**You are going to read an introduction to a book. Seven paragraphs have been removed from the extract. Choose from the paragraphs A-H the one which fits each gap (1-7). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use.**

If you work for an advertising agency, the early years of the 1990s may well have been the toughest of your professional life. The recession in business was bad enough. It was longer, deeper and more severe than anticipated by even the most pessimistic, hitting industrialised nations as hard as anything else for thirty years.

1

Every single business in the country was affected, some – the vehicle and building trades – finding themselves 30 per cent down. A lot of people – a lot of companies – in a lot of countries suffered. Of course, advertising people are scarcely unique in losing their jobs in such difficult times, but of all those still in employment, they often feel particularly under pressure.

2

And yet, alongside these psychological and financial imperatives lies an almost paradoxical rise in the perceived importance of the marketing process. The notion that companies should be making sure they are producing services and goods that their customers want, as opposed to merely what it is convenient for them to provide, is not a new one. Still, it's scarcely unfair to say that it has been only over the past ten or fifteen years that many companies seem to have put the idea intentionally, rather than fortuitously, into practice

3

All these things have pleasingly increased the status of marketing people, while simultaneously adding to their burden. Marketing is increasingly regarded as that which it is not: a universal panacea. With approximately half of most marketing budgets being spent on advertising, there's some truth in saying that the buck then stops with the adpeople. It is certainly true that if the 80s was the decade in which advertising never had it so good, the start of the 90s saw the industry enduring its worst downturn for a generation. This was, of course, partly a direct consequence of the economic climate at the time

4

And, generally, in the absence of concrete, convincing and quantitative evidence to the contrary, they had to conclude that the benefits of advertising might be questionable. At a time when enthusiasm to account for every dollar spent was naturally high, it was simply not clear enough to many client companies exactly what they were getting for the large sums of money they were spending, exactly what return they were seeing on their investment. Advertising – ever a business to excite the suspicions of the sceptic – was, as a consequence, more than ever before on trial.

5

Now, while none of this should elicit sympathy for a thoroughly tough business, it does mean that many of those advertising people still in work continue to face precisely the same problems as their clients: how to do more with less. If this is, in itself, sufficiently trying, a number of other factors have made the production of effective advertising particularly difficult.

6

These include, for example, the dramatic demographic changes facing much of the West; the burgeoning power of the retailer; the changing needs and desires of consumers; the rise of sponsorship; the increasingly onerous legal restrictions on advertising. And, of course, for some companies there is the new challenge of advertising abroad. Together with the economic situation, it is these matters which have forced many of those responsible for advertising to revisit Lord Leverhulme's commonplace that: 'Only half my advertising works. The trouble is I don't know which half.' Because now more than ever before, the pressure is on to increase the proportion of advertising that works.

7

This means that while conferences and seminars may provide some useful information, the books currently available on advertising, and how to do it, really don't. Those that are available tend to treat the process of producing advertising with too much respect. To give the impression that the work advertising agencies produce is invariably of the highest quality, deeply considered and remarkable value for money, is neither true nor likely to help those employees of the client company who are ultimately responsible.

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A

Thus, client companies almost everywhere took the view of one of their leaders quoted in the British trade magazine Campaign: 'We want better strategies, better targeting, better creativity, better media placement, better thinking. We aim to ensure we get advertising agencies' best people on our business and then ensure they are motivated to work their fingers to the bone, producing outstanding work for us.'

B

The consequences have been that marketing activities have at last begun to be given the attention they deserve by management, that these people have acquired a little learning about the subject, and that a few brands have actually begun to be genuinely marketed.

C

Ultimately, the poverty of the current advertising scene is due to the nature of the relationship between agencies and their clients. The best way of getting better advertising lies partly in improving this, and partly in adopting a more empirical approach to the whole advertising process.

D

However, there was also evidence of more deepseated change which would not simply be waved away as, and when, economic prospects brightened. The fact was that while this recession naturally caused potential clients to review, reconsider and often cut their budgets at the time, it also made them examine more closely than ever before the economics of advertising.

E

It is not terribly surprising that, at the moment, help for those who want or need to do just that is far from freely available. Generally, companies and the advertising agencies they use have been far too busy simply coping with these circumstances to wish to talk or write about them, while those that have succeeded in keeping their heads above water are often understandably anxious to keep the secrets of their success to themselves.

F

Seen, as they are, to spearhead efforts to support the bottom line, they suppose themselves to be under close enough scrutiny from their colleagues, let alone their bosses. Moreover, they are also faced with the very considerable problem of increasingly being asked to do their ever more difficult jobs with smaller and smaller budgets. They have been told that less must be more.

G

Some of these are a direct consequence of the recession discussed earlier: the controversy over production costs, and the disinclination to take the sort of risks that are ironically often the essence of good advertising. Other events would have happened irrespective of local or global economic conditions.

H

In Britain it meant in 1991 alone that while gross domestic product (GDP) stooped, interest rates remained punitively high, consumer spending on almost everything other than staples fell, more than half a million people lost their jobs, and some 75,000 homes were repossessed.

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