younger generation, the use of social media to sell and advertise the company and the stock (online orders) and also the use of high profile celebrities promoting the brand and the company through social media platforms. It allows the business to flourish and prosper to the new technology.

The next factor of the PEST analysis is the technological factors that affect the business. This I believe links to social media. Consumers use technology to promote, sell and the whole production is all based on technology nowadays. Everything from admin work, paper work for new employees, employee payslip viewing and rota's, customers buying and returning, checking stock etc. It can now all be done through the use of technology on our phones, iPad computers and laptops.

Therefore I would just like to say that the use of a PEST analysis is required in all established companies in order for it to flow thoroughly and efficiently. Thank you for taking the time in reading about the company's pros and con's.

Yours Faithfully,

Mohammed Anis Mirza

AC 3.1

The term 'Employee behaviour' is the way in which employees respond to specific circumstances and situations in the work environment. While many elements determine an individual's behaviour in the workplace, employees are shaped by their culture and by the organisation's culture.

The key influencing techniques to manage the behaviour of employees. Organisations can achieve their goals and objectives only through the combined efforts of their employees and it is the task of management to get work done. Employee performance management is fundamental to the effective operation of organisations (Laurir J. Mullines, Management and Organisational behaviour 2007, 410).

Key influencing techniques of the management of managing the behaviour of employees. The key influencing techniques of managing the behaviour of employees one can be the concept of having one to one meetings on a regular basis with every employee ensuring that they are being assessed and managed of their work ethic and how to improve it. These are also known as performance appraisals.

Employee management provide scheduled meetings for discussion of work progress, so employees receive the feedback they need to help assess their accomplishment and to know where they stand. It is a big important factor when employees in the organisation understand how their work contributes to the success of the company, morale and productivity usually improve.

4.1-

The usage of technology in the organisation has helped and supported businesses all over the world. The use of social media and internet has allowed many companies and businesses simply start from there. Nowadays lots of businesses have become successful due to social media and use of technology.

One key advantage for Harrods has been the use of iPad's, iPhones and being able to browser online for items as well as coming into store to do so. You can now place orders, apply for gift cards, browser the stock check all through the use of technology!

Another advantage for having technology in the work environment it gets the work done quicker and more efficiently. It cuts a lot of time out meaning more work and tasks can be done during the period given.

The disadvantage for the technological aspect in any business would be the lack of customers they get physically. People depend so much on technology that they do not use the old fashioned way of just going into store.

Another disadvantage for the business is that other businesses will find newer and innovative ways to make profit through the use of technology and keeping up with the changes can be difficult and coming up with newer techniques becomes a challenge for the business.

Also another disadvantage may be that having cutting-edge technology is an ongoing expense. There are initial purchasing costs, as well as ongoing maintenance, updates and training expenses that are required to keeping up with the new technology changes.

Another issue may be that in businesses when it comes to the employees using technology it can become a distraction to them and cause them to not work, meaning the work load builds up as the

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employees are distracted and not focussed on the task at hand. The use of technology can have its disadvantages and advantages like in every aspect of the work environment. It just means being able to balance it out and learn how to make the work environment a place of learning and getting the work done.

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