



Section 2.6

Activity 2.6.1

1. A 'trade union' (labour union) is an organisation of working people with the objective of improving the pay and working conditions of its members and providing them with support and legal services.
2. Responsibilities of trade unions might include:
 - Representing workers' interests during negotiations on pay and working conditions
 - Providing legal support to employees in dispute with their employers
 - Giving advice to employees in employment-related issues.
3. Employers might not want employees to join trade unions because they:
 - Force up wages and costs
 - Make it more difficult to manage workers
 - Make it more difficult for managers to bring about change.
4. The benefits to call-centre workers of joining UNI might be to:
 - Represent their interests during negotiations on pay and working conditions
 - Provide legal support
 - Give them advice on employment-related issues
 - Push wages
 - Improve working conditions
 - Prevent unfair/illegal employment practices.

This could bring the following problems:

- If wages and labour costs are forced up the business might cut jobs
- Some workers might not like being involved in union-led industrial disputes
- The union may make decisions that suit the union rather than the employees.

Activity 2.6.2

Research task.

Activity 2.6.3

1. Changes in the external business environment that might have had an incremental effect on business include:



- Increased digitisation of data makes storing and retrieving information easier
- Greater use of renewable energy increases energy costs
- Faster internet connections facilitates digital marketing.

2. Changes in the external business environment that might have had dramatic effect on business include:

- A major terrorist attack
- Government defaults on its debt
- A significant weather event (hurricane).

Activity 2.6.4

1. A 'project champion' is a person assigned to support and drive a project forward, explains the benefits of change, and assists and supports the team putting change into practice.
2. A project champion has the following roles on a new project:
 - Planning
 - Investigating
 - Presenting at meetings
 - Ensuring the availability of resources.
3. Factors that would make a project champion successful might be:
 - Personal qualities of the project champion
 - The willingness of the organisation to accept change
 - The attractiveness of the project.

Activity 2.6.5

1. 'Change management' is the planning, implementing, controlling and reviewing the movement of an organisation from its current state to a new one.
2. Britax might face change because of:
 - Competition
 - Changes in technology
 - Changes in government regulations.



3. Britax might reduce resistance to change by:
 - Creating a project team to lead change
 - Developing a vision and strategy for change
 - Making effective communication of the change vision.
4. The problems Britax might find as it tries to manage change could be resistant:
 - Employees
 - Management
 - Corporate culture
 - Trade unions
 - Shareholders
 - Customers
 - Banks and other creditors
 - Business environment.

Activity 2.6.6

The importance of ethics to Walmart's managers might be:

- Rights of workers to have union representation
- Pay and conditions of workers
- Influence of workers on decision-making
- Redundancy.

The importance of culture to Walmart's managers might be:

- The way that managers and employees relate to each other
- Communication within the organisation
- Reaction to conflict
- Reaction to change.

Exam practice question

1. A 'single-union agreement' is when an employer recognises just one union for purposes of collective bargaining.
2. Trade unions might benefit from collective bargaining because workers:
 - Are in a stronger negotiating position as one united voice
 - Can take industrial action more effectively.



3. A globalised union might bring the following benefits to:
 - Employers – they can negotiate with workers across national boundaries in a globalised world
 - Employees – they are represented by one organisation if they move between countries.
4. Multinational companies might be affected by the development of one large international trade union in the following ways:
 - The union representing workers is a powerful negotiating force
 - Negotiations are easier with a single union
 - They can deal with workers across national boundaries
 - They could face industrial action in more than one country.

Key concept question

Employer and employee relations may be affected in the following ways by change:

- Where it creates changes to employees' work
- Leads to redundancies
- Creates more jobs
- Leads to changes in pay rates
- Alters hierarchies.

Employer and employee relations may be affected in the following ways by ethics:

- The way managers deal with employees
- The way employees deal with managers
- A conflict between profit and employee welfare
- Management and worker reaction to conflict.