

**FINAL
ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT**
Examination Paper

(COVER PAGE)

Session : January 2021

Programme : Diploma In Hotel Management Programme (DHMN)
Diploma In Culinary Arts (DCAN)

Course : COM2114 : Workplace Communication

Date of Examination : March 11, 2021 (Thursday)

Time : 8.00am – 10.30am Reading Time : Nil

Duration : 2 Hours : 30 Minutes

Note: 30 minutes is added into the duration of the examination to factor in any connectivity matters and for you to scan and upload your scripts.

Special Instructions :

This paper consists of **FOUR (4)** questions. Answer **ALL** the questions. **Write ALL your answers** in the foolscap papers.

Materials permitted : Nil

Materials provided : Nil

Examiner(s) : Priyadarshinee Superamaniam and Archanaa Maniappen

Chief Moderator : Ms Siti Adibah Abdul Mutalib

This paper consists of 6 printed pages, including the cover page

DIPLOMA IN HOTEL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (DHMN)
DIPLOMA IN CULINARY ARTS PROGRAMME (DCAN)
COM2114: WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION
FINAL ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT: JANUARY 2021 SESSION

Instructions: This paper consists of **FOUR (4)** sections. Read the instructions carefully and answer **ALL** sections.

Section A: Case Study (30 marks)

Read the following case studies and answer the questions

Case Study 1 (20 marks)

Café : Macalister House, Georgetown

Macalister house is known for its cozy ambience and friendly staff. The place has always been known for serving the best Western food in Penang. Joan, the owner and manager remembers how busy weekends used to be, but now, only ‘take out’ and deliveries are allowed. Since Macalister House has been around for more than 2 decades, they have quite a number of loyal customers. Joan has also been trying to create a presence on food delivery platforms.

These efforts have kept her restaurant up and running thus far, but things are getting more difficult. They have had to adjust working hours, rewrite menus, cut down on staff, deal with late stock delivery, price hikes, and worst of all, shortage of ingredients. The chef has had to manage with what they have, and he is not very happy about it.

Joan had noticed that customer ratings has never been above 3.5 / 5 and some of the latest reviews are as follows:

Rev 1: “Not as good as they used to be...”

Rev 2: “Too much cheese, less flavor.”

Rev 3: “Did Macalister change its chef? The food was better before...”

Rev 4: “Pasta too soggy, should use different packaging for delivery!”

Joan calls for a meeting to discuss the above with her staff. Halfway through the meeting...

Chef Brian
(Main Chef) : So, Jo, you’re saying that this is all my fault? The ratings and reviews?

Joan
(Owner / Manager) : No Brian, of course not. How can I blame you? It’s just that, in general, all complaints are about the food, and the taste.

Chef Amira (Asst. Chef) : It is a restaurant Jo, people will talk about the food. It's normal. I still see our weekly customers walking in to collect their take away orders. These reviews are probably from first timers. Chill, we don't have to worry about them.

Carla (Kitchen Aid) : Our taste has changed. My mother said the same thing. But we can't help it. The ingredients we used to have, compared to the ingredients we're using now, are very different in terms of quantity and quality.

Joan : Amira, we can't have that attitude toward customers – old or new, everyone matters. And yes Carla, I know about the ingredients, but what can we do? Brian, I don't need an angry chef, I need advice. Help me make this better...

Chef Brian : This is not my problem Joan. If you are afraid to pay the price and do the necessary for good ingredients, then I can't do much. I can only cook with what I'm given.

Chef Amira : You should think about increasing the price of the food – not cutting down on ingredient quality and quantity.

Joan : No. We cannot increase the price of the food. Our usual customers are used to, and comfortable with the price. Our online customers will be paying delivery charges as well. If we increase the price, people will go for more affordable options.

Chef Brian : You decide Jo, you want us as chefs, then, give us good ingredients. I cannot cook like this anymore – with people constantly saying my food is not good enough.

Joan : Have you ever thought about how difficult it is to keep this place running while paying your salaries? All you think about is your reputation Brian!

Joan stands up and walks out of the restaurant.

Answer the following questions based on the above scenario. (20 marks)

1. Identify **FOUR (4)** communication issues / problems in the scenario above. Support your answer with appropriate justification. (8 marks)

2. Provide **4 (FOUR)** suggestions on how you think Joan and her staff could have better handled the communication issue you have identified in Question 1? (12 marks)

Case Study 2 (10 marks)

Pauline works at the Sheraton in Kuala Lumpur. At the Sheraton, she works in the housekeeping department. Her role within the department is to train all new staff in general housekeeping skills.

Today she is training a new staff member Isabel, on how to clean and maintain the mini bar in the guestrooms. Isabel, who has just recently arrived from Russia, finds that Pauline's Australian accent is quite difficult to understand. Moreover, Pauline speaks fast but softly. She has asked Pauline to repeat her instructions for cleaning and restocking the mini bar, and she is still unable to understand her. Therefore, she decides to complete the task her way before moving on to another room where she repeats the same task.

After Isabel has completed cleaning and restocking all the mini bars that she was assigned, Pauline checks to see if the tasks were completed to job specification. Pauline quickly discovers that Isabel has not completed the task as she was instructed to. She wonders how this could happen when she has instructed Isabel repeatedly.

As Isabel is about to go home Pauline catches up with her and asks Isabel to redo the minibars. Isabel can't understand why Pauline wants her to do this again, when the afternoon housekeeping staff is now on duty. Isabel tells Pauline that she has to go home now, and is unable to stay back tonight. Pauline can't believe what she's hearing and tells Isabel that she must finish her job before she goes home, and if she doesn't do this, she will report her to the House Keeping Manager and Human Resource Manager.

Answer the following questions based on the above scenario. (10 marks)

1. Identify **5 (FIVE)** active listening steps that Pauline could have taken to avoid the misunderstanding. Support your answer with appropriate justification.

SECTION B: Definition of Terms (20 marks)

Define the following terms. Provide appropriate explanation and a suitable example to support your answers.

1. Collectivism
2. Strategic Ambiguity
3. Psychological Noise
4. Relational Messages
5. Interdependence

SECTION C: Formal Correspondence (20 marks)

Refer to Case Study 1 from SECTION A

Assume that you are Joan (The Owner / Manager) at Macalister House, Georgetown.

After the meeting, you (*Joan*) decide that something has to be done to reduce tension among the kitchen staff, and yourself. You decide that you could all use a fully sponsored 3 days 2 nights ‘time off’ at your family’s beach house. You are also planning to have a short bonding and training session. You have planned to seek the help of a popular trainer whom you will be inviting to stay at the same location. You need the trainer to focus on some of the following aspects: shifting a business online, working together during a crisis, and, innovating products. You need your staff to be inspired to do better.

Prepare an email addressed to the trainer. Request for a customized training session, and provide some information on what you think the Macalister House team needs to handle challenges and move forward together.

SECTION D: (30 marks)

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

1. You find yourself working in the service industry, in a foreign country in the next few years. Discuss **FIVE (5)** cultural and team communication skills or considerations that you might have to use in order to interact effectively in your foreign workplace. Explain the need for these skills and consideration, and provide suitable examples to support your answers.
2. In today's world, companies are utilizing teamwork across the globe. Employers are seeing the value of teamwork and what can be accomplished when people work together. Discuss **FIVE (5)** characteristics of an effective team in a multicultural company.

-THE END-
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