

Examiner's Report
LEVEL II EXAMINATION - JANUARY 2024
(204) BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

SECTION A

Question No. 01

This question consists of 15 sub-sections. The total marks allocated for question number one is 25.

For sub-question numbers **1.1** to **1.5**, the correct answer is to be selected, and the number assigned to the selected answer is to be written in the answer booklet.

The majority of the candidates had selected the correct answers to this question, and it was observed that very few did not follow the relevant instructions. Although the number related to the selected answer should be mentioned in the answer sheet, there were cases where a few candidates marked the relevant answer in the question paper itself and attached the question paper to the answer booklet. Despite the instruction to write only the number corresponding to the answer on the answer sheet, a limited number of candidates did not manage their time effectively and wrote the entire answer in the answer booklet.

To fill in the blanks of question number **1.6** to **1.10**, it was expected that the correct answer should be selected from the two answers given in brackets and the selected answer should be written in the answer booklet along with the question number. Although the majority of candidates had successfully submitted answers for this, there were cases where some candidates were unable to score due to a lack of knowledge or lack of preparation prior to the exam.

Candidates should understand the management subject while answering such questions, which were prepared to cover many parts of the syllabus while understanding the instructions given when writing the answers.

Short answers to questions numbered **1.11** to **1.15** were to be written on the answer sheet along with question numbers.

- 1.11** The question was asked to identify two characteristics of a good strategy. A small number of candidates had successfully answered this question; however, some candidates had also submitted alternative answers.
- 1.12** It was asked to state two objectives of Human Resource Management. Overall, it was observed that the answers were provided successfully. However, alternative answers were being identified as well.
- 1.13** The question was asked to state two strategies to manage the supply chain of an organization. It was revealed that the majority of the candidates did not have a proper understanding of supply chain management, and the scoring was quite poor.

- 1.14** It was asked to briefly explain what is meant by GAP analysis in the strategic planning process. It was shown that providing answers was at a very poor level, and there were also cases where some candidates avoided providing answers. Although the relevant marks can be obtained easily, it was a question that the majority of candidates did not get marks due to not understanding the question properly or due to weakness of knowledge.
- 1.15** It was stated to recommend two actions to overcome resistance to change. It was seen that half of the total candidates had successfully provided answers and obtained marks, while some had provided unacceptable answers as irrelevant alternative answers.

SECTION B

This section consists of five compulsory questions carrying ten marks each and a total of 50 marks.

Question No. 02

This question was aimed to test the knowledge of the candidates on the importance of effective decision making for business success. This question consists of three sub-sections.

- (a)** The question was expected to clarify two main managerial roles played by a manager in an organization.
- It was confirmed that the majority of the candidates did not understand what was asked in the question. For this, the management functions of planning, directing the organization and controlling were written. Identification of managerial roles remained weak.
- (b)** Two importances of decision-making were asked to be explained. Most of the candidates had successfully written the answers and obtained marks easily.
- (c)** The question was presented to identify two decision models according to the personal decision-making framework. There were many instances where many candidates chose to skip answering this section. A very limited number of candidates had successfully answered.

Question No. 03

A question was asked to test the understanding of planning. This question consisted of three parts.

- (a)** The question is intended to identify three principles of planning. Most of the candidates did not seem to properly understand what was asked in the question. Three principles of planning were correctly recognized by a very limited number of candidates. It was observed that most of the candidates provided the principles of organizing or characteristics of organizing as answers.
- (b)** The question was asked to present the planning process. Although this is a very easy question as a basic theory of management, there were cases where the planning steps were not mentioned properly. It was also revealed that some candidates had provided answers very successfully.

- (c) It was asked to explain two characteristics of planning. The majority of candidates had provided successful answers and obtained marks. There were also cases where some candidates had mentioned three characteristics but not explained.

Question No. 04

This question was presented to test the knowledge of the candidates regarding leadership theories and motivation. This consists of two sections.

- (a) The question was posed to explain two types of leaders identified by “*Fiedler’s Situational Leadership Theory*”. Only a small number of candidates wrote the correct answers and earned marks, while the majority had failed to provide the correct answers. Answers were given that were irrelevant to the question, referring to different types of leaders. It was observed that many of the answers provided were not at the level of obtaining marks either due to lack of understanding or due to lack of preparation prior to the examination. Also, there were instances where the answers were presented without any confidence. It was observed that the overall performance of this section was poor.
- (b) In this section, the question was asked to explain three ways of motivating employees as leaders. Six marks were allocated for this question, and the majority of the candidates submitted successful answers and obtained marks. It was observed that some candidates did not understand the problem correctly. Some other candidates had given financial and non-financial motivational ways as answers. However, it was observed that the candidates' performance was at a higher level for this part.

Question No. 05

This question was presented to test the understanding of the importance of effective communication in management. The question consisted of three sections.

- (a) It was asked to state two characteristics of effective communication. Eventhough, majority of the candidates provided answers, it was observed that they lacked the proper understanding of the characteristics of effective communication. It was seen that some candidates had provided the requirements in the communication process as answers. The overall performance was average.
- (b) Without a proper understanding of the communication skills a manager should possess, the answers were often given as to the skills that a manager should possess. A few others had managed to properly present and obtain marks on the communication skills that a manager should possess.
- (c) It was asked to explain two controlling techniques. The response rate for this part was low compared to the above 5(b) part. The majority of the candidates mentioned two control techniques, but no explanation was given, as the answers should be given as per the question, such candidates would not be able to obtain the full marks.

Question No. 06

This question was presented to test the understanding of marketing in an organization. The question consists of three parts.

- (a) The question was asked to explain two importance of an organization's marketing mix. It was required to explain two importances of marketing mix; however, most of the candidates only mentioned the points but did not explain. Some candidates introduced what marketing is and provided an explanation. There were also cases in which some candidates wrote only about the product or the price in terms of the product, price, place or promotion within the marketing mix. Overall, it was observed that the performance of this part was at a poor level.
- (b) It was asked to explain two importance of branding for an organization. The majority of the candidates answered successfully and secured the relevant marks. Overall, the performance was high for this section.
- (c) The question was asked to identify two impacts of new technology on the operations of a business. Here, it appeared that the question was not properly understood. Although, many candidates had presented details about new technologies such as CAP, CAM, SIM, there were cases where they did not mention how these technologies would affect the operations. It was observed that the performance was at a moderate level.

SECTION C

Question No. 07

A case study question. This 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, namely (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e). The total marks for the question is 50.

- (a) This part tested how the specific strategies identified by the marketing team of **XYZ Ltd.** will help the company reach its target audience. Therefore, the students should understand and read the case very carefully to write the answers to the questions. The facts asked in the question are contained in the given case itself.

The strategies adopted by the marketing team could have been carefully observed and given as answers. Although the majority of the candidates had identified the strategies and provided the answers, there were instances where some of them had missed the answering as they had not read the case carefully. Also, there were instances when such strategies failed to explain how to reach the target audience. Overall performance was satisfactory.

- (b) This question was asked to explain three suggestions that **XYZ Ltd.** can implement to retain its employees.

Even though it is a question that is possible to earn marks easily. There were instances where facts which were not relevant to the question has provided. It had to answer the favorable situations and the incidents that could motivate the employees. Although, some candidates had written recruitment of new employees and other related matters, they could not get marks for it. And there was also the possibility of getting marks through the explanation of acceptable presented facts. It was observed that the performance was at average level.

- (c) It was asked to identify three specific automation technologies that **XYZ Ltd.** has incorporated into its operations. There were many cases where the answers were not successfully written. Answers could have been written easily if the case study was clearly read and understood.
- (d) The question was asked to explain three ways how **XYZ Ltd.** can adapt to changing market conditions and technology trends to maintain their competitive edge. Also, while it is necessary to identify how to adapt to technological trends, there were cases where only the changing market conditions were discussed, without paying attention to this aspect. How to adapt to java technology trends was not clearly explained. In addition to this, irrelevant content was also included in the answers, resulting the instances where candidates failed to earn full marks related to the question.

The majority has written about the advantages that can be achieved through Total Quality Management (TQM). It was expected the benefits that the organization can get from quality management rather than mentioning what quality management is. In this question, only five possible advantages are expected, and no explanations are required. Some candidates gave explanations and it is necessary only to state the advantages.

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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