

**UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID  
DEVELOPING WORKPLACE CRITICAL THINKING  
(BMSW4005\_LON)**

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**TABLE OF CONTEXT:**

**Primark introduction.**

**Attitudes, beliefs and values are important for a workplace.**

**Management theories.**

**Critical thinking model.**

**Recommendations.**

**Conclusion.**

**Reference.**

## **Introduction**

This report will be based on how critical thinking is of fundamental importance for managing an organization, analyzing problems and making decisions. The values and ethics of companies are the fundamental pillars to be pursued and must be respected in a situation when a decision is to be made. The report will be based on a famous world retail company as Primark that has implemented many strategies in recent years to achieve this famous brand today, but above all it will analyze how the company has been influenced by the Covid19 pandemic, managing to restart its business as soon as possible; it will also evaluate the values within Primark that regulate the internal policies that must be carried out by all the shops, in the same way, to guarantee uniformity by the company. The report will conclude with the application of various models that are or could be followed by the company and a final recommendation using appropriate critical thinking. ( Jarche 2010)

## **Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is a skill that can be acquired by an individual, but requires a careful and long learning process; this skill is based on the ability to be able to collect information on a topic and draw an appropriate conclusion without being influenced by external factors, but by adhering to rigorous information. Critical thinking required time to be learned by an individual because he must be able to make the right judgement; to make the right decision about a topic the individual must be able to understand other people point of view, their perspective of a point and he must do it without any prejudices or bias; moreover, excellent critical thinking must distinguish facts from opinion. It is necessary for critical thinkers to imagine and explore alternatives, in other words, to expand the information about the topic and try to examine it from all the points of view. It is mandatory to carry out excellent critical thinking on the part of the individual to provide a judgment with clarity, accuracy, consistency, depth, breadth and fairness. ( Aghazadeh 2018)

## **Primark and its Critical Thinking**

Primark is an Irish Fashion Retail company with 390 stores in over twelve countries around the world. Primark after more than forty years of his foundation as became one of the major leading points of reference for shopping for men or women in the whole united kingdom. Over the years, the public has been attracted by the ethics of Primark which is based on providing the customer with quality clothing at affordable prices. (Blazquez, 2021).

The idea of giving people the opportunity to change their clothes often was the winning move for Primark which, making careful market analysis, evaluated how fashions have been changing too quickly in recent times, restricting the number of buyers; through a careful market critical thinking over the retail shop Primark has understood what the retail public required most, that is to be able to keep fashionable over time by spending an affordable amount. Primark over the years has used a different strategy from its competitor while others have opened their companies to online sales, which have depopulated in recent years, offering their customer all kinds of facilities to receive the desired products as soon as possible and in perfect condition; Primark has turned to an internal policy aimed more at the daily life of the customer who therefore aims at quick purchases, perhaps before the customer goes to work or during lunch breaks. After careful critical thinking, the management of Primark evaluated how opening more stores around the big cities was more convenient than online sales it allowed not only huge advertising for the logo but also curiosity in the public that visits their store even when not out with the idea of shopping. ( Primark ,2021)

Another important point of view helped Primark in the choice to be made regarding the economic impact of the introduction of online sales, they opposed it because it

was seen as not profitable for the profit of the company. ( Jolly and Butler,2020). In other words, Primark introducing online sales would go against its ideologies aimed at selling quality products at low prices, the cost for packing and shipping would have been more than the product itself, not considering the cost for lost or requested parcels problems customer exchanges and refunds. ( Jack, 2021).

From an environmental point of view, Primark has a desire not to adhere to home deliveries of products is also because it is one of the world-renowned organizations at the retail level most active in favour of the sustainability of the planet; in fact, Primark has created within its company a specific branch that deals with the environmental impact of its stores and how to make them eco-sustainable as much as possible. Online sales would have put a stop to Primark ideas on safeguarding the planet. (Robertson, 2020).

The problems for the strategy of Primark began when the Covid 19 pandemic has started and gradually each state declared national lockdowns where all non-essential stores were closed to limit the spread of the virus and save as many lives as possible. Primark with all the venues closed and without an online sale did not have the opportunity to obtain any kind of gain for the entire long period of lockdown, the company had to face the crisis and close many stores to save its economy, but the losses were still unimaginable. No one in every sector could foresee such a scenario, especially the retail market which found itself blocked and away from its customer, especially company lacking online sales; the management of Primark could not foresee such a disastrous situation, they have chosen to adopt a conservation strategy, that was to following the governments' lockdowns closing all the 375 venues around the world, safeguarding employees and customers live and wait for the situation to return to normal and safe; also they evaluated that a quick and improvised launch of their brand in the online market could have aggravated the losses even more. Primark wanted to send signs of strong attitudes of resistance to bad times and confidence in the future to its employees and customers, not being intimidated by the possibility of losing its customers to competitors with online sales, in fact in the company there is the awareness to be a staple in the global market and despite the bad moment for everyone, Primark resisted and wanted to launch some new shops after the lockdowns around the world where ending, anticipating the excitement of customers in being able to go back to shopping as before. ( BBC,2021)

## **Attitudes, Beliefs and values in a workplace**

Each organization has its ethics to follow to show its principles to the world, in such a way as to entice people to be interested in working or doing business with the company; a company to form ethics needs to establish attitudes and behaviours, needs to guarantee the same rights and instil social values over the workplace to its workers. (Cohen, 1991)

### **Attitudes**

The ability of the employee to instil a good attitude during the shift is very important because it provides the worker with the necessary motivation to perform his role in the best possible way. Making the worker understand the importance of his job and making him feel important, is the best way for the company to have a positive impact on his work and transmitting trust to the customer. A good attitude in a workplace is essential for a good company that wants to have excellent customer service because the employees reflect the company to the public and this is why their way of working is important to convey to the customer a good feeling with the organization. (Taylor S.,2021)

### **Beliefs**

Every workplace must guarantee every employee the same rights, educating any member of staff to mutual respect, from the point of view of cultural diversity. There can be a lot of differences between the culture of all the employees of a workplace, but it is of fundamental importance by the management to make feel everyone comfortable and avoiding any prejudice. Every organization must have a body that deals with personnel and is specialized in understanding the different cultures present in the workplace in such a way as to guarantee equality and an impersonal judgement in situations. (Bauer et al. 2007)

### **Values**

For a company is of fundamental importance to transmit integrity to the world because it increases the trust of customers and the reputation of the organization in the public, for this reason having strong values that are carried forward by its workers is the goal of most of the entrepreneur of success. The impact of the values given to a company is the basis of the foundation of the organization itself if its moral ethics were not respected, the company would lose its morality. Moreover, The values provided to the company and its employee are some ethical rules to follow to respect others and achieve personal and company goals in the best way possible. ( Coen, 1991)

## **Attitude, beliefs and values in Primark.**

Primark has several values that it has been following for years and has introduced into the working life of its employees, in fact, one of the major ethical values on which Primark is based in the acceptance of the different cultures and the inclusion of each individual in the workplace; Primark has been almost to take into account all kinds of diversity of many cultures, having over 180 different nationalities as an employee. Another fixed point for Primark is the ethics of equal work, that is, that every employee who holds the same role receives the same salary. Primark promotes equality among workers and is against child labour. Primark is committed to the ecological sustainability of the company and is one of the active organizations in the retail sector in favour of the environment; the company also does not produce any type of a product of animal origin and does not have any type of business with those who use it. The main ethics of Primark is therefore to provide high standards of work, with fair wages and clear equality and respect among all workers. (Primark,2019).

Primark has been enforced to promote its ethics especially after the reopening of the lockdown to ensure customers and their employees' safety during their stay in all the venues around the world. Precise anti-covid regulations have been adopted by the company which must be followed in each store. Moreover, to satisfy customers, the exchange and refunds times of the products have been extended. (Primark 2021)

## **Management theories**

Management is the set of actions to be implemented for an organization to achieve its set objectives and make choices regarding the various topics to be addressed during management. An entrepreneur must have a good knowledge of management and the theories that derive from it, to be able to better manage the company and ensure that its employees follow its ethics and values. (CFI,2015).

## **Taylor Management theories**

Taylor Management theories were formulated by Frederick Taylor that was one of the first management consultants of history. He was an engineer who was looking for a way to increase production in the textile sector which was his field. The fundamental mindset of Taylor was to encourage and valorize the hard worker of the company and paying them back monetarily; in other words, one of his major points of view was to give rewards to the best workers. He supports in his theory the idea of dividing the various task within the company to the various workers based on their best skills. The objective of the organization that agrees with this theory is to not waste the efficiency of each worker and to monitor it in the best possible way, making the worker always the same duty and promising great rewards to the best employee. The theory of Taylor is heavily based on daily meritocracy and it is very different from other theories because here the worker has to prove that is at the

level of the company day after day. The three major components of Taylor theories are measure, monitor and control of the workers to make them feel the pressure and importance of their work for achieving success and efficiency. In this theory there is no emphasis on initiative or innovations on the part of the worker, only productivity is important. This theory can be applied in those organizations, where there is no tendency to trust and gratitude on the part of the worker, but to a continuous turnover of personnel with a new desire to affect the market. ( Taylor, 2003).

### **Human Relation Management theory**

Human relation management theory was ideated by Elton Mayo who was looking to find a way to increase the productivity of workers; he focused his study on the behaviour of employees in the workplace and how productivity change in different conditions of work. The theory of Mayo is based on the importance of human relationships within the company and how they influence the progress of the worker, that is, it defines how a worker that is satisfied and grateful for his job performs better. It is important for the management of an organization that wants to base its ethics on human relations within the staff to understand that they have a social duty to their work they have to educate them to mutual respect and acceptance to diversity, avoiding conflicts and prejudices. This theory, therefore, aims to show how a worker motivated by management and who feels accepted by his colleagues, makes his work more effective and constant, but above all pleasant for himself, compared to one who is constantly stressed in achieving goals. ( Robinson 2021)

### **JIT Theory**

Just in time theory was ideated by Taiichi Ohno, Vice President of Toyota, who was looking for an idea to increase productivity to respond to the increase of the demands from the buyers. The philosophy of this theory is based on reducing errors and waste during production and providing the customers high quality, by strengthening the relationship between the supplier and producer with less spoilage and obsolete. A company that chooses to use them just in time theory certainly wants to increase customer satisfaction by reducing errors on the part of the staff and at the same time wants to reduce the cost of wrongly made products through particular attention required of the staff. It is also necessary to take into account the production and sorting times of the product with must be respected in order not to disappoint expectations. (Barlow,2015).

## **Scanlon Human Relation Approach**

The Scanlon plan is a managerial theory to improve the effectiveness of the company through the use of combined skills such as excellent leadership and good employee participation that get rewards if the organization achieves the set goals. The main problem with this theory is that if each sector of the company does its job perfectly and collaborates with its colleagues from other departments, the organization will be able to achieve results; while if someone does not properly perform their duty, the company will suffer because the other staff member will not be able to complete their task perfectly. (White K.J. 2017)

## **Theory of X and Y.**

The theory of X and Y was ideated by Douglas McGregor and is based on the different styles of management to adapt in different contexts. Good management needs to be able to adapt to the workers in front of him, understanding their needs and motivating them in the right way. This theory can be adapted to small businesses, but result impossible to be adopted by big organizations for the reason of time management and equality to everyone. (Indeed Editorial Team 2021).

## **Bureaucracy Management theory**

Bureaucracy management theory was conceived by Max Weber around the 19th century when organizations were expanding into territories, increasing jobs and the popularity of the company rate soared. Therefore, the fulfilment of social duties towards employees and customers had become an obligation for the company. The theory is based on the equality of workers and the absolute opposition to favouritism among employees and above all on the management of customers by the staff in an exemplary manner and without discrimination. An organization needs to be regulated by laws and a fixed hierarchical construction that enforces them to be exemplary to the public. It is important in a bureaucratic organization to divide the tasks between the various departments and then between the various employees themselves based on their skills in such a way as to ensure greater efficiency in the performance of each employee. In a bureaucratic company good management aims at the development of the employee, both from the career and social point of view, at impersonal personnel management and a careful rigour in following rules to achieve a high level of efficiency. (EPM, 2009.)

## **Primark Management**

The management of Primark follows the Bureaucratic theory, the organization owning over 370 stores in different countries, needs management that makes the work done by the various store coincide in the same way everywhere, to make customers feel comfortable in some venues by Primark; each store is governed by rules and a fixed hierarchy and divides the work among the workers. (Essay, 2017). Primark had to adopt rules that comply with anti-covid19 regulations, adopting security measures such as social distancing and a maximum of people inside the store. These new laws have resulted in long waiting times for customers, creating inconvenience, but the management of Primark is required to respects its ethics in which the safety of employees and customers comes first. (Primark 2021)

## **Critical Thinking model**

Critical thinking model guides to learn the ways of thinking to manage a company and make the right decision following the values of the organization.

Companies use these models to act, always following straightforward ethics. (The Foundation of Critical Thinking)

## **Red Model**

The Red Model of critical thinking describes the work to be performed by an individual to collect information on a topic to make an impersonal judgement. The model is seen as a process that is divided into three parts: Recognize assumptions where information is collected, without confusing it with the opinions of others, evaluate arguments where one thinks about the information taken and draw conclusions where judgements are reached in an impersonal way based on information collected. ( Davis, 2013).

## **De Bono 6 THINKING HATS METHOD**

De Bono Thinking Hats is a guide for a business manager on how to interpret their working days based on the different daily duties in the workplace to make the right decision for the organization. The manager must be able to regulate his attitudes on the tasks and circumstances and to transmit the same impact to employees. This method is based on the ability of the manager to adapt to any eventuality and be seen as a trusted figure by employees and customers. (The De Bono group)

## **Alfaro Lefevre 4-Circle CT model**

Alfaro Lefevre 4-Circle CT model is a critical thinking model based on how to learn critical thinking ability. The model is divided into four parts where a process concerns the growth of the individual in collecting information, analyzing it and commenting on it on the subject. An individual will need to know the characteristics of correct critical thinking so as not to make mistakes when going to issue a judgment, an individual will need to be provided with intellectual skills to be combined with critical thinking skills to fulfil the job correctly and efficiently; interpersonal and self-management skills where the individual must be able to have acquired an impersonal judgment and self-control

of his attitudes; an individual needs to know technical skills to be able to do various research on a topic and make an appropriate judgment after comparing multiple parts. ( Alfaro- Lefevre, 2013).

## **6 Steps of Critical Thinking**

6 Steps of Critical Thinking is a new idea of thinking according to which the individual has to face a process every time he is faced with critical thinking and has to divide the various phases into six parts. The first step for the individual is knowledgeable about the topic because is important to know the details of the situation. Second step a good critical thinker is a person who understands the situation and dynamics. After steps third and four, he will analyze the data in possession of his personal experience and he will simulate every solution at the issue for formulating a judgement. In point five, there will be a synthesis of the ideas and solution and will evaluate the fairest and following the ethics of the company. In the last step, there will be the announcement of the decision made by the individual, where the objective is to resolve the situation impersonally and correctly. ( Elmanansy )

## **Benner Novice to expert Theory**

Benner Novice to expert theory is a guide to a right approach of an individual to a new job, a way of thinking for a person who wants to enter a business and climb the hierarchy; the theory is divided into five phases of work by the individual in which there is improvement in work and social skills. The first part is reserved for the beginning of the work, in which the novice will be trained and monitored at all the time by his supervisor, will have to follow the rules and instructions scrupulously and will have to be very careful in acquiring new skills and experience. The second step concerns the advancement of the individual, after having acquired confidence and skills in his work with experience, he will be able to concentrate on improving his weakness in the workplace. The third step is based on the efficiency achieved by the individual after some years of experience on his job and on the constant scrupulousness in completing his duty efficiently. In the fourth step, the individual will have achieved such experience and confidence in his work that he will be able to start deciding through critical thinking of his past experiences. The fifth step is based on the maturity reached by the individual in which, he will find his strength and work motivation and it will be his task to instil it in the rest of the team. ( Petiprin)

## **Primark Management Model**

Management of Primark over the years has focused a lot on gathering information on what customers appreciate from a retail chain, as well as in the red model, Primark has focused his interest on gathering information and careful analysis of the market. The most difficult choice was found in the renunciation of online sales during the lockdowns, but the market analysis had been the focus to the possible gains compared to the losses and had assessed how a possible negative impact could have occurred. From the point of view of integration and positive attitudes towards new employees, Primark provides a careful guide on its website where people looking for a job can find every detail on careers opportunities in the organization based on their skills and experience. Primark provides ongoing training to develop its workers and provides them with various benefits and rewards. (UKEssay 2018)

## **Recommendations**

Primark must carefully evaluate the current and future situation through careful critical thinking and understand which is the right model to follow because times and situations change and must be ready for external and internal factors that can change the market. The company faces serious problems such as long lines to enter or pay in shops that lead to public discontent, the Primark Management system inside the shop is sometimes slow, they had assigned each employee to a single duty, without any decision-making power, therefore must be a passage of information in the hierarchy scale for any problems, reducing the efficiency of the company that aims at careful and precise care of the customer who does not like to wait. Primark has respected its ethics in these difficult times of the covid 19 pandemic, evaluating how the opening to online sales would have a disastrous impact on the environment, the organization being an active testimonial in sustainability, could not go against its ethics and disappoint the many people, including employees and customers, who believe in their values. (Gisby, 2020).

## **Conclusion**

This report analyzed the importance of having acquired excellent critical thinking to manage an organization in such a way as to have a clear vision of the information in the possession and to be able to make decisions on the course to be given to the company. External factors such as covid-19 and the consequent lockdown measures with a negative result on global markets must make the management of companies think so that preventive measures are found to avoid similar situations in the future or at least not to be found more unprepared. Organizations must undoubtedly collect Lockdown data and analyze them and then come to conclusion to focus on the present and have good decision making for the future. (WE Forum,2021)  
Corrects attitudes in the workplace, right beliefs and important values must be the basis of every organization because they are the key to entice the public to take an interest in the company. The development for an employee is the centre of his working universe and for a company, it is imperative to have a social and career development plan to guarantee the interest of the employee in the progress of the company. The ideas, ethics and decisions of the management must be filtered in an exemplary way passing through the employees to the public through precise rules. (Summerfield,2021)

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