

The
Management
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UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP
DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF MANAGEMENT AND
LEADERSHIP/ BACHELOR OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES/ BACHELOR OF COMMERCE

BCM 111/ UCU 106/ UCU 100: COMMUNICATION SKILLS 1

DATE: 29TH JULY 2026

DURATION: 2 HOURS

MAXIMUM MARKS: 70

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Write your registration number on the answer booklet.
2. **DO NOT** write on this question paper.
3. This paper contains **SIX (6)** questions.
4. Question **ONE** is compulsory.
5. Answer any other **THREE** questions.
6. Question **ONE** carries **25 MARKS** and the rest carry **15 MARKS** each.
7. **Write all your answers in the Examination answer booklet provided.**

QUESTION ONE

Read the case study below and answer the questions that follow:

CASE STUDY: THE SILENT COLLAPSE OF APEX SOLUTIONS LTD

Apex Solutions Ltd, a rapidly growing regional logistics and technology firm, recently underwent a massive structural reorganization to integrate its physical warehouse logistics with a brand-new digital client platform. The initiative was spearheaded by the executive board to secure a competitive edge in a modern, technologically enhanced market. However, three months post-launch, the company faces severe internal friction, declining staff morale, and an unprecedented 25% drop in client retention.

The trouble began during the initial rollout phase. The executive team drafted an ambitious, 50-page technical implementation plan. Instead of organizing localized town hall meetings or engaging in iterative dialogue, the CEO sent a company-wide email broadcast with the dense document attached, adding a short note: *"Please review and align your departments immediately. No exceptions."* Many warehouse shift supervisors, who primarily access corporate updates via mobile screens while on the move, found the document long, filled with complex corporate clichés, and difficult to parse. Assuming the directive was meant solely for the IT and corporate office teams, several supervisors ignored the email entirely.

As the systems transitioned, major operational gaps emerged. Frontline customer service representatives were left completely unaware of system errors that altered delivery timelines. When clients called to complain, customer representatives—lacking real-time information—offered conflicting, unverified explanations. Driven by panic and a lack of structured reporting templates, department heads began flooding the internal servers with poorly written, reactionary corporate memos. These documents lacked proper paragraphing, omitted clear action points, and often contained spelling and grammatical errors born of haste. Key operational updates were buried under emotional prose, causing critical notices to be overlooked entirely.

To address the brewing crisis, the Chief Operating Officer (COO) called an emergency inter-departmental meeting. Because the team worked across multiple regional hubs, the meeting was hosted virtually. It quickly degenerated into chaos. The COO, serving as the chair, had not circulated an agenda in advance and failed to establish ground rules for virtual etiquette. Throughout the two-hour call, participants frequently interrupted each other, spoke over one another, and left their microphones unmuted, creating disruptive background noise. Two senior logistics managers kept their cameras turned off, text-messed on their personal phones, and failed to contribute to the discussion. A technical lead tried to explain the system patch using an overly dense slide deck filled with unreadable, unlabeled data charts that confused the operational team further. The meeting ended abruptly without any formal agreements, and the designated secretary took no minutes, leaving participants completely in the dark regarding their next steps.

Simultaneously, the public relations fallout intensified. A leaked internal memo criticizing the warehouse staff's adaptability found its way onto social media platforms.

The company's initial public response was a defensive, legalistic press release that failed to account for cross-cultural sensitivities or demonstrate empathy toward affected clients. Internally, the toxic environment prompted two mid-level logistics managers to resign. To fill the vacancies quickly, HR rushed an interview process. They conducted unstructured panel interviews where interviewers frequently displayed poor listening skills, interrupted candidates, and maintained rigid, uninviting body language. Consequently, the firm misread several candidates, hiring individuals whose professional ethics and communication styles did not align with the company's core values. The cultural rift within Apex Solutions Ltd has now widened into an operational stand-still.

Required:

- a) Analyze four distinct communication barriers that manifested during Apex Solutions' restructuring process
(8 Marks)
- b) Based on best practices for meeting communication and visual aids, highlight three distinct procedural or technological failures and explain how proper minute-writing and slide design could have salvaged the outcome. **(9 Marks)**
- c) Compose a 250-word internal memo from the CEO to all staff using professional business formatting to restore trust after the leaked memo crisis and outline future workplace communication etiquette guidelines. **(8 Marks)**

QUESTION TWO

- a) Communication models provide a theoretical framework for understanding how messages are processed. Compare and contrast a linear communication model with an interactive/transactional model. **(7 Marks)**
- b) Examine how the presence of common grammatical errors, excessive corporate clichés, and poor proofreading can alter the psychological impact of a message.

**(8
Marks)**

QUESTION THREE

- a) Differentiate between a business memorandum (memo) and a formal business letter in terms of target audience, and explain a scenario where an email would be completely inappropriate compared to a physical letter. **(7 Marks)**
- b) Discuss how a manager can consciously use four distinct categories of non-verbal communication to project authority, empathy, and clarity during a corporate crisis speech.
(8 Marks)

QUESTION FOUR

- a) Public speaking and oral presentations require a careful blend of technology and human delivery. Explain how an individual can effectively manage their voice, while seamlessly integrating visual communication tools to keep a diverse, distracted audience engaged. **(8 Marks)**
- b) Identify three common mistakes speakers make during the Q&A segment of a public presentation, and formulate a strategy for handling hostile or unexpected questions without losing professional credibility. **(7 Marks)**

QUESTION FIVE

- a) Outline the core communication roles and responsibilities of both the Meeting Chairperson and the Meeting Participant **(7 Marks)**
- b) Discuss four contemporary challenges associated with hosting virtual meetings and propose practical best practices that an organization can institutionalize to ensure digital inclusion and high engagement among remote workers. **(8 Marks)**

QUESTION SIX

- a) Describe the stages of interview communication from preparation to follow-up, and explain how a candidate can align their verbal and non-verbal communication to demonstrate competence and professionalism. **(8 Marks)**
- b) Explain how hidden cultural assumptions cause workplace friction, and formulate ethical guidelines to govern multicultural corporate communications. **(7 Marks)**