

Part One: the analysis result for this complaint letter

1 Problem Definition

In this assignment, a complaint letter was provided with well-written sentences and paragraphs, the task is to identify the issues and inappropriate content as a formal business letter. After reading the letter, according to the introduction in class, I summarized the problems in this letter and suggestions have been provided as well.

This solution includes two parts according to the assignment requirements. The first part is an essay in which I will describe how I identified the issues. The second part is a re-written letter in which I will modify the formatting, structure, tones and content in order to make it more professional. All of the two parts are organized in this document with the CRAP design principles.

The first part of this essay is about recalling the C.R.A.P principles. According to the introduction in class, there are four principles of C.R.A.P: Contrast, Repetition, Alignment and Proximity.

Firstly, the essay has been spited into different elements and each element will focus on one topic. The topics have been classified into four types: formatting issues, style issues, structure issues and content issues. As a result, different elements have a different look from each other. For example, each element has a unique title and numbering.

Secondly, in order to implement the principle of Repetition, the same font has been selected throughout this document. The body font is Calibri Light with size 12, the heading font is Calibri Light with size 16. The re-written letter's font is Times New Roman with size 12.

Thirdly, all of elements are properly aligned to the margin and no elements are positioned arbitrarily. For example, alignment in this document is created by left aligning all of the text and graphics. As a result, each element has some visual connection with another element in this document, and this creates a clean, sophisticated look and makes the relationships to be clear.

Finally, since the issues have been split into four types, the related elements are together in a group. Especially in the re-written letter, its structure follows the immediate writing structure introduced in class: summary, background, details and outcome. Another example is the graphic, the principle of proximity states that elements that are associated with each other should be placed closely, and vice versa. As a result, the source of a graphic is more close to the graphic rather than other paragraphs.

2 Identified Problems

2.1 Formatting

The first issue of this letter is the formatting. From the content of this letter, we can find that it is a standard formal business letter, so it is important to write this type of business letter with a fairly formal document format which should have specific rules around the layout.

According to the introduction in class, generally, we have two main options for format: full block style and modified block style. I made a deep survey on the internet and I found generally, the British and American business letters have the same general format excluding indentation used in various formats. An acceptable business letter should be like as below:

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[SENDER'S COMPANY NAME]
[SENDER'S ADDRESS (optional if placed at bottom)]
[SENDER'S PHONE]
[SENDER'S E-MAIL (optional)]

[DATE]

[RECIPIENT W/O PREFIX]
[RECIPIENT'S COMPANY]
[RECIPIENT'S ADDRESS]

(Optional) Attention [DEPARTMENT/PERSON]

Dear [RECIPIENT W/ PREFIX]
[First Salutation then Subject in Business letters]

[CONTENT]

[CONTENT]

[COMPLIMENTARY CLOSING (Sincerely, Respectfully, Regards, etc.)]

[SENDER]
[SENDER'S TITLE](Optional)
[SENDER'S ADDRESS (optional if placed at top)]

Enclosures ([NUMBER OF ENCLOSURES])
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Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Business_letter

Base on the introduction in class, I made a comparison between British and American business letter, which is listed below. Basically, the British business letter prefer the modified block style, as the American business letter select the full block style.

Compare British and American business letters

	American business letter	British business letter
Heading	According to the format but usually aligned to the left	Usually placed in the top right corner (sometimes centred)
Date	Month-Day-Year Usually aligned to the left two lines below the heading	Day-Month-Year Usually placed directly (or 1 blank line) below the heading
Salutation	Dear Mr./Ms. Smith: Dear Sir or Madam: After the salutation there is a colon (:)	Dear Mr./Ms. Smith: Dear Sir or Madam: After the salutation there is a comma (,)
Complimentary close	Sincerely, Sincerely yours, Yours truly,	Sincerely, Yours sincerely, Yours faithfully,

Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/british-american-business-letters-differences-types-academy-bea->

2.2 Style

The second issue of this letter is style/tone, because one business letter should consider the tone/style of the message and the use of appropriate style in business writing as important aspects of communicating desired message and achieving the desired results. In this case, as a complaint letter, it is more important to adjust the tone according to the circumstances because the writer would like to solve the problems rather than complaining someone or something.

For example, the first paragraph is not in a formal writing style and whoever read the first a few lines will feel uncomfortable, especially in this case that the letter is sent to the owner of the company. The solution is to eliminate the emotional and subjective expression in a business letter, alternatively, the writer should just describe the subject and the facts.

In the second paragraph, the writer could not recall the employee's name, this reflects the writer's attitude greatly. Because the name could be easily found in contract, emails, business card and etc. So the problem is that this expression give the reader an impression that the writer does not pay attention to this matter at all or this matter is not very important for the writer. According to the introduction in class, the first step is to gather sufficient information in the stage of planning. Checking the exact designer's name must be done before writing this letter, and this is why the writer should spend more time on planning stage before drafting.

In the third paragraph, the writer uses the informal expression to describe the background about this matter. The writer uses a word: 'ugly' to describe the current colour solution. This expression is not accurate. Because there are a couple colour in one website, for example, the LOGO, the footer, the colour of texts or themes. Maybe the writer does not like the LOGO's

colour but the writer did not provide the detailed information to specify which one is being discussed, as a result, the exact problem has not been expressed clearly to the manager. In a business letter, it is very important to convey the accurate ideas and problems. This can be done during the brainstorm stage.

The fourth paragraph reflects that the writer do not have a careful revising for this letter because the logic has not been well-organized. For example, hang up a customer's phone call is a serious matter, the writer should focus on this point, rather than complaint that the employee was in other projects. Because being busy in other projects and hung up a phone call is different. On other hand, the writer should focus on the impolite matter rather than complaint the web designer himself. So, there was not enough time for revising.

In the fifth paragraph, the demand give an expression that the writer do not really want to resolve this matter itself because changing a colour is not a so big issue, apparently a public apology is the serious matter.

Overall, the style and tone of this letter needs to be improved. In my re-written letter, I changed the tone to descript the same matter. And as a result, the reader will have a better reading experience.

2.3 Style

The third issue of this letter is the structure. Similar to the discussion in the class, this letter is a typical immediate writing rather than a climactic writing, so the start paragraph should be the critical information and the rest of document should support it. The structure of this letter should be: summary, background, details and outcome, but unfortunately, this letter does not follow this structure and this is the reason that makes it less professional.

The writer should organize the expression and sort the ideas into topic in the planning stage. Lack of good style and organization is due to less revising after writing. For example, if the writer read this letter in other day, the write himself maybe find the most issues.

Another possibility is that the writer revised this letter but in the drafting stage. Generally, many people seem to find it hard to draft and revise simultaneously.

2.4 Content

The fourth issue of this letter is its content. On one hand, changing colour is not a very big deal for web designer. This means that the web designer might be too busy to perform it at that time. Or, the writer did not point out the exact elements, for example, the LOGO colour or the colour of texts in the home page? Generally, if the end user just want to change the colour of texts, it

will be a relative small job because we can modify the configuration in WordPress system. But if the end user wants to change the LOGO's colour, the web designer needs to contact with UI designer to give a new LOGO, the process time will be longer. So, the writer should express the requirement as accurate as possible.

On the other hand, asking the employer to fire one employee exceeds the scope of this matter. Most of company has an internal policy about customer service, the end user can compliant for the service itself but it is not up to the customer to fire someone because it is the company's internal matter.

Finally, asking for a refund is typical request in purchasing something. For example, if you buy a product but it does not work well, you can request a refund or exchange. But for the service, it will be more complicated. In this case, the writer bought the service for web site creation. Why did the writer ask for the refund of half of the money? How to estimate the loss for this refund? At least, the writer should the general reasons.

3 Conclusion

Overall, this complaint letter is not professional and efficient. According to the introduction in class, I will give a re-written sample in the part two. The modification will focus on:

- Using a formal business letter with full block style.
- Using an immediate letter structure.
- Using more appropriate and professional tones.
- Removing inappropriate content and adjust the orders of paragraphs.

Part Two: a re-write complaint letter

Fly-by-Night Airlines
9889 Pleasant Street
Dartmouth, NS, B4L 2E1

October 11, 2017

Customer Service Manager, Websties-R-Us-4-U
8998 Robie Street
Halifax, NS, B0k 8D2

Dear Customer Service Manager:

Could I request your assistance concerning how to change the colour of my home page in WordPress? I contacted with Mike West over the phone but he refused my reasonable request and hang up on me. The requirement of change is urgent, I will appreciate if you assign other web designer for me.

I made a contract with your company in order to create our new web site for Fly-By-Night Airlines on 10th June, 2017. Mike West is the web designer from your company. The web site was ready a month early and I received training from Mike in how to use it.

After a month of using it, our requirements about the home page's colour changed, I could not find how to change the home page colour in the training documents. So, I had to contact Mike over the phone on September 12, 2017 and asked him to change the configuration for me because I had another important things to do at that time. But Mike said he was working on another project so he could not perform this change. As a result, he not only refused my reasonable requests but hung up on me.

I am most annoyed that I wasted a morning discussing with Mike about this matter. My impression of Websites-R-Us-4-U has been tarnished, and I am now concerned about how your

customer service is being managed by your company. I trust this is not the way Websties-R-Us-4-U wishes to conduct business with valued customers.

I am waiting a solution to my problem and I would like to request a half refund of the bill I paid as well because the delay causes me financial loss, I will wait until 30th November, 2017 before seeking help from the Better Business Bureau, the Department of Consumer Affairs and the fraud unit of the local police.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

John Smith

Fly-By-Night Airline