

Importance and impact of critical thinking skill in workplace and on individuals.

(BMSK5001-BIRM)

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Date: 23/07/2020

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Executive summary

In today's life, people are developing many skills to improve themselves in the workplace, to be successful in most professions, but also to increase their knowledge in academic studies. In all contexts and at every age, every situation, people tend to find solutions about the questions they faced, to analyse and interpret new events. And for satisfactory results, critical thinking abilities are essential to figure out solutions to complex problems. So critical thinking has a key role in cooperative reasoning and constructive tasks. It helps to get knowledge, improve theories, and strengthen arguments, after having found the key points, analysing the sources of information and the evidence before making a decision or a judgement. That is why many authors define critical thinking as a self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, and self-corrective thinking (Clarke,2019).

Introduction

The aim in this report is to use critical thinking skill to examine the influence or the impact of some individual attitudes and beliefs on workplace behaviour. Also, applying a critical assessment of a suitable management theory such as chaos theory, we will evaluate its impact on workplace. And, at the end, doing a critical reflection to assess our own beliefs and attitudes related to our learning in this course.

In the first part of this study we will analyse the impact of individual beliefs and values in workplace behaviour. In the second part we will assess critically the chaos theory model and its effectiveness in modern organisations. And at the end, before concluding we will do a critical reflection to show how critical thinking skill has improved us throughout the learning on this module.

Discussion

A- Impact of individual beliefs and values on workplace behaviour.

1- Description of individual beliefs, values, and attitudes

Considered as a part of someone personality, individual beliefs, values, and attitudes affect how people are thinking, what are they doing and how they did it. Beliefs are things that people feel and which guide them in their daily life. Not necessarily based on facts but an opinion linked closely to the morale and values and can be defined like internal feelings that something is true even though that belief may be unproven or irrational. Beliefs can come from diverse sources like a person own experiences, education, or culture...

values are considered as principles and standard which we lead our lives. Influenced by beliefs, background, education..., value is a measure of the importance a person attaches to something acquired within the life. According to Blackman (2018) personal values are the important things, the characteristics and behaviours that motivates us and guide our decisions like for example honesty, integrity, kindness, courage, creativity, love, perfection...

Attitudes refer to someone opinions, beliefs and feelings linked to the environment. For example, in the workplace, behaviour depends on how people feel and understand their work attitudes. And, if experiences and skills are important for employees at work, we can notice that attitudes play a crucial role in a professional environment to create a productive staff. And businesses are developing some keys attitude to increase productivity like respect for others, commitment to the job, innovative ideas to find new ways and helpfulness with others.

2- Importance of individual beliefs and values and attitudes on workplace behaviour

As we know many decisions making by people reflect values and believes to reach specific goal in purpose to satisfy personal or organizational needs. Individual values including for example enthusiasm, creativity, humility, and fulfillment may be considered as important principles for

self-interest to share with others to build internal cohesion in a group. that is why values guide behaviour and help to understand better many actions. For example, people considering family as an important value, devote more time with them and promote family relationships. People developing strong beliefs and values are kind to make important decisions and career choices, by aligning them to the organisation core values. This helps employees to be respectful about company policy rules and others, to be effective team member, to meet deadlines, to be positive and reliable. But also, to focus on detail, honest and delivering quality and any other ability to improve the organisation's success.

3- Impact of individual beliefs, values, and attitudes on workplace behaviour.

Values are the foundation of the beliefs and influence the decision people are making, the actions and impact behaviour throughout attitudes. According to Pinegan (2000) values are multidimensional and each one may affect behaviour differently. Indeed, the conduct of employees is influenced by values. And, someone with honesty, hard work and discipline values become an efficient employee and a model for others. Contrary, people who show negative values participate in negative behaviour that can hurt the organisation.

Regarding the impact of personal attitudes in the workplace, the most important aspect for employees is the positive or negative influence it can have on coworker's performance. Because employee, with good attitudes is active and productive, and do his best to improve himself and people around him, while another who displays negative attitudes reduce efficiency and effectiveness.

Based on past experiences and considered to be true, individual beliefs are convictions (spiritual, moral, social, economic, political, intellectual...) which influencing people motivation and engagement with specific tasks in a company.

B- Chaos theory management in modern organisations.

In this part of the report, we are going to assess the chaos theory management in nowadays organisations. It consists to analyse and evaluate the effectiveness about this theory in workplace to form a judgment or to find solutions throughout a critical thinking model. For this the Pearson's R.E.D critical thinking model is more designed for us to think better and with precision, to recognise assumptions, to use a right and objective approach to evaluate

arguments and, finally to focus on relevant information to draw conclusions. The R.E.D model is based on three keys: R (recognise assumptions). E (evaluate arguments) and D (draw conclusions). So, we will examine the effectiveness of chaos theory management in modern-day workplace, then we will evaluate its effectiveness before drawing conclusions.

1- Effectiveness of chaos theory in modern-day workplace.

Before starting to study this topic, we must understand better what is chaos theory management. According to Duffy (2000) chaos theory explains periods of transition in which changes occur in unpredictable, irregular, and uncertain ways. As we know, management in workplace includes planning and controlling to accomplish organisational missions. But, in the other hand chaos theory considered initially as a scientific principle describing the unpredictability of systems in mathematics for example, means that each system has the potential to fall into chaos. And applied to the workplace environment, organisations are faced with uncertainties from competitive markets and the fluctuation of global economy (Peters,1980). And, for the management which it will be ineffective even in predictable situations or processes, due to the chaos causing inefficiencies in production and organisational behaviour. In many companies today, reaction is more noticed than planning and managers feel like they do not have control in changes occurring in production, accounting, sales, and customer service.

According to Levy (2007) the chaos theory has a significant impact on planning and forecasting on firms and industries. For this author, forecasting is difficult for example in a supply chain, based on the complex interactions between the organisations, their suppliers and their markets. And to face instability, companies have to manage uncertainty by drawing up organisational planning allowing them to create more communication between people and to take important decisions (Theitart, 1995). Planning helps organisations to have a stability and ability to protect themselves against potential environmental threats.

2- Evaluation of the chaos theory in modern-day management in workplace.

As we know, chaos theory is the study of complex, nonlinear dynamic system (Lorenz,1993) where the system must be considered as a set of rules, an arrangement of things or a group of related things that work towards a common goal. And based on what we developed before,

small actions (internal or external) in this environment, produce large consequences, creating a chaotic atmosphere. According to Mason (2007) unexpected reactions within various parts of the organization can lead to uncertainty in the workplace and unintentional results for organizational change. That is why, if some leaders appreciate to apply the principles of the chaos theory in their daily practice in workplace, others make some legitimate critiques about this theory about its unpredictability and its instability.

For the pros, businesses around the world must adapt in the changing condition environment in the workplace and in the continuing technology advancement. Because minor changes like a competitor's new business strategy or New technology implementation can have a substantial impact on the organizational system (Levy, 2007). And the chaos theory can help to aid companies to understand the way they evolved when needed and changing continuously. Chaos theory also helps managers and leaders to evaluate throughout many observations, the causes that govern the system and to find solutions controlling better the process and implementing change.

Nevertheless, some criticisms are developed by some people. For them some companies, by not knowing the issues they faced, and not able to explain the dynamics of the situation, are open to more chaotic behaviour (Cutright, 1997). Another reason, why lot of organisations do not use it, is its measurement (quantitative and qualitative), that making the theory difficult to document when happened. And this lack of information or research within the organisation, is one of its major weakness.

3- Applying chaos theory in the workplace

During all this chapter, the relevance of chaos theory is widely discussed between pros and cons of the application of this model. That is why managers are always searching for innovative solutions and trying to improve their decisions making. Indeed, this model proves how small disruptions can create a high volatility in the chain. But, according to Levy (2007), management can reduce the volatility to improve performance, by using chaotic model which can suggest ways to intervene to achieve certain goals. In another hand, changes can occur in the context of business strategy where chaotic systems can spontaneously self-organise into more complex structures regarding long-term contract for example, technical cooperation or joint ventures (Allen, 1988). Also, guidelines and decision rules need to be adapted to the complexity and uncertainty caused by the evolving of industry structures and permanent strategy changes of competitors. In the workplace, managers need some recommendations to adapt in the chaotic

environment. First, they have to make continuous change, second, they have to reinforce the importance of teamwork among all employees, third, they must involve more people affected by the situation in decision making, and finally, become more flexible and emphasizing a holistic process in the workplace.

Feedback is another factor having direct implication for the system's functioning: positive feedback, when an input destroys the system by amplifying anomalies, and negative feedback, when an input, out of the system manage, control, or limit the outcomes.

C- Reflection on impact of critical thinking skill on learning

Considered as a structured point of view or a well-reasoned way that convinces other people, critical thinking is important to reflect on issues by analysing information, evaluating the evidence and drawing the conclusions that show how valid and justifiable are the arguments developed. Critical thinking skill can help people to gain abilities to make decisions on life choice and working career.

In this chapter we will going to see how important the critical thinking skill in workplace and for individuals. And, also the impact of this skill in our learning development, particularly about this module.

1- Importance of critical thinking skill

In nowadays workplace, many employers valued critical skills as the most desirable and essential skills required for many jobs and they prioritise hiring those employees who can think creatively, solve a problem, share thoughts and opinions using good judgement and making good decisions on their own.

In high Education, critical thinking can enhance academic performance (Lloyd,2010) and allows to develop student judgement, evaluation, and problem-solving abilities. Critical thinking skill is needed in any situation of life where people must reflect, analyse or plan about something. It helps to analyse information by using knowledge in solving problems and helps to improve the way we express ideas with comprehension abilities. Critical thinking is also important for evaluating innovative ideas and promoting creativity. And more interesting, critical thinking enables for self-evaluation allowing to reflect on values and decisions, and may be considered as a base of science and democracy by giving citizens the possibility to set up opinions about what is right and what is wrong, and to prove scientific facts.

2- Impact of critical thinking skill in our learning development.

Few months ago. I started a course at University called developing workplace and critical thinking. In this module I learned how to engage the thinking process. the course taught me how to develop a critical approach and to make a claim using argument in purpose to make a point of view more convinced, using evidence to justify it. This model gave me also the possibility to know what is thinking right (logic) and what is reasoning. Inductive reasoning; moving from specific instance into a generalised conclusion and deductive reasoning; moving from generalised principles known to be true to a specific conclusion. The course allowed me also to find better the difference between beliefs, values and attitudes and the sources and impact of the systems in the workplace. Also, organizations core values have been learned throughout this module, as well as critical thinking model of which the more important is the Pearson's R.E.D, without forgetting the Socratic questioning. The last lessons were devoted to theories of management which gave me the chance to understand the rules guiding managers to lead organisations and several organisational processes. I knew, with this module that there are different schools of management theories (classical management theory, behavioural school, quantitative school, and modern theory).

And all those learning, helped me to develop more my thinking skill. Before I started this course, I had not all the tools I needed to reflect or think in a better way to make arguments to convince people. Even, it was difficult to know what proof I needed (qualitative or quantitative) to make my arguments valid or strong. and the first result of the critical thinking skill in my own development was the discussions I had with my classmates in a working group. In this working group, applying all I learned from this model, I felt more independent and more confident with them by contributing in different and diverse topics. My learning on the module allowed me to write throughout an assignment, an inductive argument about the relevance of organisational core values on workplace behaviour. The critical thinking, I developed, helped me to argue

inductively in a case study if “core values may or may not influence behaviour”. And, supported by relevant evidence and credible literature I made a claim with strong argument to form judgement in this assessment.

This module was for me a great tool to increase my understanding for my learning in general and particularly for academic lessons. In my day to day life activities, I can resolve complex situations by developing strategies from this new knowledge gotten. Critical thinking skill allows me today to analyse and solve problems systematically rather than by intuition or instinct.

Conclusion

During all this report, we are trying to understand better the impact of individual beliefs, values, and attitudes on workplace behaviour. And as a management theory, we showed how the chaos theory model is effective and important and how it affects modern-day workplace by using the Pearson's critical model. Before finishing with a critical reflection on how critical thinking skill has changed us based on our learning on the module.

Also, we learned in this topic that as a process of analysing information, critical thinking allows to get the best answer to a question or a problem. And to reach this aim, people need the assessment of their personal strengths, weaknesses and preferences which can affect decisions they may make. That is why we agree with those who think that one of the most important aspects of critical thinking is to decide what we are aiming to achieve and then make a decision based on a range of possibilities. So, critical thinking needs always to be improved by becoming more self-aware, developing foresight, practicing active listening, asking questions, evaluating existing evidence and mostly by understanding the mental process.

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