



MACHAKOS UNIVERSITY

University Examinations for 2018/2019 Academic Year

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

**THIRD YEAR SECOND SEMESTER EXAMINATION FOR
BACHELOR OF COMMERCE**

BBA 314: PUBLIC RELATIONS

DATE: 23/4/2019

TIME: 8:30 – 10:30 AM

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer question ONE and any other TWO questions

QUESTION ONE (COMPULSORY) (30 MARKS)

PREPARING EMPLOYEES FOR CHANGE

Moving house is often a logistical challenge for a family, so imagine trying to move approximately 2000 employees to new premises. This challenge, coupled with the requirement to change the way in which employees use their work environment was the task facing Mutiso's company. To address this issue, Mutiso's company initiated a National Workplace Change Program with the first project being the relocation of a significant number of its workforce to a new office tower in the heart of the city. This was a significant change for many employees and the company realised that communication would play a critical role in preparing its employees for the move, by:

- promoting the far-reaching behavioural changes required to achieve its long-term goals
- maintaining business continuity during the move
- creating a communication blueprint for future sites.

Mutiso's company appointed Synchronous Communication to develop and implement a robust communication strategy to support this significant corporate initiative. Significant research was used to inform the communication strategy. Research commissioned by Mutiso's company on new workplace designs and cultural aspirations was reviewed to identify potential issues and challenges. Briefings with key stakeholders focused on areas such as maintaining business

continuity while preparing employees for the move as well as the aspirational targets of promoting the collaborative and sharing behaviours the new workplace was designed to foster. Target publics for the program included:

- the employees who would be relocating
- the workplace champions
- senior and line management
- internal support departments such as human resources

Unlike many external communication programs, all of these publics were known to Mutiso's company and could be communicated with through corporate channels. To provide a context for the communication program, the positioning statement 'Outside the Square' was used to focus the program and help internal audiences 'tune in' to program-specific communication. Six specific stages of the change journey were identified to guide the communication program: announce, engage and excite, align and champion, signal and promote, celebrate and embrace, and reinforce and sustain. Each stage used different tactics to promote the key messages and desired behaviours with a strong focus on visual and participatory mediums to attract interest. For example, one of the key change and communication tools was a stage-based display centre with full scale fit-out prototypes of a typical work area. The display was used extensively throughout the program to give employees a first-hand experience of what the new workspace would look like and how it would support the way they work. Other tactics included specially designed videos for each stage, a dedicated intranet, site tours, more than 200 employee briefings, newsletters, workplace guides, welcome kits and celebratory events to mark key milestones. While much of the program was designed to create a sense of excitement and achievement, it also dealt directly with employee concerns, recognising the overall wariness to change and the challenges the new open plan workspace would bring. By working with employees, these issues were identified and collaborative solutions designed and implemented. Overall, the program was highly successful: all relocations occurred on schedule and all employees were able to work without issue from day one in the new premises.

(Public Relations Management in Organisations by Amisha Mehta and Robina Xavier).

- a) Explain the role of the public relations officer in the above as far as internal and external communication is concerned. (10 marks)
- b) Discuss the steps that the PRO should follow when conducting market research before locating to the new location. (10 marks)
- c) Explain the difference between PR and marketing. (10 marks)

QUESTION TWO (20 MARKS)

- a) Discuss the difference between public relations and advertising. (10 marks)
- b) Explain why it is important for an organization to address customers' complaints as quickly as possible. (10 marks)

QUESTION THREE (20 MARKS)

- a) Explain the need for every organization to maintain a Crisis Management team (10 marks)
- b) Discuss the role of public relation practitioner in every organization. (10 marks)

QUESTION FOUR (20 MARKS)

- a) Explain the principles that any public relations practitioner should observe while dealing with the media (10 marks)
- b) Discuss the Public Relation challenges in the 21st century. (10 marks)

QUESTION FIVE (20 MARKS)

- a) Culture can powerfully shape the organization long term success. Discuss the importance of organization culture. (10 marks)
- b) A good news release should tell a story the same way a journalist could have written it. Discuss the essentials of a good presentation of a news release. (10 marks)