

Ethical and Theoretical Assessment of Management Practices at Nexus Tech Global (NTG)



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Student Name: Yaxuan Dai

Student Number: 2420047

Programme: International Business Management

Module: Contemporary Issues Management (BMBM6003)

Lecturer: Robyn Griffiths

Submission Date: 19/11/2025

University of Wales Trinity Saint David Swansea Business School

Executive Summary

Nexus Tech Global (NTG) describes itself as an organisation built on agile values, but many employees do not experience the workplace this way. Staff feedback and recent survey results suggest growing pressure from strict targets, long working hours and close monitoring from middle managers. These issues have contributed to higher burnout levels, rising turnover, and a notable decline in trust in senior leadership. Reports also show that NTG's diversity and inclusion efforts are not applied consistently across different regions, which further undermines staff confidence in the company's stated commitments.

This report examines NTG's situation by using several management and ethics theories. Concepts from Scientific Management and bureaucracy help explain the strong focus on control and rigid procedures. Critical perspectives—such as research on toxic leadership, Foucauldian views on surveillance and feminist discussions about gender inequality—offer deeper insight into the social and ethical concerns raised by employees. Comparisons with cases from companies like Amazon, Uber and Boeing illustrate how similar patterns can produce wider organisational risks. These theories are linked directly to NTG's practices to show how each issue affects employees and the overall culture.

The report argues that NTG faces a serious gap between its stated values and the reality experienced by staff. To address this, several recommendations are proposed, including revising its structures so that control is balanced with flexibility, developing fairer and more inclusive leadership practices, improving how HR analytics are used, strengthening diversity efforts, and building more meaningful dialogue with stakeholders. These changes could help rebuild trust, support wellbeing and improve long-term organisational performance.

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Contents	4
1. Introduction.....	6
2. Main Findings	7
2.1 Case Context.....	7
2.2 Scientific Management and Bureaucracy	7
2.3 Toxic Leadership and Burnout.....	8
2.4 Algorithmic Surveillance and HR Analytics	9
2.5 Gender Inequality and Diversity	10
2.6 Comparative Cases	11
2.7 Stakeholder and Ethical Assessment	11
3. Recommendations	13
3.1 Develop Strategic Bureaucracy	13
3.2 Cultivate Inclusive and Ethical Leadership.....	13
3.3 Reform HR Analytics and Surveillance	14
3.4 Promote Gender Equality and Diversity.....	14
3.5 Enhance Stakeholder Engagement and CSR	15
4. Conclusion	15

5. References	16
----------------------------	-----------

1. Introduction

Nexus Tech Global (NTG) has recently faced several complaints from employees about how the organisation is being managed. Although NTG works in a fast-moving digital industry where flexibility is usually important, many staff members feel that the internal culture does not match this expectation. Instead, they describe the environment as quite controlled and heavily focused on performance targets. Employees have also reported feeling watched more closely through different monitoring tools, which makes them more stressed and less trusting of senior leaders.

Because of these concerns, this report aims to look more closely at NTG's management practices and assess them from both mainstream and critical theoretical perspectives. Mainstream ideas such as Scientific Management and bureaucracy help explain why managers rely on strict procedures and detailed performance measurements. Critical theories, including toxic leadership, Foucauldian views on surveillance, and feminist approaches to gender inequality, give a broader picture of how power and control are experienced by employees. Stakeholder theory and ideas from Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) are also used to consider how NTG's decisions affect different groups inside and outside the company.

The report is organised into three main parts. Section 2 presents the main findings and connects theory with what is happening at NTG. Section 3 offers recommendations that could help the organisation rebuild trust and improve working conditions. Section 4 provides a short conclusion about the implications for NTG going forward.

2. Main Findings

2.1 Case Context

NTG is a technology company providing predictive analytics and AI-driven solutions for clients in different sectors. Publicly, it brands itself as innovative and “Agile by design”. Internally, however, the organisation still operates through a clear hierarchy with centralised decision-making. Middle managers control workloads tightly, and staff report expectations to work long hours and meet demanding performance targets.

A recent internal survey recorded a 38% fall in trust in senior management, alongside high levels of stress and intentions to leave. Patterns of diversity and inclusion are also uneven: some regions apply inclusive policies while others remain male-dominated and resistant to flexible work arrangements. These differences between what NTG says it values and what employees actually experience suggest that something is not working well in the company's culture (Cole & Kelly, 2020). The following subsections use theory and evidence from recent research to analyse NTG's key challenges.

2.2 Scientific Management and Bureaucracy

NTG's emphasis on tight control and standardisation reflects the ongoing influence of Scientific Management, first developed by Frederick Taylor. Taylor advocated detailed job design, close supervision and performance measurement to maximise

efficiency. Contemporary organisations still rely on similar metrics and procedures, even if the language has changed.

Bureaucratic theory further clarifies NTG's structure. "Bureaucracy for the 21st century" argues that formal roles and rules can coexist with strategic flexibility when authority and processes are transparent and proportionate (Monteiro & Adler, 2022). At NTG, the requirement for routine managerial signoffs and metric-driven oversight indicates formal controls that have drifted into micromanagement—reducing autonomy and slowing local decision making which helps explain falling trust among staff.

Although NTG claims to use agile methods, recent research shows agile designs can reproduce control and inequality when layered on top of legacy hierarchies or when presenteeism is rewarded (de Laat, 2023). For NTG, "agile" language masks Taylorist coordination: stand-ups and dashboards exist, but decision rights and workload pacing remain centralised, creating a value–practice misalignment.

2.3 Toxic Leadership and Burnout

Many of NTG's problems can also be understood through the idea of toxic leadership. Several employees described their managers as overly demanding, quick to criticise, and not very supportive. Although the managers might argue that they are trying to keep up with fast deadlines, this style of leadership often leads to exhaustion and emotional strain for staff. Research shows that when leaders act in a hostile or unsympathetic way, employees are more likely to experience stress and burnout, and eventually think about leaving the organisation (Nunes, Silva & Oliveira, 2024). This pattern seems to match what workers at NTG have reported.

Another issue linked to toxic leadership is the lack of psychological safety. When employees do not feel safe to express worries or challenge decisions, they tend to stay silent instead of speaking up. This can prevent problems from being solved early and can create more pressure over time. Morrison (2023) argues that organisations benefit when staff feel able to voice concerns without facing negative reactions. At NTG, however, the emphasis on meeting strict targets appears to make employees feel that raising concerns might be risky or pointless.

The constant pressure to achieve measurable goals also contributes to burnout. Employees mentioned that they are often pushed to meet deadlines that feel unrealistic or do not give enough space for proper planning. This aligns with research showing that unrealistic or unclear expectations can quickly wear down motivation and wellbeing (Kellogg, Valentine & Christin, 2020). In NTG's case, the combination of demanding leadership styles and continuous performance pressure has created a cycle where employees are tired, less engaged and more likely to consider leaving the company. Taken together, these factors show how toxic leadership can have a powerful effect on overall morale and organisational culture.

2.4 Algorithmic Surveillance and HR Analytics

NTG's use of dashboards and predictive analytics reflects algorithmic management.

From a Foucauldian view, such tools normalise continuous comparison against benchmarks and can internalise discipline (de Laat, 2019). At NTG, constant visibility of “productivity” metrics plausibly amplifies self-surveillance and anxiety.

Studies have found that when algorithms focus too much on evaluating people, employees often feel they have less control and may start to push back (Schlund & Zitek, 2024). Related work indicates algorithmic control reshapes power and discretion at work (Kellogg, Valentine & Christin, 2020). This helps explain NTG's minimal-compliance behaviours and data-gaming risks.

HR analytics can be developmental if transparent and co-designed; however, skill gaps, privacy concerns and weak data culture often derail value creation (Meijerink &

Bondarouk, 2021). For NTG, the problem is not analytics per se but opaque metrics and unrealistic targets—encouraging compliance over learning.

2.5 Gender Inequality and Diversity

Variation in how regional units implement inclusion indicates structural—not merely cultural—inequality. Evidence on post-bureaucratic/agile settings shows that when delivery speed and informal availability dominate, evaluation shifts toward visibility over outcomes, amplifying gendered disadvantages (de Laat, 2023). For NTG, the practice of rewarding “always-on” responsiveness and office-based visibility conflicts with its agile rhetoric and disproportionately penalises caregivers, reinforcing a masculine norm around time and presence.

Tokenism research further explains why representation targets alone do not alter power: informal networks shape stretch assignments, sponsorship and credibility (Holgersson & Romani, 2020). At NTG, centralised approvals plus KPI-only evaluations narrow who is seen as “leadership material”, while dissent about workload or fairness can be misread as low commitment. This dynamic helps explain inconsistent D&I outcomes across regions despite corporate policy.

To convert policy into practice, NTG should (1) publish promotion criteria that weight outcomes and team contribution—not presence; (2) make flexible/remote eligibility universal by default with clear performance guardrails; (3) monitor representation and pay/progression gaps by level and function, with action plans for

outliers; and (4) build sponsorship/mentoring schemes for under-represented talent and hold leaders accountable for inclusion outcomes (Cooper & Hoel, 2020). These steps align incentives with equity, reducing the gap between espoused values and daily decisions.

2.6 Comparative Cases

Some of the issues at NTG are similar to cases where performance pressure was given more importance than transparency. The Boeing 737 MAX crisis shows how suppressing voice and prioritising deadlines over safety can have catastrophic results (Herkert, Borenstein & Miller, 2020). While NTG's stakes differ, the underlying governance risk—goal fixation that sidelines ethics—remains relevant.

Investigations of Amazon and Uber have linked aggressive targets and surveillance to burnout and reputational damage (Wolor et al., 2022). For NTG, these parallels underline a strategic risk: short-term output gains can be offset by attrition, weakened employer brand and impaired learning. Framing NTG's challenges as “wicked problems” highlights the need for iterative, stakeholder-rich solutions rather than one-off fixes (Lönngren & van Poeck, 2021).

2.7 Stakeholder and Ethical Assessment

Stakeholder theory requires organisations to consider employees, customers, suppliers and communities—not only shareholders (Dmytriiev, Freeman & Hörisch, 2021).

Applied to NTG, this means trust, voice and equitable opportunity are not peripheral HR issues but central governance duties. Managing stakeholder relationships ethically can also improve long-term performance (Jones, Harrison & Felps, 2018). Carroll's CSR pyramid reminds us that legal and ethical responsibilities accompany economic goals (Carroll, 2016; Dmytriiev et al., 2021). NTG's current emphasis on efficiency over fairness indicates an ethical under-investment that now threatens its economic base. Genuine CSR, integrated with strategy, can rebuild engagement when employees see credible action (Aguinis & Glavas, 2019; Awa, Etim & Ogbonda, 2024).

NTG appears to concentrate heavily on economic performance, while under-investing in ethical treatment of employees and broader social responsibilities. Aguinis & Glavas (2019) shows that CSR programmes can enhance employee engagement when they are genuine and integrated into core strategy.

Awa et al. (2024) argue that engaging meaningfully with key stakeholders is fundamental to contemporary CSR practice. For NTG, this means actively listening to employees' concerns about workload, surveillance and inequality, and incorporating their perspectives into policy decisions. Without such engagement, trust will continue to erode and may spill over into NTG's external reputation and customer relationships.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Develop Strategic Bureaucracy

NTG should redesign its structure into a “strategic bureaucracy” that combines formal clarity with local flexibility (Monteiro & Adler, 2022). Policies and approval processes need to be simplified and made transparent, so that employees understand decision criteria and managers cannot arbitrarily delay work. Cross-functional teams should be given real authority over day-to-day decisions, within agreed boundaries.

This would maintain accountability while reducing micromanagement and confusion.

3.2 Cultivate Inclusive and Ethical Leadership

To improve the situation at NTG, leadership development needs to become a much bigger priority. At the moment, a lot of managers seem to focus mainly on performance results and strict procedures, which makes employees feel pressured rather than supported. A more inclusive and ethical style of leadership could help build a healthier environment. This includes leaders who actually listen to their teams, show basic fairness and empathy, and explain decisions more openly instead of simply giving instructions. Research suggests that when leaders behave in a more supportive way, employees feel more valued and are more willing to contribute (Cooper & Hoel, 2020).

One issue that NTG needs to pay more attention to is consistency. Several staff members mentioned that how they are treated depends a lot on which manager they happen to work under. This inconsistency can create confusion and sometimes inequality. Inclusive leadership aims to reduce this by giving managers clearer expectations and training about how to treat people fairly across different teams. Holgersson and Romani (2020) also point out that gender norms and organisational culture can affect who gets recognised or promoted, so managers need to be aware of these invisible biases when making decisions.

Another part of ethical leadership is encouraging employees to raise concerns without fear. At NTG, people often stay silent because they are worried that managers might react negatively or see them as unproductive. This is a problem because it stops the

organisation from identifying issues early. Morrison (2023) shows that when leaders openly welcome feedback, even if it is critical, employees are more likely to share their thoughts. Creating this kind of environment at NTG would not only help with immediate problems but also support longer-term learning and improvement.

Overall, shifting towards a more inclusive and ethical leadership style could help NTG rebuild trust and reduce some of the stress that employees are currently experiencing. It would also support a culture where people feel more motivated and confident about their work.

3.3 Reform HR Analytics and Surveillance

NTG should reframe analytics as a developmental tool rather than a disciplinary weapon. This requires explaining **what** data are collected, **how** they are used and **how** individuals benefit. Algorithms should be audited for bias and reviewed by a cross-functional committee including HR, data specialists and employee representatives. Invest in data literacy for HR and line managers to interpret results responsibly (Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2021). Where metrics are unrealistic or create perverse incentives, redesign them with staff to align with learning, quality and wellbeing.

3.4 Promote Gender Equality and Diversity

NTG should adopt a coherent global diversity strategy with local adaptation but clear minimum standards. This includes equal access to flexible and remote working, transparent promotion criteria and active monitoring of representation at different organisational levels (Holgersson & Romani, 2020) .

Employee resource groups and mentoring schemes can support underrepresented employees and create channels to challenge discriminatory practices. Managers must be trained to evaluate performance based on outcomes rather than physical presence, reducing the bias against those who utilise flexible options (Cooper & Hoel, 2020).

3.5 Enhance Stakeholder Engagement and CSR

Finally, NTG should develop an integrated CSR strategy grounded in stakeholder dialogue (Aguinis & Glavas, 2019). Regular forums, town-hall meetings and anonymous feedback mechanisms can give employees a voice in shaping policies on workload, wellbeing and equality.

Externally, NTG can collaborate with communities and professional bodies to demonstrate its commitment to ethical AI and responsible employment practices. Aligning business objectives with social and environmental goals will help rebuild trust with both internal and external stakeholders (Carroll, 2016; Dmytriiev et al., 2021).

4. Conclusion

Overall, NTG shows a clear gap between its public image of being agile and people-focused and what employees actually experience. The analysis in this report shows

that management practices shaped by Scientific Management, bureaucracy, toxic leadership and algorithmic surveillance have eroded trust and wellbeing. Gender inequality and inconsistent diversity initiatives further undermine the organisation's ethical foundations.

However, the case also presents an opportunity. By adopting strategic bureaucracy, cultivating inclusive leadership, redesigning analytics for development, and embedding equality and stakeholder dialogue, NTG can realign everyday practices with its espoused values. This will not only address current complaints but also restore trust, protect learning capacity and support sustainable performance.

5. References

Aguinis, H. & Glavas, A. (2019) 'On corporate social responsibility, sensemaking, and the search for meaningfulness in work', *Journal of Management*, 45(3), 1057–1086.

Awa, H.O., Etim, W. & Ogbonda, E. (2024) 'Stakeholders, stakeholder theory and corporate social responsibility (CSR)', *International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility*, 9(1), 11.

Carroll, A.B. (2016) 'Carroll's pyramid of CSR: taking another look', *International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility*, 1(3), 1–8.

Clegg, S.R. (2019) *Management, Organisation and Contemporary Social Theory*.

London: Routledge.

Cole, G.A. & Kelly, P. (2020) *Management: Theory and Practice*. 9th edn. Andover: Cengage.

Cooper, C.L. & Hoel, H. (2020) '*Workplace bullying and mobbing in the UK: a comprehensive review*', **International Journal of Management Reviews**, **22**(3), 123–145.

de Laat, P.B. (2019) 'The disciplinary power of predictive algorithms: a Foucauldian perspective', *Ethics and Information Technology*, 21(4), pp. 319–329.

de Laat, K. (2023) 'Remote work and the post-bureaucratic organisation: unintended consequences of digitally mediated autonomy', *ILR Review*, 76(1), pp. 135–159.

Dmytriiev, S.D., Freeman, R.E. & Hörisch, J. (2021) 'The relationship between stakeholder theory and corporate social responsibility', *Journal of Management Studies*, 58(6), 1441–1470.

Dmytriiev, S.D., Freeman, R.E. & Phillips, R.A. (2021) 'Corporate social responsibility and stakeholder theory: learning from each other', *Journal of Management Studies*, 58(6), 1471–1492.

Herkert, J., Borenstein, J. & Miller, K. (2020) 'The Boeing 737 MAX: lessons for engineering ethics', *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 26(6), 2957–2974.

Holgersson, C. & Romani, L. (2020) 'Tokenism revisited: when organizational culture challenges masculine norms, the experience of token is transformed', *European*

Management Review, 17(3), 649–661.

Hong, H. & Kacperczyk, M. (2023) 'Firms and social responsibility: a review of ESG and CSR research in corporate finance', *Annual Review of Financial Economics*, 15, pp. 523–554.

Jantjies, S.D., Erasmus, B.J., Manzini, A.B., Mxolisi, M. & Makamu, T.E. (2024) 'Investigating toxic leadership's influence on employee turnover intentions: the mediating role of organisational culture', *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22, a2571.

Jones, T.M., Harrison, J.S. & Felps, W. (2018) 'How applying instrumental stakeholder theory can provide sustainable competitive advantage', *Academy of Management Review*, 43(3), 371–391.

Kayas, O.G., Soyer, A. & Demirkaya, H. (2023) 'Workplace surveillance and employee reactions: a systematic review', *Journal of Business Research*, 160, 113779.

Kellogg, K.C., Valentine, M.A. & Christin, A. (2020) 'Algorithms at work: the new contested terrain of control', *Academy of Management Annals*, 14(1), 366–410.

Lönngren, J. & van Poeck, K. (2021) 'Wicked problems: a mapping review of the literature', *Environmental Education Research*, 27(9), pp. 1324–1345.

Maslach, C. & Leiter, M.P. (2022) *The Burnout Challenge: Managing People's Relationships with Their Jobs*. Harvard University Press.

Meijerink, J. & Bondarouk, T. (2021) 'The duality of algorithmic management: toward a research agenda on HRM algorithms, autonomy and value creation', *Human*

Resource Management Review, 31(4), Article 100876.

Monteiro, L.F. & Adler, P.S. (2022) 'Bureaucracy for the 21st century: clarifying and expanding our view of bureaucratic organization', *Academy of Management Annals*, 16(2), 427–475.

Morrison, E.W. (2023) 'Employee voice and silence: taking stock a decade later', *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 10(1), pp. 79–107.

Nunes, S., Silva, G. & Oliveira, T. (2024) 'Toxic leadership and employee turnover intention: a systematic review and meta-analysis', *Administrative Sciences*, 14(12), 340.

Ofei, A.M.A., Poku, C.A., Paarima, Y., Barnes, T. & Kwashie, A.A. (2023) 'Toxic leadership behaviour of nurse managers and turnover intentions: the mediating role of job satisfaction', *BMC Nursing*, 22, 374.

Paruzel, A., et al. (2021) 'The relationship between perceived CSR and employee-related outcomes: a meta-analysis', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 607108.

Schlund, J. & Zitek, E. (2024) 'Algorithmic surveillance and perceptions of organizational justice', *Communications Psychology*, 2(1), 53.

Wolor, C.W., Ardiansyah, A., Rofaida, R., Nurkhin, A. & Rababah, M.A. (2022) 'Impact of toxic leadership on employee performance', *Health Psychology Research*, 10(4), 57551.