**COMMUNICATION – FILL-IN-THE BLANK: SESSION 4**

**Business Communication: Process and Product – 9th Edition**

**Mary Ellen Guffey and Dana Loewy; Cengage Learning 2018 (ISBN: 978-1-305-95796-1)**

**Chapter Eight: Positive Messages**

In the workplace most messages are positive or neutral and, therefore, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

In Phase 1, prewriting, you will need to spend some time \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ your task.

In Phase 2, drafting, you will first want to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the files, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ documentation, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ your message.

Phase 3, revising, involves putting the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on your message.

When you write messages that request information or action and you think your request will be received positively, start with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

If several questions must be asked, you have two choices: You can ask the most important question first, or you can begin with a summary \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of a message that requests information or action provides necessary details.

Whenever possible, focus on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the reader.

In the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of your message, tell the reader courteously what is to be done.

Showing appreciation is always appropriate, but try to do so in a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ manner.

Often, your message will respond directly and favorably to requests for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

In the first sentence of a direct reply email, deliver the information the reader wants \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

When customers or prospective customers inquire about products or services, your response should do more than merely supply answers. Try to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ your organization and products.

We live in an age when vocal individuals can start a firestorm of criticism online or become powerful brand ambassadors who champion certain products. Therefore, businesses must \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to social media comments about themselves and, if necessary, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Social media marketing experts are developing \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to provide organizations with tools for strategic decision making in various situations.

Customer reviews online are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for savvy businesses to improve their products or services and may serve as a free and efficient crowdsourced quality-control system.

Social media experts say that not every comment on the Web merits a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. They recommend responding to posts only when you can add value.

As businesses increasingly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with their customers and the public online, they develop rules of engagement - best practices: (1) be positive, (2) be honest, (3) be transparent, and (4) be helpful.

In business, things can and do go wrong. When you as a customer must write to identify or correct a wrong, the message is called a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

In an age of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ communication, claims written as letters still play an important role even as they are being replaced by telephone calls, emails, and social media posts.

When you, as a customer, have a legitimate claim, you can expect a positive response from a company. Smart businesses want to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from their customers.

Open your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with a compliment, a point of agreement, a statement of the problem, a brief review of action you have taken to resolve problem, or a clear statement of the action you want.

In the body of a claim message, explain the problem and justify your request. Provide the necessary details so that the difficulty can be corrected without further \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

End a claim message with a courteous statement that promotes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and summarizes your action request.

Finally, in making claims, act \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Revising a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ message will help to temper its original tone, describe the problem objectively, and provide all the facts and figures.

Even the best-run and best-loved businesses occasionally receive claims or complaints from consumers.

When a company receives a claim and decides to respond favorably, the message is called an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

In responding to customer claims, you must first decide whether to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the claim.

You have three goals in adjustment messages:

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Instead of beginning with a review of what went wrong, present the good news in an adjustment message \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

How to rebuild lost confidence depends on the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

People like to hear apologies. A well-timed apology can increase the culprits’ influence and likeability. They will be perceived as more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

The primary focus of an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ message is on how you are complying with the request, how the problem occurred, and how you are working to prevent recurrence.

The best \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ messages – whether thanks, congratulations, praise, or sympathy – concentrate on the **FIVE S’s**: (1) Selfless, (2) Specific, (3) Sincere, (4) Spontaneous, and (5) Short.

**Thank You – Goodwill – Sympathy and Condolences**

**Chapter Nine: Negative Messages**

The truth is that everyone occasionally must deliver \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in business. Because bad news disappoints, irritates, and sometimes angers the receiver, such messages must be written carefully.

Goals in Conveying Unfavorable News, include:

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Thinking through the entire writing process is especially important when writing bad-news messages, because the way bad news is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ often determines how it is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

In Phase 1 (prewriting), you need to analyze the bad news and anticipate its \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on the receiver.

Choose words that show that you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the reader as a responsible, valuable person.

Select the best \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to deliver the bad news.

In Phase 2 (drafting), you will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ information and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for ideas.

In Phase 3 (revising), you will read over your message carefully to ensure that it says what you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

One of the first steps you will take before delivering negative news is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ how your receiver will react to this news.

The direct strategy may be more effective in situations such as the following:

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The indirect strategy does not reveal the bad news \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

It enables you to keep the reader’s attention until you’re ready to explain the reasons for the bad news.

Many communicators prefer to use the indirect strategy to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ negative news.

Typical instances in which the indirect strategy works well:

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Whether to use the direct or indirect strategy \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ largely on the situation, the reaction you expect from the audience, and your goals.

Even though it may be impossible to make the receiver happy when delivering negative news, you can reduce bad feelings and resentment by structuring your message \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Most \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ messages contain some or all of these parts: buffer, reasons, bad news, and closing.

A \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is a device to reduce shock or pain.

Not all business communication authors agree that buffers increase the effectiveness of negative messages. However, in many cultures \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ bad news is appreciated.

The following are buffer possibilities:

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are often part of negative-news messages.

Professional writer John Kador recommends what he calls the Five Rs model for effective \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in business messages: (1) Recognition, (2) Responsibility, (3) Restitution, (4) Remorse, and (5) Repeating.

One of the hardest things to do in negative messages is to convey sympathy and empathy. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is the ability to understand and enter into the feelings of another.

Providing an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ reduces feelings of ill will and improves the chances that readers will accept the bad news.

Although you can’t prevent the disappointment that bad news brings, you can reduce the pain somewhat by breaking the news \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

After explaining the bad news sensitively, close the message with a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ statement that promotes goodwill.

When you must refuse typical requests, you will first think about how the receiver will react to your refusal and decide whether to use the direct or the indirect strategy. If you have any doubt, use the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ strategy.

Today’s impatient, hyperconnected consumers eagerly embrace the idea of delivering their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to social networking sites rather than calling customer service departments.

Businesses can employ some of the following effective strategies to manage negative news on social networking sites and blogs:

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Smart organizations involved in a crisis prefer to communicate the news \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to employees and stakeholders.

Morale can be destroyed when employees learn of major events affecting their jobs through the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or from news accounts – rather than from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.