

PGDM- IB, Batch 2022-24
Inter-Cultural Business Communication
IB - 105
Trimester – I, End-Term Examination: September 2022

Roll No: _____

Time allowed: 2 Hrs
Max Marks: 40

Instruction: Students are required to write Roll No on the cover page of the Answer Sheet. All other instructions on the question paper / Admit card should be followed meticulously.

Sections	No. of Questions to attempt	Marks	Total Marks
A	Minimum 4 questions with internal choices and all COs (Course Intended Learning Outcomes) covered in the Question Paper	4* 5	20
B	Compulsory Case Study	2*10	20
			40

SECTION A – (5 marks * 4 questions) = 20 Marks

A1a Study the image below carefully. Identify the possible organizational communication barriers that may occur in similar situations and discuss the probable solutions to resolve them. (CO1)



Or

A1b The David Electrical Company worked day and night to develop a new current regulator designed to cut the electric power consumption in aluminium plants by 35%. They knew that, although the competition was fierce, their regulator could be produced more cheaply, was more reliable, and worked more efficiently than the competitors' products.

The owner, eager to capture the market, personally but somewhat hastily put together a 120-page proposal to the three major aluminium manufacturers, recommending that their regulators be installed at all company plants.

She devoted the first 87 pages of the proposal to the mathematical theory and engineering design behind his new regulator, and the next 32 to descriptions of the new assembly line she planned to set up to produce regulators quickly. Buried in an appendix were the test results that compared her regulator's performance with present models, and a poorly drawn graph showed how much the dollar savings would be.

Retro Electrical didn't get the contracts, despite having the best product. Six months later, the company filed for bankruptcy.

Q A1 b. Identify the **communication error**. Identify possible solutions or strategies that would have prevented the problem, and what benefits would be derived from implementing solutions or preventing the problem. (CO 1)

A2a Discuss why active listening is a core communication skill in our professional lives. What would you do if you notice that your colleague continues to interrupt your virtual presentation on Google Meet? What could be possible reasons for that? (CO 2)

Or

A2b Iqbal worked in Majeed Export Services Attock for a year as a Public Relations Officer (PRO), and he was laid off as the entire Attock branch was closed due to recession. He decided to meet the CEO for possible outplacement as the organization had several other branches to accommodate him. However the secretary of the CEO, Ms. Zubaida did not permit Iqbal to meet by saying that CEO was busy. Iqbal returned without meeting the CEO. He got better employment opportunities elsewhere and joined.

Iqbal, being a competent person, wrote an article for an international journal while working in the new organization. It was published after 9 months and received complimentary copies from the publisher. Therefore, Iqbal wanted to share the successful publication with his former CEO and went to meet him to gift the article as a complimentary copy. Below was the conversation Iqbal had with the secretary of the CEO.

Iqbal: I would appreciate if you could arrange an appointment with the CEO. I want.....
(Secretary interrupted)

Secretary: Why did you come? We had already handed over your résumé to Mr. Zakir for outplacement. You may go now.

Iqbal: I did not come for employment opportunities. Don't assume that people would come here for employment only. I have come to gift a complimentary copy of my article featured in an international journal. The CEO would be glad to share the success.

Secretary: No, No, the CEO sees everything and knows everything as every article publication is known to him.

Iqbal: It is not departmental journal. It is a prestigious journal globally and I want to inform him and gift the article.

Secretary: "You will not get an appointment. The CEO is busy" (said firmly.)

Iqbal: I anticipated that CEO would be busy and I have already written the details of my name over the complimentary copy.

Secretary: Okay, leave it and go. (She said impolitely and started looking here and there)
Iqbal handed over the complimentary copy to Secretary.

Iqbal: Fine, please hand over to the CEO. I am leaving the place. However, I will send an email to the CEO about my coming physically to gift the article. (Secretary probably worried as Iqbal had already mentally prepared to send the email and keep the CEO informed. If the Secretary had any intention to skip handing over the complimentary copy, the CEO will know as Iqbal would send mail).

Iqbal handed over the complimentary copy to Secretary and departed the office. He sent an email to his ex-CEO about his coming and he could not meet as the latter was busy with his schedules.

After 5 hours, the Secretary telephoned Iqbal and said firmly, "CEO told to return the article to you. You come and take the article back."

Iqbal replied, "It is the complimentary copy meant for the CEO only". Secretary insisted to take back the article immediately. Iqbal told Secretary to courier and he was about to give his address. Secretary interrupted Iqbal's conversation and replied, "No we don't send you through courier. You have to come and take." Iqbal responded politely, "Right now, I am far away from that place. When I come to that area I would take back the article." The very next day, Iqbal received an email from his ex-CEO congratulating him for the publication and thanked for coming all the way to gift the article. Iqbal felt excited that his ex-CEO was pleased with the publication.

QA2b. Refer to the case and explain the cost of poor listening? (CO2)

A3a Video Gamers Association app (VGA) has clocked 50 million downloads of its game on Google Play in less than two months after its debut in India. To celebrate the milestone, players have been gifted a 'Galaxy Messenger Set' in addition to some more rewards. VGA is also celebrating "Independence Day Mahotsav" from August 11 to August 20 2022, where players can win rewards, including special mobile phone skin. The company had added players can unlock new missions ahead of Independence Day celebrations in India on August 15.

Q A3 a. Identify and explain which of the principles of persuasion propounded by Robert Cialdini and Aristotle were responsible for the given app's download explosion. (CO 3)

OR

**SOME THINGS SHOULD
NEVER BE FOR SALE.**



LET'S END CHILD SLAVERY AT NOCHILDFORSALE.CA
#nochildforsale



Q A3 b. Using the above image, explain Aristotle's and Cialdini's modes of persuasion. (CO 3)

A4a John is a sailor aboard the USS Lastship and is known for being a hard worker. John's superiors told him that he would be supervising some foreign workers while they were on board. John's superiors told him to ensure that the contractors completed the work correctly and quickly, adding that the repairs must be completed within five hours. John had not supervised foreign workers before and asked what he should expect. His superior informed him that the contractors probably wouldn't speak English, and if given the opportunity, will be lazy. John was bothered because his supervisor seemed to be demeaning the locals and insinuated that John could not trust the contractors to do their work well because they were not Americans. Although he was uncomfortable with his supervisor's comments, he was in no position to question what was said.

As the contractors arrived, John smiled and happily greeted four Middle Eastern men and their manager. The foreign manager spoke broken English and the contractors did not speak English at all. After the initial greeting, the foreign manager motioned for contractors to go with John, where he led the men to the area to conduct repairs. They immediately started working. As John sat silently watching the contractors, he thought about how wrong his superior had been. At this point, John thought the repairs would get done without a problem.

After about 20 minutes, the contractors had prepared the workspace and unpacked their tools, but then asked John for permission to take a break. John was conflicted because the contractors had only just started working and John did not truly have the authority to authorize them to work or take a break.

Q4a. Taking into consideration high and low context cultures, explain the situation as depicted in the case. Also refer to Hofstede's power-distance index and explain the problem. What should John do in this situation? (CO 4)

Or

Q4b. MakeupPro is an Australian multinational company that makes and distributes organic cosmetics both within Australia and overseas. The head office is based in Brisbane, Australia. You have recently been appointed as the country manager for China. Upon your arrival in China, you have noticed that the organisation is facing several intercultural communication challenges.

Problems: The three intercultural challenges are based upon:

1. Different cultural values and etiquette
2. Direct versus indirect styles of communication
3. Different cultural norms of decision making

In conjunction with two other China-based Australian managers, you conduct academic research in order to understand these problems and come up with logical and practical recommendations. You and your team are tasked with writing a report to the CEO and executive group.

Q4b. Using the theories of intercultural business communication, discuss the problems and provide recommendations to solve these problems. (CO4)

SECTION B – CASE STUDY (20 Marks)

DRW Technologies

DRW Technologies, a defense and aerospace company with 21 manufacturing plants in the U.S. Southeast, Midwest, and West Coast, made advanced electronic systems for the U.S. military and commercial aircraft manufacturers. The company had a reputation for innovation and was consistently profitable. However, an anticipated decline in the U.S. defense budget and increasing use of fixed-price contracts¹ were forcing defense industry contractors to try to lower costs. In addition, some industry analysts were predicting a drop in demand in the commercial aviation market.

Organization of DRW Technologies

The corporate headquarters of DRW Technologies was responsible for strategy, human resources, corporate finance and accounting, marketing and sales, shareholder relations, legal services, and government and public relations. The plants operated with a high degree of autonomy: they had their own human resources and finance and accounting departments along with product development, procurement, and manufacturing. In addition to production contracted through corporate marketing and sales, the DRW plants produced rush or custom orders for high-priority customers such as the U.S. military's Special Operations Command. These orders, which represented approximately 10% of annual sales and had been trending upward, typically were not profitable, but plant management regarded them as a way to maintain strong relationships with loyal customers. In DRW Technologies' decentralized organization, each plant prepared an annual budget that was approved by corporate and included a target for contribution to the firm's profits. In the previous three years, several of the plants had missed their targets, in part because of costs the company had to absorb under fixed-price contracts. However, the general feeling among the plant executives was that temporary circumstances, predominantly external, had caused the shortfalls.

Plant procurement managers were aware of increasing cost pressures and had informally started sharing information on vendors with each other. The latter led to a few deals with vendors to supply certain materials common to some or all of the plants.

Hiring of Ed Claiborne

Dagmar Hilgard, who had been the company's CEO for two years, was the first woman in the position and the firm's first CEO to have a primarily finance background. She was concerned about the need to cut costs. Among other areas, she thought there was an opportunity to save money in procurement. With the approval of the board of directors, she hired DRW Technologies' first corporate vice president of procurement, Ed Claiborne. He had been a procurement executive for a profitable national defense subcontractor. That firm was hierarchical with a strict chain of command. Claiborne was interviewed by Hilgard and by the chief financial officer of DRW Technologies, Charles Suh, who expressed reservations to Hilgard about Claiborne's ability to adapt to the DRW culture.

Claiborne's appointment was announced through a press release on the DRW Technologies website and in an email sent by Corporate Human Resources to all corporate executives and plant general managers. The appointment was also announced in the company's printed newsletter.

Later, on Claiborne's first day, Hilgard stressed that his primary concern should be cutting costs and doing it as quickly as possible. To be his assistant, she assigned Debby Lopez, who had 14 years of experience at DRW. She had worked her way up

from a position in the accounting department of the North Carolina plant and knew many plant employees throughout the company.

Claiborne studied the cost of materials in 10 plants for the previous year, information that Debby Lopez had obtained for him. He quickly determined that he could lower costs by reducing the number of suppliers and taking advantage of economies of scale for some materials used at multiple DRW plants. He projected potential cost savings of up to 50% over six years. It was an open question, however, whether national vendors could do a better job than local suppliers of delivering material on time to multiple DRW plants in different parts of the country.

New Purchasing Policy

Claiborne decided to put in place a policy requiring plant procurement managers to clear with him contracts of \$250,000 or more two weeks before the contracts were to be signed. He set the dollar threshold to ensure that he would see most of the plants' procurement dollar values but would not be overwhelmed by the daily volume of small contracts. He had a meeting with Hilgard to discuss the policy, and she approved it. She said she did not need to know the details of its implementation.

He considered how to inform the plant procurement managers of the new policy, and decided the most efficient method was by email. Claiborne then wrote a draft message and asked Lopez what she thought of it. She recommended that he visit some of the larger plants, meet the plant and procurement managers, and ask for feedback on the proposed policy. Lopez also told him that the plants would be extremely busy for the next four to six months because of a backlog of orders.

Claiborne frowned and shook his head. He said, "Debby, I don't think visiting plants is necessary. Besides, I don't want to rack up high travel expenses when I'm trying to cut costs." Claiborne's email message read:

To: Plant Procurement Managers
From: Edward Claiborne, Corporate Vice President of Procurement
Subject: Prior Approval of Contracts

Effective immediately, you will send me all contracts valued at \$250,000 or more at least two weeks before you are planning to sign them. I will then let you know how to proceed. There are no exceptions to this policy.

This policy has been approved by Dagmar Hilgard and is of utmost importance to our continued competitiveness. Our markets are changing rapidly and we need to respond quickly and effectively.

If you have any questions, contact my assistant,

Debby Lopez. Sincerely,
Edward Claiborne
Corporate Vice President of Procurement

The email message was sent on a Monday morning and most of the procurement managers responded within the week with short messages. This email response was typical:

Dear Ed,

Congratulations on your new job. I look forward to meeting you. I am glad to see that procurement is now being represented at the corporate level. We will inform you of any contracts above the stated limit at least two weeks before we sign them. This

seems like a step in the right direction.

However, over the next several weeks, no contracts were submitted. At lunch and in meetings, Claiborne overheard corporate executives discussing their recent visits to the plants. They mentioned that the plants were extremely busy and many had added extra shifts.

Q1 How do you explain the fact that no contracts have been submitted to Claiborne? What went wrong with his communication? (CO 2)

Q2 Let's assume that procurement managers are deliberately not following the policy. Why do you think they are not complying? What communication strategy can be adopted to get them on board? (CO 2)