

Letter # 3: Negative Message

Assignment:

You are a recent college graduate and are applying for a number of jobs. Unfortunately, you receive two offers on the same day and need to accept one and decline the other. Write a letter to the hiring manager (see below) explaining your acceptance of another offer, keeping in mind the five goals of delivering bad news, found on page 193. You select the scenario that is most applicable to your current situation.

Preparation:

Review Chapter 8: Writing Negative Messages (Especially pgs. 193-195)

Format:

Use the modified block letter format for this assignment. Please refer to page 421-423 for an explanation of the block and modified block formats. The example in your book on page 422 is a block format letter while the example on page 423 is modified block letter format. Please note the differences carefully.

There are two main ways to format a negative message letter; directly or indirectly. You can find comparisons of these strategies on pages 193-194. For this exercise, you will be utilizing the direct approach, since you do not need to maintain any formal relationship with the organization you are declining. Follow the organization on pages 195-196 as a guide.

The format of your letter tells the reader a lot about you and your professionalism. Since you do not want to completely cut ties, it is important to leave a lasting respectful impression. Pay particular attention to your letter's margins, line spacing, font type and size, and placement of letter parts such as the return address, date, inside address, salutation, complimentary close, and signature block.

- The information for the job you are declining is: Assistant Manager, Hilton Corporation.
- The contact person for this position is: Terrence Walters, Hiring Manager, Hilton Corporation, 555 SW 8th St., Miami, FL 33199.

Recommended Organization

Introduction/Opening: Begin your letter with the bad news. The *indirect approach* includes a buffer, however, the direct approach does not. Be sure to remain professional and concise in this section to not sound rude or ungrateful for the opportunity.

Body/Discussion:

In the **first paragraph** of the body include your reasons for the decision, without too much detail about the other position. Having the right balance of ambiguity is respectful to the employer you are declining. Use creativity when developing reasons for taking the other position over theirs. Maybe the schedule was more flexible or the other position better fit your skill set. These are just a few examples to consider when writing this section.

In the **second paragraph** you can add a positive spin to the situation if you desire. This could be as simple as saying you'll keep this employer in mind for future endeavors or that you will recommend a qualified friend who should apply for the position.

Conclusion/Closing: Begin your closing paragraph with a courteous transition and thank the employer for the opportunity. Conclude your letter by indicating how the reader may contact you if he has any questions.