

VPM's
DR VN BRIMS, Thane
Programme: PGDM (2017-19)
Second Trimester Examination December 2017

Subject	Organizational Behavior II		
Roll No.		Marks	60 Marks
Total No. of Questions	7	Duration	3 Hours
Total No. of printed pages	2	Date	26.12.2017

Note: Q1 is compulsory and solve any FOUR from the remaining SIX questions.

Q1) Case Study: “Lessons for undercover Bosses”

20 marks

Executive offices in major corporations are often far removed from the day-to-day work that most employees perform. While top executives might enjoy the perquisites found in the executive suite, and separation from workday concerns can foster a broader perspective on the business, the distance between management and workers can come at a real cost: top managers often fail to understand the ways most employees do their jobs every day. The dangers of this distant approach are clear. Executives sometimes make decisions without recognizing how difficult or impractical they are to implement. Executives can also lose sight of the primary challenges their employees face.

The practice of “management by walking around” (MBWA) works against the insularity of the executive suite. To practice MBWA, managers reserve time to walk through departments regularly, form networks of acquaintances in the organization, and get away from their desks to talk to individual employees. The practice was exemplified by Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard, who used this management style at HP to learn more about the challenges and opportunities their employees were encountering. Many other organizations followed suit and found that this style of management had advantages over a typical desk-bound approach to management. A recent study

of successful Swedish organizations revealed that MBWA was an approach common to several firms that received national awards for being great places to work.

The popular television program *Undercover Boss* took MBWA to the next level by having top executives from companies like Chiquita Brands, DirectTV, Great Wolf Resorts, and NASCAR work incognito among line employees. Executives reported that this process taught them how difficult many of the jobs in their organizations were, and just how much skill was required to perform even the lowest-level tasks. They also said the experience taught them a lot about the core business in their organizations and sparked ideas for improvements.

Although MBWA has long had its advocates, it does present certain problems. First, the time managers spend directly observing the workforce is time they are not doing their core job tasks like analysis, coordination, and strategic planning. Second, management based on subjective impressions gathered by walking around runs counter to a research and data-based approach to making managerial decisions. Third, it is also possible that executives who wander about will be seen as intruders and overseers. Implementing the MBWA style requires a great deal of foresight to avoid these potential pitfalls.

Questions

1. What are some of the things managers can learn by walking around and having daily contact with line employees that they might not be able to learn from looking at data and reports?
2. As an employee, would you appreciate knowing your supervisor regularly spent time with workers? How would knowing top executives routinely interact with line employees affect your attitudes toward the organization?
3. What ways can executives and other organizational leaders learn about day-to-day business operations besides going “undercover?”
4. Are there any dangers in the use of a management by walking around strategy? Could this strategy lead employees to feel they are being spied on? What actions on the part of managers might minimize these concerns?

Q 2) You are a good individual performer in your organization, now for the new project your boss has assigned you a group of 6 people to work with you which come from diverse backgrounds. How would group size affect your performance and how would you use the stages of group development in this case?

Q 3) Your management feels that the structure of the organization needs to be changed. How would you use Kotter’s eight step plan of change model to implement change?

Q 4) You are going for your 1st job and you have to prepare a checklist of factors that would lead to your job satisfaction. What would your checklist be and why?

Q 5) Julia just finished a certification appointment for Maria, a participant who has cerebral palsy (spastic paralysis). Maria has some difficulty speaking and uses a wheelchair for mobility. As they head toward the door, Maria says something to Julia. Julia replies, “I’m sorry, I didn’t

understand what you said.” Maria repeats her comment. Julia looks confused and says, “One more time please?” Maria repeats her comment in a louder voice. Looking a bit flustered, Julia says, “Okay, well, maybe we can talk about that next time.” Julia reaches for the door and says, “Let me get that for you.” Maria, at the same moment, angrily pushes the button for the automatic door and rolls away. Julia walks back to her office feeling embarrassed and that she is no good at working with disabled participants.

What could Julia have done differently to avoid or minimize this conflict? What could Julia learn from this experience?

Q 6) Through a scenario explain distributive bargaining and integrative bargaining.

Q 7) How can managers create a boundary-less organizations?