

Chapter 7

Management Skills (Communicating) Solutions

Chapter 6 & 7 – Management Skills (MUST BE Leading, Motivating & Communicating)

Communicating

Barriers to Effective Communication

Factors to Consider to Communicate Effectively

Elements of Effective Communication

Meetings, Memos, Notice/Agenda, Minutes, Secretary/Chairperson

Report & Business Letter

Bar Charts, Pie Charts, Line Graph

2015 Q4 (A)

Paul O'Brien is the Sales Manager with Water Solutions Ltd, a business which has recently developed a new water conservation product. Paul is due to make a presentation to the board of directors on the potential of this product. He will present the following projected sales data for the product for the next six months.

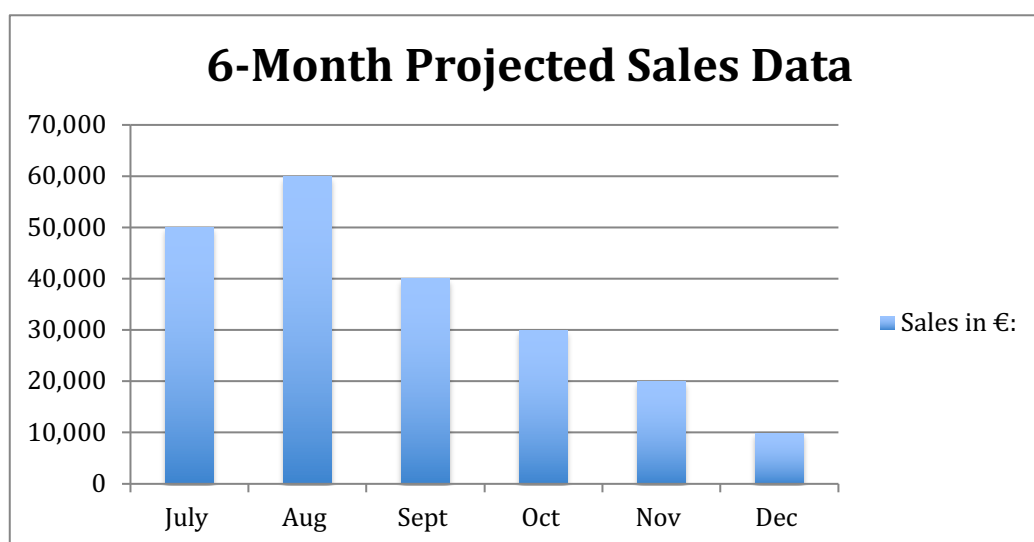
Month:	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sales in €:	50,000	60,000	40,000	30,000	20,000	10,000

- (i) Illustrate the above data by means of a bar chart or a line graph.
(ii) Outline the principles Paul should consider to ensure he communicates his message effectively to the board of directors. (25 marks)

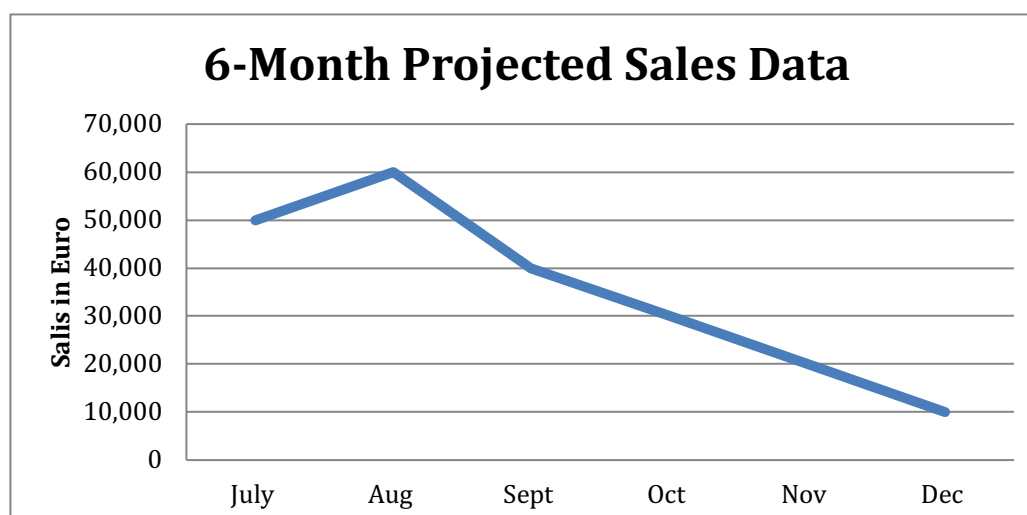
MS: 6 bars or points 6 @ 1 m Title of chart 2m X axis 2m Y axis 2m;

(ii) 3 @ 4m (2+2) Must be appropriate to the board/Paul; Link to Paul: 1 mark

(i)



or



(Note: For any chart or graph, a title and correct labeling of the axes are essential. In this question, it carried 6 of the 12 available marks.)

(ii)

(Note: This is a trend that has developed, where the examiner doesn't just want you to repeat the textbook knowledge. You must be able to decipher what is relevant and link it to the question asked, e.g. only giving the principles relevant to communicating with the board.)

Timing

The sender of the message should **consider how long they should spend communicating** it to the recipient. Too long and they risk using **padding** or **waffle** which can make the **recipient lose some of the intended message** through **boredom**, and **too short** and they might not be able to **fully deliver** the message.

E.g. Paul is dealing with the board of directors (BOD) that likely have very busy schedules, so he needs to deliver the message **efficiently**.

Accuracy of Information

The sender should have a **thorough knowledge of the topic** that they are presenting about. Their presentation should have a **clear structure**; an **introduction**, **plan of action** and **expected outcomes**.

E.g. Paul should anticipate the concerns of the BOD and have considered **possible responses ready** on the topic.

Confidentiality of Information

Some mediums are **safer** for **transferring confidential** information e.g. **encrypted files on a computer** or **face-to-face meetings**.

E.g. The projected sales data for a new product are **sensitive**, so the face-to-face method of a meeting is good for Paul's presentation.

Other: Appropriate Language, Use of Visuals, timing/appropriate method/need for record/ feedback/preparation for audience.

2019 Q4 (A)

A Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in a business needs exceptional communication skills and needs to adapt his/her communication style and message to different stakeholders.

- (i) Discuss the importance for a business of effective communication.
- (ii) Illustrate two barriers that a manager has to overcome to communicate effectively with staff, providing a different example in each case. (20 marks)

MS: (i) 2@5(2+3); (ii) 2@5(2+2+1)

(i) 1. Instructions are **understood** by all employees and **deadlines are clearly communicated** to employees resulting in an **increased productivity**.

2. **Better industrial relations** arise as **clearer communication** and **openness to listening** to others mean that **any dispute between stakeholders in a business can be resolved before it becomes a critical issue**.

If a manager gives accurate information at the AGM to investors, they will trust in their investment and be more confident in the manager to run the business / look to increase their investment.

(Taken from 'Getting a H1 in LC Business PDF' available in our store)

(ii) Language

Avoiding the use of jargon and over-complicated or technical terms to make sure you're pitching information to the right skill level of the audience.

E.g. A manager needs to choose language appropriate to the audience and use short clear sentences so the message can be understood

Information Overload

Managers should break up pieces of information in to more manageable pieces and provide written formats for staff to review later on by email.

E.g. A manager can email a breakdown of decisions made so staff are clear on the outcomes of meetings and decisions if a lot took place at them

2021 Q5 (B)

Illustrate the factors that a business needs to consider when communicating with its various stakeholders. (20)

MS: 4 x 5m (2+3)

2012 Q4 (A)

Illustrate the factors that a business needs to consider when communicating with its various stakeholders. (20 marks)

MS: 4 @ 5 marks (2+2+1).

Appropriate Language

If the language is too technical or too difficult for the customers to understand then the message may be misinterpreted.

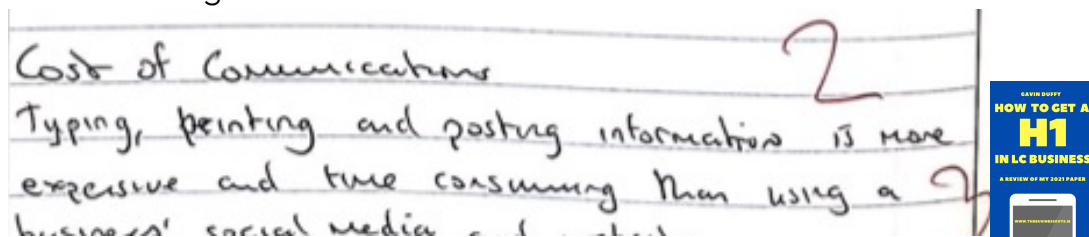
The business needs to choose language appropriate to its audience. In the case of customers, short clear sentences and visual supports etc. may be suitable for product assembly e.g. flat packs.

Confidentiality

If the message is sensitive for the stakeholder e.g. terminating the employment contract of an employee, then a meeting would be more appropriate than a letter or an e-mail, so any information transferred is safer.

Cost

A CEO communicating with his managers worldwide may choose to hold a virtual meeting to cut down on travel and subsistence costs.



(Taken from a pack available in our store, use NOTES10 for 10% discount)

Urgency

If a crucial piece of information has to be communicated instantly to a supplier, then a phone call may be faster than a text or e-mail e.g. to arrange a change in delivery times

Other: Legal requirements; Availability of technology, Feedback requirement

2014 Q4 (A)

Describe the functions of the different meetings held by limited companies.
(20 marks)

MS: The AGM was awarded 10(4+4+2)

Any other two meetings were given 6(4+2)+4(2+2)

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

This is a meeting held **once a year** and attended by the **directors** and **shareholders** of the company. The main functions of the AGM are to **elect a board of directors**, let the **chairperson** gives a **report** on company performance, and so they can **declare a dividend** for the year.

Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)

This is a meeting of the **shareholders** and **company directors** held to discuss a matter of **urgency** that **cannot wait** until the **next AGM**. There is **no other matter discussed at this meeting**. There could be an EGM if there was a takeover bid for the company or a major fire at the production plant.

Board Meetings

These are meetings of the board of directors and are often held on a monthly basis. Progress and **performance** is discussed and **tactical** and **strategic plans** are **formulated**. Problem-solving is a key function of board meetings.

Ad Hoc Meeting

A meeting that takes place at **short notice** to discuss a matter that **requires attention** and that has **arisen unexpectedly**. They are not organised in advance, but only as the need dictates, e.g. a sales meeting to address falling sales targets.

2011 Q3 Short

(a) Distinguish between **two** types of meetings which are common in a business.

(b) Outline **two** benefits of meetings as a method of communication.

MS: (a) 4marks (2+2) (b) 6 marks (3[1+2] + 3[1+2])

(a) Answer is similar to that given for the 2014 question (see above).

(b) **Decision-making:** Having stakeholders present to discuss issues before decisions improves the quality of the decision.

Official/Confidential: A meeting could be used to inform staff of redundancies or for dealing with other sensitive information.

Other acceptable points: Allows feedback, records can be kept (minutes), good for brainstorming.

2012 Q4 (B)

Distinguish between the duties of a chairperson and a secretary in the organising and running of an Annual General Meeting. (20 marks)

MS: 2 x 10 marks(4+3+3). Three clearly developed points are required for both.

The Chairperson

- The chairperson **draws up the notice and agenda** with the secretary before the meeting.
- The chairperson **calls the meeting to order** and **opens the meeting** only after **ensuring the quorum is present**.
- The chairperson **guides the discussion** and **manages time** and **contributions** without any personal bias, **allowing discussion only of matters on the agenda**.
- The chairperson organises **vote taking** and, in the event of a tie, they have the **casting vote**.

The Secretary

- The secretary **sends out the notice and agenda** to all those **who are entitled to attend**. This should be sent out in **plenty of time** giving members or shareholders **time to prepare for the meeting**.
- The secretary **arranges a suitable venue** ensuring that essential **resources** such as **refreshments, audio-visual equipment and seating plans** are in **order**.
- The secretary assumes the **role of minute's secretary**. This involves reading the minutes of the previous meeting and having them approved and then signed by the chairperson. It also involves **taking notes**, so that the minutes of the present meeting can be written up accurately later.

2014 Q4 (B)

Outline how developments in technology have benefited business communications. (20 marks)

MS: 4 @ 5 marks (2+3). Must mention a recent development in technology.

Quicker/Cheaper Communication

If you need to speak with an **employee** who is **travelling** in another country or you need to communicate with your **supplier** halfway around the world, technology such as **email** and **texting** allows you to do so **instantaneously**. Urgent messages can be communicated **rapidly** and **effectively** using different technologies, including **Skype** and **smart phone technology**.

Electronic Data Interchange and iCloud/Dropbox

These services greatly facilitate communication in a global market. Document transfer, automated stock ordering, details of trading figures, etc., can be transmitted globally in a matter of seconds.

Company Websites and Social Network Pages

The Internet, including **social network** sites such as Facebook and business networks such as LinkedIn, has facilitated global marketing for companies. **Network advertising**, **company websites** and **electronic payment** have allowed global e-commerce to flourish. It is **easier** and **quicker** to interact directly with your **target market** online.

CAD (Computer Aided Design)

CAD has **revolutionised the design process**, making it much **easier** and **faster** to develop new products, and allowing companies to react quickly to customer requests and needs. Allows **designs to be saved, changed and reworked without starting from scratch**. A product designed in one country can be sent electronically to another country to be tweaked by local designers to make it better suited to local tastes.

2009 Q4 (C)

"There is often a legal requirement for members of the public to hand over their personal information to public bodies."

Discuss the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1988 in relation to:

- (i) The Rights of Data Subjects
- (ii) The Obligations of Data Controllers.

MS: 2 @ 5 Marks (2+3)

This has also appeared in Q1 along with the other Acts, so be prepared to occasionally see a question asked in a question you are not used to seeing.

The Data Subject has the right to **access information** that is being held on the subject, they have the **right to view all the data** within **40 days of a written request**.

If a data subject accesses data and **finds data held by a controller to be untrue**, they have the right to have that information or data changed, so **errors will be corrected or deleted**.

Other acceptable points: right to compensation; right to have their name/email removed from direct mailing lists.

Personal data held on all subjects must be kept **confidential** by the controller so they must ensure all the data is in a **secure location** and **monitor attempted breaches of security**.

All information collected by a data controller must be **obtained in an honest and open way**. The data subject must not be **misled** during the collection of the data by the controller.

Other acceptable points: to update the information; to use the information only for the purpose intended; to provide the requested information within the 40 days.

2017 Q4 (C)

Bective Manor is a stately home available for wedding ceremonies and functions. It has recently started using Twitter and Facebook to market its services. Customers' details are stored in a database. Emer Kelly, the Marketing Manager, has been assigned the additional role of Data Protection Officer.

Using your knowledge of the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003, draft a report from Emer Kelly to Richard Daly, Managing Director, outlining the obligations of Bective Manor to its customers in relation to data protection. (Use today's date.) (20m)

REPORT – Obligations to Customers

PREPARED BY: Emer Kelly

PREPARED FOR: Richard Daly, Managing Director

DATE: Thursday 15th June 2017

TERMS OF REFERENCE: Investigate obligations to our customers in regards to data protection.

BODY OF THE REPORT (MAIN FINDINGS):

Personal data held on all subjects must be kept **confidential** by the controller so they must ensure all the data is in a **secure location** and **monitor attempted breaches of security**.

All information collected by a data controller must be **obtained in an honest and open way**. The data subject must not be **misled** during the collection of the data by the controller.

Other acceptable points: to update **outdated/incorrect information**; to **use the information only for the purpose intended**; to **provide the requested information within the 40 days**.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

As it is a legal requirement, we should review our current operation to cover all the issues raised in the body of the reports above.

APPENDICES

Emer Kelly