



Communications for Business

01 June 2016

Marking Scheme

This marking scheme has been prepared as a **guide only** to markers. This is not a set of model answers, or the exclusive answers to the questions, and there will frequently be alternative responses which will provide a valid answer. Markers are advised that, unless a question specifies that an answer be provided in a particular form, then an answer that is correct (factually or in practical terms) **must** be given the available marks.

If there is doubt as to the correctness of an answer, the relevant NCC Education materials should be the first authority.

Throughout the marking, please credit any valid alternative point.

Where markers award half marks in any part of a question, they should ensure that the total mark recorded for the question is rounded up to a whole mark.

Answer any FIVE (5) questions

Marks

Question 1

- a) You are the Marketing Manager of an organisation which designs and sells office furniture. Create an email message that you would send to existing external clients to formally invite them to a promotional event, launching your new range of luxury executive office chairs. **12**

Marks will be awarded as follows: 5 Marks for the correct format (1 mark) of an email and which includes to, from, date, subject matter, signatory (1 mark for each)

Up to 7 marks will be awarded for general conventions of emails being observed, for example using correct language, NOT SHOUTING, appropriate structure, no jargon, clearly articulating the core details of the message – no waffle, formal professional tone and any other relevant conventions which ensure professional communication.

- b) Before attempting to write the email (above) what would be the suggested process (and its components) that could be adopted to ensure effective communication? **4**

The three-step writing process (1 mark), which is plan (1 mark), write (1 mark), complete (1 mark)

- c) Once the new range of luxury executive chairs have started to sell, as Marketing Manager, you decide to send a further email to potential customers from an email database. You wish to demonstrate to potential customers the popularity of the product and the extraordinary rate of sales since the range launch 6 months ago. How could you present this quantitative data as an attachment to the email? Give an appropriate example. **4**

The email could contain charts and graphs to display sales over the 6 months (2 marks), for example a simple line graph could show the increasing number of sales over time (2 marks).

Total 20 Marks

Question 2

- a) You are designing a presentation for young people (16-19 year olds) to identify the benefits of continuing to higher education (university). Explain, using examples FIVE (5) ways of ensuring an effective presentation for such an audience. 10

1 mark for each of the following (list not exhaustive) and an additional mark for each example:

Ensuring preparation – the presenter must prepare appropriate slides and anticipate questions that may arise from the group.

Ensure that the presenter is enthusiastic – young people will easily switch off if the presenter does not have the energy or enthusiasm for higher education (HE); they may even share their own story.

The presentation needs to be appropriate for the intended audience – people get bored easily so the length would need to be quite short and quite basic in content as they may know little of HE.

The presentation should contain lots of visual aids, these should be well prepared and serve to excite and inspire young people, such as photographs of graduating students

The location needs to be appropriate – young people are more relaxed in a less formal setting, so this should be taken in to account.

- b) Provide a definition and clear example of the following types of team: 6

- I. Potential Team
- II. Real Team
- III. High-performance Team

Potential Team: Group assigned a task – trying to work together, but lack of focus and frustration. This often happens in academic project teams (up to 2 marks).

Real team: Group assigned a task – all members committed and mutually supportive. High probability of success (up to 2 marks).

High-Performance Team - Group assigned a task – all members committed and are aware of each other's strengths (and weaknesses!) up to 2 marks

- c) Tuckman states that there are five stages of group development. Name the first stage and describe what happens during this. 4

The first stage is forming (1 mark). During this stage:

- ***Individuals try to establish identity within the group (1 mark)***
- ***Behaviour is often tentative and 'polite' (1 mark)***
- ***Leadership pattern starts to emerge (1 mark)***

Total 20 Marks

Question 3

- a) Identify THREE (3) common types of written document that are commonly used in business using an appropriate example for each. 6
Award 1 mark for each document and 1 mark for each example.

Informational reports – this gives purely data/facts without analysis or recommendations. This could contain employee absenteeism statistics.
Analytical reports – offer information and analysis, with recommendations. This could look at factors impacting upon a new products launch.
Proposals – include persuasive requests for decisions or action. An example could be a suggestion to change current working practices.

- b) Describe the purpose of an agenda and explain the importance of FOUR (4) agenda items. 10

The agenda sets the purpose of the meeting; and also indicates the order in which items are to be discussed, so that the meeting achieves its purpose (up to 2 marks).

The agenda should include (1 mark for agenda item (to a maximum of 4) and 1 mark for explaining each items importance) :

- **The title, date, venue and start and end times of the meeting. This is important as it will encourage good attendance (reducing ambiguity).**
- **The issues to be discussed at the meeting, this is important so that participants can come fully informed and prepared.**
- **Approval of previous meetings' minutes, this is important so that it can go on record that the minutes are an accurate representation of what occurred.**
- **Review of actions from previous meeting, this will ensure that anything that needed to be done has now been completed (1 mark)**
- **Any Other Business (AOB), this will ensure that any other items that are important (and not covered) are addressed.**

- c) Explain, with examples the differences between listening and hearing. 4

Hearing is one of the five senses of a person and it is the ability to perceive sound by detecting vibrations through an organ such as the ear. Hearing is part of the body's process and is the function of perceiving sound. Hearing can occur consciously or unconsciously, such as when one sleeps (up to 2 marks).

Listening also known as 'active listening' is a technique used in communication which requires a person to pay attention to the speaker and provide feedback. Listening is a step further than hearing, where after the brain receives the nerve impulses and deciphers it, it then sends feedback. Listening requires concentration, deriving meaning from the sound that is heard and reacting to it. (up to 2 marks)

Total 20 Marks

Question 4

- a) Identify what makes a meeting formal and provide examples of the purpose of formal meetings. 4

Formal meeting will have a specific agenda and the minutes of the meeting will be recorded (1 mark). Formal meetings are typically used for reporting and presenting important financial and large scale operational information (up to 3 marks)

- b) Provide TWO (2) reasons why it is important to minute a meeting.
Award 1 mark for each reason to a maximum of 2. Examples include:

- **It provides the basic rationale for a decisions**
- **It show what actions have been agreed on**
- **It records responsibility for actions**

- c) Identify and justify an appropriate visual aid which could be used to engage an audience. 4

Visual aids can range from PowerPoint slides, to flip charts, OHT, blackboards, props, videos, and multi-media links. (Award 1 mark for selecting an aid and 3 marks for an appropriate justification).

- d) Explain the term 'virtual meeting'. Develop a convincing argument to compel more businesses to make use of virtual meetings, highlighting FOUR (4) benefits. 10
Award up to 2 marks for demonstrating a good understanding of 'virtual meeting':

A virtual meeting is technically anything that is not traditionally face-to-face communication. Generally, this term now refers to technology-enabled meetings which combine visual and auditory experiences, allowing people to interact through a shared virtual environment on the web.

Award 1 mark for each benefit outlined and a further 1 mark for developing this. Benefits include:

- **reducing travel costs**
- **better for environment**
- **enable multiple time zones to be synchronous**
- **ensure speed of meetings**
- **reduce need for large meeting spaces**
- **ensures the quick and efficient transference of information and supporting materials**

Total 20 Marks

Question 5

- a) Identify and explain Price and Maier's (2007) *Team Profiles*. Which of the profiles is most aligned to your own profile? Explain why. 12

Award 1 mark for identifying each profile (Activist, Reflector, Theorist and Pragmatist) and 1 mark for an explanation of each of the profiles. For example:

Activist – doer works in the present, flexible and open to new experiences, activity centres around them, likes working as a team - active person/concrete thinker

Reflector – reviewing, cautious and hold back, observes first and is slow to commit – likes to maintain a big picture view Concrete thinker/ reflective

Pragmatist – planning enjoys putting theories together and techniques in to practice. Will put ideas to work, structured and uncomfortable with unfocussed discussion – Abstract thinker/active

Theorist – likes thinking through problems in a clear and logical way. Likes structured situations, less happy working with others with different styles. Reflective person/abstract thinker.

Award up to a further 4 marks for candidates selecting a profile that is similar to their own (1 mark) and for explaining why (up to 3 marks)

- b) Explain, with examples the difference between discrete and continuous data. 4

Discrete data is a count that can't be made more precise. Typically it involves integers. For instance, the number of children (or adults, or pets) in your family is discrete data, because you are counting whole, indivisible entities: you can't have 2.5 kids, or 1.3 pets. (2 marks)

Continuous data, on the other hand, could be divided and reduced to finer and finer levels. For example, you can measure yourself at progressively more precise scales—meters, centimetres, millimetres, and beyond—so height is continuous data. (2 marks)

- c) Explain why non-verbal communication is important. 4
Award up to 4 marks for a detailed explanation:

Non-verbal communication is important; this is because the way you listen, look, move, and react, tells the other person whether or not you care. Furthermore, non-verbal communication can indicate if you're being truthful, and how well you're listening and ensure that the impact of what you are saying is appropriately reinforced. For example, when verbal and non-verbal match they increase trust, clarity, and rapport. When they don't, they generate tension, mistrust, and confusion. (up to 4 marks)

Total 20 Marks

Question 6

- a) Identify FIVE (5) different types of communication and discuss the factors that should be taken in to account when selecting each type. **10**

Award up to 5 marks for the identification of different types of communication, for example, face to face (formal and informal meetings), telephone, written (email and letter), visual (PowerPoint presentation) or online (discussion forums, blogs).

Award up to 5 marks for discussing factors which would be taken in to account:

Intended audience

Type of message to be conveyed – formal/informal

Purpose of message to be conveyed (informational/consultative)

Budget

Length on communication (ongoing, on off)

Whether participation is required or not

- b) Identify the THREE (3) key aspects of a message that should be reviewed and provide examples of how each can be achieved. **6**

Award 1 mark for identifying each of the following aspects and an additional mark for an example for how it can be achieved:

Clarity, e.g. break up overly long sentences

Readability, e.g. use of white space

Appropriateness, e.g. no use of slang or jargon.

1 additional mark for an example

- c) Identify the FOUR (4) *Operational Principles* on which Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is based. **4**

The basic premises of NLP are built on 4 operational principles:

Know what you want to achieve.

Understand whether you are moving towards or away from your outcome.

Be flexible in your behaviour until you achieve your desired outcome.

Take action now. (1 mark for each)

Total 20 Marks

End of paper

Learning Outcomes matrix

Question	Learning Outcomes assessed	Marker can differentiate between varying levels of achievement
1	1, 2	Yes
2	3, 5	Yes
3	1, 4, 6	Yes
4	3, 4	Yes
5	2, 5, 6	Yes
6	1, 6	Yes

Grade descriptors

Learning Outcome	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Prepare business messages and reports	Demonstrate ability to perform the task	Demonstrate ability to perform the task consistently well	Demonstrate ability to perform the task to the highest standard
Present quantitative data to convey information	Demonstrate ability to perform the task	Demonstrate ability to perform the task consistently well	Demonstrate ability to perform the task to the highest standard
Deliver effective presentations	Demonstrate ability to perform the task	Demonstrate ability to perform the task consistently well	Demonstrate ability to perform the task to the highest standard
Contribute to business meetings	Demonstrate adequate ability to work as part of a team and provide some appropriate input	Demonstrate strong ability to work as part of a team and provide consistently appropriate input	Demonstrate highly effective ability to work as part of a team and provide high quality input
Understand theories of working in teams	Demonstrate adequate level of understanding	Demonstrate robust level of understanding	Demonstrate highly comprehensive level of understanding
Use non-verbal skills and listen effectively	Demonstrate adequate and appropriate use	Demonstrate appropriate and effective use	Demonstrate highly appropriate and effective use