

DEVELOPING WORKPLACE CRITICAL THINKING

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Part One

Organisation Description

The shops owned and operated by John Lewis Company may be found throughout the United Kingdom. The John Lewis and Waitrose retail brands are the names under which the corporation operates. These shops sell a variety of goods, such as furniture, accessories, kitchenware, dining ware, and outdoor furniture and equipment (Slaman & Storey, 2016). The John Lewis Company also offers a variety of cosmetic, financial, insurance, and optical services. It also sells items using multiple websites linked to John Lewis and Waitrose names. In addition, it runs a factory and a farm. The John Lewis Partnership's main office is in London.

Introduction and Importance of Critical Thinking

Formerly known as John Lewis, the John Lewis & Associates chain today has premium department shops all around the United Kingdom and concessions in Australia and the Republic of Ireland. The company, the biggest cooperative in the United Kingdom, is an employee-owned cooperative organisation that distributes general products under the brand name John Lewis. Spedan Lewis, the son of company founder John Lewis, founded it in 1929 (Paranaque & Willmott, 2014, p. 608). The company's "Never Knowingly Undersold" promise, from 1925 to 2022, guaranteed that it would match the price of any national chain store that provided the same item at a cheaper price. John Lewis founded its first shop on London's Oxford Street in 1864; now, the company has 35 locations throughout the United Kingdom. In October 2016, a Dublin Arnotts shop became the first in Ireland to offer John Lewis products under a concession. That year, the first John Lewis concessions in Australia opened. Within the media John Lewis' Christmas TV

commercial has become a staple of the British holiday season. It marks the beginning of the last countdown before Christmas.

Many businesses' fast-paced environments push employees to think superficially and make quick decisions that could have unfavourable effects. The ability to slow down and thoroughly consider all of one's options is a skill that improves with critical thinking training. Besides decreasing mistake rates, critical thinking at work has the following advantages: Having a crucial mind makes one a better communicator (Paranaque & Willmott, 2014, p. 608). Better communication occurs when workers think more rationally and less based on emotions.

Emotional intelligence is improved by the ability to think critically. Analytical reasoning and emotional acuity are seemingly at odds with one another. Team members who can think things through before acting are more likely to succeed than those who cannot. Instead, they carefully consider all relevant factors, including the emotional and ethical consequences, and then make the best choice possible (Smith et al., 2017, p. 979).

The ability to think critically is a crucial ingredient in the creative process. Critical thinkers' hallmarks are their willingness to take in and weigh a wide range of information to make sound choices. It makes them more prone to think of original approaches to problems. They are naturally inquisitive and not afraid to probe for further information (Smith et al., 2017, p. 980). In light of the importance of Partners being aware of and taking all necessary measures to prevent transmission, the firm has supplied them with information, education, and training.

Thinking critically is a cost- and time-saver. The need for managers to keep an eye on their employees is reduced, possible issues are seen sooner, employee freedom and initiative are fostered, and managers have more time to devote to other tasks when they are encouraged (Smith et al., 2017, p. 982).

The difference between beliefs, attitudes, and values in the workplace

Attitudes are founded on the beliefs and values people carry inside. Beliefs are the convictions and assumptions people have come to accept as accurate based on their experiences. Honest beliefs about things, ideas, and people are called values. Attitudes, beliefs, and values are all examples of internalized systems that find expression in one's behavior. Attitudes regarding various workplace components reflect how people feel about those areas. The two most significant attitudes that predict success in the workplace are enthusiasm for one's work and loyalty to one's company (Ciocirlan et al., 2020, p. 544). A group of individuals with the same worldview best represents a corporation. Because of these core values, the organisation operates the way it does. It is because the shared worldview bonds people to their contemporaries (they make workers a kind of tribe). Companies have values, sometimes called corporate or core values, which are a set of tenets that employees must uphold to work cohesively toward a single purpose. These principles are often associated with corporate development, client loyalty, and other business-related goals.

The company's Beliefs, attitudes, and values during the pandemic

The stance of the John Lewis Company is values of trust, equity, participation, and acceptance. It is simple to write off the John Lewis community's way of life as an artifact of the organisation's founding documents. However, the organisation's core values of trust, justice, involvement, and inclusiveness are admirable goals that any group may pursue (Sammour, 2017). In particular, every company may profit from having a staff that takes pleasure in serving the community and customers to the greatest extent possible by adopting a style of engagement that aims to generate valuable and rewarding employment. Company policy throughout the epidemic has been maintaining a 2-meter (or 1-meter-plus with mitigation) social space between employees.

Controlling the number of clients in the shops, one-way pedestrian traffic networks when practical, sneeze screens, and barriers are some of the steps the organisation has put in place to control transmission risk when social distance is not an option. “Do right” is a core value of the organisation, which means the company always applies the best judgment and never compromises its principles (Sammour et al., 2020).

The firm is committed to the collaborative belief that partners, consumers, suppliers, and communities benefit from our joint efforts to build a prosperous company and a better, more secure future. Simply put, "we are not just workers but equal Partnership owners, sharing in its expertise, power, and profits." The firm successfully convinced the public that regular hand washing might prevent the spread of illness. They have also implemented stricter cleaning, handwashing, and hygiene policies across the board.

Assessment of Management Theories

Taylor Scientific Theory

Taylor emphasized that there should be friendly and entirely amicable connections between employees and management. Dissimilarities between them serve no purpose for either party. Managers and employees must appreciate and value one another (Davis et al., 2015, p. 324). Taylor advocated for a "mental revolution" between executives and employees to attain this ideal state of unity. To encourage hard labor, Taylor supported the maxim "a fair day's pay for a fair day's work." That is to say, an employee who is not as productive as his peers should not be compensated at the same rate as those who are.

Taylor, who studied mechanical engineering, valued effectiveness greatly. He was climbing the corporate ladder at a steel company in the United States when he devised studies to measure employee productivity. In one, he tried out several shovel designs until he came up with

a model that would keep employees comfortable while shoveling for long periods (Davis et al., 2015., p. 325). Working alongside bricklayers, he studied their techniques and figured out how to lay bricks more effectively. And he used the scientific method to determine the best way to do every job function. He discovered that the "optimal" technique to perform a job might be developed by calculating the time required for its many components. Taylor concluded that certain persons were more efficient at work than others based on his "time and motion" investigations. As a result, it was crucial to have the proper individuals working in the correct positions. By applying his findings from these studies to the business world, Taylor established his four scientific management principles (Davis et al., 2015., p. 327). "Taylorism" is another name for these ideas.

Frederick Taylor, a prominent figure in the era of classical management, created Scientific Management because of his efforts to reduce the time employees spent on individual tasks (Davis et al., 2015., p. 329). Frederick Taylor is an efficiency expert and mechanical engineer. Particularly significant in the 20th century, Taylor's scientific management ideas (job analysis, work design, workforce concord, etc.) have a place in business history. Many management techniques may be traced back to these principles. It is generally agreed that Taylor's Principles is the most influential management book of the 20th century and that he remains at the top of the list of contributions to the history of management philosophy.

In regard to COVID-19, to this day, the methodologies of business planning and execution may be traced back to Taylor's research, which has been widely criticized for being too radical. Some historians, however, argue that Taylor's writings primarily contain capitalist ideas rather than substantive insights into management. The WHO named Covid-19 a pandemic on January 30, 2020, (Anderson et al., 2022, p. 1916). As a result of the urgency of stopping the pandemic's spread, governments have had to implement extreme measures, including virtually shutting down

all economic and social activity. Covid-19 significantly impacted the working world and had ripple effects in education, social activities, and the health sector. Despite the Covid-19 epidemic, online shopping has grown more common. E-commerce appears to have permeated every industry nowadays. During this time, society as a whole became less sociable as individuals were forced to relocate. Due to the rise of digital technology, many formerly office-based professions, such as those in publishing and accounting, have been forced to relocate their operations to the comfort of their homes.

Elton Mayo

Mayo's famous Hawthorne experiments provided the basis for his management ideas, which explored the effects of changing workplace circumstances on worker output. The results of his tests offered many insights into the true nature of employee motivation and paved the way for future methods of team development and group dynamics (Muldoon et al., 2019). According to the Mayo theory of management, interpersonal considerations like appreciation and social interaction have a far more significant impact on employee motivation than monetary incentives or physical working conditions like temperature and lighting. With the use of a matrix he created, Elton Mayo showed how likely it was that different teams would win. His matrix shows how various permutations of group norms and group cohesion affect a team's performance.

According to the central tenet of management theorist Elton Mayo's work, employees care more about their social and relational contexts than their pay or working circumstances. According to this theory, managers may boost output if they consider workers as distinct people rather than replaceable parts of a larger machine. Many of the Human Relations ideas that Elton Mayo helped develop or promote remain relevant and valuable today (Muldoon et al., 2019). As "humane" and individual-centered office settings become more popular than strict, industrial, corporate

structures, substantial-tech corporations like Cisco and Google have experienced a resurgence in interest in them. The Gervais Principle, for example, posits that employees may be appeased with relational incentives (peer approbation, staff parties, and gift vouchers) just as well as with monetary rewards, which can be traced back to Elton Mayo's work as well (bonuses, profit-shares).

The Hawthorne idea was a watershed moment in management because of Elton Mayo's emphasis on people. One idea that explored the effects of encouragement at work was Douglas McGregor's X and Y theory. Each of these classic management ideas is applicable in various ways. My analysis of the COVID-19 epidemic has helped me draw up some valuable management lessons people can use daily (Muldoon et al., 2019). Methods of coping with the problem, such as social isolation have developed over time. People stumbled into social networking in 2008, just around the tremendous economic downturn. Around the period of globalization, social media and email began to replace traditional letter writing. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube have become indispensable in modern society.

Max Weber Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy, as defined by German sociologist Max Weber, is an organisation that is highly organized, codified, and yet impersonal. He also established the idea that a company or organisation needs a set of rules, regulations, and established channels of power to function well. Labor specialization, a codified system of laws and regulations, and a clear chain of command are all hallmarks of the perfect bureaucracy, according to Max Weber (McClean et al., 2017). According to Weber's "Economy and Society" from 1921, the most effective type of organisation is a bureaucracy because of its ability to maintain specialized knowledge, stability, continuity, and cohesion (McClean et al., 2017). On the other hand, he cautioned that unchecked bureaucracy

poses a danger to individual liberty by enclosing individuals in an "iron cage" of impersonal, illogical, and rigid regulations. With their inherent need for conducting safe and impersonal legal transactions, the advent of monetary economies paved the way for establishing modern government bureaucracy. Major financial institutions, like public-stock trading corporations, rose to prominence because their bureaucratic structures were better able to handle the complex needs of capitalist production.

Bureaucracies embody several characteristics that set them apart from others, including hierarchical organisation, specialization, authority, and accountability (McClean et al., 2017). A state, as defined by Weber, is "a human society that (successfully) asserts the monopoly of the lawful usage physical force within a certain area," and "the right to employ physical force is assigned to other organisations or to people only to the degree that the state authorizes it." During the Covid -19 epidemic, when all other organisations failed, especially during the lockdown, the state's monopoly on using force became increasingly apparent. Bureaucratic institutions fulfilled their functional and historical mission of sustaining the state when the state itself was endangered. Nevertheless, such a function inevitably exposed the holder to the benefits of elite status.

To keep the state running during Covid-19, everyone had to self-isolate and minimize physical interactions and meetings. The bureaucracy had to establish or fortify emergency organisations like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Ministry of Health to keep the system stable (McClean et al., 2017). To prevent the disease from spreading to the rest of society, patients had to be quarantined. It became an urgent daily need to provide reports detailing casualties. To help lessen the populace's suffering, palliatives had to be procured and distributed.

Critical Thinking Models

Red Model

Recognize assumptions- In the lack of evidence, deductions are considered true. After hearing a presentation, it is simple to accept as true whatever was said, even if no proof was provided. By picking up on people's preconceived notions, one may separate truth from opinion and choose the most helpful information. Understanding assumptions' role might help them fill in knowledge gaps and broaden their perspective on problems. After becoming aware of them, assumptions should be scrutinized from several angles (perspectives). The company's priorities during the epidemic should be health and safety (Mahboobeh, 2017). Since Covid-19 affects humans and necessitates a human reaction, the company must first tend to its own. The organisation has to ensure that it has taken all the necessary measures to safeguard the safety of its workers, permit people to work from home and establish a backup strategy for working while the staff is sequestered.

Evaluate arguments: An argument is a set of claims made to influence another person's opinion or behavior. One of the essential components of critical thinking is the capacity to assess arguments. The workers will have this skill if they can examine claims impartially and precisely. The RED Model's pattern recognition training helps one spot when someone is trying to convince them of something they already believe (known as a confirmation bias). Recognizing and disentangling one's emotions is crucial in evaluating arguments, as strong feelings tend to obscure one's ability to think clearly and rationally (Mahboobeh, 2017). Therefore, the corporation has to convince individuals to do particular things during the pandemic, like if they want to avoid contracting COVID-19, get vaccinated. Be sure to use soap and water to clean hands regularly.

Wearing a mask to cover lips and nose in the company is highly discouraged. Stay away from groups of people and get used to being alone.

Draw conclusions: The action of drawing reasonable inferences from the data at hand. Those that have this competence do not make broad assumptions without solid proof. Furthermore, they will shift their stance when the facts need it. One trait that defines them is "excellent judgment," which means they consistently make sound choices. Leaders may make better judgments under pressure when they possess these abilities. Successful government agencies know the importance of teaching their employees these abilities. Leaders adept in critical thinking are better able to adapt to change and make strategic choices regardless of the situation of the economy, enabling them to work more efficiently and complete their missions.

De Bono's 6 Thinking Hats Method

The six thinking hats are a technique for facilitating more fruitful brainstorming sessions by ensuring that a wide range of perspectives and ways of thinking are reflected. The paradigm, created by Dr. Edward de Bono, uses a system of six roles (or "hats") to help groups better organize and apply their abstract ideas to concrete problems. In the workplace, those six caps include: The white hat represents logic and reason (Swamy et al., 2019, p. 186). The red hat represents emotion and intuition. The red hat represents the emotional connection to the issue. The public, for example, experienced a wide range of negative emotions, including worry, apprehension, confusion, anger, and helplessness. The term "black hat" represents a situation's potential adverse outcomes. COVID-19 caused businesses to lose money and customers. It also meant one could not return and get them after the crisis (Swamy et al., 2019, p. 186). The yellow hat represents positivism and is worn when hoping for the best possible result. The green hat is imaginative, where suggestions

abound and criticism is minimal. For management and logistics, the "blue hat," also known as the "hat of control." It facilitates tighter coordination between subgroups, which ultimately benefits the whole.

According to the theory, the blue hat represents the issue and the desired outcomes in relation to COVID-19. The worldwide spread of the Coronavirus has resulted in the closure of several companies. The white hat shows the actual data about the issue (Swamy et al., 2019, p. 186). The spread of the virus has prompted new travel restrictions. As a result of the quarantine regulations, several companies had to shut down. It is now common practice for employees and clients to work remotely when possible.

For the green hat, there is always the possibility that new methods of communicating with and servicing distant clients will be developed in the future. Services and goods that facilitate remote work and digital communication include teleconferencing equipment, video conferencing software, online degree programs, meal kit delivery services, fitness equipment, and media (Swamy et al., 2019, p. 186).

Recommendation

I think the Taylor scientific theory may be helpful for the company's management; therefore, I am suggesting they adopt it. Management theory, known as "scientific management," is based on the systematic study and synthesis of processes. The primary goal is to raise productivity in the workplace. There have been various adverse effects on healthcare personnel due to the Covid-19 Pandemic period, the most significant of which is the shift in how healthcare is delivered. Despite the Covid-19 epidemic, online shopping has grown more common. E-commerce appears to have permeated every industry nowadays. During this time, society as a

whole became less sociable as individuals were forced to relocate. Due to the rise of digital technology, many formerly office-based professions, such as those in publishing and accounting, have been forced to relocate their operations to the comfort of their homes.

John Lewis Company might use the red model to encourage critical thinking, particularly regarding covid19. By picking up on people's preconceived notions, one may separate truth from opinion and choose the most helpful information. Understanding assumptions' role might help them fill in knowledge gaps and broaden their perspective on problems. After becoming aware of them, assumptions should be scrutinized from several angles (perspectives). The company's priorities during the epidemic should be health and safety. Since Covid-19 affects humans and its interactions, organisations has to ensure that it has taken all the necessary measures to safeguard the safety of its workers. Permit people to work from home. Establish a backup strategy for working while the staff is sequestered.

Conclusion

The firm owned and operated by John Lewis Company is found throughout the United Kingdom. The article overviews many management philosophies, such as the Taylor Scientific Theory, the Elton Mayo Theory, and Max Weber's Bureaucracy. As a result, the Taylor scientific theory is the most suitable for the business to deal with COVID-19. It is because scientific management is a philosophy of management based on the analysis and synthesis of processes. The primary goal is to raise productivity in the workplace. The essay focuses on two critical thinking models: the red model and De Bono's 6 Thinking Hats. Since the red model has demonstrated greater effectiveness, picking up on people's preconceived notions may separate truth from opinion

and choose which information is most beneficial to them. Understanding assumptions' role might help one fill in knowledge gaps and broaden their perspective on problems.

Part Two: Reflective Journal

Introduction

Week 2

This week was important as it clarified developing workplace critical thinking. The week explained to me workplace beliefs, values, attitudes, emotions, and critical thinking. For instance, Attitudes toward work, such as contentment on the job and loyalty to the company, resulting from workers' mental and emotional reactions to their surroundings at work. Some individuals, for example, place a premium on professional success because they value personal fulfilment above all else. You utilize your core beliefs to choose the best course of action in every given situation, including your job, as well as to make major life and professional decisions. The ability to think critically in the workplace is essential for assuring accurate and timely issue solutions, which in turn helps to cut down on wasteful mistakes and make the most of your company's limited resources. Critical thinkers in a team are better able to create connections between concepts, identify problems and contradictions, and make sound judgments.

Week 3

The lecture allowed us to differentiate between critical and creative thinking. I understood that the ability to think critically is defined by our capacity to analyze and evaluate information with reason and clarity (Paranaque & Willmott, 2014, p. 608). Creative thinking aims to come up with either original or practical ideas. Excellent creators use both analytical and creative reasoning. And it went on to say that the first step in systems thinking is to identify the system's most important stakeholders and processes—those that may either facilitate or impede progress toward

a goal. Strategic planning must identify the beginning points or the levers to create a good ripple or cascading impact inside a group or system. Questions of how, when, why, and who dominate strategic planning.

Week 4

Week 4 was helpful as it explained competencies individuals may hone to better equip themselves for making sound decisions and tackling complex problems in today's dynamic corporate world. It also explains how to train one's mind to think imaginatively and analytically. The presentation covered the benefits of using creative and critical thinking in business, the steps involved in arriving at a good solution to a problem, and the ideas behind Scientific Management. To provide only one example, some philosophers may assess your problem-solving style by asking whether you tend to settle for the first answer that "works" or if you come up with many options before picking the best one (University of Vermont, 2018). As a result, I realized the need to maintain a steady gaze on the data we lack, the data we have, and the discrepancies between the two.

Week 6

Week six taught me about management theories. I understood that the Six Thinking Hats method helps consider decisions from various angles. People's attention and participation in a conversation are enhanced by introducing an organized parallel thinking process (Swamy et al., 2019, p. 186). With its emphasis on effectiveness, quantifiability, predictability, control by means other than human judgment, and the irrationality of reason, Weberian bureaucracy represented the apogee of Weberian rationality (McClean et al., 2017).

Week 8

A company with high innovation potential scores high in the following areas: Strategy and planning, Marketing, Technological process, Quality Management, Logistics, and Human resources. The lecture week taught me that the ability to think creatively and innovatively is crucial in today's world (Stojcic et al., 2018). The creative processes of many successful businesses now make use of novel approaches. Accordingly, there are defining features shared by firms with a history of innovation. Adequate levels of risk-taking, Employee motivation (that is, a desire to enhance both the product and the company's operations as a whole), and Employee training and development.

Week 9

Week 9's aim was to discuss the relationship between beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviour and the relation between values and Sustainable development. I learned that achieving a sustainability transition that will fulfill human needs, eliminate hunger and poverty, and preserve the planet's life support systems requires a shift in human values, attitudes, and behaviors, which is acknowledged by sustainable development.

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