



ASSIGNMENT 1st SEMESTER : STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT (STRM)

STUDY UNITS COVERED : CHAPTERS 1 - 4

DUE DATE : 3.00 p.m. 16 March 2010

TOTAL MARKS : 100

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES FOR COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

The complete 'Instructions to Students for Completing and Submitting Assignments' must be collected from any IMM GSM office, or the relevant Student Support Centre or can be downloaded from the IMM website. It is essential that the complete instructions be studied prior to commencing your assignment. The following points highlight only a few important notes.

- 1) You are required to submit ONE assignment per subject.
- 2) The assignment will contribute 20% towards the final examination mark, and the other 80% will be made up from the examination, however, the examination papers will count out of 100%.
- 3) Although your assignment will contribute towards your final examination mark, you do not have to earn credits for admission to the examinations; you are automatically accepted on registering for the exam.
- 4) Number all the pages of your assignment (e.g. page 1 of 4) and write your name and surname, student number and subject at the top of **each** page.
- 5) The IMM GSM requires assignments to be presented in a typed format, on plain A4 paper. This assignment must be completed within a limit of 1500 words, excluding the bibliography.
- 6) A separate assignment cover, which is provided by the IMM GSM, must be attached to the front of each assignment.
- 7) Retain a copy of each assignment before submitting, in case the original does not reach the IMM GSM.
- 8) The assignment due date refers to the day up to which assignments will be accepted for marking purposes. The deadline is 3:00 p.m. on 16 March 2010. Late assignments will be accepted, but **25 marks** will be deducted from the maximum mark, if received after 3:00 p.m. on 16 March 2010 and up to 5:00 p.m. the following day, after which no assignments will be accepted.
- 9) If you fail to follow these instructions carefully, the IMM Graduate School of Marketing cannot accept responsibility for the return of the assignment. It may even result in your assignment not being marked.

Results will be available on the IMM website: www.imm.co.za on Friday, 7 May 2010.

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS:

Marks will be awarded for:

- Logical argument and sound reasoning.
- Evidence of independent research (i.e. consulting and using relevant sources of information).
- Relevant application of knowledge.

Answer **ALL** the questions below.

Please note that the answers to the questions below need to be very detailed and show that great effort and thought has gone into the compilation of each answer.

Prescribed textbook: Hill, C.W.L., and Jones, G.R. 2008. *Strategic Management: An Integrated Approach*. 8th ed. Houghton-Mifflin.

OR

Hill, C.W.L., and Jones, G.R. 2009. *Theory of Strategic Management with Cases*. 8th ed. CENGAGE. (New edition of 2008 prescribed text)

QUESTION 1 **[35]**

Select two companies of your choice from the same industry, and analyse these companies' competitive advantage, elaborating on the building blocks of competitive advantage. Your answer must give detailed examples of the factors each company has used to build and sustain competitive advantage. Comment on the differences between these two companies' competitive advantage.

QUESTION 2 **[35]**

For each of the two companies selected in Question 1, discuss with practical examples what each company has done to ensure the durability of the competitive advantage.

QUESTION 3 **[20]**

Provide a brief summary explaining the differences between building competitive advantage through functional-level strategy and building competitive advantage through business-level strategy.

PRESENTATION **[10]**

ASSIGNMENT TOTAL: 100