Distribute office mail

2.2.3.1 Introduction to the learning outcome

This unit covers competencies required to match relevant files and attachments, presentation of incoming mail to the in-charge, marking of incoming mail by the in-charge based on the subject, back incoming mail to the office administrator who acts on them and recording and circulating of the incoming mail

2.2.3.2 Performance Standard

2.2.3.2.1 Incoming mail is matched with relevant files and attachment as per the SOPs

2.2.3.2.2 Incoming mail is presented to the in-charge as per the organization structure

2.2.3.2.3 Incoming mail is marked by the in-charge based on the subject as per the organization structure

2.2.3.2.4 Incoming mail is delivered back to the office administrator who acts on them as per the instruction of the in -charge

2.2.3.2.5 Incoming mail is recorded and circulated to relevant offices as per the in-charge instructions

2.2.3 3 Information Sheet

Definitions of terms

Incoming Mail: This is the correspondence an organization receives from outside.

Registered Mail: It is a service offered by the Post Office for sending valuable information and documents.

Confidentiality: It is the state of keeping or being kept secret or private

Integrity: The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles

Inward Mail Register: This is the register or book where all non-personal incoming mail is recorded. It indicates such particulars such as date of receipt, addressor, addressee, subject and to whom it is issued.

Addresser: The person who gives address

Addressee: The person or organization to which something such as a letter or message is addressed to

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Attachment: It is an enclosure sent accompanying a mail

Matching of incoming mail with relevant files and attachment

Once the incoming mail is received in the mail room, the officers confirm whether there is any attachment. The attachments should be pinned to the letters which they accompany. Any missing or incorrect items should be reported promptly using an enclosure slip (a note drawing attention to the omission). The remittances should be entered in the remittances book. Check the remittances with the amounts indicated on the letters or accounts to which they are attached.

The amount, method or payment and the officer's initials should be written on the corner of the document. The remittances are then detached from the correspondence and passed to the cashier who sings for them in the remittances book.

Presentation of incoming mail to the in-charge

The mail room officer should read through all the mail and sort into piles urgent, important and routine. Get files for any relevant or previous correspondence and clip to the files. Distribute mail as quickly as possible after it has been received and sorted out as delays may prove expensive. Once the mail is received in the office, ensure that the urgent mail is delivered to the appropriate person as soon as possible and is dealt with before other types of mail. One should ensure that items that arrive in the same envelope are kept together. Before the letter is

dispatched to the specific individuals, the head of records office will decide on how items are to be handled. The officer should mark routine documents with filing instructions and pass to the officer responsible for filing.

Personal and confidential letters should be forwarded un-opened and the mail is finally handed

over to the boss sorted out as follows: (a) Registered mail on top

(b) Personal or confidential letters

(c) Letters of material requiring immediate attention

(d) Correspondence of general importance

(e) Routine mails.

In case the mails are intended for more than one department, it can be dealt with by listing on top of the letters the names or initials of officers who must see it. Secondly a rubber stamp may be used either at the face or reverse of the letter concerned to list offices/departments to which it

should sent and a circulation slip may be attached to such letters.

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At regular intervals, messengers are required to clear the sorting racks and trays and deliver the mails to various departments, sections and offices. For faster distribution, the following rules should be followed:

(a) Read and check the text of all recorded and date stamped letters in order to decide to whom it will be delivered.

(b) Send all the remittance to the cashier

(c) Route orders to the sales department

(d) Send application letters to the personnel department

(e) Send salary claims to the salaries and wages department

(f) Refer quotations and estimates to the purchasing department

(g) if the matter is to be dealt with by many officers, one can prepare a circulation slip.

Handling mail that requires attention of more than one officer

Mail room personnel may receive mails that require to be acted upon by more than one officer. In such a situation, a circulation slip is prepared. It consists a list of possible recipients attached to the mail. It is then passed to the first recipient on the list who then ticks off their name and forwards it to the second and so forth. The circulation slip should indicate where to forward the mail once the last recipient has seen it.

Example of a Circulation Slip

Circulation Slip Title……

Please read the attached document and pass it on the next person listed

Name Date cleared Action taken

Received by Mail Department and

circulated on:

Table 7

Content confidentiality and integrity in distributing office mail

(a) Confidential documents mean any document which contains any trade secret, sensitive information or private financial information pertaining to any party.

(b) The correspondence should be well labeled confidential

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(c) Limit access to any unauthorized person to the offices with confidential information

(d) The correspondence marked personal or confidential is delivered to a specific officer and should not be accessed by any other person.

Recording of incoming

In small departments, a book may be kept to record all incoming mail. This may not be the case in other organizations but they record at least those letters with enclosures such as cash or cheques. It is important to record non-personal mail in the inward mail register and all remittances in the remittance inward book. It indicates the date of receipt, addressor, addressee and subject and to whom it is addressed.

Inward register mail

DATE ADDRESER ADDRESSEE SUBJECT TO WHOM IT

IS ISSUED TO

Table 9

Source: Author

Importance of inward mail register

(a) It is a proof that a particular letter mentioned in it has actually been received

(b) It is a safeguard against the loss of any letter

(c) When a letter is handled over to the section concerned initials are obtained as an acknowledgement receipt

Mail attachment

Mail attachments are those documents that are attached together with the mail. These enclosures include:

(a) Cheques

(b) Price lists

(c) Insurance Policies

(d) Invoices

(e) Quotations

(f) Orders

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(g) Statements

Mail assessment

Responsibilities for handling different types of mail

- Personal mail which includes any communication addressed to a specific name. This should be directed to the specific individual to whom the letter is addressed and they should not be opened.

- Business mail includes letters, which are addressed to the company. These should be forwarded to the officers in charge of the departments to which the letter is referring to.

- Internal mail which includes mail within the organization, for example, memos, letters and other documents, e.g. circulars prepared within the organization. They are supposed to be dispatched to the various persons and departments or pinned on the notice boards

- Letters that require to be seen by more than one officer. A circulation slip should be prepared so that each of the concerned officers will have a look at it and act accordingly.

- For very urgent letter of immediate attention of several officers, photocopies should be made out of such letters and sent to all of them thereby saving time.

2.2.3.4 Learning Activities

Case Study

How can the receipt of incoming mail be organized to ensure prompt and proper handling within the firm? In what ways can distribution to departments be made efficient and error-free?

Practical Activities

Some incoming mail needs to be seen by more than one person or department in the firm. Suggest what can be done to make sure that three people see the contents of a letter?

(a) When there is no urgency

(b) When the matter is urgent.

2.2.3.5 Self-Assessment

1. Most of the incoming mail have attachment accompanying them. Name six examples of such attachments.

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2. Mail room personnel may receive mails that require to be acted upon by more than one officer. In such a situation, a circulation slip is prepared. Using a well labled diagram, draw a circulation slip.
3. How should mail clerk personnel handle confidential content when handling incoming mail?
4. All the incoming mail should be recorded in the mail inward register. What is the importance of the register?
5. Using a well labeled diagram, draw an Inward Mail Register
6. How can the mail clerk in charge of the registry ensure the proper matching of an a attachment with the incoming?
7. Some incoming letters require the attention of more than one person. Describe two ways in which such letters can be dealt with.
8. Explain the contents of an inward mail register?

2.2.3.6 Tools, Equipment, Supplies and Materials

· Computers

· Mailroom table

· Sorting trays

· Date/time stamp

· Addressing machine

· Franking machine

· Office glue

· Pin remover

· Stapler

· Paper punch

· Opening knife

· Internet connectivity

· Registers

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· Signage

· Organization chart

· Reference materials

· Office memory aids

· Mailroom equipment

2.2.3.7 References

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