

UNIT 1

INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS LETTERS

<https://www.instructionalsolutions.com/blog/business-email>

PART 1 BUSINESS EMAILS

Business emails are a pillar of modern communication. On any given day, the average office worker receives over 80 emails. That's a lot of communication. While we send a lot of emails, many of them are not effective. Everyone's inbox holds those difficult to read or process emails, hanging around because the recipient is unclear on how to reply or act. Don't let that happen to your business emails. Etiquette, style, and format are essential to writing emails that get results.

There are four questions that you must consider as you begin to draft a business email:

1. Who is My Audience?

In all business writing, the audience is the top consideration. Who you are writing for will determine how you write your email. The reader will determine the tone, formality, and content of the communication.

Your email's reader may be your colleague, client, or supervisor. Each reader will have a different background, project knowledge, and priorities. You can use project acronyms with a colleague who has the same deep project knowledge as you do. Those same acronyms will be confusing to an executive who needs an update for budget forecasting.

With your audience at the forefront, you will always write a more effective email. The audience includes all the people included in the sender fields. This includes the To:, CC:, and BCC: fields but main focus should be on those in the To field. Writing for the audience also means using these fields correctly.

The To: field is for the direct audience who needs to reply or take action from the email content. The CC: field is for readers who need to receive the email conversation for reference or clarity, but do not need to take action nor reply. The BCC: field is for the audience who only needs to see the initial email and none of the later chain of replies. Incorrect usage of the sender fields is a common business email mistake. It occurs when the audience and their roles are not thoughtfully considered.

Use the Bcc field very judiciously. Often it's best to forward an email separately, with a brief statement on why you're sending this information.

2. What is the Purpose?

An email must have a purpose. And it must have only one purpose.

This email practice is called the 'one thing rule'. Each email should cover only one specific item, task, or request.

Covering multiple actions in one email can cause confusion and inefficiency. One email should not include both client report revision notes and a scheduling question for the quarterly meeting. This scenario calls for two separate emails. By limiting emails to one thing, the email is easier for the recipient to understand, process and act upon. This clarity increases understanding and productivity.

In practice, we sometimes have to ask for several pieces of information related to the same topic. In this case, use a numbered list to clarify for your reader that the request has components. This will help your reader respond easily and ensure you receive all the specifics you need. You need to review these three items before we release the sketch to the production team:

- Content
- Design
- Color choice

3. Is This Email Necessary?

There is a tendency to over-communicate by email. While email is efficient and provides an electronic paper-trail, not all communication should occur over email.

Ask yourself: *—Is this email really necessary?!* Perhaps a quick phone call or a ping on the company messenger is more appropriate. If you're expecting a lot of back-and-forth on the topic, a short conversation can eliminate a lengthy email chain.

Choose the right channel to send information. Email is great, but it's one channel.

4. Is Email Appropriate?

Email can be used in many scenarios but is not always appropriate.

If you are delivering bad news, do so in person or buffer the email thoughtfully. An email is impersonal and is difficult to convey empathy or compassion. If you must write a business apology email follow these rules.

Sensitive information sent by email runs the risk of being accidentally shared. There are plenty of cases of email mishaps, ranging from funny to serious. Whether the information is personal contact or personal opinion, consider whether it's appropriate for an email. If you wouldn't want it accidentally shared, be very thoughtful about how it is sent in the first place.

If you are unsure if an email is appropriate, ask yourself if you'd be comfortable with that email being projected in a meeting. Attending the meeting are your boss, all your future bosses, and your mother. If it passes this test, then send it. If not, there is likely something that is not appropriate.

Email Style

Business emails have a very specific style. They are professional but brief. They should be written to be skimmed, but with enough information to allow a complete response.

Tone

Finding the correct tone can be the biggest headache in drafting an email. The tone changes based on your audience. It can range to formal to friendly but is always professional and should always be matched to your audience.

Wordy politeness can often be overlooked in efforts to be brief in emails. However, please and thank you should be included anytime it is appropriate. Also, writing in all caps could route your email to the spam folder). If you wouldn't shout the statement in person, don't shout it in an email. Instead, use italics, underlining or bold to emphasize important points. Example: Vacation requests must be submitted at least two weeks in advance. Notice the harsh tone if the bold text is swapped for caps: Vacation requests must be submitted AT LEAST TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE.

One exception: Do use all caps in email headings when writing to any organization that strips html formatting from email. The military, military academies, and some financial institutions with strict security protocols often strip html formatting.

Headings are very helpful to readers. They allow a reader to skim and find information easily. They're a business writer's best weapon against information overload.

Avoid excessive use of punctuation or emojis. Exclamation points should be used sparingly! Emojis continue to have a larger role in digital communication and several style guides have approved their judicious use in business writing. I follow the rule of only using them after the other party has sent one. They should never be used in formal business emails.

Emails are meant to be skimmed, so they should have plenty of white-space to assist the reader. Use shorter paragraphs, lists and bullet points to streamline the information. And, use headings to break up concepts and allow a reader to skim. In addition, awkward formatting copied from other documents or emails can be distracting. To have seamless formatting for your email, strip the text formatting of the new content by using your email client's Remove or Formatting function.

Here are the most common formatting features and how to use them.

type.png

Font: The font is the typeface that you should choose for your email. It is best to choose a sans serif (a typeface without decorative strokes at the end) as they are more modern and simple and easy to read onscreen. They are also easier to read at a small size. Gmail uses Sans Serif as the default. You could also use Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, Trebuchet MS, or Verdana.

Type-email.png

Text Size: You should try to keep your email in the normal size. This is between 10–12pt.

bold.png

Bold: You can use bold for headings and to emphasize important text. Bold text catches the eye of readers as they scan the email.

italics.png

Italics: Italics are a softer way to draw attention to an area of text. They are used to bring emphasis to an area of a sentence. They do not make words stand out when the user is scanning a page the way bold text does. Italics should also be used for titles of full works.

underline.png

Underline: Underlined text can easily be confused for a link. When writing an email, it's best not to use underlined text to draw attention to an area of an email. It is better to use bold or italics.

color-email-text.png

Text Color: You should avoid using multiple text colors in an email as it draws the eye in to multiple locations and looks unprofessional. It is likely that your email program makes your hyperlinks blue.

alignment.png

Alignment: Business writing uses text that is fully aligned left. Academic writing indents the first sentence of a paragraph five spaces. In business email, you will never need to indent the start of a paragraph. Users scan pages in a F-shaped pattern. By changing the alignment it makes it more difficult for the reader to skim.

numbers.png

Numbers: Using a numbered list can help organize content where the sequence is important. For example if you were describing steps you would want to use a numbered list.

bullets-gmail.png

Bullet Points: Bullet points are a great way to create white space on your page and draw attention to related items. Bullet points work best for unordered lists.

indent.png

Indent More: In business emails you should not indent the first sentence of a new paragraph. A line break represents the start of a new paragraph. The indent more button allows you to add an indent to text. This is useful on rare occasions when you want to indicate that some information is a subset of what preceded it. It creates a visual indication that the indented information is less important.

indent-less.png

Indent Less: This allows you to move your content to the left

quote.png

Quote Text: If you are referring to quoted text you should use the quote text function. It provides a slight indent to your content and a grey vertical line to the left. This shows readers that you are quoting text.

remove formatting gmail-1.png

Remove Formatting: If you are pasting text into your email it is vital you use the remove formatting function. Otherwise you will paste the text styles and it will be obvious to your reader that you copy and pasted that text. To use this function select the text you want to remove formatting. Then click the remove formatting button.

PART2 PARTS OF BUSINESS EMAIL

<https://business.tutsplus.com/articles/how-to-write-a-formal-email--cms-29793>

What Is a Formal Email?

A formal email is typically sent to someone you don't know well or to someone who's in authority. Examples of someone who you might send a formal email to include your professor, a public official, or even a company you're doing business with.

If your workplace has a formal environment, use formal emails with your boss and colleagues unless you're told to do otherwise. Many workplaces are moving towards a more casual environment and this often carries over to email communications. If you're not sure what's right for your workplace, ask.

Casual Versus Formal Email: What's the Difference?

A formal email differs from a casual email. A casual email usually goes to a person you know well—often it's someone you're on good terms with such as a friend or family member. When sending a casual email, you don't need to worry as much about structure and tone.

In fact, part of what makes a formal email different from a casual email is the structure. A formal email has a very defined structure, with a definite salutation (the opening part of the email), signature section, opening sentence, and body.

You also use language differently in a formal email than in a casual email. Avoid using abbreviations, contractions, slang, emoticons, and other informal terminology. The tone of a formal email is different as well. An informal email may not even use complete sentences or proper grammar, but a formal email always does.

Here's an example of formal email language:

The meeting is scheduled for December 5th at 9:30 a.m. All students must attend. Your project updates are needed.

Compare the formal language with the informal email language in this email:

Required meeting—Dec 5, 9:30 a.m. Updates needed. See ya there. :)

Both statements share the same information. But the tone of the first is much more formal. Notice the incomplete sentence, slang, and emoticon in the informal example.

Writing a Formal Email

While an informal email can often be sent quickly, writing a formal email typically takes a bit more thought and a bit more time. Careful consideration needs to be given to each email element.

With that in mind, let's take a closer look at some common elements of a formal email:

5. Subject Line

The subject line is what the reader sees in their inbox. If the subject line is misleading or missing information, your email may not get read. The message may even be sent to spam. The more formal your email is, the more detailed your subject line should be. But beware of making your subject line too long.

Here's an example of a formal email subject line:

Required Student Meeting: December 5th, 9:30 a.m.

Compare that subject line with this informal email subject line:

Upcoming Meeting

Notice that the first subject line is more informative and complete. The informal subject line, sent to someone you know well, just barely touches on the topic.

6. Salutation

The salutation directly addresses the person you're sending the email to. It's always used in formal email messages, but sometimes skipped in informal messages. Here are some examples of formal and informal salutations.

If you're sending the email to a group, address the entire group. Here's an example:

Dear Students,

If you've got the person's name you want to send the email too, it's proper to use their name along with any title the person has. Here's a sample formal salutation for an individual:

Dear Professor Smith,

If you don't know the name of the person you're trying to reach, you should make every effort to discover that information. As a last resort, it's okay (but less effective) to address the email to the title of the person you hope to reach. Here's an example of a formal salutation without a name:

Dear Human Resources Director,

In rare instances where you don't know a person's name or title, it's okay to use this salutation:

To whom it may concern,

Contrast the formal salutation examples with the following informal salutations: Informal Salutation for a Group

Hey Class

Informal Salutation for an Individual

Hello Taylor,

As you can see, the formal and informal salutations are very different.

7. Introduction

The opening of a formal email often requires the sender to introduce themselves. In contrast, informal emails are sent to someone you know and the introduction isn't needed. Here's an example of an opening in a formal email:

My name is Jordan Smith. I am the professor of Statistics for XYZ University. This message is for all current students.

8. Body

The body of a formal email typically elaborates on the purpose of the email. Elaboration may not be needed in an informal email. Although the body contains detailed information, it's important to write clearly and concisely in a formal email. Remember your reader isn't familiar with you and may not be familiar with your topic. You don't want your email recipient to misunderstand an important point.

9. Closing

How you end a formal email is equally important. Since the email closing is the last thing your recipient looks at, your email closing can leave a lasting impression.

A good formal email closing also reminds the reader who you are since it should include your full name, contact information, and title (if appropriate). If you can, use a professional signature template for added impact. (Learn more about signature templates in the next section.)

In contrast, an email closing may be extremely casual for an informal email. In some instances where the recipient is well known to you, you may even omit the email closing.

The most common way to start a formal email closing is with the word "Sincerely." It may be a common closing, but it's also a safe closing.

Here's an example of a formal email closing:

Sincerely,
Jordan Smith

Professor of Statistics, XYZ College
[Email address goes here]

[Phone number goes here]

You now have the information you need to write each section of a formal email. Formal emails are very similar to professional emails, since professional emails are often written in a formal style. The principles that apply to professional emails are also useful for formal emails.

Formatting and Structuring a Formal Email

While many informal emails are unstructured, how you format and structure your formal email is important. At a minimum, a formal email should contain all of the following elements:

Subject line. Be specific, but concise. Many experts agree that the ideal subject line is six to ten words long.

Salutation. Address the recipient by name, if possible. Use honorifics, as appropriate. For example, write Dear Professor Smith, not Hey.

Body text. This section explains the main message of the email. For a formal email, use proper grammar and complete sentences.

Signature. Your email closing should be formal, not informal. Use your first and last name. If you're writing on behalf of an organization and you know the title of the person you're sending the email to, use it.

As we mentioned earlier, there are many similarities between a business email and a professional email. This tutorial explains the proper way to structure a business email:

Your email font choice is also important when you're formatting a formal email. Although many modern email platforms allow you to use many different fonts, it's best to stick with a common, readable font like Verdana, Calibri, Times New Roman or Georgia. Helvetica and Arial are common sans-serif fonts you could use as well.

Avoid novelty fonts like Comic Sans, handwriting fonts like Bradley Hand, and script fonts like Brush Script. Remember that if you choose an unusual font for your formal email, that font may not be supported by some email platforms.

Also, stick to one or two fonts in your formal email. Using too many different fonts can make your email look too casual. Too many fonts may even make your formal email less readable.

Sending a Formal Email

Once you've written and formatted your formal email, you're almost ready to send your message. But before you press that Send button, review your email carefully. Look for:

- Spelling errors
- Mistakes in a name
- Typos
- Grammatical errors
- Remember, a sloppy email full of mistakes makes a bad impression.

Also, pay attention to the email address you're using to send the email if you want to be taken seriously. Many of us created email addresses when we

younger that aren't appropriate for formal emails. If you can get it, your email address for formal emails should be a variation of your name without any extra characters.

Here are some examples of appropriate and inappropriate email address:

Email Address #1

KittenLOver73%@example.com

Save this type of email address for casual emails to your family and friends.

Email Address #2

TaylorJones@example.com

This email address can be used for formal and professional emails.

Note: These email addresses used here are for example purposes only. They aren't intended to represent real email addresses.

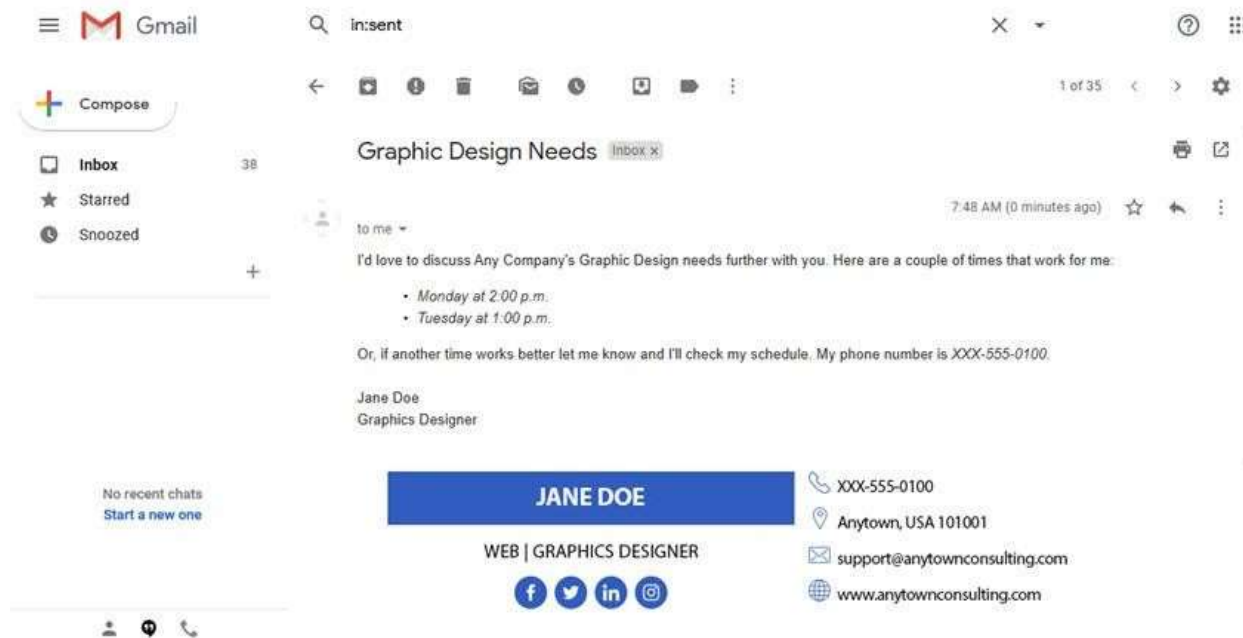
If you're a student or writing on behalf of an organization, it's a good idea to use the email provided by your educational institution or the organization you're representing. Most colleges, for example, provide their students with email addresses in the format:

firstnamelastname@collegename.ed

Using Templates for a Formal Email

One way to add extra impact to your formal email is to use a professionally designed signature template. A signature template adds graphic interest to your email. A signature template also includes your complete contact information.

Here's an example of an email closing with a professionally designed signature template:



PART 3 BUSINESS LETTERS

DEFINITION

A letter is a written or printed message addressed to a person or persons, usually sent by post or messenger. It is an addressed legal, formal, or informal document for various purposes.

A business letter is a written communication addressed to a person or organization by a person or organization for a specific business purpose.

A. TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

1. Inquiry letter
2. Order letter.
3. Sales letter.
4. Complain letter.
5. Application letter.

B. THE PARTS OF THE LETTER

1. Heading
2. reference
3. date
4. inside address

5. salutation
6. subject line
7. opening paragraph
8. main Body
9. closing paragraph
10. complimentary close
11. signature
12. enclosure
13. carbon copy
14. initial

C. STANDARD ELEMENTS OF A LETTER

1. Letter Head/ Heading.
2. Reference.
3. Date.
4. Receiver's Name and Address. (Inside Address)
5. Salutation.
6. Subject
7. Main Body.
8. Complimentary Close.
9. Signature.
10. Sender's Name and Designation.

D. OPTIONAL PARTS OF A LETTER

1. Attention Line.
2. Identification Line.
3. Enclosure.
4. Carbon Copies.

Task 1

Rearrange the following parts of the letter in good order!

1. 07 March 2013
2. Your order no. 23
3. Messrs. Johnson Smith & Carlson Ltd.
Los Angeles, LA

4. Dear sirs,
5. Ref. DT/NN/13
6. You will remember that you went into some trouble to meet your delivery date and we are sure that you would not wish to inconvenience us by delaying your payment.
7. Sony Electronic Corporation
99 Sweetmango Street New
York, NY 56779
USA
8. We have to remind you that your account for television with the above order number dated 12th February 2013 has not been paid yet. Discount cannot now be allowed.
9. A copy of the statement is enclosed, and we shall be glad to receive your check by return.
10. JR/ mz
11. Jonathan R. Smith
Logistic manager
12. Yours faithfully,
13. Enc. 1
14. CC:

-Accounting Manager
Executive Secretary -
File

Task 2

Pronounce the ordinal numbers below correctly!

Ordinal number 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 11th 21st 30th 31st

E. THE WAY OF WRITING THE DATE

British style	American style
12th January 2012	January 12th, 2012
12 January 2012	January 12, 2012
On the twelfth of January two thousand twelve	January the twelfth two thousand twelve

Task 3

Look at writing inside address, salutation, and complimentary close and complete the blanks!

Inside address	Salutations	Complimentary close	
The personnel manager	Dear Sir,	Yours faithfully,	British
	Dear Sir:	Very truly yours,	American
Messrs. Marvin, Tobin & Sweetheart	Dear sirs,		B
	Dear gentlemen:	Yours truly	A
Mr. William Smith	Dear Mr. Smith,	Sincerely, Yours sincerely, With best wishes,	B
:	Sincerely yours, With best regards,	A
Mrs. Cathleen Han	,		B

	:		A
Miss Diana Lane	,		B
	:		A

Task 4

1. Design a letter heading for manufacturing washing machines, refrigerators, and other household equipment.
2. Write out the following date in three or four different ways in which it might appear at the top of a business letter:
 - a) the fourteenth of April nineteen-seventy-eight
 - b) may the twentieth two thousand thirteen
 - c) august the seventeenth two thousand seven
3. Below are names and addresses which might appear –suitably set out, of course – in the top left-hand corner of a business letter. Give the correct salutation and complimentary close in each case:
 - a) Burke and Sons Ltd., 55 Inkerman Road, London SE5 8BZ.
 - b) The Sales Manager, BGW Electrics Ltd., Liverpool 4
 - c) Mr.A.L. Moon, British Rail (Southern Region), London W1M 2Bt
 - d) Ms. Angela Box, Gorton, and Sons, 344 Oxford St.m London W1A 3BA

Task 5

Arrange the following into a complete business letter and give parts name of the letter below!

Sony Electronic Corporation

99 Sweetmango Street

New York, NY 56779

USA

Ref. DT/NN/13

07 March 2013

Messrs. Johnson Smith & Carlson Ltd.

Los Angeles, LA

Dear sirs,

Your order no. 23

We have to remind you that your account for television with the above order number dated 12th February 2013 has not been paid yet. Discount cannot now be allowed.

You will remember that you went into some trouble to meet your delivery date and we are sure that you would not wish to inconvenience us by delaying your payment.

A copy of the statement is enclosed, and we shall be glad to receive your check by return.

Yours faithfully,

Jonathan R. Smith

Logistic manager

Enc. 1

CC:

-Accounting Manager

- Executive Secretary

-File JR/ mz