

CASE STUDY: “MANAGEMENT & CONSULTANCY SERVICES PTE LTD” (Note: This is a fictitious Non-profit Organisation, based loosely on information about real organisations.)

Management & Consultancy Services Pte. Ltd. (MCS) is a Singapore headquartered consultancy group that provides general management, accounting, and leadership development services to Multinational Companies (MNC) operating in Singapore and neighbouring countries including Malaysia, Indonesia, and Vietnam. MCS was set up some years ago by five friends that included two Singaporeans, one Malaysian, one Indonesian and one Vietnamese who were in the same project group for BU5601 Fundamentals of Management when they studied in NTU. The five friends were the co-founders of MCS, and they remain friends and business partners, holding senior leadership positions in MCS.

In the early days of the company, these five friends spent some time making decisions as a group about the nature of the business and where they wanted the business to be in the future. Although they had elected one of the Singaporeans to be the President (or CEO) of the company, they chose to make collective decisions about their company’s direction, believing this was the best way to make such important decisions. After completing a SWOT analysis, they decided to have a single company with branch operations in their own countries. They deliberately chose to employ experienced professionals and to offer high quality management consulting services to MNC operating in each country.

The Singaporean who was elected President of the company is responsible for the leadership of the company. She is supported in the Singapore HQ by the other Singaporean who is designated as an “Executive Vice President” (EVP) and is responsible for the company’s business in Singapore. The other three business partners are also designated as EVP and are responsible for the company’s business and overall operations in their respective countries.

The President must ensure consistency across the company in terms of three major business functions: Finance & Accounts (F&A), Administration & Standards of Service (A&S) and Human Resource Management (HRM). The President has three Senior Vice Presidents (SVP) reporting to her, who are based in the Singapore HQ and are each responsible for one of the three business

functions. Each SVP has a Vice President (VP) in each of the four countries to ensure the business function is carried out well in each country. The VPs also report to the respective EVP for their country office. In addition, in each country office, there is a VP of Operations & Business Development (OBD) who is responsible for the services offered in that country, the VP reports to the EVP for that country office. There are several “middle managers” in each office who oversee and coordinate the various activities of the staff in each country office.

The leadership of MCS is in good hands. The President is a quiet unassuming person who is modest and unpretentious. She is ambitious for the company overall performance, and she freely gives credit to her EVPs for successes in their regional offices. However, she always takes full responsibility for any poor results in the company. This is in keeping with her solid values which are based on her personal beliefs about responsibility and recognition. She has a high level of passion and commitment to the purpose of helping organizations do well by providing quality management consulting to them. She leads with her heart as well as her head, showing courage but also compassion.

As MCS operates internationally, it faces certain challenges in each of the four countries. For example, there are variations in economic growth across the countries such that the overall profits from the country offices may fluctuate from year to year. There are also variations in government requirements for businesses in each country and the threat of some political instability in at least one of the countries. In addition, there are many ethnicities represented across the four countries, for example in Singapore and Malaysia: Chinese, Malay, and Indian (although the proportion of these is quite different in Singapore compared to Malaysia). This means, for example, taking account of different religious practices in each country, and how they may affect customers and employees.

The leaders have inspired the MCS employees to genuinely believe they are working towards helping businesses improve, which will help their respective countries' economies to grow. Through a variety of team-building activities, managers help supervisors and employees to develop positive relationships with one another and feel connected and committed to the company. Managers also takes in interest in employees' careers, and they coach them on-the-job, as well as

provide opportunities for further training off-the-job. Managers constantly seek feedback from clients, and they share this openly with their employees to highlight areas for further improvement and to foster a sense of achievement for “a job well done”. Employees are paid well, and they appreciate the extra recognition they receive (eg. “Consultant of the month” awards) for outstanding work.

END OF CASE STUDY

TUTORIAL QUESTIONS

Before each tutorial, please answer the relevant questions indicated below in a Word document titled tutorial_1_yourname (tutorial_2_yourname etc.). You are to submit your Tutorial Answers into the relevant Turnitin Folder in the Assessment folder in the NTULearn site. "Turnitin" is a software program that will check your submission against every written document (including websites) on the worldwide web! It will show up any significant overlap between what you have written and what is elsewhere on the web (including all past and present university assignments). If the overlap is high enough to suggest "plagiarism", your instructor will have a serious talk with you! Please make sure that your Tutorial Answers are *your own work*!

Note that you are required to complete and attach the "Cover page for Tutorial Answers" to the front of a Word Document that has your answers to the case study questions.

Your Tutorial Answers will be used as the basis for group discussions, so please do your assignment before each tutorial.

Some of the questions are based on application of management concepts to the case study, while some require you to do extra research or thinking about other situations.

Tutorial 5 (Covers Lecture 8 and 9)

Lecture 8 – Motivation

Q1. Explain the two (2) types of factors in Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation, with one (1) example for each factor of what MCS does to make sure employees are motivated and not dissatisfied.

Q2. According to our textbook, managers can organise the workplace in such a way that employees will be fully engaged at work, and this leads to high motivation and high organisational performance. Identify the three (3) elements that create employee engagement with a brief example from the case for each element that shows MCS is doing this.

Q3. Assuming you are the President of MCS, suggest some innovative ideas to motivate the employees to excel in their respective roles. (Apply a motivation theory to explain your ideas.)

Lecture 9 – Communication

Q4. According to the article by Whitehouse (2015) Despite what Zappos says, middle managers still matter: "Middle management's job is to create communication channels that allow ideas to percolate and circulate throughout the organization." Identify and describe three (3) Mintzberg's

Ten (10) Manager roles which emphasize the importance of communication. (This question links the learning in Lecture 9 to Lecture 1.)

Q5. Suggest two (2) specific channels of communication that managers at MCS could use and describe how they could use each channel to engage employees and help them connect with one another across geographic boundaries.

Tutorial 6 (Covers Lecture 10 and 11)

Lecture 10 – Effective Team Management

Q1. Based on the Theory of Effective Team Leadership, cite the examples of team leadership behaviours exhibited by the President of MCS.

Q2. Reference the textbook (and lecture notes) on “What Effective Virtual Team Leaders Do”, assuming you are the President of MCS, what will you do to maintain an effective senior management team (among the President and 4 EVPs) virtually especially under current pandemic situation. (Apply all appropriate Team theories in the context of a virtual setting.)

Lecture 11 – Managing Human Resources and Understanding Individual Behaviour

Q3. If MCS can encourage good communication across the geographic boundaries, describe two (2) benefits, or “dividends”, of managing their workforce diversity well. Justify your answer. (If necessary, make some inferences in your justification.)

Q4. Assuming you are the SVP for HRM, and your President of MCS gave you one Key Performance Indicator (KPI) to win the Singapore’s Best Employers 2023 (reference: <https://www.straitstimes.com/best-employers-singapore-2021>), you are to develop a broad HR strategy to achieve this goal. (You may want to reference these tactics to develop your HR Strategy: <https://www.peoplekeep.com/blog/five-tactics-to-become-an-employer-of-choice>)