

TITLE: The Measurement of Warning Letters on Two Dimensions: Threat and Intimacy

DATE: July 1967

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REPORT NUMBER: Unnumbered (NRN039)

NTIS NUMBER: None

FUNDING SOURCE: None

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:

To develop letters that vary in the degree of threat and intimacy of style for use with negligent drivers.

SUMMARY:

Nine warning letter models, structured at three different intensities on two stimulus dimensions, were rated by negligent drivers to determine if they evoked responses in accord with the author's conceptions of them. Biographical and personality data were also collected in order to obtain a description of the population, as well as to determine the relationship of these variables to the perception of a warning letter. The correlations between biographical/ personality variables and the warning-letter ratings did not support strong, consistent relationships; however, subjective levels of threat and intimacy corresponded to planned levels. That is, rated threat increased significantly from low- to high-threat letters and rated intimacy increased significantly from the low- to the high-intimate letters. There was no significant interaction between the two variables; that is, the level of intimacy in the letters did not influence the perceived level of threat, nor did the threat level influence the perceived level of intimacy.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

This information was used in designing a large-scale warning letter study.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Master's Thesis, California State University, Sacramento, 1967.