

Communication Portfolio

ENGL 202D: Business Writing | Fall 2017 | Dr. Scott

Overview

In working with employers and colleagues, it's imperative that you attend closely to matters of both tone and content in order to ensure the successful delivery of your message. Accordingly, one of the foremost objectives of ENGL 202D is to guide you through this process of learning to communicate effectively. In our course's second major assignment, the communication portfolio, you will demonstrate effective business writing by providing five (5) examples of your everyday business communication.

Instructions

The following everyday business communication examples are required in your portfolio:

1. Request message (e-mail)
2. Follow-up request message (genre of your choice)
3. Negative news message (e-mail)
4. Thank-you note (letter)
5. Rhetorical analysis of the aforementioned four (4) items (memo)

Combine all items into a single Word document, remembering to attend to formatting and document design. Upload this single file to Canvas.

Scenario #1: Request message (email)

You recently found what appears to be an ideal job or internship opportunity with your dream employer. You are planning to apply for the position. Before you do so, though, you'd like to find out more. Write an email in which you request specific information about the position from your prospective employer. In this email, you should not present yourself as a student begrudgingly completing a class assignment but as someone who is informed and interested in learning more about the position. Consider: What information do you need to collect before applying for this job or internship? Do you think the employer will give you that information? How can you ensure that you appear excited about the position but not overeager or flippant?

Scenario #2: Follow-up request (genre of your choice)

Professionals are busy people, and they often ignore non-critical emails. Assuming that your email from #1 above was not answered, write a second request for information. In writing this second request, how might you word your request so as to not alienate your recipient? How much do you need to “remind” your recipient about the content of your previous email request? Do you want to write a script for a telephone call, initiate an instant-messaging communication, or send another email? Which communication genre might work best given your subject matter?

Scenario #3: Negative news message (email)

You’ve gotten the job or internship, and you’re enjoying your corner office with a view. You quickly realize, though, that your boss is under the impression that you have technological expertise that you don’t. Indeed, your boss has asked you to design a new company Web site from scratch, not realizing that you lack the professional Web design experience and knowledge to help user-test and troubleshoot the site. In a polite but clear fashion, write an email to your boss explaining why you cannot create the Web site and suggesting an alternative plan. How do you deny a request that seems simple to your boss? How do you maintain your boss’s trust in your know-how?

Scenario #4: Thank-you note (letter)

You’ve successfully navigated the Web site dilemma, and after a solid stint at the company, you’ve decided it’s time to move on to a new opportunity. Realizing that you were lucky to work with such a generous employer, you decide to send a thank-you letter to your boss. How can you make the thank-you letter specific and convincing? How do you preserve the lines of communication so that if you need a recommendation down the road your boss will be glad to help?

Scenario #5: Rhetorical analysis (memo)

Now that you’ve written four (4) communication samples, convince me that you’ve made good communication decisions with respect to audience, genre expectations, and content. Write a memo (of no more than 500 words) in which you provide an analysis of the content of your portfolio. Your goal here is to give me confidence that you can think strategically about business communication. In your memo, carefully explain your rhetorical choices using language from *Business Communication Essentials*. From reviewing your writing, what do you think are your strengths and weaknesses as a writer (invention, organization, tone, etc.)?