


Session 04

Business Letter Writing



The 4 point plan

- Whether you are composing a business letter, a fax message, a memo or an e-mail, the general rules for structuring the body of the message are the same. A well structured document written in good business language is the core of effective communication.
- 4 point plan provides a useful but simple framework for structuring all written communications

1. INTRODUCTION(Background and Basics)

Why are you writing?

Refer to a previous letter, contact or document.

Examples:

- Thank you for your letter of ...
- It was good to meet you again at last week's conference.
- We wish to hold our annual conference in September.

2. DETAILS

- Give information/instructions.
- Ask for information.
- Provide all relevant details
- Separate into paragraphs.
- Ensure logical flow.

3.CONCLUSION

- State the action expected from the recipient.
- State the action you will take as a result of the details provided.

Examples:

Please let me have full details of the costs involved together with some sample menus.

If payment is not received within seven days this matter will be placed in the hands of our solicitor.

4. CLOSE

A simple one-line closing sentence is usually all that is necessary to conclude a message. This should be relevant to the content of the message

Examples:

- I look forward to meeting you.
- I look forward to seeing you at next month's conference.
- A prompt reply would be appreciated.
- Please let me know if you need any further information.

Don't use incomplete closes. i.e.,

- Hope to hear from you soon.
- Looking forward to hearing from you.

Instead of

Say

We refer to your letter of 21st October 2004.

Thank you for your letter of 21 October.

As spoken in our telecom today.

Thank you for calling me this morning.

Please revert to me soonest possible.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Should you require any further clarification please
Do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Please give me a call on 2873455 if you
have any questions.

Modern Business Letter Faux Pas

1. So many young people with so many old fashioned expressions

Instead of

Use

Purchase

buy

Endeavour

try

Commence

start

Terminate

end

Faux Pas 02

2.Many people use long words.

Instead of

Say

Arrangements have been made for a repeat order to be dispatched to you immediately.

I have arranged for a repeat order to be sent to you today.

The cause of your complaint has been investigated.

I have looked into this matter.

The seminar will be conducted by Mr. Fernando.

Mr. Fernando will conduct the seminar.

Faux Pas 03

3. Many people use passive voice in writing. - Our great grandfathers used passive voice in writing because they didn't want to show who was responsible for anything. Today's business writers should use active voice, which is more alive, more focused, more personalized and much more interesting and clear.



Faux Pas 04

Many people put a line of colons in any list.

Date: 29 October 2010
Time: 9.00am to 5.00pm
Venue: Waters Edge Hotel

} wrong

Date Thursday 29 October 2010
Time 9.00 am to 5.00 pm
Venue Waters Edge Hotel

} correct



Faux Pas 05

5. Some people still need a line to sign their name.

The space between “yours sincerely” and the writer’s name/title is indication enough that this is where the signature goes. Get rid of the line and get rid of more clutter in our writing.

Yours sincerely

Mr. Perera

Finance Director

Components of a Modern Business Letter

1. Reference
2. Date
3. Inside Address
4. Salutation
5. Heading
6. Body
7. Complimentary Close
8. Sender and Designation
9. Enclosures
10. Copies

Component 01

1. Reference

The reference includes the initials of the writer (usually in upper case) and the typist (in upper or lower case, as preferred). A file or departmental reference may also be included.

Examples:

LD/ST LD/st LD/ST/156

Component 02

2. Date

The date should always be shown in full. In the UK it is usual to show the date in the order day/month/year. No commas are used.

Example:

08 June 2010

In some other countries the date is typed in the order of month/day/year, often with a comma after the month. (Example: June 08, 2010)

Component 03

3. Inside Address

The name and address of the recipient should be typed on separate lines as it would appear on an envelope. You should address the recipient as they sign their letters. For example, a person who signs as “Menaka Fernando” should be addressed as such in the inside address with the courtesy title “Miss”. To address her as “Miss M Fernando” would not be appropriate.

- Example:

Miss Menaka Fernando

15 High Level Road

Nugegoda

Component 04

4. Salutation

If the recipient's name has been used in the inside address, it is usual to use a personal salutation.

- Examples:

Dear Mr Silva

Dear Miss Dilu Perera

If your letter is addressed generally to an organization and not to a specific person, the more formal salutation “Dear Madam/Sir” OR “To whom it may concern” should be used.

Component 05

5. Heading

A heading gives a brief indication of the content of the letter. It is usually placed one clear line space after the salutation.

- Example:

Dear Miss Peiris

2004 SECRETARIES CONFERENCE, 8/9
DECEMBER 2016

Component 06

6. Body of the Letter

Follow the 4 point plan discussed earlier;

- Introduction
- Details
- Conclusion
- Close

Component 07

7. Complimentary Close

We end the letter in polite way by using a complimentary close. The two most common closes are “Yours faithfully” and “Yours sincerely”

- Examples:

Dear Sir

Dear Sirs

Dear Madam

Yours faithfully

Dear Sir or Madam

Dear Miss Peiris

Dear Mr John Perera

Dear Jane

Yours sincerely

Dear Robert

Component 08

8. Sender and Designation

After the complimentary close 4 or 5 lines space should be left so that the letter can be signed. The name of the sender should then be inserted. The sender's designation or department should be shown directly beneath his/her name. Normally the title "Mr" is never known when the writer is male. However it is usual to add a courtesy title for a female; this is shown in brackets after her name.

Examples:

Yours faithfully

JOHN PETER

Chairman

Yours sincerely

Dilu Perera (Miss)

Sales Manager

When a letter has to be signed on behalf of the sender, it is usual to write "for" or "pp" in front of the sender's printed name; "pp" is an abbreviation for per procuracionem, which simply means "on behalf of".

Example:

Yours faithfully

for JOHN PETER

Chairman

Component 09

9. Enclosures

There are many different methods of indicating that enclosure is being sent along with a letter:

Affix a coloured “enclosure” sticker usually in the bottom left-hand corner of the letter.

Type three dots in the left-hand margin on the line where the enclosure is mentioned in the body of the letter.

Type “Enc” or “Encs” at the foot of the letter, leaving one clear line space after the sender’s designation. This is the most common form of indicating enclosures.

Example:

Yours sincerely

Loren Daluwatta

Conference Secretary

Encs


Component 10

10. Copies

When a copy of a letter is to be sent to a third party this may be indicated by typing “cc” (copy circulated or courtesy copy) or “Copy” followed by the name and designation of the copy recipient. If there are two or more copy recipients, it is usual to show these in alphabetical order.

- Example:
- Copy/CC John Peter, Sales Manager
 Sam Peterson, Accountant
 Neta Fernando, Secretary

(Source: Model Business Letters, E-mails & Other Business Documents - Shirley Taylor)



Types of Business Letters

- Good news letter
- Neutral letters
- Bad news letters
- Persuasive letters




Format

- a. Block Format
- b. Modified Block
- c. Semi-Block

Types of Business Letters - examples

- Covering letters
- Recommendation letters
- Follow up / Thank you letters
- Acceptance / Rejection letters
- Inquiry letters
- Resignation letters
- Persuasive letters

The image features a large white circle centered on an orange background. Inside the circle, the text "Q & A" is written in a black, serif font. On the left side of the circle, there is a dashed yellow arc. On the bottom right edge of the circle, there is a small solid blue circle.

Q & A