

**University of Wales**  
**Trinity Saint David**

**Assessment**  
**On**  
**The workplace problem**

**Moodle name: Problem Solving and Decision Making (BMSW 4004 –London)**

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**Introduction**

This assignment aims to identify and analyze a complex problem in the context of a potato chip manufacturing company. The problem is a conflict between the heads of the Packing department and organization department over the preparation of a goods outward slip. The conflict has resulted in a delay in the dispatch of the goods, and this is resulting in increased costs and a negative impact on the company's buyers. The assignment will analyze the case problem, analyze

the information, apply situational analysis models, and suggest various alternative solutions to the problem. Besides, the report offers a detailed implementation plan and a communication program for stakeholders to resolve workplace problems.

## **The workplace problem**

The case study presents a conflict between the heads of the packing and organization departments in a potato chip manufacturing company. The packing department head believes that the goods outward note is part of the dispatch of goods process and should be prepared by the dispatch department. However, the organization department head believes the packing department is responsible for the organized movement of goods and not the preparation of internal documents such as the good's outward slip.

As a result of this conflict, the production and dispatch of goods has been disrupted, leading to increased late delivery charges and a negative impact on the company's buyers. The profitability of the company has also been affected. The management consultant, Mr. A has called the two department heads to discuss the problem and find a solution.

The conflict between these two departments is affecting the company's operations as the dispatch of manufactured goods has been stopped resulting in late delivery charges and a negative impact on the company's buyers. The case problem is the conflict between the packing and organization departments over the preparation of the goods' outward slip, which has led to a disruption in the production and dispatch of goods and a negative impact on the company's profitability.

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## **Analysis Information**

It is clear from the information that has been presented in the case study that the disagreement that has developed between the packing department and the organization department is the result of a misunderstanding of the roles that each department plays and the responsibilities that each department is responsible for. The head of the packing department believes that the dispatch department is responsible for the preparation of the good's outward slip, whereas the head of the organization department believes that the organization department is responsible for the organized movement of goods but not for the preparation of internal documents.

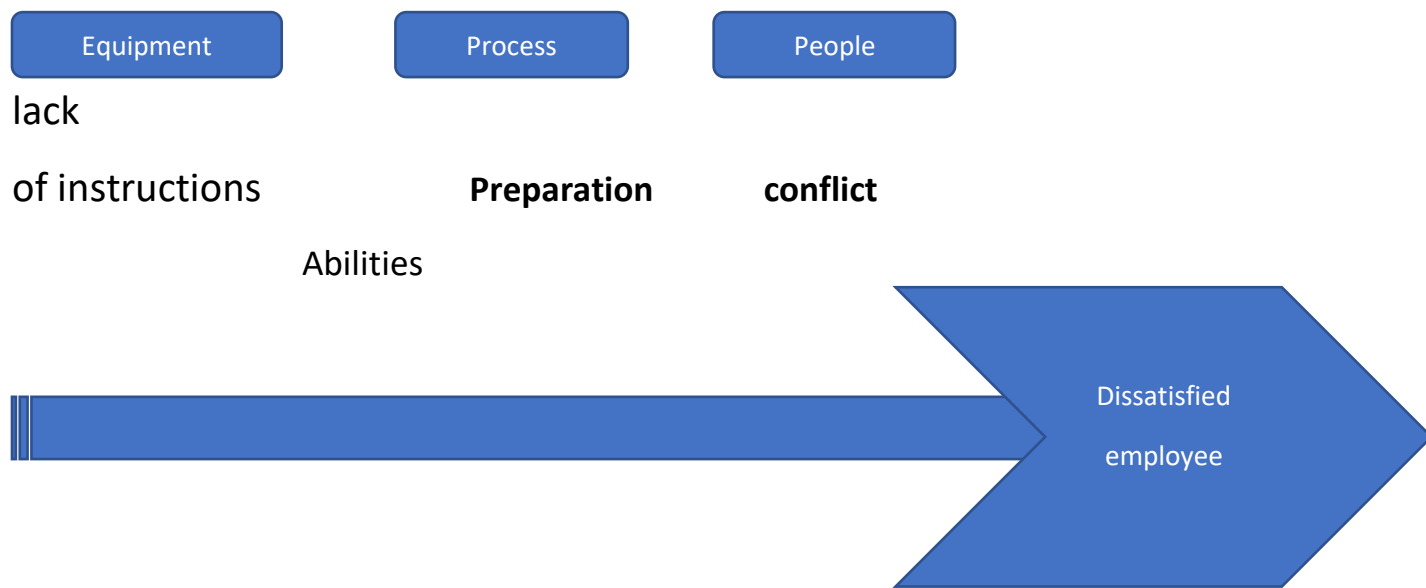
In addition, the head of the organization department has brought up the issue of the department being understaffed, which prevents them from taking on the additional job of preparing the items export slip. When analyzing the data, it is critical to consider the perspectives of both parties involved. It is essential to consider both the effect that the delay in the shipment of the goods

has had on the customers of the company as well as the extra expenses that have arisen as a direct consequence of the delay.

## Root Cause Analysis (RCA)

The root cause of the problem in the case study is the lack of clear communication and coordination between the packing department and the organization department. This lack of communication and organization has led to a conflict over the preparation of the goods' outward slip, which in turn has caused a delay in the dispatch of the goods and an increase in the cost of late delivery charges.

To identify the potential causes of the problem, a Fishbone diagram can be used. The diagram shows the four main causes of the problem: People, Processes, Systems, and Environment.



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**People:** The people involved in the problem are the packing department head and the organization department head. They both have different opinions on who should prepare the goods outward slip, which has led to a conflict.

**Process:** The process involved in the problem is the dispatch of goods, which includes the preparation of the goods' outward slip (Junker et al., 2021). The packing department head believes that the dispatch department should prepare the goods outward slip, while the coordination department head believes that the organization department should do it.

**Equipment:** The system involved in the problem is the company's internal processes and procedures for the dispatch of goods. The lack of clear guidelines and procedures for the preparation of the goods' outward slip has led to confusion and conflict between the two departments.

**Environment:** The environment in which the problem is occurring is the competitive business environment of the potato chip manufacturing industry (Junker et al., 2021). The delay in the dispatch of goods due to the conflict has had a negative impact on the company's profitability and customer satisfaction.

To filter out the potential causes of the problem and identify the actual causes, data and information can be collected from various sources such as interviews with the people involved in the problem, review of the company's internal processes and procedures, and analysis of the business environment. This data and information can then be analyzed to identify the root causes of the complex problem.

Therefore, the root cause of the problem in the case study is the lack of clear communication and coordination between the packing department and the coordination department. This lack of communication and coordination has led to a conflict over the preparation of the goods' outward slip, which in turn has caused a delay in the dispatch of the goods and an increase in the cost of late delivery charges. To identify the problem's actual causes, data and information can be collected and analyzed using tools like the Fishbone diagram.

Applying Situational Analysis Tools

## PESTLE Analysis

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The PESTLE analysis is a useful tool for understanding the external environment in which a business operates. By looking at the political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental factors that may affect a business, it can help to identify potential opportunities and threats (Szabo et al., 2020). In the case study above, we can use the PESTLE analysis to understand the conflict between the packing and coordination departments, and to suggest alternative solutions.

Political factors:

In the case study, there are no specific political factors that are affecting the conflict between the packing and coordination departments. However, it is possible that the government's regulations regarding the handling and transportation of goods could be relevant to the dispute (Junker et al., 2021). For example, if there are strict rules governing the preparation of goods' outward slips, then this could cause confusion and lead to conflict.

**Economic factors:**

The economic factors that are relevant to this case study include the cost of late delivery charges and the impact on the company's profitability. As the conflict between the packing and organization departments continues, the company is incurring additional costs due to late deliveries (Hasle et al., 2019). This is impacting the company's profitability and could potentially lead to financial difficulties in the future.

**Social factors:**

The social factors that are relevant to this case study include the impact on the company's customers. As the shipments are delayed due to the conflict between the packing and organization departments, the customers are likely to be frustrated and dissatisfied. This could lead to negative word-of-mouth and a loss of customers in the long term.

**Technological factors:**

In the case study, there are no specific technological factors that are relevant to the conflict between the packing and organization departments. However, it is possible that the use of technology could help to resolve the issue (Puccio et al., 2019). For example, the company could invest in software that automatically prepares and checks goods outward slips, which

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would alleviate the burden on both departments and allow them to focus on their core responsibilities.

**Legal factors:**

The legal factors relevant to this case study include any regulations governing the handling and transportation of goods. As mentioned above, if there are strict rules in place that dictate how goods' outward slips should be prepared, then this could be contributing to the conflict between the packing and organization departments. It is important the company understands and complies with these regulations to avoid legal difficulties.

**Environmental factors:**

The environmental factors relevant to this case study include the impact of the company's operations on the environment. If the conflict between the packing and organization departments is causing delays in the dispatch of goods, this could increase transportation emissions (Junker et al., 2021). This could have negative consequences for the environment, and the company should consider ways to minimize any environmental impact

### Range of Alternative Solutions

#### Alternative Solution 1:

One solution to the problem in the above case study is for the packing department to take on the responsibility of preparing the goods' outward slip. This solution has the advantage of being more efficient, as the packing department is already responsible for packing the merchandise as per the orders, and thus they are already familiar with the merchandise and its destination (Frank & Kluge, 2017). In addition, this solution would eliminate the need for the organization department to take on extra work, which they are already struggling with due to being understaffed.

#### Alternative Solution 2:

Another solution to the problem in the above case study is for the organization department to take on the responsibility of preparing the goods' outward slips. This solution has the advantage of providing a check and balance system, as the organization department would be responsible for both preparing the goods' outward slips and checking the merchandise to be shipped. This would ensure that the merchandise being shipped is accurate and in line with the orders. In addition, this solution would allow the packing department to focus on its core responsibilities, namely packing the merchandise (Szabo et al., 2020).

#### Using the Weighed Decision-Making Matrix:

To evaluate the alternative solutions and select the most appropriate one, we can use a wide decision-making matrix. In this matrix, we would assign different weights to several factors that are important in this decision, and then evaluate each solution based on those factors (Junker et al., 2021). For example, factors that might be important in this decision include efficiency, accuracy, and workload.

| Solution                                   | Impact company profitability | Impact customer Satisfaction | Impact department workload | Impact internal communication and collaboration | Impact company reputation | total |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| Packing department takes on responsibility | - 5                          | 0                            | -5                         | +5                                              | 0                         | -5    |

|                                                                                    |    |   |    |    |   |   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|----|----|---|---|
| ty of preparing goods outward slip                                                 |    |   |    |    |   |   |
| Organizati on departmen t takes on responsibili ty of preparing goods outward slip | -5 | 0 | +5 | +5 | 0 | 5 |

After assigning weights to the several factors and evaluating each solution based on those factors, we can then determine which solution is the most appropriate. In this case, it is likely that the first solution, where the packing department takes on the responsibility of preparing the goods outward slip, would be the most appropriate, as it provides the highest level of efficiency and allows both departments to focus on their core responsibilities

Implement the Solution

Gantt chart

| Task   | Activity | Predecessor | Duration |
|--------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Task A | Task A   | 2           | 3        |
| Task B | Task B   | 2           | 2        |
| Task C | Task C   | 2           | 1        |
| Task D | Task D   | 2           | 3        |
| Task E | Task E   | 1           | 2        |

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| Key Activities<br>Week Number                             | Week 1-3                                                                            | Week 3-5                                                                            | Week 5-6 | Week 6-9 | Week 9-12 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Analyse the causes of the conflict                        |  |                                                                                     |          |          |           |
| Collaboration Between packing and organization department |                                                                                     |  |          |          |           |

|                                |  |  |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Prepare goods outward slip     |  |  |  |  |  |
| Dispatch of manufactured goods |  |  |  |  |  |
| Monitor progress               |  |  |  |  |  |

## Communication Plan with Stakeholders

The stakeholders in this case are the Packing department head, the organization department head, and the management consultant.

Influence/power and interest matrix:

| Stakeholders                 | Influence | Power | Interest |
|------------------------------|-----------|-------|----------|
| Packing department head      | High      | High  | High     |
| Organization department head | High      | High  | High     |
| Management consultant        | High      | High  | High     |

## Stakeholder Communication Plan

| Stakeholders            | Power Interest | Key interest | Communication vehicle | Frequency  | Comments                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Packing Department Head | High           | High         | Listening             | Continuous | The two department heads should work together to agree on who is responsible for preparing the goods' outward slip. They should discuss the costs and benefits |

|                              |      |      |              |            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------|------|------|--------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                              |      |      |              |            | associated with each option and come to an agreement that works best for the company.                                                                                                                                                              |
| Organization department Head | High | High | Negotiations | Continuous | First assess the situation and identify the root cause of the conflict between the two departments. Once the root cause has been identified, the consultant should facilitate a meeting between the two departments and come to a mutual solution. |
| Management Consultation      | High | High | Negotiations | Continues  | The management consultant should first evaluate the situation and pinpoint the underlying reason the departments are at odds.                                                                                                                      |

### Monitoring Techniques

To monitor the effectiveness of these solutions, a variety of techniques could be used. For example, the company could implement regular audits to ensure that the goods' outward slip is being prepared and checked properly. Additionally, the company could track the number of late delivery charges incurred and compare this to previous periods to determine if the solutions are having a positive impact.

Overall, it is crucial for the company to address the conflict between the packing and organization departments and find a solution that ensures the smooth and timely dispatch of goods. By implementing clear guidelines and responsibilities, increasing communication and collaboration, and using effective monitoring techniques, the company can address this complex problem and improve its overall efficiency and profitability.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the conflict between the packing and organization departments over the preparation of goods' outward slips is a complex problem that is causing harm to the company. To resolve the conflict and prevent further damage, it will be important for the company to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each department, provide necessary resources and support, and establish a cross-functional team to work together on the preparation of the slips. By addressing the underlying causes of the conflict and finding a solution that addresses the concerns of both departments, the company can improve its operations and prevent further harm to its business.

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## **Role-Play**

### **Problem Solving and Decision Making**

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Two department heads, namely the Packing department head and the organization department head in a potato chip manufacturing company are having a conflict over preparing goods outward slip. The head of the packing department thinks the goods outward note is part of a dispatch of goods process; therefore, the dispatch department is required to prepare it. On the other hand, the organization department head believes that the organization department is to arrange for the movement of the goods from the company place to the buyer place or any other place. They are responsible for the organized movement of goods, not internal documents like outward slip goods.

Both departments have stopped making the goods slip outward, which slip outward and that is why the dispatch of manufactured goods has stopped. There has been a delay in the dispatch of the goods, and it is negatively impacting the company. The cost of late delivery charges has increased and that is why the profitability of the company is affected.

**Mrs. Luiza:** Management Consultant

Mr. Olufemi: Dissatisfied employee

**Mrs. Luiza: Question 1.**

**So, I have** heard about the conflict that you are having currently about the preparation of goods outward slip. I called you to discuss it.

**1.** Can you explain to me what the problem is Mr. Olufemi

**Mr. Olufemi: answer 1:**

Yes, sure. I am the Packing department head in this company and our department is responsible for packing the merchandise as per the orders. We are responsible for making packing slips, but the actual movement of goods is done by the organization department. They should be making goods outward slips and not the packing department. That is why I have been refusing to accept this responsibility.

Mrs. Luiza. **Question 2.**

Mr. Olufemi, I can understand you are not satisfied with the organization department, but your department is so important in the company.

**2.** Can you, Mr. Olufemi, reach an agreement with the organization department about preparing goods outward slip?

Mr. Olufemi: **answer 2.**

The management Consultant should have thought about it before. If you think that it is important to reach an agreement, this problem should not have continued for so long.

Mrs. Luiza.

As you know, the company suffered huge losses last year and we were looking at every department, that is why it took so long.

**Question 3.** I see. Do you want to add something Mr. Olufemi

Mr. Olufemi: **answer 3.**

Yes, I certainly do. I am the head of the packaging department, and my responsibility is to cooperate with the organization and delivery of the goods to the destination. To do this, we depend on the external goods slip as we need to check both the packaged goods and the actual goods to be shipped. I do not think the creator and controller should be the same person. If I create external goods slips, I will have to check them myself during shipping. Also, we are already understaffed. Therefore, I am unable to take on this additional responsibility.

Mrs. Luiza:

I hear both of your concerns, but the thing is, because of this conflict, our shipments are delayed, and the company is paying late delivery charges to the customers and not to mention the negative impact being created on the customer's mind. That is why we must produce a solution to this problem as early as possible.

Mrs. Luiza: **Question 4.**

Mr. Olufemi: What do you suggest we do so that you reach an agreement so that you do not have this conflict?

Mr. Olufemi: **answer 4.**

Based on all the problems and conflicts that we have as a department; I would suggest that you as the consulate manager give us a solution as soon as possible so that the company does not suffer losses from these disagreements.

Mrs. Luiza:

I will analyze the causes of this problem and effects it has on the company as a whole and let you know how we should proceed further. But, until then,

I urge you to work with the organization department on this so that the company does not have to suffer.