EBAU Practice Examination (Cantabria)

Angry Senders Beware

When Marcus Wood hit *Send*, little did he know that the e-mail he was sending to colleagues would make headlines around the world. In it, Wood – who is the boss of a recruitment company in Australia – used offensive language to accuse his employees of not being good enough. According to Wood, they were playing games while they should have been at their desks, they didn't wear the correct attire in the workplace and they took too many days off sick.

He gave his workers an ultimatum: if they didn't improve their performance in three months, they would be fired. His employees got their revenge by putting the e-mail on Twitter. Their tweets were shared globally, and news of the e-mail appeared in newspapers from Australia to the UK. The "worst work e-mail ever", as some called it, had gone viral. After his e-mail had become famous, a repentant Wood apologised, and said: "I am becoming an online sensation for how not to communicate …"

But Marcus Wood wasn't the first to have sent such an e-mail. Since e-mails became the communication tool of choice in offices worldwide, workers have been sending messages they later wished they hadn't. Take Richard Phillips, for instance. In an e-mail, the lawyer demanded five euros from his secretary to pay for dry-cleaning after she had accidentally spilled ketchup on his suit. Four days later when he still hadn't received the money, Phillips, who is believed to have earned 200,000 euros a year, sent another e-mail asking for the cash. But his secretary was out of the office looking after her ill mother. On her return, she couldn't believe what she was reading and forwarded the e-mails to her colleagues. Embarrassed, Phillips resigned from his position at the London law firm.

What should furious bosses and angry workers do before they e-mail their colleagues? They should take a deep breath, calm down and think before they send. "Write your e-mail a couple of hours before you send it," advises Lily Herman, an expert in e-mail etiquette. She says that this allows you to change your message when you are likely to be less angry. By doing this, you won't put your hard-earned reputation at risk from a not-so-carefully worded e-mail.

Question 1: [2 POINTS] Indicate whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE and write down which part of the text justifies your answer.

a) Marcus Wood admitted his mistakes.

b) Employers and employees prefer to use e-mails to communicate with colleagues.

c) A London-based lawyer refused to leave his job after sending angry e-mails to a colleague.

d) Experts believe that sending angry e-mails might damage your reputation.

Question 2: [2 POINTS] Answer the following questions in your own words according to the text.

a) Why did Marcus Wood feel sorry when he found out that his e-mail had gone viral?

b) Why do you think the writer mentions how much Phillips earned a year?

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Question 3: [1,5 POINTS] Find words or phrases in the text that correspond to the words and definitions given.

a) pressed (paragraph 1)

b) clothes (paragraph 1)

c) apologetic (paragraph 2)

d) for example (paragraph 3)

e) money (paragraph 3)

Question 4: [1,5 POINTS] Choose the correct option a, b, c or d for each question and COPY the sentence onto your answer sheet.

1. Marcus Wood thinks that his workers …

a) are always ill.

b) use bad language in the office.

c) need to improve their performance.

d) should leave their jobs in three months.

2. Wood's employees got their revenge …

a) by sending the e-mail to journalists.

b) by asking Wood to apologise.

c) by calling it the "World's worst e-mail".

d) through social media.

3. Richard Phillips' secretary …

a) shared the e-mails with others.

b) wrote back to him immediately.

c) ignored his e-mails.

d) didn't believe him.

Question 5: [3 POINTS] Write a short essay (about 120-150 words) on the following topic: The advantages and disadvantages of e-mail communication

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