

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
FACULTY OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION – JULY 2013

TITLE OF PAPER: BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

DEGREE AND YEAR: B.COM. 1

COURSE CODE: BA111 IDE

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS:
1. THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF SECTION (A) AND (B).
 2. THE CASE STUDY ON SECTION (A) IS COMPULSORY. TOTAL MARKS POSSIBLE: 40 MARKS.
 3. ANSWER ANY THREE QUESTIONS FROM SECTION (B): TOTAL MARKS POSSIBLE: 60 MARKS.

NOTE: MARKS WILL BE AWARDED FOR GOOD COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH, AND FOR ORDERLY PRESENTATION OF WORK.

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

SECTION A

As Mr. Methula, the Managing Director of Zimbabwe Focus Trading House lay in hospital, his mind was on the stock that needed to be collected from suppliers before the end of the day. He remembered the special order of protective clothing that had been made by Good Cuts Butcheries the previous day and reached out for his phone to call his Deputy Managing Director to remind him. The pain hit him just as his hand closed over the phone, reminding him of where he was. He lay still for a while with his eyes closed thinking about how close he had come to dying when he collapsed from a mild heart attack during the salary increases negotiations with the staff union.

His eyes flew open as he remembered how he had argued with staff members over what they perceived to be low salaries and how he felt that these were justified by the staff problems the shop had continued to experience in the past year, leading to low productivity and income. The salary increases had not been at par with the galloping inflation rate and most people in the country had to make do with an equivalent of less than 50% of their previous income, in terms of purchasing power. More than 30% of the staff members were frequently absent from work, relationships between management and staff were strained. In addition, a few bad apples had taken to coming to work drunk, and the "smokers club" members as smoking workers were affectionately known, were spending more time in the smokers lounge than in the shop. Tempers had really flared at the last meeting.

Mr. Methula realised that he could not do much to improve the country's economy but decided that he had to do something to reduce the stress levels in the company.

Questions

- (a) Define stress in the workplace, discuss the causes and signs of stress at Zimbabwe Focus trading House (20 marks)
- (b) What can Mr. Methula do to curb the level of employee stress at the Zimbabwe Focus Trading House? (20 marks)

SECTION B

Question 1

The world is said to have become a global village. Business performance is greatly affected and influenced by events that occur in the international arena. Discuss, using examples, the factors in the international arena, that affect businesses in Swaziland. (20 marks)

Question 2

Why is it important for businesses to have HIV policies? Explain the effects of HIV in the business place? What are the provisions of a good company HIV policy? (20 marks)

Question 3

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is defined as an obligation over and above that required by law and economics, to pursue social objectives that are good for society. Discuss the arguments for and against CSR. (20 marks)

Question 4

It is important to inculcate and pursue high levels of ethical standards in conducting business and related activities. How can businesses maintain such standards? (20 marks)