

Ineffective

Social media strategy - Message (HTML)

To: <Customer service list>
Cc:
Subject: Social media strategy

All,

The consultant we discussed at last week's status meeting is available to meet next Tuesday. This guy has helped a number of customer service organizations, and he'll be available to give us some advice and figure out what our needs are.

Let's not waste this opportunity to learn more about social media tools for customer service. I'd like everyone to prepare some intelligent questions ahead of time. We'll forward them to Mr. Johnson so that he can think about them before the meeting. I was rather disappointed last time we brought in an expert like this; I have to beg these people to talk to us, and most of you just sat and stared during the Q&A session.

Details:
Tuesday
10:00 a.m. to whenever
Mt. Shasta room

I consider it very important for everyone on the team to be at this meeting, but if you won't attend, at least try to phone in so you can hear what's going on.

Shari

(a) The vague subject line fails to alert people to the upcoming meeting.

(b) The greeting is cold and off-putting.

(c) The opening paragraph fails to provide necessary background information for anyone who missed the meeting.

(d) A negative, accusatory tone puts readers on the defensive, and the request for action fails to clarify who needs to do what by when.

(e) The meeting information includes the day, but not the date, which could lead to confusion.

(f) The wording here assumes that people who won't attend don't want to, which might not be true. The writer also fails to invite questions ahead of the meeting.

(g) The lack of a closing (such as "Thank you") contributes to the harsh, abrupt tone.

(h) The writer fails to provide alternative contact information or invite questions about the meeting.

(a) An informative subject line helps people grasp important details immediately.

(b) The greeting is friendly without being too casual.

(c) The opening paragraph fills in missing information so that everyone can grasp the importance of the message.

(d) This upbeat paragraph emphasizes the positive value of the meeting, and the request provides enough information to enable readers to respond.

(e) The date eliminates scheduling uncertainty.

(f) The writer offers everyone a chance to participate, without making anyone feel guilty about not being able to attend in person. The closing paragraph invites questions ahead of time so they don't derail the meeting.

(g) Like the greeting, the close has a warm and personal tone, without being too casual.

(h) The email signature provides additional information and alternative contact options.

Effective

Social media strategy meeting, Tues 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. - Message (HTML)

From: shari.washington@sprenco.com
To: <Customer service list>
Cc:
Subject: Social media strategy meeting, Tues 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Hi team,

The customer service consultant we discussed at last week's status meeting is available to talk with us next Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. For those of you who missed the meeting, Walter Johnson has helped a number of organizations use social media tools to improve customer service programs. He's agreed to spend several hours with us to answer any questions we have about these technologies.

This meeting is a great opportunity for us to learn about important innovations in customer service, so let's make sure get the most out of it. I'd like each of the project leaders to brainstorm with your groups and prepare questions that are relevant to your specific parts of the social media project. Please email these questions to Pete (peter.laws@sprenco.com) by the end of the day Thursday, and he'll forward them to Mr. Johnson before the meeting.

Details:
Tuesday, March 12
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Mt. Shasta room
We're ordering in sandwiches; please register your choice on the intranet by Monday at 5:00 p.m.

For those who can't attend in person, please dial in on the conference line. You'll be able to see the slides via WebEx, as usual. If you have any questions, feel free to drop by my office any time on Friday.

Thanks,
Shari

Shari Washington
Group Manager, Retail Systems
Office: 747-555-1852
Mobile: 747-555-6868

Figure 1.2 Effective Professional Communication

At first glance, the first email message looks like a reasonable attempt at communicating with the members of a project team. However, review the blue annotations to see just how many problems the message really has.