



DEVELOPING WORKPLACE CRITICAL THINKING BMSW5101

How do organisational beliefs, attitudes, and value systems affect workplace behaviour? Also, how will tailoring workplace changes for the post COVID mindset tackle the challenges we face now, and create more resilient businesses in the future?



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Executive Summary

This reading will be based on the values, beliefs and attitudes present in Vinoteca Ltd, a chain of five restaurants operating in the English territory and for which I have been serving for four years, they will be put under observation given the presence of this new pandemic called Covid19, and then specify which are the major current challenges that the company itself must face, in addition an in-depth analysis approach to human relations, trying to detail with the use of theories such as: Maslow, really important to understand the type of personality that a critical thinker must have for the benefit of the company and also personal compared to De Bono's six thinking hats method. In addition, an in-depth study of the use of logic, applying the Red Model of Critical Thinking and assessing it with the scientific management of Taylor, Gantt, Mayo, and Gilbreth comparing the criticisms, with the aim of understanding the impact that this pandemic has caused to Vinoteca Ltd. Finally, an in -depth study on advantages and disadvantages of bureaucratic management within the company, and a contingency plan by applying and investigating the theories of Burns & Stalker, defining whether Vinoteca Ltd has an organic or mechanistic structure. The final report will be supported by study cases addressed weekly during the second term and the material will be displayed in the Appendix section.

Vinoteca Ltd challenging Covid-19

For over a year, the pandemic crisis has been putting a strain not only on operations, but also on the permanence on the market of many companies and sectors. Among these, the hospitality sector is among the most impacted, and has had to completely redesign its operating strategies to respond to the prolonged uncertainty. On the one hand, the fear of customer contagion and social distancing drastically reduced consumption "away from home"; on the other hand, the restrictions on mobility, as well as the continuous, as often unpredictable, lockdowns and regulatory changes have resulted in difficult programming of service delivery with serious repercussions on the entire sector. (Bacon, 2021) However,

resilient management can reduce the negative effects of the impact of a crisis, the pandemic one, never experienced before with such protracted magnitude and global extension.

Consequently, it becomes necessary to implement strategies and tactics that make companies less vulnerable to sudden shocks. This is where resilience comes into play. In business contexts, it is defined as the ability of a company to resist, react - by proactively activating - and recover from a critical event that has undermined its stability and functioning. To overcome market turbulence and criticality, companies must show resilience skills, i.e., robustness, flexibility / agility, and integrity of purpose, but in micro and small businesses, often individual, the role of the entrepreneur and his psychological resilience skills they also become decisive. (Dahles, 2015)

Vinoteca Ltd was born in 2005 from the idea of Charlie and Brett, experts in the restaurant sector with the same passion, wine. Both always try to promote a product that has a true, interesting and above all genuine history, always dedicated to supporting local producers and it is also thanks to this those other restaurants have opened to date. Despite the personal fears, the uncertainties, the doubts and the lack of confidence that Covid-19 has brought into people's life, it was exciting to see how the management of Vinoteca Ltd managed the pandemic, ensuring that all employees were protected from this virus invisible, initially it was mandatory to close the sites but with the reopening during the lockdown only a takeaway service was offered to ensure that only a few employees took part in the work. Obviously, before involving them in the work activity, they were asked who felt comfortable and I think it was fundamental since they did not violate the beliefs of their employees, indeed, to date I can say that they have strengthened my personal attitude. Furthermore, despite the drop in sales due to social distancing and all the other constraints it had to apply, Vinoteca Ltd has improved the e-commerce service, redesigned a new line for packaging and finally transformed what were the usual wine tastings in a real virtual experience, hosting local artists to entertain the public from home while testing different wines. Following, the values, beliefs and attitudes present in Vinoteca Ltd and what are the differences between them.

Value, Belief and Attitudes within Vinoteca Ltd

Human being has his own values, beliefs, and attitudes that he has developed during the personal growth of life, and therefore family, friendships, colleagues have a high importance and determine who we know and how we really see the world. As human beings, we continue to influence the quality of our work based on our beliefs, what we truly believe gives us an identity, and our identity determines the outcome of our experiences. (Clark, 2013) Beliefs can be cultural, moral or sometimes even religious and constitute an enormous value in the business sector and especially for Vinoteca Ltd, since the purpose of *Charlie and Brett (owners of Vinoteca)* is to enrich the lives of their consumers by immersing them in a real taste experience, sharing a good aged wine accompanied by a delicious food menu, and it does not matter if you are of a different religion or another culture, what matters is to believe in what you are doing for your company, especially in this period where between different conspiracy theories and misinformation on Covid19, the increase in anxiety and stress can cause depression and this does not benefit at all on performance in the workplace, confirms a research published by Frontiers. (Frontiers, 2021)

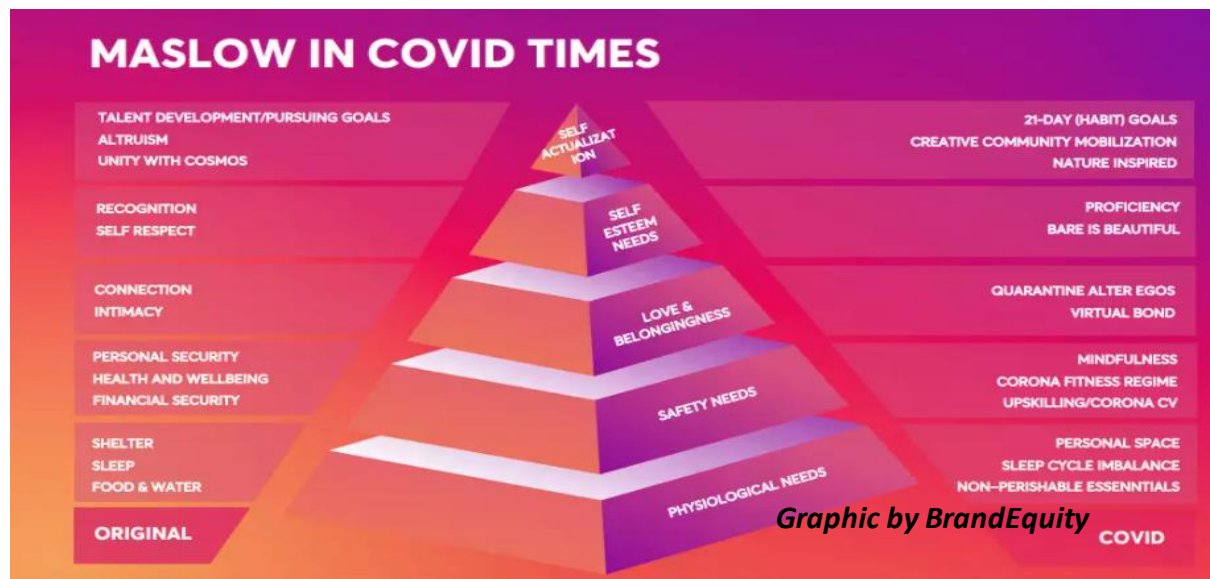
Values are motivational constructs that define what we consider important and that indicate what goals are to be achieved, they constitute the criteria and standards by which to proceed in the comparison between events and to which we must follow in the conduct of our company. They are our reference map and allow us to orient ourselves in the workplace with sufficient clarity, competence, and effectiveness. Values are what people believe to be good or bad, right or wrong, desirable or undesirable, what must be done and what must be avoided, being positive, trying to help others, transferring knowledge, and they also involve adopting a given social, moral and work perspective in the awareness of rights and duties, in assuming responsibility for one's choices and actions. (andresvisus, 2018) If we are aware of what are the things that matter most to our company and what are the values that represent it most, we can achieve the highest and highest level of achievement both for our company and for our person. If we do not clarify what matters most to us and our company, what we are willing to really fight for, then how can we expect to make effective decisions? Being able to make business decisions depends on how clear your corporate values are. Being consistent with your values and acting on them gives the company great strength, and for Vinoteca Ltd

those are the main five values: Positivity, Career Development, Professionalism, Training and Support, and finally Diversity. Furthermore, it is said on the website that “our core values are the set of guiding beliefs upon which Vinoteca is based. These values are our guiding principles for everything we do at Vinoteca”. *Robbie White (Vinoteca HR Director)*.

Attitude is the innate or acquired disposition towards certain activities, but how do you recognise an attitude? And, above all, is it possible to develop individual attitudes? In addition to being innate or acquired, an attitude can concern both the psychological and physical aspects. In any case, developing individual attitudes is an essential step in the search for personal improvement. It is true that there are people who are particularly gifted for a certain activity, but it is also true that for others this ability comes from training and conscious practice. This means that an attitude is not always innate, but it can also be cultivated and, moreover, a leader must be good at planning development plans for staff based on honesty, without causing them to go against their own interests. (Susman, 2020) The HR management of Vinoteca Ltd is in close contact with all employees and offers constant support through training, and it is thanks to frequent training that the idea of attitude is strengthened, and therefore to do better, to give more. In the next section, a brief introduction of the effects caused by Covid-19 on the scale of needs designed by Maslow.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the Covid-19 Crisis

A question that we often ask ourselves and that we hear repeated in talk shows, debates, conference calls, is the following: "what will the model of society that will come after the time of the Coronavirus look like?" To try to understand it and to make a contribution to the ongoing model, we can start by considering what human needs are and the motivations that drive his actions at the time of COVID-19 to identify those who will follow him. In order to try to interpret human behaviour, it was therefore decided to disturb a famous author, Abraham Maslow, an American psychologist who was placed by the scientific journal "The Review of General Psychology" in tenth place among the most cited psychologists of the twentieth century. (Stoyanov, 2017) In his 1954 book *Motivation and Personality*, Maslow outlined a path of analysis of individuals that may be useful to recall in this still moment of emergency generated by the COVID 19 pandemic.



The need arises whenever the human being perceives an imbalance between the perceived situation and the desired situation; it is therefore a state of dissatisfaction that man tries to fill, procuring the necessary means (goods and services) to cancel it or at least limit it. It is precisely this gap between perceived and desired that determines the motivational drive, which generates the behaviour or action to achieve the intended purpose. But we need to reflect on how a catastrophic event, such as Covid-19, can be enough to bring us back to the lowest levels of the pyramid at any moment, that is, the need to satisfy basic, physiological and safety needs. And it is precisely for this reason that companies like Vinoteca Ltd must surround themselves with people with a high rate of critical thinking, to develop new plans, ideas, and strategies for future success. And this is why in the next section I will apply the De Bono six hats in Vinoteca Ltd, to identify who currently holds a certain role within the company and how, thanks to the characteristics of the different colours of hats, the company continues to emerge despite the pandemic is still present.

De Bono's six thinking hats applied to Vinoteca Ltd

The Six Thinking Hats Technique developed by Edward de Bono is a very effective communication and reasoning tool. Thanks to it, we face our personal realities from different approaches and perspectives, also applying lateral thinking. Edward de Bono is already 84,

but he is still active. This Maltese psychologist and professor at the University of Oxford has given us with his works a more than considerable legacy in the field of creativity, highlighting the potential of thought and enriching the world of management, that of the processes that characterize the world of organizations. In this moment of maximum expression of resilience, it is very important for the management of Vinoteca Ltd to identify oneself in one of the six hats, for the success of the company in this critical moment caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, right now to any company that is suffering from this strong crisis serves a person who thinks outside the box. (Payette, 2017)



I have been working for Vinoteca Ltd for four years, and in this time frame and especially with the impact of the pandemic, which made me realize that the management present in the company is a mix of all six hats, for example White hat: we were directed by an operation manager who, in direct line with the decisions of the government, managed step by step the actions to be taken; Yellow hat: *Brett and Charlie*, who despite the uncertainties of the future have transmitted serenity to their staff, etc; Finally, it is mandatory to mention the function of the Blue Hat, which concerns the HR department, it was fundamental for the reconstruction of a new vision despite the fact that Covid-19 persists, since the beginning it has guided the staff, and with the restart it has strengthened and clarified the corporate values previously announced in the previous section. (See Appendix Week 5)

Pearson's RED critical thinking model applied to Vinoteca Ltd

As already mentioned in the previous section, it is essential for a company to have personnel with critical thinking skills, but it is also necessary not to lose sight of other skills that are

mentioned in Pearson's Red Critical Thinking model, which are vital for the process of receiving information and drawing a conclusion, which during Covid-19 was not a quick and easy process. Here a graphic explains the process in its three phases:



RECOGNIZE ASSUMPTIONS

It is deceptively easy to listen to a comment or presentation and assume the information presented is true even though no evidence was given to back it up. Noticing and questioning assumptions helps to reveal information gaps or unfounded logic. We also need to examine assumptions from different viewpoints.

EVALUATE ARGUMENTS

The art of evaluating arguments entails analyzing information objectively and accurately, questioning the quality of supporting evidence, and understanding how emotion influences the situation. Common barriers include confirmation bias, or allowing emotions to get in the way of objective evaluation.

DRAW CONCLUSIONS

Bringing diverse information together to arrive at conclusions that logically follow from the available evidence is crucial when making a decision. People who can do this are careful to inappropriately generalize beyond the evidence and they can change their position when the evidence warrants doing so. They are often characterized as having "good judgment."

In the first phase, the operation manager of Vinoteca Ltd had to recognize his limitations in being able to go against what were government decisions, in this case it is necessary to have the calm and professionalism not to make hasty decisions stemming from personal and non-corporate intentions or needs. The second phase involves evaluation, and this is where the situation becomes complex, since the human being is more often than not subject to making decisions based on instinct and not on logic, and for this we will talk about it in the next section.

Finally, here is the last phase which is the definitive one, the decision has been taken, but first different strategies, ideas, points of view have been evaluated, but the operation manager has evaluated and decided on the basis of the evidence, and based on what most it was appropriate to protect the health of its employees, and therefore decided for a staggered reopening of the restaurants in order to avoid involving many people at the same time. (Wulandari, 2021)

Taylor, Gantt, Mayo, Gilbreht applied to Vinoteca Ltd

It is funny to think that scientific theories written and thought up many years ago come to light in this moment of world crisis, the work sector is constantly evolving but despite technology, artificial intelligence and much more, companies continue to apply written theories and applied to humans decades ago. In the case of Vinoteca Ltd we will apply four

scientific theories and comparing them one to another we will see which is more suitable in bringing benefits to the company despite Covid-19.

Taylor's Scientific Management Theory

Was an American engineer, active in the second half of the 1800s - early 1900s (after the depression of 1873 in the USA), he is considered the father of the scientific analysis of methods and the determination of working times and that, wrongly, he is considered the one who would have imposed the methods of piecework for the massive exploitation of workers. In reality, it was the entrepreneurs who took advantage of his method to impose specific (and increasingly tight) working times, while he had studied methods to make working conditions more humane (at the time when working hours were 12-14 hours / day and children of all ages worked, often in criminal conditions). He began as a worker in 1874 and, since he was a model worker who worked more than the others, they made him boss, hoping he could get others to work faster. He soon realises that it wasn't about persuading people, but about radically changing the system of organization of work processes and tools / machines. For Taylor it was a question of replacing antagonism and distrust with mutual cooperation and help, considering Covid-19 this theory could be suitable for facilitating team working, but it would create favouritism and conflicts in the management of Vinoteca Ltd. (Kai-Ping Huang, 2013)

Henry Gantt Management Theory

We remember him for his famous diagram, but also because he worked for a long time in close collaboration with Taylor, and introduced the system of "coupons", i.e., incentives, linked to production with assigned times. (1901). His ideas of him were very close to those of his teacher, but he had the merit of foreseeing the importance of the human element and he came very close to the concept of "motivation" as we understand it today. For him, the management system was then "teaching and accompanying" rather than "commanding". The era of power, of strength, in the management of men had to give way to that of "knowledge".

He stressed that the allotted time should not be fixed until after a "scientific" study, which would allow to define, for each job, reasonable times to be used at a reasonable pace and possible to achieve thanks to a good training and with a sufficient reward (the latter is the novelty compared to Taylor's ideas). Gantt stated that an interesting job willingly done is much less tired than a job one is forced to do to force; or rather, for him, an allotted time, which generates a reward, produces this interest, and maintains attention to work with

repeatable and constant results. Result: more work, better work and more workers satisfied. He thought that a worker can acquire the habit of working well by producing a considerable amount of product and reject the idea that to get a good product it is necessary to work slowly.

Gantt has defined the role of the manager, the one who has to support you, do training, but applying this theory in relation to Covid-19 and clearly understand that problems will follow, with the advent of this pandemic we have started to use the platforms more online, the timing for organising a training session was not the same as what normally used before Covid-19, but required a greater learning effort from the whole team, and for this I do not think Vinoteca Ltd could benefit from it with a slow and awkward process. (Peterson, 1987)

Elton Mayo's Management Theory

The research of this character turned to the development of working conditions, finding that the maintenance of good relationships between colleagues and between employee and superior caused great variations in people's performance, much more so than technical equipment, training, etc. He came to define the reasons for this success which were essentially:

- a pleasant working environment
- well-designed timetables
- safety at work
- safety of use
- the reasonable level of wages
- judicious holiday management

His works are a completion of Maslow's principles, which placed the "needs of base "and had defined a hierarchy, arguing (rightly) that in the absence of what he calls" physiological ", one cannot speak of the other 4 levels, on the contrary he established the principle of regression: if a lower level need arises , the individual abandons the search for the satisfaction of a superior to concentrate on the former. (Bruce, 2011)

This theory has had a positive feedback on the management of Vinoteca Ltd, since despite the lockdown and therefore the interruption in seeing colleagues on a daily basis, the managers of the company have been in continuous contact with the staff, creating this synergy, ensuring that with the advent of normality every single individual returned to work with the same values, beliefs, and attitudes as before.

William Gilbert's Scientific Method

Gilbreth, a young builder, thought (like Taylor) to improve the working conditions of the masons and together increase speed. He did these studies aided by his wife Lillian Moller Gilbreth, who studied work habits of manufacturing workers, of employees in all sorts of industries with the same intentions as her husband. Gilbreth reduced all hand movements of an operator in the combination of 18 basic movements, such as "grab", "carry under load", "stop", etc. Gilbreth called these movements therblig, (which is the name of "Gilbreth" read backwards, with the transposition of t and h). In the last few years of the last century, it was understood that repetitive movements can lead to injuries due precisely to the inattention generated by this repetitiveness (boredom). As we can see, the ideas of Gilbreth and Taylor were complementary, but philosophically different (according to some), in fact the first is remembered as that of the chronometer (although not strictly true) which tried to reduce the Gilbreth process tended to make processes efficient by reducing movements. Gilbreth's approach was more aimed at the welfare of workers much more than Taylorism (not Taylor), which workers saw as more attentive above all to profit. (Zilsel, 1941)

If we were to apply this theory to the management of Vinoteca Ltd we would risk increasing the well-being of the workers, this is certain, but at the same time we will reduce the chances of success during a moment of crisis, since right now an effort is required of all employees. , to be ready to replace the colleague in case of urgency, to ensure that the company remains profitable.

Contingency Plan at Vinoteca Ltd

In 1961 a book called "The Management of Innovation" was published, and the authors were Tom Burns and Graham Stalker, expert electronics scholars, with their experiences they were able to see that the values and mission of a company tell us the way where the company itself could face a change. They have established that companies fall into two categories: organic and mechanistic. (Burns, 1994) In agreement with Burns and Stalker, I would say that Vinoteca

Ltd is classified as an organic company, since it has an organizational structure that is not always hierarchical, there are established roles within the company and every single employee is paid regularly.

Covid-19 caused a global crisis on all aspects, the catering sector invested money in a contingency plan in the reopening of the restaurants, the plan involved the purchase of spacer panels, signage, sanitizers, and a spacing of 2 meters between one table and another, therefore a decrease in customers. Despite the economic effort by companies, today it is difficult to find workforce, and based on a recent article, you can have a clear idea of why there are no more staff who want to work in England, perhaps because Covid-19 has created this state of agitation in the people who brought them closer to their loved ones, doubt and uncertainty has dragged them to go back and start from scratch. This article underlines that so far, all the research carried out on the impact of Covid-19 on hospitality, confirms that the gravity of the situation is not visible at the moment, but the future will not be bright if the HR department does not design a good contingency plan, which includes new hygiene and safety regulations, virtual training sessions, corporate meetings in remote session etc. (Dogra, 2021)

Recommendation

After eighteen years of working in catering, I am amazed at all the improvements the restaurant industry has made over the years, since we had to order from the waiter and now order from home, and a huge step with the help of technology. In past years IT department was not known about its existence, today it is essential to have technological skills to make the company not only strategic, but profitable. It is advisable for any new openings and especially those already existing to integrate and IT department in your company, which will help to adopt new sales strategies. Furthermore, Covid-19 but like other phenomena that cause inconvenience to companies, must serve as an example to strengthen values and beliefs, since despite the challenge is quite difficult, a real leader must ensure that his staff find the resources necessary to develop new sales strategies and more, improve the quality of internal meetings, communication between colleagues, achieve new goals and celebrate small victories, this can only strengthen values, confirm the beliefs within Vinoteca Ltd and above all improve attitudes.

Conclusion

Coronavirus is a tragedy for humanity, and it is also the worst economic crisis since the post-war period. Managers are the strategic key to future business success, and this moment in history requires a greater effort from them. This can be defined as a delicate and annoying phase and you have to approach it rationally, only in this way can you continue to reduce costs, create new opportunities and above all redefine the company structure, obviously focusing more frequently on digital and all its aspects.

If no one talks about something, it just doesn't exist. What we have never witnessed in our past experiences is not perceived on the horizon. Our fault is that we rely on experience and opinion, not on thought and reason. The lesson from Plato to Voltaire has not passed. On the contrary, it is precisely the noise generated by our increasingly interconnected social form that generates shadows and cognitive prejudices, English speakers say. Instead, to free the power of our thinking we must look at the facts: we return humble, we forget constraints and mental traps. This is what the role of leader calls us. This is the Executive's task, to develop opinions and make decisions against the trend, thinking about securing the Business after the Coronavirus.

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Appendix

Week 3 Scanlon-JIT

Task 3

Read the abstract of the 2 programs (Scanlon Plan and JIT) provided on Moodle in Week 3 Folder

Discuss in groups in Break Rooms:

- What are the central themes surrounding the program and why are they important?

Scanlon Plan is cost-saving, gainsharing, productivity-incentive plan in which any saving (agreed upon standard labour cost per unit of output subtracted from actual labour cost per unit of output) is shared equally between the workers and the organization.

JIT is used only when requires, is a tool mainly used to avoid waste of money and time for companies, it is no mandatory tool to save the cost, but only the managers has the power to introduce this last minute helpful program.

- What are the advantages of the program?

Scanlon Plan is mainly used to help companies improve productivity, gathering different ideas from employees and create a such of stability in the management leadership field. Profit sharing, a percentage of money for whatever profit the employees bringing into the company. Coordination to achieve goals for the firm, working together and encouraging participations.

JIT improves efficiency, supplier relationship, decrease waste production, reduce inventory costs and finally develops a better way to communicate between human resources.

- What are the disadvantages of the program?

Scanlon Plan disadvantages are mainly focus on cutting a part of employees bonuses or commits, ideas provoke long process to be implemented due the fact that needs long time to take place and required individual ideas from employees and this it can be not good for the long-term productivity, also requires that the business have to show data, and this is really dangerous for the privacy of the company itself.

- **JIT Risk of Running Out of Stock** - With JIT manufacturing, you do not carry as much stock. This is because you base your stock off of demand forecasts, and if those are incorrect, then you will not have the correct amount of stock readily available for your consumers. This is one of the most common issues with manufacturing that utilize methodologies such as JIT and lean.

- **Dependency on Suppliers** - Having to rely on the timelessness of suppliers for each order puts you at risk of delaying your customers' receipt of goods. If you are unable to meet consumer expectations, then they could take their business elsewhere. This is why it is important to choose reliable suppliers and have a strong relationship with them so that you can make sure that you have the materials you need to meet your customer demands.

- **More Planning Required** - JIT inventory management requires companies to understand sales trends and variances in close detail. Many companies have seasonal sales periods, meaning that a number of products will need a higher stock level to combat consumer demand. Therefore, you must plan ahead for instances like this and ensure that your suppliers are able to supply the requirements.

- Identify the assumptions, facts, concepts, beliefs, used in your reasoning

The **Scanlon plan** is a gainsharing program in which employees share in pre-established cost savings, based upon employee effort. ... Formal employee participation is necessary with the **Scanlon Plan**, as well as periodic progress reporting and an incentive formula.

Just-in-time (JIT) inventory and just-in-time manufacturing have been buzzwords in the world of supply chain for some time now, and quite a few businesses have adopted this approach. With growing competition and increasing pressure to boost profitability, many businesses have adopted this strategy to boost their bottom line—which can be problematic when supply chains come to a screeching halt.

Companies who are using this model are: Amazon, Apple, Google, McDonalds and most of retails shop

Week 5 De Bono 6 thinking Hats

Group Exercise:

Apply de Bono's six thinking hats to solve a problem. You need to discuss in group and identify which hat ideas you contribute during the discussions. Some students can wear more than one hat during the discussions.

INSTRUCTIONS	
3 min	Brainstorm a Problem to discuss.
3 min	White Hat - Facts and information about the Problem?
3 min	Red Hat - Feelings towards the Problem?
3 min	Black Hat - What are the negative aspects of the Problem?
3 min	Yellow Hat - What are the benefits/positive aspects of the Problem?
3 min	Green Hat - What alternatives do we have?
7 min	Blue Hat - Sum what is learned and discuss possible next steps.
25 min	Total

Luca's workplace issue (Lack of Communication)

repeated tasks, wasting of time and resources, conflicts, bad behaviour between colleagues, miss of opportunities, less productivity, less awareness, stress and confusion, poor leadership, and management.

Ivanovitch- **Green** (employees different culture background, different languages, different perspectives, undermotivated)

Vanessa- **Yellow** (put problems in place and calculate the benefits only, increasing productivity and interpersonal relationship with others, reduces stress, facilitated better communications, uses problem solving skills and emphasises situations)

Dapaah- **Blue** (providing training session, mentoring and supportive, consultants and monitoring)

Shemeka- **Red** (body language, emotions, tone, managing compassion and empathy, safe and comfortable environment which produces better results)

Raquel- **White**- (providing surveys, questionnaire, collecting data and planning further events with the aim to create good atmosphere within the company)