**Proof of Consultation**

**Section 1: Scoping a Relevant Issue**

**About the Organisation:** Worlducation is a social startup focused on enhancing education through technology. The company manufactures tablet computers designed for primary school students, incorporating engaging software, content, and AI-powered activities that personalize learning. They follow a business-to-business (B2B) model, selling directly to schools, and donate tablets to underprivileged classrooms for each unit sold.

**Key Operational Processes:**

* **Sales Process:** Sales inquiries are recorded through direct contacts or online, and orders are processed using an internal ERP system.
* **Operations:** The operations team verifies orders and coordinates with the manufacturing facility in Hong Kong for production.
* **Manufacturing:** The production process begins upon order confirmation, and tablets are shipped to customers.
* **After-Sales Support:** The company offers post-sales support for troubleshooting and software updates, especially with the shift to remote learning.

**Stakeholders:**

* **Internal Stakeholders:**
  + *Sales Team*: Responsible for generating leads, closing deals, and maintaining school relationships.
  + *Operations Team*: Manages manufacturing coordination and timely deliveries.
  + *Development Team*: Develops software, AI, and content for the learning experience.
* **External Stakeholders:**
  + *Schools/Teachers*: End-users who provide feedback influencing future product development.
  + *Manufacturers*: The Hong Kong-based factory responsible for assembly.
  + *Suppliers*: Provide hardware and software components for the tablets.

**Section 2: Select Issue**

**Issues Mentioned:**

* Supply Chain Disruptions Due to COVID-19
* Delays in meeting demand
* Loss of revenue due to delayed product delivery
* Impact on customer relationships

**Selected Issue: Supply Chain Disruptions Due to COVID-19**

**Description of the Selected Issue:** COVID-19 has caused significant disruptions to the supply chain, with the factory in Hong Kong closing for a month, resulting in production delays. This has caused a backlog in fulfilling orders and financial strain on the company. Additionally, delays have negatively impacted customer relationships, particularly with schools.

**Rationale for Selecting the Issue:** This issue is critical to the company's operational stability. Addressing the supply chain disruptions will help mitigate financial strain, improve customer relationships, and ensure consistent product delivery, which is vital for growth and sustainability.

**Restrictions on Potential Solutions:**

* **Budgetary Constraints:** The company faces cash flow issues, making large investments in supply chain expansion difficult.
* **Organisational Policy on Outsourcing:** There may be restrictions on outsourcing manufacturing or seeking alternative suppliers based on historical company policies.
* **Internal Workforce Capacity:** The financial pressure limits the ability to expand teams or invest in new technologies.

**Proof of Consultation:** Attached proof of consultation, including emails or meeting records with stakeholders (internal and external), discussing potential solutions to the issue. (This will be included with the submission.)

**Section 3: Creative Thinking Techniques**

**Techniques to Generate Innovative Solutions:**

1. **Brainstorming:** A collaborative technique where a team generates ideas freely without judgment to foster creative solutions.
2. **Mind Mapping:** A visual tool to explore all potential solutions by branching out from a central concept, in this case, addressing supply chain issues.
3. **SCAMPER:** A method that involves asking specific questions to explore alternatives:
   * *Substitute:* Can we substitute certain processes or materials to improve efficiency?
   * *Combine:* Can two ideas be combined to streamline the supply chain?
   * *Adapt:* Can we adapt existing solutions to meet new needs in the current environment?
4. **Reverse Thinking:** Reversing the problem to examine new perspectives. For example, "How can we reduce delays in manufacturing?" might lead to alternative approaches in production and logistics.

**Section 4: Information Related to Identified Issue and Potential Solutions**

**Preliminary Solutions:**

1. Establishing a second manufacturing facility outside of Hong Kong to reduce dependence on a single location.
2. Outsourcing production to a third-party facility to alleviate pressure on the current manufacturing plant.
3. Optimizing the supply chain through better demand forecasting and technology to handle demand surges.
4. Purchasing off-the-shelf tablets to temporarily meet demand until manufactured units arrive.

**Competitor Information:**

1. **ClassTech:**
   * *Products:* Similar tablet-based learning systems.
   * *Response to Issue:* More flexible in outsourcing, forming partnerships with local manufacturers.
   * *Unique Approach:* Focuses on integrated learning environments with cloud-based software.
2. **LearnTech:**
   * *Products:* Educational technology hardware and software.
   * *Response to Issue:* Increased stock levels and strengthened relationships with logistics companies to avoid delays.
   * *Unique Approach:* Utilizes AI-driven inventory management to predict demand and streamline supply chains.

**Market Information & Best Practice Examples:**

* Competitors are focusing on more flexible manufacturing approaches, with hybrid outsourcing models and AI-driven inventory management.
* Best practices include building strong relationships with logistics companies and maintaining higher stock levels to manage potential delays.

**Section 5: Factors Impacting on Ideas**

**Feasibility Assessment Factors:**

1. **Commercial Potential:**
   * Solutions like outsourcing or establishing a second manufacturing facility may incur high upfront costs but could offer long-term stability and growth.
2. **Target Audience/Purpose:**
   * Solutions should prioritize the educational institutions that rely on timely product delivery and quality. Ensuring the educational needs of schools and students are met is crucial.
3. **Implementation Feasibility:**
   * The feasibility of solutions depends on available resources, including production capabilities, team capacity, and technological infrastructure.
4. **Internal Resource Availability:**
   * Any solution must be realistic in terms of the company’s existing resources, including personnel, finances, and production capabilities, to ensure smooth execution without overwhelming the team.