



“Investing in Africa’s future”

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, PEACE, LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

**NMMS 505: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND INDUSTRIAL
RELATIONS**

END OF SECOND SEMESTER EXAMINATION

MAY 2021

LECTURER; DR P ZVAVAHERA

TIME: 7 HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer **ONE** question

Credit is given to application of theory and practice

Plagiarism attracts a penalty

Question One

Amber is a medium-sized distribution company that has a long history of taking a 'partnership approach' to managing its human resources. Senior managers are convinced that this HR strategy is holding back the organisation's efficiency and agility; in particular when compared with recent new entrants to the market which operate lean management and take a more aggressive approach to managing people.

Critically evaluate whether the partnership approach is still suited to this changing competitive market environment. If you were asked to identify a model to replace partnership, which would you choose and why?

[100 marks]

With appropriate referencing, draw upon **both** your reading and experience of organisations to inform your answer.

Question Two

'Going International'

With its headquarters in Sydney, Pacific International Ltd is a property development and investment company with operations in Australia and New Zealand. Although only 10 years old, Pacific International has expanded rapidly, primarily by acquiring underperforming companies. Until recently, Pacific International was seen as an Australian company, but with funds generated by profits made in the inner city property boom, the company has just taken over its first Chinese-managed company - Hong Kong Consolidated Ltd. A property, hotel and resort company, Hong Kong Consolidated Ltd got into financial difficulty because of its high-tech investments. Like Pacific International, it is young and dynamic, but it lacks people with significant international management experience. Although relaxed with Pacific International as the new owner, many senior Hong Kong Consolidated managers are concerned that the 'traditional' culture of their company may be threatened. Already, Sam Wallace, General Manager, Operations, for Pacific International and James Li, General Manager, Hong Kong Consolidated, have been involved in a heated dispute. Li, although a highly qualified and experienced manager, is regarded as overly status conscious. Wallace, in turn, is known to be quick-tempered and very direct. Regardless, both are excellent managers and Pacific International cannot afford to lose either of them.

Tom Young, Pacific International's Managing Director, is worried about the future because both the Australian and Hong Kong companies have strong corporate cultures. His vision is for Pacific International to become a global company with the best people, irrespective of nationality, holding the top jobs. Young, however, has had little experience working with Hong Kong Chinese and in managing an international company. The problem is how to change people's attitudes and get people working together. Many of Pacific International's managers regard the Australian operations as the most important and themselves as holding more important positions than their Hong Kong counterparts (and they are upset with the high salaries of their Hong Kong counterparts). Hong Kong Consolidated's managers, in turn, are concerned that they will become 'second-class' citizens because all the top management is Australian (but they are reluctant to take jobs in Sydney because of the low salaries and high tax rates). As part of the process of trying to bring people together and to develop a new corporate culture, Tom Young has decided to create the new position of Human Resources Manager, Asia-Pacific Region.

- a) Describe the situation outlined in this case study-what is happening. **[20 marks]**
- b) What role might effective Human Resources Planning have played in avoiding this situation? **[20 marks]**
- c) How would you advise the Managing Director on strategies to overcome your perception of Human Resources Planning problem? **[40 marks]**
- d) What might be the Recruitment actions/procedures arising from your recommendations for improved Human Resources Planning. **[20 marks]**

Question Three

The Commercial Technical and Allied Workers' Union (CTAWU), a general workers union in Chitomborwizi, had succeeded in organising the workers at Kuwadzana Ltd, garment factory which had been operating in the country for 5 years.

At the time, the company employed 1400 workers, mainly female, in respect of whom, an initial agreement had been concluded between the company the union. Negotiations had commenced in January 2020 on a second agreement to replace the original one.

Below are some of the main developments that took place:

- i) During the negotiations, the company dismissed Ms Tsodzo, a shop steward, for allegedly-
 - a) Leaving her work station and going outside the factory before the agreed 10'oclock break had arrived;
 - b) Disobeying an order from the Quality Control Manager; (this caused her suspension)
 - c) Abusing the Quality Control Manager after working hours; (this led to her dismissal)
- ii) Ms Tsodzo who had been employed for about three years was known to be a very competent worker and had been instrumental in organising workers;
- iii) The union accused the company of "unfair dismissal" and the matter was referred to the Labour Tribunal;
- iv) About three days before the Labour Tribunal, was due to commence the hearing, some members of the union picketed the company's premises, reportedly in a disorderly manner, harassing management in the process;
- v) Before the hearing could be completed, the president of the company flew into the country and closed down operations of the company, in the face of the union's demand for unconditional reinstatement of Ms Tsodzo, and the harassment of management by the workers during the picketing activities;
- vi) Evidence presented during the "hearing" revealed
 - a) That Ms Tsodzo had actually taken her break after the clock had struck 10 o'clock;
 - b) Ms Tsodzo admitted disobeying the order given by the Quality Control Manager;
 - c) Ms Tsodzo had never disobeyed orders before even from the said manager;
 - d) The Quality Control Manager admitted that the order given to Ms Tsodzo (namely the counting of rejected units) had never been given to any worker at the factory before;

- vii) The Labour Tribunal found that the charge on which the dismissal was actually based “had not been adequately substantiated”.
- viii) The Tribunal also condemned as unjustified the reported action of harassment of management by the workers;
- ix) Early in the year, the company held discussions with the Minister of Labour on possibilities of recommencing operations. Management made clear its intention not to have any negotiations with the union;
- x) Furthermore, management insisted that, as a precondition, all former workers would have to reapply for employment and choose a union other than the CTAWU.

Required

- a) Applying your knowledge of industrial relations, analyse the behaviour of the company and its representatives, Ms Tsodzo and the union, commenting on the correctness or otherwise of their actions. **[50 marks]**
- b) Recommend a solution to the dispute. Be sure to give reasons for your answer. **[20 marks]**
- c) What steps would you recommend to avert a recurrence of the problem? **[30 marks]**

END OF EXAMINATION
