

LETTER WRITING BUSINESS LETTERS

By Moazzam Ali

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COMMERCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

- Commercial correspondence is the correspondence you share with another party during the course of or in continuation of a business transaction. It is a very important part of business, primarily because it is a form of written documentation of the client's requirements, your statement of intent and ability, and all the other things, good and bad, associated with a business transaction.



COMMERCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

- Commercial correspondence is not only important to business, it is a critical aspect of business. Commercial correspondence acts as a reference point for any queries regarding a project completed in the past. There can be different kinds of commercial correspondence - a requirement document, a courtesy letter, a complaint letter, etc.



USES OF A BUSINESS LETTER

- A business letter is a formal way of communication between two or more parties. There are many different uses and business letters. Business letters can be informational, persuasive, motivational, or promotional.
- A business letter can...
 - tell an employer why you want the job.
 - tell a company that you don't like their service.
 - ask someone for information.
 - tell someone in government what you think.



THE IMPORTANCE OF LETTERS

1. Letters represent your company's public image and your competence
2. Letters are more personal than a report, yet more formal than memos or e-mail
3. Letters are more permanent than e-mail
4. Letters constitute an official legal record of an agreement

THE IMPORTANCE OF LETTERS

5. Letters follow up on telephone calls and other types of oral communications
6. Letters provide a wide range of corporate information
7. Letters can support action
8. Letters sell
9. Letters are efficient for targeted mass mailings

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD LETTER

- o The most important element of writing a good letter is your ability to identify and write to your **audience**. If you are addressing your letter to the department of human resources, avoid using highly technical terms that only engineers would understand, even if your letter is addressed to an engineering company, chances are that the personnel in human resources does not have an engineering background.

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD LETTER

- o The next element is that you make sure you present your objective in a **clear and concise** manner. Don't be vague about your objective, most people will not have the patience to sit there and guess at the meaning of your letter or the time to read a long-winded letter, just get to the point without going into unnecessary details.

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD LETTER

- o Another important element to remember is to remain professional. Even if you are writing a complaint letter, remain polite and courteous, simply state the problem(s) along with any other relevant information and be sure to avoid threats and slander.

LETTER FORMATS

- o Full-block format
 - All text flush left, spaces between paragraphs
- o Semi-block/Modified format
 - The writer's address, date, complementary close, and signature to the right side of the letter
 - The date aligns with the complementary close
 - Notations of enclosures flush left below signature

LETTER FORMATS

- o Indented paragraph format
 - Identical to the semi-block format except that each paragraph is indented five spaces
- o Continuing pages
 - If your letter runs beyond one page, use name, page number, or address in the header of the second page

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Return Address Line 1 |
Return Address Line 2 |
Date (Month Day, Year) |
Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr. Full name of recipient. |
Title/Position of Recipient.
Company Name
Address Line 1
Address Line 2

Dear Mr./Mrs./Mr./Ms. Last Name: |
Subject: Title of Subject |

Body Paragraph 1 |
Body Paragraph 2 |
Body Paragraph 3 |
Closing (Sincerely, |, |) |
Signature |
Your Name (Printed) |
Your Title
Enclosures (2) |
Type Initials |
    
```

PARTS OF A LETTER

- Address
- Date line
- Inside address
- Salutation
- Subject line
- Text of the letter (body)
- Complementary close
- Signature
- Enclosure(s) line
- Copy notation/Reference Initials

PARTS OF A LETTER

- **1. Your Address:** (Not needed if the letter is printed on paper with the company letterhead already on it.): The return address of the sender of the letter so the recipient can easily find out where to send a reply to. Skip a line between your address and the date.
- **2. Date:** Put the date on which the letter was written in the format Month Day Year i.e. August 30, 2003. Skip a line between the date and the inside address (some people skip 3 or 4 lines after the date).
- **3. Inside Address:** The address of the person you are writing to along with the name of the recipient, their title and company name, if you are not sure who the letter should be addressed to either leave it blank, but try to put in a title, i.e. "Director of Human Resources". Skip a line between the date and the salutation.

PARTS OF A LETTER

- **4. Salutation:** Dear Ms./Mrs./Mr. Last Name., Dear Director of Department Name: or To Whom It May Concern: if recipient's name is unknown. Note that there is a colon after the salutation. Skip a line between the salutation and the subject line or body.
- **5. Subject Line (optional):** Makes it easier for the recipient to find out what the letter is about. Skip a line between the subject line and the body.
- **6. Body:** The body is where you write the content of the letter; the paragraphs should be single spaced with a skipped line between each paragraph. Skip a line between the end of the body and the closing.
- **7. Closing:** Let's the reader know that you are finished with your letter; usually ends with Sincerely, Sincerely yours, Thank you, and so on. Note that there is a comma after the end of the closing and only the first word in the closing is capitalized. Skip 3-4 lines between the closing and the printed name, so that there is room for the signature.

PARTS OF A LETTER

- **8. Signature:** Your signature will go in this section, usually signed in black or blue ink with a pen.
- **9. Printed Name:** The printed version of your name, and if desired you can put your title or position on the line underneath it. Skip a line between the printed name and the enclosure.
- **10. Enclosure:** If letter contains other document other than the letter itself your letter will include the word "Enclosure." If there is more than one you would type, "Enclosures (#)" with the # being the number of other documents enclosed that doesn't include the letter itself.
- **11. Reference Initials:** If someone other than yourself typed the letter you will include your initials in capital letters followed by the typist's initials in lower case in the following format, AG/gs or AG:gs.

WRITING A BUSINESS LETTER



HOW DOES A BUSINESS LETTER LOOK?

- A business letter is a special kind of letter.
- There is a correct order for each part of the letter.



BUSINESS LETTER FORMAT

Mohammed Ali
 924 First Avenue North
 St. Louis, MO 57844

Your name and address are the first thing on a business letter.



Business Letter Format

Mohammed Ali
 924 First Avenue North
 St. Louis, MO 57844

Make two empty lines.

April 1, 2004

Then type the date.



Business Letter Format

Mohammed Ali
 924 First Avenue North
 St. Louis, MO 57844

April 1, 2004

Jessica Brown
 Technology Instructor
 Hmong American Partnership
 430 North Dale Street
 St. Paul, MN 55103

Make two empty lines.

Type the name, title, company, and address of the person you are sending the letter to.

Business Letter Format

April 1, 2004

Jessica Brown
 Technology Instructor
 Hmong American Partnership
 430 North Dale Street
 St. Paul, MN 55103

Dear Ms. Brown,

Make one empty line.

Type the greeting.

Use titles such as Dr. Mr. or Ms. If you don't know the name of the person you can type

To Whom it May Concern:

Business Letter Format

April 1, 2004

Jessica Simpson
 Technology Instructor
 Hmong American Partnership
 430 North Dale Street
 St. Paul, MN 55103

Dear Ms. Brown

I am writing to request.....

Make one empty line.

Type the body of the letter. This is where you give information, ask questions, or tell the person what you think.

Business Letter Format

Dear Ms. Brown,

I am writing to request information about your computer class, Training For Employable Computer Skills. Specifically, I would like to know when the class meets, what topics are covered, and how I can register for the class. Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Make one empty line.

Type the closing.

Business Letter Format

Dear Ms. Brown,

I am writing to request information about your computer class, Training For Employable Computer Skills. Specifically, I would like to know when the class meets, what topics are covered, and how I can register for the class. Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Mohammed Ali

Make 4 empty lines.

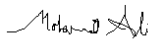
Type your name.

Business Letter Format

Dear Ms. Brown,

I am writing to request information about your computer class, Training For Employable Computer Skills. Specifically, I would like to know when the class meets, what topics are covered, and how I can register for the class. Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Mohammed Ali

When you print your letter you will sign right here.

SPACING

Now you are ready to type a business letter. Don't forget about the spacing.

Mohammed Ali
924 First Avenue North
St. Louis, MO 57844

April 1, 2004

Jessica Brown
Technology Instructor
Hmong American Partnership
430 North Dale Street
St. Paul, MN 55103

Dear Ms. Brown,

I am writing to request information about your computer class, Training For Employable Computer Skills. Specifically, I would like to know when the class meets, what topics are covered, and how I can register for the class. Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Mohammed Ali

2 lines

2 lines

1 line

1 line

1 line

4 lines



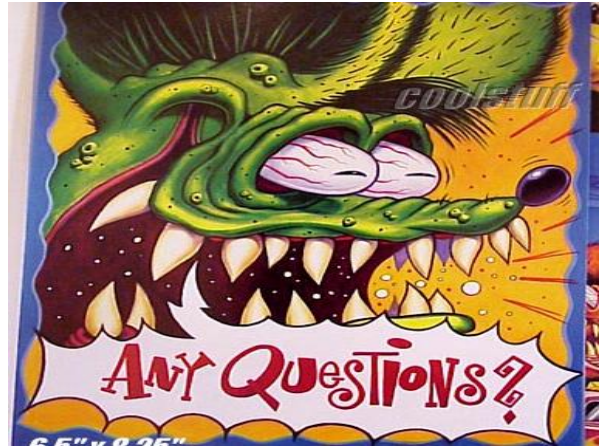
The points to note about this layout are:

- most business firms use 'headed paper' for letters, with the name of the firm and the address at the top of the letter
- the date is placed in the usual 'right-hand corner' or on the left above the addressee's name and address
- the addressee's name and status in the firm are given and then the full address
- an informal greeting is used, because the writer knows the addressee well
- a 'block' format is being used, so there is no indenting from the edge of the paper
- it is common practice to include a more personal closing such as 'Best



The points to note about this layout are:

- the headed paper and the date above the addressee's name and address: in block formats, the date may appear in this place
- the addressee's name and address are not punctuated by commas or full stops
- the formal greeting "Dear Sir/Madam" with no comma after it
- the closing is "Yours faithfully" rather than "Yours sincerely" because the addressee has not been addressed by name or surname.



FRIENDLY LETTERS



PURPOSE OF FRIENDLY LETTER

- A friendly letter is a way of communication between two people (sometimes more) who are usually well acquainted. There are many uses and reasons for writing a friendly letter, but usually friendly letters will consist of topics on a personal level. Friendly letters can either be printed or hand-written.

FRIENDLY LETTER WRITING

- The friendly letter is typically **less formal** than that of a business letter. Usually the **first paragraph** of the body will consist of an introduction which will give the recipient an idea about you're writing to them with a short summary of the main topic of your letter. If you don't know the person you are writing to, you may want to introduce yourself in this introductory paragraph as well.

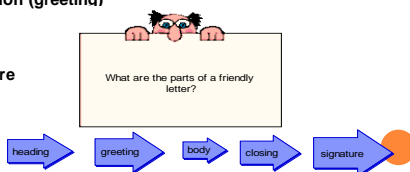
FRIENDLY LETTER WRITING

- The next few paragraphs will usually consist of the **message** you want to get across along with any details you may want to convey.
- The last paragraph will usually be the **conclusion** where you wrap everything up. You can sum up your main idea in this paragraph, thank the recipient for their time, wish the recipient well, and/or ask any questions.
- Since friendly letters are less formal, **you can feel free to write it** however you like, but the above format is fairly common.

PARTS OF A FRIENDLY LETTER

- A friendly letter has five parts

- **The Heading**
- **The Salutation (greeting)**
- **The Body**
- **The Closing**
- **The Signature**



PARTS OF A FRIENDLY LETTER

- **1. The Heading.** This includes the address, line by line, with the last line giving date. Skip a line after the heading. The heading is indented to the right side of the page. If using preaddressed stationery, add just the date.
- **2. The Greeting.** The greeting always ends with a comma. The greeting may be formal, beginning with the word "dear" and using the person's given name or relationship, or it may be informal if appropriate

Formal: Dear Uncle Jim, Dear Mr. Wilkins,
 Informal: Hi Joe, Greetings,

PARTS OF A FRIENDLY LETTER

- **3. The body.** Also known as the main text. This includes the message you want to write. 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. The complimentary close.** This short expression is always a few words on a single line. It ends in a comma. It should be indented to the same column as the heading. Skip one to three spaces (two is usual) for the signature line

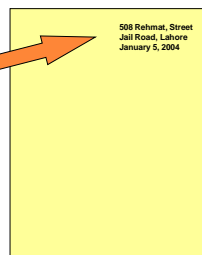
PARTS OF A FRIENDLY LETTER

- **5. The signature line.** Type or print 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. The signature should be written in blue or black ink. If the letter is quite informal, you may omit the signature line as long as you sign the letter.
- **Postscript (optional).** If your letter contains a postscript, begin it with **P.S.** and write the message. Skip a line after the signature line to begin the postscript (P.S. will be written on the left side of the page).

THE HEADING

- The heading can include your address and the date. In casual, friendly letters your address is not necessary.

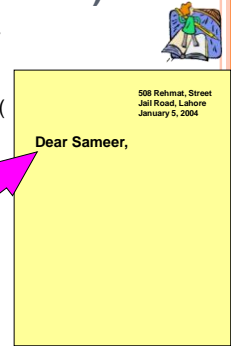
Heading



THE SALUTATION (GREETING)

- Dear _____. The blank is for the name of the person you are writing. After you write the person's name you put a comma (,) .

Greeting



THE BODY

- The body of the letter is the information you are writing in your letter.

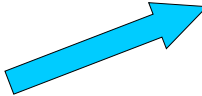


508 Rehmat, Street
Jail Road, Lahore
January 5, 2004

Dear Sameer,

I hope you will be able to come and visit next month. We are planning a special visit to the museum. My mom will call your mom later this week to make all arrangements. Be sure to bring your swimsuit when you come! We're planning an afternoon trip to the lake.

Body



THE CLOSING

- The Closing: In the closing the first word is capitalized and you put a comma after the last word.

Some examples of closings are: Sincerely, Your friend, Love, Very truly yours,



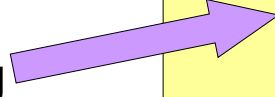
508 Rehmat, Street
Jail Road, Lahore
January 5, 2004

Dear Susan,

I hope you will be able to come and visit next month. We are planning a special visit to the museum. My mom will call your mom later this week to make all arrangements. Be sure to bring your swimsuit when you come! We're planning an afternoon trip to the lake.

Your friend,

Closing



YOUR SIGNATURE

- This is your name. It goes under the closing.



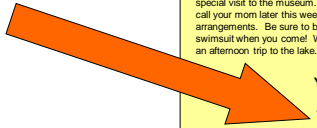
508 Rehmat, Street
Jail Road, Lahore
January 5, 2004

Dear Sameer,

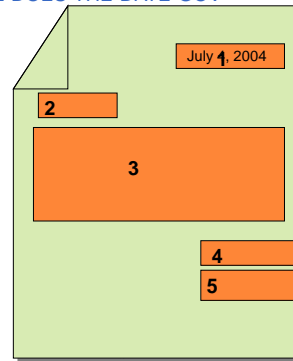
I hope you will be able to come and visit next month. We are planning a special visit to the museum. My mom will call your mom later this week to make all arrangements. Be sure to bring your swimsuit when you come! We're planning an afternoon trip to the lake.

Your friend,
Ali

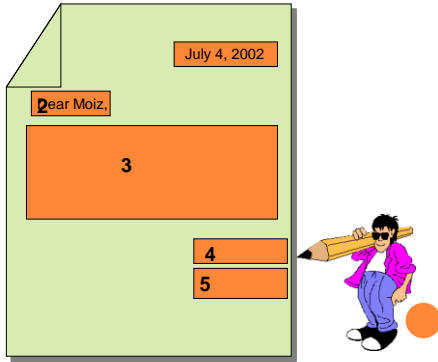
Signature



WHERE DOES THE DATE GO?



WHERE DOES THE GREETING GO?



July 4, 2002

Dear Moiz,

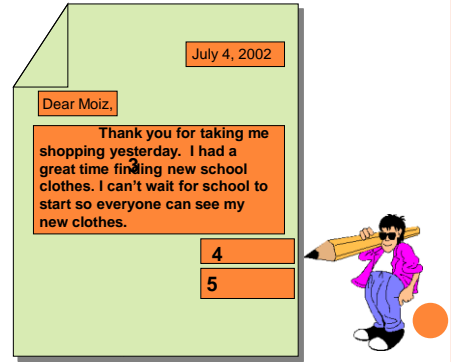
3

4

5

A cartoon character with a pencil and a red ball is standing next to the envelope.

WHERE DOES THE BODY GO?



July 4, 2002

Dear Moiz,

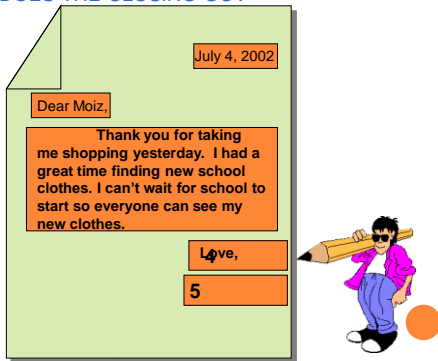
Thank you for taking me shopping yesterday. I had a great time finding new school clothes. I can't wait for school to start so everyone can see my new clothes.

4

5

A cartoon character with a pencil and a red ball is standing next to the envelope.

WHERE DOES THE CLOSING GO?



July 4, 2002

Dear Moiz,

Thank you for taking me shopping yesterday. I had a great time finding new school clothes. I can't wait for school to start so everyone can see my new clothes.

Love,

5

A cartoon character with a pencil and a red ball is standing next to the envelope.

WHERE DOES THE SIGNATURE GO?



July 4, 2002

Dear Moiz,

Thank you for taking me shopping yesterday. I had a great time finding new school clothes. I can't wait for school to start so everyone can see my new clothes.

Love,

5Ali

A cartoon character with a pencil and a red ball is standing next to the envelope.

A SAMPLE FRIENDLY LETTER



July 4, 2002

Dear Moiz,

Thank you for taking me shopping yesterday. I had a great time finding new school clothes. I can't wait for school to start so everyone can see my new clothes.

Love,
Ali

311 East Duke Street
Stanley, N.C. 28164
August 15, 2004

Dear Phil,

How has your summer been? Not too hot I hope. Did you get to visit your grandparents? Did you go on your trip to Toronto as you had hoped? They say Toronto is a beautiful city.

This is my second season at Camp Bellaire. I just passed my swimming test. Now I can swim out to the raft and also use the boats. To pass I had to jump into the water with my clothes on (as if I had just fallen out of a boat). But finally I swam back to shore. It was tough, but I did it!

I'm looking forward to seeing you soon. There is lots of news to catch up on!

Your friend,
Mike

heading

311 East College Street
Stanley, N.C. 28164
August 15, 2004

Dear Phil,

greeting

body

How has your summer been? Not too hot I hope. Did you get to visit your grandparents? Did you go on your trip to Toronto as you had hoped? They say Toronto is a beautiful city.

This is my second season at Camp Bellaire. I just passed my swimming test. Now I can swim out to the raft and also use the boats. To pass I had to jump into the water with my clothes on (as if I had just fallen out of a boat). But finally I swam back to shore. It was tough, but I did it!

I'm looking forward to seeing you soon. There is lots of news to catch up on!

closing

Your friend,

signature

Mike

Each of the following letters is written in an **inappropriate tone and language** for its purpose. Rewrite each of them using a different and appropriate tone and language.

1) Dear Dorothy,
It has come to my attention that you will be present at my party on Saturday the eighth of March next at the hour of 7.30. I am pleased to inform you that your presence will be welcome at this event and my respective parents are also anticipating your attendance with positive feelings. Please do not consider coming bearing gifts of any kind. Your presence will be sufficient.
Yours faithfully,
Sylvia Magnus
Sylvia Magnus

2) Dear Mr Wilson,
How are you then? Remember me? I worked in your firm a stores last summer holidays. Well, the fact is I've left school now and I thought I'd just drop you a line to ask if you've got anything going for me on, like, a permanent basis. Nothing too strenuous, of course!
Frankly, I want to get a job to earn some cash. I want to go skiing at Christmas. Can you help out? Looking apart, I'd consider anything. See you then.
Yours etc. Rodney

3) Dear Madam,
Thanks a lot for your recent order. I'm afraid we're having some difficulty with the old suppliers again. Can't help it at our end, but that sounds like excuses. We'll try and sort it out as soon as possible, depend on it. Look, immediately we get the stuff in, we'll rush it to you. O.K.? Be in touch.
Best regards,
Laura

TO MIKHAIL NAIMY BY KHALIL GIBRAN

Boston,
Jan. 1, 1921

Dear Meesha:

Good morning, and a happy New Year. May the Lord burden your vines with bunches of grapes, and fill your bins with wheat and replenish your jars with oil, honey, and wine, and may Providence place your hand upon the heart of Life in order to feel the pulse of Life's heart.

This is my first letter to you in the New Year. Were I in New York, I would ask you to spend the evening with me in the peaceful hermitage. But how far am I from New York, and how far is the hermitage from me!

How are you, and what are you writing or composing, and what are you thinking? Is the special issue of *Al-Sayeh* about to come out, or is it still waiting for those machines which run fast when we wish them to slow down, and slow down when we wish them to run fast? The West is a machine and everything in it is at the mercy of the machine. Yes, Meesha, even your poem, "Do the Brambles Know," is at the mercy of Saloum Mozart's wheels. I was indisposed last week, and for this reason I did not write anything new. But I have reviewed my article, "The Lost One," smoothed it out, and mailed it to Al-Hilal.

Remember me, Meesha, with love and affection to our comrades, and may God protect you as a dear brother to

GIBRAN

ASSIGNMENT # 1

- Write a courteous letter to your neighbor whose dog annoys you by barking at night.

Or

- To a friend, describing a pleasant dream.
- Write a letter to the manager of the factory, asking permission for a party to visit the factory.

Or

- To the Editor of a newspaper, on reckless driving

COMPLAINT LETTERS' WRITING

- The complaint letter should be **addressed** to the customer service/consumer affairs department or the head office if there is no customer service department. The address and contact information of the customer service department should be available on the company's products or website.

COMPLAINT LETTERS' WRITING

- The complaint letter should be written in the **business letter format**. When writing a complaint letter you want to keep it short and to the point to help ensure that your letter will be read in its entirety, if you write a seven page complaint letter, it's highly unlikely that someone will sit down and read all seven pages.

COMPLAINT LETTERS' WRITING

- In the first paragraph you should identify what the issue is and any **relevant information** that you believe is important. Be sure to include the following information if it's applicable to the situation: the date/time of the issue, location, name of person on duty, name of product, what the problem was, your account number, model number, price, warranty information and reference number. Be sure to stick with the facts and avoid putting emotions into your letter.

COMPLAINT LETTERS' WRITING

- The next paragraph should state what you would **like done** to resolve the situation. If you received poor service, you could request an apology or a coupon. If a product malfunctioned, you could request that you could exchange the product for a new one or request a refund.

COMPLAINT LETTERS' WRITING

- The last paragraph **should thank** the reader for the time. You can also throw in some compliments about something you liked about their company's product or service.
- You should include your telephone number/e-mail address after your printed name so that they can contact you.
- Be sure to keep a copy of the letter for yourself and include photocopies of any relevant documents and enclose them with your letter.

65 Market Street
Val Haven, CT 95135

June 30, 2004

Customer Service
Cool Sports, LLC
8423 Green Terrace Road
Asterville, WA 65435

Dear Sir or Madam,

I have recently ordered a new pair of soccer cleats (item #6542951) from your website on June 21. I received the order on June 26. Unfortunately, when I opened it I saw that the cleats were used. The cleats had dirt all over it and there was a small tear in front of the part where the left toe would go. My order number is AF26168156.

To resolve the problem, I would like you to credit my account for the amount charged for my cleats. I have already went out and bought a new pair of cleats at my local sporting goods store so sending another would result in me having two pairs of the same cleats.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I have been a satisfied customer of your company for many years and this is the first time I have encountered a problem. If you need to contact me, you can reach me at (555) 555-5555.

Sincerely,

Signature

WRITING THANK YOU NOTES

- There are many reasons for writing a thank you note. Thank you notes may be written after receiving a gift, help from a friend, for attendance at an important event, or for any other occasion where you feel it is necessary. A simple thank you note shows your appreciation, it will make the person you are thanking feel better, improve your image as a grateful person, and/or increase the likelihood the person you are thanking will help out again.

WRITING THANK YOU NOTES

- Thank you notes can be written on just about anything but writing it on something nicer than just plain white paper or through email will add to the value and presentation of your note. A thank you note that is hand written on a card will look more personalized and sincere than a note printed off the computer. Notes can either be mailed or given in person but the sooner it is done the better, usually within two weeks is a good time frame to use. Thank you notes are usually simple but thoughtful messages thank you write to express your gratitude. The following is a guideline that you can use when writing your thank you note.

WRITING THANK YOU NOTES

Hi Aunt Kelly!

Thanks for the new bike you bought me for my birthday; it's just what I wanted. The color red fits the bike well! It is my favorite color. I plan on riding the bike around my neighborhood everyday right after school. I look forward to seeing you soon!
Thanks again for the bike.

Love,
Signature

WRITING THANK YOU NOTES

- Greetings**
To start out the note, you should greet the recipient, i.e. "Hi Aunt Kelly!"
- Thank them**
You should mention the gift/service and express your appreciation for it, e.g. "Thanks for the new bike you bought me for my birthday, it's just what I wanted."
- Mention something you liked.**
Mention a specific detail about gift/service, e.g. "The color red fits the bike well! It is my favorite color."
- Update them**
Update the recipient on your life pertaining to the gift/service, e.g. "I plan on riding the bike around my neighborhood everyday right after school."

WRITING THANK YOU NOTES

- **Add a personal note**
Add a personal note to the recipient, it doesn't have to be very long or detailed, e.g. "I look forward to seeing you soon!"
- **Thank them again!**
You can never say thank you too much, and since this is a thank you note it is a very appropriate place to do it, e.g. "Thanks again for the bike."
- **Closing**
End the letter with a simple closing followed by your signature on the next line, e.g. "Love, (Line Break) Your Signature"
- **Notes & Tips**
If you received money, don't mention the amount, you may want to write something along the lines of, "Thank you for your generosity, it is greatly appreciated."

BUSINESS EMAIL WRITING

- The following are some tips to help you when you are writing business letters through email:
- A heading is not necessary in an email (your return address, their address, and the date).
- Use a descriptive subject line.
- Avoid using an inappropriate or silly email, register a professional sounding address if you don't have one.
- Use simple formatting, keep everything flush with the left margin; avoid special formatting and tabs.

BUSINESS EMAIL WRITING

- Keep your letter formal, just because it's an email instead of a hard copy is no excuse for informality (don't forget to use spell check and proper grammar).
- Try to keep your letter less than 80 characters wide, some email readers will create line breaks on anything longer and ruin the formatting.
- If possible avoid attachments unless the recipient has requested or is expecting an attachment. If it is a text document, simply cut and paste the text below your letter and strip off any special formatting.
- If the person's name is unknown, address the person's title i.e. Dear Director of Human Resources.

ADDRESSING AN ENVELOPE

- In the upper-left hand corner should be your name, and underneath that should be your return address.
- In the upper-right hand corner should be the postage stamp (with the correct postage amount).
- In the middle-center should be the recipient's name and recipient's address.
- If you are writing a friendly letter with a small envelope, you can write the return address on the flap of the envelope if there is no room on the top-left hand corner.

Your Name
Return Address Line 1
Return Address Line 2

STAMP

Recipient Name
Recipient Address Line 1
Recipient Address Line 2

