

# **UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND**

## **FACULTY OF COMMERCE**

**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION 2012**

**FULL-TIME AND I.D.E.**

**TITLE OF PAPER : BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

**COURSE : BA212/BA312**

**DEGREE AND YEAR :BCOM2/DIPCOM 3**

**TIME ALLOWED :THREE (3) HOURS**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

- 1. THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF SECTIONS (A) AND (B)**
- 2. SECTION (A) IS COMPULSORY**
- 3. ANSWER ANY THREE (3) QUESTIONS FROM SECTION B**

**NOTE: MARKS WILL BE AWARDED FOR GOOD  
COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH AND FOR ORDERLY  
PRESENTATION**

**THIS EXAMINATION PAPER SHOULD NOT BE OPENED UNTIL  
INVIGILATOR HAS GRANTED PERMISSION**

**SECTION A [COMPULSORY]****READ THE FOLLOWING CASE AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BELOW****Inter-City Manufacturing, Inc.**

The president of Inter-City Manufacturing Inc., Rich Langston, wanted to facilitate upward communication. He believed an open-door policy was a good place to start. He announced that his own door was open to all employees and encouraged senior managers to do the same. He felt this would give him a way to get early warning signals that would not be filtered or redirected through the formal chain of command. Langston found that many employees who used the open-door policy had been with the company for years and were comfortable talking to the president. Sometimes messages came through about inadequate policies and procedures. Langston would raise these issues and explain any changes at the next meeting of senior managers.

The most difficult complaints to handle were those from people who were not getting along with their bosses. One employee, Leroy, complained bitterly that his manager had overcommitted the department and put everyone under too much pressure. Leroy argued that long hours and low morale were major problems. But he would not allow Rich Langston to bring the manager into the discussion nor to seek out other employees to confirm the complaint. Although Langston suspected that Leroy might be right, he could not let the matter sit and blurted out, "Have you considered leaving the company?" This made Leroy realize that a meeting with his immediate boss was unavoidable.

Before the three-party meeting, Langston contacted Leroy's manager and explained what was going on. He insisted that the manager come to the meeting willing to listen and without hostility toward Leroy. During the meeting, Leroy's manager listened actively and displayed no ill will. He learned the problem from Leroy's perspective and realized he was over his head in his new job. After the meeting, the manager said he was relieved. He had been promoted into the job from a technical position just a few months earlier and had no management or planning experience. He welcomed Rich Langston's offer to help him do a better job of planning.

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SOURCE: Based on Everett T. Suters, "Hazards of an Open-Door Policy," *Inc.*, January 1987, pp. 99-102.

**QUESTION 1**

- a) Discuss the importance of upward communication in the organization and how the open door policy help facilitate such communication. (20 MARKS)
- b) Write a memo to the manager Rich Langston explaining the communication barriers in the above mentioned case. (20 MARKS)

## **SECTION B**

**ANSWER ANY THREE (3) QUESTIONS FROM THIS SECTION**

### **QUESTION 2**

Describe the listening process, and explain how listeners can overcome barriers at each stage of the process. **(20 MARKS)**

### **QUESTION 3**

Discuss with examples, the negative cultural attitudes that exist in intercultural communication and then explain how cultural pluralism can help curb such attitudes. **(20 MARKS)**

### **QUESTION 4**

Discuss the different types of group conflict and the various techniques you can use to manage them. **(20 MARKS)**

### **QUESTION 5**

Describe the role of blogging in business communication today, and explain how to adapt the writing process to blogging. **(20 MARKS)**