

**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FACULTY OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT – CBU 4106**

**FINAL EXAMINATION - DECEMBER 2007
TIME ALLOWED 3 HOURS**

INSTRUCTIONS

- *Answer Section A and any three questions from section B.*
- *Questions may be answered in any order.*
- *As much as possible, use relevant examples.*

SECTION A

Question 1

Blair's civil service speech.

An extract of a speech given by the British prime minister on the subject of civil service reform.

Tuesday February 24, 2004

In 1854, at the request of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, William Gladstone, two Treasury officials, Northcote and Trevelyan, produced a brief report on the future of the Civil Service. Their main recommendations were, firstly, that civil servants should be recruited by open competitive examination (with the examinations conducted by an independent central board) and, secondly, that promotion should be on merit rather than seniority. The endemic patronage of the age would be replaced by an assessment of the ability to do the job.

Mild though the Northcote-Trevelyan proposals seem in retrospect, they were far from universally welcomed. 'Where is the application of the principle of public competitions to stop?' Queen Victoria asked nervously. The Cabinet itself was divided with the result that it was not until Gladstone himself became Prime Minister in 1868 that the proposals really made an impact and even then competitive entry into the Home Office and Foreign Office was not put in place until 1914. But what made the Northcote-Trevelyan proposals a turning point were the enduring values, which underpinned them. Those values of integrity, impartiality and merit have proved timeless and are a decisive legacy of Gladstone and his officials.

The question for the Civil Service in our generation is how to sustain these values, while bringing about the radical transformation our times demand.

The Civil Service has strengths that are priceless. The greatest is indeed its integrity. That comprises not just its impartiality, but an ingrained, pervasive streak of honesty. It knows the difference between obeying legitimate political orders and impropriety. It knows it by instinct and it executes it without fear or favour.

It sees its role as serving the Government of the day to the best of its ability, whatever colour the Government's politics. The transition to New Labour after 18 years of Conservative Government was achieved with remarkable ease, a tribute to both of Andrew Turnbull's immediate predecessors, Robin Butler and Richard Wilson. The myth on which young Labour activists were reared in the 1970s and 80s of a Civil Service that was Tory to its bones, turned out to be just that: a myth.

And its strengths do not stop with the lofty ideals of integrity and political impartiality. The ability of the Service to master complex negotiation not just with attention to detail but sublime skill, I have witnessed and been grateful for, on many occasions. We could never have done the Good Friday Agreement without it; or countless European Councils. There is an intellectual ingenuity in parts of the Service that is remarkable and rare in any field.

For politicians who must endure the crucible of daily Parliamentary and press probing, some of it fair, some of it not, the Service also provides expert advice, intelligently crafted and usually utterly sensitive to political reality. The parody of Sir Humphrey is like all good parody: it has a heavy dose of truth in it. But to any would-be senior politician, I say: don't knock it. The art of Sir Humphrey will remain necessary as long as politics remains. But for the caricature to define the modern Civil Service would be absurd.

The calibre of the individuals within the Service is enormously high; in many respects every bit as good as their private sector counterparts. And in addition to all of this, we should never forget that the Civil Service unlike a private sector company can't pick and choose its clients. It has to handle some of the most difficult, most intractable and least comfortable people and issues.

So why does it now need radical reform?

Questions

(a) What evidence is there that the British civil service in 1854 was run along bureaucratic lines? Had this set up changed in 2004? Support your response.

[6 marks]

(b) Define the term values. Identify **three** values that emerged from Northcote – Trevelyn proposals and have remained as the core of the British civil service till today. Can these values be said to exist in the Zimbabwean civil service currently? Support your views.

[10 marks]

(c) In the United Kingdom (UK), the civil service “sees its role as serving the Government of the day to the best of its ability, whatever colour the Government’s politics.”

(i) To what extent has this principle been applied in the UK? How has this affected the efficiency of the civil service?

[4 marks]

(ii) To what extent has this principle been applied in the United States of America? How has this affected the efficiency of the system?

[4 marks]

(iii) Which direction has Zimbabwean civil service taken in terms of this principle? How has this choice of direction affected the effectiveness of the top civil service? Clearly explain your answer.

[8 marks]

(iv) Which system, between the British and American would you opt for? Why?

[4 marks]

(d) What positive quality did the former prime minister see in the civil service which private sector employees did not fully possess? Would this quality be said to exist in Zimbabwe currently? If not, what steps can be taken to make it available?

[4 marks]

SECTION B

Answer any *three* questions from this Section

Question 2

“Administration and management are basically the same activities.” Discuss this statement with reference to the public sector.

[20 marks]

Question 3

“Both private and public organisations in the modern world are run along bureaucratic lines.” Critically examine this statement and then show the benefits Max Weber hoped a bureaucracy would provide to modern administrative systems.

[20 marks]

Question 4

With the aid of examples from the developed world, discuss the main thrust of the new public management approach of the twenty-first century. What lessons can Zimbabwe learn from the experiences of the developed world?

[20 marks]

Question 5

Show how political and economic factors made public sector reforms possible in Europe in the early 1990s. What lessons can Zimbabwe learn from these reforms?

[20 marks]

Question 6

“The dominant motive in people’s actions in the marketplace is a concern for themselves.” How relevant is this statement in the political marketplace? Justify your response.

[20 marks]

Question 7

“Certain societies tolerate political and administrative corruption.” How far is this a measure of the level of a country’s economic and democratic development? Does this affect the quality of service provided by the public sector in the given scenario?

[20 marks]