

Solutions Manual

South-Western Federal Taxation: Individual Income Taxes

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CHAPTER 1

AN INTRODUCTION TO TAXATION AND UNDERSTANDING THE FEDERAL TAX LAW

SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEM MATERIALS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. (LO 1)
 - a. By becoming a dealer, any gains and losses John has are converted from capital to ordinary classification.
 - b. Theresa has become self-employed. Now she will be subject to self-employment tax and will have to make quarterly installment payments of estimated income and payroll taxes.
 - c. Due to the home mortgage interest deduction and property tax deduction, most new home-owners will itemize their deductions *from* AGI. Thus, Paul probably will no longer claim the standard deduction on his income tax return.
2. (LO 1) The income tax consequences that result are Marvin's principal concern. Any rent he receives is taxed as income, but operating expenses and depreciation will generate deductions that will offset some or all of the income or even yield a loss. Marvin must also consider the effect of other taxes. Because the property is being converted from residential to commercial use, he can expect an increase in the ad valorem property taxes levied by the local (and perhaps even the state) taxing authorities. Besides the real estate taxes, personal property taxes could be imposed on the furnishings.
3. (LO 2) The statement is only partly correct. The Federal income tax on corporations was not a problem as it had previously been sanctioned by the Supreme Court. What had been declared unconstitutional was the tax on individuals as it applied to the income *from property*.
4. (LO 2) To finance our participation in World War II, the scope of the income tax was expanded considerably—from a limited coverage of 6% to over 74% of the population. Hence, the description of the income tax as being a "mass tax" became appropriate.
5. (LO 2) For wage earners, the tax law requires employers to withhold a specified dollar amount from wages paid to the employee to cover income taxes and payroll taxes. Persons with nonwage income generally are required to make quarterly payments to the IRS for estimated taxes. Both procedures ensure that taxpayers will be financially able to meet their annual tax liabilities. That is, the amounts withheld are meant to prepay the employee's income taxes and payroll taxes related to the wages earned.
6. (LO 3) As to Adam Smith's canon on *economy*, the Federal income tax yields a mixed result. From the standpoint of the IRS, economy exists as collection costs are nominal (when compared with revenue generated). The government's cost of collecting Federal taxes amounts to less than one-half of 1 percent of the revenue collected. Economy is not present, however, if one looks to the compliance effort and costs expended by taxpayers. According to recent estimates, about 56% of individual taxpayers who file a return pay a preparer, and one-third purchase tax software.
7. (LO 3) A tax is *proportional* if the rate of tax remains constant for any given income level. The tax is

progressive if a higher rate of tax applies as the tax base increases.

8. (LO 4)
 - a. The parsonage probably was not listed on the property tax rolls because it was owned by a tax- exempt church. Apparently, the taxing authorities are not aware that ownership has changed.
 - b. Ethan should notify the authorities of his purchase. This will force him to pay back taxes but will eliminate *future* interest and penalties.
9. (LO 4) Although the Baker Motors bid is the lowest, from a long-term financial standpoint, it is the best. The proposed use of the property by the state and the church probably will make it exempt from the School District's ad valorem tax. This would hardly be the case with a car dealership. In fact, commercial properties (e.g., car dealerships) often are subject to higher tax rates.
10. (LO 4)
 - a. In this case, the "tax holiday" probably concerns exemption from ad valorem taxes. "Generous" could involve an extended period of time (e.g., 10 years) and include both realty and personalty.
 - b. The school district could be affected in two ways. First, due to the erosion of the tax base, less revenue would be forthcoming. Second, new workers would mean new families and more children to educate.
11. (LO 4) A possible explanation could be that Sophia made capital improvements (e.g., added a swimming pool) to her residence and her parents became retirees (e.g., reached age 65).
12. (LO 4) Presuming that the dockage facilities are comparable in Massachusetts, the Morgans may be trying to avoid ad valorem taxes. Taxes on nonbusiness personalty vary from one state to another and are frequently avoided.
13. (LO 4) Until recently, it appeared that Federal excise taxes had declined significantly as to the number of transactions covered. Taxes on the sale of jewelry, leather goods, cosmetics, and admission to entertainment events are no longer taxed by the Federal government. But the enactment of the gas guzzler tax and the tax on tanning salons, in addition to the increase in the tax on tobacco products, seems to indicate an expansion of excise taxes at the Federal level.
14. (LO 4) Herman could have been overcharged, but at least part of the excess probably is attributable to a hotel occupancy tax and a car rental tax. In major cities, these types of excise taxes have become a popular way of financing capital improvements, such as sports arenas and stadiums. Consequently, the amount of the taxes could be significant.
15. (LO 4) An *excise tax* is limited to a particular transaction (e.g., sale of gasoline), while a general *sales tax* covers a multitude of transactions (e.g., sale of all nonfood goods).
 - a. The following states *do not* impose a general sales tax: Alaska, Delaware, Montana, New Hampshire, and Oregon.
 - b. There is no Federal general sales tax.