

REFLECTION ANON

1

The module of Operations Management is indeed an exciting module with many practical exercises which allow you to critically investigate and analyse the operations processes of the organisation. I have learned to assimilate theory and practice. I have learned to apply operations principles not only in my working environment but operations management is very important for the success of any project.

The module is very informative, topics such as lean and just in time are new topics that I have never come across in my academic career and I enjoyed learning about the ERP systems and how it functions in an operations environment.

I enjoyed more to work in groups, I can say I am a good team member as I worked tirelessly to achieve the group goals and also learn from my fellow group members. We thank technology and the skills I gained from the module which ensured that we use innovative ways of communication as we are learning in a pandemic era with limited contact. I learned to work under pressure and still provide quality work to contribute to the success of the group thereby also achieving the module outcomes and ultimately achieving the organisation's goals of equipping students with wide knowledge and encourage us to be better managers and leaders in our organisations.

Community engagement is an important component of the Business school and University at large, and I appreciate the opportunity we received to contribute to this component by finding an NPO and analysing their operations management plan and contribute immensely to the improvements as we did with our project at AKKH. This was a very refreshing exercise as we get to contribute to real-life scenarios and provide life-long lasting solutions.

I must say, I have grown personally from the person I was at the beginning of the semester to who I am now, due to the soft skills I excelled in during this module. I forced myself to think like a manager, to think out of the box and apply theory, I challenged myself to meet all deadlines with limited challenges and made sure that with each exercise I learn something new. The breakaway rooms were an excellent way to interact with the rest of the class rather than only my group members. I am a people's person so the rooms gave me a platform to enjoy that moment a little longer whilst learning and having fun.

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I have thoroughly enjoyed this subject, the manner in which the classes were presented and the assessments done are worlds apart from how it was done 21 years ago when I started my B.Pharm degree at PU vir CHO. After concluding my degree, I had a ton of theoretical knowledge, but very little practical insight. The total opposite is true with this subject, we came prepared to class with the theoretical knowledge since we were forced to summarise the theory and could then listened with insight to your presentations. I learned in practice by applying the theory in my organisation. Your audible feedback was very constructive, so much so that I almost felt lost when we did not get the last recording.

The group project helped me to interact and form a strong bond with my fellow group members from day one. It was also very pleasing to be given an opportunity to make a sustainable difference in the lives of others by utilising my skills and experience. This subject has given me the theoretical and practical knowledge to confidently engage in operations management discussions with colleagues. You have taught this “old dog” new tricks, by making me **look beyond the obvious** and **ask difficult questions**.

Thank you for the passion and eagerness you have shown while sharing your valuable knowledge throughout the semester.

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Thank you, Dr. Jordaan, for how the subject is being delivered. Firstly, the life-changing opportunity to identify a Non-Profit Organization and to implement some of the operations management left a positive impact on my life. With this experience, I will continue to engage with ODO and where possible offer assistance to ensure that the impact made as a result of being part of the North West University is sustained.

I thoroughly enjoyed the recorded PowerPoint presentations as it becomes very interactive and as a student, I can always go back and listen to the contents. This makes the subject matter to be enjoyed and I have always looked forward to your class. The contact session assignment has taught me to manage my time better and to prepare in advance for my classes. I was able to identify areas where I lack understanding and request clarity from the syndicate group members and also during class sessions.

Your ability to provide us with feedback before attending class on Saturday on work submitted on a Wednesday is highly commendable.

Thank you once again for the method of delivering this subject. Please continue with the NGO approach as it enables students to be in touch with day-to-day issues that are affecting society. Together we can change the world, by applying operations management principles.

God bless you, Proverbs 1 verse 5.

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Idowu Koyenikan, internationally acclaimed organisational consultant and author of the bestselling books *Wealth for all* says: “When you work on something that only has the capacity to make you five dollars, it does not matter how much harder you work – the most you will make is five dollars.” Operations management speaks to the manner in which processes that transform raw material inputs into final products and services are managed, in order to fulfil the needs of consumers and customers. Operational decisions which have long-term effects within the company, and often calls for great financial expense and resource allocation, should be formulated strategically. The MBAA812 course teaches professionals how to maximize efficiency through having a strategic plan in place to accomplish specific goals that align with the overall organisational strategy as set out by the executive team.

The online presentation of the subject matter during this semester, especially in the midst of a pandemic, in my opinion have been highly successful. The following are some of the class aspects that appealed to my learning preferences:

- The lecturer modelled the theory and principles to teach new concepts. The washing pegs story, the t-shirts with illustrative satire pictures about the lessons and the bakery flow chart were some effective modelling techniques applied.
- Students working as a team to understand concepts and learn from shared experiences. Splitting the class up into breakaway rooms with diverse teams to answer questions posed by the lecturer, to discuss topics and how they applied to different industries, were very successful.
- Enabling the students teach others. Students were able to display the knowledge they have gained and share it with others in order to add value to the greater society. The community project is a good example of knowledge sharing where management of a NPO, often run by people with little to no technical expertise had to be taught about operations management.

Regarding the method of assessment, I feel that the compilation of a PoE is often much more effective than a written formal assessment. The structure of this PoE is especially successful in my view and here is why: most often true learning and knowledge expansion occurs in real life outside of the classroom, thus through practical application of theories and principles.

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I enjoyed the classes very much and I have learnt a lot over the past semester, I have learned to think about operations management in a different way and it has opened my eyes to so much of the inner workings, that I have not noticed.

It is in large part thanks to this subject that forced me to think about operations management, to critically evaluate and help me gain the insight that I needed to make the decision to make a career change – to move out of the business development direction and take a job as an operations manager. So all and all I would say this subject has been a life-changer, thank you for that!

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I have personally worked in Redspot as it is a family business since I have finished with school in 2011 which is giving me a bit of a drawback due to the lack of management experience in other companies. With covid-19 that has entered last year the new methods of learning that has been introduced is for me in quite a few ways an improvement but obviously nothing can overcome physical classes. On the subject of Operations Management, I have learned very much due to the practical applications of analysing my business and re-thinking the things we currently do.

With our group assignment working with other managers together on a real project was a new experience for me and have also learned from their experiences and seeing other processes in other businesses instead of my own.

The classes were kept interesting and all participants in the class was kept on participating in discussions and to collaborate with other people in the class as well. In my opinion it could not have been done better on a virtual platform.

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Initially it was difficult to identify any problems with regards to the FCIU while being part of management at the same time. However, as the semester progressed and the theory got explained through using real life examples, things became clear within the FCIU.

Subject: The Operations Management module have equipped me with knowledge I would forever use going forward in my career. The details might change over time as the industries evolve, but the reference framework will always remain fairly accurate.

Presentation: Being able to present to a group of people will always be a valuable skill to poses, especially as you progress to higher management positions. Even though it's something I in some sort of way fear, this module forced me to step out of my comfort zone and present to a group of people I don't know. Most certainly something that needs to be embraced by future students.

Assessment: The numerous assessments covered throughout the semester was very time consuming, but it did expose us to what the MBA program is about and what is lying ahead. Further to the above, the assessments also forced us to ensure we critically assess each area of operations within our own workplaces to the benefit of ourselves. The assessments further tested our group work capability and allowed the various groups to mould and grow into stronger groups for the 2nd phase lying ahead.

Thanks a lot Prof. Jordaen for all the time and effort put in during this module, presenting it in a very enthusiastic manner, making it exciting for all for us.

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At first, it was difficult to identify the operational side of a service company like Almar especially when more involved with the projects and planning side, but as the semester progressed the theoretical information, as well as class discussion, helped to identify and analyse the operational problems within the company. Most of the suggestions mentioned above cost no money to implement and Almar had enough skilled and trained staff to make the impact effectively. Small changes can make a huge difference, it just needs to be implemented.

MBAA812- Operations Management

Submitting assignments each week forced me to keep up to date with the subject during the semester, it made me summarize the topics for myself and granted the opportunity to evaluate myself on understanding the subject, this was interesting as I could apply what I have learned at my profession but at the same time get a different perspective on the information I thought I knew to allot about. Subject I enjoyed and applied most in my working environment in the 1st Semester. Fun and interactive classes!!

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I want to thank Dr Johan Jordaan for all the insightful operations management knowledge he has passed on to the MBA group of 2021. Dr Jordaan has gone above and beyond to help us understand the importance of operations management in all organisations.

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Reflecting on the start of this module, beginning 2021, I was a bit negative because we already completed Operations in our PG-DIP. Apart from my perception, we also adapted from a formal contact session to a screen with names. However, after attending Dr Johann Jordaan's first class, I was hooked. It is a privilege to attend a class presented by a highly knowledgeable lecturer. Dr Jordaan is one of the best lecturers and an expert in operations management.

In my current working environment, I was able to implement systematic thinking and approach to the tasks at hand. In our Unit, we are responsible for the presentation of short courses for individuals and several institutions. Operations management has provided for insight to approach each training course as a project on its own.

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Learning online was challenging at the beginning, earlier contact class since I was at home and experiencing a lot of disturbance, I couldn't pay much of the attention. The solution was to go to my offices and attend from office.

The Presented slides helped me understand all topics since it summaries the themes per contact and the use of photos, video and graphs provided more insightful knowledge of the model.

The way Dr. Jordan present / lecture was understandable, I learnt a lot from the relevant examples and was motivated to study.

The approach to do assignment after every contact section, helps me to understand and get an opportunity to study every theme and avoid piling of work to the end.

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Overall I enjoyed the subject and how it was presented, I feel that what made the subject matter particularly enjoyable was the problem identification and subsequent problem solving involved. The course was broken down into the theory and the practical application of the theory as part of a community group project and an individual assessment of our workplace. With regards to the theory, we were required to prepare for upcoming lectures by going through and summarising the topics which would be covered in those contact sessions. My personal belief is that this is an excellent approach as it forces us as the students to adequately prepare for the lectures. Having lectured myself I know the importance of this for both the students but also in facilitating the lectures and contact sessions and many times allows for more interactions between the lecturer and the students. This approach further made sure that I stayed on top of the work and the subject matter and I would greatly recommend this approach. As part of the summaries we were provided the opportunity to raise any questions we had and subject matter we felt we needed more explanation on. This was implemented as

it drove how the lectures were approached by the lecturer, this is great if the students are honest in their feedback, but it did allow Dr. Jordaan to then put greater focus on the issues raised as part of the lecture preparations. A real strength of the lecturer was to use every day real world examples to explain concepts to us and really found a way to "dumb it down".

The practical application of the theory was split into two different projects, the group project which was the community project and an individual project assessing the operations in the workplace. With regards to the community project, personally I found this greatly satisfying, however, I feel as a group maybe we bit off more than we could chew as our selected community partner was the Abraham Kriel Kinderhuis and is actually quite a large organization and undertaking. But I do feel that did benefit us, as we had to really apply ourselves as we truly wanted to contribute to the organization and make a difference. I thought this was great way to apply the theory learnt and to get together as a group and get to know one another as this was our first project working together. In terms of the individual assignment, I find it to be highly applicable when it is performed in an environment that is conducive to it. It also provides a platform for us to become more prominent within our respective companies. My personal journey through this process started off well as I was still under contract at the WRG at the NWU, but that came to an end in the middle of the semester. This made the operations analysis tougher as I was not involved directly anymore and did not have direct contact with the individuals working at the NABF and management perceived it more as a "we will let you do your homework" than necessarily taking it as seriously or seeing the positives that it may have, particularly after my contract ended. As such I feel my overall experience of this section might not be as positive as for the the theory and the community project and my opinion would be biased, but as said previously in the right environment this is excellent.

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This subject covers eight (8) topics and eight individual assignments with one group assignment over the semester. I have attended all the zoom lectures even though it is always schedule last of the day. The reason why I am always look forward is because it is fun and hands on. This is one of the practical approach which has enticed me to look forward and love the subject. I hardly study because the subject is so practical and linked to real life situation. The only challenge I have come across is the fact that I have to submit individual assignment every Wednesday. In most instances it sound as if there is plenty of time but lyaa! However, I strongly support that the format of individual assignment continue because it forced us to keep on learning and be in touch with our work.

The group assignment real brought the entire team together and it helps us to learn people management skills. I could see some challenges but we have managed to overcome them.

My recommendation is to introduce quizzes that are automated to help and strengthen the ability to understand the concept and procedures discussed.

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I have found the module very interesting, I have previously done the module but with less interaction than this one, I have really found it more interesting. The way classes were presented, getting more involved in the organisations operations was a wonderful experience even though we were not able to attend facet to face classes but it was very insightful for me.

We encountered challenges in the group assignments or interaction but it has taught us even more lessons about the diverse employees we would encounter in the future when dealing with the actual organizational experiences and be able to resolve the conflict amongst ourselves. I cannot really fault it anywhere except for improvements. Online classes were more convenient as we were able to attend classes from anywhere. I really enjoyed the module.

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I have found this module to be very interesting and very insightful. I have learned a lot in terms of operating a business. It has been of great help to our company. All the themes are very much applicable to the company and the module has helped us apply this themes and shown us how we can improve our operations to contribute to our strategic objectives.

The module was well presented and very well prepared. I find assessment to be a bit unfair because its 50% group work and 50% individual. I feel it cannot assess individual work if so much assessment comes from the group work. I personally enjoyed the module, it is very important for operation of the business and I would recommend it to the all business who would like to see their businesses grow.

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Operations are part of every business. The handbook helped me understand how every part of the operational business process fits in, and the examples helped me understand how other organisations apply the right fit for their operational needs. I must admit this was the first handbook I have ever read from front to back. In addition, the roadmap approach helped to have enough time to prepare for the sessions.

The slides helped prepare for the contacted session, and the voice guidance helps a lot understand the content presented.

The small assignments were like mini-guides of operations, and I will always revert to them. Efundi site and layout was excellent, and hopefully, other lectures will start following your example.

The group assignment was a good and rewarding process to understand better how operations management can fit in any organisation. The interaction with NPO helped to experience the daily challenges, and when applying your mind and knowledge, you can make a difference to any organisation.

The POE helped me to understand how different operational issues can be mitigated in line with the strategic plan of an organisation. I have also learned the importance to keep sustainability part of the strategic process.

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I enjoyed the module; I do not know if there would be another way to teach such a module besides using the assessment method that requires students to summarise and use their working environment as an application.

- The recording feedback works well. It brings a human element to feedback, especially when teaching and learning are entirely on virtual platforms.
- I appreciate the mentoring feedback that you have always provided throughout the course.
- The biweekly assignments are a great way to help students engage with the content and ask relevant questions.
- Kindly update your small assignment instructions on efundi. Some of the documents are still written in 2019 and can be confusing.
- Instructions on efundi should be the same as the ones you outline during the class. It can be confusing for people who work on assignments early before you deliberate about it in class in detail.

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This was a very challenging subject especially being in the service industry. The theory is very interesting as most of the factors I have never dealt with. Applying it on Mooivaal Media gave me new insight and had to dig very deep to apply the theory in real life. The interaction in the class made it very close to face-to-face classes. I decided to do my MBA as I want to learn from others and to apply it in my own situation or work. The MBA has been mentally and physically challenging, but I like being challenged and therefore the reason I applied. Little did I know the impact. I am excited of what will be happening for the rest of the course and would like to be stretched and improved as a person.

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I have found this subject to be a fulfilling journey, taking me out of my comfort zone and teaching me to ask critical questions. I enjoyed the fact that the content was presented very practically, with fewer emphases on the technical detail of the textbook, but rather focussed on applying the elements to my current work environment.

Initially, the task seemed a bit daunting, but after a while, I realised what was required and which type of questions require answering. I believe this skill still has room for improvement, but the module certainly increased my ability and confidence to approach problems critically. I have since started a new job at a new company, where I am applying this approach to problem-solving and hope to make an impact by doing so.

The inclusion of the community project was an eye-opener and I appreciated having the exposure to a non-profit organisation I would otherwise not have had. It gave me a fresh perspective on how much I can do to help, with what I have been given. It was also important to step outside of the business environment, to learn how operations can be used to serve the community. It has inspired me to do more and be involved in charity organisations where I can aim to make a difference.

Having bi-weekly submission directed and assisted me to remain disciplined, but also ensured that I was always prepared for class. This meant the class could be spent interacting with other

students, rather than engaging theory. It also brought a rhythm to the semester. Receiving personal feedback on short and long assignments was useful to enable progress during the semester and also facilitated interaction between the student and the lecturer. Albeit one-way communication, it proved to be supporting and appreciated.

The teamwork required in this module also doubled as a support system to ensure I was abreast with the developments of all modules during the semester. Working in a team was challenging at times, but as part of the soft skills training offered, I learned to trust other team members and letting go of control.

The presentation was practical and could be easily associated with. I particularly enjoyed the relevant real-world examples or references to the lecturer's personal experiences. For me, that brought it home. I preferred the continuous assessment of this subject, to writing an exam. I felt that it brought a deeper understanding of the topics, together with the continuous feedback, set a steady pace for the semester. At the end of the day, the subject has been a positive experience, bringing a new perspective on the possibilities in business operations.

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1.0 Learning experience

The teaching received surpassed my expectations in that:

- ☐ It provided first hand practical experience of application of some of the theory concepts learned (i.e. Operations Management and Research Methodology).
- ☐ Recording of online sessions and availing them in time proved very useful, not only to those who missed sessions, but provides an opportunity for revision of some of the concepts presented.

2.0 Suggestion to improve online teaching

It is recommended that, post-covid-19 pandemic:

- ☐ Teaching should continue to be fully online, which is the essence of distance learning.
- ☐ A mix of both face-to-face contact and online should be avoided. Adopting one mode of delivery (i.e. online) will provide common method of delivery to all the students without giving those that will be able to attend face-to-face contact an upper hand over those not able to attend the contact sessions.
- ☐ Condense the eight contact sessions into one or two week continuous contact session.
- ☐ Organise revision sessions prior to examination period, in case the condensed contact sessions idea is considered favourably.

Some of the lecturers need to put more effort in engaging more with students to resolve issues with studies (i.e. assignment and other queries).

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I would like to firstly acknowledge and dedicate my utmost respect and appreciation to Dr Jordaan for being able to make a difference in how I perceived my studies. His emphasis on critical thinking and how to pose strategic questions, has indeed made a difference in one's abilities to think critically and ask "difficult" questions. From him, one learned that the qualification is worth nothing if not backed by knowledge and practicable application of that knowledge.

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I do not regret the decision I made to pursue studying an MBA, especially during this agile time where technology, disruptions and knowledge are key for the future. One never imagined studying contactless and using technology, interesting time indeed.

For the past six or five months, I've learned, lot of reading, juggling work, studies, restructuring, life and pandemic difficulties but I can proudly say "I survived". I am growing daily through the business school leadership. I am so grateful. The study sessions / classes are excellent on Saturdays, it gave me time to dedicate the days strictly to school, gave opportunity to allow for better planning, limited distractions, focus and flexibility is great.

In terms of lecture's, all are knowledgeable, professional and treat students fairly with respect. There were few glitches with Prof Leon, but I think it was beyond his control, technology can be wary sometimes.

I, however, think there are some gaps that need to be addressed. Firstly, the interaction and lessons sharing amongst students were very minimum, I believe, we learn through engagement. It will be highly appreciated to allow for debates and interactions in class. Secondly, the level of commitment and maturity of some students are a concern, this is not good for the competitiveness of the business school and future leaders. I propose that the screening should be a bit stricter. Lastly, selecting groups without contact or at an early stage is a bit challenging. Maybe, it will be better to have first session as a face to face (ken mekaar is belangrik) and thereafter through virtual. Or at worst, group allocation to be done by programme director.

Looking forward to the next semester.

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The module was well presented and interesting. The lecturer provided practical and relevant examples. I learned the essence of operations management and my manager was impressed with the level of analysis I did on our department. He is happy to let me drive the proposed solutions and he will provide me with the necessary support where required.

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My experience has been great thus far. I like online learning, it saves me a lot of time and costs which I would have incurred having to travel to campus.

Operations Management is great on an overall, details are as follows:

Delivery method:

Online delivery of classes from the traditional contact classes University like NWU has been great because they still maintain a close relationship with students even on the online platforms. The online method also enhances worklife integration.

Lecturer:

Prof Jordaan is very professional and knowledgeable in the subject. He has always kept the lines of communications open for all students to contact him, even via WhatsApp.

Suggestions:

While the style of teaching used in ops is great and well supported, the following was noted: we end up focusing all the attention on it because of all contact submissions. I would suggest that students be allowed to skip maybe two of the short assignments, whichever one they chose to allow time to focus on other modules. The method used in Ops is great though, I like it.

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The course was very interesting and has assisted me in understanding the bigger picture in terms of the relationship between organisational strategy and operations management. Based on the experience from my company, it was noted that a strategy may be well defined however if there is no clear relationship between operations and strategy, the strategy becomes obsolete and isolated documented, therefore management should regularly review internal processes to ensure alignment of the strategy.

The design of operations are very important as they have a direct relationship with key strategic objectives, the design defines how the operations of the organisation will ensure that the strategic objectives are met. This will include set performance targets of how the objectives will be supported in the daily operations. Furthermore, it was noted the design of operations will be based on people and processes whilst IT is a driver to ensure optimisation.

Operations will not be adequately managed and optimised through process automation if their processes have not been adequately designed/documented and if the people do not understand and don't comply with the process, there will be system failure which will result in the organisation not meeting strategic objectives.

ERP/IT systems form part of optimising the operations, most of the processes can be enhanced by automating the processes to ensure uniformity and elimination of human error during processing. Through an ERP batch processing can be scheduled to reduce manual labour of individual transactions that may be similar. The emergence of COVID 19 has presented a big risk for all business as disrupted the usual operations and many business environments had to adapt quickly as there was a risk of operations being halted resulting in the closure of business. COVID19 is an emerging risk that has fast track many innovative processes which would have never seen the day of light if it was not for the pandemic, the risk however requires continuous monitoring and management to forecast possible changes in the regulations that may affect operation.

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For a 1st-year student everything was just confusing and many times I wanted to give up. Firstly, with the administration of the 1st Summer School, I felt like the School was not organized because I was only informed on a Friday before the Monday of the classes that I need to attend for the whole week, hence I could not attend because the notice was too short for me because of the responsibilities that I had in the office on that week I could not stay away. If the School can inform the student at least 2 weeks before for an important session like that, that will be great because honestly I felt so lost without firsthand information from the Summer School.

With regards to the Teaching and Learning from the 4 modules that I registered for I enjoyed the Operations Management and the Research Methodology the most. Both lecturers engaged with the students' every time we had class. There was a time when I wished MBA was only about Operations Management only especially when I had a chance to engage with the Old Age home during the Community Project.

Hence I would like to pass my gratitude to you Dr. Jordaan even the way you gave me my feedback, for the fact that you called me out by my name during the recordings, to me that was just amazing. Thank you for your passion and the love you have for your work.

Thank you so much you made this 1st semester a beautiful experience for me.

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I learned valuable lessons during the Operations management classes. The lecturer engaged with students and gave a lot of examples to try to make it practical for us. I found the online classes very effective and I could connect from anywhere in the country, no restrictions and therefore no reason to miss class. The Zoom breakaway rooms during classes have helped us to be able to engage with other students and hear their thoughts and what they do in their organisations. If there is one thing that I love about this module is the constant feedback that we received via voice notes. This shows a lot of passion and commitment from the lecturer's side. I have learned how important it is to implement small changes successfully to win support for bigger changes later on.

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I would like to thank you Dr Jordaan and everyone who was involved in the preparation and execution for a thorough and well organised module. I appreciate how the module was not theorised but was practical. Engaging in the community/company initiatives for both the group and the individual assignments was eye opening. The module was made interesting by the numerous assignments.

Through this I learned how to think critically. I particularly enjoyed the study school and the practical real life examples that were presented to make the content easily understandable.

I send my gratitude to the MBA Titans, my team, an exceptional group of experienced individuals who showed team work and how "people in operations" can be applied in all areas of life.

It is unfortunate that all learning is currently online restricted. As a recommendation, I suggest the following:

1. Introduce more presentations such as the one done at the last contact session. Presentations that encourage each member's participation by taking the lead to present a topic.
2. Encourage cross team collaboration
3. Introduce Multiple Choice Test and Quizzes.

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Teaching received during the first semester 2021- MBA phase 1

We were privileged to begin the first semester of 2021 academic year by attending the summer school as Phase 1 MBA students; this conduct laid a foundation of what to expect during the rest of the semester and prepared as accordingly. We began our journey by recognizing that Operation Management is a branch of systems management concerned with generation of commodities and services through the transformation of raw materials. During this journey I acquired knowledge with regards to operations management principles as well as practical experience in implementing these principles by means of working with Khayaletu Village a Non-Governmental Organisation in Potchefstroom; it was an educational and fulfilling experience.

The method of teaching presented by Pro Jordaan was beneficial to us as students in such a way that it provided us with a sentiment that we are attending a face to face consultation. The chat rooms that were development from time to time afforded us an opportunity to engage with other students as it could have been done during face to face consultations. The overall learning experience during this semester was an educational and pleasant journey.

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I am very much happy with the online session. Knowledge was effectively delivered to my expectations. Prof Jordan was very practical whenever he delivered all of his lessons. The covered theory relates to issues which are currently happening in the industry such as lean management, maintenance, inventory, planning, scheduling and ERP systems just to mention a few.

What stood out for me?

The operations management theme which stood out for me was the people in operations. The reason for that is because everything revolves around the creation of human being and if there is no control in behavior they would be some heavy consequences to be encountered which affects the environment surrounding the community for example, two of former colleagues were involved in a grenade incident at their home at Ikageng township. The community was disturbed as they believe that explosives are tightly controlled and not easily accessed by anyone without legal route being adhered. The psychology of human being is critical and impactful in operations such motivation, stress management, performance, leadership and ethics just to highlight a few.

General comments about online learning

I personally was not ready to switch from face to face contact session into live online sessions however Prof Jordan made it to be fun and enjoyable. I am happy on my side.

Benefits live online session

- ☐ Travelling cost on from Krugersdorp to Potchefstroom campus were completely reduced.
- ☐ I realised that live online contact sessions are effective as the interaction conducted with lecturer the same way as the face to face session.
- ☐ I am able to spend more time with my family and can learn and execute my studies under their presence.
- ☐ I strongly recommend online learning with live contact session under the conditions that there will be a commitment from lecturers to offer speedy responses to emails whenever there is a consultation.

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The operations management module came as an eye opener in my career. I am a social worker by profession and this module assisted me to look at service delivery with a better eye. For example, issues of quality are mostly ignored in my capacity as a social worker but now I understand the values of quality in my daily work. Besides the quality of services that I must improve after learning about quality I strongly believe that quality is the centre part of all service delivery.

As a student I believe that the module and facilitation process were student centred. Though learning took place online the facilitator created a safe environment to interact with each other including fellow students. The operations management module encouraged and empowered me to be able to add value in my work environment. I strongly feel confident that I can be able to handle change with better understanding and that for quality to be effective one needs to remain with an open mind.

The module also taught me that team work is extremely important. The setup of problem-solving teams means that issues in a workplace are not only management issues but are the collective issues that require all individuals' input to better address them. Change brings pain but the results are enjoyable.

The processes of supply chain management and inventory management indicated to me that we have been doing quite a lot of things in a wrong way. The suggestions I made to management became an eye opener. Although they indicated that they were aware of other things, they expressed strongly that it is something that they are giving attention and that it takes time since most of the decisions require the intervention of regional and national office. For example, the issues of recruiting supply chain management personnel. The management indicated that most of the salary levels in the service points require matric since its level 5

posts. They also indicated that besides the level 5 posts that they advertise they also need practitioners who can be appointed at level 7 or 8.

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COVID-19's rise has resulted in the closure of educational institutions worldwide. This put institutions' preparation to deal with a crisis to the test, as efficient online learning required modern technology, including hardware and software. This closure accelerated the development of online learning environments to ensure that learning is not disrupted. Numerous universities have developed an interest in the most effective methods for delivering course content online, engaging learners, and conducting evaluations. As a result, COVID-19 has evolved institutions to invest in online learning, despite its danger to humankind. I began my journey at NWU in 2020; we were the first students to transition from full-time to online education due mainly to lockdown restrictions.

Since finishing the PGDIP, I'd say that the Operations Management module at this level has been extremely challenging and excellent. This is my second collaboration with Prof Jordaan, and I have enjoyed each session. I liked how the class was conducted; we were encouraged to be proactive and use the Operation Management theories we were learning within the organizations that we work for. Theories have taught me to analyze operations inside the company for which I work. I've sharpened my ability to ask probing questions to obtain new insights. This sort of education assisted me to form connections at work since I had to deal with various subjects that were not in my field of work, such as supply chain management. I've also gained a better understanding of how various departments inside FirstRand work. I encountered

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obstacles since Operation management activities are geared toward manufacturing, but I work for a service organization. Prof. Jordaan, on the other hand, made a clear contrast between how operation activities may be utilized in these various businesses.

The module entailed a project in which we had to select an NPO, I was part of the team that works with ODO(Olievenhoutbosch Disability Organisation). Apart from the experience of applying the Operation Management techniques, we learned in this model, engaging with ODO staff and team has taught me to listen with empathy and understanding. Through this initiative, I gained experience engaging with a variety of people and learning a variety of perspectives and opinions. As a result of being a part of this initiative, I gained an understanding of how non-governmental organizations operate, the challenges they face, and most importantly, I learned a great deal in the process.

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The semester as a whole has been a challenge. Engaging virtually creates a number of barriers that I've not previously experienced during my studies. Having said this, Operations Management was by far the most engaged and practical of the subjects covered this semester. The Portfolio of Evidence forced me to engage with stakeholders across the business.

This in itself assisted me in developing some much needed interpersonal skills as I had to overcome job security barriers. Many of my colleagues were initially very closed about their departments, and in certain cases, saw my investigation as an attack on their overall performance. It took some time to break down these barriers and obtain buy-in regarding the process.

I was surprised by the level of insight obtained from junior team members who had simply never been offered a platform to present their views. The overall reception received at the end of the investigation was overwhelmingly positive. Perhaps the most profound change I experienced over the period was that Executives started including me in a number of strategic meetings.

For me, Operations Management has opened my eyes to the organisation as a whole. I now understand that all departments are interdependent and that it requires the constant improvement in each area to ultimately lead to a successful future for the business.

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Restructuring in SARS in 2020 brought uncertainty, Covid19 complicated things further. I could not fathom how the world would operate post-Covid. Being part of the new team, that enables business operations efficiency was challenging, I can't imagine how I would have contributed better without the insights that came as the result of studying the operations management module at NWU.

The operation module empowered me to invite all the stakeholders in the room, ask all the questions. Engage with the leadership in getting his business unit vision, but also clarity on the about the operational processes being linked to the Vision 2024. My curiosity enabled me to be invited into the top 70 leaders Strategic session to observe the leadership crafting the APP, and being able to defend the proposed interventions. Being part of this auspicious incident in the organization is humbling

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I started this module with very limited knowledge of the subject matter. The module was challenging, especially with the bi-weekly submission of assignments. The module however introduced me to several topics that I found very helpful in my work. Analysing and applying the operations management principles one by one, within my organisation, provided me with more insight and understanding. Every week I challenged myself even more to convince the lecturer of my critical thinking abilities and application of the knowledge from the specific contact session.

Furthermore, I enjoyed working with a diverse group of individuals on the group assignment and presentation. The group's diverse background in an array of industries enriched my learning in a variety of ways. As the team leader, I found my leadership skills put to the test as I had to deal with differing viewpoints and several concerns relating to work ethics.

Thank you, Dr. Jordaan, for the unique way you presented the module, particularly the flipped classroom T&L method. My expectations were exceeded by the learning experience.

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The module was exciting and challenging at the same time. I learned a lot about operations, and I can use the learnings in my daily work life. I am constantly analysing my company but also our customer's operations. I can make sense of processes and decisions I could not previously.

I have started implementing some of the principles learned in my areas of influence, and I am also educating my team on some of the best practices I have learned throughout the module.

The module was intense because of the weekly submissions. However, I started appreciating the weekly tasks during contact sessions because they forced me to prepare, study the theory and ask critical questions. I saw my critical thinking skills improving, and I am now looking at situations beyond the obvious.

I am definitely a better manager now.

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The Operations Management course was very challenging and eye opening. It helped me put theory into practice for all operations in any organization. The structure kept me on my toes and always up to date. The fortnight assignments saw it to that I was never left behind and always doing my work, however at some point I could feel the pressure. The final assessment above helps me to indeed critically think of a real world organization of my choice and apply all operations management principles I have learned, like you Dr. Johan always say; the learning is for us, we should learn these principles and be able to apply them for ourselves. I really hope I have demonstrated the learning for myself in my work above because really Dr., you did your part. If there is a class I wished to have attended at least once physically, it is your lecturer. However I am really enjoying the online sessions as they are cost saving.

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It had been a very short term, since everyone was piled up with a lot of school work to do and other personal activities. I really enjoyed the subject if I had to compare. The lecturer is very informative of the subject itself, has excellent strategies that assisted us as students to perform well in all assignments.

Operations Management, the subject was really interesting. We as students get an opportunity to research each topic before lessons and break-away sessions to share our organizational experiences relating to themes/topics covered per contact session. All those exercises had taught me to be a critical thinker and bring solutions to my organization's challenges.

The module had made me realise our strengths and weaknesses in terms of application of operations management principles, also to find better ways of doing things which will lead the institution towards fulfilment of its vision, mission and key values.

As a leader I also understood the importance of each operational strategy in ensuring effective running, analysis of the product that the institution offers, design of the product offered, the important of people in operations, supply chain management, inventory management, strategic angle of the institution etc.

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In my capacity as process manager, I got the most of each session that I can. All the different parts of this subject are 100% applicable to my daily work. I was surprised by how much I did not know and how much I still need to learn.

The assignments also helped a lot. I was forced to prepare for class. It is shocking to me when I look back and realise the amount of work we covered.

The presentation of the lesson was great. I enjoy the way Prof Johan presents the information. The lessons were always full of information, practical examples and comedy.

This subject is by far my favourite and I am sad to finish it off so quickly.

Thank you!

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This module definitely changed the way I think of my organisation. I am more aware of what is going on as I now have specific targets that I set for myself and also for the business. I feel comfortable to address issues I pick up within the business and present them to the management team.

This has created a platform for great interaction between the theory and the work environment. The final portfolio has brought it all together and forced us to bring all the topics together and conclude it in one assignment.

I will definitely remember this module for the rest of my career. And it is not restricted to just my career but with my everyday life as well.

The simplicity of the way it was presented in class with applicable examples was what it brings all of the module together.

Thank you

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By far the best presentation and management of a subject in the current MBA course, but also far better than any in AMP or PgDip. I really appreciated the fact that there is proper structure to the overall learning experience and we always knew what to expect throughout the semester, not the same with other subjects. Efundu was used properly, which in the pandemic scenario makes a huge difference. It is very frustrating to look for assignments, submissions etc. in Efundu purely because lecturers did not structure everything clearly.

The class presentations were done nicely and I enjoyed the interactive nature and breakaway discussions. Although there was a lot of work on regular assignments, it guided us to work through the whole course in a structured way and understand everything. Most importantly, due to this we have a better understanding and can remember the topics better after the course, therefore much more beneficial than one short Q&A and an exam.

Thank you for the lessons, I learned a lot, especially on critical thinking and thinking out of the box. I was forced to think differently about my business, and the results are very interesting. I now have many more ideas in the business.

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I enjoyed operations management module the most as I found the subject more challenging given my education background which is worlds apart from operations, the presentation and the assessment made it easier for me to like the module as it was insightful and engaging. The assessment enforced that I look for the operations themes in my everyday surroundings and questions the way things are done and why they are done that way. I now question and challenge convention in my organisation. I believe it is the interaction between a subject and its environment which is fundamental to the process of learning.

I believe that learning deeply involves asking questions, testing ideas and finding answers and this I found in this module. I have learned the art of critical thinking which involves a wide range of thinking skills leading toward desirable outcomes. Most important, the question we were required to ask after each contact session assessment prompt me to think critically and ask difficult problem-solving question which provided me with an opportunity to step back and think about how to actually solve problems and how a particular set of problem solving strategies is appropriate for achieving the desire goal/outcome.

As modern society is becoming more complex, information is becoming available and changing more rapidly prompting users to constantly rethink, switch directions, and change problem-solving strategies, the subject presentation incorporated real life situation that we were able to engage on in class and apply the relevant operations strategy, I found this interesting and a good learning experience. Last point to note, being a Christian I found NWU Business school to be like a home, the bible verse shared most often and inviting our Heavenly Father to take the lead in our learning journey, that is profound, encouraging and comforting. May God bless the work of your hands and may you be blessed as you passionately impart knowledge and learning to generations.

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When I started on the journey for Operations Management with Dr Jordan 25th January 2021, the nerves were all over the place. I was asking myself if i made the right decision and if i was ready for what lied ahead. Because I already took the first step with the tedious application process and funding was approved so i had to carry on. After the study school, i had a reflection session and realised that i still wanted to achieve this qualification. The continuous support provided by the study school manager also made it easy.

This was my first experience of Operations Management, and it was an interesting course to learn. I have always wondered what the linked between the different departments was and with the module i was able to understand it.

It provided me an opportunity of learning and understand Omnia as an organisation with different departments and the role each department contributes in the existence of the whole organisation. I interacted with a lot of different individuals while collecting information and also increased my internal networks. Building new relationships which never existed before.

On the subject of networking, meeting, and knowing my group members was also helpful in the first semester of the whole MBA journey. The forming and storming were a continuous norm in the group (Vaal Group 1), but the sleepless nights paid off with the final presentation and the POE submission. It was all worth it. This is just the first half of the first semester, but the journey is already interesting, and I am looking forward to walking, even crawling until I reach the finish line with the support of everyone around me.

As for Operations management as a module, it was well presented and so interactive. Virtual classes are not easy, but the breakaway groups discussion made it easier to learn and grow.

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Operations management module was interesting and fun especially for someone with limited operations management experience in real life. The module opened my eyes on the importance of operation management and how various elements are

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Ek het die Operasionele bestuurskurses so opreg baie geniet! Soveel geleer en regtig 'n wereld wat vir my oopgegaan het. Dankie prof vir 'n perfek saamgestelde en hoogs insiggewende kursies! Ek kan regtig nie enige voorstelle maak oom die kursies verder te verbeter nie.

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The module has been an eye opener for me. We always look at our organisation through the eyes of the units that we are in. The module has encouraged me to go deeper into the organisation and see how some of the operations affect me and the work that I do. It is always easier to point a finger at management and complain about their incompetency not realising that given the opportunity being in a management position is not as easy as it seems.

This journey has helped me think out of the box and to better prepare me for the future. What I have learnt I can apply it by making small changes within the unit that I am in. Sharing the report with my organisational management was a daunting task but I am grateful that it gave me an opportunity to interact with people on different throughout the semester.

Studying and having assignments submitted before class helps in a sense that we are required to think and go into our organisations instead of just writing theory laid out in textbooks which are becoming obsolete given how operations have impacted by Covid- 19.

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The learning experience was good, there was a lot of engagement between the lecturer and the students, which resulted in a lot of information sharing. I enjoyed a lot the student discussions in breakaway rooms. The processes of sharing experiences were totally enlightening.

The seven assignments that we had to submit throughout the semester were really helpful, there are things that I personally thought I knew but the summarized slides and being reminded constantly to not just critically think the concept and ask "the difficult questions" gave

me a different insight and fresh way of looking into things. If you had asked me in the beginning of the semester which theme, I was most likely to implement in the organization? Maintenance was probably going to be the last option.

But with what I learned; I was confident enough to take it up when the need emerged. The community project, this was by far the highlight of my semester, as a team we managed to change lives by just applying what we learned, without using any money, this has really changed my view on a lot of things in life. In the olden days, well not that I am too old of course, the community would really celebrate when one of the kids got into university, this really made me understand why.

In conclusion, this was the best learning experience, I really think I have become just a little bit wiser than I was when I started the course. Too much critical thinking and asking the difficult questions can do that to a person. Thanks to Dr Jordaan!

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From theme one, I have enjoyed this subject. It makes a lot of sense to request students to summarize the theory in advance as preparation for weekend classes, I started getting familiar with the method and improved my marks as the semester progressed.

As I am the Financial Director of this Group, I am privileged to have all information at my disposal and for this submission and the whole semester, it was not required for me to consult any of the operations employees, as I am fully aware of what occurs at all operations.

With that said, this subject still made me think critically about the way we operate. I always thought that we are extremely efficient, however, I now had material to compare it to and found on several occasions that our methods are outdated and need revision. The ideas and concepts that I learned here are already being evaluated and they will make a difference to our organization. This report will also be shared with the Operations Executive.

I enjoyed the course Dr Jordaan, and thank you for the time you took to give me personal feedback on my questions raised in the bi-weekly submissions. Interlinked in terms of contribution to the success and growth prospects of the organization. The module gave insight on how operation management link with organization strategic planning and goals. The Operation manager decisions directly affect the operations and other department such as finance, Supply chain purchasing and administrative departments.

What made the module interesting is having knowledgeable and experienced lecturing and on-going support from Dr Jordaan. The lecture was instrumental in answering calls and providing timely feedback between all seven contact sessions I have also enjoyed the breakaways rooms format which promoted interactive learning and force active participation from Students.

The knowledge I have gained will come in handy when having operational management discussion with the rest of Head of departments to accelerate the company's operational strategies. This experience will also help in my volunteering work to the community the

community as the basics of operation management are embedded but only need regular practical application to perfect my skills.

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In all honesty I did not expect a year being as chaotic as 2021 thus far.

Firstly, MBA is not for sissies, neither is it for one who is not willing to immerse him/herself in the experience.

This I learned the hard way after falling behind once and working very hard to catch up to my group and the rest of the class.

Here one also is taught the most important part of operations management – Nothing is possible without people assisting you in what you take on.

The classes were alive and dynamic. Even the classes that I missed whilst moving to another company and town could be followed and felt because of the liveliness of the presentation.

The work was presented in such a manner that anyone who listened and had some grasp of the subject could understand it.

The assessment criteria were clearly explained and even through distance studies and online learning was able to grasp the concepts and my mistakes.

The assignment was insightful as I used this exact plan to show my new regional manager what I want to change and he accepted it.

Thank you for a wonderful learning experience sir.

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This subject was my favourite subject for this semester. It was fun and exciting to see how the theory can be applied to the real life of a business. The lecturers' heart is definitely in his work, which made the subject and the education of the subject successful. The classes were not boring at all, it was interesting, and after every class, I could take something home and said that I have actually learned something today. I think it would have been much more fun if we could have class face-to-face, but Dr Jordaan did find with every class a way to make it interesting and fun.

Although I struggled at the beginning to get used to it, the assessment was fair but later in the semester start to master the assessment. It is a lot of work, but it is for our own good and preparation, and I actually started to enjoy the weekly assessments, and the group assignment was very much fun and interesting. I will not want anything to change for this subject because it is an enjoyable learning experience.

Thank you, Dr Jordaan.

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Due to the new norm presented by Covid 19 we are seeing the rise in digital transformation and influx of information. The change can be drastic, sudden, and even spontaneous at times. So, to keep abreast and updated with the latest curriculum content it is vital for organizations and individuals to have latest information to keep relevant with the latest developments.

Therefore, I would suggest we have a mixture of both the textbook and information from the internet like peer reviewed journals, articles, and research papers as they are more recent. Learning should not be restricted to class attendance, books and journals but it should be broad based, like for example one can learn a lot from the community that one lives in, one can learn from the kids at home or in the street, learn from villagers, lay person and so forth. In conclusion learning should be structured but at the same time open to learn from uncharted paths.

I agree with how the assessments and community projects are structured as they help us to grasp the contents of the course and to apply what we have learnt practically. However, I suggest that you trim down number of individual assignments or consolidate them into 2 or 3 assignments.

Thank you for the valuable input.

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From the course, I have learned that operations management is basically resource management with respect to service delivery and it is essential for all managers for customer satisfaction. Now I have a clear idea on how successful managers does his duties and have in-depth theory about communication skills and analysis skills.

The most important aspect that I have learned about operations is the strategy. Any operations cannot operate without a proper and detailed strategy. People management is also key to produce required outputs.

Teamwork is very essential because part of the work was conducted via the group sessions and work has evenly shared, this have each and every member roles and responsibilities and work was shared. My suggestion after completing this course is that operations management should be for all sectors nor only manufacturing, strategies must be developed for sectors that do not have one in place.

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All I can say is that I have learnt a lot from this module, and I really appreciate the fact that it was more practical than theoretical. I admired the lecture's way of teaching, the way he engages with students and those weekly short assignment were truly impactful in way that they made me engage with all the different divisional assistant managers and managers at Agriseta and I have gained a lot of knowledge about my own organisation. I have worked for my organisation for almost 5 years now and I still did not understand some of the functions in my workplace, but the OPS MBA 812 has made me understand those functions that I have been clueless in.

I would like applaud Mr Johan for his hardwork and dedication and one of the things that stood out for me are those voice recordings that he made after marking our assignments and gave each and everyone of us feedback on how we can improve and do better or even giving us compliments when you have done extremely well it just shows how much he loves his work and loves seeing his students doing better and improving and I also valued the contact classes, we did not even feel that they were virtual classes because of the way Mr Johan conducted them, ops was the only module that had break away rooms where students engage and discuss topics that were given to us.

To be honest, I do not have anything bad or to critic the lecture with.

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I think the module is presented well, especially with the focus on practical application. The theory in itself is not difficult, but applying it to practical problems force you to think about how the theory should be applied. Although not much of the theory was new to me, it was a good exercise to really see how it is applicable to the different problems in our organization, and to present it in a formalized way.

Something that could add value is to have small exercises for topics that are not necessarily relevant in all organisations. Something like forecasting for instance – it is extremely useful to understand how it is applied. Providing a small exercise where the data is given and each student must use the data to perform forecasting will actually teach the student how to apply the more technical theory.

Even the community assignment had some practical rewards. It forces you to think outside of your own organizational framework, and to focus on practical solutions. After our final group presentation, I visited the old age home again. The feedback was that our interventions resulted in the old age home getting six additional elderly persons. That is an increase of 25% on their current number, and it was satisfying to know that our plans actually made a difference.

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I think besides all the challenges with the online classes and the epidemic, MBAA 812 was a big success. I have learned a lot. I did feel sometimes that because the bulk of the theory is based on production, it is not very clear as how to use it in the services sector. It is important for a business school to give students exposure to various sectors, and I do think that the theory that is based on the production sector taught me a lot about operations. I do however think that most MBA students, certainly in South Africa, is more in a services environment and it might be worthwhile to expand the literature to unpack the operations management principles of the service sector.

Production can still be a bigger part of the theory, as students in the services sector needs the exposure.

The marks given by the other groups for the presentation of the group portfolio was somewhat a let-down. I think we were one of the two groups where the submission of the final marksheet

of the one group (the one grade was outstanding when the group results were released) lowered our grades. The grades, in my opinion, should be relatively in line with the grades for the written portfolio, but it is far off. The fact that the other group that submitted late was able to grade us while they knew what we graded also bothers me. I nonetheless enjoyed the group project very much.

My suggestion for the grading group presentations is:

- 1) A panel of external reviewers, maybe NWU MBA alumni to give grades.
- 2) If this is not an option, there should be some sort of allowable factor between the group portfolio grade and the presentation graded by the fellow students.

The operations management module is really something that any engineer can relate to. The fact that the classes was presented in such a practical way based on Dr. Jordaan's experience in practice really sheds light on a lot of topics. Dr. Jordaan's passion for educating is evident on how much effort he puts into giving individual feedback to each student, giving coaching on soft skills and the practical examples that is shown by the use of various tools. The encouragement to ask the difficult questions in your organisation and to get your hands dirty really helped.

Thank you Dr. Jordaan.

I enjoyed MBAA 812 very much.

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The writer enjoyed the push to study the subject with the submission every two weeks. The truth is that there is no way one could have gone through the content so effectively without those submissions on every contact session.

Operations Management is a content subject, and the writer is of the view that the approach is the best given the circumstances of students having competing needs for available time. The submissions also prepared the students for contact sessions because the lecturer will be teaching on the content, they have already gone through focusing on the difficult parts as indicated by the students. The writer also loved the interaction of the MBA students in the breakaway sessions. This assisted in students getting to know each other.

The long assignments allowed the students to apply the theoretical knowledge of the module to the real-life situation of businesses. Students managed to assess what the organisations are currently using as advanced by the theory of operations management. They also managed to proffer ways in which the organisations may improve current practices.

The group project was a wonderful opportunity to also interact as students and know each other better.

The writer appreciates the quick feedback on assignments provided throughout the semester except for that hiccup towards the end of the semester.

The online system worked perfectly. The writer is in favour of the online teaching model (Zoom Classes) given that MBA students are busy people with work and other commitments. In terms of online teaching, everything is going very well, and the writer cannot think of anything that may need to be improved on.

The final portfolio submission was a time to holistically reflect on the whole module rather than in its small parts or topics. It gave the writer a f the operations of the organisations he investigated and see how everything fits together in operations management. An opportunity was afforded to analyse what the organisations are currently doing right to meet their strategic objectives. The writer then proffered suggestions on how the organisations may have a relook at the various operations management themes to improve on them and enhance their ability to meet their strategic objectives.

In short, the whole module, despite its intensity and high demand for time, was a real eye-opener. The writer managed to get an appreciation of the various facets which make up the organisations and the various elements that make up and fit into the whole puzzle. The writer is coming out of this module a better person from a business sense point of view. This will have an immensely positive