

MEMORANDUM

August 20, 2012

TO: Managerial Communication Students

FROM: Jie Wang 

RE: Company Information Request Letter

Your team should meet and compose a letter to the company assigned for the final project to request information that would be helpful for your research.

The return address for the letter should be that of the team leader only as to avoid inconveniencing the company by requesting multiple sets of the same materials. The letter should be sent to the Investor Relations office at your company as the IR office has general information about the company that should be helpful for your project. Please do *not* address the letter to the CEO or CFO of the company as you would not expect a senior executive to handle students' requests personally. If you have a contact person's name (e.g., Jason J. Winkler at Motorola Solutions Inc., found on <http://investors.motorolasolutions.com/index.cfm>), use his title and last name ("Dear Mr. Winkler:"). If you are unable to find a specific person's name, then use "Dear Sir or Madam:" as the salutation. Throughout the letter, the plural pronoun "we" should be used to refer to your team, not "I" since the letter is from your team, not an individual. The signature blocks should contain all team members' signatures.

Since the information request letter will convey mostly neutral news to the reader, the direct pattern (i.e., frontloading the topic) should be used. In other words, the primary purpose of the first paragraph should be identifying the topic. As you compose the opening paragraph, ask yourself this question: From the recipient's perspective, what would he wish to know immediately?

In the next paragraph, you might wish to mention your research project on a Chicago-area-based company and why your team has selected this particular company. Then get to the specifics of your request: ask for a copy of the company's most recent (specify the year) annual report, product and/or service (depending on what the company provides) brochures, newsletters, and any other general information that may be helpful for your project. Remember the tone of your request is important because the company doesn't have an obligation to send information to students for their school projects; thus, you should sound courteous and try not to make the request burdensome for the recipient (for instance, do not ask for printed materials on the company's history since you should be able to locate this information on your own).

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Finally, show appreciation for the company's effort to help you with your research project and provide a convenient way, such as a phone number, for the recipient to contact you just in case they have any questions about your request.

Please double-space the body of the letter to make it easy for me to recommend changes.