CHAPTER 8
Persuasive Messages

Writing Plan for a Persuasive Request

Capture the reader’s attention.
Describe a problem, state something unexpected, suggest reader benefits, offer praise or compliments, or ask a stimulating question.

Opening
Body
Closing

Build interest.
• Explain logically and concisely the purpose of the request.
• Prove its merit.
• Use facts, statistics, and expert opinion.

Reduce resistance.
• Anticipate objections.
• Offer counterarguments.
• Establish credibility.
• Demonstrate competence.
• Show the value of your proposal.

Motivate action.
• Ask for a particular action.
• Make it easy to respond.
• Show courtesy, respect, and gratitude.

Requesting Favors and Actions

When is persuasion necessary?
Requests for time, money, information, special privileges, and cooperation require persuasion.

Why are requests granted?
• Requests may be granted because the receivers
  • are genuinely interested in your project.
  • see benefits for others.
  • expect goodwill potential for themselves.
  • feel obligated as professionals to contribute their time or expertise to “pay their dues.”
Persuading Within Organizations

Persuading subordinates
- Instructions or directives moving downward usually require little persuasion. However, persuasion may be necessary to
  - generate “buy-in”
  - ask workers to perform outside their work roles
  - accept changes not in their best interests.

Persuading the boss
- In requests moving upward
  - provide evidence.
  - don’t ask for too much.
  - use words such as “suggest” and “recommend.”
- Sentences should sound nonthreatening, for example, “It might be a good idea if....”

Making Claims and Requesting Adjustments (Complaint Letters)
- Avoid sounding angry, emotional, or irrational.
- Begin with a compliment, point of agreement, statement of the problem, or a brief review of action you have taken to resolve the problem.
- Provide identifying data.
- Explain why the receiver is responsible.

Making Claims and Requesting Adjustments (Complaint Letters)
- Enclose document copies supporting your claim.
- Appeal to the receiver's fairness, ethical and legal responsibilities, and desire for customer satisfaction.
- Describe your feelings and your disappointment.
- Close by telling exactly what you want done.

AIDA Writing Plan for a Sales Letter

Capture the ATTENTION of the reader.
Offer something valuable, promise a benefit, ask a question, provide a quotation, and so forth.

Build INTEREST.
Emphasize a central selling point. Make rational and emotional appeals.
Elicit DESIRE.

To reduce resistance, use testimonials, money-back guarantees, free samples, performance tests, or other techniques.

Motivate ACTION.

Offer a gift, promise an incentive, limit the offer, set a deadline, or guarantee satisfaction. Include a P.S. with a special inducement.

Writing Successful Online Sales Messages

- Communicate only with those who have given permission!
- Craft a catchy subject line.
- Keep the main information "above the fold."
- Make the message short, conversational, and focused.
- Convey urgency.
- Sprinkle testimonials throughout the copy.
- Provide a means for opting out.

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