

Geoffrey Cross,
Dept. of English,
University of Louisville

Scrambled Order Bad News Exercise

You are production manager of a plant. You have received a request from a production management professor to have his class tour your facility. Put the following in an effective order for a bad news message (see Locker and Kaczmarek, *Business Communication: Building Critical Skills*, Module 11.) Omit any statements that are not useful. Use transitions to link statements.

1. The plant is extremely hot.
2. We keep tight security because we have a new product we don't want the Japanese to know about.
3. Workers have practiced heat yoga to be able to withstand the high temperatures.
4. You wouldn't like the heat here.
5. We do not have staff to conduct the tour.
6. Your request to tour the factory has been received.
7. Company policy forbids tours of the plant.
8. Thank you for your interest in touring GE's Appliance Park Building 56; the video and model can provide much useful information.
9. People who aren't acclimatized to the temperatures can pass out and fall on the concrete floor or fall into dangerous machinery.
10. We can loan you a tour video and a 10-foot-long prototype model of our latest assembly line, which requires worker teams.
11. We cannot allow your class to tour the factory.
12. Employees have to wear special heat-protective clothing to be in the factory.

Key (reasons may be in slightly different order): Omit 4 (We can't tell them how they would respond.), 2 (Don't give away company secrets). Order: Buffer: 6; Reasons 1, 3, 12, 9, 5 (or omit), 7 (Company policy is o.k. reason if there are sufficient reasons for it. It shows all inquirers are treated the same.); Refusal: 11; Alternative: 10; Positive, Forward-Looking Closing: 8.

**Exercise very loosely inspired by business case in Dumont and Lannon *Business Communications*, 2e, pp. 172-173.