

Chapter 8

Negative Messages



Negative Messages

- Convey unpleasant, disappointing, or unfavorable information for the receiver
- Can be an opportunity to resolve a business problem successfully

Negative Messages

- May use the direct or indirect plan
- Consider these questions:
 - What message does the receiver expect?
 - How will the receiver respond emotionally to the negative message?
 - Will it affect the individual's ego or self-esteem?





Use The **Indirect Plan** if:

- The receiver expects a positive response.
- The negative message affects the receiver personally and will be upsetting.
- The negative message is of importance, and the receiver will react negatively.
- The receiver prefers indirect communication due to culture or other reasons.

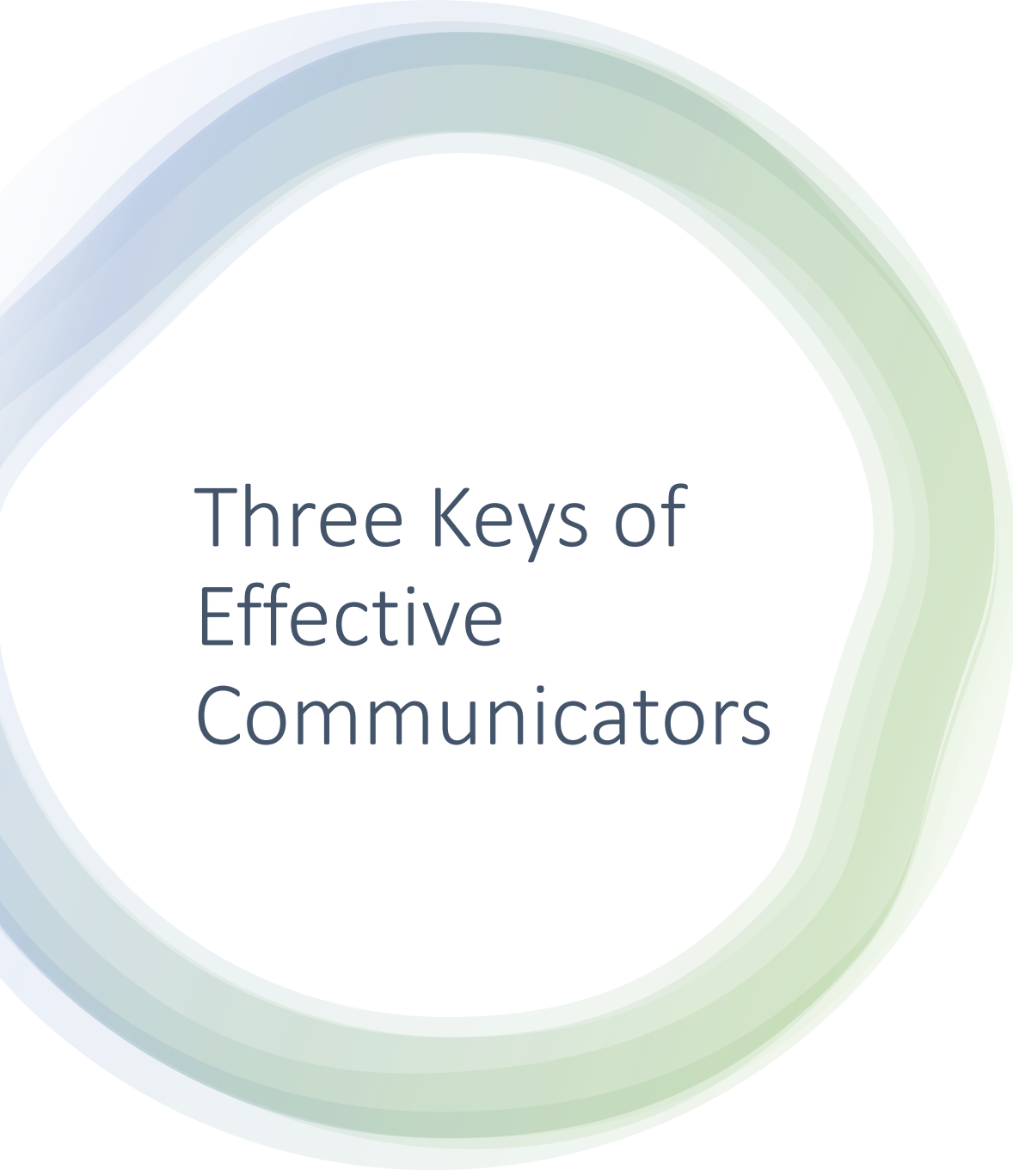




Use The **Direct Plan** if:

- The negative message may be expected, is routine, or will not be upsetting to the receiver.
- The negative information needs to be emphasized.
- Your receiver's preference, cultural or otherwise, is directness.
- The message responds to a death or a tragedy.





Three Keys of Effective Communicators

- Adapt the message to the receiver's viewpoint.
- Emphasize positive, bias-free words.
- Show respect for the receiver's needs and interests.



The Indirect Plan

- Enables receivers to accept negative information
- Enables receivers to maintain a satisfactory relationship with you and your organization



Negative Messages Using the Indirect Plan

- Refused claims
- Refused requests
- Unfavorable decisions
- Unsolicited negative information

The Indirect Plan



Opening
buffer



Logical
explanation



Negative
information



Constructive
follow-up



Friendly
close



Opening Buffer

- Provides coherence
- Builds goodwill
- Is positive
- Maintains neutrality and introduces the explanation

Logical Explanation

- Relates to the opening buffer
- Presents convincing reasoning
- Stresses the receiver interest and benefits
- Uses de-emphasis techniques
- Is positive

Negative Information

- Relates to the logical explanation
- Gives negative information implicitly or explicitly
- Uses de-emphasis techniques
- Gives negative information quickly
- Is positive
- Says what can be done (not what cannot)
- Avoids an apology

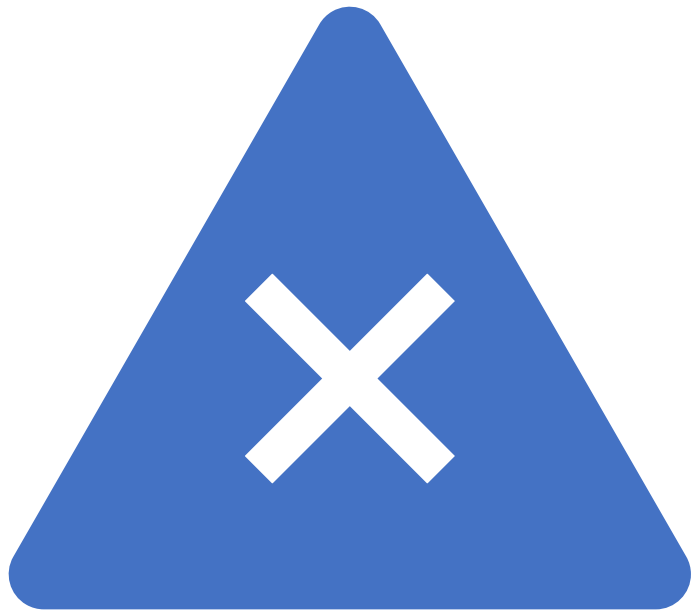
Constructive Follow-up

- Provides an alternative solution
- Gives additional reasoning



Friendly Close

- Builds goodwill
- Personalizes the close
- Stays off the negative subject
- Is warm and optimistic

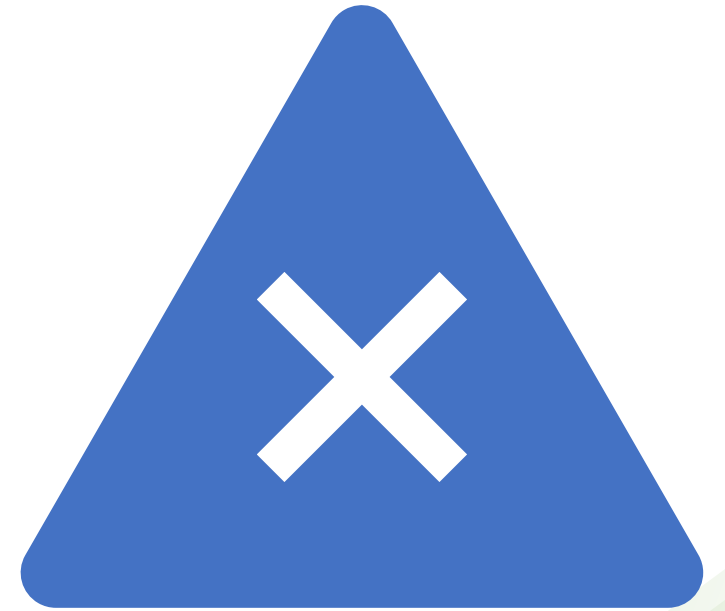


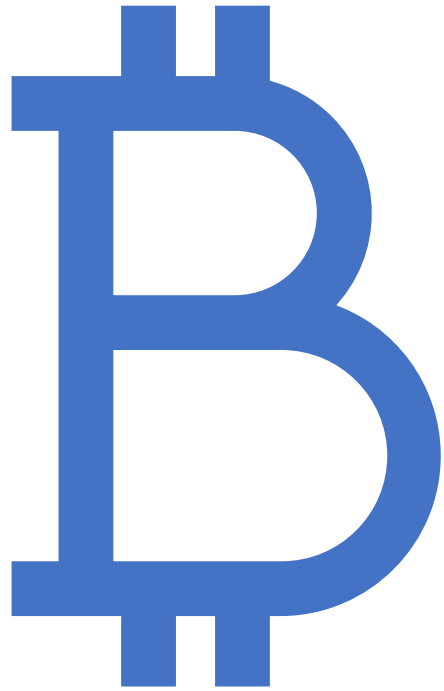
Request Refusals

- Denial of something that someone asked for
- Uses the indirect plan because it will be negative information for the receiver

Adjustment Refusals

- Denial of a claim
- Uses the indirect plan because it will be negative information for the receiver





Credit Refusals

- Rejection of a credit request
- Uses the indirect plan because it will be negative information for the receiver

Unsolicited Negative Messages

May use the modified indirect plan

Begins with an explanation

Describes the changes and implications

Ends with a friendly close

Using the Direct Plan for Negative Messages

- Begin with the main idea.
- Follow with the logical explanation.
- Then include the constructive follow-up.
- Finish with a friendly close.