

MGMT1201: Business Communication

Assignment: Negative Message

This assignment is worth 10% of your overall grade.

Assignment Overview:

The purpose of this assignment is to write a negative message. Communicating unfavourable news doesn't have to result in bad feelings. Strategic negative messages are unique in their special attention to content, structure, context and tone.

There are seven goals to keep in mind when delivering negative news, in person or in written form:

1. Be clear and concise in order to not require additional clarification.
2. Help the receiver understand and accept the news.
3. Maintain trust and respect for the business or organization and for the receiver.
4. Avoid legal liability or erroneous admission of guilt or culpability.
5. Maintain the relationship, even if a formal association is being terminated.
6. Reduce the anxiety associated with the negative news to increase comprehension.
7. Achieve the designated business outcome.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this assignment, you will be able to:

- Create digitally-written professional communications for readability, coherence, clarity, conciseness and tone.
- Apply research tools to enhance communication

Directions:

As part of the crisis management and public relations team for Domino's Pizza, you have been asked to write a letter to Mr. Santiago Cortez – who recently got a Domino's tattoo and has been contacting Domino's to receive his prize of free pizza for life – explaining that Domino's Pizza is not continuing the "Domino's Forever" campaign. The campaign was cancelled effective noon September 7, 2019. Your title at Domino's Pizza is Media Response Specialist. The contact information for Domino's Pizza and Mr. Cortez is:

Domino's Pizza Inc.
20 Frank Lloyd Wright Drive
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106, USA

Mr. Santiago Cortez
5305 42A Ave
Red Deer, AB T4N 3A6

1. Read the background information provided.
2. Read the rubric.
3. Compose a letter announcing that the "Domino's Forever" campaign has been cancelled, **using the negative, indirect method.**

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4. Ensure that the message meets the seven goals of writing negative messages provided in the assignment overview, and which are developed in more detail in your textbook.

You may use the following resources:

1. The course textbook
2. Course content
3. Background information

Background Information:

400 People Got a Domino's Tattoo for Free Pizza. Why do Brands Promote these Body-Altering Stunts?



(Red Rum Tattoo, 2018)

People get tattoos for any number of reasons. For almost 400 people recently, that reason was free pizza for life.

In Russia, Domino's Pizza offered customers "100 pizzas a year for 100 years" for free if they tattooed the company's logo on themselves and then shared the image to social media with the hashtag #DominosForever, the **Wall Street Journal** reports. The promotion was supposed to run for two months, but the pizza chain had to discontinue it after four days because so many people were willing to ink up. In the end, 381 people qualified for the deal.

The reason many of them chose to get red-and-blue logos tattooed prominently on themselves was not solely because of an overwhelming loyalty to MeatZZas™. Per the **Wall Street Journal**, "A stagnant economy has left average disposable incomes stuck around \$500 a month" in Russia. Several people whom the paper interviewed got the tattoos because they needed the free food.

People occasionally pay to ink things like the Harley-Davidson wings and Apple apples with no financial incentive from the brands whatsoever; they truly just feel an affinity. But offering free stuff in exchange for customers getting tattoos of a company's logo is a different dynamic. There's also been a trend of companies not-so-subtly encouraging employees to get tattoos of their employers' logo. It might seem funny at first glance, but it's actually a pretty bleak statement on what brands are willing to do for some fleeting social media marketing buzz and the economic reasons people comply.

Selling your Skin for Free Stuff

While Domino's is one of the more high-profile global brands to pull this stunt, there's a storied history of restaurants offering free food in exchange for walking

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human signage — or in the case of Melt, an Ohio-based grilled cheese chain, a more modest 25 percent off for life. According to a gallery on the chain’s website, at least 900 people have tatted the brand’s cheesy bread-and-crossbones logo on themselves for this deal. The sandwiches must be incredible, because the “Kindergarten,” a pretty classic-looking grilled cheese, goes for \$7, which means you save about \$1.25.

Why People Tattoo Themselves for Free Stuff

“When people are offered something for free, they have this extreme positive reaction that clouds their judgment. They are ready to forgo options that are, rationally speaking, better for them,” a marketing professional told the **Pacific Standard** in 2015. The case of tattooing yourself for free burritos is an extreme instance of that. But for many of the Muscovites who wanted free pizza, it was almost an act of desperation. Paying the equivalent of \$30 for a tattoo in exchange for a lifetime of worry-free eating was worth it to them, which is a disturbing commentary on both Russian economics and the fact that a brand was so flippant in its marketing that it didn’t realize that could be the case.

Some of these situations are fuzzier. People do have legitimate bonds with brands. In 2014, HBO ran a promotion with a small tattoo parlor near Comic-Con in San Diego, paying for 111 fans to get HBO-approved *Game of Thrones* tattoos. That is truly a cohort with a rabid fan base who didn’t necessarily consider it a promotion — they likely wanted *GoT* tattoos anyway.

And it could be similar for Anytime Fitness: On the brand’s blog, many members discuss how the logo has meaning for them, as a representation on a journey to health and as a symbol of their membership in a community. “Anytime Fitness Concord really is a family. My tattoo represents this family, and a decision to live my life to the fullest,” one wrote.

But the brand is probably getting a lot more out of it than you are. Anytime has received features in multiple national publications for its tattooing stunts. What happens when you quit that job, or don’t like pizza anymore, or gain all the weight back, and that tattoo is still there, seemingly mocking you?

On a final practical note: Tattoo removal costs thousands of dollars and is really painful. And unlike Domino’s 30-minute delivery guarantee policy, lasers are not guaranteed to remove a tattoo completely.

References

Adapted from Wischhover, Cheryl. (2019, Sept. 17). 400 people got a Domino’s tattoo for free pizza. Why do brands promote these body-altering stunts? *Vox*. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2018/9/17/17871162/dominos-pizza-tattoos>

Red Rum Tattoo. (Photographer). (2018). *Domino’s Pizza tattoos earn some Russians ‘free pizza for life.’* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-45445668>

The assignment must meet the following guidelines:

1. A minimum of 225-250 words (at least one typed page). If using a second page, ensure that the second page includes relevant information to convince the reader to continue to read the second page.
2. This is a **business document** and follows the business letter format including spacing as shown on page 457 of the textbook. A business document follows these principles:

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- a. Font type: Calibri or Arial
 - b. Font size: 10 or 11
 - c. Single spaced, according to business letter format
 - d. Left justified, do not indent paragraphs
3. Include an APA style title page with: running head, title of the assignment, your name and ID number, school name, your instructor's name, and the date you are submitting the assignment (Times New Roman, 12-point font, double-spaced). **The letter/email will not be in APA style.**
 4. Organize and structure:
 - Create a letterhead using a Microsoft Office template. Do not use logos or other official images, unless these sources are correctly cited.
 - Writing negative, indirect messages requires three to four paragraphs, as indicated by the **indirect format**. Use more paragraphs and organization tools to create more effective use of white space as necessary.
 - Follow the correct format for writing letters. Please see Appendix C in your textbook, *Business Communication: Polishing Your Professional Presence*
 5. Proofread for correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, syntax, and English language usage.
 6. You must cite ALL of your sources using APA formatting. If you did not use sources in your message, you do not need a reference page. Please refer to Bow Valley College's Learning Resource Services Page on citations: <http://bowvalleycollege.libguides.com/apa-style/citation> for further information on APA references.
 7. Your paper will be marked in accordance with the Rubric attached to this assignment.
 8. Submit your assignment in to the Brightspace/D2L dropbox provided.

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

You will receive a mark of zero if your work is copied or plagiarized and further disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the academic honesty policy.

Ensure you are aware of the College policies on Academic Honesty and also Plagiarism. Academic dishonesty and plagiarism are taken very seriously at the College even if the dishonesty or plagiarism is unintentional. Please also know that taking credit for work you did not contribute to as it is also considered Academic Dishonesty and will be reported.

Please review the *Academic Honesty Module* with respect to academic honesty and plagiarism. This information is located on Brightspace/D2L within the Program pages. (Location: <https://d2l.bowvalleycollege.ca/d2l/home> > Select your Program of Study

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under the heading My Programs > Select the Academic Honesty Module under the Content Browser)

Turnitin

When you submit your assignment, it will go through Turnitin. Turnitin is a web-based service that checks the assignment against its database of materials that contain other learners' work as well as electronic academic materials.

It is highly recommended that you use the Turnitin tool to make improvements to your paper before you submit the final version. Be aware of the due date for the assignment. Submit your first draft long before the deadline and allow yourself time to make changes. Then, submit your final version by the deadline.

Learners find the Turnitin report useful for editing papers. The report will include incorrect use of referencing, too many quotes, and paraphrases. If the Turnitin report, for your first draft, shows a high percentage of matching text, this will give you an opportunity to review and edit your assignment for proper citations and more original analysis. Once you make your edits, it is possible to submit your work to Turnitin again. Turnitin will know not to match the text in your second draft with text in your first draft, and so on. It is advisable to wait at least 24 hours before you submit the second draft.

Faculty find Turnitin useful as a tool to teach learners proper citation practices and highlight the need for more learner originality. Faculty can also use Turnitin as a tool to detect possible instances of plagiarism and academic dishonesty.