

UNIT-II Drafting Letters

Letter Writing (Formal)

Formal Writing

Here are some useful tips and guidelines when you are writing a personal or official / business letter, resume, and a cover letter.

Make a plan. Stop and think before you start writing. Make a note of the points you want to make in a logical order.

Use everyday English as much as possible. Avoid jargon and difficult words, and explain any technical terms you have to use.

Identify your reader. The tone that you choose for your correspondence will depend on the relationship you have with your reader: to a subordinate you can issue a directive, to a superior you can only recommend or request.

Pay attention to the modal verbs you use. Modal verbs such as 'must' and 'will' are suitable for orders; 'should', 'could', and 'may' are suitable for recommendations and requests.

Choose the right style. Are you going to write formally, informally or in a neutral style? Be consistent with your chosen style throughout the whole document.

The degree of formality may depend on the context of what you are writing:

- Brief personal message to a very close colleague-informal
- Longer report to a colleague and/or for file-informal/neutral
- Official company document or letter to a customer-neutral/formal
- **Be concise.** Don't use fifty words when you can use five. Sentences that are too long are difficult to read.
- **Use paragraphs.** Make sure you use paragraphs. They give the reader a chance to pause for thought. Try to keep to one main idea to a paragraph.
- **Check your spelling.** Poor spelling gives a bad impression. Remember that spellings in American English are slightly different to their British counterpart. Whichever one you choose-be consistent!
- **Be polite.** Even if you are complaining, this is important. A polite complaint will get you much further than a rude one.
- **Use a good lay out.** Set out your letter or report properly (address, dates, names, etc). This makes it professional and much easier on the eye for the reader.
- In general, a good style in English means writing clearly, simply and concisely.

Contents of a Formal Letter

- The opening paragraph should be short and state the purpose of the letter- to make an enquiry, complain, request etc.
- The paragraph or paragraphs which comprise of the body of the letter should contain the relevant information behind writing the letter. Most letters in English are not very long, so keep the information to the essentials and concentrate on organising it in a clear and logical manner rather than expanding too much.
- The closing paragraph of a formal letter should state what action you expect the recipient to take i.e. to refund, send you information, etc.

Greetings and endings

- If your letter begins with 'Dear Ms Jones', then your letter should end with 'Yours sincerely'.
- If you do not know the name of the person you are writing to then your greeting should be 'Dear Sir' or 'Dear Madam' and your ending should be 'Yours faithfully'.

Headings

- It is always best to give a heading to formal letter. This helps to ensure that the request stated in your letter is dealt with as efficiently as possible.
- Headings come immediately after the greeting, and should be underlined or typed in **bold**. Make your heading brief and specific. For example:

Dear Sir/ Madam

Application for Conduct Certificate

I have been studying...

Letter Forms

Based on the purpose, we may have different forms of formal letters. Some of the most common forms are:

- Inquiry Letters: asking for information
- Application Letters: applying for something, for example, a job
- Covering Letters: enclosing documents
- Complaint Letters: expressing some grievance or displeasure
- Invitation Letters: inviting someone to something
- Acceptance Letters: accepting something
- Apology Letters: apologizing for something

BUSINESS LETTERS - SAMPLES

Acknowledgement Letter

Foot steps Incorporations Ltd

12, Winners Enclave, Jaipur

Phone:0141-27354661-69; Fax:0141-
27354660

RJP/T/29

1 October 2014

Ms Sakshi Gupta

Event Manager

340, Nehru Place

New Delhi

110019

Dear Ms Gupta

We write this to appreciate the committed support and help we received from you in organizing a three-day workshop on *Advertising: Possibilities and Perspectives* from 28-30 September, 2010, in Jaipur. Throughout the event, your suggestions and guidance helped us organize the workshop in a systematic and methodical way. Every body appreciated your commitment, positive approach, and professionalism with which you managed the event. . What particularly stood out was your cheerful disposition and team spirit that helped the other members in the team use their acumen and ingenuity in trying circumstances.

We look forward to more such associations in the time to come.

Thanks and regards

Yours sincerely

Alok Rastogi Coordinator

Acceptance Letter

Although you will often accept a job offer in person, it is a good gesture and a wise practice to formalize it with a letter. Begin your acceptance letter by thanking whoever has sent you the offer, and then make it clear that you have decided to accept it. Express how much you look forward to filling this new position and mention one or two aspects of the job you will especially enjoy. The main text of such a letter is given below:

Dear Sir

Thank you very much for your letter dated 24 October 2014 offering me the post of Marketing executive in your esteemed organization. I am indeed delighted in accepting this post on the terms stated in the appointment letter and confirm that I can commence my work from 1st November 2014.

I can assure you that I shall do everything I can to make my association with your organization productive, meaningful, and rewarding. Particularly I look forward to making a solid contribution to the project Vista 21 st Century that should provide mean opportunity to use my ideas and expertise for the growth and development of the organization. Besides this, I also look forward to making a constructive contribution to the International Conference the organization is planning to organize in the month of October 2015.

I am earnestly looking forward to an exciting association in the time to come.

Yours sincerely

G. Sharma

Complaint letter

A complaint letter is written to tell someone that an error has occurred and that needs to be corrected as soon as possible. In business world, there are numerous situations which warrant a complaint or claim letter as quite a few things go wrong several times. For instance, wrong billing of goods are dispatched; customers are overcharged for the goods sent to them; and at times they receive the goods in a damaged condition. Read some of the excerpts of complaint letters:

1. On 21 October 2014 we placed an order with your firm for 120 ultra-super long-life batteries of 1KV and 60 of 5KV. The consignment arrived yesterday but contained only 100 batteries of 1KV and 6 of 5KV.
2. The bed sheets that we ordered have been received through consignment number 206/1233. We regret to inform you that the texture, colour, and print are not as per the specification of our order.

While writing a letter of this type, maintain a poised and calm tone. Admittedly, we all feel angry when we have to suffer because of someone else's mistake. Even then there is no point in blaming, accusing, and being angry while drafting such a claim or complaint letter. Hence, the tone of complaint letters should not be aggressive or insulting, as this would annoy the reader and not encourage them to solve the problem. In addition, questions such as 'Why can't you get this right?' should not be included. Follow the following steps for writing a letter of this type:

1. Inform about the problem in a clear, precise way.
2. Refer to the order/invoice number to avoid ambiguity in communication.
3. Avoid being rude, angry, or humiliating in your tone.
4. Suggest a solution to help the other rectify the problem.

A text of such a letter is given below:

Dear Sir

This is to acknowledge the receipt of consignment containing 100 copies of Sidney Sheldon's *Best Laid Plans*, last evening. On its arrival apparently, something seemed amiss about the consignment as a large part of it seemed to have been drenched quite noticeably. With a view to retrieve the books in order as quickly as possible, our reception staff immediately opened the consignment. On opening the parcel, however, we realized that the damage was far more extensive than initially observed.

In fact, we have found most of the books to be in a bad shape, nearly 56 of them have been received in bad condition. The remaining books too seem to have either lost their cover or a part of them comes off the moment you turn pages in them. Some of the books in the lot have developed cracks in between the page and a few of them seem to have been frayed in the corners. Of the entire lot, we could retrieve only ten books which we can keep in our book racks for sale without embarrassing ourselves while confronting our customers.

Since Sheldon's best seller has been in quite a demand recently, we were quite optimistic about the sale of the book in good number. However, since now we are left with only a handful of those copies which can be sold, it seems we will have to manage without our own best laid plans.

We are returning a parcel containing 90 copies of the Sheldon's *Best Laid Plans*. Kindly send another 100 copies of the novel as soon as possible. Please also send with the consignment 30 copies of Ken Follett's *The Third Twin*. You are further requested to send the fresh invoice covering the cost of the new order after crediting our account with the invoiced value of the returned copies including reimbursement for the postage cost of 476 incurred in returning the damaged books to your store. Keeping in view the vacation time that is just round the corner, we request you expedite the order at the earliest. While sending the parcel however, please ensure a safe arrival of the consignment. We look forward to your early reply.

Vikram Sodhi

Manager

Inquiry Letter

A letter of inquiry is written to enquire about a product or service. While writing an inquiry letter, keep in mind the following:

1. State clearly and precisely what information you require—a catalogue, some general information, samples, price lists, quotations, etc.
2. Ask about the time period the supplier is likely to take in facilitating the order.
3. Seek clarification regarding the mode of payment, discount offer, credit facility, if any.
4. Keep your inquiry brief and to the point.

At times, enquiries are also written to find out the status of an order already placed. Sometimes we may like to know when we will get our scholarship for the year, receive our original documents since we have paid all the instalments of our car/ house, or when our thesis viva voce will be held. In all such enquiries, the matter written should be concise, complete, and yet brief.

Permission Letter

Permission letters are widely used to send and receive messages of request, or to seek or grant permission for utilizing the resources, facilities or services. In the business world, you may request the management to grant you the authority to do something or take decisions on authority's behalf. The amount of details you need to provide in a permission letter will depend on what you are seeking and from whom you are seeking it. Depending on the need, hierarchy, and relationship, the tone, the length and the language employed in a permission letter differ. For instance, if you ask a colleague for permission to share an article, the letter may be very short and informal. However, while requesting for loans, asking for facilities for conducting experiments, or seeking permission from some author for using his / her copy righted material, the letter will have to be written elaborately and worded in a tone explaining the reason for asking for the specific favour. Some of the expressions commonly used while writing this type of a letter are, *Could you possibly...or I would be grateful if you could...*, *Kindly help us organize...*, *It would help us a long way in assessing. ...*, *We look forward to your kind approval in this regard...*, *Will your organization be in a position to allow us...*, etc.

An example of a permission letter is given below:

10 November 2014

The Dean-Administration BITS Pilani, Rajasthan

Subject: Request for approval of travel expenses for the UGC major research project (Transforming Language Learning with New Technologies for Enhancing Employability of College Students from Rural Background)

Dear Sir

Since I, along with my project fellow, need to go to Delhi for giving a Mid-Term presentation for the above stated UGC project, I request you to approve travel (by air-conditioned taxi), stay and incidental expenses as per actual.

The expenses may kindly be approved under Travel / Field Work for which I have received 37,500/-. I thank you and look forward to your consideration in this regard.

Sincerely,

Dr.Pushp Lata NC-3028

Associate Professor

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Invitation Letter

A letter of invitation is sent by an individual or an organization to invite someone to attend an event. An invitation letter can be formal or personal. A personal invitation letter is usually designed to invite someone to attend a social event, such as a birth day party, an engagement ceremony, a wedding party, an anniversary dinner, etc. On the other hand, a formal invitation letter is usually designed to fulfil some organizational or official interest.

The main text of such a letter is given below:

Dear Prof Pathak,

You will be delighted to know that we are organizing a two-day "ELT @ I International Conference on Interfacing Language, Culture and Technology" (ELT @ I Rajasthan) on 8-9 October 2014 at MNIT, Jaipur. The conference would provide a suitable platform to the academic professionals and research scholars to initiate and facilitate discussions among the academicians and the educational planners on the existing practices and emerging challenges in English language teaching.

We wish to invite you as the Chief Guest for the valedictory function of the conference. It would be an honour and privilege to have you with us. We shall provide you airfare for economy class from Allahabad to Jaipur and back. A university car will be arranged to receive you at the Jaipur airport. We shall also be glad to care of your hospitality and comfortable stay in Jaipur.

The brochure providing details of the conference is attached for your perusal. Kindly accord your consent at the earliest so that the preparation may be made accordingly at our end. Needless to say that your Valedictory Address will inspire hosts of academicians actively devoted to ELT.

For further details of the Conference, please visit our website:

<http://discovery.mnitjaipur.ac.in / ELTAI>

We earnestly look forward to your inspirational presence on this occasion.

With Warm regards,
D.Sharma

Specimen Letter 1

Amit Macwan, from Mechanical Department, writes a request letter to his Head of the Department to get permission for using the EME lab apart from his regular timetable.

From

02.11.2019

Amit Macwan,

Enrollment No : 09XXXXXXXX001

Mechanical Department

College of Engineering

Chennai

To

The Head of the Department,

Mechanical Department

College of Engineering,

Chennai

Respected Sir,

Sub : To grant permission to use EME lab

I am Amit Macwan from Mechanical Department. I am working on the project "PROJECT TITLE" as a final year project in the 6th semester. In this connection, I need to use the EME lab and the other resources there.

I request you to permit me to use the EME lab during college hours. It would help me in completing my project. I assure you that I will take care of the tools/things in the EME lab when I work there. Thank you very much.,

Yours faithfully,

Amit Macwan

Specimen letter 2

Letter of Adjustment

A modern industrialist knows, 'All silent stakeholders are not necessarily satisfied stakeholders.' adjustment letter should aim at pleasing the dissatisfied stakeholders and bringing them back into fold. The adjustment letter is a very delicate piece of composition. The style must be diplomatic and language must be courteous.

On behalf of Xylon Tools Firm, you should write a letter of adjustment.

From
Xylon Tools Firm,
Xenith Road,
Mumbai.

To
The Proprietor,
Aroma Industries
1453, GIDC,
Vatva,
Ahmedabad.

Sub : About inconvenience caused to you

Dear Sir,

We are sorry about your letter dated 20* July 2011 informing us about the delay in the execution your order dated 20* June 2011 for 200 Industrial Tools (Model No 142X).

Our workers and office staff had been on strike from 1• July to 18* July 2011. Such a situation h completely paralysed our routine work.

We are very sorry for the inconvenience caused to you. We can now reassure you that the tools be dispatched within 6 days.

Hope to have healthy business and industrial relations forever.

Yours faithfully,

(S. R. Patel)
Xylon Tools Firm

Specimen letter 3

Requesting leave

From

22.07.2019

Vivek Patel,
Core Member,
Project MMT/09

To

Mr Tapan Soni,
Project Head,
Project MMT/09,
Memco Mills,
Surat.

Dear Sir,

Subject : One week Earned leave

I request you to grant me one week leave starting 14th August, as I have to attend a family function at Bhuj. I will rejoin on 20th August 2011. Kindly consider my request.

Thank you,

Sincerely yours,

(Vivek Patel)

Sample questions for letter writing

1. **Write a letter to M/s. Oxford Publishing House, London complaining that the books sent by them were not those you had ordered for. Ask for replacement.**
2. **A number of scooters and cars are parked in your locality without any order, causing blockage of the streets. Write a letter to the local Secretary of the Resident's Association complaining against this problem.**
3. **On 30th November, your college is going to hold its annual sports day. You want Mr. Dhanraj Pillai, a noted hockey player to give away the prizes to the budding sportspersons of the college. Write a formal invitation requesting him to grace the occasion. You are the Sports Secretary of your college.**
4. **Write a letter to your Principal apologising on your misbehaviour at the time of assembly at your college**
5. **You are the Director of ABC Company, Patel Road, New Delhi. Write an acceptance letter to the Principal of a college offering their students a chance to take up internship in your company.**
6. **Write a letter to The Manager, New Woodlands hotel, Chennai, to find out the rates for conducting a farewell party to your seniors on their lawns, enquiring about the catering cost per head, service charges and other details You are the Chairman of your college.**
7. **Bal Vidya Public School, Chenna, urgently requires a post-graduate teacher to teach political science for which they have placed an advertisement in The Indian Express. Draft a letter including a CV, applying for the advertised post.**
8. **You decide to hold a dinner party to congratulate your grandparents on their golden wedding anniversary. Draft a formal invitation to all family members to attend a grand dinner at home.**
9. **You would like to apply for the post of Marketing Manager in a reputed firm in Mumbai. Write a letter to the Public Relations Officer, Chantac Enterprises, Mumbai, applying for the job.**

DIALOGUE WRITING

A dialogue is a conversation between two or more people. It is an important writing skill as it helps you to think about different roles and provides you a platform to articulate yourself after careful planning, even though a normal conversation usually takes place spontaneously and colloquially.

Here are a few tips for writing a dialogue:

1. Remember to use formal expressions if the conversation is between a superior and a subordinate.
2. Try to put yourself in the shoes of the person whose dialogue you are writing.
3. Be creative and imaginative and generate new ideas that can lead to an interesting conversation.
4. In an informal conversation between two individuals of an equal social standing, try to maintain an informal tone throughout. Also, take care of the fact that the conversation appears natural and spontaneous.
5. In a telephonic conversation, remember to use expressions and greetings that show clearly that the conversation is happening over a phone. For example, begin the conversation by introducing yourself or asking who is calling.
6. Do not let one speaker monopolise the conversation.
7. Try your level best to involve both the speakers in the dialogue, both asking and responding to statements and questions.
8. Carefully think of ideas related to the main theme and jot down points so that the dialogue flows in a coherent and logical manner without any repetition of ideas.

Sample dialogue

Now, look at an example of a dialogue between two professors in a University about a project.

Tara: Hi Asha! Good morning.

Asha: Hi! Good morning. Have you checked the website of the University Grants Commission?

Tara: I've been busy with my classes and evaluation of term papers. I haven't actually found the time to surf through the net. Is there any news?

Asha: Oh yes! They have posted the last date for the submission of minor and major research proposals for projects.

Tara: Oh! is it so. When is the last date?

Asha: It is the 31st of July. I have already started working on a proposal so that I can obtain some financial assistance from the UGC.

Tara: Brilliant! Even I have been contemplating some issues related to the creation of an animated series based on the history of English literature. I guess this is the most appropriate moment to write a project proposal on it.

Asha: Yes, of course. You can take the help of technical staff and also software developers in order to get a rough estimate of the budget and go ahead with the preparation of your project proposal.

Tara: Thank you so much, Asha, for reminding me about the deadline and the projects. I nearly forgot all about it.

Now look at an informal conversation between two engineering students in their final year, discussing their plans for their future.

Arun: Hi Sid, now that our graduation is almost over, you must be planning for the future.

Sid: Yes, Arun. I am not much interested in higher studies. Therefore, I don't intend to do my Masters. But, I'm considering joining some classes. What about you?

Arun: I'm also not much interested in doing my Masters. I would like to start my own manufacturing company with the help of my uncle who already has some background knowledge of it. By the way, what classes are you talking of?

Sid: Wow! That's amazing. These days start-ups are making it big and their ideas are quite innovative. As for me, I intend to join coaching classes to prepare for the Indian Engineering Services.

Arun: I am glad to hear that, Sid! At the time when the most intelligent engineers leave their nation in search of greener pastures, it is really heartening to hear a friend wanting to serve the nation.

Sid: Thank you, Arun. Even, I felt quite impressed when you said you wanted to start your own company. I appreciate your ambition and confidence.

Arun: Frankly speaking, I am quite happy to know that you are impressed. In fact, most of the time people have discouraged me as they feel that my ideas are too unconventional and that I may not be successful.

Sid: I understand you very well as many people have told me too that it may take years to clear the exam and that I may never clear the IES. However, I have taken it with a pinch of salt.

Arun: Very true. It's good that we use our own heads!

Exercise 1 Write dialogues for the following situations.

1. Write a dialogue between two friends about environment pollution.
2. Write a dialogue between two friends discussing a movie that they have watched recently.
3. Write a dialogue between the CEO of a company and an employee on the matter of the latter's negligence of his duties.
4. Write a dialogue between two friends discussing their hobbies.
5. Write a dialogue between the Dean of a college and a student representative requesting financial assistance for a club activity at college.
6. Write a dialogue between a doctor and a patient discussing the latter's health condition.

Exercise 2 Complete the following dialogues. You may add upto six exchanges.

1. Student: Good morning Sir. I would like to borrow a book on Artificial Intelligence.
Librarian: Yes, sure. Do you have any particular author in mind as there are many textbooks and reference books on Artificial Intelligence.
2. Class Representative: Sir, I'd like to get permission from you for an industrial visit.
Principal: Yes, of course. Where have you all planned to go?
3. Anne: Hello! Hello! It's Anne speaking.
Jane: Hello, Anne. I am Jane. Nice to hear from you!