



Useful Tips to Prepare Memos

1. Use the standard format or the one prescribed by the organization.
2. Include all the necessary segments.
3. State clearly the context and purpose in the opening segment.
4. Keep in mind your relationship with the recipient to choose the degree of formality.
5. Maintain a positive tone.
6. State in the closing segment what action is expected from the recipient.
7. Use features like highlighting, bold face, etc. to draw attention.
8. Keep the memo short.

Some bosses—those who believe in the importance of upholding status distinctions—want memos to sound formal and distant in a way that is appropriate while communicating to a superior. Others—those who have an open and participative approach to managing—would prefer the use of first person, contractions, and even sentence fragments to create an informal and conversational style. While writing a memo, therefore, one may choose the style that suits the organizational culture, but keep in mind that a friendly tone and courtesy are always required to suggest an association with the reader.

Generally, the tone is kept neutral or positive, but one may occasionally have to issue complaints or reprimands in memo form. Use caution in negative situations, and be aware of the effect of the correspondence. If the communication is spiteful, blunt, or too coldly formal, it might annoy the recipient. Flowery language, excessively technical jargon, or complicated syntax will make one sound pompous. Therefore, one should aim to sound cordial, straightforward, and lucid. Develop a relaxed and conversational style without being too chatty. Projecting an image of consideration creates a greater chance of being viewed as knowledgeable and competent in carrying out the professional responsibilities.

Ensure that a memo is as short and to-the-point as possible. Whether the news is good, bad, or neutral, address the issue in the opening segment. If the memo is lengthy, provide an indication of its organization in the opening segment. Exhibits 15.23 and 15.24 illustrate a memo. The CD contains more samples.

EMAILS

The phenomenally rapid growth of the Internet and its widespread use in business has changed the way in which organizations communicate. All organizations have Internet access, and most individuals have a personal email address. Many companies are promoting the use of email for most—if not all—in-house correspondence, and a great deal of communication with outside organizations also relies on email.

Email stands for electronic mail. These are digital messages that can be sent through an Internet connection. Email offers some tremendous advantages. It is fast—a message can be sent to as many people as necessary instantaneously. It is inexpensive, as it saves paper and is promoted in most organizations as a green initiative. It is convenient and saves time. When dealing with external agencies, especially important clients, it is the most unobtrusive mode of communication, as the recipients can read it at their own leisure and pace, and respond after due reflection.

EXHIBIT 15.23 Sample memo 1

Elite Cycles Limited
Jaipur
Interoffice Memorandum

Date: 10 May 2014

To: Production Manager
From: Personnel Manager
Subject: CHANGE IN WORKING HOURS

Please refer to your memo pd/21 dated 6 May 2014 requesting for a change in working hours of your division because of the extremely hot weather conditions.

As desired by you, the Vice President, Personnel, has agreed to change the working hours. The new timings will be 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Monday through Saturday) with effect from 17th May 2014 to 16th July 2014. Kindly inform all the employees working under you.

K. S. Shah
K.S. Shah

Amber Towers, A. C. Road, Jaipur – 302001
Phone 0141- 5112413

Labels on the right side of the memo:

- Heading
- Date
- Receiver
- Sender
- Subject
- Main body
- Signature

When email technology was introduced, it brought in a completely different world in terms of writing. For one thing, it was very informal, as personal emails did not require strict attention to grammatical rules. Page design did not exist. People have adopted the informality of email that had become a standard feature of the genre. However, as emails gradually replaced office letters and memos of all kinds, a certain amount of formality has been introduced. Governments and ministries now use emails for their official communication.

Email also has its own vocabulary of acronyms. Some of the most common ones are listed in this chapter. Email combines most of the best—and a few of the worst—characteristics of the more well known methods of communicating, including postal mail, telephone, and fax.

EXHIBIT 15.24 Sample memo 2**National Institute of Technology**
Worli, Mumbai

Interoffice Memorandum

Date: 25 August 2014
To : Dean, Educational Hardware Division
From: Manager, Reprography Unit
Subject: PURCHASE OF THREE PHOTOCOPIERS

With the addition of four new departments and consequent increase in the number of both faculty and students, the volume of work in the reprography unit has considerably gone up.

The two CopyFast photocopiers that we have at present are no longer adequate to meet the demands. These machines were bought seven years ago and have become obsolete. Moreover, they break down frequently and need major repairs. This year alone we have spent Rs 25000/- to keep them in working condition.

Our estimate shows that we now require at least three more photocopiers to cope with the increasing demand. We have also studied the features and the cost of various brands of photocopiers currently available in the market.

We recommend the purchase of three ImageX5 photocopiers from Singhania Imaging Ltd., Mumbai. The price list is enclosed.

I request your approval for the purchase of these three photocopiers.



Sait Ali

You can do several things with email that are difficult or impossible with any other form of communication. While email is an efficient way to communicate, it is also subject to limitations. In particular, we must realize when email is appropriate and when it is not. For example, when writing about emotionally charged subjects (or when the person we are writing to may become angry, defensive, or otherwise upset about a subject, or when we are angry), a face-to-face conversation is generally more appropriate than email. Similarly, discussing confidential matters or very complex issues is often better done in other ways than through email.

Advantages and Limitations

Advantages

- It is possible to communicate quickly with anyone through the Internet. Email usually reaches its destination in a span of minutes or seconds.
- It is easy to send messages to more than one recipient simultaneously by just typing in several email addresses. It also allows one to maintain mailing lists on the computer, which allows quick distribution to many people. It results in avoiding repetition or reproduction of text.
- Email can be used to access vast pools of information stored on the Internet.
- Thousands of email messages can be saved and stored, and one can search message files electronically.
- All or part of an email can be pasted into other computer documents.
- Some email services allow access to a printer-friendly version of email messages.
- Most email systems have a reply button that enables one to include all or part of the original message when replying. This feature speeds up replying to messages, as people spend a lot of time establishing a context for their reply in a phone call or a letter.
- Drawings, sounds, video clips, and other computer files can be attached to an email.
- Letters, notes, files, data, or reports can all be sent using emails.
- One need not worry about interrupting someone when sending an email. The email is sent and delivered by a computer system communicating with the Internet. Although it is put into someone's mailbox, the recipient is not interrupted by the arrival of email.
- The received emails can be dealt with at a convenient time in leisure. Also, it does not have to be written or sent only at a time when the recipient will be available. This is known as asynchronous communication.
- Emails are not anonymous—each message carries the return address of the sender—but it is possible to write to anyone with an email address. All the messages appear the same to the person who gets the email. The messages are generally judged on the basis of their content, not their source.
- As in the case of postal mail, emails can be marked with high, medium, or low priority. The email can also be marked for receiver's action.
- The cost to of sending an email is independent of the distance, and in many cases, the cost does not even depend on the size of the message. Most Internet access charges are based on the number of hours one uses the Internet per month, or a flat monthly fee.

'What a wonderful thing is mail, capable of conveying across continents a warm human hand-clasp.'

—Author Unknown

Limitations

- Email is editable. Email communication is subject to security issues. It is therefore insecure.

- Email is anonymous. The identity of a message's author can be completely masked or lost in just two generations of the message. It might be impossible to be certain as to where an email originated. Without an identifiable source, any claim based on it cannot be validated.
- Email cannot be retracted. Once the 'Send' button is pressed, there is no bringing it back.
- Email is not necessarily private. Since messages are passed from one system to another, and sometimes through several systems or networks, there are many opportunities for someone to intercept or read email. Many types of computer systems have built-in protections to stop users from reading others' email, but it is still possible for a system administrator to read the email on a system or for someone to bypass the security of a computer system.
- Some email systems can send or receive text files only. Although we can send and receive images, programs, files produced by word processing programs, or multimedia messages, some recipients may not be able to properly view the message.
- It is possible to forge email. This is not common, but it is possible to forge the address of the sender. We may want to take steps to confirm the source of some emails that we receive.
- We can receive too much or unwanted email, just like other types of junk mail. Junk email is called spam. One may have to take active steps to delete the junk mail received and try to stop it from being sent in the first place.
- We may not know about the person with whom we are communicating. The communication is often all in text and it is possible for us to get an incorrect impression of the person sending us email. Also, some people misrepresent themselves. One must be aware of phishing, which can be used for identity threat. Phishing is the process of attempting to access sensitive information such as usernames and credit card details by pretending to be trustworthy entity.

Style, Structure, and Content

Email messages are equivalent to brief informal memos used to communicate information or ask questions. Email messages must be kept *brief*; ideally, under 200 words. In some circumstances, such as writing an email report, longer messages will be required. However, in most cases, short messages are likely to get the point across more clearly and are also more likely to get answered. Few people are interested in reading messages much longer than what fits on their computer screens. In fact, some people do not read lengthy messages or stop reading after the first few hundred words.

Also exercise caution in terms of the tone used. For example, a message from a junior employee that addresses the president of a major company using an informal tone in an email note to a colleague would be inappropriate. In other words, the audience and purpose when writing email should be considered as carefully as when writing formal letters.

Also, just because the medium is electronic, do not assume the messages being sent are short-lived. Many people archive their email and system administrators can retrieve long-deleted messages. An ill-conceived email may still be available in the archives or deleted mail.

Poor spelling and grammar in email messages could lead some readers to question the writer's competence. Although problems with spelling and grammar are generally ignored in forums such as the various *Internet Newsgroups* (indeed, commenting on these sort of issues is generally considered bad Internet manners), they are generally frowned upon in schools and

industry. Sending an email memo filled with spelling errors to an instructor, client, or supervisor is ill-advised. Always take the time to consider the effect that the tone, style, grammar, and spelling of a mail may have on the recipient.

As far as the structure of email is concerned, there are three parts: header, message, signature. The header identifies the sender, receiver, people who receive a copy of the mail, the date on which the mail is sent, and the subject. The message includes the content and the signature block contains the name of the sender. The senders can also add their address and phone numbers to the signature block.

Emoticons and acronyms

Emoticons, or *emotional icons*, are used to compensate for the inability to convey voice inflections, facial expressions, and bodily gestures in written communication. Some emoticons are better known as *smileys*, as they are faces showing different expressions. As they are read from a monitor screen, emails tend to be a cold and emotionless medium. It is also very easy to offend people without even knowing that we have. Sarcasm, even meant in good heart, is usually misinterpreted. That is why emoticons were developed. They allow you to make it clear when what you are saying is not meant to be taken seriously. Those with a dry sense of humour, for example, can use ;-) which is a wink and a grin.

Some commonly used emoticons and email acronyms are listed in Table 15.10. While there are no standard definitions for the following emoticons, we have supplied their most usual meanings. Refer to the CD for common email jargon.











TABLE 15.10 Common emoticons and acronyms

Emotion	Expression	Emotion	Expression
:) or :-)	Expresses happiness, sarcasm, or joke	:Q or :-Q	Expresses confusion
:(or :-(Expresses unhappiness	:@ or :-@ or	Expresses shock or screaming
:] or :-] or :D or :D	Expresses jovial happiness	😬 :-s	Worried
:[or :-[Expresses despondent unhappiness	😂 :))	Laughing
:! or :-!	Expresses indifference	😴 I-)	Sleep
:/ or :\ or :-/ or :-\	Indicates undecided, confused, or skeptical	😷 :-&	Sick
:S or :-S	Expresses incoherence or loss of words	😡 X-(Angry
🤐 [-(Not talking	💀 8-X	Skull
😴 (:	Tired	👽 =)	Alien 1
🤔 :-?	Thinking	👽 >-)	Alien 2
👏 =D>	Applause	😡 :-L	Frustrated

(Contd)

TABLE 15.10 (Contd)

Emotion	Expression	Emotion	Expression
 %%-	Good luck	 <:)	Cowboy
 **==	Flag	 [-o<	Praying
 ~o)	Coffee	 :>-	Peace
 *-:)	Idea	 O:)	Angel
Acronyms	Expansion	Acronyms	Expansion
ASAP	as soon as possible	AAMOF	as a matter of fact
BBFN	bye bye for now	BFN	bye for now
BTW	by the way	BYKT	but you knew that
CMIIW	correct me if I'm wrong	EOL	end of lecture
FAQ	frequently asked question(s)	FITB	fill in the blank
FWIW	for what it's worth	FYI	for your information
HTH	hope this helps	IAC	in any case
IAE	in any event	IMCO	in my considered opinion
IMHO	in my humble opinion	IMNSHO	in my not so humble opinion
IMO	in my opinion	IOW	in other words
LOL	lots of luck or laughing out loud	MGB	may God bless
MHOTY	my hat's off to you	NRN	no reply necessary
OIC	oh, I see	OTOH	on the other hand
ROF	rolling on the floor	ROFL	rolling on the floor laughing
RSN	real soon now	SITD	still in the dark
TC	take care	TIA	thanks in advance
TIC	tongue in cheek	TTYL	talk to you later
TYVM	thank you very much	WYSIWYG	what you see is what you get
<G>	Grinning	<J>	Joking
<L>	Laughing	<S>	Smiling
<Y>	Yawning		

Email Etiquette

There are many etiquette guides and many different etiquette rules. Some rules will differ according to the nature of the business and the corporate culture. Here, we list what we consider as the 24 most important email etiquette rules that apply to nearly all formal communication situations.

Answer swiftly

People send an email because they wish to receive a quick response. If they did not want a quick response, they would send a letter or a fax. Therefore, each email should be replied to within at least 24 hours, and preferably within the same working day. If the email is complicated, just reply saying that the email has been received and that you will get back to them. This will put the reader's mind at rest and usually they will then be very patient.

Do not overuse reply all

Use Reply All only if you really need your message to be seen by each person who received the original message.

Use templates for frequently used responses

If you often tend to receive the same queries, such as directions to your office or how to subscribe to your newsletter, save your replies as response templates and paste these into your message when you need them. You can save your templates in a Word document, or use pre-formatted emails. Even better is a tool such as *ReplyMate* for Outlook (allows you to use 10 templates for free).

Use proper structure and layout

Since reading from a screen is more difficult than reading from paper, the structure and layout are very important for email messages. Use short paragraphs and blank lines between each paragraph. When making points, number them or mark each point as separate to keep the overview.

Identify yourself and the topic

Where possible, identify yourself on the From: line using your full name rather than just email address. For example, use 'Amit Kumar Saxena' aks@vu.edu.in rather than just aks@vu.edu.in. Recipients are more likely to respond if they can easily identify the sender. In addition, knowing whom a message is from helps the recipient put the message in context.

At the end of the message, include an alternative way to be contacted (i.e. phone number, FAX, postal address) along with the name. This information can be provided in a signature field that can be turned off for more personal emails. Providing contact information is especially important when asking for an answer that is likely to be quite complex. Often, less time is required to explain something complex over the phone or in person than to type out the message.

The information in the subject line should be meaningful to the recipient as well as the sender. For instance, when sending an email to a company requesting information about a product, it is better to mention the actual name of the product, e.g., 'Product A information', than to just say 'Product information' or the company's name in the subject.

Answer all questions, and pre-empt further questions

An email reply must answer all questions, and pre-empt further questions. If all the questions in the original email are not answered, it will likely bring further emails regarding the unanswered questions, which will not only waste the time of the sender and the recipient but also cause considerable frustration. Moreover, if one is able to pre-empt relevant questions, the reader will be grateful and impressed with the sender's efficiency and thoughtfulness. Imagine for instance that an off campus student sends you (assume that you are a professor of Electronics

Engineering) an email asking some doubts on a lesson. Instead of just explaining the answer to the student's problem, if you mention some other sources that he/she can refer to for further understanding, the student will definitely appreciate this extra information.

Be concise and to the point

Do not make an email longer than it needs to be. Remember that reading an email is harder than reading printed communications and a long email can be very discouraging to read.

Use proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation

As in all forms of written communication, this is not only important—because improper spelling, grammar, and punctuation give a bad impression of the individual or the company—but also essential for conveying the message properly. For example, using *u*, *r*, and *ur* for *you*, *are*, and *your* respectively is inappropriate for formal messages. Mails with no full stops or commas are difficult to read and can sometimes even change the meaning of the text. If your program has a spell checking option, why not use it?

Do not write in CAPITALS

IF YOU WRITE IN CAPITALS IT SEEMS AS IF YOU ARE SHOUTING. This can be highly annoying and might trigger an unwanted response in the form of a flame mail. Therefore, try not to send any email text in capitals.

Avoid long sentences

Try to keep the sentences to a maximum of 15–20 words. Email is meant to be a quick medium and requires a kind of writing different from letters.

Use active instead of passive voice

Try to use the active voice of a verb wherever possible. For instance, 'We will process your order today' sounds better than 'Your order will be processed today'. The first sounds more personal, whereas the latter, especially when used frequently, sounds unnecessarily formal.

Keep your language gender-neutral

It is important to be gender-sensitive. Avoid using discriminatory language such as: 'The user should add a signature by configuring his email program'. Apart from using he/she, you can also use the neutral gender: 'The user should add a signature by configuring the email program'.

Maintain coherence

When replying to an email, include the original mail in the reply, Click 'Reply', instead of 'New Mail'. Some people opine that the previous message must be removed since this has already been sent and is therefore unnecessary. However, if a person receives several emails, it is difficult to remember each individual email. This means that a 'threadless email' will not provide enough information and the recipient may have to spend a frustratingly long time to find out the context of the email in order to deal with it. Leaving the thread might take a fraction longer in download time, but it will save the recipient much more time and frustration in looking for the related emails in their inbox.

Do not overuse the high priority option

We all know the story of the boy who cried wolf. Overuse of the high-priority option will make it lose its function when really needed. Moreover, even if a message has high priority, it will come across as slightly aggressive if it is flagged as 'high priority'.

Do not attach unnecessary files

Large attachments can annoy readers and even bring down their email system. Wherever possible, try to compress attachments and only send attachments when they are productive. Moreover, one should have a good virus scanner in place to prevent the readers from receiving documents containing viruses.

Re-read the email before you send it

A lot of people do not bother to re-read an email before they send it out, as can be seen from the many spelling and grammatical mistakes contained in emails. Besides, reading the email from the recipients' perspective will help frame a more effective message and avoid misunderstandings and inappropriate comments.

Take care with abbreviations and emoticons

In business emails, try not to use abbreviations such as BTW and LOL. The recipient might not be aware of the meanings of the abbreviations, and in business emails these are generally not appropriate. The same goes for emoticons. It is advisable to avoid using any entities that the recipient might not be familiar with.

Be careful with formatting

Remember that when an email is formatted, the sender might not be able to view the formatting, or might see fonts that are different from the ones intended. When using colours, use a colour that is easy to read on the background. One also needs to be aware of the fact that there are some accessibility norms that do not allow the use of certain colours, keeping in mind colour-blind people.

Take care with rich text and HTML messages

When sending an email in rich text or HTML format, be aware that the sender might be able to receive only plain text emails. If this is the case, the recipient will receive the message as a .txt attachment. Most email clients, however, including Microsoft Outlook, are able to receive HTML and rich text messages.

Do not use email to discuss confidential matters

Sending an email is like sending a postcard. Do not send confidential information by email. Moreover, never make any vilifying or discriminating comments in formal emails, even if they are meant to be jokes.

Avoid using URGENT and IMPORTANT

Even more so than the high-priority option, try to avoid the use of words such as 'Urgent' and 'Important' in an email or subject line. Use this only if it is a really, really urgent or important message.

Use the Bcc: field or do a mail merge

When sending an email, some people place all the email addresses in the To: field. There are two drawbacks to this practice: (1) the recipient knows that the same message has been sent to a large number of recipients, and (2) someone else's email address is being publicized without their permission. One way to get round this is to place all addresses in the Bcc: field. However, if the To: field appears blank, it might look like spamming to all the recipients. Instead, the list containing the email addresses of all recipients could be included in the To: field, or even better, with Microsoft Outlook and Word, it is possible to mail merge and create one message for each recipient. A mail merge also allows the use of fields in the message so that each recipient can be addressed personally. For more information on how to do a Word mail merge, consult the Help feature in MS Outlook.

Using the cc field

Try not to use the Cc field unless the recipient in the Cc field knows why they are receiving a copy of the message. This will depend on the situation. Only the recipients in the To field are supposed to act on the message. The Cc field is used to keep others informed about the project, e.g. the manager or a co-worker.

The Bcc is used when a copy of the mail is to be sent to other recipients without the knowledge of the main recipient. For example, it is used in official correspondence such as appraisals being done by first-level managers. The first-level manager provides some feedback to his/her subordinate over email, but includes the second-level manager in Bcc, just for his/her information. The subordinate doesn't get to see that the email is also copied to the second-level manager. This is mostly used for providing sensitive feedback that is supposed to be private.

'I consider it a good rule for letter-writing to leave unmentioned what the recipient already knows, and instead tell him something new.'
—Sigmund Freud

Do not reply to spam

Replying to spam or unsubscribing confirms that the email address is 'live'. Confirming this will only generate even more spam. Therefore, just hit the delete button or use email software to remove spam automatically.

Effectiveness and Security

Email is, of course, a form of written communication, but it is different from traditional written communication. Email is not bound by the physical limitations of a page of paper, it can be transmitted and received very quickly, and a single message can be sent to a group of thousands



Some Tips for Email Effectiveness

1. Write a meaningful subject line.
2. Keep the message focussed and readable.
3. Use attachments sparingly.
4. Identify yourself clearly.
5. Be kind. Do not flame.
6. Proofread.
7. Do not assume privacy.
8. Distinguish between formal and informal situations.
9. Respond promptly.
10. Show respect and restraint.

TABLE 15.11 Characteristics of memos, letters, and email

Characteristic	Letters	Memos	Email
Structure	Contains several elements starting from heading to distribution list	Contains lesser elements than letters and does not include salutation and complimentary close	Contains most of the elements which a letter has but addresses are the email addresses or email ids
Layout	Elements are arranged in any of the layouts discussed earlier in the chapter	Heading elements are aligned with left margin vertically	Given in prescribed format by the email service providers
Purpose	To persuade and to share information	To share information, to direct to recommend, or to congratulate	To convey short routine messages quickly
Audience	Generally low-tech and lay readers, such as vendors and clients	Generally high-tech or low-tech, mostly business colleagues	Generally multiple readers with various levels of knowledge; could include instructors, company supervisors, and subordinates as well as family and friends
Degree of formality	More formal than memos because of external destination	Generally informal because of internal circulation	Degree of formality is less than both in memos and in letters and follows a conversational style
Short forms, abbreviations,	To be avoided	To be avoided unless very common among the employees	To be judiciously used
Circulation	External	Internal	Both internal and external

of people as easily as it can be sent to one or two people. Since email is written communication and it is not done on paper, we have to do what we can to make it easy to read and comprehend. Because messages are sent electronically, it is possible to get a response in a matter of minutes or seconds. When we are communicating, trading comments separated by only a few seconds, email is similar to spoken communication. It tends to get informal and personal, and that is probably just the way we want to be during quick exchanges with another person. On the other hand, when we are communicating using email, we cannot display our facial expressions or gestures or express intonation the same way we would when speaking.

There is no substitute for a well-thought-out and well-expressed message. There is also no excuse for mis-spellings or grammatical errors in professional or business communications. To make an email most effective, it has to be written clearly, take into account the fact that people will likely be reading the message on a computer screen, and take full advantage of the medium itself.

However, one must be aware of the ease with which email messages can be sent to unintended readers and of the possibility that old email messages will come back to haunt the sender. The following guidelines are worth following:

- Ensure that personal messages are sent to the correct individual and not to a mailing list. Many email users have been embarrassed by accidentally sending personal or confidential

messages to an entire mailing list or organization. Before sending an email, one of the last things that should be done is check that it is being sent to the intended recipient(s).

- Do not send confidential or personal material via email unless it is encrypted because most email systems are insecure. We suggest that any email message sent should be treated as a public document simply because email servers typically maintain copies of email and many people archive the email they receive. An email message sent several years ago could turn up when least expected.



Although you may be familiar with sending and receiving email messages, the CD provides some sample email messages.

Now that we are aware of the three forms of written communication, namely letters, memos, and emails, Table 15.11 concludes the chapter with a comparison of the various characteristics of these very important forms of communication.

SUMMARY

Writing letters, memos, and emails is an integral part of all academic and work environments and cannot be avoided. To create and maintain a cordial relationship with people one has to deal with, one should develop the art of writing. While good command over language is a must, one must also know the structure of the various forms of written communication. Effective writing possesses the seven Cs of writing, that is, it should be clear, concise, correct, courteous, conversational, convincing, and complete. As a rule, any letter must be responded to at the earliest.

The purpose of writing a letter is to sustain a relationship or build a new one. Business letters are of different types, such as credit and collection, enquiry, order placement, complaint and adjustment, instruction letters, and persuasive letters. The principles of business writing will also enable one to write impressive job applications and résumés. More common today is the online submission of a résumé, accompanied with a covering email. Besides these types, there are official and personal letters.

Memos are a very common medium of communication within an organization. The purpose is to

inform, persuade, or reprimand. They are classified as documentary, congratulatory, and disciplinary. Most organizations have their own prescribed format for memos; however, the standard format can be followed otherwise. Memos use a more informal language than business letters.

Emails have come to be used widely throughout the world today. It is one of the most convenient ways to contact people in any part of the world for business or personal purposes. Communication through emails has its advantages and disadvantages. Emails also have their own set of vocabulary, jargon, and etiquette. It is prudent to be aware of the email etiquette. Learning how to use emails effectively will definitely go a long way in helping one to develop good communication skills. It is also worthwhile knowing the security issues involved, so that we are able to make the best use of this wonderful mode of communication.

A good idea of these three major forms of written communication will help us to use the most effective mode in any given situation, and help us achieve our goals effectively and efficiently.

EXERCISES

1 Answer briefly the following questions :

- How are letters, memos, and emails different from each other? Do they also have any similarity? Explain.
- Emails are very fast means of communication, but have some drawbacks. Discuss.
- Discuss the important points to be considered while drafting a cover letter to accompany a résumé.

- (d) Discuss email etiquette.
- (e) You have submitted a proposal to University Grants Commission (UGC) on 'Enhancing education in rural area through technology'. Write a letter urging action. Invent the necessary details.
2. Recall or refer to the principles of writing business letters discussed in this chapter and point out the weakness in the following sentences taken from business letters. Then rewrite them so as to make them effective.
- (a) I beg to inform you that owing to the nationwide shortage of packing material we are not in a position to comply with your request.
- (b) We do not find any reason why you are asking for the replacement of computers, which you have mentioned in your letter reached you in damaged condition.
- (c) As instructed, we will bill you for this amount. We are sending the goods today by Green Grass Couriers.
- (d) Your misunderstanding of our June 7 letter caused you to make this mistake.
- (e) Even though you were late in paying the bill, we did not disallow the discount.
- (f) In replying to your esteemed favour of the 5th, I submit under separate cover the report requested by you.
- (g) This is to strongly protest the inappropriate behaviour of your sales manager when I requested her to kindly permit me to meet you because I wanted to tell you about the external agencies which are creating some problems.
- (h) With reference to your request for the supply of 10 Kg of wheat flour to be used on the auspicious occasion of your house warming ceremony, we are sorry to say that we may not be able to make any commitment at the present moment of time.
- (i) You should be aware of the fact that there is no better dealer for Greeting Cards than us not only in this whole city but also in the other 3 metropolis.
- (j) Though I have carefully gone through the report prepared and submitted by you to us in your letter of 15th June, I regret to say that owing to the reason that I am extremely busy, I am not in a position to take any action for the proper implementation of recommendations offered by you with great consideration.
- (k) I hereby acknowledge the receipt of your letter and beg to tell you that as per the rules, it is not required to submit your request for loan to the branch manager.
3. Rewrite these opening sentences of claim and adjustment letters:
- (a) We are sorry that we cannot accept the return of the TV that you bought on August 5.
- (b) You are certainly being unfair to us when you insinuate that we tried to put something over on you when you bought a defective lamp.
- (c) We cannot understand how your records could have been broken as you claim in your letter of March 10.
- (d) We are surprised to learn that you are already having trouble with your Cine movie projector.
- (e) In answer to your letter expressing dissatisfaction with your dictating machine, I wish to state that we stand behind anything we sell.
4. Revise these statements granting or refusing adjustments:
- (a) Although we are not at fault, we are willing to accept return of the lampshade.
- (b) It is simply impossible for us to grant your request. Everyone gets the same fair treatment at Gordon's.
- (c) Since the delay in delivery was not our fault, we cannot accept the responsibility for your loss.
- (d) We shall be willing to exchange the machine in order to retain you as a valued customer.
- (e) We will make this concession to you, even though it is much more than should be expected under the circumstances.
5. Revise these sales letter beginnings to give them more reader appeal. You may use the method of gaining attention in the opening sentence.
- (a) We are conducting an intensive sales campaign to get the public to know about the Book Club.
- (b) November 5 was a night of darkness for millions of people in the East. There was a power failure that lasted for several hours.
- (c) Can't you remember the fun you had at Lake Joy last summer?
- (d) The quality of the paper you use will affect your reader's reaction to your message.

- (e) We believe that the Current Review is a winner.
6. Change these negative introductions to make them affirmative:
- (a) You don't want to waste your money when you buy tyres.
 - (b) Srickem was developed to prevent your plastic floor tiles from buckling and curling. You will never have to worry about unsightly playroom floors again.
 - (c) Don't you remember last December 26? Were you prepared to cope with the record snowfall? Were you not huffing and puffing with your snow shovel while your neighbours guided their snow blowers along their walks?
7. Revise these sentences to eliminate dangling phrases:
- (a) Before rejecting these designs, we suggest that you compare them with other plans.
 - (b) Relying on his ability to react quickly in emergencies, the car picked up speed.
 - (c) Already filled with students, the visitors could find no place in the auditorium.
 - (d) Referring to your letter of March 13, your complaint was ill-advised.
 - (e) Having sent the incorrect invoices to you, we assure you that we will adjust it at once.
8. Rewrite these sentences to eliminate all double negatives:
- (a) Didn't you hear nothing from the personnel manager about your promotions.
 - (b) The problems had arisen so unexpectedly that scarcely nobody in the office knew what to do.
 - (c) Plan your vacation trip now. Don't plan to go nowhere this summer.
 - (d) That cannot be done no longer by any member of the tax department.
9. Assuming that you have the requisite credentials, draft Job Application Letters in response to the following advertisements:
- (a) Wanted a Plant Manager (Operations) at our new factory in Gaziabad, UP Engineering Graduates with minimum 5 years experience in manufacturing industries as Plant Managers can apply. Salary is negotiable. Apply with particulars to Box 650, The Hindu, Chennai-600004 latest by 30th July.
 - (b) If you are a recent post-graduate in science and interested in research, apply for the post of Junior Research Associate in our R&D Division. You should hold a post-graduate degree in mathematics, physics, chemistry, or biology. If selected you will be given a Research Assistantship of Rs 8000/- p.m. and you will have the opportunity to work in excellent laboratories. Apply within 15 days to Manager Research, R&D Division, Wipro Industries, Bangalore-560 012.
 - (c) Safe Insurance Company seeks personable, college-trained person to manage office of five employees. People skills and good communication ability a must. Knowledge of office procedures and Word processing essential. Send application within 10 days to Human Resource Office, P.O. Box 719, Kanpur.
 - (d) Healthy Foods Ltd, a fast-growing manufacturer in the food-processing industry, has openings in its training program. Only highly motivated, dynamic, and result-oriented people with excellent communication skills need apply. Opportunities for advancement to management positions based on performance. Applicants must demonstrate a professional image and possess skills in working with people. Computer literacy required. Apply to Personnel Manager, P.O. Box 520, Bangalore.
10. Answer as directed.
- (a) As the Manager of Sangam Hotel, New Delhi, write a claim letter to the General Manager of Bharat Potteries, Aligarh Road, Bhavanipur, telling him that most of the contents of the china-ware which you had ordered from their firm have reached you in a damaged condition. Demand replacement or suitable compensation. Invent necessary details.
 - (b) As the Purchase Manager of Satyam Computers, 9 Naidu Road, Hyderabad-500007, you had ordered two dozen Personal Computers from Hindustan Computers Limited (HCL), 140 M.G. Road, Bangalore-500001. When the consignment arrived, you found some of the pieces in the damaged condition.
 - (i) Write a *complaint letter* to the Sales Manager of the company asking for repair, replacement, or compensation.
 - (ii) As the Sales Manager of HCL, draft a *suitable reply*.

- Use full block format in both the letters.
- (c) As the Purchase Officer of a Company, write a complaint letter to Uniflex Ltd, New Delhi, pointing out the damage which was discovered after checking the consignment containing Compact Discs sent to you by the supplier. Invent the necessary details.
 - (d) Playing the role of Senior Sales Manager, Apex Ltd, draft a suitable reply to this claim letter. Use full block letter format for the letters.
 - (e) Ajay purchased a VCR on August 13 from Smiley's TV Town, Mumbai. The VCR came with a 'ninety-day warranty against all defects' and a guarantee for 'in-home free repairs and labor'. On October 30, the VCR showed a horizontal line across the screen when she replayed tapes. Ajay called the store manager, Vikas Mallik, and explained the problem. Mallik said the horizontal lines were caused by a dirty head and told Ajay to bring the VCR in for cleaning. He also told Ajay that he would be charged for this service since dirty VCR heads were basic wear and, therefore, not covered by the warranty. Ajay was angered by this response from the store manager and decided to write a letter of complaint. Based on the information provided, write Ajay's letter of complaint.
 - (f) As the Sales Director of Fitness Plus Centre, Bangalore, draft a sales letter to Business Professionals selling them on your 3 Wellness Packages: 1. The 3-day Fitness Weekend 2. The 7-day Total Fitness Program 3. The Individualized Corporate Well-being Program.
 - (g) Assume that you are the Marketing Manager for a professional hockey team. At present, you are concerned about season-ticket sales for the coming season. They are well below sales for previous years and hence you plan to do something about it.
Draft a sales letter to those 500 people who have bought season ticket last year but did not this year.
 - (h) Realizing the need of packing services in Faridabad, Elite Professional Packers have recently started their services in the city. You, as the publicity manager of this company have the onus of promoting this service.
Draft a sales letter to be sent to the prospective users.
11. Draft a memo as directed in each of the following:
 - (a) Various universities in India offer their academic programmes through distance learning mode of education. A large number of junior officers of a company have sought permission to improve their educational qualifications through these programmes. As the Manager of Personnel Department of this company write a memo to be sent to all Junior Officers spelling out (a) the company's policy in this regard and (b) the deadline for submitting their applications. You can also assure them that a decision would soon be taken and communicated to the applicants.
 - (b) Workwell Industries Limited has observed that a sizeable number of employees take leave on certain occasions such as mega music event, test cricket matches, and international film festivals. You as the Vice President, Personnel, feel that this hampers the smooth functioning of the industry and tells upon the efficiency of the organization. Appealing to the Divisional Heads of your organization to take suitable action to prevent such mass absenteeism, draft a memo and mark a copy of the same to your Managing Director.
 - (c) The General Manager of Comfort Home Appliances Ltd, Kolkata, is worried about the wastage of stationery in almost all sections of the company. Draft a memo to be signed by him and sent to all Sectional Heads, asking them to identify the reasons behind such wastage and also advise the employees under their control to restrain from such wastage.
 - (d) Elite Industries Ltd, Gurgaon, has decided to replace the furniture in its Marketing and Human Resource Development Divisions. As the Office Manager, write a memo to the Purchase Officer to identify the items of furniture to be replaced, identify the supplier, and submit a memo containing all the related details for administrative approval. Mark a copy of this memo to the Finance Manager.
 - (e) The Clean Food Products Ltd, Kanpur has decided to provide Internet surfing facilities to all its employees. As the Managing Director of this company, draft a memo to be circulated among all the Divisional Heads containing the following details:

- The location, number of computers to be made available, timings, and procedure for lodging complaints if any.
12. Recently you read in the editorial column about honour killing practised in the conservative Indian society. Write a letter to an editor drawing attention to the stigma in society.
 13. Through the medium of letter to the editor, you want to share your feelings about the award winning film 'Slumdog Millionaire'. Write a letter to the editor reflecting the fact that this film does not only deal with the down trodden urchins but also want to generate awareness about the imbalances in the country.
 14. You are the coordinator of the English drama club, and you want to stage 'Othello' by Shakespeare this Saturday. Write to the Welfare Division to book the auditorium and get the arrangements done for light and sound system.
 15. Write a letter of declining the invitation to the course coordinator of National Academy of Defense Production who has invited you to deliver the guest lecture on 'Interview Skills'. Invent the necessary details.
 16. Email
 - (a) Should email replace the communication forms such as memos and letters? Explain your answer.
 - (b) Imagine yourself to be the instructor of a course in which 75 students have registered. Draft an email to be sent to all these students asking them to select a topic of their choice and prepare for a professional presentation of 10 minutes duration.
 - (c) As the Sales Manager of a company, draft a reply which has to be sent in the form of an email to three customers who have complained about your product. Invent necessary details.
 - (d) Assume that you are the Managing Director of a company dealing with electronic equipment. Inform all your employees about the new community hall which the company is going to inaugurate next week. Highlight the important features of both the hall and the inauguration.
 - (e) As the Personnel Manager of a multinational firm, draft an email to be sent to those candidates who were not selected in the interview conducted few days before. Take care not to be courteous and sympathetic while conveying the negative message.
 - (f) What are the various email service providers that you have come across? Compare the structure and layout of the email facility offered by them.
 17. The following formal letters are ineffective. Rewrite each of them keeping the principles of business letter writing in mind:

(i)
 Spotless Washing Machines Pvt.Ltd.
 10, Browning Street, Kanpur, U.P.
 Website: swmpl.org Phone: 0123-44455566

23 March 2014

Mr. Vipul Kumar
 35, Race Course Road
 Kanpur
 U.P.

Dear Customer:

Sub: Invalid cheque sent by you

Your cheque sent by you for the balance payment of the washing machine purchased by you a few months ago from us as you had wanted more efficiency in your washing and also wanted to have more choices in terms of color, capacity, model, etc., as compared to the earlier one you had been using for quite sometime has bounced back from the bank today.

It is your duty to check your bank balance before sending the balance payment to us! Now we have to wait for your cheque again for some time.

As you know, we are one of the leading dealers in Washing Machines in Kanpur and we have different types of clients. Some pay in time; some pay on time; but so far nobody has sent a bouncing cheque! Of course, you are one among those who pay the amount in time but what's the use?

Here's your cheque and we expect you to do the needful at your earliest without fail.

Ashish Kumar

Sales Manager

Enclosure: Your cheque

(ii)

11 May, 2014

Avy Trading Corporation

Daryaganj, Vijay Nagar,

New Delhi-110005

Telephon: 011-2345678

Mr Ravi Malhotra

Sales manager, Reva Computers

Ajmer Road, Jaipur-302006

Dear Mr Malhotra

We saw your advertisement in the *The Times of India* about one of your important products. The advertisement caught our attention because we are interested in this product. In fact, we want to equip our corporate office with modern facilities and we would like to buy this product.

However, we cannot send the purchase unless we know more about this product. Send us more information about the product as soon as possible. We want to know many things, which include product specification and special features of this model of the product, details of discount for bulk purchase, an estimate for the cost of the product, and details regarding terms of business and delivery dates.

Respond to this letter as early as possible.

Yours Sincerely

Amit Jain

(iii)

24, Malaya Road

Vellore, India

Commercial Art & Design

Subject: Freelance Graphic Designers for advertising and marketing Campaign Enclosure: Sample copy of graphic Design and Campaigns

Onoff Pvt. Ltd.

Connaught Place

New Delhi, India

Our Reference: MA / 1230

Dear Business owners,

Designing a great marketing piece is a lot like baking a cake. Anyone can throw some ingredients together and plunk them in the oven. But to take a mouth watering, three layer chocolate cake you need all the right ingredients in just right proportions and the knowledge to put them together correctly.

Our firm provides freelance graphic designers who are highly qualified and trained professionals. We are proud to boast that we have a long list of clients. Do you dread the thought of a new advertising campaign for your business? Does the thought of creating a new sales brochure overwhelm you?

Call us today at 09888880000 and let's finalize the deal otherwise you will have to pay a heavy penalty for it. Thanks for your time.

It's time you should be obliged by our services and give us maximum profits. Great commercial art and graphic design business is just a phone call away.

Director 'Sharma'

Your sincerely

10 May 2014: