KEY STAGES IN THE COMMUNICATION CYCLE

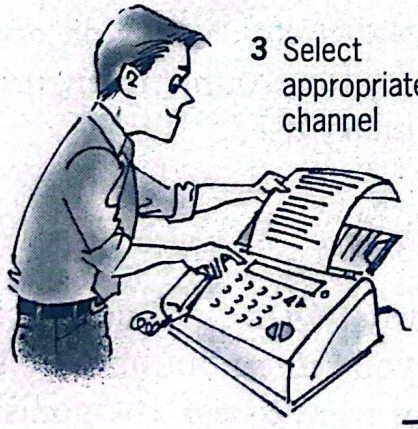
Sender

Recipient

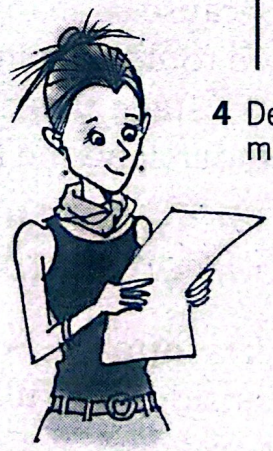
1 Conceive the message

2 Encode the message

3 Select appropriate channel



4 Decode the message



5 Interpret the message

6 Feedback

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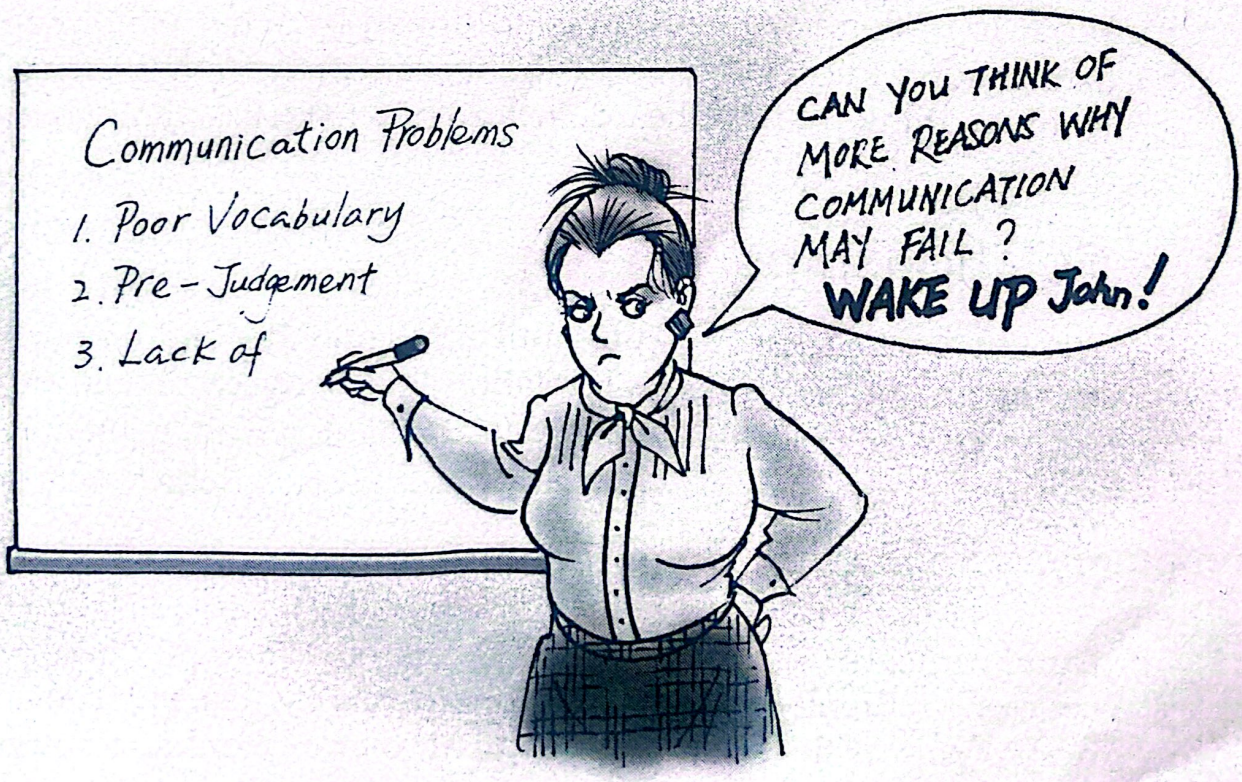
Did you know?

How well you communicate is determined not by how well you say things but by how well they are received.

BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Many problems encountered in our business and personal lives result from miscom-munication. What the recipient understands by a message may not always be the message which the sender intended. Several communication barriers exist between sender and recipient, and they may be responsible for a message not being understood correctly, or a message becoming distorted.



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INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITIES

Many businesses today operate on a global scale. Therefore if communication is to be effective, it is important to be aware of cultural differences, and to be sensitive to them.

What is culture?

Culture is a shared system of beliefs, attitudes, values, expectations and norms of behaviour. Members of a culture have similar beliefs and theories on how people should behave, think and communicate, and they all tend to act on those beliefs in much the same way.

From group to group, cultures differ extensively. When you communicate with someone from a different culture, you do so using the theories and beliefs of your own culture. However, when your audience receives your message, they do so based on the assumptions of their own culture. As a result of basic cultural differences, misunderstandings could easily occur, and often do.

Remember

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Remember

You can improve your cross-cultural communication skills by recognising cultural differences, by being willing to accept that other people have different beliefs and assumptions, by being open-minded enough to know that not everyone has the same standards and theories as you, and by constantly making an effort to improve your intercultural communication skills.

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WHY ARE COMMUNICATION SKILLS IMPORTANT?

Communication is the heart of every organisation. Everything you do in the workplace results from communication. Therefore good reading, writing, speaking and listening skills are essential if tasks are going to be completed and goals achieved. As you develop your career you will find various reasons why successful communication skills are important to you, for example:

- To secure an interview. You will need good communication skills to make sure your application letter is read and acted upon.
- To get the job. You will need to communicate well during your interview if you are to sell yourself and get the job you want.
- To do your job well. You will need to request information, discuss problems, give instructions, work in teams, interact with colleagues and clients. If you are to achieve cooperation and effective teamwork, good human relations skills are essential. Also, as the workplace is also becoming more global, there are many factors to consider if you are to communicate well in such a diverse environment.
- To advance in your career. Employers want staff who can think for themselves, use initiative and solve problems, staff who are interested in the long-term success of the company. If you are to be seen as a valued member of the organisation, it is important not just to be able to do your job well, but also to communicate your thoughts on how the processes and products or services can be improved.

Remember

Effective communication will help you to:

- get a job
- do your job
- keep your job
- earn promotions

Good morning sir. I wonder if I

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NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

In face-to-face encounters, non-verbal communication is often just as important as verbal communication. As you are speaking, information can be conveyed non-verbally as well as verbally. The non-verbal signals of listeners will provide instant feedback.

Non-verbal communication techniques are often used unconsciously, for instance, while speaking we may throw our arms around or while listening, a sudden shock may result in a sharp intake of breath. Such non-verbal signals add impact to a meaning, and they combine to provide an instant impression in a way that written communication or telephone calls cannot. Actions of this sort are an important part of the communication process.

Generally, we are very careful in what we say verbally but we do not pay attention to what we do with hands and/or with other parts of the body. Sometimes what we say verbally may not be *in sync* with what we say non-verbally. When this happens, chances are the listener will rely more on what you are communicating non-verbally. This is because what we communicate non-verbally is often involuntary and, therefore, more difficult to manipulate. Understanding the non-verbal communication helps us to understand ourselves and others better. These also help us in becoming effective communicators.

In non-verbal communication, we will discuss all those forms of communication that fall in neither oral nor written communication. These include:

- Body movements
- Space
- Time
- Colour
- Layout/Design and
- Vocalization
- Telephone Techniques

BODY MOVEMENTS

It is said that the face is the most expressive part of the human body. Shoulders and hands form the next most expressive parts of the human body followed by the feet and the leg movements.

Facial Expressions

Human faces are capable of communicating a wide range of expressions and emotions. A smile conveys good humour, raised eyebrows denote questioning and disbelief, and a frown denotes upset or worry.

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MODERN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Business communications can be written in a much more relaxed style than they were decades ago. Old-fashioned, long-winded jargon is out. You should aim to put across your message naturally, in a friendly, informal style. The secret of good writing is to use plain language as if you are having a conversation. This unit looks at some simple rules you should follow in order to ensure all your communications are effective.

SIX KEY RULES OF GOOD WRITING FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

1 Come straight to the point

Busy business people haven't got time to read long-winded documents. They welcome letters that are direct and to the point – but at the same time courteous. Save your reader's time by keeping your sentences short and simple. Shorten these sentences:

- Please be informed that our monthly management meeting will be held on Tuesday 28 August 200– in Training Room A.
- Please note that the fire alarms throughout the company will be tested next Tuesday 14 July 200–.
- I wish to advise you that Mrs Joanna Green is no longer with this department.
- Would you be so kind as to let me know when these goods can be delivered.
- I would like to remind you that petty cash claims should now be submitted to Alvin in Accounts Department.
- I am writing to inform you that our company's Annual Dinner and Dance will be held on Friday 28 December 200–.

2 Remember the KISS principle

Keep it short and simple – that means short sentences and simple words. Don't try to impress your reader with big words – they will not be impressed – they will just have to reach for the dictionary. Choose short words instead of these, and choose one word instead of these phrases:

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Unit 6 Introducing the business letter

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this unit you should be able to:

- State the main details found on letterheaded paper
- Design letterheaded paper
- Discuss the various parts of a business letter and continuation sheet
- Describe the basic presentation requirements in fully blocked layout with open punctuation
- Understand the importance of consistent presentation
- Explain how business documents should be structured
- Describe the four-point plan for structuring business communications
- Compose a variety of simple business letters
- State the main points to remember about business letters

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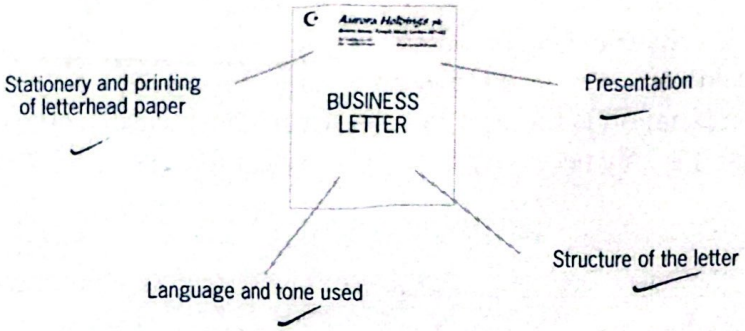
Communication with people outside your organisation is vitally important. This is your means of establishing contact with the outside world. For this reason a high standard should be set and maintained in all your communications. High standards in an organisation's correspondence suggest high standards in business generally.

Despite the many modern communication methods available today, business letters are still very often the main means of establishing business relations with other organisations. Business letters are an ambassador for your company, so a good first impression is essential.

Business letters convey an impression of the company in many different ways:



When writing a business letter (or any other business communication) your aim should be to ensure a high standard in each of these four key areas. A well-presented business letter may lead to an important business contact.

These four key areas – printed stationery, presentation, structure, language and tone – will be considered in this unit.

PRINTED STATIONERY

Letterheaded paper

Good quality letterheaded paper is generally used for business letters. An attractive, well-balanced letterhead enhances the prestige of an organisation. Various details are included on letterheaded paper, as shown in this example:

Shirley Taylor Training and Consultancy
391B Orchard Road
#13-09 Ngee Ann City Tower B
Singapore 238874

Tel (+65) 64726076
Fax (+65) 63992710
Mobile (+65) 96355907
E-mail shirley@shirleytaylor.com
Website www.shirleytaylor.com

Logos

A logo is a graphic symbol on the letterhead, very often the same as a trade mark used on packaging, delivery vehicles, etc. These logos are often unusual or amusing so that customers remember them easily and become familiar with them. With effective design, a company's logo can become a widely circulated medium through which a company can confirm and sustain its corporate identity.

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(a)

(b)

(c)

Reproduced courtesy of (a) WWF, (b) Boots Group plc, (c) Cadbury Trebor Bassett

PRESENTATION: FULLY-BLOCKED LAYOUT

The fully-blocked layout is now the most widely used method of display for a business documents. Open punctuation is usually used with fully blocked layout. Th combination is thought to have a very businesslike appearance. In this example no that it is only necessary to leave one clear line space between each section of the letter.

Logo. A special logo can help to identify a company

Letterhead. Company's name, address and telephone/fax numbers, and email address

Reference. Initials of writer/typist (maybe also a filing reference)

Date. UK style is day month year. Alternative styles may be preferred in other countries

Inside address. Name, full postal address, town and post code

Salutation

Heading. Give the gist of what the letter is about

Body of letter. Separate into paragraphs with a new idea in each. Leave one clear line space between each paragraph

Complimentary close. Make sure it matches the salutation

The writer will sign the letter here

Sender's name (indicate females with a courtesy title in brackets)

Designation or department

Enclosure indication if necessary (if more than one use 'Encs')

Indicate anyone receiving copies here (if more than one use alphabetical order)

Shirley Taylor Training and Consultancy
391B Orchard Road
#13-09 Ngee Ann City Tower B
Singapore 238874

Tel (+65) 64726076
Fax (+65) 63992710
Mobile (+65) 96355907
E-mail shirley@shirleytaylor.com
Website www.shirleytaylor.com

ST/CFB

2 May 200-

Mr Dennis Harhalakis
38 Chancery Avenue
Singapore 309656

Dear Dennis

FULLY BLOCKED LAYOUT

The fully blocked layout for displaying business documents is now widely used, but do you use it correctly? The main feature of this modern display is that all lines start at the left margin – with no exceptions.

Most people combine fully blocked layout with open punctuation – this means that no punctuation marks are used outside the body of the message itself. Of course we need commas and full stops in the main text, but no punctuation is used in the date, inside address, salutation, complimentary close, etc.

If you use fully blocked layout for the first page of a letter, you should also block the second or subsequent pages. Continuation sheets should show the page number, date and reader's name – all blocked at the left margin. An example of a fully blocked continuation sheet is enclosed.

Remember to use fully blocked layout with open punctuation in all your business documents.

Yours sincerely

Shirley Taylor

Shirley Taylor (Miss)
Manager

Enc

Copy Suzanne Walker, Human Resource Manager

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Did you know?

I'm often asked 'When should we use Dear (first name) and when should we use Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms xxxxx?' Well the answer is easy.

When you are writing to someone, consider how you would address them if you were to meet. For example, if you are writing to Varsha Mehta, imagine you are walking along the street and you meet Varsha. Would say to her 'Hello Varsha' or 'Hello Mrs Mehta'? It's that simple. Remember, write as you speak!

OTHER PARTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

Confidential/airmail/urgent

If a letter is confidential this should be indicated between the date and inside address, just as it would be shown on the envelope:

CONFIDENTIAL
Mr Arun Saha
Managing Director
ITES Solutions
20/4, Sukhrali Chowk
Mumbai – 400001

AIRMAIL
Ms Sweta Narang
B1/1773
Vasant Kunj
New Delhi – 110070

Attention line

Traditionally an attention line was used when the writer wanted to ensure that the letter is directed toward the desk of a specific person. The letter was addressed to the company in general and always began 'Dear Sirs'.

FOR THE ATTENTION OF MRS BHAWNA SAGAR,
MANAGER – HUMAN RESOURCES
National Buildings Construction Corporation Limited
NBCC Bhawan,
Lodhi Road,
New Delhi – 110003

Dear Sirs

In today's business communications when we usually know the name of the person to whom we are writing, it is rarely necessary to use an attention line. Simply include the recipient's name and designation in the inside address and use a personalised salutation.

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CATEGORIES OF BUSINESS LETTER

There are many different categories of business letters. In this section we will look at some very basic letters. A sample letter is shown in each category and then you can practise writing some for yourself.

Some of the main categories of business letter are:

	Aim
Confirmation	To confirm arrangements made between sender and recipient
Acknowledgement	To acknowledge receipt of a letter, order or other item
Enquiry	To request information or prices
Reply	To respond to an enquiry
Complaint	To criticise poor service or goods
Adjustment	To respond to the complaint and hopefully make amends
Collection letters	To obtain settlement of a debt
Sales letters	To sell goods or services
Circular letters	To reach a certain group of people (customers/staff)

Letter of confirmation

The main purpose of this letter is to provide a written record of arrangements made between the sender and the recipient in person or by telephone. These letters are usually very short.

Indian Handlooms
7, Ashoka Road
Chandini Crossing
New Delhi - 110003

Tel: 011-23716085-98
Fax: 011-23316933

TWB/cfb

18 August 200–

Prof Abdullah Khan
Sales Manager
Tie & Dye Fabrics
IFFCO Chowk
New Delhi - 110032

Dear Mr Khan

I am pleased to confirm our meeting at 1030 on Tuesday 12 September 200– at our head office in New Delhi. Our Director from Beijing, Mr Ong Chee Huat, will be in New Delhi at that time and he will also join us in our meeting.

As I mentioned to you on the telephone I am very interested in seeing your new range of winter fabrics and hope you can bring some samples with you.

I look forward to seeing you again.

Yours sincerely

Vinod Mehra
General Manager

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Acknowledgement

This letter is sent to acknowledge receipt of something when a written record is appropriate. An acknowledgement may also be sent to acknowledge receipt of another letter or document which requires further attention. As such you would clearly state that you will look into the matter and reply in more detail at a later date.

Stardust Photo Studio

101, Ist floor
Shree Ram Towers Netaji Marg
Lucknow - 226001
INDIA

Tel: 2288361-68 *Fax: 0522 - 2288376*

HMY/lk

25 May 200–

Mr Suryakant Tripathy
203, Silver Oaks
Vasundhara Vihar
Bangalore - 42

Dear Mr Tripathy

Thank you for your letter of 22 May addressed to our General Manager, Mrs Harsimran Kaur.

Mrs Kaur is overseas on business and will not be in the office again until 4 June. I shall be in contact with Mrs Kaur and shall inform her about your letter, which I am sure will receive her prompt attention.

Please let me know if I can be of any help.

Yours sincerely

Vineeta Jain (ms)
PA to Harsimran Kaur
General Manager

Some organisations use printed cards for this purpose, which can be completed easily.

Deep Chand and Partners, Ambadeep Building, Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110001

We acknowledge with thanks the receipt of

which will receive careful attention.

Telephone - 011-24367702 *Fax - 011-24363421*

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Enquiry

Enquiries for information about goods or services are sent and received in business all the time. In your letter remember to state clearly exactly what you want – information? a catalogue? a price list? a quotation? Keep your enquiry brief and to the point.

The sender's personal address looks good when balanced at the top right

When you write your own personal letters a reference is not necessary, just a date

When writing to a company use the salutation 'Dear Sirs'

Introduction

Details

Response required

Close

Match the complimentary close with the salutation

34 Windsor Avenue
Beecher
Chesterfield
S44 2JL

20 January 200–

Nautilus Cruises plc
Nautilus House
Temple Street
London
SE1 4LL

Dear Sirs

My neighbour, Mr Roland Keating, has recently recommended your luxury cruises to me. He and his wife have often taken a Nautilus cruise and speak very highly about them.

My wife and I are thinking of celebrating our 25th wedding anniversary in August with a special holiday.

Please send me a copy of your current brochure showing the cost of your cruises together with departure dates.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours faithfully

MARK FARRELLY

Reply to enquiry

Enquiries mean potential business so they must be acknowledged promptly. If the letter is from an established customer, say how much you appreciate it. If it is from a prospective customer, thank them for their enquiry, give all the relevant information and express the hope of good business relations.

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Letterheaded paper

Nautilus Cruises plc

Nautilus House, Temple Street, London SE1 4LL

Tel: +44(0)208 542 5555
Fax: +44(0)208 555 4444 *Email: nautilus@cfb.co.uk*

Reference and date

TM/ST

22 January 200–

When replying to a letter use the appropriate courtesy title before the name in the inside address

Mr Mark Farrelly
34 Windsor Avenue
Bolsover
Chesterfield
S44 2JL

Use the personal 'Dear Mr Farrelly' rather than 'Dear Sir'

Dear Mr Farrelly

Introduction

Thank you for your letter of 20 January enquiring about our cruises. I am pleased that you have heard favourable comments about our luxury cruises.

Details

I enclose our catalogue giving full details of this year's cruises. Your attention is particularly drawn to page 49 which gives departure dates for each cruise.

Response required

As there is usually a heavy demand for these cruises I suggest that you should book early, particularly as you propose to travel during the peak season.

Close

Please do not hesitate to contact me and I shall do my best to ensure that your 25th wedding anniversary is celebrated in style.

Match the complimentary close with the salutation

Yours sincerely

LORETTA BERTOCCHI
Sales Manager

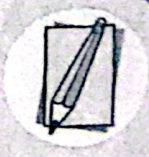
Don't forget Enc

Enc

Complaint

There are bound to be occasions in business when you have to make a complaint, or deal with one. When you have a genuine complaint you will feel angry but remember that the other party may not be to blame. They may have a perfectly good defence. Therefore, your letter should be confined to a statement of the facts followed by an enquiry about what the company will do about it or a suggestion of how you expect the matter to be dealt with. At all costs avoid rudeness or sarcasm. This will only cause ill-feeling. Remember, most of the time when you make a complaint in writing to higher authorities about your grievances/experiences at the shop floor level, it could be possible the reader has no prior knowledge about the whole issue.

Checkpoint



Have you ever had reason to complain about goods or services? Discuss some reasons why complaints may be necessary.

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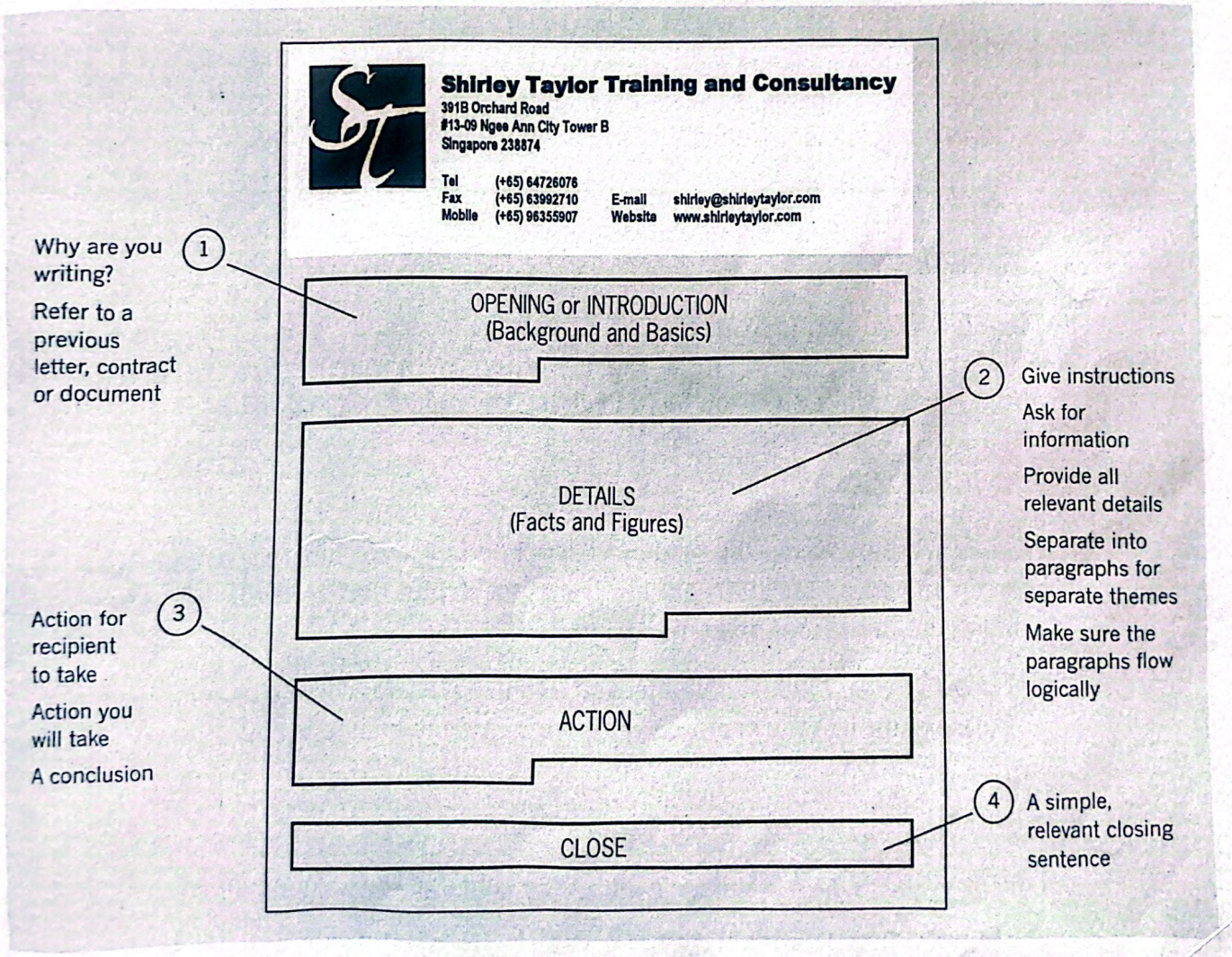
Remember, there will be many occasions when you will need to write a letter which does not fall into any specific category. In these situations you must remember the general rules of good business writing and plan your letter carefully so that its objectives are met.

STRUCTURE

Many business letters, like the ones we have looked at in this unit, are short and routine. They can be written without any special preparation. Other letters require more careful thought and planning. This four-point plan provides a simple framework for structuring all business communications. The following diagram illustrates the four basic sections (the four-point plan) that will make up all your business communications.



Remember

If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail!

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The four-point plan

1 Opening or introduction

The first paragraph of your message could refer to a meeting or previous conta perhaps to a letter or e-mail received. Otherwise it should introduce the subject th you want to discuss in the message itself. For example:

Thank you for your letter dated . . .
It was great to meet you yesterday.
Thank you for calling me this morning.
It was good to speak to you today.
ST International will be holding a conference for secretaries in April 200–.

Remember

Avoid boring openings like 'We spoke', 'Reference your letter dated . . .' or 'This follows our earlier meeting'.

2 Details

Here is where you give all the 'meat' – all the facts and figures. This is where yo will give information, in a logical order, with separate paragraphs whe appropriate. Make sure you include all the key points in a logical order.

3 Action

Here is where you tell the reader what action you want him/her to take as a resu of your message. Or alternatively it may be action that you will take after all th points you have mentioned. For example:

I hope you will investigate this and let me have your comments soon.
Please complete the enclosed reply form and return it to me by . . .

4 Close

Finish with a simple one-line close – a relevant one-liner. For example:

I hope to hear from you soon.
Your prompt reply would be appreciated.
Please call me at . . . if you have any questions.

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Checkpoint

In groups, discuss how you think the company would reply to this letter from Elton James. Draft a suitable response.

PRESENTING BUSINESS LETTERS – KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

1 Use fully-blocked style with open punctuation consistently.
2 Leave one blank line between each section of the letter and between ead paragraph.
3 The only big space on your letter should be for the sender's signature.
4 Display your subject heading in capitals and bold to make it stand out.
5 Structure your message according to the four-point plan – with an introduction details, action and close.
6 Make sure the information in your central section flows logically from point t point. Restructure if necessary.
7 Take special care with your opening and closing paragraphs.
8 Include appropriate headings at the top of continuation pages.
9 Proofread your message carefully, and consider whether it is structure appropriately.
10 Read through your message as if you were the reader. Ask yourself how th reader will feel when it is received.

A–Z OF BLOOPERS AND BLUNDERS, COMMON ERRORS AND CLICHÉS: C

Clarification

We often see sentences like 'Please contact me if you require any further clari cations'. The word should be 'clarification', it becomes countable when you a talking about specific pieces of clarification you need. In most cases you will mean t act of clarifying something, so use the word as an uncountable noun – 'clarification'.

NB: It would be much better to say 'Please give me a call at xxxx if you have a questions.'

Clichés

Clichés (or platitudes) are things that have lost their sparkle, and often th meaning, through overuse. Examples of writing clichés are those old-fashion

Nathan's Employmment Agency
17 Tower Hill, LONDON, EC1A 9DD UK
Tel: 0207 623 9442
Fax: 0207 623 9444

FAX TRANSMISSION HEADER

To: Mrs Anu Morar – Personnel Manager
Company: First State Bank of India
Fax Number: 009111 289479
From: Claire Burgess – Consultant

Date: RECEIVED

No. of sheets (including header sheet): 1
Message:

We have many clients with banking qualifications who are anxious to gain experience of working overseas. Should you be interested, we would be delighted to supply further details.

3 You work as an assistant to Mr Fadzil Malakoff, the Manager of JEG Products, a manufacturing company in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Mr Malakoff has shown you this letter he has just received.

METROVILLE COLLEGE
Lorong Mambong
Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

(yesterday's date)

The Manager
JEG Products
57 Jalan Kuning
Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

Dear Sir or Madam

I am a student in the Department of Business Studies and I am doing a project on local businesses.

I would be very grateful if I could visit your company. I am interested in finding out such things as:

- the size of the company (number of employees)
- the market in which you operate
- your range of products
- your pricing strategy
- your plans for the future

I am free every afternoon next week.
Thank you for your help.

Yours faithfully

Anita Lai

Anita Lai

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Emphasise the heading (you may prefer to use resumé)

Appropriate personal details (you may add race, citizenship, I/C number or others)

Summarise your main selling points

Tabulate your education in three columns (chronological order)

Be specific and list all your qualifications (not just '3 O levels')

Present job first, working backwards

Hobbies/sports you enjoy/special achievements/ results awaited?

A previous employer? A teacher? Youth club leader?

Month and year only

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name
Address
Telephone
Nationality
Date of Birth
Marital Status

PROFILE

EDUCATION

DATES	SCHOOL/COLLEGE	COURSE

QUALIFICATIONS

DATES	EXAMINING BODY	SUBJECT

WORKING EXPERIENCE

DATES	EMPLOYER	POSITION/DUTIES

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

REFEREES

1 2

Date

INVITATION TO INTERVIEW

A letter inviting shortlisted applicants to attend all interview should be fairly short, simply thanking the person for his/her application and giving a day/date/time for the interview.

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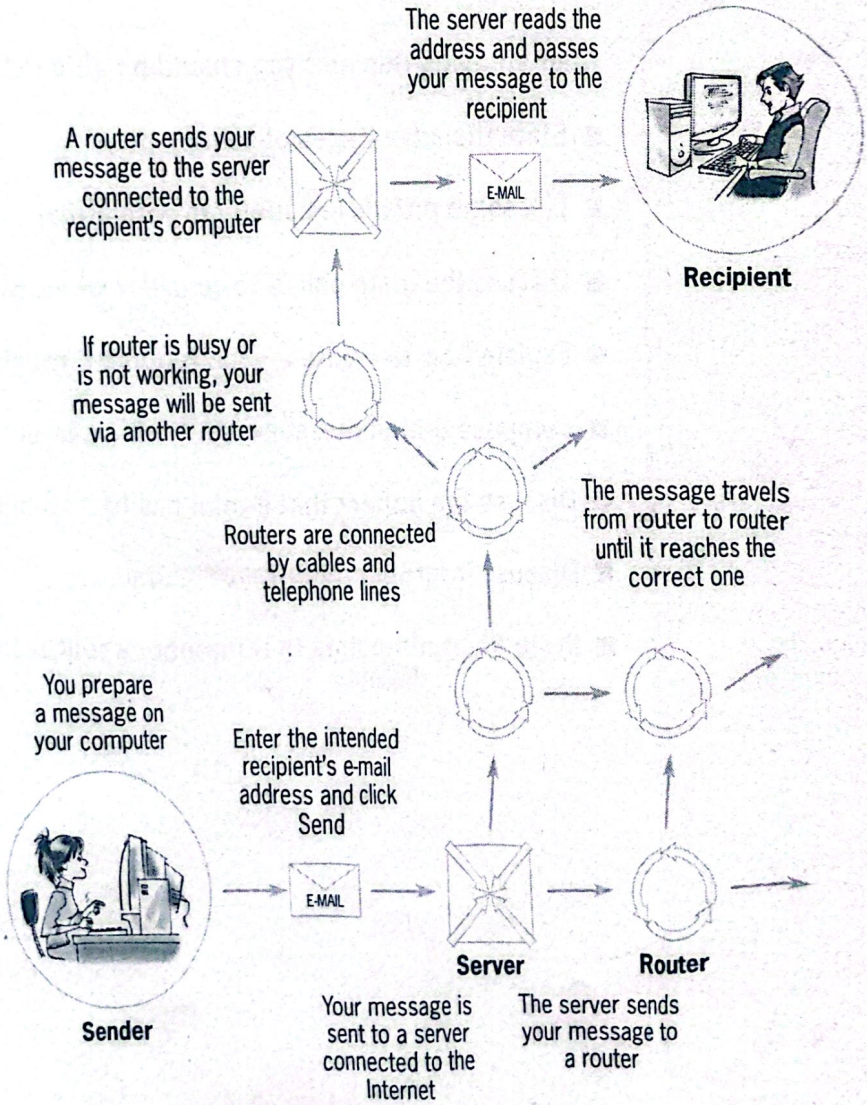
THE EVOLUTION OF E-MAIL

Businesses today operate in a highly competitive market in which high-s communication and information transfer is essential. Most of the activiti today's offices are electronic, using computer-based technology. Electronic ma e-mail as it is commonly known, has evolved as an effective, low-cost and in method of communication with friends and colleagues all over the world.

With e-mail, messages are keyed into a computer workstation and transmitted to the recipient. A single message may be sent simultaneously to recipients.

The following diagram shows how an e-mail message is sent across the worl the Internet.



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SAMPLE E-MAIL MESSAGES

1

To GinaPorter@GlobalComms.co.uk
From shirley@shirleytaylor.com (Shirley Taylor)
Date 22.10.04 9.55
Subject Lunch 28 October

Hello Gina

This is just a reminder that I'm looking forward to meeting you for lunch next Friday 28th. I am glad you've arranged for Jenny Chew to join us too. Can I suggest 12.30 at Hemingways on Orchard Road? I hear this new restaurant is fabulous. My treat of course. Please confirm.

Shirley

Informal greeting

Contractions are OK

Informal, chatty style where appropriate

No formal closing

2

To MandyWilson@Pioneer.co.sg
From shirley@shirleytaylor.com (Shirley Taylor)
Date 14.8.04 14:30
Subject Customer Services Training

Dear Mandy

We are considering sending some of our staff on a training course on Customer Services. Do you have a suitable course available within the next few months? If so please let me have the dates and times plus costs.

If there isn t a regular Pioneer course scheduled, can you tailor-make a course specially for our staff? We could hold it in our conference room.

Perhaps we can arrange to meet to discuss this - are you free next Friday 20 August at 11 am? I could come over to you, or you could come over to my office. Just let me know.

Shirley Taylor
Manager
ST Training and Consultancy
Tel: +65 64726076 Fax: +65 63392710
Mobile: +65 96355907
e-mail: shirley@shirleytaylor.com
http://www.shirleytaylor.com

[This e-mail may be confidential and privileged. Any form of unauthorised use is prohibited. If it has been wrongly sent to you, please delete immediately and notify the sender. Thank you.]

This style is slightly less informal

Short sentences, no padding!

Short paragraphs

Write in a casual style as if you are speaking

A standard signature block

A disclaimer

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www.shirleytaylor.com

Netiquette

In personal relationships the conventions of behaviour are called etiquette. In e-mail we have **netiquette** – a set of rules for e-mail that have evolved from experience. All your emotions and subtleties have to be incorporated into what you write, so misunderstandings are easy to create. Here are my tips for better netiquette:

N ever leave a response too long.
It's common courtesy to respond to a message as quickly as you can – even if you have to say that a detailed response will be sent later.

E -mail addresses must be correct.
Correctly addressed e-mail messages are received within seconds, but it can take a while to receive an error message letting you know that an incorrectly addressed message wasn't delivered. Get your e-mail addresses right first time.

T ake off the caps lock. DON'T SHOUT!
Even though you want to get noticed, please do not use capitals in e-mail messages – this is like shouting – it is rude and will usually be counter-productive. And also ... NEVER RESORT TO EXCESSIVE PUNCTUATION*@!!**?!!!!

I nformality is OK in e-mails.
Replace formal salutations like 'Dear Leslie' with 'Hi Leslie' or even just 'Leslie'. Similarly, replace 'Yours sincerely' with 'Best wishes' or some other informal closing. (Try to avoid the overused 'Regards' and horribly abbreviated things like Tx and Tnks & Rgs!)

Q uestion your subject heading.
People are most likely to read important looking e-mails first. Give your messages a clear and specific subject heading that will get noticed.

U se short sentences and short paragraphs. The shorter your messages, the more likely they will be read and understood. Remember to paragraph just the same as in other business documents.

E numerate with numbers or bullets.
Present your messages attractively. Use numbers, bullets or sub-headings if possible – this will add to the clarity of your message.

T idy up long sentences to eliminate waffle.
Tapping away at the keyboard as you think, it is easy to allow sentences to become too long. Read through your message carefully and improve clarity and understanding.

T ake a pride in your finished message. Make sure your message is accurate, brief and clear as well as attractively presented. In this way it will be understood and will achieve the desired results.

E nsure everything is right before you hit 'send'. You cannot call an e-mail back for second thoughts, so get it right first time!

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Your complaint about your fax machine that you bought from ... past to me for my attn. Please be informed that your policy document shows that you only have a one year guarantee for these products and it ran out on 2nd Sept. So if you want it fixing you will have to pay for it.

Let me know what you want to do.

Rewrite the e-mail in a more appropriate tone.

USING E-MAIL – KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

1 Compose a SMART subject heading. This will give the recipient a good idea of the contents of the message, and it makes for easier handling.
2 Keep caps lock off. Capitals indicate SHOUTING and can appear threatening. They should never be used in e-mails.
3 Use an appropriate greeting and sign-off. Formality does not read well in e-mails. Replace formal salutations like 'Dear David' with 'Hi David', or even just 'David'. Similarly, 'Yours sincerely' is not appropriate in e-mails. Please don't overuse 'Regards' too. Why not just put your name?
4 Check your syntax. It's easy to allow sentences to become very long and verbose. Keep your sentences short and simple, and check your sentence construction. The more pride you take in composing your message, the more successful you will be in being understood and achieving the desired results.
5 Be sure you hit the right reply button. The message may be addressed just to you or to lots of others, or it may be CC'd or BCC'd to lots of other recipients. Make sure you hit the correct reply key so that the right readers receive your message.
6 Use 'reply to all' wisely. Some writers choose to send an e-mail to lots of people but it's not always wise or appropriate for every individual reply to be seen by all the same people.

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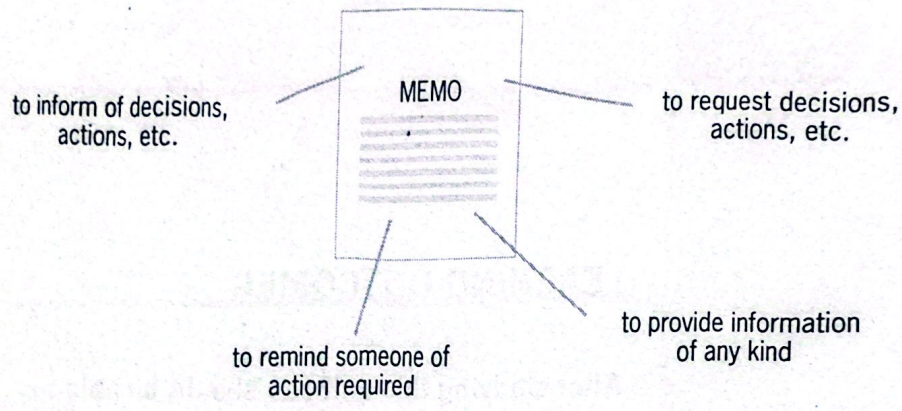
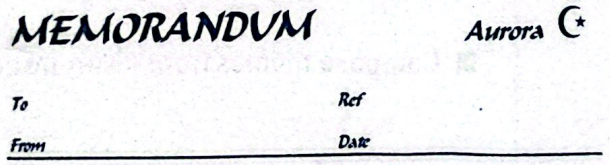
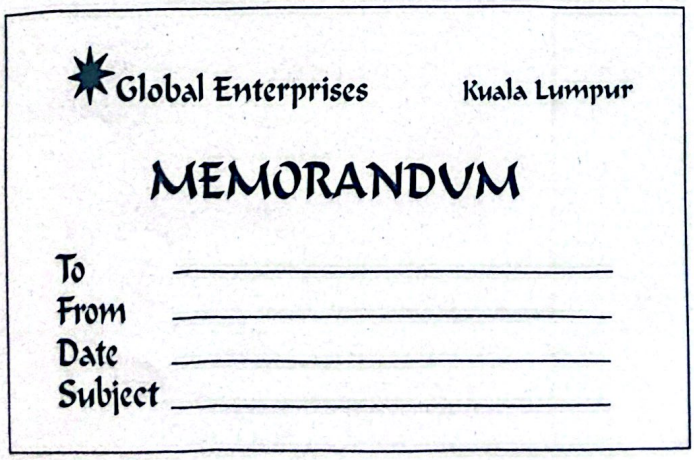
WHY MEMOS?

The memorandum (plural memoranda), affectionately called a 'memo', is a written communication from one person to another (or a group of people) within the same organisation. Memos serve a variety of purposes:

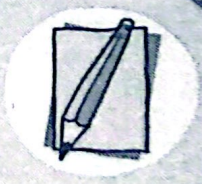


Just as letterheaded paper is used for letters, many organisations use pre-printed stationery for memos. Here are some examples:





Checkpoint



Bring in some of your organisation's memo headed paper to discuss with your fellow students.

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It is important that the memo headings show details of sender and recipient as well as reference and date. Courtesy titles (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) are usually not included. If pre-printed memo forms are not used in your organisation, the following headings are suggested.

No courtesy titles are necessary on memos

This one-line style is neat and simple

MEMORANDUM

To Joy Seow, Administration Assistant

From Maggie Ong, Executive Secretary

Ref MO/ST

Date 12 July 200–

After these memo headings, continue in the usual fully-blocked style. When more than one topic is dealt with it is good practice to use numbered points and sub-headings. A memo will not include a salutation and complimentary close, but it will usually be signed or initialled depending on the procedure adopted within individual organisations.

Use these standard headings and align all the details neatly

Don't forget reference and date

Leave 3/4 line spaces before the heading (but don't put Re!)

Separate the body into paragraphs, using numbered points and sub-headings if relevant

No complimentary close is necessary

Leave a space here for the sender to sign or initial the memo

Don't forget Encs

MEMORANDUM

To Joy Seow, Administration Assistant

From Maggie Ong, Executive Secretary

Ref MO/ST

Date 12 July 200–

IN-HOUSE METHODS OF DISPLAY

Congratulations on recently joining the staff in the Chief Executive's office. Here are some general guidelines on the format of correspondence preferred in this office:

1 LAYOUT OF DOCUMENTS

All documents should be displayed in the fully blocked style with open punctuation. Some specimen documents are attached which will guide you in these requirements.

2 SIGNATURE BLOCK (LETTERS)

On outgoing letters the Chief Executive prefers his name and title in lower case with initial capitals, ie

Peter Nunn
Chief Executive

On some personal letters, no salutation or complimentary close will be required, but Mr Nunn will usually give instructions about this.

3 NUMBERED ITEMS

When items need to be numbered they should be typed alone with no full stop or bracket. Subsequent enumeration should be decimal, eg 3.1, 3.2, etc.

I hope that these guidelines will be useful but if you have any questions please speak to me.

Maggie Ong

Encs

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USING LISTS AND BULLETS

Lists can be used in letters, e-mails, fax messages, memos, virtually any document. They are useful to set off important ideas. Your list could be a series of words, names, notes, whatever.

Items could be listed using numbers, letters or bullets. If there are rather a lot of points, numbers are better – then it's easy to refer to item number 3 or whatever. For a simple list of names or words, bullets are better.

Why use lists?

- They help you to organise your thoughts and your points.
- They help focus your reader's attention on important points.
- They help readers find your key points.
- They help to simplify detailed or complicated topics.
- They simplify the skimming process for busy readers.
- They enhance visual impact.

Displaying lists

Make sure you introduce your list appropriately so that your reader knows what to expect. Here are some examples.

Example 1

Be sure that all your list items are parallel in structure. In this example, every point in the list needs to follow the word 'by'.

> You can improve your business writing by:
> 1 adopting a friendly, conversational writing style
> 2 reading your message out loud to check the tone
> 3 keeping to the point and staying focused
> 4 organising your points carefully with my four-point plan
> 5 using language that the reader will understand.

Example 2

Here is a simple list of bullet points. Here all points begin with a verb, to follow the word 'to'.

> When writing a letter of complaint about something you have bought, remember to:
> - describe the item that you bought
> - say where and when you bought the item
> - explain what is wrong and any action you have already taken
> - mention names of anyone you have spoken to and what was discussed
> - state what you expect to be done to rectify the situation.

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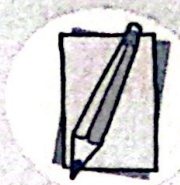
Checkpoint



Here are some memos. The first thing you need to do in each case is to compose a suitable heading. Then follow the instructions in your employer's note and write a suitable reply. Prepare each memo on a separate sheet of paper.

MEMORANDUM

To Frank Gates, Branch Manager, Leeds

From Derek Hall, Managing Director

Ref DH/LPO

Date 20 March 200–

Choose an appropriate heading

I will be taking Mr James Hudson, our new Sales Director, to visit all our Northern branches during week commencing 27 April.

Our visit to your branch will be on Monday 27 April and we expect to arrive at 1000.

Please arrange for a brief tour to be conducted in the morning followed by a meeting with you. After lunch Mr Hudson would like to meet all the Sales staff.

Please confirm the above arrangements as soon as possible.

Derek

Please reply – everything's OK for their visit – I'll look forward to mtg JH

FG

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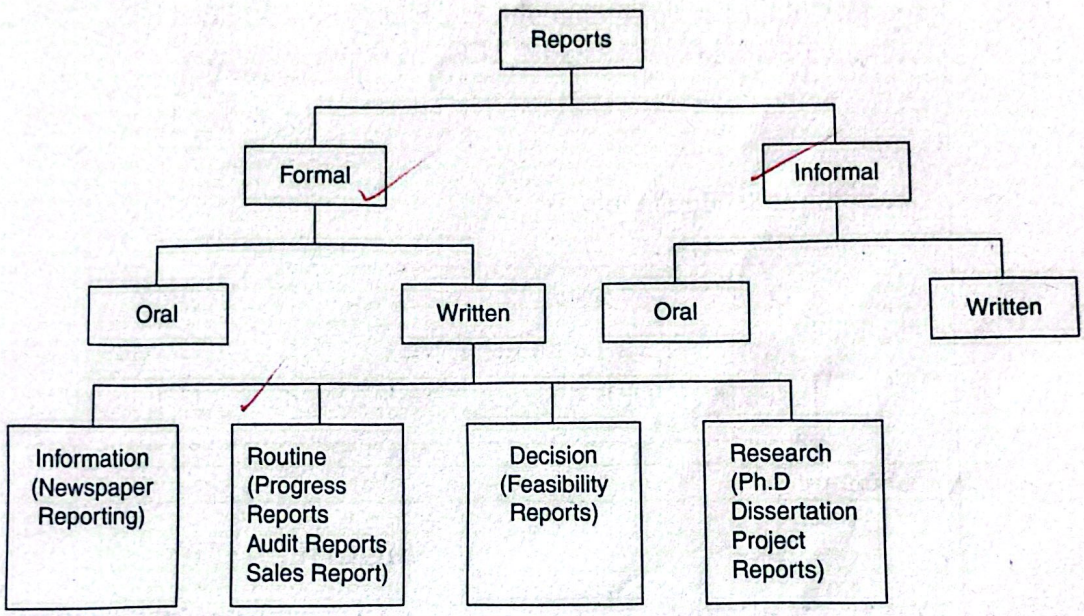
WHAT IS A REPORT

In its simplest form, a report is a piece of information from a person who has the information for someone who needs it. Reports vary greatly in length and degree of formalness in the presentation. The spectrum could range from a single word or a telephonic message as 'sent' or 'delivered' to the bulky 300-page company's annual report or a PhD dissertation.

Length varies

TYPES OF REPORT



The basic function of any report, whether it is formal or informal, is the same, i.e. to provide information for a specific task. Generally, informal reports are short (maybe 2 or 3 pages) with conversational styles in presenting the data. Most of the reports that are written today in an organisation follow letter or memo formats. Sometimes the needed information is provided orally, either over telephone or in one-to-one interaction. However, most organisations prefer written mode to avoid distortion of information.

FORMAL REPORTS

Depending upon the purpose, formal reports vary greatly in structure, content, length and choice of words.

In the classification, formal written reports are divided into 4 categories. The categorisation is done for better understanding of 'what a report is' without implying water-tight compartmentalisation among different types of reports. If the

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While all *decision reports* entail research inputs, most *research reports* lay a great deal of emphasis on methodology and review of literature. Academic research and consultancy projects fall under this category. These reports demand research, which may involve questionnaires, site visits and interviews, and tend to have detailed structures.

STRUCTURE OF A FORMAL REPORT

A very formal report has the following structure:

1. Preliminary parts
   - Title fly
   - Title page
   - Letter of authorisation
   - Letter of transmittal
   - Preface/Acknowledgements
   - Table of contents
   - List of illustrations
   - Abstract/Synopsis

2. Body parts
   - Introduction
     - Background of the report
     - Statement of problem and purpose
     - Scope
     - Methodology
     - Definitions
     - Limitations
     - Historical background of the report topic
     - Report organisation
   - Text
     - Description and Analysis of Data

3. Ending parts
   - Summary
   - Conclusions
   - Recommendations

4. Appended parts
   - Bibliography
   - Appendices
   - Glossary
   - Index

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Example of a formal report

Company's name and report title (be specific)

Who asked for the report?
What was requested?
When was it requested?

List the steps taken to gather the information (past tense)

Present the information obtained through each step mentioned in 'Procedure'

Use numbered points and sub-headings for clarity

AURORA HOLDINGS

REPORT ON COMPLAINTS ABOUT POOR SERVICE AND FOOD PROVIDED IN THE STAFF RESTAURANT

TERMS OF REFERENCE

To investigate complaints about poor service and food provided in the staff restaurant and to make recommendations, as requested by Mr Michael Lee, Administration Director, on 14 April 200–.

PROCEDURE

1 An interview was held with Mrs Alice Newton, Restaurant Manageress, on 15 April.

2 Interviews were held with a cross-section of staff (48) who used the restaurant between 15 and 20 April.

FINDINGS

1 INTERVIEW WITH RESTAURANT MANAGERESS

1.1 STAFFING

Mrs Neena Verma has 3 full-time assistants. The youngest, Miss Lily Ng, attends day-release classes at Southpoint College on Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week. She works 1400–1700 on those days.

1.2 EQUIPMENT

A schedule of current equipment and their year of purchase is attached. No problems were reported. However Mrs Newton said that additional equipment would be useful:

1 microwave oven
1 slow cooker
1 rice cooker

2 INTERVIEWS WITH STAFF

20 staff from the 1200–1300 lunch sitting were interviewed, and 28 from the 1300–1400 sitting.

2.1 CHOICE

The food available is shown on the attached schedule. 60% of the staff interviewed said they would prefer some cold meals to be provided. They said they may make alternative lunch arrangements if the variety did not improve.

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Include the page number at the top left margin

2

2.2 QUEUEING

70% of staff took lunch from 1200 to 1300 hours as opposed to 30% from 1300 to 1400. This resulted in large queues forming at the first lunch sitting.

What are the logical implications from the 'Findings'?

CONCLUSIONS

1 There are insufficient assistants to cope with the preparation of food in the morning and with the popular first lunch sitting.

2 The present equipment is insufficient.

3 The selection of meals is not wide enough to cater for staff requirements.

4 The ratio of staff to each sitting is not balanced.

What action do you suggest should be taken, based on Findings and Conclusions?

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 A new assistant should be recruited to work 0900-1400 hours on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

2 Mrs Newton should be asked to look into prices and availability of the new equipment required.

3 Mrs Newton should be asked to devise some new dishes which also include cold choices.

4 The number of staff attending each sitting should be reviewed so that a more even balance can be achieved.

Leave a space for the writer to sign

Name and title of writer

TUNINA MAJUMDAR
Business Administration Officer

ML/tlh

Reference and date

24 April 200–

Remember

Reports should be objective, impersonal and factual. Write in full sentences using third person and reported speech. Do not use I/We/You.

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PROPOSALS

A proposal is a special type of report that is designed to present ideas and persuade the reader to accept them. A proposal will analyse a problem, present a solution and suggest an approach to solve the problem.

This proposal is reproduced with permission from *How to Write Proposals and Reports that get Results* by Ros Jay and published by Prentice Hall.

FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

An initial study for ABC Ltd

by

Jane Smith

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FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

An initial study

Objective
To identify the factors involved in introducing flexible working hours, to examine their benefits and disadvantages and to recommend the best approach to take.

Summary
At present, almost all employees of ABC Ltd work from 9.00 to 5.00. A handful work from 9.30 to 5.30.

Many, though not all, staff are unhappy with this and would prefer a more flexible arrangement. Some are working mothers and would like to be able to take their children to and from school. Some, particularly the older employees, have sick or elderly relatives who make demands on their time which do not fit comfortably with their working hours.

For the company itself, this dissatisfaction among staff leads to low morale and reduced productivity. It also makes it harder to attract and retain good staff.

There are three basic options for the future:

1 *Leave things as they are.* This is obviously less demanding on resources than implementing a new system. At least we know it works even if it isn't perfect.
2 *Highly flexible system.* Employees would clock on and clock off anytime within a 12½ hour working day until they have 'clocked up' 35 hours a week. This would be the hardest system to implement.
3 *Limited flexibility.* Staff could start work any time between 8.00 am to 10.00 am and work through for eight hours. This would not solve all employees' problems but it would solve most of them.

Proposal
Introduce a system of limited flexibility for now, retaining the option of increasing flexibility later if this seems appropriate.

Position
The current working hours at ABC Ltd are 9.00 to 5.00 for most employees, with a few working from 9.30 to 5.30.

Problem
Although this works up to a point, it does have certain disadvantages, both for the organisation and for some of the employees.

The organisation: The chief disadvantage of the current system is that many of the staff are dissatisfied with it. This has become such a serious problem that it is becoming harder to attract and retain good staff. Those staff who do join the company and stay with it feel less motivated: this, as research has shown, means they are less productive than they could be.

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REPORT WRITING – KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

1 Business reports help companies to make decisions and solve problems.
2 Proposals present ideas and persuade the reader to accept them.
3 Write reports in third person and reported speech.
4 Keep all the facts and information impartial and impersonal.
5 Use sub-headings to classify the information logically, breaking it down into logical sub-sections.
6 State the steps that were taken to collect the information at the beginning of your report.
7 Present conclusions based on the facts in the findings.
8 Suggest recommendations when they are requested.
9 Compose a covering memo when sending a free-standing report.
10 Remember that a report should be understandable by someone who has no prior knowledge of the subject.

A–Z OF BLOOPERS AND BLUNDERS, COMMON ERRORS AND CLICHÉS: K, L

Kindly

I was on an aeroplane recently when the stewardess announced, 'Ladies and gentlemen, we will shortly be landing at Singapore Changi Airport. Please kindly return to your seat and fasten your seatbelt.'

'Please' and 'Kindly'? We don't need them both – and certainly never in the same sentence.

'Kindly' is definitely a great-grandfather word that we should not be using in the twenty-first century. Use 'please' instead. Avoid phrases like 'I would be grateful if you would' or 'I should appreciate it if you could'. Just say 'Please'.

Learnt/learned

Both are correct. 'Learned' is usually American English, while 'learnt' is British English. The same is true for burnt/burned, leant/leaned, spelt/spelled, spilt/spilled, spoilt/spoiled.

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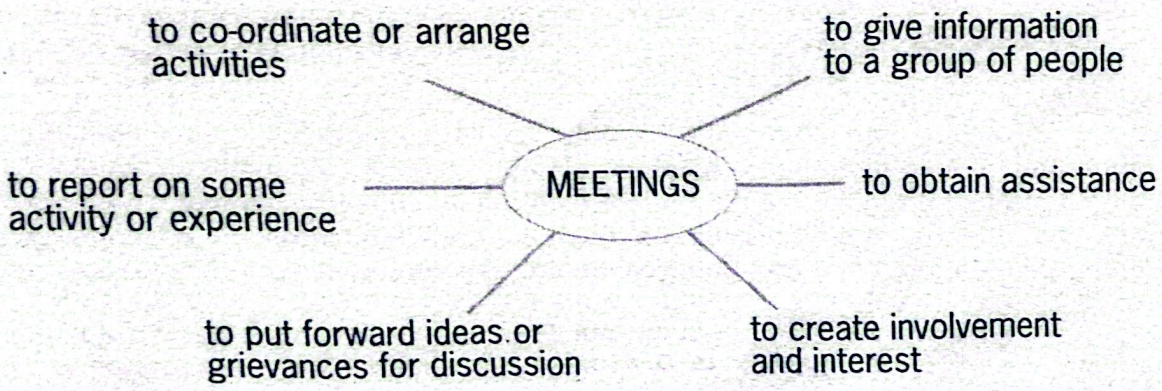
MEETINGS IN BUSINESS

Many meetings take place in business and an effective meeting is an efficient tool in the communication process. Meetings enable face-to-face contact of a number of people at the same time. They provide a useful opportunity for sharing information, making suggestions and proposals, taking decision and obtaining instant feedback. Active participation of all members of the meeting is usually encouraged.

Meetings are used for a variety of purposes:



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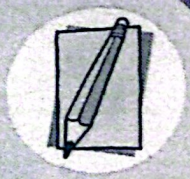

What meetings are held in your organisation? Who attends these meetings? Discuss the purpose of these meetings.

TYPES OF MEETING

Formal meetings

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MEETINGS IN BUSINESS

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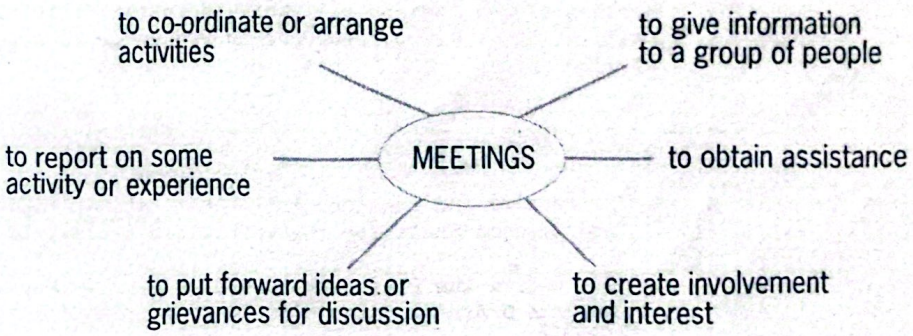

Checkpoint

What meetings are held in your organisation? Who attends these meetings? Discuss the purpose of these meetings.

TYPES OF MEETING

Formal meetings

The rules of conduct of formal meetings are laid down in a company's Articles of Association and/or Constitution or Standing Orders. With such meetings a quorum must be present, i.e. the minimum number of people who should be present in order to validate the meeting. A formal record of these meetings must be kept, usually by the company secretary.

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Annual General Meeting (AGM)

AGMs are held once a year to assess the trading of the organisation over the yea
All shareholders are invited to attend the AGM but they must be given 21 day
notice.

GLOBAL ENGINEERING PLC

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Tenth Annual General Meeting of the Company will be held in the Hillview Hall, Hillview Place, Bedford, on Wednesday 25 August 20-- at 1100 hours

A G E N D A

1 To receive and consider the Directors' Report, Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 July 20--.

2 To confirm the Preference Dividend paid in May 20-- and the Ordinary Interim Dividend paid in June 20--.

3 To declare an Ordinary Final Dividend.

4 To propose that the name of Mr D Williams be added to the list of authorised signatories to be attached to the Bank Mandates for City Bank plc, Grange Road, London.

5 To transact any other business that may be brought before an Ordinary General Meeting.

G Hope

G HOPE
Secretary

4 July 20--

JR/GH

Statutory meetings

Statutory meetings are called so that the directors and shareholders ca
communicate and consider special reports. Companies are required by law to hol
these statutory meetings.

Board meetings

Board meetings are held as often as individual organisati

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NOTICE AND AGENDA

The success of a meeting depends on a variety of essential preparations. An important one is to ensure that all the documentation is dealt with efficiently. The notice and agenda are usually combined in one document. The portion at the top is known as the notice. This gives details of the type, place, day, date and time of the meeting.

The agenda is the middle portion of the document. This is the list of topics to be discussed at the meeting. On the example shown here note that the first three and final two items are known as *ordinary business*. These are items which will be included on every meeting agenda. After the opening items of ordinary, business there will be a list of *special business* – these are special matters to be discussed at this meeting only.

Company name and committee name

AURORA HOLDINGS plc

SOCIAL CLUB

Notice states place, day, date and time of meeting

A meeting of the Sports and Social Club will be held in the Conference Suite A on Friday 14 May 200– at 1800

Use the heading AGENDA

AGENDA

These three items of ordinary business are included on every agenda (some committees will also include 'Correspondence')

1 Apologies for absence
2 Minutes of last meeting
3 Matters arising

Special business is listed separately (any official reports come first)

4 Chairman's Report
5 Football Results and Matches (Frank Jones)
6 New Keep-Fit Classes (Carol Chen)
7 Purchase of Tennis Equipment (Aileen Forster)
8 Annual Dinner and Dance

Finish all agendas with these final two items of ordinary business

9 Any other business
10 Date of next meeting

Don't forget reference and date

CE/ST

7 May 200–

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MEETINGS – KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

1 A notice and agenda is sent out to give all members advance notice of the purpose, date, time and venue of a meeting.
2 An agenda is a list of topics to be discussed at a meeting.
3 The agenda should have ordinary business at the beginning and the end – business that is discussed at every meeting.
4 Special business will be included in the central section of the agenda – business that is unique to each meeting.
5 The Chairman may have a special agenda with extra notes to help him manage the meeting.
6 Minutes are a record of a meeting and they are essential for everyone who attended as well as those who were absent.
7 Minutes may be presented in different formats depending on the preference of each company.
8 It is usual to include an 'Action' column stating who is responsible for dealing with each item.
9 The same headings should appear on the minutes as on the agenda.
10 Write minutes in past tense and third person using reported speech.

A–Z OF BLOOPERS AND BLUNDERS, COMMON ERRORS AND CLICHÉS: M

Marketing

In standard English the word 'marketing' is used to describe what companies do when they promote a product. It is not used to describe what we do when we go to the market or supermarket. For example:

My mother does her shopping in Carre Four.
My aunt went to the market to do some shopping.
A lot of money is spent on marketing new products.

Mention

Mention and *mentioned* are not followed by the word about (same as *discuss* and *discussed*). For example:

The teacher mentioned that next Monday is a public holiday.

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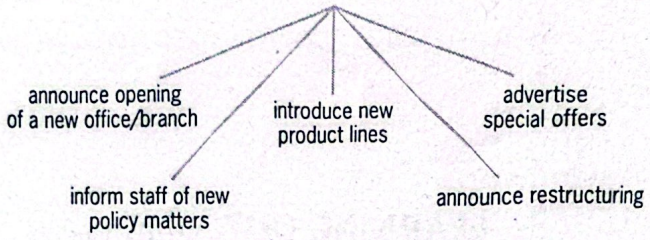
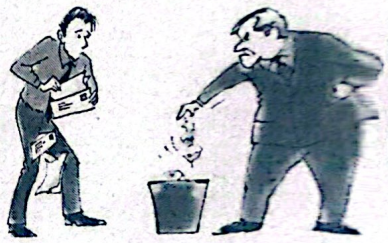
CIRCULAR LETTERS

A circular letter is one that is sent out to many people at the same time. The letter may be prepared once only and then duplicated. With modern technology, however, it is more likely that each letter could be personalised to look like an original. Circular letters may be sent for many reasons:



When writing a circular letter remember these important guidelines:



- keep it brief, otherwise it may not be read
- ensure the letter is informative and direct
- use individual terms, e.g. 'you', not 'all of you'.

Reference and date (month and year only) — ST/et

November 200–

Use singular expressions here (not students) — Dear Student

I thought you might like to keep this example showing the correct layout of a circular letter.

A circular may be sent to all customers of a company announcing something new, eg

- a move of premises
- introduction of new goods/services
- a forthcoming sale or special event

Internally a senior executive may send out a circular letter to all employees. This is sometimes called an **Open Letter**.

Use individual expressions in the body, i.e. you NOT 'all of you' or 'you all' — Although a circular letter will be sent to many people, the term ***you*** is used in the body of the letter. Never use the wording ***all of you*** or ***all customers***. Remember that only one person will read each letter so it must be worded in a personal style.

Note that as many copies are required it may take a while to print out all the letters, so only the month and year are shown in the date.

I hope this example is useful to you.

Yours sincerely may be used — Yours sincerely

SHIRLEY TAYLOR
Training Consultant

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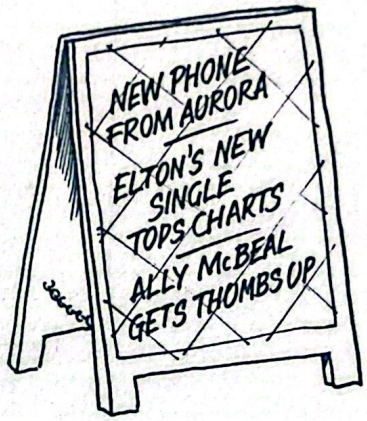
NEWS RELEASES

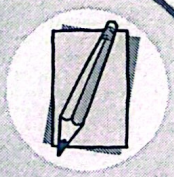
A news release is an announcement sent to the press and other media about anything considered to be newsworthy. A press release is not an advertisement but it can result in useful publicity for the company issuing the release.

Some reasons why a company may send a news release to the media are:

- relocation of offices
- introduction of new products
- purchase of new buildings
- move to new premises
- changes in top personnel.

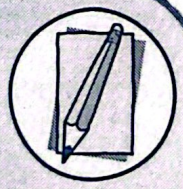


Checkpoint



Can you think of any other reasons why a company may issue a press release? Discuss this with your colleagues and make a list.

Checkpoint



Do you deal with news releases in your company? Do you know the person who does? Can you ask if you can see copies of some press releases and perhaps show them to the rest of your class?

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COMPANY NEWSLETTERS

Many companies publish regular newsletters known as in-house journals or company magazines, which keep staff informed about matters of interest. These regular magazines are very good for improving company/staff relations. They are an effective way of reaching out to members of staff where there are many different branches of a company around the country or even internationally. These newsletters may also be sent to employees who have retired.

Company newsletters contain a variety of information such as:

- new policies/procedures
- updates on products/services
- births/marriages/deaths
- promotions
- sports and social news
- contributions from employees.

Special newsletters may be produced for circulation to customers or members of a special industry. They are a good way of keeping people informed about the latest products, news and developments within the company.

USE OF TEMPLATES

The use of templates is a great help in business writing specially for amateur writers. Organising your thoughts becomes easier when you have a pre-built format. The logical sequencing of ideas, free flow of thoughts and their transformation on paper becomes not only easier but also faster. It also helps us in identifying the type of information required for the document.

Templates help not only the writer but also the reader as the reader will know exactly what he or she can expect and in which section.

Templates also avoid unnecessary wordiness as the various sub-headings c that once you have covered the information of one sub-heading, you autom move to the next sub-heading. Often wordiness results from not knowing w stop writing.

A blank screen on the computer or a plain sheet of paper may lead to what c termed as 'writer's block,' when you just don't know how to start. Templa therefore, give direction to the writer.

Here is a sample of content page of AIMA NEWS. Note how both issues o newsletter had almost the same headings. The coverage, however, will keep changing with each issue.

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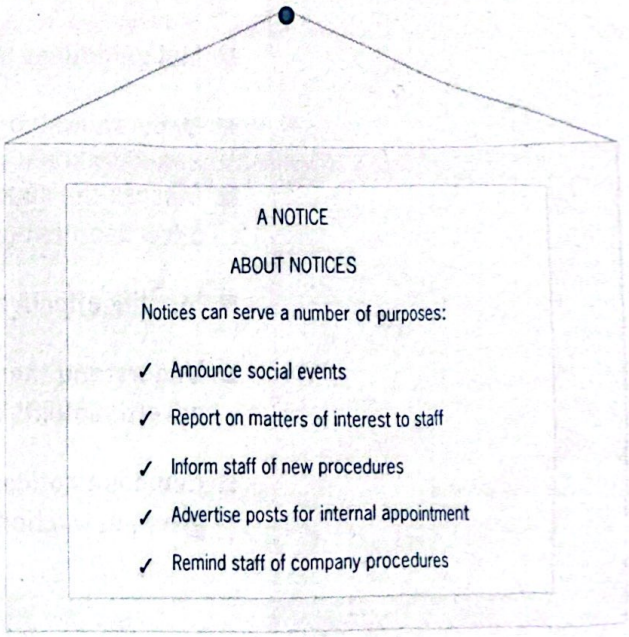
NOTICES

Notices are also around us everywhere we go – in the supermarket, on the underground, at the entrance of shopping centres, at the railway station, the bus station, the cinema.

Most organisations have notice boards posted around the offices which are used to bring special items to the attention of all staff.

Notice boards may be sectioned according to different topics, for example policy matters, health and safety, staff announcements. It is a good idea to nominate one person to be in charge of each notice board. This person should be responsible for:

- removing obsolete notices
- sectioning notices under appropriate headings where possible
- removing 'dead' notices (but retaining them for a short while in case of queries)
- keeping the notice board tidy and clean.



Checkpoint

Look around your school or college and consider the merits of the notices you see on the corridors.

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DESIGNING NOTICES

When designing a notice your aim must be to ensure that your notice is seen and acted upon where necessary. Long, rambling paragraphs will not achieve this aim. When designing notices bear in mind these guidelines:

- give the notice a clear heading
- use different size print for emphasis
- use sub-headings to break up the main information logically
- use asterisks/bullet points to display points on separate lines
- use the paper effectively to display the notice attractively
- include the name of the writer at the bottom as well as a reference and date.

Remember

When designing a notice make sure you split the words appropriately otherwise you could change the meaning completely.

A notice must contain the essential information displayed attractively so that it receives attention and co-operation. Here are three examples of effective notices that meet all these requirements.

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Display adverts

Display advertisements may incorporate a variety of font styles and sizes. Artwork or colour may be included. Charges will be based on the number of column centimetres, often with a minimum size. Information can be displayed within the advertisement to attract special attention to specific points.

WRITING STYLE

When asked to compile an advertisement you must be able to pick out the main points or features of whatever is being advertised and then put them over in an interesting, attractive way. It is essential to aim for your advertisement to be 'seen' when it stands next to lots of other advertisements. Here is AIDA from the advertising department explaining the technique for meeting this objective:

301

AIDA

Attention	you must attract the reader's attention
Interest	get the reader's interest by mentioning something that will appeal to them
Desire	arouse the reader's desire to buy, to attend a function to find out more or to contact the writer
Action	make the audience want to do something as a result of reading the ad

You will achieve these AIDA objectives if you follow these guidelines:

- use a company logo, prominently displayed
- compose a catchy headline and display it prominently
- use spacing to advantage, giving special items prominence
- categorise the information using sub-headings, bullet points
- clearly state the action you want the reader to take
- make your advertisement eye-catching
- aim for your advertisement to stand out from all the others around it.

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Checkpoint

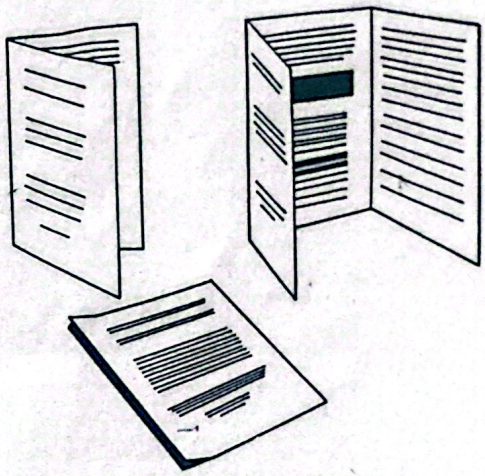
Bring in to class a copy of a local newspaper, journal or magazine. Turn to the classified ads section and see if any adverts jump out at you. What makes these adverts so successful?

LEAFLETS

Most organisations produce leaflets or brochures for any number of reasons:

- to publicise goods or services
- to promote special events and promotions
- to give information of any kind.

Such leaflets may take the form of a single page, so they could be designed as a folded document – A4 size could be folded once or twice to make a four-page or six-page leaflet as shown here:



DESIGNING LEAFLETS

Here are some guidelines to consider when designing leaflets:

1 Use a company logo, prominently displayed.
2 Use an appropriate heading that clearly states what the leaflet is about.
3 Consider carefully the information which needs to be included in the main body of the leaflet. Break it up according to different aspects of the main theme.
4 Use sub-headings and bullet points where possible.
5 Use straightforward, simple language and short sentences.
6 Be as persuasive as possible, making everything sound interesting and beneficial.
7 Use everyday language instead of technical jargon.
8 Aim for an effective and attractive display which uses space to advantage.
9 If you want a response give full details – what to do, who to contact, telephone number, etc.
10 If a portion is to be completed, refer to form design.

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