



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
Cambridge International Diploma in Business
Advanced Level

EFFECTIVE BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

5172/01

Core Module

May 2011

2 hours plus 15 minutes' reading time

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

You may use a soft pencil for any diagrams, graphs or rough working.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Attempt **all** tasks.

Start each task on a new piece of paper.

Please leave a margin on the right and left hand side of each new page.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together, in the correct order.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

This document consists of **4** printed pages.



You must read the case study below and attempt ALL the tasks which follow.

(This case study is fictitious.)

The Major Road Construction Company

The Major Road Construction Company is a large company which is organised into two sections:

- Quarry Materials – ready mixed concrete, cement and contracting services;
- Building Products – mortar, masonry, packed and pre-cast products.

The company is currently expanding into Asia and has just been given a major road building contract in Vietnam. A requirement of the contract is that the company will merge with an existing company called The Ca Mau Company for the length of the project. The main office will be based in the city of Bac Giang. 5

Richard Lomas, the Managing Director of The Major Road Construction Company, believes that its people make the difference and enable the business to be the leader in its chosen markets. It aims to employ motivated people all working together as one team across all of its business activities. The Major Road Construction Company employees have the opportunity to contribute their ideas on how to achieve results. They can do this through the employee suggestion scheme or by presenting ideas to managers to discuss within development teams. This helps individuals feel part of the wider team, allows them to gain a greater understanding of the business, and strengthens employee engagement with a commitment to the organisation. 10 15

Within each functional area, there are three main levels of staff:

- Managers who organise and plan their departments to exceed the expectations of internal and external customers. They work closely with other managers across the company to ensure continuous process improvements.
- Supervisors who work with managers to ensure that operators apply procedures and practices consistently. 20
- Operators who carry out the day-to-day construction tasks.

The Board of Directors are fully aware that businesses have to respond to rapidly changing markets and conditions in order to remain competitive and continue to grow. Developments in technology, competition from new or emerging markets, changing tastes and fashions, and changes to the law can all affect a business. At the last board meeting concerns were raised by a number of members regarding the proposed merger with The Ca Mau Company. The main concern was communication with all stakeholders. The Managing Directors of both companies have spoken on the telephone but now wish to meet face to face. Richard Lomas will be travelling to Vietnam to meet with Ying Tien, Managing Director of The Ca Mau Company. 25 30

Ying Tien has a number of agenda items for the meeting. These include recruitment and selection, internal communication, project management and the use of ICT between both companies.

You are the Personal Assistant to Ying Tien.

You must attempt ALL of the following tasks.

Where appropriate use information from the case study to support your answer.

1 The Board of Directors of The Major Road Construction Company have made communication with all its stakeholders a priority whilst working with The Ca Mau Company.

(a) Identify **four** key causes of poor internal communication. **[4 x 2 = 8]**

(b) The directors of both companies are concerned that there will be no misunderstandings between the employees regarding communication. **List three** advantages and **three** disadvantages of written communication. **[6 x 1 = 6]**

(c) It is very important for all managers to understand the role of non-verbal and verbal communications.

Explain the meaning of **each** of the following. Give **one** example of **each**.

(i) Metacommunications. **[3]**

(ii) Kinetics. **[3]**

[Total: 20]

2 The merger of both companies for the duration of the project has been agreed. A face to face meeting has been arranged for both Managing Directors.

(a) Write a letter to Richard Lomas inviting him to meet with Ying Tien. The meeting will take place on 6 June at the Head Office in Bac Giang. List the agenda items and any other details which would be appropriate. You can invent any other relevant details. **[12]**

(b) There will be a further meeting for all the Directors of The Ca Mau Company to meet with Richard Lomas. Write a memo to all the Directors inviting them to meet with Richard Lomas. Ying Tien has insisted upon full attendance. You can invent any other relevant details. **[8]**

[Total: 20]

3 The preparations for the Directors' meeting are now completed.

(a) Describe the characteristics of a successful meeting. **[6 x 1 = 6]**

(b) Due to the nature of the merger a number of teams will be virtual groups. **List** the factors which affect virtual groups. **[6 x 1 = 6]**

(c) There will be a number of groups from each company working very closely together for the duration of the project. Identify **four** rules which the groups will comply with if they are to be successful. **[4 x 2 = 8]**

[Total: 20]

- 4 One of the action points resulting from the discussion between the two Managing Directors is that The Ca Mau Company has not been conducting performance appraisal interviews with its staff. Ying Tien has asked you to review their appraisal procedures.
- (a) Prepare **six** guidance points which should be discussed during a performance appraisal interview. **[6 x 2 = 12]**
- (b) Ying Tien has asked you to give examples of **four** types of question you may use for a recruitment and selection interview. What should they be? **[4 x 2 = 8]**
[Total: 20]
- 5 Ying Tien has asked you to analyse the data for raw materials which will need to be purchased to complete the project.
- (a) Suggest and justify **four** types of graph which could be used to present this data. **[4 x 2 = 8]**
- (b) Identify the structure of a suitable report to be sent to Richard Lomas. **[6 x 1 = 6]**
- (c) Explain to Ying Tien what a Gantt chart is and how it can be used within the project. **[6]**
[Total: 20]