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MBA 642
Management of Human Resources

Case Assignment Questions

Southwest Airlines: Using Human Resources for Competitive Advantage (A)

Instructions:

- ❖ Put the names of the team members in the upper-left-hand corner of the first page of your team's answers.
- ❖ Staple the pages together with a staple in the extreme upper-left-hand corner.
- ❖ Double-space the text of your team's answers. Use a legible font, make the font size 11-pt. or 12-pt., and use margins no smaller than 1-inch.
- ❖ Your team's answers are limited to no more than 6 pages of text; any exhibits (e.g., figures, tables, charts, diagrams, or so forth) that you might decide to include do not count against the limit of 6 pages of text. Note that 6 pages of text is a limit, not a goal. Get to the point and focus on the critical issues for each question.
- ❖ Unless the question explicitly specifies otherwise, stick to the facts provided in the case—other information about the companies or the industries involved in the case, which you might know or discover through research, is out of bounds.
- ❖ You cannot answer a question by recommending that “more research is needed in order to answer the question.”

Questions:

1. What is the strategy of Southwest Airlines?
2. How does Southwest Airlines get its competitive advantage? To what extent are the sources of competitive advantage difficult to imitate and likely to persist over time?
3. How serious is the competitive threat faced by Southwest Airlines?
4. What issues should Ann Rhoades raise at tomorrow's meeting? What recommendations should she make?