

Exam in Organizational Psychology, Bachelor, Autumn 2014

Course code: PSY2406

Formal issues:

- The home exam is handed-out through the reception of the department of psychology on November 5 at 9:00. It will be available on Fronter shortly after that.
- If you have **formal** questions during the exam period, you can post these questions in the blog in the Fronter room of this course. I will answer them once a day during the exam period.
- The maximum length of your exam assignment is 3000 words. Report the word count on the front page of the assignment.
- Write your candidate number that you find in StudentWeb (do not use your name) and course code on the front page of your assignment. Remember to fill out the "obligatorisk erklæring" (Declaration).
Obligatorisk erklæring: <http://www.sv.uio.no/psi/studier/admin/>
Declaration: <http://www.uio.no/english/studies/admin/examinations/cheating/index.html>
- Please submit the exam assignment in 2 copies at the reception of the department of psychology before November 19, 14:00.

It is not required for this exam to refer to scientific work apart from the textbooks. However, if you use any kind of other sources, please use the APA-style for citing:

<http://www.sv.uio.no/english/studies/resources/sources-and-references/APA-guide-summary>

CASE INCIDENT 2

An odd couple? P&G and Google combine cultures

At Procter & Gamble, the corporate culture is so rigid, employees jokingly call themselves 'Proctoids'. In contrast, Google staffers are urged to wander the halls on company-provided scooters and brainstorm on public whiteboards. Now, this odd couple thinks they have something to gain from one another – so they've started swapping employees. So far, about two-dozen staffers from the two companies have spent weeks dipping into each other's staff training programmes and sitting in on meetings where business plans get hammered out. The initiative has been noticed. Previously, neither company had granted this kind of access to outsiders.

Closer ties are crucial to both sides. P&G, the biggest advertising spender in the world, is waking up to the reality that the next generation of laundry-detergent, toilet-paper and skin-cream buyers now spends more time online than watching TV. And Google craves a bigger slice of P&G's €6.5 billion annual ad budget as its own revenue growth slows.

As the two companies started working together, the gulf between them quickly became apparent. When actress Salma Hayek unveiled an ambitious promotion for P&G's Pampers brand, the Google team was stunned to learn that Pampers hadn't invited any 'motherhood' bloggers – women who run popular websites about child-rearing – to attend the press conference. For their part, P&G employees gasped in surprise during a Tide brand meeting when a Google job-swapper apparently didn't realise that Tide's signature orange-coloured packaging is a key part of the brand's image.

These differences did provide important learning opportunities. Denise Chudy, a Google sales-team leader, caused a stir when she showed a dozen or so P&G employees some Google data indicating that online searches for the word 'coupons' was up about 50 per cent over the previous 12 months. Tracking online searches was 'one of the best learning [experiences] of my first week at Google,' P&G marketing manager Catherine Duval-Russell wrote on an in-house blog.

P&G has a long history as a marketing innovator. Back in the late 1800s, it developed one of the earliest truly national brands – Ivory soap – with saturation advertising in everything from farm journals to religious periodicals. Decades later, radio and TV 'soap operas' famously took their name from the fact that P&G advertised so heavily on them to reach women.

As part of a month-long job swap a mixed group of Google and P&G staffers crowded into P&G's archives to study the 62-year history of Tide. Sessions like these are a key part of P&G's training of up-and-coming brand managers.

Pouring over decades of marketing material – all featuring Tide's bright orange packaging in a starring role – Google employee Jen Bradburn took note. 'It's helpful to know not to mess with the orange too much,' she said. That elicited a chorus of unambiguous 'yesses' from P&G employees in attendance.

Google job-swappers have started adopting P&G's language. During a session on evaluating in-store displays, a P&G marketer described the company's standard method, known as 'stop, hold, close'. Product packaging first needs to 'stop' a shopper. 'Hold' is a pause to read the label, and 'close' is when a shopper puts the product in the cart. 'This is just like our text ads,' Google's Ms. Chudy said. The headline is the 'stop', its description is the 'hold' and the 'close' is clicking through to the website. 'This is going to get so much easier, now that I'm learning their language,' she said.

With mommy-bloggers, Pampers was quick to follow Google's advice. After failing to invite any to its initial Pampers promotion press conference, it invited a dozen or so to visit P&G's baby division. The bloggers claim to have drawn anywhere from 100,000 to 6 million visitors to their websites. The bloggers toured the facilities, met with executives, got a primer on product design and had their hotel and travel costs covered. Their visit was captured on video for other P&G brands to study.

Pampers' sense of discovery of the power of bloggers is apparent in the video. 'This is a very different type of communication than what Procter & Gamble is used to,' Pampers spokesman Bryan McCleary advises viewers of the video. The bloggers 'don't like advertising,' he says in the video. 'What they do like are exciting stories . . . and those things actually can become word-of-mouth advertising, if done in the right way.'

Source: Based on E. Byron, 'A new odd couple: Google, P&G swap workers to spur innovation', *Wall Street Journal*, (Eastern edition), 19 November 2008, p. A.1.

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Please answer all questions on the case “An odd couple? P&G and Google combine culture”:

1. Describe the learning and development activities in this case and answer the following question: Are these learning and development activities helpful to fulfil learning needs?
2. How do the cultures of P&G and Google differ? Do you think the method described in the case would be effective in changing a company’s culture? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Do you think Google employees would want to work at P&G? Would P&G employees want to work at Google? Explain your answer.