Writing Effective Messages

Business Letters
Memos
Email
Presentations
Reports
and So on
What do you think of this email?

Date: 1/12/2015
To: Mary Forte
From: partyhardy@yahoo.huh
Re: English 149

I need more units to remain a full time student, so I MUST HAVE YOUR CLASS. I will stop by your office at 10:00 to pick up a permit to enroll.
Messages

Make sure your message has the following:

• An explicit purpose statement
• Specific, concretely supported details
• An explicit action request
Subject: Writing Assistance  
Sent by: “John Doe”  
John.doe_writingassistance.com@bmsend.com  
On: December 3, 2009 7:36am  
To: mforte

Hi, Mary,

Wow, this year flew even with some bumps in the road. Going by the forecasts I have been hearing for 2010 it looks like it is only going to gain momentum.

I have managers contacting me to source Technical Writers and Instructional Designers to try and wrap up end of the year projects. I thought I would check in and see how the year was shaping up for you, and how the plans for 2010 were looking?

I look forward to hearing how we may be able to help in the near future or down the road.

Sincerely,  
John A. Doe  
Writing Assistance, Inc.
Write an explicit purpose statement.

Which of the following is explicit?

I am writing to recommend Jim Carrey for the position as head comedian.

Jim Carrey is a good employee.

The purpose of this letter is to tell you about Jim Carrey’s qualifications for this position.

I have known Jim Carrey since we worked together at the Comedy and Magic Club in Hermosa Beach.

I am writing about Jim Carrey.

I am interested in applying for the position as head wine taster.
Use specific, concrete detail.

Which of the following is specific and concrete?

• We need the report by the end of the week.
• We need the report by Monday at 9 am.

Can that sentence become more concrete?

• I am a hard worker.
• I have a lot of classes and I work.
• I am taking 16 units and working 20 hours a week.
Hi, Professor,

I’m really hoping to take your Underwater Basket Weaving class this fall. It’s the last class I need to graduate. Exciting! Unfortunately, it’s already full, and I don’t have any other options. I’m not on the wait list yet, but I will be as soon as I register.

Hope to see you in the fall!

Sponge Bob
Use an explicit action request.

Which of the following is explicit?

- I hope you will make those changes.
- The changes should be made.
- Please consider making those changes.
- I’d like to work for your company.

How can you phrase that as a specific request?
Avoid ambiguous statements.

College students make nutritious snacks.
Provide incentives and deadlines as needed.

Copy of the report

Free advertising
Messages

**Use You-Attitude.** Present the message from the reader’s point of view.

- Be polite.
- Use “you” before “I” or “we” (usually)

  How can you make the following sentence reader-focused?

  We will ship the order on May 1st.

- Be concise.
Provide accessibility.

- Headings
- Vertical, bulleted or numbered lists
- Visuals
Deliver bad news respectfully.

Use the Sandwich Method:

What are the three main elements of an effective message?

Good will
Purpose
Details
Action
Good will
Dear Editor:

Please accept these comments on your most recent issue.

Some of your most recent and more extreme sweaters (e.g. with the flaps at the bottom edge) were described by my daughter as reminding her of the cloths hanging at a car wash, not exactly attractive.

A second reason for preferring the conservative styling is that I am an attorney working as a labor arbitrator. I resist the navy blue suit and instead knit jacket-type sweaters that serve my purposes admirably. This is apropos of requesting fewer pullovers and more jackets/cardigans.

Sincerely,
Jane Doe, Subscriber
Dear Editor:

From my past experience writing you, I have found you to be very responsive, an unusual but very positive characteristic for a publishing staff. Please accept these comments on your most recent issue.

I approve of the more “classic,” i.e. conservative, styling for several reasons, not the least is that after putting so much work into a garment, I don’t want it outmoded in a short period of time. Some of your most recent and more extreme sweaters (e.g. with the flaps at the bottom edge) were described by my daughter as reminding her of the cloths hanging at a car wash, not exactly attractive.

A second reason for preferring the conservative styling is that I am an attorney working as a labor arbitrator. I resist the navy blue suit and instead knit jacket-type sweaters that serve my purposes admirably. This is apropos of requesting fewer pullovers and more jackets/cardigans.

I look forward to seeing more jacket patterns in your wonderful magazine.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe, Subscriber
July 10, 2000
To: Casey Willard, Manager, Personnel
From: Elvira Lehigh, Manager, Data Processing
Subject: INCORRECT PAYROLL CHECKS

I have been reviewing the “errors” in the computer files.

Contrary to what you insinuated in our meeting, the majority of these errors were made by your clerks. I do not feel that my people should be blamed for this. They are correctly copying the faulty time tickets that your clerks are preparing . . . .
From a caterer at a large institution to the “Big Dogs” at dining

Hi, Everyone, I want to think you for your help in setting up Harry Potter night and working it threw to the end. Making it one of the best ever!

It is our version of the Oscars contentions. It was very successfully and the students had a great time. Food was great, the kitchen did a great job. Jen, I am hopping you can pass this on to your RA’s for all there great help and running the film!. . . .

Kiki who’s email address I do not have helped save the tree yesterday! Without the help of Dr. & Mrs. Padilla, we would still be hanging up the arch way tree’s I would say. “It take a CKC village to raise an event” I did “cc” Chuck Davis so he could see what a great team we have and how much help everyone gave to make it wonderful.

Thanks, Jane Doe
Compose your messages carefully.