

ASSIGNMENT QUESTION

Programme:	Executive MBA
Module Code & Name:	EMBOB - Organisational Behaviour
Business School:	IEMD Graduate Business School, Spain
Course Leader:	
Title:	N/A

Assignment Tasks:

You are a human resource manager at a large Spanish bank. As part of your job you are required to conduct annual performance appraisals for 30 employees at various levels in the bank, ranging from young trainees right through to experienced mid-tier managers. These performance appraisal interviews are important for the employees and the organisation: they are used to determine pay levels for the next year and also form the basis for major decisions about promotion, training, etc. From next year, however, the annual performance appraisal will take on an extra significance as the bank is thinking of adopting a “rank and yank” approach. This means that the top 20% of performers at each level across the organisation will each receive a performance bonus while the bottom 20% of performers at each level across the organization will be fired. So, from next year the stakes will be very high and, as part of this year’s performance appraisal you must give the employees clear and unambiguous advice about how they need to improve their performance in order to avoid being fired and perhaps even gain a bonus. Before their appraisal each employee is required to fill out a self-assessment questionnaire. The first question asks the employee, “How would you rate your overall performance in the previous year.” They can rate themselves from “Poor” to “Outstanding.”

Lea Restrepo

The first person you seen is Les Restrepo. She is a 23 year old management trainee who has just completed her first year with the bank. At her interview 18 months ago (which you conducted) Lea Restrepo was confident she would graduate from the university with merit, although when she actually got her results in average. Still, she had impressed at the interview with her enthusiasm and knowledge of the banking system (her father had been a senior executive at another bank) so you decided to take a punt on her and offer her one of the coveted and highly competitive management training positions. Unfortunately for you and Lea Restrepo’s colleagues, this decision isn’t working out very well. Her performance has been, at best, average and she struggles with lots of things that other trainees are finding to be straightforward and she often blames others for her mistakes. Still, her enthusiasm is undiminished and she enters into each new task with great vigor (even if she usually ends up doing a poor job). In fact, it’s difficult to persuade Lea Restrepo not to volunteer for jobs that she is obviously (to others at least) unsuited for. In her self-assessment, she has rated his performance over the previous year as “Outstanding.”

Charles Nadal

The next person you see is Carles Nadal. He joined the bank as a 18 year old trainee and has slowly but surely made his way up to be a competent and reliable supervisor of a 10 person team of bank tellers. These are the “front line” customer service operatives who deal with the public all day. It can be a stressful and demanding job but it creates few obvious opportunities for the team

members to exercise their autonomy. Still, Carles Nadal's is one of the top performing teams in the bank and they report high levels of job satisfaction and morale. They all attribute this to his low-key but supportive management style. Despite this, Carles Nadal is extremely modest about his own skills and achievements. He is quite shy and introverted but seems to have a knack for getting the best out of others. At 35, Carles Nadal has been in the supervisor's role for 5 years and you think he should really be thinking about applying for promotion, although it is unlikely he will ever do this without considerable prompting and support. He attributes all the team's successes to its members and never takes any credit himself. In his self-assessment, he has rated her performance over the previous year as "Average."

Questions:

Part A: An Analysis of Lea Restrepo and Carles Nadal's Situation

1. How would you explain Lea Restrepo and Carles Nadal's behaviour in relation to their own performance and the performance of their colleagues?
2. Bearing in mind your response to the previous question, suggest advice that you would give Carles Nadal so that he gets rated in the top 20% and receives a fair annual bonus? Conversely, what advice would you give Lea Restrepo so that she can avoid being "yanked" (i.e., being rated in the bottom 20% and fired) next year? In your answer be sure to discuss how both Lea Restrepo and Carles Nadal might improve their self-awareness about their own competence and how they might use this to work on improving their **work performance**.

Part B: A Personal Reflection

In any situation where our performance is being rated by others, most of us tend to overestimate our competence level in the particular skill being rated. In light of this insight, reflect on how you would respond in the future if, like Lea Restrepo, your success at university doesn't meet your own expectations? Be sure to take into consideration key attitudinal and behavioural factors like your response to advice and criticism, your levels of motivation, your willingness to seek help, etc. Also, be sure to draw on additional appropriate material you find through your own research.

The word count is 5,000 words (+/- 10%) with indexed headings & subheadings in the following format:

- A Cover Page
- Table of Contents
- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion
- Reference Section

The **Harvard Referencing System** must be adopted with in-text citations.

Further Instructions for Assignment.

1. The general assessment criteria are: Substance, Originality of work, Presentation, Use of illustrations / examples, where appropriate.
2. Independent research on the relevant topics is encouraged.
3. Special consideration would be given to students who demonstrate an in-depth analysis of the questions.

4. Candidates who simply regurgitate their answers from sources may risk getting a poor mark and may risk failing the paper outright if plagiarism is detected.
5. Any similarities between individual assignments will result in a fail grade.
6. The presentation format should be:
 - Top, Bottom margins : 1"
 - Left margins : 1.25"
 - Right margin : 0.8"
 - Header & Footer : 0.5"
 - Printing : Single Page A4 size
 - Vertical spacing : Double
 - Font type & size : Times Roman 12 pt
 - Binding : Comb
 - Page numbering : Page x of y (right justified in footer)
7. Retain a copy of your assignment.
8. You are required to submit a labelled soft copy of your assignment.

Legends for Term Used

Terms	General Description of Work Presented
Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant issues consistently identified/discussed/analysed to a very high standard with very clear explanations/rationale/justification. • Very strong evidence of wider reading with relevant citations used providing very strong insights into the topic of discussion. • Critical analysis very well developed with strong identifications of pros and cons and the impact/implications of both to the issue at hand. • Very professionally and creatively presented quality of work that is very neat and tidy with very coherent flows of arguments.
Good/Strong/Clear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant issues consistently identified/discussed/analysed to a high standard with clear explanations/rationale/justification. • Strong evidence of wider reading with relevant citations used providing strong insights into the topic of discussion. • Critical analysis well developed with good identifications of pros and cons and the impact/implications of both to the issue at hand. • Some professionalism and creativity shown in the quality of presentation

	with work that is neat and tidy with coherent flows of arguments.
Some / Fair / Somewhat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant issues consistently identified/discussed/analysed to a satisfactory standard with good explanations/rationale/justification. Some inconsistencies. • Some evidence of wider reading with relevant citations used providing good insights into the topic of discussion. • Critical analysis somewhat developed with some identifications of pros and cons and the impact/implications of both to the issue at hand. • Some professionalism and creativity shown in the quality of presentation with work that is somewhat neat and tidy with some coherent flows of arguments.
Poor / Little / Partial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant issues consistently identified/discussed/analysed to an inconsistent standard with poor explanations/rationale/justification. Many inconsistencies detected. • Little evidence of wider reading with relevant citations used providing little insights into the topic of discussion. • Critical analysis poorly developed with little or no identifications of pros and cons and the impact/implications of both to the issue at hand. • Little professionalism and creativity shown in the quality of presentation with work that is NOT neat and tidy with incoherent flows of arguments.