



How to Write a Business Letter

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Salutation

- The salutation is an important part of a letter.
- The choice of the right salutation depends on whether you know the person you are writing to and how formal your relationship is.



Salutation - Formal

*To Whom It May
Concern:*

Use only when you do not know to whom you must address the letter, for example, when writing to an institution.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Use when writing to a position without having a named contact.

Dear Mr Smith,

Use when you have a named male contact.

Dear Ms Smith,

Use when you have a named female contact.



Salutation - Formal

Dear Dr Smith,

Use when writing to a named doctor.

Dear Prof Smith,

Use when writing to a named professor.

Dear Xu Li,

Type the whole name when you are unsure of the recipient's gender.



Salutation

Informal but still professional

<i>Dear Colleagues,</i>	Use when writing to a group of people.
<i>Dear Mary,</i>	Use when writing to a named female.
<i>Dear John,</i>	Use when writing to a named male.



Salutation Informal (personal letters)

These salutations should be used with people you are close to, as they might offend others.

Hello guys, Use when writing to a group of people you know very well.

Hi Guys,

Hi, Use when writing to one or more people you know very well.

Hey,



Punctuation for Salutations

- There should be a comma after the salutation and a colon after “To Whom It May Concern”.
- No full stop is needed after Mr, Ms, and Dr. when using British English.
- Full stop and comma are used in American English
- The form Miss is outdated – best to use Ms (pronounced Mzzz)
- Avoid the exclamation (!) in salutations.



Starting your letter


There two ways in which business letters usually start:

- they make reference to a previous contact, for example, phone conversation, meeting, previous mail correspondence;
- or they are the first contact with the recipient.

Starting your letter

- **Making reference to previous contact**
- *I am (we are writing) regarding*
- *your inquiry about ...*
- *our phone conversation ...*
- *In reply to your request ...*
Thank you for contacting us.

Contacting
the recipient
for the first
time

- 
- *I am (we are) writing to*
 - *inform you that ...*
 - *confirm ...*
 - *enquire about ...*
 - *complain about ...*
 - *I am contacting you for the following reason.
I recently heard about ... and would like to ...*

Making a Request

- *We would appreciate it if you would ...*
- *I would be grateful if you could ...*
- *Could you please send me ...*
- *Could you possibly tell us ...*
- *It would be helpful if you could send us ...*

- *We are pleased to announce that ...*
- *I am delighted to inform you that ...*
- *Congratulations, you have just....*
- *Best wishes are in order...*
- *Our company has decided to give...*

Giving Good
News

Giving Bad News



- *We regret to inform you that ...*
- *I'm afraid it would not be possible to ...*
- *Unfortunately, we are unable to ...*
- *After careful consideration we have decided ...*



Enclosures

- *Please find enclosed (for letters)*
- *The enclosure contains the necessary documents.*
- *Abbreviation for enclosure is Encl .*
- *Please find attached (for emails)*
- *In the attachment you will find the requested forms.*
- *The symbol for an email attachment is usually a paper clip.*



Offering future assistance

- *If you require more information, please let us know.*
- *Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need any further assistance.*
- *For further assistance, please contact us.*



Referring to future contact

- *I am looking forward to hearing from you soon.*
- *We are looking forward to meeting you on 21 January/in New York.*
- *We would appreciate your reply at your earliest convenience.*



Closing - Very Formal

- The closing salutation must match the opening salutation and the overall tone of the letter.
- Choose one of the following closing lines depending on the formality of the salutation.

Your sincerely, Sincerely yours, Respectfully, Yours faithfully (GB)	Use when you've started with Dear Sir/Madam or To Whom It May Concern.
Sincerely,	Use when you've started with Dear + name.



Closing - Less formal but still professional

Kind regards,

Warm regards,

Regards,

Best regards,

not too formal but businesslike

Best wishes,

even less formal

Closing - Very Informal

Best,
Hugs,
Cheers,

Use with friends and colleagues
you feel close to.
