

Unit 1- Management Today

Case Studies

1. E-Commerce: Is it Practical for an Entrepreneur?

SCENARIO

Lindsay owns and runs a home-based basket service. She and her part-time assistant create and deliver custom baskets for special occasions. Many baskets feature local foods and flowers. Store openings, office parties, bridal and baby showers, wedding anniversaries, and hostess gifts account for most of her business. Lindsay takes great pride in her ability to talk with customers and design baskets around their color schemes. Now she's wondering if she could increase her profits by putting her business online.

CRITICAL THINKING

As an entrepreneur, what are some of the factors Lindsay should consider as she makes her decision? How does her risk differ from that of a manager in a large corporation? Why?

2. Performance Review

SCENARIO

A regional business chain just bought the local supermarket that Shawn manages. Last week he received a memo from national headquarters announcing that for the next six months all stores must raise sales by a minimum of five percent. Shawn has been told that his annual performance review will be tied to his store's performance.

CRITICAL THINKING

What are some of the strategies Shawn can use to increase sales? How can he help keep employees' morale and productivity high as they adjust to the new management system?

3. The Continuum of Time and Education

Before you answer the critical thinking questions, briefly examine the two tables below. Think about how education has influenced business.

Percent of Americans with high school diplomas	
1900	6.3 %
1998	82.8 %

Percent of Americans aged 25 and older with diplomas in 1998	
High school diploma	82.8 %
College diploma	24.4 %

CRITICAL THINKING

Part One Describe the changing needs of business—from the Industrial Age to the Internet Age. Show how the various management studies and theories discussed in this unit reflect this ongoing change, which affects all aspects of business.

Part Two Imagine you are a manager and it's your job to stay ahead of the competition. Can you suggest any ongoing or future changes you see in the economy that could lead to changes in management style?

4. The Spreading of a Virus

SCENARIO

Some businesses save money by adopting the management concept of the inventory control: just-in-time (JIT). This has been successful in reducing the amount of parts and raw materials a business needs to stock. Under JIT the factory estimates what is needed to produce a designated quantity of finished goods and keeps only that amount on hand.

CRITICAL THINKING

Computer viruses are always threatening the business world. Consider what would happen if a company's digitized JIT inventory was corrupted by a virus. What might be the effects of a virus?

5. Corporate Culture

SCENARIO

Imagine that you'll be working for a corporation one day. Start to identify the corporate culture in a particular company and judge where—or if—you might fit in.

CRITICAL THINKING

What strategies can you use to find out about the corporate culture?

Can you match your positive strengths with what the company seems to want and value?