Your notes

GCSE Business: revision notes

Communication in business

Contents

1. Start here: why communication matters
2. Methods of communication
3. Barriers to communication
4. Exam tip
5. Key terms
6. Quick questions
7. What to do next

Start here: why communication matters

- **Communication** is passing information from a sender to a receiver, through a medium (a method), so that it is understood. Good **communication** often includes **feedback**, so the sender knows the message was understood.
- **Internal communication** is within the business, such as between managers and staff. **External communication** is with people outside, such as customers, suppliers, banks and the government.
- Good **communication** keeps staff motivated and well informed, avoids mistakes, helps decisions to be made quickly and keeps customers happy.

Methods of communication

- Face-to-face meetings, including video calls: two-way, with instant **feedback** and body language, but hard to arrange and leave no record unless minutes are taken.
- Email and text messages: quick, cheap and can reach many people at once, with a written record, but easily ignored or misunderstood, and too many emails cause overload.
- Phone calls: quick and personal, but no written record.
- Letters: formal and give a permanent record, but are slow and cost postage.
- Social media: reaches many customers cheaply and quickly, but mistakes are public and spread fast.
- Notice boards and posters: cheap and seen by many staff, but people may not read them and there's no **feedback**.
- Choose a method by thinking about how urgent the message is, whether a record is needed, whether it is confidential, how many people need it and the cost.

Barriers to communication

- Barriers stop a message being received or understood. Examples: **jargon** or technical language, a message that is too long or unclear, the wrong method, a long chain of command, noise or poor connections, language and cultural differences, and receivers who don't trust or listen to the sender.
- Problems they cause: mistakes, wasted time, poor decisions, low motivation and unhappy customers.
- Ways to reduce them: use simple language, choose the right method, keep chains of command short, check the message is understood by asking for **feedback**, and train staff.

Exam tip

- When recommending a method, link it to the situation: "an email, because all 200 staff need the same information quickly and it gives a written record".

Key terms

Communication	Passing a message from a sender to a receiver so that it is understood.
Internal communication	Communication between people within a business.
External communication	Communication between a business and people outside it.
Feedback	A response from the receiver that shows whether the message was understood.
Communication barrier	Anything that stops a message being received or understood.
Jargon	Technical words that people outside a job may not understand.

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. Which is an example of external communication?
2. Why is feedback important in communication?
3. Which method gives a permanent, formal record but is slow?
4. Which is a disadvantage of email?
5. Which is a barrier to communication?
6. Why can a long chain of command be a barrier?
7. What is a benefit of face-to-face communication?
8. Which is a disadvantage of a notice board?

Your notes

Answers

1. A business emailing a supplier
2. It shows the message has been understood
3. A letter
4. Messages can be ignored or misunderstood
5. Using jargon the receiver doesn't understand
6. Messages pass through many people and get changed or delayed
7. Instant feedback and body language
8. Staff may not read it and there's no feedback

What to do next

Practise 10 questions on this topic

Try 3 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

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