

MAGIC Learning Exchange  
M.A.G.I.C.<sup>®</sup> E-Mail Writing:  
*Make A Great Impression on your  
Customers with Every E-Mail*

November 5 & 6, 2008

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## Participants:

There were representatives from over 90 companies in a wide range of industries such as financial services, healthcare, consumer goods, hospitality, technology and transportation.

## Introduction:

Diane Berenbaum presented guidelines and tips for writing e-mails based on Communico's program, MAGIC E-Mail Writing. She addressed content from three of the five phases in that program.

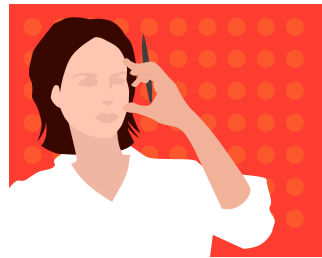
# Purpose

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- **Make A Great Impression on the Customer** with every e-mail—*Make each contact so professional that the customer wants to have another contact with you.*
- Position you and your organization in a consistently positive manner

# The Biggest Problem with E-mails....

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The failure to think before writing

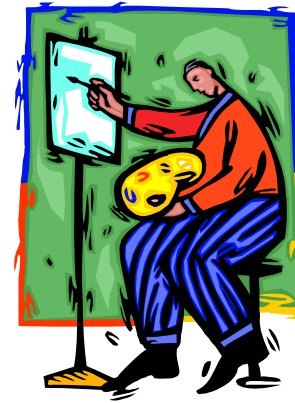
# M.A.G.I.C.<sup>®</sup> E-Mail Writing

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1. Organization

2. Dialogue

3. Netiquette



# Organization

[Flow]



# Ask 3 Questions before Writing

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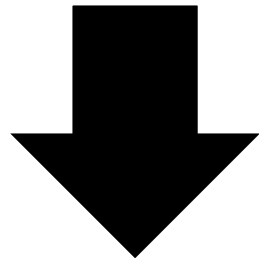
- Who?
- What?
- How?

*Focus on the reader*

# Flow

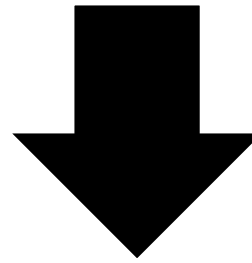
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Relationship



MAGIC

Task



Factual

# Original: Tragic E-Mail

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Dear Customer:

We received your e-mail stating that there were problems with your statement. You say that you do not deserve the late fees charged to your account.

Upon further investigation, we found that there was an error made. We have adjusted your account so that it is now accurate.

We apologize for any inconvenience that this matter caused you.

# What Makes this Tragic?

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- Cold salutation; doesn't treat customer as a person
- Accusatory – “You say”
- “We” is not personal and is overused
- The apology at the end doesn't feel sincere
- Tone is cold
- Vague – did not say what they did or what the error was
- All about the writer – not focused on the reader

# Organization: MAGIC Flow

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- **M**ake contact professionally
- **A**cknowledge and/or empathize
- **G**ive a clear explanation
- **I**nform reader of solutions and/or alternatives
- **C**lose with MAGIC

# Rewrite: MAGIC<sup>®</sup> Flow

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Dear Mr.                   :

Thank you for taking the time to write to us about your statement. I understand your concern about late fees and your desire for resolution.

I have researched the matter and found that your payments are up to date and that no late fees are applicable. I apologize for this error and the frustration you've experienced as a result.

I assure you that your account has been updated and all late fees have been removed. A revised statement is being mailed to you today.

I appreciate your patience and look forward to serving you in the future.

# How would you respond?

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To: Human Resources

I have been with this company for 20 years and was told that I would receive a special reward on my anniversary. Imagine my surprise when I opened the package and found an item that is awarded to people who have been with the company for only 5 years.

How could you make such a mistake? My records clearly show that I have been here 20 years. Is that any way to treat a long-time employee?

I deserve the 20-year award and want you to send me the appropriate packet so that I can order the item I want.

# Sample Response: MAGIC<sup>®</sup> Flow

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**M:** Thank you for letting me know about the mix-up with your anniversary award.

**A:** I understand your disappointment , especially after reaching such a big milestone, and apologize for the error .

**G:** I have researched the matter and fine-tuned our process so that this will not happen again.

**I:** I will express the 20-year award packet to you today so that you receive it tomorrow. Please keep the 5-year award, as a token of our appreciation.

**C:** Thank you for your understanding . Please call me directly at... if you have any questions.

# Organization: Tragic Bad News

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Dear Mr.                   :

We are writing to inform you that Item # X35-NRT will be discontinued.

Our records indicate that this will affect your production of ABC Tools, which use this product in their manufacture.

We do have a limited supply left . You can place an order by November 30 to obtain this product before it is no longer available. We also have suitable replacements and can provide assistance to help you transition to these products.

Serving your needs is important to us. We regret any inconvenience this may have caused. You have been a valued customer for decades and we appreciate your business.

# What Makes this Tragic?

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- Impression created is one of indifference – feels like a form
- Words say “valued customer” but feels like an afterthought
- Starts out with the bad news

# Bad News Burger

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“Sandwich” the bad news

- Relationship Message
- Bad News
- Relationship Message

# Organization: MAGIC Bad News

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Dear Mr.                   :

I appreciate the cooperative relationship we have shared over the decades. With this in mind, I want to inform you of a change that will impact your organization. Item # X35-NRT will be discontinued this month.

I sincerely regret any inconvenience this may cause. Please note that we do have a limited supply left. You can still obtain this item if you order by November 30<sup>th</sup>.

I will also be happy to suggest replacement products that fit your needs and work with your staff to ensure a successful transition.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation with this product change. I look forward to partnering with you in the months ahead.

# Organization: MAGIC Flow

---

- **M**ake contact
- **A**cknowledge and/or empathize
- **G**ive a clear explanation
- **I**nform reader of solutions and/or alternatives
- **C**lose with MAGIC

# Organization: Factual Flow

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- Give a clear explanation
- Inform reader of solutions and/or alternatives
- Close with MAGIC

# Dialogue

[Words and language used]



# Dialogue: Tragic Language

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## RESPONSE TO INQUIRY:

I am not the person who supports the OT database. Please contact payroll personnel directly.

# What Makes this Tragic?

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- Starts off with a negative message – “I am not the person”
- The writer takes no ownership or responsibility – gives the impression that he doesn’t care
- Vague, indifferent language puts people off
- Does not provide helpful details such as a specific contact or phone number/e-mail address
- MAGIC phrases (“please” and “thanks”) do not overcome the tragic impression

# Dialogue: MAGIC Language

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Thanks for your message. The best way to get the support you need is to contact Martha Blume in Payroll. I am sure she will be able to help you.

You can reach her at xxx-xxxx, extension 123.

Best regards,

# Tragic Wording

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In response to your e-mail regarding contacting the carrier, when a customer chooses to pickup an order the responsibility of contacting the carrier falls on the customer.

Please make the appropriate arrangements so that the carrier picks this up as soon as possible.

**Total No. of Words: 43**

**% Long Words: 28**

# What Makes this Tragic?

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- Can't get the message in one read through
- Too many “long” words (three or more syllables) – affects readability
- Run-on sentence at the start
- Word repetition (“carrier” used three times)
- Language – “falls on the customer” puts people off
- Tragic phrase – “as soon as possible”

# MAGIC Wording

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Thank you for your e-mail about the process for pick-ups.

Please note that customers need to contact the carrier if they choose to pick up an order.

Please arrange to have the above order picked up by

\_\_\_\_\_.

**Total No. of Words: 38**

**% Long Words: 5**

# Edit Formal Language/Extra Words

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Instead of	Use
As per our telephone conversation	As we discussed
In the event that	If
Thank you in advance for your prompt cooperation in this matter.	I would like your input by Friday so I can send out the monthly update on time. Thanks for your help.

# Dialogue Guidelines

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- Words: 10% long words
- Sentences: Average length of 15 – 20 words
- Use MAGIC phrases
- Edit extra words and formal language

# Netiquette

[Writing is a work of art;  
pride and attention to details]



# Netiquette - Tragic Samples

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1. SUBJECT: Attendance Policy
2. You will have to ask the client I do not know
3. PLEASE CONFIRM THAT YOUR ADDRESS IS: P O BOX 9999 SALEM, OR 55555

# Netiquette – MAGIC Rewrites

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1. SUBJECT: New Attendance Policy Effective Dec. 1, 2008
2. The best way to obtain that information is to ask the client. I do not have access to that data.
3. Please confirm that your address is: Post Office Box 9999  
Salem, OR 55555

# Netiquette Guidelines

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- Make subject lines informational (5 – 9 words)
- Avoid using all capital letters (use upper and lower case)
- Use proper grammar and punctuation
- Check for typos - Use spell check, but review for proper word usage

# Other Netiquette Guidelines

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- Select the appropriate distribution list – beware “auto fill”
- Avoid “reply all” unless the message is relevant for all
- Stop email chains! Don’t forward more than two e-mails
- When you do forward, change the subject line as appropriate
- Use professional fonts and avoid emoticons, wallpaper and graphics—think of your reader
- Control impulse to shorten e-mails with abbreviations

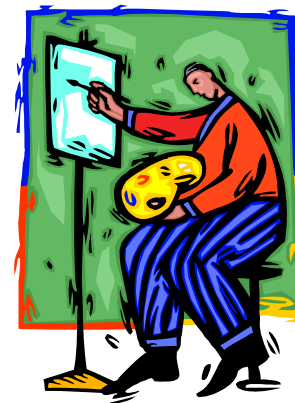
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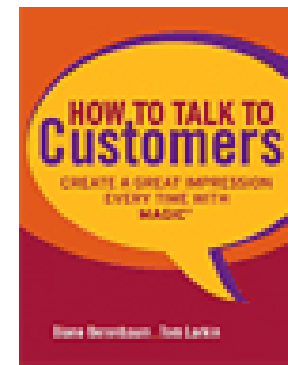


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Impression on your Customers with Every E-Mail*

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**Thank you!**  
**Diane Berenbaum**

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