

PRACTICE 5

Situation: You work for a very successful company producing newspapers and magazines. The owner of the company, Mr Oliver Hochbaum, has a very high profile nationally and internationally. He started his career publishing a school magazine 20 years ago and he has seen his *business grow into a massive publishing business.*

Mr Hochbaum is often invited to participate in public events and you often assist him in this. Yesterday he gave you some documents and said this to you:

"Could you please help me? I'm off to America for a few days and I promised to do a job for the local college, Northern Business School, before I go. The students have to come up with an innovative business idea and I agreed to look at them and decide which was the best. I've got some notes about each idea but could you please summarise the information about the ideas into a report? The college has narrowed it down to five ideas and there are two prizes – one for the idea which is most environmentally friendly and one for the idea which makes best use of information and communication technology.

I would be very grateful if you would put all the ideas into a sensible report to which I can refer and please suggest which of the ideas should receive the prizes. I know I should do this but I really haven't time and your judgement is as good as mine."

The notes on the five ideas are as follows:

The Quickbolt

This is a lock for inner doors in a house – can be fitted to inside doors in minutes – doesn't damage the door – no holes drilled – fits most standard doors – makes them secure – any burglar who breaks in through outside door or window – can't get any further into property – would give up.

Not very expensive to produce – great benefit to home owners.

The mini wind-turbine

Not cheap to produce – but can pay for itself in a few years. Turbine to produce electricity for places like schools, farms, small businesses etc from wind. No fossil fuels involved – no carbon dioxide emissions.

Can store electricity generated when wind is blowing, for times when it is not – any surplus power fed into national grid. Quite small in appearance – can be placed on roof.

The interactive website

Great help for small businesses – provides on-line communication between a company and its suppliers – fully active website – secure information on orders, purchases, deliveries and payments exchanged between companies.

Saves time in small companies – can be used 24 hours a day – not expensive software – but some training for use required.

The heated cushion

This is a cushion which can be used at outdoor events (eg by spectators at sporting events) – disposable cushion – like a normal cushion – two layers of soft material – but also an inner layer of chemicals which, when mixed, gently heat up for about 2 hours. Comfortable and warm seat on cold days.

Perfectly safe – well tested – can be thrown away after use.

Multi-layered fun soap

Often difficult to persuade children to wash – can now encourage them with “fun” soap – looks like ordinary bar of soap but comprises several layers – changes colour as each layer is used – contains no harmful chemicals – but is often used very quickly – therefore more sold – good business idea.

Task

Write a report giving a logical presentation of the five ideas. You should suggest which idea should receive each prize and support your recommendations.

(25 marks)