

Assessment: Analyzing International Business Trends in Canada

Objective: This assessment is designed to help students identify and analyze international business trends and assess their influence on companies, industries, and career opportunities in the global economy. The focus is on applying critical thinking skills to determine which trends Canada should follow or is already following in its approach to international business.

Instructions:

1. **Read each case scenario carefully.**
 2. **For each case, answer the following questions:**
 - Identify the international business trend being discussed.
 - Analyze how this trend influences the company or industry involved.
 - Discuss how this trend could impact career opportunities in the global economy.
 - Provide a brief recommendation on whether Canada should follow or continue following this trend and why.
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Case 1: Sustainability and the Fashion Industry

Scenario: A Canadian fashion company is known for using sustainable materials and eco-friendly production processes. The company has successfully expanded into international markets by promoting its commitment to environmental sustainability. They have partnered with international eco-conscious fashion brands and have seen a growing demand for their products, particularly in Europe and Asia.

Questions:

- What trend is influencing the company?
- How does this trend affect the company's global business opportunities?
- How could this trend shape career opportunities in industries like fashion and retail?
- Should Canada continue to promote sustainability in international business? Why or why not?

Answer (Example):

- The trend influencing the company is **sustainability**.
- This trend allows the company to access new eco-conscious markets and build a strong international reputation, leading to growth opportunities abroad.

- Careers related to sustainable fashion design, supply chain management, and marketing are likely to expand as sustainability becomes a core focus.
 - Yes, Canada should promote sustainability as it aligns with global market demands and strengthens Canada's reputation in environmentally responsible business practices.
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Case 2: Gender Parity in Tech Companies

Scenario: A large Canadian tech firm has implemented gender parity policies to create an inclusive and diverse workplace. The firm has experienced growth in its international partnerships by being recognized as a leader in workplace equality. However, some critics argue that other markets, such as Asia, may not prioritize gender parity, making it harder for the company to succeed in those regions.

Questions:

- What trend is affecting the company?
- How is this trend influencing the company's global partnerships and reputation?
- How does this trend impact career opportunities in industries like tech?
- Should Canada prioritize gender parity when doing business internationally? Why or why not?

Answer (Example):

- The trend is **gender parity**.
 - This trend boosts the company's global reputation as a leader in equality, helping them form strong partnerships with countries that value gender inclusivity.
 - As tech companies adopt gender parity, there will be more opportunities for women in STEM fields, enhancing diversity in the workforce.
 - Yes, Canada should prioritize gender parity as it not only supports ethical practices but also enhances Canada's image as a progressive nation.
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Case 3: Artificial Intelligence in the Auto Industry

Scenario: A Canadian automotive company is using AI to streamline its production processes and improve vehicle designs. AI has helped reduce costs and increase efficiency, allowing the company to compete in the highly competitive international auto market. However, the adoption of AI has led to the displacement of many jobs traditionally held by manual workers.

Questions:

- What trend is influencing the company?
- How does this trend affect the company's ability to compete internationally?

- What is the potential impact of this trend on job opportunities in industries like manufacturing?
- Should Canada embrace AI in its international business strategy? Why or why not?

Answer (Example):

- The trend influencing the company is **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**.
 - AI helps the company reduce costs and stay competitive in international markets by improving efficiency and innovation.
 - While AI can lead to job displacement in manual roles, it creates opportunities in fields like AI development, data analysis, and engineering.
 - Yes, Canada should embrace AI, as it is critical for remaining competitive in the global economy, but the government should also invest in upskilling programs to support displaced workers.
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Case 4: Universal Basic Income (UBI) and Consumer Spending

Scenario: A Canadian province is testing a Universal Basic Income (UBI) pilot program, providing residents with a regular monthly income. Early results suggest that UBI has increased consumer spending, particularly in local businesses and services. However, some critics argue that this trend could reduce people's motivation to seek traditional employment.

Questions:

- What trend is being tested in this scenario?
- How does UBI influence business opportunities, especially for local companies?
- What could be the long-term effects of UBI on industries that rely on consumer spending?
- Should Canada consider UBI as part of its strategy for international business growth? Why or why not?

Answer (Example):

- The trend being tested is **Universal Basic Income (UBI)**.
 - UBI increases disposable income for consumers, leading to higher spending, which benefits local businesses.
 - In the long term, UBI could drive growth in sectors like retail and services, though concerns remain about its effect on traditional employment.
 - Canada could consider UBI as part of its economic strategy, as it may stimulate consumer spending, but the impact on labor markets should be closely monitored.
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