

## Project 1—Analytical Report [BEFORE EDITS]

For this project, you will conduct research on pieces of business correspondence to analyze the best practices for ethically delivering good news, bad news, and persuasive messages. Specifically, you will evaluate the usability of a piece of communication—that is, you will analyze whether the document effectively communicates the necessary information to its audience and where it fails to do so.

First you will find a piece of business correspondence or other approved piece of communication to analyze. Then you will analyze its ethical and rhetorical situation, the various forms of correspondence created by the organization, and provide your recommendation for future communication practices the business should continue or improve.

**Your analytic report should examine:**

- The situation that inspired the message in this document/s
  - The purpose of this document/s? Why is it needed?
  - The audience (intended, secondary, tertiary) of the message
  - The context of the message
- The credibility of the messages you read
- Message tone effectiveness
- Any data provided (is there enough? Is it credible?)
- Determine how much the readers already know and what they hope to know/do after they read the report
- Identify and discuss specific design/content choices the author used to appeal to the audience/s
- How cultural (in)competencies affect the rhetorical perception of the message
- The effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the rhetorical choices.

## Project 1—Analytical Report [UPDATED PROMPT]

### Project Overview

For this project, you will conduct research on pieces of business correspondence to analyze the best practices for ethically delivering good news, bad news, and persuasive messages. Specifically, you will conduct a rhetorical analysis based on your research and recommendations of a business's response to negative or bad news.

**Commented [MG1]:** Added headings help guide students (the reader) through the assignment prompt.

Business communication is meant to be used and not just read. Good business communication communicates information to an audience who will act on that information in a variety of ways: in making hiring decisions, in following technical procedures, in developing research plans, and more. In this assignment, you will evaluate the usability of a piece of communication—that is, you will analyze whether the document effectively communicates the necessary information to its audience and where it fails to do so.

### Learning Objectives Project 1 Addresses

- Recognize how ethical issues influence business communication
- Compose business communications appropriate for specific audiences, purposes, and contexts

**Commented [MG2]:** The updated prompt includes what Course Learning Objective the project will help students achieve. Including these can also help instructors reinforce how the assignment will help students achieve these objectives.

### Project Writing Tasks Include:

- **Identify a situation** in which a company needed to respond to a situation related to its business. Find a piece of business correspondence or other approved piece of communication to analyze. Analyze its ethical and rhetorical situation, the various forms of correspondence created by the organization, and provide your recommendation for future communication practices the business should continue or improve.
- **Write an analytical report** that examines:
  - The situation that inspired the message in this document/s
    - The purpose of this document/s? Why is it needed?
    - The audience (intended, secondary, tertiary) of the message
    - The context of the message
  - The credibility of the messages you read
  - Message tone effectiveness
  - Any data provided (is there enough? Is it credible?)
  - Determine how much the readers already know and what they hope to know/do after they read the report
  - Identify and discuss specific design/content choices the author used to appeal to the audience/s
  - How cultural (in)competencies affect the rhetorical perception of the message
  - The effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the rhetorical choices.

**Commented [MG3]:** This section breaks down what specific tasks students are expected to complete.

This assignment is due **Wednesday, 9/22 by 1:30pm** and is worth 100 points (weighted 20% of your overall grade).

### Submission

Submit the 2-3 page long analytical report and your memo to Blackboard with the original report or piece of communication as a PDF.

**Commented [MG4]:** Added assignment due date, weight of the project, and directions for submission.

### Tips for Writing the Analytical Report

1. Organize your analytical report with "talking" headings inspired by your conclusions of your analysis. That means your headings will be entirely dependent on your research into the situation you are analyzing.
2. An effective analytical report begins with the conventional memo heading. The first paragraph should be the one you write last; it should be a summary of your entire analysis that ends with a preview statement for the contents of your report.
3. The second paragraph should provide background information on the topic/event you have selected to analyze. Answer things like: when did this event happen? Who are the major stakeholders involved? What initiated the circumstances surrounding this type of communication? What were the results or outcomes of it? What channels were these messages delivered in?
4. Support your analysis with body paragraphs and conclude your report with some recommendations for the company. Your recommendations should be based on your analysis and what you know about good business communication (so far).

**Commented [MG5]:** You might also consider adding some additional "tips" to help students better understand your expectations for formatting and content. This could also be framed as "tips for success"!

I was able to add this section after seeing some common pitfalls and thinking about what I am really looking for in the report.