

Business English Skills Test

Candidate: Sam Sample

Started: 27/02/18 08:22

Completed: 27/02/18 08:59

Test: Business Communications Writing Sample – General Scenarios

Scenario #1

An employee sends an e-mail asking about the company's policy on volunteering during work hours. Write a response using the following information:

- Must be a full-time employee
- Allowed 16 hours per year during regularly scheduled work hours
- Must not create a need for overtime or cause conflict with other employees' schedules
- Must get approval from managers on type of volunteering and schedule

Candidate's Response

Dear Sir,

In relation to your enquiry, we confirm that our company's policy allows employees to do volunteering work during work hours. However some conditions shall be met so that the regular work time is not affected. Firstly, the employee must be working for the company full-time. Secondly, please note that there is a maximum of 16 hours per year of volunteering work allowed for full time employees. Furthermore, the volunteering work shall not affect the employee's work relations with the other employees of the company, nor shall it determine the employee work overtime due to the volunteering work. Finally, the volunteering work type and the schedule must be approved by the managers of the company.

Scenario #2

An applicant sends an e-mail asking for directions to the office. Write a response to the applicant using the following details:

- Exit 85 South on to Riverdale Rd
- Turn Right on to Concourse Rd (2nd traffic light)
- Continue 3 miles (Cross over Juniper Avenue)
- Turn Left into Heritage Office Park
- Mitchell building - 2nd building on the left
- Office located on the 2nd floor in the Mitchell Building

Candidate's Response

Dear Sir,

Following your request for information regarding the directions to our office, please note that the latter is located in the 2nd floor Mitchell building. Supposing you will come from Auckland, you must take exit 85 South on to Riverdale Rd. Then you go straight for about five miles and then turn right on the Concourse Rd at the 2nd traffic light and continue for 3 miles. After you cross over Juniper Avenue turn left into Heritage Office Park where our office building is located. Mitchell building is the 2nd building on the left as you enter the Heritage Office Park.

Should you have any further questions or need any clarifications, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Scenario #3

Write an e-mail to your department announcing a process review meeting. Include the following information in your e-mail:

- Meeting will be March 13 from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM.
- Meeting location will be Conference Room B.
- Attendance is mandatory.
- We will discuss changes to the current process.

Candidate's Response

Dear all,

As you may already know, we are having a meeting on Friday, March 13 from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM. The agenda consists of discussing possible changes to the current process. I would be very pleased to receive any suggestions or ideas prior to the meeting.

You are all invited in Conference Room B on the above mentioned date.

Kindly note that your presence is mandatory.

Have a nice day!

Scoring Guidelines

The following scoring guidelines are recommended for use in assessing candidates' writing skills. These guidelines were established to help you (1) create a standardized process for scoring candidates' responses and (2) document the results if this information is used for making hiring decisions.

Dimensions of written communication skills can be scored using 3-point scales, as follows. In general, a score of '3' corresponds to an outstanding response, a score of '2' corresponds to a satisfactory response, and a score of '1' corresponds to an unacceptable response. Written communication can be analyzed in terms of the following dimensions:

Mechanics

The punctuation, spelling, and capitalization in the response are:

3: consistently correct and appropriate.

2: generally correct and appropriate; a few errors may be present or the same mistake may be repeated.

1: very inconsistent; rules governing mechanics are applied inappropriately or inconsistently throughout the response.

Punctuation examples:

Correct: We had to complete the project by Friday; otherwise, we would have lost the account.

Incorrect: The office address is, 75 Arlington Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116.

Spelling examples:

Correct: The new organizational plan includes an additional sales manager; this manager handles the top clients.

Incorrect: The new organizational plan includes an additional sells manager; this manager handles the top clients.

Capitalization examples:

Correct: The meeting will be held in Room 222.

Incorrect: The meeting will be held in the Conference Room.

Word Choice

The breadth and appropriateness of words chosen to express ideas are:

- 3:** completely acceptable and appropriate; there are no errors in subject-verb agreement, verb forms, selection of pronouns, or possessives.
- 2:** generally acceptable and appropriate; there are some errors in subject-verb agreement, verb forms, selection of pronouns, or possessives.
- 1:** unacceptable and inappropriate; there are many errors in subject-verb agreement, verb forms, selection of pronouns, or possessives.

Subject-verb agreement examples:

Correct: There **are** many questions.

Incorrect: There **is** several mistakes.

Verb forms examples:

Correct: By the time negotiations began, many pessimists **had** expressed doubt about them.

Incorrect: By the time negotiations began, many pessimists **have** expressed doubt about them.

Selection of pronouns examples:

Correct: Susan told Dan she would delegate the project to **him and me**.

Incorrect: If you have any questions, please contact **myself** or Mike Smith.

Possessives examples:

Correct: The supervisor will reward **whoever** had the most production.

Incorrect: Many associates believe **it's** responsibility is to report errors.

Organization

Ideas and supporting details in the response are:

- 3:** clearly elaborated and well organized.
- 2:** unevenly elaborated.
- 1:** not present and/or disorganized.

Examples:

Clear: Your presence is requested at a meeting to discuss alternatives to outsourcing aspects of our work to vendors. The meeting will be held in the Board Room on December 12, 2005 from 11:00am-noon. Please prepare three alternatives and be prepared to discuss them at the meeting.

Unclear: Your presence at a meeting is requested. It starts at 10:00. Please remember to change your email settings by this evening at 5:00.

Clarity

The purpose of the communication in the response is:

- 3:** clearly stated and the overall response is coherent
- 2:** somewhat unclear and there are some problems with coherence
- 1:** completely unclear

Examples:

Clear: To qualify for the position, you'll need to be a high school graduate and have clerical experience.

Unclear: Position acquisition requirements are any combination of high school graduation and years of clerical experience.

Audience Adaptation

Compared to the level of the audience, the communication is written at a level that is:

- 3:** perfectly suited to the audience
- 2:** either slightly too advanced or too basic
- 1:** completely inappropriate

Examples:

When responding to a customer's order:

Simplified: As noted in the previous section, if you bought extra copier equipment, such as a second built-in stapler, you must check that it is installed correctly.

Too Complex: As noted in the preceding section, if you purchased additional copier options, such as a built-in stapler, it is a requirement you verify its correct installation.

Additional Guidelines for Scoring Writing Samples

- Ensure the same scoring guidelines are followed for all applicants.
- Define what constitutes a good answer before scoring responses.
- Be alert to the following distractors that may impede objectivity: writing style, scorer fatigue, and carryover effects (that is, when previous scores influence future scores).
- Read responses a second time after initial scoring.
- Aim to have responses read by multiple raters to assess consistency and reliability within raters.
- Attempt to remove identifying information from an applicant's writing sample. That is, eliminate non-relevant information about an applicant (e.g., name, demographic information) from the writing sample in order to reduce positive or negative biases.

Time Summary:

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| Time Taken (mm:ss): | 29:38 |
| Started on: | 27/02/18 08:22 |
| Completed on: | 27/02/18 08:59 |