

BUSI 3660

Professional Communication: Negative-News Letter

Purpose

One very important communication skill is the ability to express yourself clearly and professionally. This involves having a clear main idea, grouping and ordering supporting information in a logical way, using clear language, and using clear visual design. It also involves selecting key information and presenting it as efficiently as possible. For this assignment, you will use information from a short case to write a clear, concise, and professional letter delivering negative news.

Case

In an aggressive expansion effort, Jamba became a good customer of your software company. You have enjoyed the business it brought, and you are quite fond of its product, especially the mango-a-go-go[®] and the strawberry surf rider[™] smoothies. Jamba Inc. is in the midst of expanding its menu with the goal of becoming the Starbucks of the smoothies and juices. “Just as Starbucks defined the category of coffee, Jamba has the opportunity to define the category of the healthy snack,” said market analyst Brian Moore. One goal of Jamba is to boost the frequency of customer visits by offering some products that are more filling. It has added bowls, sandwiches, and flatbreads to its menu. It is also offering smoothies made with fresh ingredients, such as beets, kale, and ginger, so that a smoothie could substitute for a meal.

You receive a letter from Jim Tate, your business contact at Jamba. He asks you to do him and Jamba a favor. He wants to set up a juice-tasting bar in your company cafeteria to test his new experimental drinks. All the drinks would be free, of course, but employees would have to fill out forms to evaluate each recipe. The details could be worked out later.

You definitely support healthy snacks, but you think the idea is terrible. First of all, your company doesn't even have a cafeteria. It has a small lunchroom, and employees bring their own food. Second, you would be embarrassed to ask your new boss to do this favor for Jamba despite the business it has brought to your company.

Your Task

Write a letter that maintains good customer relations with Jamba but refuses the request. What reasons can you give, and what alternatives are available? Address your letter Mr. Jim Tate, Vice President, Product Development, Jamba Inc., 3001 Dallas Pkwy Ste. 140, Frisco, TX 75034.

Check the format of block-style letters pages 530 and 531 in your textbook. As you plan and write your letter, consider the following points:

1. Find a tactful, professional way to deny the request while making sure Jim Tate will not feel guilty for asking.
2. Decide whether to use the direct or indirect approach.

3. Present clear, pertinent facts using the information available in the case. You may make up logical, necessary information.
4. Write clearly, concisely, and professionally.
5. Proofread your email to avoid spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.

You may work individually or with your group members. You will be graded with the Professional, Clear, and Concise Rubric, which is available on Canvas.