

## SECTION TWO

# Assessing Student Progress

Student progress is assessed on the bases of:

- Participation in class.
- Responses to the *EXERCISES*, *CASES*, and *CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS* presented in the textbook and this Instructor's Manual.
- Responses to the *TEST BANK* questions in this Instructor's Manual.
- Extended *ASSIGNMENT/EXAMINATION QUESTIONS*.

This section lists assignment and examination questions that have been used successfully with students using the textbook.

# Assignment/Examination Questions

## CHAPTER 1. International Management and Culture

1. “The activities performed by any organization express the influence of its business environment.” How far is this definition adequate?
2. “The critical factor in achieving economic growth is access to international markets. Cultural and political factors are always secondary.” What reasons are there for agreeing? What reasons for disagreeing?
3. “An organization is most at risk when all of its members share the same view of the world and have the same priorities.” Under what circumstances might this be true?
4. Naisbitt (1995) writes:

The new Asia, forged by economic integration, technology (especially telecommunications), travel, and mobility of people, will increasingly look like one coherent region.  
(p. ix)

Under what circumstances might the business person today be wise to treat Asia as a single region? Under what conditions might he/she be wise not to?

## CHAPTER 2. Comparing Cultures

5. “Comparative models of culture explain different priorities in management communication. They explain little else.” What reasons are there for agreeing/for disagreeing?
6. “International business has developed so rapidly over the past 25 years that Hofstede’s model is now badly out of date.” Discuss.
7. What are the strengths of Hofstede’s model? What criticisms can be made?

8. "Hofstede's findings only tell us how far cultures differ. They do not establish the characteristics of any one management culture." How far do you agree?

### CHAPTER 3. Shifts in the Culture

9. "In the new world order, national cultural values are converging in some respects, diverging in others." How far do you support this view?
10. What evidence is there for supposing that the economic downturn in the Japanese economy reflects a fundamental shift in the culture? What evidence is there for supposing that the downturn is causing a culture shift?
11. How far has the culture of your country shifted over the past 20 years? Give examples to show evidence of shift, and explain the factors that have caused it.
12. What "foreign interventions" have influenced your culture over the past 20 years? Explain what effects have been beneficial and what have been harmful.

### CHAPTER 4. Organizational Culture

13. "An organizational chart showing who reports to whom gives the expatriate manager all the information he needs to know about the organizational culture." Do you agree?
14. "Typically, a manager tries to create the organizational culture that fits his personality. In practice, the organizational culture produces the manager." How far is this true?
15. How far can the same concept of "culture" be applied to both the national group and to members of a company? Why? Why not?
16. Hofstede (1991) claimed that the scores derived from his research samples:  
... paradoxically contain no information about the corporate culture of IBM: they only show to what extent people from an IBM subsidiary in country X answered the same questions differently from similar people in country Y. (pp. 25-6)

Do you agree?

## CHAPTER 5. Culture and Communication

17. “One-way communication has no possible function in a modern company.” How far is this true of a local company based in your country of interest? How far is it true of a multinational branch operating in this country?
18. “At root, all management communications are trying to persuade.” How does the manager try to persuade?
19. How does culture influence communication style? How does task influence communication style? Give examples.
20. Design a transactional communication model that can describe spoken interactions in your study group. Why might this be more effective than one- or two-way models?

## CHAPTER 6. Needs and Incentives

21. How far does Hofstede’s (1997) model provide a basic tool for predicting motivations in your region of interest? What other theoretical tools might be applied?
22. One Thai manager commented, “the only way I can motivate my workers is to offer a pay rise. They all want to buy a BMW.” What implications does this have for the design of incentives in your country of interest?
23. Under what circumstances are employees likely to be motivated by factors other than financial incentives?
24. How far do factors in the organizational culture motivate performance?

## CHAPTER 7. Dispute Resolution and Negotiation

25. How can Hofstede’s model be applied to explaining cross-cultural conflicts in your country of interest? What other models are useful?
26. “In individualist cultures and collectivist cultures, organizational conflicts arise for the same reasons.” Do you agree? What are the implications for the international manager working in your country of interest?
27. “In Asia, people do everything possible to avoid conflict. The opposite is true in the West.” What is the evidence for disagreeing with this?
28. What happens in the organization when arguments and competition spiral out of control? What factors determine how the problem is resolved?

**CHAPTER 8. Formal Structures**

29. In what respects do task specifications influence organizational structure? In what respects does structure influence task?
30. "Organizational structures have the primary function of determining what communications are appropriate to solving specific tasks." What are the implications in a time of change?
31. "The main function of an organizational culture is to regulate structural relationships, not to regulate roles." How far do you agree?
32. "The main function of organizational structure is to control who communicates with whom, about what, and how." Discuss.

**CHAPTER 9. Informal Systems**

33. "Formal structures have the effect of regulating who does not communicate with whom. Informal systems help members to overcome this weakness." Discuss.
34. How far can the continued existence of patronage in organizations in your country of interest be explained by economic factors and how far by cultural factors?
35. In what circumstances might informal structures be more effective than formal structures in controlling behaviour?
36. In what circumstances is the concept of patronage useful in explaining business relations?

**CHAPTER 10. Planning Change**

37. Change is painful, and people resist it unless it is obviously in their interests. What implications does this have for organizational planning?
38. Under what conditions can management effectively implement a plan for change?
39. "Plans for change succeed only when the appropriate communication structures have been established." What structures?
40. How does culture influence planning processes? What other factors may be more important? Give examples from your country of interest.

**CHAPTER 11. Globalization and Localization**

41. Why might globalization lead to an increase in local powers to control?
42. In what respects do globalizing tendencies erode the influences of national cultural values? In what respects do they increase them?
43. Who gains from globalization? Who loses? Why?
44. "There is no such person as the entirely global manager." Discuss.

**CHAPTER 12. Family Companies**

45. "The globalization process reinforces the weaknesses of the local family company." How far do you agree? Give examples from your country of interest.
46. What problems are shared by small family companies everywhere? What problems are specific to family companies operating in your country of interest? Explain why they are specific.
47. How far are family disputes the main cause of family company failure in your country of interest? What factors might be more important?
48. In what respects have family companies in your country of interest been most influenced by Anglo management techniques, and in what respects least influenced?

**CHAPTER 13. Designing and Implementing Strategy**

49. "In practice, theories of globalization have little impact on the work of strategic planning." Do you agree? Why, or why not?
50. Under what circumstances is it realistic to treat strategic planning and strategic implementation as two separate processes?
51. "Anglo notions of strategic planning are entirely relevant to family companies in less-developed countries." What reasons are there for disagreeing?
52. "Emergent strategy is what the strategic manager does, not the strategic planner." Discuss.

**CHAPTER 14. Headquarters and Subsidiary**

53. "The perceptions of risk rather than risk itself decide how headquarters controls its foreign subsidiary." How far do you agree? And disagree?
54. What alternatives are available to headquarters in controlling its foreign subsidiary? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?
55. "Conflicts between headquarters and subsidiary can usually be explained by failures of communication." Discuss.
56. "The need to protect its technology is the most significant factor in determining headquarters policy in relation to its subsidiary." Do you agree that this is the "most significant"?

**CHAPTER 15. International Joint Ventures**

57. "Ownership of technologies is the main factor that influences how the partners agree to control their IJV." Do you agree?
58. What factors contribute most to success in an international joint venture? How important are factors in the business environment?
59. "The most important reason for a company to form a joint venture is to acquire new knowledge and new skills." What knowledge and skills can a company acquire this way?
60. "The success of an international joint venture depends above all on cultural compatibilities between the partners, not on personal trust." Do you agree? Explain your answer.

**CHAPTER 16. Staffing to Control**

61. Why might problems in the organizational culture endanger the success of an international joint venture? How can the partners protect the venture against these problems?
62. Why do some multinational companies use bureaucratic systems to control their subsidiaries? Why do some prefer to use cultural controls?
63. "The Western multinational should make more expatriate appointments in order to exert greater headquarters control." Under what circumstances should a Western company take this advice? In what circumstances should it not?

64. “A multinational company only empowers its foreign subsidiary when it can find no other way of motivating subsidiary staff.” Do you agree? What other factors can influence the decision to empower?

## **CHAPTER 17. Expatriate Assignments**

65. What is expatriate success? How can a multinational headquarters protect itself against expatriate failure?
66. Demands for expatriate labor are changing. What changes are occurring? How can they be explained?
67. Under what circumstances might a multinational company decide to appoint an expatriate to manage its foreign subsidiary? Under what circumstances might it be wiser not to?
68. What factors influence the success or failure of an expatriate assignment?

## **CHAPTER 18. Training and Supporting an Expatriate Assignment**

69. The appointment of an expatriate manager to a subsidiary in your region may be an expensive option. Consider various strategies by which his/her value can be maximized.
70. “If expatriate selection is efficient, further training for the assignment is not needed.” In what circumstances might this be true? In what circumstances might it not be true?
71. “The most important criterion when appointing an expatriate is that he/she should have good communication skills.” How can the company help him/her develop these skills.
72. “Needs analysis is largely a waste of time. It is immediately out of date.” How far do you agree? Discuss the implications for training.