

A Presentation on **Business Correspondence**



Sonal Bahuguna
Assistant Professor
Graduate School of Business
Tula's Institute, Dehradun



Tula's Institute, Dehradun

INTRODUCTION



- In our day to-day life we exchange our ideas, thoughts and other information with our friends, relatives and other people. Sometimes we directly talk to them and sometimes we also write letters to them. In letters we express our feelings in a few words, we may ask for any information or we may write about a complaint in connection with our problems.
- Similarly businessmen also exchange ideas, information by writing letters. They communicate business information to customers, suppliers and others and at the same time receive a variety of letters from them. In this lesson let us know about different types of letters used in the process of business transaction.

Meaning of Business Correspondence



- Communication through exchange of letters is known as correspondence. We communicate our feelings, thoughts etc. to our friends and relatives through letters that may be called personal correspondence.
- A Businessman also writes and receives letters in his day to-day transactions, which may be called business correspondence.
- Business correspondence or business letter is a written communication between two parties. Businessmen may write letters to supplier of goods and also receive letters from the suppliers.

CONT.....



- Customers may write letters to businessmen seeking information about availability of goods, price, quality, sample etc. or place order for purchase of goods. Thus, business letters may be defined as a media or means through which views are expressed and ideas or information is communicated in writing in the process of business activities.

Essential Qualities of a Good Business Letter



- We may classify the qualities of a good business letter as:
 - a. Inner Qualities; and
 - b. Outer Qualities

Inner Qualities



- a) The inner qualities of a good business letter refer to the quality of language, its presentation, etc. These facilitate quick processing of the request and that leads to prompt action. Let us discuss the various inner qualities of a good business letter.
- (i) **Simplicity** - Simple and easy language should be used for writing business letters. Difficult words should be strictly avoided, as one cannot expect the reader to refer to the dictionary every time while reading letter.

CONT....



- (ii) Clarity** - The language should be clear, so that the receiver will understand the message immediately, easily and correctly. Ambiguous language creates confusion. The letter will serve the purpose if the receiver understands it in the same manner in which it is intended by the sender.
- (iii) Accuracy** - The statements written in the letter should be accurate to, the best of the sender's knowledge. Accuracy demands that there are no errors in the usage of language - in grammar, spellings, punctuations etc. An accurate letter is always appreciated



(iv) Completeness - A complete letter is one that provides all necessary information to the users. For example, while sending an order we should mention the desirable features of the goods, i.e., their quality, shape, color, design, quantity, date of delivery, mode of transportation, etc.

(v) Relevance - The letter should contain only essential information. Irrelevant information should not be mentioned while sending any business correspondence.



(vi) Courtesy - Courtesy wins the heart of the reader. In business letters, courtesy can be shown/expressed by using words like please, thank you, etc.

(vii) Neatness - A neat letter is always impressive. A letter either handwritten or typed, should be neat and attractive in appearance. Overwriting and cuttings should be avoided.

b) Outer Qualities



- The outer qualities of a good business letter refers to the appearance of the letter. It includes the quality of paper used, color of the paper, size of the paper etc. Good quality paper gives a favorable impression in the mind of the reader. It also helps in documenting the letters properly. Let us discuss the various outer qualities of a good business letter.
- **Quality of paper** - The paper used should be in accordance with the economic status of the firm. Now-a-days the cost of the paper is very high. Therefore, good paper should be used for original copy and ordinary paper may be used for duplicate copy.



- **Color of the Paper** - It is better to use different colors for different types of letters, so that the receiver will identify the letters quickly and prompt action can be taken.
- **Size of the paper** - Standard size paper (A4) should be used while writing business letters. The size of the paper should be in accordance with the envelopes available in the market.



- **Folding of letter-** The letter should be folded properly and uniformly. Care should be taken to give minimum folds to the letter so that it will fit the size of the envelope. If window envelope is used then folding should be done in such a way that the address of the receiver is clearly visible through the transparent part of the envelope.

CONT....



- **Envelope** - The size and quality of the envelope also need special attention. The size of the letter should fit the size of the letters. The business firms use different types of envelopes i.e., ordinary envelope, window envelope, laminated envelope Business Correspondence 159 etc. In window envelope there is no need to write the address of the receiver separately on the envelope. It is clearly visible through the transparent part on the face of the envelope, which may be called as window. In laminated envelope a thin plastic sheet or cloth is pasted on the inner side that gives extra protection to letters from being damaged during transit.

Different types of letters



- **Sale letters /Correspondence**

Sales correspondences are the ones that are written for the purpose of trade between two parties. Sales letters are the form of business correspondence as it gives information about the product that is going to be sold. And they are very efficient to deal with clients.

- The sale letter can target a person or group of people to gain their attention. In the letter of sale, a salesman discusses the letter's purpose such as the specification of product, service, nature of trade, shipping cost, shipping duration, support after-sales service, and other sales-related matters.

Sales Letters Types



- 1. Introductory Sales Letter**
- 2. Product Update Sales Letter**
- 3. Thank You Letter**
- 4. Holiday Celebration deal or promotion Sales Letter**
- 5. Invitation Sales Letter**

Introductory Sales Letter



- An introductory sales letter is usually sent to introduce a consumer or business customer to your company and products. In addition to apprising people of your existence, the introductory sales letter explains how readers would benefit from purchasing your products over other brands.
- Companies sometimes offer a trial period in an introductory sales letter. The introductory sales letter should be limited to one page. It must grab people's attention, build their interest and prompt their desire to visit the store to buy your products.

Product Update Sales Letter



- Product update sales letters apprise your old and existing customers of new products or changes to existing ones.
- Many companies use comparative details to describe the advantages of the new products over older ones. Additionally, a special promotion may be included in the product update sales letter that gives the customer a limited period to purchase newer products at a discount.

Thank You Sales Letter



- Every so often, it is important to thank your customers for their business. The thank you sales letter should almost always mention how much you value your customers for their patronage. Keep the thank you letter short, and briefly mention that your products are always available when the customer needs them.

Holiday Celebration Sales Letter



- The holiday celebration sales letter gives you a chance to offer your product as a potential gift for your customers' family, friends or work associates. A holiday sales letter could begin with, "We'd like to wish you a happy holiday season here at ABC Jewelry. We just received a limited supply of tie clamps and bracelets with diamond studs that make wonderful gifts for that special someone. Visit our store now while the supply lasts."

Invitation Sales Letter



- If your company is celebrating an anniversary, write an invitation sales letter to your customers. This letter should be designed to make your customers feel important and as if they are part of your family. Briefly mention your products in the letter, and invite customers to enjoy the celebration. You may want to decorate your business establishment or offer free refreshments for the occasion.

Lost Customer Sales Letter



- The lost customer sales letter is designed for customers who have not purchased products or have canceled their service. You should state that you miss these customers and apprise them of any new products or specials.

Goodwill Letters



- Goodwill letters are purely genuine and they are not a compulsion for every company to follow. It is done to express your sincere affections at a time when a goodwill can be created. The goodwill that is earned or created is in no way in terms of money. There might be monetary gains in the future but that depends on many different scenarios.
- Thus, a financial gain may be translated to a company in the long run because goodwill letters are written to humans. The humans over a period of time become a backbone for business for all the companies. Thus, while writing you need to maintain a set of rules and follow them.

Principles of Effective Goodwill Letters



There is no fixed plan or outline for such letters. It is better for each person to write in his/her own style. There are some points which need to keep in mind while writing such letters.

- The letter should be timed properly.
- A short letter makes a better impression than a long one.
- The words must be carefully chosen. The writer's own natural vocabulary is the best.
- The tone of letter should be personal & suitable for the person who is to receive it.
- Jargon phrases are worse in such letters & must be strictly avoided.

Goodwill Letters



- **Congratulatory Letters**

- ❑ The good fortune or achievement of employees, business associates & friends provides many occasions for writing such letters .
- ❑ Expression of good wishes & congratulation should be brief, direct & concise.
- ❑ Enthusiasm & genuine pleasure in the success & achievement of someone must be reflected in the letter.



- **Letters of Sympathy**• When an associate, whether customer, colleague, employee or business acquaintance meets with misfortune of any kind, a message of sympathy should be sent.
- A letter of condolence should be short & simple.
- It should contain a consoling message, briefly expressed, it may give some comfort or encouragement to the reader.



- **Invitations to Speak**• Institutions, organizations, & professional associations hold meetings, seminars & conferences at which speakers are invited to address the audience.
- The opening paragraph of such letters should give some information about the inviting organization, & the purpose of the meeting or the nature of the function.

Greetings



- When writing a letter for professional purposes, an appropriate greeting is essential. Your greeting sets the tone for your letter or email message, and is an indicator of your written communication skills.

Options for Starting a Letter



- When deciding which salutation to use, you should consider whether, and how well, you know the person. The answer will determine how you start your letter.
- **Personal Greetings**
- **When to use a person's first name:** If you are writing to someone in a professional capacity that you have known personally for many years, it is appropriate to use only their first name.



- **Professional Greetings**
- **When to use a professional greeting:** If you don't know the person well, it is best to use Mr., Ms., or Dr. as an appropriate business letter salutation.



- **Use a Formal Salutation**
- **Keep it formal:** Try to avoid the temptation to begin your professional letter with informal salutations like "Hello," "Greetings," "Hi There," or "Good Morning" if you don't know the name of your contact person.
- While those informal greetings are fine for casual emails to friends or even for more formal emails you might send to groups of people, in a professional letter you'll need to use a personal salutation with either a first and/or last name ("Dear Mr. Doe") or a job title ("Dear Hiring Manager").

Notices



- Notices are a means of formal communication targeted at a particular person or a group of persons. It is like a news item informing such person or persons of some important event. This can be an invitation to a meeting, an announcement of any event, to issue certain instructions, make appeals etc.
- It is generally written and then displayed at a public place, where it is accessible to all. They can be pasted on notice boards. If it is meant for a wider audience it can even be published in a newspaper. The government when it issues notices must publish it in national and local papers.

Format



- Since notices are a formal document it should follow a structure or a format. Keep in mind there is no one correct rigid format. Different formats used by different people/organizations can show some variations. Let us look at the most used format of notices.
- **1. Name of Issuing Organization/Authority:** Right at the very top, you print the name of the person or company that is issuing the said notices. This will help the reader identify the notices as important or unimportant to him.



- 2. Title:** When writing notices we mention a title “NOTICE” at the top. This helps draw attention to the document.
- Notices are generally posted at a public place or published in newspapers. It is important that they do not get lost in a sea of information. So a bold title clearly mentioned helps draw the attention.
- 3. Date:** After the title to the left-hand side we print the date on which the notices have been published. Since this is a formal document date is an important aspect of it since these documents stay on record.



- 4. Heading:** Then we move on to an appropriate heading to the notices. This heading should make abundantly clear the purpose of the notices.
- 5. Body:** After the heading, we write the brief and to the point body of the notice. The main content of the notice features in the body.
- 6. Writer's Name:** At the end of the notices we write the name and designation of the notice-writer. The notices have to also be signed by the same person to lend it authority and validity.

Content



- Notices should cover some important points that are to be communicated to the readers. Let us summarize the five points that the content of the notice will cover, the five W's
- **What:** What is the notice about? The notice should be clear about what is going to happen (event), or what has already happened (occasion). This is the crux of the message and should be written clearly. There should not be any ambiguity.



- **Where:** If the notice is about an event, then the location of such an event must be written clearly. The venue or the location are important details, so make sure to include this in the notice.
- **When:** This is the time and the date of the event or meeting. If possible the duration of the event should also be mentioned to people can schedule their time accordingly.



- **Who:** This will be who the notice is addressed to. Who all are suppose to adhere to the notice should be clearly mentioned to avoid confusion.
- **Whom:** And final detail should be whom to contact or get in touch with. This mentions who the appropriate authority is to contact.

Circulars



- A circular is essentially a letter containing some important information that is distributed to a large number of people. Say for example you have to invite an entire department for a meeting, or update the dress policy for the whole office – a circular will be the best mode of communication for these purposes.

Circular No. _____

25th October 2018

Revised Working Hours

All Employees of XYZ Company,

This is to inform all employees there will be a change in the working hours of the organization effective immediately. As you know we now do not function on any Saturdays since last month. So we only have 5 working days in a week, a revision in the working hours was necessary to ensure the quality of work does not suffer. Hence one hour will be added to the previous 9 hour work days. The revised working hour will be as follows:

- Working Days: Monday to Friday (except holidays)
- Working Hours: 8:30 am to 6:30 pm (These hours will include the one-hour lunch break)

Applications for employment



- A job application letter is a letter you send with your resume to provide information on your skills and experience. This letter is your chance to “sell” yourself to an employer, explaining why you are an ideal candidate for a position.
- When you write your job application letter, it’s essential to pay close attention to formatting.

Types of Job Applications Letters



- There are two types of job application letter, such as Solicited application letters and unsolicited application letter-
- ***Solicited Application Letter:***
- Solicited application letters are written in response to an advertisement for hiring or recruitment. Here the job seeker knows the vacancy and can tailor his application as per the requirements of the said post.
- If you're sending a solicited application letter, you will usually know what qualifications the organization is seeking. In this case, highlight the chief qualifications and mirror the requirements specified in the advertisement. You should grab the attention by focusing on the phrase Proven Skills, sometimes used in the advertisement.



- ***Unsolicited Application Letter:*** Unsolicited applications letters are written at the writer's own initiative to the organization. Who has not advertised for recruitment? Unsolicited application letter is also called prospecting letter. But in case of writing an unsolicited letter, you have a better chance of being read and receiving individualized attention. You can gain attention by focusing on the needs of the employers and how they will be gained by employing you.

Modern Office techniques Used in Business Communication



- The workplace was once composed of a physical office space with employees working face-to-face, and through email during set hours between 9am and 5pm.
- Fast forward several years and it is now the norm for employees to be working across multiple locations, hours and devices, the workforce no longer confined to a single office environment.



- As these diversified workplaces emerge, the need for team-based and collaborative, digitally connected work environments becomes critical to efficiency and growth. Organizations must introduce digital workplace strategies capable of **improving collaboration** and communication, and enabling employees to work together effectively, regardless of location or device.

What Is A Digital Workplace?



- While the digital workplace is now driving a wide range of projects across many industries, the concept is still emerging. There are many definitions of the digital workplace and some are all encompassing, while others focus on specific facets of the concept.
- The **digital workplace** can be considered the natural evolution of the workplace. It encompasses all of the technologies staff use to do their jobs. This can range from the HR applications and core business applications to email, instant messaging, enterprise social media tools, portals. Most (if not all) organizations have a digital workplace.

The Most Popular and Efficient Business Communications Tools



- To manage these industry changes, many leading organizations in business and government have implemented a digital workplace strategy. By intelligently combining the technologies that many businesses already use, the digital workplace has broken down the communication barriers and is transformation employee experience to one promoting efficiency, growth and innovation.
- The key to success, however, depends on the implementation of a digital workplace strategy - requiring one that is capable of driving true change within the organization.

Intranet/Social Intranet



- An **intranet** is a private hub that can be accessed by any authorized users within a business organization. It is used for driving **internal communication** and collaboration, as well as easy access to resources. Modern intranets are often built using **content management systems** as they are easier for non-technical staff to manage,
- In this age of **bring-your-own-device**(BYOD) and telecommuting, an intranet solution will result in a more flexible workforce and ensure all employees are working towards the same goals.



- Intranets enable you to easily share company news and build an information-rich environment, accessible from any location and on any device. This makes it a great platform for **cultivating a positive culture across a diverse workforce.**
- Intranets take this further by facilitating communication among staff working in different locations. Staff can update each other quickly and easily on their own news. They can distribute news to specific colleagues in a particular location or area of specialty, and colleagues can interact with the content and offer feedback in real-time.

Chat & Private Messaging



- Collaborative spaces which provide private/group messaging and chat functions are often viewed as one of the best business communication tools to keep teams working together.
- It's an effective form of communication for busy employees and managers. Instant messaging makes updates on projects and general team discussion much easier.
- This works well when employees or team members are spread across different geographical locations and different time zones. Files can be shared and conversations can be accessed if needed.

Discussion Forums



- Although discussion forums may seem like old tech to some, it is still one of the preferred communication business tools used today.
- A discussion forum can bring together management and employees and allows for an open discussion on any topic. It can also help in knowledge dissemination and bring the workforce together.
- Forums are also effective in archiving organizational knowledge to be used by anyone as a reference. **Employee morale** can also be boosted by participating in regular discussion forums.



- Discussion forums will also facilitate knowledge sharing. No time will be wasted answering the same questions again and again once the company forum has been integrated with enterprise search. This will enable forum information to be discovered by people who need it, when they need it.

Tracking & Case Software



- An online help desk with a case tracking system enables employees and customers to submit a case or support ticket. This allows it to be assigned to the right employee and have it checked and resolved in time.
- A case tracking system helps centralize customer support queries and keep track of any open issues.



- Track team productivity, priorities the most relevant and important queries and collect valuable customer feedback that can help in improving your products, services and customer relationships.
- An issue tracking system is generally used in an organization's customer support call center to create, update and resolve reported customer issues or even issues reported by employees within the company.

Internal Blogs



- An internal blog is also a good option. This is not something your customers and competitors will be able to access.
- The internal blog is a place where employees can share ideas and experiences fast and in an informal fashion. Internal blog advantages can include:
- Broadcasting and highlighting an employee's knowledge about a certain topic or area of the organization
- Creating a searchable and permanent archive of knowledge base articles, knowledge and expertise. All the articles uploaded and published on an internal blog will stay there unless deleted manually



- It promotes open discussion and collaboration among the workforce. There are instances where some employees will be more likely to speak up in a virtual environment than face-to-face
- It connects employees across departments
- It keeps the staff up-to-date on important information and company updates



THANK YOU