

Bad News Letter Exercise (10%)

Purpose: in Week 3, we discussed some of the ways in which messages might appear muddled, offensive, aggressive, or negative. The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate your ability to work **entirely independently** and to assess, effectively and accurately, the quality of a flawed letter.

THE TASK

The document below has been sent to an off-site supervisor who is very removed from the office from which the letter was sent. This supervisor is very sensitive, prone to irritation, and doesn't really care much about people's feelings. In other words, the supervisor's priority is making the office run effectively, efficiently, and professionally. As far as they know, this office (Site A) is running perfectly fine.

The substance of the letter below is that it is conveying to this type of supervisor the need for new training modules. The news of this need is, above all else, is the focus of the letter. There are other inclusions intended to support that news, including an explanation of the need, the presentation of possible solutions, and so forth.

In a .doc or .pdf document, I'll expect you to answer the following questions with specific, focused answers that are detailed (and that draw on **specific, quoted** examples from the original text). Organize your answer into **proper paragraphs** with topic & concluding sentences and ensure each paragraph is an **appropriate length** (5-7 sentences). You should, too, be using terminology from class with references to paragraphing, direct/indirect messages, and other related or relevant terms from class. **Do not comment on grammar** or the header/footer formatting; this is not part of the assignment.

(1) Determine the degree to which **the arrangement of the content** is effective. Evaluate, in other words, the coherence of this letter's paragraphs. Does the letter seem coherent based on our definition of the term in class? What makes it so? Or, if it doesn't seem coherent to you, why is that? (150wds)

(2) What **structure** (direct or indirect) does this take? How did you determine the structure? How effective is it? Why (or, why not)? (150 wds)

(3) How well does the author handle **negative language/negative connotations**? (100 wds)

(4) How **consistent and appropriate** is the overall content of the message? (150wds)

(5) **With reference to ideas/terms/concepts** from some or all of Weeks 1, 2, 3, and 4, find three separate sentences that are **perfectly fine** in the context of the letter's focus. Which three sentences are actually helpful for someone considering this request? What is effective about their language, writing, tone, or "you-focus"? Be careful what you select, since even some "nice" sentences may not be relevant to the letter. (350-400wds)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR LETTER

Jennifer Laterbrachten
A Priori Site A
1001 Service Road, London, ON, N55 G73
Phone: (592) 555-3499
jen@sadsa.ca

8 February 2018

Anantha Chandha
Supervisor
A Priori Head Office
1001 One Thousand Street, Toronto, ON, N55 G77

SUBJECT: Staff concerns

Dear Anantha,

I just wanted to write to tell you that you're doing a really great job! However, our team is very dissatisfied with our current training and they agree that we need more training in order to ensure that the workplace is safe for all employees. We hope you will consider providing some additional training for us, because it will help ensure that our team meets the needs of our clients by maintaining the best possible work environment. As the HR lead at this location, I am always looking for ways to improve our office environment, and this new training is one such way to do that.

There are new harassment / workplace responsibility modules used by our parent company, *InvestaResource*, and these modules have proven effective in solving workplace issues around bullying and other similar behaviours. We would be very pleased to discuss these modules with you further. We need these modules because our own office has had some instances of workplace bullying, and the staff has, in some cases, expressed concern about the absence of sensitivity training in the workplace. As a result, staff members feel largely unprepared and unmotivated to work. Please let me know if the proposed solution to the problem is something in which you would be interested. I look forward to hearing from you. What do you think?

Best wishes,
Jennifer