

Futura Systems Ltd.

Six years ago Una and Frank set up their own small business, Futura Systems Ltd. Both had worked in the computer industry for 10 years prior to setting up the business. Frank had worked in the Marketing/Public Relations area and Una had worked as a computer programmer. They both had worked for companies that were rapidly expanding. As a result of the expansion of the computer industry, their roles in their respective companies were changing. Both were unhappy with these changes so they decided to set up a business together.

Throughout the 10-year period when they worked for other companies Una and Frank were very aware of the changes taking place in the computer industry. During this time they also built up many contacts in the industry in their own respective specialist areas. They noted the growth in the industry and the changing needs of all those conducting business in the different sectors. In particular, they were aware of the need for Information Technology development by sole traders, businesses of all sizes and other organisations. Una and Frank decided to meet the technology needs of these customers by setting up a business to supply computer systems and customised software packages. These objectives encouraged them to set up Futura Systems Ltd.

Futura Systems Ltd. operates out of a Business Park in the suburbs of a city. The company now employs 25 people and each member of staff is a college graduate. The staff are organised into Project Groups each consisting of five employees. Each group has a technical, software, marketing and financial specialist. Each group totally manages its own orders. Satisfying the customer is seen as being of prime importance.

Over the past few months' the business has had problems meeting deadlines for a number of projects. These problems are particularly associated with two of the Project Groups. This has resulted in frustration for some of the employees and the management.

A number of employees have made complaints to the management, as they are frustrated at not being able to do their own work satisfactorily. Frank is particularly worried as he feels that these issues will have an effect on customer service that will have both short-term and long-term implications for the business.

Futura Systems Ltd. operates in an ever-changing environment where it must keep up to date with developments in both the hardware and software areas. At present the top management team are preparing a long-term plan for the business. Survival in the future is crucial.

Una and Frank are aware that the economy is thriving at present and that constant research and development must take place if the business is to stay competitive. Una has researched the state agencies that can be of assistance to them in the future and has identified the type of assistance each can offer to the business. Una and Frank as the top management team are reviewing how their business has developed and how it might proceed in the future.

Questions

- Q1.** Describe in detail **three** benefits of organising the workplace into Project Groups? **6 marks**
- Q2.** Identify **three** possible problems which Una and Frank face in the short-term and/or long-term. Suggest a possible way to deal with each problem. **12 marks**
- Q3.** Identify and explain **three** issues which Una and Frank should consider when preparing their long-term plan. **12 marks**