Business @ the Speed of Thought

While reading
Chapter 1
1 Answer these questions.
   a What should no company ever assume?
   b What was ENIAC?
   c In the past, what was the usual reason for not sharing information with all departments in a company?
   d How can a good digital nervous system make meetings more effective?
   e What does the author say you need to put an effective plan into action?
   f In what ways can unplanned events be positive?
   g What should a company do “more than anything”?
   h How has the role of manager changed at Microsoft?
   i What is another name for an all-digital workplace?
   j Explain the “soft-boiled egg rule”.

2 Are these sentences right (✓) or wrong (✗)?
Correct the wrong sentences.
   a Most companies have inefficient people working for them. ✓
   b A successful company will always have a safe position in the market. ✗
   d Alfred Sloan was the boss of McDonald’s. ✗
   e Most of the work done in developed countries is information work. ✓
   f Getting information is difficult and expensive. ✗
   g As CEO of Microsoft, Bill Gates banned all unnecessary paper forms. ✓

Chapter 2
3 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?
   a Some German directors thought Bill Gates was wasting their time. ✗
   b Customer service is the best way of adding value to a business. ✓
   c All big internet changes happen within twelve months. ✓
   d The “middleman” will disappear. ✗

4 Put these events in the correct order, number 1–7.
   a Jiffy Lube earned $25 million. ✓
   b Microsoft introduced Windows 95. ✓
   c Internet use doubled to more than 25 million people. ✓
   d A knowledge-management magazine was published. ✓
   e Coca-Cola set up its first email system. ✓
   f News stories said that Microsoft didn’t understand the Internet. ✓
   g Microsoft held its first Internet Day. ✓

5 Match the word(s) on the left with the word(s) on the right to make pairs, e.g. 1991 – Pennzoil Company.
   1998 89,000
   In three years slow
   Five years ago data available
   1993 $25 million
   A few days Internet use doubled
   Dec. 7, 1995 $10 million
   Friday afternoon Internet Day
   5 a.m. knowledge management magazine
   1997 products out of date

Chapter 3
6 Who …
   a spends between 200–300 billion dollars on paperwork? ✗
   b is using digital work flow to make sure that inquiries are followed up? ✓
Chapter 5

8 Answer these questions.
   a  Who are the “brains” of a company?  YES NO
   b  How did the old way of thinking view workers?  YES NO
   c  What made humans survive and become successful?  YES NO
   d  What group of people does success or failure depend on?  YES NO

9 Correct these sentences.
   a  Business managers are the main people who benefit from the increased efficiency of information technology.
      ……………………………………………
   b  It’s important to apply new technology for its own sake.
      ……………………………………………
   c  Companies should be managed and controlled from the center.
      ……………………………………………
   d  The old way of thinking saw workers as creative and independent.
      ……………………………………………
   e  The digital age will increase the cost of social services.
      ……………………………………………
   f  In earlier times, Bill Gates believes his skills would have been just as valuable as they are today.
      ……………………………………………
   g  Digital tools extend our individual ability but limit our ability to work together.
      ……………………………………………

After reading

10 Bill Gates feels positive about the effects and benefits of information technology. Problems such as privacy, security, and children spending too much time on computers are exaggerated and easily solved. Give a summary of the book from an opposite point of view, outlining the possible dangers of a web-based lifestyle.

11 Imagine a service or business that is inefficient (you may know of one). Write to the head of the company and suggest ways that information technology can be used to improve the situation.

12 What problems have you experienced in using the Internet to get information? Make a list of all the problems and then suggest ways in which each problem can be overcome.
Chapter 1

1 Match the words on the left with the ones on the right.
- Big Day
- DNS
- career information
- primary need
- GM
- manufacturing
- paperless office
- knowledge-as-a-verb
- information flow
- marketing activity
- Alfred Sloan
- 38 cities
- production
- sales numbers
- customer
- communication
- lifeblood
- open jobs
- Michael
- Dertouzos

2 Complete each of these sentences with words from the box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>brand</th>
<th>complex</th>
<th>deliver</th>
<th>digital</th>
<th>facts</th>
<th>fact-finding</th>
<th>information</th>
<th>partners</th>
<th>plan</th>
<th>quality</th>
<th>share</th>
<th>thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

a Information is ................. work.
b When thinking and working together are significantly assisted by computer technology, you have a ................. nervous system.
c You should be creating systems that will ................. information immediately to anyone who can use it.
d A bad business ................. will fail however good your ................. is.
e McDonald’s has the strongest ................. name and market ................. and a good reputation for ..................
f During Sloan’s time, General Motors became one of the first really ................. business organizations in the United States.
g Sloan thought that ................. trips were very important.
h Sloan saw that the manufacturers and the dealers had to become ..................
i Sloan said he would pay a lot of money so that every dealer could know the ................. about his business.

Chapter 2

3 Fill in the gaps in this passage using the words below.

competition relationship helps Internet customers reducing

Chapter 3

5 Answer these questions.

a What happened on August 24, 1995?
b What makes the author “suspicious”?
c Why does Harper Collins use a PC-based system to follow book sales?
d What is the most common use of data mining?
e What is the “main idea” behind a Web store?

Chapter 4

6 Match the synonyms.

enormous - enormous, forbid - change, treatment - structure, complex - communicate, shift - immense, skills - care, interact - complicated, encourage - stop, organize - abilities, join - attract

Chapter 5

7 Match the antonyms.

manual - solution, success - accept, center - join, problem - failure, disconnect - control, allow - digital, resist - individual