



Moderators Assignment Feedback – Applied Business Communications and Personal Skills

After each series, we ask our moderators to provide a report on each assignment-based unit to identify

- any questions which were usually answered particularly well, including main points and qualities that characterised good answers.
- any questions which were usually answered badly and main weaknesses in candidates' answers.
- common errors or misconceptions made by candidates.

We hope that this will be of assistance when completing your Business Communications and Personal skills assignment.

General feedback to candidates

Good set of assignments, with candidates either achieving a Level 3 or Good Level 3 Pass.

Candidates should carefully read each question. The assignment is looking to test business communication from different angles. Repeating answers from one question to another is not good practice.

Candidates should use the mark scheme in each question to ensure their answers meet the requirements.

Candidates should check that material used from websites or textbooks are referenced clearly. Use of the Turnitin Similarity report in advance of a final submission will help in this respect by identifying text which may require a reference.

It would be good practice for candidates to ensure when using appendices they do not just include links or insert documents as an image, as Turnitin does not allow our assessment team to open external resources, if links or images are uploaded, this will result in an administration error where no marks can be awarded.

Appendices can be added at the end of the assignment provided they are signposted in the answer.

Feedback for each assignment question

This section of your assignment aims to demonstrate that you understand the principles of effective applied business communications and personal skills

Q1. Explain the benefits of understanding business communications and developing relevant skills.

Q1 – Some candidates only focused on business communications rather than including the benefit of development of relevant skills as well, which would have gained higher marks.

Q2. Evaluate the following forms of business communications, explaining the contexts in which the following should be used:

- a) Telephone communications
- b) Formal and informal written communications
- c) Formal and informal meetings
- d) Presentations

Q2 a) – d) Candidates who provided different contexts for their answers gained higher marks.

Q3. Explain good practice for the following forms of communication

- a) Business greetings
- b) Telephone communications
- c) Letter writing
- d) Business emails
- e) Business reports
- f) Business meetings

Q3 a) – f) Answers provided were mostly descriptive; candidates need to focus on giving examples of good practice 'including data protection requirements'.

Q4. Explain behaviours which build productive relations with colleagues, including advice on how to

- a) Create a good first impression
- b) Build rapport, trust and credibility
- c) Gain results through reciprocal relationships
- d) Provide feedback in different situations
- e) Resolve conflicts
- f) Cope with difficult people

Q4 a) – f) Some candidates need to remember to focus on behaviours to show a wider understanding of the subject. Answers that included advice in addition to an explanation gained higher marks.

Q5. a) Explain how to establish and maintain an effective team, including consideration of a team's

- i) Mission
- ii) Membership
- iii) Roles
- iv) Organisation

b) Identification of reasons why teams struggle at different stages

Q5a) - Some valid points made but again candidates would gain higher marks by providing different approaches and contexts. In 5a i) use your own organisation mission statement.

Q5b) – Generally answered well with a good understanding shown by some candidates as to why teams struggle. Better answers showed practical application of general theory.

Section B Policy

This section aims to demonstrate that you know how to communicate in your own business environment.

Q6. Explain your use of the following forms of communication. Include organisational practice or policy (if formalised) for:

- a) **Business greetings**
- b) **Telephone**
- c) **Letter writing**
- d) **Business emails**
- e) **Record keeping**
- f) **Business meetings**
- g) **Business reports**

Q6 a) – g) Some candidates repeated comments made in questions 2) & 3) which cannot be awarded further marks. Higher marks are awarded for practice linked to own organisation's policy

Section C Practice

This section aims to demonstrate that you can evaluate your skills and apply effective business communication and personal skills in the workplace.

Q7. Assess own strengths and weaknesses in relation to the following business skills:

- a) **Communications skills**
- b) **Time management**
- c) **Initiative**
- d) **Commitment**
- e) **Perseverance**
- f) **Ability to embrace change and respond positively to new priorities**

Q7 a) – f) Those who gained higher marks gave more balanced answers, with some candidates only focussing on their strengths.

Q8. Explain, with criteria for success, realistic short and long-term goals in relation to your business communications and personal skills

Q8 Candidates need to focus their answers around short and long term goals and include a SMART plan as per the mark scheme.

Q9. Explain your personal involvement in an issue which demonstrates

- a) **Initiative**
- b) **Commitment**
- c) **Perseverance**
- d) **Flexibility**
- e) **Good time keeping**
- f) **Appropriate communications skills**
- g) **Effective conflict resolution**

Q9 a) – g) Candidates were able to provide relevant & appropriate response to this question.

Q10 - Assess your performance and progress regarding communications and personal skills, while studying for this CICM unit. Include in your answer feedback from others and an explanation of:

- a) **Your response to setbacks**
- b) **How self-reflection has informed your actions**

Q10 – Some candidates assessed their performance in relation to undertaking the assignment rather than assessing their performance and progress in terms of their communications and personal skills development.