

MEMO

To: WRIT 221 Instructor and Students
From: River Kelly
Date: August 30, 2020
Subject: Rhetorical Analysis of U-Haul Claim Letter

The task at hand is to write a professional letter disclosing my lack of satisfaction with a company's service. The purpose of this memo is to breakdown and specify the format structure, tone, and design choices to effectively persuade its reader of my claim.

Background: I recently rented a moving truck from the company, U-Haul. Without any problems, I got from point A to point B. Everything went great, that is until I went to return the moving truck. Upon checking the vehicle back-in, the employee noted that I had exceeded the number of miles configured for my trip. Each additional mile would result in an additional fee. He said that I had exceeded the estimated 370-mile trip by upwards of 120 miles. This, in fact, was not possible. I drove the truck from point A to point B, and nowhere else. There must have been an error on their end. When I originally went to pick up the vehicle they did not have the one which I reserved, so they gave me the next available option. During this, could the truck not have been logged properly? Either way, I know that there is no way I drove this many additional miles.

Motivation: As the saying goes, "The customer is always right." I, the customer, had a negative personal experience with this company. I believe that the root of this dissatisfaction can be blamed on them. I hope to persuade the company to do everything in their power to make me a satisfied customer.

Primary Reader(s): U-Haul Customer Support is the primary intended reader for this letter.

Secondary Reader(s): Because customer support usually consists of multiple areas of specialty, this means the reader could be any one of the support roles for which a work-order gets assigned to be resolved. Typically incoming claims are first filtered by the 'general request' group. If the claim is outside the scope of their abilities, the work-order is moved up the hierarchy until it reaches the appropriate department to best resolve the issue.

Intended Use: To inform customer support at U-Haul that it is my belief a mistake/error has occurred during my recent experience with them. The company should know that I believe the fault of the error was not because of my actions, but theirs. The success of the document should be based on the resolution of the problem at hand.

What Is The Relationship With The Audience?: I am a first time customer of U-Haul. My relationship with the audience is formal and professional. The recipient of my letter is acting as a representative of their organization. Likewise, my letter should also be addressing the organization in addition to the reader.

What Information Does the Audience Need? I might know who they are, but they certainly don't know who I am. My letter should include some information about who I am and why they should care. Something like, "I rented a vehicle on this day and drove from X to Y, and my receipt number is ABC." should provide adequate relevant information.

What Information Might The Audience Request?: They might ask for evidence to support my claims. Possibly for photos taken of the odometer before departure- which I do not have. They might ask for clarification about the addresses of the locations for which I was traveling to and from.

What Is The Desired Response From The Audience?: In my letter, I would like to request that they provide possible solutions to my problem. Because I am seeking total reimbursement of these charges, I think stating this solution at some point would establish what my recommendation would be- a place to hopefully start any negotiations.

Direct or Indirect?: I feel that an indirect message provides a better structure to plea my case. I want to first explain my situation and why I feel that I have been wronged. I intend to make it clear that I believe an error has occurred on their behalf and that I would like them to offer me solutions to resolve this problem.

Tone: The tone of my letter will be formal and professional. I plan to be very specific with exactly what happened and how I believe the situation should be taken care of.

Medium and Acceptable Length: I plan for my letter to be in PDF format as an attachment in an email. I would like to keep my letter on a single page by staying on topic and being specific.

Conclusion: I would like my letter to emphasize the importance of maintaining customer relationship integrity without being demanding or patronizing. I need to explain my concerns while keeping in mind the perspective of the reader. I need something from them.