

<i>900 exercises in vocational communication</i>	SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT Page 1	Category E Level 3
	Answers	

PART 1

Adrian, your older brother's best friend, works in a factory for assembling television sets. You are looking for a placement as an office worker, and Adrian introduces you to the manager, Mr Sargent, who agrees to take you on in the company for two months. It's convenient for him, as his main secretary is on maternity leave.

Mr Sargent is a kind manager, always willing to listen to his employees.

You have been working there for 2 weeks when the Manager calls a meeting with his principle colleagues. You are also there to take notes, write a short report about the meeting and, perhaps, to give your opinion.

The meeting begins. After thanking his colleagues for coming, the Manager, Mr Sargent, states:

“With the arrival of the hot weather, the staff have asked to change their working hours. They would like to start earlier in the morning in order to have longer evenings. At 6am instead of 8. I have called this meeting to find out what you think of this, as I would like to take the best possible decision.”

Mr Charlton, supervisor: *Changing your working hours to fit the season, that's a new one ... Why not change every day, depending on the weather, while we're at it?*

Mrs Ryan, training manager: *I think it's not such a bad idea.*

Mrs Finch, finance manager: *It sounds a bit dangerous to me...*

Mr Russell, production manager: *That's an interesting idea, I think we should go for it.*

Mr Leonardo, personnel manager: *If we must, we must. But it's going to make life very complicated.*

Mr Larbi, delivery manager: *I would be more than willing to adapt the timetable as they would wish.*

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The manager sees that there are three for and three against the idea. He therefore asks everyone to give their reasons.

Mr Charlton, supervisor: *These people look for any excuse for not working. I think work is good for you and you should give your work all your attention. You can't have two days in one.*

Mrs Ryan, training manager: *In any case, women who work always do two days in one! But it's true that the weather is gorgeous at the moment, so we would also benefit...*

Mrs Finch, finance manager: *I don't think we should give satisfaction to the personnel. Now they're asking for this, tomorrow they'll ask for something else, it'll never end. And if we get into the habit of giving them what they want all the time, Heaven knows what they'll ask for next.*

Mr Russell, production manager: *The weather is so good that we have problems of overheating in the workshops. Even with the ventilation on full, it gets up to 35°C between three and five in the afternoon. The workers are tired and the work is difficult. I really think we should go for it.*

Mr Leonardo, personnel manager: *It's a bit complicated: if we move the day forward by two hours, we also have to move the meal times, otherwise we would be coming back after lunch for twenty minutes work. Or we could just do away with the lunch hour, but I'll leave you to explain that to the canteen staff. What's more, it's all right for the workers who come by car, but for those who come by train, I'm not sure if it will be possible... we'd have to see! And is everyone willing to get up at 5am or even earlier for those who live further away?*

Mr Larbi, delivery manager: *It would be an excellent thing, because it would allow us to send off the lorries before the evening rush hour. Our clients would thus receive their delivery earlier, which they have been wanting for a long time.*

The Manager thanks his colleagues and says he will think about it. He asks you to write up your notes and classify the arguments given, and to come and see him in his office. After typing up what each colleague said according to your notes, you prepare a chart to classify the arguments given.

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Here is the chart you have prepared. Complete it now.

Type of answer	Name of colleague
Answers motivated by the wellbeing of the Sargent company	<i>Mr Russell, production manager</i> <i>Mr Leonardo, personnel manager</i> <i>Mr Larbi, delivery manager</i>
Vague or principled answers	<i>Mr Charlton, supervisor</i> <i>Mrs Finch, finance manager</i>
Answers given for personal convenience	<i>Mrs Ryan, training manager</i>

PART 2

You have just finished when Adrian comes into your office. He says:

“It was my idea to change the working hours! So what did they all say? Especially the personnel manager. He’s the one with the most influence on what the boss decides! Is he for it?”

Answer Adrian’s question by reformulating the opinion of the personnel manager.

The personnel manager thinks it will be a little complicated to change. For example, there is the problem of the lunch hour. It has to be moved forward two hours. We can’t do away with the lunch hour completely. What would happen to the canteen staff? There is also the problem of people who come by train. Would the train times allow them to get to work two hours earlier? He was also wondering if everyone would be willing to get up extremely early, especially those who live quite far away...

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PART 3

Adrian is not pleased with the personnel manager's words. He exclaims:

“Complicated, complicated! But there's nothing complicated about it! On the contrary, it's quite simple!”

You find that it is not all that simple. Explain to Adrian how the arguments given by Mr Leonardo actually seem quite realistic to you.

It's actually not that simple, Adrian...

There's the problem of the mealtimes. We can't lay off the canteen staff by doing away with lunch. Especially since, at the end of the summer, we'll no doubt go back to the usual working hours. If people eat between half past twelve and half past one, as they do now, they will go back to work for just 1 hour, which makes for a very unbalanced day and could be harmful for production at some workstations... you'd have to look at that. So they would have to eat at 10.30 instead of 12.30 moving it forward by 2 hours. Will everyone agree to eat so early? Would the canteen staff agree to bring lunch forward like that?

And then, there is the problem of transport for those who come by train. There would have to be a train that arrives at Troude station between 5.30 and 5.45 to enable the people to walk here.

Finally, will everyone want to take up your proposal, as the people would have to get up very, very early, especially those who live far away or who have to catch the train...

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PART 4

In the two weeks that you have been working in this company, you have begun to know the staff and their habits. The atmosphere at work is good and the employees really do appreciate the manager. You find that Mr Charlton, the supervisor, does not have an objective view of things and that his arguments are not convincing. Adrian is not surprised. He asks for details.

Write an appreciation of the ideas expressed by Mr Charlton.

This text is given solely as a suggestion.

(A reminder of what Mr Charlton, the supervisor, said: *Changing your working hours to fit the season, that's a new one ... Why not change every day, depending on the weather, while we're at it? These people look for any excuse for not working. I think work is good for you and you should give your work all your attention. You can't have two days in one.*)

Mr Charlton is sarcastic at first and very scornful of the workers who, according to him, would be capable of asking to change the timetables every day depending on the weather. The supervisor is very scornful. "These people" is a very scornful way of talking of workers in general, as if everyone was the same according to what job he does. He implies that the workers in general are always ready to do their work badly just to get it out of the way without giving any sort of justification to this affirmation. Bringing the day forward by 2 hours does not alter the amount of attention we pay to our work. I see no direct connection there. Finally, what does he mean by "do 2 days in one"? He does not explain himself. Is he talking about avoiding moonlighting by letting people do another job after their work at the factory? Does he think people will be tired if they go to bed at their usual time but get up much earlier? It is not clear. Mr Charlton's ideas are not well set out. He does not justify them. So I don't think we need attach a lot of importance to them.

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PART 5

You decide to help Adrian obtain the change in working hours. To do so, you consult some members of staff on the possible solutions to the problems. Here are the practical answers that you received.

Mr Lopez: *I've found some information: there is a train that arrives at Troude station at 5.45. It takes us 10 minutes to walk to the factory. It's perfect if we want to begin work at 6.*

Mrs Leroy: *For the canteen, we could bring forward the lunch hour and eat between 10.30 and 11.30. We'd go back to work from 11.30 to 2pm.*

Mrs Lee: *I work in the canteen and I think it's feasible. I've asked my colleagues in the kitchen and on the service. They would be quite pleased to leave the factory earlier, especially in the kitchen, with the ovens, where it's even hotter than in the workshops! They agree to get up 2 hours earlier. In summer, it's much easier than in winter when it's still dark at 8 o'clock...*

Mrs Hallem: *I have a problem with my youngest. I take her to the crèche at 7.20 just before I get to work. My husband takes the oldest to school at 8. The crèche doesn't open until 7.*

Mr Lopez: *Could you ask your husband to take the little one to the crèche and the older one to school at the same time?*

Mrs Hallem: *Yes, I could ask him...*

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You are now going to write your report. But before doing so, in order to prepare it properly, first make a list of all the arguments in favour of changing the timetable, setting out clearly what problems have been posed or still exist. Suggest solutions to these problems in order to convince the opponents.

This text is given solely as a suggestion.

Problems to be solved	Suggested solutions
<p><i>Transport by train. Do the train times allow the employees to arrive at 6am?</i></p> <p><i>The canteen. What time would we have to eat? Are the canteen staff willing to bring forward the meal times?</i></p> <p><i>Problem of children to be taken to school or the crèche</i></p> <p><i>Is everyone willing to get up two hours earlier?</i></p>	<p><i>There is a train that arrives at Troudele at 5.45, which would enable the employees to get to the factory at 6.</i></p> <p><i>Lunch could be between 10.30 and 11.30. On the one hand, the people will have had breakfast very early and will be hungry after 4 hours' work. On the other hand, if we come back to work at 11.30, there would still be 2 ½ hours work, which would balance the day. Finally, after consulting the canteen staff, all of them would be willing to bring lunch forward 2 hours, especially since the heat from the ovens would be easier to bear early in the morning than when it's already hot in the kitchen.</i></p> <p><i>This could still be a problem, although some members of staff could arrange for their partners to take the children instead.</i></p> <p><i>The question could be put to the vote. But you must remember that in the workshops, there are already problems of excessive heat. Even with the ventilation on full, temperatures can reach nearly 35°C between three and five in the afternoon. People tire easily when working in these conditions. Moreover, the deliverymen would be pleased not to have to drive in the rush hour traffic. We would save time and there would be less fatigue and stress at the wheel of our lorries.</i></p>

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PART 6

Adrian would really like you to be able to convince the manager. He asks you some questions to make sure. Answer his question.

“Have you given arguments that take into account the working conditions in the factory? Which ones?”

This text is given solely as a suggestion.

Yes, I have mentioned the temperature that reaches 35°C in the workshops and makes the workers really tired between 3 and 5pm.

I've found a solution for the train which would allow people to arrive on time if they want to start work 2 hours earlier.

I've seen that it is possible to bring the lunch hour forward by 2 hours so that the workers can go back to work for a reasonably long afternoon.

I've taken into consideration the remark of the deliveries manager about the rush hour traffic. Starting two hours earlier would not be a problem at all, on the contrary, it's very helpful.

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PART 7

You are still preparing the report to give to the manager, which will include your opinion. Make the plan of your report.

***This plan is merely a suggestion.
Many other plans are possible.***

Request from the personnel and its justification

Colleagues' opinions

Justification of the different opinions

Problems to be solved

Consultation with staff and possible solutions

Should we give satisfaction to the personnel? My opinion

END OF SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT
