



EXAMINER'S REPORT

AUGUST 2007

B2B MARKETING MANAGEMENT

General Comments

A number of students had clearly not prepared with any degree of efficiency and as a consequence, the marks recorded were very low. Apart from a lack of knowledge of the relevant topic, poor examination technique also militated against a stronger performance in this subject. Students must make full and equal use of the time allocated for each question. It is not acceptable that a superficial and brief answer be submitted for Section A. This is worth 40% of the overall marks and should receive 40% of the time allocation.

Question 1

Students understood the rudiments of change management but did not fully address the role that marketing personnel play in effecting such a process. Weaker answers were superficial and evoked no real understanding of the issues. More focus was needed on the concept of customer-driven supply chains i.e. designing supply chains from the perspective of the customer and not from the internal and myopic stance of company-related issues. Answers should also made use of one or two detailed case studies to support the line of opinion and argument. This was missing in the weaker answers.

Question 2

Answers to this question varied in terms of detail and relevance. Stronger scripts focused on the issue of risk and the need to review the pedigree of suppliers before entering into agreements or LTG's. Weaker answers only addressed the make-up of the typical DME and supplied a description of the job specification of each member. This latter approach did not address the main thrust of the original question and left the examiner with little scope for awarding marks.

Question 3

With this question, students were expected to focus on the need for some primary research input from local middlemen or "experts" that would be in a far stronger position to shed some insight into market opportunities for tractor tyres in China. The weaknesses of relying on secondary data needed to be assessed – particularly in the case of a country like China where serious doubts about the credibility and accuracy of secondary data are often expressed. Such a uni-dimensional approach should be considered as "high risk". Generally the students addressed this question in a satisfactory manner.

Question 4

This was only partially addressed by the candidates. More focus was needed on the ways in which power is used in the relationship between middlemen and suppliers. There are plenty of well documented examples of how this actually happens. Students should have discussed the origins of power and how in particular, power-dependency positions emerge.

Question 5

Some candidates demonstrated a poor understanding of what key account selling entails. This provided an opportunity to draw upon material covered in other classes on the programme. Stronger answers related the discussion to the specific situation that was identified in the question.

Question 6

This was not a popular question and only three candidates attempted it. Generally it was handled effectively.