

FINAL  
Examination Paper

(COVER PAGE)

Session : August 2015

Programme : Diploma In Hotel Management (DHMN/DHM)  
Diploma In Culinary Arts (DCA)

Course : COM2114 : Workplace Communication

Date of Examination : December 10, 2015 (Thursday)

Time : 8:00 am – 10:00 am Reading Time: Nil

Duration : 2 hours

Special Instructions :

Section A : Short Case Studies

Section B : Define the following terms.

Section C : Memo Writing

Section D : Short Essay

Materials permitted : Nil

Materials provided : Nil

Examiner (s) : Ms Malini K.N.S. Nair, Ms Archana d/o Mariappan

Moderator : Ms.Allison Wang Mun Kuen

*This paper consists of 4 printed pages, including the cover page.*

DIPLOMA IN HOTEL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (DHMN/DHM)  
DIPLOMA IN CULINARY ARTS PROGRAMME (DCA)  
COM2114: WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION  
FINAL EXAMINATION: AUGUST 2015 SESSION

**Section A :** Read the following case study and answer the questions that follow.

Case Study 1 (20 marks)

In the past few months at his new job, Sham (an Assistant Manager at Samplings on the Fourteenth, Berjaya Hotel) has noticed that the number of customer complaints has been minimal or nonexistent. Customers were happy. But, when he took the time to speak to them, they had mentioned the unusually long time taken for their food to be served. Also, he had personally seen customers requesting for their orders to be reheated as it was too cold to consume.

Sham knew how important reputation is for a Michelin Star restaurant. The food was the focus, but the presentation and service were no less important. Sham took up the initiative to investigate on the issue in order to recommend improvements.

He observed the operations of the restaurant for 2 weeks. He noticed that the slip in service usually happened at one particular section – once the food was prepared and laid at the counter before it was served to the customers. The only conclusion he could come up with was for the ground staff – the waiters and waitresses to be more alert, especially during a crowded seating.

Sham had already sent in 2 emails to his direct superior – the manager, Mr. Jacq Saunders. According to procedure, Sham needed Mr. Jacq's approval before he could speak to the staff about this matter.

Mr. Jacq replied by stating that it was not necessary and that the ground staff knew what they were doing. He also mentioned that it was impossible to please everyone. Mr. Jacq was concerned that the ground staff would take the issue offensively and might not cooperate with Sham in the future. Besides, they were managing fine as it is according to Mr. Jacq. Sham was not satisfied with Mr. Jacq's response and decided to take matters into his own hands. He called for a staff meeting. He did inform Mr. Jacq, but it was in the form of a last minute email just 30 minutes before the meeting.

During the meeting, Sham spoke to the staff regarding the issue but the staff couldn't see what more they could do to make things better. They were already doing their best. Sham lost his temper and threatened to dismiss them if he were to receive another complaint regarding service. He justified it by stating that the restaurant's reputation was of utmost importance, and, that waiters and waitresses were easily replaceable.

The staff were unhappy with the manner in which they had been addressed and they brought the matter to Mr. Jacq. Mr. Jacq assured them that he would speak to Sham about it. Sham was summoned to his cabin. When he walked out, Sham looked pale and ready to cry. The staff saw this expression and smiled to themselves.

Answer the following questions based on the above scenario.

(20 marks)

- (a) Identify and explain **FOUR (4)** communication barriers in this case study. (10 marks)
- (b) If you were in Sham's shoes, what **TWO (2)** things would you have done in order to communicate the message or his concerns more effectively to the staff? (5 marks)
- (c) It is evident that Sham is in a difficult spot. What **TWO (2)** things could he do now in order to restore his reputation with the staff and Mr. Jacq? (5 marks)

Case Study 2 (20 marks)

Read the following case study and answer the questions that follow.

**Copthorn Hotel and Spa Group**

Leon Lim, recently appointed as Director of Customer Relations, has been hired by the Copthorn Hotel and Spa Group to improve the group's customer relations. The group has a number of hotels in Malaysia and Thailand. Leon's first task is to focus on building better relationships with the guests who use the hotels, especially those who may become frequent visitors. The challenges facing the hotel group are exemplified by the following facts. In the last five years:

- Group turnover has fallen by 20%
- The group's room occupancy rate has dropped from 81% to 60%
- Customer surveys have indicated increasing dissatisfaction with the hotels especially for Service and Staff helpfulness, enthusiasm, and knowledge, which was rated as 2/5.
- The retention rate of guests has fallen from 25% to 9%.
- There seems to be little customer loyalty to the hotel group.
- Recent reviews have reduced two of the hotels' rating from four stars to three.

- (a) Given that most of the employees were from different cultural backgrounds, explain **FOUR (4)** communication barriers that could have affected the hotel? (10 marks)
- (b) If you were Leon Lim, what solutions might you consider in addressing these problems? (5 marks)
- (c) What can Leon do to make staff more motivated and customer orientated in their approach to their work? (5 marks)

**Section B : (10 marks)**

Define and provide ONE (1) appropriate example for the following terms.

1. communicationchannel (2 marks)
2. ethnocentrism (2 marks)
3. compromise (2 marks)
4. people-orientated listening style (2 marks)
5. decoding (2 marks)

**Section C : Letterwriting (20 marks)**

Refer to Case Study 1. Mr. Jacq Saunders has received a complaint from a regular tourist agent, Annie James. Her clients whom she had booked into the hotel were unhappy about the cold food served regularly at the restaurant. In addition, servers do not seem to be able to answer questions about the food on the menu or even explain about their specials for the day. She insists that if things do not improve, she will stop booking vacation packages at Sampling on the Fourteenth, Berjaya Hotel as it is not living up to the standards expected.

As Mr. Saunders, write a response to Annie James. Use the full-block format and include any detail necessary.

**Section D : Essay - 30 marks**

Choose ONE (1) of the questions below and write an essay of about 250 words.

1. Good leadership promotes successful meetings, but members can also play an important role in making a meeting successful. List and explain FIVE (5) guidelines every member involved in a meeting should follow.

OR

2. To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others.' (Anthony Robbins)

Discuss FIVE (5) factors that affect our perception. For each factor provide a real life instance or example.

**-THE END-**

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