Business Letter Assignment

Professional Communications OER: Writing

This project/resource was funded by the Alberta Open Educational Resources (ABOER) Initiative, which is made possible through an investment from the Alberta government

## Introduction

In this assignment you need to craft a letter that provides feedback on a vacation experience. Please study the scenario provided and the list of requirements to plan your letter. The scenario provides sufficient information for you to determine the style, tone, and purpose of your letter. The guidelines and requirements listed provide insight on the structure you should use.

## Scenario

You work as a travel agent with Sunny Days Travel Agency. You receive an email from Eric Kean, a client you organized a vacation for.

In the email, Eric indicates he had a very positive experience while vacationing in the South Pacific on the group getaway you sold him. The accommodation and food at the Regent Hotel were top notch. He says he enjoyed having a room with a great view and appreciated that the food selection was great and that there was always plenty of food.

The package you sold him did include guest activities, but Eric indicates they were not very exciting and seemed to cater to a select age group. Eric goes on to say that this was his first time using Sunny Days Travel Agency and that, at first, he had not been sure what to expect. The scams and bad experiences of travellers he had heard about seemed to plague the travel industry, but he decided to book the trip anyway hoping for the best. Over all, Eric says, he was not disappointed.

The package you sold Eric was offered and organized by Conklin Tours. Sarah Long is Conklin’s representative, and you decide to send her a letter describing Eric’s experience. You want to convey to her that, overall, Eric had a good time. You also want to draw attention to the not-so-good things he experienced in the hope that these can be overcome for future vacationers.

## Guidelines and Requirements

* Use a direct approach to style this “Good News or Neutral Information” letter as outlined in the “Business Letters” section of the eText.
* Create the letter using block. The structure needs to consider who is sending and receiving the letter, the length of the letter, and its purpose. In the Writing Module, you may have been introduced to optional elements for letters, such as subject line, reference initials, etc. If an optional element is necessary in your letter, be prepared to explain why you have included it.
* Keep the length of your letter to no more than two pages with customary margins. Use a font and size that is consistent with the style and format for this type of letter.
* Include an opening (introduction) and closing (conclusion) paragraph. Each should be modelled after its function as presented in the Writing Module.
* Your letter should have no more than five paragraphs in total. Being concise will be important so as to convey your message completely within this limitation. Recall that a paragraph should focus on one idea only, as indicated in the module.
* Ensure your letter is grammatically correct, properly punctuated, and easy to read.

## Grading

Thirty (30) marks are available for this assignment part and distributed as follows:

* Structure = 10 marks.
  + Up to two marks will be deducted for each error or omission regarding structural elements as outlined in a table in the module eText.
  + Up to two marks will be deducted for each optional element included that is unnecessary or that violates letter structure rules as outlined in the module eText.
  + Up to four marks will be deducted for the letter style based on how it does not conform to a Good News or Neutral style as outlined in the module eText.
* Mechanics = 10 marks.
  + One full mark will be deducted for each occurrence of incorrect grammar, spelling error, and punctuation error.
* Readability = 10 marks.
  + Factors that will be considered in this criteria include sentence structure, flow of ideas, clarity of thought, correct use of adjectives, adverbs, conjunction, etc.
  + These factors will be used to determine the extent to which they negatively affect the flow, comprehension, and readability of your letter.

## Submission

Due dates and other submission details will be outlined by your instructor.

# **Business Letter Assignment Part Two** (optional)

## Scenario

After receiving your letter (Part One of the assignment), Sarah Long has decided to contact Morgan Giles, the general manager of the Regent Hotel, which provides guest accommodations included in the vacation package. Conklin Tours has a long-standing relationship with this hotel. Sarah wants to ask if the hotel would consider modifying the activities available with the vacation package so they are more useful to all guests. She also wants to know if doing so will affect the package pricing structure and availability of rooms dedicated to this package. Sarah plans to include direct comments from the original letter sent to her by Sunny Days Travel Agency to add more validity to her inquiry.

## Guidelines and Requirements - Part Two

Assume you are Sarah Long. Craft a letter to the hotel general manager about the specific points outlined in the scenario and that will adequately convey feedback received about the vacation package.

Key characteristics for this optional part of the assignment:

* Use an indirect approach to style this “Bad News” letter as outlined in the “Business Letters” section of the eText.
* Use full block style and include only the necessary and appropriate elements as outlined in the module for the type and purpose of this letter.
* This is a business-to-business letter and, therefore, needs a more formal but friendly tone. The letter should be on company letterhead (you will need to create this).
* Passages or references from the original letter should integrate smoothly within the text and not stand alone or confuse the inquiry points. Use correct procedure when quoting passages from the original letter.
* Include a copy of the original letter from Part One of the assignment to act as support.

## Grading - Part Two

Thirty (30) marks are available for this assignment part and are distributed as follows:

* Structure = 10 marks.
  + Up to two marks will be deducted for each error or omission regarding structural elements as outlined in a table in the module eText.
  + Up to two marks will be deducted for each optional element included that is unnecessary or that violates letter structure rules as outlined in the module eText.
  + Up to four marks will be deducted for the letter style based on how it does not conform to a Bad News style as outlined in the module eText.
* Mechanics = 10 marks.
  + One full mark will be deducted for each occurrence of incorrect grammar, spelling error, and punctuation error.
  + Punctuation here includes proper use of quotes when including passages from the original letter.
* Readability = 10 marks.
  + Factors that will be considered in this criteria include sentence structure; flow of ideas; clarity of thought; correct use of adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, etc.
  + These factors will be used to determine the extent to which they negatively affect the flow, comprehension, and readability your letter.