



ZIMBABWE

MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

**HIGHER EDUCATION EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL
(HEXCO)**

NATIONAL DIPLOMA

IN

**MANAGEMENT STUDIES, ACCOUNTANCY AND BANKING AND
FINANCE**

SUBJECT: Business Communication

PAPER NO: 500/S01

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2013 EXAMINATION

REQUIREMENTS

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATE

Answer ALL questions

This paper consists of 9 printed pages.

QUESTION 1

Using your own words as much as possible write a summary of the following passage in no more than 300 words. Give the summary a title and state the actual number of words that you use.

No human has ever or will ever totally conquer nervous tension when approaching the lectern to make a speech. Hardened professionals suffer the same queasy qualms that afflict the beginner.

The difference between the expert and the novice is that experience teaches a person how to control his nerves and how to present an outward – appearing, serene and confident demeanor to the audience. To the public his composure is immaculate; inwardly his seething vitals are twisted into coils of copper wire that inhibit breathing and even cause his heart to palpitate. Yet, he bows gracious to the man who has introduced him, says, “Thank you, Mr. Folett – Smith,” looks out at his audience with a benign smile, and begins his speech. 5 10

Confidence is the key. Once this euphoric state is achieved, the heart resumes its beat, the mind begins to function, and a speaker feels at home in his environment. The sources of confidence are many and varied. Linus has his security blanket; when it is clutched tightly in his hands, he can face the world’s tribulations with equanimity. Without it he is reduced to a terrified rabbit. 15

A speaker’s security blanket is a patchwork quilt with many pieces of material contributing to his feeling of confidence. First there is comfort in knowing he is properly groomed for the task at hand.

The first duty of a speaker is to check appearance and dress. All of you are probably familiar with the story of the man who moved from a rural area of Iowa to Greenwich, Connecticut. Every morning of a 20

working day he observed his neighbours performing a never –
changing ritual as they stood for a moment on the front porch before
entering their cars to drive to the station. For many weeks he was
impressed by this seeming act of devotion before facing the rigors of
the daily battle for survival in the jungles of Manhattan, and it was 25
not until much later that he realised the deed had a more practical
application, wallet, commutation ticket, did I forget my necktie, are
my trousers zipped? If the speaker substitutes notes for ticket, he
will do well to emulate those Greenwich tycoons.

Shirts and suits should be immaculately pressed, shoes should
glisten like mirrors, hair, which is no longer merely cut, should be 30
effectively styled and in place.

While waiting his turn at the lectern , the speaker should study his
surroundings with an analytical eye, noting the doors, the
decorations, the height of the ceiling – everything that will help
make it familiar. He should scrutinise the audience, try to break it 35
down to familiar individuals. The more familiar he is with the
surroundings, the more comfortable he will feel.

Many speakers attempt to begin a speech in a breathless state. This
does not inspire self – confidence. While being introduced, the
speaker should take a number of deep breaths. This act might
steady breathing and heartbeat, and it will charge the lungs with life 40
– giving oxygen.

Meticulous preparation is a wonderful confidence builder. If the
speaker has prepared and rehearsed the speech adequately, he can
draw comfort from the fact. If he has not, he has only himself to
blame for the ensuing disaster. If his notes are well prepared, he
should be assured that even if he suffered a lapse of memory, a 45
glance at them will put him back on the track.

The opening of the speech is written out at the top of his first note card. Delivering it firmly and accurately will give him confidence as he continues.

Confidence builds on itself. Nervousness abates when the speaker realises he is off to a good start.

Once the speech is well launched, the speaker will begin to feel, to 50
be aware of the surroundings, even to think. The mind will
gradually take control of the vocal process and delivery will start to
flow evenly. The body, however, operates on a different time
schedule and may lag behind the mind in conquering its feeling of
strangeness and unease. It can perform in an odd and erratic
fashion unless it, too, is rigidly controlled.

Practice is the only means of ridding the system of its natural 55
tendency to act in singularly peculiar ways. Practice in private will
not help to any great extent. There is little nervous tension involved
when one addresses an empty room and none when rehearsing in
the comfortable privacy of one's own boudoir. So, actually speaking
before an audience is the only answer. Prepare as well as you
possibly can and then let nature take its course. 60

A speaker with no experience can, and usually does, deliver a five
minute speech without being aware of anything except a feeling of
abject terror for the whole period. The next time he speaks, his
palms will not be quite as damp, and the fog will last only four
minutes. If he survives his early experiences, by the fifth speech he
will know where he is and what he is doing when he reaches the
lectern. Being in this delightful frame of mind, he will be able to
perform more than adequately since he will have conscious control
over his voice, his speech patterns, and the emotions of his body. 65

He will still, of course, be nervous, but he will have learned how to control the evidence of his nervousness and thus win the envy and respect of his audience.

QUESTION 2

The organisation for which you work is considering introducing a number of recreational facilities as a way of boosting staff morale. The investments manager has asked you as his assistant to investigate the possibility of this move, paying particular attention to the costs involved. Produce a recommendatory schematic report for the investments manager to be submitted on 20 December 2013.

(20 marks)

QUESTION 3

You are the personnel manager of Boss Company. Lately, you have observed that a number of members of staff do not report for work on Fridays making various excuses. You are worried about the impact of such behaviour on the company business. Write a memo to all members of staff discouraging them from such practice and informing them the procedure to be followed whenever they need to go away for any reason.

(15 marks)

QUESTION 4

- (a) Identify any five (5) differences between written and spoken language. (10 marks)
- (b) Explain the following terms:-
- (i) ad – hoc meeting
 - (ii) noise
 - (iii) quorum
 - (iv) agenda
 - (v) decode
- (5 marks)

QUESTION 5

You are the head of department at Chiti Polytechnic. You ordered sufficient stationery items for the 2012 midyear examination. AOB stationery have not delivered the items until examinations commence. Some stationery items for subjects like typewriting, shorthand and Accounting are difficult to improvise and therefore students can not write as per examinations requirements. Write a letter of complaint to AOB stationers about the delay in delivery and showing to what extent this has inconvenienced you.

(15 marks)

6
literal
eliterab
irrelata
questioneer

QUESTION 6

Read the case below and answer the questions which follow it. An ability to apply your knowledge to communicate theory to real work situation is expected.

Thandiwe woke up at 07:00 on Monday morning to the sound of the telephone ringing. She groped for the receiver and answered sleepily. "Hello, Thandi? It's Bob from Apricot. Can you come in today we have an urgent job to be done."

Apricot was an advertising agency that Thandiwe, as a freelance illustrator, worked for regularly.

"Er.... yes, that should be fine. When should I come in?" "As soon as you can. Thanks Bye."

As she was getting ready, Thandi remembered that she had a business appointment at 16h30. "Oh, well. I'll sort it out when I get there" she thought.

Thandi arrived at the Apricot Advertising Agency at 0900. She told the receptionist, Anne, why she was there and waited while Bob was called.

"He says you should go straight to the studio. He'll brief you as soon as he's ready," said Anne.

It was 09h45 by the time Bob arrived in the studio, looking distracted.

"Ah, Thandi. Sorry! Things are hectic today, so let me give you the brief quickly so you can get on with it. I need you to illustrate a new fruit juice box. I want very realistic fruit – strawberries, apples, bananas. Here are my designs, they should give you an idea."

Thandiwe looked through the designs.

"Fine Bob," she said. "So you'd like individual fruit or perhaps strawberries in a basket or...."

"Yes, yes. That sort of thing. I need the illustrations by 17h00 to show the client. I'll check in on you later – I have to get back to a meeting."

Thandiwe was just about to mention her afternoon appointment, but Bob was already on his way out.

Thandiwe started to work straight away. By 11h30 she had nearly finished the first drawing. She was so absorbed in her work that she did not notice Terry looking over her shoulder.

“Who gave you this brief?” asked Terry sharply. Thandiwe got rather a fright. “Er...”

“Never mind,” said Terry. It’s all wrong. We want fruit TREES. You’ll have to do it again.”

“But Bob said he wanted fruit,” said Thandiwe, “I’d better check with....”

“Never mind,” interrupted Terry. “We need these by 16h30 today. Do the tree. We agreed about that – he must have forgotten.

With that, Terry left, sighing heavily.

Thandiwe was feeling confused and slightly irritated. She tried to telephone Bob, but he was not available. She wasn’t sure whether to re-do the illustrations or wait for Bob. She glanced at her watch – nearly 12h00. She decided to start on the new illustrations or they would not be completed on time.

By 14h00 Thandiwe had finished one illustration and was adding the finishing touches to an apple tree when Bob came into the studio.

“Why the tree? I’m sure I said individual fruit,” exclaimed Bob.

“Yes, you did. But a woman came in and changed the brief. I tried to get hold of you, but....”

“What was her name?” asked Bob, looking angry.

“I’m not sure,” replied Thandiwe. “She had short blonde hair and....”

“Terry!” Exclaimed Bob. “That interfering #\$%A&@! Sorry. Look Thandi, this is my brief. This is what I want,” he said, pointing to her earlier illustration. “Can you complete three more before 16h30?”

“I should be able to, Bob,” said Thandi “but I” Again, Bob left before she could mention her appointment.

By the time Bob returned to the studio, Thandiwe had finished the work. She had not done as well as she’d have liked, but she’d had to work very quickly.

“These are fine, Thandi,” said Bob. “If you could just correct the colour on the apples. I’d like a brighter green.”

Thandiwe checked her watch – 16h10.

“I’m sorry, Bob. I have an appointment at 16h30 which I can’t cancel.”

“Why didn’t you say so earlier?” asked Bob.

“But I tried to, but you....”

“Never mind,” sighed Bob. “I’ll correct it myself.”

“I’m sorry,” murmured Thandiwe.

“It’s okay. You’d better rush off to your important date.” said Bob.

Thandiwe noticed the sarcasm in his voice. She left the agency feeling upset, and wishing she’d been more assertive. As a result, she arrived at her meeting in a bad mood.

Meanwhile, back at the agencyBob finished the drawings by 17h00, which meant that the client had been kept waiting for half an hour.

- (a) Analyse the communication between Bob and Thandiwe. Could Thandiwe have handled the communication better? Explain how she could have done so. (5 marks)
- (b) Analyse the communication between Thandiwe and terry. How could Thandiwe have improved her communication? (2 marks)
- (c) Analyse the communication within the Apricot Agency. How could this communication have been improved? (3 marks)
- (d) Analyse the quality of listening at the agency. How could Thandiwe, Bob and Terry improve their listening? (5 marks)
- (e) If you were asked to prepare a plan for effective communication within the Apricot Agency, what sort of plan would you draw up? (5 marks)

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