Handbook of Letter Writing

Johnson Borges

Diamond Publications

Handbook of Letter Writing
Prof. Johnson Borges

First Edition : August 2010
Reprint : February 2014

ISBN : 978-81-8483-323-2

© **Diamond Publications**

Cover Page :
Sham Bhalekar

Printing :
Shree Chintamani Offset Pvt. Ltd., Pune

Published by :
Diamond Publications
264/3 Shaniwar Peth, 302 Anugrah Apartment
Near Omkareshwar Temple, Pune - 411 030
☎ 020-24452387, 24466642

info@diamondbookspune.com
www.diamondbookspune.com

Sale Distributor :
Diamond Book Depot
661 Narayan Peth
Appa Balwant Chowk
Pune 411 030
Tel. - 24480677, 66020282

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or utilised in any form and by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Contents

Letters

- Introduction 7
  - Basic Principles of Letter Writing
  - The Forms of Personal / Informal Letter
  - The Forms of a Business Letter
- Useful Phrases for Letter Writing 17
- Useful Tips For Personal Letter 21
- Example of Letterhead 25
- Formal of Letter 26
- Curriculum vitae and Resume 32
- Text of the Letter 35
  - Personal Letters (1 - 21)
  - Request, Enquiries, Quotation, Price-list, Order (22 - 70)
  - Request for Credit, Reference, Bills, Payments and Collection (71 - 103)
  - Agency, Freight, Transport (104 - 124)
  - Complaint (125 - 156)
  - Goodwill (157 - 175)
  - Banks (176 - 224)
  - Insurance (225 - 245)
  - Secretarial (246 - 266)
  - Premises (267 - 278)
  - Circulars (279 - 287)
  - Reports (288 - 303)
  - Application (304 - 315)
  - Appointments, Testimony, Resignation (316 - 325)
  - Miscellaneous (326 - 350)

E-mail

- Introduction 169
  - Formatting E-mail Messages
  - E-mail Format (Use of cc & bcc)
  - Acronyms or Abbreviation for E-mail
  - SMS Dictionary
  - Commercial Abbreviations

PREFACE

You already know how important it is to speak good English in todays global environment. Writing just like speaking is communication. In our letters and e-mails we need to express many things like authority, gratitude, dissatisfaction etc. Expressing ourselves well and with the correct level of formality is an important skill.

The art of writing a letter takes practice, knowledge about proper form and the ability to put into the words, the thoughts and feelings, which are associated with the letter. Learning to write a letter can be difficult, as there are multiple types of letters which can be written. To avoid the time that it may take to learn to write each one of the letters, if you are able to learn to write a basic letter, that will help you create letters for a variety of occasions.

HANDBOOK OF LETTER WRITING has been designed and created keeping constantly in view the above facts. It describes effectively the various strategies to be adopted for better results through correspondence.

The letters in this book reflect a characteristic communication style: simple, direct and together with the modern conveniences of the personal computers, e-mail and the internet, provide you with both a guide to good letter writing and a simple way to automate your correspondence.

350 letters covered in this book provide a good sweep of various forms of personal, business, commercial, secretarial, insurance and banking letters, which can serve as a sound base to emulate and practise. The book describes effectively the various strategies to be adopted for better results through correspondence. A number of model letters have been given to help you draft your own letters suited to the occasion, time and opportunity in your correspondence. I am sure the patient perusal

and study of the book will help you a lot in progressing rapidly on the express way of correspondence towards phenomenal achievements and accomplishments. This book is a valuable, practical, comprehensive and modern guide for all of you who are involved in, and are concerned with correspondence.

I register my sincere thanks to Shri. Dattatray Pashte of Diamond Publications. I am also grateful to K. V. Shigavan of Aksharwel along with his staff.

I hope readers will appreciate this book. Any comments or suggestions for the further development of the book would be most welcome. I can be reached at diamondpublications@vsnl.net

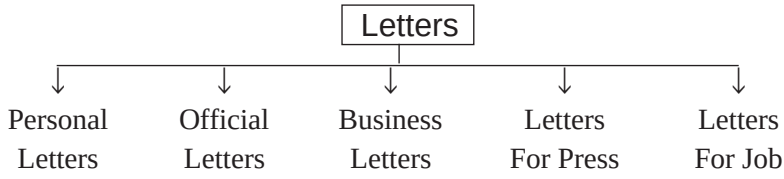
– Johnson Borges

Introduction

Letter writing is not just an art but a necessity in today's world of communication revolution. Though the cyber age has affected the art of letter writing, it has opened new avenues as well. E-mail, is an example. In todays revolutionary world, the formats of letter writing have undergone changes as well. Though this book we have tried to keep you abreast of the latest trends in letter writing.

Classification

Letters are of different kinds. They are broadly classified as follows.



Basic Principles of Letter Writing

(A) Stationary :

The quality of stationary is important. It is the physical appearance of the letter that creates the first impression, and on many occasion the first impression is also the last impression. The reader forms his opinion about you and your business based on the physical aspects of your letter. Hence, it is significant that your letter looks inviting and attractive.

(B) Typing :

Business letters should remain typewriter and grammatical and spelling error free. These types of letters should be legible and professional

and there fore typing the letter is one of the most effective ways to ensure that the letter demonstrates a professional appearance thought the entire course of the letter, there by creating a positive impression on the recipient of the letter.

Never type on both the sides of sheet or letter head. Spacing is also important in typing. When the letter is short, it may be typed in double space with triple spaces between paragraphs, paragraphs should present on even and pleasant appearance. They should terminate at logical points. The part of the letter should be typed at their proper places with proper spacing and margins to create harmony, uniformity and balance.

(C) Tone :

While writing a letter one should be natural and relaxed. Always write letter with a positive outlook and frame of mind. Be always courteous and polite even when writing an unpleasant letter. While writing a business letter you must always keep your aim in mind. The tone of your letter should always be pleasant and appealing so that you can convey the message across in order to elicit desired response.

(D) Approach :

Your letter should have "You-approach" in it. It should read as if you are conversing with the recipient.

(E) Brief and Friendly :

As brevity is the soul of wit, use minimum possible words. The more economic you are with your words, the more delightful your letter become. But brevity never means incompleteness.

(F) Planning :

Jot down the main points and then elaborate them logically while writing the letters. You have to be logical, complete and concise to convey your message to the reader.

(G) Simple and Natural :

Short simple sentences and short logical paragraphs make your letter easy and inviting. Use a fresh paragraph for every fresh thought and idea. Develop your idea into message using simple, short and

intelligible sentences.

(H) Punctuation :

Make use of punctuation marks and pauses correctly and imaginatively. Punctuation is a means to make writing more easy, intelligible and functional. It is for better to under-punctuate than to over-punctuate.

(I) Grammar :

A misspelled word may create a lot of confusion and misunderstanding and so you must be particular about your spelling, grammar and usage.

(J) Time :

Your letters should reach the recipients when they are most likely to give their most undivided attention.

Time is a most precious commodity and businessman should always use it judiciously and promptly in sending out his letters to customers.

(K) Styles :

Indented style is no more popular though it gives a business letter a balanced and poetical appearance.

The blocked style is preferred because it is more functional, practical, time and labour saving and there fore economical.

Informal Letters

Informal letters are written to people who are close to us or known very well to us. They include letters to parents, brothers and sisters and other relatives.

Such letters are termed informal because the style and format to be followed are casual. You write to such people as if you were conversing with them.

The Form of Personal / Informal Letters

Personal letters, also known as friendly letter and social notes normally have five parts.

(1) Heading :

This includes the address of the person writing the letter, line by line, with the last line being the date. The heading informs the reader where you wrote the letter, and when.

The commas and full stops at the end of the lines are to be omitted.

The date can be written in following ways. 10th July 2009, July 10, 2009.

Example :

C-1/117, M. G. Road
Camp, Pune - 411001
20th August, 2010

(2) Greeting or Salutation :

The form of greeting will depend upon the relation in which you stand to the person to whom you are writing.

The members of your family, for example, it will be my dear mother, Dear uncle, etc.

To friends, It will be

Dear Anand, Dear Ravi, etc.

Please note that in above examples the use of the term Dear is purely formal, and is a more polite expression, not necessarily implying any special affection.

(3) The Communication or Body of the letter :

Also known as the main text. This includes the message you want to write. The style in which it is written will depend upon the kind of letter you wish to write. The style of a letter to an intimate friend will be very different from that of a purely business letter or an official communication.

Normally in a friendly letter the beginning of paragraphs is indented. If not indented, be sure to skip a space between paragraphs. Skip a line after the greeting and before the close.

(4) Complimentary Close :

The complimentary close should agree with the salutation. It is a formal and polite way to end your letter. The following subscriptions can be used in letters to relatives and close friends :

→ Your affectionately
→ Yours affectionate son / daughter.
→ Yours loving son or brother / sister or friend
→ Yours very sincerely (to friends)

You can also write -

With love and good wishes from your affectionate friend Rahul Kumar.

While concluding letters to friends and acquaintances whom you addressed as 'Shri' you should use the word 'sincerely' or 'very sincerely', which may be preceded by 'with kind regards.'

As caution, it must be mentioned that sincerely should not be used in letters beginning with the formal 'Dear sir' after which the formal subscription is faithfully or truly.

(5) Signature line :

Type your name. The handwritten signature goes above this line and below the close. The signature line and the handwritten signature are indented to the same column as the close. If the letter is quite informal, you may omit the signature line as long as you sign the latter. In letters to strangers, the signature should be clearly written, so that the reader may know whom to address in reply.

A woman should prefix to the name miss, mrs, kumari or smt in brackets. Ms. can be used by a woman who does not wish to be called miss or mrs.

Postscript - If your letter contains a postscript, begin in with P.S. and end it with your initials. Skip a line after the signature line to begin the postscript.

Example : P. S : I shall try to meet you on sunday.

Yours affectionately,
(Mrs.) Neeta Pandey

Business or Formal Letters

Formal letters are addressed to officials, authorities, would be employers, businessmen, newspaper editors and the like.

Such letters require specific wording and a very definite format.

Form of a Business Letter

A well made up business letter consist of the following parts.

(1) Heading :

In business correspondence almost always letterheads are used. A letterhead generally consist of the company or firm's name postal address, the nature of business and contact numbers comprising telephone, telex, fax and E-mail address.

Reference – Sometimes letterheads may have 'Ref'. Printed on them. This Reference is typed two spaces below the letterhead.

Example :

Ref. NBT/192/PBS

(2) Date :

The date is typed in full in order day - month - year two spaces below the reference.

Example :

Ref. BHU/LT/203

10th August 2009

(3) Inside Address :

The inside address also appears on the envelope. The name and address of the recipient are typed. It should be typed three spaces or more below the date or Ref.

Example :

Mr. Rahul Sen
1023, East street
Camp, Pune - 411001

Sometimes there are special marking in a letter comprising

Attention Line and confidential mark. In case the letter is confidential, it is typed just one space above the inside address in upper case.

Example :

CONFIDENTIAL
Mr. Arvind Kumar Sales Manager Bhakti Industries 303, Ramgopal Industrial Estate Dr. R. P. Road, Mulund (W) Mumbai - 400080

Attention line is used when you want your letter to be handled by a particular person. It should be in the upper case or underlined. It should be typed one space below the inside address or above it.

Example :

Vishv Vijay Publisher M-12, connought circus New Delhi - 110001 ATTENTION : MR. ROHIT RAI

OR

For The Attention of Mr. Rajiv Khanna
V - Guard Industries Ltd. 44/1037 L.F.C. Road Kaloor, Kochi Kerla - 682017

(4) Salutation :

Also called greeting. The Salutation in a business letter is always formal. It normally begins with the word 'Dear' and always includes the person's last name or sir, sirs, madam.

Examples

Dear Mr. Joshi, Dear sir/madam, Dear sirs, Gentlemen,

The salutation is typed two spaces below the inside address or the attention line, and then two spaces below follows the body or text of the letter. But sometimes there is a subject line before the text of the letter. Subject lines inclusion marks courtesy to the recipient. It also helps the recipient to know at once the subject of the letter. It is typed two spaces below the salutation.

Examples :

Sub : Supply of Goods on Credit

Sub : Appointment of Accountant

Sub : Excess Amount Paid

(5) Body or text of the Letter

In business letters the colloquial expressions should not be used. There should be a definite order and it should deal with one subject and unnecessary details should be avoided. The first paragraph should be brief and introductory. In it you are required to introduce the subject of your letter and give reference of previous correspondence if any.

The first paragraph should begin with an attractive sentence in order.

- to arouse the reader's interest.
- to make reference to previous correspondence.
- to say why you are writing to the recipient.

A few examples of opening lines are given below.

(1) With reference to your letter of 8 May, I ....
(2) I am writing to enquire about ....
(3) After having seen your advertisement in .... I would like ....
(4) After having received your address from ...., I ....
(5) I received your address from .... and would like ....
(6) We/I recently wrote to you about ....
(7) Thank you for your letter of 5 July ....

(8) Thank you for your letter regarding ....
(9) In reply to your letter of 10 June ....
(10) Following the visit of your sales managers ....

Closing-Text

Never close your letter with expressions like 'Thanking you', 'Looking forward to your reply', or 'Hoping to hear from you'

The closing line of the text of a business letter should be effective in order -

- to make a reference to a future event
- to repeat an apology
- to offer help

A few examples of effective closing lines are given below -

(1) If you require any further information, feel free to contact me.
(2) I look forward to your reply.
(3) I look forward to hearing from you.
(4) I look forward to seeing you.
(5) Please advise as necessary.
(6) We look forward to a successful working relationship in the future.
(7) Should you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.
(8) Once again, I apologies for any inconvenience.
(9) We hope that we may continue to rely on your valued custom.
(10) I would appreciate your immediate attention to this matter.

(6) Complimentary Close :

It is a formal and polite way to end, your business letter. For this 'yours faithfully', 'yours truly', 'Truly yours' are accepted standard forms.

(7) Signature :

The complimentary close or subscription is followed by signature of the writer or the concerned official. It should be signed in ink and by hand. The use of rubber-stamp signature should be avoided. Below the signature the signer's name and title should be typed. The name and title are typed 4-5 spaces below the complimentary close. Sometimes the name of the firm or company is also typed immediately after the complimentary close.

Examples :

Yours Faithfully Signature Ravi Kumar Manager	Your Faithfully Signature Ram Goyal For Sun Enterprises

(8) Reference Initials :

One space below the signature may be typed Reference Initials. It consist of signer's initials in upper case followed by an oblique and then by typist's lower case initial. This serves as a reminder who prepared and typed the letter.

Example

Your Faithfully Ram Kumar Manager RK/MPS

(9) Enclosures :

Just below the reference initials is typed the Enclosure reminder followed by the number of enclosed items.

Example

Encl. : 5

(10) Copies to be Circulated Notation :

This is a courtesy like Enclosure to let the recipient know to which third party the copy of the letter has been sent. It is indicated by typing 'CC' followed by the name of the recipient of the copy of the letter.

Example :

Encl. : 4 CC Mr. Kartik Sahani, Sales Manager

(11) Envelope :

The envelope should always match the letter in quality, size and colour. The address should be typed in single space about half way down and leaving proper space margin to the left.

❑ ❑

Useful Phrases For Letter Writing

(A) Phrases for Personal and Social Correspondence

Openings :

The standard opening for personal correspondence is Dear but variations include :

My dear....
My dearest....
Darling....

Useful Phrases :

Thank you for your letter [inviting, offering, confirming]
I am very grateful to you for [letting me know, offering, writing]
It was so kind of you to [write, invite, send]
Many thanks for [sending, inviting, enclosing]
I am writing to tell you that
I am delighted to announce that
I was delighted to hear that
I am sorry to inform you that
I was so sorry to hear that

Closures : For acquaintances and formal situations

Best wishes
With best wishes
Kindest regards

Closures : Affectionate variations for close friends and family

All my love
All the best

Love
Lots of love
Much love
With love
Love from us both
See you soon
Once again many thanks
I look forward to seeing you soon
With love and best wishes
With love to you all
Do give my kindest regards to....

(B) Phrases for Letters about Employment

Openings :

The standard opening for formal correspondence is Dear

Dear Sir	Dear Mr
Dear Madam	Dear Mrs
Dear Sir or Madam	Dear Ms
Dear Sirs	

Useful Phrases :

I am writing in response to your advertisement in [publication]
I am writing to apply for the post of
I should be pleased to attend an interview
Thank you for your letter of [date] offering me the post of
I am delighted to accept the position of [job title]
I look forward to starting work with you

Closures :

Thank you for considering this application
I should be pleased to attend an interview
Please do not hesitate to contact me on the above number if you should require further information
I look forward to hearing from you