

## Communications – Ordinary Level

*Describe the purpose of a meeting and outline the merits of a meeting as a method of communication.* (15m) (LCOL 2001)

### The Marks:

Purpose = 5 marks; two merits at 5 marks each.

### A SAMPLE ANSWER:

The purpose of a meeting is to exchange information and opinions, usually so as to agree on some action to be taken.

The merits of a meeting:

- allows information and opinions to be heard before decisions are made
- allows those present to speak their minds
- gathers information and opinions quickly
- allows immediate feedback/response, so wrong information can be corrected immediately

### EXAM TIPS

Drawing charts/graphs:

- The axes must be marked out evenly and proportionately, e.g. '10, 20, 30, 40 ...' or '50, 100, 150, 200 ...' – **not** '50, 70, 80, 110 ...'

### Agenda:

The Agenda for an AGM **always** starts with:

1. The Minutes of the previous AGM
2. Matters arising from the Minutes
3. Chairperson's report

... and **always** finishes with AOB.

Other items are fitted between these.

## Communications – Ordinary Level

*A Sample Answer to (LCOL 1999 – Q5 (e))*

'Letterhead' with name and address of business

Mary and Mark Brown  
Toymakers  
1, Main Street, Seatown

Make up suitable address if no address is given

Make up any suitable date if no date given

12 June 1999

Use the name and address given in the question

M. Green  
Newsagent  
Main Street  
Dungarvan

Name and address of receiver must go here

Dear Mr Green,

The first paragraph tells the reader what the letter is about

We make wooden toys which are very popular with tourists. Our products are attractive and well-made, as you can see from the enclosed brochure. They are also reasonably priced, which you can see from the enclosed pricelist.

The second paragraph goes into more detail.

We would like you to consider stocking our toys in your well-known store. We are certain that if you do so, they will bring lots of business to your shop, and you will sell large quantities of them to the many tourists who visit Dungarvan.

Looking forward to receiving your order.

Yours sincerely,

Mary and Mark Brown

**Note:** Students were required to make up some details 'to persuade' Mr Green to take their products to sell in his store.

## Communications – Higher Level

*'On average, managers spend over 75% of their time communicating.'*

*Explain the factors that ensure managers communicate effectively. Use examples where appropriate. (25m) (LCHL 2005)*

### The Marks:

5 points at (2+2+1) each.

Each point earns 2 marks and it also must contain 2 'sub-points' (at 2 + 1 marks).

Suggestion:

- 1) **Define** the key topic ('effective communication') with an **example**.
- 2) Give **four factors** which affect the effectiveness of communication illustrating each with an **example**.

### A SAMPLE ANSWER:

Effective communication means communication that achieves its purpose, for example, a calm, clear announcement over the intercom which gets everybody quickly and safely out of a building which is on fire.

Effective communication requires planning: the sender must consider:

- the **type of language** to be used, for example, a contractual document must be phrased very precisely, often using technical legal language. Whereas a speech congratulating workers on some achievement should use informal language.
- **length** of communication: the longer the message, the more likely that the receiver(s) will 'switch off', for instance, a long boring speech to the workforce. Communication should be as short as possible, while making sure they contain the essential information.
- **timing** – A message that requires a particular response must give the receiver enough time to do what the sender wants. For example, a message asking people to attend a conference on a particular day must be sent in time for people to make the necessary travel and other arrangements.
- **accuracy** – Communications must never contain inaccurate information, as this would create distrust and harm credibility, thus weakening the effectiveness of future communications.
- **trust** – Trust between sender and receiver is essential for effective communications. A lack of trust creates suspicions that information may be inaccurate or misleading. For example, a manager explaining to a workforce why the firm cannot afford a wage rise at present will simply not be believed, if there is a lack of trust.

Many other points could be made similarly.