

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
FACULTY OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
MAIN EXAMINATION
ACADEMIC YEAR 2009/2010

TITLE OF PAPER: Industrial Relations

DEGREE AND YEAR: Bachelor of Commerce 1V

COURSE NUMBER: BA 414/IDE 414

TIME ALLOWED: Three (3) hours

INSTRUCTIONS

1. THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF SECTION (A) AND (B)
2. THE CASE STUDY SECTION (A) IS COMPULSORY
3. ANSWER ANY THREE QUESTIONS FROM SECTION B

NOTE: You are reminded that in assessing your work, account will be given of the accuracy of language and the general quality of expression, together with the layout and presentation of your final answer.

THIS PAPER MUST NOT BE OPENED UNTIL THE INVIGILATOR HAS GRANTED PERMISSION.

GOOD LUCK!!!

SECTION A CASE: COMPULSORY: (40 MARKS)

Read the case below and answer the questions that follow.

CASE: Mannner.Manner Co.Ltd

On Friday, at 7:00, the management of Mannner.Manner was informed that all 200 workers in the main production plant embarked on a wildcat strike. They were demanding that management increases their wages by 10% with immediate effect and that certain grievances be resolved before they would return to work. Management approached the Senior shop steward for an explanation but he refused to discuss the issues with management unless the union was present. Management then said that it would not recognise the shop stewards committee with immediate effect and that the strike was a matter between the workers and management and that the Union was not involved in the issue even if they were a majority union that was recognised by Mannner. Mannner. The shop steward informed management that they would have to bare the consequences of their actions and also demanded that Nicko, the production manager who was a Foreigner, should be dismissed immediately because he was a racist who did not want to embrace change. The union organiser arrived at the plant and asked to speak to the employees. Management refused him access to the plant and then informed the striking workers that they would be dismissed if they did not return to work within one hour.

A hand written note was slipped under the door of the HR manager shortly after the ultimatum was given to the employees. In the note it was alleged that employees were expected to work under unsafe conditions and that they did not receive any protective clothing. They were also unhappy with the late payment of wages, transport problems and the unfair treatment of applicants for employment. Nicko allegedly also assaulted a Swazi worker and the matter was not dealt with properly in terms of the agreed grievance procedure. They also said that they were returning to work but that they would be embarking on a go-slow strike immediately, until management met with their union representative. Management then decided to shut off all the machines in the plant and clocked all striking employees out. When the workers heard of this arrangement they became furious and started shaking the fences around the plant while they were chanting union slogans.

Required:

- A. You are a labour Relations consultant. Management requests you to review and analyse the events that took place. (10 marks)
- B. Advise them on actions that should be taken to restore harmony in their workforce. (30 marks)

Total**40 marks**

Source: Adapted from Lukas Ehlers(2003) labour Relations Practice in South Africa (Revised Ed.), EAMS Publishing-Pretoria pp. 36.

SECTION B (60 MARKS)

Answer any **three (3) Questions** from this section

2. "Employers and trade unions are involved in love-hate relationships. They cannot agree to like one another yet they cannot afford to destroy one another or break the relationship. They therefore search for methods to resolve their differences and try to formulate agreements on how to conduct their relationship. Through a collective bargaining process they sometimes succeed, and at other times they disagree to an extent that they need to embark on industrial – or court action in an effort to force their bargaining partner to agree to a desired position".

Required:

Write a proposal for a recognition/ collective agreement; in the process you should highlight critical elements in it (20marks)

3. The Industrial's Relations Managers work is very demanding; mainly because of the inability to meet the insurmountable needs of employees, hence leading to industrial disharmony. Identify challenges that create difficulty for Industrial Relations' managers to carry out their job as regard fulfilment of workers interests and suggest remedies for this situation. (20 marks)
 4. An organisation in which you have recently got employed has a Board of Directors who are opposed to the idea of membership to the Employees' Association and/or the existence of Trade Unions at the workplace. As a result, the organisation experiences different and regular forms of industrial action. Discuss each of the forms of industrial actions indicating circumstances under which each form can be used. (20 marks)
 5. Industrial Relations experts have always believed that negotiation is the best method for resolving industrial disagreements in organisations. Ironically, most of the parties don't seem to have the necessary qualities for negotiation. Discuss the qualities of a successful negotiator and specify the necessary preparations for negotiations. (20 marks)
 6. "The overall objective of a trade union is to represent the interests of its members; but because these interests range widely, both within the enterprise and outside, the objectives of trade unions become multiple and complex". Discuss these objectives of trade unions. (20 marks)
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