



Developing Workplace Critical Thinking (BMSW5101_LON)

Student name & ID: **Artiola Stana 2121201**

Lecturer name: **Dr Akinseye Aluko**

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Part 1

Executive summary

Costa Coffee



Sergio and Bruno Costa established the international coffee shop business Costa Coffee in London, England 1971. The two brothers, who were born in Italy and migrated in London in the 1960s, started inserting, roasting, and selling coffee beans to nearby suppliers and coffee shops. (Gruber, 2022) The Costa family built their first retail location in 1978 in Vauxhall, London, and it rapidly gained a following for its superior coffee and pastries. Costa Coffee continued to grow in the UK throughout the 1980s and 1990s, and Whitbread PLC, a hospitality corporation that also control trademarks including Premier Inn and Beefeater, obtained the business in 1995. (Gruber, 2022) Costa Coffee maintained its remarkable growth both domestically and abroad while being owned by Whitbread. In 1999, the company established its first overseas location in Dubai. Today, there are more than 4,000 locations across more than 30 nations. Costa Coffee now sells its goods in several locations, including retail stores, vending machines, and even petrol stations, in addition to its classic coffeehouse style. One of the biggest earnings in the coffee sector occurred in 2018 when Coca-Cola purchased the business for £3.9 billion. (Gruber, 2022)

Introduction

The goal of this study is to pinpoint some of the major obstacles that managers and employees faced while using critical thinking in their communication and decision-making during the COVID-19 pandemic in organisations. Employees are now required to work remotely from their homes due to the current economy's globalisation and the international COVID-19 pandemic. Costa Coffee during the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns had to modify their operations and utilize critical thinking, much like other businesses. The following are a few steps that Costa Coffee has taken and applied critical thinking:

- As a result of the lockdowns that required them to shut down their physical stores, Costa Coffee had to make changes to their business approach to suit the new circumstances. They concentrated on facilitating online orders, providing delivery service, and drive through options. (Digital Spy)
- Costa Coffee had to exercise caution in their supply chain management as the pandemic caused disturbances in the global supply chain. (Milan, 2020) They needed to guarantee adequate availability of their products while simultaneously prioritizing the protection of their supplier's workforce. (Milan, 2020)
- During pandemic, effective communication was crucial, and Costa Coffee made sure to keep their customers updated on any changes made to their business operations. They utilized various communication channels such as social media, email, and other website to keep their customers informed. (Costa Coffee, 2020)

Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values

The most complete and generally conceptualised theory of persuasion is Milton Rokeach's Beliefs, Attitudes and Values theory. The beliefs, attitudes and values hypothesis are cognitive consistency theory that asserts that a person's beliefs, attitudes, and values must be consistent with one another and elaborates on the significance of this when attempting to persuade a person. (Block, n.d) Understanding what each theory component stands for and how they relate to one another it is crucial for a complete understanding of the beliefs, attitudes, and values theory. (Block, n.d)

Beliefs: When there are significant emotional stakes, beliefs have the strongest impact. Workplace cultures have a significant impact on and reinforce beliefs for individuals. Workplace culture, which are made up of collective feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and values of the employees as well as the organisation, are important conduits for the transmission of cultural norms. (Altman, 2019) At work, we often either agree with the dominant ideas in our group or are actively working to disprove them. The importance of alignment as a strategy for organisational performance is a topic that managers and consultants frequently discuss. Yet before a person can be "on-board" with an organization's collective aims and values, their personal beliefs must first be self-aligned. (Altman, 2019)

Attitudes: Employee satisfaction, productivity, and the overall corporate culture can be significantly impacted by attitudes in the workplace. There are various attitudes that can be seen in the workplace, like:

- The level of contentment an employee feels about their employment is known as a job satisfaction. Job security, remuneration, work-life balance, and the level of management support all play a role in a job satisfaction. (Clarity Wave, 2018)
- Employee loyalty and commitment to their employer is referred to as organisational commitment. Highly devoted workers are more likely to stick with company, put in more effort, and give customers better service. (Clarity Wave, 2018)
- An organization's common values, beliefs, and behaviours are referred to as its workplace culture. Collaboration, innovation, and sense of belonging are all fostered by a positive workplace culture. (Clarity Wave, 2018)

Values: The guiding ideals that are most significant to us in terms of our working style are our workplace values. These firmly held beliefs serve as a guide for significant choices in

life, including job selections, and help us distinguish between the proper and improper ways of functioning. Some workplace values are:

- Being responsible
- Attention to details!
- Providing outstanding work and being trustworthy
- Working well in a team
- Respecting corporate guidelines and policies
- Being dependable
- Fulfilling commitments (Mindtools, n.d)

By giving everyone in the organisation a shared goal, values alignment aids in the accomplishment of the organization's fundamental mission. People labour towards distinct goals, with different intentions, and with different consequences when their values are out of harmony. Relationship at work, productivity, job satisfaction, and creative potential may all suffer as a result. (Mindtools, n.d)

In summary, beliefs, attitudes, and values are three concepts that are closely related but have distinct meanings. Beliefs are assumptions or convictions that people hold to be true, attitudes are feelings or opinions people have about specific objects, people, or situations, and values are principles or standards that people hold as important and guide their behaviour and decision-making. (Mindtools, n.d)

Costa Coffee beliefs, attitudes, and values

- Passion for coffee, Costa Coffee firmly believes that good coffee can unite people and improve their quality of life. (MSA, 2021)
- Customer focused, Costa Coffee places a high value on providing excellent customer service and ensuring that its customers have a satisfying experience. The business values building a feeling of community in its coffee shops and treating its customers with love, respect, and warmth. (MSA, 2021)
- Costa Coffee is dedicated to procuring its coffee beans in an ethical and sustainable way, as well as to partnering with farmers and communities globally to promote ethical business practices. Whether it is through new coffee blends, menu items or

technology, Costa Coffee is constantly looking for ways to innovate and enhance. (MSA, 2021)

- Friendly and inviting atmosphere, the business values establishing a welcoming environment where customers can relax and enjoy their coffee. (MSA, 2021)
- Community, the business places a high priority on instilling a sense of belonging and community in its coffee shops so that patrons may interact with one another and feel like they are a part of something bigger. (MSA, 2021)

Costa Coffee SWOT Analysis

Strengths • Globally recognised brand in the coffee industry known for its diverse range of products. (An, 2015) • Positive reputation and employs effective supply chain management practice. • Has a strong global presence with over 3,800 stores located in 32 countries (Momin, 2022)	Weaknesses • Faces intense competition from both big-name coffee chains and local independent coffee shops. • Costa Coffee is vulnerable to seasonal fluctuations in demand and changing coffee beans prices. (Momin, 2022) • Limited offerings in other food, and their prices are comparatively high when compared to other competitors. (An, 2015)
Opportunities • Costa Coffee can expand into emerging markets in Asia and Africa. • Can introduce new and creative menu items to entice both new and returning customers. • By developing more environmental-friendly and sustainable practices, Costa Coffee can attract customers who prioritize eco-friendliness. (Momin, 2022)	Threats • Economic and political instability in some markets • Trend towards healthier food and beverage options • Covid-19 pandemic affecting the food industry and changing the customer's preferences and habits. (Momin, 2022)

Workplace Behaviour During Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic and the nationwide closure of high-street locations put UK coffee operator Costa Coffee in the unfortunate position of having to manage several difficult organisational changes. (Flood, 2021) In normal circumstances, this would be a difficult project, but it was made worse by the fact that large portions of the Costa workforce were no longer allowed to work in-store for extended periods of time and new furlough restrictions were introduced to assist staff members. (Flood, 2021) Due to lockdowns, social segregation tactics, and remote working, Costa Coffee has seen a major drop in footfall, like other coffee shops. As a result, Costa Coffee's revenue has decreased. It has moved its emphasis to takeaway and delivery services as customers shunned cafes and indoor dining establishments. Additionally, the business unveiled redesigned packaging to guarantee frictionless delivery and food safety. (Lodge, 2020) Costa Coffee introduced security measures such required mask use, social seclusion, and improved hygiene to safeguard the security of its customers and employees. The company also limited the number of customers allowed in at once and installed screen and barriers inside the stores. (Lodge, 2020)

Management Theories

How someone can interpret their own beliefs, attitudes, and values differently

For a someone who is responsible for a diverse staff with varying ideas, attitudes, beliefs, values, and cultural differences can be a significant issue. Even the tiniest detail might be misconstrued. Most of the staff that someone is managing will not share the way of thinking because they come in all different shapes and sizes. Understanding that there is always a solution to every problem is crucial for a successful and happy environment. (UKEssays, 2018)

Taylor Scientific Theory

Frederick Winslow Taylor hailed from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and had a formative experience in Europe during his youth. He attended Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire in 1872 but chose not to attend university immediately. (Ward, 2021) Instead,

Taylor pursued different manufacturing jobs before gaining a mechanical engineering degree from Stevens Institute of Technology in 1883. He later went on to serve as a Chief Engineer at Midvale Steel Works in Philadelphia. (Ward, 2021) Following his resignation in 1890, Taylor assumed the role of General Manager at Manufacturing Investment Company. However, he departed the company in 1893 with the aim of establishing the field of engineering management consulting. (Ward, 2021) Taylor went to serve as President of America Society of Mechanical Engineers from 1906 to 1907, and eventually became a professor at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College. (Ward, 2021)

Frederick Winslow Taylor's tools of Scientific Management in the organisation today

- The state of working in harmony and collaboration between employers and employees.
- The allocation or distribution of tasks and obligations among individuals or groups.
- The use of systematic methods to choose and prepare employees for their jobs.
- Substituting general and often imprecise guidelines with more accurate and empirical approaches based on scientific principles. (Nethavhani, 2020)

Taylor Scientific Management Theory applied to Costa Coffee

Taylor's Scientific Management is a managerial concept that focuses on efficacy and output by employing scientific methods and techniques. This principle involves dividing activities into smaller parts and examining them to identify the most efficient method of completing them. (Ibrahim, 2019) After conducting a thorough and critical analysis of the development of management theory in practice, it has been identified the below theory, which is Taylor's Scientific Management, that could enhance the efficiency of Costa Coffee operations management and address any management issues specific to their business context. (Ibrahim, 2019) This management theory is relevant to the Costa Coffee business, and it can be applied to improve the performance in a case-by-case basis. In simpler terms, this management approach and practice can be utilized to solve any emerging management problems or issues based on the nature and context of the problem at Costa Coffee. (Ibrahim, 2019) Using the scientific approach to determine the best way for Costa Coffee to complete tasks, selecting and training employees based on qualifications, promoting

collaboration between workers and managements, and assigning responsibility for planning work to management. (Ibrahim, 2019)

Critical Thinking Model

De Bono's 6 Thinking Hats Method (applied to Costa Coffee)



Dr Edward de Bono, a Maltese physician psychologist, and author, created a technique called "Six Thinking Hats" for solving problems creatively. This approach prompts group members to examine issues from various perspectives by assigning different "thinking hat" to each person. (Sabater, 2021)

- **White Hat**: This hat symbolizes thinking that is based on factual and data-driven analysis. Its emphasis is on information, figures, and facts that already known or may require further research. (Sabater, 2021) Costa Coffee concentrate on actual information and statistics and the white hat can be utilized investigate sales records and customer feedback. (Costa Coffee, 2013)
- **Red Hat**: This hat symbolizes intuition and emotions and motivates individuals to approach the issue subjectively and articulate their sentiments and instincts

concerning the matter. (Sabater, 2021) Regarding Costa Coffee, this may entail evaluating the customer's sentiments towards the ambiance, selection of products, and the general experience provided by the Costa Coffee. (Costa Coffee, 2013)

- **Black Hat**: This hat signifies analytical and critical thinking and centres on recognizing potential issues, hurdles, and hazards related to the circumstances. (Sabater, 2021) This hat could involve examining the possible obstacles that the business might encounter. (Costa Coffee, 2013)
- **Yellow Hat**: This hat stands for positive and optimistic thinking and motivates participants to investigate the advantages, possibilities, and significance of the situation. (Sabater, 2021) Concerning Costa Coffee, this may include exploring approaches to grow the business, introduce fresh menu items, or improve quality. (Costa Coffee, 2013)
- **Green Hat**: This hat symbolises innovative and creative thinking and prompts participants to produce new concepts, opportunities, and options. (Sabater, 2021) This hat could entail generating novel marketing tactics, creating innovative products, or finding methods to enhance the sustainability of the business. (Costa Coffee, 2013)
- **Blue Hat**: This hat embodies a meta-level and comprehensive thought process, serving as the moderator or coordinator of the thinking procedure, directing the group's path, and assessing the consequences. (Sabater, 2021) Costa Coffee might use this hat to recognise the most favourable concepts and formulate a concrete course of action to execute them. (Costa Coffee, 2013)

Recommendations

The recommendations for Costa Coffee that could help the company to thrive is to:

- ✓ Continue prioritising the safety and wellbeing of employees and customers.
- ✓ Maintain focus on quality and sustainability.
- ✓ Encourage creative problem-solving and innovation.
- ✓ Embrace technology and digital solutions.
- ✓ Foster culture of continuous improvement.

Overall, these recommendations are to help Costa Coffee built on its strengths and navigates the challenges and opportunities of the post pandemic period.

Conclusion

After examining Costa Coffee's values, attitudes, and beliefs throughout the pandemic, along with implementing Taylor's Scientific Management and De Bono's Six Thinking Hats method, it can be inferred that Costa Coffee has shown a strong dedication towards their fundamental principles of quality, sustainability, and community throughout this difficult period. Furthermore, Costa Coffee has demonstrated its emphasis on quality by taking measurements to guarantee the safety and welfare for both its staff and customers. Additionally, their engage to sustainability is evident through their continuous effort to minimize the environmental impact.

Part 2

REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

Introduction

During the past ten weeks, I have had the privilege to undertake the critical thinking module as a student, which has been an incredibly rewarding experience. As a learner, I have been exposed to intricate concepts and have been able to refine my critical thinking abilities. The purpose of this reflective journal is to explore my personal growth and process over the duration of the module. By reflecting on my experiences, I aim to deepen my comprehension of critical thinking and recognise areas where I can further improve. Gibb's reflective model will be the model that I will use to write this reflective journal. Through this process, I inspire to gain novel insights and viewpoints on critical thinking, and to continue advancing my aptitudes as a critical thinker.

Gibb's Reflective Cycle

Graham Gibbs, a British sociologist, and educational theorist devised the Gibbs Reflective Cycle as a framework to enable individuals to contemplate their experiences in an organised and methodical manner. (Wain, 2017) The cycle incorporates six phases that facilitate the individual in navigating the process of reflection, analysis, and action. The six phases consisting of:

1. Description
2. Feelings
3. Evaluation
4. Analysis
5. Conclusion
6. Action Plan (Wain, 2017)

Reflection week 1-9

Week one

Firstly, in the description stage, I learned that critical thinking involves the ability to analyse information, evaluate arguments, and make sound decisions. (Fisher, 2014) Our lecturer discusses about the requirements for assessment 1 and the importance of gaining a basic understanding of management theories and the beliefs, attitudes, values, and emotions in the workplace context. I felt challenged by the amount of information presented in the first week of class, but also felt motivated to learn and apply this knowledge in my future. I considered how these concepts could be applied in a real-world workplace setting. Then, I explored the different strategies and techniques for improving critical thinking, such as questioning assumptions and biases, and considered how management theories can be used to support effective decision-making. In conclusion, I recognised that the first week of the class provided a strong foundation for developing my critical thinking skills and it also it was a sum up for what we are going to learn the following weeks, till the end of the semester. Finally, for action plan was to create a plan to continue practicing and refining my critical thinking, seeking out opportunities to apply these skills in my current and future workplace.

Week two

In the second week of my course, we had a recap of week which have me stronger foundation of my learning. Additionally, I deepened my comprehension of the significance of beliefs, attitudes and values within a workplace and their impact of team dynamics. The significance of critical thinking in the workplace stood out to me, as I reflected on my past experiences and acknowledged my tendency to accept information without making assumptions. However, now that I have better understanding of the importance of critical thinking, I am more conscious of the need to assess information carefully and to inquire further. In general, the second week presented me with significant insights that I can utilize in both my academic and professional life.

Week three

During week three of class, we delved deeper into topics covered in week two. We reviewed the importance of critical thinking and how it can be applied in various aspects of our lives. We also learned about what employers are looking for in an employee which were:

1. Come ready to work on the first day.
2. Communicate and think critically.
3. Work in teams.
4. Use technology.
5. Speak multiple languages.
6. Think and communicate globally.

And how being a good critical thinker is highly valued in the workplace. Reflecting on these topics has helped me realize the importance of being a good critical thinker not only for professional success but also for personal growth. Another topic was the JIT Management, which is a manufacturing and inventory control philosophy that aims to minimize waste and lower inventory costs by delivering materials and products precisely when they are needed in the production process. (Stevens, 2020) It relies on close coordination between suppliers, manufacturers, and distributors to ensure timely and accurate delivery of materials and products. Success requires careful planning, a responsive supply chain, and a commitment to continuous improvement. (Stevens, 2020) Last topic that was covered in week three was the Scanlon Plan. The Scanlon Plan is an employee incentive program designed to foster collaboration between employees and management towards achieving organisational goals. (Wren, 2019) Developed by Joseph Scanlon, it incentivises employees to suggest ways to improve operations and productivity with the reward being a share of the cost of savings or increased profits. (Wren, 2019) It is based on open communication, mutual trust, and shared rewards, and it is a popular tool for organisations to enhance employee engagement and job satisfaction. (Wren, 2019)

Week four

The fourth week of class focused the RED model of critical thinking, problem-solving, and Scientific management. The RED model of critical thinking consists of three stages: recognising assumptions, evaluating arguments, and drawing conclusions. (Wulandary, Baedhowi, and Hidrayani, 2021) It is an effective approach for analysing complex situations and making sound decisions. (Wulandary, Baedhowi, and Hidrayani, 2021) During the week, we practiced applying the RED model in group discussions. Personally, I found it helpful in identifying hidden assumptions and biases that can affect decision-making. By assessing

arguments and making conclusions, I was able to make more informed decisions. Additionally, we discussed problem-solving techniques, such as brainstorming and root cause analysis, which helped to break down complex problems into smaller parts. Finally, we talked about Scientific management, a management philosophy that prioritises efficiency and productivity by training workers to perform their jobs in the most efficient way possible. (Cuofano, 2021) We discussed its pros and cons, including the potential risk of dehumanizing workers. Overall, the lesson was informative and taught me valuable skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, and management.

Week five

During week five, we covered the topics of De Bono's six thinking hats and Bureaucracy. As per the Gibb's reflective model, I now recognise that De Bono's six thinking hats are valuable tool that can be used for creative thinking and problem-solving. By adopting various perspectives and modes of thinking, I was able to tackle problems from different angles and come up with innovative solutions. Our class discussions on bureaucracy also helped me understand the pros and cons of this organizational structure. While bureaucracy can promote efficiency and consistency, it can also result in flexibility and excessive rules. (Mulder, 2018) As I think back on my learning, I realize that my understanding of these concepts will be beneficial for me in the future as I encounter diverse organisational structures and engage in problem-solving.

Week six

In week six of class, we focused on utilizing critical thinking poles, decision-making skills, and the Contingency Management Theory. Reflecting on my learning experience, I realise that using critical thinking poles helped me to consider multiple perspectives and make more informed decisions. Additionally, our group discussions on decision-making skills provided me with valuable insights into how to approach complex decision-making situations. By using tools such as decision matrices and considering the consequences of different options, I was able to arrive at well-reasoned decisions. Finally, our exploration of the Contingency Management Theory helped me to understand how different leadership styles can be effective in different situations. Being flexible and adapting to the needs of the situation can make leaders more effective in achieving organizational goals. (Indeed, 2020) Contingency Management Theory is a form of therapy that uses rewards or punishments to reinforce

desirable or undesirable behaviours. Its objective is to teach or alter behaviours using positive reinforcement. (Indeed, 2020)

Week seven

In the seventh week of my learning, I gained an understanding of the significance of beliefs, attitudes, and values, as well as the System Theory. I comprehended that beliefs refer to a group of presumptions that individuals hold to be factual about the world. Attitudes represent our affirmative or negative assessments of individuals, locations, and objects, while values serve as the principles that direct people's choices. In the workplace, these concepts significantly influence individuals' interactions with each other and how they conduct their work. I felt motivated to learn more about these topics to enhance my interpersonal skills and become a better team player. I believe that the System Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how individuals, groups, and organisations interact with one another. It highlights the importance of considering the interconnectedness of various elements in a system, and how changes in one part of the system can have ripple effects throughout the whole system. (Lai and Huili Lin, 2017)

Week eight

Throughout this week, I have acquired significant knowledge regarding the management of innovation and creativity in the business domain. Utilizing Gibb's reflective cycle, I have analysed my learning experience and assessed its impact on my understanding. Initially, I recognised that my prior comprehension of innovation and creativity in the business world was restricted, and the teachings of this week have expanded my outlook on the topic. Furthermore, I comprehended the significance of innovation and creativity in the growth of an enterprise and how proficient handling of these elements can provide a competitive advantage to a business. The examination of case studies during this week assisted me in understanding the difficulties associated with managing innovation and creativity. To conclude, this week's learning has been enlightening, and I now have a better understanding of the importance of managing innovation and creativity in the business environment. To manage creativity in business, one must establish an atmosphere that stimulates and facilitates the creation of fresh ideas, concepts, and solutions. (Boyles, 2022) It involves providing employees with the necessary resources, tools, and support to think creatively. Successful

management of creativity involves setting specific objectives, encouraging a culture that emphasises innovation and experimentation, and putting in place frameworks for assessing ideas. (Boyles, 2022)

Week nine

In this week we learn about sustainable development, and Carlos Gomez explained the significance of cultivating a mindset that embodies the traits of an authentic and successful leader. He also shared his own story with us and explain that we are the ones that can control our feeling with different examples. I realised that becoming an authentic and successful leader requires an intimate understanding of oneself, including values, strengths, weaknesses, and personal objectives. I also learned that being adaptable and open to change is essential, as sustainability requires constant innovation and adaptation to changing circumstances. More in details, sustainable development is a strategy for development that achieve present day needs while preserving the ability of future generations to fulfil their own needs. This is accomplished by balancing economic, social, and environmental considerations. (Monash University, 2022)

Conclusion

