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COMMUNICATION SKILLS

November 2016

Time: 3 hours



THE KENYA NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

DIPLOMA IN SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT
DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
DIPLOMA IN COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT
DIPLOMA IN ROAD TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT
DIPLOMA IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT
DIPLOMA IN INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT
DIPLOMA IN MARITIME TRANSPORT LOGISTICS

MODULE I

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

3 hours

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

*This paper consists of 14 questions in TWO sections; A and B.
Answer ALL the questions in both sections in the answer booklet provided.
Candidates should answer the questions in English.*

This paper consists of 5 printed pages.

Candidates should check the question paper to ascertain that all the pages are printed as indicated and that no questions are missing.

SECTION A (32 marks)

Answer ALL the questions in this section.

1. List **four** ways in which an organization can improve its public image. (4 marks)
2. State **three** channels of communication that employees may use to pass information to the management. (3 marks)
3. List **three** advantages of giving instructions orally. (3 marks)
4. Outline **three** reasons why it is important to observe etiquette when communicating. (3 marks)
5. State **four** ways in which a candidate may impress an interview panel. (4 marks)
6. List **three** items contained in the Terms of Reference of a report. (3 marks)
7. List **three** factors of audience demographics which a sender should consider to communicate effectively. (3 marks)
8. State **three** types of information which should be included in the body of an appointment letter. (3 marks)
9. Outline **three** reasons why an organization may use social media to advertise its products. (3 marks)
10. State **three** roles of the sender in the communication process. (3 marks)

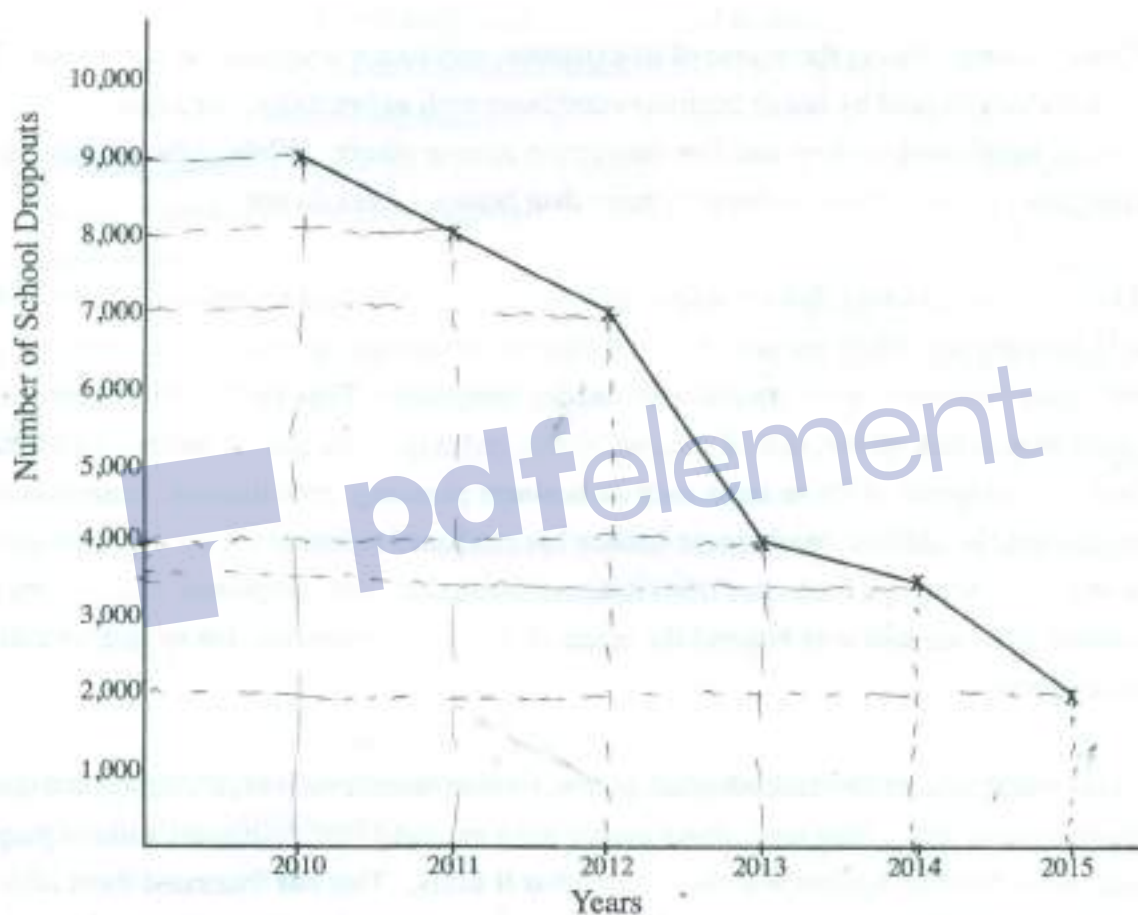
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SECTION B (68 marks)

Answer **ALL** the questions in this section.

11. (a) You work as a Public Relations Officer at Mwamba Furniture Limited. You have received a letter from Jim Kashara, a customer, complaining that the furniture delivered to him was of poor quality. The investigations conducted by your Sales Manager reveal that your company is at fault. Write an appropriate response. (10 marks)
- (b) The graph below indicates the number of school dropouts in Kona County from 2010 to 2015.



- (i) What is the general trend in the rate of dropouts? (1 mark)
- (ii) In which years did the greatest decline in dropouts occur? (1 mark)
- (iii) What is the total number of dropouts for the last two years shown? (2 marks)
- (iv) What is the difference between the years when there was the greatest and lowest number of dropouts? (2 marks)

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12. (a) Explain **four** requirements for conducting a formal meeting. (8 marks)
- (b) Explain **five** ways in which a customer care provider may meet the expectations of a customer. (10 marks)
13. The management of Shika Bank has realized that its customer base has been declining for the last one year. As the Assistant Operations Manager, you have been asked by the Chief Executive Officer to investigate the matter and write a report. Assume that you have completed the investigations and write the report. (16 marks)
14. *Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow.*

Every business, during the course of its existence, will face a near collapse experience. This is a period characterized by **harsh** business conditions such as low sales, low employee morale, low profits, small market share and low innovation among others. While some manage to recover from this period and bounce back stronger than before, others do not.

There are many factors that are responsible for this near collapse experience. Some of them are self-inflicted and others are not. Self-inflicted factors are the internal forces within the business which the management has control over and can manipulate. They include lack of entrepreneurial skills such as risk taking, lack of innovativeness and originality among others. Another factor is lack of managerial skills in areas such as business planning, coordination, communication and marketing. In addition, **inadequate** finance has continued to hinder the growth of businesses the world over. Although banks and other financial institutions have improved their lending policies, interest rates are still way beyond the reach of many entrepreneurs due to lack of collateral to secure loans.

Many entrepreneurs also lack adequate technical skills in areas such as production and operational management. For a long time, many people have ventured into businesses without proper self-assessment to determine if they have **what it takes**. This has frustrated them after starting because they identify the problem when it is too late and the investment is at stake.

Besides the internal factors, external factors too affect the performance of a business. External factors are those forces outside the business which may hinder or facilitate the operations of a business. Infrastructure is one such factor. Poor infrastructure, for example, increases the cost of doing business and lowers operations. Further, political and legal factors seriously affect business operations by providing either an enabling or a restrictive environment. Political stability is **instrumental** in facilitating a quick return on investment and healthy competition in business.

Another external factor is competition. Although business experts argue that competition is inevitable, it can hinder business operations if it is unhealthy. An entrepreneur should, therefore, be protected from unfair competition such as counterfeit goods, illicit imports and dumping which continue to threaten the survival of many businesses. Moreover, inadequate markets discourage entrepreneurs in their operations. Many people venture into business with the hope of getting a market for their products. However, this has continued to be a nightmare for many of them. Some entrepreneurs complain that besides dumping of counterfeit goods, they are unable to expand the market into other regions.

If these factors are not well controlled, they can lead to the collapse or retardation of a business. Hence, it is necessary for entrepreneurs to know how they can revive their businesses if faced by such scenarios. Some of the measures which an entrepreneur can take include coming up with business strategies to give the business a sense of direction and retain focus in its operations. A business must also constantly analyse its human capital to determine the skills levels so as to know when to upgrade in order to be competitive. Besides, one must understand customer needs and wants so as to strive to satisfy them. If these measures are in place, it is likely that a business will be able to overcome the challenges it may face and even grow into a big business empire.

Adapted from: KASNEB Newslines Issue No. 3, July - September 2015

(a) State the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage:

- (i) harsh; — unfriendly conditions
- (ii) inadequate; — Less than required
- (iii) what it takes; — what is required to do something
- (iv) instrumental; — A tool or a way.
- (v) illicit; — ~~legal~~ illegal
- (vi) coming up with. — extracting or forming

(6 marks)

(b) In about 150 words, and according to the passage, explain the factors that may cause a business to collapse.

(12 marks)

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