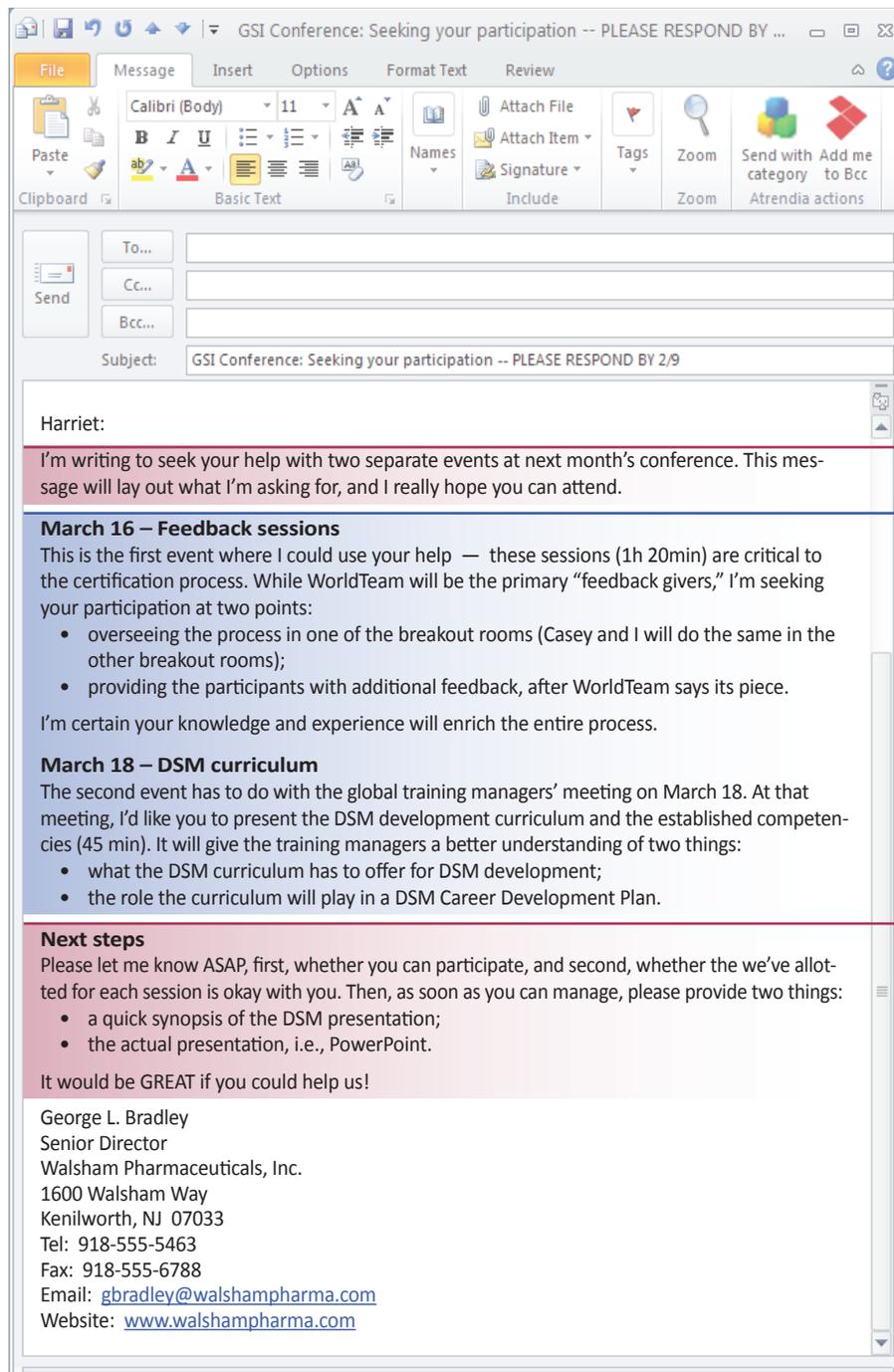


## ABSOLUTE ESSENTIALS

# The master template: ORSON

Whenever you're drafting an email longer than two or three sentences, the body of your message must unfold in a logical manner. For business email, "ORSON" represents the three stages critical to this logical flow.



## The three stages of ORSON

**OR** **Orient the Reader.** State clearly both the *topic* and the *purpose* of your message.

**SO** **Spell Out the details.** May be a single paragraph or many—it depends on the complexity of your information.

When you have more than one major topic, use headlines to clearly delineate those topics. Bullet separate items or points.

**N** **Nail down.** Bring the message to a close. Discuss where you'd like to see things go from here. Review next steps, any actions you or the reader will take. Reiterate a key point.

**Note on your signature:** Include *complete* contact information—even when you think the reader already has it. For more on this topic, see our *Free Writing Tools: Sample No. 5—Handling the Signature*.