



WORKING TOGETHER (unity)



BOOK SEVENTEEN

WORKING TOGETHER (UNITY)

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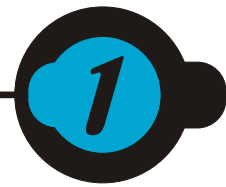
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Outcomes



This booklet will help you improve the relationships in your cooperative: between yourself, the manager, and your employees; as well as between the various employees in your business. After studying this booklet you should be able to:

- ✓ Have gained background knowledge on the history of group work;
- ✓ Organise staff by means of work schedules;
- ✓ Understand the importance of training for all your employees;
- ✓ Compile a list of Rules and Regulations for your business;
- ✓ Know how to increase productivity;
- ✓ Recognise conflict situations and how to resolve them;
- ✓ Use team building as a tool to increase productivity.

Introduction

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Since the earliest times, man has seen the need to work in groups for the survival of society. Primitive hunters (approx. 40 000 BC) worked in groups to hunt and kill animals for food. Other members of the tribe also worked together to collect food such as fruit, berries and roots.

As time went by and people started to make tools and weapons, they only used those individuals in the tribe who had the skills to perform these tasks. And when early man started to grow his own food, this meant that some members of the tribe had the time to do other tasks such as making bowls and containers from clay, weaving their own fabrics.

This division of labour is still very relevant today. Not everyone has the same skills and talents. Therefore a business needs various people to do various tasks. As certain people perform these tasks together, it is important to know how to manage these groups to increase their productivity and to ensure a healthy work environment.

Bongani will help you throughout this booklet by providing examples of situations that may occur in your business. He will also help you resolve various crisis situations or give you hints and tips.

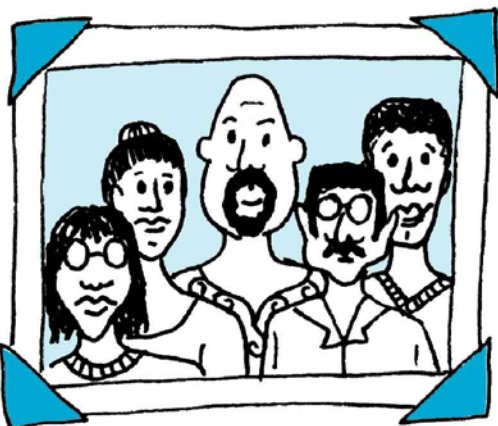


organising your employees

Bongani is the manager of an agricultural cooperative. He has a number of people working in his business, as it is too large to be run by one person only.

Sophie is responsible for the cash register at the checkout counter, as well as the small items being kept on the shelf next to her, such as cigarettes and sweets. She also has to look out for shoplifters in the area around the cash register.

Maria works at the second cash register whenever the shop is busy, for example on weekends or the end of the month. Her main responsibility, however, is to mark the prices on items and to display products in the store. She also has to re-pack larger packs into smaller packs for re-sale. As she is usually in the store itself, she is able to assist clients with their purchases as well.



Jacob is in charge of the order of goods, and also checks the deliveries. Another one of his responsibilities is to do regular stocktaking of the items in the store.

Mohammed is still a trainee, and works with Jacob most of the time. Jacob is teaching him the skills he will need to become an efficient and productive member of the staff in Bongani's store. Bongani also teaches some of his skills to Mohammed. This will ensure that someone else is able to take care of his duties when he has to be somewhere else.

Bongani is responsible for organising and supervising all these activities. He has to ensure that his business runs smoothly and that all his employees perform at their peak.

Planning

It is important that each employee knows when he is expected to perform certain tasks. A work schedule should be drawn up and placed in the tearoom or the manager's office.



This schedule should consist of the following:

- ➔ The person's name and the shifts he is to work during that week.
- ➔ The maximum amount of staff should be working during the busiest times of the day or week. It is also a good idea to write down the number of persons on duty at a certain time.
- ➔ Allow for breaks to give the staff a rest; people can make mistakes when they are tired.
- ➔ The number of hours a staff member is working during a week. The law stipulates a maximum of 45 work hours per week. This should not be exceeded.
- ➔ Remember that the employees who open the shop in the morning should be there at least half an hour before opening time. Those who close the shop should remain until all the money has been counted and everything has been locked up.

Name	Mon	Tues	Wednes	Thurs	Fri	Satur	Sun	Hours
Sophie	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	13:00 - 20:00	9:00 - 12:00	9:00 - 12:00	45
Bongani	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	13:00 - 20:00	9:00 - 12:00	9:00 - 12:00	45
Maria	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 13:00	12:00 - 17:00		42
Jacob	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 13:00		12:00 - 17:00	42
Mohammed	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	8:00 - 16:00	13:00 - 20:00	9:00 - 12:00	9:00 - 12:00	45

Organising your employees ... continued



Distributing tasks

In Bongani's shop each person has a number of tasks that he or she must perform. As it is not possible to do these all at once, his employees have to use their judgment to decide which tasks are the most important at a certain time. For example, when the shop is busy, Maria has to work at the second cash register. She leaves the rest of her tasks until she has the time to do them. Jacob cannot do stocktaking while a large amount of goods is being delivered. He has to check the deliveries as they come in to ensure that the quantities are right.

Bongani has to supervise when each of his employees has to do a certain task, but he also expects them to make some of the decisions themselves. They must be able to anticipate what will happen, for example at the end of the month when many customers come into the store.



It is important that each employee knows his/her responsibilities. For example, if Maria does not know that she is responsible for working at the second cash register when it is busy, clients will become impatient when they have to wait in a long queue at the checkout counter. If Bongani should ask her why she is not doing her job, she might tell him that she did not know that she was supposed to be at the second cash register. This could cause a lot of problems, especially in a larger cooperative with many employees.

Organising your employees ... continued



If anything goes wrong, Bongani has to report to the directors of the cooperative. His employees are his responsibility. He cannot blame them when something goes wrong. Bongani has to make sure that his staff is trained properly for the tasks they have to perform. He must give clear and detailed instructions when he distributes the tasks between his employees.

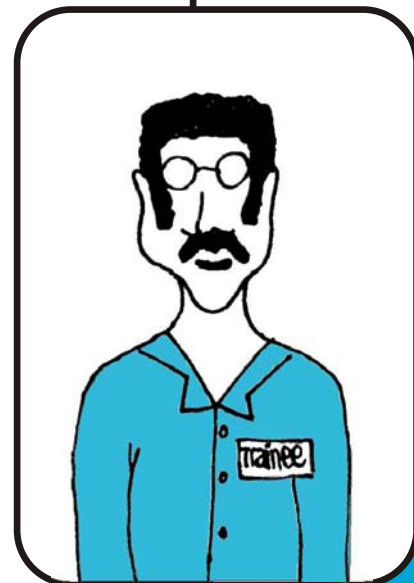
It is very important that employees report to Bongani before they make important decisions. Jacob cannot order large quantities of expensive goods if he does not discuss it with Bongani first. They should make these decisions together, to make sure that nobody makes costly mistakes.

Training

New employees

From time to time, as the cooperative expands and the workload gets bigger, Bongani might have to recruit new employees. Some of them will already have certain qualifications. Others will be young and inexperienced. Either way, it is important to train them to perform the functions allocated to them, as each business operates in its own unique way.

The first few days are very important. Bongani has to make sure that the new employee understands exactly how the business functions, and what is expected from him or her. This kind of training is called induction.



Organising
your employees
... continued



Usually a senior member of staff, called a mentor, will be assigned to train the new employee. On the first day, the senior staff member must show the new recruit everything in the shop. It is a good idea to give the new employee a list of everything he or she should know. This list could be divided into two sections; first-day information and first-week information:

First day:

Working hours	Break times
Dress code	Salary system
Leave regulations	Work organisation
Members of staff	First aid
Emergency procedures	

First week:

Healthcare and Insurance	Retirement
Income tax	Tips and gifts
Employee shopping	Disciplinary actions
Private use of telephone	Keys and lock-up
Suggestions and complaints	Staff meetings
Trade unions	
Smoking and drinking restrictions	



Other information can be given to the new employee over a period of time, especially during the first month. This kind of information will not be vital to his or her functions, for example the aim of the co-operative, the names of committee members, or details of competitors.



Training should start immediately. The person responsible for the training of the new member should give him or her a few basic tasks to perform on the first day. The best way to do this is to first **show** the new recruit how to do a certain task. Then the procedure should be **explained** in detail. The new recruit should be allowed to ask questions about the task. Next, the recruit should perform the task while the senior staff member watches. Any mistakes made should be **corrected** immediately by the mentor. The senior staff member must allow the recruit to practise on his or her own for a while. The recruit can be given a bigger challenge each day until he or she knows exactly how to do the job.

Existing employees

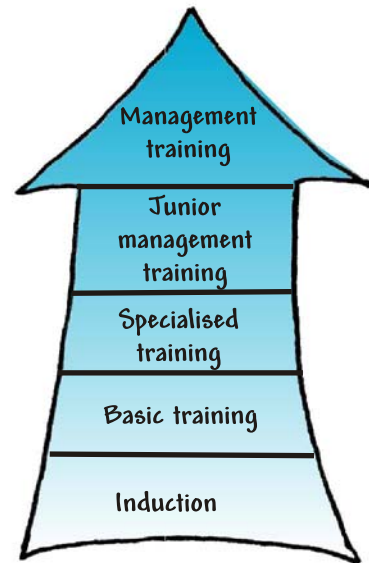
Although existing employees know what they have to do, they must still have the opportunity to develop their skills. This will enable them to grow in the business and reach new levels of employment, for example management level.

The usual route an employee will take through the various levels of employment is:

1. **Induction**, as discussed in "the training of new employees" above;
2. **Basic training**, which is on-the-job training. An employee will learn various skills such as display of goods and stock control.
3. **Specialised training**, teaching the employee to specialise in one or more fields;
4. **Junior management training**, where the manager will teach the trainee the basics of cash control, budgeting and other management functions; and finally
5. **Management training** at a college.

Employees should be encouraged to learn as much as they can about the various aspects in the cooperative. This can only benefit the cooperative, as employees will become more efficient and productive.

Bongani uses training material such as these booklets to train the members of his staff. Each booklet has a different specialised topic. Bongani can decide which booklet he should give to which employee. The money spent on training is an investment in the future of the business, and in the personal development and upliftment of each employee.



Organising your employees

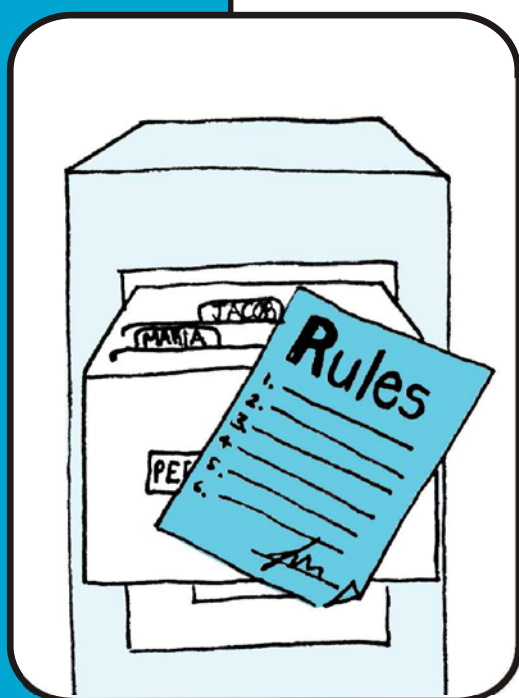
Internal Rules and Regulations

It is important that the manager of a cooperative lay down some basic rules and regulations that the employees, and also the manager, should obey.

These rules should be formulated to prevent an employee from doing something wrong. This will prevent disciplinary steps against that employee. If a member of staff disobeys one of the rules, he will have to face the consequences of his actions, because he knew it was wrong before he did it.

For example: Bongani finds out that one of his employees (Thembi) has been stealing goods from the store. He fires her immediately, because it is stipulated in the staff rules that if someone is caught stealing, he or she will be dismissed with immediate effect.

It is important to have very strict rules about the handling of cash and goods. Each employee should be informed about these rules and they should also know which actions would be taken if these rules are broken. An employee should never say, "I did not know it was wrong".



Bongani has found that the best way to ensure that all his employees know the rules and regulations of the business is to write down all the rules and their consequences. He has given a copy of the rules to each of his employees, which they had to read and then sign. These sets of signed rules are kept with their employment contracts in a filing cabinet. They serve as proof that he has informed them of all the rules and regulations. They also prove that they have signed them to confirm that they understand the rules.

Increasing Productivity

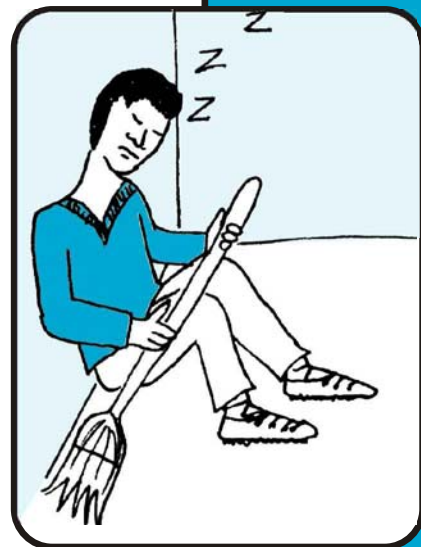
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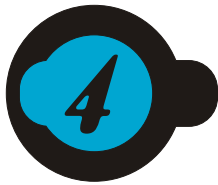
To keep the overhead costs of a business as low as possible, it is important to have as few employees as possible. If a business has too many people working there, the prices will have to be raised. This could influence sales.

Bongani has noticed that although his staff work very hard each day, many tasks are not finished at closing time. The reason for this could be that he does not have enough staff. The most probable reason, however, is that some employees are lazy and do not perform as required.

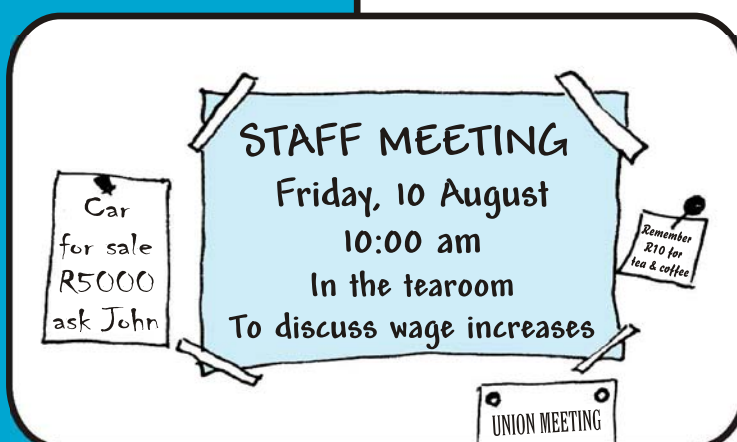
Bongani has to motivate his staff to work hard. This could be done in various ways; either by means of awards or bonuses (money) or by praising an employee when he or she has performed above average. Below are just a few ways to increase productivity and to keep it that way:

- Talk to employees. Communication is very important. Show your employees that you notice their achievements by praising them. This will motivate the staff because employees will feel that their hard work is worthwhile.
- If a certain employee shows that he or she has the potential to be a junior manager, for example, you could consider giving recognition to his commitment by offering him such a job when it becomes available.





- ◉ If it is financially possible, a bonus or raise in salary should be given to a hardworking employee to recognise his or her achievements.
- ◉ A growing system of compensation is profit sharing. This means that employees get a percentage of the profits made in the business over a certain period. In this way, an employee is not rewarded for individual efforts, but all employees are rewarded when the company makes progress. In some companies the profit-sharing system is used to substitute pension schemes.
- ◉ Another way of showing gratitude for the achievements of employees is to offer them benefits such as paid vacation, health insurance, pension schemes and sick leave. Even an afternoon off every now and then makes all the difference.
- ◉ Hold regular staff meetings to allow employees to express their views. Give them the opportunity to discuss new ideas, goals, future plans or ongoing projects. Make them feel that the company needs them, and that their ideas are important. They should feel responsible for the growth of the company. If there has been some form of progress, they should feel proud to be a part of it.
- ◉ Respect all the values of different employees. This includes their religion, culture, political views and social standing. Employees must know that they should respect their fellow workers' values. They should not be allowed to make fun of them or try to force their views on others.



Increasing Productivity

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Team building

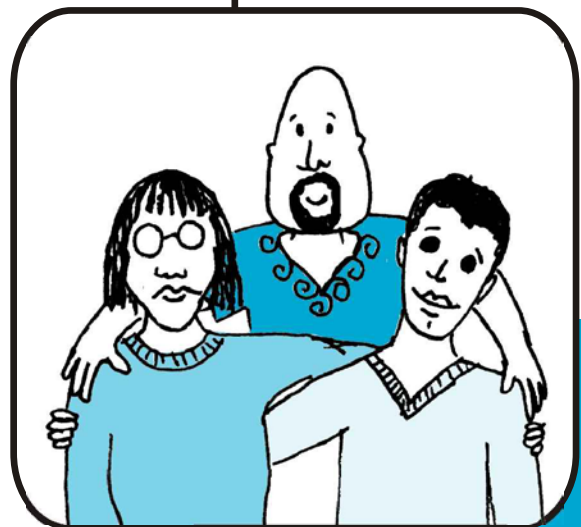
Team building is a way of strengthening the ties between people working in a company. Usually, team-building programmes are hosted by professional businesses specialising in team-building activities.

It is important to encourage employees to work together in teams because it will increase productivity and improve the effectiveness of your business. Employees will also be more motivated, job satisfaction will improve and they will feel proud of their unique role in the organisation.

These activities are a fun way to develop group cohesion and to recognise leadership potential in employees. Individuals are motivated to combine their skills, talents and abilities and to work in teams to overcome certain challenges. All employees are taught that they need each other: trust, teamwork, support and communication have to be combined to achieve success.

Various activities can be used in team-building exercises: strategy games, role-playing, building activities, paintball games, problem solving, discussions, courses, etc.

Internally, better teamwork can be achieved by allowing people who want to work together, to do so. Do not force people to work together. Negative energy between two or more persons can influence the group as a whole. Research shows that people who choose to work together perform much better than those who are instructed to work together, even if they do not have a financial or technological advantage. It is important that members of a team realise that the success of teamwork is far more important than personal performance.



Increasing Productivity

... continued



Communication and Negotiation

Communication can be described as the sharing of information. This is an important element in a business, where information is constantly sent to and from certain channels. If there is no proper flow of information in a business, it could have a serious impact on the performance of the organisation.

Resolving conflict

Prevention is better than cure. However, should a conflict situation arise, you as the manager should try to resolve it as quickly and as fairly as possible. Here is a list of a few things Bongani has learned in his business:

- ★ Determine the seriousness of the situation. Talk to the parties involved, preferably separately, and ask them to express their views on the matter. Explain to them that their negative attitude is influencing the company as a whole, and that they are expected to resolve their conflict as soon as possible. Volunteer to act as mediator if they are unwilling to solve the problem on their own.
- ★ Ask both parties to write a statement of their views before the meeting. This way everybody has a chance to say exactly how he or she feels without being interrupted.
- ★ After the parties have read their statements, they should agree on a way to resolve the conflict. They must also agree on a way to measure the progress or change they have made after a certain amount of time.
- ★ If you do not know how to mediate, do not hesitate to call in a neutral party who can. Rather resolve problems as soon as possible than to allow them to snowball. Both parties should agree on and trust the neutral party.
- ★ Team building can also help to resolve conflict situations in a business.



Trade Unions

In medieval times, guilds were established to regulate the craft industry. These guilds were the early equivalent of the trade unions we know today. The main difference between guilds and trade unions is that guilds represented masters and workers, while today's trade unions represent the interests of workers only.

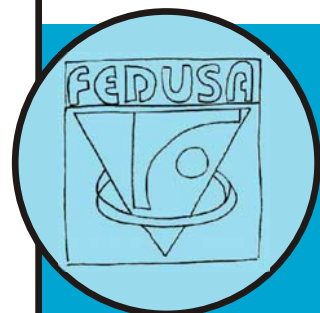
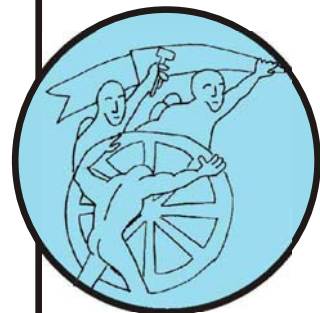
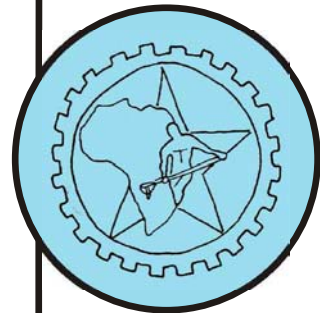
Trade unions were founded to help workers demand better salaries and wages and improving their working conditions. Their main objective is to protect the interests of their members by negotiating with the employers. Shop stewards are chosen by the members of a certain union to represent them in an organisation. The purpose of shop stewards is to listen to the complaints of union members, and to see to it that there is no unlawful intrusion on their rights. If any irregularities arise, he or she must report them to the union. The shop steward should also report these irregularities to the employer, and try to solve these problems. If a compromise cannot be reached, the shop steward should report to the union who will handle it from there.

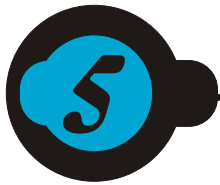
For an annual membership fee, members enjoy various services rendered by the unions, for example negotiating with the employer for the following:

- Legal advice and services;
- Healthcare and funeral benefits;
- Training and education;
- Housing.

Collective bargaining is a very important element of trade unions. They negotiate on behalf of all their members to ensure the best wages and working conditions, as well as other complex agreements. If the employer and the trade union cannot reach an agreement, the members may sometimes go on strike to persuade the employer to give in to their demands.

In South Africa, there are several trade unions to protect workers in various employment areas. NUMSA, COSATU, NEHAWU, and FEDUSA are only some of these unions.





The CCMA

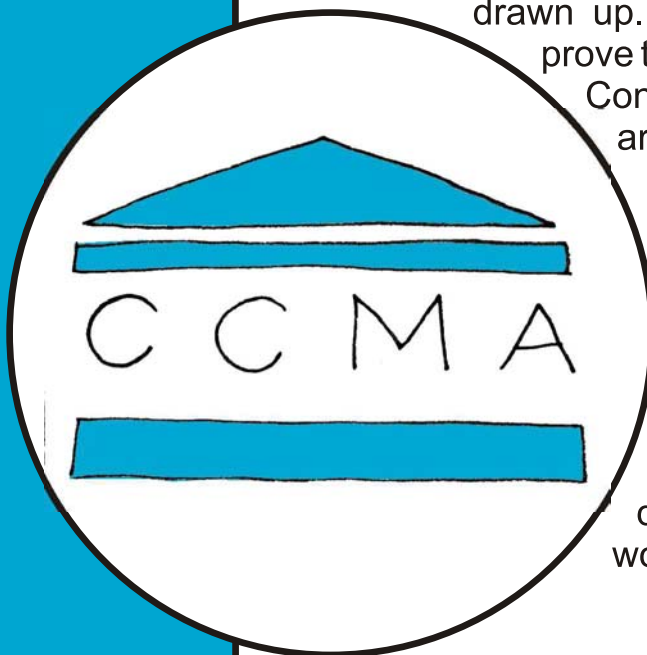
The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) is an independent organisation, established to resolve conflict situations between parties. The CCMA is not controlled by any business, political party, trade union or the government.

If disputes cannot be resolved between employers and employees, the CCMA will arbitrate these matters. They can also be asked to help restructure the workplace and prevent disputes.

The first step is a conciliation meeting, with a conciliator arranging a meeting with both parties in the dispute. They will then try to find a way to settle the matter by means of an agreement between the parties. Although the conciliator can meet with the parties separately, a meeting is usually held with both parties present. Both parties should give their ideas on how the situation can be resolved. In the conciliation stage, the dispute must be allowed 30 days to be resolved before referring it to the CCMA. If the parties manage to settle the dispute, an agreement will be drawn up. A certificate will be issued to

prove that the dispute has been settled. Conciliation is less formal than arbitration. It is not a hearing.

At an arbitration hearing, both parties have a chance to state their cases. After this, the arbitrator will make a decision. This decision is called the *arbitration award* and is legally binding. Another way to resolve disputes, if conciliation does not work, is to go to the Labour Court.



Communication & Negotiation

... continued

Assessment



1. Discuss briefly how the division of labour originated.
2. Study the first few paragraphs under heading 3.1 (Planning). Now compile your own schedule containing work times for all Bongani's employees with the following working hours:
Monday to Thursday: 09:00 to 17:00
Friday and Saturday: 09:00 to 20:00
Sunday: 09:00 to 12:00
Remember to allow time for breaks. Do not exceed the maximum amount of work hours allowed per week.
3. Give 2 reasons why an employee should know what his or her responsibilities are.
4. Name the 3 ways in which a new employee should be trained and discuss each briefly.
5. Why should existing employees also receive training?
6. Compile a shortlist of rules and regulations for your business. You need not name more than 5 rules. Name the consequences if these rules are broken.
7. Why is productivity important?
8. What is team building? Why should a company use team-building activities?
9. What is conflict? How can it be resolved in a business?
10. Name 2 functions of a trade union.
11. What is the CCMA and when should a business use its services?



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