INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF EAST AFRICA
'Learning to Succeed'

FACULTY OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS - APRIL 2025

PROGRAMME: MBA
YEAR/SEM: YEAR 1/SEMESTER 1
COURSE CODE: MBA 714
NAME: ADVANCED COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND CRITICAL THINKING

DATE:
TIME:

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

SECTION A

SECTION A IS COMPULSORY

Question 1:

Crisis Communication in a Public Relations Disaster

XYZ Airlines, a leading global carrier, recently faced a severe public relations crisis when a viral video showed security personnel forcibly removing a passenger from an overbooked flight. The footage spread rapidly across social media, attracting criticism from customers, media houses, and even government officials.

Initially, XYZ Airlines released a generic statement, stating that they were "reviewing the matter." However, public outrage intensified, with customers boycotting flights and industry analysts predicting significant financial losses. Social media influencers and advocacy groups demanded accountability. The airline's stock price dropped by 12% within three days, and competitors seized the opportunity to market their customer-friendly policies.

Four days later, the CEO issued a formal apology and promised an internal review. However, critics argued that the response was too slow and lacked genuine empathy. Trust in the brand had been severely damaged, and customer loyalty had declined.

Questions

a) Analyze the major crisis communication failures in XYZ Airlines' response. (10 marks)

b) How could the company have implemented a proactive crisis communication strategy instead of a reactive one? (10 marks)

c) Discuss using real-world examples of successful crisis management. (10 marks)

d) Explain how corporate social responsibility (CSR) could be used as a long-term strategy to rebuild the company's image and regain stakeholder trust. (10 marks)

Question 2:

Effective Communication

Grace and Mark work in the marketing department of a large company. They have been assigned to collaborate on a major product launch. However, as the project progresses, communication issues arise. Grace prefers detailed emails outlining each task, while Mark favors quick verbal discussions. This difference in communication styles leads to misunderstandings and missed deadlines.

During a team meeting, Grace expresses frustration about Mark not responding promptly to emails, while Mark complains that emails are inefficient and slow. Their manager intervenes and suggests they find a compromise in their communication methods.

a) Identify and discuss the communication barriers present in this case. (8 marks)

b) How can Grace and Mark improve their communication to enhance teamwork? (8 marks)

c) What role does active listening play in resolving conflicts like this one? (8 marks)

d) Suggest an effective communication strategy that could work for both individuals. (8 marks)

e) How can the manager facilitate better communication between team members? (8 marks)

SECTION B

SELECT ANY THREE QUESTIONS IN ALL

Question 1:

Write a letter to the dean Faculty of Business informing him that you wish to change the course you are currently doing.

The reasons and arguments will earn more marks. **(20 Marks)**

Question 2:

Why is it important to consider the purpose and audience before making a speech? (20 Marks)

Question 3:

Write a letter to a friend inviting them to your birthday party, including details about the time, location, and any special activities planned. **(20 Marks)**

Question 4:

a) Explain the importance of conciseness and clarity in written communication. **(10 marks**)
b) What are the key components of an effective business report? **(10 marks)**

Question 5:

Why is feedback an essential element of the communication process? **(10 marks)**
b) How can an organization create a culture of constructive feedback? **(10 marks)**

Question 6:

a) Discuss the advantages of using social media in professional communication. (10 marks)
b) What are some risks and challenges associated with social media communication? **(10 marks)**

Question 7:

a) Identify three barriers to effective communication in organizations. **(10 marks)**
b) Suggest two strategies to overcome these barriers. **(10 marks)**

Question 8:

a) Differentiate between **verbal** and **non-verbal** communication. **(10 marks)**
b) Explain how **non-verbal cues** such as body language and facial expressions influence communication. **(10 marks)**

Question 9:

a) Discuss Lasswell's communication model and its relevance in mass communication. **(10 marks)**
b) How does the Shannon and Weaver model explain communication breakdowns? **(10 marks)**

Question 10:

a) Define communication and explain its importance in human interactions. **(10 marks)**
b) Describe the key elements of the communication process. **(10 marks)**

Question 11:

How can you differentiate between a fact and an opinion when analyzing a source of information, and why is this distinction crucial for critical thinking? **(20 Marks)**

Question 12:

How can you identify biases in a given argument, and why is it important to do so when evaluating information? **(20 marks)**