

# Business letters essay

[Business](#)



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A business letter is more formal than a personal letter. It should have a margin of at least one inch on all four edges. It is always written on 8½" x11" (or metric equivalent) unlined stationery. There are six parts to a business letter.

1. The Heading. This contains the return address (usually two or three lines) with the date on the last line. Sometimes it may be necessary to include a line after the address and before the date for a phone number, fax number, E-mail address, or something similar. Often a line is skipped between the address and date. That should always be done if the heading is next to the left margin. It is not necessary to type the return address if you are using stationery with the return address already imprinted. Always include the date.

2. The Inside Address. This is the address you are sending your letter to. Make it as complete as possible. Include titles and names if you know them. This is always on the left margin. If an 8½" x 11" paper is folded in thirds to fit in a standard 9" business envelope, the inside address can appear through the window in the envelope. An inside address also helps the recipient route the letter properly and can help should the envelope be damaged and the address become unreadable. Skip a line after the heading before the inside address. Skip another line after the inside address before the greeting.

3. The Greeting. Also called the salutation. The greeting in a business letter is always formal. It normally begins with the word " Dear" and always includes the person's last name. It normally has a title. Use a first name only if the title is unclear--for example, you are writing to someone named "  
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Leslie," but do not know whether the person is male or female. For more on the form of titles, see Titles with Names. The greeting in a business letter always ends in a colon. (You know you are in trouble if you get a letter from a boyfriend or girlfriend and the greeting ends in a colon--it is not going to be friendly.)

4. The Body. The body is written as text. A business letter is never hand written. Depending on the letter style you choose, paragraphs may be indented. Regardless of format, skip a line between paragraphs. Skip a line between the greeting and the body. Skip a line between the body and the close.

5. The Complimentary Close. This short, polite closing ends with a comma. It is either at the left margin or its left edge is in the center, depending on the Business Letter Style that you use. It begins at the same column the heading does. The block style is becoming more widely used because there is no indenting to bother with in the whole letter.

6. The Signature Line. Skip two lines (unless you have unusually wide or narrow lines) and type out the name to be signed. This customarily includes a middle initial, but does not have to. Women may indicate how they wish to be addressed by placing Miss, Mrs., Ms. or similar title in parentheses before their name. The signature line may include a second line for a title, if appropriate. The term " By direction" in the second line means that a superior is authorizing the signer. The signature should start directly above the first letter of the signature line in the space between the close and the signature line. Use blue or black ink. Business letters should not contain postscripts.

A business letter is a formal communication from an organization to its customers, the general public for their information, another Company or the Authorities. It is often written in a standard format, and in formal language, compared to a private letter between two people who are well known to each other.

#### Optional parts of a business letter

##### Enclosure:

The meaning of enclosure is to attach some documents with the letter. Enclosures are related documents sent with a letter such as; bills, cheques, quotations, brochures, price-lists etc. which have been mentioned in the letter and are sent as enclosures. The abbreviation of enclosure is 'Encl.'. It is not a regular part of the layout of a business letter. It is written only when some documents are to be sent with the letter. If there are many enclosures, they are numbered and placed behind the letter in the order of their serial number. It is written at the bottom left of the letter, after the signature. The enclosure line is very useful to the recipient of the letter. By reading the enclosure receiver comes to know that some more documents have been sent with the letter. If you wish the reader to return any of the documents, type/ Write RETURN after the item.

##### Post Script:

Postscript (postscriptum) or P. S. means something written outside the main script it is a bit of writing, not more than three lines, added to the letter after the signature and after enclosures. Writing a post script indicates that the writer had forgotten to include something important in the body of the letter

or bit of information which is not a part of main message of the letter. It is often written in hand at the time of signing the letter. It is also used to add a friendly personal note to a formal letter. It enables the writer to establish personal contact.

#### Superscription:

In commercial correspondence the word superscription refers to anything that is written on the envelope. The meaning of subscription is “ Something written outside”. As it is written outside, it includes the sender’s address and the recipient’s address as well. Sometimes in response to advertisements for jobs, candidates are advised to superscribe their applications.

#### Identification line / Reference Initials:

The reference initials refer to the person who has dictated the letter and the person who has typed out the letter. This line appears two spaces below the last line of the signature, on the left hand side of the paper sheet. In modern institutes the signatory may not be the person who has drafted the letter. The letter must have been typed out by the typist and it might be drafted by third person so identification line enables us to know the name of the person who has drafted the letter and the person who has typed out the letter. e. g.  
KMP/RJS

The first initial is that of the person who has drafted the letter and the second one is the person who has typed out the letter. Identification is helpful if any disputes are found. So if there is any typographical error found out then the typist is to be held responsible. If there is any error regarding

contain of the letter found out then the person who has drafted is to be held responsible