**BUSINESS LETTERS**

A business letter, used to inform or persuade a reader, is more formal than a personal letter. The most common style of a business letter uses block formatting, in which each element of the letter, except the letterhead, is aligned with the left margin. A business letter should be typed. Proofread your letter for spelling and grammar errors.

## Return Address and Date

The letterhead displays the name and address of your business and other contact information. It is centered at the top of the page. If your stationery has a letterhead, type your return address, without your name, at the top of the paper, aligning the address with the left margin. Follow the return address with two line spaces and then type the date of your letter. Follow the date with one line space.

## Recipient's Address

The recipient’s address, or inside address, matches the address that will appear on the envelope. Include the recipient’s personal title, such as “Dr.,” “Mr.” or “Mrs.” If the recipient has a professional title, such as “Manager,” place this after the individual’s name, such as “Mr. John Smith, Manager.” Follow the inside address with two line spaces.

## Subject Line and Salutation

Inform the reader of the reason for your letter with a subject line that begins with “Re:” followed by a word or phrase that indicates the topic. If your letter is about a sales presentation, for example, write “Re: Sales presentation.” Follow the subject line with two lin spaces; then type the salutation. The salutation begins with “Dear” and is followed by the recipient’s name and a colon. Use a formal salutation, such as “Dear Mrs. Jane Smith:” unless you know the individual well; in that case, you can write “Dear Jane:.” Follow the salutation with two line spaces.

## Message

Type your message in paragraph form. Do not indent paragraphs. Separate paragraphs with a blank line space. Business writing is concise, so use active verbs and a conversational style. Organize your message into an introduction, a body and a conclusion. The introductory paragraph states the reason for your letter. The body of the letter consists of one or more paragraphs in which you expand on the subject; include details, reasons and information appropriate to your topic. In the concluding paragraph, summarize your point. Follow the final paragraph with two line spaces.

## Conclusion

Type the word “Sincerely” aligned with the left margin and follow it with four line spaces, then type your name and title on subsequent lines. If someone other than you typed the letter, leave a blank line space after your typed name and print the typist’s initials in lower-case letters followed by a slash and your upper-case initials. If you are including other documents with your letter, leave a blank line space and type “Enclosure:” followed by the titles of the enclosed documents on subsequent lines. If you are sending a copy of the letter to anyone else, leave a blank line space and type “cc:” followed by the name(s) of those people who will receive copies. Sign your name in the blank space between “Sincerely” and your typed name.

***Business Letters***

Business letters should be terse, clear, and to the point. Businessmen are busy men, and

have no time to read long, rambling and confused letters.

Business letters are naturally much more formal in style than friendly letters. Certain

forms of polite expression are used, such as-

"I shall be much obliged if you will send me,"

"Please despatch at your earliest convenience," etc.

At the same time certain phrases of business "jargon" should be avoided. They are

commonly used, but are not good English; and the meaning can be conveyed as clearly in

simple, everyday language.

Examples of such expressions are:-

"Yours of even date to hand."

"Despatch same at once."

Avoid so far as possible abbreviations (like advt. for advertisement, exam, for

examination, etc.) and the omission of I or we (e.g., "Have received" instead of "We have

received").

In business letters ordering goods, care should be taken to give clear and exact

descriptions of the articles wanted. An itemized list of the goods wanted should be

supplied, with the quality and quantity required.

Directions for forwarding should be given (by rail, post, etc.) and the manner in which

payment will be made indicated (by Money Order, V.P.P., cheque, or by debiting to the

writer's account). Everything should be clear and precise.

FORM:- The form of business letters is the same as already described, with one addition,

viz., the Address (i.e., the name of the firm or businessman to whom the letter is

addressed), which should be written on the first page, lower down than the Heading and

to the left of the page. (It may be placed at the end of the letter lower than the signature

and at the left side of the page, but the usual position is at the beginning.)

MODES OF ADDRESS:- The modes of address vary. (1) To a tradesman:-

Shri B.V. Rao

Bookseller

12 Ring Road

Bangalore

Being Dear Sir, and conclude Yours faithfully.

(2) To a firm:-

Messrs K.R. Das & Co.

Tea Merchants

24 Ring Road

Kolkata

Begin Dear Sirs, and conclude with Yours faithfully.

Note:- If the firm has an impersonal title, Messrs should not be prefixed. For example:-

Eurasia Publishing House, Vijay Trading Co.

(3) To professional men or private gentlemen:-

Mr. K. Bhaskar Chartered Accountant Pratibha House Thiruvananthapuram 695 002

Mr. K.R. Misra

32 Bhandarkar Road

Pune 411 004

Begin Dear Sir or My dear Sir, and conclude Yours faithfully,

Oyurs truly, etc

SAMPLE OF ADJUSTMENT LETTERS:

Picture Frame Corporation

1458 West Asia Building

Libis Quezon City

June 19, 2008

Mrs. Angelita Everest

475 Villamore Airbase

Pasay, Parañaque

Dear Mrs. Everest:

We regret very much that you were troubled to write your letter of June 15 regarding the proofs of your daughter’s portrait.

After careful examination of the five proofs, I am convinced that they are not worthy of so good a subject as your young daughter.

That these proofs, Mrs. Everest, do not measure up your expectations of our service is explained by the illness of Mr. Roth at the time of our sittings. When you made the appointment, he was not ill. After an absence of four weeks, he is again with us.

Mr. Roth specializes in children’s portraits. During his enforced absence, however, a colleague did his best with children, but I assure you that we can now make a better portrait of your daughter.

Under the circumstances we are glad to suspend our regulation of one set of proofs for each patron. We invite you to call at our studios again. By visiting us on or before Friday, June 20, you will be assured of an artistic portrait for her birthday.

Cordially yours,

Piolo Pascual

Manager

**II** **ENQUIRY LETTERS**

* A letter of enquiry is a request for information that the writer believes the reader can provide. Regardless of its subject, the objective is to get the reader to respond with an action that satisfies the inquiry.
* The action taken can benefit either the writer or the reader, and sometimes both. That being the case, the scope must include enough information to help the reader determine how best to respond.

**Identify Your Reader**

An enquiry letter should be addressed to the person who is most likely to respond in a positive and helpful manner. If you are unsure of who that might be, try making a few phone calls to identify a contact person. That person's name should be placed in the inside heading and the salutation of your inquiry. It should also be included on the top line of your envelope.

Remember that people do business with people first, businesses second. When you address your reader by name, you recognize their importance and value as an individual human being.

**Establish Your Objective**

The objective in an inquiry letter is to make a request. It will either ask the reader to provide something beneficial to the writer, or take advantage of something the writer has to offer.

Your inquiry should be specific and brief. If you are asking more than one question you might consider highlighting them in a bulleted list.

**Determine Your Scope**

The scope of an inquiry letter should provide enough information for the reader grasp your objective, make an informed decision and respond in a timely manner..

**Organize Your Letter**

Organizing your inquiry letter will establish a logical order in which to present your information. You have already begun this task by establishing an objective and determining your scope. Refer back to them. Together they include much of the content that will become the body of your letter.

A simple outline will get you organized. Begin by creating a list of relevant points and place them in the sequential order that will best help your reader. comprehend your inquiry. These points will become the backbone of your draft; your outline will become a checklist.

**Draft Your Letter**

Working from an outline is the simplest way to draft an in inquiry letter. You have already organized yourself by creating a list. Refer back to it and turn each fragment into a full and complete sentence expressing a single thought or idea.

**Close Your Letter**

An inquiry letter should close in a professional manner. Once your last paragraph is written, sign off between a complimentary close such as "Sincerely," or "Thank you," and your printed name.

If you are writing in conjunction with an official duty, place your title below the printed name. Additional information such as dictation remarks, notification of attachments, enclosures and copies sent to other individuals should be placed beneath the title line.

Address :to be written: it is not written in the letter as it must be typed on a company letter head which already has the address printed

July 2, 2008

Mr. Rodrigo Rivera

Personnel Director

Technote Corporation

3152 Bridge Avenue

Boston, MA 02154

Dear Mr. Rivera:

May I ask a favor of you? Randy del Rosario, a representative of the Leverage Company, recently told me of your success in managing Technote’s training program for the hardcore unemployed. Our firm is presently planning such a program, and we would appreciate information about the mind-set section of your program.

We expect to begin our training sessions on approximately August 1. I believe we are prepared for the remedial-education and job-skills portion of the program, but we need help with mind-set section. Specifically, we would appreciate knowing who you employed to teach that section, the major emphasis in the section, and the length of the section in relation to the entire programs.

I congratulate you on your success in managing Technote’s program, and I believe your ideas would help us solve this long-neglected problem, also. I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

Francisco Fortaleza

Managing Director

**III Complaint Letters**

* A complaint letter advises the reader of an error in a business transaction or a defect discovered in a consumer product or service. The objective is to provide detailed information regarding the error or defect and to serve as a legal document recording the writer's claim and the corrective action or adjustment being requested.
* Keep in mind that your reader is a trained customer service professional and not very likely to be the person responsible for the error or defect. Rather than being angry, use a firm but courteous tone when stating a complaint. Remember, you want results, not a fight.
* The scope of a complaint letter should include only those facts that validate your claim and a request that corrective steps be taken. It may also detail the options that you are willing to accept in satisfaction of the claim.

**Identify Your Reader**

Although a clearly identified reader is not absolutely necessary, a complaint letter should be addressed to the person who is most likely and able to resolve an unsatisfactory situation.

In a very small business the owner is generally the contact person. In a mid-size company a vice president or upper level management person solves problems. In either case place that person's name in the inside heading and the salutation of your complaint letter. Include it also on the top line of your envelope.

Large companies often have a Customer Service department to whose attention a complaint can be addressed. In these cases, the inside heading should contain just the name and address of the company. The salutation will then be replaced by a simple attention getting device.

**Establish Your Objective**

The objective of a complaint letter is to prompt an action that resolves a conflict. You should avoid threats and accusations when providing the details of your complaint. Stick to the facts and your reader will comprehend what went wrong and what action you expect them to take.

**Determine Your Scope**

The scope of a complaint letter should encompass the relevant information necessary to resolve a problem, correct an error or repair a defect. It should provide the reader with exact descriptions, including dates, times and places. It should reference purchase orders, invoice numbers, payment records and even dollar amounts when appropriate.

**Organize Your Letter**

Organizing your complaint letter will establish a logical order in which to present your information. You have already begun this task by establishing an objective and determining your scope. Refer back to them. Together they include much of the content that will become the body of your letter.

A simple outline will get you organized. Begin by creating a list of points that your letter will address and put them in the sequential order that will best help your reader comprehend your complaint. These points will become the backbone of your draft; your outline will become a checklist.

**Draft Your Letter**

Working from an outline is the simplest way to draft a complaint letter. You have already organized yourself by creating a list. Refer back to it and turn each fragment into a full and complete sentence expressing a single thought or idea.

In order that your thoughts and ideas are conveyed in a cohesive manner, write in as natural a sounding voice as possible. Try writing your draft quickly and then read it out loud. Concentrate on communicating your objective to your reader. Make sure that the scope of your letter contains all the relevant information included in your organizational list.

Keep in mind that you are writing a rough draft. For the moment you can ignore spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure. Those are technical details that you will pay attention to in the final step when you review and revise your work.

**Close Your Letter**

A complaint letter should close in a professional manner. Once your last paragraph is written, sign off between a complimentary close such as "Sincerely," or "Thank you," and your printed name.

If you are writing in conjunction with an official duty, place your title below the printed name. Additional information such as dictation remarks, notification of attachments, enclosures and copies sent to other individuals should be placed beneath the title line.

calls for an action.

**EXAMPLE: This is just a format:-**

[Your address]

[Your city, state, zip code]

[Today’s date]

[Name of contact person (if available)]

[Title (if available)]

[Company name]

[Consumer Complaint Division (if there is no contact person)]

[Street address]

[City, state, zip code]

Re: [Account number or other reference to your complaint]

Dear [Contact Person]:

This letter is to [notify you {or} follow up on our conversation of {date}] about a problem I am having with the [name of product or service performed] that I [bought, leased, rented or had repaired] at your [name of location] location on [date].

I am dissatisfied with your [service or product] because [describe problem]. I have already attempted to resolve this problem by [describe attempts and actions taken]. I have enclosed copies of my records. [Include copies of receipts, canceled checks, contracts, and other relevant documents]

Unfortunately, the problem remains unresolved. I am hereby requesting that you: [List specific actions you want (such as: refund, exchange or repair the item)]

1)

2)

3)

Please contact me within [number of days] days to confirm that you will honor my request. I have prepared a complaint for submission to the proper agencies for investigation. I will not file the complaint if you resolve the problem within this time period I have indicated.

Thank you for your anticipated assistance in resolving my problem. Please contact me at [telephone number and/or e-mail address] if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[Your signature]

[Your name]

Enclosure(s): [List attached document copies]

cc: [Name(s) of anyone to whom you are sending a copy of this letter]

**IV Response Letters**

* A response letter provides the answers or information requested in a letter of inquiry. The objective is to satisfy the reader with an action that fulfills their request.
* If you have neither the information requested nor the authority to reply, forward the inquiry on to the correct person. If you are the correct person, be prompt with your reply. Address every question courteously, even those that do not seem relevant.
* Take into account that your reader may lack your expertise. Keep your response on point and avoid going beyond the scope of the reader's request.
* When responding to a forwarded letter inform your reader in your opening paragraph that you are the correct contact person for all future communications. In your closing paragraph, express your willingness to be of further assistance.

**Identify Your Reader**

A response letter should be addressed to a person from whom a request or inquiry has been received. That person's name will be found in the complimentary close of a previous inquiry letter and should be placed in the inside heading and the salutation of your response. It should also be included on the top line of your envelope.

Remember that people do business with people first, businesses second. When you address your reader by name, you recognize their importance and value as an individual human being.

**Establish Your Objective**

The objective of a response letter is to satisfy the reader with an answer or action that fulfills the request of an inquiry. The answer either informs the reader of the respondent's ability to provide information or of a willingness to act on their behalf in some other way.

Your answers should be specific and brief. If you are replying to multiple questions you might consider placing your answers in a bulleted list. Items on a list highlight the components of your response, like snapshots in a photo album.

**Determine Your Scope**

The scope of a response letter is contained in the information you provide for the specific purpose of helping the reader grasp your objective. You may safely assume that your reader is a busy person, so getting to the point is important. Your goal is to have the reader make a decision quickly and respond in a timely manner. Information that is not related to your objective should be left out.

Consider your targeted reader. Make it your business to now something about that person. What is their title or position? Are they the president of the company or the shipping clerk? Do they have what you want? Can they do what you ask?

Give them the relevant background information needed in order to make an informed decision. Let the reader know who you are and something about your motive. If you are to receive some benefit, it may help to explain for what purpose the benefit will be used. If the reader is to receive some benefit, it may help to offer an incentive to respond.

Put yourself in the reader's shoes and ask yourself what and how much background information is needed in order to take the action you are requesting. Would you already know everything you need to know, or would you need a little more? While you are in their shoes you might also ask yourself how much persuasion you would you need in order to be moved to act.

**Organize Your Letter**

Organizing your response letter will establish a logical order in which to present your information. You have already begun this task by establishing an objective and determining your scope. Refer back to them. Together they include much of the content that will become the body of your letter.

A simple outline will get you organized. Begin by creating a list of points that your letter will address and put them in the sequential order that will best help your reader comprehend your response. These points will become the backbone of your draft; your outline will become a checklist.

**Draft Your Letter**

**W**orking from an outline is the simplest way to draft a response letter. You have already organized yourself by creating a list. Refer back to it and turn each fragment into a full and complete sentence expressing a single thought or idea.

**Close Your Letter**

A response letter should close in a professional manner. Once your last paragraph is written, sign off between a complimentary close such as "Sincerely," or "Thank you," and your printed name.

If you are writing in conjunction with an official duty, place your title below the printed name. Additional information such as dictation remarks, notification of attachments, enclosures and copies sent to other individuals should be placed beneath the title line.

Example:-

ADDRESS to be written here:

May 25, 2010

Molly Burke

45 St. Paul Street

Baton Rouge, USA 8909

Dear Miss Burke,

Good day. We would like to thank you for spending your time to inform us that our service didn’t meet your expectations. We will take every step and measure to assure you that we will find a solution to this issue immediately.

The management failed to inform you that the internet connection will reach its maximum speed after 7 days. This is why you have been experiencing a slow internet connection for the past two days; because your connection was installed just three days ago. This is our fault for not letting you know, and we sincerely apologize.

We will do our best to make sure that you will trust our company again and be confident with our products and services again. Satisfied customers are our biggest achievement. To make up for this, we would like offer you a 20% discount offer on our plans and some other privileges.

We hope that this can somehow compensate for your unsatisfied expectation.

Again, we would like to thank you for your feedback as it will help us provide better services. It is our company’s aim to satisfy our customers. We would like to regain your trust and hope to serve you again in the future.

Please feel free to contact me at 411-990-2009 or email me at jennysmith@wbc.com if you have any other concerns which you would like us to take action on. Thank you very much and have a good day.

Sincerely,

Jenny Smith

General Manager

Web Connect Internet Services

411-990-2009

**V SALES LETTERS**

* A sales letter is a marketing tool that promotes a good or service. Its objective is to persuade the reader to buy what the letter offers. To be effective, its scope must describe a particular benefit the reader will gain by making the purchase, such as a problem solved or a need fulfilled.
* Before you begin, you should be familiar with what your sales letter intends to promote and the people you intend it to reach. This may require a little research and some brainstorming, but without preparation your sales letter will be less effective.
* Then decide on the features that best highlight the good or service; identify its selling points, in other words. Bigger, brighter, stronger, faster, cheaper, etc., are common selling points when writing a sales letter.

Once you have made a selection, you must persuade the readers that the benefit of your offer outweighs the cost. In other words, convince them that what you have to offer is a good deal.

In the sample sales letter the writer promotes a service performing a time-consuming task that few people like to do.

**Identify Your Reader**

A sales letter should be addressed to a group of prospective buyers who meet an established set of criteria. Selecting their names should be done carefully, ideally with the help of a professional who specializes in direct mail marketing. He or she will be able to assist you in constructing a mailing list tailored to your specific needs.

Once assembled, the names of your potential customers should be placed in the salutation and inside heading of your sales letter. They should also be included on the top line of your envelope.

Whether you are singling out homeowners or renters, students or working people, dentists or lawyers you are singling out a group of people with an identifiable need or desire, one that you can fulfill or satisfy in some way. This group is your target audience. Each member is a potential customer.

Keep in mind that people do business with people. When you personalize your sales letter, addressing the reader by name, you recognize that person's individual importance and their value as a human being.

Establish Your Objective

The objective of a sales letter is threefold:

To attract attention

Generate interest

Induce a purchase

Your sales letter may not induce an immediate purchase, however, it should, at the very least, meet the first two objectives. It should provide its readers with enough information to heighten their brand awareness about who you are and what goods or services you have to offer. They may return as a customer in the future.

After all, on the day that your direct mail piece arrives, the targeted reader may neither need nor want what you have to offer. Regardless, your sales letter can have a positive residual effect if it succeeds in creating a strong and favorable impression at the time it is received.

Determine Your Scope

To be effective, the scope of a sales letter must identify one or more of the following:

A problem that can be solved

A need that can be fulfilled

A desire that can be satisfied

A pleasure that can be gained

It must then present an attractive solution in a manner persuasive enough to accomplish the objective of the letter, convincing the reader to make a purchase.

Successful sales letters gear their pitch toward the benefit received by the reader rather than the actual goods or services being offered.

Organize Your Letter

Organizing your sales letter will establish a logical order in which to present your information. You have already begun this task by establishing an objective and determining your scope. Refer back to them. Together they include much of the content that will become the body of your letter.

A simple outline will get you organized. Begin by creating a list of items that your package will include and put them in the sequential order that will best help your reader comprehend the contents of your package. These points will become the backbone of your draft; your outline will become a checklist.

**Draft Your Letter**

Working from an outline is the simplest way to draft a sales letter. You have already organized yourself by creating a list. Refer back to it and turn each fragment into a full and complete sentence expressing a single thought or idea.

In order that your thoughts and ideas are conveyed in a cohesive manner, write in as natural a sounding voice as possible.Try writing your draft quickly and then read it out loud. Concentrate on communicating your objective to your reader. Make sure that the scope of your letter contains all the relevant information included in your organizational list.

Keep in mind that you are writing a rough draft. For the moment you can ignore spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure. Those are technical details that you will pay attention to in the final step when you review and revise your work.

**Close Your Letter**

A sales letter should close in a professional manner. Once your last paragraph is written, sign off between a complimentary close such as "Sincerely," or "Thank you," and your printed name.

If you are writing in conjunction with an official duty, place your title below your printed name. Additional information such as dictation remarks, notification of attachments, enclosures and copies sent to other individuals should be placed beneath the title line.

Digital Product

# 457 Ayala St.

Makati City

July 15, 2007

Dr. Angel Aquino

School Administrator

West Link College

Pasay City

Dear Dr. Aquino:

Busy executives stay ahead of paperwork even when they are out of the office. They do with Digital Product’s remarkable new vest pocket secretary.

It’s so small and light you can slip it in your pocket and take it anywhere. Yet it packs full-hour ideas, letters, memos and reports on a Single Micro-Cassette. You can hear the recording with astonishing clarity – all with a touch of a single button.

Digital Products are sold just about everywhere.

See your Digital Product dealer for additional information or a demonstration.

Sincerely yours,

Jose dela Cruz

Marketing Director

**VI REQUEST LETTERS**

**Writing the Basic Request Letter**

The body of the very simplest request letter is usually only one or two paragraphs. This is especially true if there is some incentive for the receiving party to respond to your request in a positive way. An example of this would be in a letter where you are requesting additional information that might lead to a purchase of merchandise from the company.

In more complex request letters where there is no incentive for the receiver of your letter to grant your request, your letter will need to include some persuasive writing. Often the sales letter format, discussed later, is used for the most complex request letters, such as when you are asking for monetary donations.

Request letter format

Opening paragraph: introduce yourself and make your request. This is usually only one or two sentences.

In the opening paragraph--or with more complex request letters this is the second paragraph. After you make your request, give any necessary details to help the receiver of your letter fully understand what you are asking for. This is often part of the opening paragraph in the simplest request letters. In more complex request letters--especially when you are inserting a couple persuasive sentences--this could be a paragraph by itself. If you are asking for more than three items or pieces of information consider using bullets to clarify your needs.

Closing paragraph: your "CALL FOR ACTION." Restate your request giving a date by which you need a response. Make sure you state why you need the response by this date. If you are making a payment in conjunction with the request, state the details of the payment in this paragraph.

Sample Letter

Incognito Digital Photography

789 North Stamford, Fairfield County

Connecticut 09602, USA

Incognito.photography@gmail.com

June 11, 2010

Greg Michaels

657 South Harpeth, Nashville

Tennessee, USA

37215

Dear Mr. Michaels:

You are requested by the company to pay for an additional fee of $20 so that we can fill your order. This is due to the new company policy which requires each of our clients to pay for an additional fee. This policy is implemented in order to make sure that you receive the best from our company. You are definitely going to experience the difference this additional fee can make once you have already received your processed and filled your order.

In addition to the fee, you are also requested to fill out this information sheet before we can fill your order. This is for the new system that the company has just recently operated on. This can further help our company to improve our products and services. We can also accommodate you better with the information you can provide in case you encounter any problem. We assure you that the information you give us is private and solely used for these purposes.

Telephone number:

Shipping address:

Ship-to name:

Credit card number:

Credit card expiration date:

Purchase order number:

We hope that you understand our new company policy and system. These measures are done to better serve you. We greatly salute you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Paul Rimes

Head of the Management

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Do you need to write a business letter? Not sure about the best layout to use or what to include in your letter? It's important that all the business letters you write are properly formatted and professional in appearance.

When you are writing to prospective employers, colleagues, professional and business connections, the layout of your letter is almost as important as what you are writing.

If the letter isn't formatted correctly, doesn't have enough space between paragraphs, and uses a non-traditional font style or size, it can reflect poorly on you.

Here are guidelines for writing a business letter, so all your correspondence makes the best impression.

**Margins**  
Business letter margins should be about 1" all around. This gives your professional letter an uncluttered look. You should align your text to the left; this is how most documents are aligned, so it will make your letter readable.

**Letter Spacing**  
Leaving space in your letter creates a clear, uncluttered and easy to read look that the reader will appreciate. Your letter should be in block format: the entire letter should be aligned to the left and single-spaced except for a double space between paragraphs.

**Font Size**  
The traditional font size for a professional letter is 12. The font should be Times New Roman or Arial. However, if you are using a letterhead, the letterhead may be in a different font size and style.

**Font Style**  
There is no need to use different styles within a professional letter. Use a uniform font (a bookprint font such as Times New Roman or Arial) and avoid underlining, italicizing, or bolding. However, if you are using a letterhead, the letterhead may be in a different font style.

**Letter Text**  
Business letter text should be clean and readable. Avoid writing your letter in one large block of text. Break your text into several concise paragraphs. These paragraphs should be aligned to the left; this allows for easier reading. When you have completed your letter, ask someone else to read it for you. Have them glance briefly at the letter. Is there too much text on the page? Is it easy to see the distinct paragraphs?

**Contact Information**  
The first section of your letter should include your contact information and the contact information of the person you are writing, too. Also include the date you are writing at the top of your letter.

**Letter Salutation**  
Unless you know the reader well and typically address them by their first name, you should include the person's personal title and full name in the salutation (i.e. "Dear Mr. James Franklin"). If you are unsure of the reader's name, include his or her title (i.e. "Dear Executive of Marketing"). If you are unsure of the reader's gender, simply state their full name and avoid the personal title (i.e. "Dear Jamie Smith"). If you are unsure of the reader's gender, name, and title, simply write, "To Whom It May Concern." Leave one line blank after the salutation.

**Letter Paragraphs**   
Professional letter paragraphs should be relatively concise. The first paragraph may include a brief friendly opening and a concise explanation of your reason for writing. The second paragraph (and any subsequent paragraphs) should expand upon your reason for writing. The final paragraph should restate your reason for writing and, if applicable, state your plan of action (or request some type of action be taken by the reader).

**Closing**  
When you're writing a business letter or email message it's important to close your letter in a professional manner so you're letter, in it's entirety, is well-written and professional.

**Signature**  
When you are sending a paper letter, finish the letter with your signature, handwritten, followed by your typed name. If this is an email, simply include your typed name.

Finally, don't forget to spell check and proofread your letter before you send it. Again, ask a family member, friend or colleague to review it for you. It's always good for another pair of eyes to take a look because it's hard to catch our own mistakes.

\_\_\_\_\_The following business letter format includes the information you need to include in a general business letter.

**Business Letter Format**

**Contact Information** *(Your contact information)*  
Your Name   
Your Address   
Your City, State, Zip Code   
Your Phone Number   
Your Email Address

**Date**

**Contact Information** *(The person or company you are writing to)*  
Name   
Title   
Company  
Address   
City, State, Zip Code

**Salutation**

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name: *(Use a formal salutation not a first name)*

**Body of Business Letter**

When writing a business letter, keep your letter simple and targeted, so the purpose of your letter is clear. Single space your letter and leave a space between each paragraph. Left justify your letter.

The first paragraph of your business letter should provide an introduction to why you are writing.

Then, in the following paragraphs provide more information and specific details about your request. Explain why you are writing so it's easy for the reader to understand what you are asking.

The last paragraph of your letter should reiterate the reason you are writing and thank the reader for reviewing your request.

Leave a blank line after the salutation, between each paragraph, and before the complimentary close.

**Complimentary Close:**

Respectfully yours,

**Signature:**

Handwritten Signature *(for a mailed letter)*

Typed Signature