LESSON 25

SALES LETTERS

Outline:

Sales Letters

Types of Sales Letters

o Solicited Letter

o Unsolicited Letter

Principles for Writing Sales Letters

o Know Your Buyer

o Prepare a List of Buyers

o Analyze the Product

* Decide on the Central Selling Point

Sales Letters

To some extent, every letter is a sales letter. You are selling your organization’s image and

goodwill. These letters are an easy and effective way of securing business. No other type of letter influences so many people or brings as big a return in terms of money as this letter.

More so than other letters, the sales letter is highly specialized, and its writing require exceptional ability and experience.

There are two kinds of sales letters:

(i) Solicited letter (the organization is invited to respond to sales messages.)

(ii) Unsolicited letter (the organization sends out uninvited messages to sell a product or

service)

Writing whatever type of sales letter, follow these principles:

1. Know your Buyer

First, identify the characteristics that describe the most likely buyer for your products or services.
From research or experience, build a “composite” buyer. The sex, age, occupation, geographic
location, financial situation and other characteristics of the “average” buyer should be be made
known. Determine what appeals will be used in letter. Defining your targeted buyer’s
characteristics helps you discover the needs and desires of these prospective buyers.

For example, you wouldn’t try to sell a “Sixty-Five Plus” insurance plan to college students.

The writer of sales letters has a choice of many different appeals. Those used depend upon the

aim of the letter, the nature of the product, and the market - the people who will receive the letter. Buyers usually spend their money for these reasons:

• For comfort (air conditioners)

• To make money (stock)

• To escape physical pain

• To save money (storm windows)

• To save time (microwave oven)

• To protect family (smoke detector)

• To imitate others (sunglasses)

. 118

• To be in style (new coat)

• To be different (exclusive hat)

• To avoid trouble (casualty insurance)

• For health (toothpaste)

• To take advantage of opportunities (investment property)

• For enjoyment (television set)

• To enhance reputation (charitable contribution)

• For cleanliness (soap)

• To satisfy appetite (candy)

• To avoid effort (power lawn mower)

• For beautiful possessions (new cell phone)

• To be popular (dancing lessons)

• To safeguard possessions (fire insurance)

• To be attractive (jewelry, garments)

• To be adventurous (travel)

2. Prepare a List of Buyers

Next, you need a good mailing list. The obvious place to start is your organization’s own list of
buyers. You can also buy lists from organizations that specialize in compiling and selling them.
For sales effectiveness, a good mailing list must contain the correct names and addresses of
people or organizations that have in common characteristics that make them likely buyers for
your products or services.

3. Analyze the Product

What specific feature of the product or service makes it attractive or useful or appealing? What
features should be emphasized? What features should be played down? (These analyses are
usually made along with Step 1.) Letters that present a product in terms of what prospective
buyers think of it and how they can use it do more than make sales--they win satisfied customers.

4. Decide on the Central Selling Point

The central selling point (CSP) should be the item of information most likely to persuade the
buyer to buy a product or service. After analyzing the buyer and the product, build your letter
around this central selling point. The CSP might be appearance, durability, comfort, convenience,
price, or any other positive feature that is likely to have the greatest influence on your reader’s
purchasing decision.