



## Writing Bad News Messages

Learn how to plan and write sensitive and bad news messages that are clear and polite, and nonot alienate the reader.

**Course duration: 4½ hours**

### CONTENT PLANNING

**Planning helps you decide what you want to say and how to say it. It helps ensure all relevant information is included and the message flows logically. Learn how to plan and structure bad news messages using an easy to use, step by step model for planning.**

Estimated duration: 1 hour

**LESSON 1: PLANNING MODEL (30 MINUTES)**

- Learn why it is important to plan your message and know the steps to the Planning Model.
- Learn how to use the Planning Worksheet to help plan written work.
- Use the planning steps to effectively plan a document.

**LESSON 2: INTRODUCTION AND CLOSING (30 MINUTES)**

- Learn about the three sections of all documents.
- Practise identifying complete and incomplete communication purpose statements.
- Practise identifying effective and ineffective introductions.
- Learn what to include in the closing.
- Practise identifying effective and ineffective closings.

### CONTENT STRUCTURE

**The body of a document provides the details for the reader in a logical framework that makes the message easy to read and scan. Learn how to write the document's body from the reader's perspective and batch the content with an apparent and systematic structure and substructure. Practise using techniques to structure information.**

Estimated duration: 45 minutes

**LESSON 1: STRUCTURE (15 MINUTES)**

- Learn about document structure and substructure and how it can used to assist with document readability.
- Correctly structure a planned document.

**LESSON 2: FORMAT (15 MINUTES)**

- Learn how to structure an outline to be logical and to follow a pattern to highlight vertical and horizontal relationships between groups.
- Use a combination of format options consistently to distinguish headings from text.
- Identify and correct faulty heading format.

**LESSON 3: HEADINGS (15 MINUTES)**

- Learn how to word headings and subheadings to follow parallel construct, and be able to identify incorrect heading progression.
- Learn the difference between topic and talking headings.
- Ensure the headings accurately reflect the content that follows them.

# CLARITY AND TONE

Learn how to structure a bad news message to be clear and complete, and how avoiding some common grammatical pitfalls can the reader to see your point of view.

Estimated duration: 1 hour 25 minutes

**LESSON 1: VAGUE PRONOUN AND WORD PROBLEMS (10 MINUTES)**

- Define vague word and pronoun reference problem.
- Identify vague word and pronoun problems in text.
- Practise correcting vague word and pronoun reference problems.

**LESSON 2: DANGLING AND MISPLACED MODIFIERS (5 MINUTES)**

- Learn the difference between dangling and misplaced modifiers.
- Identify dangling and misplaced modifiers in text.
- Practise correcting dangling and misplaced modifiers.

**LESSON 3: PARALLEL CONSTRUCT (20 MINUTES)**

- Learn what parallel construct means.
- Understand why using correct parallel construct is important.
- Identify and main grammar forms used in parallel construct.
- Learn the five main parallel construct situations.
- Identify faulty parallel construct using a set of guidelines.
- Learn how to repair faulty parallel construct.

**LESSON 4: POSITIVE TONE AND LANGUAGE (40 MINUTES)**

- Learn how to maintain a positive, professional and polite tone.
- Use positive language and make careful word choices to avert alienation and misunderstandings.

# INTERACTIVE TUTORIALS

Estimated duration per tutorial: 45 minutes

**TUTORIAL: RESPONSE TO OVERDUE ACCOUNT (45 MINUTES)**

Complete an interactive tutorial that shows how a poorly written bad news document can be transformed into a clear, polite, well structured and professional document.

**TUTORIAL: RETIREMENT FUND DISPUTE (45 MINUTES)**

Complete an interactive tutorial that shows how a poorly written sensitive document can be transformed into a clear, polite, well structured and professional document.