

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

Cambridge International Diploma Advanced Level

MARK SCHEME for the May 2006 question paper

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS

5172

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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The following are not model answers, but are nevertheless to be regarded as persuasive. Candidates may offer other relevant and appropriate material and arguments.

1 You work as the Marketing Manager for EPS, and you manage a team of staff responsible for the marketing of the new 'smart' batteries.

(a) Explain to your staff the role of external communications to all stakeholders for the marketing of this new product. [6]

Answer could include the following expanded points – answers should be contextualised to the case:

- Aim and purpose of external communication: to promote the new batteries, raise awareness, encourage orders
- Audience: different communications for different stakeholders such as end customers i.e. business customers or individual consumers, intermediaries for industrial and consumer markets
- Model of communications: sender, message, medium, receiver, noise
- Promotion of the brand and of smart batteries

This is a general task and candidates may answer in a number of ways.

[2 mark per point = up to 6 marks]

(b) Explain one characteristic of both verbal (oral) and non-verbal communications which will be important for the sales representatives to consider when visiting the industrial companies to sell the new batteries. [6]

Answer could include the following expanded points – answers should be contextualised to the case:

- *Non-verbal communication:*
 - Consider kinetics, body language, dress, facial expression, posture etc.

Example

Sales staff will need to be persuasive and enthusiastic and welcoming, therefore the body language needs to be open – no crossing arms, warm smiles etc.

- *Oral communication:*
 - Could be in the form of face-to-face conversations, interviews, meetings, briefings, presentations
 - Sales reps need to ensure that they are not talking jargon
 - need to ensure that their oral message fits with the written messages in letters, brochures

Example

The sales reps need to use phrases that reinforce the message

[3 marks each = up to 6 marks]

(c) Identify four potential key problems which EPS could face because of poor communication with both industrial customers and individual consumers. [8]

Problems could include:

- No clear aim or purpose of communication resulting in loss of sales
- Use of inappropriate language such as 'techno' speak
- Customers unable to understand the message due to education/experience levels
- Use of inappropriate medium such as informal chats etc.
- Problems with language and cultural barriers

[2 marks per point = up to 8 marks]

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2 It is important that the communications for the launch of the new batteries are effective.

(a) Evaluate the following types of communication for the launch of the new batteries:

(i) Promotional videos [4]

(ii) Press releases [4]

Answers should include:

Promotional Videos:

- One way communication only
- Can demonstrate product use
- Can illustrate range of products
- Can include important information such as contact numbers, etc.
- Can illustrate the company's location, buildings, etc.
- Can be added to the website
- Good to use with industrial customers
- Dates very quickly
- Can be expensive to produce

[1/2 marks per point = up to 4 marks]

Press Releases:

- Mainly used to get coverage in appropriate press
- One way communication only
- Considered credible – more than advertising
- Can be used as attachment to customers letters
- Limited information can be included because of length required
- Can include embargoed date

[1/2 marks per point = up to 4 marks]

(b) Write a letter to send to either industrial or individual consumers regarding the new batteries. The letter is intended to promote the benefits of the new 'smart' batteries and to encourage the reader to seek further information. You can 'create' any details that you think are necessary. [12]

The letter should conform to the following format:

- | | | |
|--|---|-----------|
| • Letter heading of the company | } | |
| • Date | } | [2 marks] |
| • Reference number | } | |
| • Appropriate salutation – Dear Mr/Mrs | } | [2 marks] |
| • Letter Heading – Smart Batteries | } | |
| • The body/content of letter | } | |
| • Technical capabilities of batteries | } | [6 marks] |
| • Appropriate closure | } | |
| • Signature and position | } | [2 marks] |

The content and tone of the letter should be persuasive and encourage customers to contact the company for more information via the website or telephone calls.

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3 There is a large number of new staff joining the workforce at EPS due to an increase in work for the new batteries, and this is creating problems with the existing staff.

(a) Identify and briefly explain three factors which could be influencing the current group effectiveness. [6]

Group Conflict in the workforce due to:

- Lack of information or poor communication system
- NVC – poor body language and distortion of message
- Inappropriate language
- Poor listening and feedback
- Pre-judgement
- Poor relationships – existing staff may resent the new staff
- Emotions
- Different ideologies – i.e. new staff with different experiences from previous job

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

(b) You want to run an effective team meeting with the old and new staff. Explain four characteristics of successful meetings. [8]

Characteristics of an effective meeting should include:

- Aims and objectives outlined
- Action points highlighted
- Time constraints adhered to leadership provided
- Preparation and use of an agenda
- The use of minutes
- The role of key participants – chairperson, secretary, treasurer

[2 marks per characteristic and explanation – up to 8 marks]

(c) Explain the importance of both verbal (oral) and non-verbal communication in a group meeting. [6]

Could consider the following:

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 – 1-3 Marks – Basic bullet points or little discussion of key points. No balance in the answer between verbal and non verbal communication.

Level 2 – 4-6 Marks – A good discussion with strong consideration of both verbal and non-verbal communications.

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4 You have been asked to conduct the induction interviews with the new members of staff.

(a) Give three points explaining about how you will prepare for these induction interviews. [12]

Answer should include points for the interviewer:

- Plan the interview
- Consider the purpose of interview – introduction to the company + consider how processes work
- Liaise with other members of the management where required
- Consider location, timing and structure of interview
- Prepare discussion points/questions if necessary
- Need to consider that this is a two-way communication process
- Needs to be helpful and supportive for the new employees and their concerns
- Needs to be a confidential and trusting environment

[2 mark per point which is not expanded, 4 marks for expanded points = 12 marks]

(b) Suggest four different types of questions. Give an example of each type which could be used within these induction interviews [8]

- Closed question – offer a choice of answers only i.e. Do you feel that you can cope with working night shifts?
- Leading question – lead the interviewee into speaking about specific issues i.e. What do you think the company could do for new members of staff?
- Open question – a question which allows the interviewee the opportunity to give open, frank and in-depth information i.e. how do you think you can use your previously gained skills effectively here?
- Hypothetical question – gives a scenario to allow the interviewee to answer in role, i.e. What if EPS decided that there were to be a new bonus system based on overtime? – How would you respond to this?

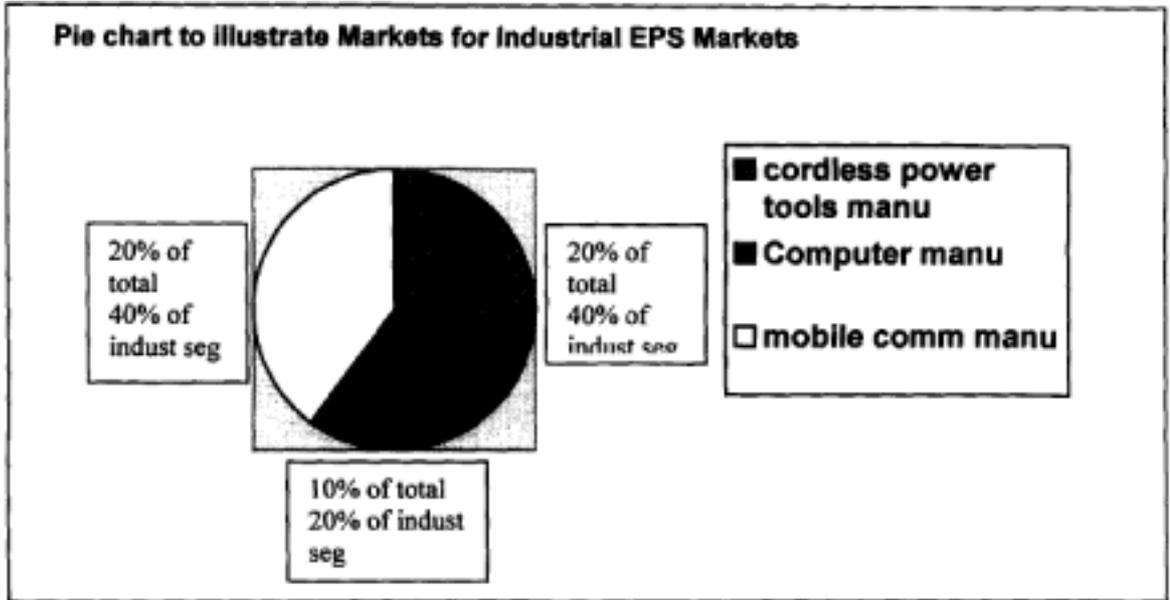
[1 mark per type of question and 1 mark per example up to 8 marks]

5 You are required to consider the industrial and individual consumer markets for the new products.

(a) Present the data on lines 17 to 25 (total sales for industrial and consumer markets) as graphical forms of communication:

(i) Pie chart for the industrial market

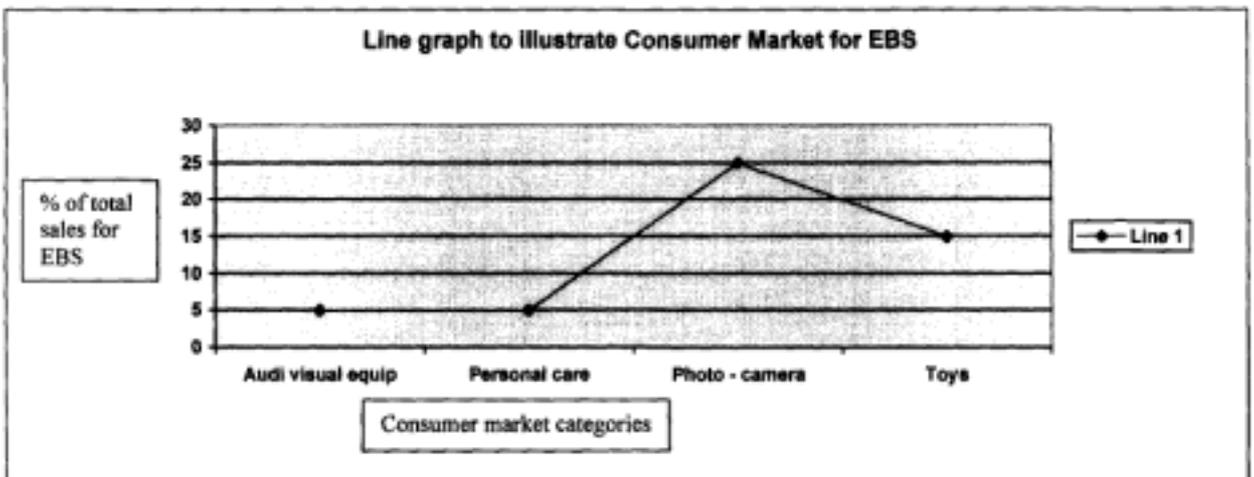
[6]



Correct aid used	[1 mark]
Correct values plotted	[2 marks]
Correct shaded areas to illustrate key	[1 mark]
Clarity of chart and correct labelling	[2 marks]

(ii) Line graph for the consumer market

[6]



Correct aid used	[1 mark]
Correct values plotted	[2 marks]
Correct shaded areas to illustrate key	[1 mark]
Clarity of chart and correct labelling	[2 marks]

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(b) Explain two advantages and two disadvantages of both pie charts and line graphs. [8]

Explanation of pie charts – easily visually digested, total value of items must be known, use of colours to enhance impact, limited to the amount of in-depth information that can be conveyed using a pie chart, need to work out in terms of 360%

[1 mark per point = 4 marks]

Explanation of line graphs – good for showing trends, many different types of line graphs to suit different situations, cannot readily or clearly be interpreted if too many plotted lines of information, therefore not helpful for complex information.

[1 mark per point = 4 marks]