Handout 3

PRACTICE: BAD NEWS/NEGATIVE MESSAGES

SENTENCE LEVEL SKILLS

Focus on the positive, imply the negative

- If we do not receive your renewal payment by the end of May, we will have to cancel your subscription of the Discovery Magazine.

- When you send in your renewal payment by the end of May, you will continue to receive without interruption, your Discovery Magazine that opens the amazing world of science to you and your family.

- Rava shoes are not sold at wholesalers like us. You can only buy them from our authorized dealers. Please refer to the list below to find the dealer nearest to you.

- Rava shoes are available at retail outlets of our authorized agents which can be found in every town throughout the country. To order a pair of high quality Rava shoes, please contact any of the agents listed below.

NOW YOU TRY IT!

- We are sorry, but our store’s policy does not allow returns of undergarments.

- Since you don’t have the receipt as proof of payment, we are unable to refund you your money.

- We cannot identify the problem with the photocopy machine as yet. Please be patient, and when we have discovered the problem, we’ll inform you.
• It is impossible that our restaurant has 4 cats prowling around as you claim, as our hygiene standards are monitored by the PAQ.

• Passive voice, nominalisation

When it is not expedient to mention the doer of the action

When the doer of the action is connected to negative words

• You neglected to submit the report on time.
• The report was not submitted on time.

• Because you have opened and damaged the packaging, we will not be able to return product to the manufacturer.
• Because the packaging is damaged, returning the product to the manufacturer is not possible.

• In case that you die in an accident, this accident plan will pay benefits to your family to tide over the loss.
• In case of accidental deaths, the plan will pay out compensation/the sum assured to the family.

NOW YOU TRY IT!

• The Senior manager gave you the wrong information about the printer functions.

• Since our logistics department staff’s inefficiency has caused the delay in the delivery of your fax machine, we have decided to offer a 30 percent discount on the machine.
Clause subordination
Put the negative message in the subordinate clause

- The report was not carefully checked, so it contained a lot of mistakes
- Because the report was not carefully checked, it contained a lot of mistakes.
- The reason for the delay was a mix-up in orders, so the logistics staff had to reschedule all deliveries for the day. Fortunately, the managed to delivery all the packages before the convention day.
- Although there was a mix-up in the orders and all deliveries for the day had to be rescheduled, we were able to deliver all the packages well before the convention day.

NOW YOU TRY IT!

- We found your claim that there were four cats prowling around the restaurant during your party untrue. Thus we will certainly not be able to reimburse you the amount you are claiming.
- Although the staff worked very hard to achieve the set sales targets every month, unfortunately, they failed to achieve them.

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