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Question 1

Question Type: MultipleChoice

SIMULATION

Explain what is meant by the following terms: equality, discrimination and diversity (10 points)
Discuss 5 benefits to having diversity in an organisation / supply chain (15 points)

Options:

A- See the Answer is the explanation

Answer:

A

Explanation:

Overall explanation

Below you will find how you can plan and draft the essay. Remember this is an example of one way you could approach the question. At Level 6 the questions are much more open so your response may be completely different and that's okay.

Essay Plan

Intro -- managers should be sensitive to these three areas

1) Equality (Equalities Act 2010)

2) Discrimination

3) Diversity

5 benefits:

4) Innovation

5) Avoids groupthink

6) Better market understanding

7) Happier employees

8) Useful in international business

Conclusion -- world is interconnected, diversity is a good thing

Example Essay

Managers who are sensitive to the needs and differences of others are effective, successful leaders. For this reason it is important to distinguish between the following terms, which are often confused:

Equality refers to the state of being equal in rights, opportunities, treatment, or status, regardless of factors such as race, gender, age, religion, disability, or other characteristics. It emphasizes fairness, justice, and the absence of discrimination in the treatment of individuals and groups. Equality is shrouded into UK law in the Equalities Act 2010 meaning that it is illegal not to treat people the same.

Discrimination is the unjust or prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups based on their differences, either actual or perceived. Discrimination involves actions or practices that disadvantage or harm certain individuals or groups, often leading to unequal treatment and opportunities. For example only hiring white-skinned employees or not letting a woman become a member of a golf club.

Diversity encompasses the range of differences and variations among individuals. Embracing diversity means recognizing, respecting, and valuing differences such as language, background and culture. Diversity goes beyond the visible traits such as race and gender and includes both inherent and acquired attributes such as educational level and political beliefs.

Benefits of Diversity in an Organization/Supply Chain

Enhanced Creativity and Innovation: Diverse teams bring together individuals with varied backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. This diversity of thought and ideas fosters creativity and innovation as team members approach problems and challenges from different angles. Creative solutions lead to a competitive advantage for an organisation and the ability to adapt to changing market demands.

Improved Decision-Making: Diversity in decision-making helps avoid groupthink, a phenomenon where homogeneous groups tend to conform to a single perspective. Different viewpoints and perspectives lead to more robust discussions and more well-rounded decisions. Organizations thus benefit from a wider range of ideas and strategies to address complex issues.

Broader Market Understanding: Diversity within an organization's workforce reflects the diversity of its customer base and the broader market. Diverse teams are better equipped to understand the needs, preferences, and behaviours of a diverse customer population. This understanding can inform product development, marketing strategies, and customer engagement, leading to increased market share.

Increased Employee Engagement and Satisfaction: An inclusive workplace that values diversity fosters a sense of belonging among employees. Employees are more likely to be engaged and satisfied when they feel their perspectives and contributions are respected and appreciated. Higher job satisfaction can lead to improved retention rates and reduced turnover costs.

Global Competence and Adaptability: In a globalized world, organizations with diverse workforces and supply chains are better equipped to navigate international markets and cultural nuances. Employees from diverse backgrounds bring valuable insights into global business practices, languages, and cultural sensitivities. This global competence enables organizations to expand into new markets and adapt to changing international dynamics.

In summary, diversity in an organization or supply chain brings a multitude of benefits, including enhanced creativity, improved decision-making, better market understanding, increased employee engagement, and global competence. Embracing diversity not only aligns with principles of equality and reduces discrimination, but also contributes to an organization's overall success and sustainability in a diverse and interconnected world.

Tutor Notes

- To gain extra points in an essay like this, you could bring in some real life examples of discrimination and diversity. The best one I can think of at the moment is Birmingham City Council which is currently in the news for pay discrimination <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-birmingham-66730165>

- You could also use some quotes on the topic as part of the introduction or conclusion:

- 'Diversity is not about how we differ. Diversity is about embracing one another's uniqueness.' --- Ola Joseph

- 'We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter their colour.' --- Maya Angelou

- 'Diversity is not a compliance issue. Diversity is a growth strategy.' --- Tiffany Jana

- Study guide p. 198

- Additional reading: [The Business Case For Diversity is Now Overwhelming. Here's Why | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](https://www.weforum.org)

Question 2

Question Type: MultipleChoice

SIMULATION

Zainab is a Procurement Manager and has recently taken on 10 new staff members, taking the size of her team from 10 to 20. Discuss the process of learning that the new members of the team may go through as they start their new roles (15 points). Explain different learning styles she may find in members of her team, relating your answer to one academic model (10 points).

Options:

A- See the Answer is the explanation

Answer:

A

Explanation:

Understanding the Learning Process and Learning Styles in a Procurement Team

As a Procurement Manager, Zainab is responsible for onboarding 10 new team members, doubling the size of her team from 10 to 20. As these new employees begin their roles, they will go through a structured learning process to develop the necessary skills and knowledge. Additionally, each individual may have a different learning style, requiring Zainab to tailor her training approach.

Part 1: The Process of Learning for New Procurement Staff (15 Points)

New employees in Zainab's procurement team will typically go through the following learning stages, based on the Four Stages of Competence Model:

1. Unconscious Incompetence (Not Knowing What They Don't Know)

At this stage, the new hires are unaware of what they need to learn and may overestimate their abilities.

Example: A new procurement assistant may not realize the complexity of supplier negotiations or compliance requirements.

Zainab's Role:

Provide clear job descriptions and introduce new employees to procurement policies.

Use mentoring or shadowing to expose them to real-world tasks.

2. Conscious Incompetence (Realizing the Knowledge Gap)

As they begin working, new team members become aware of their lack of knowledge and skills.

Example: A recruit may struggle to use procurement software or understand supplier evaluation criteria.

Zainab's Role:

Offer structured training programs (e.g., workshops on procurement software).

Allow safe spaces for mistakes and learning.

3. Conscious Competence (Developing Skills with Effort)

New employees start applying their knowledge but still require concentration and practice.

Example: A team member can conduct supplier due diligence, but needs to double-check procedures.

Zainab's Role:

Provide feedback and constructive coaching.

Assign small, real-world tasks to build confidence.

4. Unconscious Competence (Mastering the Skills Automatically)

At this stage, the employee can perform tasks efficiently without much conscious effort.

Example: A procurement officer can analyze supplier bids instinctively, applying best practices without hesitation.

Zainab's Role:

Encourage employees to mentor new hires in the future.

Offer career development opportunities (e.g., CIPS qualifications).

Part 2: Learning Styles in the Team (10 Points)

Different team members will have different learning styles, which means Zainab must tailor her training to accommodate them. A useful model to understand these differences is Kolb's Learning Styles Model (1984), which identifies four learning styles:

1. Activists (Learn by Doing)

Prefer hands-on experiences and practical exercises.

Example: A new team member learns best by participating in live supplier negotiations.

Training Approach:

Use role-playing exercises and real procurement tasks.

2. Reflectors (Learn by Observing and Thinking)

Prefer to watch, analyze, and review before taking action.

Example: A procurement analyst might prefer to observe meetings before participating.

Training Approach:

Provide case studies and post-task reflection sessions.

3. Theorists (Learn by Understanding Concepts and Models)

Prefer structured explanations, data, and frameworks.

Example: A procurement team member might want to study CIPS frameworks before implementing them.

Training Approach:

Use lectures, whitepapers, and structured presentations.

4. Pragmatists (Learn by Applying Knowledge to Real Problems)

Prefer practical solutions and immediate application.

Example: A procurement officer may experiment with supplier cost models in real contracts.

Training Approach:

Use real-world

SIMULATIONS and problem-solving exercises.

Conclusion

New employees in Zainab's procurement team will progress through stages of competence, requiring structured learning, coaching, and hands-on experience. By recognizing different learning styles (based on Kolb's model), Zainab can tailor training to ensure maximum engagement and skill development. This will help her team become efficient, confident, and competent procurement professionals.

Question 3

Question Type: MultipleChoice

SIMULATION

It has recently come to light that Fakeborough City Council has been engaging in discriminatory labour practices. These allegations include paying male employees more than female employees for completing the same type of work and excluding some employees from promotional opportunities for no good reason. Discuss how employees at Fakeborough City Council can deal with discrimination at work, and the risks that Fakeborough City Council are currently facing. (25 points).

Options:

A- See the Answer is the explanation

Answer:

A

Explanation:

Overall explanation

Below you will find how you can plan and draft the essay. Remember this is an example of one way you could approach the question. At Level 6 the questions are much more open so your response may be completely different and that's okay.

Essay Plan

Introduction -- discrimination undermines principles of fairness, equality and justice

Section 1: Employees should: use internal reporting mechanisms, seek legal advice, talk to union, use ADR, keep records

Section 2: Council's risks: legal, reputational, productivity, loss of talented staff, regulatory scrutiny

Conclusion: Council needs to promptly address these issues

Example Essay

Discrimination in the workplace is a grave issue that undermines the principles of fairness, equality, and justice. In this essay, we will discuss how employees at Fakeborough City Council can deal with discrimination at work and the risks currently faced by the council as a result of these discriminatory practices.

Dealing with Discrimination at Work:

Internal Reporting Mechanisms: Employees should utilize internal reporting mechanisms established by Fakeborough City Council to address discrimination issues. These mechanisms typically include channels for lodging complaints, such as HR departments or designated ombudsman officers. There may also be a whistleblowing channel which would inform senior leaders of issues such as the pay gap between male and female workers. By reporting incidents, employees can initiate formal investigations into these types of discriminatory practices.

Seek Legal Advice: If internal mechanisms do not yield satisfactory results or if employees fear retaliation, seeking legal advice from employment law specialists is a viable option. Legal professionals can provide guidance on pursuing legal remedies, such as filing discrimination claims with employment tribunals or courts. One way to do this may be for the employees at Fakeborough Council to speak to their trade unions or workers' councils, which could help individuals collectively address discrimination concerns. These representatives can negotiate with the council on behalf of affected employees and advocate for fair and equal treatment.

Document Incidents: Employees should keep detailed records of discriminatory incidents,

including dates, times, locations, witnesses, and any relevant communication or documentation. These records can serve as valuable evidence in any legal proceedings or internal investigations.

Seek Mediation or Conciliation: Mediation or conciliation services can be explored as alternative dispute resolution methods. These processes aim to facilitate constructive dialogue between employees and the council to resolve discrimination issues amicably.

Risks Faced by Fakeborough City Council:

Legal Consequences: Fakeborough City Council is at risk of facing legal consequences if discrimination allegations are substantiated. If they are found to have paid male workers more than female workers, this would be in violation of the Equalities Act 2010. Consequences of a breach of this legislation may involve fines and compensation payments to affected employees.

Reputational Damage: Discrimination revelations can lead to significant reputational damage for the council. Negative media coverage and public backlash can erode public trust and support, making it challenging to attract and retain talent or secure funding for essential projects. As this is a public sector organisation, Fakeborough do not need to worry about loss to profits, as a private company would in a similar situation, however, damage to reputation could have other financial impacts such as losing out on opportunities. For example losing the opportunity to host events such as sporting events in the city because the event organisers don't want to be associated with the Council, or losing funding from central government.

Employee Morale and Productivity: Discrimination negatively impacts employee morale and productivity. Employees may disengage from their work, leading to decreased productivity, absenteeism, and high turnover rates, which can further strain the council's resources. This is particularly true when opportunities to advance are not equal. For example if Fakeborough council are only promoting white employees, then employees of other ethnicities will be disincentivised from working hard as they know that their work will not be compensated or rewarded.

Regulatory Scrutiny: Regulatory bodies, including the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) in the UK, may investigate Fakeborough City Council's employment practices if discrimination allegations arise. This can result in further legal obligations and potential penalties.

Loss of Talent: Discriminatory practices can drive away talented employees who seek workplaces with fair and inclusive cultures. This can result in a loss of valuable human capital, hindering the council's ability to deliver services effectively.

In conclusion, addressing discriminatory labour practices at Fakeborough City Council requires employees to use internal reporting mechanisms, seek legal advice, engage with employee representatives, document incidents, and explore mediation or conciliation. The council faces significant risks, including legal consequences, reputational damage, diminished employee morale and productivity, regulatory scrutiny, and the loss of talent. It is in the council's best interest to promptly address and rectify discriminatory practices to foster a fair, inclusive, and productive work environment while mitigating these risks.

Question 4

Question Type: MultipleChoice

SIMULATION

Mark is the Head of IT at Squirrel Incorporated and has been asked to join a cross-functional team including staff from the procurement and finance departments. The team is tasked with looking into the procurement of a new IT system. Explain some of the different roles that Mark could play in this newly formed team and discuss how Mark can influence the outcome of decisions made. (25 points)



Options:

A- See the Answer is the explanation

Answer:

A

Explanation:

Mark's Role and Influence in a Cross-Functional Procurement Team

As Head of IT at Squirrel Incorporated, Mark has been asked to join a cross-functional team to evaluate and procure a new IT system. This team includes representatives from procurement and finance, meaning each member will have a distinct perspective. Given Mark's technical expertise, he can play multiple roles in the decision-making process. This essay explores key roles Mark could play and how he can influence the outcome of decisions.

Roles Mark Could Play in the Team

1. Technical Expert

Since the procurement involves an IT system, Mark's primary role is to provide technical expertise on system requirements, compatibility, and security.

Responsibilities:

Define the technical specifications for the new system.

Ensure the system is compatible with existing infrastructure.

Evaluate vendors' technical capabilities and cybersecurity compliance.

Influence on Outcome:

Ensures only technically viable solutions are considered.

Prevents the company from investing in obsolete or incompatible technology.

2. Liaison Between IT and Other Departments

Since procurement and finance teams may not have deep technical knowledge, Mark can act as a translator, ensuring IT needs are understood and integrated into procurement decisions.

Responsibilities:

Explain technical jargon in business-friendly terms.

Align IT system selection with business objectives.

Address concerns from finance (budget) and procurement (supplier contracts).

Influence on Outcome:

Ensures the new system meets business and IT needs.

Helps non-technical team members make informed decisions.

3. Risk Assessor

IT systems carry risks related to cybersecurity, compliance, and implementation challenges. Mark can lead in risk assessment and mitigation.

Responsibilities:

Identify potential security vulnerabilities.

Ensure compliance with data protection laws (e.g., GDPR, CCPA).

Evaluate risks related to system downtime and integration failures.

Influence on Outcome:

Reduces the risk of costly data breaches or compliance violations.

Helps select vendors with strong security measures.

4. Change Management Facilitator

Implementing a new IT system requires user training and adaptation. Mark can anticipate resistance to change and help ensure smooth adoption.

Responsibilities:

Assess potential user resistance and develop a training plan.

Work with HR and department heads to facilitate smooth transition.

Provide input on user experience (UX) and ease of use.

Influence on Outcome:

Increases the likelihood of successful system adoption.

Reduces productivity losses due to poor training or resistance.

5. Budget and Cost Advisor

Although finance oversees budget approvals, Mark can help justify IT-related expenses and ensure the team gets the best value for the investment.

Responsibilities:

Identify hidden costs (e.g., licensing fees, maintenance, upgrades).

Compare on-premise vs. cloud-based solutions for cost-effectiveness.

Negotiate with vendors for best pricing and support packages.

Influence on Outcome:

Ensures long-term cost savings by choosing a scalable, efficient system.

Prevents overspending on unnecessary features.

How Mark Can Influence Decision-Making

Mark's technical knowledge, risk assessment skills, and financial awareness give him significant influence over the team's decisions. Here's how he can maximize his impact:

Providing Data-Driven Insights

Use comparative analysis to show which IT system performs best.

Present case studies or industry benchmarks to support recommendations.

Building Consensus Among Team Members

Address concerns of procurement (vendor selection) and finance (cost control).

Act as a neutral party balancing IT needs with business constraints.

Advocating for Long-Term Strategy Over Short-Term Cost Savings

Highlight scalability and future-proofing rather than just upfront costs.

Explain the total cost of ownership (TCO), including maintenance and upgrades.

Engaging with Vendors and Negotiating Best Terms

Participate in vendor meetings to ensure IT concerns are properly addressed.

Suggest contractual terms that provide flexibility and service guarantees.

Conclusion

Mark's role in this cross-functional team is critical to ensuring a successful IT system procurement. By acting as a technical expert, liaison, risk assessor, change manager, and budget advisor, he can ensure that business needs, security, and cost-effectiveness are balanced. His ability to communicate effectively, present data-driven insights, and align stakeholders will significantly influence the final decision. Through strategic engagement, Mark can help the team select the best IT system that supports Squirrel Incorporated's long-term success.



Question 5

Question Type: MultipleChoice

SIMULATION

Explain how stress in the workplace can impact upon employees. What are factors that can lead to stress in the workplace and how can an organisation look after its workforce when it comes to reducing stress? (25 points).

Options:

A- See the Answer is the explanation

Answer:

A



Explanation:

Overall explanation

Below you will find how you can plan and draft the essay. Remember this is an example of one way you could approach the question. At Level 6 the questions are much more open so your response may be completely different and that's okay.

Essay Plan

Intro -- stress has impacts both for employee and employer

P1 -- how stress impacts on employees

P2 -- factors that lead to stress -- quote HSE

P3 -- how an organisation can look after workforce

Conclusion -- stress has far reaching consequences

Example Essay

Workplace stress is a prevalent issue that can have profound effects on employees and organizational performance. Stress arises from various sources and can significantly impact an individual's well-being, productivity, and job satisfaction. Recognizing the importance of addressing workplace stress, organizations have adopted strategies to mitigate its adverse effects. This essay explores the impact of workplace stress on employees, the factors contributing to stress, and organizational strategies for stress reduction.

Impact of Workplace Stress on Employees:

Physical Health Effects: Persistent workplace stress can lead to physical health issues such as headaches, digestive problems, and hypertension. In extreme cases, it has been known for stress to cause heart-attacks.

Mental Health Implications: Stress is closely linked to mental health disorders like anxiety and depression. Employees experiencing high levels of stress are at greater risk of developing these conditions, leading to decreased concentration, motivation, and overall job satisfaction.

Decreased Productivity: Stressed employees often find it challenging to focus on tasks, leading to reduced productivity and lower quality work. This can affect project timelines and overall organizational performance.

Increased Absenteeism: Stress-related illnesses can lead to increased absenteeism, impacting team dynamics and workload distribution. Absences can also result in increased costs for organizations.

Low Morale and Job Satisfaction: A stressed workforce may experience reduced job satisfaction and morale. This can lead to decreased engagement, a higher turnover rate, and difficulties in attracting and retaining talent.

Factors Contributing to Workplace Stress: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Management Standards of 2003 have identified six causes of work-related stress:

Lack of Support: Insufficient support from supervisors or peers can exacerbate stress, as employees may feel isolated and unsupported in challenging situations.

Excessive Workload (Demands): High workloads, unrealistic deadlines, and excessive overtime can overwhelm employees, leading to stress.

Lack of Control: Employees who have limited autonomy or decision-making authority may feel stressed due to a perceived lack of control over their work.

Role Ambiguity: Unclear job roles and responsibilities can create confusion and stress, as employees struggle to meet undefined expectations.

Change and Uncertainty: Frequent organizational changes, such as restructuring or layoffs, can create job insecurity and stress among employees.

Workplace Relationships: Poor relationships with colleagues or supervisors can contribute significantly to workplace stress. For example bullying or harassment in the workplace.

Organizational Strategies for Stress Reduction:

HSE Management Standards: Organizations can adopt the HSE Management Standards as a framework to identify and address stressors. This involves assessing workplace conditions related to the six stress factors and taking action to improve them.

Mental Health Support: Offer employee assistance programs (EAPs), mental health resources, and counselling services to help employees cope with stress and mental health challenges.

Training and Education: Provide training on stress management, resilience, and work-life balance to empower employees with coping strategies.

Workload Management: Ensure workload distribution is reasonable and aligned with employees' capabilities. Encourage breaks and discourage excessive overtime.

Communication: Promote open and transparent communication channels to address concerns, clarify roles, and keep employees informed about organizational changes.

Flexible Working Arrangements: Offer flexible working options, such as remote work or flexible hours, to help employees achieve a better work-life balance.

Leadership Training: Train managers to recognize signs of stress, provide support, and create a supportive and inclusive work environment.

In conclusion, workplace stress has far-reaching consequences on employees and organizational outcomes. A recent study by CIPD has shown that stress is the leading cause of long-term absence from work. Recognizing the sources of stress, organizations can implement strategies, and use the HSE Management Standards, to mitigate its impact. By fostering a supportive and healthy work environment, organizations can reduce stress levels, enhance employee well-being, and improve overall performance.

Tutor Notes

- I really wanted to add studying for CIPS when you have a full-time job is a factor that can lead to stress in the workplace. It's definitely not a wrong answer, but an examiner may not share my sense of humour haha

- I've chosen to write this essay in bullet points to show you how it can be done. This is a useful style if you're running out of time, and if English isn't your first language. The important thing with answering CIPS questions is to actually answer the question. You don't need 'posh' language like 'furthermore' and 'moreover'. You can get a good score by writing simply and succinctly.

- HSE Management Standards 2003 identifies six causes of work-related stress that I wrote about above. Here's a fun mnemonic to help you learn them: - SDCRRC -- stress does create really crappy realities
- The study guide doesn't talk about this, but you could mention Mental Health First Aid Courses, which are growing in popularity, and also the use of confidential counselling.
- Your essay could have mentioned Hatton vs Sutherland (2002). This case is an important precedent -- it shows that just because a workplace offers confidential counselling to employees, this does not negate responsibility for employee stress -- the company is still liable for causing you stress.



Question 6

Question Type: MultipleChoice

SIMULATION

ABC Ltd is a consultancy organisation which employs 30 members of staff, all of whom work from a single office. Traditionally all record keeping has been paper-based. Mohammed, the CEO, has decided to implement electronic systems. Discuss the following methods of change Mohammed could use, explaining advantages and disadvantages of each: planned, incremental and revolutionary. Which style should Mohammed use? (25 points).

Options:

A- See the Answer is the explanation

Answer:

A

Explanation:

Overall explanation

Below you will find how you can plan and draft the essay. Remember this is an example of one way you could approach the question. At Level 6 the questions are much more open so your response may be completely different and that's okay.

Essay Plan

Intro -- what is change management?

P1 -- planned

P2 -- incremental

P3 -- revolutionary

Conclusion -- planned is best

Example Essay

Change management is a set of processes and strategies aimed at helping an organization smoothly transition from its current state to a desired future state. Mohammed, the CEO of ABC Ltd, aims to transition his consultancy organization from traditional paper-based record-keeping to electronic systems. To navigate this change effectively, Mohammed can consider various change management approaches, each with their own advantages and disadvantages:

Planned Change: Planned change is a methodical and structured approach to implementing change. It involves careful planning, preparation, and a well-defined roadmap for transitioning from the old paper-based system to the new electronic one. It typically minimizes disruption and resistance by providing employees with a clear understanding of the process. Mohammed could use a Gantt chart and other tools so that everyone knows what is happening when: for example he could introduce the electronic systems department by department, for example having the HR department use it first, then after a month roll it out to other departments.

Advantages: Planned change offers predictability and allows for detailed planning and risk management. It also offers the lowest disruption; it gives employees an option to adapt gradually, reducing disruptions to daily operations and since the change is well-communicated and organized, it can effectively address employee resistance.

Disadvantages: Slower Implementation: It may take time to implement planned changes fully, potentially delaying the realization of benefits.

Incremental Change: Incremental change involves making small, manageable changes over time. This approach prioritizes gradual progress and can be less disruptive, as employees adapt step by step. For ABC Ltd this may be that each employee gets access to the system to do some aspects of their job first, then after a while they gain access to another part of the system and so fourth, until all actions are completed electronically rather than on paper.

Advantages: As this change method involves several steps, it reduces potential resistance to the change. It also provides Mohammed with a lower risk: Smaller changes are easier to monitor and adjust, lowering the risk of implementation issues. If the electronic system has a bug, this can be fixed quickly before doing away with the old paper system.

Disadvantages: The main disadvantage to this approach is similar to that of the planned approach- there is a prolonged transition: implementing changes incrementally may extend the transition period, delaying the full benefits.

Revolutionary Change: Revolutionary change entails a swift and complete shift from the old system to the new one. It aims for rapid transformation but can be highly disruptive and stressful

for employees. This means Mohammed would introduce the system without warning, overnight.

Advantages: Revolutionary change can lead to quick results and immediate benefits. It is possible that employees may be more committed to using the new system due to the sense of urgency associated with this approach. They don't get a choice or time to moan about the change- they have to simply get on and use the new system.

Disadvantages: High Disruption: The speed of change may lead to stress, resistance, and potential issues. It also comes with a higher risk of Failure: inadequate planning and adjustment time can increase the risk of implementation failure. If the new system has bugs, but Mohammed has done away with the old paper-based system, this may result in staff not being able to do any work.

Conclusion:

In the context of ABC Ltd's transition to electronic record-keeping, a planned change approach appears to be the most suitable. This approach offers a methodical, structured, and predictable transition process. It allows Mohammed to carefully plan and manage risks while minimizing disruptions to daily operations. Additionally, it is well-equipped to address any resistance that may arise during the change process. Considering these advantages, a planned change approach aligns well with the organization's need for a smooth and effective transition to electronic systems while ensuring the best chance for success.

Tutor Notes

- This question asks you to pick one of the options, so don't sit on the fence here. Of those listed, planned or incremental would probably be the obvious choice, as revolutionary change is really risky for this scenario. Revolutionary change is associated more with responding to emergencies or creative tasks, rather than introducing a new IT system. Introducing an IT system really should be done slowly, as it allows time to sort any issues and get people on board and trained using it.

- A question on different types of change could also ask about emergent change- so make sure you're familiar with this as well.

Question 7

Question Type: MultipleChoice

SIMULATION

Zoe has recently formed a cross-functional team to work on a new secret project called Project X. There are 8 members of Project X and these members have different ages, cultural backgrounds, lengths of service at the company and personalities.

Discuss 5 reasons why teams can fail, relating these to potential issues Zoe may face with her team, and discuss ways Zoe can overcome them. (25 points)

Options:

A- See the Answer is the explanation

Answer:

A

Explanation:

Why Teams Fail: Challenges in Cross-Functional Teams and Solutions for Zoe's Project X

Cross-functional teams, such as Zoe's Project X team, bring together diverse skills, perspectives, and experiences. While this diversity can foster innovation, it also presents challenges that can lead to team failure if not managed properly. Below are five key reasons why teams fail, how these issues may arise in Project X, and how Zoe can overcome them.

1. Lack of Clear Goals and Direction

How This Affects Project X:

If Zoe does not establish clear objectives, deliverables, and expectations, team members may work in different directions, leading to inefficiencies and frustration. Given that Project X is secret, the lack of transparency may cause confusion and disengagement.

Solution:

Clearly define the project's mission, objectives, and success criteria at the outset.

Use SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) to set expectations.

Hold regular briefings to ensure all team members understand their role in the project.

2. Poor Communication

How This Affects Project X:

With team members from different backgrounds, experience levels, and personalities, communication styles may vary. Some may hesitate to share ideas, while others may dominate discussions. This can lead to misunderstandings, silos, and frustration.

Solution:

Establish clear communication channels, such as scheduled meetings, email updates, and collaboration tools (e.g., Slack, Microsoft Teams).

Foster an open communication culture where all members feel comfortable sharing ideas.

Encourage active listening to ensure all voices are heard.

3. Conflict and Personality Clashes

How This Affects Project X:

Diversity in age, culture, experience, and personalities can cause friction. Senior employees may resist younger members' ideas, while different working styles may lead to disagreements. If conflicts go unmanaged, the team can become dysfunctional.

Solution:

Conduct team-building exercises to build rapport and understanding among members.

Implement a conflict resolution strategy, ensuring disputes are addressed constructively.

Encourage a collaborative mindset, where team members focus on shared goals rather than personal differences.

4. Lack of Trust and Team Cohesion

How This Affects Project X:

If team members do not trust each other or the leader, they may be reluctant to share ideas, take risks, or collaborate. The secrecy of Project X may also create skepticism and uncertainty among members.

Solution:

Foster psychological safety, where team members feel safe sharing ideas without fear of judgment.

Encourage transparency by sharing relevant information about the project whenever possible.

Organize team bonding activities to strengthen relationships and build trust.

5. Ineffective Leadership

How This Affects Project X:

If Zoe fails to lead effectively, team members may feel disengaged, unsupported, or micromanaged. A lack of clear decision-making can result in delays and frustration.

Solution:

Zoe should adopt a situational leadership style, adjusting her approach based on team needs.

Balance guidance with autonomy, ensuring team members feel empowered but supported.

Regularly recognize and appreciate team members' contributions to boost morale.

Conclusion

For Project X to succeed, Zoe must proactively address these common team failures by setting clear goals, fostering strong communication, managing conflicts, building trust, and leading effectively. By implementing these strategies, she can ensure her cross-functional team remains engaged, motivated, and productive, driving Project X to success.

Question 8

Question Type: MultipleChoice

SIMULATION

Discuss transformational and transactional approaches to leadership. Which is the most appropriate approach in the following case study:

Mo is a procurement manager at a large manufacturing organisation. He oversees a team of 5 procurement assistants. The assistants are currently not working to a high level; they lack skills and confidence in completing tenders and Mo is concerned about their abilities to conduct accurate work. (25 points)

Options:

A- See the Answer is the explanation

Answer:

A

Explanation:

Introduction

Leadership is a critical factor in shaping employee performance, motivation, and overall organizational success. In procurement, managers must adopt a leadership style that aligns with their team's capabilities, business objectives, and operational challenges. Two widely recognized leadership styles are Transformational Leadership and Transactional Leadership, each with distinct characteristics and effects on team performance.

This essay will discuss both leadership styles, outlining their advantages and disadvantages. It will then evaluate which approach is best suited for Mo, a procurement manager facing skill and confidence issues among his team members.

Understanding Transformational Leadership

Definition

Transformational leadership is a leadership style that focuses on inspiring, motivating, and developing employees to reach their full potential. Transformational leaders act as mentors and role models, encouraging innovation, professional growth, and long-term performance improvements.

Key Characteristics of Transformational Leadership

Inspiration and Motivation -- The leader encourages employees to perform beyond expectations through a compelling vision.

Individualized Support -- Focuses on mentoring and coaching employees to enhance their skills.

Encourages Innovation -- Employees are empowered to think creatively and solve problems.

Develops Future Leaders -- Focuses on long-term talent development rather than short-term task completion.

High Engagement and Emotional Intelligence -- Builds strong relationships with employees and fosters a positive workplace culture.

Advantages of Transformational Leadership

Encourages professional growth -- Employees develop new skills and gain confidence.

Increases motivation and job satisfaction -- Employees feel valued and supported.

Promotes innovation and continuous improvement -- Encourages employees to think creatively.

Builds long-term organizational success -- Creates future leaders through mentoring and skill development.

Disadvantages of Transformational Leadership

Time-consuming -- Requires significant time and effort for mentoring and development.

Not suitable for urgent performance issues -- If immediate performance improvement is needed, transformational leadership may be too slow.

Employees may resist change -- Some employees may be unwilling to embrace coaching and new expectations.

Understanding Transactional Leadership

Definition

Transactional leadership is a leadership style based on a structured, performance-driven approach. It focuses on clear expectations, rewards for success, and consequences for underperformance. This style is best suited for improving task efficiency, enforcing compliance, and ensuring consistency.

Key Characteristics of Transactional Leadership

Clear Expectations and Rules -- Employees have defined roles and responsibilities.

Performance-Based Rewards and Punishments -- Good performance is rewarded, while poor performance is corrected through disciplinary actions.

Focus on Efficiency and Results -- Emphasizes productivity and operational efficiency over employee growth.

Short-Term Performance Goals -- Ensures immediate improvements in employee performance.

Hierarchy and Structure -- Follows a strict chain of command.

Advantages of Transactional Leadership

Ensures short-term efficiency and compliance -- Clearly defines expectations, which leads to immediate improvements in performance.

Effective for structured tasks -- Employees know exactly what is expected, reducing uncertainty.

Increases accountability -- Employees are held responsible for meeting targets.

Useful for crisis management -- Provides a clear directive in high-pressure situations.

Disadvantages of Transactional Leadership

Limited employee development -- Focuses more on task completion rather than skill enhancement.

Can reduce creativity and innovation -- Employees may feel restricted by rigid expectations.

May reduce motivation -- Over-reliance on rules and punishments can create a negative work environment.

Not ideal for building long-term talent -- Employees may not develop leadership skills or confidence.

Which Leadership Style is Most Suitable for Mo?

Case Study Analysis: Mo's Leadership Challenge

Mo is a procurement manager leading a team of 5 procurement assistants.

The assistants are underperforming due to lack of skills and confidence.

Mo is concerned about their ability to complete procurement tenders accurately.

Evaluating the Best Leadership Approach for Mo

Criteria	Transformational Leadership	Transactional Leadership
Developing Employee Skills	✓ Excellent – Encourages learning and mentoring.	✗ Poor – Focuses on immediate compliance rather than skill development.
Boosting Employee Confidence	✓ Excellent – Encourages personal growth and motivation.	✗ Limited – May not help in building long-term confidence.
Ensuring Short-Term Performance Improvement	✗ Slower – Focuses on long-term growth rather than immediate results.	✓ Strong – Provides immediate discipline and structure.
Fostering Innovation in Procurement	✓ Strong – Encourages assistants to think creatively.	✗ Weak – Enforces rules but limits creative solutions.
Managing an Underperforming Team	✓ Good – Helps low-performing employees improve.	✓ Strong – Sets clear expectations and improves short-term performance.

Based on the specific challenges Mo is facing, neither leadership style alone is perfect. Instead, a combined approach is most suitable:

Recommended Approach: A Blend of Transformational and Transactional Leadership

Short-Term Approach: Transactional Leadership for Immediate Performance Improvement

Mo should set clear expectations and enforce accountability to ensure the assistants improve their performance in procurement tenders.

Implement a structured training program with performance benchmarks.

Use performance-based incentives (e.g., bonuses, recognition for accurate work).

Provide constructive feedback on mistakes to encourage learning.

Long-Term Approach: Transformational Leadership for Skill Development and Confidence

Mo should act as a mentor and coach, providing continuous learning opportunities.

Encourage assistants to develop confidence in procurement by assigning them progressively challenging tasks.

Inspire the team by highlighting the importance of procurement excellence in achieving organizational goals.

Implement peer learning and mentorship programs to create a supportive learning environment.

Conclusion

Both Transformational Leadership and Transactional Leadership offer valuable benefits, but in the case of Mo's underperforming team, a blended approach is the most effective strategy.

Transactional Leadership should be used in the short term to improve immediate performance,

enforce accountability, and ensure accuracy in procurement tenders.

Transformational Leadership should be introduced gradually to develop skills, boost confidence, and foster long-term career growth among the procurement assistants.

By combining both approaches, Mo can quickly improve his team's performance while ensuring they gain the necessary skills and confidence to succeed in procurement. This balanced leadership approach ensures short-term efficiency and long-term growth, making it the most effective strategy for Mo's situation.

Question 9

Question Type: MultipleChoice

SIMULATION

What is situational leadership? (5 points) Discuss and evaluate how this approach may be used in supply chain management (20 points)

Options:

A- See the Answer is the explanation

Answer:

A

Explanation:

Introduction

Leadership effectiveness depends on how well a leader adapts to changing situations, team capabilities, and organizational needs. Situational Leadership, developed by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard, is a flexible leadership model that suggests no single leadership style is best in all situations. Instead, leaders must adapt their approach based on the maturity, competence, and motivation of their team members.

In the context of supply chain management, where conditions are constantly evolving due to market dynamics, supplier relationships, technological changes, and risk factors, situational leadership is a highly relevant approach.

1. What is Situational Leadership? (5 Points)

Definition

Situational Leadership is a contingency-based leadership model that suggests leaders should adjust their leadership style based on the specific situation and the readiness level of their team members.

Key Concept: Leadership Styles Based on Team Readiness

The Situational Leadership Model identifies four leadership styles, which are determined by a combination of directive (task-oriented) and supportive (relationship-oriented) behaviors:

Leadership Style	Directive Behavior	Supportive Behavior	Best for...
Telling (S1)	High	Low	Low-skilled or new employees who need clear instructions.
Selling (S2)	High	High	Employees with some skills but low confidence or motivation.
Participating (S3)	Low	High	Skilled employees who need encouragement and involvement.
Delegating (S4)	Low	Low	Highly experienced and motivated employees who work independently.

Why Situational Leadership is Important?

Encourages flexibility in leadership.

Helps develop employees' skills and confidence.

Ensures effective leadership in changing environments like supply chain management.

2. How Situational Leadership Applies to Supply Chain Management (20 Points)

Supply Chain Management Overview

Supply chain management (SCM) involves planning, procurement, logistics, inventory management, risk assessment, and supplier relationships. Given the fast-changing nature of supply chains, managers must adapt their leadership style based on team capabilities, supplier maturity, and operational challenges.

Situational Leadership Applied to Supply Chain Functions

1. Telling (S1) -- Directive Leadership for New or Inexperienced Teams

Application in Supply Chain:

Best for new supply chain employees who need strict guidance on procurement, contract management, and compliance.

Works well in structured environments, such as warehouse management and logistics operations,

where standard operating procedures (SOPs) must be followed.

Example:

A newly hired procurement officer struggling with contract negotiation may need step-by-step instructions from a senior manager to ensure compliance with procurement regulations.

2. Selling (S2) -- Coaching Approach for Semi-Skilled Supply Chain Teams

Application in Supply Chain:

Used when employees have some knowledge but need motivation and guidance.

Effective in supplier relationship management, where procurement staff need training on negotiation techniques and ethical sourcing.

Helps employees understand the bigger picture and improve decision-making skills.

Example:

A procurement team transitioning to a digital procurement system may need training, encouragement, and strategic direction to adopt new technologies.

3. Participating (S3) -- Collaboration in Strategic Supply Chain Decisions

Application in Supply Chain:

Works best for experienced supply chain professionals who need empowerment and involvement in decision-making.

Encourages team input on strategic decisions, such as risk management, cost optimization, and sustainability initiatives.

Best for cross-functional collaboration, where procurement, logistics, and finance teams work together.

Example:

A supply chain manager engaging with senior procurement professionals to co-develop a supplier diversification strategy to reduce dependency on a single supplier.

4. Delegating (S4) -- Empowering High-Performing Supply Chain Teams

Application in Supply Chain:

Best for highly experienced and autonomous supply chain professionals who require minimal supervision.

Used in global supply chain operations, where regional managers handle logistics, procurement, and supplier engagement independently.

Encourages innovation, allowing supply chain teams to optimize processes using AI, automation,

and data analytics.

Example:

A senior procurement manager overseeing global supplier contracts operates with full autonomy and implements a digital supplier performance dashboard without needing daily oversight.

3. Advantages and Challenges of Situational Leadership in SCM

Aspect	Advantages	Challenges
Flexibility	Allows leaders to adapt to different supply chain challenges and employee skill levels .	Requires leaders to accurately assess team readiness and adjust their approach accordingly.
Improves Performance	Employees receive the right level of guidance and support , leading to higher efficiency.	If misapplied, leaders may micromanage skilled employees or under-support junior employees .
Enhances Supplier Collaboration	Enables better supplier engagement by adjusting negotiation and relationship management styles.	Some suppliers may expect consistent leadership styles and struggle with variable approaches.
Supports Change Management	Useful in implementing supply chain technology upgrades, sustainability initiatives, and new procurement policies .	Employees may resist frequent changes in leadership style , leading to confusion.

Conclusion

Situational leadership is a highly effective approach for supply chain management, where dynamic conditions require flexible leadership styles. By adjusting leadership approaches based on team competency, motivation, and operational needs, supply chain leaders can optimize procurement, logistics, and supplier relationship management.

The most effective supply chain leaders use all four styles, applying:

Telling (S1) for new procurement staff,

Selling (S2) for skill-building in supplier management,

Participating (S3) for strategic decision-making, and

Delegating (S4) for experienced global supply chain teams.

By mastering situational leadership, procurement and supply chain managers can increase efficiency, reduce risks, and improve supplier partnerships, ultimately enhancing organizational success.

Question 10

Question Type: MultipleChoice

SIMULATION

Explain 5 qualities of an effective leader (10 points) Discuss the role of a leader in relation to the procurement and supply chain function of an organisation (15 points)

Options:

A- See the Answer is the explanation

Answer:

A

Explanation:

(A) Five Qualities of an Effective Leader (10 Points)

Effective leadership is crucial for the success of any organization, particularly in strategic procurement and supply chain management. Below are five key qualities that define an effective leader:

Vision and Strategic Thinking (2 Points)

A successful leader has a clear vision for the future and can develop strategic plans to achieve organizational goals.

In procurement, this means aligning supply chain strategies with overall business objectives, such as cost reduction, sustainability, and supplier relationship management.

Integrity and Ethical Leadership (2 Points)

Ethical leaders act with honesty, transparency, and fairness, setting high ethical standards for their teams.

In procurement, integrity ensures fair supplier selection, compliance with procurement laws, and avoiding corruption or conflicts of interest.

Decision-Making and Problem-Solving Skills (2 Points)

Leaders must analyze complex situations, consider different perspectives, and make informed decisions.

In supply chain management, this involves risk assessment, supplier negotiation, and resolving disruptions (e.g., supply shortages, logistics issues, or geopolitical risks).

Communication and Influence (2 Points)

An effective leader clearly communicates the organization's goals and expectations to internal and external stakeholders.

In procurement, this involves negotiating contracts, managing supplier relationships, and ensuring cross-functional collaboration within the organization.

Emotional Intelligence and People Management (2 Points)

Emotional intelligence (EQ) includes self-awareness, empathy, motivation, and social skills, which are essential for managing teams.

In procurement, this helps leaders build trust, motivate employees, and handle conflicts with suppliers or internal teams effectively.

(B) Role of a Leader in Procurement and Supply Chain Functions (15 Points)

Leaders in procurement and supply chain management play a crucial strategic role in ensuring the efficiency, sustainability, and ethical integrity of the organization's supply chain. Below are five key roles a leader plays:

Setting Strategic Direction in Procurement (3 Points)

A leader defines procurement objectives in line with corporate strategy, such as cost reduction, supplier diversity, risk management, and sustainability.

Example: A Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) may implement a strategy to reduce reliance on a single supplier and diversify sourcing to minimize risks.

Ensuring Ethical and Sustainable Procurement (3 Points)

Leaders must establish and enforce ethical procurement policies to avoid fraud, bribery, or unethical supplier practices.

Example: Ensuring compliance with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, such as sourcing from ethical suppliers who follow fair labor practices.

Supplier Relationship and Risk Management (3 Points)

A leader is responsible for building strong supplier relationships that foster trust, reliability, and long-term partnerships.

They also identify and mitigate risks in the supply chain, such as supply disruptions, geopolitical risks, and financial instability of suppliers.

Driving Innovation and Continuous Improvement (3 Points)

Leaders encourage teams to adopt innovative technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), blockchain, and data analytics in procurement.

Example: Implementing e-procurement systems to enhance efficiency and transparency in supplier transactions.

Developing and Empowering the Procurement Team (3 Points)

A leader must focus on talent development, upskilling procurement professionals, and fostering a culture of continuous learning.

Example: Providing training on contract management, negotiation skills, and supplier evaluation techniques to enhance team capabilities.



Question 11

Question Type: MultipleChoice

SIMULATION

Explain the following types of dismissal: fair dismissal, unfair dismissal, summary dismissal, constructive dismissal and redundancy (15 points) How should an employee respond if they believe they believe that they have been let go by their employer unfairly? (10 points).

Options:

A- See the Answer is the explanation

Answer:

A

Explanation:

Overall explanation

Below you will find how you can plan and draft the essay. Remember this is an example of one way you could approach the question. At Level 6 the questions are much more open so your response may be completely different and that's okay.

Essay Plan

Introduction -- complex area of law

Section 1 -- each type of dismissal, explain and example

Section 2- what they should do; use internal channels first, seek advice (union / Citizens Advice), mediation, litigation via Employment Tribunal.

Example Essay

Employment termination is a complex area of employment law, and different types of dismissal carry distinct legal implications. In the United Kingdom, where employment law is well-established, employees are entitled to certain rights and protections when facing dismissal. This essay explores various types of dismissal, including fair dismissal, unfair dismissal, summary dismissal, constructive dismissal, and redundancy. It also discusses how employees should respond if they believe they have been unfairly dismissed.

Types of Dismissal:

Fair Dismissal: Fair dismissal occurs when an employer terminates an employee's contract with valid reasons that are recognized by law. Common grounds for fair dismissal include misconduct, lack of capability and statutory reasons. For example, an employee consistently failing to perform their job despite adequate training and support may be fairly dismissed for capability.

Unfair Dismissal: Unfair dismissal, on the other hand, happens when an employee is terminated without valid reasons or if the employer fails to follow the correct dismissal procedures. Employees with at least two years of continuous service have protection against unfair dismissal. For example if XYZ Ltd fire Employee X who has worked at the company for 5 years because there is a personality clash between them and the management, Employee X could claim unfair dismissal (personality clash is not a valid reason for dismissal).

Summary Dismissal: Summary dismissal, often referred to as instant or gross misconduct dismissal, occurs when an employer terminates an employee's contract without notice due to severe misconduct. It typically involves serious breaches of workplace rules or the law. For example if an employee is caught stealing, they may be fired on the spot without notice.

Constructive Dismissal: Constructive dismissal occurs when an employee resigns from their position due to an employer's fundamental breach of the employment contract, creating an unbearable working environment. An example of this is if the employer fails to provide the worker with the correct PPE to complete the work (for example in the Construction industry). Because the employee is unable to complete the work safely, they resign. In this instance, the 'blame' is put firmly on the fault of the employer for 'making' the employee resign.

Redundancy: Redundancy takes place when an employer dismisses an employee because the job role they held no longer exists, or the employer's business needs to reduce its workforce. Redundancy dismissals must adhere to specific procedures and fair selection criteria

a. In the UK this is referred to as TUPE.

If an employee believes that they are being fired unfairly they can claim unfair dismissal. Firstly, they should initially consider raising their concerns internally through the company's grievance procedure. This allows for a formal process where grievances can be investigated and addressed.

This is particularly useful in large organisations where workers may be fired by middle-managers who are not properly trained or aware of the legislation regarding this area. By raising a concern through a grievance policy, it allows the right people in the company such as HR or the senior leadership team, to fully assess the situation.

Secondly, the employee should seek advice from an organisation such as Citizen's Advice or their workers' union. They will be able to advise if the situation does amount to unfair dismissal. Getting a third party involved can help to bring in a new perspective and keep discussions positive and moving forward.

If it is believed that the unfair dismissal has merit, employees can contact ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation, and Arbitration Service) for early conciliation. ACAS may facilitate settlement discussions between the employee and employer to avoid legal proceedings. If internal processes and ACAS conciliation do not resolve the matter, employees can file a claim with the Employment Tribunal within specified time limits, asserting unfair dismissal. The time limit to claim is currently 3 months minus a day from the date you were dismissed. Employees may seek legal advice and representation during Employment Tribunal proceedings to ensure their rights are protected and they receive appropriate compensation if the claim is successful.

In conclusion, various types of dismissal exist, each with distinct legal implications. Employees should be aware of their rights and protections under UK employment law, particularly concerning unfair dismissal. It is important to remember that 'employment rights' in the UK are only granted after 2 years of service, and this is often a big factor when looking at this area of law. It is important for all employees in the UK to understand these types of dismissal as having appropriate responses empowers employees to seek redress when faced with unjust termination.



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