

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

Cambridge International Diploma Advanced Level

MARK SCHEME for the October 2004 question paper

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS

5172

Effective Business Communication (Core), maximum mark 100

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows 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.



October 2004

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA

Advanced Level

MARK SCHEME

MAXIMUM MARK: 100

PAPER: 5172

BUSINESS
Effective Business Communication



Page 1	Mark Scheme	Paper
	CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA – OCT 2004	5172

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 Richard Rose is worried about the rising number of customer complaints which have been received.

(a) Explain the following methods of communication

- (i) team meetings
 - (ii) email
 - (iii) seminars
 - (iv) briefings
 - (v) written reports
- [5 x 2]

Answers should include the following:

- (i) **team meetings** - regular meetings with staff and management or dedicated teams. Use an agenda and clear notice where and when the meeting is to take place – two way form of communication.
- (ii) **email** - this could be used to give information to staff but not best as this is not a technology driven company and the installation staff may not have access to email.
- (iii) **seminars** - these are usually, presentation of information which leads to a discussion, often used for training purposes or proposals – two way communication.
- (iv) **briefings** - this is where management brief staff about key issues and current problems. This is often more one-way communication than two-way communication.
- (v) **written reports** - more formal communication method often used to communicate complex information – one-way method.

Level 1 - Brief definition of the methods of communication [1 - 5 Marks]

Level 2 - A developed discussion around each of the methods [6 - 10 Marks]

(b) Identify, with reasons, the most appropriate method(s) of communication which Richard should use to ensure that all staff are aware of the problems. [4]

Identification of the most appropriate method – team meeting or a quality circle are most likely to be selected as the most effective method – reasons; two-way communication, able to get feedback from staff, can handle issues sensitively.

[2 marks for appropriate suggestion and 2 marks for reason]

Page 2	Mark Scheme	Paper
	CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA – OCT 2004	5172

(c) **Richard realises that the workmen have problems with different types of communication. Explain each of the following and give one example for each.**

- (i) **Paralanguage**
- (ii) **Metacommunications**
- (iii) **Non-verbal communication** **[6]**

(i) **Paralanguage**

The intonation used to emphasise what the real meaning of the words are. It is not what is said but the way in which it is said. Example: the workmen may be sarcastic in their tone when talking to customers.

1 Mark for explanation and 1 mark for example [2 marks]

(ii) **Metacommunication**

Meta Communication - description

Comes from the Greek meaning beyond. The sense that humans have in feeling that there is more to what a person says than just the words – i.e. beyond the words.

Example – An example could be that the workmen are saying that they are busy when they are stopping for a drink all the time.

1 Mark for explanation and 1 mark for example [2 marks]

(iii) **Non-verbal communication**

Kinesics, body language, dress, facial expression, posture etc.

Example – the workmen may stand with folded arms or hands in their pockets or not look at the customer when talking to them. This indicates a lack of respect.

1 Mark for explanation and 1 mark for example [2 marks]

[Total: 20]

Page 3	Mark Scheme	Paper
	CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA – OCT 2004	5172

2 Richard knows that he needs to respond to the customer complaints.

(a) Write a letter for Richard, apologising for the problems which the customers have experienced. You may create any details you wish.

[8]

The letter should conform to the following format:

Format

- Letter heading of the company
- Date
- Reference number
- Appropriate salutation – Dear Mr/Mrs
- Letter heading – Customer Complaint
- Signature and position

Content

- The body/content of the letter
- Apology for problems + compensation
- Appropriate closure – further action and response contact details

The content and tone of the letter should be apologetic and offer some sort of compensation for customers.

Format 4 Marks

Content 4 Marks

(b) Richard emails the company who manufactured the ceramic floor tiles to pass on the customer complaint about the tile which has scratched. Explain the benefits of using email for this communication.

[6]

Benefits could include:

- Speed of communication
- Facilitation of more easily accessible response mechanism
- Ability to see that the communication has been received (and when)
- Novelty value for this type of business
- Ability to communicate overseas quicker and more cost effective

Level 1: A small amount of benefits identified [1 - 2 marks]

Level 2: A small amount of benefits which are explained [3 - 4 marks]

Level 3: A good range of well explained benefits [5 - 6 marks]

Page 4	Mark Scheme	Paper
	CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA – OCT 2004	5172

(c) Explain how Richard could use the following to help increase sales by targeting potential customers.

(i) Database of previous customers' addresses

(ii) Desk top publishing software

(iii) Website

[6]

(i) Database of previous customers' addresses

- The database should provide contact details which could be used to send out mailshots.
- The database could be used to build a loyalty scheme.
- The information on the database could be used to target similar customers with similar characteristics.

[one point expanded for 2 marks or two bullet points = 2 marks]

(ii) Desk top publishing software

- Can be used for the creation of professional mail shots and flyers
- Can be used to create professional brochures

[one point expanded for 2 marks or two bullet points = 2 marks]

(iii) Website

- Channel for promotional information
- Could be used for special loyalty scheme
- Opportunity to offer virtual presentation of the showroom
- 24 hour access

[one point expanded for 2 marks or two bullet points = 2 marks]

Page 5	Mark Scheme	Paper
	CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA – OCT 2004	5172

3 Richard is determined to introduce effective group communication within the company and has decided to call a general meeting for all members of staff.

(a) Identify and explain five characteristics of an effective and successful meeting with all employees. [10]

Characteristics of an effective meeting should include:

- Aims and objectives outlined
- Selecting the right participants
- 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 characteristics and explanation – up to 10 marks]

(b) Explain the characteristics of effective groups within an organisation. [10]

Explanation of characteristics of effective groups to include:

- Structure of group
- Culture within group and organisation
- Development of trust within the group
- Level of support within the group
- Consultation and communication
- Involvement in decision-making
- Respect for members of the group
- Norming, forming, storming, performing

Level 1: Some understanding of group dynamics [1 - 2 marks]

Level 2: Further understanding and fuller consideration [3 - 6 marks]

Level 3: Detailed analysis of successful groups related to case [7 - 10 marks]

[Total: 20]

Page 6	Mark Scheme	Paper
	CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA – OCT 2004	5172

4 Richard has identified that the company has grown so much, that a full-time receptionist is now required. He has decided to interview five applicants for the position.

(a) Explain four types of questions which Richard could use in the interviews and give an example of each type [8]

- Closed question – offer a choice of answers only i.e. Do you have experience of dealing with awkward customers?
- Leading question – lead the interviewee onto speaking about specific issues i.e. Why do you think you are suitable for this position?
- Open question – a question which allows the interviewee the opportunity to give open, frank, and in-depth information i.e. what are your ambitions if you were to join the company?
- Hypothetical question – gives a scenario to allow the interviewee to answer in role, i.e. You have just improved the company website – how could you use this to promote the company further?
- Probing question – this type of question digs deep into the persons thought process to understand what it is they are really thinking.

[Any of the above 4 questions - 1 mark for identifying and explaining the type of question and 1 mark per example up to 8 marks]

(b) Explain three ways a recruitment interview for new staff would differ from a disciplinary interview with staff. [6]

- Recruitment interview would aim to assess the ability of the candidate as being suitable for the post – identifying their previous employment history, strengths and weaknesses, identify attitude, appearance etc
- The recruitment interview may be used as a short-listing procedure
- Disciplinary interview should try to find out what the real causes of employee problems are
- Disciplinary will have different people on the panel to the recruitment interviews
- Both types of interviews should allow the interviewee to discuss areas which they want to bring out

Level 1: Basic point of one or the other method of recruitment interview [1 - 3 Marks]

Level 2: Is for an explanation that contrasts the disciplinary interview [4 - 6 Marks]

Page 7	Mark Scheme	Paper
	CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA – OCT 2004	5172

- (c) **Identify and explain three other different types of business interviews which a manager may be expected to undertake within his or her role. [6]**

Different types of business interviews:

- Counselling
- Performance review
- Termination
- Induction
- Data-gathering
- Exit
- Quality related interviews

Consider valid and justifiable alternative answers

[2 marks per expanded type of interview occasion up to 6 marks]

[Total: 20]

Page 8	Mark Scheme	Paper
	CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA – OCT 2004	5172

5 Richard knows that he needs to track the number of complaints and record these against sales trends.

(a) Explain the advantages and disadvantages of the following types of graphical forms of communication which Richard could use to present this data.

- (i) Pie chart**
- (ii) Line graph**
- (iii) Bar chart**
- (iv) Table**

[4 x 2]

- (i) Pie chart** - graphically easy to read, 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°
- (ii) Line graph** - good for showing trends, cannot readily or clearly be interpreted if too many plotted lines of information, therefore not helpful for complex information
- (iii) Bar chart** - vertical and horizontal scales showing the unit of measure, bars of equal lateral dimension, good for showing information which is not too complex. Limited visual impact if results are very close in value, limited number of bars per bar chart
- (iv) Table** - good for tabulating complex information, limited immediate visual impact and difficult to interpret readily

**[1 Mark advantage and 1 mark for disadvantage of each type of graphical form
= 8 marks total]**

(b) Richard is aiming to improve the company brochures. Explain how this could be achieved by using modern technology [6]

The brochure could be improved using:

- Graphics in Word
- Examples of CAD designs of bathrooms etc
- CD containing the brochure could be designed with virtual tours of show room
- Brochure could be put on website and video clips and moving animation could be used

Level 1: some understanding of technological advances [1 - 2 marks]
 Level 2: good understanding and examples offered [3 - 4 marks]
 Level 3: excellent understanding and explanations [5 - 6 marks]

Page 9	Mark Scheme	Paper
	CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA – OCT 2004	5172

- (c) **A press release is to be written about the changes at Waterfall Interiors. Explain the characteristics of a press release. [6]**

Press release characteristics to include:

- Written for publication to different audiences – journalist and target audience
- Content - information needs to be newsworthy, credible, true, etc
- Structure & style – needs to include headline, include facts, quotations, embargo date, needs to be double line spaced, include photos, etc
- Needs to be accurate and therefore needs to be checked.

Level 1: Some understanding of press releases [1 - 2 marks]

Level 2: Good understanding of press releases [3 - 4 marks]

Level 3: Excellent understanding and explanation of press releases [5 - 6 marks]

[Total: 20]