

Week 36

A-Level Business

Homework bundle for this week

本周作业合集

exercises.lol

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7. Human resource management (A Level)

Starter Quiz · 课前小测

A-Level Business

Name: _____ Score: _____

- The span of control is:
 - ☐ the number of subordinates a manager directly oversees
 - ☐ the number of levels in the hierarchy
 - ☐ the firm's total staff
 - ☐ the chain of command
- Delegation means:
 - ☐ passing authority for a task to a subordinate
 - ☐ removing a level of hierarchy
 - ☐ centralising all decisions
 - ☐ making staff redundant
- Two-way communication is usually more effective because it:
 - ☐ allows feedback from the receiver
 - ☐ is always faster
 - ☐ needs no listener
 - ☐ avoids all barriers
- A paternalistic leader:
 - ☐ decides like a caring parent and explains choices
 - ☐ lets staff decide everything
 - ☐ never consults anyone and gives no reasons
 - ☐ has no authority
- Hard HRM treats employees primarily as:
 - ☐ a resource to be used efficiently
 - ☐ valued assets to develop
 - ☐ shareholders
 - ☐ customers
- Which are barriers to communication? (Select all that apply.)
 - ☐ too many levels of hierarchy
 - ☐ jargon

- ☐ information overload
- ☐ clear, concise messages

Tick every correct option.

7. Theory Y assumes employees are motivated and seek responsibility.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

8. Widening spans of control tends to make a structure flatter.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

9. A manager who delegates a task remains accountable for the result.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

10. Vertical communication flows up and down the hierarchy.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

7. Human resource management (A Level)

Answers · 答案

A-Level Business

1. **the number of subordinates a manager directly oversees**

Span of control = direct subordinates per manager.

2. **passing authority for a task to a subordinate**

Delegation passes authority down the hierarchy.

3. **allows feedback from the receiver**

Feedback confirms the message was understood.

4. **decides like a caring parent and explains choices**

Paternalistic leaders decide but explain, acting in staff's interests.

5. **a resource to be used efficiently**

Hard HRM views labour as a cost/resource.

6. **too many levels of hierarchy; jargon; information overload**

Clear messages help; the others are barriers.

7. **True**

Theory Y managers tend to delegate and empower.

8. **True**

Wider spans reduce the number of levels.

9. **True**

Authority can be delegated; accountability cannot.

10. **True**

Instructions flow down, feedback flows up.

7.1 Organisational structure

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 29 marks

KEY WORDS centralisation 集权 • span of control 管理幅度 • organisational structure 组织结构
• chain of command 指挥链 • decentralisation 分权

Objective

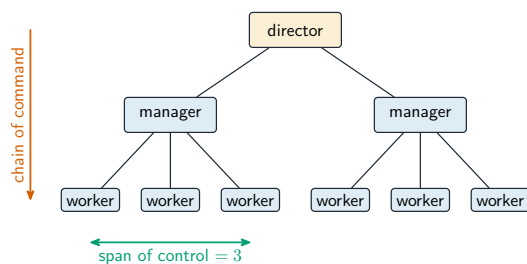
Build the skills to answer exam questions on **organisational structure** 组织结构 — **hierarchy, chain of command and span of control** 层级、指挥链、管理幅度, **tall versus flat** 高耸与扁平 structures, **centralisation** 集权, **delaying** 精简层级, and **delegation** 授权.

You must be able to:

- define chain of command, span of control, hierarchy
- compare tall and flat structures, and centralisation with decentralisation
- analyse and evaluate a change to a firm's structure

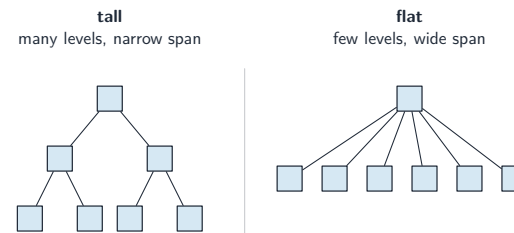
1 Worked examples

■ Reading an organisation chart



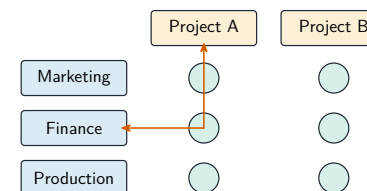
Chain of command runs top to bottom; span of control = staff directly under one manager

- **Tall structure:** many levels, narrow spans → slow messages, close control. **Flat:** few levels, wide spans → fast messages, more trust.



Tall versus flat organisational structures

- **Centralisation:** decisions at the top (strong control). **Decentralisation:** decisions shared down (faster, motivating).
- **Delegation:** giving a task and the power to do it to a junior — but **accountability** stays with the manager.
- A **matrix structure** groups staff by both department and project, so a worker reports to two managers.



each worker reports to a function manager and a project manager

A matrix structure: dual reporting by function and by project

Answer shapes: AO1 + AO2 + AO3 (reasoning chain) + AO4 (a supported judgement *in context*).

2 Practice

2.1 Define the term *span of control*.

[2]

2.2 State the difference between a *tall* and a *flat* organisational structure. [2]

2.3 Define the term *delegation*. [2]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Explain one benefit to a business of having a **flat** organisational structure. [3]

3.2 Analyse two effects on a business of **delayering** its structure. [8]

3.3 A growing business is deciding whether to **centralise** or **decentralise** its decision-making. Evaluate this decision. [12]

Solutions

Business answers are marked by **level of response** against the assessment objectives: award **AO1** knowledge, **AO2** application, **AO3** analysis and **AO4** evaluation.

2.1 the number of staff a manager is directly responsible for (2 for a clear definition; 1 for a partial idea).

2.2 a tall structure has many levels and narrow spans of control; a flat structure has few levels and wide spans (2 for a clear difference; 1 for a partial idea).

2.3 when a manager gives a task, and the authority to do it, to a more junior worker (2 for a clear definition; 1 for a partial idea).

3.1 [3] **AO1** 1 — name a benefit (faster communication; lower management cost; more staff empowerment). **AO2** up to 2 — develop it, e.g. fewer levels mean a message reaches the bottom quickly and unchanged → faster decisions and fewer errors (2 developed / 1 limited).

3.2 [8] For **each** of two effects: **AO1** 1 + **AO2** 1 + **AO3** up to 2. Example chains — *lower costs*: fewer managers → lower salary bill → higher profit. *Wider spans*: remaining managers control more staff → they may be overstretched → control and quality could fall. Maximum 4 per effect, 8 total. (Reward both a positive and a negative effect.)

3.3 [12] **AO1** 2 / **AO2** 2 / **AO3** 2 / **AO4** up to 6. **Centralisation**: consistent, fast, tight control — but ignores local knowledge and can demotivate. **Decentralisation**: faster local decisions and motivated staff — but weaker control and possible inconsistency. Judgement: a firm in many locations or fast-changing markets gains from decentralising, while one needing tight control or consistency may centralise — the best mix depends on the firm's size, spread and the skill of its local managers.

7.2 Business communication

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 29 marks

KEY WORDS barrier 障碍 • communication process 沟通过程 • business communication 商务沟通
• communication 沟通 • medium 媒介

Objective

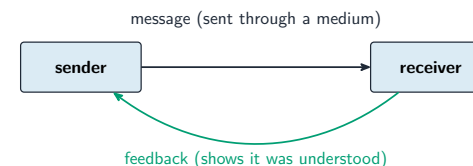
Build the skills to answer exam questions on **business communication** 商务沟通 — the **communication process** 沟通过程 (sender, medium, receiver, **feedback** 反馈), **barriers** 障碍 to communication, and how to improve it.

You must be able to:

- describe the stages of the communication process
- explain common barriers to communication
- analyse and evaluate ways to improve communication in a business

1 Worked examples

■ The communication process



Sender → medium → receiver → feedback

- **Process**: a sender sends a message through a medium to a receiver; **feedback** shows it was understood.
- **Barriers**: unclear or long messages, a poor medium, too many hierarchy levels, language/culture, lack of trust.
- **Improve by**: shortening the chain of command, choosing the right medium, keeping messages clear, asking for feedback.

Answer shapes: AO1 + AO2 + AO3 (reasoning chain) + AO4 (a supported judgement *in context*).

2 Practice

2.1 State the four stages of the communication process. [2]

2.2 Define the term *barrier to communication*. [2]

2.3 State two barriers to effective communication. [2]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Explain one benefit to a business of good communication. [3]

3.2 Analyse two **barriers** that could stop a message reaching staff clearly. [8]

3.3 A business has slow, unclear communication between its managers and staff. Evaluate how it could improve its communication. [12]

Solutions

Business answers are marked by **level of response** against the assessment objectives: award **AO1** knowledge, **AO2** application, **AO3** analysis and **AO4** evaluation.

2.1 sender → medium → receiver → feedback (2 for all four in order; 1 for a partial list).

2.2 anything that stops a message getting through clearly from sender to receiver (2 for a clear definition; 1 for a partial idea).

2.3 any two of: an unclear or too-long message; a poor medium; too many hierarchy levels; language or cultural differences; lack of trust (1 + 1).

3.1 [3] **AO1** 1 — name a benefit (higher motivation; fewer mistakes; faster decisions). **AO2** up to 2 — develop it, e.g. clear instructions mean staff know exactly what to do → fewer errors → less waste and rework (2 developed / 1 limited).

3.2 [8] For **each** of two barriers: **AO1** 1 + **AO2** 1 + **AO3** up to 2. Example chains — *too many levels*: the message passes through many managers → it is changed or delayed on the way → staff act on the wrong information. *Poor medium*: an important message sent by a quick text → detail is lost → misunderstanding and mistakes. Maximum 4 per barrier, 8 total.

3.3 [12] **AO1** 2 / **AO2** 2 / **AO3** 2 / **AO4** up to 6. Options: **shorten the hierarchy** (delaying speeds messages but raises spans), **choose better media** (cheap but needs training), **encourage feedback** (confirms understanding but takes time), **train staff**. Judgement: the best fix depends on the cause — if the chain is too long, layering helps most; if messages are unclear, better media and feedback matter more — usually a combination is needed.

A-LEVEL BUSINESS • EXERCISE SHEET

7.3 Leadership

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 29 marks**

KEY WORDS leadership 领导 • leadership style 领导风格 • autocratic 专制型
• democratic 民主型 • emotional intelligence 情商

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **leadership** 领导 — the four **leadership styles** 领导风格 (**autocratic**, **democratic**, **paternalistic**, **laissez-faire** 专制、民主、家长式、放任), **emotional intelligence** 情商, and **leading change** 领导变革.

You must be able to:

- describe the four leadership styles and when each suits
- explain emotional intelligence and why it helps a leader
- analyse and evaluate the best leadership style for a situation

1 Worked examples

■ Leadership styles



Autocratic keeps all control; laissez-faire gives staff the most freedom

- **Autocratic:** leader decides alone — fast, good in a crisis. **Democratic:** asks staff — motivating, better ideas.
- **Paternalistic:** decides in staff's "best interests". **Laissez-faire:** gives staff freedom — suits skilled staff.
- **Emotional intelligence:** understanding and managing feelings → builds trust, eases change.

Answer shapes: AO1 + AO2 + AO3 (reasoning chain) + AO4 (a supported judgement *in context*).

2 Practice

2.1 State two leadership styles. [2]

2.2 Define the term *autocratic leadership*. [2]

2.3 Define the term *emotional intelligence*. [2]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Explain one situation in which an **autocratic** leadership style is most suitable. [3]

3.2 Analyse two benefits to a business of a **democratic** leadership style. [8]

3.3 A business is going through major change. Evaluate which leadership style its managers should use. [12]

Solutions

Business answers are marked by **level of response** against the assessment objectives: award **AO1** knowledge, **AO2** application, **AO3** analysis and **AO4** evaluation.

2.1 any two of: autocratic; democratic; paternalistic; laissez-faire (1 + 1).

2.2 a style in which the leader makes decisions alone and tells staff what to do (2 for a clear definition; 1 for a partial idea).

2.3 a leader's skill in understanding and managing their own and other people's emotions (2 for a clear definition; 1 for a partial idea).

3.1 [3] **AO1** 1 — give a situation (an emergency/crisis; unskilled or new staff; a quick decision needed). **AO2** up to 2 — develop it, e.g. in a safety crisis there is no time to consult → the leader decides at once → the danger is dealt with quickly (2 developed / 1 limited).

3.2 [8] For **each** of two benefits: **AO1** 1 + **AO2** 1 + **AO3** up to 2. Example chains — *motivation*: staff are asked for ideas → they feel valued → they work harder and stay longer. *Better decisions*: staff who do the job share knowledge → managers decide with fuller information → fewer mistakes. Maximum 4 per benefit, 8 total.

3.3 [12] **AO1** 2 / **AO2** 2 / **AO3** 2 / **AO4** up to 6. **Autocratic** gives quick, firm direction in a crisis but may raise resistance. **Democratic/paternalistic** involves staff and eases fear, building acceptance, but is slower. Judgement: leading change usually needs a leader with high emotional intelligence who involves staff (democratic/paternalistic) to win acceptance, but may act autocratically when speed is vital — the best style depends on the urgency and the staff's reaction.

A-LEVEL BUSINESS • EXERCISE SHEET

7.4 Human resource management strategy

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 29 marks**

KEY WORDS soft hrm 软性人力资源管理 • hard hrm 硬性人力资源管理 • trade union 工会
• workforce planning 人力规划 • hard and soft hrm 硬性和软性人力资源管理

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **human resource management strategy** 人力资源战略 — **hard and soft HRM** 硬性和软性人力资源管理, **workforce planning** 人力规划, and **trade unions** 工会 and **collective bargaining** 集体谈判.

You must be able to:

- explain the difference between hard and soft HRM
- describe workforce planning and the role of trade unions
- analyse and evaluate an HRM approach for a business

1 Worked examples

■ Hard vs soft HRM

Hard HRM	Soft HRM
<i>staff = a resource, used at lowest cost</i> tight control short-term contracts cost-driven	<i>staff = the most valuable asset, developed</i> training & involvement long-term careers motivation-driven

Two approaches to managing people: hard HRM (cost-driven) versus soft HRM (motivation-driven)

3.3 A manufacturer is choosing between a **hard** and a **soft** HRM approach. Evaluate which it should use. [12]

Solutions

Business answers are marked by **level of response** against the assessment objectives: award **AO1** knowledge, **AO2** application, **AO3** analysis and **AO4** evaluation.

2.1 hard HRM treats staff as a resource to be used at lowest cost (tight control); soft HRM treats staff as a valuable asset to be developed and motivated (2 for a clear difference; 1 for a partial idea).

2.2 an organised group of workers that speaks and negotiates for its members (2 for a clear definition; 1 for a partial idea).

2.3 negotiation between a trade union and an employer over pay and conditions for a whole group of workers at once (2 for a clear definition; 1 for a partial idea).

3.1 [3] AO1 1 — name a benefit (higher motivation; lower labour turnover; better skills). **AO2** up to 2 — develop it, e.g. training and involvement make staff feel valued → they stay longer and work better → lower recruitment costs and higher quality (2 developed / 1 limited).

3.2 [8] For **each** of two reasons: **AO1** 1 + **AO2** 1 + **AO3** up to 2. Example chains — *right staff at the right time*: planning shows future skill gaps → the firm trains or hires in good time → no shortage that slows production. *Cost control*: planning avoids over-hiring → wage costs stay efficient → higher profit. Maximum 4 per reason, 8 total.

3.3 [12] AO1 2 / AO2 2 / AO3 2 / AO4 up to 6. **Hard HRM:** lower wage costs and flexibility — but low motivation, high turnover and possible poor quality. **Soft HRM:** motivated, skilled, loyal staff and better quality — but higher training and pay costs. **Judgement:** soft HRM suits a firm relying on skilled, customer-facing staff, while hard HRM may suit low-skilled, cost-driven work — the best approach depends on the type of work and the labour market.