

On the Job **WRITING**



BASIC EDITION

Lesson 17

In this lesson, you will learn to:

- Make direct requests
- Make persuasive requests

MAKING REQUESTS

Angela Diaz' friend, Maria, called from Puerto Rico last night to say she will arrive in New Jersey in three weeks for a visit and wants to spend time with Angela. They talked over an hour about the fun things they could do and places they'd like to go.

Taking two days off from her job at the senior assisted living center didn't seem like such a big deal to Andrea last night, but this morning she's having second thoughts about asking her boss for vacation time. The company policy requires asking for vacation in writing two months in advance.

Convincing Dr. Gonzales to let her take vacation on short notice will be stressful, and Angela hardly knows how to begin her request. *"Maybe,"* thinks Angela, *"I will just say that I've not seen my friend for a long time. But that doesn't sound like an important enough reason."*

One thing she remembers is how pleased Dr. Gonzales is when staff members share what they see and hear at Latino festivals. The residents, most of whom once lived in Puerto Rico, love it, especially if the staff wears colorful costumes and dances and sings during recreation time.

Andrea has a thought. *"What if I start my request by announcing that I'd like to attend the big Puerto Rican parade in New York City while my friend is in town. Then I'd say we would come back to the Center and perform for the residents."* Maybe that will persuade Dr. Gonzales!



DEFINE IT! Persuasion

Persuasion is a form of communication used to influence a person's actions, attitude, decisions or behavior.

DIRECT REQUESTS AND PERSUASIVE REQUESTS

The difference in a direct request and a persuasive request is that direct requests show readers immediately how they will benefit. Persuasive, or indirect requests, must convince readers of the benefit.

A direct request usually opens with the actual request, so the reader can see the benefit. For a persuasive request, a few “convince me” sentences typically come first.

Direct Requests

Writing a request for something another person wants to provide is easy. All you need to do is state simply what you are requesting:

- *Will you please send Part No. DGO482 for my Bexit printer?*
- *Will you accept this check in honor of Susan Anthrop's charity run for Multiple Sclerosis?*
- *Please send me a copy of your latest catalog.*
- *Will you come for an interview next Tuesday, March 4, at 2 p.m.?*

The direct request below was simple for the writer because the insurance company will benefit if a sale is made. The writer can expect a quick response.

To: Charlotte Bangor
Cc:
Subject: Insurance quote
From: jrashim@Engs.com

Will you ask one of your automobile insurance agents to contact me regarding an insurance policy for a car I am thinking about buying? Please call me at home after 5 p.m. and before 8 p.m. tomorrow, if possible, as I would like to purchase the car and make an insurance decision soon. The agent may call my cell phone at (404) 555-2315.

These steps will help you write a direct request that is clear, concise and complete.

Step 1: Explain why you are writing. Summarize your reason briefly.

Will you ask one of your automobile insurance agents to contact me regarding the annual cost of insurance for a car I am thinking about buying?

Step 2: Provide all the necessary details. Anticipate and answer any questions the reader may have about your request.

Please contact me at home after 5 p.m. and before 8 p.m., tomorrow if possible, as I would like to purchase the car and make an insurance decision soon.

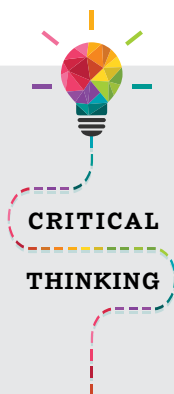
Step 3: Tell the reader exactly what to do. Explain any items that could be confusing.

The agent may call my cell phone at (404) 555-2315.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTION



When making a direct request by email, write a simple, clear subject line that lets the reader know immediately the purpose of the request.



Do you think readers find a short, direct request more or less appealing if a few unrelated, conversational sentences are added, such as a comment on the weather?

Persuasive Requests

Persuasive requests ask a reader to do something that the person is not inclined to do. Therefore, they are harder to write than direct requests.

Persuasive requests asks the reader to take an action, such as hiring, purchasing, donating money or endorsing a political candidate. They are often received in letters, emails, brochures and proposals. They may go to a group of people or to one individual.

Angela Diaz must convince her boss to make an exception to company policy. This is a big hurdle to overcome, so her request needs careful thinking before she writes. Angela can follow the steps below that help when writing a persuasive letter. You should use these guides also.

Step 1: Get the reader’s attention. Start with a question, an interesting fact or a mutual interest.

Step 2: State the purpose. Ask for what you want—clearly and directly.

Step 3: Show the benefits to the reader. Provide details that will make your case.

Step 4: Minimize obstacles that may stand in the way of approval. Anticipate and respond to possible objections.

Angela’s request to Dr. Gonzales is shown in the right column.

Dr. Gonzales, for several days last year after our residents watched the Puerto Rican parade in New York City on TV, they were still talking about it! Do you remember when several residents stood up and sang Puerto Rican songs at dinner one night?

That leads me to a request: My friend from Puerto Rico is visiting in three weeks, and the dates coincide with this year’s parade in NYC. I would like to request two days’ vacation so she and I can attend the parade and come back to perform the songs and dances in-person for our residents.

- *We will develop easy dance steps for residents who are able to join in dancing.*
- *We will lead wheelchair-bound residents in moves they can make from their chairs.*
- *We will project excitement and call on residents to join us in singing.*
- *My friend, Maria, will talk about her life in Puerto Rico today, and our residents can reminisce about their own life there many years ago.*

I am aware this is short notice to ask for two days’ vacation, but the parade is held only one time a year. My resident-partner at the Center, Jaime Linn, has agreed to cover my workdays.

LESSON 17 ACTIVITY



Jason Wi is training to become a robotics technician. For his internship, he must persuade Eskew Engineering to mentor him. Write an opening sentence for Jason to get the reader’s attention and then write one or two details explaining the purpose of the request. Create any needed details to complete the paragraph.