

## UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

Cambridge International Diploma Standard Level

### MARK SCHEME for the May 2006 question paper

#### **CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS**

**5162**      Effective Business Communication, maximum mark 100

These mark schemes are published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. They show the basis on which Examiners were initially instructed to award marks. They do not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began. Any substantial changes to the mark scheme that arose from these discussions will be recorded in the published *Report on the Examination*.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the *Report on the Examination*.

- CIE will not enter into discussion or correspondence in connection with these mark schemes.

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**1 Pierre has asked you to prepare a paper to send to all the members of staff in the consultancy. The paper needs to focus on the following issues.**

**(a) Explain three important issues which need to be considered when deciding the best methods of communication with employees within 'Lane 5'. [6]**

Answers to include three issues such as:

- Need to convey clear message within the organisation
- The business needs to receive and process information effectively
- Necessary for a business to operate successfully at all levels
- Need to consider the individuals within the organisation and consider appropriate methods, i.e. Directors, admin staff etc.
- Need to consider the immediacy of the communication
- Need to consider the importance of the communication i.e. disciplinary interview, notice about canteen opening times
- Need to consider the level of feedback required i.e. one-way or two-way communications
- Need to consider methods of recording the communication i.e. copies etc.
- Need to consider timings and costs involved
- Need to consider use of electronic methods
- Do not use jargon
- Communication with a group on a group basis.

**[1 mark per issue and 1 mark for explanation up to 6 marks]**

**(b) Explain two methods of one-way communication and two methods of two-way communications, which could be used to ensure that all staff know about the plans to target Singapore and Sri Lanka. [8]**

Answer to include identification of one-way communications and an explanation of each:

- Letter
- Memo
- Report

Answer to include identification of two-way communications and an explanation of each:

- Telephone
- Meetings
- Quality circles
- Interviews
- Video conferencing

**[1 mark per method + 1 mark for explanation = 8 marks]**

**(c) Identify and explain three different methods of evaluating the effectiveness of communications. [6]**

Answer to include methods of evaluation and an explanation of each:

- Availability – can staff access the information – time zones etc.?
- Cost-effectiveness – is it cost effective?
- Message content – is the message understood and decoded correctly by the receiver or member of staff?
- Appropriateness – is the method appropriate for the situation?
- Will it affect motivation?

**[1 mark per method and 1 mark per explanation up to 6 marks]**

**[Total: 20]**

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**2 'Lane 5' has been invited to give a presentation to a potential customer who is a major retail bank in Sri Lanka.**

**(a) Write a letter from Pierre Hoy, accepting the invitation to give a presentation to the bank. You can create any details necessary. [12]**

The letter should conform to the following format:

- Logo or letter heading of the company } 3 Marks
- Date } 3 Marks
- Reference number } 3 Marks
  
- Appropriate salutation – Dear Mr/Mrs } 1 Mark
  
- Letter Heading – Business Performance } 6 Marks
- The body/content of letter } (Levels applied)
- Accept invitation and give information
- Include website details }
- Appropriate closure }
  
- Signature and position } 1 Mark

The content and tone of the letter should be positive. It should cite the benefits of the company's consultancy service. The letter could include some inducement or response mechanism.

Content of the letter:

Level 1 – 1-3 marks – A short vague letter without details and appropriate closure.

Level 2 – 4-6 marks – A good letter with invitation acceptance and web details and closure.

**(b) Write a memo from Pierre Hoy, telling 'Lane 5' employees that they will need to prepare a presentation for a potential new client to try to secure new business. [8]**

The memo should conform to the following format:

- Logo of the company
- Date
- To: Internal staff
- From: Director
- Subject: Presentation
- The body/content of memo
- Tells staff about presentation + confirms date
- Stresses the importance of this presentation
- Gives a little background on client.
- Appropriate conclusion
- Initials or signature only

The content and tone of the memo should be persuasive and impress upon the staff how important this presentation will be as it could lead to potential big business.

**[up to 4 marks for content and up to 4 marks for layout]**

**[Total: 20]**

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**3 Pierre has decided to introduce weekly team meetings for all employees within the company, to keep them updated about the plans to target banking and financial businesses in Singapore and Sri Lanka.**

**(a) Draw up the agenda for the first meeting, giving all information which will be required. [10]**

Agenda will need to include:

- Heading (includes agenda title, date, time and venue of meeting)
- Apologies for absence
- Objectives of meeting
- Up date of current issues
- Advertising/Promotion
- Recruitment of new staff
- Any other business
- Date, time and venue of next meeting

**[up to 5 marks for content and up to 5 marks for layout]**

**(b) Explain the roles of formal and informal communications within the company and how this may influence the effectiveness of the workforce. [10]**

Role of formal communication:

- Official specific information
- Could be letters, reports, memos, presentations
- Legal information can be disseminated e.g. contract of law, safety regulation

Affect on workforce:

- Needs to be handled sensitively in a small company
- Can look to be impersonal if tone is wrong
- Should be used to give important information and praise
- Can be used to motivate if developed correctly

Role of informal communication:

- Verbal and NVC, grapevine, social communication
- Can be used to motivate
- Should not be relied upon for complex information
- Small companies often use informal communication at the cost of formal information
- Message can become obscured or changed

Affect of workforce:

- Workforce can feel less important
- Can affect the group culture
- Grapevine and social communication can undermine management

Level 1: Acknowledges the different roles of communication but not effects on workforce

**[1-2 marks]**

Level 2: Considered communication and some of the effects

**[3-5 marks]**

Level 3: Analyses communication and applies this to case workforce

**[6-8 marks]**

Level 4: Full analysis of both communications which are fully applied

**[9-10 marks]**

**[Total: 20]**

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**4 Pierre Hoy has instructed you to conduct the interviews for two new consultant posts, which have just been advertised.**

**(a) Define two purposes of a recruitment interview. [4]**

Purposes could include;

- To identify key personal characteristics of interviewee
- To assess the interviewee's essential skills required for the job
- To promote the company to the interviewee
- To offer the interviewee an opportunity to find out more about the company
- To see if the interviewee would 'fit in' the company
- To assess the interviewee's personal appearance and punctuality

**[2 marks per point up to 4 marks]**

**(b) This is the first time you have carried out recruitment interviews. Write a set of guidelines to plan for the interviews for the two new consultants. [10]**

Guidelines for planning interviews:

- Consider the aims and purpose of the interview
- Need to decide who should be present at the interview
- Need to consider type of questions – open, probing, scenario base, etc.
- The discussion should largely go backwards and forwards from the interviewer to the interviewee so that the interviewer maintains the position of controlling the proceedings
- The interviewer will also need to set the general tone of the interview which will reflect the relationship of the parties and nature of the discussion
- Need to choose an appropriate location and time and collect all necessary background data that will set the structure for the interview i.e. personal specification, job specification, selection criteria
- Need to listen carefully for information expressed by the interviewee. Need to consider how this is to be recorded
- Need to make notes on critical issues during the course of the interview and close with a summary of the main points raised, highlighting the next stage of the process i.e. when the decision will be made
- After the interview, need to spend a few minutes making additional notes that may be useful for reference later, whilst the interview is fresh in the mind.
- Need to consider the acceptance and rejection letters after the interview to appropriate people

Level 1: demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding **[1-2 marks]**

Level 2: demonstrates a clearer understanding of planning stages **[3-5 marks]**

Level 3: analyses appropriate stages which are fully applied **[6-8 marks]**

Level 4: fully analyses all appropriate stages which are applied **[9-10 marks]**

**(c) List three other types of interview which could be conducted in a small company such as this. [6]**

Other types of interviews which could take place:

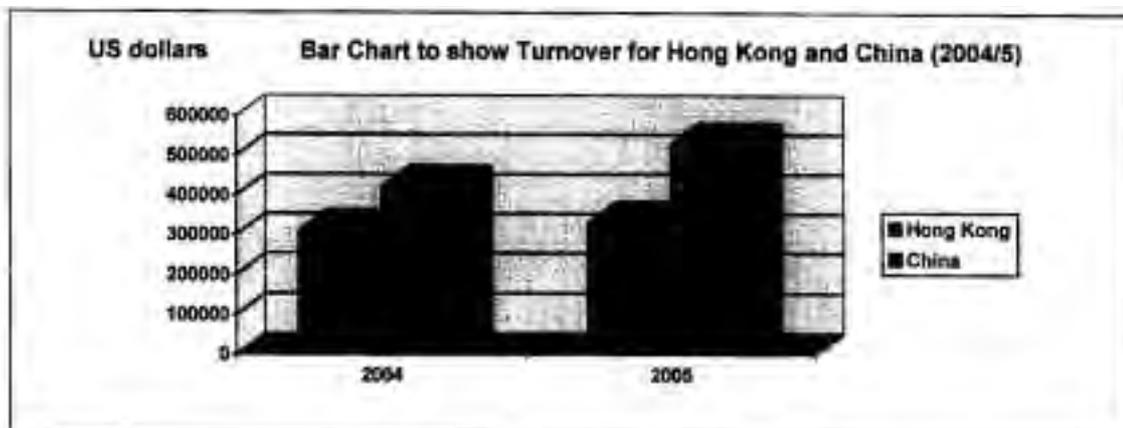
- Performance appraisal reviews
- Medical interviews
- Counselling interviews
- Grievance interview
- Disciplinary interview
- Two way communication process

**[1-2 marks per point up to 6 marks]**

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5 In preparation for the interviews, Pierre wants to be able to give each applicant information about the sales for Hong Kong and China for the last two years.

(a) Pierre has asked you to prepare the data in Table 1 and present it as a bar chart for 2004 and 2005 only.



A simple bar chart, comprising of a vertical and horizontal axis, with '0' as the common factor. This could be in the form of a vertical or horizontal bar chart, with shaded portions.

- Correct aid used [2 marks]
- Correct values plotted on axes, with '0' as the common factor [2 marks]
- Correct shaded areas to illustrate key [2 marks]
- Clarity of chart and correct labelling [4 marks]

(b) List three issues which you need to consider when producing data as a visual aid. [4]

Issues to be considered:

- Analyse the audience to whom this information will be presented and reflect their needs in terms of the amount and level of data used
- Keep the format simple, uncrowded and easy to handle
- Label the information clearly
- Provide a key for headings etc.
- Attention to labels
- Use shading where appropriate

[1-2 marks per point up to 4 marks]

(c) Briefly explain the following:

- (i) pie charts.
  - (ii) line graphs. [6]
- (i) circular diagrams that are particularly useful for showing the composition of all data, with the segments demonstrating the relative values of the data. Must be accurate. Not all information is best presented in this way.
- (ii) these are a series of points joined together to form a straight or curved line and are usually used to reflect a trend over a period of time, or the interaction of two variables. Similar to column or bar charts, but with the lines instead of columns to represent the value of the variables.

- Level 1: basic description of each [1-2 marks each]
- Level 2: good description and analysis of each [3 marks each]

[Total: 20]