



COMMUNICATION LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS DEPARTMENT

JANUARY TO APRIL Semester, 2025

Final Practical Exam COM 401: Organizational Communication

40 MARKS

Course: Organizational Communication

Total Marks: 40% (Each Task: 20 Marks)

Submission date: As per Exam timetable

Submission Format: Typed document in PDF or Word format, submitted via LMS

Exam Overview & Instructions

This practical exam evaluates your ability to apply **crisis communication** and **conflict resolution strategies** in an organizational setting. You will analyze three **realistic business scenarios**, propose solutions, and justify your approach using concepts learned in class.

Your task is to:

- **Analyze the problem.**
- **Develop a strategic response.**
- **Justify your approach**, explaining why your solution is effective.

Task 1: Crisis Communication – Product Recall at VitaBev Beverages (20 Marks)

Scenario:

VitaBev Beverages, a soft drinks company, is in crisis after several customers reported **food poisoning** from a contaminated batch of its popular **BerryBoost energy drink**. The issue has sparked social media outrage, with hashtags like **#BoycottVitaBev** trending.

Key Challenges:

- The **media and customers** demand immediate answers.
- The **government's food safety agency** has launched an investigation.
- The company risks **losing public trust and market share**.

Student Task:

Develop a **Crisis Communication Plan** to manage the situation. Your response should include:

1. **Crisis identification & key stakeholders** - Who is affected, and who needs to be engaged?
2. **Communication strategies & messaging** - How will the company respond (press release, social media, customer assurance)?
3. **Action plan & media engagement** – What steps will the company take to fix the problem and rebuild trust?
4. **Evaluation & future crisis prevention** How can VitaBev prevent this from happening again?

Deliverable: A 2–3-page crisis communication strategy document.

Choose one of the two questions below.

Task 2: Conflict Resolution – Wage Dispute at Atlas Manufacturing (20 Marks)

Scenario:

At **Atlas Manufacturing Ltd.**, a labor dispute has escalated between **the factory workers**

and management. The workers, led by their union, are **demanding higher wages**, arguing that inflation has reduced their purchasing power. **Management refuses**, citing financial constraints and declining sales.

The conflict has resulted in:

- **Work slowdowns**, leading to missed production targets.
- **Increased tension** between employees and HR.
- A looming **workers' strike**, which could halt operations entirely.

Student Task:

You are the **HR Manager** tasked with resolving the dispute before it escalates. Develop a **Conflict Resolution Plan**, including:

1. What are the key issues and perspectives?
2. Which strategy will you use and why?
3. Steps to resolve the issue, including meetings and agreements.
4. How will you ensure long-term peace and employee satisfaction?

Deliverable: A 1–2-page resolution strategy document.

Task 3: Crisis Communication – Data Breach at CyberSecure Solutions (20 Marks)

Scenario:

CyberSecure Solutions, an IT firm specializing in **cloud security**, has suffered a **massive data breach** exposing **sensitive client information**. News outlets are reporting that personal and corporate data has been leaked on the **dark web**, leading to:

- **Major clients threatening to cancel contracts.**
- **Government regulators demanding an explanation.**
- **Reputational damage** that could affect future business.

Student Task:

As the company's **Communications Manager**, create a **Crisis Communication Plan**, including:

1. Who needs to be informed and addressed?
2. How will you communicate the issue while maintaining trust?
3. What steps will the company take to fix the breach and prevent future incidents?
4. How will you handle press conferences, social media backlash, and customer complaints?

Deliverable: A 2–3-page crisis communication report.

Assessment Rubric for Each Task (20 Marks)

Criteria	Excellent (5 Marks)	Good (4 Marks)	Satisfactory (3 Marks)	Needs Improvement (1-2 Marks)
Task Completion	Addresses all aspects of the case study thoroughly.	Covers most areas with minor gaps.	Addresses some elements but lacks depth.	Many elements missing or unclear.
Application of Theory	Effectively applies crisis/conflict resolution strategies.	Applies relevant theories but lacks depth.	Some connection to course concepts but weak.	Little to no theoretical application.
Problem-Solving & Analysis	Strong analytical thinking, creativity, and strategic solutions.	Good analysis with some innovative ideas.	Basic problem-solving, lacking depth.	Weak or ineffective solutions.
Clarity & Professionalism	Writing is clear, professional, and error-free.	Minor errors but maintains professionalism.	Some grammar or structure issues.	Poorly written with multiple errors.

Total Marks: 40% (Each Task: 20 Marks)