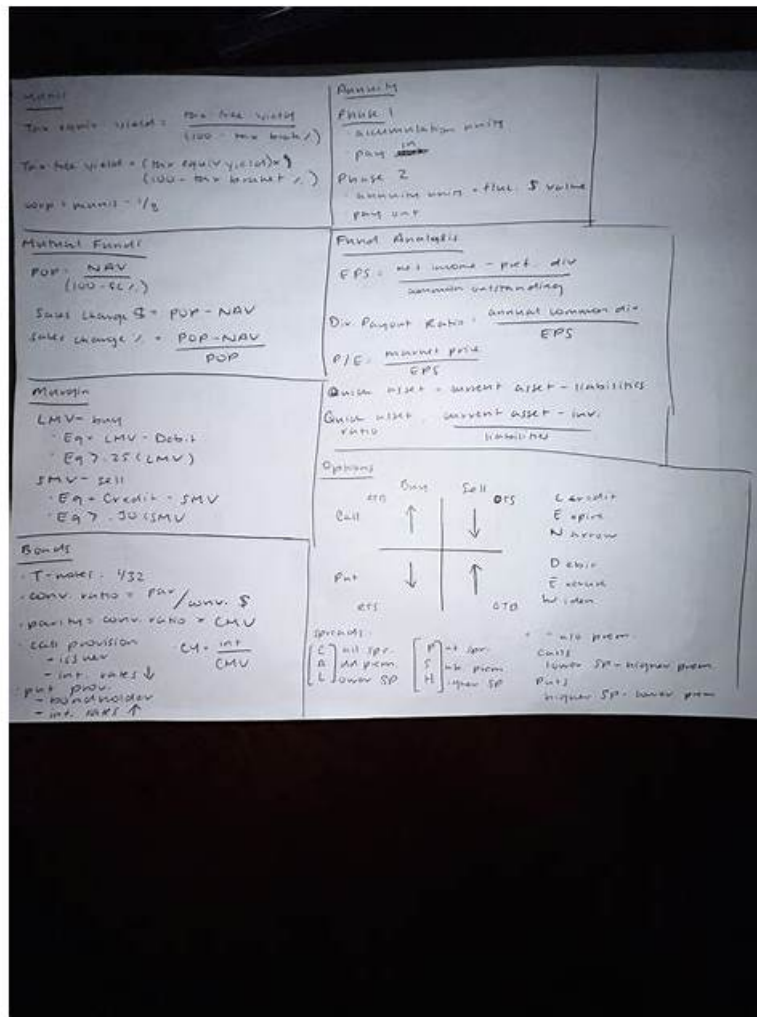


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CIPS Global Commercial Strategy Sample Questions (Q33-Q38):

NEW QUESTION # 33

SIMULATION

XYZ is a toilet paper manufacturer based in the UK. It has 2 large factories employing over 500 staff and a complex supply chain sourcing paper from different forests around the world. XYZ is making some strategic changes to the way it operates including changes to staffing structure and introducing more automation. Discuss 4 causes of resistance to change that staff at XYZ may experience and examine how the CEO of XYZ can successfully manage this resistance to change

Answer:

Explanation:

Causes of Resistance to Change & Strategies to Manage It - XYZ Case Study When XYZ, a UK-based toilet paper manufacturer, implements strategic changes such as staff restructuring and automation, employees may resist change due to uncertainty, fear, and disruption to their work environment. Below are four key causes of resistance and how the CEO can manage them effectively.

Causes of Resistance to Change

1. Fear of Job Loss

Cause: Employees may fear that automation will replace their jobs, leading to layoffs. Factory workers and administrative staff may feel particularly vulnerable.

Example: If machines take over manual processes like paper cutting and packaging, employees may see this as a direct threat to their roles.

2. Lack of Communication and Transparency

Cause: When management fails to communicate the reasons for change, employees may speculate and assume the worst. Unclear messages lead to distrust.

Example: If XYZ's CEO announces restructuring without explaining why and how jobs will be affected, employees may feel insecure and disengaged.

3. Loss of Skills and Status

Cause: Some employees, especially long-serving workers, may feel their skills are becoming obsolete due to automation. Managers may resist change if they fear losing power in a new structure.

Example: A production line supervisor may oppose automation because it reduces the need for human oversight, making their role seem redundant.

4. Organizational Culture and Habit

Cause: Employees are accustomed to specific ways of working, and sudden changes disrupt routine. Resistance occurs when changes challenge existing work culture.

Example: XYZ's employees may have always used manual processes, and shifting to AI-driven production feels unfamiliar and uncomfortable.

How the CEO Can Manage Resistance to Change

1. Effective Communication Strategy

□ What to do?

Clearly explain why the changes are necessary (e.g., cost efficiency, competitiveness).

Use town hall meetings, emails, and team discussions to provide updates.

Address employee concerns directly to reduce uncertainty.

Example: The CEO can send monthly updates on automation, ensuring transparency and reducing fear.

2. Employee Involvement and Engagement

□ What to do?

Involve staff in decision-making to give them a sense of control.

Create cross-functional teams to gather employee input.

Provide opportunities for feedback and discussion.

Example: XYZ can form a worker's advisory panel to gather employee concerns and address them proactively.

3. Training and Upskilling Programs

□ What to do?

Offer training programs to help employees adapt to new technologies.

Provide reskilling opportunities for employees whose jobs are affected.

Reassure staff that automation will create new roles, not just eliminate jobs.

Example: XYZ can introduce digital skills training for workers transitioning from manual processes to automated systems.

4. Change Champions & Support Systems

□ What to do?

Appoint change champions (influential employees) to advocate for change.

Offer emotional and psychological support (e.g., HR consultations, career guidance).

Recognize and reward employees who embrace change.

Example: XYZ can offer bonuses or promotions to employees who successfully transition into new roles.

Conclusion

Resistance to change is natural, but the CEO of XYZ can minimize resistance through clear communication, employee involvement, training, and structured support. By managing resistance effectively, XYZ can ensure a smooth transition while maintaining employee morale and operational efficiency.

NEW QUESTION # 34

SIMULATION

XYZ is an airline whose profits have been severely affected due to not being able to operate during a two-year pandemic. Cash reserves at the organisation are at an all time low and XYZ are looking into sources of short-term funding for working capital. Discuss four sources and suggest which one XYZ should use.

Answer:

Explanation:

Sources of Short-Term Funding for XYZ Airline

Introduction

XYZ, an airline with severe financial losses due to a two-year pandemic, requires short-term funding to maintain operations. With cash reserves at an all-time low, the airline needs immediate working capital to cover employee salaries, aircraft maintenance, airport fees, and fuel costs.

Short-term funding options provide temporary liquidity but come with different risks and costs. This answer evaluates four sources of short-term funding and recommends the best option for XYZ.

1. Bank Overdraft (Flexible Borrowing Facility)

Explanation:

A bank overdraft allows XYZ to withdraw funds beyond its available balance, up to a set limit.

☐ Advantages

- ✓ Flexible borrowing - Funds can be accessed as needed.
- ✓ Quick to arrange - Available through existing bank relationships.
- ✓ Interest only on borrowed amount - No need to take a large loan upfront.

☐ Disadvantages

- ✗ High-interest rates - Overdrafts often have higher interest than standard loans.
- ✗ Limited borrowing capacity - May not be enough to cover all costs.
- ✗ Bank may demand repayment at short notice.

Best for: Covering minor cash flow shortages but not large-scale operational funding.

2. Short-Term Business Loan (Fixed-Term Borrowing from a Bank or Lender) Explanation:

A short-term loan provides a lump sum of cash that XYZ must repay over a set period (typically 3-12 months).

☐ Advantages

- ✓ Larger funding amounts available - More substantial than overdrafts.
- ✓ Predictable repayment terms - Fixed monthly payments help with planning.
- ✓ Can be secured or unsecured - Secured loans offer lower interest rates.

☐ Disadvantages

- ✗ Requires repayment even if revenue is still low.
- ✗ Potentially high interest rates, especially for unsecured loans.
- ✗ Approval process may take time.

Best for: Covering larger operational costs like aircraft maintenance and staff salaries.

3. Sale and Leaseback of Assets (Liquidity from Selling Existing Assets) Explanation:

XYZ can sell its aircraft or other assets to an investor or leasing company and then lease them back for continued use.

☐ Advantages

- ✓ Immediate cash injection without losing operational assets.
- ✓ No repayment burden - Unlike loans, it does not increase debt levels.
- ✓ Improves cash flow for essential expenses.

☐ Disadvantages

- ✗ Long-term cost increase - Leasing is more expensive than owning in the long run.
- ✗ Loss of asset ownership - Limits financial flexibility in the future.
- ✗ Dependent on market conditions - Aircraft resale values fluctuate.

Best for: Raising large capital quickly while continuing operations.

4. Government Grants or Emergency Aid (Public Sector Financial Assistance) Explanation:

Governments often provide financial aid or grants to struggling industries, especially airlines affected by global crises.

☐ Advantages

- ✓ No repayment required - Unlike loans, grants do not need to be repaid.
- ✓ Low risk - Does not increase financial liabilities.
- ✓ Supports industry stability - Governments want airlines to survive for economic reasons.

☐ Disadvantages

- ✘ Lengthy approval process - Bureaucratic delays may not provide immediate relief.
- ✘ Strict eligibility requirements - XYZ must meet conditions set by the government.
- ✘ Potential public criticism - Bailouts may attract negative media attention.

Best for: Long-term financial recovery rather than immediate short-term cash flow issues.

5. Recommendation: Best Source for XYZ

Recommended Option: Sale and Leaseback of Assets

Why?

- ☐ Provides immediate liquidity - Essential for covering urgent operational costs.
- ☐ No additional debt burden - Unlike loans, it does not create financial liabilities.
- ☐ Ensures business continuity - XYZ can still operate leased aircraft.

Secondary Option: Short-Term Loan

If sale and leaseback is not viable, a short-term business loan can be used for emergency liquidity, but it increases financial risk.

Final Takeaway:

Sale and Leaseback → Best for quick large-scale funding without debt.

Short-Term Loan → A backup option if leasing is unavailable.

NEW QUESTION # 35

SIMULATION

Currency Options and Currency Swaps are instruments used in foreign exchange. Explain the advantages of using these derivatives compared to the use of spot transactions

Answer:

Explanation:

Comparison of Currency Options, Currency Swaps, and Spot Transactions in Foreign Exchange Introduction In international trade and finance, companies dealing with foreign currencies use various financial instruments to manage exchange rate risks. The three main instruments are:

Currency Options - Provide the right (but not obligation) to exchange currency at a fixed rate in the future.

Currency Swaps - A contract to exchange currency flows over a set period.

Spot Transactions - A simple immediate currency exchange based on the current market rate.

While spot transactions offer simplicity, currency options and swaps provide better risk management and flexibility.

1. Currency Options (Flexible Risk Management Tool)

Definition

A currency option gives the holder the right, but not the obligation, to exchange a currency at a predetermined rate on or before a specific date.

☐ Types of Options:

Call Option - Right to buy a currency at a fixed rate.

Put Option - Right to sell a currency at a fixed rate.

Example: A UK importer buying goods from the US purchases a GBP/USD call option to protect against an increase in the exchange rate.

Advantages of Currency Options Over Spot Transactions

- ✓ Risk Protection - Protects against adverse currency movements while maintaining upside potential.
- ✓ Flexibility - No obligation to execute the transaction if the exchange rate is favorable.
- ✓ Ideal for Hedging Future Payments - Useful for businesses with uncertain future cash flows in foreign currencies.

☐ Disadvantages

✘ Premium Costs - Buying options requires upfront payment.

✘ Complexity - More sophisticated than spot transactions.

Best for: Businesses managing currency risk with unpredictable payment schedules.

2. Currency Swaps (Long-Term Hedging Solution)

Definition

A currency swap is a contract between two parties to exchange currency flows over a set period at a predetermined rate.

☐ How It Works:

Companies exchange principal and interest payments in different currencies.

Used to secure long-term financing in foreign markets.

Example: A UK company with a loan in USD enters a GBP/USD swap with a US firm to exchange interest payments, reducing exchange rate risk.

Advantages of Currency Swaps Over Spot Transactions

- ✓ Long-Term Stability - Protects businesses from long-term exchange rate fluctuations.

- ✓ Cost Efficiency - Often cheaper than converting currency via spot transactions repeatedly.
- ✓ Reduces Interest Rate Risk - Useful for companies with foreign currency debt obligations.

□ Disadvantages

- ✗ Less Flexible Than Options - The swap contract must be followed as agreed.
- ✗ Counterparty Risk - Dependent on the financial stability of the other party.

Best for: Companies with long-term foreign currency liabilities (e.g., loans, international contracts).

3. Spot Transactions (Immediate Currency Exchange, No Hedging)

Definition

A spot transaction is a straightforward exchange of currency at the current market rate for immediate settlement (usually within two days).

Example: A European exporter receiving USD payment converts it immediately into EUR using a spot transaction.

Limitations Compared to Derivatives (Options & Swaps)

- No Risk Protection - Subject to daily exchange rate volatility.
- Not Suitable for Future Obligations - Cannot hedge against expected payments or receipts.
- Higher Costs for Frequent Transactions - Repeated spot trades incur forex fees and spread costs.

Best for: Small businesses or one-time transactions with no currency risk concerns.

4. Comparison Table: Currency Options, Swaps, and Spot Transactions

Feature	Currency Options 🎯	Currency Swaps 🔄	Spot Transactions 📍
Purpose	Hedging future exchange rate risks	Long-term currency exchange risk management	Immediate currency exchange
Obligation to Execute	No (buyer has a choice)	Yes (contractually binding)	Yes (immediate settlement)
Risk Protection	High	Medium (for long-term contracts)	None
Flexibility	High (optional execution)	Low (fixed agreement)	High (instant exchange)
Best for	Businesses with uncertain future cash flows in foreign currency	Companies with long-term foreign currency liabilities	Immediate, one-time payments
Main Disadvantage	Costly premiums	Counterparty risk	High exposure to currency volatility

Key Takeaway:

Currency options offer flexibility and protection but come at a cost.

Currency swaps provide long-term stability for large corporations.

Spot transactions are simple but expose businesses to market fluctuations.

5. Conclusion & Best Recommendation

For businesses engaged in international trade, investments, or loans, using currency options and swaps is superior to spot transactions, as they provide:

- Protection from exchange rate volatility.
- Cost efficiency for large or recurring transactions.
- Better financial planning and risk management.

Best Choice Based on Business Needs:

For short-term flexibility → Currency Options

For long-term contracts or loans → Currency Swaps

For one-time currency exchange → Spot Transactions

By selecting the right derivative instrument, businesses can reduce foreign exchange risk and improve financial stability.

NEW QUESTION # 36

SIMULATION

Analyse the GE McKinsey Matrix as a tool to influence directional policy

Answer:

Explanation:

Analysis of the GE McKinsey Matrix as a Tool to Influence Directional Policy Introduction The GE McKinsey Matrix is a strategic tool used by businesses to prioritize investments, allocate resources, and influence directional policy. It expands on the BCG Matrix by evaluating business units or product portfolios based on two dimensions:

Industry Attractiveness (external factors such as market growth, competition, and profitability).

Business Unit Strength (internal factors such as brand strength, financial performance, and operational efficiency).

The matrix helps organizations decide where to invest, grow, or divest, making it a valuable tool for influencing long-term strategic direction.

1. Explanation of the GE McKinsey Matrix

The GE McKinsey Matrix categorizes business units into nine strategic zones, guiding investment decisions:

| Industry Attractiveness →

Business Unit Strength ↓	High	Medium	Low
Strong	Invest/Grow	Invest selectively	Maintain profitability
Medium	Invest selectively	Maintain/Protect	Harvest or Divest
Weak	Maintain/Protect	Harvest	Divest

Example:

Apple's iPhone (High Industry, Strong Business Unit) → Invest & Grow

Microsoft's Bing Search Engine (Low Industry, Weak Business Unit) → Divest or Harvest ☐

2. How the GE McKinsey Matrix Influences Directional Policy

1. Investment Prioritization

- ☐ Identifies which business units deserve more investment.
- ☐ Helps companies allocate resources to high-potential markets.

Example: Amazon invests heavily in AWS (Cloud Computing) due to high industry growth and strong business positioning.

2. Market Entry and Expansion Decisions

- ☐ Assists in geographical and market expansion decisions.
- ☐ Helps assess whether to enter emerging industries.

Example: Tesla entered renewable energy (solar panels, batteries) due to high industry potential.

3. Strategic Exit or Divestment Decisions

- ☐ Identifies low-performing divisions that should be divested.
- ☐ Prevents financial losses by exiting declining markets.

Example: GE sold its financial services division (GE Capital) to refocus on industrial manufacturing.

4. Balancing Risk and Portfolio Diversification

- ☐ Encourages a balanced portfolio of high-growth and stable businesses.
- ☐ Ensures companies avoid over-reliance on a single product or market.

Example: Google (Alphabet) maintains a diverse portfolio of AI, search, and cloud businesses to balance risk.

3. Advantages and Limitations of the GE McKinsey Matrix

☐ Advantages

- ✓ More detailed than the BCG Matrix - Considers multiple industry and business factors.
- ✓ Helps with long-term strategic planning - Guides investment, expansion, and divestment.
- ✓ Balances risk and growth - Prevents over-reliance on a single revenue source.

☐ Limitations

- ✗ Subjective analysis - Industry attractiveness and business strength are difficult to quantify.
- ✗ Complex implementation - Requires detailed data collection and industry research.
- ✗ No direct action plan - Only provides guidance on resource allocation, not execution strategies.

4. Conclusion

The GE McKinsey Matrix is a powerful tool for influencing directional policy by helping companies prioritize investments, expand into attractive markets, and exit underperforming businesses. However, it should be used alongside financial analysis and market research to ensure strategic success.

NEW QUESTION # 37

SIMULATION

XYZ is a successful cake manufacturer and wishes to expand the business to create additional confectionary items. The expansion will require the purchase of a further manufacturing facility, investment in machinery and the hiring of more staff. The CEO and CFO are confident that the diversification will be a success and are discussing ways to raise funding for the expansion and are debating

between debt funding and funding. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each approach?

Answer:

Explanation:

Evaluation of Debt Funding vs. Equity Funding for XYZ's Expansion

Introduction

As XYZ, a successful cake manufacturer, plans to expand into additional confectionery items, it requires significant investment in a new manufacturing facility, machinery, and staff. To finance this expansion, the company must choose between:

Debt Funding - Borrowing from banks or financial institutions.

Equity Funding - Raising capital by selling shares to investors.

Each funding option has advantages and disadvantages that impact financial stability, ownership control, and long-term business strategy.

1. Debt Funding (Loans, Bonds, or Credit Facilities)

Definition

Debt funding involves borrowing money from banks, lenders, or issuing corporate bonds, which must be repaid with interest.

□ Key Characteristics:

The company retains full ownership and decision-making control.

Loan repayments are fixed and predictable.

Interest payments are tax-deductible.

Example: XYZ takes a bank loan of £2 million to purchase new machinery and repay it over five years with interest.

Advantages of Debt Funding

- ✓ Ownership Retention - XYZ keeps full control over business decisions.
- ✓ Predictable Repayment Plan - Fixed monthly payments make financial planning easier.
- ✓ Tax Benefits - Interest payments reduce taxable income.
- ✓ Shorter-Term Obligation - Once the loan is repaid, there are no further obligations.

Disadvantages of Debt Funding

- Repayment Pressure - Regular repayments increase financial risk during slow sales periods.
- Interest Costs - High-interest rates can reduce profitability.
- Collateral Requirement - Lenders may require company assets as security.
- Credit Risk - If XYZ fails to repay, it risks losing assets or damaging credit ratings.

Best for: Companies that want to maintain ownership and have stable revenue streams to cover repayments.

2. Equity Funding (Selling Shares to Investors or Venture Capitalists)

Definition

Equity funding involves raising capital by selling shares in the company to investors, such as private investors, venture capitalists, or the stock market.

□ Key Characteristics:

No repayment obligations, but shareholders expect a return on investment (ROI).

Investors gain partial ownership and may influence business decisions.

Funding amount depends on the company's valuation and investor interest.

Example: XYZ sells 20% of its shares to a private investor for £3 million, which funds new production lines.

Advantages of Equity Funding

- ✓ No Repayment Obligation - Reduces financial burden on cash flow.
- ✓ Access to Large Capital - Easier to raise significant funds for expansion.
- ✓ Attracts Strategic Investors - Investors may provide expertise and industry connections.
- ✓ Spreads Business Risk - Losses are shared with investors, reducing pressure on XYZ.

Disadvantages of Equity Funding

- Loss of Ownership & Control - Investors gain a say in company decisions.
- Profit Sharing - Dividends or profit-sharing reduce earnings for existing owners.
- Longer Decision-Making Process - Raising equity capital takes time due to negotiations and regulatory compliance.
- Dilution of Shares - Selling shares reduces the founder's ownership percentage.

Best for: Companies needing large funding amounts with less repayment pressure, but willing to share ownership and decision-making.

3. Comparison: Debt vs. Equity Funding

Factor	Debt Funding 🏦	Equity Funding 📈
Ownership Control	Full ownership retained	Ownership diluted (shared with investors)
Repayment Obligation	Yes (fixed loan repayments)	No repayment required
Financial Risk	High (risk of default)	Lower (no debt burden)
Cost to Company	Interest payments	Profit-sharing/dividends
Speed of Acquisition	Faster (bank loans, bonds)	Slower (investor negotiations, due diligence)
Best for	Companies with stable cash flows	Companies needing large investment with high growth potential

Key Takeaway: The choice between debt and equity funding depends on XYZ's risk tolerance, cash flow stability, and long-term growth strategy.

4. Conclusion & Recommendation

Both debt funding and equity funding offer advantages and risks for XYZ's expansion.

- ☐ Debt funding is ideal if XYZ wants to retain ownership and has stable revenue to cover loan repayments.
- ☐ Equity funding is better if XYZ seeks larger investments, strategic expertise, and reduced financial risk.

Recommended Approach: A hybrid strategy, combining debt for short-term capital needs and equity for long-term growth, can provide financial flexibility while minimizing risks.

NEW QUESTION # 38

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