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Extreme LINKS Examination Questions

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In academic degree-granting programs, performance evaluation and grading are obviously significant issues for instructors. In addition to within-simulation performance evaluation, “external” evaluation via assignments, reports, presentations, and examinations are all possibilities within LINKS-based courses.

LINKS instructors might find the following “extreme” examination questions to be of interest in student assessment within their LINKS-based courses. These examination questions are described as being “extreme” because of their challenging and thoughtful nature.

- These examination questions are designed to be used on a final examination after LINKS exercise concludes. They are generally complex enough so that they can be used on take-home examinations, if desired.
- All of these questions require thoughtful discussion; they are not just simple recall questions. (On occasion, I have even handed these questions out for prior study and review, and have advised students that questions such as these would be fair game for examination purposes.)

All LINKS Simulations	<p>Competitive Analysis: What important business insights have been gained via analysis of your competitors in your LINKS industry?</p> <p>IT Tools: What Excel spreadsheet tools did you create to help you analyze and manage your LINKS business? How, specifically, were these Excel spreadsheet tools used to improve your LINKS firm’s performance?</p> <p>Research Studies: Which three research studies were most important to your LINKS firm? Why?</p> <p>Strategy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) What mix of low-cost, niche/differentiated/high-end, and “value” offerings is required to be successful in the LINKS markets that you faced? (“Value” offerings are competitively well-priced for the benefit-set offered, so “value” offerings could be priced anywhere from low to high.)(2) Was first-mover advantage important in your LINKS industry? Why or why not?(3) Based on your LINKS simulation experience, do you agree or disagree with this statement? <i>“The ability to learn faster than your competitors is the only sustainable competitive advantage.”</i> Why? <p>Team Management: Suppose that another person joined your LINKS firm. How would you re-allocate the responsibilities of current team members? Or, alternatively, how would you exploit the available time of this new staff member to the maximum possible benefit of your firm?</p> <p>Team Organization: If your LINKS team had been twice as large (i.e., twice as many team members), how would your team organization (and management)</p>
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	<p>have changed? Why?</p> <p>Team Performance: Consider the following statement about performance in LINKS: <i>"Good management is more important than good luck."</i> Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why? [Hint: Try to provide evidence to support your point of view.]</p>
Supply Chain Management Simulations	<p>Supply Chain Management: What are the three most important things to manage set-top box supply (procurement, manufacturing, distribution, and transportation) efficiently and effectively?</p> <p>Postponed Production: Suppose that you and all other firms in your set-top box industry had access to an additional product in your LINKS industry. Would the existence of an additional product increase, decrease, or have no impact on the use of postponed production in your set-top box industry? Why?</p>
LINKS Product Variants	<p>Regulatory Environment: Would you be in favor of or against the elimination of patent protection in the set-top box industry? Why?</p>
With Credit Financing Decisions Activated	<p>Balance Sheet Management and Profitability: Is a very high level of Accounts Receivable wise? Or, is it better to just lower prices rather than have substantial on-going/repeated high-levels of credit financing? What are the economics and trade-offs involved with using credit financing?</p>