

DRAFTING A LITTLE PAPER

ON A

PERCEIVED INJURIOUS EXPERIENCE

This assignment is to write a letter to a person who has offended you. Try to think of a real or imagined incident, in personal life or work life, where you will write a letter to a person who, as you perceive it, has "injured" you. (Please do not actually send this letter without further discussion.) In real life, drafting such a letter may mainly serve to help you (or someone you are counselling) to organize thoughts about how next to proceed. (In real life probably half the people who draft such a letter decide simply to go talk with the offending person.)

The purposes of a PIE letter are several:

1. To illustrate that each person can deal effectively, on his or her own, with many offenses, (at least in the context of North American society);
2. To illuminate how complaints and grievances sometimes arise from differences in values and in perceptions, as contrasted with different understandings of fact;
3. To show that it may help to communicate directly with an offender, especially where a PIE arises from differences in perceptions and values;
4. To teach the fact that communications will go better where facts are separated from opinions, judgments and feelings; where statements which could appear to be opinions are labelled as such; and where the offended person can offer a sensible solution. These points make each sentence in a perfectly drafted PIE letter more difficult for the offender to refute, and the letter more likely to be successful;
5. To show that there are powerful ways to resolve disputes without direct third party intervention and without endangering the privacy or rights of the offender.... and that a prepared address by an offended person (in writing or in person) may permit an offended person more control over his or her life.
6. To teach the preparation of such a statement for use in pursuing another dispute resolution option if desired;

7. To illustrate a method that may help an injured person to deal with his or her feelings and the disruption in that person's life.

Please read "Drafting — and Perhaps Sending — a Private Letter to a Person Who Has Harassed or Offended You." There are many good ways to write a letter; for the purposes of this assignment, please follow the suggestions provided.