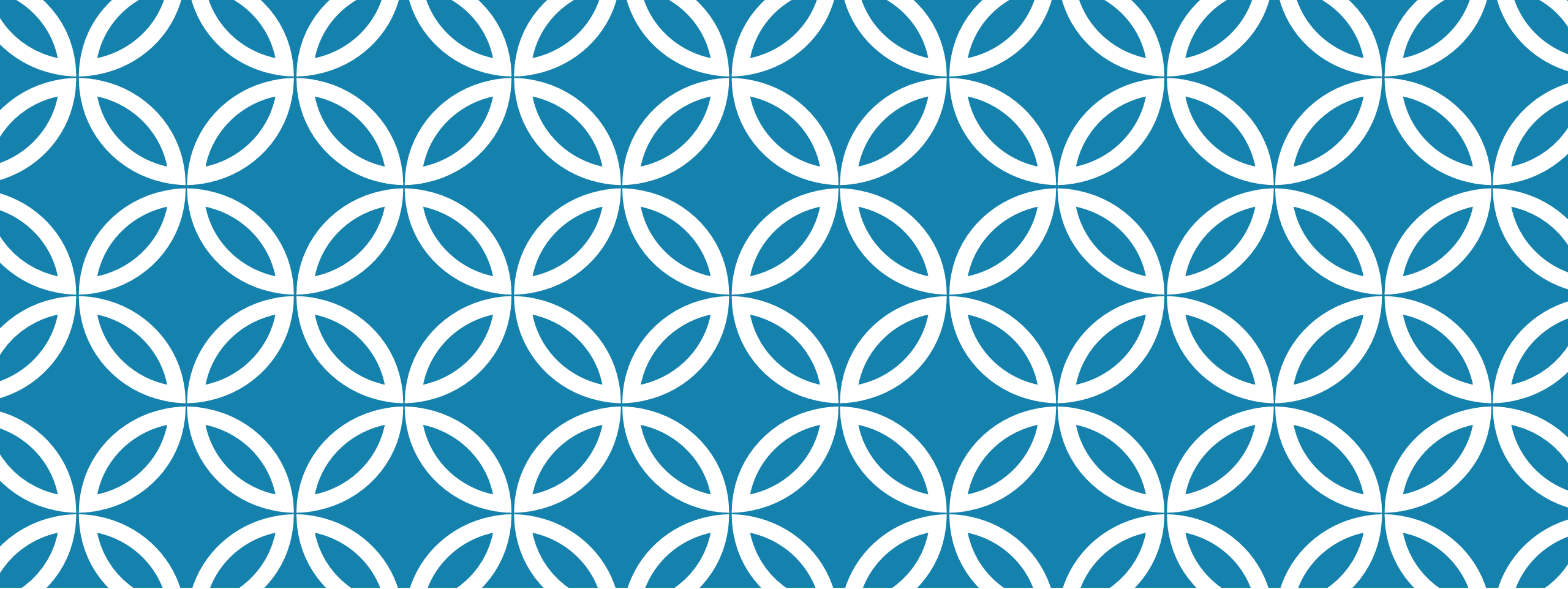




WRITING A BUSINESS LETTER



WHAT IS A BUSINESS LETTER?



A business letter is a letter written in **formal language**, usually used:

- ❖ When writing from one business organisation to another
- ❖ For correspondence between such organizations and their customers, clients and other external parties.

WRITING A BUSINESS LETTER

- ❖ The overall style of letter will depend on the relationship between the parties concerned.
- ❖ There are many reasons to write a business letter:
 - To request direct information or action from another party
 - To order supplies from a supplier
 - To identify a mistake that was committed
 - To reply directly to a request
 - To apologise for something wrong that happened
 - To convey goodwill



DIFFERENT TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

- ❖ The most important element you need to ensure in any business letter is **accuracy**.
- ❖ One of the aspects of writing a business letter that requires the most accuracy is **knowing which type of business letter you are writing**.
- ❖ A number of options are available for those looking to trade in business correspondence, and **getting a reply might be easier if you know the form you need to send**.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

1. Letter of Complaint

- ❖ A letter of complaint will almost certainly **result in an official response** if you approach it from a business-like perspective.
- ❖ Make the complaint **brief, to the point** and **polite**.
- ❖ Politeness pays off regardless of the extent of anger you are actually feeling while composing this type of business letter.



DIFFERENT TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

2. CV (Resume') Cover Letter

- ❖ A cover letter that accompanies a CV (resume') should be **brief**.
- ❖ It should take as little time and as few words as possible to accomplish one task: **persuading the reader** to anticipate reading your CV (resume').
- ❖ Mention the title of the job for which you are applying, as well as one or two of your strongest selling points.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

3. Letter of Recommendation

- ❖ A recommendation letter allows you to use a few well-chosen words to the effect of letting someone else know how highly you value a third party.
- ❖ Resist the temptation to go overboard.
- ❖ Approach your recommendation in a straightforward manner that still allows you to get the point across.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

4. Letter of Resignation

- ❖ An official letter of resignation is a business letter that should be fair and tactful.
- ❖ Be wary of burning any bridges that you may need to cross again in the future.
- ❖ Offer a valid reason for your resignation and avoid self-praise.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

5. Job Applicant Not Hired/ Rejection Letter

- ❖ In some cases you may be required to write a business letter that informs a job applicant that he was not chosen for an open position.
- ❖ Offer an opening note of **thanks for his time, compliment him** on his experience or education and explain that he was just **not what the company is looking for** at the present time.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

6. Notification of Error

- ❖ When sending a business letter that lets the receiving party know that an error has been committed, it is good business sense to **include a copy of the error in question** if there is **paperwork evidence** of it.
- ❖ Make the offer of additional copies of material involved in the error if necessary.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

7. Thanks for Job Recommendation

- ❖ A letter of thanks for an individual that helped you get a job should be professional and courteous.
- ❖ Above all else, avoid the temptation to go overboard in offering your thanks. Be aware that your skills also helped you land the job and it was likely not handed to you as a result of the third party.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

8. Information Request

- ❖ A business letter that requests information should make the request **specific and perfectly understandable**.
- ❖ It is also a good idea to **state the reason** for the information request.
- ❖ Extend advance **appreciation for the expected cooperation** of the recipient.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

- ❖ This list is not exhaustive.
- ❖ Other examples might include:
Referral Letters, Apology Letters,
Retirement Letters, Job Promotion
Letters, Networking Letters..etc

IBM Corporation
4400 Silicon Drive
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

September 28, 1999

Mrs. Mary McGoon
1401 Main Street
Anytown, NC 34829

Subject: "Intro to XML" CD

Dear Mary,

It was a pleasure to meet you at XML World '99 in Ottawa recently. As promised, I'm enclosing a copy of the "Intro to XML" tutorial CD. I apologize that we were out of CDs when you stopped by our booth.

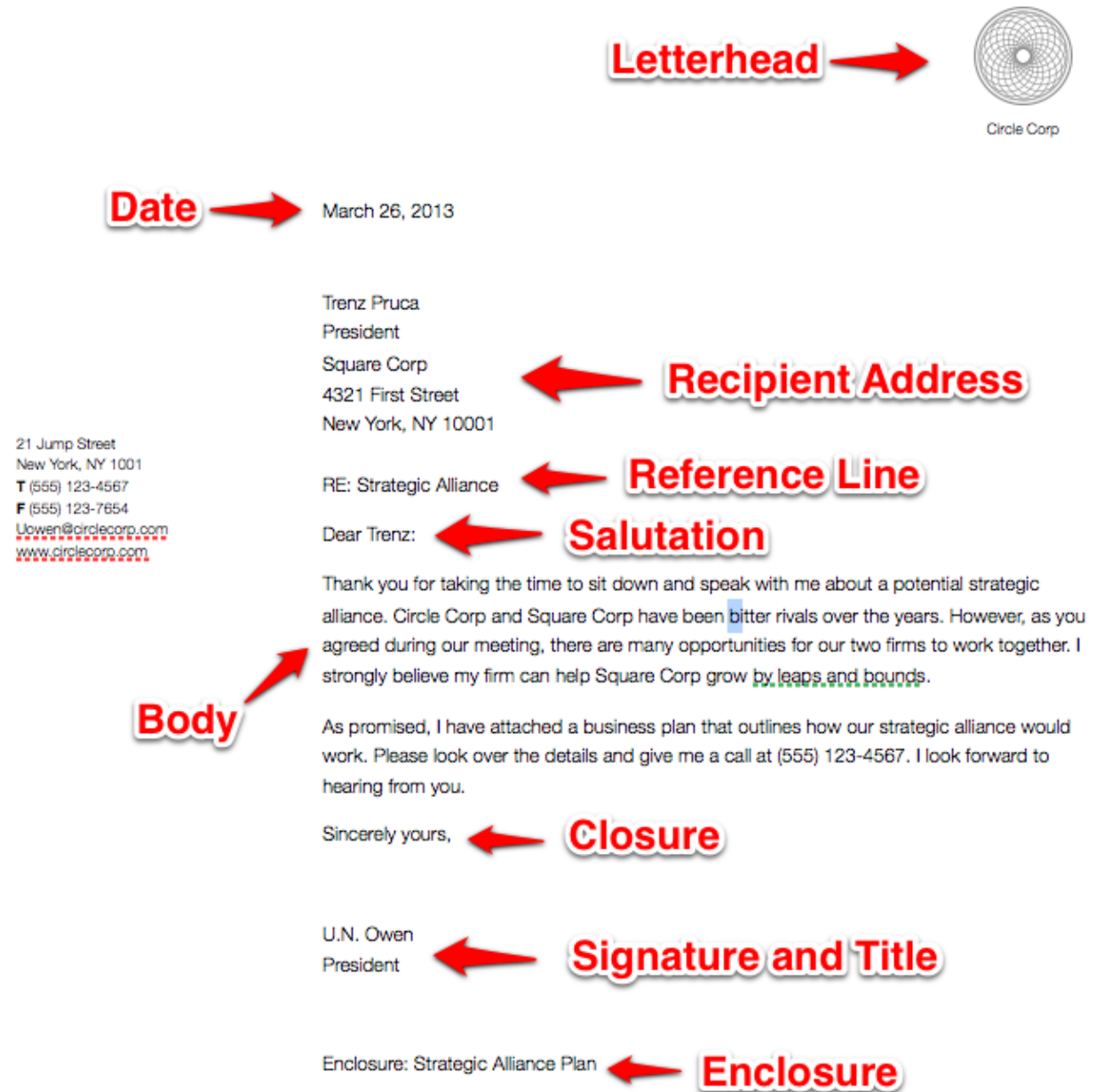
Please let me know if you have any comments on the tutorial, or if you have suggestions for future topics. Over the next few months, we'll be adding new tutorials to the developerWorks web site (www.ibm.com/developerWorks). We'd really like your feedback!

Sincerely,

Doug Tidwell
Senior Programmer

Enclosure: CD-ROM
cc: Dirk Nicol
cc: Leah Ketrang

Components of a Business Letter



COMPONENTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

Letterhead

- ❖ Companies usually use **printed paper** where heading or letterhead is specially designed at the top of the sheet.
- ❖ It bears all the necessary information about the **organisation's identity**.

COMPONENTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

The date of the letter

- ❖ Date of writing - The month should be fully spelled out and the year written with all four digits October 12, 2005 (12 October 2005 – UK style).
- ❖ The date is aligned with the return address.
- ❖ The number of the date is pronounced as an ordinal figure, though the endings st, nd, rd, th, are often omitted in writing.
- ❖ The article before the number of the day is pronounced but not written.
- ❖ In the body of the letter, however, the article is written when the name of the month is not mentioned with the day.

COMPONENTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

The Inside Address

- ❖ In a business or formal letter you should give the address of the recipient after your own address.
- ❖ Include the recipient's name, company, address and postal code.
- ❖ Add job title if appropriate.
- ❖ Separate the recipient's name and title with a comma.

COMPONENTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

The Inside Address

- ❖ Double check that you have the correct spelling of the recipient's name.
- ❖ The Inside Address is always on **the left margin**.
- ❖ If an 8 1/2" x 11" paper is folded in thirds to fit in a standard 9" business envelope, the inside address can appear through the window in the envelope.

COMPONENTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

The Greeting / Salutation

- ❖ The type of salutation depends on your relationship with the recipient.
- ❖ It normally begins with the word “Dear” and always includes the person’s last name.
- ❖ Use every resource possible to address your letter to an actual person.
- ❖ If you do not know the name or the sex of your receiver, address it to Dear Madam/Sir (or Dear Sales Manager or Dear Human Resources Director).
- ❖ As a general rule the greeting in a business letter ends in a colon (US style). It is also acceptable to use a comma (UK style).

COMPONENTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

The Subject Line (optional)

- ❖ Its inclusion can help the recipient in dealing successfully with the **aims of your letter**.
- ❖ Normally the subject sentence is preceded with the word **Subject:** or **Re:**
- ❖ Subject line may be emphasized by underlining, using bold font, or all capital letters.
- ❖ It is usually placed one line **below the greeting** but alternatively can be located directly after the “inside address,” before the “greeting.”

COMPONENTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

The Body Paragraphs

- ❖ The body is where you explain why you're writing.
- ❖ It's the **main part** of the business letter.
- ❖ Make sure the receiver knows who you are and why you are writing but try to **avoid starting with "I"**.
- ❖ Use a **new paragraph** when you wish to **introduce a new idea** or element into your letter.
- ❖ Depending on the letter style you choose, **paragraphs may be indented**.
- ❖ Regardless of format, **skip a line between paragraphs**.

COMPONENTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

The Complimentary Close

- ❖ This **short, polite** closing ends **always with a comma**.
- ❖ It is either at the **left margin** or its left edge is in the centre, depending on the Business Letter Style that you use.
- ❖ The traditional rule of etiquette in Britain is that a formal letter starting “*Dear Sir or Madam*” must end “*Yours faithfully*”, while a letter starting “Dear Mr...” must end “Yours sincerely”. (Note: **the second word of the closing is NOT capitalized**).

COMPONENTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

The Complimentary Close

Signing off at the end of your letter is one of your last opportunities to **make an impression**. Depending on your relationship and reason for writing to the recipient, there are several options available to you.

Very formal

These options are acceptable when you're contacting someone for the first time or you're discussing a serious issue.

Yours sincerely

Yours respectfully

Yours truly

Yours faithfully - appropriate if you don't know the recipient's name

COMPONENTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

Formal

These options would still be acceptable when contacting someone for the first time but demonstrate a friendlier tone.

Kindest regards

Kind regards

Yours appreciatively

Relaxed formal

Once you've established a relationship with the recipient, there is no need to maintain a formal tone (unless you're discussing a serious issue).

Warm regards

Best wishes

With regards

Thank you

Best

COMPONENTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

Signature and Writer's identification

- ❖ The signature is the last part of the letter.
- ❖ You should sign your first and last names.
- ❖ The signature line may include a second line for a title, if appropriate.
- ❖ The signature should start directly above the first letter of the signature line in the space between the close and the signature line.
- ❖ Use blue or black ink.

WHAT TO AVOID WHEN YOU'RE WRITING A FORMAL LETTER

- Spelling and grammatical errors. [Grammarly](#) is a free tool you can use to proofread your work.
- Using contractions, i.e. 'i'm' should read 'I am'. 'That's' should read 'that is'.
- Including unnecessary information.
- Making the same point multiple times
- Overcomplicated language, i.e. 'the issues highlighted are indicative of future failings' *could* read 'I believe these issues will lead to a problem'.

OVERCOMING BIAS IN LANGUAGE

Table 5-1

Overcoming Bias in Language

Examples	Unacceptable	Preferable
Gender Bias		
Using words containing “man”	Mankind Man-made Manpower Businessman Salesman Foreman	Humanity, human beings, human race, people Artificial, synthetic, manufactured, constructed Human power, human energy, workers, workforce Executive, business manager, businessperson Sales representative, salesperson, clerk, sales agent Supervisor
Using female-gender words	Authoress, actress, stewardess	Author, actor, flight attendant
Using special designations	Woman doctor, male nurse	Doctor, nurse
Using <i>he</i> to refer to <i>everyone</i>	The average worker, he	The average worker, he or she
Identifying roles with gender	The typical executive spends four hours of his day in meetings. Consumer, she The nurse/teacher, she	Most executives spend four hours each day in meetings. Consumers, they Nurses/teachers, they
Identifying women by marital status	Don Harron and Catherine Don Harron and Ms. McKinnon	Don Harron and Catherine McKinnon Mr. Harron and Ms. McKinnon
Racial/Ethnic Bias		
Assigning stereotypes	My black assistant speaks more articulately than I do. Not surprisingly, Shing Tung-Yau excels in mathematics.	My assistant speaks more articulately than I do. Shing Tung-Yau excels in mathematics.
Identifying people by race or ethnicity	Frank Clementi, Italian-Canadian CEO	Frank Clementi, CEO
Age Bias		
Including age when irrelevant	Mary Kirazy, 58, has just joined our trust department.	Mary Kirazy has just joined our trust department.
Disability Bias		
Putting the disability before the person	Disabled workers face many barriers on the job. An epileptic, Tracy has no trouble doing her job.	Workers with physical challenges face many barriers on the job. Tracy's epilepsy has no effect on her job performance.

How to create a business letter



Recipients address

Mr K Parry
19 Elm Street
Glossop
Derbyshire
SK13 9PZ

Company name/logo

npower

Date

Our reference: MTRA
22nd July 2006
Your customer account
Your property: 19 Elm Street

Salutation

Dear Mr Parry

Your opening meter reading

Thank you for choosing npower as the supplier of your mains gas.

Your npower gas account will be set up with an opening meter reading of 1942. This is the point from which you will begin saving money on your gas bills.

Your previous gas supplier should use this reading to close your account and produce your final bill. When they send you their final bill, please check to ensure your old account has been closed at 1942. If a different meter reading has been used, you should contact them directly to ask them to send you an amended bill.

You should receive your first npower bill in approximately three months' time. If you've opted to pay by Direct Debit, we will send you a statement for your information only.

If you have any questions, please call our Customer Care Line on 08457 90 60 50. We look forward to saving you money on your gas bills for many years to come.

Signature

Yours sincerely

E Crabbe

Louise Crabbe
Customer Response Manager

Main body of text

Company details

Customer Care
Dorset House
Epsom Drive
Swindon
SN4 2SH

Telephone: 08457 90 60 50
Facsimile: 01793 555944
www.npower.co.uk

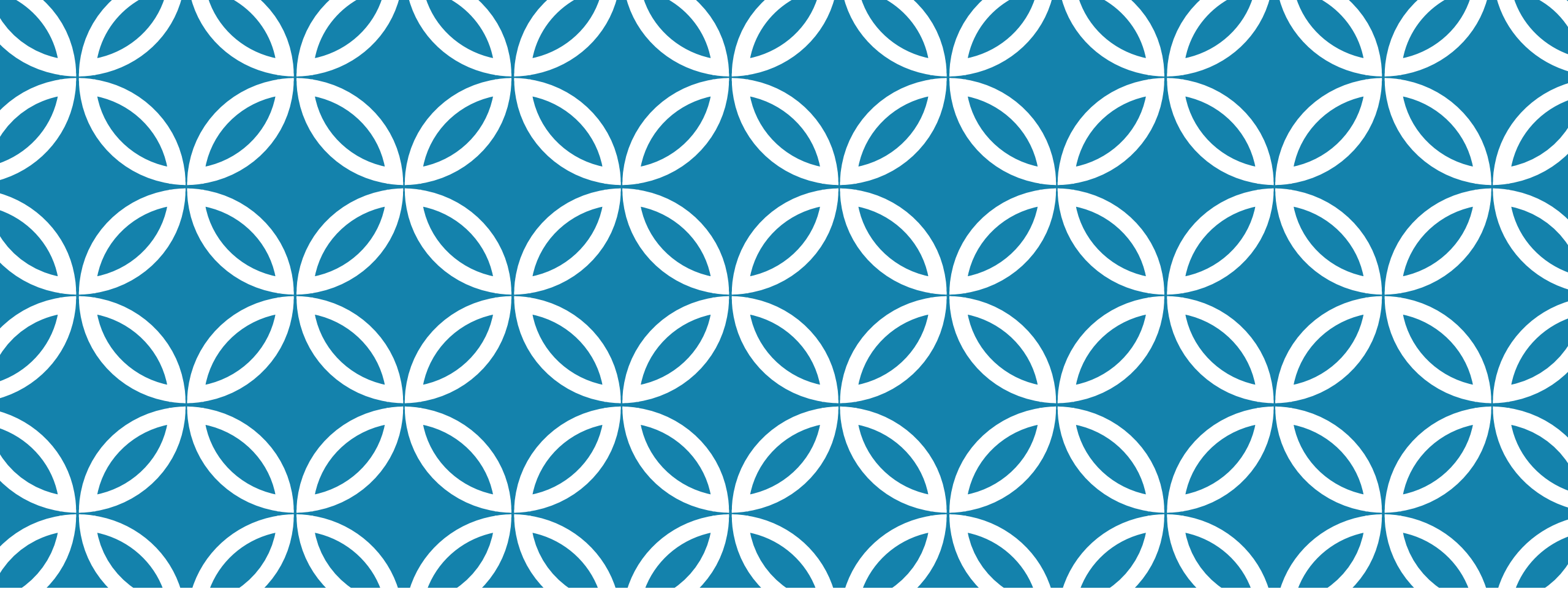
Registered Office: Calsonic Limited
Windsor Hill Business Park
10th Floor, 10th Floor, Swindon SN4 0PL
Registered in England and Wales, No. 2868016

BUSINESS LETTER FORMAT

- ❖ **Block Letter Format:** The common block letter format is formatted with **all of your text with the left margin**. Paragraphs are doubled spaced and all line text single spaced. The margins are a standard word processor setting of one inch.
- ❖ **Semi-block Letter Format:** For the semi-block, the only difference between the semi and alternative block is, as opposed to have the body text justified left, **the first line of each paragraph is indented**.

BUSINESS LETTER FORMAT

- ❖ **Alternative Block Letter Format:** The alternative block letter format moves the return address, date, closing, name, title and signature to the left side of the page.
- ❖ **Simplified Letter Format:** This format takes the same properties of the block letter with one exception, the greeting or salutation is eliminated. This is a helpful format when you don't know the recipient's gender is male or female, or Mrs. or Miss.



EXAMPLES OF A BUSINESS LETTERS



BUSINESS LETTER BLOCK STYLE

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

516 W. Iowa Street
Dermott, AR 71638-2039
(870) 555-0183

December 7, 200- About 2 inches or 2 lines below letterhead

↓ 4

Mr. Alex P. Perkla
Homemade Construction
571 S. Pecan Street
Dermott, AR 71638-2225

↓ 2

Dear Mr. Perkla

↓ 2

Thank you for helping to make this year's Friends and Neighbors Dinner a success.

The tables and benches your crews built, delivered, and set up were put to good use. Meals were enjoyed by 376 people who might otherwise have spent their holiday alone and hungry.

Homemade Construction has a positive reputation in the community. That reputation is well deserved.

↓ 2

Sincerely

↓ 4

Chuck L. Fosgate, Chair
Friends and Neighbors Dinner

↓ 2

Enclosures

Letterhead

Date

Letter
Address

Salutation

Body

Complimentary
Close

Signature
Lines

Enclosure
Notation

Business Letter - Sample

Vancouver Manufacturing

9102 NW 99th Street, Vancouver, Washington 98665
(800) 555-1212 - www.example.com

September 25, 2005

Mr. John Taylor
Director of Operations
ABC Corporation
100 E Main Street
Vancouver, WA 98685

Dear Mr. Taylor:

As our new letterhead indicates, we have recently changed the name of our business from Fort Vancouver Manufacturing to Vancouver Manufacturing.

There has been no change in management and we will be providing the same products and fine service on which we have built our reputation in the industry. We would appreciate it if you would bring this announcement to the attention of your accounts payable department and direct them accordingly.

Thank you for being one of our valued customers. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Al Olsen
President, Vancouver Manufacturing

Danny Disma

9927 Dudstone Street • Danes, IL 71187
958.995.6942 • dannydisma@aol.com

June 13, 2006

2378 North Avenue
Gladstone, OH 28283

Dear Mr. Elliot:

Passion. Dedication. Industry know-how.

These are the attributes that drive me, and these are the attributes that I bring to my work.

I'm passionate about the job that I do. When representing a line or opening a territory, I've always started from the ground up. No one ever gave me a \$30MM brand and said grow it to \$40MM. They gave me a new brand or a new territory and watched as I drove it to success.

I'm dedicated to performing my best. I'm a "roll up your sleeves" kind of person who makes work a priority and who believes wholeheartedly in customer service.

I have extensive industry know-how. With more than 15 years in the field, I'm well-known and well-respected by manufacturers, retailers, and other reps of all sizes – from the big box retailers, to the mom-and-pops, and from lines like Kraftmaid all the way to Elmwood Kitchens.

I'd like the opportunity to share more of my passion, dedication and know-how in person. I look forward to following up soon.

Regards,

Danny Disma



National Cable & Telecommunications Association
25 Massachusetts Avenue, NW – Suite 100
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 222-2300

www.ncta.com

Kyle McSarrow
President and CEO

(202) 222-2500
(202) 222-2514 Fax

November 12, 2008

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin
The Honorable Michael J. Copps
The Honorable Jonathan S. Adelstein
The Honorable Deborah Taylor Tate
The Honorable Robert M. McDowell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: File Nos. EB-08-SE-1067-1075, 1077-1078

Dear Chairman and Commissioners:

On October 30, 2008, the FCC's Enforcement Bureau issued Letters of Inquiry ("LOIs") to 11 NCTA member companies and, according to press reports, at least two other cable companies. The NCTA member companies are: Bend Cable Communications, Bright House Networks, Cablevision Systems, Charter Communications, Comcast Corporation, Cox Communications, GCI, Harron Entertainment Company, Midcontinent Communications, Suddenlink Communications, and Time Warner Cable. Press reports indicate that RCN Corporation and Verizon Communications also received LOIs.¹ Together these companies serve more than 86 percent of the nation's cable customers.

I am writing to express deep concern with the issuance of these LOIs. NCTA and its members do not contest the Commission's authority to inquire into the cable industry's digital migration and its impact on consumers. Indeed, we welcome the opportunity to describe an evolution that will bring numerous benefits to consumers and are willing, as always, to meet with the Chairman, individual Commissioners, or the Media Bureau to discuss the digital migration, which we believe is plainly in the public interest. That said, we have serious concerns concerning the method selected by the Commission to gather information on this subject, in particular the issuance of LOIs to 13 companies to obtain industry-wide information. The appropriate vehicle for that is a Notice of Inquiry or the Commission's annual Video Competition proceeding.

¹ Lynn Stanton, *FCC Probing Shift of Cable Channels*, TRDAILY (Nov. 4, 2008); Jonathan Make, *Channel Move Inquiry Letters Go To Dozen TV Firms*, COMMUNICATIONS DAILY, at 10 (Nov. 6, 2008).