

BUSINESS LETTERS

In the business world and in everyday life, we encounter situations that require our composure and a steady voice. Practicing strategies to reduce anxiety gives us the tools we need to deal with people effectively in all situations.

Many people are just nervous about writing a formal letter as they are about giving a formal presentation, and with good reason. Poorly worded letters can have serious consequences because it takes time to detect, pinpoint, and resolve any miscommunication.

As we practice writing different types of letters, we should be familiar with many tools to get started. Our knowledge of spelling, mechanics, and grammar are necessarily to be well to prevent or revise distracting errors. The technical vocabulary can add the precision needed for clear.

Personal vs. Business Letters

Letters usually fall into two groups: Personal and Business. We can write personal letter in an informal, breezy style that reflects the way we speak – with slang, familiar expressions, and a variety of loosely organized topics. Many people now use e-mail as a substitute for personal mail, and the styles are similar.

When we write business letters we must use formal language, Standard English and a conventional style. Business letters should be clear, concise, and well edited. Business letters have a clear purpose, usually stated in the first paragraph. They might cover more than one topic, and if so, the ideas and paragraphs are organized and presented in a logical, deliberate order.

Business letters are usually written in two ways: **blocked** or **modified-blocked style**, with single spacing within paragraphs and double spaces between paragraphs and letter parts.

Letter Formats

The two standard formats for business letters are the blocked and modified-blocked style with intended paragraphs.

The **blocked style** is the simplest. Start every part of the letter and every paragraph in the body of the letter in the left margin, and skip one line between parts and paragraphs.

In the **modified block with the intended paragraphs**, indent your address and your closing and signature to the same number of spaces, usually near the centre. You can also indent the first line of each paragraph a consistent number of spaces or not indent any paragraphs. Choose your preference and be consistent.

The General Formatting Guidelines:

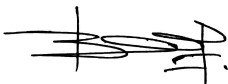
- Use the computer (or typewriter) to type all business letters. Do not send hand written correspondence.
- Single space the text of a letter, but skip one line between the parts and paragraphs of a letter.
- Use the white space (margins) to create a frame around the letter. Adjust the margins so they are similar.
- If the letter is more than one page, number the pages, starting with page 2, in a consistent place, such as the upper-right or lower right corner.
- Indicate at the end of the letter if you are sending enclosures and if you have copied the letter to someone else.
- Type envelopes using recommended style.

Elements of the Business Letter

Business letters have the following parts, separated by a double space.

1. Heading
2. Date
3. Receiver's name and Title (if known)
4. Subject
5. Greeting
6. Body of the letter
7. Closing
8. Handwritten signature of the sender
9. Typed name and title of the sender
10. Enclosure or copy information (if needed)

Example of Inquiry Letter in blocked style

Heading	Ace Engineering Incorporation Mahendranagar Kanchanpur
Date	September 29, 2013
Address	Keshav Raj Joshi Kanchanpur Engineering Works Mahendranagar
Subject	Subject: Schedule a sales call
Greeting	Dear Mr. Joshi
Introduction and purpose	Recently, a close friend, Mohan Singh, mentioned your company and that you manufacture customized connectors using innovative designs. I would like to meet with one of your representatives to see examples of your products and discuss whether your company can help me meet the needs of my customers.
Details	In particular, I am looking for a connector for ink-handling applications. Currently we are purchasing connectors from Acme Engineering, but I have recently received several complaints from customers about ink leaks.
Follow-up	Please have a representative call me at 099-525169 early next week to schedule a meeting here with my installation managers. We would like to see product samples at that time. I am available any weekday, and I would prefer to receive your call after 1 P.M. Thank you for your assistance.
Closing	Cordially
Signature	
Typed name & signature	Ajay Sharma President
Enclosure	Enclosure: Schematics for variation ink-handling products.

Example of Follow-up Letter in modified-block with intended paragraphs

Heading	Kanchanpur Engineering Works Mahendranagar Kanchanpur
Date	September 30, 2013
Address	Ajay Sharma Ace Engineering Incorporation Mahendranagar
Subject	Subject: Schedule a meeting
Greeting	Dear Mr. Sharma
Introduction and purpose	It was a pleasure talking with you today. I look forward to meeting you and your managers on Monday, June 19, at 2 P.M. I will bring several samples of our products to examine and discuss.
Details	In the meantime, I have enclosed the standard product specification and examples of the shrouded 1/16" hosebarb we currently manufacture, as we discussed. Based on our preliminary discussion about your application, we would use a different valve than the one in these parts. This will allow us to maintain the overall package size you require.
Follow-up	We will provide pricing information for your purchasing agent at our meeting on Monday. Of course, if you have any questions about these or other parts that we manufacture, certainly give us a call.
Closing	Sincerely,
Signature	
Typed name & signature	Keshav Raj Joshi Design Engineering Manager
Enclosure	Enclosure: Specification and samples.

Positive Letters

A positive letter expresses information in a neutral or positive tone. The writer could be making a request, providing information, or acknowledging good service. Some letters can be extremely brief – even only one or two sentences.

Longer letters are made up of three distinct parts, usually presented in three or more paragraphs: 1. Introduction 2. Explanation 3. Resolution and closing

The introduction states the subject clearly and directly. It may also include the purpose for writing.

The middle part of a letter explains the request or provides the information. Usually, the information is organized and presented in an order that is easy to read and understand.

The resolution paragraph states the specific action that will accomplish the purpose for writing. It could be a request, date, or statement of commitment. State the specific response that you expect from the letter. Provide exact instructions or requests.

Sometimes no resolution is required, and the writer can simply close the letter. Do not extend the letter with excessive, flowery language, but conclude the letter with a positive comment – either appreciation or acknowledgement.

Negative Letters

Letters are sometimes written to refuse service or employment, to turn down claims or credit, or to deny information. Since the reader will find the news disappointing, it is important not to confuse or insult the reader and make further association with the reader more uncomfortable than necessary. It is possible to continue a business relationship despite a negative situation. These letters usually have three parts:

1. Introduction
2. Reason for refusal
3. Refusal and Closing

The introduction states the purpose for writing. It recounts the incident that occurred to initiate the letter. Write the introduction objectively, stating facts that both you and the reader accepts as facts. Avoid accusatory language. Avoid any wording that is judgmental or belittling.

The reasons for refusal are stated to clarify the position and reassure the reader that we considered the request fairly and can justify our refusal. Often company policy or procedure can be cited, which then provide guidance for the reader's actions in the future. Reasons for refusal should be consistent and legally sound. Avoid sounding evasive. Write with confidence and conviction.

The last part should clearly state what is being refused, and what, if any, further action can be taken. Close with a positive, sincere statement that will keep the door open for further business or association with the reader.

Example of negative Letter in blocked Style

[Date]	September 30, 2013
[Address]	Ajay Sharma Ace Engineering Incorporation Mahendranagar
[Greeting]	Dear Mr. Sharma
[Introduction]	Thank you for your interest in the Universal Communication Company. I reviewed your CV and application for a position as technician at Universal. Your education appears to cover all the areas of fundamental electronics and electricity.
[Reason for refusal]	Presently, however, we are interviewing only technicians with experience in maintaining digital devices, an area that does not appear on our CV.
[Refusal & Closing]	For this reason, Mr. Sharma, I cannot consider you for our present positions. If you are able to complete the basic and intermediate courses in digital devices before graduation, please consider resubmitting your CV to Universal. Sincerely, Shyam Singh Human Resource Manager