

# BIJU PATNAIK UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, ORISSA ROURKELA

## MODEL TEST PAPER

(HM 3102) - BUSINESS COMMUNICATION (SEMESTER 2)

Time: 3 hours

Full Marks: 70

Answer Question 1, which is compulsory, and any 5 of the remaining questions. Question 1 carries 20 marks and the other questions carry 10 marks each. The marks carried by sub-questions are indicated in the margin on the right.

1a.) Describe briefly the kind of communication which is represented in each of the samples given below.

(2 marks for each sub-question)

(i.)

Manager	I would like to tell all of you that at Apex Engineering, we value new ideas. If anyone has a suggestion to offer, e-mail it to me and I will forward it to our Managing Director. Is that clear?
Junior Engineer	Yes, sir.

(ii.)

Ranjit	We should let the Project Leader know that some members of the team are not co-operating with us.
Arshad	No, wait. Let me speak to Vinod and Meena first.

(iii.)

Avinash	Sir, we have come up with a new idea to boost the sales of our digital inverter and would like to make a presentation this week.
Marketing Manager	Excellent! Let's plan it for Thursday afternoon. I'll inform the Director.

(iv. )

Raghu	Someone was saying yesterday that our salaries are going to be cut this month because the company has made a big loss.
Hussain	Who told you that?
Raghu	I overheard some boys from the Production Department talking about it in the canteen. Is it true?
Hussain	I don't believe it. But I'll check with the Supervisor.

(v.)

Mr Amlani Hello, is that Hindustan Aerospace ?  
Operator Yes, sir. Who is calling ?  
Mr Amlani This is Rajan Amlani, Director of Personnel, Bharat Dynamics. Could I speak to the Managing Director, Mr Anil Jain, please ?  
Operator Yes, sir. I'll put you through to Mr Jain at once.  
Mr Jain Morning, Rajan. What's up?  
Mr Amlani Oh nothing, Anil. I just thought I'd remind you we are playing golf together on Sunday. You haven't forgotten, have you?  
Mr Jain Sunday? Oh, I'd forgotten all about it! Thanks for reminding me, Rajan. Sorry, I've been terribly busy all week.  
Mr Amlani Well, I'll remind you again on Saturday afternoon, just to make sure.  
Mr Jain Could you do that, please? Thanks a lot.

**1b.)** Study the dialogues below and comment on them. What problems of communication are highlighted here? Point out any abnormal features of communication that you find. (Answers should be in about 50-60 words.)

(i.)

McCarthy Mr. Fujiyama ! I'm Joe McCarthy, CEO of Global Infotech, Houston, Texas. We are the sixth largest IT company in the States and I'm in Japan to look for a partner for our new software project. I've heard good reports about your company, Mr Fujiyama, and I want to ask you to become our business partner. What do you say to that?

Mr Fujiyama Good afternoon, Mr McCarthy. I hope you had a pleasant flight from Houston. Is this your first visit to Japan?

McCarthy You bet! But it sure ain't gonna be the last. Nice place you got here, Fujiyama !

Mr Fujiyama Thank you, Mr McCarthy. You must be tired after your journey. Can I offer you some Japanese tea? I think you will find it refreshing.

McCarthy Japanese tea? No thanks, buddy, not for me. Good American coffee is what I like. You interested in joining us, Fuji? I got a draft proposal in my briefcase. Wanna see it?

Mr. Fujiyama Mr McCarthy, I hope you find our weather to your liking? This is a good time to visit Japan. We have our annual Chrysanthemum Festival on Monday. Could I invite you to stay on and witness it? I'm sure you will enjoy our chrysanthemums.

McCarthy Sorry, Fujiyama, I've no time for that. I must close the deal and get back to Houston tomorrow. Let's talk business. What are your terms for collaborating with us?

Mr Fujiyama Mr McCarthy, please relax and join me for a glass of sake. That's Japanese wine, made from rice. Afterwards, we will go out and have dinner. We can talk business tomorrow. In Japan, we like to do business with friends.

**(4 marks)**

(ii.)

Jasbir Singh is a project engineer in Vintron Electronics. One morning he walks into the office of the General Manager, Subimal Banerji, pulls up a chair and sits down.

Banerji Yes, Singh. What can I do for you?  
 Singh Mr. Banerji, I am not happy with the way we're running our new software project.  
 project. We are rushing things too much and not giving ourselves enough time to straighten out the bugs.  
 Banerji I haven't received any complaints from the other project engineers so far. They seem to be satisfied with the way things are going.  
 Singh Well, they're not telling you the truth then. Maybe they're afraid to talk to you.  
 Banerji I don't see why they should be. In this company we encourage people to exchange ideas freely.  
 Singh Maybe, but we rarely get a chance to meet you and discuss things with you. You seem to be busy all the time.  
 Banerji Well, it's true that I carry a large number of responsibilities. But this new project is specially important for us. Will you send me a report, Singh? I'd like to know exactly what's happening.  
 Singh Look, Mr. Banerji, I'm a software designer, not a writer. I don't have the time. But if you are prepared to listen for ten minutes, I'll tell you what's wrong.  
 Banerji Sorry, Singh, but I am supposed to meet the MD in ten minutes. But I need that report before I can take any action. Get one of the others to write it for you if you can't. You can ask Indira. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to go through this file before I meet the MD.

**(4 marks)**

**1c.)** Re-write the following sentence so as to make the language bias-free.

As the company needs skilled manpower urgently, the Chairman has decided to conduct training programmes for blind, deaf and mentally retarded schoolchildren.

**(2 marks)**

**2.)** How is communication in the business world different from ordinary 'everyday' communication?

**OR**

If you were a middle-level executive in a business company, what would you do to ensure that your communication with others was effective?

**(Answer in about 150 words.)**

**3.)** Imagine that you work for a multinational IT company and have been transferred to a European country. You want to adjust yourself culturally to the new environment so that you do not have cross-cultural problems.

Which aspects of the local culture would you wish to observe and understand in order to avoid problems of cross-cultural communication?

**4.)** Read through the passage given below and answer the questions that follow.

A case filed in Mumbai High Court alleges that the maps provided by the Google Earth website aided terrorists in planning the 26/11 attack. Earlier, former president A.P.J. Abdul Kalam had expressed apprehension that these images could be misused by subversive elements to inflict damage on the country. Several other countries, including

China, Iran, U.K., and the U.S.A., have warned Google to desist from showing sensitive terrain.

The concern expressed by governments is understandable. Google's easily available satellite-view software now has powerful features that enable users to zoom-in from space to 100 metres above ground. The close-up pictures allow you to read even house numbers and the licence plates of cars. What more could a wannabe terrorist possibly want?

Lots, actually. Here's a reality check. If we hope to deprive future terrorists of crucial technologies, we should remember that they also use mobiles, satellite phones, radios, GPS navigation devices and lap-tops. Not to speak of airplanes, trains and cars – and, in the case of the Mumbai attacks, boats. So do we ban all of these?

The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is currently working on Bhuvan, an on-line mapping system that is expected to be ten times more precise than Google Earth. Should the project be stopped because its maps may fall into the hands of terrorists?

Just because technology can be misused by some people, should we jettison the whole infrastructure of scientific progress? Society survives because the good uses of this infrastructure outweigh the bad, even though they are usually less dramatic. Dismantling it would only be an admission of defeat.

- (i.) Choose an appropriate title or heading for the passage, containing not more than 5 words. **(1 mark)**
- (ii.) What is the main idea that the writer is presenting in this passage? (Give the answer in your own words, in one or two sentences. No credit will be given for reproducing words or sentences from the passage.) **(2 marks)**
- (iii.) What led to the writing of this passage? **(2 marks)**
- (iv.) What is Bhuvan ? What is special about it? **(1 mark)**
- (v.) Look at the sentence: “What more could a wannabe terrorist possibly want?” (paragraph 2). What does the word “wannabe” mean here? What does the writer intend to say? **(2 marks)**
- (vi.) Explain, in your own words, what the following words / phrases might mean:  
Satellite-view software (paragraph 2)  
Jettison (paragraph 5) **(2 marks)**
- 5a.) Read through the following passage and prepare brief notes, in outline form, to help you in identifying and remembering the important points. **(5 marks)**

Could the switchover from an electrical signalling system to a partly computerized one have led to the Coromandal Express tragedy near Jajpur Road on Friday evening?

The cause of the accident is mired in controversy, with opinions ranging from over-speeding and poor track condition to a technical ‘glitch’ in the signalling system. Basudeb Acharya, M.P., Chairman of the Standing Parliamentary Committee on Railways, had pointed to the lack of maintenance of tracks in this section as a possible cause, but railway

officials said on Sunday that a signal flaw was probably to blame. The Solid State Interlocking (SSI) system had been introduced only a few weeks back, they pointed out.

SSI is an electronic, partly computerized system that is considered to be more advanced than the old electrical Route Relay Interlocking (RRI) system which has been in use in the railways. Both the SSI and the RRI systems have the same purpose: they control the interlocking of tracks at crossings and signals to ensure that no two trains get on the same track. SSI is no doubt more advanced but there are certain technical problems that have not been sorted out yet. "We are not writing off the possibility that Friday's accident may have been caused by a glitch in the system," a senior railway official said.

**(b.)** Use your notes to prepare a summary of the passage, in about 50 words. **(5 marks)**

**6.)** In the passage below, the sentences are not in the right order. Re-arrange the sentences in two paragraphs, putting them in the correct order.

Every country needs energy to drive industry and create jobs, water to support agricultural production and roads and ports to transport products to the market, but the need becomes greater during an economic downturn. There can be no economic growth without infrastructure development. Whenever there is an economic crisis, governments should make it a point to increase their investment on infrastructure development. The economic crisis which has hit the world today gives us an opportunity to re-assess and improve our planning, so that future growth can be faster. Every dark cloud, it is said, has a silver lining. However, policy makers have not always followed this prescription. During earlier economic recessions, infrastructure investment suffered in many countries. For example, when there was a global economic recession during the 1990s, huge cuts were made in many South American and Asian countries in government spending on infrastructure. This turned out to be short-sighted policies, making it difficult for these countries to recover.

**7.)** Imagine that you are a senior Sales Executive working for Deccan Electronics, a Hyderabad-based computer hardware company. Your company plans to introduce a new laptop computer which will be specially attractive to students and will out-sell existing brands. The company has asked you to conduct a market survey among students of private engineering and management colleges in the Bhubaneswar area, to find out what their needs and preferences are. The feedback from this survey will be used in designing and marketing the new laptop.

Prepare a report, in about 450 words, addressed to the Managing Director of the company, presenting and analyzing the findings of your survey and your recommendations with regard to the features that the new computer should have to attract students, its pricing, distribution and marketing strategies etc.

**8.)** What is meant by the term 'soft skills'? Would you agree with the view that soft skills are just as important in the professional world as 'hard skills'? What are the reasons for your answer?

**OR**

Why is it important to be a good 'team-player' in today's business world. How can you develop the qualities and skills required to become a good team-player?

**OR**

Why is it important to be a good listener? How can you make yourself a good listener?

**The End**

## MODEL ANSWERS

### **Question 1 a.**

Type of communication:

- i. formal, internal, oral, vertical (downward)
- ii. informal, internal, oral, horizontal
- iii. formal, internal, oral, vertical (upward)
- iv. informal, internal, oral, horizontal
- v. informal, external, oral (telephone), horizontal

**1b. (i)** This dialogue highlights some problems of cross-cultural communication. Mr McCarthy, an American, is direct and forthright. He states the purpose of his visit at once and wants an immediate answer, but Mr Fujiyama, being Japanese, avoids 'talking business' during his first meeting with Mr McCarthy. As he puts it: the Japanese 'like to do business with friends.'

(ii) There seems to be a dangerous communication gap in this company. The General Manager is apparently too busy to talk to the Project Engineers and expects everything to be reported to him in writing. Singh, one of the Project Engineers, is obviously under pressure and not being able to communicate with the GM makes him feel frustrated.

**1c.** As the company needs skilled workers urgently, the Chairperson has decided to conduct training programmes for hearing-impaired, visually-handicapped and intellectually challenged schoolchildren.

**6.** Every dark cloud, it is said, has a silver lining. The economic crisis which has hit the world today gives us an opportunity to re-assess and improve our planning, so that future growth can be faster. Whenever there is an economic crisis, governments should make it a point to increase their investment on infrastructure development. However, policy makers have not always followed this prescription. During earlier economic recessions, infrastructure investment suffered in many countries. For example, when there was a global economic recession during the 1990s, huge cuts were made in many South American and Asian countries in government spending on infrastructure. This turned out to be short-sighted policies, making it difficult for these countries to recover.

There can be no economic growth without infrastructure development. Every country needs energy to drive industry and create jobs, water to support agricultural production and roads and ports to transport products to the market, but the need becomes greater during an economic downturn.