

Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani (Rajasthan)

First Semester 2017-2018

Comprehensive Examination (Closed Book)

Course No. : MBA G503/BITS F320

Max. Marks: 70

Course Title : Managerial Skills

Weightage : 35%

Date : 12/12/2017

Duration : 3 Hours

"Destiny is not a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for; it is a thing to be achieved."

- Jeremy Kitson

1. One manager says that she finds procrastination to be a big help in her decision making. Do you agree or disagree? Why? **(2.0 Marks)**

2. Whether each of the following goal/objective is a measurable outcome? Explain your answers?

(2.0 x 4 = 8.0 Marks)

- A. Provide better service to all my customers.
- B. Answer every letter received within five work days.
- C. Significantly reduce the number of complaints.
- D. Add only very productive individuals to the department.

3. A worker under your supervision has recently been fired for incompetence and repeated violation of confidential information. Several weeks later, the former worker returns to you asking for a letter of recommendation. He says you owe it to him; you fired him and he has not been able to find any work and has a family to support. What would you do and why? **(3.0 Marks)**

4. As the result of a series of financial reverses, you are faced with selling a portion of your antique car collection. You need to get at least Rs. 6,00,000 and you need it in three days. The car you have up for sale is an antique Bentley and is in excellent shape and is easily worth Rs. 9,00,000 if not more. You haven't checked on the market value or whether there are any people looking, nor have you placed any advertisements. While you are discussing the situation with your spouse, a well-know antique collector approaches. After some brief conversation he indicates that he has heard, through mutual friends, of your interest in selling the Bentley. As the two of you are looking at the car, he says, "Look I don't like to haggle/bargain - it's not my style. I can give you Rs. 7,00,000 for the car, and I can have a bank Cheque to you in 24 hours."

A. Would accept the offer? Why or why not? **(4.0 Marks)**

B. Briefly comment on your BATNA? **(4.0 Marks)**

5. Jai, manager of shipping and receiving department at Madrid Corporation, didn't know whom to believe. Jasmine had just left the office after her second disciplinary interview in three months. She had changed from a productive and willing employee with a sunny disposition to a grump who was about to be fired for insubordination. She had been absent four times in the last three weeks, she often came to work late, and she was seldom where she was supposed to be. Jai called her in and warned her, then gave her a written warning six weeks ago.

Their meeting today had been for a second written warning because she had refused a direct order to work in the warehouse. Now he had a real problem. Jasmine had burst into tears and begged him not fire her because she needed this job to support her kids. She said she was afraid to go into the warehouse. Since her job had changed three months ago, she hated work. Her new duties required that she go into the warehouse to check product locations, and there were undesired posters all over the place. When she tried to do her job, Vikas would sneak upon and tease her. Worse yet, when she complained to the warehouse supervisor, he had laughed and told her that she had better shut up about it or he'd see to it that she lost her job. Jai was reacting exactly as the warehouse supervisor had said he would because if he gave her a second written warning today, it meant that she was likely to be fired.

Jai did not know what to do. The company had a firm policy that a supervisor must investigate and report all claims of sexual harassment, and the penalty for not doing so was dismissal.

- A. Do you think Jasmine is a problem employee? Justify your answers. **(3.0 Marks)**
- B. What would you do if you were Jai? **(4.0 Marks)**

6. Maria was promoted as Head Nurse two years back and since then she is conducting performance appraisal of nurses, yet she is still uncomfortable with the performance appraisal because she's isn't' sure that her approach is the right one. The form that she is supposed to use is too black-and-white in the judgments required. It reduces everything to behaviors on a rating scale and then asks her to rank the employees in her group for the purpose of allocating merit increases.

Maria wants to be fair to everyone, particularly merit pay is tied to the evaluations. Knowing how important those pay raises could be, Maria is never able to give anyone a bad rating. The nurses seem to sense her feelings and have often argued about the few poor ratings she gave them until she changed them. Last time one of the nurses had been very angry with Maria because she thought she was better than one of the others, who often came in late and was careless about patient care. What's more she was right. Maria felt guilty that she had been unfair to her, but she had known how much the others had needed their merit bonuses.

- A. Why is the performance appraisal such a problem for Maria? **(2.0 Marks)**
- B. What could the organization do to make performance appraisal easier? **(2.0 Marks)**
- C. How would you remedy the situation of the employees who are angry with her over their ratings? **(2.0 Marks)**

7. Karan was kicking himself for having delegated an important task to Brinda. The annual sales report he had asked her to do was going to be late. In hindsight, he knew he never should have given her the assignment. At the time she had seemed to be the best person for it. She always did a great job on everything he asked of her, and her sales figures were consistently higher than anyone else's. She had tried to warn him that she was swamped and had even asked for additional clerical support staff to help her, but Karan had disregarded it. She had always done well under pressure and managed to accomplish all her tasks. Since she liked to work on her own, he told her what he needed and just left her to do the job. A new experience was good for everyone once in a while. Besides, extra help would have added expense when he was trying to cut costs.

- A. What mistake did Karan made in delegating the report to Brinda? **(3.0 Marks)**
- B. From Brinda’s perspective, what factors were likely to have contributed to her problems with the report? **(3.0 Marks)**
- C. If you were Karan, how would you select a person to do the report and what steps would you take to delegate well? **(4.0 Marks)**
8. A private University was contemplating on measures to promote academic integrity across its multiple campuses. As of now the University doesn’t have well defined guidelines or policies related to handling plagiarism issues. The university was extremely concerned about increasing trend of plagiarisms across its campuses and hence started focusing curbing such practices and was actively seeking ways and means to promote academic integrity. The University was interested in providing tool(s) for its faculty members that will help them to check any work that they already suspect to be plagiarized. To facilitate this, the university bought a large number of “Turnitin” licenses.

Turnitin is an internet-based service with the world’s largest content comparison database. The user uploads essay, written report/assignment in the Turnitin website and it checks these essay, written report/assignment for *unoriginal content* and provides feedback to the user on the use of source material used in the report. Turnitin is a tool that checks the essay, written report/assignment against various electronic resources (electronic books, electronic journals, databases, websites, student papers/assignments that have already been submitted through Turnitin at Salford University and other higher education institutions) for matching text. It will then highlight the areas of the submitted essay, written report/assignment where a match has been found. However, there will be many sources that are not checked against, such as new web content (e.g. today’s news articles) and password protected sites (e.g. intranets). Once the check is completed Turnitin produces an **Overall Similarity Index (OSI)** represented by % and a color code. OSI % refers to the percentage of text in the essay, written report/assignment that has been matched to other electronic sources (as mentioned above). OSI color code indicates how much matching text was found. These color codes can be interpreted using the table below.

OSI Color Code	Interpretation of Color Code
Blue	No matching words
Green	1 word to 24% matching text
Yellow	25% to 49% matching text
Orange	50% to 74% matching text
Red	75% to 100% matching text

Instructor RR of this university gave a take home assignment to the students registered in the course ‘Introduction to Business’ (a compulsory course for 1st year MBA students). To carry out this assignment fourteen groups of five members each was formed. The groups were required to analyze a case study and submit a written report (providing answers to three questions asked in the case) to the instructor. Post submission while evaluating these reports RR observed that there was a possibility of plagiarisms in the report submitted by several groups. Subsequently RR uploaded all 14 reports on ‘Turnitin’ and obtained the following OSI % and color codes.

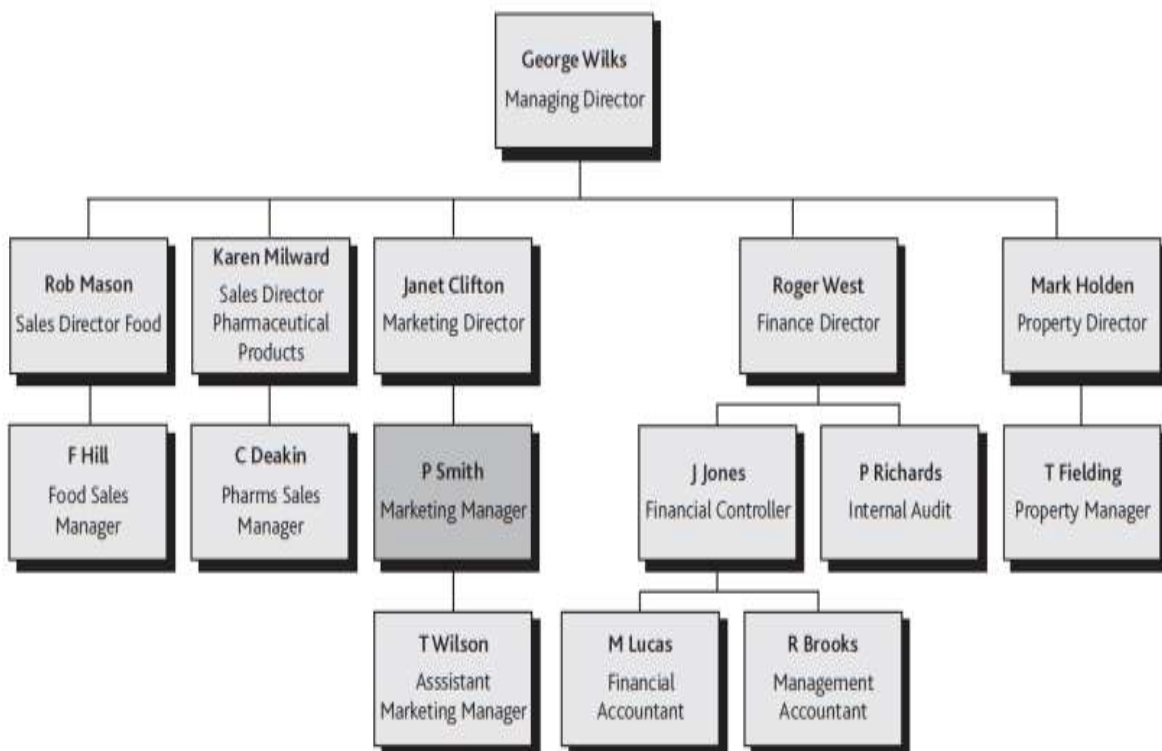
Group No.	Overall Similarity Index (OSI)	
	%	Color Code
1	43	Yellow
2	52	Orange
3	44	Yellow
4	36	Yellow
5	27	Yellow
6	47	Yellow
7	34	Yellow

Group No.	Overall Similarity Index (OSI)	
	%	Color Code
8	26	Yellow
9	49	Yellow
10	59	Orange
11	61	Orange
12	64	Orange
13	78	Red
14	72	Orange

Given the above data, RR was wondering how to go about making a decision i.e. what should be done regarding the evaluation of take home assignment? Place yourself as 'RR' and answer the following questions.

- A. List down the criteria for evaluating alternatives? **(3.0 Mark)**
- B. List down the alternatives for RR? **(4.0 Marks)**
- C. If you were RR which alternative (listed in your answer for the question 'B' above) you will choose and why? **(3.0 Marks)**

9. Your name is P Smith and you are the Marketing Manager of a company named Reeder's. Your boss is Janet Clifton (See organization chart below).



Reeder's is a retailing company specializing in sales of foods and pharmaceutical products that has branches through the country. Its head office, where you work, is in Birmingham and its Managing Director is George Wilkes.

Reeders hired you because you are an ambitious, positive thinker who'll make things happen.

Four situations are presented below. Some are inter-related so don't look at each one in isolation. In each situation, select the most appropriate alternative/answer and also provide justification for your selection/choice/answer. **(4 x 4.0 = 16.0 Marks)**

Situation 1 – Charity Calls you receive this letter

FROM:

National Society for Handicapped Children
PO Box 158
LONDON

TO:

Head of Marketing
Reeders Ltd
44 Moat House Lane
BIRMINGHAM

Dear Sir or Madam,

As you know, we are one of the leading charities presently helping children and young people who suffer from a wide range of handicaps. There is a vast amount of work for us to do to bring some hope into the lives of many thousands of children, but unfortunately we find that our funds are not enough to enable us to do what we feel needs to be done.

We rely very heavily on support from the public, and in particular from corporate sponsorship and donations to enable us to carry on with our work. To this end we have arranged a major fundraising concert on 12 December to be held at Symphony Hall in Birmingham, featuring the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Choir.

In order for this to be the success that we hope for, we are asking local businesses to support the event with sponsorship or a donation. We would be grateful for donations of whatever size, but if you feel able to contribute 1000 or more we would be able to arrange some corporate entertaining for a party of you and your guests at the concert. Businesses have told us in the past that they find this type of entertaining a very pleasant way of thanking customers or staff for their support.

I do hope that you will feel able to help us in this way. If you would like any further information about our organization or the work that we do, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Smethurst, (Head of Fundraising)

What do you do?

- A. Refer to Janet Clifton
- B. Refuse donation
- C. Give donation or sponsorship

Situation 2 – It's big news!

Reading the paper on the way to work you see this article...

Boots for Sainsbury's

Retailing giants Boots and Sainsbury's yesterday announced a deal which will see the chemist chain's Health and Beauty shops opening on supermarket sites. Initially the openings will be on an experimental basis in seven stores, but if the experiment works, observers believe that the format could be introduced widely throughout the Sainsbury's superstore chain.

Both companies were being cagey about the project's potential yesterday. A Sainsbury's spokeswoman would only say that if successful it is hoped to extend the trial into other stores. But one analyst said: "This has potentially enormous importance in the longer term". Initially the experiment will be restricted to stores in St Albans, Ipswich, Dulwich, Camberley, Poole, Sevenoaks, and Hemel Hempstead; Sainsbury's will provide space and charge Boots rent.

Boots' high street shops have been under pressure from Superdrug and other competitors who have undercut Boots on perfumes, sun creams and condoms. But Boots' spokeswomen could not comment on the company's pricing strategy in the experimental concessions, and it is not known whether prices would match those in high street Health and Beauty shops. Sainsbury's already has five concessions with Lloyds Chemists, and 12 Sketchley dry cleaners.

What do you do?

- A. Email summary of article to Janet Clifton
- B. File it in your 'miscellaneous reports' file
- C. Save it to deal with later

Situation 3 – Business Development

Minutes from a Business Development Committee meeting

1. Proposed extension of range of ready meals

F Hill reported back to the committee on this matter. There appears to be considerable evidence that ready meals are becoming increasingly popular, particularly in the larger towns and cities where the main buyers appear to be office workers who buy meals during the day to save cooking for themselves in the evening. These products have a high margin. The potential problem with them is that they have a very short shelf life. Foreign foods and "healthy" foods appear to be more popular than other types.

G Wilks proposed that a detailed costing exercise should be carried out. F Hill suggested that customer opinion could be sought in branches. J Clifton agreed to

arrange this. Further discussion was deferred to the next meeting.

2. Introduction of lockable display cabinets

K Milward reported that she was very unhappy about the introduction of lockable glass covers over many products in branches. Although the committee had approved this three months ago, she felt that it was acting as a considerable deterrent to customers buying products, and sales had suffered accordingly. K Milward agreed to provide further detailed analysis of the fall in sales by line, and the effect on profit. R West agreed to quantify the fall in pilferage levels since these cabinets have been introduced. The matter would be further reviewed in the light of this information at the next meeting.

3. New branch opening

J Clifton stated that arrangements for the opening of the new branch in Southport on 18 November were well in hand. All the normal publicity had been arranged for the event with exception of the 2-page spread in the Southport Advertiser, which has not yet been arranged because they do not accept advertisements more than 1 month in advance of publication. The design work for the spread has been prepared. It was planned to appear in the 12 November edition. It was agreed that P Smith would arrange this.

4. Seasonal fluctuations in pharmaceutical product sales

G Wilks stated that he was concerned about the low sales in pharmaceutical products over the summer months that are experienced every year. Although this is due to very low sales in cough and cold remedies which yield high profits in the winter months, he felt that there were areas that we could expand which would compensate for this to some extent, such as insect repellent, hay fever treatments and skincare products. He is currently reviewing a number of possible products and hopes to have further information available for the next meeting.

5. Results for last month GW congratulated everyone, particularly the food sales staff, on very good results

6. Any other business None.

What do you do?

- A. Arrange branch opening publicity immediately
- B. Organize customer research immediately
- C. Arrange branch opening publicity and organize customer research
- D. Delegate branch opening publicity

Situation 4 – Synchronized Sponsorship you receive this letter...

FROM:

The Synchronized Swimming Society
University of Chester
Western Road
CHESTER

TO:

Marketing Manager
Reeders Ltd
44 Moat House Lane
BIRMINGHAM

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing on behalf of our society, which was formed last year, in the hope that you will feel able to sponsor us on a tour of the Greek islands. We hope to tour the islands next May for two weeks with a team of about 10 people. We plan to give demonstrations of synchronized swimming in the sea and swimming pools and to raise the profile of the sport in general by our presence.

We will be able to display the Reeders name and logo prominently on our swimwear, thus giving a high degree of exposure to your company. We will also be able to publicize the use of some of the food and beauty products that you sell, for example waterproof cosmetics and slimming products (as several of our team have recently been on diets and will happily attribute their success to one or more of the diet programmes that you sell).

We would hope that you would consider a figure in the region of 8,000 reasonable for such sponsorship. We look forward to hearing from you, and feel sure that this arrangement will be very beneficial to us both in the future.

Yours faithfully,
Alison Worth Secretary

What do you do?

- A. Bin the letter
- B. Accept sponsorship
- C. Write a declining letter

*****END*****