Rich-Con Questions

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1. 1. **What are three aspects/areas in the case where Rich-Con performed well?**

One area in which Rich-Con performed well was in recognizing that the legacy environment that was being used was outdated and would eventually cause the company issues as software and hardware were losing outside support in the form of replacement hardware and software support. Another area in which the company performed well was in seeking to utilize new software to replace the handwritten order system that was being used at the time since the handwritten system was more prone to mistakes from misplacements and overall, less efficient than a digital system. Finally, Rich-Con made excellent use of finances when it came to buying equipment for the shop floor. It makes sense to take advantage of cheap existing equipment from failing companies, assuming that each piece of equipment is still in good condition and maintenance will not cost more than new equipment, rather than buying new more expensive equipment.

* 1. **What are three aspects/areas in the case where Rich-Con performed poorly?**

In the Rich-Con case, the company performed poorly in attempting to write an entirely new piece of software without any sort of outside help or outsourcing. Yes, developing software in-house would be cheaper than outsourcing. However, Rich-Con lacked the necessary expertise to even write the software in the first place. Sawyer herself even states that she had little faith in the employees' ability to use a new system, and yet she wanted to trust these employees with new software. Rather than saving money, they ended up wasting money and time on a failed project. Additionally, by relying only on the vendor for implementing the new system, Sawyer set the company up for failure. The company had already struggled with building a new piece of software which Sawyer had overseen. She clearly needed extra help in implementing the new system, yet she trusted the vendor building the software with every aspect of implementation. The vendor offered little training with the new system which left employees grappling with little know-how when the system was eventually implemented. Finally, Rich-Con implemented the system far too hastily. There was no incremental testing of the new system, and the employees lacked sufficient training to even use the system. Sawyer even says that she felt like the company was not ready for the new system but jumped on pushing out the software anyway which eventually led to the crisis the company faced shortly after.

1. **What do you think about Rich-Con’s approach in designing and implementing a new system?**

Rich-Con’s overall concept was good; however, the execution of said concept was poor. I feel that the first significant mistake Rich-Con made was opting to buy an integrated software package. While this was a better alternative to the in-house development, which was inadequate and ineffective, the software package lacked the requirements and capacity to cater to the specific needs of Rich-Con. In addition to this, the overall absence of user testing coupled with the under training of employees significantly worked to their detriment. These issues, along with an already insufficient system for the company’s unique needs, created a recipe for disaster that ultimately led to failure. Essentially, I feel that it was too large and too hasty of a transition that was not adequately primed for; and the incautious approach to accomplishing said transition reflects an overall poor approach to design and implementation of a new system.

1. **How did the new system cause the chaos within the company?**

The system caused chaos because many employees were not trained to the extent that they should have been. This led to ineffective communication regarding customer orders. They could not get orders out and incorrectly recorded inventory, shipping, invoicing, and more. In summary, the company could not properly give customers their orders which caused an uproar of customer dissatisfaction.

1. **How would you judge Marty Sawyer’s performance as president of Rich-Con?**

I believe Marty Sawyer had a great vision for Rich-Con. It was time for the company to turn to technology to efficiently manage tasks and customer orders. However, the switch to the new system was executed very badly. I believe it was rushed and employees should have spent much more time training for use of the new system. Employees also should have learned basic computer skills to better understand the new system.

1. **If you were Marty Sawyer, what decision would you make at the end of the case about resolving the crisis that was caused by the new system?**

A good decision for Rich-Con would be to halt use of the system temporarily. System Three will eventually give out, so a new system is necessary and should be implemented soon. However, Marty Sawyer jumped the gun on her implementation and did not thoroughly test the system or train her employees. Due to this, Rich-Con should revert to System Three temporarily.

Once the chaos that the new system’s failed implementation caused is repaired, Rich-Con should troubleshoot the new system and determine if the system was configured incorrectly or if it is malfunctioning. If the new system can be configured correctly and is indeed not malfunctioning, then her next step should be to work on configuring the system to work for the company's processes. If and when the new system is fixed, she should then thoroughly train her employees in the new system. Then, instead of making a complete change from the old system to the new one so suddenly, she should implement the new system slowly to get employees okay with and used to the change as well as catch issues before they rely completely on the new system.