

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

**Cambridge International Diploma in Office Administration
Standard Level**

Scheme of Work

5232
Communication and Task Management
Core Module



UNIVERSITY *of* CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations

Introduction

Communication and Task Management is a Core module concerned with the development of communication skills alongside time management as a communication tool. It enhances and extends the skills and knowledge required to manage tasks and to communicate efficiently within the office environment.

What is assessed in this module?

- the ability to
 - identify and apply task management techniques
 - respond positively to others in the working environment and contribute to a team task
 - choose appropriate methods of business communication to carry out a series of routine tasks, concisely and clearly
 - understand and apply effective communication techniques
- an assessment, set and marked by Cambridge International Examinations

Tutor Preparation Required to Deliver this Module

You will need:

- access to a wide range of letterheaded paper, memos, forms, etc.
- access to reference books and a range of resources, including the Internet
- step-by-step process for teaching communication procedures
- miscellaneous examples, and examples of written documents (good and bad)
- telephone scripts, role play situations, scenarios, tapes/CDs
- handouts
- instruction sheets for students undertaking tasks
- a range of short achievement tests
- past examination papers, and model answers
- flipchart, whiteboard and overhead transparency projector, and prepared OHTs
- access to typewriters or computers, text processing and spreadsheet software and other office equipment such as photocopiers, fax machines, telephones, answering machines, etc.
- contact with outside organisations regarding the possibility of work experience visits, and visiting speakers.

Underpinning Knowledge

- the ability to display a variety of business documents
- a good standard of oral and written communication

General Principles and Procedures

Administrators and secretaries are likely to be called upon to use a variety of communication and task management skills during their working career. A great deal depends, of course, on the kind of organisation for which they work. All business organisations, large and small, use (and expect employees to use) task management techniques and a range of oral and written communication tools and skills, according to their needs.

All companies expect each member of staff to contribute to the organisation's success by responding positively to others in the working environment. This could be through being a company employee, or a member of a department or a team within a department, or a part of a team whose members come from various departments.

Students at the Standard Level are likely to have gained basic oral and written communication skills, either from their work or from previous studies. However, it is also likely that they will have different levels of ability as well as skills. For this reason tutors will need to consider whether to use whole class or small group teaching, or individual activities, as well as a variety of teaching methods.

A choice of textbooks is available to help students enhance and extend their oral and written communication skills. Search engines on the Internet and the various websites can also be very useful.

Regular assessment of students' work by the tutor, together with written or verbal feedback, ensures that learning and understanding takes place. It also facilitates appropriate revision sessions and provides positive feedback to both tutor and student.

The use of computers, with spreadsheet and word processing software, e.g. Excel and Microsoft Word, would add realism to students' studies.

Liaison with other tutors and shared teaching could greatly benefit this module, e.g. Text Processing, Office Procedures, Organising Meetings and Events, and Interpersonal Business Skills.

Suggested Introductory Activity

Students should be given an in-depth introduction to the module, with an overview of what is required for success at the Standard Level, i.e. the ability to demonstrate competence by applying knowledge and understanding through a set of Cambridge International Examinations' assessment questions.

A good starting point could be to discuss what they understand to be the purpose of communication and to introduce them to the concept that communication is a continuous two-way process. A spontaneous sharing of ideas can usefully act as an introduction, as well as eliciting from students their present understanding of effective communication and what it may involve in the office environment.

The tutor could then move on to introducing the concept that time management is a component of communication and a prerequisite to making sure that time is available to communicate efficiently in order to work effectively, i.e. the need to plan work, establish priorities, identify resources and skills required for tasks, etc.

A question and answer session could identify and clarify students' present understanding of the terms

- deadline
- time scheduling
- time management
- work management
- work plans
- action plans

Scheme of Work

Competence Criteria	Classroom Ideas	Resources	Notes
Session Plan One			
3.1, 3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduction to the module; importance of brief note-taking and its organisation use question and answer to elicit why it is necessary to respond to customer and client needs appropriately. explain the terms and the need for effective and efficient dissemination of information using a previously prepared OHT explain communication as a two-way process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> flipchart prepared OHTs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> emphasise the importance of clear and accurate communication in business, i.e. to achieve objectives, avoid misunderstandings, misinterpretation, etc. identify the different individuals, groups and organisations with whom people at work communicate and their different needs – students to make notes emphasise the need to see any form of communication from the recipient's point of view, and to use different methods of to support one another
3.2, 3.3, 4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use OHT to explain and expand on what should be considered when communicating, and the need to match communication style to circumstances students to record key points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepare OHT listing the needs to be considered, i.e. status, role, context, type of message and its purpose, body language, suitability of method, style, tone, language, timing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> need to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recipient's status and role context (e.g. face-to-face or telephone conversations, meetings, interviews); the type of message and its purpose (e.g. proposal, opinion, agreement, disagreement collaborative); body language, co-operative body language in face-to-face communication, suitability of method used, its style, tone, language, timing

Session Plan One continued

<p>3.2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> question and answer to elicit students' knowledge of the various methods of business communication available, their characteristics; strengths and disadvantages. Discuss and expand tutor to summarise findings, expand as necessary, student to make notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> flipchart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> compare strengths and weaknesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> spoken communication non-verbal communication written communication, i.e. simple business memorandums, emails, fax, letters and reports
<p>3.1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> elicit student's understanding of 'poor communication' and 'barriers to communication'. Brainstorm the causes students to share their own experiences when written or oral communication has been poor and ineffective and how it affected them. Group, with tutor's help, to identify the problems and to suggest alternatives students to reword examples on handout exercise and feedback to class. Tutor to comment, guide and assist individuals to summarise their findings, and feedback to the group, one student recording key points on flipchart tutor to summarise group's findings, expanding key points as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> flipchart provide students with a handout exercise, which requires them to reword the text more appropriately, and effectively. provide examples of poor and ineffective communication that could lead to loss of goodwill, respect for the individual and company, loss of business, etc. tutor to prepare a support handout listing consequences of poor and common barriers, together with relevant guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> causes of poor communication: Tutor to review 'the need to match communication style to circumstances and points to be considered' – see part 3.2, 3.3, 4.1 emphasise that poor communication leads to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of goodwill loss of respect for the individual and the company loss of business poor interpersonal relationships misinterpretation of message given misunderstanding poor company image, etc. examples of common barriers to communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> language used poor listening skills background knowledge lack of time preconceived judgement own perception of the situation status culture, etc.

Session Plan Two			
3.1 continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • divide into small groups and discuss the examples of poor and ineffective communication and feedback their findings to the group. Tutor to expand, guide and summarise key points • students provided with a handout listing the consequences of poor communication and common barriers, for reference and revision 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • invite the group to select a tape or CD of a pop band and singer for use in session three.
3.1-3.3, 4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • question and answer to review and consolidate session one. Reinforce any weak areas, offering fresh examples • workshop: Students to work in pairs, study and discuss the examples provided, and attempt to rewrite the letter and memo more appropriately. Tutor to guide and support individual students • brainstorm the group's considerations when rewriting. Tutor to randomly nominate six students to read their rewrites to the class. Class and tutor to provide constructive feedback • OHT presentation summarising tutor's findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flipchart • tutor to provide examples of a business letter and a memo that illustrate poor and ineffective communication • flipchart • tutor-prepared OHT summarising reasons for the letter and memo's poor and ineffective communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review handout provided in session one at the end of the question and answer session

Session Plan Three			
3.1-3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • briefly use brainstorming to review the characteristics and advantages of various methods of communication • discuss how listening is an additional characteristic of effective communication and the need to take in information accurately 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasise the importance of developing effective listening skills, alongside an appropriate listening manner, and an awareness that poor listening is also a barrier to understanding a message accurately
3.1, 3.2, 4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listening exercise: Ask students to listen to the tape carefully. Observe • when tape/CD has finished randomly ask questions about specific parts of the tape's content. Invite comments and questions from the group • replay the tape/CD again, and again ask random questions about the content/message of the tape/CD, and what problems were found • ask students to evaluate their own listening skills, understanding of the words and content of the tape/CD, and any problems they had. Each student to feedback to the class individually • tutor to expand on feedback and summarise findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student's tape or selected track from CD. Tutor to have a reserve tape or CD available for unforeseen occurrences • flipchart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tutor to note keywords, internal, external, tape/CD, and/or other distractions, and observe students' behaviour • emphasise that it is important to listen effectively not only to take in information accurately, but also to enhance good relationships

Session Plan Three continued

<p>4.2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • question students regarding why they did not find it easy to get accurate information from the tape on the first and subsequent playbacks, and why they found listening to be hard • explain other reasons why listening is hard and how inaccurate messages occur. • summarise why listening is hard and how it can result in inaccurate information being received and given students to make notes • elicit from students ways in which listening can be improved, and expand and summarise the key aspects of improving listening skills • question and answer to reinforce new learning • provide students with handout on key points concerning listening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flipchart • flipchart • provide handout summarising all key points concerning listening, and how listening skills can be developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain that listening is hard if there is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - noise and other distractions - dislike of the speaker and/or subject - a poor speaker (or singer) • emphasise that listening is also hard and likely to result in inaccurate information if you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assume you know what is going to be said next - are over-confident - are planning what to say next - are tired - are not concentrating • listening can be improved by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organising the surroundings - appearing interested - concentrating - taking notes - summarising
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Session Plan Four			
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> question and answer – revision of session plan three elicit students' knowledge and understanding concerning time management, and how they might identify task requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> flipchart flipchart tutor to devise gapped handout to be completed to consolidate new concept and ways of identifying task requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give ways of identifying task requirements, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> context of task: levels of authority, working relationships (inside and outside the organisation), working conditions purpose of task: duties and responsibilities; competence required; need for flexibility when engaged in a task planning: breaking down more complex tasks into manageable sections; data collection, using basic techniques (e.g. tables, diagrams, charts); use of appropriate communication technique: to inform, co-operate, share information

Session Plan Four continued

<p>1.1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tutor to discuss time management as a component of communication and its importance in helping us to work efficiently and effectively • students to complete handout • discuss the nature of good objectives and the need to define and use objectives to plan and monitor work and individual tasks • discuss the use of discussion to agree objectives and to determine strengths and interests of team members • provide a handout that gives four examples of poorly written objective statements. Students to attempt to rewrite the objectives, then to feedback to group, and tutor to constructively criticise • tutor to show model answers for the four objectives and explain why they are model answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flipchart • tutor to have available examples of well written objectives • tutor to provide handout with four poorly written objectives • OHT showing four well written objectives 	
<p>1.1, 1.2, 1.3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brainstorm ways of managing time successfully • discuss the terms: deadline, timescale, time scheduling, and their importance in time management • discuss the terms: co-operation, co-ordination and collaboration and their importance in time management and interpersonal relationships. Tutor and students to give examples • discuss action plans and aids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flipchart • flipchart – examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasise the need to prioritise, and to have measures to judge the achievement of objectives (i.e. monitoring as a time management system) • emphasise the importance of deadlines, timescales, time scheduling, co-operation, co-ordination and collaboration • use of aids to plan activities

Session Plan Five			
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review key points for writing objectives, using two well-written examples as reminders. Students to write two more objectives, using appropriate wording. Observe and assist, as necessary question and answer, to reinforce ways of managing time and its relevant terminology. Summarise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> flipchart tutor to prepare OHT with two well written model for comparison with students effort 	
1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extend effective time management by discussing the importance of the work environment and workspace for time management discuss strengths and weaknesses in managing time and use question and answer to identify where time goes at work discuss the need to review progress and the need to agree successful delivery, share ideas and free and open communication 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> emphasise the need to organise paperwork, establish timescales and deadlines and use appropriate communication techniques time is taken by telephone calls, meetings, paperwork, research) re-emphasise the importance of prioritising work and ensuring effective performance explain the need to adapt to change, learning from mistakes, appealing for help, giving and receiving feedback – when, to whom and in what way
1.1-1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the terms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> co-operation co-ordination collaboration to ensure understanding, students to give examples of when they have co-operated, co-ordinated and collaborated groups of four to discuss the scenarios, make decisions and feedback to the class. Tutor to support and guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> flipchart tutor to provide three scenarios as handouts for students to identify whether co-operation, co-ordination, collaboration, or some of each, were required to meet the scenario objective 	

Session Plan Six

1.1-1.3

- using question and answer and examples, review and consolidate session five
- **workshop:** With the aid of an example action plan tutor to explain and work through the process of preparing an action plan from a given scenario
- students to produce an action plan, with the help of the tutor, from a given scenario
- completed action plan to be checked against tutor's model answer and discussed
- review the essentials of task action planning

- flipchart
- relevant OHTs and scenarios to be available
- flipchart
- tutor to provide handout showing example of an action plan and giving the process of its preparation
- provide a handout giving a typical set of tasks which are required to be completed to a given deadline
- prepare an OHT with an exemplar answer which meets the needs of the action planning task
- flipchart, OHT

- emphasise the need for simple monitoring techniques
- action plan scenario: Include a task with a problem associated with it, some tasks that need to be ready by a particular time, and some that are urgent or important. Provide opportunities for co-ordination, co-operation and collaboration
- tutor to explain that there is no right or wrong answer to an action plan – in practice there are many different factors to be considered

1.2

- explain the purpose of charts in time management, and discuss their advantages and uses
- show examples of manually and software prepared charts.
- students to manually practice the preparation of various chart types – using the instructions and information provided – observed and assisted by tutor
- students to prepare a particular type of chart from the information provided in a given scenario. Chart to be checked against tutor's model example and discussed

- prepare simple examples of charts, tables and diagrams, produced manually and with the use of software – for handing out and OHT presentation
- provision of step-by-step instructions for the manual preparation of a range of chart types
- provision of a scenario requiring a particular type of chart to be produced and checked against an OHT model example
- flipchart

- compare the businesslike presentation of a software produced chart to a manually prepared one
- examples of Gantt chart, bar and flow charts to be included in the examples

Session Plan Seven

3.3

- outline and discuss the main types of written communication, the purposes for which they are used; their structure, tone and style
- students to make notes

- flipchart
- OHTs
- handouts

- main types of written communication:
 - memorandums
 - email
 - fax
 - letters
 - reports
- the purpose of a memorandum is that it is an efficient method of communication within an organisation which gives or requests action or information, e.g. written records of agreement, altered or modified oral agreements, or to put forward ideas or suggestions

3.3

- outline the principles (i.e. rules) of written communication
- discuss the need to apply the principles of written communication to all documents, at all times
- use question and answer to reinforce the concept that success in business is all about communication and that to work efficiently we must communicate efficiently
- provide each student with an example of each type of document and systematically discuss each document type in relation to whether or not the principles of written communication have been applied
- brainstorm to re-affirm the principles of written communication

- gapped handout to be completed at the end of the session to consolidate learning
- handout outlining the principles of written communication, their purpose, structure, tone, and style
- examples of documents for student activity

- the purpose of an email is that it is a low cost and quick method of communication within and external to an organisation. It provides records of agreement, alterations or modifications to oral agreements, and can put forward ideas or suggestions
- emphasise that the following principles of written communication should be used at all times: the aim should be clearly stated there should be a logical structure, clear layout, and appropriate style distractions to the reader should be avoided by checking the relevance of the content against the aim, removing unclear language, reducing long or wordy sentences and paragraphs, and avoiding unexplained abbreviations

Session Plan Seven continued

- memorandums should have a simple structure comprising the sender/s and recipient/s name, date, subject heading, and information, action proposed. The tone should be appropriate to the status of the sender or receiver and the style should be simple, with short sentences, without clichés or slang, concise, informal but businesslike, easy to understand, and grammatical
- emails should have a very simple and untraditional format comprising the recipient's accurate email or Internet email address, subject heading, information, action proposed
- the tone will be appropriate to the sender or receiver. The style will be simple with fairly short sentences and paragraphs, no clichés or slang, relaxed – not too chatty – but concise, easy to understand, grammatically correct
- business letters should identify the aim before starting to write a letter. Its structure should consist of a subject heading, clear and concise statements for writing the letter, brief step-by-step explanation of the context, summary of action proposed. The tone should be sensitive to the receiver's interpretation, status, and should be tactful
- the style should be appropriate to the receiver, clarify through short words, sentences, and paragraphs

Session Plan Eight

3.3

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • business correspondence workshop to provide students with the opportunity to attempt to apply their knowledge of the principles of written communication to a range of documents • as each composition is completed students should check their work against the guidelines given, and then have it marked again by the tutor on a one to one basis - receiving any guidance necessary • tutor to feedback to the class problems noted • review the principles of written communication through question and answer • review the purpose, structure, tone, style of specific business correspondence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examples of poorly written memos, emails, and letters • exercises requiring the composition of a selection of short memos, emails, and letters of covering various topics and situations • refer to the previous session's notes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasise the importance of proofreading documents before handing in for marking or despatch. Check for spelling and grammatical errors, application of the principles of written communication, and an appropriate business layout • remind students that the aim of all business communication is to compose their messages in such a way that the recipient can interpret it exactly as the sender intended. It requires the sender to ask themselves 'Is this the right time to send or give this message?' |
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Session Plan Eight continued

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report writing: Tutor to explain the principles of written communication concerning report writing, followed by a question and answer on selected aspects of the topic • workshop: write a simple report reporting on the content of your course programme, so far, following the procedure for report writing exactly, as outlined. Tutor to help/guide on an individual basis • students to ask their partner to check that their report has followed the principles of written communication for report writing, as applicable to a simple report. Report to be handed to tutor for assessment and further guidelines • tutor marked report to be rewritten appropriately by student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepared OHTs showing a line drawing of a simple report • handout with key points concerning simple report writing and step-by-step procedure • tutor marked report to be rewritten by student and remarked by tutor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report must be prepared before starting to write, i.e. preparation: the aim of the report should be defined, the report type identified, the structure and style prepared, information should be selected and unnecessary or irrelevant information discarded for the report and appendices • the introduction, body, evaluation (if required), conclusion, logical order and layout should also be planned • The report should be structured as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introduction summarising content - logical sequence for body of report - use an evaluation (if required) and give a conclusion • pages should be numbered, topic headings should be given, together with sub-headings as appropriate • an index of the report and appendices should be provided - the style should be simple and varied, the sentence lengths variable, and layout should be used to break up dense text, and diagram and charts can be used
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Session Plan Nine

<p>4.1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group discussion concerning cultural influences when communicating, and the importance of recognising the meanings of non-verbal behaviour, other than what student is used to • exercise: Students to choose a country they have visited, or have read about, and discuss cultural conventions noted • review the need to match communication style to circumstances • brainstorm factors affecting effective face-to-face and telephone communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flipchart • flipchart • prepared OHTs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remind students that western societies consider eye contact to be important, whereas other societies consider it to be inappropriate, and some consider it to be rude • factors affecting effective verbal communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - using positive behaviour, i.e. building on others' ideas, summarising, indicating support when appropriate, respecting others' views; sticking to issues (not personalities) when disagreeing, asking appropriate questions - using questions effectively by ensuring that the purpose of the questions is to get information, understanding, or to confirm agreement and commitment - choosing appropriate types of questioning such as open and closed, probing, hypothetical, leading, and understanding their strengths and weaknesses, appropriate and inappropriate use
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Session Plan Nine continued

<p>4.2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • elicit why it is important to use questions effectively • discuss the strengths and weaknesses of different question types and their appropriate and inappropriate use • workshop: Divide class into groups of four to role play-a selected situation. All group members to plan the questions, two to act as observers, one to feedback to the class • tutor to assist/guide individual groups with appropriate types of questioning • tutor to summarise weaknesses and strengths found during class feedback and give further guidance, as necessary • assessment: Students to study a handout with ten questions of various types and to indicate which type of question each one is, and then to exchange test paper with partner for marking from OHT answer 'sheet' • students to feedback to the group the problems they had in deciding the question type 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flipchart • OHTs • handout • outline suggestions for short interview sessions on flipchart or OHT (e.g. interviewing a prospective student, purchasing a family home, purchasing a new personal computer, etc.). Give two examples of each question type for each scenario • flipchart • tutor to provide a set of 15 questions using a range of question types • prepared OHT showing questions and answers for students to check against • flipchart 	
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Session Plan Ten

<p>4.3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brainstorm the behaviour to avoid when answering the telephone • discuss methods of making important calls • discuss methods of taking calls effectively • role-play: Divide the group into pairs. Give each pair a telephone script to study and prepare for role-play. • pairs of students to role-play making and receiving a telephone call. Tutor and remainder of the group to observe • when all role play completed tutor and students to provide generalised feedback • tutor to highlight the pitfalls, particularly with regard to tone, style and appropriateness of questions used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flipchart • prepared OHTs • two telephones (preferably connected, but not essential) • screen divider • a variety of telephone scripts which should include some appropriate questioning • handout summarising behaviour to avoid when answering the telephone; the needs to be considered when making effective telephone calls; and how to take calls effectively <p>Note: When a large group is involved this activity needs to be split between two sessions to make it manageable and effective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • behaviour to avoid when answering the telephone: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - not answering quickly - not keeping callers periodically informed when holding on - not identifying yourself - transferring callers without explanation - continuing a conversation after picking up the telephone - speaking unclearly • emphasise that effective call making requires that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the call is planned in advance - relevant information is to hand - pen and paper is ready - you introduce yourself and adopt a friendly tone, take notes, time the call, and follow organisation's procedures for making calls • to take calls effectively you should <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - answer promptly - be friendly but businesslike - ask for and use the caller's name - explain your actions when callers are holding on, or when transferring the call have pen and paper ready to take accurate and complete messages
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Session Plan Eleven			
2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tutor to define the roles in effective teams; elicit students understanding of leadership, and the need for teams to play to the strengths of their individual members explain the importance (and need) of adapting to change and understanding how people express themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> flipchart tutor-prepared handout summarising key points to be discussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explain the importance of employers selecting employees who fit in with existing staff team roles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> leaders negotiators organisers thinkers innovators
2.1, 2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss the importance of keeping in mind that the communication cycle is the same whether we work in a team or a group. Review the two-way communication cycle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> flipchart communication cycle OHP 	
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> question and answer the meaning of the term 'ground rules' and why these are necessary. Discuss the need for teams to use ground rules tutor to summarise findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> student to record answers on flipchart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ground rules refers to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the standards by which a team or group operate agreement on how a team will work together agreement on the level of group and individual commitment acceptable and unacceptable behaviour rules for solving tension and disagreements giving and receiving feedback
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explain what an agenda is and its purpose elicit how an agenda could be useful when making telephone calls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> flipchart OHT examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> purpose of an agenda is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> help team members to prepare and remain on track help note taking, action planning, monitoring, individual and team accountability

Session Plan Eleven continued

2.3

- brainstorm effective ways of making and receiving requests, and the various sources from which requests come
 - reinforce new learning through random question and answer session
- flipchart
 - tutor-prepared OHTs and handouts
 - examples of realistic office type requests
- receiving requests involves:
 - testing understanding (open and closed questions)
 - listening,
 - clarification
 - thinking time
 - negotiating deadlines
 - summarising
 - saying 'no'
 - making requests involves:
 - identifying objectives
 - picking the right moment
 - using appropriate language

Session Plan Twelve

<p>2.4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss what the group understand to be 'interruptions' in a work environment; and why it is important to understand the effect they have on the workflow • tutor to systematically work through a series of workplace interruptions presented on an OHT and invite class members to suggest a suitable way of dealing with them. Once all ideas have been briefly noted on the flipchart tutor to show and explain model answer • reinforce new learning by brainstorming the techniques identified • use question and answer to identify the groups' understanding of 'negative criticism' and 'constructive criticism' and the distinction between them, and whether 'aggression' and 'assertiveness' are the same thing • provide definitions on handout and OHT • discuss why it is important to plan strategies for dealing with unexpected conflicts or negative criticism, and the need to be aware of different types of conflicts and how to handle them • verbal random questioning on the importance of planning strategies for dealing with conflicts or negatives criticism, and methods of handling criticism and aggression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flipchart • prepared OHT giving examples of interruptions in the workplace • OHT pen <p>(Nb Make provision for the technique to handle interruption to be shown beneath the example given)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flipchart • OHT • handout of definitions • flipchart • tutor-prepared handout • tutor-prepared OHT • examples of conflict situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when interruptions occur within the work environment you should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - be polite but firm about time with people - treat the interruption as if you are working to an agenda (as would be the case in a meeting) - make use of appropriate body language • emphasise that criticism can be both positive and negative • handling criticism and aggression: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ways of reacting to constructive or unjustified criticism - verbal and non-verbal techniques for dealing effectively with unacceptable behaviour - recognising the differences between assertiveness and aggression
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Session Plan Thirteen

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss the needs of the CIE assessment paper; the importance of covering all aspects of the syllabus, and having practice in answering assessment questions • discuss and analyse the needs of sample questions using question and answer and tutor's own example answers • complete practice question paper – to be marked by tutor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flipchart • tutor-prepared OHT • tutor-selected questions • tutor-prepared model answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasise the importance of glancing through all questions before attempting to answer – to become thoroughly familiar with them • read each question carefully and highlight or underline key words, e.g. if the question reads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'give four examples of ground rules that are likely to be used by a team' - the key words would be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> give 4 examples ground rules team • keep referring back to the key words as you write each sentence, paragraph, or item • check that all key points have been covered before moving on to the next question • keep in mind what the question is actually asking. For instance: The above question is not asking you to explain what ground rules are, or to say why they are needed. It is asking for examples • if you are unsure of a word in a question, e.g. function, facility, procedure, method, etc. you are at liberty to use a dictionary
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Session Plan Fourteen

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• tutor to return marked papers, give feedback, and discuss possible model answers• general question and answer session on problem areas, and potential assessment topics• tutor to ask students which areas they would like to revise at the next session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• flipchart• OHTs with key points of model answers• handout illustrating a complete model answer and appropriate presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• emphasise the need to read the whole question and not to make assumptions• elicit the meaning of the word 'apply' and what students understand it to mean• use the example of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 'apply the principles of written communication to your memo'- explain that it is not saying 'Tell me (or list) the principles of written communication'- it is asking the student to use the principles of written communication when writing the memo
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Session Plan Fifteen			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revise areas of syllabus selected by students at the last session. Support with work related questioning • students to practice writing the answers for two typical assessment questions. To be marked by tutor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flipchart, prepared OHTs, spare handouts of those previously provided • prepared work related questions • handout with two typical assessment questions • Internet sites, and other resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the value of using the Internet sites for extending knowledge
Session Plan Sixteen			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tutor to hand marked work back and discuss findings, provide guidance and reinforcement • students to discuss any new information found on the Internet – if available • students to plan private and individual work plans to prepare for CIE assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flipchart • handout illustrating key points of examination questions marked • notepaper and pen • tutor to provide a timetable form handout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasise the value of frequent and regular assessment practice, rather than infrequent extended practice sessions

Resources

Books

TITLE	AUTHOR(S)	PUBLISHER	DATE
Business Communication	David Nickson, Suzy Siddons	Heinemann	1996
Business Communication for Secretarial Certificates	Jon Sutherland, Diane Canwell	Heinemann	1997
Mastering Business Communication	L A Woolcott, W R Unwin	Palgrave	1983
Successful Time Management in a Week	Declan Treacy	Hodder & Stoughton	1998
Clear your Desk	Declan Treacy	Random House Business Books	1991
Perfect Time Management	Ted Johns	Arrow Books	1994

Websites

Websites such as:

www.amazon.com

www.heinemann.co.uk/vocational

are useful resources for information and the purchase of text books, together with search engines such as:

www.ask.com

www.google.com

www.yahoo.com