

Bad News Letter Written Assignment

Introduction: bad-news letters are challenging because nobody likes bad news. Bad-news letters have the potential to make the recipient angry and resentful, and most of us don't want to create anger and resentment, especially in a professional context.

Goal: the goal of this assignment is for you to write a bad-news letter using one of the scenarios below:

1. As a city council member for the City of Rochester, you have received a letter from a city resident who lives and works on Park Avenue who has a complaint about the potholes on that street. The constituent demands that something be done about the potholes immediately. The letter writer describes a recent accident in which the driver of a minivan swerved to avoid a pothole and hit a bicyclist. The minivan driver and the child in the backseat were scared but unhurt. The bicyclist was rushed to the hospital with a broken elbow and multiple cuts and scrapes. The letter writer wants the pothole problem addressed now. The problem is that the city of Rochester repairs its potholes between May and September, and it is currently February.
2. As the Vice President of MCC, you receive a letter from a student who has not been accepted into the nursing program and believes the selection process is unfair. The student demands that the decision be reversed and shares an example of a student with a lower GPA who was accepted into the program over the letter writer. The problem is that the application process is very competitive, based on a points system, GPA in specific courses (not overall), and the academic department itself, not the Vice President, makes admissions decisions.
3. As the owner of several tattoo studios, you have received a letter from a woman whose 19 year old daughter recently received a tattoo at one of the shops you own. The mother is demanding that you pay for the tattoo to be removed because she doesn't believe tattoos are appropriate for young women, especially those who still live at home. The problem is that the age of consent for tattoos is 18 in New York State, and you know all your artists check identification and require clients to sign consent forms.

Details: make up any details you need to address the situation you chose. In option 1, write a bad-news letter to your constituent explaining why the potholes on Park Avenue will not be immediately fixed. In option 2, write a bad-news letter to the student in which you explain why the application decision will not be reversed. In option 3, write a bad-news letter to the mother in which you explain that you will not be paying for tattoo removal.

Organization: include the five parts listed in the middle of page 165 in your textbook—one part per paragraph.

Attach: your assignment as a word doc.

Grading: the assignment is worth 35 points. See the rubric following the assignment for grading details.

Format: follow the block business letter format we discussed in week three and that is found on page 142 in your textbook.

	Excellent	Average	Approaching Average	Failing
Format and Structure	-block format with appropriate spacing is employed without error -return address, inside address, greeting, and closing (sender's name and title) are present, appropriately punctuated, and professional -subject line is present, professional, and does not provide the bad news directly	-block format with appropriate spacing is employed with minimal error -return address, inside address, greeting, and closing (sender's name and title) are present, appropriately punctuated, and professional with minimal error -subject line is present, and clear, and does not provide the bad news directly	-block format is employed with multiple errors - return address, inside address, greeting, and closing (sender's name and title) are not all included and/or appropriately placed or punctuated -subject line communicates bad news directly	-does not employ block format -- return address, inside address, greeting, and closing (sender's name and title) are not included -subject line is not present
Content	-<i>Nod</i> expertly establishes contact and creates rapport -what constituent is asking for is stated concretely and clearly -includes all relevant ideas and details in implicit denial of the request, using no negative language	-<i>Nod</i> adequately establishes contact and creates rapport -what constituent is asking for is stated clearly -includes all relevant ideas and details in request -denial may be more explicit than implicit,	-<i>Nod</i> is confusing and/or does not establish rapport -does not clearly state what constituent is asking for -does not include all relevant ideas and details in request -denial is explicit and employs negative language	-does not include <i>Nod</i> --does not state what constituent is asking for -ideas and details are minimal, confusing, or not connected to assignment

	-a <i>Sweetener</i> is offered specifically and clearly, if appropriate -ending is constructive and courteous	may employ minimal negative language -a <i>Sweetener</i> is adequately offered, if appropriate -ending is courteous	-a <i>Sweetener</i> is not offered, if appropriate -ending is confusing or unprofessional	-denial is explicit and employs negative language -a <i>Sweetener</i> is not offered, if appropriate -ending is not included
Grammar/ Usage	-uses professional and formal language throughout -demonstrates control of the conventions with no errors	-uses professional and formal language throughout -demonstrates basic control exhibiting occasional errors that do not hinder comprehension	-language is informal or inappropriate -demonstrates emerging control, exhibiting frequent errors that make comprehension difficult or indicate a lack of understanding of conventions of grammar	-language is informal or inappropriate -demonstrates minimal or no control of conventions