

HL IB Business Management



Your notes

2.6 Communication

Contents

- * Formal & Informal Communication






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Formal & Informal Communication

Methods of Communication

- The aim of communication is to **exchange** or **transfer information**
- **Formal communication** is channeled **through a businesses formal organisation structure** and is likely to be capable of being recorded in some way
- **Informal communication** is any communication that takes place **outside of the official channels** and is unlikely to be formally recorded

VERBAL	VISUAL	WRITTEN
 <p>FORMAL METHODS INCLUDE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MEETINGS • INTERVIEWS • PRESENTATIONS • LECTURES <p>INFORMAL METHODS INCLUDE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FACE TO FACE CONVERSATIONS • TELEPHONE CALLS 	 <p>FORMAL METHODS INCLUDE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRESENTATIONS • DISPLAYS & NOTICEBOARDS • MAPS & DIAGRAMS <p>INFORMAL METHODS INCLUDE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GESTURES • BODY LANGUAGE 	 <p>FORMAL METHODS INCLUDE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REPORTS • LETTERS & EMAILS • PRESS RELEASES • BROCHURES <p>INFORMAL METHODS INCLUDE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEXT MESSAGES & INSTANT MESSAGING

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The main forms of communication used by businesses

- The effectiveness of each method **depends on the business context**, the nature of the communication and the **personal preferences** of both the sender and receiver of information

Strengths & Weaknesses of a Range of Communication Methods

Method of Communication	Strength	Weakness
Face-to-Face Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Face-to-face communication allows for the exchange of facial expressions, body language, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Face-to-face communication may not always be feasible due to



	tone of voice which enhance understanding	geographical distances or time constraints
Written Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written communication provides a paper trail that can be referred to in the future for clarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without facial expressions and tone of voice, written messages can sometimes be misinterpreted or lack emotional context
Phone Calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phone calls allow for real-time communication, enabling quick exchange of information and resolution of queries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without seeing the other person, it can be challenging to interpret their body language and facial expressions accurately
Video Conferencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video calls allow people in different locations to connect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unreliable internet connections or audio/video problems can hinder effective communication
Instant Messaging & Chat Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instant messaging (WhatsApp, Slack) enables fast and real-time communication making it ideal for brief exchanges or urgent matters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text-based communication lacks non-verbal cues, increasing the chances of misunderstandings or miscommunication

Examiner Tip

Businesses use a combination of different communication methods, choosing the most appropriate for the message or discussion that needs to be held

However, factors such as time and distance play an important role in the type of communication chosen - in some cases the method chosen will not be the most appropriate method but it is the quickest or the only option available



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Barriers to Communication

- Barriers to communication **hinder the flow of information** leading to potential misunderstandings, conflicts and inefficiency

An Explanation of the Barriers to Communication in Business

Barrier	Explanation
Language and jargon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of technical terminology or industry-specific jargon can create barriers between individuals or departments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Misinterpretation or lack of comprehension can occur when people are not familiar with the terms being used e.g. many businesses use a large amount of acronyms which can leave new staff feeling confused
Noise and distractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical noise such as loud machinery or a crowded workspace can interfere with effective communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similarly, distractions like phone notifications, email alerts, or multitasking can divert attention and impede clear communication
Lack of feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication is a two-way process and the absence of feedback can affect understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When individuals don't ask for or provide feedback, assumptions and misunderstandings can arise, leading to communication breakdowns
Cultural differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In today's globalised business environment people from diverse cultural backgrounds work together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural differences in communication styles can create barriers if they are not understood
Hierarchical barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees may feel hesitant to communicate with their superiors due to fear of repercussions or a perceived lack of accessibility



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This can impede the free flow of information and ideas within the business
Lack of clarity and conciseness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vague, lengthy or overly technical messages can confuse recipients
Emotional barriers or lack of time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If individuals are angry, stressed or upset their ability to convey or understand messages may be compromised Busy work schedules and competing priorities can limit the time available for communication
Technological barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over-reliance on technology or improper use of communication tools can create barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical issues such as poor internet connections, malfunctioning equipment or unfamiliarity with communication platforms can slow down communication
Personal biases and filters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People often have preconceived notions, biases or filters that affect their interpretation of messages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> These biases can affect their ability to listen objectively and understand the intended meaning accurately

- Organisations should **encourage open communication**, may consider providing **training on effective communication techniques** and encourage a **culture of transparency and collaboration** to overcome these obstacles