Delivering Persuasive Messages

Business Communication, 15e
Lehman and DuFrene
Persuasive Message: Plan Before You Write

• Know your product, service, or idea
• Know your audience
• Know the desired action you wish your audience to take
How To Know Your Product

• Read all the available __________
• Use the product or _______ others use it
• _________ the product, service, or idea with others
• Conduct tests or ____________
• Talk to people who really _____ the product
Which of these questions is the most important to answer before composing your message?

1. What will the product do for the receiver?
2. What are its superior features (receiver benefit)?
3. How is it different from the competition?
4. What is the cost to the receiver?
How to Know Your Receiver

• Identify basic demographics
  – Age, gender, educational background, income level, race…

• Know receiver’s wants and needs

• Consider how you can meet needs based on Maslow’s hierarchy
Inductive Outline Used in Persuasive Messages

**ATTENTION:**
Get the receiver's attention

**INTEREST:**
Introduce the product, service, or idea and arouse interest in it

**DESIRE:**
Create desire by presenting convincing evidence of the value of the product, service, or idea

**ACTION:**
Encourage action

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Apply Sound Writing Principles

- Keep paragraphs _______
- Use _________ nouns, _______ verbs, and _______ language
- Put the receiver in the _________
- Stress a central _______ _______
Elements of Ethical Persuasion

- Clear definition of offered product or service
- Scientific evidence for product claims
- Context for comparative statements
- Audience sensitivity for ideas that are objectionable or offensive
Gaining Attention in Sales Messages

- Analogy
- Personal experience
- Solution to a problem
- Split sentence
- Startling statement
- Story/Quote/Question
- What-if opening
Introducing the Product, Service, or Idea

- Be cohesive
  - Attention-getter must lead naturally to introduction

- Be action-oriented
  - Place product in the receivers’ hands and allow them to use it

- Stress a central selling point
  - Attention-getter must lead to discussion of distinctive feature
Presenting and Interpreting Factual Evidence

• Do not just say it, show it
  – Present data to back up the central selling point

• Compare a new product with something familiar

• Be objective, excluding exaggerations and subjective claims
Convincing Customers with Testimonials, Guarantees, and Samples

- Tell what others have said about your product
- Provide guarantees or free trial offers
- Allow customers to sample product before buying
Subordinating the Price

• Create a ______ for the product first
• Use _______ to show how the price saves money
• State the price in ______  ______
• Invite ________________ with like products
• Put price in a ______________ clause combined with the central selling point
Motivating Action

• Make the action clear and simple to complete

• Restate the reward for action; relate to central selling point

• Provide incentive for quick action

• Ask confidently for action
Types of Persuasive Messages

• Unsolicited sale messages
• Claim messages
• Messages requesting a favor
• Messages requesting information (survey messages)
Buy a $299 PearJam handheld music player from PearMusic, and we will let you download songs from our website for 99 cents each.

Our 300,000 songs are great!!!! And we are adding songs all the time. Our website can be navigated easily and is chock full of music we like. The quality is good, and the music is better. We give you access to a wide variety of artists, and we also give you free 30-second previews of each song.

Our techies are using the new CPM format to release the songs, and you will love what it does for you! Our songs are legal and high quality because we negotiated with the big guys at the record companies, and we made the deals.

Analysis

Uses deductive approach inappropriately by placing request before gaining receiver’s attention or providing convincing evidence

Uses writer-centered, exaggerated language that diminishes receiver interest and confidence in the writer’s objectivity

Continued
At 99 cents each and no subscription fees, you will spend about the same amount per song as with a traditional CD format, but we let you buy only the songs you want to hear. And you can mix songs from various artists to make your favorite playlists, all playable on our PearJam handheld music players and our comPear computers. Browse our collection by genre, artist, album, composer, or song title. Use our 30-second free previews to be certain the song is what you want.

You can use the enclosed authorization number to save $50 on the rather expensive PearJam. You have to go to our website, comPear.com/PearMusic to use it. You can do it whenever you feel like it.

States desired action with no mention of benefits

Analysis

Erodes reader confidence through arrogant attitude and presentation of technical information without explanation

Lacks central selling point that reflects accurate knowledge of receiver’s needs; provides no unity for numerous details

Emphasizes price unnecessarily by placing at beginning of paragraph
Do you want to access the music you love and arrange the songs how YOU want to? want CD-quality songs that are easy to download? want those songs to be portable? and want the peace of mind knowing that all your downloads are sanctioned by the record company and the original recording artist? Then you want PearMusic from comPear.com.

With comPear’s new online digital music store PearMusic, you can find songs from Tom Petty, Richard Marx, Harry Connick, Jr., and every other Tom, Dick, and Harry in the music world for 99¢ per song with no subscription fees. With PearMusic, you also can

- Load the songs onto your PearJam handheld music player and up to three comPear computers.
- Mix songs from various artists to make your favorite playlists.
- Burn a single playlist up to 10 times without changes.
- Get a free 30-second preview for every song.
- Listen to CD-quality music on your computer and your PearJam.
• Browse the PearMusic store by genre, artist, album, composer, or song title.
• Access cover art for CDs and watch exclusive full-length music videos.

Visit www.comPear.com/PearMusic today and check out the collection that is growing daily. Use the enclosed authorization number to save $50 on your purchase of a PearJam (regular price $299) so that you can take your PearMusic wherever you go. Just key the authorization number into the “special offer” box on the checkout screen. The $50 savings offer expires July 31, so get your PearJam today and start making your own music choices with PearMusic.

Analysis

Keeps focus on receiver by use of second person, active-voice sentences

States specific action with reward

Makes action easy and provides incentive for quick response
We've just reviewed the first draft of the Thunderbolt music video and find it totally unacceptable. It must be redone to our specifications.

We made it clear that our target is the MTV set, who demand over-the-top entertainment, and indicated the sample clips from the Indigos were similar to what we wanted. Instead, you send us a simplistic video of nothing more than live-concert footage of the band.

Call us immediately to schedule re-shooting of the entire video.

Analysis

Begins with request before presenting reasons

Uses writer-oriented language to present limited facts

Provides no appeal for taking requested action

Sounds demanding without presenting appeal
When Thunderbolt negotiated with your firm to produce our first music video, we were impressed with the clips of other Harrelson videos and your proven performance record. Especially intriguing to us was your video of the Indigos, with its subtle use of symbolism in the graphic images along with creative shots of the musicians.

In our meeting with your creative team, we focused on the methods used in the Indigos video and specifically asked for graphic symbolism juxtaposed with shots of the band. After viewing the first draft of our video, we find the level of artistic expression disappointing. This video closely resembles a concert tape, focusing primarily on live-concert footage of the band and will have little appeal with our customers, the MTV set, who demand innovative and exciting new approaches in entertainment.

With Harrelson’s reputation for creative productions, we are confident the video can be revised to meet our expectations. The band will do its part to assist in reshooting footage and will meet with the creative director at a mutually convenient time to discuss the kind of graphic imagery appropriate for interpreting our music and its message. Please call me at 555-3920 to schedule this meeting.