

MODULE CODE: BMSW 5101 LON

STUDENT ID:2115854

STUDENT NAME: ANDREEA ELENA POPA

LECTURER'S NAME: AKINSEYE ALUKO

Developing workplace critical thinking

INTRODUCTION:

In this report I am going to talk about how organisational beliefs, attitude and value systems affect workplace behaviour. I will also mention the facts and theories about how will the workplace changes for the post-Covid business environment to handle the new business challenges and make it better for the future. For my chosen business study I have elected Frasers Group. Frasers group is one of the largest retail companies which is situated in the United Kingdom. This is resulting into the fact that it contributes substantially to the United Kingdom's economy.

The company was founded by Mike Ashley in 1982 as a single store located in Maidenhead trading under the name of "Mike Ashley Sports". (Frasers Group, 2023)

Frasers Group Plc replaced the Sports Direct name as the ultimate parent company and as a means of acquiring other businesses. (Jonathon Manning ,2022)

The Frasers Group began as a small shop in Maidenhead in 1982 and has since grown into a global powerhouse. As part of its business development, Sports Direct International was renamed Frasers Group plc in 2019. It reflects the growth of the Group and the changing identity of the market. Mr Ashley has also purchased a number of brands such as Slazenger, Karrimor, Lonsdale, Kangol and Everlast, which are sold in Sports Direct stores (Coreena ford , 2022). Frasers group is the UK,s leading and Europe's fastest growing sports and lifestyle retailer by revenue and operating profit, and the owner of a significant number of internationally recognised sports and fashion brands, including Nike ,Adidas, Under Armour and Puma. The group has over 1,000 stores across a number of fascia's in the UK and Europe. Frasers group includes Sport Direct, House of Frasers and Flannels.

Impact of the organisational beliefs, attitudes and value systems:

The impact that the organisation had endured, the beliefs of the Frasers group has increased in numbers in the course of the Covid-19 pandemic. It was significantly difficult to be aware of and acknowledge what was happening around us at the time. There was a mass amount of restrictions that were put upon retailers from the government. Frasers Group have reported a sharp rise in half-year sales and profits compared to a period last year that was affected by lockdown restrictions however the retailers at the time remained cautious looking ahead, sighting supply chain issues as well as a squeeze on consumers and the return of lockdowns in Europe. It is in fact true that the restrictions affected many employees and due to pay which decreased their productivity however the self-actualisation of employees through a satisfying work environment, and supportive

employer-employee relationship, is more prioritised giving that maximising their productivity and efficiency by successfully empowering. Leaders are essential in influencing a positive organisational climate. Having a leader gives the employees a sense of safety as well as it gives them someone or something to aspire to due to the higher pay they might get due to the higher status and job as a leader. Before then covid era had hit, everything was functioning as normal the sales were on a peak scale, the costumers were communicative, interested and enthusiastic for our products, interested in seeing the companies new line products, there was a mass amount of hard working employees, there were extra hours for facing the extraordinary and large amount of clients at the time, sometimes the stores would be open upon its closing times by at least one hour. Once the Covid-19 virus and pandemic hit it's like the people hit in time and the sales have dropped in ground level drastically, the clients were scared by the virus which hit us all and the employees had to learn how to be a close organisation so we can result and begin in working in an online shops and deliveries. For them to know how to work online as the in person, walk in stores have closed they had to undergo intense quick training. The manager had to think critically and to know how improve the shops or and companies sales as for them to keep its employees as they needed to give the hired individuals enough hours to be able to not create a class difference between the staff. Once with the closing of walk-in shops all employees were in furlough according to the governments discussed decision. The sales in the online shops compared to the in-person retail store were significantly lower due to the fact that the clients preferred to see the product before spending their money to buy it but because in person viewing of the product was not available they have to make a decision between the two fact they could shop and buy online or wait until the walk-in stored would open once again. To encourage online shopping the manager and their critical thinking had to come to a conclusion that many discounts and voucher had to be put into place as it would encourage the shoppers to buy because they would have a discount of something like £10 off every £50 they spent or had in their cart to buy. As well as the VIP clients were motivated to buy online by the fact that they had a 20% discount. When the shops finally re-opened on the streets the government had decided that only half of the hired employees to come back to in store working and the others to remain in furlough for the reasoning that a social distance of minimum of one and a half meters to be kept at all times to limit the amount of spreading and infected people by the Covid-19 virus. All employees were announced about this decision by the manager and to not create discomfort to any staff they made the decision that they should call a part of the employees to work in store for one week and then the other half to replace them the next week, then the process was repeated one regular basis. This made sure that everyone worked inside the walk-in store, they were treated equally and limited the amount of hours that were cut. On the other hand this increased the amount of work as well as the dedication and productivity needed where the pay did not increase. As more stored opened the more stricter the rules because and both the employee and costumer had to respect the rules such as: hand sanitising, making face coverings essential, keeping a social distancing and creating a maximum of number of clients in the store for example 5.

Like a manager, you have to know how to put systems into place. Most managers follow the system theory. This is one of the tactics that were backed up by science and the bureaucratic laws. The bureaucracy is the most efficient way to construct organisations, this was also a theory by Max Weber in 1905. This is an organisational structure that is identified by rules, procedures, number of desks and requirements etc. These proven strategies are mostly needed after a break from social interaction to make post-covid workers feel more comfortable to enter the workspace physically. Different types of rules, strategies and systems are introduced by the manager as they go through the two different types of reasoning. The manager needs to decide which type of reasoning they should take due to them wanting to take the risk or not.

The manager while imputing these strategies, they also have to be in the possession on the ability of critically thinking. This is when they are able to think clearly and rationally being able to grasp the obvious connection between ideas. We require a wide range of ability in order to think critically, including the ability to observe, analyse, interpret, reflect, evaluate, infer, explain, solve problems and make decisions. The employees well-being is valued hugely in a workplace therefore a manager needs to use their critical thinking when re-introducing or changing if not creating people timetables to work in person like they once did. Values, attitudes, beliefs. These are three aspects of manager that not only show how the manager is themselves but what they will bring to the organisation and how they interact with others such as costumers and their employees. These are also aspects that affect critical thinking. The importance of creating a good critical thinker is to be rational, curious person who seeks the truth. Their goal is always to get the truth to come out and never to verify their bias point of view. It is seen when in the workplace workers tend to call in sick or take credit for the work however the manager may not believe they are sick or produced the amount of work especially after a long covid break therefore they might ask for medical proof or check cameras to find out the truth. The Human relation theory, also known as the humans relations management, is a broad management philosophy that emphasises achieving organisational goals by acknowledging and significance of employee attitudes, impersonal relationships, group dynamics and leadership styles. Also the people can develop their skills better. People skills are necessary whether you are applying for work or furthering your career. Good people skills can help you perform well in job interviews, maintain solid connections with co-worker's, and make a good first impression with important clients. Outside of work, you can put your people skills to use with family and friends. The better skills is to think creatively, this that means you are able to train your mind to think creatively helps you invent, problem-solve, create and communicate in fresh, new ways. When you think open-mindedly you become a happier person ready to accept exciting surprises from life. Edward de Bono's six thinking hats technique is a communication and reasoning tool. You use it to perceive things from new angles by using lateral thinking. The six thinking hats technique could help you take better decisions. It can be used to move through several thinking processes in order to evaluate problems and facts from every available perspective. The solutions you'll come up with towards the end will not only be more accurate, but also far more creative and original. Not just this, the bureaucracy management theories it is also very important for the organisation. Bureaucracy is an organisational system distinguished by numerous regulations, standardised processes, procedures, and standards, as well as a precise and meticulous division of labour, obvious hierarchies, and professional and nearly impersonal connections among employees. Being able to think critically and problem solve is very important. This is an individual's capacity to discern the direct relationships between causes and effects. Simply described, this is a person's ability to make sense of a situation even when they are chaotic. Logic is one of the most essential abilities required for decision-making since it provides an accurate means of predicting the consequences of a prospective solution, allowing you to alter your mind if you believe the effects are not worth it. In my workplace, the manager's skills are critical thinking and solving problem, as they are an important part for the organisation and for the company productivity and profit because they can manage the hard situation for the employees and for the costumers to take the right decision for everyone. When the pandemic covid-19 rules was apply from the government ,the organisation was affected, the productivity and the profit was low, we have to improve our skills and practice the best skills what we got to increase the sales going forward. The rules have to be respect for everyone from employees to costumes, example like face coverings and keeping a distance and also it was very difficult to communicate with the costumers or to show them the best products. Anyway now after two year we have to respect the rules and to learn how to live with such restrictions. The managers have to think critically in order to be most helpful for employers to give them the right direction in the workplace and to teach them how to use or research their skills to be more productive, that's

way they give more attention to teaching staff or to training them in the hard condition in the workplace. Systems theory is a theoretical framework that helps people understand how organisations work. A system can be defined in a variety of ways, but it is best described as an entity that contains all of the elements required to carry out its functions. It began as a tool to study organisations from the outside, but it has now evolved into a method of getting insight into daily activities within an organisation. Creativity and innovation are essential for achieving corporate success. To motivate employees and encourage them to think beyond the box, provide them with time and resources to explore new areas for innovative ideas. Creativity and innovation boost an organization's ability to solve problems, regardless of whether it is creating a new strategy or an innovative technique. Creative problem solution provides the competitive advantage that every firm seeks. Environmental sustainability is beneficial for the environment, but it is also good for business. Organisations across all industries can increase reputation, customer loyalty, and employee happiness by campaigning for sustainability and establishing programmes that support an environmentally friendly atmosphere. Environmental sustainability is no longer a luxury for organisations; it is gradually a matter of corporate social responsibility. Almost every business function depends substantially on technology. Whether it's connecting with your team, revising a policy, or analysing old records, technology plays a substantial part in supporting employees to perform tasks and develop in their careers. Learning more about business technology and how it influences the workplace can help you make better use of the tools that are available in the workplace.

In conclusion, It is researched that before the covid-19 pandemic employees were at a peak state of sales as well as costumers were never more interested in products or more interactive with the staff. However, this all changed when the pandemic hit meaning that you had to stay indoors, shop online, and wear face masks at all times when outside you housing place. This affected retail negatively as they mostly relied on in person shopping and advertising. Although it was hard and sales dropped, Frasers group still managed to continue their sales. This was done by online marketing. When the pandemic calmed down, employees were re-introduced into in person stores managers had to use many different strategies backed by theories such as the bureaucratic theory to get everyone back in the physical workplace. In the future we could back up strategies that are used now or were used in the past by science or theories that were proven to work in order to increase productivity and employees wellbeing.

PART 2:

I will going to write a reflective learning journal from first term, level 5 on Leadership Management including the teaching and learning session from week 1 to week 9. This will be done with Harvard style referencing. In this journal I will attempt to explain what the lecturer has taught us that we understood of the topic of practicing for the future problem solving when we got the problem or to know how to tolerate or how to manage the organisation if you are in the place of a manager.

At the begging of my study I was introduced to a large range of management theories of which help out an organisations productivity and quality. These theories have been developed by time as they were passed down by other managers and even proven to work by the experience of the employees. These theories were backed up by science and bureaucratic procedures. For a decent level of productivity there are five management theories of which are: human relations, scientific management, contingency theory, system theory, bureaucratic management. In an organisation the employees are the main part of the system as they are extremely important to keep the business

going and growing. Backed by scientific research, there are two main types of reasoning that a manager or anyone may involve when problem solving or improving a certain aspect. The manager within a workplace has to deal with many problems that some may be more serious than others. They then need to decide if they should risk being wrong and use inductive reasoning or if the problem is at a level of seriousness where they need to use deductive reasoning as this will also affect their workers. The employees would have to listen and accept their managers rules and opinions in order to improve their skills. Within their daily activity employees can use their knowledge at the time of which they are working to improve the outcome.

As I go along my study, I was taught that critical thinking is used in many different aspects of my life however it is mainly used in business and organisations where a lot of thinking and problems come into place in order to run the certain business the right way and improve it. Having a critically informed manager about the civilians may allow them to question why people may have certain opinions on politics and then they may evolve their work around that in order to attract more customers or build a relationship. On the other hand having a manager of which is also critically informed in economics may allow them to think or question certain ways of which they do things or certain products in order to improve their workforce and their import to maximise both the profit and the economic benefits. Critical thinking within a manager is not only a positive way to tack on problems or the want for improvement but also increase productivity within the employees. This makes the manager active and engaged with the outside world of which could really benefit the workforce. This may be by having a understanding of the diversity of values or of the social structures of the world. This will not only benefit them but the workplace also.

On my third week of study, I acquired the knowledge of a range of intellectual skills, how to solve complex problems and how to communicate and discover the truth. Every employer has to be in the possession of developed skills, to go through a thought process and then communicate clearly, have good knowledge of technology as well as knowing the values of working in a team. For a manager they must have some sort of knowledge of solving complicated obstacles and problems using critical thinking in order to maximize benefit and have an outcome of the best quality. Their goals is to be able identify the obstacle of which are standing in their way of the organisation from running smoothly and making the most possible benefit and having the greatest outcome. They then need to have the skills to be able to think critically in order to think to solve the problem. A solution has to be decided and through with courageous attitude and an open mind to maximise sequel. Management is something that has to pay attention to human relations approach, need for attention, social interaction and individual achievement

In the fourth week of study, we were taught about characteristics on business environment. As a collective, we have been taught about how to think creatively by using the following strategies: flexibility and fluency as well as having an inquisitive mind. Critical thinking is a skill that is needed to know in order to be able to manage a problem, recognise, evaluate and then eventually when the manager is sure to draw a conclusion out of many. In order to solve a problem it is needed to identify and evaluate the alternative solutions before making a final decision. The lecturer had shown us about the scientific management in 1910-1935 as well as about the golden age of which took place in the 1880's. This was the use of scientific proof and tools to aid with approaching various aspects of business. This was where a mass amount of factories was introduced into workplaces therefore there was a dramatic increase in productivity and the gains not matched by workers. Frederik Taylor was a large part in the mechanical engineering as he was known for improving mechanical efficiency. Henry Gantt communicated with Taylor at the time to create time tables of which explained where and for how long someone was to aid in the war. This is now used in the work place for shifts.

In the fifth week of study, we were informed about De Bono's six thinking hats method. This was used to separate thoughts and focus a meeting giving it a topic of discussion rather than many. This helps develop or improve one's business. The Bureaucratic management is based on the fact that some problems cannot be solved by one individual, This takes in government intervention and provision of services. The bureaucracy was created by the economist and lawyer, Max Weber of which contained two principles: rule based power and hierarchy. The advantages of the critical issue is that It limits power as well as following the rules. While at the same time having full transparency. On the other hand, the disadvantages of the Appraisal of Bureaucracy are that there is a minimal amount of flexibility and having the love of details.

In the sixth week, we learnt about the building structure of the decision making process. This process can vary to many different ways in building towards that decision. Though this process may seem simple every individual company needs to think about what part every individual employee plays in this process. Although making a singular decision may seem simple, to make a good one you need to be able to identify all the pros and cons and evaluate which one gives the best opportunities. Finally a decision is taken that is considered to give the best outcome based on the organisation or business. The contingency theory was the importance of critical thinking to organise the structure and the control system that the manager chose for the business. There are two basic ways of which can be organised to control the organisations activities. These are mechanist structure and organic structure. The organisation environment which was external became evident in the 1960s and it was focused to find methods in which allowed aid the managers to improve the system of the organisational resource.

In week 7 of the term, we learnt about the System theory was founded by Ludwig Von Baetalanffy in 1940. The system theory is put in place to create a understanding an opportunity to analyse about the administration to work in a larger system. The basic elements of the system theories is to achieve your set goals, to have control in order to receive feedback of which you can improve your system next time. The system can be split into multiple parts. We have been taught about the subsystem of which is the base of all the process of which decides an output and input. This continues normally throughout the system using communication which helps out to exchange important and relevant information. Super systems is where all other systems from the outside world interact or affect the system inside the workplace. This can be analysed through the PESTLE analysis. However to keep all of these separate and simpler to understand boundaries are set into place to protect from the supersystem. Systems use feedback to meet the objectives of organisations and are motivated by the businesses goals. Equifinality is concept of which a system can take many divergent routes and have the same outcome with the same benefits. The manager when looking at systems, not only looks at the system as a whole but also the independent and the values of each singular part. They look at the results and take decisions depending how the system is running and its needs.

On week 8, I acquired knowledge of managing innovation and creativity changing work. This included many different sub topics such as strategies, marketing, technological process, quality management, logistics and human resources. Strategies consisted of imagining the future and startling to form planned paths of how you get there. However, marketing was where you began to take action on what you have planned. Implementing technology is essential for a business in the 21st century therefore it would make a massive impact to the growth of the business as well as on the products also known as technological innovations. As we go down our planned path we need to make sure that we are going slow to assure the best service is given and that we have the best quality offered to our customers. To ensure that we will need to take good care and ensure that the logistics of our company and or organisation are on point and at their best. Lastly, as many of these apply to the actual physical items of the company, the employees need to also be managed as they

need to be satisfied with their work and motivated at all times to ensure full productivity. This does not only help the employees but also helps the culture of the company grow with them. The managers within a company always look for new innovation as they see the change not as a threat but for the greater good.

In my final week of study in the term, I learnt about sustainable development. This means the protection of the physical resources done in a specific way that permits customers, employees and many other people to provide for their own best economic and cultural wellbeing as well as social. Also allow them to provide for their safety and health while not damaging the precious environment around us. Economic sustainability was part of my study. This explained how we encounter and have to think about the government or who is paying for our items and why. When thinking about sustainable development you have to consider the evolution that is happening at the time also. This may be what we see now, the introduction of efficient low cost technology.

In conclusion, I have learnt about many different techniques such as the six thinking hats, critical thinking, problem solving, sustainable environment, systems within the workplace and many more. The ones I have personally seen in action in my day to day life and that I believe have the most impact are the six thinking hats and critical thinking. I have seen these in construction sites and within my own workplace as they are the easiest to understand and at the same time make a lot of impact. I think that these could be used in many other workplaces as it could change the whole perspective of the organisation for the better in the future as we have proof it works both in normal day to day work and post pandemic workspaces. These could also help out online organisations as we are advancing with technology in this generation.

References:

[Bureaucratic Management Theory of Max Weber \(simplysociology.com\)](https://www.simplysociology.com/bureaucratic-management-theory-of-max-weber/)

[Chapter 3: Scientific Management, Bureaucracy, and the Emergence of the Modern Organization – Organizational Communication \(pressbooks.pub\)](https://www.pressbooks.pub/chapter3/scientific-management-bureaucracy-and-the-emergence-of-the-modern-organization-organizational-communication/)

[Creative Thinking: What is it, Why is it Important, and How to Develop it? \(potential.com\)](https://www.potential.com/creative-thinking-what-is-it-why-is-it-important-and-how-to-develop-it/)

[Critical Thinking | SkillsYouNeed](https://www.skillsyouneed.com/critical-thinking/)

[Critical Thinking \(Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy\)](https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/critical-thinking/)

[Edward de Bono's Six Thinking Hats Technique - Exploring your mind](https://www.exploringyourmind.com/six-thinking-hats-technique/)

[How To Improve Your People Skills in 8 Simple Steps | Indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com/how-to-improve-your-people-skills-in-8-simple-steps/)

[Importance of Creativity and Innovation in Business Environment \(digitalleadership.com\)](https://www.digitalleadership.com/importance-of-creativity-and-innovation-in-business-environment/)

[Management Theories - How Modern Organizations Manage People \(corporatefinanceinstitute.com\)](https://www.corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/skills/management-theories-how-modern-organizations-manage-people/)

[Personal beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviour | IAA](https://www.iaa.com.au/personal-beliefs-values-attitudes-and-behaviour/)

[Reshape the Workplace: Five Post-COVID Behaviors and Attitudes \(workdesign.com\)](https://www.workdesign.com/reshape-the-workplace-five-post-covid-behaviors-and-attitudes/)

[Six Thinking Hats® - Looking at a Decision in Different Ways \(mindtools.com\)](https://www.mindtools.com/six-thinking-hats-look-at-a-decision-in-different-ways/)

[Six Thinking Hats: The Concept and Application | SafetyCulture](https://www.safetyculture.com/six-thinking-hats-the-concept-and-application/)

[System Theory - Systems Approach to Management - Harappa](https://www.harappa.com/system-theory-systems-approach-to-management/)

[UK retailer Frasers profit jumps on strong reopening after lockdown | Reuters](https://www.reuters.com/uk-retailer-frasers-profit-jumps-on-strong-reopening-after-lockdown/)

[Values.pdf \(wce.education\)](#)

[What Is Business Technology? \(Definition and Advantages\) | Indeed.com](#)

[What is Environmental Sustainability? | Microsoft Sustainability](#)

[5.3: Using Critical Thinking Skills- Decision Making and Problem Solving - Social Sci LibreTexts](#)

[6 important critical thinking skills you should master \(betterup.com\)](#)