

Reading



The Company

BLB Inc. is an international, high-tech I.T. Company based in Rochester, Kent, in England. The company was founded by J.K. Motherboard in 1978 and has gone from strength to strength since then. The head office is still in Kent, and there are now manufacturing and distribution subsidiaries throughout the world in Morocco, India, the USA? China and Russia. L.C.C.S. (Low Cost Country Sourcing) means that we are able to provide our customers with cutting-edge solutions at highly competitive prices. Our new one-stop-shop strategy to provide a multitude of services tailored to customer needs is just part of our Customer Excellence policy.

The firm is divided into 4 main divisions, or B.U.s : C.O.B., domotics, industrial electronics and nanotechnology, and our target markets include transport (avionics and railways), the medical research field and the world of finance and banking. We used to work a lot with small engineering firms but demand from financial institutions means that this year uour primary customers are firms dealing on the stock markets.

The remarkable annual growth rate of the company means that our turnover for 2010 reached the outstanding sum of 154?000?000 Euros.

We have 5,600 employees worldwide who are engaged in the quest for continuous improvement and complete customer satisfaction.

I. Answer the following comprehension questions

1. The firm has
 - a. gone from one place to another.
 - b. been continuously growing since it was established.
 - c. lost strength compared with 1978.
 - d. shown no weakness since 1978.
2. What has made the prices so competitive ?
 - a. sourcing from a country with lower production and labour costs.
 - b. providing cutting-edge solutions.
 - c. finding resources for customers at high prices.
 - d. looking for the best bargain on local markets.
3. What is the advantage to a customer of a one-stop-shop organisation ?
 - a. The customer only needs to go to one store.
 - b. The customer only has to visit the company once.
 - c. All the services the customer needs can be found in one place.
 - d. The business manager does the shopping.
4. Which are the market segments the company aims at ?
 - a. nanotechnology and electronics.
 - b. small engineering firms.
 - c. transport, finance and banking.
 - d. stock markets.
5. What is the company striving for ?
 - a. the question of continuous improvement.
 - b. ongoing betterment and full customer satisfaction.
 - c. improving customer satisfaction.
 - d. satisfying their 5,600 employees.

II. Choose the right definition.

1. Sourcing is :
 - a. the strategic management of external resources.
 - b. selling to customers in developing countries
 - c. procurement from a particular source.
2. Turnover is :
 - a. a company's total income after expenses and taxes are deducted
 - b. a company's total income before expenses and taxes are deducted
 - c. a company's total income after expenses but before tax is deducted
3. B.U. stands for :
 - a. business unit
 - b. business unity
 - c. business united

4. In this text, C.O.B. stands for :
 a. Close of Business b. Case of Beer c. Chip-on-board
5. Domatics is :
 a. working from home
 b. home automation
 c. a policy which refers to a national market

Writing

- I. **Complete this text about a manager using the words listed below.**
Performance – tasks – grievances – aware – overall – skills – assess
– duties – delegate – requirements – briefing – link

A “manager” could be described as the “.....1” between corporate objectives and the hard work of the employees, showing employees how their department and they as individuals are part of the2 corporate structure. A good manager can assess the3 and know-how of the people he works with, and therefore assign4 and responsibilities to the right team member.

Managers have to5 tasks and assign resources, as well as cope with handling6 and solving problems in the workplace. Added to this are the day-to-day report writing, meetings and7 other executives.

The best managers are8 that everyone has a role to play within the company and that it is important to work “with” people to encourage and motivate them. Here are some of the key9 of a manager :

- Explain company policies, procedures and ethics to new employees.
- Provide a clear view of the job to be done and10 expectations.
- Delegate work to others appropriately.
-11 performance six-monthly or yearly.
- Give feedback about the subordinates' performance.
- Identify training12 for individual development.

II. Which is the odd-man out, and why ?

1	cutting-edge / innovative / old-fashioned / leading-edge
2	mass-produced / tailored / custom-made / made-to-order

3	division /business unit (BU) / strategic business unit (SBU) / department
4	target / objective / purposelessness / aim / goal
5	firm / society / company / enterprise / corporation
6	based / located / situated / localised
7	subsidiary / head office / headquarters / main office
8	policy / politic / protocol / practice / guiding principle

III. Correct the underlined words

1. It exists many different kinds of company or corporation from a one-man business to a multinational group.
2. The diamond company has announced earnings of £13.9 billion today – the biggest ever benefits of a South African company.
3. That investment in Bread & Buns has proven very rentable.
4. The company has delocalized to an East European country which was unpopular with the employees.
5. The economical situation in France and the Euro area has improved since the slump of the early 21st century.
6. The C.E.O. won an annual salary of about \$900,000, to which was added £50 million in stock awards and a huge cash bonus.
7. The company was implanted in India in 1926.
8. One of the best ways to touch your customers is by demographic targeting.
9. If you organize your work well you will win time in the long run.
10. The informations given out by the P.R. Officer reassured the shareholders about the financial stability of the company.

Listening : Europe needs to support technology more.



I. Listen to the document and answer the following questions :

1. Who is Larry Page ?
2. What does he reproach European leaders with ?
3. Which large corporations have settled in Silicon Valley ?
4. Why is Silicon Valley a great place for technology ?
5. Which British newspaper did Mr Page talk to ?
6. How much does he want to invest in new ideas ?
7. What is Europe often reproached with ?

II. Listen again and do the gap-fill exercise. 🖨

Writing

I. Write the sentences in the mixed-up sentences exercise.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

The End