

Sarah Rigert

Professor Janet Underwood

Certified Technical Writing

November 16, 2023

Assignment 5: Proposal Audience

Identifying and analyzing the audience during the planning stage of a proposal is essential for establishing credibility, developing a persuasive argument, and determining tone and word choice. For this proposal, I identified the audience's subject knowledge level, role, age, and cultural background. My proposal will recommend the installation and maintenance of trash cans for residents to dispose of pet waste along the walking areas in my neighborhood. The audience will be the neighborhood HOA board, specifically the president, who is also the chairperson of the Landscaping committee. The audience's goals are to maintain a neighborhood image and level of cleanliness to preserve home values, promote relocation to the area, and provide a pleasant environment for residents to enjoy. According to the HOA president's recent reelection campaign, her goal as president is to serve the community by maintaining a beautiful, first-class environment in the neighborhood. I expect my audience will be open to receiving my proposal but will be wary of implementing it due to the potential time and financial resources required. For my proposal to be accepted I must demonstrate that the benefits of implementation are worth the investment.

Assessing the audience's knowledge of the subject is necessary to determine word choice and level of background information to include. There is a balance between providing enough information to convey a message and avoiding redundancy. The audience's knowledge level of this subject is high. The audience has lived in the neighborhood long-term and is familiar with

the location, characteristics, and daily habits of residents. The HOA president has served on the board for 8 years and has volunteered with the Landscaping committee since 2011.

Responsibilities of the Landscaping committee include planning, researching, and implementing improvements or additions to outdoor areas. The audience has likely received similar proposals in the past and is familiar with the topic I am proposing. To adjust the document to audience knowledge level, I will keep descriptions of neighborhood characteristics brief and focus most of the document on explaining the logistics of the solution and the expected results. I will direct the tone and word choice to experienced and educated professionals, not lay people.

Examining the role of the audience helps the writer build a persuasive argument and focus on information relevant to the reader's goals. My audience takes the role of the decision-maker. The board has the power to vote on and implement neighborhood improvements with funds from resident dues. Decision-makers want to see results through objective data and detailed explanation of budget, timeline, and return on investment. Decision-makers want their objections addressed and questions anticipated and answered in the document. To adjust my proposal to the audience's role, I will focus on an explanation of data including resources required and results. I will anticipate points of opposition and address the audience's potential concerns with solutions.

Identifying the age group of the audience is necessary to create a message that meets personal interests, needs, and goals. My audience is part of the "baby boomer" generation, ranging in age from mid 50s to 70s. Typical characteristics of this generation include family-oriented values, expectation of respect, and difficulty using new technology. When building an argument, I will appeal to the audience's personal values by emphasizing how the proposal will result in increased quality of life for families by elevating the living environment and increasing

time spent outdoors. To maintain mutual respect, I will use a professional tone and present the problem objectively without casting blame. When formatting the proposal, I will ensure that the document is visually easy to read and will provide access without use of technology, such as through a physical copy.

Evaluation of cultural background is important to minimize barriers such as tone, complex terminology, and use of colloquial phrases that prevent understanding of the message. My audience is primary white, native English speakers, and from the American Southeast. According to the chapter reading, individuals in the southeastern United States expect a higher level of respect through phrases such as “Yes ma’am,” “Yes sir,” and gestures they deem to be signs of politeness. The members of the board are all experienced or retired professionals. The business culture in the United States views directness as a sign of openness and honesty, trustworthiness. I will adjust the proposal writing to my audience by maintaining a respectful, professional tone throughout the document. When presenting the problem and evidence for the solution, I will present the information directly and objectively.