

WRITING BUSINESS MESSAGES

Organizing Your Message

- ▣ What Good Organization Means

General Nutrition Corporation has been doing business with ComputerTime since I was hired six years ago. Your building was smaller then, and it was located on the corner of Federal Avenue and 2nd N.W. Jared Mallory, our controller, was one of your first customers. I still remember the day. It was the biggest check I'd ever written. Of course, over the years, I've gotten used to larger purchases.

Our department now has 15 employees. As accountants, we need to have our computers working so that we can do our jobs. The CD-RW drive we bought for my assistant, Suzanne, has been a problem. We've taken it in for repairs three times in three months to the authorized service center, and Suzanne is very careful with the machine and hasn't abused it. She does like playing interactive adventure games on lunch breaks. Anyway, it still doesn't work right, and she's tired of hauling it back and forth. We're all putting in longer hours because it is our busy season, and none of us has a lot of spare time.

This is the first time we've returned anything to your store, and I hope you agree that we deserve a better deal.

Four of the most common organization mistakes:

- ▣ Taking too long to get the point
- ▣ Including irrelevant material
- ▣ Getting ideas mixed up
- ▣ Leaving out necessary information

Why Good Organization is Important

- ▣ Saves you time
- ▣ Saves you work
- ▣ Helps you delegate
- ▣ Increasing reader understanding
- ▣ Saving readers time

September 13, 2004

Customer Service
ComputerTime
556 Seventh Ave.
Mason City, IA 50401

Dear Customer Service Representative:

GNC bought an Olympic Systems, Model PRS-2, CD-RW drive from your store on November 15, 2003, during your pre-Christmas sale, when it was marked down to \$199.95. We didn't use the unit until January, because it was bought for my assistant, who unexpectedly took six weeks' leave from mid-November through December. You can imagine her frustration when she first tried using it, and it didn't work.

In January, we took the drive to the authorized service center and were assured that the problem was merely a loose connection. The service representative fixed the drive, but in April we had to have it fixed again—another loose connection. For the next three months, the drive worked reasonably well, although the response time was occasionally slow. Two months ago, the drive stopped working again. Once more, the service representative blamed a loose connection and made the repair. Although the drive is working now, it isn't working very well. The response time is still slow, and the motor seems to drag sometimes.

What is your policy on exchanging unsatisfactory merchandise? Although all the repairs have been relatively minor and have been covered by the one-year warranty, we are not satisfied with the drive. We would like to exchange it for a similar model from another manufacturer. If the new drive costs more than the old one, we will pay the difference, even though we generally look for equipment with substantial business discounts.

GNC has done business with your store for six years and until now has always been satisfied with your merchandise. We are counting on you to live up to your reputation for standing behind your products. Please let us hear from you soon.

Sincerely,



Jill Saunders
Administrative Assistant

States purpose clearly

States precisely what adjustment is being requested

Includes all necessary information and no irrelevant facts

Explains the situation so that the reader will understand the problem

Presents ideas logically

Motivates action from the reader in the closing

How Good Organization is Achieved

- ▣ Define the Main Idea

Table 5-1**DEFINING BUSINESS MESSAGES**

General Purpose	Specific Purpose	Topic	Main Idea
To inform	Teach customer service reps how to file insurance claims.	Insurance claims	Proper filing by reps saves the company time and money.
To persuade	Get top managers to approve increased spending on research and development.	Funding for research and development	Competitors spend more than we do on research and development.
To collaborate	Solicit ideas for a companywide incentive system that ties wages to profits.	Incentive pay	Tying wages to profits motivates employees and reduces compensation in tough years.

How Good Organization is Achieved

- ▣ Limit Scope

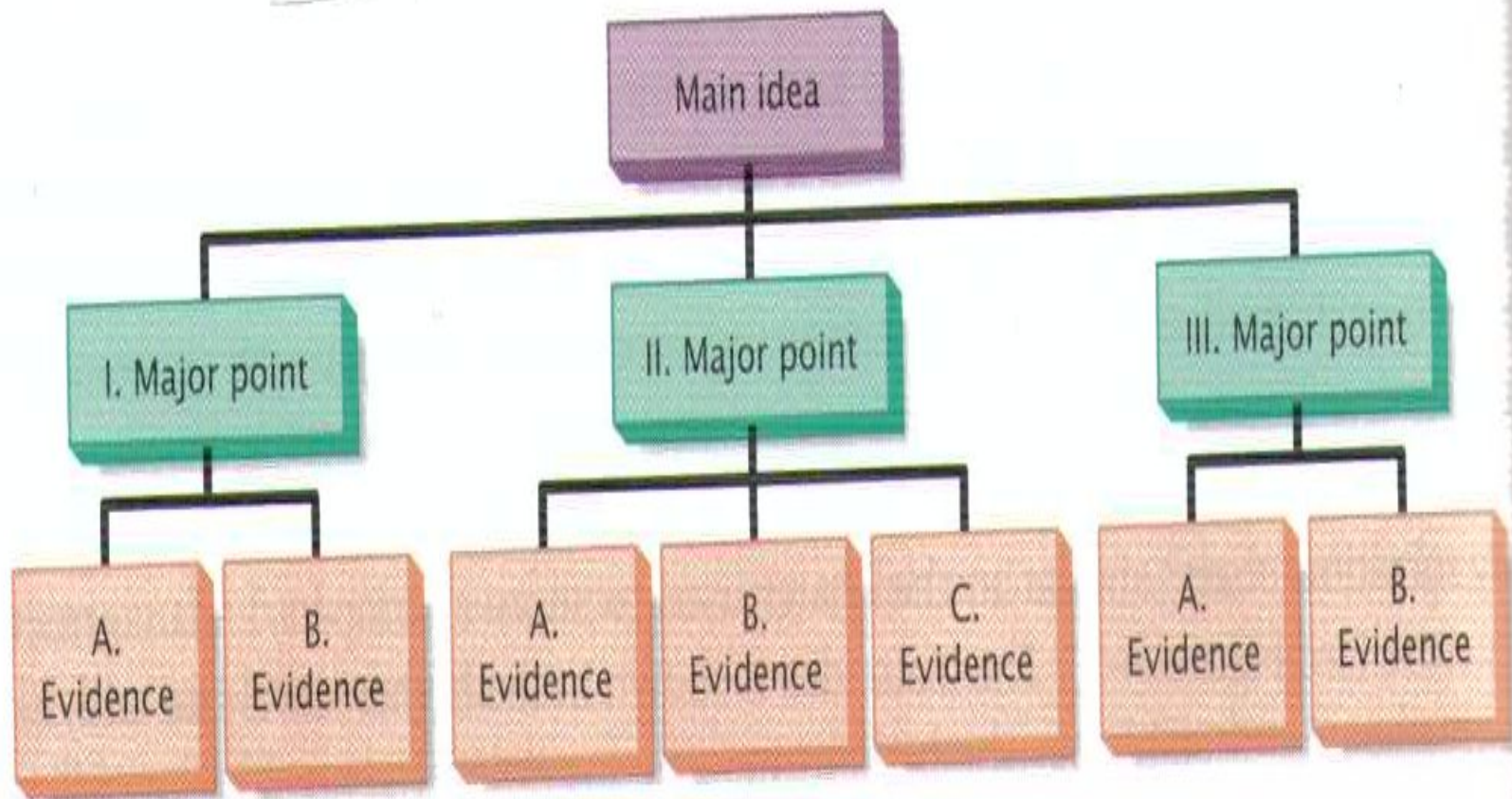
How Good Organization is Achieved

- ▣ Structure Your Message;

Organization Chart for Organizing a Message

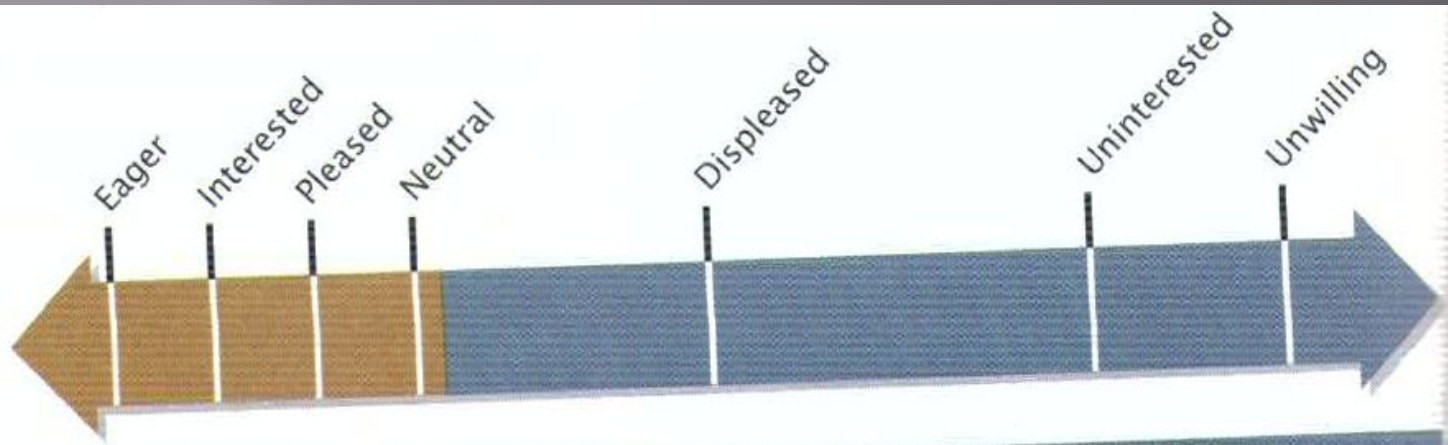
- ▣ Start from the Main Idea
- ▣ State the Major Points

- ▣ Illustrate with Evidence



How Good Organization is Achieved

- ▣ Choose Between the Direct and Indirect Approaches
- ▣ Direct approach (deductive)
- ▣ Indirect approach (inductive)



	Direct approach	Indirect approach	
Audience reaction	Eager/interested/ pleased/neutral	Displeased	Uninterested/unwilling
Message type	Routine, good news, goodwill	Bad news	Persuasive
Message opening	Start with the main idea, the request, or the good news.	Start with a neutral statement that acts as a transition to the reasons for the bad news.	Start with a statement or question that captures attention.
Message body	Provide necessary details.	Give reasons to justify a negative answer. State or imply the bad news, and make a positive suggestion.	Arouse the audience's interest in the subject. Build the audience's desire to comply.
Message close	Close with a cordial comment, a reference to the good news, or a statement about the specific action desired.	Close cordially.	Request action.

Controlling Your Style and Tone

Use a Conversational Tone;

- ▣ Avoid obsolete and pompous language
- ▣ Avoid intimacy
- ▣ Avoid humor
- ▣ Avoid preaching and bragging

STAYING UP TO DATE AND DOWN TO EARTH

Obsolete

In due course

Permit me to say that

We are in receipt of

Pursuant to

In closing, I'd like to say

The undersigned

Kindly advise

We wish to inform you

Attached please find

It has come to my attention

Our Mr. Lydell

Please be advised that

Pompous

Upon procurement of additional supplies, I will initiate fulfillment of your order.

Perusal of the records indicates a substantial deficit for the preceding accounting period due to the utilization of antiquated mechanisms.

Up to Date

Today, tomorrow (or a specific time)

(Permission is not necessary)

We have received

(Omit)

(Omit)

I; me

Please let us know

(Just say it)

Enclosed is

I have just learned; or, Ms. Garza has just told me

Mr. Lydell, our credit manager

(Omit)

Down to Earth

I will fill your order when I receive more supplies.

The records show a company loss last year due to the use of old equipment.

Controlling Your Style and Tone

- ▣ Select Active or Passive Voice
- ▣ The passive voice is the right choice in some situations:
 - ▣ To be diplomatic
 - ▣ To avoid attributing either credit or blame
 - ▣ To create an objective tone

THINKING LIKE A WORDSMITH

Avoid Weak Phrases

Wealthy businessperson

Business prosperity

Hard times

Avoid Unfamiliar Words

Ascertain

Consummate

Peruse

Circumvent

Increment

Unequivocal

Avoid Clichés

Scrape the bottom of the barrel

An uphill battle

Writing on the wall

Call the shots

Take by storm

Cost an arm and a leg

A new ballgame

Worst nightmare

Fall through the cracks

Use Strong Terms

Tycoon

Boom

Slump

Use Familiar Words

Find out, learn

Close, bring about

Read, study

Avoid

Growth, increase

Certain

Use Plain Language

Strain shrinking resources

A challenge

Prediction

Be in charge

Attack

Expensive

Fresh start

Strong competitor; disaster

Be overlooked

Thank You