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## Writing a reconsideration letter

You're understandably disappointed to receive a formal rejection of any kind. But remember, just about any decision can be appealed, meaning asking the deciding party to take another look and reconsider their decision. The way you write your reconsideration letter also called a letter of appeal has a lot to do with whether your request will be honored or will even get a second glance. People who make decisions like these every day are overwhelmed with communications, including many reconsideration letters. So their first impression of your letter can affect how they feel about your request before they've even read it. If it's crammed with long paragraphs, they're weary from the start; and may even push it to the bottom of the pile. To make the best impression: Keep your letter to one page. Write short paragraphs. Use bullet points to make it easier to read. A reconsideration letter, or recon letter, is important and therefore requires formal business format and style. Keep these points in mind when setting up your letter: Use block format: Block and indented formats are the most commonly used in business letters. In block format, every line is flush left. Paragraphs are indicated by an extra line space rather than by indentations. Although you could use either, block style makes bullet points stand out because all other copy is flush left. Begin with your address: Skip your address if you're using letterhead. Otherwise, write your address on two lines: Street address on line one and city, state and zip code on line two. Spell out words like "Street," "Road" and your state. Do not include your name in this section. Add the date: Skip one line and add today's date if you'll be mailing your letter today or tomorrow. If you are mailing it later, date it close to when you'll mail it. Or change the date just before you print and mail it. Having a current date conveys that your letter is important. If it's a week old by the time your decision maker sees it, it looks like old news that can't matter very much. Add the recipient's information: Skip one line after the date and use as many lines as you need to include all of your recipient's pertinent information, including formal name, complete and accurate title and business name and address. Example of writing a recon letter to a judge: The Honorable John H. CranstonDistrict Court (or whatever the full name of the court is)Street address of the courtCity, State zip code (no comma between state and zip code) Example writing a recon letter to a college: Ms. Meredith P. Johnston Dean of StudentsMilbert CollegeStreet addressCity, State and zip code Greet formally: Use the full, formal name from the rejection document. For example, "Dear Judge Cranston:" or "Dear Dean Johnston:" Note that the greeting ends with a colon. Confident, not arrogant: The tone you take in writing your recon letter can be a make-or-break factor. Don't take an antagonistic, angry or superior tone. Aim to sound confident about your request, but humble in asking. A recon letter isn't the place for a clever opening. Decision makers want to know up front what your letter is about. For example: "I'm writing to ask that you reconsider your decision in Case Number 4325671, that was given on (month, day, year). The decision is attached to this letter for your convenience." Attaching a copy of your decision letter or documents makes it easier for the recipient to refer to the details of your case without having to look it up. It also reduces the likelihood that they'll set your letter aside while looking for your case documents. Your best chance at having the rejection reconsidered and reversed is if you have new information in your recon letter that wasn't given at the time of the first decision. Make it clear that this is new information and explain it briefly but so it's easy to understand. For example, if you've been removed from school because of an infraction of the rules, or accused of a crime in court: "I have new information that affects this case: A witness has come forward with evidence that places me far from where the activities in question occurred. The witness's sworn and notarized statement is attached." If you don't have new information, try to give the case a new slant or ask that it be reconsidered differently. People who make these tough decisions receive many recon letters asking that decisions be reconsidered. They've heard every conceivable excuse and plea before. Why should yours be the exception? Avoid expressing your hardships or devastation. Everyone who is rejected is upset, but that's not a valid reason to have the decision reversed. For example, in the case of a college admissions rejection, instead of: "I will be the only family member in three generations not attending Milbert College." State your case in more rational terms and address benefits to the school: "Twelve members of my family are proud Milbert College graduates, and three made lasting contributions that benefit all students: Championing the construction of the Tower Arch. Fundraising for the expansion of the biology department. Chairing the annual Fulton Poetry Competition. I, too, want to add my contributions to Milbert College. For these reasons, I believe my status as a legacy applicant should be given further consideration." Wrap up your reconsideration letter with a quick thank-you. Add a formal closing and indicate that attachments are included. For example: Thank you for taking the time and effort to reconsider my decision.Sincerely, (Skip four lines to sign your name) Your full nameTitle, if appropriate(Skip one line)Attachments: court decision documents Use a grammar and spelling program to check for and correct any errors. Print, sign and mail your reconsideration letter immediately. Conveying bad news is not easy, especially if you hate disappointing people. However, at some point in your career, you may have to write a denial letter to inform an applicant that his job overture was unsuccessful. With the right approach, you can write a letter that delivers the bad news yet remains polite. Begin the letter thanking the applicant for his time. The letter should start with "Dear Mr. or Mrs..." and go on to say thanks on behalf of the organization. State the refusal in a clear way so no confusion lingers for the recipient. Do not use positive words to begin a negative sentence. For example, "We were very impressed with your resume, but regret to inform you that you are not qualified for the position." Be clear and concise so the recipient knows exactly what you mean. Don't make the letter longer than it needs to be; break the bad news as soon as possible, while remaining polite. Explain the reasons for the decision. Perhaps the job was already filled or there was an error in the application documents. Providing a reason for the denial is important if you wish to help the applicant improve his chances for success in the future or if you want to point out an easily remedied error. However, some companies or individuals offer a rhetorical reason; this is an option to avoid telling the truth. For example, if the person was late to the interview or appeared to have poor hygiene, you should use rhetoric instead of explaining the true reason. Close the letter with a courteous sentence and a note of goodwill. For example, "We appreciate your time and efforts throughout the interview process." Wish the applicant the best in the future and encourage another try. Don't make the ending long and drawn out at the risk of seeming insincere. Tips Be sure to send the denial letter in a timely matter. Do not leave the person hanging for a final decision. In some instances, a businessperson must be firm and request that a customer or another business cease and desist its actions. For example, if a neighboring business is actively attempting to take business away from you by targeting your existing customers with its sales pitch as they leave your establishment, you might write a letter requesting that the business ceases its activities or you will take legal action against it. A back-off, or cease and desist, letter must be firm and clear to be effective. Type the date, and skip a line space. Type the manager's name, the business's name and the business address on separate lines. Skip another line space. Create the salutation by typing the person's name, followed by a colon. Do not type "Dear" before the name because that will soften the firm tone your letter needs. Tell the recipient to immediately cease the harmful actions. List the actions, with the relevant dates and times, and be specific about what you would like the recipient to stop. The specific details are important in case you need to take the recipient to court later; you will have evidence that you told the recipient to stop its activities. Use clear, matter-of-fact language, and avoid attacking the recipient personally. Explain what you will do if the recipient does not stop its actions. Do not make any threats that you are not willing to follow up on. For example, if you state that you will take the recipient to court, be prepared to do so. Provide your contact information, such as your telephone number or email address. If the recipient contacts you, save the email or write down the details of the call. Keep these communications as evidence in case the matter goes to court. Type "Sincerely" and skip three lines. Print the letter on your company letterhead, and sign your name above your typed name. Mail the letter with signature confirmation so you have evidence that the recipient received your letter. 1 What Are the Advantages and Disadvantages of a Graph? 2 Circuitry 101: Examples of Series Circuits & How They Work 3 How Much Minced Garlic Equals One Clove? 4 Caves: Nature's Majestic, Mysterious Wonders 5 What Are Dramatic Techniques?

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