



MERRIMACK COLLEGE

Business Letters

Merrimack College Writing Center

Goals

- Understand the basic structure of a business letter
- Understand how types of letters change according to the type of relationship the business wants to sustain with its audience



Standard Block Form

- Clean and easy to create
- Modern, Professional look
- 1 line between each item except for signature (3 lines)
- No indentations: uses block paragraph format

Sample

42 Douglas Lane
Smalltown, MA 01800

February 25, 2019

Nicholas Greene
HR Specialist
TheReallyBig Company
3341 S. 4th St.
Big City, MA 01975

Dear Mr. Greene,

Introduction Paragraph (your purpose for writing)

Body paragraph(s) (as many as you need, but stay on one page!)

Conclusion Paragraph (your contact info and a thank you are appropriate)

Sincerely,

Jon Q. Applicant

Quick Tips for Clean Sentences

1. Use the 23 word rule: After 23 words, no one cares. If you have to go over 23 words in a sentence, make sure the one before and the one after have less than 23 words.
2. Never begin two consecutive sentences, nor two consecutive paragraphs, with the same word. Avoid ending two consecutive sentences or paragraphs with the same word/phrase, too.
3. Stack your sentences up to see how long they are in relation to each other. To avoid choppiness, avoid having three in a row of the same length and structure.
4. Avoid adverbs. What's the difference between "truly interested" and "interested"? The first wastes time and space. The second is direct.
5. Avoid emotions. Save your love and excitement for non-business writing.
6. Perform your letter out loud, as if your job prospects and career depend on it. You'll more likely find your typos and errors.
7. Keep a positive tone.



Good News Letter Model

Par. 1: Announce the good news.

Par. 2: Provide details and next steps.

Par. 3: Courteous closing.



Bad News (Direct) Model

Par. 1: Announce the bad news.

Par. 2: Provide the rationale/background.

Par. 3: Instruct the recipient of next steps.

Par. 4: Courteous closing.



Bad News (Indirect) Model

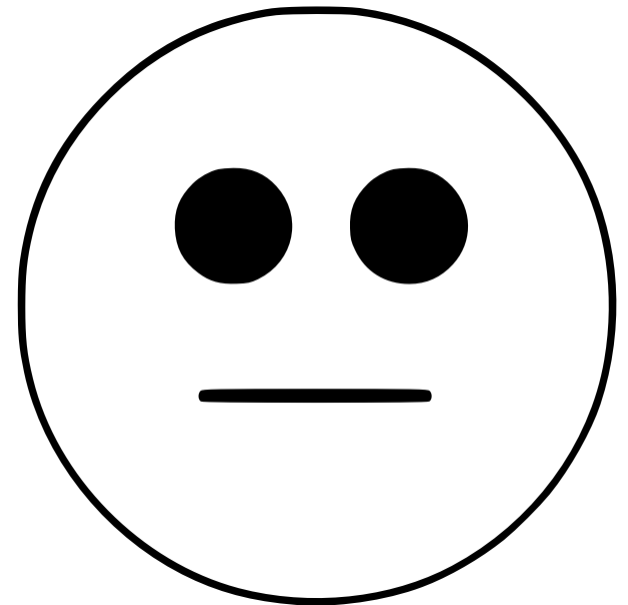
Par. 1: Create a buffer in which you remind the recipient of your good relationship.

Par. 2: Provide the rationale/background.

Par. 3: Announce the bad news.

Par. 4: Instruct the recipient of next steps.

Par. 5: Courteous closing.



AIDA Marketing Letter Model

Par. 1: Grab the reader's **ATTENTION** by establishing their need.

Par. 2: Build their **INTEREST** by showing how product/service will help.

Par. 3: Heighten their **DESIRE** by showing product/service details/benefits.

Par. 4: Explain how the reader can take **ACTION** to receive the product/service.



Remediation Letter Model

Par. 1: Acknowledge receipt of the complaint; DO NOT apologize for what happened.

Par. 2: Identify a company representative who (will) resolve the issue.

Par. 3: Sympathize with the customer.

Par. 4: Explain how you are resolving / will resolve the situation.

Par. 4: Repair customer relationship

Par. 5: Keep communications open.

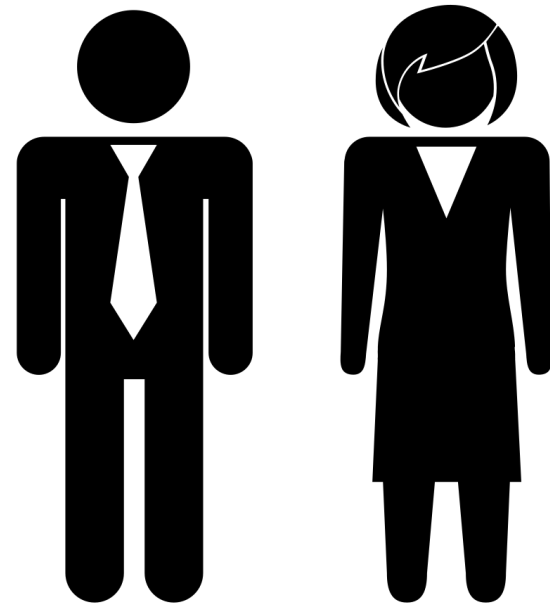


Cover Letter Model

Par. 1: State your purpose and where you found out about the job; explain your education type and time; explain why you are qualified.

Par. 2-Par. n: Explain your qualifications by tying illustrations of your experiences directly to keywords from the job description.

Par. n+1: Request the interview; provide contact information; thank the reader.



Information for Documentation & Citation

Author: Robert T. Koch Jr.

Title: Business Letters

Website: Merrimack College Writing Center

Year: 2020

URL: https://www.merrimack.edu/academics/academic-success-center/writing_center/





MERRIMACK COLLEGE