**TopCoder: Developing Software through Crowdsourcing (A and B)**

1. Discuss TopCoder’s business model in the context of Thomas Friedman’s “hyperconnected world.”
   1. How do they make money? Why is their business model successful?
   2. Do you see the company becoming more or less successful over the next 10 years? Explain why.
   3. How does TopCoder manage its “Community of Competitors?” Where is there room for improvement?
2. Describe and evaluate TopCoder’s process of developing software as a disruptive innovation.
   1. What industries and companies do they disrupt?
   2. What kinds of customers do they serve (overshot, undershot, or non-market consumers, or some combination of those)? Explain why.
   3. Evaluate TopCoder using some or all of the Five Forces. Which ones are affected by TopCoder?
3. Imagine you are an IT director for a hospital system.
   1. If your Chief Information Officer asked you if you’d recommend using TopCoder, what would you say? Explain your rationale.
   2. If your organization did decide to use TopCoder, how would you evaluate whether a specific project is appropriate for them?
   3. Do you think applying a TopCoder-like software development process could be successful within an organization? Why or why not? How might this work?

**Kodak and the Digital Revolution (A only)**

1. Would you characterize the digital camera as more of an evolutionary technology or more of a discontinuous technology (refer to the article “Avoiding the Pitfalls of Emerging Technologies,” specifically footnote 1 on page 30)? Explain.
   1. Analyze the digital camera using Christensen’s signals of change. Was the digital camera originally serving overshot, undershot, or non-market consumers? Explain.
   2. What existing technologies did the digital camera displace? What industries did it transform?
   3. In 2012, the digital camera itself is being displaced. What technologies have replaced the digital camera?

1. Kodak developed a series of new technologies in the 1980s but seemed unable to capitalize on them.
   1. As a response to Sony’s Mavica, Kodak invested $5 billion in R&D of digital imaging over 10 years. Was this the right response?
   2. Evaluate their decision-making around the development and marketing of new technologies they developed. How well did they fit within the context of their overall product strategy?
   3. To which of the “pitfalls” did Kodak fall victim?

1. Since the case, things still don’t look good for Kodak. They are now in bankruptcy and continue to have serious problems.  
     
   For example, read this article at:  
   <http://www.forbes.com/sites/cfainstitute/2012/08/16/not-a-picturesque-kodak-moment>
   1. What are some options for Kodak? What could they do to turn things around?
   2. What advice from the “Avoiding the Pitfalls of Emerging Technologies” should they implement, and how would they do it?

**Social Strategy at American Express**

1. Consider, as a whole, American Express’ social strategy.
   1. Name and describe the major components of their social strategy? What were the goals of each component?
   2. How does each component serve their overall corporate strategy? How does it tie to their strengths as an organization?
   3. What are some of the tangible benefits American Express hoped to garner from its social strategy? Be specific (i.e., don’t just say “increased revenue”).
2. Consider American Express’ use of external social media platforms.
   1. How did their use of Facebook and Twitter differ from their use of Foursquare?
   2. What kinds of data can the company gather by looking at activity in these social networks? What insight could the company gain into its customers by analyzing this data?
   3. If you were Berland, would you choose the “broad” option or the “deep” option, as outlined at the end of the case? Defend your answer, while also considering the potential pitfalls of your recommendation.
3. Evaluate American Express’ OPEN Forum (NOTE: It would be useful to spend a few minutes on the site – www.openforum.com – before answering this question).
   1. In what ways is the OPEN Forum like a community of practice? A knowledge management system?
   2. What characteristics does the OPEN Forum share with a social network? How do the “social” elements of the Forum enhance the effectiveness of the site?
   3. Imagine you are advising Berland. Recommend a strategy going forward for the OPEN Forum. What should the next steps?

**Volkswagen of America: Managing IT Priorities**

1. Describe the problems with the way Volkswagen had been managing IT projects at the time the case starts.
   1. What were the key obstacles to making good decisions at Volkswagen?
   2. What did their existing decision-making process tell you about the way IT was viewed? Did they see IT as a strategic asset? Why or why not?
   3. How did the new management methodology change their prioritization processes? How did people adapt to the new rules?
2. Volkswagen designated three “investment types”: Stay in business, return on investment, and option-creating investment.
   1. How would one financially evaluate the “option-creating” investment projects in light of their increased uncertainty?
   2. Do you think financial justification is necessary when evaluating “stay in business” projects? If so, how would one go about doing this? If not, explain why.
   3. Describe some examples of “stay in business” investments within the healthcare context. Can the methodology of Volkswagen be applied to healthcare organizations?
3. Do you agree with the DBC’s funding decision (providing funding for the top-rated portfolio, and then working down until they ran out of money)?
   1. How is it possible that under this new system a “critical” project (the global supply chain system) was underfunded?
   2. Can you recommend a better selection system?

**The Globalization of Wyeth**

1. What were the key reasons for moving forward with globalization at Wyeth?
   1. What were the barriers to globalization within Wyeth’s organization?
   2. What were the barriers to globalization beyond Wyeth’s organization?
   3. Why was IT central in the effort to globalize Wyeth?
2. Two major components of Wyeth’s global IT strategy were its ERP system and its “Global Data Warehouse.”
   1. Briefly describe each system and how they served Wyeth’s strategic goals?
   2. In what ways do you think that the global nature of these initiatives influenced their design, development, and implementation?
   3. Do you think these “enterprise” efforts will remain successful over the long-term at Wyeth? Why or why not?
3. Another major component of the globalization effort was the Regional Support Centers (RSCs).
   1. How did they use the RSCs to push Wyeth’s agenda to globalize?
   2. Why were some divisions more interested in adopting the RSCs than others? What lessons can you draw from this?
   3. Would you say that globalization is just another centralization/decentralization decision that any company makes when it has multiple divisions, or is it fundamentally different? Explain.

**CareGroup (also read “When Hackers Turn to Blackmail”)**

1. Compare the outage at CareGroup with the security breach at Sunnylake.
   1. Why did each incident occur? What was the root cause?
   2. What was the effect of each incident on regular business operations?
   3. Evaluate CareGroup’s response to their network collapse. Are you satisfied with their response? Why or why not?
2. Consider the ten “lessons learned” as stated in the CareGroup case.
   1. Which three do you think are the most important for organizations to adopt so that they can avoid a similar problem?
   2. How would you apply your advice from part (a) to Sunnylake? What should they do to prevent future breaches?
   3. Think about the three recommended responses to the Sunnylake incident (at the end of the “Blackmail” article. Which one do you agree with most? Why?
3. How does the reason an IT failure occurs change the nature of the response?
   1. In what ways is Sunnylake’s resolution of the breach helped or hindered by receiving a ransom notice?
   2. Do you think CareGroup would have reacted differently if the failure was due to blackmail instead of a self-inflicted problem?
   3. If you were the public relations representative for CareGroup, how would you respond to a press inquiry about that incident? If you were Sunnylake, how would you respond?