

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

Cambridge International Diploma Standard Level

MARK SCHEME for the October 2005 question paper

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS

5162 Effective Business Communication, maximum mark 100

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1 You work for Interflower. The most appropriate methods of communication are essential for the success of Interflower business.

(a) State what factors must be considered when choosing the most appropriate method of communication for both internal staff and external customers. [8]

Answer to include:

Internal communications

- 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, etc.
- Need to consider the immediacy of the communication.
- Need to consider the importance of the communication.
- 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 to etc.
- Need to consider timings and costs involved.
- Need to consider use of electronic methods.

External Communications

- Need to consider the reputation of the organisation externally.
- Need to consider the formality of the communication.
- Need to consider the level of feedback required.
- Need to consider the skills required by communicators with external customers.
- Need to consider the different needs of the customers.
- Need to consider cost involved.
- Need to consider the accessibility of the customer to the communication.

Level 1 (1-3 Marks)

For the provision of a basic understanding of one or two issues, or a bullet point list.

Level 2 (4-6 Marks)

Some elaboration of minor points with a reasonable understanding demonstrated.

Level 3 (7-8 Marks)

A good discussion of at least four points relating from the above with some application.

(b) You are planning internal and external communications to address a number of problems currently facing Interflower. Identify, with reasons, the most appropriate method of communication for the following situations:

(i) to discuss the problems of low staff morale. [3]

Accept: one to one meeting, group meetings etc.

Reasons: two-way communication possibly sensitive.

[1 mark for type of communication + 2 marks for reason up to 3 marks]

(ii) to promote a new range of flowers to potential new customers. [3]

Accept: letter, email, advert, brochure, website, memo.

Reasons: one-way communication to hit large amount of people + needs to show range of products.

[1 mark for type of communication + 2 marks for reason up to 3 marks]

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(iii) to invite staff to apply for promotion. [3]

Accept: staff appraisal, notice, email.

Reasons: one-way and two-way to target effectively, fairness.

[1 mark for type of communication + 2 marks for reason up to 3 marks]

(iv) to promote a new loyalty club for existing customers. [3]

Accept: mail shot letter, email and word of mouth in shop.

Reasons: need to hit high number and be persuasive.

[1 mark for type of communication + 2 marks for reason up to 3 marks]

[Total 20]

2 A new competitor has just launched its international floristry business and you are worried that the sales for Christmas will decline.

(a) Write a letter to your past customers telling them about Interflower's products available for Christmas orders. You should try to ensure that the customer will respond to this letter. You may 'create' any details. [14]

The letter should conform to the following format:

- Logo or letter heading of the company } [2 marks]
- Date } [2 marks]
- Reference number } [2 marks]
- Appropriate salutation – Dear Mr/Mrs } [2 marks]
- Letter Heading – Christmas Selections }
- The body/content of letter }
- Explanation new Christmas range } [8 marks – levels below]
- Appropriate closure }
- Signature and position } [2 marks]
- Response mechanism }

The content and tone of the letter should be polite and persuasive, detailing the new Christmas range. The letter should also summarise by explaining what the next stage will be to order i.e. send in attached slip or email.

Level 1 (1-2 Marks)

Demonstrates limited content and persuasion.

Level 2 (3-5 Marks)

Demonstrates a good tone and appropriate contents.

Level 3 (6-8 Marks)

Excellent persuasive tone and good content.

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- (b) Explain three advantages of an Internet site for the promotion of the Interflower products. [6]

Answer to include:

Explanation of Internet site – used to promote products and to offer sales on-line.

Advantages:

- 24/7 access.
- international audience.
- easy to evaluate.
- hot links.
- added value.

[2 marks for each advantage = 6 marks]

[Total 20]

- 3 You have arranged to give a presentation to the Managing Director of Interflower about your suggestions for developing a customer loyalty club.

- (a) Identify what factors you will need to consider when planning the presentation in terms of verbal and non-verbal communication. [10]

Verbal Communication:

- Decide on the aim of the message.
- Select and deliver the important facts and figures.
- Identify and stress the key points of the message.
- Choose an appropriate verbal style – sincerity, warmth, assertiveness, diplomacy.
- Choose an appropriate articulation – tone, enunciation, emphasis, volume, projection.
- Monitor feedback constantly – adjust delivery accordingly.
- End on a positive note.

Non-verbal Communication:

- Need to decide on body stance and gestures – ease, physical presence, enthusiasm.
- Need to ensure eye contact.
- Need to be prepared to listen to feedback and show this.
- Need to check facial expression.
- Need to choose most effective methods of presenting data – charts etc.

Level 1 (1-2 Marks)

Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding.

Level 2 (3-5 Marks)

Demonstrates a clearer understanding of verbal and NVC.

Level 3 (6-5 Marks)

Analyses verbal and NVC issues.

Level 4 (9-10 Marks)

Excellent understanding of all elements and applied.

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(b) You know that effective groupwork within Interflower is important for the development of good customer care. Explain how the following can have an impact on the effectiveness of the working relationship of staff.

- (i) relationships within the group.**
- (ii) size of the group.**
- (iii) group culture.**

[10]

Answer should include:

- (i)** the size of the group – smaller groups can become more intimate and communicate well, but may not have all the skills required however larger groups may not be able to communicate effectively.
- (ii)** relationships within the group can relate to power and personal length of service. The level of trust and credibility within the organisation will have an impact. The level of external interaction will also have an impact.
- (iii)** group culture is very important in terms of how the group operates, can be related to people’s background, lifestyle, nationality, religion, attitudes to work, education and interests.

Level 1 (1-2 Marks)

Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding.

Level 2 (3-5 Marks)

Demonstrates a clearer understanding of groups.

Level 3 (6-8 Marks)

Analyses and discusses issues.

Level 4 (9-10 Marks)

Excellent understanding of all elements and applied.

[Total 20]

4 You are planning to recruit a new market analyst and have received a number of suitable applications. You now intend to interview these applicants.

(a) Explain what you will need to plan for this type of recruitment/selection interview.

[12]

Need to plan the 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.

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- 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 the appropriate people.

Level 1 (1-3 Marks)

Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding.

Level 2 (4-7 Marks)

Demonstrates a clearer understanding of planning stages.

Level 3 (8-10 Marks)

Analyses appropriate stages.

Level 4 (11-12 Marks)

Excellent analysis of appropriate elements.

- (b) Identify two types of questions which you should use and give one example of each type of question. [8]

Answers to include:

- 1 Closed question – used to find out facts about the candidate such as age, current income, checking skills, checking details on the application form – questions such as ‘are you trained to use Excel spreadsheets?’.
- 2 Open questions – used to find out attitudes and past experience – questions such as why did you apply for this position? What could you bring to the job?.

[2 marks per explanation and 2 marks per example of question up to 4 marks for each type]

[Total 20]

- 5 You know that you need to prepare data in order to analyse the declining worldwide sales figures.

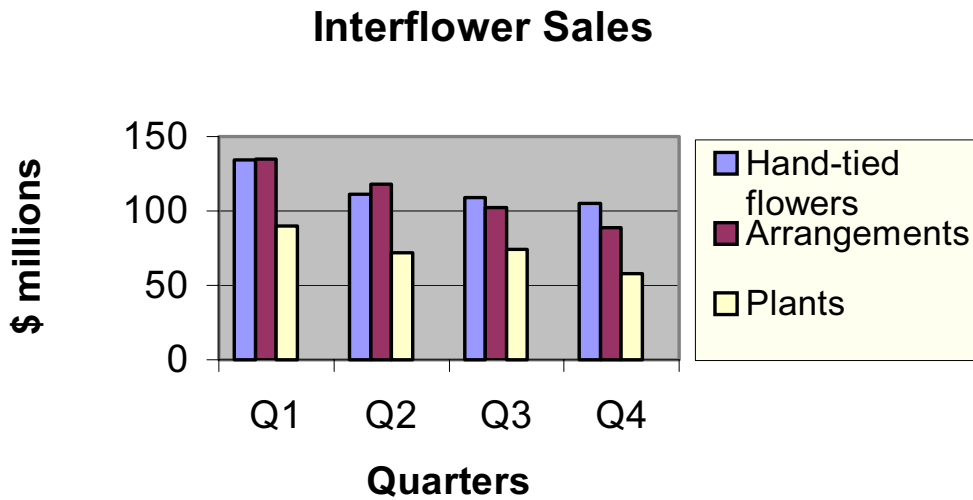
- (a) Describe three types of graphical visual aids, which you could use to do this. [6]

Answer to include any of the following alternatives or alternative visual aids such as Z-Charts or Pictograms:

- Tables – the use of numeric tables as a valuable way of presenting complex facts.
- Line graphs – the advantage of line graphs against tables is that the line graph can still retain complex information, but it can be easier to identify and compare at first glance.
- Pie charts – pie charts break up data into a circular diagram representing 360 degrees or 100%. The relative size of the slice of the pie indicates the proportion of it to the whole.
- Bar charts – series of bars in vertical or horizontal format representing totals or amounts of items being compared using a common scale.

[3 x 2 = 1 Mark Per type of visual aid and 1 mark per description up to 6 marks]

(b) Prepare the data in Table 1 and present it as a bar chart for the four quarters. [10]



A simple column/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 axis, with '0' as the common factor | [2 marks] |
| Correct shaded areas to illustrate key | [2 marks] |
| Clarity of chart and correct labelling | [4 marks] |

(c) Give two examples which illustrate how technology can enhance visual communications within business. [4]

Answers to include:

- Models can be produced – 3D to visualise more effectively.
- Full colour can be used.
- Integration with other IT packages for an effective presentation such as PowerPoint.
- Integration with other multimedia aids such as talking heads etc.
- Information can be produced as progressive information.

[2 marks per example up to 4 marks]

[Total 20]