

Writing a Formal Letter



INVESTICE DO ROZVOJE VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

Operační program Vzdělávání pro konkurenceschopnost

Název projektu: Inovace magisterského studijního programu Fakulty ekonomiky a managementu

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Warm-up

Work in pairs.

- What is the purpose of writing a formal letter?
- Make a list of at least five purposes to write a formal letter.
- What were the purposes of your writing a formal letter in Czech or English?

Introduction (1)

A formal letter is organized as follows: Paragraph 1 Introduction
Paragraph 2 The body of the letter
Paragraph 3 The conclusion

Purposes: Formal letters have a **variety of purposes** – you usually want to conduct some sort of business, such as **applying for a job, complaining about inadequate goods or services, or making an enquiry**, to name only a few uses.

Common Goal: to get the results you want **from someone whom you may or may not know personally**. Bear in mind that on the receiving end of your letter is a human being. Remember to be **polite**, even if you are writing a complaint. Be brief and to the point. Use **formal language**, and **check your letter for errors**.

Steps to follow:

- 1 The letter should be **typed**.
- 2 Start with **your address**. It should be in the **upper-right corner**.
- 3 Skip a line and continue with the **recipient's address aligned with the left margin**.
- 4 Skip another line. Then type **the date** with the full name of the month aligned to the right.
- 5 Skip a line again and type a **salutation** (formal greeting). If you know the name of the recipient, use their title and surname, for example *Dear Mr Smith*. If you do not know the name of the person you are writing to, you should always use *Dear Sir/Madam*. If you do not know the reader's gender, use a non-sexist salutation, such as *To Whom It May Concern*. It's also acceptable to use the full name in a salutation if you can't determine gender. For example, you might write *Dear Chris Harmon*: if you were unsure of Chris's gender.

Introduction (2)

6 Then begin with the **body of the letter**. State the problem (purpose) up front. Briefly and clearly explain the specific details of the problem. You may need to include dates, costs, names, and other relevant information.

7 Refer to any **attachments** you are enclosing (*I enclose a copy of..., attached are the copies of ...*)

8 Close with your request and a courteous statement of thanks. Invite your reader to contact you. Indicate what you are expecting. (*I look forward to hearing from you. I would welcome the chance to further explain my case in a personal interview.*)

9 Close the letter with either **Yours**, **Yours Sincerely**, or **Thank You** followed by your name and, if relevant, position title. If you do not know the name of the person, you should use **Yours Faithfully**. Leave enough room to add your signature above your name.

10 Type your name and title (if any).

11 If you have enclosed any documents along with the letter, such as a resume, you indicate this simply by **typing Enclosures** one line below the closing. As an option, you may list the title of each document you are including in the envelope. For instance, if you have included many documents and need to ensure that the recipient is aware of each document, it may be a good idea to list the titles.

12 Before the last step, remember that as far as **punctuation after the salutation and closing** is concerned, the standard is to use a **colon** after the salutation (never a comma) and a comma after the closing. There is also a less-accepted format, known as *open punctuation*, in which there is no punctuation after the salutation and the closing.

13 Your business letter should be folded in three and inserted into a business-sized envelope, clearly and neatly addressed. Make certain your punctuation, spelling, and grammar are perfect.

Now answer the questions concerning a formal letter:

- 1 What is the organization of a letter?
- 2 Where will you put your address in a formal letter?
- 3 Where will you put the recipient's address?
- 4 Where and how will you write the date?
- 5 How will you type the salutation if you know the name of the recipient?
- 6 How will you type the salutation if you don't know the name of the recipient?
- 7 When will you close the letter with Yours, Yours sincerely?
- 8 When will you close the letter with Yours faithfully?
- 9 How will you fold your business letter?

Read Nancy's letter of application to Worldwatch. Put one word into each gap.

17 Hillside Rd
Cheswood
Herts. WD 3 5LB

Thursday 17 January

David Benton
Worldwatch UK Ltd
357 Ferry Rd
Basingstoke RG2 5HP

Dear Mr Benton

I saw yourfor a business journalist in today's Guardian newspaper. I am very
in the job and I think that I have many of the necessary

I politics and modern languages at Oxford University. I amin French,
German and Spanish. I have widely in Europe and South America, and I
worked as a business journalist for the BBC the last five years.

I enclose a copy of my curriculum vitae. I look forward hearing from you soon. Please let me
know if you need more information.

Yours sincerely,
signature
Nancy Mann



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Look at Nancy's letter again and answer the following questions:

In what other ways can you begin and end formal letters?

In what ways can you begin and end informal letters?

Where is Nancy's address written?

Where is the address of the company she's writing to?

In what other way can you write the date?

Where does Nancy sign her name?

Where does she print her name?

There are three paragraphs. What is the aim of each one?

Check your answers:

- Formal beginnings and endings

Dear Sir or Madam, Dear Madam, Dear Sir(s) ...

Yours faithfully (when you don't know the name.)

Dear Mr/Ms/Miss/Mrs SmithYours sincerely when you know the name.)

Dear Simon/Sally Smith Yours sincerely (This is becoming more frequent when writing to strangers but **not** Dear ~~Mr~~ Simon Smith)

- Informal beginnings and endings

Dear Mary....

love/regards/kind regards/with best wishes/all the best *John/Elizabeth*

-In the top right hand corner.

- On the left above the name.

- 17 January 2013 or 17/1/13

- She signs her name directly below the ending.

She prints it below her signature.

Para. 1 – says where she saw the advertisement and introduces herself.

Para. 2 - gives details about why she is suitable for the job.

Para. 3 – in the conclusion, with details about anything enclosed in the letter and the hope for further contact.

Source: Soars, L. and J. New Headway English Course – Intermediate, OUP, 2001

Write a letter of application for the following job in the Daily News.

Trans-Globe Coaches want

TRAVEL COURIERS

In Europe, the Far East, North and South America

Have you got good interpersonal skills?
Can you speak two or more languages?
Do you want to see the world?

Please apply with CV to

The Personnel Manager
Trans-Globe Coaches
Victoria Square
London SW1 6VC

Thanks for your attention



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