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No of Questions - 09

SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTING AND BUSINESS
BSc. (APPLIED ACCOUNTING) GENERAL / SPECIAL DEGREE
PROGRAMME

YEAR I SEMESTER I – INTAKE VIII (GROUP B)
END SEMESTER EXAMINATION – SEPTEMBER 2017

BCM 10125 Business Communication I

Date : 16th September 2017
Time : 9.00 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.
Duration : Two and a half (02 ½) hours

Instructions to Candidates:

- Write the Index Number in the space provided at the top of this sheet. Do not write your name anywhere in this question paper.
- Answer **ALL** questions in this paper itself.
- This paper consists of four sections (A,B,C and D)
- The total marks for the paper is 100.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets.
- Answers should be written neatly and legibly

Section A: Vocabulary and Grammar

Question No. 01

Read the extract below on Financial Statements and Profitability Ratios.

Choose the best word to fill in each gap from **a, b, c or d** and underline the correct option.

The financial statements of a business provide important information for people outside the business who do not [1] access to the internal accounts. For example, existing and [2]shareholders can see how much profit a business made, the value of its assets and the level of cash [3] Although these figures are useful, they do not mean a great deal by themselves. In order to [4]any real sense of the figures in the final accounts, they need to be properly analysed using accounting ratios and then [5]with either the previous year's ratio or against averages for the industry.

The profitability of a company is important and a key [6]of its success. In the profit and loss account the figures shown for gross profit and net profit mean very little by themselves. However, by [7].....them as a percentage of sales they become much more useful. The figures can then be evaluated against those of previous years, or with those of similar companies.

[Adopted from: Cambridge ICFE: International Certificate in Financial English]

- | | | | |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. a. hold | b. have | c. grant | d. keep |
| 2. a. eventual | b. promising | c. aspiring | d. potential |
| 3. a. reserves | b. stocks | c. quantities | d. stores |
| 4. a. reach | b. find | c. take | d. make |
| 5. a. differentiated | b. opposed | c. compared | d. balanced |
| 6. a. measure | b. evidence | c. mark | d. proof |
| 7. a. indicating | b. expressing | c. outlining | d. pronouncing |

(07 Marks)

Question No. 02

Read the following article. Fill in the blanks by changing the **form** of the words in brackets appropriately.

Don't be victims of your own mindset – Binod

Businessmen in this part of the world tend to become victims of their own mindset, according to a Forbes billionaire. “We tend to be victims of our own mindset. Businessmen need to [1].....(coming) out of the comfort zone,” said Binod K. Chaudhary Chairman, CG Corp Global, Nepal speaking at the 178th AGM of Ceylon Chamber of Commerce in Colombo.

In order to train toward success, one [2] (need) to be resilient to stress, change and uncertainty, he said. “Times have gone where capital was a constraint. The world is [3]..... (technology) connected. That’s the future.” He said the capital-centric traditional industries such as textile, jute, sugar and steel [4]..... (use) to rule the market. Those days have now ended.

The paradigm of entrepreneurship has changed. Trendy You Tubers are compelling [5]..... (tradition) television broadcasters to rethink their [6]..... (survive), teenage Instagram stars are becoming case [7]..... (study) for marketing gurus.

“We are going through [8]..... (disrupt) changes,” he said, listing examples of three new [9].....(business) – Uber — the biggest taxi service in the world, which does not own a single car, Airbnb — the biggest online hotelier with the maximum number of rooms, which does not even have a single hotel of its own and Alibaba – the biggest e-trading platform, which does not have a single factory or warehouse of its own.

The commonalities among them are – they [10]..... (relied) on modern technology, use the[11](recently) Internet-based tools, geographical and political boundaries do not deter them from doing business, they [12]..... (connecting) people who need the product with people who have the product and are willing

to sell. “They provide a forum where the service provider and recipient come together,” Mr. Chaudhary [13]..... (highlight).

[Adopted from: The Sunday Times Sri Lanka, July 2, 2017]

(13 marks)

(Total 20 Marks)

Section B: Communicating in a work environment

Question No. 03

The institution you work for, trains its staff periodically. The Training Manager has asked you, the Assistant Training Manager, to write to the Global Language Centre inquiring about the two day training programme on ‘Report Writing’ it had advertised in the Sunday Observer on 26 August 2017.

The Training Manager intends to send a group of 10 participants and would like to know the following particulars:

- The course fee for ten participants
- Availability of overnight accommodation in the training centre and cost
- Discount on the fee for over ten participants

Write a letter of inquiry to Coordinator / Language programmes at 346, Anderson Road, Colombo 5, including all the information required.

The layout of the letter should be in **full block**. [Word limit 150-200]

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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

(20 Marks)

Question No. 04

Imagine that you are preparing for a job interview. Given below are some of the questions you expect at the interview.

Write the response you would give at the interview.

1. What are your short term goals?

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2. Are you able to handle multi-tasking?

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3. What is one of your qualities that you would like to improve on?

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4. You may need to relocate in this position. What are your thoughts on this?

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5. Do you have any plans to continue your education further?

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(15 marks)

Presenting Statistical Data – graphs and charts

Question No. 05

The bar chart given below shows the leisure time enjoyed by both men and women in different categories of employment between 2014 and 2015.

Write a brief report summarizing the information in the given period. [Word limit **120 - 140** words]

Leisure time in a typical week in hours- by gender and employment status, 2014-2015



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(10 Marks)
(Total 45 Marks)

Section C: Listening

Question No. 06

You are going to listen to extracts of **5 conversations** where the speakers discuss team building.

While you listen, write **True** if the statements given below match the information in the conversations, and **False** if the statements do not.

Read through the statements first. **The conversations will be played twice.**

Conversation 1

- i. Talking to individuals in the team would take up a lot of time. []

Conversation 2

- ii. Sometimes it is not possible to remove the unproductive team members. []

Conversation 3

- iii. It is practical to involve all team members in decision making to save time. []

Conversation 4

- iv. Efficient team members should be rewarded at any cost. []

Conversation 5

- v. Sometimes staff training costs so much that managements opt to select cheaper means of building team spirit. []

(Total 10 Marks)

Section D: Reading for academic and professional purposes

Read the following article and answer the questions given below.

[1] You must have heard about the theory ‘survival of the fittest’; you must also have heard a statement: “A smooth sea never makes good sailors”. Both the ‘survival of the fittest’ theory and the statement above fit really well with the world of startups which is a challenging one.

[2] There are about 150 million startups or companies just beginning to operate in the world today with 50 million new startups launching every year. On average, there are 137,000 startups emerging every day. **These** are huge numbers by any standards.

[3] But the question remains, how many startups tend to survive the violent waves of change that have completely transformed the very nature of today’s startups? Challenges are everywhere. The following are some of the biggest challenges being faced by small business startups.

1 Fierce Competition

[4] There is always a competition going on between the giants in the corporate world. Competition poses one of the biggest challenges for the survival of startup businesses. In order to survive in this competitive business environment that covers both traditional and online businesses, the startups need to play aggressively, and punch above their weight to gain the much needed recognition amongst the clusters of ever challenging and expanding businesses.

2. Unrealistic Expectations

[5] Success does not come alone. **It** brings expectations with it. Startups tend to face challenges when they set ‘unrealistic expectations’ following a booming success. Success is short-lived and expectations never end. This is where startups need to translate what the real expectations are.

[6] In order to succeed in a competitive business world, **they** need to have high but controlled expectations, keeping view of the resources available, the extent of growth potential, and other market factors as well.

3. Hiring Suitable Candidates

[7] One of the most important factors that define organizational culture within a startup company is the synergy of the team. A team comprises individuals with similar capabilities and identical focus. In order to develop a highly successful team culture, organizations in general – and startups in particular – need to hire suitable candidates. There is a huge pool of **aspiring** individuals available. Selecting a suitable candidate that fits the job well enough is a tricky task.

4. Partnership Decision Making

[8] Partnership is the essence of success. In this ever-expanding and ever-changing digital era, where organizations need to battle hard for **their** survival, startups also find it difficult to find trustworthy partners. Going into a partnership pays great dividends for the startups, but they need to consider a variety of factors before making any decision to collaborate with another company working in the same ecosystem. To reap maximum benefits out of a partnership, startup businesses should look for organizations that enjoy a sound presence within the market and a good reputation amongst the industry giants.

5. Winning Trust of Customers

[9] Customer is the king. Winning a customer's trust is one of the most important challenges that startups face today. With a highly satisfied and loyal customer base, startups can scale and make progress towards excellence. Customers are the real force behind a startup's success. **Their** word-of-mouth power and their presence on social media can give tech startups an edge against all the traditional businesses.

[10] To win customers' trust and loyalty, startups need to work aggressively to implement a customer-centric working philosophy, so as to enable them to succeed in their pursuit of attaining the height, sustainable growth and progress they desire to achieve in this tech-savvy and challenging business world.

[11] In order to face and tackle the challenges of a violent business world, startups need to be resilient and focus on keeping their integrity in tact against all odds.

[Adapted from an article by Bradd Haddin]

Question No. 07

- i. According to the information in paragraph 2, what do we know about new businesses starting annually?

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(01 Mark)

- ii. In paragraph 4, what two types of businesses facing challenges are mentioned?

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(02 Marks)

What solutions are suggested to overcome this situation?

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(01 Mark)

- iii. What could lead to ‘unrealistic expectations’?

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(01 Mark)

What aspects should new businesses consider when they set ‘realistic expectations’?

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(03 Marks)

- iv. According to the information in paragraph 7, how could the team culture of a startup be developed? Explain.

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(02 Marks)

- v. What factors related to a potential partner company should a startup consider before going into partnership? Explain in your own words.

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(03 Marks)

- vi. How could the customers of tech startups contribute to their advantage over the traditional businesses?

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(02 Marks)

- vii. How could new businesses ensure the loyalty and trust of their customers as given in paragraph 10?

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(03 Marks)

- viii. What would be required of the startups to overcome the challenges of the competitive business world as stated in paragraph 11?

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(02 Marks)

Question No. 08

What or who do the following words and phrases refer to in the article?

- i. these - paragraph 2 -
- ii. it - paragraph 5 -
- iii. they - paragraph 6 -
- iv. their - paragraph 8 -
- v. their - paragraph 9 -

(02 1/2 Marks)

Question No. 09

What do the following words mean in the context?

- i. Emerging - paragraph 2 -
- ii. Transformed - paragraph 3 -
- iii. Clusters - paragraph 4 -
- iv. short-lived - paragraph 5 -
- v. aspiring - paragraph 7 -

(02 1/2 Marks)

(Total 25 Marks)