

### Approach 3: “Control through a Systems lens” (excellent for theory integration)

This approach treats the organisation as a system. Controlling becomes the feedback mechanism that keeps the system stable and adaptable. This approach naturally supports critical evaluation and fits your systems management coverage.

#### Step-by-step guide

1. Start with the systems idea: organisations have inputs, processes, outputs.
2. Define control as feedback + corrective action to reduce variance.
3. Argue why control is essential in open systems facing uncertainty (customers, competitors, regulation).
4. Link Fayol + leadership styles to where control “sits” in the system (structure, authority, communication).
5. Challenges = noise, complexity, time delays, bad data, and unintended system effects.
6. Mitigation = better feedback design and learning loops.

#### Suggested structure and key points

Why control is essential (400 words):

- Control maintains stability (quality, safety) and supports adaptation (learning).
- In open systems, without control, variance grows and performance drifts.
- Different orgs: charity (donor accountability), public sector (service standards), private sector (profit + customer), startups (burn rate control).

Theory link (400 words):

- **Systems management:** feedback loops; negative feedback stabilises; positive feedback can amplify problems.
- **Fayol:** authority/responsibility + scalar chain = control channels.
- Leadership styles: different “control architectures”
  - Autocratic = centralised feedback and correction.

- Democratic = distributed feedback; quicker local problem-solving.
- Laissez-faire = weak feedback; risk of system drift.
- Transformational leadership = changes the system by shifting norms (cultural control).

Challenges (400 words):

- Data quality and delays (controls react too late).
- Complex causality (fixing one part breaks another).
- Over-control reduces system flexibility and innovation.
- Conflicting standards (multiple stakeholders demand different outcomes).

Mitigation (400 words):

- Use multiple feedback loops (customer, process, finance, people).
- Build “early warning” indicators.
- Encourage local problem solving + escalation pathways.
- Continuous improvement routines and cross-functional reviews.

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Example set

- **Supply chain disruptions** (control systems fail when conditions shift).
- **Aviation safety** (tight controls essential; illustrate risk).
- **Fast fashion inventory** (control needed to avoid excess stock and waste).