A pair of letters—one dealing with sales, the other with a claim—comprises the third major project for the course. Although the letters will exist as separate documents, each will require you to complete a similar process. For each letter, choose (or, if you wish, invent) a subject or topic: either a product or service to market or a “polite and reasonable” complaint to lodge. Consider carefully your purpose for writing each document, and follow Markel’s guidelines set forth in chapter 15 to enable you to accomplish your purpose in the best way.

Spend some time brainstorming the topic or subject of each letter. The best sales letters, for example, sometimes are based on products or services that you already know and favor: a certain brand of mountain bike; music or video club; computer game; coffeehouse or restaurant; gym; and so on. Claim letters tend to be best when they arise out of a real, rather than invented, context. Your purpose with the claim letter is not simply to complain, but to persuasively suggest some sort of adjustment. (Remember the Sea-Tasty tuna letters.)

For the sales letter, focus on a specific audience. Complete an Audience Profile Sheet similar to that shown by Markel for the sales letter only. Your Instructor, who represents a different kind of audience (the “grader”) will look for letters that incorporate successfully the issue of form and content explained by Markel in chapter 15. Strong letters will adhere to one of the standard letter formats; include necessary elements of professional correspondence; emphasize the “you attitude”; contain information necessary to the type of letter; and reflect thorough editing.

DUE DATES

W 15 Mar Drafts of Sales Letter (with APS) and Claim Letter due for Peer Review (20 pts.)

M 27 Revised Sales Letter (with APS) and Claim Letter due for grading (60 pts.)

SUBMISSION

Before submitting your revised copies for grading, review the grading checklists below and the Letter Format Writer’s Checklist outlined by Markel in chapter 15. The letters should be turned in exactly as they would appear if you were to mail them; hence, do not include “course information” on the documents themselves. Turn in project documents in the following order: (1) revised sales letter; (2) Audience Profile Sheet; (3) sales letter peer review sheet; (4) claim letter; (5) claim letter peer review sheet.

GRADING CHECKLISTS

The Sales Letter and Audience Profile Sheet (30 points possible) . . .

- gains the reader’s attention and persuades that your claims are accurate;
- describes the product or service that you are marketing;
- explains to your reader how to learn more about that product or service;
- adheres to standard letter format;
- is well edited with regard to grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling.

The Claim Letter (30 points possible) . . .

- identifies the product or service;
- explains the problem succinctly but completely;
- proposes an appropriate adjustment;
- concludes courteously and adheres to standard letter format;
- is well edited with regard to grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling.