Humanities for Engineers (UHU005)

**Case Study No. 2**

**Oracle: globalisation, virtualisation and managing individuals**

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**Oracle: globalisation, virtualisation and managing individuals**

## Q1. What is a traditional structure for an international organisation? How might Oracle’s structure differ from a traditional international structure?

## Solution Q1. A traditional structure for an international organization often follows a more centralized and hierarchical model, with clear lines of authority and reporting.

## Oracle's structure is more complex and dynamic than a traditional international structure :-

* **Global and Geographic Virtual Teams**: Oracle forms virtual teams across both global and geographic lines for specific projects or client needs. These teams are dynamic, with members joining or leaving as needed, which contrasts with the more static and clearly defined roles in traditional structures.
* **Consultative Leadership Approach**: Initially, Oracle used a more directive approach, typical of many traditional international organizations. However, over time, it shifted to a consultative leadership style, involving local managers in decision-making and planning, which helps mitigate resistance to global initiatives. Traditional structures might maintain a top-down approach, where decisions are made centrally with less input from local managers.
* **Focus on Knowledge Management**: Oracle places a strong emphasis on knowledge management, teamwork, and cross-cultural understanding, which are critical in its global operations. Traditional structures might not prioritize these elements to the same extent, instead focusing more on hierarchical control and clear-cut reporting lines.

## Q2. If you were the IT manager in Melbourne, what non-technical training or development might help you manage your workplace challenges?

## Solution Q2. As an IT manager in Melbourne managing a global team, several non-technical training and development programs could help you address workplace challenges effectively:

* **Remote Team Management**: Since your team is likely dispersed across different regions, training in remote team management would be valuable. This could include strategies for fostering team cohesion, maintaining motivation, and ensuring clear communication despite geographical distances. Training might also cover the use of virtual collaboration tools effectively.
* **Conflict Resolution and Negotiation**: Conflicts can arise in any team, especially in a global context where cultural differences may play a role. Training in conflict resolution and negotiation can help you address issues quickly and fairly, maintaining a positive work environment.

## Q3. Not all international organisations have the technology of Oracle. Speculate on the impact of that technology as an enabler for Oracle. How does an international organisation without these technologies manage its globalised workforce? Oracle is on the leading edge of technology. What lower technology activities do other organisations engage in?

## Solution Q3. Organizations without Oracle’s level of technology face more significant challenges in managing their global workforce. These companies often rely on lower-tech approaches to communication, collaboration, and management:

* **Regional Offices**: Companies may establish regional offices with more autonomy to handle local operations. This decentralized approach reduces the need for constant communication with headquarters but can lead to inconsistencies across the organization.
* **Phone and Fax Communication**: Without robust email and collaboration platforms, companies may rely on phone calls and fax for communication, which are less efficient and harder to track.
* **Scheduled Meetings Across Time Zones**: Without real-time collaboration tools, organizations may have to rely on scheduled conference calls, often outside regular working hours, to coordinate between different time zones. This can lead to delays and inefficiencies.

Organizations without cutting-edge technology might engage in the following lower-tech activities to manage their global workforce:

* **Physical Mail and Courier Services**: For official documentation and contracts, physical mail and courier services might still be widely used.
* **Simple Project Management Tools**: Companies may use basic project management tools like spreadsheets or standalone software that aren’t integrated globally.
* **Localized IT Systems**: Instead of a single global IT system, organizations might use localized IT systems that are tailored to specific regions but do not communicate seamlessly with other parts of the company.