

Develop critical thinking essay

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Explain the difference between beliefs, attitudes and values.

Beliefs, attitudes and values form the basis of who we are as individuals and what we feel is important in how we behave and interact with friends, families and colleagues during our day to day life. The differences between these are as follows:

Beliefs are what we as individuals hold within ourselves and what we believe to be true based on the experiences we have encountered throughout our life.

Attitudes are based on our experiences in life and how we are brought up. They are the emotions we feel and set our behaviours on how we interact with people and situations. Our attitudes can also change dependant on the circumstances we are faced with.

Values define our characters and are what we believe to be important in how we live our lives. Our core values help determine how we prioritise issues that arise in our life and how we measure our successes and failures.

In order to recognise why we behave in the way that we do we need to understand the world around us and develop an understanding of our own beliefs, attitude and values. As individuals we will have a number of different behaviours that will influence how we handle situations; these behaviours will be present at different levels of consciousness to us.

Hemingway's Iceberg Theory (illustrated below) compares the levels of an iceberg with our behaviours showing the most conscious ones sitting above the water like the visible tip of an iceberg while our behaviours relating to

our beliefs, attitudes and values that we are less conscious to us sit below the water level, like the submerged part of an iceberg.

1.2 Critically assess the impact of beliefs attitudes and values on own behaviour

The way in which I behave, and my attitude towards situations in life are affected by my beliefs and values.

Whilst at work I believe in working hard, keeping my head down and meeting deadlines. I am a very process orientated person and can become quite frustrated with those who do not follow procedures. Sometimes I feel this can be a barrier as I cannot see the bigger picture, and sometimes details and other factors can be missed because I am too focused on following the rules of structure and process.

I love creativity and admire people who can work outside of the constraints of rules but I feel I am unable to be creative as I am too critical of my own work and I will often find fault in things I do. I am quite a focused individual at work and although I recognise that my beliefs and values are very different to others within my department I sometimes find this difficult to deal with as I believe everyone should work to the same values and standards that I do.

Because of the working standards I believe in I often find it difficult to delegate work to others, particularly work relating to areas of my work that are my strengths such as data collecting and reporting. I have the attitude that it would be quicker for me to carry out the piece of work rather than trying to show others how to complete it as their thinking and formatting may not be to my liking. This is a trait that I feel I need to work on as it will hold back other staff members developing skills within their role.

I do not like conflict and will shy away from heated discussions that involve big personalities. This is particularly frustrating for me and there are often times where I feel I have a valid point or idea but I cannot convey that to others. I feel the only way sometimes I can put forward my ideas and suggestions in situations such as this is on a one to one basis or via written communication. This is an area I feel I need to work on as I fear it may hold me back in terms of progressing within my department.

On a positive note I am an approachable person and love to help my colleagues wherever I can.

I believe in working hard so that I can enjoy my life outside of work with my loved ones.

2. 1 Identify management theories relevant to your role

Management theories compare different methods used by leaders to manage staff to operate services and complete tasks. There are many different models of management theories available to read up on however I have chosen to look at Douglas McGregor's XY Theory and Goleman's Leadership Styles as I feel elements of these fit with my role.

Goleman's Theory

Daniel Goleman's theory has identified six different leadership styles which he believes leaders fall into. Goleman states good leaders must be emotionally intelligent to understand which styles they should adopt for different situations.

Goleman's theory identifies 4 positive styles of leadership, which are focused around team harmony, these leadership styles are called Visionary,

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Coaching, Affiliative and Democratic. The remaining two styles are negative and can potentially create conflict as they are directional, and focus on setting down expectations, these styles are known as Pacesetting and Commanding. These styles are explained further in the following table:

- Leadership Style Leadership Impact Characteristics
- Visionary Positive Leader Motivates staff with a clear and exciting vision, useful for organisations that need to overcome a challenge.
- Coaching Positive Leader Coaches' individual employees on how to develop and be more effective at work
- Affiliative Positive Leader Team spirit and motivation play a big part, building on people's needs to belong and be accepted
- Democratic Positive Leader Listens to all opinions when needing to make a decision/right choice.
- Pacesetting Negative Leader Task-oriented demanding fast paced results.
- Commanding Negative Leader Good in a crisis situation or for sorting difficult staff/problems
- Goleman's leadership style theory basically looks at task versus people. Managers who tend to purely focus on tasks will generate poor results; whereas managers who focus more on people will generate better performance and results, which allows people to grow and develop.
- The best leaders will usually use elements from each of these styles to adapt to the situation in hand.

McGregor's XY Theory

Douglas McGregor's XY Theory is another leadership style that looks at task versus people. The emphasis around this theory is the management's attitude toward people. These two styles are explained further in the following table and diagram taken from <https://www.businessballs.com/improving-workplace-performance/mcgregors-xy-theory-of-management/>:

- Leadership Style
- Leadership Impact
- Leadership Beliefs

Theory X - 'authoritarian management' Negative Leader The average person dislikes work and will avoid it where he/she can.

People must be forced with the threat of punishment to work towards organisational objectives.

The average person prefers to be directed; to avoid responsibility; is relatively unambitious, and wants security above all else.

Theory Y - 'participative management' Positive Leader Effort in work is as natural as work and play.

People will apply self-control and self-direction in the pursuit of organisational objectives, without external control or the threat of punishment.

Commitment to objectives is a function of rewards associated with their achievement. People usually accept and often seek responsibility.

The capacity to use a high degree of imagination, ingenuity and creativity in solving organisational problems is widely, not narrowly, distributed in the <https://assignbuster.com/develop-critical-thinking-essay/>

population. In industry the intellectual potential of the average person is only partly utilised.

A theory X manager believes their staff cannot be trusted and need to be micro managed and constantly pushed to complete their work. This belief creates a task-oriented leadership style where the manager will focus on the task in hand ensuring this is completed, against all costs, without taking into account or paying attention to people's needs and feelings.

The theory Y manager believes their staff are trustworthy and take responsibility for their actions and are self-motivated to work hard. This belief creates a people focused leadership style where the manager focuses on developing their staff by giving attention to them and understanding their needs and feelings. This relationship will earn respect on both sides and staff who work under this management style are more likely to work hard and complete their tasks, to prove they are responsible.

McGregor's theory is a good simple theory to understand. Basically there are two types of people in the world (motivated and unmotivated) and both types need managing differently.

2. 2 Critically assess the impact of own beliefs attitudes and values on a management theory relevant to your role.

My behaviours are affected by my beliefs, attitude and values and these will be different to those I manage. I believe you should be responsible for yourself and the actions you take. I value honesty and commitment and believe these to be important traits for working life. Because I hold these beliefs I expect others to as well which I know is not always the case.

In my current role I listen to and read about difficult situations that people have received with their patient care or relatives care at the hospital. My teams work environment is not positive as each day is met with emotional and challenging individuals. A negative management style would not work with my team, positivity and good team working relationships is key to keep motivation going in our difficult work place.

I believe I can relate to Goleman's Leadership theory more than McGregor's XY theory as I can see elements from Goleman's theory in how I manage my team and day to day work.

Goleman speaks of a Democratic Leader, someone who will listen to opinions before making a decision. Both members of my team will make suggestions for improvements to our service. I will listen to these ideas and if we all agree these will work and for the greater good of the department I will put the motions in place to make it happen. I love to hear new ideas and I'm a great believer in continuously striving to make improvements.

The Coaching leader is about guiding and developing staff. Developing staff is great for morale and business improvement. Both members of my team have attended several courses under my leadership which has led to process improvements and a change in how they behave when speaking to people on the phone. Both members of my team are looking to progress their career and helping them to develop gives me job satisfaction. If people are having difficulties in understanding a subject I know it gives me a great sense of achievement to be able to help them and pass on that knowledge. Knowledge is power!

On the flip side of the coaching leadership style I believe I possess, when it comes to meeting targets and reporting deadlines I have difficulty in letting this go and will start to fall into the Commanding and Pacesetting leadership style. Because I believe in working hard and meeting deadlines the elements from these styles help me to ensure this is actioned. I would not want to be purely categorised as one of these leaders, however when trying to undertake target driven tasks these styles best fit with me to achieve this.

Because I am process orientated I am quite stuck in my ways and do not think outside the box and therefore do not fit as a Visionary leader. I lack of confidence in trying to get my point across, I believe this is due to the numerous occasions where my suggestions have been ignored as others with a louder voice are heard above me. I admire visionary leaders and I'm quite envious of them, although visionary leaders do not tend to be completer finishers and would rely on process orientated individuals like me to carry their vision forward.

I do not like conflict and like a harmonious happy working environment which an Affiliative leader strives for. I believe I possess elements from this style and I am someone who will listen to both sides of the story and not jump to conclusions. Admittedly I will sit on the fence in most situations, however if I feel very passionately about something I will step forward and stand up for what I believe in. I am an empathetic person, I do not like to see people suffering and will try and help them resolve what is making them unhappy.

For a period of time my department has been quite happy in our working environment despite the nature of our work. However the last few months

we have unfortunately inherited a Pacesetter, Commanding Leader. My team and I are now unhappy and lack motivation to get tasks completed. In my opinion this style of management is unproductive in gaining good results. People are a huge asset in business and keeping them motivated and happy will in turn produce effective results.

In summary I believe my leadership style to be predominately affiliative and coaching with characteristics from the democratic and pacesetter styles which I would adopt depending on the situations I need to deal with.

2.3 Use the critical assessment to evaluate how someone with different beliefs, attitudes and values might interpret the theory differently.

After looking into Goleman and McGregor's leadership theories I do not want to be thought of or seen as a negative leader by anyone within my team or department. The positive aspects of the leadership styles discussed in these theories are ultimately the ones that produce the best results for staff and businesses. However it appears that a failing organisation would benefit temporarily with a negative type of leader to help put it back on track.

Both members of my team have only been working with me just over a year and will find my style of management different to those they have worked with before. They are both completely different in the way they approach and carry out their work. One is quite idealistic and suggests many ideas to improve working ways and processes but does not see all of these through to the end whilst my other team member is very target orientated and will always meet the deadlines set.

I believe that when someone is employed to do a job they should keep their head down, work hard and ensure their tasks are completed to a high standard; this is the pacesetter style I feel I have adopted within my leadership. My idealistic team member clearly does not hold this style when it comes to targets and they are easily distracted and quite chatty with other teams in the office. To them deadlines are not important and they are not so responsive to my pacesetter style when I'm trying to achieve targets and would favour me more in adopting my affiliative side.

I like to keep everyone happy at work and will look to find solutions that work best for all. Both members of my team will put forward suggestions and ideas to make improvements to our service and I will take these forward on their behalf. Unfortunately some of the time I am unable to get agreement from the other departments that this will affect and I will back down and not push the idea forward and would therefore rather take this back and try and appease my team. I believe both my team members would attribute this as an affiliative leadership style however they would find this a weak quality within me if I do not stand my ground with their ideas and suggestions.

If work load increases in my team I am quite happy to step in and help out. However I do get very frustrated with one of my team members when they are distracted by others and they do not seem to understand the importance of getting on top of the workload. This issue would be dealt with easily by a commanding leader, in my head I can do this but in practice is not possible due to my overriding need to keep everyone happy. I feel my team members take advantage of this side of my leadership style and will therefore carry on with their behaviour.

I believe people should be qualified to do the job they are employed to do and seek to gain additional skills if they feel there are elements within the role they are not confident in achieving. Both members of my team have undertaken several courses and I believe they would link this to the coaching leadership style which is a positive element I believe I have in supporting them to develop both in their role and within the organisation.

In summary I feel others perception of my leadership styles may lean more towards the pacesetting style due to my need to meet targets. I would disagree and I take on board that I do possess these characteristics but feel I work very much as an affiliative and coaching leader the majority of the time as it is important to me to keep everyone happy at work and ensure they work to their best potential and progress with their career.