

Business Communication

1

Exam Information	Description
Exam number 220 Items 35 National Career Cluster Business Management & Administration Certification available Yes	The Business Communication 1 industry certification exam assesses candidates' knowledge of how Business Communication affects all aspects of our lives. Learners demonstrate their ability to communicate in a clear, courteous, concise, complete, and correct manner on both personal and professional levels. Competency is evaluated in oral, written, interpersonal, technological, and employment communication. Listening skills are also incorporated throughout. The overriding goal is to ensure learners have a solid communication base to communicate effectively.

Exam Blueprint and Performance Skills

Standard	Percentage of exam score
1. Effective Communication	19%
2. Non-verbal Communication	5%
3. Public Speaking Skills	16%
4. Written Communication	41%
5. Listening Skills	19%

*Includes performance skill evaluation

Standard 1 - Effective Communication

Effective communication-Candidates will understand that effective communication results in the receiver understanding the intended message.

Objective 1 Recognizing the purpose of a message.

1. **Political:** a message intended to influence a decision of political purpose and/or pertains to an issue of public policy.
2. **Commercial:** that promotes or advertises a product or service.
3. **Networking:** is intended to gain a relationship through sharing ideas, information, and messages.
4. **Personal:** a private form of communication, only seen and accessible by users participating in the message.
5. **Educational:** a more formal message that is intended to inform, instruct, and enhance learning.

Objective 2 Understand and identify how the audience and situation affect style and tone.

1. Recognize when to use communication channels based on the audience and situation.
 - a. Audience
 - i. Friends: Informal
 - ii. Boss/Supervisor: A combination of both formal and informal.
 - iii. People you supervise: Formal
 - b. Types of Situations
 - i. Formal
 - Boardroom: Use Parliamentary Procedures. How to call for a motion, take minutes, keep the language formal, and keep topics diplomatic and polite.
 - Hiring and Resignation: Uses industry language and a professional tone.
 - ii. Informal
 - Networking Event: Often with an unfamiliar audience. In-Person events. Putting your best foot forward, having an elevator pitch on who you are and why you are there. Often, a time for sharing contact information.
 - Breakroom talk: Familiar can be fun and friendly, but often if used for interoffice politics or discussion of pop culture and non-work topics.

Objective 3 Barriers to effective communication

1. Identify barriers to communication.
 - a. Organizational barriers: the hindrances in the flow of information among the employees that might result in the message not being received completely.
 - b. Physical barriers: an element or a physical factor that acts as a distraction to hinder the flow of communication (noisy rooms, or communication from a distance).
 - c. Physiological barriers: the limitations of the human body and the human mind (memory, attention, personal discomfort, and speech).

- d. Language barriers: Obstacles like a lack of knowledge of a specific language obstructs communication.
- e. Cultural barriers: an issue arising from a misunderstanding of meaning, caused by cultural
- f. differences between sender and receiver.
- g. Perceptual barriers: psychological barriers prevent the individual from accurately understanding the messages being conveyed to them. It can include stereotypes, preconceptions, biases, and personal opinions.
- h. Technological barriers: any miscommunication caused by technology integration, slow internet, lack of training on technology, or other technology-based interferences.

2. Use bias-free language to develop responsible ways of thinking and acting. Bias-free language does not discriminate and therefore includes all audience members in a fair and friendly manner.

Optional: Standard performance evaluations on the final page of this document.

Standard 2 - Non-verbal Communication

Candidates will identify and demonstrate effective non-verbal communication.

Objective 1 Compare and contrast the effect of nonverbal communication on the sender and receiver.

1. Nonverbal communication is the transfer of information through the use of body language, including eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, and more.
2. Recognize the effect of nonverbal communication
 - a. Facial Gestures
 - Emotions: Anger, Sadness, Joy, Surprise, Fear, Frustration, Confusion, Boredom, Disgust, and Neutral
 - Hand gestures that regulate, manage, contradict, and substitute interactions (thumbs up, okay, pointing, shushing, and waving)
 - b. Body language
 - Proximity
 - Posture
 - Poses
 - Approach
 - c. Mannerisms: something a person does repeatedly with their face, hands or voice that they may not realize that they do.
 - d. Eye contact
 - Engages and shows interest, attentiveness, and concern for both the sender and receiver. Increases understanding
 - Too much eye contact can be inappropriate or creepy.
3. How appearances (visual aids and dress, for example) impact a message
 1. What you wear matters and conveys a message
 2. You don't get a second chance for a first impression
 3. Share examples of Business dress
 - Business Formal
 - Business Casual

Optional: Standard performance evaluations on the final page of this document.

Standard 3 - Public Speaking Skills

Candidates will develop and practice effective spoken communication skills.

Objective 1 Explain the correct use of the following components/characteristics of spoken language.

1. **Pronunciation:** how you say a word. This includes emphasizing different syllables, words, or phrases. Pronunciation can vary based on geography or tradition.
2. **Enunciation:** to pronounce a word clearly, articulating every syllable of the word.
3. **Tone:** the inflection, rise, and fall of the sound, such as sending a question in a higher pitch. Often conveys specific emotions to the listener. It can include volume.
4. **Cadence:** the rhythmic flow of a sequence of sounds or words, including pauses. When presenting, individuals should seek to eliminate filler words.

Objective 2 Explain how to create an effective spoken presentation or speech.

1. Preparation
 - a. Prepare thoroughly and plan your message
 - b. Consider your audience
2. Practice
 - a. Rehearse your presentation, and consider video recording the presentation.
 - b. Avoid reading your presentation
 - c. Dress appropriately
3. Delivery
 - a. Introduce yourself and your topic
 - b. Speak clearly, using projection to reach the back row
 - c. Have confidence, make eye contact, and use your space
 - d. Be careful with filler words
 - e. Summarize and end strong
 - f. Be prepared to answer questions

Standard 4 - Written Communication

Candidates will produce effective written communication documents.

Objective 1 Use digital tools to identify and correct common grammatical errors

1. Misspelled and misused words
2. Run-on sentences or fragments
3. Proper capitalization (proper nouns, I, start of sentences)
4. Improper punctuation (when to use semicolons, colons, commas, and periods)

Objective 2 Use effective writing to produce instant messaging and emails appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.

1. Instant Internal Messaging (Examples: Teams, Slack, and Google Chat)
 - a. Short, direct, and appropriate to the audience
 - b. For instant or immediate use
 - c. Still professional in nature and tone
 - d. Can be reviewed and referred to
2. Email Communication
 - a. Describe the appropriate usage of Reply, Reply All, and Forward
 - b. Define and describe the use of CC and BCC
 - c. Demonstrate and practice effective subject lines
 - d. Provide examples of salutations and openings of an email
 - e. Use the correct tone and professionalism (etiquette) for the audience and the intended message
3. Types of Emails
 - a. Explain when to use and how to compose the following emails
 - every day/routine/good news
 - sales/persuasive (Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action)
 - bad news/refusal messages (Buffer, Details, Bad News, End with Positive)
 - thank you note/follow-up
 - b. Identify the appropriate use of a complimentary close
 - c. Explain the use of e-mail attachments
 - d. Describe the importance of editing (read it through) before publishing/sending
 - e. Share the appropriate response time to emails, typically 24 to 48 hours
 - f. Describe the actions needed for inbox management

Objective 3 Know how to access and select the appropriate templates for document design

1. Explore available templates - in Google, Microsoft, or other web resources
2. Understand the importance and need for document layout
3. Know which templates will enhance your message
4. Using brand or corporate-specific templates and style guides

Objective 4 Describe the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence

1. Artificial Intelligence Programs: a set of technologies that enable computers to perform a variety of advanced functions. It reacts in ways that would usually require human intelligence.
 - a. Ensure accuracy by checking sources or providing them to AI

- b. Edit responses to add personal tone and examples
 - c. Appropriate for idea generation and brainstorming
 - d. Not appropriate to substitute for your own knowledge and writing
 - e. Each institution and corporation will most likely have an AUP (Acceptable Use Policy) for when to disclose that AI was used.
- 2. Explain the life of data when using Artificial Intelligence
 - a. Be aware that any documentation or data uploaded into a prompt is then property of the public domain
 - b. Co-Pilot and Gemini allow for privacy settings to maintain company ownership and safety.
- 3. Prompt Engineering and AI
 - a. Prompt Engineering: the process of providing instructions to an AI program to produce the desired output.
 - Explain that AI learns from the prompt engineer or user
 - Word Usage
 - Emotion
 - Professionalism
 - Tone
 - Formatting
 - User preferences

Optional: Standard performance evaluations on the final page of this document.

Standard 5 - Listening Skills

Candidates will develop and practice proficient listening skills in the workplace, including in-person, phone, and video calls.

Objective 1 In-person listening skills

- 1. Explain how to listen attentively in business situations
 - a. Take accurate notes, include assignments and action items
 - b. Follow directions
 - Ask clarifying questions
 - Provide feedback and paraphrase the message
 - c. Pay attention
 - Make eye contact
 - Exhibit other non-verbal cues, such as nodding and smiling

Objective 2 Demonstrate the proper use of telephone etiquette

1. Speak clearly and take part in the conversation
2. Leave effective messages including contact information- spoken slowly
3. Reply to messages promptly

Objective 3 Demonstrate the proper use of video call etiquette

1. Demonstrate the proper use of video call etiquette
 - a. Establish norms for the meeting
 - Cameras on
 - Microphones muted
 - Raise the hand icon when you want to speak
 - Beginning and ending on time
 - b. Speak clearly and take part in the conversation
 - c. Be aware of your background
 - Consider background noises
 - Choose an esthetically pleasing or non-distracting environment
 - Be courteous- professional in chat, not texting during meetings, etc.

Performance Skills Evaluation

Exam name: Business Communication 1

Candidate Name: _____

Performance assessments may be completed and evaluated any time before the certification is issued. The following performance skills can be used in connection with the associated standards and exam. The evaluator will function as the subject matter expert to determine if the candidate meets the skills requirements with a Yes/No for passing.

Standard 1 – Effective Communication • Create a presentation on any subject that shows the following ◦ Clearly identified audience and/or situation ◦ Tailor a presentation to an audience. ◦ Use bias-free language. ◦ Demonstrate a communication barrier in business.	Pass:
Standard 2 – Non-Verbal Communication • Practice nonverbal forms of communication. • Demonstrate how altering non-verbal communication can change a message.	Pass:
Standard 3 – Public Speaking Skills • Plan and present short presentations • Analyze a professional/famous speech and evaluate cadence, enunciation, pronunciation, and tone.	Pass:
Standard 4 – Written Communication • Compose and send either a good news, a persuasive, a thank you, or a bad news email • Have candidates evaluate an email or another piece of writing, looking for grammar, purpose, audience, and layout. • Explore AI and prompt development when composing written communication.	Pass:
Standard 5 – Listening Skills • Watch or participate in business meeting and take notes • Practice following oral directions and taking notes. • Demonstrate proper phone technique.	Pass:

Evaluator Name:

Date:
