

COURSE CODE BA111 (M) 2007

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER 2007

YEAR OF STUDY: D.COM (YEAR 1/IDE YEAR 2)

TITLE OF PAPER: BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY

TIME ALLOWED: TWO (2) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. This paper consists of section A and B.**
- 2. The cases study question – Section A, is compulsory.**
- 3. Answer any two questions from section B.**

NOTE: Marks will be awarded for good communication of English and for orderly presentation of work.

This examination paper should not be opened until permission has been granted by the invigilator.

SECTION A (Compulsory)

Musa, a service support manager for Asakhe Investment – based in Matsapha, had been an exemplary employee for several years. A strong leader who had a good reputation, 32-year-old Musa was well liked by upper level management and the 15 employees he supervised.

This up-and-coming individual also had a medical condition that was beginning to wear down his body's immune system. Infected with HIV, Musa had developed a form of AIDS, which can result in such symptoms as shortness of breath, lingering dry cough, skin rashes, extreme fatigue, and light headedness. Symptoms never surface in many people who are infected, and some people develop conditions years after infection.

Extreme fatigue became part of Musa's daily life and was detriment to his usual top-notch performance. As his health deteriorated, he began to realise his physical limitation. About 15 months earlier, Musa revealed the information about his health to his middle-management supervisor, Nonophile. He asked her to keep the news confidential. Musa was aware of his condition several months before he informed his manager. Because HIV is not contagious through casual contact, this individual was not a health risk to the other company employees and therefore was under no obligation to share such personal information with his employer. Because he could not keep up with his work load, however, Musa wanted to inform Nonophile that the problem was medical. Knowing that the company's policy on HIV ensure his confidentiality, Musa believed that the company would accommodate him by not disclosing his illness.

After her discussion with Musa, Nonophile consulted Brian Lawton, the company's employee assistance director and technical psychologist. She asked how to respond to managers and employees who have questions about workers who have HIV. "Nonophile was distressed because she was concerned about Musa's health," said Brian. Musa was showing signs of fatigue and was missing work. His co-workers began to wonder if he was ill. "Nonophile was afraid the Musa was wearing himself down," Brian added. "She also was concerned about the impact the illness was having on the people he supervised – people who had suspicions about him being infected with the disease, but who didn't know what to say or do."

Nonophile was aware of the company's three-point policy:

- Keep confidential all information about the medical condition and medical records of an employee who AIDS.
- Contact Employee Assistance Services (EAS) immediately after learning that an employee has been diagnosed with AIDS.
- Help employees learn about AIDS by asking EAS for the AIDS Education Program.

Yet, even though Nonophile was aware of the policy, she had never had to implement it or manage its effects. She had several questions and needed assistance in how to implement company policy on Musa's behalf. She also wanted to demonstrate concern and compassion for her fellow employee while staying within the legal boundaries of confidentiality. One particular point of interest for Nonophile was possible job-based adjustments that Musa might need in the months ahead. Because Musa was a valued employee, Nonophile wanted to minimise his concerns while maximizing his tenure.

Questions

- (a) According to your own assessment, does the company's AIDS policy adequately protect the rights of all employees? Discuss. (20 marks)
- (b) Is the protection of Musa's privacy rights more important than, less important than, or equally as important as the company's need to be efficient in getting its day-to-day work done? Should Musa be removed from his job? (20 marks)

SECTION B

(Answer any **two** questions from this section).

Question 1

- (a) In the case of the University of Swaziland, who are primary and who are secondary stakeholders? In two sentences, say why are stakeholders important in any organisation? (15 marks)
- (b) A company's public image is always important. Briefly describe the process that can be followed by companies to manage issues. (15 marks)

Question 2

- (a) Most companies have always had some problems with sticking to ethics. Briefly discuss why ethics is so important and why unethical behaviour occurs. (20 marks)
- (b) Discuss five business ethical issues faced by business people daily? (10 marks)

Question 3

- (a) What is the difference between an issue and a crisis? What steps can be followed by management of a company to deal with a crisis? (20 marks)
- (b) Briefly discuss four characteristics that define a crisis. (10 marks)

Question 4

- (a) What is corporate social responsibility? (5 marks)
- (b) Companies usually face some limits to corporate responsibility. Discuss in detail the limitations faced by companies towards social responsibility. (25 marks)