

## Which Marketing Orientation is Best?

### Introduction

In the following activity, you are presented with an excerpt of a discussion from a manager's meeting for a newly formed firm that is setting up as a manufacturer of bicycles. Essentially, they are discussing which marketing orientation/philosophy they should adopt.

Your overall task is to determine which orientation/philosophy that you think would be most appropriate approach for this firm.

### A Discussion of Different Marketing Orientations

- James:** As you all know, I've been a keen cyclist for many years. And I think that there's a real opportunity for innovative state-of-the-art bikes. There's always someone out there who wants the latest gadget. We've all seen that in the entertainment market (with PlayStation and iPhone for instance). So, I think that we can easily pick up on that trend in the bike market.
- Julie:** Sure, that's an option, but you're talking about a pretty small market. I think that we should go mass market. These days some kids own two or three bikes or get a new one every year. Success in that large market is simply price. If we make the bikes efficiently and sell them at a low price – then the bikes will roll off the shelves as fast as we can make them.
- John:** Yeah – maybe that will work. But today's world is celebrity and brand crazy. For many kids today, it's all about image and status. So, I think that we should get a high-profile celebrity to endorse our product, and then get out there and really build a strong brand. This is a real opportunity – I mean, you can list a dozen brands of cereal, but how many brands of bicycles do you know?
- Jane:** But do people really choose a bike based on the brand? Or do they choose a bike that really suits them and has a good range of features. You know what I think – I think we should run some focus groups with kids, teenagers, and young adults and find out what they really want in a bike. Meeting customer needs is the key to success.
- Jenny:** Well, of course, we should meet customer needs! But wouldn't it be great if we could make a difference to the environment as well. You know, encourage people to cycle (not drive) whenever they can. And we could also generate a lot of free publicity by using this approach.

## Student Discussion Questions

1. Which marketing orientation/philosophy is each person essentially referring to? (Choose from the list below.)
2. Based on the information you have, which particular orientation do you think that the firm should follow? Why?
3. Which orientation approach do you think is adopted by most large firms?

- Production Concept
- Product Concept
- Sales/Promotion Concept
- Marketing Concept
- Societal Marketing Concept