



## ASSIGNMENT MEMORANDUM

**SUBJECT : INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION (IC)**

**ASSIGNMENT : 1<sup>st</sup> SEMESTER 2010**

### QUESTION 1 [35]

1.1 There are three main cultural groups represented:

- a) UK, Germany, The Netherlands, Italy, France and the USA all have a European-orientated culture. Characteristics are:
  - i) Individuals are philosophical, analytical, long-term thinkers, dislike being placed under pressure.
  - ii) They are cautious and unwilling to take risks.
  - iii) They are not especially aggressive, but are highly competitive.
  - iv) They usually have fairly stable careers.
  - v) Individuals dress tastefully but without flair – except the Italians and French.
  - vi) They are not usually lavish with expense accounts.
  - vii) Members respect quality, sound engineering, etc.
  - viii) Italians and Spaniards are more volatile and show greater flair.
  - ix) Americans are more outspoken, dress more casually, respond to technological 'gimmicks' more than the others.
  - x) Punctuality, exchange of cards, handshakes, and fairly formal attire are the norm.
  
- b) Japan and China represent the Far Eastern culture (some students might group India here):
  - i) Tradition in FE emphasises family and group loyalties.
  - ii) Decision by consensus is still the norm.
  - iii) Building of relationships is regarded as important; as it is the key to developing business in countries such as Japan.
  - iv) 'Face' is important and emphasis is placed on the correct form of address, correct way of greeting people, etc.

- v) Exchange of business cards is highly important; punctuality and fairly formal attire are usual.
  - vi) These cultures are technically orientated in business.
- c) Saudi Arabia represents the Middle East culture (India might be grouped here):
- i) Islam is widely followed and influences every aspect of life. Hospitality, generosity, loyalty, friendship and modesty are valued in social and business environments.
  - ii) Businesswomen are becoming more accepted in the region, but do not enjoy the status they have in Western business circles.
  - iii) Time is seen as a continuous flow of events in which past, present and future tend to meld, without being well-defined and separate. Arab businessmen are frequently late for appointments. Visitors, however, are expected to be on time for appointments.
  - iv) The establishment of trust and personal relationships is considered more important than a prompt conclusion to business meetings or deals.
  - v) Rank and status are important. It is the practice to shake hands with the most important person in the room first, and thereafter shake hands with the others in turn.
  - vi) The Arab handshake is gentle and limp, and eye contact is important during a greeting. Business cards are not necessarily exchanged at the beginning of a meeting – a foreign visitor should wait until his hosts offer their cards before extending his card.
  - vii) Because the left hand is reserved for personal cleansing in the Middle East it is an insult to accept, offer or hold anything with the left hand.
  - viii) To display the soles of one's feet publicly is offensive as it is the part of the body that touches the ground.
  - ix) When discussing business, Arabs may be reluctant to say 'no', particularly if they are in a position of authority.
  - x) Non-verbal communication is particularly significant for the foreign visitor. Eye contact is considered to be an attempt to look 'behind a person's eyes' in order to gauge someone's inner qualities.
  - xi) Placing one's hands on one's hips is a sign of a challenging attitude while sneezing, sniffing, coughing and blowing one's nose are considered impolite and should be muffled.

Answers may focus on some other characteristics, but reasonable coverage will be recognised.

**Study Note reference: International Communication Additional Notes 2009, Module 7.**

**QUESTION 2****[55]**

2.1 Marks will be awarded for the following elements of the letter to Whitchurch, Benson and Smythe:

- a) Suitable opening phrase/greeting
- b) State writing at the suggestion of Bronwyn Geldendorff of Chisholm Boakes
- c) Explain relationship with Ms Geldendorff
- d) Briefly describe chocolates:
  - Quality
  - Choice of flavours
  - Design to customer's specs
  - In business for some years
- e) Final comment, inviting a request for quote
- f) Layout of letter:
  - Correctly headed with Corporate Chocolate's name, address
  - Telephone/fax numbers stated in international format
  - Email and website included
  - Correctly dated and addressed
  - Appropriate salutation
  - Well laid out with concise language
  - Correct complimentary close
  - Person's name and position stated.

2.2 The draft copy of the leaflet should include:

- a) Description of the product, i.e., handmade chocolates moulded and packaged to buyers' specs
- b) Selling features of the product:
  - Quality, Austrian recipe
  - Meets EU food and health standards
  - No artificial preservatives and colourants (important)
  - Choice of chocolate types and fillings
  - Type of customer who buys it and why
- c) Emphasis on quality service and reliability; experience in supplying customers in EU as well as South Africa
- d) Contact details: this is essential because one never knows where a leaflet may end up and business may be lost if contact details are not shown
- e) Some indication of the type of illustrative material should also be given.

**Textbook Reference: Fielding, M. 2006. *Effective Communication in Organisations*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Cape Town: Juta Academic. Chapter 18.**

**PRESENTATION****[10]**