

SONY CORPORATE: REINVENTING ITSELF TO REDISCOVER THE TECHNOLOGICAL EDGE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the unique challenges associated with managing such a highly diversified company?
2. Are there any benefits to such a high level of diversification?
3. Managers at Sony have blamed financial problems on the Japanese earthquake and a weak global economy. Do you agree with their assessment, or do you think there are other major problems that would have led to problems anyway. If so, what are they? If not, then do you think the company should just wait until times get better?
4. Does Sony have any distinctive competencies or resources relative to its competitors? What are they? How can Sony utilize these strengths to increase performance in the future?
5. Sony is highly dependent on global markets. If you were the CEO of Sony, which global markets would you stress? Why? (There is not an obvious answer to this question – you are going to have to really think through it).
6. Should Sony shrink? That is, should Sony get out of some of its businesses? Which one business do you think Sony should most consider divesting?
7. Sony has restructured its management reporting structure. Why would the company do this? Can a restructuring really solve operating problems such as those experienced at Sony? How?
8. Sony seems to have centralized most of its R&D activities at the corporate level. That is, all of the business units in the company make use of the same R&D efforts. What are the advantages and disadvantages of centralizing this activity in a company as diversified as Sony?
9. What do you think Sony should do to solve its problems and regain profitability?