|  |
| --- |
| **Criteria** |
| 1.     Clear, logical, assertive topic sentence (first of each paragraph) that directly responds to the question. |
| 2.     Paragraph focuses on only topic sentence claim – NO TOPIC DRIFT. |
| 3.      Adequate, accurate and specific evidence that strongly supports topic sentence claim without plagiarizing. |
| 4. Thorough analysis that flows logically, without redundancy, from the chosen evidence and demonstrates an understanding of the source material. |
| 5.     Balance of relevant evidence and student analysis to support the topic sentence claim. |
| 6.      Writing is clear and understandable. |
| 7.      Uses correct grammar and punctuation, considering handwritten exam format. |
| 8.      Language is active and concise, and uses business style. |

**Topic Sentence Requirements**

**Important Note: Creating Effective Topic Claim Sentences**

(Note: you will not have access to this reminder and accompanying examples during the exam.)

Remember, topic sentences need to be assertive claims.  In this regard, they need to include both evidence and a reason why.

**Example of a good topic sentence has three parts:**

(A.)Netflix CEO Reed Hastings’ memo is effective in appeasing upset customers (B.) because the memo uses conversational, emotional language (C.) that connects with customers on a human level.

**Example of a bad topic sentence:**

Netflix CEO Reed Hastings’ memo is effective in appeasing upset customers.

**What’s the problem?**

A vague claim like this can’t act as a viable and specific map to the paragraph, a map that can help you avoid topic drift.

**So make sure your topic sentences include the reason why or answer the question - so what?**

**points and tips**

 Each paragraph is a "pass/fail."

**READINGS FOR THE STUDENTS**.

When you arrive for the exam I will give you the blue books and questions. Students will write one-paragraph responses to three (3) of the five questions. I don’t have any preference as to which three questions each individual student answers.

At the end of the two-hour exam, I will collect EVERYTHING – blue books (obviously), printouts of the readings that students have brought, and **all copies of the exam questions** and any notes the students have made during the exam.

When I start grading the exams, I will grade them against the final exam rubric. Each paragraph is a pass/fail paragraph. So each student can get one of four possible grades on the final exam:

* + 0 (zero; none of the three paragraphs meet the rubric criteria)
  + 34 (one paragraph meets all rubric criteria, two do not)
  + 67 (two paragraphs meet all rubric criteria, one does not)
  + 100 (all three paragraphs meet the rubric criteria)

**REMEMBER**

* + When you paraphrase you **must** change vocabulary, change organization, but keep the length and keep the meaning. You also must cite the information or it is **plagiarism.**
  + Analyze - this is you explaining fully, even if you feel the information was implied.
  + If the company makes a statement, try to tell the reader **where/when and how** it was made.  (on Youtube? In an interview with the NYTimes….and on what date? )
  + Use month, day and year when you give a date
  + One – nine = words 10 -1000000000 = numbers ( except in time, dates and millions)
  + First time = Timothy Coombs, crisis communication expert, or Christina Owings, CEO of Google …..second time use Coombs or Owings ( family name )
  + Review all elements of Business Writing Style ( concise, specific, Active voice, No weak, hard to measure words (very), No sentences starting with "it is" constructions...)

**NetFlix Memo**

**Sample Question:**

Review Netflix CEO Reed Hastings’ 2011 memo to Netflix customers upset by Netflix’s change in services, and argue in one concise, direct, assertive paragraph your response to the following question: **Was Hastings’ communication EITHER effective OR ineffective in appeasing his audience, and why?** To support your argument, use specific details from the provided text and your own logic and knowledge.

**Netflix CEO Reed Hastings’ 2011 Memo**

Dear \_\_\_,

I messed up. I owe you an explanation.

It is clear from the feedback over the past two months that many members felt we lacked respect and humility in the way we announced the separation of DVD and streaming and the price changes. That was certainly not our intent, and I offer my sincere apology. Let me explain what we are doing.

For the past five years, my greatest fear at Netflix has been that we wouldn't make the leap from success in DVDs to success in streaming. Most companies that are great at something – like AOL dialup or Borders bookstores – do not become great at new things people want (streaming for us). So we moved quickly into streaming, but I should have personally given you a full explanation of why we are splitting the services and thereby increasing prices. It wouldn’t have changed the price increase, but it would have been the right thing to do.

So here is what we are doing and why.

Many members love our DVD service, as I do, because nearly every movie ever made is published on DVD. DVD is a great option for those who want the huge and comprehensive selection of movies.

I also love our streaming service because it is integrated into my TV, and I can watch anytime I want. The benefits of our streaming service are really quite different from the benefits of DVD by mail. We need to focus on rapid improvement as streaming technology and the market evolves, without maintaining compatibility with our DVD by mail service.

So we realized that streaming and DVD by mail are really becoming two different businesses, with very different cost structures, that need to be marketed differently, and we need to let each grow and operate independently.

It’s hard to write this after over 10 years of mailing DVDs with pride, but we think it is necessary: In a few weeks, we will rename our DVD by mail service to “Qwikster”. We chose the name Qwikster because it refers to quick delivery. We will keep the name “Netflix” for streaming.

Qwikster will be the same website and DVD service that everyone is used to. It is just a new name, and DVD members will go to qwikster.com to access their DVD queues and choose movies. One improvement we will make at launch is to add a video games upgrade option, similar to our upgrade option for Blu-ray, for those who want to rent Wii, PS3 and Xbox 360 games. Members have been asking for video games for many years, but now that DVD by mail has its own team, we are finally getting it done. Other improvements will follow. A negative of the renaming and separation is that the Qwikster.com and Netflix.com websites will not be integrated.

There are no pricing changes (we’re done with that!). If you subscribe to both services you will have two entries on your credit card statement, one for Qwikster and one for Netflix. The total will be the same as your current charges. We will let you know in a few weeks when the Qwikster.com website is up and ready.

For me the Netflix red envelope has always been a source of joy. The new envelope is still that lovely red, but now it will have a Qwikster logo. I know that logo will grow on me over time, but still, it is hard. I imagine it will be similar for many of you.

I want to acknowledge and thank you for sticking with us, and to apologize again to those members, both current and former, who felt we treated them thoughtlessly.

Both the Qwikster and Netflix teams will work hard to regain your trust. We know it will not be overnight. Actions speak louder than words. But words help people to understand actions.

Respectfully yours,

-Reed Hastings, Co-Founder and CEO, Netflix

p.s. I have a slightly longer explanation along with a video posted on [our blog](http://blog.netflix.com/2011/09/explanation-and-some-reflections.html?lnktrk=EMP&g=16F39B14F2C7405F5DA05D85810BAFD60AC0315E&lkid=netflixBlog), where you can also post comments

NOW OPEN THE QUESTION RESPONSES AND COMPARE

**Netflix Good and Bad examples**

**Good Example Response #1**

(1)Nexflix CEO Reed Hastings memo is **ineffective** in appeasing upset customers,(2) because he spends the early part of the memo justifying and explaining his own experience,(3) failing to address customers’ primary concern about cost until the last third of the document. For example, Hastings states toward the beginning of his memo that he “should have” preemptively explained to customers why Netflix is splitting its services and increasing prices. He explains that “it wouldn’t have changed the price increase, but it would have been the right thing to do.” Hastings ruminates on his own feelings about Netflix’s changed service, discussing his love of Netflix’s streaming service and justifying his rationale for separating that service from the DVD by mail one. His own experiences, both as a Netflix viewer and as company CEO, inform the bulk of the memo, making it seem out of touch with consumer concerns. Had Hastings based his communication with consumers around their collective concerns rather than around his unique experiences, he would have appeared more relatable and less self-righteous. Although Hastings does rescind Netflix’s price increase for current customers later in the document, his memo is ineffective in appeasing his audience because it is likely that many would have stopped reading by then due to the self-centered and out-of-touch rhetoric throughout the early part of the memo.

**Good Example Response #2**

(1)Netflix CEO Reed Hastings’ memo is effective in appeasing upset customers (2) because the memo uses conversational, emotional language (3) that connects with customers on a human level.  For example, Hastings explains that he “love[s]” both the DVD and streaming services for different reasons; that, for him, “the Netflix red envelope has always been a source of joy;” and that he knows the new Qwikster logo will grow on him over time but that “it is hard.” By using words like “love” and “joy” and by making clear that the Netflix CEO, like his customers, uses and enjoys Netflix’s present services and experiences feelings of sadness during the transition to a new business model, Hastings relates to customers on a person-to-person level. He shows that he feels the same as his customers while allowing those customers insight into—and ultimately, empathy for—how he must feel as CEO. With its appeal to customers’ feelings, Hastings’ memo is effective in repairing Netflix’s reputation with its customers.

**Bad Example Response #1**

Netflix CEO Reed Hastings’ memo is effective in appeasing upset customers because the memo uses conversational, emotional language that connects with customers on a human level. Hastings talks to the customers like they are people he knows, not like they are just people that he makes money from. His words make it clear that he really cares about them as people. He makes them care about him, too, by showing that the Netflix changes hurt him just like they hurt the customers. Appealing to customers’ feelings makes this memo effective in making sure people feel positively toward Netflix after this crisis.

**Bad Example Response #2 (TOPIC DRIFT)**

Netflix CEO Reed Hastings’ memo is effective in appeasing upset customers because the memo uses conversational, emotional language that connects with customers on a human level. For example, Hastings explains that he “love[s]” both the DVD and streaming services for different reasons; that, for him, “the Netflix red envelope has always been a source of joy;” and that he knows the new Qwikster logo will grow on him over time but that “it is hard.” A mass memo can seem like a cold document, but the fact that this memo is long enough to address all the issues that customers are worried about in a detailed and heartfelt way makes customers feel cared for. In addition to relating to customers emotionally, Hastings’ memo appeases customers’ primary financial concern by assuring current customers that, for them, the switch in business model will not involve a price increase. The many references Hastings makes to the future also make them feel reassured, because they understand that the business will actually offer them greater benefits in the end.

**Sample Question:** Read the attached excerpt from "Lessons Learned from the Tylenol Tragedy,” and argue—in one concise, direct, assertive paragraph—your response to the following question: **Which single PR strategy was most powerful in Johnson & Johnson's reputation repair, and why?** To support your argument, use specific details from the provided text and your own logic and knowledge.

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**Sample responses, with color-coding to emphasize analysis: ( you need equal amounts )**

**Factual evidence support (from the reading)**

**Interpretive analysis support**

**Sample Response “A”:**

            Open, active communication with the public, through Chairman James Burke’s TV interviews and a toll-free hotline, was Johnson & Johnson’s most powerful reputation repair strategy because, with this strategy, the company took advantage of 1982’s limited media channels to update the public on new developments.

(or : Johnson & Johnson's most powerful reputation repair strategy was its open, active communication with the public, through Chairman James Burke's TV interviews and a toll free hotline, which took advantage of the 1982's limited media channels to update the public on new developments. )

First, Chairman James Burke appeared “on TV interview shows” to explain how Johnson & Johnson was controlling the situation.  In that way, Burke cooperated with the TV news media, providing a sense of active transparency and complying with W. Timothy Coombs’ recommendation that companies use the news media to quickly reach a large pool of stakeholders.  Since, in 1982, TV had fewer competing media, because the Internet was not yet the competing influence that it is today, Burke using TV to disseminate key response messages was a powerful choice.  Second, Johnson & Johnson used a toll-free hotline to answer questions, which enabled the company to communicate one-on-one with members of the public.   The hotline was a way to personally explain the situation to anyone seeking information, demonstrating Coombs’ advice that companies should use all available channels to communicate to the public after a crisis.  Through TV and telephone, two powerful modes of communication in 1982, Johnson & Johnson spoke to the public using widely disseminated messages to fill what otherwise may have been an information vacuum, which could have led to more public mistrust of the company.

**Sample Response “B”:**

            The most powerful PR strategy that Johnson & Johnson used to repair its reputation was strategically coordinating with the medical community because the people within this community could become “force multipliers” advocating for the company.  For example, according to “Lessons learned from the Tylenol tragedy on surviving a corporate crisis,” J&J “made intensive efforts to communicate with physicians through all media” to encourage these physicians to reassure their patients of Tylenol’s safety.  The article specifically mentions that J&J sent 450,000 electronic messages to people in medical and pharmaceutical industries and dispersed more than 2,000 sales reps to make in-person presentations to doctors and health-care workers.  By coordinating with the medical community in these ways, J&J gained what Leslie Gaines-Ross calls “force multipliers”: “a network of independent third parties willing to take your side.”  In this case, J&J recognized that the support of the medical community would have reinforced the power of the company’s message, that Tylenol is safe, by channeling that message through trusted, authoritative, and seemingly unbiased sources: doctors and other health-care professionals.  Had J&J not involved medical community representatives as third-party advocates in these ways, taking advantage of their positions of influence to endorse Tylenol, consumers may have remained more skeptical of Tylenol’s safety and taken more time to trust the product again.