



Composing a Business Letter

Handout 2

Business letters are written for a specific purpose. They are formal, brief, direct, and include all the necessary information. Frequently business letters are used to request information or order materials.

Six Parts of a Business Letter

1. Heading:

- Your Address
- City, State, Zip Code
- Month, Day, Year

2. Inside Address:

- The name of the business firm or person to whom you are writing
- Address of the name of business or person whom you are writing
- City, State, Zip Code

3. Salutation: (The formal style greeting)

- *Dear Sir or Madam*
- *Dear Mr. James*
- *Ladies and Gentleman:*

4. Body:

- The content or message of the letter

5. Closing: (A formal closing phrase)

- Sincerely,
- Yours truly,

6. Signature:

- Your first and last name should be written four lines below the closing phrase.

In creating a business letter, you will practice adding and deleting text, using the spell-check option, reviewing what you have written, and printing the final document.

- 1) Using word-processing software, type in the heading with your own address and the current date.
- 2) Type in the inside address with the person or company's address receiving the letter. You may also include the person's title after the name. *For example, Mr. John Jones, President.*
- 3) Insert salutation or greeting. The formal greeting is always followed by a colon (:). If a specific name is not known, the greeting is *Dear Sir or Madam.*
- 4) Write a letter requesting information. State the purpose of the letter. Be sure the facts are given brief, logical way. Indent each new paragraph by pressing the TAB key one time.
- 5) You may choose one of the following topics to write about:
 - The Chamber of Commerce of a community asking for information on that community
 - A children's author or publishing company telling why the student liked a particular book
 - A company asking for product information
 - An environmental group requesting information on the cause they support
 - The President or a member of the Congressional delegation offering support or raising questions about a particular issue
 - A letter to the editor of the local newspaper about some local issue
 - The Web master of a Web page that the student likes commenting on the Web site
- 6) Insert a closing followed by a comma. Only the first word of the closing is capitalized. For example, *Yours truly.*



- 7) **Insert your first and last name four lines below the closing.**
- 8) **Spell check the letter.**
- 9) **Proofread the letter. If needed, make necessary changes.**
- 10) **Exchange files with a classmate and make any suggested changes to the file using a different color of text.**
- 11) **When your file is returned, make the changes that you agree with. Make sure that all text is returned to the original black color and that all comments that are not part of the actual letter have been removed.**
- 12) **Use print preview to make certain your letter is spaced properly on the page (Click on FILE>PRINT PREVIEW).**
- 13) **Save the file (CTRL+S).**
- 14) **Print the letter.**