

Unit Title: Introduction to Business Communication	Unit Code: IBC
Level: 3	Learning Hours: 100
Learning Outcomes and Indicative Content:	
Candidates will be able to:	
1. Explain the principles which govern the transmission of information in business situations	
1.1	Describe the purposes of communication: to inform, instruct, persuade, request, clarify, co-operate, buy and sell, advertise, etc
1.2	Explain the use of medium appropriate to a situation (e.g. telephone, face to face, fax, email, letter, memo etc) and why likely to be the most effective and most suited to the purpose
1.3	Explain how business relationships affect communication
2. Compose all common types of written communication in a clear, complete and correct way, with attention to presentation and neatness	
2.1	Compose business letters, properly laid out with correct “top and tail” in blocked or semi-blocked format, using a tone appropriate to the purpose, written in legible handwriting
2.1.1	Letters of appreciation or complaint
2.1.2	Letters asking for assistance (e.g. in providing conference facilities) or giving confirmation of an arrangement
2.1.3	Letters applying for a job, offering a job or responding to a job offer
2.1.4	Letters offering or declining the offer of a service
2.1.5	Letters accepting or declining an offer or invitation
2.1.6	Letters clarifying or explaining a situation
2.2	Prepare reports, their structure and content
2.3	Prepare memos, their purpose and layout, benefits and drawbacks
2.4	Prepare notices
2.5	Prepare simple advertisements and publicity material including flyers and press releases
2.6	Prepare a curriculum vitae

3. Describe the principles of communicating orally in an effective way

- 3.1 Describe the use of the telephone
 - 3.1.1 Making a call
 - 3.1.2 Answering the telephone
 - 3.1.3 Dealing with customers by telephone, including necessary personal qualities, e.g. politeness, patience, organisation, tone of voice, etc
 - 3.1.4 Using the telephone to deal with urgent and/or personal matters
- 3.2 Describe face to face communication, both formal and informal
- 3.3 Describe how to give a talk, a speech or a briefing

4. Explain how non-verbal signals can help or hinder communication

- 4.1 Explain the importance of personal appearance and grooming
- 4.2 Body language
 - 4.2.1 Posture;
 - 4.2.2 Eye contact;
 - 4.2.3 Facial expressions;
 - 4.2.4 Use of gestures and body movement;
 - 4.2.5 Personal space;

5. Describe common barriers to successful communication and explain how to overcome them, including:

- 5.1 Incomplete information, lack of clarity
- 5.2 Poor listening / decoding skills, lack of concentration
- 5.3 Noise (technical and psychological)
- 5.4 Differences of gender, language, culture, status, age, time zones
- 5.5 Preconceptions, stereotyping and unclarified assumptions
- 5.6 Inappropriate channels or media
- 5.7 Inappropriate language or vocabulary
- 5.8 Wrong time or place
- 5.9 Hostile or negative attitude
- 5.10 Lack of preparation and/or insufficient time to assimilate

6. Summarise effectively simple business documents and to show an understanding of their content

- 6.1 Selection of material
- 6.2 Use of an original vocabulary
- 6.3 Clarity and accuracy of the summary
- 6.4 Adherence to word limit
- 6.5 Fitness for purpose

7. Describe the role of computers and related technology in modern business communication

- 7.1 Teleconferencing and videoconferencing
- 7.2 Telecommuting
- 7.3 E-mails
- 7.4 Describe essential hardware and its function
- 7.5 Describe important applications software and its function
- 7.6 Local Area Networks and Wide Area Networks
- 7.7 Storage and retrieval of information
- 7.8 Describe the preparation of documents on a computer, including spreadsheets
- 7.9 Computer security and protection against loss of data
- 7.10 Mobile telephone communication
- 7.11 Pagers

8. Describe and explain office organisational skills

- 8.1 Explain how to prepare for, and conduct oneself at interviews
- 8.2 Explain how to organise and conduct successful meetings
 - 8.2.1 Invitations and agendas
 - 8.2.2 Choice and arrangement of venue
 - 8.2.3 Minutes
 - 8.2.4 Roles of chairperson and secretary
- 8.3 Explain interpersonal relationships: motivating staff and colleagues and maintaining good working relationships
- 8.4 Describe office layout and ambience (e.g. open-plan, choice of furniture, use of space, light, colour etc) and how they affect communication
- 8.5 Describe the role of the receptionist and the design of the reception area
- 8.6 The purpose of office equipment, e.g. faxes, photocopiers, intercoms, pagers
- 8.7 Describe storage and filing of documents

- 9 Describe formal and informal communications structures in business contexts and explain why, and how, they operate**
- 9.1 Vertical downwards
 - 9.2 Vertical upwards
 - 9.3 Horizontal
 - 9.4 Diagonal
 - 9.5 Grapevine
 - 9.6 The communications cycle from sender to receiver and back to sender
 - 9.7 Communications models: chain, circle, wheel, star; their benefits and drawbacks
- 10 Explain the meaning of common business and communications terms, and also their uses, benefits and drawbacks**
- 10.1 Describe IT terms, e.g.: WAP, LAN, interface, firewall, RAM, screensaver, MMS, etc
 - 10.2 Describe commercial terms, e.g.: tariffs, embargo, multinational, conglomerate, etc
 - 10.3 Describe external market terms, e.g.: target market, research data, circular letter, etc
 - 10.4 Describe terms related to people, e.g.: entrepreneur, CEO, HR, sole trader, etc

Assessment Criteria:

- Assessment method: written examination
- Length of examination: three hours
- Candidates should answer four questions from a choice of eight, each question carrying equal marks

Recommended Reading

ABE, *ABE Study Manual – Introduction to Business Communication*, ABE