

Purpose Statement – Written Communication

Due dates for the Purpose Statement

First Draft (5 points):

Compose in MyCompLab before class

Thursday, January 26 (All Sections)

Final Draft (10 points):

Compose in MyCompLab before class

Tuesday, January 31 (4:30 Section)

Monday, January 30 (11:00 & 2:00 Sections)

CAUTION: Assignments that fail to follow the instructions will NOT be graded. If they are revised and resubmitted within a week, they will be graded for no higher than a C (80% of the total point value of the assignment).

WARNING: All assignments are due **BEFORE** the beginning of class. Submit assignments at least an hour before class starts so you have time to contact me for help. If MyCompLab simply won't work, email your assignment to me to get it in on time. **LATE ASSIGNMENTS RECEIVE A ZERO WITH NO OPPORTUNITY FOR REVISION.**

Scenario for the Purpose Statement

One year ago, you became the manager of a financially struggling bar called Moe's. In the past year, you have managed to draw up plans to refurbish the tavern and broaden its appeal. However, the investors whom you have attracted will fund renovations only under one condition: You can no longer allow patrons to run up a bar tab without a credit card, to which all purchases must be charged before the customer leaves the building.

Your best customers, many of whom have been coming to Moe's for years, have always been able to charge drinks to their "tab" and then pay at the end of the month. Although many patrons pay their bar tab at the end of each week, Homer Simpson, Carl Carlson, Lenny Leonard, and Barney Gumble expect to receive their bar bill in the mail once a month. When you send out this month's bill, you plan to include a letter notifying those patrons of the planned changes.

Content requirements for the Purpose Statement

For this assignment, you are going to create a **Purpose Statement** for a letter notifying one of the men listed in the above scenario that you will no longer be allowing customers to run a bar tab. **DO NOT WRITE A LETTER!!**

Your Purpose Statement must:

- Establish your (hypothetical) primary purpose for writing this letter, inform or argue. (*Hint: There is one correct answer here.*)
- Identify your target audience.
- Identify specifically what your central idea or main points will be.
- State your behavioral objective: What specific actions do you want your reader to take after reading your document?
- Identify your secondary purpose(s). These could include inform, argue, and/or build goodwill (*but should not be the same as the primary purpose*).

For written communication, you have permission to use the following formula for your purpose statements. Simply "plug in" the information that is specific to your document:

"The purpose of my document is to [inform or argue] [identify target audience] about [list central idea or main points here] so that they will [identify behavioral objectives here]. My secondary purposes are to [inform, argue, and/or build goodwill (whichever ones are NOT your primary purpose)].

Please adjust the phrasing as necessary, so your purpose statement is grammatically correct and clearly written.

Helpful questions

If you are having trouble coming up with ideas for a purpose statement (for this or any writing project), answering the questions below may help you generate ideas:

1. Do you need to simply inform readers about something that is indisputable and/or not negotiable, or do you need to convince them to *choose* to act or believe differently than they do right now?
2. Who, specifically, are your target readers? What are some of their common characteristics?
3. What are the most important ideas your reader will need to “get” in order to be informed or persuaded?
4. What action do you hope the reader takes in response to reading your message?
5. If you plan to argue, what information will you need to provide to support your arguments? If you plan to inform, are there any little arguments you might have to make along the way to convince your reader your information is trustworthy and important?
6. In what ways will you need to build goodwill with your reader?

Additional Tips

Remember to be as specific and concrete as possible when you establish your target audience, main points and behavioral objectives will be for your document. Below are examples that relate to topics that are different from this assignment:

- Target Audience:** “Anyone between 18-98” or “anyone who is interested in my topic” are not narrow enough. Who is the specific group of readers you most need to reach in order to achieve your objectives for writing? Define them using specific, concrete terms.
- Main points:** “Strategies for success” or “drunk driving is wrong” are not specific enough for a main point or central idea. What specific strategies do you plan to cover in your paper? What are the specific negative effects of drunk driving that make it “wrong”?
- Behavioral objective:** “Do better in college” or “know the effects of global warming” are not concrete or specific enough for behavioral objectives. What specific behaviors indicate a student has done “better” or “well” in college? What behaviors could indicate a person is trying not to contribute to climate change?

Grading scale for final Purpose Statement

10 points: A

9 points: B

8 points: C

7 points -↓: Revision required