

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION: ACAD. YEAR 2013/14
JULY, 2014

COURSE TITLE - Leadership in Organisations
COURSE NUMBER - BAE 425
TIME ALLOWED - Three (3) Hours

INSTRUCTIONS

4. This paper consists of Section (A) and Section (B)
5. The case study in Section (A) is compulsory
6. Answer any three (3) questions from section (B)

NOTE

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

GOOD LUCK!!

**CANDIDATES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO READ THE QUESTIONS UNTIL THEY ARE TOLD
TO DO SO BY THE INVIGILATOR**

SECTION A - COMPULSORY (40 MARKS)

Read the case study below and answer the questions that follow

RE-VITALISING THE HR DEPARTMENT AT CALCOMP

Several years ago, it was apparent that changing the role and activities of the human resources (HR) function at CalComp was essential for the firm's future. CalComp, a world-wide wholly owned subsidiary of Lockheed Corporation, produces and sells computer graphics equipment. The company had 2,700 employees working in offices located in 14 countries. Consequently, the firm and its HR department faced problems on both the domestic and international fronts.

Employee morale was low and the HR department was viewed simply as "traffic cop" that told employees and managers why they could not do something. It was difficult to recruit workers at corporate headquarters, located in Orange County in the Los Angeles area, which was a highly competitive labour market.

To lead the change, Charles Furniss was hired as Vice-President of Human Resources. Furniss first called the 22-person HR staff together to develop a strategic plan for the HR department. He conducted interviews with the HR department and all top-level managers in the firm to determine what the HR department needed to do to become more "customer-focused" internally. Following the interviews, a strategic plan for the HR future for a two-year period was prepared. The plan was titled "World-Class Human Resources." Once the plan was developed and endorsed by top management, the HR staff marketed it by making presentations to employees, managers, and local professional associations in order to communicate that CalComp was going to have a progressive and responsive HR department.

Some of the leadership activities taken to implement the plan included redesigning the employee publications and publishing them more frequently. Also, motivation and training services were offered to all employees in the headquarters office. One program was so successful that it was duplicated at the CalComp plant in Scottsdale, Arizona, by closing the plant for a full day so that

all 250 employees could participate. Shortly after, the HR department sponsored an open day for employees to show off newly refurbished department offices and to encourage employees to meet with HR staff members. Also, leadership and management development training was expanded, over 300 managers and supervisors attended programs over a six-month period of time.

While a more active and responsive image of the HR department was being established, Furniss and his staff members moved to implement some of the other components of the World-Class Human Resources Plan by setting specific strategies, goals, and timetables for various HR activities. For instance, one goal was to reduce turnover by four (4) per cent and recruitment costs by 20 per cent in one year, both of which were accomplished. In addition, measures for assessing the performance of the HR department were set, and a regular reporting process was established for five major HR areas: staffing, compensation, benefits, training and development, and employee relations. Key indicators are tracked on a monthly basis.

After five years, the HR department at CalComp is seen as a viable business unit. Today, the HR department at CalComp has a different image with employees and managers. More importantly, the HR department is playing a vital role for the corporation as it faces the challenges of the future.

QUESTIONS

1. How would you define the leadership style of Charles Furniss in revitalising the HR Department at Cal Comp? [10 Marks]
2. Would you define his leadership as “task” or “relationship” oriented, why? [20 Marks]
3. How would you categorise Charles Furniss in the Blake and Mouton’s Leadership Grid? And, why? [10 Marks]

SECTION B (60 MARKS)

INSTRUCTION

Answer any three (3) questions

1. (a) Is leadership a specialised role within an office, department, team or other group? Explain? [10 Marks]
(b) Should all good managers be good leaders OR are these two (20 roles incompatible with one another? [10 Marks]
2. (a) Pick one of the two orientations - task or relationship - *Show that one is more important than the other* - ~~argue that it is the most~~ important orientation for leaders [10 Marks]
(b) The most important measure of a leader is the performance of ^{the} followers OR leaders are most effective when their followers are satisfied? *what are situations to do here* [10 Marks]
3. (a) What are attitudes and what implications do they have for leaders? [10 Marks]
(b) Do you think personality may change over time due to experience in the leadership role? Discuss. [10 Marks]
4. The trait approach to leadership has failed to present a universally acceptable set of effective leadership traits agree or disagree. [20 Marks]
5. "The contingency theory has broadened our understanding of leadership by forcing us to consider the impact of situations on leaders. Discuss and support the above statement? [20 Marks]