

The Appearance and Design of Business Messages

- *In the more traditional forms of written communication, your receiver will **form an impression** of you, based on the **overall appearance and format of the message**.*

Business Letters

- *The medium used most often for written messages to persons outside your organization is the **business letter**.*
- *Your letter's appearance conveys **nonverbal impressions** that affect a **reader's attitude** even before that person reads the letter.*
- *The many types, styles and formats of modern word processing systems and printers can enhance the appearance of your message and create a positive impression.*

- *Elements of appearance that help produce favorable reactions are appropriate stationery and correct letter parts and layouts.*

Stationery and Envelopes

Quality, Size, Color

- *Good company stationery is most often at least 25% cotton, 20 pound weight and white, cream , or light gray in color.*
- *Most letters are the standard size 8 1/2 by 11 inches (A4).*
- *With the new possibilities generated by computer graphics, certain changes are brought into traditional ways.*

Letterhead

- *Modern letterheads, usually occupy no more than 2 inches at the top of the page.*

- *The firm's name, address, zip code, and sometimes telephone number, fax number. Internet address, nature of business and name of department, sending the correspondence are **printed, embossed or engraved.***

Envelopes

- *Return addresses of the senders, often printed like the letterhead or, if necessary typewritten, should be in the upper left hand corner of the envelope.*
- *The addressee's address, which is the inside address, of the letter should be placed on the envelope.*
- *Addresses should always be typed in block form, with all lines align on the left.*

•*Information in the addresses should be listed in the following order:*

•*Name and title of receiver*

•*Name of department*

•*Name of organization*

•*Name of building*

•*Street address, or post office box number*

•*City, state(province), zip code.*

•*Country*

•*Mail notations such as **Registered** should be typed in all capitals below the postal area.*

- *Any on - arrival instructions such as **Confidential** should be typed in all capitals below the return address, near the left upper edge of the envelope.*

Standard Parts of the Letter

- *Most business letters have the following parts:*
- ***Heading: letterhead, and date.***
- ***Inside address***
- ***Salutation***
- ***Complimentary Close***
- ***Signature Area***
- ***Reference Section***

Heading - Letterhead and Date

- *Heading - letterhead or your own address - should be at the top of the letter before the date and before the name and address of the receiver of your message.*
- *Usually the date is typewritten two - six lines below the last line of the letterhead at the left hand margin, centered, or ends with the right hand margin.*

Inside Address

- *Always blocked at the left hand margin.*
- *It includes the name and address of the individual, group or organization to whom you are writing.*
- *Courtesy title and name: Mr./ Ms./ Mrs.*
- *Executive or Professional Title: Dr./ Prof.*

Salutation

- *Salutation is typed on the second line below the inside address, two lines above the body and even with the left hand margin.*

Body

- *Most letters are typed single - spaced with 2 spaces between paragraphs, before and after the salutation, and before the complimentary close.*

Complimentary Close

- *The most popular complimentary closes are; sincerely, sincerely yours, (only first word is capitalized).*

Signature Area

- *Name of your company, your signature, your typewritten name and your business title.*

Reference Section

- *It may include information about the message composer, the typist, appear at the left hand margin one or two lines below your signature.*

Optional Parts of the Letter

Attention Line

- *An attention line is useful when you want your message to go to a certain department or when someone other than the addressee will take care of your message.*
- *It is usually between the inside address, salutation - blank line above and below the subject line.*

Subject Line

- *It helps tell your reader at a glance what your letter is about.*

- *The subject line may include or omit the word “subject”.*
- *It is usually placed on the second line below the salutation and centered, it should be underlined.*

Enclosure Notation

- *An enclosure or attached notation is included to remind your reader to check for additional pages of information.*
- *It is typed a single or double spaced under the reference initials.*

Copy Notation

- *When you want persons other than the addressee to receive a copy of your letter, the names of these persons should be typed just below the reference initials or the enclosure notation, type “cc” before it (carbon copy).*

File or Account Number/ Mailing Notation

- *To aid in filing and quick retrieval for both sender and reader's company.*

Postscript

- *To emphasize a point already in your letter or to include a brief personal message, unrelated to the letter, a postscript typed or handwritten “ PS”, may be added below everything else typed on the page.*

Letter Layout

Punctuation Styles

- *Open and mixed punctuation are two forms.*
- *In open punctuation, no line of any letter part (except the body)has any punctuation at the end.*

- *In **mixed punctuation** a colon follows the salutation; a comma follows the complimentary close.*

- *A comma in place of colon after the salutation can be used.*

Letter Styles

Full Block

- *Every line begins at the **left hand margin**.*

Modified Block

- *The date, the complimentary close, and signature section begins at the horizontal center or near the right hand margin.*
- *Attention and subject line may be indented, centered, or begin at left hand margin, it appears attractive on the page.*

Modified Block with Paragraphs Indented

AMS (administrative management society) has been in use since the 1950's because of its simple style.

Tips for Letter Placement

- *Software packages permit instant formatting: indents, spacing, margin width, type styles, according to the length of the letter or the size of the paper.*