

Examiner's Report
LEVEL II EXAMINATION - JANUARY 2022
(204) BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

This question paper comprised of three Sections – **A, B** and **C** consisting of 07 compulsory questions.

SECTION A

Question No. 01

Question 1 consisted of fifteen (15) OTQs and was presented covering all parts of the syllabus of the Business Management subject stream.

For sub questions No. **1.1** to **1.5**, the most correct answer was to be selected and the number assigned to the selected answer was to be written in the answer booklet. Majority of the candidates had selected the correct answer. It was observed that some candidates did not have correct understanding of the questions and therefore candidates had displayed a poor level in scoring marks.

As for sub question numbers **1.6** to **1.10**, the correct answer out of the given two answers had to be selected and the selected answer had to be written in the answer booklet with the question number. Majority of the candidates had followed the instructions and written the correct answer. Majority of the candidates had followed the instructions and written the correct answer. Few candidates, had not followed instructions.

As for sub No. **1.11** to **1.15**, short answers had to be written in the answer booklet with the question number.

1.11 The question required to list two types of organizational structures. It was sufficient to name two organizational structures. Majority of the candidates had named two organizational structures, correctly and obtained marks. Few others had attempted trying to explain organizational structures with long answers.

1.12 It was required to explain briefly what is meant by Marketing Management. Most candidates were unable to score the relevant 2 marks on their answers. The reason for that was writing irrelevant unnecessary matters. Only a few candidates had clearly and correctly defined the term and earned the 2 marks. It was observed that the performance level of candidates for this question was low.

1.13 The question required to state two disadvantages of an internal recruitment policy. It was observed that most of the candidates had successfully answered this part. There were instances of certain candidates providing acceptable matters using their assumptions.

1.14 It was required to list two pricing methods used in Marketing. Most of the candidates failed to obtain the allotted marks, as they were unable to successfully list two pricing methods in Marketing. It was observed that obtaining marks was at a poor level.

1.15 The question was set to state two differences between strategic control and operational control. It was observed that obtaining of marks was at a very low level as the answers of majority of the candidates were not satisfactory. Only a very few candidates obtained the allotted marks providing successful answers.

Overall performance for this question was at a satisfactory level.

SECTION B

5 compulsory questions. Total 50 marks at 10 marks per question. The overall performances of majority of the candidates for this question was at a satisfactory level. Instances of a very few candidates avoiding answering the questions and few other candidates providing very unsatisfactory answers were observed.

Question No. 02

This question comprised of 3 parts, **(a)**, **(b)** and **(c)** to test the knowledge of planning.

(a) This part required to state the steps of the planning process. It was required only to state the steps of the planning process. Majority of the candidates had provided satisfactory answers. Some candidates had stated the steps of the planning process not in order, having not understood the question properly. Instances of some candidates stating decision making steps as problem solving steps were observed. Although this was a question for which marks could have been easily obtained, the opportunity to obtain marks had been lost because some candidates had presented matters outside the scope of the correct answer.

(b) This part required to explain two barriers for planning. There were instances in which most of the candidates had presented unnecessary lengthy matters as answer to this part. An overall satisfactory performance level was shown for **part (b)**.

(c) Stating two conditions that managers need to consider when making decisions was required by this part. Although, certain candidates were successful in answering this section, an overall unsatisfactory performance level was observed for this section. Obtaining marks remained at a very poor level.

Overall performance for this question was at an average level.

Question No. 03

This is a question set to test the knowledge of candidates in the present context of management and control of organizations. The question consisted of 3 parts **(a)**, **(b)**, **(c)** with an allocation of 10 marks.

- (a)** This part required to explain two challenges faced by managers in the present Sri Lankan context. For this, it was necessary to mention any two relevant matters with brief explanations. Majority of candidates had provided correct answers and earned marks. Instances were observed in which it had been clearly explained about the present economic crisis in Sri Lanka and the Corona epidemic and how those have become challenges to managers. But some other candidates had scored less marks for this part because they had provided answers besides the correct answer and also repeated the same facts over again. Certain other candidates had repeated facts relating to the economy and not explained even briefly those facts which resulted in earning low marks.
- (b)** This part required to identify of two differences between Japanese Management Style and Traditional (western) Management Style. Very limited number of candidates only had provided satisfactory answers and obtained marks. Most of the candidates had not identified the differences between the two styles and had not been able to obtain marks as a result of unsatisfactory answers. Majority of the candidates had no knowledge at least about the main features of the Japanese Management Style.
- (c)** The question required to explain two reasons as to why controlling is important for an organization. Candidates had on the whole provided matters correctly and obtained maximum marks. Few other candidates had explained features of controlling one by one without understanding the question correctly. Few other candidates began their answers by explaining what controlling is and written all that they knew regarding controlling in the form of a paragraph. There were instances where reasons for controlling to be important had been included at the end of the paragraph. It was confirmed that candidates had wasted the time available to answer other questions to write answers for this question paying no attention to the marks allotted to the question.

Overall performance for this question was at a satisfactory level.

Question No. 04

This is a question set to test the knowledge of importance of Operations Management. The question consisted of 2 parts **(a)** and **(b)**. Total 10 marks.

- (a)** Explaining three difficulties faced by an organization that operates in the service sector in relation to Operations Management was required by this question. Most of the candidates had not attempted this question. A higher percentage of those who attempted had not understood the question. Certain candidates had provided answers such as living problems resulting from COVID-19 pandemic, transport problems, keeping distance and providing service from home. Further, some had mentioned the problems faced by an organization as a result of operations being carried out by the production sector instead of by the service sector. Those appeared to have been due to lack of understanding of this question by candidates. It was observed that the performance for this question was at a poor level.

- (b)** Stating four strategies that can be adopted by the Operations Management in the service sector for better value addition was required by this question.

Majority of the candidates were successful to some level in providing answers to this question. Most of the candidates had proposed raising efficiency, effectiveness, encouragement of employees, payment of salaries to them and about facilities associated with their service stations.

Overall performance for this question was at a poor level.

Question No. 05

This was a question set to test the knowledge of Human Resource Management (HRM). It consisted of 2 parts, **(a)** and **(b)** and the total marks allocated were 10.

- (a)** It was required to state four reasons to consider induction as an important Human Resource Management function.

Many instances of majority of candidates not providing answers to this question were observed. Even those who attempted the question, failed to obtain full marks. Some candidates had provided answers without understanding the question and the answers were not successful for award of marks. Certain other candidates had described the term Human Resource Management and pointed out the importance of induction. It was seen that the knowledge of candidates about induction was not sufficient. A very few number of candidates had pointed out the manner in which induction becomes important indicating that it is part of Human Resource Management and provided a clear answers to the question. However, it can be concluded that the performance of candidates to this question was at a poor level.

- (b)** The question required explaining three reasons as to why effective communication is important for an organization. Most of the candidates had provided answers of some level. This was a question to which obtaining of marks was easy.

But, some candidates had only mentioned the matters and refrained from explaining matters. There were instances where candidates were not awarded relevant marks.

Overall performance for this question was at a poor level.

Question No. 06

This is a question set to test the knowledge about theoretical matters relating to Principles of Management. How should leadership act in an ever changing business environment. This question set to inquire into such theoretical matters and it consists of three parts **(a)**, **(b)** and **(c)** and allocated 10 marks.

- (a)** It was required to state 3 elements of transformational leadership. It was observed that providing of correct answers to this question was at a very low level. The reason for that being not understanding the question correctly, many candidates had provided characteristics of leadership as the answer. Some candidates had stated matters such as qualities that should be possessed by a leader. But, very limited few had stated elements of transformational leadership.

- (b) The question required to explain two types of change according to the nature of the change. It was observed that answers to two types of change according to the nature of change had been at a fairly satisfactory level. It was found that although changes have been identified, majority of candidates had been unable to explain those matters. The performance of candidates for this part had been at an average level.
- (c) The question required to explain two internal factors which influence the strategy of an organization. Only a very limited few candidates had provided successful answers. Majority of candidates failed to obtain marks. It was observed that the knowledge of candidates was at a very low level.

Overall performance for this question was at an average level.

SECTION C

Question No. 07

This is a case study question. Total marks allocated were 25. The question has been set to test how theoretical matters would be related to the given scenario by the candidates. The question consisted of 5 parts (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e). The case study question set this time was drafted in such a manner enabling candidates to obtain marks easily.

- (a) Explaining three important functions that a leader should perform to gain success in a business organization was required by this question. An easy case study associated question where candidates can earn marks easily.

It was necessary to state 3 functions of a successful leader and explain those in association with the given scenario. It was disclosed that most of the candidates had earned full marks for this question. Some other candidates had stated functions that should be performed by a leader, not related to the scenario and had explained those.

- (b) The question required to explain two advantages and two disadvantages of digital marketing for an educational institute like **Athena**. Any candidate looking at the present world with a sense of inquiry, it would prove that this was an easy question to obtain marks. A considerable number of candidates had displayed a high level of performance in answering this question. But, although majority of the candidates had stated the answer as facts, only a handful of them had explained those facts.
- (c) The question has been set to state four objectives that can be achieved by **Athena** from a proper Human Resources Planning. Because majority of candidates had mention directly the advantages of Human Resources Management. They could obtain high marks for this part as well.
- (d) It was required by this part to state three consequences of a wrong selection decision of an employee to **Athena** based on the current situation. Candidates had provided different reasonable answers in answering to this question as consequences of a wrong selection of an employee to **Athena**.

- (e) This part required to explain the suitable strategy that **Athena** can use in the post COVID-19 market situation according to Porters' Generic Strategies. The answers provided by majority of candidates were at a very poor level. It did not appear that candidates even considered adjusting the post COVID-19 market situation to present situation. There were many instances of inappropriate answers written without proper understanding upon candidates own assumptions.

Overall performance for this question was at an ordinary level.

Common factors to be considered in order to improve the level of understanding and competency level of the candidates:

- (1) Go through the syllabus/study pack thoroughly.
- (2) Upon receiving the question paper, read instructions carefully (Extra time allocated for this purpose).
- (3) Candidates should read the question several times and understand what needs to explain. When a direct answer is expected answers should be precise. Writing unnecessary explanations and details should be avoided.
- (4) Answers should be in one language only. This is the language to be used when applying to the examination and answers to each question number should begin in a new page of the answer booklet.
- (5) Manage the time efficiently at the examination.
- (6) Before handing over the answer booklet to check twice that all question numbers and the Index Number is written correctly.
- (7) The "Action Verb Check List" is included at the end of the question paper. Each question other than OTQs; begin with an Action Verb. Candidates should write the answers based on the definition given in that list.
- (8) Ensure that the handwriting is at a legible level and question numbers are properly stated for each of the answers.
- (9) Reading of Self-Study Text published by AAT, Articles and Magazines, etc. is desirable.
- (10) Study and practice answering past question papers and Pilot Papers in order to improve knowledge.
- (11) Face the examination positively with a firm determination of passing it.

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