Email Memo

From John Doe

To: Tom Jones

Date: Tuesday, November 20, 2001, 10:04 a.m.

Subject: Company Newsletter

Tom,

I can’t include your article in the company’s newsletter. I have spent a lot of time with it and the more I go over it, the more it is clear to me that there are major problems with your writing. It just doesn’t hang together. It reads like a series of seperate thoughts that came to you at the time but bear no relationship to the topic of the article. You don’t explain how one paragraph even relates to the topic of the article and you don’t use transitions between paragraphs. For example, what’s the purpose of paragraph two and how does it relate to the topic? And I’m also not sure what the “news” is for readers. I shared it with another employee and he was not sure what he learned from reading it. You also write too generally and don’t relate your concepts to specific situations. I might be open to the possibility of saving the article if you fix these problems and send it to me by Monday. But the above issues have to be addressed explicitly and you’ll have to stick to specifics.

Regards,

John

Reply Email Memo

From: Tom Jones

To: John Doe

Date: Tuesday, November 10, 2001 10:18 a.m.

Subject: Company Newsletter

JOHN.

I JUST READ YOUR MESSAGE AND YOU ARE WRONG!!! I HAVE SPENT A LOT OF TIME ON THIS ARTICLE TOO AND I THINK IT HANGS TOGETHER VERY WELL. AND SO DOES EVERYONE ELSE THAT LOOKED AT IT. THEY SEEM TO THINK I DID A GOOD JOB. IT IS NOT A SERIES OF SEPARATE THOUGHTS (NOTE THE CORRECT SPELLING OF “SEPARATE”) AND I DID STICK TO THE TOPIC. I’M SORRY THAT YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THIS. I CANNOT MAKE ANY REVISIONS BY MONDAY. MAYBE IF YOU HAD SENT ME THE PROMISED FEEDBACK IN A TIMELY MANNER, I WOULD HAVE HAD A CHANCE. I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT YOU WOULD HAVE HAD THE COURTESY TO CALL ME TO DISCUSS THIS RATHER THAN DROPPING THIS ON ME. THANKS FOR NOTHING, JOHN!!

TOM

1. Please comment on the two memos. What could be done to handle this flaming exchange in a more effective manner.   
  
2. What is “flaming”   
How can email flame exchanges between two people can involve the whole organization, consuming significant time and money.   
  
3. What are characteristics of email messages versus other types of communication (e.g., telephone, face-to-face, etc.).   
What are important things to remember when using different kinds of communications.