

306 Negative Message Assignment

Most of us have worked with someone who did not seem to deserve a raise or promotion. Assume you are the employer of such a person. Your average-performing employee has asked for an increase in rank and salary. Write a 1-page single-spaced (250-400-word) memo tactfully denying his or her request. **But give** the employee some suggestions which **might** help him or her attain the goal in a year. Be positive here but don't promise anything because factors outside your control (such as an economic downturn) may make raise and promotion impossible. Please also carefully follow the suggestions for bad news letters presented in class and the book, along with the grading criteria. **The person addressed should not be the person in the job appraisal. Turn in both final drafts together.**

Grading Criteria

If the message includes a buffer other than below, this opening paragraph should relate to the reader's concerns, introduce **or** lead into the topic, and avoid misleading statements. There should be no abrupt shift in tone between the buffer and the body of the letter. The job description below could serve as the buffer.

The message should include at the top or immediately after another buffer a description of the job duties and demands (criteria for the job).

The **reasons** why the employee does not meet the criteria of the job should then be presented--**before the refusal**.

The reasons for the bad news should be clear and sound.

There should be sufficient reason(s) for the rejection.

The refusal should follow clearly from the reasons.

The refusal should be tactful but clear.

The message should offer suggestions for improving performance so that one has a win-win" situation.

The message should be clearly organized.

The message should be reasonably concise.

The message should be as free as possible of grammatical and spelling problems.

The message should end on a pleasant note and avoid suggesting further problems.

The letter should follow the indirect approach: 1) criteria, 2) reasons he/she did not meet criteria, 3) refusal, 4) alternative 5) positive close.

The message should clearly indicate that the reader has been taken seriously and treated fairly.