

Faculty of Arts

First Year Examination in Arts – Semester 2 - 2017/2018

ESL 1202 – Effective Communication: Written and Spoken

This paper consists of one question.

2 hours

40 marks

Imagine you are the Human Resources Manager of a company that develops software for insurance, finance and mobile phones named Quantech Software Services, USA. Your company is hoping to set up a child care center for the children of the employees and you have been asked to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of offering child care at the parent's place of work.

Read the information given below and write a report to Mr. Kevin Anderson, the Human Resources Director. You can make up any relevant information, offer your own interpretation of the situation and suggest recommendations. (Word limit: 1000-1300 words).

Your report should include the following sections:

- Title page
- Table of contents
- List of illustrations
- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusions
- Recommendations

Findings from secondary sources:

- Today's working parents struggle to find convenient and reliable child care that is also of high quality. An often overlooked solution is offering child care at the parent's place of work.
- Only 7 percent of companies nationwide offer on-site day care to employees. Since 2004, *Google* has opened two day care centers, accommodating approximately 200 children at two different sites. It has been so effective that it has struggled to meet the demand for child care and also has kept child care affordable for everyone. At present, they are planning on opening a third center.
- When an employer provides on-site child care, employees work hard, stay with their jobs, miss fewer work days. A 2014 study published in the *Journal of Managerial Psychology* found that employee performance was higher and absenteeism was lower among employees using on-site child care than employees using an off-site center or who had no children.
- Creating an office environment where family and work are not mutually exclusive and where productivity flourishes should be the new approach to work/life balance. After all, a company's most important asset is its people who will move the company forward through creativity and innovation. Fewer the distractions, the more engaged and productive they will be.
- The benefits of on-site child care retain current employees and work as a recruitment tool to attract new employees that may have recently started a family or planning to in the future.
- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2015, 34.4 million families in the United States had children under the age of 18. Both parents worked outside of the home in 60.6 percent of families. Evidently, child care is definitely a need in this country.

Findings from primary sources:

A questionnaire survey was conducted among 10 senior managers, 20 employees belonging to the middle management level and 20 employees from lower occupational ranks. They explained the advantages and disadvantages of providing on-site child care as follows:

Advantages			
	Senior Management	Middle Management	Lower Occupational Ranks
Improves productivity	57%	60%	88%
Helps retain and attract employees	55%	75%	76%
Convenient	60%	80%	89%
Creates good morale	50%	57%	70%
Offers emotional security	64%	71%	80%

Disadvantages			
	Senior Management	Middle Management	Lower Occupational Ranks
High cost	87%	72%	50%
Liability	90%	67%	40%
Distracted parent	85%	65%	37%

Five senior managers and four employees belonging to the middle management were interviewed and they expressed the following views:

- **High cost:** A common concern is the high cost of operating a full service center on-site. Furniture, rent, insurance, materials and staffing costs can be overwhelming.
- **Liability:** The liability on the business in case something happens to a child can be devastating.
- **Distracted parent:** For some, having a child so close can be distracting. A parent's frequent visits to the child can impact work productivity as well as harm a child's opportunity to establish relationships with friends.
