

2Q

APJ ABDUL KALAM TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
FIRST TRIMESTER MBA DEGREE EXAMINATION DECEMBER 2016

MBA 14 BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

Max. Marks: 60

Duration: 3 Hours

Part A

Answer all questions. Each question carries 2 marks

1. "Communication is a multi-purpose tool". List the attributes connected to this statement.
2. "Reflection has two roads to it". State the characteristics of this statement
3. "Writing is a three-stage process". What are the three stages?
4. What are the kinds of Business Letters?
5. What do you mean by 'skimming' and 'scanning' in tackling case studies?
(5x2 marks = 10 marks)

Part B

Answer any 3 questions. Each question carries 10 marks

6. "Communication facilitates harmony in a cross-cultural setting". Elaborate
7. "Oral communication has the potential to make a successful impact". Explain the requirements for it to be successful.
8. "Good writing skills found on strong principles of the same are key asset at every stage of your career". Explain with base characteristics of principles of writing.
9. What are the various points to be attended while planning a meeting? Detail each point with example.
10. What are the various hurdles in understanding a case? How can these be overcome?
(3x10 marks = 30 marks)

Part C

Compulsory question, the question carries 20 marks

11. Answer the questions given at the end of the case.

June Hanks had worked for Jim McLin for almost one year now, but she still was not used to these last-minute staff meetings. It was difficult to predict when they would occur. Some meetings might come within days of each other, whereas other meetings might be months apart. No matter when they were scheduled, though, she could count on one thing: They would be set up at the last minute. June knew that most of the other six managers in the department, who also attended these meetings, felt the same way she did: Jim's supervisory style could be somewhat frustrating.

Although not yet accustomed to Jim's last-minute meetings, June was not particularly surprised to learn that a meeting scheduled had suddenly been scheduled for that afternoon at 3:30. She asked Rudy Bronstein, the co-worker who told her of the meeting, what it was about. Rudy just shrugged his shoulders as if to say "Who knows?".

Jim's staff members were assembled in their meeting room at 3:30. As was common, Jim arrived about 10 minutes late, apologizing profusely. As he settled into his chair, he said: "It's been a while since our last meeting, and I felt like we all needed a chance to catch up on what was going on in the department and throughout the rest of the company".

June caught Rudy's attention and rolled her eyes. All of their meetings started like this,

she thought, and they usually led nowhere. She soon discovered, however, that this meeting would be different.

After going around the table and obtaining a brief report from each of his staff members, Jim announced: “We have got to take care of this red-tape problem”.

He paused as if to let the message sink in, but there was nothing shocking about it. Since the first day June worked for Jim, she had heard him complain that this department spent too much time on “red tape” – his code word for a lot of detailed procedures that he felt people followed too closely. Jim liked to expand on this topic at every occasion, although almost everyone else felt there was no effective way to reduce or cut out the variety of organizationally required forms and procedures they had to complete. June felt like telling him that there were far more important issues to focus on.

“I’m really serious about it this time,” Jim continued. “I want each of you to bring me atleast three ideas for how we can cut down on the red tape we have here. I’ll expect them in writing on my desk first thing tomorrow morning”.

June could not hold her tongue any longer. “Jim, that’s a very difficult task to complete. I was planning to work late tonight on that Howard Project you assigned me last week. I just can’t do them both. Besides, if we have an urgent problem to take care of, it’s this new VIP service program. It’s causing a lot of problems for everyone at this table”.

The VIP service program was an initiative Jim had begun a few months ago. The intent of the program was honorable: to provide the best service possible. However, in practice, the program was a nightmare. It obliged anyone in the department to stop whatever they were doing in order to fix a problem of any magnitude. Jim did not see the need for addressing why the problems occurred to begin with or for trying to distinguish major from minor problems. As a result, his staff had their work interrupted more frequently, which in fact led to more errors in their ongoing work. June knew that all of her co-workers had been complaining about these problems, and she noticed supportive smiles and nods from others around the table.

Jim paused for a minute, looking at June. He then said, “June, you know that you haven’t had that much experience with this program yet, and besides, I know that what you’d propose can’t be done and wouldn’t work anyway. No. let’s stick with the red tape problem.”

Jim looked around the group. “Now, let’s see what else is going on. Who’d like to share any further ideas or suggestions?” There were no volunteers, and Jim had to do some considerable coaxing to receive any additional comments.

He finally ended the meeting after 15 minutes of forced, half-hearted discussion. Everyone left quickly without saying a word to him.

Questions

- 1) Evaluate how well Jim managed this meeting. (8 marks)
- 2) What could he have done to make it more productive? (12 marks)

(20 marks)