

# Consumer Affairs Written Style Guide

*Guidance for creating the CRAYOLA brand voice in written communications.*

## 1. Response Must Support the Corporate Strategy and Brand Equity

### A. Writing Goals and Objectives

1. Deliver WOW through service
2. Be creative, open minded and trusting
3. Educate and empower
4. Build open and honest relationships
5. Be passionate, accountable and determined to help
6. Be humble

### B. Guiding Principles – Responses Must:

1. Add value and be useful
2. Positively represent the brand
3. Be age appropriate
4. Answer the question and be helpful
5. Be friendly, warm and not scripted
6. Use a tone and voice consistent with Crayola

## 2. CRAYOLA Tone and Voice Style

### A. Tone (Personality and Style) – Crayola is Helpful Creative Resource

1. Professional yet informal
2. Clear and educational

### B. Voice (Attitude and Emotion) – Crayola is Trusted Friend

1. Fun but not silly
2. Confident but not arrogant
3. Helpful but not condescending
4. Informal but not sloppy
5. Expert but not bossy
6. Respectful but not patronizing
7. Appropriate but not stuffy
8. Wholesome but not childish

## 3. Rules for Writing

### A. Trademarks

- a. Crayola – CRAYOLA or Crayola® at first mention

### B. Departments

- a. Quality Assurance Team
- b. Marketing Team
- c. Trademark Department
- d. Legal Department

# HOW TO SAY IT

## OPENING

The tone of your email is as important as the content. The opening sets the tone for the entire email. Take an extra minute to craft an opening using three techniques.

1. Restate the consumer's question.

*Thank you for your email asking how to purchase Crayola Colored Pencils.*

2. Personalize the opening by using what you know about the consumer.

*We are concerned you are unhappy with the Crayola Crayon Carver and that your 8-year-old daughter found this toy difficult to use.*

3. Personalize the email by introducing yourself, when appropriate.

*My name is Kris, and it is my pleasure to help you resolve this matter. As a mother myself, I understand the difficulty associated with.....*

INSTEAD OF	SAY
Thank you for your email or inquiry.	Thanks for getting in touch with us about....
	Thank you for asking about....
	Thank you for your interest in....
	Your question about ____ is a good one!
	Thank you for your interest in purchasing _____ for your son!
	ADULT--There is no age limit to childlike wonder, and I am happy to learn you enjoy using Crayola(R) products!

## BODY

### Checklist for Building a Relationship with Consumers:

- ✓ Put yourself in their shoes. How would you feel as a parent or consumer?
- ✓ Acknowledge their predicament, and validate their feelings.
- ✓ Accept total responsibility for the resolution, and be accountable.
- ✓ Did the transaction seem easy? Are your next steps easy to follow?
- ✓ Be confident in how you will help, and that you will help.
- ✓ Would your response be the same if you were writing to your mother or grandmother?
- ✓ If your response was reposted in social media for everyone to see, would you be happy with your response and level of service?

**How to:**

Accept Responsibility	<p>While I can't explain how this happened, I will share your experience with our Quality team and make it right for you and your son.</p> <p>When things go wrong, it isn't okay with us, either. I want to help resolve this for you.</p> <p>I am concerned you had this experience, but assure you I can help.</p>
Acknowledge military or veterans	<p>We appreciate your service and hope your husband makes it home to your family soon.</p> <p>Your wife is making the ultimate sacrifice. Please relay our appreciation for her service. We wish her a safe return home.</p> <p>We appreciate the sacrifice your family has made to ensure our freedom. Thank you.</p>
Acknowledge someone who is ill	<p>During (stressful) times of crisis, we understand children and adults often count on the arts to help express their thoughts and feelings.</p> <p>We are moved by every story we receive about precious children like _____. Others have also asked us to name a Crayola product after a child.</p> <p>We are touched by your story, and are sorry to learn of your loss. Through caring and kind friends, <u>Dillion's</u> courageous path was shared with us, as was her wish to <u>supply crayons to all sick kids</u>.</p> <p>We are touched by your story and share your sadness.</p> <p>We offer you warm thoughts and best wishes during your courageous battle. We hope you have comforting days ahead.</p>
Acknowledge hard times	<p>In today's world, challenges seem to present themselves often. Although we don't have all the answers, we want to help by.....</p> <p>Purchasing school supplies for a family during these tough economic times can be a challenge. Or, I appreciate the difficulties this economy has placed on families and schools.</p> <p>On behalf of Crayola, I commend you for helping the children of your community. It must be difficult to assume the financial responsibility of such a program.</p> <p>Many consumers share their struggles with us, and we are honored they chose to do so. We wish you colorful days ahead.</p> <p>I am sorry to hear about the challenges your family is facing.</p> <p>I hope that wonderful opportunities come to your family soon.</p>
Acknowledge a question we have no answer	<p>Your question about _____ is a good one. Although I don't have this information available to me, I can share that_____.</p> <p>Although I don't have an answer to your question about _____, I can share that.....</p>

	In regards to your question about _____, I wish I was able to provide this information. It is proprietary and is not available to me in consumer affairs at this time.
Address a Donation request	We understand why you thought about Crayola at this time. During stressful times or times of crisis, children and adults alike often count on the arts to express strong feelings and to try to calm emotions. Drawing and writing can help children express their thoughts and feelings and also helps to restore emotional balance, even in unsettling times.
Address length of time in replying	Please accept my apology for the delay in answering your email. Unexpected volume has prevented us from responding to you as timely as we'd like.
Address loss of faith	We know you have come to expect and trust a certain level of quality from Crayola products, and are disappointed to learn we did not meet your expectations with this particular one.  We strive to make products for children that spark creativity and provide hours of fun. It sounds like lately you have had more frustration than fun, and we'd like to help.
Address loyalty/generations of support	Thank you for being a loyal Crayola consumer through the years. We are sorry we let you down with this particular product.  As a longtime consumer, you are our most valued customer.  Crayola is a trusted brand. We appreciate the opportunity to quickly resolve matters when our product does not perform as it should.  Thank you for introducing new generations to Crayola products! We appreciate your loyalty.
Address a repeater	We are concerned to learn of the frequent disappointing results you've experienced using Crayola products, and we'd like to help. As mentioned during our last contact, in order to refund you for your purchase, we require either the product or a store receipt be forwarded to us. In the mean time.....
Address unreasonableness	You have every right to be upset with your experience/a brand you trusted. I'd like to forward you _____ as compensation for your missing/broken..... Your loyalty is important to us, and I hope you believe this resolution is fair.

Appreciate your contact	Your comments and concerns are always welcomed. It is consumers like you that help us maintain the integrity of our brand.
Crayola's Mission	Crayola is passionate about helping parents and educators raise creatively alive children who we believe will grow to be inspired, original adults. Our company has inspired artistic creativity in children for more than 100 years - since the first box of Crayola crayons rolled off the assembly line in 1903. Since then, the Crayola brand has grown into a portfolio of innovative art tools, crafting activities, and creative toys that give kids the power to express all that inspires them as they explore, discover, play, pretend, and dream. We believe in dreaming like a child and imagining the impossible. We like to

	say that we give wings to invisible things!
Demonstrate listening	<p>Thank you for providing thoughtful feedback regarding your experience with..... or expressing concern.</p> <p>Thank you for sharing your experience with the Crayola ____ you purchased from Walmart.</p>
Diffuse Anger	<p>I understand the anger you must feel toward your experience. I am sorry this happened to you on what was to be an important day.</p> <p>You have every right to be disappointed with your experience. I want to help regain your trust in our brand by.....</p>
Dissatisfaction with Replacement Turnaround	<p>I am pleased you were able to resolve this issue with RETAIL STORE. For future reference, if the product is returned to us timely in the self-addressed envelope we provide, product replacement rarely takes the two weeks we ask that you allow. I know this can seem like a lifetime to children, and hope that they are now enjoying the new Crayola XYZ purchased from RETAIL STORE.</p> <p>I understand waiting for a replacement product can be difficult for a child. I will also include a complimentary coloring chart and crayons for your daughter to enjoy.</p> <p>While I cannot promise you will have your product by _____, I can assure you your request will be processed in the next business day.</p>
Empathize	<p>I can understand your embarrassment when the gift you gave didn't work as described/advertised.</p> <p>I would feel the same if I was let down by a brand I trusted.</p> <p>A child should never be disappointed with his/her new toy on their birthday/at the holidays.</p> <p>As a mother myself, I understand you want the best for your children, and it is difficult to see them disappointed.</p>

Explaining our side	<p>We hope our response is helpful in explaining the background, research and insight involved in creating these products. We believe in Crayola Multicultural products, our consumers and educators, and in the positive social growth of our children.</p> <p>It is never our intention to offend someone or be insensitive to a personal situation. Rest assured your comments will be shared with our Marketing team. We appreciate your candid feedback.</p>
Express concern over a serious matter	<p>You need and deserve answers, and it is our responsibility to provide you with them. We are not taking this lightly and want to resolve this issue for you so that you can, once again, feel confident using Crayola products.</p> <p>Your satisfaction and trust in our brand means everything to us and we want you to be</p>

	<p>comfortable having Crayola products in your home.</p> <p>Your family's safety and trust in our brand mean everything to us, so we aren't taking this lightly.</p>
Manufacturing abroad	<p>You are correct that we manufacture some of our products in China. As a global company, we source a small amount of our products from China, but rest assured our products undergo independent laboratory testing in Asia, and many are tested again, in Europe, which has some of the highest standards for toy quality and safety in the world. Because safety is important to us, our art material products undergo third-party toxicological testing by the Arts and Create Materials Institute and carry the AP seal. We are confident that we have the processes and system in place to ensure the quality of Crayola products you have come to know.</p>
Next Steps	<p>I hope your son will enjoy using these coupons to buy a product special to him.</p> <p>If the stain removal suggestion I provided doesn't remove your stain, I'd like to hear from you.</p> <p>It would be helpful to have answers to the following questions so that I can provide next steps in resolving this issue.</p>
No substantiation	<p>I am happy to offer you \$___ in product coupons. With documentation that supports your purchase price, I can offer \$___ in product coupons. If by chance you find the product and/or store receipt that was inadvertently tossed in the garbage, I hope you would consider submitting it to us so we can fully reimburse you for the purchases.</p> <p>I understand that it can be an afterthought to contact us about a bad experience with a product. We want to help, but require more information about your purchase. Without the product or a store receipt, I am happy to offer \$___ in product coupons, good towards future Crayola purchases.</p> <p>Crayola is a trusted brand. We appreciate the opportunity to quickly resolve matters when our product does not perform as it should.</p>
Recommend Ages	<p>Proper age labeling helps guide you in choosing the right art supplies for your child. Safety is obviously one of the most important characteristics, but we also consider factors such as type of skill required to use the product or size of the product. I can assure you our products are safe for all ages!</p>
Saying "No"	<p>Although I realize this is not the answer you were expecting when you reached out to us, I hope this gesture of goodwill allows you to purchase a few Crayola products your children will enjoy.</p> <p>Although I am sure this is not the answer you hoped for, I want to assure you your feedback will be forwarded to our Quality team.</p> <p>Although I would like to provide additional information in regards to ingredients, I do not have this available to me in Consumer Affairs. I hope you find the next steps I provided helpful in obtaining the information you are seeking.</p>
Show Value	<p>We are eager to restore your confidence in the brand.</p>

	<p>We take a special interest in our educators as they are most familiar with the products.</p> <p>We appreciate consumers like you who take the time to share their experience.</p> <p>You trust our brand, and we appreciate your willingness to help us improve the products and services we offer.</p>
Trademark Protection	<p>At times, the trademark assets that make the Crayola name recognizable, familiar and an icon of trust are misused. We will request our Trademark team investigate this use.</p> <p>Because our consumers are protective of the Crayola brand name and the high quality products it represents, they are often quick to let us know when a possible infringement has occurred with one of our products, and we appreciate this. Rest assured your email will be shared with our Trademark team.</p>
Validate	<p>I, too, would be upset if this occurred during my child's birthday party.</p> <p>It must have been frustrating for you to put so much effort into planning the perfect party for your daughter only to be let down by the brand you trusted.</p> <p>As the parent with three children, I am sure it was time-consuming/inconvenient for you to return the product to the store. I apologize for this experience, but assure you we are here to help if assistance is needed in the future.</p>

## **CLOSING**

**If you take the time to personalize your message, don't end the email with an impersonal closing. Your closing should not undercut the friendly, personal tone of your email. It should reinforce your main point or the action you will take.**

<b>INSTEAD OF</b>	<b>SAY</b>
We appreciate your contact.	<p>Thanks for this opportunity to help you obtain information for your school project.</p> <p>It was my pleasure to provide you with these stain removal suggestions. Good luck in removing your stains!</p> <p>I appreciate the opportunity to provide you with a new ____ and hope your future experiences will be enjoyable.</p> <p>We appreciate the opportunity to make things right, and to restore your trust in our brand.</p>
If you need further assistance, please call us at.....	<p>We are here to help should you need us again!</p> <p>We hope to hear from you again should you need additional assistance.</p>

## Where to focus

Here are areas where you can help customers develop deeper emotional connections with your company:

- **Walk the talk.** Employees can better connect with customers when they've had similar experiences. For instance, at Fairmont San Francisco, new employees get the same penthouse champagne toast the hotel management uses to woo event planners. Other Fairmont properties treat new employees to a night as a guest so they can get a feel for every touch point and see how to make things seamless for customers.
- **Listen** to customers and front-line employees. To connect with customers, you want to increase the reasons they like — or are satisfied with — you. The best way is to regularly get feedback and consistently gather and act on informal feedback. Ask employees to offer at least three things a week that they heard from customers that would improve relationships. Customers comment informally all the time on things they really like or dislike. You don't want that valuable information to go unused.
- **Show your personality.** Scripted transactions, corporate policies and lack of transparency in how you do business limit connections. Use social media to show customers the causes you're passionate about. Allow front line workers to make small, relevant talk with customers. Admit when you make mistakes — and how you'll fix them — to show customers that you're human.

### Transcript of Personal Emotional Connection

Four Key Strategies for Building Personal Emotional Connections with your Customers

Every time we serve a customer, we should ask;

" If I were the customer in this situation,  
how would this experience feel for me?

Did the transaction feel simple and easy?

Did my issue get resolved quickly?

Did the team member accept responsibility

for making sure I got what I needed?" Personal Emotional Connection 2. Get closer to customers' emotionality 3. Listen, Really Listen 4. Demonstrate Respect 1. Put the customer at the

forefront of everything you do