Tutorial Letter 201/1/2018

Organisational communication
COM2601

Semester 1

Department of Communication Science

This tutorial letter contains important information
about your module.

BARCODE

Define tomorrow.

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CONTENTS

1   INTRODUCTION

Dear Student

We hope you have enjoyed your studies on organisational communication thus far.

Please note that the comments in the tutorial letters are important and are intended to help you gain a better understanding of the work and to help you prepare for the examination.

It is therefore important to read through all of your tutorial letters carefully.

This tutorial letter contains general comments, feedback on the assignments for Semester 1 and a description of the action words used throughout this course.

2   GENERAL COMMENTS

Please consider the feedback given in this tutorial letter against the answers you provided in your assignment. Please contact us if you would like to discuss the content of the tutorial, request further explanations or query a mark.

Remember, as this module is a semester module, you will not have much time between receiving this tutorial letter and the examination portfolio, so it is important to work through the feedback as soon as possible.

Furthermore, once the marks for this module have been finalised (when the examination portfolio, year and module marks are released), we can no longer amend or change an assignment mark for you – it will be too late.

If you have any **academic enquiries**, kindly contact your lecturers for this module.

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3   FEEDBACK ON ASSIGNMENTS: SEMESTER 1

Tutorial Letter 101/2018, which you received when you registered for COM2601, contained the two compulsory assignments.

This tutorial letter provides feedback on Assignment 01, which you had to submit in order to gain admission to the examination and which contributes 15% towards your final module mark, as well as Assignment 02, which contributes 5% towards your final module mark.

Please note that there are various activities in the study guide that serve as self-assessment exercises in preparation for the examination. We find that some of you ignore these activities and as a result find the portfolio examination quite difficult.

Please remember that the study guide was written in such a way as to guide you through the work and help you answer the questions.

Try to complete all the activities to ensure that you understand the work.

3.1 Assignment 01

Unique assignment number: 881866   881866

Due date: 5 March 2018

You had to answer all the questions in Assignment 01.

YOU HAD TO SUBMIT THIS ASSIGNMENT IN ORDER TO GAIN EXAMINATION ADMISSION.

THE MARK YOU RECEIVE FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT CONTRIBUTES 15% TOWARDS YOUR FINAL MODULE MARK.

The following are broad guidelines for answering the questions:

When answering questions in this module, always remember that the first part of your answer should be a theoretical discussion based on the theory given in the prescribed book.

The second part of your answer should focus on applying the theory to the scenario given in the question.

Please be sure to read through your questions carefully, and make sure you answer the question asked.

For future assignments, ask the lecturers for help if you do not understand the questions asked.

The theoretical component, for the purposes of this module, must always outweigh the scenario or practical component, as this is a **theoretical** module.

This means that the bulk of your answer must focus on discussing the **theory,** with substantially less focus on your application of the theory to the scenario.

The application, which is rooted in **your own understanding** of the theory, has an array of possible model answers.

For this reason, there is no "correct" or "incorrect" way of interpreting theory.

If you justified and substantiated your interpretation and application with the correct theoretical elements, your answer would have been (and will always be) considered for mark allocation (i.e. you will receive marks).

It is important to make sure you understand the way theory and application complement each other in an academic discussion, because in the portfolio examination for this module you will be expected to apply theory to a real-life organisational setting. In this way, this assignment prepares you for the portfolio.

In order to answer the questions in the assignment, the following theoretical principles are discussed.

Although the feedback below is given in telegram format to allow you to easily see what was expected, you had to discuss the core aspects in paragraph format with full sentences in the assignment.

According to Angelopulo and Barker (2013) effective organisational communication is not directed at individuals but rather teams or groups and that communication enjoys priority within organisational decision making. Therefore, it is worth looking at the role of communication in the decision-making process of groups and teams.

Question 1

Define the terms '*group*' and '*team*' within the context of organisational communication.   (4)

Question 2

Discuss *group communication* with specific reference to formal and informal groups and the advantages and disadvantages of groups. (14)

Question 3

Describe what *team communication* entails. (4)

Question 4

Define the term 'decision making' and discuss the types of decisions in organisations. (8)

Question 5

Identify and discuss *decision-making styles* that can be implemented during the decision-making process and list two disadvantages of group decision making.

(10)

Content **[40]**

Technical quality **[10]**

TOTAL **[50]**

Questions:

Chapter 3 Section 3.10 in the prescribed book, pages 97-102

Question 1

Define the terms '*group*' and '*team*' within the context of organisational communication

Mark allocation:
Defining the term "group" (2 marks)
Defining the term "team" (2 marks)
Prescribed book: Chapter 3, Section 3.10.1, page 98

- Group:
A cluster of two or more people who work together for a specific purpose, usually to the benefit of the individual members of the group.

- Team:
Group of people working towards a common, co-operative action to achieve a specific outcome for the benefit of the group through synergy, rather than for the benefit of the individual members.

Question 2

Discuss *group communication* with specific reference to formal and informal groups and the advantages and disadvantages of groups.

Mark allocation:
Define/short discussion of terms "Formal groups" (2 marks) and "Informal groups" (2 marks)
Discuss advantages and disadvantages of groups (5x2=10)
Prescribed book: Chapter 3, Section 3.10.2, page 98-99

- Formal groups:
Selected and members appointed by the organisation. These groups function effectively and in harmonization with other formal groups for the organisation to obtain its goals and objectives. Formal groups are characterised by organisational rules, regulations and policies.

- Informal groups:

Form by themselves and members join voluntarily. These groups can exist alongside the formal groups. Informal groups are characterised by similar values and attitudes, group norms, conformity and sanction, group cohesiveness, group defensiveness and group roles.

- Advantages:
  - More knowledge and information
  - More open course of action
  - Group criticism of proposed alternatives should produce a more highly refined selection of possible approaches
  - Various tasks can be assigned to individuals within the group who possess the most expertise related to tasks
  - A high human relations value; working towards a concerted effort without the risk of sanctioning the group

- Disadvantages:
  - Conflict of ideas may exist between leaders (formal and informal)
  - Conflict may destroy morale
  - Members may lack training, experience and the competence needed to make good decisions
  - Ongoing struggle to establish and maintain roles that cab either strengthen or weaken an individual's role within the group
  - Time needed for group action or to make decisions

Question 3

Describe what *team communication* entails.

Mark allocation:
Description of the term "team communication" (4 marks)
Prescribed book:
Chapter 3, Section 3.10.3, page 99

- Team communication:

Need for team communication arises from the fact that; teams are diverse (type of people), members share leadership responsibilities, members create identity, work towards mutually defined goal within context of groups/system.

- Lead to:
    - organisations implementing team communication in an effort to work more intelligently
    - improve quality & customer service
    - enhance productivity

Desired communication:
Open, cooperative communication, participation is key in discussions.

Team approach also leans towards:
Individual's responsibility is defined in terms of the team's responsibility – action must be taken at any time to meet goals irrespective of individual position.

Question 4

Define the term 'decision making' and discuss the types of decisions in organisations.

Mark allocation:
Definition of "decision making" (2 marks)
Types; Programmed & non-programmed (2 marks), strategic and operational (2 marks), top-down & worker empowered (2 marks)
Prescribed book:
Chapter 3, Section 3.10.4, page 99-100

"Decision making describes the act of seeking and interpreting information that is based on perceptions, to arrive at a conclusion that is based on strategic issues."

Types of decisions in the organisation:

Programmed	Considered solutions to specific problems, tasks follow a defined set of guidelines that have been tested through experience.
Non-programmed	Unstructured solutions to more complex and ambiguous problems, regular policies and procedures are insufficient.
Strategic	Long-term plans to address long-term goals, various levels; corporate, business, functional, operational.
Operational	Day-to-day activities and work schedules, expected crises such as absenteeism, technical breakdowns, delays.
Top-down	Traditional approach, hierarchical, time saving, result in high quality decisions.
Worker empowered	Direct: Delegation is formed, or added responsibility is given to members or teams. Indirect: There is participation in the decision-making process by lower-level employees

Question 5

Identify and discuss *decision-making styles* that can be implemented during the decision-making process and list two disadvantages of group decision making.

Mark allocation:
List and discuss 4 decision-making styles (4x2=8 marks) Disadvantages of group decision making (2 marks)
Prescribed book: Chapter 3, Section 3.10.4, page 102-103

Decision-making styles:

- Directive style:

Autocratic, status aware & uses status to achieve results, low tolerance for ambiguity, task orientated, technical orientation, logical, efficient, practical, systematic, action orientated, decisive, factual, fast decision-making, and considers few alternatives.

- Analytical style:

People who consider complex situations based on ambiguous information, higher tolerance and tendency to over-analyse, decision time longer, (want best answer).

- Conceptual style:

Socially orientated when approaching problems, considers broad alternatives, future orientated, initiating new ideas, high tolerance for ambiguity, takes risk and focused on people or social aspects, realistic and indecisive.

- Behavioural style:

Focus on people aspect of decision-making and have concern for organisation and personal development of co-workers, supportive, enjoy social interaction, encourage shared opinion, open to suggestions, rely on meetings to make decisions, difficult to say 'no' and to make difficult decisions.

Students could have listed any two of the following disadvantages of group decision making:

- Group polarisation, which might shift to extreme attitudes among members

- Domination by forceful or powerful members

- Possible social pressure among group members to conform and fit in

- Goal displacement in order to win an argument and 'groupthink', which can override sound judgement

TECHNICAL PRESENTATION
The remainder of the marks for this assignment were awarded for the technical presentation or quality of your written work.   **(10)**

Although all the requirements of the technical presentation are clearly discussed in Tutorial Letter CMNALLE/301, the specific requirements include the following:

Introduction and conclusion or summary   **(1 mark each)**

As a general guideline, you should begin with a short introductory paragraph to set out the problem and relate it to the study material. You should also round off the assignment with a concluding paragraph (or summary), indicating how you solved the problem, or summarising the main arguments.

You may do this for **every** question, or **generally** for the assignment as a whole.

Table of contents
The following is a hypothetical example of how you could present a table of contents:

TABLE OF CONTENTS	
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Please note:

The headings and sub-headings used in the table of contents must correspond with the headings used in the assignment, as should the page numbers.

Declaration of own work submitted **(1 mark)**

This declaration must be placed at the **front** of the assignment. The wording is given below. You are allowed to paraphrase this.

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this is my own and personal work, except where the work(s) or publications of others have been acknowledged by means of reference techniques.

I have read through and understand Tutorial Letter CMNALLE/301 regarding technical and presentation requirements, referencing techniques and plagiarism.

Student's signature

Student's name

Student number

Date

A witness's signature

Sources consulted **(5 marks for a list of sources and in-text referencing)**

We are trying to teach you the importance of making reference to **each and every** source you consult. We are very strict about this point.

If you did not reference, in the list of sources consulted **as well as** in the text, you received a mark of zero (0) for your technical presentation, as this constitutes plagiarism.

Examples of our adaptation of the Harvard method are as follows:

For example, in the list of sources consulted:

Allen, M, Titsworth, S & Hunt, SK. 2009. *Quantitative research in communication*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.

Huang, CJ. 2005. Exploring types of organization-public relationships and their implication for relationship management in public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 17(4):393–425.

Stewart, TD. 2002. *Principles of research in communication*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

For example, in the text:

Internal organisational communication has been credited with being "the lifeblood of an organisation" (Dolphin 2005:173), as it is a major gauging ...

Or

According to Van der Walt (2006:359), the context in which the research phenomenon exists ...

(Maximum of 10 marks)

3.2   Assignment 02

Unique assignment number: **718716**

Due date: **3 April 2018**

This assignment consisted of 20 multiple-choice questions.

Each question counted two (2) marks.

THE MARK YOU RECEIVED FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT CONTRIBUTED 5% TOWARDS YOUR FINAL MODULE MARK.

In a large publishing company in New York, a young woman, Laura, was hired as a copy editor for one of the many journals produced by the company. Seven other employees worked on this team editing this journal, including a senior editor named Tim. Laura had worked there for about a month when she and her co-workers went for happy-hour after work. Everybody had a great time and consumed a fair amount of alcohol. When everybody was leaving the bar to head home, Tim, who had been secretly attracted to Laura since she started work at the journal, hailed a cab and offered to share the ride with Laura. Laura accepted the offer. Once she was inside the cab, Tim suddenly made an aggressive sexual advance. Horrified, Laura pushed him away and told him to get out of the cab. Mortified, Tim slinked out of the cab.

The next day, Laura came to work with some apprehension. How would she deal with Tim? Would the cab incident affect her job? Although Tim did not supervise her, would he try to get her fired? Tim immediately went to her office and apologised for his extremely inappropriate behaviour in the cab. Relieved at his apology, Laura decided not to pursue the matter through any formal channels in the office.

Everything would have been okay if Tim had stopped at just one sincerely expressed apology. However, whenever he found himself alone with Laura, Tim apologised again. And again. At every opportunity, for three months, he said he was sorry about the incident. This constant apology was awkward and annoying to Laura. Ironically, by Tim apologising continuously for his unwanted attention in the cab, he was foisting another form of unwanted attention upon Laura. When he first started apologising, Laura told him that "it was okay". After three months of many

apologies, she reached a point where she asked him to stop apologising, to no avail. Frustrated, she confided in a few co-workers about her unusual dilemma. Consequently, these co-workers lost respect for Tim.

Although the cab incident was not common knowledge in the office, Tim sensed that others knew about it by the way they interacted with him. The incident became the office "elephant" that the employees "in the know" saw, but didn't explicitly acknowledge. Meanwhile, Laura was tired of hearing Tim apologise and her feelings of discomfort increased. So when another editor position opened up in another journal division of the company, she applied for the job and was transferred to the other journal. In her new position, she didn't have Tim bothering her anymore. But she was unhappy with her new job. The journal material was very boring. She didn't work as well with her co-workers as she had in the previous journal (excepting Tim). She realised that she really enjoyed her old job. She began to regret her decision to avoid the conflict with Tim by moving to the new job. In an effort to seek advice on how to solve her problem, Laura decided to consult with the company ombudsman.

Q1   Various levels of organisational conflict are discernable in the case study above. Firstly, and perhaps most obviously, there is the conflict between Laura and Tim.

      This form of conflict points to ………. conflict.

      (1)   intrapersonal
      (2)   interpersonal
      (3)   intergroup
      (4)   interorganisational

Option 2:
Interpersonal

Turn to Chapter 3, Section 3.7.2 of your prescribed book.

In the case study by Taylor (2000) a picture is painted that predominantly focusses on the interactions and conflict between two individuals: Laura and Tim.

When conflict arises between two individuals within the organisation, interpersonal conflict is identified – Option (2).

Intergroup conflict (Option 3) refers to conflict that takes place between two **groups** of people, whilst interorganisational conflict (Option 4) refers to the conflict that takes place between different **organisations**.

As the conflict highlighted in this question is between two individuals – not groups or organisations – these two options cannot be seen as correct.

Furthermore, intrapersonal conflict (Option 1) refers to the conflict that resides **within one individual** and since there are two parties to the conflict highlighted in this question, this option cannot be seen as appropriate or correct either.

Q2   At the end of the case study, Laura decides to consult with the company ombudsman. Intervention by an ombudsman is typically associated with which one of the following strategies of conflict management?

   (1) Mediation
   (2) Social Intervention Programmes
   (3) Arbitration
   (4) Negotiation

Option 3:
Arbitration

Turn to Chapter 3, Section 3.7.4 of your prescribed book.

An arbitrator (Option 3) is a neutral party who will listen to the accounts and versions of both parties to the conflict, discuss possible solutions with the parties, and who will then make a final, binding decision regarding the conflict that both parties would have to adhere to.

This is exactly the role of the ombudsman, in such a situation such as this.

The fact that the ombudsman does not involve both parties to **collectively** seek a solution regarding the conflict situation, as in this case, sets it apart from other strategies where a neutral third party is involved.

For example, in both mediation (Option 1) and negotiation (Option 4), the parties to the conflict find solutions to the conflict **together**.

For this reason, neither of these two options could be regarded as the key.

Furthermore, Option 2 – Social Intervention Programmes – does not involve a neutral third party at all, and is therefore also not the key.

Q3   Various levels of organisational conflict are discernable in the case study above. Towards the end of the case study, we see that Laura decides to go after another position, in a different division in the organisation. Soon after obtaining it, however, Laura starts to regret the decision, and doubts that it was a good one.

This form of conflict points to ………. conflict.

(1)   intrapersonal
(2)   interpersonal
(3)   intergroup
(4)   interorganisational

Option 1:
Intrapersonal

Turn to Chapter 3, Section 3.7.2 of your prescribed book.

In the case study, it is seen that Laura experiences conflict within herself – conflict that is not inflicted by another person.

Conflicts **within** a single individual, is known as intrapersonal conflict.

For this reason, Option 1 is the key to this question.

Intergroup conflict (Option 3) refers to conflict that takes place between two **groups** of people, whilst interorganisational conflict (Option 4) refers to the conflict that takes place between different **organisations**.

In the conflict highlighted in this question neither groups of individuals, nor organisations come into play.

Therefore, Options 3 and 4 cannot be seen as correct.

Furthermore, interpersonal conflict (Option 1) refers to the conflict that occurs between two or more individuals.

Although the conflict between Laura and Tim serves as an impetus to her moving divisions, the conflict of her decision in itself, is not reliant on Tim or any other individual – it resides **within** Laura specifically.

For this reason, Option 1 is incorrect as well.

Q4   The conflict between Laura and Tim, especially at the onset, is personal or socio-emotional in its nature.

      This type of conflict disengages people from one another, and is known as ………. conflict.

      (1) optimal
      (2) futile
      (3) functional
      (4) dysfunctional

Option 4:
Dysfunctional

Turn to Chapter 3, Section 3.7.3 of your prescribed book.

In the prescribed book, two types of conflict are identified: Functional and dysfunctional conflict.

Only Options 3 and 4 should, therefore, have been considered for this question, as there are no such types of conflict (for the purposes of this module) as optimal (Option 1) or futile (Option 2) conflict.

In the case study, no mention is made of the conflict between Laura and Tim ever being used constructively to, for example, lead to better understanding, innovative solutions or greater commitment in the organisation.

Rather, the conflict – which focusses on emotional and personal aspects – disengages, not only Laura from Tim, but eventually Tim from other members of his team also.

For this reason, the conflict cannot be seen as functional (Option 3), but is rather dysfunctional in its nature.

Option (4) is therefore the key to this question.

Q5   Organisations need to understand the confront changes occurring in the business environment in order to promote the effective management of organisational culture, this is done by considering certain factors.

Which four factors need to be considered to enable the organisation to manage culture?

(1) Responsibility/autonomy;   satisfaction;   desire   to   change   and innovativeness.
(2) Directive style; analytical style; conceptual style and behavioural style.
(3) Individual   characteristics;   organisational   ethics;   organisational processes and organisational structure.
(4) Investigate the extent and rationale of the quality initiative; to encourage   support;   to   eradicate   employee   resistance   and   a dysfunctional corporate culture.

Option 3:
Individual characteristics; organisational ethics; organisational processes & organisational structure.

Option 1 refers to the characteristics of that contribute towards developing a relevant criteria to determine if an organisation is ready to implement the TQM programme.

Option 2 refers to the decision making styles that can be used during the decision making process.

Option 4 relates to the organisational readiness assessment of the first phase that precedes the implementation phase of the total quality management (TQM) approach.

Q6   Which managerial approach will attempt to capture an IT employee's knowledge and experience about computer databases with the purpose of making it available to other employees whenever they need it?

    (1) Knowledge management approach
    (2) Humanistic management approach
    (3) Classical management approach
    (4) Systems management approach

Option 1:
Knowledge management approach

In chapter 4, various principles representative of the knowledge management approach are discussed.

After studying these principles you were required to look at the little scenario provided in question 5 and to apply what you have studied of knowledge management to the scenario.

By studying the classical management approach, the humanistic management approach or the systems management approach (which does not exist) you will find that none of these aim at capturing knowledge and experience with the view to making it available to others.

Q7   Which of the following are examples of qualitative research methodology?

(1) Interviews and classical experimental designs
(2) Ethnography and self-recorded diaries
(3) Focus groups and quasi-experimental designs
(4) Content analysis and field observation

Option 2:
Ethnography and self-recorded diaries

In chapter 11, the various methods used in qualitative research are discussed.

From this section it is clear that classical experimental designs, content analysis and quasi-experimental designs (which are all mentioned in the other options) are essentially quantitative, not qualitative.

Q8   According to Van Der Walt (2006:72) change in the organisation is defined as "constant, certain and continuous actions with the purpose adjusting and/or modifying existing practices towards new practice".

In addition Grobler identifies that change can either be … .

(1) incremental or radical/profound
(2) macro/organisational level or micro/individual level
(3) convergence or divergence
(4) internal networks or external networks

Option 1:
Incremental or radical/profound

Option 2 refers to the importance of communication during the change process at the various levels.

Option 3 refers to the patterns of viewing the challenges of globalisation in the organisation; communication in the organisation intends on finding a balance between convergence and divergence by encouraging people to adjust to the cultural differences worldwide.

Option 4 refers to the communication networks that promote the direction in which messages flows in the organisation; the networks interconnect the lines of communication to ensure that messages are exchanged and interpreted correctly.

Q9   In 2014, Unisa launched the *Unisa is changing* campaign, wherein three aspects of organisational change is announced.

1   Unisa is changing. Prepare for the change.

Source: Unisa (2014)

The slogan for the announced change is: '*Unisa is changing. Prepare for the change*'. Judging by this slogan alone, in which step of the three-step process model is this organisational change engaged in?

(1)   Step 1
(2)   Step 2
(3)   Step 3
(4)   All of the above

Option 1:
Step 1

Turn to Chapter 4, Section 4.4.1 of your prescribed book.

The three-step process model of change explains the three consecutive steps that can be taken in organisational change management.

An organisation would follow these steps sequentially, so it is impossible to simultaneously be involved in all three steps.

For this reason, Option 4 cannot be considered to be the key.

Option 1, on the other hand, is the key to this question, as the first step in the three-step process model *unfreezes* organisational members, insofar as **preparing them** for the change that is about to happen.

As the slogan for the *Unisa is changing* campaign urges constituents to **prepare** for the change to come, this is the step in process.

Step 2 (Option 2) involves the actual advocating and implementing of the change, as Step 3 (Option 3) 'refreezes' constituents into the new way of doing things in the organisation.

As the slogan merely prompts towards a preparation (not implementation or refreezing) for change, these two options cannot be seen to be correct.

Q10   Susan participates in a research study. She is required to carefully record a detailed description of every communication event occurring between herself and the secretaries in her office.

Which research method is used in this example?

(1) Interviewing
(2) Triangulation
(3) Action research
(4) Self-recorded diary

Option 4:
Self-recorded diaries

Although this question requires application it is not difficult.

You were required to study each of the methods mentioned as options and to choose the method that is most applicable to the scenario.

In chapter 11, it is stated that a self-recorded diary is about recording all communication events.

This applies to the scenario whereas none of the other methods, namely interviewing, triangulation or action research, can be applied to the scenario.

Q11 ………. should be regarded as something an organisation "is", not something it "has".

    (1) Culture
    (2) Climate
    (3) Change
    (4) Attributes

Option 1:
Culture

Culture is imbedded within the organisation; it is not an independent element and cannot be created, and should not be confused with organisational climate which is a set of organisational attributes that have been evident over a period of time.

Q12 The Chief Executive Office (CEO) of *Nakagawa* a video manufacturing organisation has called on a meeting with all manufacturing floor managers to outline the export strategy for the organisation new identified markets in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Which of the networks of communication below **best** describe the above scenario?

(1) External networks of communication within the communication.
(2) Internal communication between the organisations different department.
(3) Upward communication from Nakagawa organisation's management to subordinate employees.
(4) Downward communication networks from organisations management to organisations employees.

Option 4:
Downward communication networks from organisations management to organisations employees

Option 4 is the key, because the CEO of *Nakagawa* organisation used downward communication networks, which involves the flow of communication from the organisation upper management to employee subordinate.

Downward communication involves company policy, training, instructions and in this case scenario providing rationale for directions with regard to new export destination.

Option 1 is not correct since external networks of communication carry information from within to outside the organisation.

Option 3 is not correct since upward communication networks involve communication from organisations subordinates to the upper management.

Upward communication involves the use of memoranda, verbal or written reports, proposals and meetings.

Option 2 is also incorrect because lateral communication involves communication between employees especially at the same hierarchical levels.

Q13   The three models to describe organisational change are … .

    (1)   individual, cultural and infrastructure
    (2)   group, cultural and structure
    (3)   individual, group and organisational
    (4)   cultural, infrastructure and organisational

Option 1:
Individual, cultural and infrastructure

Your prescribed book explains the three models that describe organisational change, as identified by Silverman (1996).

These are: the individual model which identifies specific psychological characteristics that can be used to modify dysfunctional client behaviour; the cultural model which is a communication plan developed to address communication needs; and the infrastructure model which is used to assess current reinforcers of behaviours and to modify the change by developing alternative systems.

The three other options given (Options 2; 3 and 4) all have one correct aspect, but seen as a whole they are fictional, and thus incorrect.

Read through the following scenario and answer the question that follows.

Mandla is in his final year of study for his Bachelor's Degree in Communication. Whilst preparing for his final examination, Mandla comes across terminology in his prescribed book that he finds difficult to understand and apply practically. He decides to e-mail his lecturer, Dr Singh, with his questions. Dr Singh replies to Mandla's e-mail with the requested explanations.

Q14 The communication function related to the interaction *from* Dr Singh *to* Mandla is … .

    (1) informative
    (2) controlling
    (3) persuasive
    (4) integrative

Option 2:
Controlling

In the prescribed book, Neher (1997) states that "the **control** function is a way of influencing... This type of communication, which is usually downward, is task related...".

In the scenario, Dr Singh provided Mandla with the requested explanations for Mandla to understand his course material.

Dr Singh therefore influenced Mandla's understanding, whilst making use of downward communication.

There were no elements in the scenario that overtly pointed to information (Dr Singh did not need any information from Mandla, as Mandla initiated the communication interaction), persuasion (there was no face-to-face contact or personal interaction), or integration (there was no coordination, scheduling or recruitment).

Read the following scenario and answer the three questions that follow:

Thabiso is doing the empirical data-gathering for his Master's Degree in Communication, which focusses on audience perceptions and studies regarding the SABC soap opera *7de Laan*. Thabiso will do his data-gathering in two phases, firstly, he will research how many people in Gauteng actually watch *7de Laan* and then in the second phase he will interview people to find out why they watch *7de Laan*.

Q15   In the first phase, Thabiso is making use of ………. methodologies.

     (1)   quantitative
     (2)   qualitative
     (3)   triangulated
     (4)   quasi

Option 1:
Quantitative

Turn to Chapter 11, Section 11.5.1 of your prescribed book.

Quasi methodology is not an actual methodological approach in empirical research, and for this reason Option 4 cannot be seen to be the correct option.

Option 3 – triangulation – refers to the combining of research methodologies, and although Thabiso does eventually combine qualitative and quantitative methodologies, he does not do so in the first phase of his research, which is what this question points to.

Rather, in the first phase of his research, Thabiso tries to uncover the **amount** of people in Gauteng who watch *7de Laan* – this phase of his research has to do with measuring quantities, and therefore, the question that underlies it is 'How many'?

Hence, the first phase of Thabiso's research is quantitative (Option 1) and not qualitative (Option 2) in its nature.

Q16   In the second phase, Thabiso is making use of ………. methodologies.

    (1) quantitative
    (2) qualitative
    (3) triangulated
    (4) quasi

Option 2:
Qualitative

Turn to Chapter 11, Section 11.5.2 of your prescribed book.

As was the case in the previous question, quasi methodology is not an actual methodological approach in empirical research, and for this reason Option 4 cannot be seen to be the correct option.

So too is Option 3 not correct as, although Thabiso does eventually combine qualitative and quantitative methodologies, he does not do so in the second phase of his research, which discounts triangulation as a viable option.

Rather, in the second phase of his research, Thabiso tries to uncover observations, by means of interviews, that would describe the quantitative data as disclosed in the first phase of his research.

As Thabiso interviews people to find out *why* they watch *7de Laan*, his research in the second phase can be seen to be qualitative (Option 2) in nature.

Q17   Once Thabiso writes his dissertation, he will combine the findings from the first- and second phases of his research.

    This is known as ………. triangulation.

    (1) investigator
    (2) theory
    (3) methodological
    (4) empirical

Option 3:
Methodological

Turn to Chapter 11, Section 11.5.3 of your prescribed book.

When Thabiso combines the quantitative (see feedback on question 8) and qualitative (see feedback on question 9) *methodologies* of his two research phases, he will be making use of methodological triangulation – through the combination of these two approaches or methods.

For this reason, Option 3 can be seen to be the key to the question.

Option 1 is incorrect, as Thabiso is the only mentioned investigator (there is no other to account for investigator triangulation), and the scenario does not make mention of two or three theoretical approaches being used – which also discounts Option 2.

Lastly, there is no such triangulation as empirical triangulation, which discounts Option 4.

Q18   The grapevine or 'rumour mill' is a network example of which kind of communication channel?

    (1) Circle network
    (2) Chain network
    (3) Wheel network
    (4) All-channel network

Option 4:
All-channel network

In the prescribed book, it is stated that the grapevine / 'rumour mill' is an informal communication channel wherein "[m]essages flow in all directions and are mostly verbal, social and / or work related".

The grapevine is classified as an example of an **all-channel network** for two main reasons:

Firstly, the all-channel network is one of only two informal communication networks.

Messages that are distributed via the grapevine are usually not bound by formal communication systems and conventions, as they are mostly verbal, social and / or work related in nature.

The other network that is informal in nature is the circle network.

This network is, however, not applicable to the grapevine as message distribution is slow (contrary to the nature of the grapevine) and task-orientated.

Secondly, all members within the all-channel network can communicate with other members directly, thus there are no communication restrictions.

One often hears in conversations that a story has spread like 'wild fire', thus denoting that there was no stopping a particular message.

Similarly, when messages are spread via the grapevine they can be communicated to any and many members, and these members may in the overall network not even know each other.

Q19   Which characteristic of the all-channel network does *not* apply to the grapevine or 'rumour mill'?

   (1)   An informal channel of communication
   (2)   All members can communicate with one another
   (3)   Messages are accurate
   (4)   Opportunities for feedback

Option 3:
Messages are accurate

In the prescribed book we find that Options 1, 2 and 4 are all characteristics that apply to the all-channel network, as well as to the grapevine / 'rumour mill'.

Although Option 3 is a characteristic of the all-channel network, it is not in all circumstances a characteristic of the grapevine.

This is because the grapevine is a verbal, social and / or work related system which is not always concerned with the distribution of **factual messages** (gossip and story-telling come into play here).

Q20   The power crisis in South-Africa, with the subsequent load shedding has forced many organisations, both small and large, to alter their business practices. As the communications practitioner at Eskom you have been requested to conduct an audit to determine if the communication activities that were used, helped the organisation communicate the message about the power crisis to its stakeholders.

From the prevalent classifications of organisational communication research, based on the scenario above, which audit would be suitable for the communications practitioner to use to complete his/her task?

(1)   Social audit
(2)   Communication content audit
(3)   Environmental monitoring
(4)   Corporate communications/public relations audit

Option 2:
Communication content audit

A communication content audit evaluates organisational communication programmes or plans to establish whether messages that are being communicated reach the targeted audience; in essence it intends on assessing communication activities.

4 MEANING OF ACTION WORDS

The following is an alphabetical list of action words (verbs) usually found in assignments and portfolio examination questions, as well as definitions explaining what is expected in each case.

Analyse

Divide the concept into units or elements and discuss each unit or element in full.

Compare

Identify the similarities and/or differences between facts, or examine the similarities and/or differences between ideas, facts, viewpoints and so forth.

Contrast

Point out the differences between the characteristics of certain indicated concepts.

Criticise

Point out good and bad characteristics, and give your own opinion after taking all the facts, arguments and/or assumptions into account.

Define or give the definition

Give a short and concise description of the subject or concept.

Describe

Give a detailed account of the characteristics of a topic. This should be done in a logical and well-structured manner.

Discuss

Elaborate on a topic by examining its various aspects. A critical approach should be followed.

Distinguish

Note the differences that distinguish two topics from one another.

Evaluate

Give an informed opinion on a topic, as measured against certain standards.

Examine

Investigate and critically discuss a topic in terms of definite criteria and/or guidelines.

Explain

Justify and clarify to ensure that the reader clearly understands your arguments. Make use of illustrations, descriptions or simple but logical explanations.

Give

State only the facts without any discussion.

Give an outline

Present the data in a brief, logical and systematic manner.

Identify

List the most important characteristics of a topic.

Illustrate

Give examples or draw a diagram to elucidate a particular topic or subject.

Interpret

Explain or give the meaning of something in terms of a more common concept. Your explanation should be as practical as possible.

List

Give a list of names, facts, items, and so on, in a specific order or according to a specific category.

Name

Give the names, characteristics, items or facts.

Offer comments

Give a more personal opinion on the matter.

Point out

Present a premise logically by means of thorough reasoning.

Summarise

Give the key aspects of a topic.

5   CONCLUSION

We hope you found this tutorial letter helpful. If you have any questions about your assignments, please contact us as soon as possible. Please check myUnisa on a regular basis for relevant information. We wish you success with your studies and in the examination.