

THE PRINCIPLES OF BUSINESS WRITING

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF BUSINESS WRITING

1. Know your objective. What specifically do I want the reader to know, think, or do?
2. Be courteous and considerate.
3. Use plain English.
4. Keep it short and simple (K.I.S.S.).
5. Avoid technical words and jargon.
6. Organize your writing using a logical sequence.
7. Use a new paragraph for each separate idea.
8. Check everything at least once before sending your message.

THE FOUR STAGES OF WRITING

It is important to spend time thinking about and planning what you want to say. This is especially important for longer letters or reports, and for any written communication which may form part of legal action in the future. The four stages are as follows:

1. Planning:

Answer The Five W's and One H-Who, What, Why, When, Where and How?

- Who am I writing to? (Always consider the reader)
- Why am I writing this?
- What is the main purpose or message?
- What research is required?
- Where will the main points go? (Develop a logical sequence)
- When do I need to send it?
- How long will it take me?
- Use a mind map – a map of your mind, thoughts or ideas
- Use a writing plan – make bullet points of what you need to include
- Organize information into a logical sequence

2. Drafting:

- Start with the first point in the plan and develop that idea into a paragraph
- Move onto the next idea in the next paragraph
- Only use one idea per paragraph
- Avoid long sentences and long paragraphs
- Always remember WHO you are writing to

3. Writing

- : Save your draft and leave it for a while before typing it neatly
- This gap leaves you time to view your work with fresh eyes

4. Editing:

- Consider the Basic Principles of Business Writing (page 2)
- Is it in the right order?
- Is it clear - will my reader(s) understand it? Are the spelling, punctuation and grammar correct?
- If sending emails with attachments, check everything is attached
- Are the email addresses and other contact information correct?
- Are the dates, names, facts and figures correct?

THE ESSENTIALS OF GOOD BUSINESS LETTERS