

April 8th, 2008

To: Abhi Rao

From: Vincent Fadden

Subject: Negative Message Rationale

As you requested, I've written a one-page rationale for three key decisions I have made in writing my negative statement.

One of the first decisions I had to make regarding my negative message was the tone of my message. I decided that it would best serve my interests to use a non-combative tone. This also serves to help with you-attitude by maintaining goodwill with my audience. In order to stay positive and avoid attacking my audience, I made sure that the responsibility for the problem always lay with either the single customer service representative that I spoke with, or the format of the website, not the individual that I am addressing my letter to.

Another decision I made was to allow the power to be in the hands of my audience. Because I was not prepared to force any consequences on Citicards, such as canceling my account, my bad news was intended only as a request for better service, and the power remained in the hands of my audience. This also helps with you-attitude by building goodwill.

I needed to present benefits for the audience, so one additional decision I had to make regarded these benefits and how to present them. I needed to present the fact that better service would result in better customer satisfaction, and therefore more business. Because there is no threat on my part, I must maintain goodwill while presenting the benefits of changing how they do business, and therefore determined to maintain positive emphasis on how Citicards would benefit from better service and a more clear format on their website.

The combination of building goodwill, maintaining positive emphasis for audience benefits and always striving for better you-attitude has helped to make this an effective negative message, and will hopefully bring about better customer service and a more user-friendly website from Citicards.