

Writing the Killer Idea Pitch

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If you've got an idea for improvements within your own company, it's often easy to assume that your boss will hear you out. But there's a right way and a wrong way to sell an idea with an email or internal memo. Below are two examples—one that's likely to bomb, and one that has a good chance of success. Roll your mouse over the blue numbers to find out why.

The Wrong Way:

To: Fred CEO
From: Joe HR
Subject: Fitness and Productivity [1]

Fred:

I recently read the national "Fitness & Productivity Report" based on a survey that our company, and many others, participated in, and it included lots of interesting information. Many companies cited work group physical fitness as extremely important, but very few said their employees actually demonstrate this! In fact, they identify physical fitness as an undervalued competitive asset, but they didn't have a plan for improvement in this area.[2] I agree with the report's argument that physical fitness is strongly linked to corporate and individual economic and personal success, in short, our success as a nation.[3] I feel that if we do not address the issue of physical fitness as it enhances workplace productivity, we will be left behind. Therefore, I'm thinking that we should consider converting the secondary conference room (which as you know is seldom used) into a gym.[4] Your leadership on this issue would be much appreciated. [5]

[6]

- Joe

The Right Way:

To: Fred CEO
From: Joe HR
Subject: How we can decrease absenteeism.[1]

Fred:

As you know, sick days are clobbering our productivity. During flu-season, for example, we're often so short-handed that we can't answer customer calls! [2] We could hire to backfill, but there's a most cost-effective solution: convert the secondary conference room to an in-house gym. [3]

We recently participated in a national survey entitled "Fitness & Business Productivity Report." The final report, which I have on my desk, points out that:

- * Employee physical fitness is an undervalued competitive asset.
- * Corporate physical-fitness programs can decrease absenteeism by 30 percent.

According to the report, an in-house gym will encourage employees and help them spend more time at the office. (Google, for example, has in-house gyms.) [4]

I've attached an estimate from a building contractor that we've used in the past. [5] Since employees can use the nearby restrooms to change, the cost is considerably less than hiring a new employee. [6]

Shall I go ahead and submit the contractor's invoice? [7] If not, when can we discuss the idea further?[8]

- Joe

The above was adapted from instructional materials on business communications from the web site WriteToTheTop.com.