

Presidency University, Bengaluru
School of Management

Comprehensive Examination

I Semester 2015-2016

Communication for Managers

MBA A 105

(Closed Book)

Max Marks: 80 marks

Max Time 3hours

Weightage : 40%

06 January 2016

Instructions to Candidates:

Write legibly, briefly and summarize/highlight the main points

Part A

(2 X 10=20)

Answer all questions

Write brief -notes on:

1. Three-step process for composing business-messages'
2. A proposal is both a selling tool and a contractual commitment'
3. The Yardstick Approach in Report Writing.
4. 'Courtesy Note' in an informative message.
5. Communication is Transactional
6. The SWOT Analysis
7. The Chronological Resume
8. The Cover Letter or Job Application Letter
9. Netiquette
10. Ethnocentrism

Part B

(5 X 8=40)

Answer all questions

1. "China on Thursday called upon India and Pakistan to intensify the process of dialogue and cooperation in order to safeguard peace and stability in South Asia." Source: TOI-17/12/2015

Today we acknowledge the importance of communication in all the spheres of life, including during that of the crisis period and it also helps in team building. If you consider the case of your own class (MBA-1st Sem.), do you think 'communication' has its role in team building and creating an amiable atmosphere? Justify your answer with suitable examples.

2.If you want to make a specific recommendation in your report, should you include information that might support a different recommendation? Explain your answer

3. A short formal report is divided into three primary parts: front matter, main body and back matter. While a writer is free to use or not use the various parts, knowing what each part is used for is important. Name and describe the various subparts and how they might be used or why they might not be used.

4.What are the principles of persuasive messages?

5. Why is it important to understand your own culture, when attempting to communicate with people from other cultures?

6. In your CFM class, you have been reading extensively that more and more work in this field is done in a collaborative environment. Your course syllabus indicates that you will have three graded oral presentations. Send a persuasive e-mail to your instructor requesting that your final presentation be a group presentation. Use facts and logic to support your request.

7. You own a 300-acre farm outside the city. Mr. Yaduvant Tripathy runs a local sawmill and has requested that you let him cut pulpwood from your farm and split the profit 50-50. Mr. Tripathy's reputation for honesty is not good, and complaints have been voiced from other farm owners that he leaves the field in disarray with large broken branches scattered, where he has cut the pulpwood. Write a negative- letter refusing his request. Use the direct approach to ensure that the answer doesn't encourage further requests. But keep the tone positive to avoid creating ill will.

8. Explain how you would decide to use an indirect or a direct plan for development of content for a negative message.

Part C

(2 X10=20)

Answer any two Questions

1. One common complaint employees' voice about supervisors is inconsistent messages – meaning one supervisor tells them one thing and another tells them something different. Imagine you are the supervisor/manager. As you read their case, give consideration to how you might help communicate with the employee to remedy the conflict. Answer the critical thinking questions at the end of the case.

Case Study – Sudipto Sanyal and Communication Barriers

Sudipto Sanyal is a 27-year old, who is a foodservice manager at a casual dining restaurant. Sudipto is responsible for supervising and managing all employees in the back of the house. Employees working in the back of the house range in age from 16 years old to 55 years old. In addition, the employees come from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. For many, English is not their primary language.

Sudipto is *ServSafe*® certified and tries his best to keep up with food safety issues in the kitchen but he admits it's not easy. Employees receive "on the job training" about food safety basics (for example, appropriate hygiene and hand washing, time/temperature, and cleaning and sanitizing). But with high turnover of employees, training is often rushed and some new employees are put right into the job without training, if it is a busy day. Eventually, most employees get some kind of food safety training.

The owners of the restaurant are supportive of Mr. Sanyal in his food safety efforts because they know if a food safety outbreak were ever linked to their restaurant; it would likely put them out of business. Still, the owners note there are additional costs for training and making sure food is handled safely.

One day Sudipto comes to work and is rather upset even before he steps into the restaurant. Things haven't been going well at home and he was lucky to rummage through some of the dirty laundry and find a relatively clean outfit to wear for work. He admits he needs a haircut and a good hand scrubbing, especially after working on his car last evening. When he walks into the kitchen he notices several trays of uncooked meat sitting out in the kitchen area. It appears these have been sitting at room temperature for quite some time. Sudipto is frustrated and doesn't know what to do. He feels like he is beating his head against a brick wall when it comes to getting employees to practice food safety.

Sudipto has taken many efforts to get employees to be safe in how they handle food. He has huge signs posted all over the kitchen with these words: KEEP HOT FOOD HOT AND COLD FOOD COLD and WASH YOUR HANDS ALWAYS AND OFTEN.

All employees are given a thermometer when they start so that they can temp food. Hand sinks, soap, and paper towels are available for employees so that they are encouraged to wash their hands frequently.

1. What are the communication challenges and barriers Sudipto faces?

2. What solutions might Sudipto Sanyal consider in addressing each of these challenges and barriers?
3. What *Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)* would be helpful for Sudipto to implement and enforce?
4. What are some ways Mr. Sanyal might use effective communication as a motivator for employees to follow safe food handling practices?

2. Companies have fired thousands of employees in the recent economic downturn. A few years ago, RadioShack Corporation sent e-mails to approximately 400 of its employees, informing them that they had lost their jobs. It is part of the culture of certain organizations to communicate important messages through e-mails.

As the HR manager at RadioShack, write a one-page memo (by strictly following its structure), to persuade the CEO to adopt a more suitable and less dehumanizing strategy for notifying employees that they have been let go.

3. You are a customer service representative for the *Unifex Software Corporation*. The company's office is located in Singapore, but your customers represent different places of Asia. Since there is a time difference between all the countries of Asia, you would like to recommend to your supervisor that some customer service representatives be given the opportunity to have flextime schedules to accommodate your customers. Prepare an persuasive e-mail for your supervisor, Ms. Thura Xiong, recommending flextime schedules. Add details that are appropriate and will help persuade her to adopt your recommendation.

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I Semester 2015-2016

Test 2

Course: **MBA A 101 Communication for Managers**

(Closed Book)

Max Marks:50

Max Time 50 Min

Weightage: 25 %

07 November 2015

(12)

Instructions to Candidates:

Write legibly, briefly and summarize/highlight the main points

Part A

(2 x 5=10 marks)

1. Describe briefly the four specific problems related to language difficulties in inter-cultural communications
2. What is natural language?
3. The subject-line of an Email should always be 'specific, concise, and catchy'. Why?
4. Describe briefly the guidelines for written instructions.
5. Why do we need informative messages in organizational context

Part B

(5 x 4=20 marks)

1. Quite simply, effective persuasion is the ability to present a message in a way that will lead others to support it. It makes audiences feel they have a choice, and they choose to agree" -Jay Conger. Elucidate.
2. Define the term netiquette with some appropriate examples.
3. Balancing emotional and logical appeal is a tough challenge. Explicate.
4. What Cross Cultural Communication skills have you found most effective?

Part C

(10 x 2 =20 marks)

1. Swerving, speeding up, slowing down, and not paying attention while driving. Most people would think this describes a drunk driver. Well, it also describes many people who use cell phones while driving. Write a persuasive letter to the editor of a newspaper, suggesting measures to curb this whimsical attitude of the people.
2. Explain in detail, if possible through a tabular format, human needs that influence motivation

Presidency University, Bengaluru

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I Semester 2015-2016 Test 1 Course: **MBA A105 Communication for Managers** (Closed Book)
Max Marks: 45 Max Time 50 Min Weightage: 15 % 21 September 2015

Instructions to Candidates:

1. Write legibly, briefly and summarize/highlight the main points
 2. Attempt all the questions serially, in the order of question paper
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Ques 1: Answer the following in one/two sentences each

[5Q x 1M=5]

- a) Xenophobia
- b) Common barriers to communication
- c) Overcoming bias in language
- d) Global village
- e) Inter-cultural communication

Ques 2 Answer the following in approx 30 words each

[6Q x 5M=30]

- a) What are the functions and dysfunctions of an office "grapevine"?
- b) *Ethnocentrism* is a common terminology used now days in cross-cultural management. Explain the term citing relevant examples.
- c) What do you understand by cultural pluralism? Explicate the concept in the context of India.
- d) "Communication is like buying a commodity from the market". Explain.
- e) 'As international, multinational, transnational, multi domestic, and global business continues to expand and bring people closer, the most important element of successful business outcomes may be the appreciation and respect for regional, country and cultural differences - known as cultural diversity'. Elucidate.
- f) Explain the importance of decoding and encoding in the communication process by drawing an appropriate diagram.

Ques 3. Read the Case Study assiduously, and then answer the questions that follow: [4+2+4=10M]

In the 1960's Kennecott, a U.S. company, was about to enter into renegotiation over its contract with the government of Chile concerning its El Teniente copper mine. At the time, Chile's BATNA appeared overwhelmingly strong as the government was possessed of a strong pro sovereignty stance towards foreign management of its natural resources. Can we take some lessons for our mortgage renegotiations? The government of Chile was politically positioned to establish their own tough financial terms or had the option of declining to renegotiate by simply ejecting Kennecott from their involvement altogether by expropriating the mine. Chile had its own experts who could manage and operate the mine, perform the processing, and could readily market this very useful natural resource. Simply put, Kennecott found itself in the position of either acceding to the contract renegotiation terms dictated by the Chilean government or have the mine snatched out from under them. Realizing that their own BATNA was weak, Kennecott executives came up with a very creative solution which ultimately weakened Chile's position while leveraging their own BATNA more favourably by creating value for both sides.

The proposal made by Kennecott entailed the following six point strategy thereby changing the rules of the game:

1. The deal consisted of Kennecott offering to sell a majority equity interest in the mining operation to the Chilean government.
2. Realising that Chile would not particularly care to divest the funds of the sale into U.S. banks, Kennecott offered to use the funds, combined with an outside loan, to finance the mine's expansion. This allowed Chile to preserve its nationalistic interests and have greater financial gain from future profits. They were able to renegotiate and establish a partnership which was mutually acceptable to both parties.
3. Next, Kennecott then persuaded the Chilean government to guarantee the loan and have this guarantee subject to the law of the state of New York.
4. Then, as many of the company's mining assets as possible were insured with U.S. backed guarantees, against the potential expropriation threat.
5. Kennecott then negotiated that the copper output derived from the expansion would be sold exclusively to clients in Europe and North America.
6. Lastly, the rights to collect from these new contracts would be sold to a consortium of financial institutions based in Japan, the United States and Europe.

This allowed for a greater diversity in the customer base and additional partners. In future contract renegotiations, this would result in a much larger multi party negotiation than just Kennecott having to renegotiate on its own. Many of these outside interests would also be engaged in other unrelated negotiations with the Chilean government, thereby reducing Chile's leverage in any future contract renegotiations. Mortgage re-negotiators won't have as much flexibility to change the negotiation game when they renegotiate their contracts.

Lastly, because of the insurance guarantees obtained by Kennecott, even if the renegotiations collapsed, Kennecott had succeeded in protecting a good portion of its interests should Chile opt to go ahead and appropriate the copper mine. Additionally, the company could also call in its other partners to act as allies. In the end, some years later, the mine was eventually expropriated by Chile, but Kennecott was in a far much better position than it had initially been before it initially started to renegotiate the contract. Kennecott enhanced its BATNA by making an offer the Chileans couldn't refuse, while taking steps to protect their interests should negotiations collapse.

- 1) What was the real dilemma before Kennecott?
- 2) The proposal proved to be a 'trump card' for Kennecott. Discuss
- 3) Describe the negotiation strategy applied by the Kennecott company to get an upper hand over the Government of Chile?