

COVID-19 Impact Project Artifact Submission

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Class Name: Industrial-Organizational Psychology

Classroom Discussion Questions Regarding COVID-19 Pandemic and Related

Diversity Issues

1. Leadership in a Crisis

For almost all companies, the COVID-19 pandemic is a crisis unlike any other in recent times. Think of how leaders and followers in organizations should behave to navigate the pandemic and recovery.

- 1) List at least three *effective* behaviors of executive-level organizational leaders (e.g., CEO) to manage their company during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2) List at least three *effective* behaviors of team leaders (e.g., manager of 5~10 team members) to manage their teams during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3) List at least three *effective* behaviors of followers to help their leaders during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Teams

Let's apply McGrath's (1964) Input-Process-Output Model and come up with ideas regarding how organizations can keep their virtual teams together during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 1) Among various team behavioral and affective/cognitive processes, choose two team processes that might be difficult to achieve in virtual team settings. Then, explain why.
- 2) List at least two specific strategies on how leaders of virtual teams can increase team behavioral and affective/cognitive processes.

3. Occupational Stress & Work-life Conflict

Work-life balance is important for employee well-being, especially during the COVID-pandemic. Here, we will think about what kinds of organizational policies or programs would be helpful to support employees' mental health during this time.

- 1) What can companies do to support their employees who have kids at home?
- 2) What can companies do to mitigate their employees' Zoom fatigue?

3) In the healthcare industry, what can companies (hospitals) do to prevent their employees (doctors, nurses) from burnout?

4. Diversity

4-1. Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives

You are asked to develop diversity & inclusion (D & I) initiatives for your company named XYZ. Below is the company's diversity statement. Based on it, come up with at least 3 ideas to promote diversity and inclusion in your company. Be specific, creative, and realistic. *Tips:* You can think of various policies and practices that influence workplace diversity & inclusion (e.g., Recruitment, Selection, Performance evaluation, Training, Mentoring/Coaching, Organizational culture change).

Diversity Statement of XYZ company

XYZ company is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity and inclusion.

Our employees are the most valuable asset we have. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities, and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture but our reputation and company's achievement as well.

We embrace and encourage our employees' differences in age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make our employees unique.

All employees of XYZ company have a responsibility to always treat others with dignity and respect. All employees are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, at work functions on or off the worksite, and all other company-sponsored and participative events. All employees are also required to attend and complete annual diversity awareness training to enhance their knowledge to fulfill this responsibility.

Any employee found to have exhibited any inappropriate conduct or behavior against others may be subject to disciplinary action. Employees who believe they have been subjected to any kind of

discrimination that conflicts with the company's diversity policy and initiatives should seek assistance from a supervisor or an HR representative.

4-2. Diversity & Inclusion Onboarding System

Promoting workplace diversity and inclusion is becoming more important than ever. Using socialization tactics suggested by Van Maanen and Schein (1979), explain how organizations should design their socialization tactics to build an inclusive organization onboarding process, especially during the pandemic where employees are working remotely.

4-3. Diversity & Leadership

This year, we have a historical moment— Kamala Harris makes history as the first woman and woman of color as Vice President. Still, women remain underrepresented in leadership positions across various industries. Let's discuss women in leadership.

- 1) Can you think of a well-known or famous woman who holds an important leadership position? In what industry does she work? How can she be successful in that industry?
- 2) Are women unfairly underrepresented in leadership roles? Why or why not?
- 3) Do you think women and men are held to different standards to attain leadership roles in organizations? Why or why not?
- 4) What can be done to break the glass ceiling?

4-4. Training

Given the heightened social awareness of rectifying biases and discrimination that existed in our society, many companies are trying to implement diversity training programs, such as racial awareness training or implicit bias training, in the hope of promoting diversity and inclusion at work.

- 1) Do you think that *mandatory* diversity training programs are necessary? If so, why? If not, why not?
- 2) What would be the pros and cons of conducting diversity training programs at work?
- 3) How should companies evaluate the effectiveness of the diversity training program after implementing it?

4-5. Diversity & Fairness

For many government jobs, affirmative action programs have long been available to veterans in a form called “veterans’ preference,” meaning that veterans get special consideration for job openings. There has been little tension surrounding the veterans’ preference form of affirmative action. Why do you suppose veterans’ preference is less controversial than affirmative action programs directed toward women or minorities?

Written Assignment Regarding COVID-19 Pandemic

Applying Industrial-Organizational (I-O) Psychology Knowledge to Navigate Through a Pandemic

This assignment was adapted from Tiffany Kriz Ph.D's Managerial Skill Development Class Material.

Assignment Overview:

Many leaders in organizations are currently working to combat COVID-19. Teams of employees who have not previously worked together are being quickly thrown together to strategize solutions to the problems facing society. Organizational leaders and managers are trying to find ways to protect and guide their workers – many of whom are fearful in the face of great uncertainty. Individuals must learn how to engage in self-management so that they do not become overwhelmed by uncertainty and a sudden change to their routine. In our I-O psychology course, we have covered topics that could help provide insights to these folks on how to handle these challenges.

Your challenge is to guide those who are attempting to navigate the current crisis, through the lens of one of the I-O topics we have covered throughout the semester. You may find the book sufficient to accomplish this task, or you may find that you need to branch beyond the book by finding external high-quality, credible, sources of information.

Your Task: You, as a psychology major/minor student, are to **(1)** provide guidance to those who are attempting to navigate the current crisis, through the lens of one of the I-O psychology topics we have covered throughout the semester. You should **(2)** choose a specific audience that your message is targeting and **(3)** provide one example of a good attempt and **(4)** one example of a poor attempt to navigate this pandemic challenges. Most importantly, you should **(5)** use course concepts to explain why your guidance is effective to navigate the current crisis.

- Examples of course concepts that you can apply are (but not limited to):
 - Teams (virtual teams, healthcare teams, global teams etc.)
 - Leadership (transformational leadership, servant leadership, abusive supervision etc.)
 - Occupational health (stress, work-life conflict, unemployment etc.)
 - Work Motivation (Maslow's needs hierarchy, goal setting, self-regulation theory etc.)
- Examples of audiences and approaches you could take to this assignment (but not limited to) are:
 - Draw on occupational health research to suggest how I-O psychologists can provide help to essential workers (e.g., healthcare professionals, police officers, firefighters) or people who lose jobs.
 - Discuss how work-life balance interventions could help mitigate the stress of remote workers in the context of current events
 - Draw on teams and leadership research to suggest how leaders could effectively and quickly move their teams into virtual platforms.

Your audience: Regardless of the approach you take, you should be clear about whose behavior you are trying to impact. Are you providing guidance that should be used by managers, or senior-level executives? Be clear about who your message is intended to help. Your message could be

oriented toward helping them manage the crisis they currently face, or, it could be framed as a way to help them learn from this crisis in order to be better prepared for managing future crises. Don't forget to draw on a positive and negative to reinforce your key message.

Format/Style:

- Aim to be concise, yet persuasive. Try to keep your essay to no longer than two pages (double-spaced, 12pt, Times New Romans).
- Style-wise, you can imagine that you are submitting this to a newspaper or other outlet to get the word out. You want to provide relevant and compelling information, but also be concise so that you don't lose the attention of your readers. In other words, make sure you focus on advancing one key argument and omit any information that does not directly relate to that argument.
- Cite the references at the end of the paper. You need to at least cite one source, such as our textbook, or you may use beyond the book by finding external high-quality, credible, sources of information. For example, peer-reviewed journal articles, New York Times, or Harvard Business Review are considered as high-quality sources; Huffington post or BuzzFeed are not.

Submission:

- Submit your assignment on a discussion thread **by MM/DD/YY**

Grading Rubric: Your assignment will be graded based on the following factors:

1. Proper application of course content (40%): Does this write-up convey a solid understanding of the course material as it applies to the situation?
2. Tailoring Audience (10%): Does the author specify their target audience? How well is their message tailored to that specific audience?
3. Focus (10%) Does the message demonstrate focus? In other words, does all of the information presented to reinforce the main point the author is trying to make?
4. Positive/negative examples (30%): Does this write-up provide a positive and negative example to demonstrate the issues at hand? How effective are those examples in reinforcing the larger point?
5. Citing (10%): Does the author appropriately cite their sources of information? *You must reference the textbook, at a minimum – you could supplement with academic research articles as needed, but this is not required if you find the textbook to be sufficient for making your case.

Good luck! This assignment is designed to encourage you to apply your knowledge of I-O psychology and your critical skills to the current situation. Don't too worry about your score on this assignment. Your score will be good as long as you provide some insightful thoughts about this pandemic situation.