

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

EFFECTIVE BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

5172/01

Core Module

October 2004

2 hours 15 minutes

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper
Graph Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

The time allocated for this examination includes 15 minutes reading time.
Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.
You may use a soft pencil for any diagrams, graphs, music 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.

[The following case study is based on a real company but some information is fictitious].

Waterfall Interiors Ltd

Waterfall Interiors is a small company which specialises in the design and fitting of domestic bathrooms, kitchens and bedrooms. The company was formed in October 1987, as a partnership, by husband and wife team Malcolm and Wendy Rose. Originally the business was based on bathrooms only. The development of Waterfall Interiors Ltd came as a natural progression to secure the future of this small but dedicated company. 5

The management team includes the following people:

Malcolm Rose, the Managing Director, is a Chartered Quantity Surveyor and has extensive experience of all aspects of the building industry since 1962.

Gary Stephenson has been with the company since the beginning, initially working on the installation side of the business. He later took responsibility for managing the many different contracts undertaken by Waterfall Interiors, and now holds the position of Sales Director. 10

Richard Rose brought his engineering and management experience to the family business in 1999. The day-to-day running of the company is under his direction, together with the design, sale and overseeing of installations.

Gary Bagguley joined the team as Contracts Manager in May and brought his many years of knowledge in high-class refurbishment work to support the growing business. 15

Complete design and installation of bathrooms, bedrooms and kitchens is the essence of the Waterfall Interiors service. One of the Directors visits the customer's property to survey the room and create the new design on a 3D-computer system. The customer is then invited to a personal appointment at Waterfall Interior's showroom, to enable them to discuss the layout with staff and choose the products that match their taste, style and budget. 20

The objective at Waterfall Interiors is to provide their customers with complete bathrooms, bedrooms and kitchens, which are individually designed and are fully integrated into their homes.

The company offers a price guarantee. The price they quote is the price the customer pays. There are no extras. All materials and workmanship are of the highest quality. The customer is required to pay a deposit of 25% and the balance when they are satisfied with the completed job. 25

Waterfall Interiors has its own extensive showrooms and vehicles. It employs a number of managers and installers who provide very high quality workmanship for which the company has been known for many years. The company does minimal advertising in the local press, but does have a website. The majority of business comes from personal recommendations from previous customers - 'word of mouth' promotion. 30

There have been a number of complaints in the past few months from some of the customers, which is very unusual. One customer complained about the fact that one of the ceramic bathroom floor tiles in her new bathroom has scratched within the first week. Another complaint was about the inappropriate attitude of two of the workmen working on the installation of a new kitchen and bathroom. Obviously, this could have a major impact on the business if these complaints are not handled well. 35

You must attempt ALL of the following tasks.

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) emails

(iii) seminars

(iv) briefings

(v) written reports

[5 x 2]

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

(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) Metacommunication

(iii) Non-verbal communication

[6]

[Total: 20]

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]**

(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]**

(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]

[Total: 20]

- 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]
- (b) Explain the characteristics of effective groups within an organisation. [10]
[Total: 20]
- 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]
- (b) Explain **three** ways a recruitment interview for new staff would differ from a disciplinary interview with staff. [6]
- (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]
[Total: 20]
- 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]
- (b) Richard is aiming to improve the company brochures. Explain how this could be achieved by using modern technology. [6]
- (c) A press release is to be written about the changes at Waterfall Interiors. Explain the characteristics of a press release. [6]
[Total: 20]