

BGE NYVK	C1	Listening Comprehension	
English for Business Communication		40 minutes*	40 marks
Sample Test 1			

* including 3 minutes' transfer time

INSTRUCTIONS

Read the instructions for each part of the paper carefully. Answer all the questions. Write in blue ink.

There are two parts to the test. You will hear each piece **twice**. For each part of the test, there will be time for you to look through the questions and time for you to check your answers.

While you are listening, write your answers on the **question paper**. You will have 3 minutes at the end of the test to copy your answers onto the separate **answer sheet**.

At the end of the test, hand in both this question paper and your answer sheet.

When you hear a signal, the text begins.

Text 1

You will hear an interview with Clare Rayner discussing why the lingerie company Victoria's Secret is opening in London.

I. | **Decide if the following statements are true (T) or false (F) according to the text.**
1-10

1. Victoria's Secret's summer sales have increased by 78%.
2. Clare Rayner works as an analyst for Victoria's Secret.
3. Victoria's Secret targets women who take pride in their appearance.
4. Both quality underwear and overwear are essential for feeling fabulous.
5. The online lingerie retailer Figleaves is owned by N Brown Group.
6. Victoria's Secret faces major rivalry from New Look and Primark.
7. Must-have lingerie is considered a throwaway garment by women.
8. Women's purchase of lingerie cannot be compared to buying shoes.
9. Quality underwear costs just slightly more than standard options.
10. Both lingerie and certain beauty services are performing well currently.

Text 2

You will hear Rosemary Jones, an economist talking about Korn Ferry, the headhunter firm and the executive search business.

II. While listening, fill in each gap in the notes with a maximum of 3 words.
11–20

Korn Ferry and the executive search business

Business boosted by:(11)

Core business: headwinds due to websites (12)

Korn Ferry: less revenue from searches

Finding new areas of business

Korn Ferry's new services

- improving(13)
- offering(14)
- working out important qualities for(15)

Competitors' new services

Heidrick & Struggles

- taking up(16)
- holding(17)

Egon Zehnder

- providing(18)

Russel Reynolds

- good at(19)

Headhunters: becoming rivals of(20)

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KEY

Text 1	
1.	F
2.	F
3.	T
4.	F
5.	T
6.	F
7.	F
8.	F
9.	T
10.	T
Text 2	
11.	stronger American economy
12.	LinkedIn/ career-networking
13.	workforce performance
14.	executive-development programmes
15.	middle managers
16.	culture-shaping
17.	coaching sessions
18.	assessments (of managers)
19.	succession planning
20.	(larger) management consultants

Text 1

Victoria's Secret

P: Presenter R: Clare Rayner

P: Its arrival on this side of the Atlantic comes hot on the heels of other glossy US brands that have been a success here in the UK like Abercrombie & Fitch and Hollister, but Victoria's Secret is launching in a competitive market. Despite the recession, women's underwear is selling well and summer sales are up by 78%. Theo Paphitis is backing a new chain of lingerie stores, Boux Avenue. So is there a gap in the UK market for posh underwear without an apparently high price tag? Clare Rayner is an independent retail analyst and is here. Who is this company aiming at, first of all, Clare?

C: Well, I think if you can judge by their advertising campaign, they're going for quite young ladies who are very body confident, let's say, and want something that's going to make them feel even more so because a lingerie purchase is an important purchase, part of the women's wardrobe that makes someone feel fabulous even if they're wearing very normal clothes over the top.

P: So we're talking about an aspirational brand?

C: In a way, but not aspirational price point because whilst they look fantastic and the products are sort of, if you look at their website, the models are all very glamorous. Nonetheless, the price point is quite tolerable, certainly aligned to the prices that we'd see across most of our current chains. So what interests me particularly is, is there room for this new entrant market? We've got Boux Avenue almost hot on their heels. They're doing all of the things that you'd expect to attract the younger buyer, scented petals in the bags and quality of service. They've invested heavily in fitters and the brand looks fabulous. Online, you've got people like Figleaves, who were recently been acquired by the N Brown Group. So it's a very hot and heavily contested market, but one that's doing well.

P: How easy then is it to make a profit from upmarket underwear if you're so conscious of having to keep the prices down?

C: Well, whilst the prices aren't high, they're certainly not low either. You're certainly not competing with the supermarkets who also sell lingerie, nor are they competing with what you'd call the cheaper end of fashion, the New Look and the Primark. But they're definitely a purchase that you'd think twice about, and it's not a throwaway garment. But for women, lingerie isn't a throwaway item. It's something that's a must have. And fit is very important. I mean, if you think about it, when a lady buys their underwear, it's akin to buying Clark shoes for your children. It's providing the best possible support for posture.

P: Explain what's going on in the recession as well, because it's intriguing to come across a retail market which apparently is doing so well just now. Why is that?

C: Well, again, it's one of those things that we can't do without. So if you're going to spend some money on underwear, there's a very fine line between buying something that's really nice and buying something that's very ordinary in terms of price. And if it's something that everybody has to have, well, certainly 50 odd percent of the population, then it's going to be largely unaffected by recession. But it's also one of those things that you look at. And I spoke to BBC's Penny Haslam about this a few weeks ago. It's one of those things that people seem to enjoy in spite of recession, a little treat, something to make themselves feel special. We talked about nail shops doing very well in recession. And lingerie seems to be one of those areas where perhaps clothing is down, but they're doing well nonetheless.

Text 2

Korn Ferry

Like its competitors, Korn Ferry has been buoyed by the stronger American economy. According to Hunt Scanlon Media, a trade publisher, the industry's revenues in America rose by 11% last year. Its core business faces fierce headwinds, however. LinkedIn and other career-networking websites are making it easier for companies to do their own recruiting. As a result of this trend, Korn Ferry collected less revenue from searches last year than in 2008.

Instead, its growth has come from pushing into new areas of business. Korn Ferry has bought a host of firms that aim to improve workforce performance even when there is no vacancy to fill. Recently it added Pivot Leadership, which offers executive-development programmes. Korn Ferry now gets just over half of its revenues from executive search, down from 90% a decade ago. For instance, after McGraw Hill was separated from its former parent, the newly independent business says Korn Ferry helped it work out what were the most important qualities its middle managers ought to have, and to evaluate whether they did in fact have them. These included being good at developing talent from within and at spotting market developments outside the firm.

Korn Ferry's competitors among the executive-search industry's "big five" have all pursued diversification to some extent. Heidrick & Struggles, the other publicly traded search firm, has plunged into culture-shaping. In 2012 it bought Senn Delaney, an outfit that analyses attitudes and communication among corporate staff, and holds coaching sessions to help managers become more effective. So when Heidrick was asked to find a new boss for a giant state oil firm, it was able to win further work helping it change its internal culture.

Egon Zehnder, a private Swiss headhunter, has long provided client firms with assessments of their managers. In 2009, on the orders of American regulators, Citigroup commissioned it to produce a report on the quality of the bank's bosses. And Russell Reynolds, another of the big five, is big in succession planning, also a growth area. As they take on such work, headhunters will find themselves increasingly in competition with larger management consultants. But as recruitment work becomes harder to find, they have little choice.