

## KEY TERMS

buffer, 190  
 refusal of a request, 193  
 compromise, 194

primary goal, 193  
 indirect claims, 197  
 adjustment refusals, 203

point of common agreement, 203  
 Negative announcements, 208

## CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

- 1 Give examples of times (or situations) when directness would be appropriate for responses giving negative information. **LO1**
- 2 Writing in the indirect order usually requires more words than does writing in the direct order. Since conciseness is a virtue in writing, how can the indirect order be justified? **LO1**
- 3 What strategy is best in a message refusing a request when the reasons for the refusal are strictly in the writer's best interests? **LO3**
- 4 "Apologies in refusals are negative because they call attention to what you are refusing. Thus, you should avoid using them." Discuss. **LO3**
- 5 Explain how a claim message can be either direct or indirect. **LO4**
- 6 "If I'm not emotional in my claim messages, the readers won't understand how upset I am." Respond to this statement. **LO4**
- 7 Some business writers explain an adjustment refusal simply by saying that company policy did not permit granting claims in such cases. Is this explanation adequate? Discuss. **LO5**
- 8 Negative announcements usually need to include much more than the announcement. Explain. **LO6**
- 9 Give examples of negative announcements that would be appropriately written in the direct order. **LO6**

## SKILLS BUILDING EXERCISES

- 1 Point out the shortcomings in the following email message from a sports celebrity declining an invitation to speak at the kickoff meeting for workers in a fundraising campaign for a charity. **LO3**

Subject: Your request for free lecture  
 Ms. Chung:

As much as I would like to, I must decline your request that I give your membership a free lecture next month. I receive many requests to give free lectures. I grant some of them, but I simply cannot do them all. Unfortunately, yours is one that I must decline.

I regret that I cannot serve you this time. If I can be of further service in the future, please call on me.

Sincerely yours,

- 2 Criticize the following message refusing the claim for a defective riding lawn mower. The mower was purchased 15 months earlier. The purchaser has had difficulties with it for some time and submitted with the claim a statement from a local repair service verifying the difficulties. The writer's reason for refusing is stated in the email. **LO5**

Subject: Your May 12 claim  
 Mr. Skinner:

Your May 12 claim of defective workmanship in your Model 227 Dandy Klipper riding mower has been reviewed. After considering the information received, I regret to report that we cannot refund the purchase price.

You have had the mower for 15 months, which is well beyond our one-year guarantee. Even though your repair person says that you had problems earlier, he is not one of our authorized repair people. If you will read the warranty you refer to in your letter, you will see that we honor the warranty only when our authorized repair people find defects. I think you will understand why we must follow this procedure.

If you will take the machine to the authorized service center in your area (La Rue Lawn and Garden Center), I am confident they can correct the defect at a reasonable charge.

If I can be of additional service, please contact me.

Sincerely,

- 3 You work for an online mail-order company, Nonsensicals, that sells such novelty items as T-shirts with clever sayings, unique toys and games, and such household accessories as framed posters and retro table lamps. Most of the employees are young, somewhat quirky, and very Internet savvy. Now consider the following email sent to everyone from the company president: **LO6**