

UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI
FACULTY OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER
FIRST SEMESTER: DECEMBER 2019
FULL TIME & IDE STUDENTS

TITLE OF PAPER : PUBLIC RELATIONS

COURSE CODE : BUS421/BA 432/ IDE

TIME ALLOWED : THREE (3) HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS :**
- (1) TOTAL NUMBER OF QUESTIONS IN THIS PAPER IS SIX (6)**
 - (2) THE PAPER CONSISTS OF SECTIONS A AND B.**
 - (3) ANSWER THE QUESTION IN SECTION A WHICH IS COMPULSORY AND ANY THREE (3) QUESTIONS IN SECTION B.**
 - (4) THE MARKS ALLOTTED FOR A QUESTION /PART OF A QUESTION ARE INDICATED AT THE END OF EACH QUESTION / PART OF QUESTION.**
 - (5) WHERE APPLICABLE, ALL WORKINGS / CALCULATIONS MUST BE CLEARLY SHOWN.**

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

SECTION A: COMPULSORY**QUESTION 1 Read the case and answer the questions that follow:****CASE: The Pick 'n Pay Group**

The Pick 'n Pay Group is one of Africa's largest and most consistently successful retailers of food, clothing and general merchandise. It is one of the most recognizable brands in the country, and, as events showed, one of the most trusted. On their website (www.picnpay.co.za) they list their corporate values as: *'we are passionate about our customers and will fight for their rights; we care for and respect each other; we foster personal growth and opportunity; we nurture leadership and vision, and reward innovation; we live by honesty and integrity; we support and participate in our communities; we take individual responsibility; we are all accountable.'*

In 2003 this commitment to customers and the honesty and integrity of the company in communicating with stakeholders was tested. Pick 'n Pay became the target of a blackmailer who threatened to poison food items on their shelves and in this way harm or kill customers. Their response after receiving the extortion note was that Sean Summer, the CEO of Pick 'n Pay, immediately contacted the police and the media to inform the customers of this threat. Food items that were identified were removed from shelves countrywide, customers who complained of symptoms of poisoning were treated and a forensic investigation was launched. By means of regular bulletins in the media, sometimes in the form of double-page advertising space bought in national Sunday media at great cost to the company, Sean Summers personally kept customers updated with the investigation and further threats received. Each of these communications emphasized Pick 'n Pay's commitment to the safety of their customers and indicated added safety precautions taken in stores. Notices were also displayed in-store and managers and employees were updated daily.

Although nobody was ever arrested for the attempted extortion, the threats decreased and disappeared after a time. It was proved that none of the food items indicated in the notes was in fact contaminated and the customers who showed symptoms of poisoning were also not diagnosed as suffering from food poisoning. The company's excellent previous reputation ensured that customers did not abandon them. Many people indicated that they continued buying non-food items from them until the threat had passed and then returned to Pick 'n Pay for all their grocery items.

Questions:

- a) Explain the corporate values of the Pick 'n Pay Group. [15 marks]
- b) Explain the reactive strategies applied by the CEO in addressing this unanticipated crisis. [20 marks]
- c) What prevented customers from abandoning the shop after the incident [5 marks]

[Total marks 40]

SECTION B

Answer any three (3) questions from this section.

QUESTION 2

Proactive marketing public relations (MPR) plays a major role in product introductions or product revisions as well as integration with other marketing communications tools, gives a product additional exposure, newsworthiness and credibility. Discuss the tools that are used in gaining proactive MPR [20 marks]

QUESTION 3

The lawyer as public relations practitioner can be illustrated by quoting O.J. Simpson's lawyer describing his winning public relations approach. Discuss. [20 marks]

QUESTION 4

The campaign is the actual public relations programme that goes out of the public and must be useful, meaningful and valuable to the organization. Discuss the steps to be followed when preparing the public relations campaign plan. [20marks]

QUESTION 5

Explain the guidelines you would follow when preparing an effective business presentation for the Chief Executive Officer of your organization. [20 marks]

QUESTION 6

The process of public relations harmonizes long-term relationship among individuals and organizations in society through application of five basic principles of public relations. Using practical examples, discuss these basic principles. [20 marks]