

Problem solving and Decision making Report

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Write a report of 2,000 words, in which you apply recognised problem-solving tools and techniques to identify and propose solutions to a work-based problem, to include an evaluation of possible solutions. Discuss and agree with your lecturer a suitable problem to be solved which may be drawn from your current or past work experiences or an agreed situation.

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Introduction

In this report I will be identifying 2 complex problems in my workplace by using problem solving techniques which will help me to find the cause of the problem and plan out the solution to solving the problem. I will also be evaluating the problem to see if the problem-solving technique works by testing them and lastly, I will be monitoring and reviewing the techniques so that I come up with a positive outcome and plan for the stakeholders.

Organisation and complex problem

I have been working for a delivery company Hermes for 2 years now, where I collect people's packages/orders and I deliver it to the address that is provided to me. It's the UK's merchandise service, which is very flexible as it gives consumers a variety of delivery options to either receive their parcels at home, their workplace and even specified locations near them such as Parcel shop and lockers which are always based at your nearest convenient store. Hermes now offers '7-day delivery' for customers who wish to send out parcels, which makes them really stand out from other delivery companies; as well as, they allow their consumers to also make money themselves by selling their things in the inexpensive, efficient and less time-consuming way. The company began in 1974 as 'Grattan mail order' in Bradford which eventually developed very quickly as they built good relationships with local carriers and parcel shops which would bring a lot of attention to their company across the UK, causing their hubs and depot's number to grow rapidly. In 2009, they made their company more broad and more accessible by including international delivery, print in-store in parcel shops and energy fuelled vehicles.

1st problem

I really love my job as I am passionate about what I do and I do believe that I'm very hardworking but I have noticed certain racial slurs have been used against me whilst being addressed by the managers and other colleagues, which has made me feel very uncomfortable. I have brought this issue up to my general manager and I was told that I should ignore them and not take it serious but the situation is still going on and this has made me feel demotivated, uncomfortable and unsupported. I really do see myself growing within the company but it can feel draining, especially when I feel as though I am being discriminated against at work and unhappy with the situation as I see people who were hired after me getting a raise or being promoted, whereas my hard work tends to go unnoticed.

Pestle analysis

P- Black and Asian minority and ethnic employees face racial harassment in the workplace and because of this there has been a huge division within the workplace. When this is happening no action is taken by the managers when it's reported, which makes me feel like they condone this kind of behaviour. My biggest concern is that I would not be able to grow within the company as I've witnessed those from a minority background also struggle to progress in their role.

E- When racial discrimination happens in the workplace people would want to leave the company as they no longer feel safe or happy. As the company might struggle to find someone to replace them, they can also lose networks or clients/customers and the company may also face a law suit if the person was unfairly dismissed based on the Equality act 2010.

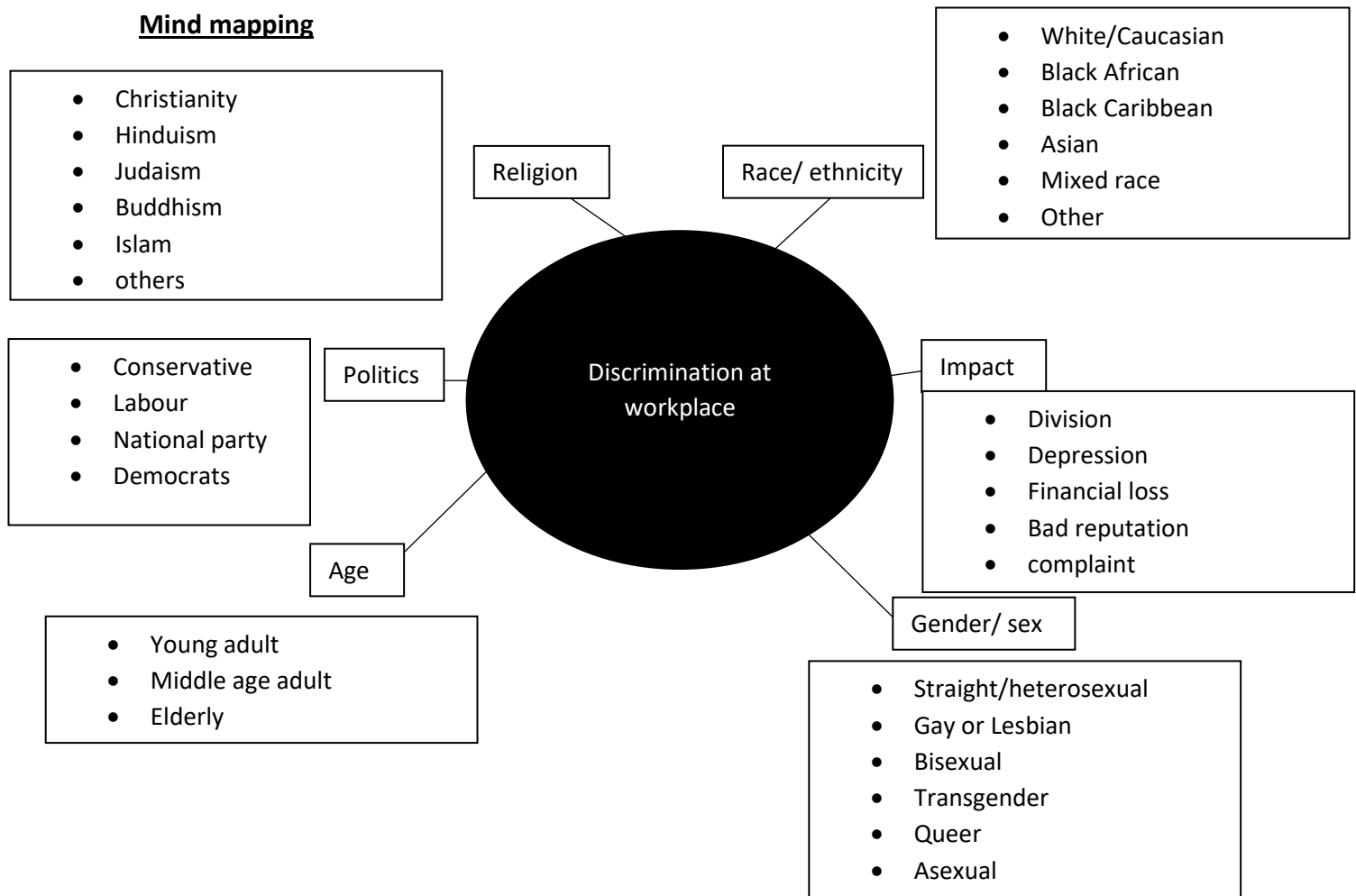
S- As I come from a minority myself, I stand for the black lives matter movement, so outside of work I support the campaign by posting positive posts on social media about it and ask some of them to share it but they don't.

T- It can lead them to gain bad reviews from social media and it can also create a social media outrage which could also lead to the company being banned from certain social platforms; consequently, this can give them a bad name. Furthermore, their company loses money from social media. For example, with advertising, marketing and branding etc.

L- The company can get a lawsuit from the employee and anyone who's been offended.

E – This will affect society and increase more racial discrimination and racial injustice in the work environment because of the company's reckless decisions.

Mind mapping



Best solution

Mind mapping is an amazing technique to use as it gives you a clear visual of the problem and it allows the company to come together and have a bigger understanding of the issue and how to solve it. Mind maps are good for matrix structured companies as it's a projectized environment, good for organizing data and social events. But I will say that Pestle analysis is definitely the best solution to use due to it being a very easy technique to use and it breaks down the problem in 5 different parts that will allow them to understand the issue from another point of view, from the law and society. The Pestle analysis is normally used in huge companies which allows them to have many great opportunities and helps them to see changes in external factors. The other reason why it's a great technique to use is because it prepares the company for possible threats in the future, which is good because it allows them to plan ahead.

PMI

Plus	Minus	Interesting
Passion for job +3	discrimination -5	See new places +3
Bonus +4	Weak company culture -4	Meeting new people +2
Flexible hours +2	Long hours -3	Learn new skills+5
=9	=12	=+10

Monitoring control and Evaluation

Whilst identifying what technique would be the best problem solving method for the issue at hand, I decided to use the PMI method which will give me a clear view of both the positive and the negative side of the problem and from the outcome it came out negative, which shows that the pestle analysis should be implemented quickly or the situation can get worse. On the other hand it shows that there are various things that the employees can experience by working with Hermes. In conclusion, managers should definitely allow employees to feel comfortable to speak up when being discriminated against, give warnings to those who are making others feel this way and train their staff about the law on discrimination at work. On the other hand employees should inform their employer about the situation, raise grievance procedures or claim employment tribunal. However, if it's still not sorted out, then it can be raised with HR, who will guide and help the employee.

Communication with stakeholders

Stakeholder	Power/interest	key interest/ issues	Communication vehicle	Frequency	Comments
management	high	Communication with employee	Email/ video conference	monthly	
Employee	high	Update Improvement	Face to face meetings	On going	
Government	High	Law update/changes	Article/online	Daily	

Conclusion

As Hermes is a flat structured company, the pestle analysis would be a great technique to use as it makes it possible for employees to communicate with their managers, as on the other hand it would have been more difficult if it was a tall/ hierarchy structure as it's a longer chain of position. I believe that it's crucial to know the type of organization structure your company has because it will let you know what role each person in the company has and if you're able to have better access to management just in case you have any issues.

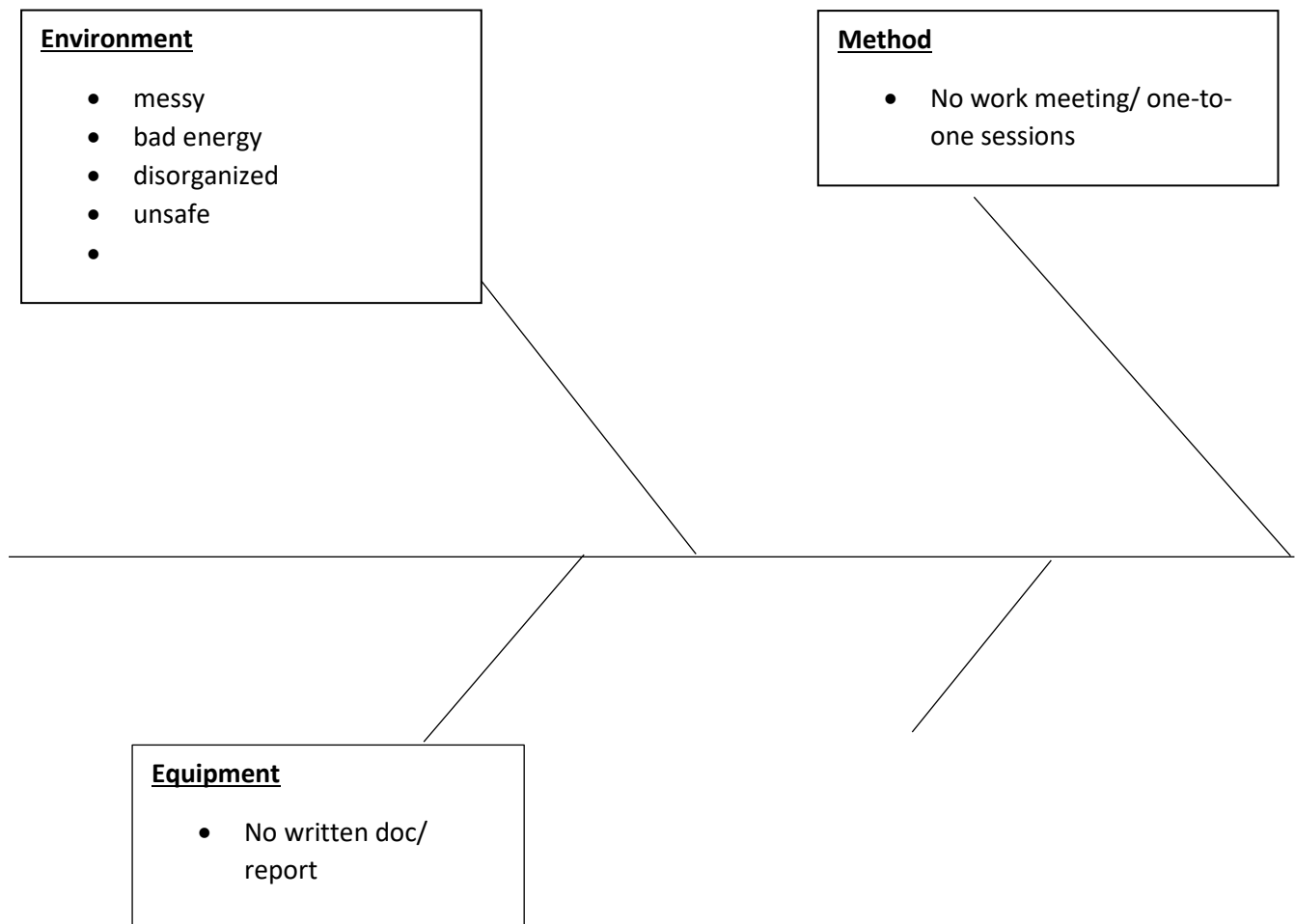
After seeing the overall situation of the problem and using the pestle analysis to analyse the problem in a broader view and aspect politically, socially, environmentally. By using this technique it educates employees, helping them to understand that there are laws based on very important and sensitive subjects, in order to make them feel protected. Lastly, whilst communicating with the

stakeholders, we came up with a plan of constructive objectives and overall goals for the company by communicating frequently and receiving updates to see if there has been any improvements as a company and this will be done monthly, daily or ongoing.

2nd problem

Also, my managers don't know how to take constructive criticism very well. For example, when I pointed out certain issues that occur when sending deliveries. If they were willing to have a discussion it could make a huge improvement in the company and how the delivery process works. This makes me feel unappreciated and the lack of motivation caused, therefore not allowing me to reach my full potential, which has affected my performance at work and the desire to go the extra mile for the company because I feel demotivated especially when I'm not being seen or heard by those in the managerial position.

Fishbone method



People

- Disrespectful
- Frustrated
- Bad communication
- Bad management
- Language barrier
- miscommunication

Swot analysis

<u>Strengths (internal)</u> • Good productivity • relationship with customers • growth	<u>Weakness</u> • Bad communication with management
<u>Opportunities (external)</u> • Future growth	<u>Threats</u> • Products out of stock

Best solution

There are many good benefits when it comes to using swot analysis, such as it can be done by everyone who is able to address a difficult situation, it exposes weaknesses quickly and it improves the business with no expenses, so that's why I believe that this technique would be great for resolving this problem. On the other hand, the fishbone method will be an affective technique to solve this problem because it allows the company not only to recognise the problems of the company but to find the root of it. Everyone is able to get involved in the findings and sorting out the problem which will bring those in the company together as everyone will know what needs to be improved and what is going well and can move as one going forward.

PMI

Plus	Minus	Interesting
Growth within company +5	Commuting-3	New opportunities+5
Training +3	Limited staff-2	Learn new skills+4
Relationship with customers+5	Accidents -4	Visit new places-2
	Product out of stock-2	
=13	=11	=+7

Monitoring control and Evaluation

After receiving the results from the PMI method the results show that there are positive things that the company offers even though there are negatives, but we are able to work with the good and it always outweighs the negative. Sometimes when we give our best whilst working we can feel unappreciated but we must try and look at things with a positive outlook. For example, just because you overwork yourself and you want to grow in the company, see it as preparation for when you are appointed to a higher role where you will have more demanding responsibilities.

In order to be heard by your manager it is important that you approach them with in a calm and friendly manner and also communicating with them face-to-face where you can start a discussion or alternatively email them so that you can book an appointment with them. If that's not possible written communication can be another option. On average, employees are actually [20 to 25%](#) more productive in businesses that have an existing and effective [internal communication strategy](#), [compared to companies](#) where employees are not connected whatsoever.

Communication with stakeholders

Stakeholder	Power/interest	key interest/ issues	Communication vehicle	Frequency	Comments
Employee	High	Not appreciated	Video conference	monthly	
Management	High	Lack of communication	meetings	Every term	
Customers	Medium	orders	Social media	weekly	

Conclusion

In conclusion, the swot analysis is a great technique that greatly aids a company identify its strengths and weaknesses which will allow them to see their achievements and what needs working on. Communicating with stakeholders has helped the company develop a clearer structure and understanding that if they put the contents discussed into practice using the swot analysis technique, the company will experience a great amount of growth and targets will be met much quicker as communication is key.

Reference

(Rea Regan, 2021) <https://connecteam.com/overcome-communication-problems-workplace/>