THE INSTITUTE OF ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

DIPLOMA IN ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATION

3rd December 2007: TIME 09.30 – 12.30

Time Allowed: 3 hours **Section A, is compulsory and all 8 questions must be attempted.** **(40% OF TOTAL MARKS)** **Two questions from Section B must be attempted** **(60% OF TOTAL MARKS)**	**Allocation of marks as** **shown on the paper.**

SECTION A: (COMPULSORY)

1. What are the work processes a manager uses to achieve their set goals?

2. Briefly describe the difference between:

    a) Flexi-working
    b) Flexible working

3. List the external triggers for change

4. What is 'Sample Timing' in Work Measurement?

5. Briefly describe the role of the Supply Chain.

6. Explain the concept of 'Market Philosophy'

7. Outline a systems model of communication known to you.

8. Briefly describe 'Risk Management'

(5 marks per question, 40 marks in total)

SECTION B: (TWO QUESTIONS MUST BE ATTEMPTED)

1. Describe the difference between the Autocratic style of management and the Democratic style of management

    (30 marks)

2. Forms are a vital source of information. Reflecting on a form you have used recently outline its contents and discuss how efficient it was in:

    (a) the clarity of it language
    (b) its signposting
    (c) achieving its purpose

    (30 marks)

3. Discuss why 'Total Quality Management' fails in organisations
    Give work place examples of why this happened.

    (30 marks)

4. It is vital that IT information is kept secure. As an Administrative Manager what actions would you take to prevent illegal access and abuse

    (30 marks)

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ADMINSTRATIVE SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

4th Dec 2007: TIME 09.30 – 12.30

Time Allowed: 3 hours **Section A, is compulsory and all 8 questions must be attempted.** **(40% OF TOTAL MARKS)** **Two questions from Section B must be attempted** **(60% OF TOTAL MARKS)**	**Allocation of marks as** **shown on the paper.**

SECTION A: (COMPULSORY)

1. Provide a brief explanation of the term "de-coupling"

2. Briefly outline the principle of TQM

3. Why do organisations set objectives?

4. What is the difference between formal and informal procedures?

5. Briefly explain the difference between purposive and purposeful control

6. How does a sole trader organisation differ from a partnership?

7. Provide a brief description of an administrative system with which you are familiar

8. Briefly define what a policy is within an organisation

(5 marks per question, 40 marks in total)

SECTION B: (TWO QUESTIONS MUST BE ATTEMPTED)

1. Using examples from an organisation you know, explain the importance of quality assurance and quality improvement

2. Outline the main stages involved in designing a system. Use examples if possible

3. Choose a procedure with which you are familiar and provide suggestions on how it could be made more effective and efficient

4. Choose an organisation known to you and provide a SWOT analysis

(30 marks per question, 60 marks in total)

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DIPLOMA IN ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

PEOPLE IN ORGANISATIONS

5th December 2007: Time: 09.30 -12.30

Time Allowed: 3 Hours **Section A, COMPULSORY and ALL 8 QUESTIONS MUST BE ATTEMPTED** **(40% of total marks)** **Section B, TWO QUESTIONS MUST BE ATTEMPTED (60%of total marks)**	**Allocation of marks as shown on the paper.**

SECTION A: (COMPULSORY)

1. Briefly explain how perception might impact upon behaviour.

2. What do you understand by 'Organisational Culture'.

3. Identify FIVE ways by which an administrative manager could improve his/her time management.

4. Outline the business case for seeking a work-life balance for employees.

5. Explain the purpose of a disciplinary procedure.

6. Explain, with the aid of examples, the difference between formal and informal groups.

7. Explain how an administrative manager might network effectively with colleagues.

8. Outline the business benefits of a diverse workforce

(5 marks per question, 40 marks in total)

SECTION B: (TWO QUESTIONS MUST BE ATTEMPTED)

1. 'Underlying the effective management of people is the requirement for a clear understanding of the nature of the business that the organisation is in and how best to provide customer or consumer satisfaction' (Morley Professional Manager March 1997)

   Examine the role and contribution of mission, goals and objectives in meeting this requirement.

   (30 marks)

2. (a) Identify the main causes of stress in the workplace

   (10 marks)

   (b) Describe the approaches than can be used by organisations to reduce stress in the workplace
   (20 marks)

3. The aim of the recruitment process is to attract applicants of suitable quality in sufficient numbers. Detail the stages in an effective recruitment process

   (30 marks)

4. To be effective in the C21st a leader must be 'inspirational.' Discuss

   (30 marks)

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DIPLOMA IN ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

INFORMATION FOR DECISION MAKING

6ᵗʰ Dec 2007: Time: 09.30 – 12.30

Time Allowed: 3 Hours **Section A, COMPULSORY and ALL 8 QUESTIONS MUST BE ATTEMPTED** **(40% of total marks)** **Section B, TWO QUESTIONS MUST BE ATTEMPTED (60%of total marks)**	**Allocation of marks as shown on the paper.**

SECTION A: (COMPULSORY)

(i) Distinguish between the three levels of information required by organisation of your choice.

(ii) Identify four external pressures facing organisations.

(iii) State the advantages and disadvantages of using pie charts in the presentation of business information.

(iv) Explain what is meant by the term 'frequency density'.

(v) Describe how a company can increase its profitability by speeding up its working capital cycle.

(vi) Calculate capital employed from the following:

Creditors	£1,509	Stock	£475
Fixed assets	£8,316	Bank Overdraft	£1,000
Debtors	£1,187	Cash	£554

(vii) Calculate the prime cost and total cost from the following:

Direct labour	£6,000	Heat, Light and Power	£3,400
Administration costs	£15,500	Rent	£2,500
Direct materials	£11,000	Supervisory wages	£3,000

(viii) Explain the purpose of cost centres in an organisation.

(5 marks for each question, 40 marks in total)

SECTION B: (TWO QUESTIONS MUST BE ATTEMPTED)

1 'The value of a decision must exceed the cost of the information'. Discuss

(30 marks)

2. (a) Draw a histogram to represent the following

Age Category	Number of Purchasers
20 -29	20
30-39	30
40-49	34
50-59	22
60-79	20

(18 marks)

(b) Determine the value of the mode

(6 marks)

(c) Give the advantages and disadvantages of the mode as a measure of central tendency.

(6 marks)

3. (a) From the following information prepare
        (i) a profit and loss account

(12 marks)

    (ii) a balance sheet

(12 marks)

	£		£
Sales	109,970	Cost of sales	84,330
Share Capital	45,870	Overhead	10,520
Fixed Assets	83,270	Creditors	22,400
Stocks	4,470	Debtors	11,130
Cash at bank	6,830	Long Term Liabilities	28,280
Tax	5,970		

(b) Define and calculate the capital employed.

(6 marks)

4. (a) Prepare a three month cash budget for a company from the following information

- Opening bank balance on 1st April of £2,478
- Rent payable each month of £500
- Sales in April estimated at £3,750
- Sales expected to increase each month from April at the rate of 10%
- Creditors to be paid £1,250 in April, £1,500 in May and £1,750 in June
- Variable expenses each month to be 40% of turnover
- Fixed expenses of £560 per month
- Capital expenditure of £2,500 on 1st April

(20 marks)

(b) What advice would you give the company?

(10 marks)

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DIPLOMA IN ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

CASE STUDY I

7th DECEMBER 2007, TIME: 09.30 – 12.30

Scenario

Time Allowed: 3 hours **Answer all FOUR QUESTIONS.** **Graph paper is included in the centre of the examination script.**	**Allocation of marks as shown on the paper.**

SILVER CIRCLE CALL CENTRE

The Silver Circle call centre employs some 600 staff operating from one site on a twenty-four hours shift based system. Each shift is 8 hours. The centre administers product support inquiries from its customers as well as outgoing calls for telemarketing, and servicing the collection of debts. By centralising the management functions of its business services and call centre operations under one roof, the company aims to provide a streamlined service to its customers, whilst reducing its operating costs. Staff specialists are concerned with monitoring levels of quality and performance.

Clients range from utilities and catalogue companies to financial services and home improvement services. The clients are varied, and the range of services diverse. Call centre operators are organised into teams in an open plan setting, typically responsible for a range of clients within a particular area of activity. In this way, the call centre retains some flexibility in deploying operators to meet operational requirements within the separate areas.

Customer operations are backed up by a range of services, covering the usual areas of business and administrative systems - including finance, human resources, procurement, IT services, account management, marketing, and general office.

Customer operations for second tier support staff are organised into work teams of up to twelve staff, depending on shift, each with a Team Leader. These in turn are grouped into four functional business areas, each with a Team Manager servicing particular types of activity: outgoing e.g. telemarketing, and inbound e.g. product support. This provides for an element of flexibility in the number of clients for a common type of service that individual teams can handle using interactive decision support and predictive dialing. Technical support staff, to which they can switch callers to if requiring a more specialised response, back-up teams dealing with incoming calls.

It was against this background that Ray Sanchez, Operations Director, opened the monthly review meeting with his Team Managers, Information Manager and a Client Account Manager from account management. "Lucy, you're our information Manager who handles ICT communications between us and our clients to ensure the smooth running of our services. I see performance measures are showing worse figures all round for the second quarter running. Average queue delays are up and teams can see this on 'real time' screens in their work areas. It's the same with conversation time, idle and handling time. Service levels of calls answered within the timeframe, together with non-contact processing time and call handling are down. Both trends in the wrong direction! At the last meeting we all said we would keep the figures under review, though I sometimes feel we are drowning under the amount of detail, and aren't getting enough time to deal with the information that really counts". Any ideas how we might improve on performance, and do we really know where we are heading?

Lucy Chang turned to Milton Band one of the other Team Managers. "Milton, before this meeting, you told me what you thought the problems were, and yes, you are right about the performance. Why not tell the others here what you think the problems are?"

Milton thought for a moment then spoke to the group. "After having talked to my Team Leaders, I see it this way, and I think all the managers here are experiencing the same problems, since all our areas show a similar pattern of performance. Lucy is right on commenting on the poor results, and Fiona Seaton our Client Accounts Manager can confirm this in her communication with our clients and the non-renewal of some contracts in the last six months. Whilst we have continued to update our service technology in the various areas with predictive dialing, caller prioritisation, number identification and decision support, it's made relatively little impact on quality and performance targets. Our absence and turnover rates in call screening and service support teams in particular, are well above industry average and the other teams are going the same way".

"Our team leaders closely monitor their staff, take a very firm line with poor performance, follow-up staff absence, sometimes with an interview, and make use of built-in software to monitor and report on each member of the team. However, this is backed up by policies and procedures that are insufficiently detailed and lack clear guidance to ensure that actions by Team Leaders are consistent across all areas".

Rose Topping, Team Manager for telemarketing added, "And it's not as if we spend a lot on training, other than ensuring staff can do their job and slot in to cover absence or other requirements in their area. HR even keeps the costs of recruitment, selection and induction down by keeping advertising to a minimum; relying on an application form and brief interview with themselves and the Team Leader. The policies and procedures are poor. From this process they gauge an applicant's suitability without having to resort to testing".

"They also let Team Leaders induct new staff with a brief overview of what's involved in the job, employment conditions, health and safety and an introduction to their work team. Then another team member 'shows them the ropes' by taking them through the scripts, familiarising them with the software and sitting with them for two hours whilst they make or take calls".

Times of lunch and tea breaks are fixed, so that the pattern of working can maintain a 24 hour cover within the two or three shifts, though in practice, we all know there's little or no cover if staff are off sick, much of it apparently due to stress. Sure it's stressful and repetitive, staff have to deal with angry customers; workstations and desk layout don't reflect best practice; and sound insulation and lighting levels could be better".

 Milton came in again at this point to agree, commenting, "we could also do with breakout and rest areas closer to the teams and proper training facilities with dedicated rooms and equipment to simulate working conditions".
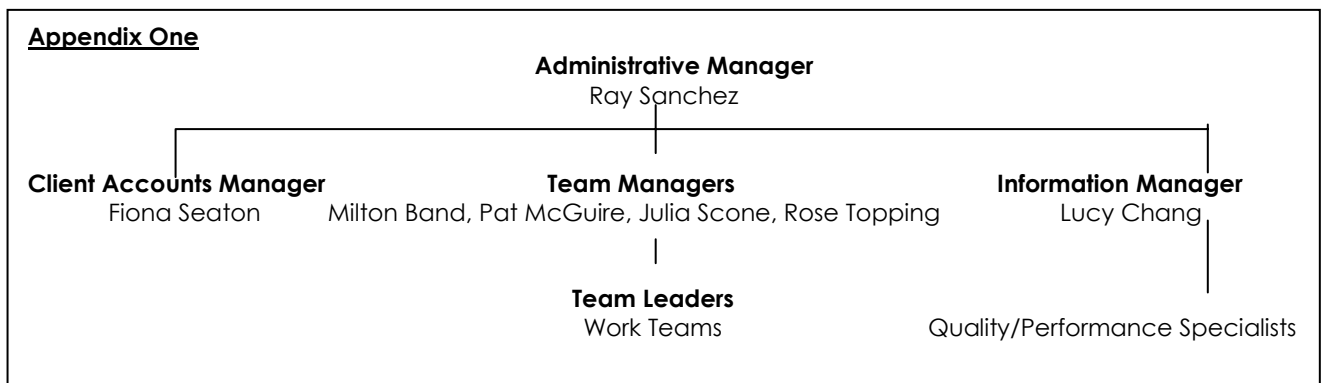
Fiona cut in, "That's all very well Milton, but we have to keep an eye on our costs, and yet, if we continue to drift like this with all talk and no action, we are going to lose even more accounts. We can't continue as we are, so let's look to the future. If you were all able to manage your time better, in using information available and working more closely with your Team leaders, perhaps you would have more time to properly plan ahead".

At this, Pat McGuire stepped in, "Before we do, another factor is the shift patterns, covering our 24-hour operation. I feel we're too inflexible in the way we devise our staff rosters and the cover they provide. There's no consultation, staff are just told what shifts they'll be working. As it is, we don't always have enough staff to cover the work, and it creates extra pressure for those on duty. We need to bring in Human Resources to look at our rosters and see what's affecting staffing levels. We have several staff who are absent due to a stress related illness.

Julia Scone went further and commented on the diversity of the workforce managed by the Team Leaders. "Differences and similarities among our staff, for example in terms of race, gender or age, present a management challenge and opportunity to all of us. Louis Planter in HR needs to alert Team Leaders to the benefits of and barriers to diversity, and provide

development opportunities for all of us here, in how to manage and make the most of the potential"

At this point, Ray Sanchez announced it was now time for the meeting to take a break, before reviewing the performance statistics in detail, and following Fiona's call to look to the future. In his mind there was a more fundamental concern about whether the goals and objectives for call centre operations should be more clearly defined in order to focus any future action that was needed.

Appendix One

Administrative Manager
Ray Sanchez

| **Client Accounts Manager** | **Team Managers** | **Information Manager** |
| Fiona Seaton | Milton Band, Pat McGuire, Julia Scone, Rose Topping | Lucy Chang |

Team Leaders
Work Teams

Quality/Performance Specialists

(a)   Make clear any assumptions you feel necessary
(b)   Make clear any local circumstances if appropriate to your case

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CASE STUDY I

7th DECEMBER 2007, TIME: 09.30 – 12.30

Questions

Time Allowed: 3 hours	**Allocation of marks as**
Answer all FOUR QUESTIONS.	**shown on the paper.**
Graph paper is included in the centre of the examination script.	

1. Advise Louis Planter on how to improve the system of recruitment and selection to reduce the turnover of staff in the call centre operations.

    (100 marks)

2. Discuss how stress is affecting the staff in Silver Circle, and suggest strategies for reducing its effects on operations.

    (100 marks)

3. Explain why the diversity of staff in call centre operations provides a particular challenge for team leaders and managers.

    (100 marks)

4. Discuss the reasons for Ray Sanchez (Administrative Manager) having clear goals and objectives to guide his area of the business.

    (100 marks)