

Professor Mokoko
ENGL 3040: Business Writing
Summer 2021—May 11th-June 18th

Project Two: “A Week of Routine Office Communication- Week A”

Week 2—May 18th-May 25th, 2021

This project sustains engagement with the fundamentals of Business Communication, including audience analysis, document tailoring, communication design, and context assessment. Through the drafting and production of **three important commonplace documents** from a typical week of business communication—the *bad news email*, the *memo*, and the *bad newsletter*—we shall continue our semester-long commitment to strategic, informed Business Communication through practice, application, and composition of these important Business Communication documents.

After completing the week’s reading, you will begin composing the three documents of interest for this project (all will be submitted in Canvas). These three documents are typical and commonplace in modern workplace environments, and while they are mundane, banal, and ordinary, they are imperative for successful Business Communicators to get right the first time—if you messed up on any of them, bad consequences could ensue.

All three documents require you to envision yourself in a **fictional scenario** involving the **TigerTime Bookstore on College Avenue**. This bookstore is not real, but you will pretend it is and that you are the owner/manager. Feel free to make up any details, and to take as much creative/artistic spin on this as you want. Feel free to make up names, details, places, rules, policies, employees, etc. What’s important here in this project is your writing, your communication skills, and your abilities to enact these important genres.

First, you will compose the “inter-office memo.” You are the owner and manager of the TigerTime Bookstore. Your bookstore caters to Clemson University college students, but also serves the public (ie. upstate S.C. residents not affiliated with the University), and is normally a thriving business. You employ 6 full time employees, but due to the difficult financial outlook due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic, you have had to let your 5 part-time employees go (they have been fired and are no longer working at the bookstore). Your inter-office memo should (1) Convey this news to your full-time employees, who have not heard of it yet and are quite close to the part-time employees, (2) Make them feel better/comfort them, and (3) Explain changes that will have to be made, beginning with new responsibilities to pick up the slack with fewer employees around (you will have to make up these responsibilities). Be as specific as possible, and feel free to make up details in this fictional scenario-- ie. feel free to make up names, responsibilities, tasks, details, etc. This document should be short, concise, and direct, but should also spell out any possible issues that might arise with this change, and should ease the understandable concerns of your remaining

employees. You will find helpful memo-writing advice on p. 23, 140, 237, 261, and 262 (sample memo provided).

Second, you will compose the “bad news email.” You are the manager/owner of TigerTime Bookstore. Your bookstore is typically closed on Sundays to give your employees time off to spend with their families, but due to lost revenue related to the COVID-19 pandemic, you’ve made the decision that for the summer of 2021, the bookstore will be open on Sundays, and your employees will have to work every-other Sunday until at least October. You anticipate that your employees will not be happy about this, as they greatly value having Sundays off, and many have expressed that this is a major advantage that the job provides to them. You anticipate one or two of them might even quit because of this change, as they have kids and like to use their Sundays off to attend religious gatherings. You know they will be unhappy with you, but the business can’t succeed without this change in open hours. You must email your employees with this bad news. Try to comfort them, be kind, anticipate their concerns, and anticipate their questions, problems, or issues. But also, be firm: this is the new policy, and it can’t change. You will find tips for writing effective emails on p. 256, 528, 531.

Lastly, you will compose the bad newsletter. You are the manager/owner of TigerTime Bookstore, and you have an employee who, well, just has to go. Chad has been your employee for 2 years now. He works as a cashier, book salesperson, all-around bookstore worker, and occasional fill-in baker for the bookstore’s cafe when the normal baker is sick. However, Chad has never been a great employee. He’s constantly late, no-call no shows, refuses to do dishes, doesn’t wear gloves when serving customers, and worst of all, loudly brags on multiple occasions (with customers around!) that he doesn’t like to read. At a bookstore, these are no-no’s. You have been gracious throughout, and patient with Chad, but things have gotten much worse lately, and just this past weekend he called out sick, but then was spotted downtown at a bar. Because of this, you had to make Karen, one of your other employees, cover his shift, forcing Karen to miss her daughter’s piano recital. You have decided to fire Chad. You should consult the “bad news” sections in your textbook on pages 528-537, though you will have to adapt their considerations of tone, audience, genre, and context to the “bad newsletter” itself.

Submissions for this project will be assessed based upon their adherence to the assignment prompt, as well as their effectiveness in addressing the concerns outlined above. **In this project, tone, style, design, language/word choice, clarity, formality/informality, and your understanding of your audience, your situation, and your genre of communication are all paramount.** Your project’s assessment and grade will reflect your ability to master these hallmarks of office communication, and will be based primarily upon the concerns listed above.

You should submit all three documents together in Canvas. **All should be 1-2 pages** (oftentimes, less is more when it comes to office communication- one page is perfectly fine for these

documents), but should be properly formatted, designed, and professional, ie. no academic headings, no double-spacing, no works cited pages- **these are office documents, not academic papers.**

Secondary Reading: Purdue OWL “[Workplace Writers](#)” Webtext

Due: Thursday, May 25th at 9PM

15% of Final Grade

Questions/Concerns/Problems? Email me @: Smokoko@Clemson.Edu and we can schedule a Zoom appointment if necessary.