

**CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME IN
FUNCTIONAL ENGLISH (CFE)****Term-End Examination****June, 2010**

02686

BEG-006 : JOINING THE WORK FORCE*Time : 3 hours**Maximum Marks : 100*

Note : All Questions are compulsory.

1. *Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow :*

Every time I say 'thank you' to a friend of mine she will turn around very seriously and rebuke me for it. She feels that by thanking her I am somehow devaluing our friendship. Similarly, many Indians feel that saying 'sorry' is not an adequate way of showing regret. Yet fluent speakers of English are forever saying 'thank you', 'please' and 'sorry'. They will thank the shopkeeper for making their bill, and the cashier for taking their money, and the delivery clerk for handing them the goods they have paid for. They will request the waiter to bring them the menu and then take their order and then thank him for serving them. Are good speakers of English over polite or are we Indians too rude ?

The fact is that markers of politeness differ from culture to culture and, therefore, from language to language. Also, in each culture the people you need to be polite to will differ. In Western societies, people are more formal and, therefore, polite with strangers and superiors but not with friends, colleagues and members of the family. For example, a friend who does not wish to be disturbed may tell another friend 'Get lost' or 'Keep quiet' but she will never say this to strangers or to people she does not know very well. In Eastern societies we show a lot of respect to age and tend to be formal even with members of the family if they are older than us and with colleagues we may meet everyday if they are slightly higher than us in hierarchy.

Allowing Options

Allowing options (or giving the appearance of allowing options, i.e. letting people decide for themselves) is absolutely central to Western notions of politeness but it has little or no place in Indian or Chinese conceptions of politeness. So, a good Indian or Chinese host will choose the dishes for you in a restaurant and go so far as to place the best pieces directly on to your plate. People from Western societies, who value autonomy more, may see this as needless imposition and feel offended. Therefore, in English even when recommending or offering

something to others or even when doing them a favour, one should always put it in a question form so that the ultimate choice is that of the person concerned. So we don't say, 'Sit down' we say 'Would you like to take a seat?' We don't say 'I'll carry your books for you', we say 'Can I carry your books for you?' In fact, even when giving orders, it is rare for someone to say 'Do this'. Most often it will be framed like a question. When the teacher tells the student 'Can you shut the door please?' it is not a question but an order. Similarly, when the boss tells his secretary, 'Can you type this letter immediately, please?' both know that the secretary cannot say 'no', only the order has been framed like a question to allow the illusion of an option because it is the more polite way to do it.

Asking for Favours

When we require a favour from others, we tend to make the amount of effort required look less. For instance we say, 'Can you hold this *for a second, please?*' or 'I've got a *bit of a problem....*' When submitting an assignment, for instance, it would be considered really rude if you were to say, 'Sir, please correct this assignment' or 'When will you return this assignment?' A more appropriate response would be. 'Sir, here is my assignment. When should I come for it?' or

'Please, Sir, could you look at my assignment ?'
Notice how in all the examples we are reducing the effort needed by the hearer to perform the task. The teacher may have to spend an hour 'looking' at the assignment but the speaker makes it sound as if it is a matter of minutes !

When we want a really big favour, we also make the introduction to the actual request quite long. For instance, if you only want to know the way to the washroom you can say 'Could you tell me the way to the washroom please ?' but if you want to borrow your friend's bicycle you would have to say, '*Would you mind very much* if I was to borrow your cycle for the weekend ?' or '*Do you think it would be alright* for me to take tomorrow off ?' and not 'Can I take tomorrow off ?'

- (a) Say whether the following statements are **True (T)** or **False (F)** : **10**
- (i) Traditionally Indians are very comfortable using 'thank you', 'sorry' frequently in their conversations.
 - (ii) It is always very rude and impolite to say "Go away !", "Keep quiet", etc.
 - (iii) Rules of polite behaviour are common across cultures.
 - (iv) Asians do not see giving an option as a necessary part of polite behaviour.

- (v) Whether an utterance is rude or not cannot be decided only by the language used.
- (vi) Among close friends and family, intimacy is marked by using impolite language.
- (vii) When asking for favours we make the task look easier than it really is.
- (viii) A student can ask a teacher "When will you return this assignment ?" Without being rude.
- (ix) Chinese and Indians share some common ideas about politeness.
- (x) Politeness demands that we give instructions instead of offering suggestions.

(b) Answers to all questions are **not** always present in the text for you to pick out. Reading with understanding requires you to interact with the text i.e., bring *your* knowledge to see if you agree or disagree with what the writer has said. The following questions are of this type. Answer them briefly :

- (i) Do you think Indians use 'thank you', 'sorry', etc. as frequently as Westerners ?
If not, why not ?

- (ii) In your culture, who do *you* have to be more polite to ? Why ?
 - (iii) In your culture, who can you be familiar and intimate with ? Give one example of the words, expression you will use to mark intimacy.
 - (iv) Who will *you* ask for a big favour ? How will you say it ?
- (c) Find words from the passage that have similar meaning. (any 6) : 6
Choice; try; people one works with; speak smoothly; sorrow; enough; not jokingly; scold.

2. What would you say in the following situations ? 12
Use appropriate modals and or expressions.
- (a) You have just had dinner at your boss's house. It's time to go home.
 - (b) Your colleague helped you to write a difficult report.
 - (c) You want your boss to let you go on holiday in August instead of September as previously arranged.
 - (d) Your office staff are in the habit of arriving 15 minutes late each morning. You want this to stop.
 - (e) You have hit somebody by mistake. You apologise for the same.
 - (f) Your mobile phone is not working. You want to make a telephone call from some one else's telephone.

3. Answer the following questions based on your reading of your course material. (Any 5) 5x4=20
- (a) What are the six questions you will ask and answer in writing someone's profile ?
 - (b) Should you be assertive or aggressive at a job interview ? Why/why not ?
 - (c) List six FAQs (frequently asked questions) at interviews ?
 - (d) Why is Group Discussion a part of the recruitment process ?
 - (e) What is body language ? Why is it important ?
 - (f) How is information normally arranged in a formal letter ?
 - (g) What are the three major characteristics of work ethics ?
 - (h) Illustrate the use of signalling and sign posting in presentations.

4. You have read the following advertisement :

WANTED MARKETING EXECUTIVES

(male/female)

A leading MNC requires fresh graduates with good communication skills and track of achieving targets

Apply : Highend Products, 121 Empire Building, Kasauli - 686 492. Ph : 0862-2483569.

by July 21,2010

- (a) Write a letter of application. 5
- (b) Write your CV and send it along with your application. 10
5. Write an informal letter on any one : 10
- (a) Thank a teacher who has specially helped you prepare for an examination.
- OR**
- (b) Write a letter of condolence to the mother of a friend who died in an accident.
6. (a) Here are sentences you've heard : 10
- Asha : Wait for me, Ashok.
- Ashok : I'm feeling too ill to wait for three more hours.
- Nisha : Why don't we meet tomorrow ?
It's too late now.
- Ashok : Yes, I absolutely agree. Let's meet tomorrow.
- Asha : No, no. I won't be coming tomorrow. Let's finish it today.
- Report what you heard to Ruma who wasn't present. Use *reported speech*.
- (b) Re - write the sentences by putting the parts in the right order : 5
- (i) for a long time/have lived/they/in the same house.
- (ii) every Friday/go/to the bank/I
- (iii) home/so late/did you come/why
- (iv) at the top of the page/please/ your name/write
- (v) around the town/walked/all morning we.