

FINAL PROMPT: SOLICITED PROPOSAL

Using what you've learned in class about tone, audience, ethics and effective language, draft an email addressing the following inquiry. Encourage the recipient to feel excited about your service, while being honest about the costs associated with the installation.

PREMISE: You are a sales representative and public relations specialist for Behrend Solar Solutions, a small company that designs, constructs and maintains solar energy systems for homes and businesses in the Erie area. Carolyn Watterson, a local pediatrician with an interest in sustainability, recently requested more information from your company, via an online request form. She recently bought a home in the 16508 area code in Erie and she is considering installing photovoltaic (PV) solar panels on her three bedroom, single-story residence.

Watterson is currently living in North East, PA, where she is still trying to sell the home she has lived in for 7 years. She'd like to be out of the old place in North East and living in Erie within three months. She is unmarried and has no children. No one else will be moving with her.

Watterson used a basic online calculator, provided on your website, to estimate overall costs. She entered information provided to her by previous owners about average gas heating bills and energy expenses. In response, you can share some of the results.

According to your estimations, the gross cost (i.e. the estimate prior to rebates, incentives, tax credits and so forth) for installation will be about \$10,000 (more specifically – between \$7900 and \$11,900). According to the estimate, she is also eligible for a number of financial incentives: a \$2500 Federal Tax Credit, a \$1650 rebate from the PA State Solar Energy Program, and \$1100 in Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SREC's, which can be sold on a market – look it up if you aren't familiar). If she is approved for each of these incentives, the net cost at installation will be approximately \$5850, and the estimated net cost in general will be approximately \$4750 (once the SREC's are factored in). Behrend Solar Solutions estimates that this initial investment can be paid back in full within 5 to 7 years (assuming regular payments).

In addition, you estimate that Watterson will save about \$850 per year in energy expenses over an expected 25 year life cycle for the solar system (\$21,250 for the full 25 year period). Solar panels will also cut down on noise, since there are no machines pumping gas or oil throughout your house. They can provide about 50% of Watterson's energy needs during the 25 year period, without greenhouse gas emissions once installation is complete. You estimate that installing the system will take about a week, but you'll need about a month to sort out the financial incentives properly.

You'd like to arrange a time to visit Carolyn Watterson at her new home for a more detailed estimate. If you can arrange for a Tuesday or Thursday meeting in the morning (between 9am and 11:30am), you can bring along Rachel Ferguson, Behrend Solar Solutions' top engineering expert. Ferguson can provide a more specific and detailed estimate, once she considers the layout of the home (especially the roof). You cannot provide those specifics, but you can answer more general questions about costs, installation, maintenance and value.

~~English 4000 Business Writing~~
~~12:25pm - 1:00pm, Room 1501A, New Bldg~~
~~1:25pm - 2:00pm, Room 1101, Wilkerson Bldg~~
~~Professor Dan Schmitt, dcs35@ashland.edu~~
~~12:25pm - 1:00pm, Carriage House II, #6~~

FINAL RESPONSE DOCUMENTS

DUE: During office hours on Monday, December 15, 11am to 3pm (or earlier)

FOLDERS SHOULD INCLUDE:

- A short **personal essay** about your experiences in the class
- Final **Prompt** response

PERSONAL ESSAY:

This should summarize what you've worked on throughout the semester. What improvements have you made? What do you feel you need to work on in the future? What do you think worked well in the class itself? How could the class be improved for future students? Which assignments/exercises did you find the most interesting? Which ones did you find least interesting?

This essay should be **1 – 3 pages in length**. If you feel like you need more than three pages, feel free to write more. If you feel like you need less than 1 ½, you probably aren't going to get a good grade!

FINAL PROMPT:

This follows a similar format to the Problem Solving in the Workplace assignments at the start of the class. Focus on the following:

In a **single page** (12 point font, etc.), try to **persuade** the potential customer to consider installing a solar system

Highlight the **benefits** of installing a solar system and use **data** from the estimate to strengthen your claims.

Be clear that the estimates are **estimates** – meaning that they are not 100% accurate – and that more information will be necessary to determine the precise costs of the project.

Consider **editing out** information. What should be prioritized? Saved for the end? Edited out all together?

Installation is expensive. How can you **offset** potential concerns about its costliness?

There are a number of ways to make a solar system sound **appealing**. Which approach should you prioritize? Ecological benefits? Savings? Quick installation?

Remember the **protocols** we've discussed in class – proper ways to identify someone, ways to eliminate bias, etc. Consider the use value of **active and passive language**.

You want the message to sound **energetic**, but not pushy. Consider ways to strike an appropriate balance.

Close the message with **confidence**. Consider re-stating an important benefit. Encourage follow-up.

Edit carefully for **spelling** and **grammar** errors.

FOLDERS:

When you submit the Portfolio Project, please put it in a thin folder. Make sure the organize the documents in a manner that makes sense.

Please avoid bulky binders! I have limited space in my office.