

# Business Communication

## Letters and Email

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# We will talk about...

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Effective Writing

PAIBOC

Letters

Covering Letters and Resumes

Agendas, Meeting Minutes

Email

FAQ and CE

# Correspondence Costs Money<sup>1</sup>

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Dartnell Institute, 10-minute message

\$13.60

\$20.52

Plan, compose, revise 1-page letter

54 minutes

Average Proposal (engg firm)

\$500,000

\$1,000,000

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Rwitgin wastes time and damages relationships

# Making Messages Effective

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**C**lear

**C**omplete

**C**orrect

**S**ave reader's time

**B**uild good will



# Complaint Letters

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**Nursery – Plants worth \$572**

**Dry and wilted. One came out by the roots when I took it out of the box.**

**Please send me a replacement shipment immediately**

# Response 1

*After ruling out problems in transit, I discovered that your order was packed by a new worker who didn't understand the need to water plants thoroughly before they are shipped. We have fired the worker, so you can be assured that this will not happen again.*

*Although it will cost our company several hundred dollars, we will send you a replacement shipment.*

*Let me know if the new shipment arrives safely. We trust that you will not complain again.*

## Response2

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Sorry we screwed up that order. Sending plants across country is a risky business. Some of them just can't take the strain. (Some days I can't take the strain myself!) We'll credit your account for \$572.

# Response 3

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... it isn't our fault. The box clearly says "Open and water immediately." ... If you pull by the leaves, you will pull the roots out. Always lift by the stem. Since you don't know how to handle plants, I'm sending you a copy of our brochure, "How to Care for Your Plants." Please read it carefully... ... to avoid disappointments in the future.

We look forward to your future orders.

Your letter of the 5<sup>th</sup> has come to the attention of the undersigned.

According to your letter, your invoice #47420 arrived in unsatisfactory condition. Please be advised that it is our policy to make adjustments as per the Terms and Conditions...

“... make an exception on your order receipt... furnish us detailed written information as to any damage.”

# Response 5

You'll get a replacement shipment of the perennials you ordered next week.

Your plants are watered carefully before shipment and packed in specially designed cardboard containers. But if the weather is unusually warm, or if the truck is delayed, small roots may dry out. Perhaps, this happened with your plants.

The violas, digitalis, aquilegias and hostas you ordered are long-blooming perennials that will get even prettier each year. Enjoy your garden.

Purpose

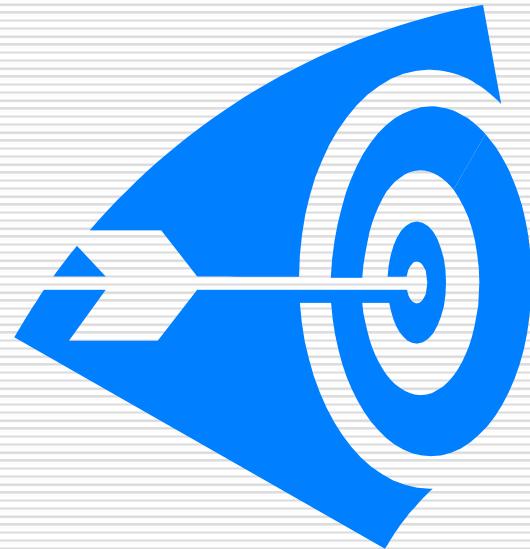
Audiences

Information

Benefits

Objections

Context



# Audiences

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Writer

Initial audience

Gatekeeper

Primary audience

Secondary audience

Watchdog audience



# Communicate across Cultures

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Gender

Race and ethnicity

Regional and national origin

Social class

Religion

Age

Sexual orientation

Physical ability



# Business Communication

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Managers and their wives will...

Managers and their spouses will...

Manpower – Personnel

Manhours – Hours or working hours

Manning – Staffing

Workman – Worker, employee, writer

Chairman – Chair, chairperson

# Gender Bias

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## Plural nouns and pronouns

Supervisors must...their departments.

Use you.

You must work for your department.

Substitute with article or revise sentence

Supervisor...time sheet for the department.

The nurse will fill out the accident report.

# Bas in Pictures

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# Letter Contents

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Reference, Date, Address, Salutation, Subject (B/A),  
Body, Complimentary Close, Enclosures

Dear Glenn: or Dear Mr Helms:

Sincerely, and Cordially,

Open (Dear Glenn) and Closed (Dear Glenn:)

Second Page – Reader's Name, Date, Page Number

# Formats for Letters and Memos

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## Open and closed punctuation

Avoid full stops at end of addresses

Avoid in abbreviations (am/pm)

## Block and Modified Block

Date

Signature

Subject Line – Optional and Rare

# Tips

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Use Templates

One line letters are accepted

# Covering Letters

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Brief

3 paragraphs, bullets

Focus on

Major requirements

Differentiators

Research

Web, friends, colleagues

Tip:

Do not plead.

# Resumé or Curriculum Vitæ

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Name, **Field**, Address, Contact Details

**Objective**, Education, Experience, **Languages**,  
**Personal**, **References**

Reverse chronological order

Personal details – Age, marital status, children (US laws on discrimination)

# Resumé Tips

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Two pages maximum.

Less important details on 2nd page.

Highlight strengths, not weaknesses.

Job hoppers -- period

Create for each company.

Use templates – but enhance them.

# Meeting Agenda

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## Time and place

Whether each item is presented for information, for discussion, or for a decision

# Minutes of the Meeting

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Decisions Reached

Action Items

Open Issues

# Emails

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Minutes a day - average worker?

49 minutes

Hours a day - top managers?

4 hours

Formats are still evolving

What % felt misunderstood (2000)?

51% (tone)

# Subject

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Be specific, concise, and catchy.

28 characters

Will Attend 3 pm Meeting EOM

Travel Plans for Sales Meeting

Your Funding Request Approved

ASAP, BTW, FYI, IMHO, TMOT

Smileys

# Body of the Email

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**Brief**

**Important points at the top**

**Bullets and numbering**

**Emphasize (NOT)**

**HTML (letterhead)**

**All rules of good writing**

# Mailing Lists

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Your boss could be reading!

Posts are archived.

Avoid using company email address.

Avoid conversations (one liners).

Do not rush to lists.

# Netiquette

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Never flame.

Use FULL CAPS only to emphasize a word or two.

Send messages on a need basis.

Recipient's work practice (one long or several short messages)

Quote briefly (B/A) while replying.

Attachments

## Questions

Resumes -- how long? 1 or 2 pages. Maximum of say 5 pages.

To justify or not?

## Common Errors

Spelling

Grammar and punctuation

Clichés – This is with reference to..

Passport details

# References

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1. Business Communication, Kity O Locker and Stephen Kyo Kaczmarek, 2004
2. Better Business Writing, The Sunday Times, 2002
3. Model Business Letters, E-mails & Other Business Documents (sixth edition), Shirley Taylor