

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION TOOLS

PERSONAL BUSINESS LETTER ASSIGNMENT

Objective: Correctly format and compose a persuasive personal business letter that will prompt action from the reader.

Directions: You are going to create a personal business letter, based on the information and guidelines given below:

Story: You bought a new pair of Maui Jim sunglasses, on August 20th. You are very proud of the sunglasses, especially since they were bought with birthday money and work money that you had saved up just for these special glasses that you saw at the Sunglass Hut in the mall. You paid \$165 plus tax for the glasses, and you planned on keeping them for at least the rest of your high school years. Last Friday as you were getting on the bus, you took the glasses out of the case to put them on, and one ear-piece fell off, causing you to lose grip of the glasses. Before you could grab them, they fell to the ground and the person walking behind you stepped on them, breaking the frames in half.

You took the glasses along with the receipt back to Sunglass Hut to see if you could get a new pair for free since you purchased them just a short time ago and they are under warranty, but the high school student behind the counter just laughed, and said "Too bad, so sad!"

Complete the following:

1. Find the address for sending your sunglasses to the nearest repair center on the Maui Jim web site on the internet. The link:
<http://www.mauijim.com/mjweb/public/repairloc/index.jsp>
2. Using the address, write a personal business letter to Maui Jim, asking them to repair your sunglasses for free.
3. Include all necessary details that would help your cause. (Make sure you refer to the enclosed imaginary copy of the receipt)
4. Make sure you format the document correctly.
5. Use the school's address as the return address:
Fishers High School
Attn: (Insert your name here)
13000 Promise Road
Fishers, IN 46038
6. Using at least 3 paragraphs and your most diplomatic, creative writing, convince Maui Jim that this complete accident was a result of their faulty screw holding on the earpiece, and that you deserve to have your sunglasses repaired for free, or your money back.

BUSINESS LETTER WRITING TIPS

Useful **Key Phrases** to use in your letter regarding unsatisfactory work:

- As someone who has worked with ...
- we were very disappointed to find / see / have discovered ...
- As our written agreement stipulated, we expected ...
- I think you will agree that a communication problem exists.
- We would like you to ..., or provide us with a refund.

http://esl.about.com/library/writing/blwrite_claim.htm

Accentuating the Positives

Your letters will be more successful if you focus on positive wording rather than negative, simply because most people respond more favorably to positive ideas than negative ones. A positive emphasis will persuade the reader and create goodwill. You should therefore be careful to avoid words with negative connotations. When you need to present negative information, soften its effects by superimposing a positive picture on a negative one:

1. Stress what something is rather than what it is not.
2. Emphasize what the firm or product can and will do rather than what it cannot.
3. Open with action rather than apology or explanation.
4. Avoid words which convey unpleasant facts.

Place good news in positions of high emphasis: at the beginnings and endings of paragraphs and even sentences. Place bad news in secondary positions: in the center of paragraphs and, if possible, sentences. Also, give more space to good news and less to bad news.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/654/01/>

Three Point Action Closing

A good persuasive closing is essential to ensure action. A good action closing—or clincher—should include the following four points:

1. Clearly state what action you wish the reader to take.
On finishing your letter, your reader should know just exactly what you want done and how it should be done.
2. Make that action easy through careful wording.
You can emphasize that what you are asking the reader to do is simple. Careful wording helps reduce reader reluctance to take action.
3. Provide the reader a benefit as stimulus for action.
Always mention the benefit(s) the reader will gain by prompt action. Such a reminder of the desirability of your product or service—sometimes called a clincher—comes appropriately at the ending of your letter. It not only provides motivation for the reader, but it also emphasizes service attitude—rather than the greed stressed if you end with dollars and cents talk.

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