

Business correspondence

Letter

- Letterhead and logo
- Date
- References
- Inside address
- Attention line
- Salutation
- Subject line
- Main message
- Complimentary close
- Signature
- Writer's name and job status
- Enclosures

Layout and Punctuation Style

The most commonly used Layout is the «fully blocked» which has the following features:

- 1) All letter parts begin at the left margin, but sometimes new paragraphs are indented.
- 2) Only the body of the letter is punctuated.
- 3) The first letter of the body is always in capitals.
- 4) There are usually 2 or 3 spaces between the salutation and the body of the letter and between each paragraph.

Format

Visual organisation of the letter:

- 1) Heading
- 2) Opening
- 3) Body
- 4) Close

Heading

It contains:

- **Letterhead and logo** (company identity and symbol)
- company name (Barry Cassell & Sons Ltd
Barclays Bank plc
Intelledex Inc.)
- address (100 Avenue Road 43 Walnut Street
Swiss Cottage Philadelphia
London NW3 3HF PA 17503
England USA)
- telephone (00 44 323 82560)
int. code country code area code number

Heading

- Date

28 October 2010

28th October 2010

(Britain)

October 28 2010 / 10/28/2010

(USA)

Heading

- References

It identifies the letter and will help in further correspondence.

It is usually composed of the initials of the writer and a series of numbers

«Our ref» refers to the company sending the letter.

«Your ref» refers to the company receiving the letter.

Heading

Our ref: FB/cf/94

Your ref: LP/ag

The first 2 letters correspond to the initials of the writer, often in capital letters.

The second 2 letters correspond to the initials of the secretary, often in small letters.

The numbers correspond to a file or department.

Opening

It contains:

- **Inside address** (recipient's address)

When you don't know the name of the person but are writing to the holder of the job title, you use «the» (The Sales Manager).

You don't use «the» when the name is included (Ms Jane Rolland, Sales Manager)

Opening

You use «Mr» for a man, «Mrs» for a woman you know is married, «Miss» for a woman you know is single.

You use «Ms» for a woman you don't know her marital status. It is becoming common in business correspondence and avoids embarrassment.

When you are writing to a partnership or company with one or more personal names, you can use «Messrs». Nowadays it is usually omitted.

Opening

- **Attention line**

It is used only if you want to address the letter to a specific member of the company.

If you include an attention line, you must not include the recipient's name in the inside address.

The attention line should be easily visible (underlined or capital letters).

Opening

- Salutation

The salutation follows the first line of the inside address.

Dear Sirs/Gentlemen (USA)

Dear Sir/Madam

Dear Mr Smith

Dear Ms Rolland

Body

It contains:

- Subject line

It states briefly what the subject line of the letter is. It should be highlighted in some ways.

Body

- Main message

This should be structured in 3 sections:

- opening section*: it introduces the letter and states its purpose. If there has been previous correspondence, it mentions this immediately.

- middle section*: gives further information or detail of the purpose.

- closing section*: concludes the letter. It usually thanks the reader for their attention and includes intention for future correspondence.

Close

It contains:

- **Complimentary close** (it follows the salutation)

Salutation

Complimentary close

Dear Sirs

Yours faithfully

Dear Sir/Madam

Yours truly (USA)

Truly yours (USA)

Truly (USA)

Dear Mr Smith/Ms Jones

Yours sincerely

Sincerely (USA)

Used with any type of salutation:

Regards, Kind regards, Best wishes, All the best.

Close

Signature – writer's name and job status

The name and job status of the writer are typed under the handwritten signature.

If a letter is signed by a secretary for the author of the letter (p.p. – on behalf of) is inserted before the typed name.

Enclosures

These can be shown as follows: Enc., Encl., 2 Encs., Enclosures: 1 catalogue