



FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT

November Examination

DEPARTMENT Department of Industrial Psychology and People Management

MODULE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

CODE HRM8X12/MHB03X7

DATE NOVEMBER 2015 MAIN EXAMINATION

DURATION 3 HOURS

TIME 09:00-12:00

TOTAL MARKS 100

EXAMINER MS. KAREN HINRICHS

EXTERNAL MODERATOR MS JEAN GRUNDLING

NUMBER OF PAGES 8 PAGES

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

- Please answer all questions/ *Beantwoord alle vrae*
- Question papers must be handed in. / *Vraestelle moet ingehandig word.*
- This is a closed book assessment. / *Hierdie is 'n toe-boek eksamen.*
- Read the questions carefully and answer only what is asked. / *Lees die vrae aandagtig en beantwoord slegs wat gevra word.*
- Number your answers clearly. / *Nommer jou antwoorde duidelik.*
- Write neatly and legibly. / *Skryf netjies en leesbaar.*
- Structure your answers by using appropriate headings and sub-headings. / *Struktureer jou antwoorde deur toepaslike opskrifte te gebruik.*
- The general University of Johannesburg policies, procedures and rules pertaining to written assessments apply to this assessment. / *Algemene Universiteit van Johannesburg beleide, prosedures en reëls aangaande geskrewe toetse en eksamens is van toepassing op hierdie eksamen.*

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QUESTION 1 (20)

Knowing that you are studying Learning and Development at UJ, the management team of your own organisation has agreed to your request that you do a presentation at the next Management Meeting.

The purpose of the presentation is for you to convince the management team that implementing what you have learned in the module: Learning and Development will add measurable value to your organisation. For this presentation, you need to:

- 1.1 Prepare/plan four (4) slides showing the specific content/learning points you intend to cover to demonstrate the learning points and the measurable value to the organisation.
- 1.2 Draft notes for each slide that will guide you through your presentation on the day.

4 x 5 marks

[20]

QUESTION 2 (30)

Read the case study and answer the questions that follow.

Human capital is critical for business success in the modern work environment. First National Bank (FNB) is one of the big four banks in South Africa with a staff complement of more than 26 000. FNB decided to use its sponsorship of the FIFA 2010 World Soccer Cup as an opportunity to leverage human capital by means of employee learning. A competitive employee game was introduced on an electronic learning platform, thereby allowing employees to learn and improve their product and banking knowledge, and become winners of prizes being awarded. The high level of learner and human capital engagement contributed to the success of the e-learning intervention. What is remarkable about this case, is that FNB managed to involve the majority of its staff in an organisation-wide e-learning intervention, despite the fact that most South African companies struggled to put “burns on seats” during the prevailing tough economic times.

In accordance with the bank’s status as National Supporter of the FIFA 2010 World Cup, and rights afforded the bank by FIFA under the contract, FNB had the right to purchase a number of FIFA 2010 World Cup and FIFA Confederation Cup tickets and

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put them to use at FNB as one of the largest banks in South Africa. FNB subsequently availed itself of the opportunity to use a portion of these assets as incentives in an exciting, educational value proposition for its staff. The intention was to use the World Cup as an opportunity to build staff capacity to become world class ambassadors for the 2010 World Cup. An “edutainment” approach was decided upon, not only to get staff involved, but to ensure that they would enjoy the training game, just like they would enjoy the soccer. Thus, the objective of the e-learning staff game was to increase staff knowledge, build human capital and to reinforce the right staff behaviours when doing their work and interacting with customers.

The essence was a call-to-action (learn and write assessments) which earned points (score goals) and these goals served as entries into a chance based draw (lucky draw) for tickets and other prizes. Goals were scored at three levels, i.e. with South Africa, with soccer and with FNB as a company. Hence, the broader contribution to nation-building in the country.

To ensure the rapid diffusion of human capital and knowledge where it mattered most, e-learning solutions were generated about key themes or business products. A temporary central “learning academy” was created to act as the co-ordinating communication mechanism and to establish rules and a system based on uniformity and standardisation so that all employees had an equal chance wherever they were in the organisation. Typical business unit specific training was done around key business products or services, such as transactional banking, homeloans, online banking, international banking, branch banking, and commercial banking. As far back as 2008 a total of 38 business unit specific learning units were rolled out. As part of the learning initiative, the then-CEO of FNB, Michael Jordaan, had a special forum called MJ’s Corner to communicate with staff, and this platform was used to disseminate important information from top management to employees. In addition, by integrating MJ’s Corner into the employee game and the learning material, employee understanding of key business issues was promoted and tested, and staff buy-in to the overall business strategy and philosophy was enhanced.

Employees entered the staff game via an electronic learning management system. The competition consisted of a number of matches played during the competition period.

Upon the completion of each match, each participant who had acquired an eligible entry (a score of 60% or more) was entered into a draw. Knowledge retention was encouraged throughout the process, especially around fundamental terms and concepts that were important to the business. Furthermore, the notion of knowing your products and services was reinforced in the e-learning methodology, both during and after the learning and assessment processes.

The first phase of the roll-out (in 2007 – i.e. three years before the World Cup) was to kick-start the knowledge game concept around the soccer and the World Cup and generic topics such as the business philosophy and values of the bank. Next, in 2008 the games started to focus on core knowledge (particularly where knowledge gaps existed) inside business units, involving both individuals and business unit teams. The aim was to develop deeper knowledge within each business unit where staff worked as well as the overarching market segment housing those business units. Participants would log into the e-learning system and select the core course (the content of which comprised entry, intermediate, competent and expert levels). In 2009 the focus was more on cross-learning by focusing on multi-skilling on other business unit material. This meant that a staff member was obligated to choose another area in the bank to study, other than his/her own area. This gave staff the opportunity to better understand the cross-functional value chains existing in the bank.

The approach and methodology used in the FNB e-learning intervention revolved around a few key principles – good planning and communication, active learner engagement, sound project management, marketing, good learner support, instant assessment, technology and measurement using key indicators. The FNB employee game showed what a company can achieve when human capital development is directly linked to strategic business initiatives, in this case a major corporate social investment project. A thriving learning organisation integrating both technology and human capital was created and nurtured. The FNB e-learning case was unique in the sense that the primary focus on people engagement ensured the success of the project, coupled with other key success factors such as technology, learner support and change management.

The result at FNB was that key learning targets were exceeded, and by including the

elements of fun, competitiveness and rewards into the learning process, excitement about learning was created – exactly what is needed to ensure a sustainable learning organisation. For instance, a 79% pass rate was achieved by the last match (staff had to score 60% or more in their assessments to qualify for the chance-based draw). What started off as a game scoring goals with soccer, evolved into an integrated and dynamic learning system of scoring goals for FNB, and scoring goals with the South African nation within the spirit of nation-building. At the time, Michael Jordaan said: “We are sticking to our vision of being a great bank helping to create a better country. And our strategy of ensuring rewarding relationships is more, not less relevant in these times.”

By empowering employees to become winners via e-learning, FNB as a company emerged as the real winner – a thriving learning organisation that was not only ready for the Soccer World Cup, but equipped with better skilled staff to serve its customers in a more competent and committed way than before. By engaging staff in an organisation-wide learning intervention linked to the Soccer World Cup, FNB succeeded in involving the majority of its workforce in this e-learning intervention.

To round off the total solution the team will be focusing on the areas of coaching and mentoring. This will underpin the formal learning material now in place and ensure close interaction with employees on a more individual basis to ensure effective on-the-job implementation of the new knowledge and skills gained and enable consistent assessment of the learning process in place.

- 2.1 Critically evaluate the statement below (from the case, paragraph 1) and motivate your point of view with examples from the case study itself:

“FNB managed to involve the majority of its staff in an organisation-wide e-learning intervention, despite the fact that most South African companies struggle to put “burns on seats” during the prevailing tough economic times.”

[8]

- 2.2 *“The approach and methodology used in the FNB e-learning intervention revolved around a few key principles – good planning and communication (1), active learner engagement (2), sound project management (3), marketing (4), good learner support (5), instant assessment (6), technology (7) and measurement using key indicators (8)”.*

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Select any four (4) of these eight (8) principles and critically discuss the value of each of the four (4) to the success of the FNB e-learning intervention.

[12]

- 2.3 The last paragraph of the case study talks about what FNB intended to do, going forward, to ensure the effective transfer of learning back-on-the-job. Discuss the use and value, **in your own opinion**, of coaching and mentoring in the transfer of learning back-on-the-job.

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QUESTION 3 (30)

- 3.1 Critically discuss the following statement (which comes from an article titled 'What does mature e-learning look like?'):

"A few years ago, exuberant claims were being made about the future of e-learning. It would take over from all forms of classroom training . . . In its enthusiasm for e-learning, MIT put all of its courses on the web for free. And projections made around the turn of the century for the future of the e-learning industry predicted exponential growth in the market.

The reality is that people have often been disappointed with e-learning. Much of it has been based on a succession of slides, which learners complete mechanically. They have experienced low engagement with this mode of learning. They have often found that the content is not relevant to their job. And learning is carried out alone; there is no social interaction with other learners". (Billhardt, 2010: 21)

[10]

- 3.2 Taking into account that the **new learning paradigm** (where learning is recognised as a critical component for continued survival and success in a rapidly changing environment) has effectively replaced the **traditional approach** (which focused on education and training within specified situations and contexts and formally delivered learning in a prescribed and pre-packed manner):

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Describe the practical implications of the new learning paradigm for learning and development in your own organisation.

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3.3 Read the statement below and answer the question that follows:

“The majority of the time, resources and dollars spent by internal learning functions is spent on formal learning. Yet according to a 2011 article published by the Center for Creative Leadership, at least 70 percent of learning within an organization occurs outside of formal learning activities.

That there is a disconnect between where learning investments are made and where enterprise learning occurs carries implications for organizational performance.” (Durham, 2012: 40)

In your own opinion, explain why organisations still continue to rely so heavily on formal and structured learning and development activities. You need to give practical examples in the explanation.

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QUESTION 4 (20)

According to Meyer, et al (2012: 100-101) “Many companies have created barriers which block the ability to learn. . . . These barriers are as follows:

- Bureaucracy and hierarchical management structures
- Rigid rules and procedures which govern who will qualify for training and who will not
- Limited resources according to ineffective prioritisation
- An organisational culture that does not value creativity and innovation
- Managerial expectations for employees to conform to the prevailing culture
- Lip service to employee empowerment and teamwork
- Limited inter-departmental cooperation
- Management control workers rather than support them
- Managerial sanction which instils fear in workers if mistakes are made

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- No support and encouragement for skills transfer and application”

Select any three (3) of the above barriers to organisational learning that block the ability of employees in your organisation to learn.

- 4.1 Explain in your own opinion, how and why each barrier blocks the employees' ability to learn

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- 4.2 Make practical recommendations that will help line managers in your organisation to address these barriers.

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Total: [100]

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