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# **Persuasive and Sales Messages**

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# The Indirect Pattern for Persuasion

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- ❑ Your goal is to ask for something the reader is likely to oppose. (Claim after warranty period, Sponsorship/Fund, Grant, Promotion, Transfer, Supervision etc.)
- ❑ You must develop a strategy that will convince the reader to comply.



# The Indirect Pattern for Persuasion

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## **AIDA Approach:**

- ☐ Gain attention
- ☐ Build interest
- ☐ Reduce resistance to create desire
- ☐ Motivate action



The diagram features a central red circle with the text "AIDA PLAN" in white. Surrounding this circle are four red quadrants, each containing a stage of the AIDA model in white text: "Attention" (top-left), "Interest" (top-right), "Desire" (bottom-right), and "Action" (bottom-left). The quadrants are separated by gray, multi-pointed star-like shapes that point towards the center.

**Attention**

**Interest**

**AIDA PLAN**

**Action**

**Desire**

# Making Persuasive Requests

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# Gaining Attention & Building Interest

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## ☐ **Gaining Attention:**

- Begin with an attention getting statement that is : personalized, you oriented, straightforward and relevant. You can use compliment, unexpected fact, stimulating question, readers' benefit, summary of the problem, or candid plea for help.

## ☐ **Build interest:**

- Prove the accuracy and merit of your request with facts, figures, expert opinion, examples, and details.
  - Suggest direct and indirect benefits for the receiver.
  - **Example:**
    - ☐ Direct Benefit: If you accept our invitation to speak, you will have an audience of 50 potential customers for your products.
    - ☐ Indirect Benefit: Your appearance would prove your professionalism and make us grateful for your willingness to give something back to our field.
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# Reducing Resistance

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- ❑ Identify possible obstacles; offer counter arguments.
  - ❑ Demonstrate your credibility by being knowledgeable.
  - ❑ In requesting favors or making recommendations, show how the receiver or others will benefit.
  - ❑ Example: *Although your gift to the Neonatal Center is not tax deductible, it would help us purchase an Intensive Care Ventilator that would be put to use immediately in caring for critically ill and premature newborn infants.*
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# Motivating Action

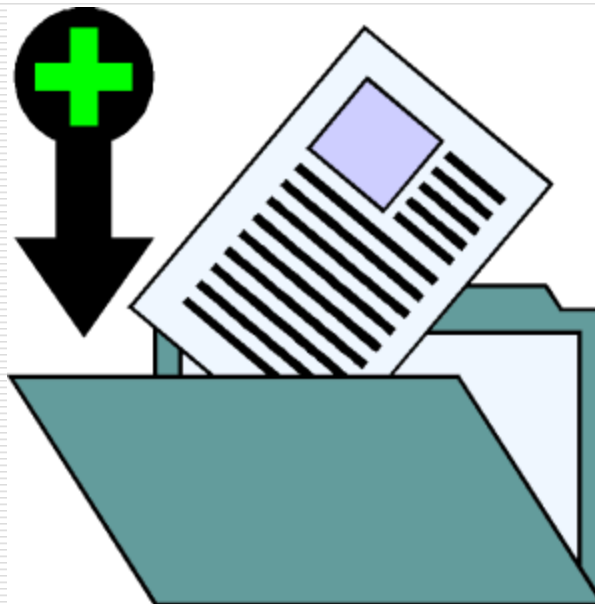
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- ❑ Ask for specific action confidently.
  - ❑ Include an end date, if appropriate.
  - ❑ Repeat a key benefit.
  - ❑ End the message with the request or with words that recall the appeal.
  - ❑ Example: *Please respond by May 1 so that we may add your photograph to our announcement.*
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# Persuasive Invitation

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Dear Dr. Thomas:

Your book *Beyond Race and Gender* stimulated provocative discussion across the nation and on our campus when it appeared last spring.

Business students at Georgia State University now consider you the nation’s diversity management guru, and for that reason they asked me to use all my powers of persuasion in this invitation. Because we admire your work, we’d like you to be our keynote speaker at the GSU Management Society banquet May 5.

As students at an urban campus in a metropolitan area, we’re keenly aware of diversity issues. In your words,

America is no longer a melting pot of ethnic groups; it is now an “American mulligan stew.” We’d like to hear more about the future workforce and how managers can maximize the contribution of all employees.

Although we can’t offer you an honorarium, we can promise you a fine dinner at the GSU Faculty Club and an eager and appreciative audience of over 100 business students and faculty. Speakers in the past have included the Reverend James R. Jones and Vice Mayor Rebecca A. Timmons.

The evening includes a social hour at 6:30, dinner at 7:30, and your remarks from 8:30 until 9 or 9:15. So that you

won't have to worry about transportation or parking, we will arrange a limousine for you and your guest.

Please make this our most memorable banquet yet. Just call our adviser, Professor Alexa North, at 356-9910 before April 1 to accept this invitation.

Sincerely yours,

## Engineering & Construction

(719) 777-4444

CommunityRelations@Amberly.com

February 27, 2006

*Opens with an attention-getting, you-focused question*

Did you help save Brad Meyer's life?

*Tells an engaging story with specific details*

A few years ago, an employee of Amberly was driving to a friend's wedding when an oncoming car, operated by a drunk driver, swerved across the center line. Brad doesn't remember the crash. But he does remember two months spent in the hospital, two months of surgery and therapy.

*Uses a character-based appeal; invites the reader to identify with these "lifesavers"*

Without the help of people like us, Brad would not have lived. Some Amberly employees save lives regularly. We're blood donors. Please be a lifesaver and join us on Friday, March 19th, for Amberly's annual blood drive.

Your help is needed for a successful drive.

Giving blood is simple. The entire process will take less than 45 minutes.

*Avoids words such as "draw blood" or "needle" that would bring unpleasant parts of the procedure to mind*

Giving blood is safe. Experienced health professionals from the Steinmetz Blood Center will be on-site to conduct the procedure exactly as they would in a clinic setting.

Giving blood is convenient. The Steinmetz staff will be in Room 401, Building B, between 9:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. To save time, make an appointment to donate. Call the Steinmetz Blood Center at 569-1170.

*Addresses likely reader objections*

Giving blood is important. Nobody knows who will need blood next, but one thing is certain—it will be available only if healthy, caring people take time to give it. Brad's accident required 110 units—more than 12 gallons—of blood. Because 110 people set aside 45 minutes, Brad Meyer has a lifetime of minutes to be grateful.

*Recalls the emotion-based opening and links it to a logical appeal: you or someone in your family*

Take a few moments now to make your pledge on the reverse side of this letter. Then return it to the Community Relations department, Mail Location 12, by March 15th. For more information about the drive, call the Steinmetz Center at 552-7116.

*Makes the requested action clear and easy*

From Brad and from other families—like yours and mine—who might need it in the days to come,

# Good Strategy in a Persuasive Request

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## Opening

Dear Ms. McLaughlin:

You'll agree, I'm sure, that college teachers of business communication need to be in touch with business leaders in the field. Established leaders like you can give the teachers that input from reality that is so very important in all practical coursework.

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# Good Strategy in a Persuasive Request

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## Body

For this reason I believe that you can make a vitally important contribution to the national meeting of the Association for Business Communication, which will be held in New Orleans at the Sheraton Hotel, October 28-31. Specifically, I want you to speak to us Friday afternoon from 2:00 to 2:45 p.m.

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# Good Strategy in a Persuasive Request

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## Body continued

What I'd like you to do is describe what you do as a correspondence supervisor at Winn Dixie. Whatever you can tell us that would help us as teachers is what you should include. Especially would the members like to hear about the writing problems of business people and what you think we should be doing in the colleges to correct them. I suggest that you speak for about 30 minutes, leaving the final 15 minutes for questions.

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# Good Strategy in a Persuasive Request

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## Closing

Will you please accept this major part on our program, Ms. McLaughlin? By so doing you will be helping to improve instruction at the colleges represented by our 1,500 members. As I must have the program completed by the 15th, may I have your answer before the 10th?

Sincerely,

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# Why Write Sales Messages?

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Sales messages are helpful in training you because

- Sales techniques are useful in your other activities.
    - in writing other messages
    - in actual sales work
    - in selling yourself
-

# Preliminary Steps to Sales Writing

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- Learn the product or service you sell.
    - how it is made
    - how it works
    - what it will do
  - Learn about the prospective customers.
    - their economic status
    - their nationalities
    - their ages
    - etc.
-

# Determining the Appeal

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## Two broad categories:

### ☐ Emotional

- appeals to the senses (feeling, tasting, smelling, hearing)

### ☐ Rational

- appeals to the thinking mind (saving money, making money, doing a better job, getting better use)
-

# Determining the Appeal

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Select the appeals that fit product or service.

- Some better suited to emotional

- ☐ music

- ☐ cosmetics

- ☐ fancy foods

- Some better suited to rational

- ☐ work tools

- ☐ tires

- ☐ industrial goods

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# Determining the Appeal

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Select the appeals that fit the prospects.

- Sales to retailers (for resale)
    - ☐ probably rational
  - Sales to ultimate consumers
    - ☐ either rational
    - ☐ or emotional
-

# Organization of the Sales Message

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- Many variations are used.
    - whatever works
  
  - But there is this conventional pattern:
    - gain attention
    - create desire
    - cover all necessary information
    - drive for the sale
    - possibly add a postscript
-

# Gaining Attention (Sales Msg)

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- ❑ Offer something valuable, promise a significant result, or describe a product feature.
  - ❑ Present a testimonial, make a startling statement, or show the reader in an action setting.
    - *Example: How much is sex costing your company? An incident of sexual harassment can cost millions of dollars unless preventive measures are taken.*
    - Describe a problem.  
*Six of our computers were recently infected with the "Melissa" virus, and we lost at least 25 work hours trying to repair the problem.*
    - Present an unexpected statement.  
*If you checked carefully, you'd probably find that 20 percent of your customers account for 80 percent of your profits.*
-



# Building Interest

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- ☐ Describe the product in terms of what it does for the reader.
  - ☐ Show how the product or service saves or makes money, reduces effort, improves health, produces pleasure, or boosts status.
    - Example: Our computer-based training program teaches your employees what behavior is acceptable and unacceptable, while showing you steps that can be taken to reduce the risk of employer liability.
    - **Suggest reader benefits:**
      - ☐ Now you can immediately protect all your computers from the latest viruses with our online anti-virus program.
    - **Pay a compliment:**
      - ☐ Because no one generates as much audience enthusiasm as you do in your presentations, we are asking you to speak . . . .
    - **Supply facts and figures:**
      - ☐ Currently 16,000 known computer viruses are in existence, and the number increases by 300 to 400 each month.
    - **Give examples:**
      - ☐ One company lost valuable data and had no recent backup disks to replace infected files.
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# Building Interest

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- Cite expert opinion.

*"Hostile code can hit without warning," says virus specialist Dr. Tony Timm, "so companies must have a virus antidote or they risk all their operations."*

- Provide specific details.

*In a test comparing six of the leading anti-virus programs, our program was flawless in virus detection, easy to use, and low in ownership cost.*

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# Building Interest

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- Mention direct benefits.

*Our anti-virus program can protect you from subtle corruptions of data that may go unnoticed for months.*

- Mention indirect benefits.

*Your company continues to be a pacesetter in the health care industry by setting an example for other organizations who are bewildered by the growing number of viruses.*

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# Reducing Resistance

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- ❑ Counter reluctance with testimonials, money-back guarantees, attractive warranties, trial offers, or free samples.
  - ❑ Build credibility with results of performance tests, polls, or awards.
  - ❑ Example: *This important investment in sexual harassment prevention comes with a money-back guarantee. If you are not satisfied, your entire training costs are returned.*
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# Motivating Action

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- ❑ Close with repetition of the central selling point and clear instructions for an easy action to be taken.
  - ❑ Prompt the reader to act immediately with a gift, incentive, limited offer, or deadline.
  - ❑ Put the strongest motivator in a postscript.
  - ❑ Example: *Sign up now and you receive a free 60-day trial. Call, fax, or e-mail us today to receive a free demo disk. You can't lose!*
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# A Rational Sales Message

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## Opening

***Would you like to save up to 12 cents  
a gallon on your bill for fuel oil?***

Does your monthly oil bill make you wince?  
Wouldn't you like to beat the high cost of  
heating--cut your annual fuel bill by as much  
as 30-40 percent? Then, I think you'll be  
interested in our Catalytic Carburetor  
Assembly. Complete details are yours for the  
asking . . . as explained below.

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# A Rational Sales Message

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## Body

Installed on your present oil burner, the Catalytic Carburetor Assembly permits burning of the present type of catalytic fuel oil at highest efficiency . . . and with a clean fire. What's more, it easily pays for itself in fuel oil savings and brings your burner completely up to date. A little simple arithmetic with your current oil bill will show you how substantial these savings are. Figure you might save up to 12 cents on every gallon, and see what a difference that makes.

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# A Rational Sales Message

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## Body continued

But there's no need to take our say-so about the savings you can make--because we back our Catalytic Carburetor Assembly with a written money-back guarantee. You can't lose--you either get the savings we guarantee, or the assembly is removed and your money refunded in full.

Scores of satisfied users throughout the state are enjoying more efficient, more economical heating--thanks to the Catalytic Carburetor Assembly. We believe that you, too, would benefit by installing this device on your oil burner.

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# A Rational Sales Message

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## Closing

To receive full information on the Catalytic Carburetor and how it can save fuel dollars, just check the enclosed postage-paid card for correctness and drop it in the mail. I'll see to it that you get complete details right away . . . without cost or obligation.

Sincerely,

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Scotts may have already looked at the customer's lawn

Dear Adams Family,

Uses the bandwagon appeal—do what so many of your neighbors are doing

What do you need to do now to protect your lawn from unsightly weeds, insects you can't even see, and damaging turfgrass diseases? Call Scotts LawnService®! We have developed NEW Ortho Weed-B-Gon Pro® and Ortho® Max™ Pro Insect Control to handle tough weed and insect lawn problems.

Sign up for Scotts LawnService like so many of your neighbors who had those problems. You'll see us treating their lawns throughout the season.

Now you can have a Scotts LawnService professional inspect your lawn for potential problems.

Builds Scotts' ethos as a company of knowledgeable professionals

We'll carefully examine your lawn and give you a detailed report on what we find, and what you need to do to keep your lawn thick, green and healthy.

And there's absolutely no cost and no obligation for this FREE Lawn Analysis.

Simply call us Toll Free at 1-800-736-0205 within the next 14 days, and Scotts LawnService will arrange for your FREE Lawn Analysis. It's easy, and you don't have to be home. We'll also include our recommendations for a Scotts LawnService program that's right for your lawn, plus a no-obligation price quote.

Uses you-attitude; suggests that you need to call in the experts

Makes several logical appeals

Appeals to emotion and logic and builds trust in the Scotts professionals

If you decide to become a Scotts LawnService customer, we'll put together a program that will give you the beautiful lawn you've always wanted. We use Scotts® slow-release, professional fertilizers on your lawn – and you can really see the difference in the results.

We'll evaluate your lawn during every visit, foreseeing and solving problems that may occur and taking personal responsibility for its progress. That's why Scotts LawnService offers you a Satisfaction Guarantee.

Requested action is clear and easy, and linked to the main

Call Scotts LawnService now or mail in the slip enclosed in the postage-paid envelope to request your FREE No-Obligation Lawn Analysis. It's the first step to having a thick, green, healthy lawn you can be proud of.

Sincerely,



# PRIORITY EXPRESS

**REPLY WITHIN  
7 DAYS OR RISK  
FORFEITURE!**

ATTENTION: marie.flatley@sdsu.edu

You have been selected to receive a FREE\* DIRECTV Satellite Entertainment System with FREE\* standard professional installation! You pay only a \$39.95 shipping and handling charge-saving you more than \$250!

[CLICK HERE NOW!](#)

This strictly limited-time offer will enable you to enjoy hundreds of channels of movies, sports, pay-per-view and more--TV as it's meant to be, with digital quality audio and video!

Your urgent  
reply is  
needed!

*Opens with an  
attention-getter*

*Reasons stress  
reader benefit*

There is no mistake. Your FREE DIRECTV Satellite Entertainment System with FREE standard professional installation is waiting for you-but you must respond soon. If I do not hear from you within 7 days this offer will go to someone else. Please do not allow that to happen! [CLICK HERE NOW!](#)



Stacie Miller  
Authorization Manager  
Satellite Concepts

P.S. This may be your final notice regarding the FREE DIRECTV Satellite Entertainment System.

*Call for action is  
clear and easy*

*Postscript adds  
that extra punch*

\* For free satellite system: must activate system within 30 days of receipt or you will be subject to a \$125 penalty. For installation offer: Limited time offer for new residential customers only who purchase a DIRECTV system, schedule an installation by 06/17/01, and activate DIRECTV programming (\$21.99 a month or above) by 07/14/01. This offer is for one free standard professional installation per household. Installation of additional receivers and custom installation available for a charge. Programming, pricing, terms and conditions subject to change. Hardware and programming sold separately. Pricing is residential. Tax is not included. DIRECTV, Inc. and the cyclone design logo are trademarks of DIRECTV, Inc., a unit of Hughes Electronics Corp. Offer may not be valid in all areas. Shipping and Handling fee is \$39.95 and is not refundable.

This offer is brought to you by Traffix. If you do not wish to receive future promotions from Traffix, [click here](#) to unsubscribe.

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**“If you want to succeed, you should strike out on new paths rather than travel the worn paths of accepted success.”**

**--John D. Rockefeller**

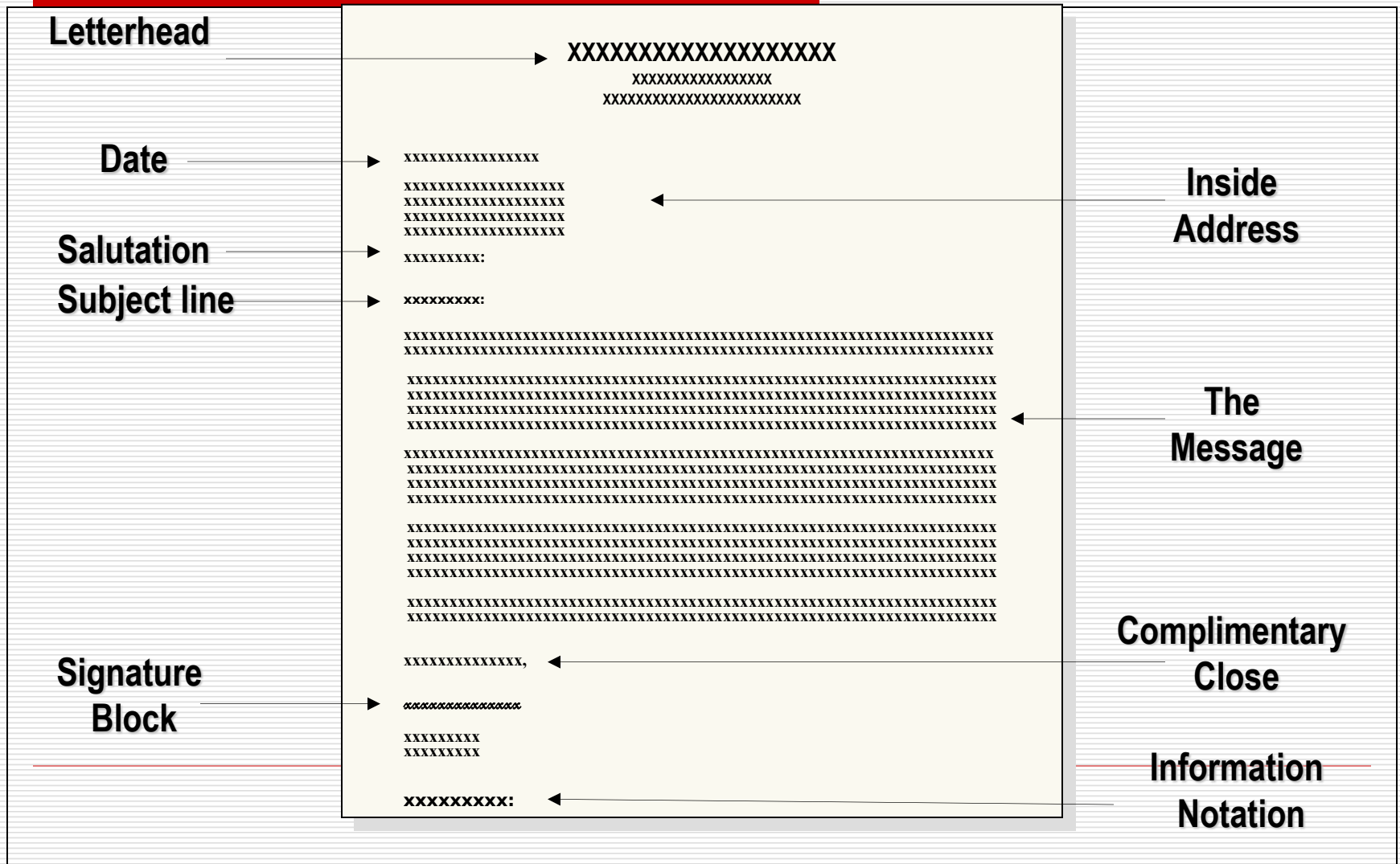
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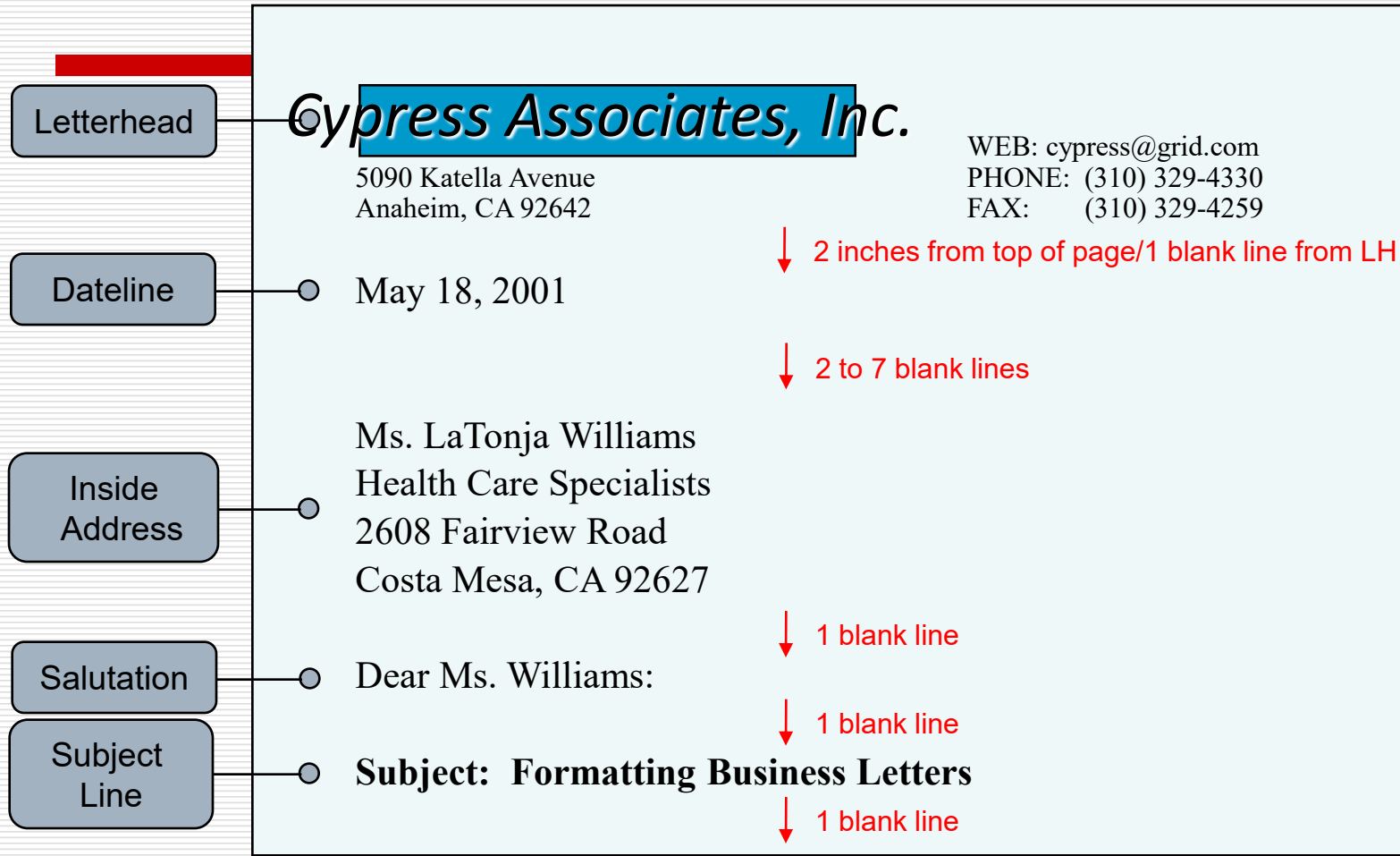
# Business Letter Formats

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# Format for Business-Letters



# Formatting Business Letters





# Formatting Business Letters

At your request, this letter illustrates and explains business letter formatting in a nutshell. The most important points to remember are these:

1. Set margins between 1 and 1½ inches; most word processing programs automatically set margins at 1 inch.
2. Start the date 2 inches from the top edge of the paper or 1 blank line below the letterhead, whichever position is lower.
3. Allow about 5 lines after the date—more lines for shorter letters and fewer lines for longer ones.

The two most popular letter styles are block and modified block. Block style, with all lines beginning at the left, causes

# Formatting Business Letters

the least trouble. In modified block style letters, the date and closing lines start at the center. For both styles the complimentary close is followed by 3 blank lines before the writer's signature. Reference initials and enclosure notations, if used, appear in the lower left corner, as shown below.

So that you can see additional styles, I'm sending our office style guide. I certainly hope this material is helpful to you and your assistants, Ms. Williams.

Complimentary  
Closing

○ Sincerely,

↓ 1 blank line

*Sharon Montoya*

↓ 3 blank lines

Printed  
Name

○ Sharon Montoya

Information  
Notation

○ Attachment:

↓ 1 blank line

# Formatting Business Letters

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- ❑ Set side margins for 1 to 1½ inches.
  - ❑ Place the date 2 inches from the top or 1 blank line below the letterhead.
  - ❑ Leave 2 to 7 blank lines between the date and inside address.
  - ❑ Single-space within paragraphs and double-space between. Don't justify right margin.
-

# Formatting Business Letters

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- ❑ Decide whether to use full block (all lines starting at the left margin) or modified block (date and closing lines starting at the center) letter style.
  - ❑ Allow 3 blank lines between the complimentary close and the writer's name.
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☐ Mixed/Closed Punctuation

☐ Mixed- Dear Mr. X:

Best regards,

☐ Closed-Dear Mr. X,

Best regards.

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# Letters Exceeding One Page

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- Always print such pages on plain paper (no letterhead). These two forms are the most common:

□ Ms. Helen	2	May 7, 2008
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Or,

- Ms. Helen  
May 7, 2008  
Page 2

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