Weight-Loss Product Business Communication Portfolio

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Introduction:

As a business manager, you may encounter situations that require a wide variety of communication responses. For this assessment, you will be creating a portfolio of communication documents. Please format each communication appropriately for the message type. Scenario #1: You are a manager of a company that has recently purchased a smaller company. The purchased company has an existing product, which will now be part of your product offering. The product is a weight-loss supplement called Weight Loss Optimizer. The product has been very successful for the previous owner, but the company had limited ability to adjust its manufacturing system to accommodate growth, as well as a limited potential sales audience. Your role is to oversee and coordinate all aspects of launching the product from the newly acquired company (U.S. Food and Drug Administration, n.d.).

You have a far greater manufacturing capacity and more potential customers readily available because you already sell several weight-loss-related products to a large base of customers. Weight Loss Optimizer has been proven successful by a research study. The study consisted of 100 participants, 90% of whom lost at least 15 pounds over a reasonable time period. To date, the study participants have successfully maintained their weight loss by continuing to use the product. Of the users, 80% were able to maintain their weight loss with continued use of Weight Loss Optimizer. The 10% of study participants who were not successful may have been unsuccessful because they did not follow the program's protocol as set forth. An inherent risk in a weight loss product is the inability to determine if the product has failed to produce results or if the user has not followed directions. Dissatisfied customers present a challenge as a result. Your success relies upon your external business partner, Pills Inc., who manufactures the pill casing for the Weight Loss Optimizer. You will need to work closely with this partner to ensure your manufacturing operation is able to increase as needed in a just-in-time environment to meet sales demands. Your contact's name at Pills Inc. is Susan Jones. You have received a customer complaint via the company's social media page. The customer's complaint is as follows: "Weight Loss Optimizer does not work! I've been using this for a week, and I haven't lost anything! No one should buy this product!"

Scenario #1: Weight Loss Company

Email to encourage staff:

Hi everyone.

We would like to announce good news for all of you: we have expanded our business and now we have more products ready for sale. We have a new product with the name, “Weight Loss Optimizer,” which has been sold in the market for many years with great success. The product is really amazing as it not only helps a person reduce weight but also keeps him active. The advantage of the product is that if the person follows the complete protocol of the weight-reducing program, then he may reduce 15 pounds within a reasonable time period. This product can prove highly beneficial for the company, but we need to show our high potential to increase its sales and increase the number of consumers.

Do you know that we may also face a few risks associated with the product? The major risk is that the consumer may not follow the program’s protocol properly, which may result in no weight loss. Another major risk is that people may not feel comfortable buying new products, which may reduce our sales costs. Now, as a great team, I expect that you will work harder to deal with the risks and to increase the sales of the products, which will directly increase the profitability of the business.

As a business manager, I would recommend that the above-mentioned risks be overcome with great strategies, such as a proper advertising strategy for the product through which we can tell consumers about the benefits of the product and the great results of the product as well. Moreover, we can guide the consumers in the advertisement that by following the program’s protocol, the product may be even more beneficial for them, and the results will be highly effective.

We can’t succeed in the sales market without you, so we invite you all to take this journey with us. Please keep an eye out for more information that will be coming soon.

Thanks for your time.

C. Develop an e-mail to motivate and encourage external stakeholders of your company in your chosen scenario. 1. Discuss two advantages of the newly acquired product. 2. Predict two disadvantages that may appear. a. Explain how to mitigate these disadvantages, should they occur.

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E-mail to external stakeholders:

To our stakeholders:

Innovation, integrity, quality, and commitment are the hallmarks of our business.

Subject: New Product Announcement: Weight Loss Optimizer. We at Fit For Fun are pleased to announce a new product we are adding to our line of services that will be introduced in the coming months. This is a new supplement product called Weight Loss Optimizer, and it has been proven to not only help clients lose weight but to maintain that weight loss over time. We wanted to take this time to inform you of the benefits of this new product before its launch date. Below are the advantages that Weight Loss Optimizer brings to the table and an explanation of how we are prepared to address any issues that arise with minor disadvantages. Weight Loss Optimizer Advantages: A research study was conducted on the product, and 90% of the participants lost over 15 pounds while using Weight Loss Optimizer. The results speak for themselves, showing that this product helps individuals lose a significant amount of weight over diet and exercise alone.

The second advantage is that the study participants who lost weight with Weight Loss Optimizer have been able to maintain their weight loss with continued use of the product. Clients often have trouble maintaining their weight loss, so this advantage is one that sets this product apart from its competitors and will be an important part of marketing Weight Loss Optimizer. Disadvantages: 10% of the study participants failed to lose over 15 pounds. While this still shows that the product is 90% successful, it is also easy to say that it has a 10% failure rate. We can defuse any tension that arises from this disadvantage by making sure that our staff and clients are well-informed about the facts of the study. This illustrates that those participants who did not lose over 15 pounds were able to still lose some weight. Also, since they were not under constant observation, we have to rely on their self-reporting, which does leave room for participant error in following the program. The other possible disadvantage would be the potential for public client dissatisfaction.

By following up regularly with our clients and addressing their concerns, the possible bad reviews will come to us before they go public on social media and product review sites. We will also be providing clients with the facts about the supplement and a detailed explanation of the results of the research study to make sure they are well-informed before they form an opinion or voice a complaint. We will be holding a meeting with our staff to go over proper procedures for client follow-up and complaint protocol to make sure that we stay ahead of any possible issues that arise. We are very excited about the addition of this new supplement and hope that you are as well. If you have any questions or would like more information on the launch of Weight Loss Optimizer, feel free to contact me. Thank you.

D. Develop a company blog entry in support of the new product from your chosen scenario. 1. Discuss three of the product's benefits for users.

Spring into Spring with Weight Loss Optimizer! Get a jump start on your weight loss this season with the new Weight Loss Optimizer. Weight Loss Optimizer is a new supplement that we are going to be introducing in the coming months. This supplement has proven results and is a great addition to your current weight loss program. By taking one pill of Weight Loss Optimizer before each meal, you will lose weight faster and maintain your weight better than with exercise and diet alone. Here are three great reasons why you should give Weight Loss Optimizer a try: 1. Lose more weight! In a recent study, 90% of participants lost over 15 pounds after incorporating Weight Loss Optimizer into their diet program. 2. Keep that weight off! The research study showed that the participants have been able to keep their weight off successfully by continuing to use the product. 3. Easy! Just take one pill of Weight Loss Optimizer before each meal and watch the pounds melt off! Weight Loss Optimizer has been proven to effectively help you lose weight and keep it off; this is why we are so excited to offer you this new product! Follow us on Facebook for product news, and look for Weight Loss Optimizer on the shelf at GNC this spring.

E. Develop a persuasive letter to the business partner in your chosen scenario in which your goal is to overcome your business partner's objections to a shorter manufacturing lead time. Note: Manufacturing lead time refers to the total time required from the time of ordering to fulfillment (i.e., shipment/delivery).

Rebecca Olson – Operations Manager Fit For Fun, Inc. 100 North Street Pahrump, NV 89048 Susan Jones – Manufacturing Supervisor Pills, Inc 7777 West Coast Drive Las Vegas, NV 89101 RE: Decreasing Manufacturing Lead Time Dear Ms. Jones, I wanted to discuss the manufacturing lead times with you because I believe that a shorter lead time is our best option for meeting the sales demands that our research has predicted. As you know, we have acquired the company Southwest Supplements and taken over the product Weight Loss Optimizer. This product has been shown to be very successful in terms of revenue due to its effective long-term results. This supplement will be a great addition to the services and weight loss products we already offer our clients, and we are already prepared to handle the high sales demands of the product. The demand for the product is

why it is so critical that we are able to increase the lead times. Our marketing research shows that the demand for this product will be much greater than some of our other products, and the speed of the lead time is going to be essential to keeping our clients and investors satisfied with the product. After speaking with you previously, I now understand your concerns about increasing the lead time and the additional resources that will be necessary on your end. I would love the opportunity to sit down with you again to go over the options to best utilize your resources and ours in order to increase our manufacturing lead time enough to meet the projected demand for the product. Please let me know a good time and date to schedule a follow-up meeting to discuss this issue further. Thank you for your time, Rebecca Olson, Operations Manager

F. Develop a response to the customer from your chosen scenario who posted a complaint about the product to the company's social media page. Note: There is a specific complaint within each scenario. The customer is extremely dissatisfied with the product from your chosen scenario. 1. Discuss the necessary steps to resolve the conflict. 2. Discuss your resolution offer to the customer.

REVIEW BY LISA A. ON GNC.COM: Weight Loss Optimizer is a waste of time and money. I have been taking it for five days now and haven't lost any weight. It doesn't contain any real weight loss medication, and it's just a caffeine pill in a pretty box. RESPONSE: Lisa, I'm sorry to hear that you are not satisfied with your results so far while using Weight Loss Optimizer. Fit For Fun takes the satisfaction of our clients very seriously and would like to address any issues you may have with our products. Our product is a supplement to a diet and exercise program, not a prescribed medication. Weight Loss Optimizer has a powerful combination of caffeine, Yohimbe, and essential nutrients. Caffeine is known to trigger thermogenesis, boost metabolism, and provide additional energy and focus. Yohimbe is derived from the bark of a West African evergreen tree and is globally sought-after for its nutrition and weight loss properties. All of our products are 100% all-natural and are made in the USA in a certified organic facility. As with all diet programs and supplements, results are often not immediate and may take a few weeks. I would recommend that you continue the program and keep taking the supplement for four weeks to see if your results improve. If you have not lost any weight and you are still not satisfied, at the end of the four-week period, we would be happy to offer you a full refund for the product.

G. Evaluate the effectiveness of the positive and negative communication strategies used throughout your communication portfolio for both internal and external stakeholders.

I have used email as a method to communicate positive messages to both my employees and the company stakeholders. The outcome desired from the emails was to establish a commitment to the product from both sides to ensure the sales success of the new supplement. Our company offers other weight loss products and supplements already, so it is safe to expect that the news of the new supplement will be well received. Since this was a positive message, I used the direct message and simplicity of an email to relay the news. This method was also a good choice for this news as it was a quick and effective way to convey basic information without taking time out of our employees' and stakeholders' days with a lengthy meeting. In my opinion, these emails will serve to share valuable information on the new product in a convenient and positive way. With the employee email, I believe that this communication method will help engage my employees while giving them the basic information that they will need before the official meeting the following week. The stakeholder email is more informative and leaves less of an opening for feedback. This email is geared more toward promoting positive news about the product while explaining some of the possible concerns without a back-and-forth conversation on the topic.

My blog post is also an example of a direct positive message. In this situation, the recipient of the message is the customer. I believe that the news included in the blog post will be received in a positive light, and the customers will be pleased to hear of our new addition to our services. Because it is a casual and conversational message, it is written in a less formal manner than the messages to the employees and the stakeholders. The main goal of this message is to increase sales. Therefore, I have written it in a more upbeat tone and used common marketing expressions to boost the sales pitch in a manner that is informative as well as engaging to the reader. This is to get the reader's attention by pointing out the specific benefits of this product with short and easy-to-understand points.

The next message was the communication with the pill manufacturer. This is neither positive nor negative in terms of communication. I am not attempting to convince them to invest either their time or money into promoting this product, as they have been hired to fill a very specific part in its creation. The only aspect of it that could be interpreted as positive or negative is the general plea for an increase in speed in manufacturing. If the company is unable to shorten manufacturing lead times, then there is a very real possibility that we will have to move our business to a different company for pill casings. The final message of the customer complaint response is closer to a negative communication. Whether it is positive or negative depends on the final outcome of how the message is received by the customer. The customer made it clear that they were immediately unhappy.

I responded by inquiring more about their situation and what possible factors caused the dissatisfaction. If the customer is willing to give the product more time and work through the methods for using the product, they may be more satisfied with both the new product and the company as a whole, which would result in positive communication. However, if they are seeking a refund of the product and are not willing to communicate further, then this negative communication will result in a loss of profit as well as a public message of dissatisfaction. I have made an attempt to send the message in a way that will support a positive outcome and will encourage the customer to continue with the product and the possible success of its use. If they are able to give the product more time, they may feel more satisfied with their results, and it will curb any further public complaints.

H. Evaluate the effectiveness of the different communication modalities (e.g., e-mail, blogs, social media, formal letters) used throughout your communication portfolio for both internal and external stakeholders.

The staff email I sent to inform my team of the new product is effective as the first step of providing them with the information they need to properly promote the new supplement. This method of communication is an effective way of informing the staff of the information on the product launch and ensures that everyone has the same information going into the meeting the next week. I was able to keep the email simple since it will not be the only form of communicating with the staff on the new product. The later meeting will give employees a chance to ask further questions and learn more about the supplement before the official product release date. The email I have sent to the stakeholders is also an effective way of letting them know about the new product.

Since they will not be working directly with the product in any manner, a simple email explaining the supplement to them in basic terms and information is enough to keep them informed. I have also given them the information they may need if they would like to contact us for more information. A company blog is an effective medium that works to distribute information to customers, stakeholders, and employees in a marketing manner. Because it is not direct advertising, it is easy to get the message across on this platform without it sounding too much like a sales pitch. It also brings new product information to readers who may not already be involved in the company, such as new potential investors and new customers. In my professional opinion, I believe that when it comes to handling the issue with the pill casing company, this should be a matter that is dealt with in a face-to-face or phone meeting (Federal Trade Commission, 2022).

This company, while separate from the main business, is part of the overall process, and a letter is too impersonal while communication is too slow in delivery. We will be working with this company to increase turnaround on manufacturing, and I believe this is a message that should not risk delays by the postal service. I do, however, believe that the way the topic is addressed, from a mutual resource perspective, is an effective way to communicate the need for shorter manufacturing lead times. Social media sites have become a very effective way to communicate with customers. These days, sites like Facebook and Twitter have become the first point of contact when reaching out to a business. By responding to complaints on a forum that the customers are already familiar with, it shows that we

are listening to what our customers have to say and are actively involved in improving customer satisfaction directly.

References

U.S. Food and Drug Administration. (n.d.). Dietary supplements. https://www.fda.gov/food/dietary-supplements

Federal Trade Commission. (2022). Health products compliance guidance. https://www.ftc.gov/business-guidance/resources/health-products-compliance-guidance