

CHAPTER THREE - S&T CORRESPONDENCE

IMPORTANCE

- Although telephones, electronic mail and computers have greatly reduced the number of business letters that most professionals have to write, **professional letters** (often called **BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE**) are still the preferred means of correspondence when a **permanent record** is desired.
- There will be many instances in your life and your scientific/technical professional career when you will need to write **correctly styled professional letters**.

OCCASIONS

- applying for a job you will need to write
 - a résumé
 - a cover letter



COVER LETTERS

enclosure accompanies the professional letter such as a résumé, a scientific article, a technical report.

- to extend an invitation to (to invite) a noted person to speak/give a seminar on ...
 - to confirm arrangements
 - to express disappointment if the invitation is not accepted
 - to write a contractual letter to offer a position (job!) to a successful candidate
 - to authorize purchase of ...
 - to complain about ...
 - to congratulate ...
 - to apologize ...
- ✓ **Why be so formal?**
- add a more **personal** touch
 - confirm
 - a phone conversation or a verbal agreement

A NON-INDENTED BUSINESS LETTER

Company Logo



Your Company's Name (18p)

Your Company's Address (14p)

Your Telephone Number at Your Company (12p)

Your Telefacsimile Number at Your Company (12p)

- ① Date
- ② Recipient's (Addressee's) Name, Title
Business/Organization/Company
Address
- ③ Dear (Dr., Mr., Ms., Mrs., Prof., Dean, etc.) Last Name:
- ④ The first paragraph (¶) is usually very short and has one or two sentences (always write out the #!) to introduce the writer, if necessary and the purpose of the letter.
- ⑤ The body of the letter should describe the purpose in complete, but brief, detail. Under most circumstances, the body should contain one to three paragraphs. Paragraphs should be separated by double spaces, but typing within paragraphs should be single-spaced. Each paragraph should contain several sentences.
- ⑥ There should be a closing statement, regarding expectations or expressing gratitude, depending upon the purpose of the communication.
- ⑦ Sincerely Yours,
- ⑧ *Your Signature*
Your Name, degree (if appropriate)
Job title (if appropriate)
- ⑨ Typist initials (if you are not the typist)
- ⑩ Enclosures or Attachments

AN INDENTED BUSINESS LETTER**Company Logo****Your Company's Name (18p)****Your Company's Address (14p)****Your Telephone Number at Your Company (12p)****Your Telefacsimile Number at Your Company (12p)**

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- ⑦ Sincerely,
- ⑧ *Your Signature*
Your Name, degree
Job title (if appropriate)
- ⑨ Typist initials (if you are not the typist)
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- ✓ **Specific Requirements**
 - always **type-written** on company/organization letterhead paper (see end of this chapter for a sample İTÜ letterhead paper)
 - no typographical errors (no typos!)
 - perfect grammar
- ✓ Still you can be **less formal** with people **you know well** or **with whom you communicate often**

PARTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

- ① 24 February 2004
- ② Dr./Mr./Ms./Mrs./Prof./etc. **Name Lastname**
Business/Organization/Company
Full Address (avoid abbreviations!)
- ③ Dear Dr./Mr./Ms./Mrs./Prof./Dean **Lastname**:
Dear **Name**:
Dear Sir or Madam:
Attention **Consumer Affairs/Purchase Orders** Office:
- ④ The first ¶ should **extend cordialities** that may be desired.
e. g. It was a pleasure talking on the phone with you yesterday.
e. g. Thank you for your letter of 1 November 1997.
e. g. I have read your most recent article on ... and it was
The first ¶ should give the **purpose** for writing.
- ⑤ The **body** should be as brief as possible without omitting any **necessary information**.
- ⑥ The **conclusion** should be a short ¶.
e. g. If you need more information, please do not hesitate to write or call.
e. g. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.
- ⑦ The **closing** should be **standard** such as:
Sincerely,
Sincerely Yours,

Yours truly,

- ⑧ Your name followed by your title (if any) should be typed below the closing, leaving enough space for *Your Signature* to appear between the closing and your name. **Your title never precedes your name**, and is not included in *Your Signature*.

e. g. Sincerely Yours,

My Signature

My Name My Lastname, Ph.D./MD/DVS/Dipl.-Ing./LPN/FLMI

Professor/Project Manager/Design Engineer/Consultant/ Coordinator/Service Engineer/Sales Engineer/...

A **postscript** (PS) may be added after the signature to highlight a particular point. However, in S&TW it is best to use them sparingly by including all necessary information within the body of the letter.

- ⑨ If your letter has been typed by someone other than you, the correspondent, the **typist's initials** should appear at the left margin after the closing.

e. g. **İÇ:iç (initials of the correspondent:initials of the typist)**

İÇ/iç (initials of the correspondent/initials of the typist)

iç (initials of the typist only)

- ⑩ **Enclosures** or **Attachments** accompanying the letter should be indicated below the typist's initials at the left margin.

e. g. Enclosure

Encl.

Enclosures

Enclosures (2)

Encl. (3)


Enclosures 4


Enclosures: College Catalog
Application Sheets
Housing Information

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- ✓ The **tone** and the **language** of the letter should be tailored to its **purpose** and to the **background of the reader**. You may use a **conversational tone** without resorting to slang (= argo).
- ✓ Do not hesitate to use the “I” pronoun. It adds a personal flavor to your formal business letter.

IMAGINE:

 You are to be congratulated on the occasion of your graduation from ...
versus (as opposed to)

 I would like to congratulate you on the occasion of your graduation from ...

- ✓ Observe caution in the use of “we”, because
 - “we” can be **ambiguous** ⇔ who is “we”? ⇔ the company/ division/people in the office/family of the writer?
 - If “we” is meant to be the company, you might be **committing your institution** to something they may not wish to endorse - unless you are the director/president of your institution.
 - Most letters are written and signed by **one person**, you, and by using “we” in the text of the letter, the text may sound **pretentious! Worse, it may be grammatically correct!**
- ✓ The pronoun “you” may be used **too frequently (i. e. abused)**.
 - e. g. As you already know, ... ⇔ **if the reader already knows**, why should he/she read the rest of the letter anyway?
 - e. g. You may, no doubt, wish to ... ⇔ what are you **demanding?**
 - e. g. You will certainly not want to miss this opportunity/occasion... to ... ⇔ **why should the reader keep on reading**, if you are too pushy and demanding?
 Shall I throw your letter into the waste basket?

OCCASIONS FOR WRITING BUSINESS LETTERS

I. (Cover) Letter of Job Application

- ✓ Majority of résumés for job applications is mailed with a cover letter. Since the potential employers read the cover letter first, it must do more than simply introduce the résumé.

- The cover letter should state the purpose for writing, i. e., that you are applying for a position/job, and demonstrate that you have very useful qualifications the reader should take time to consider.
- ✓ An application letter can be divided into three (always write out the #!) parts:
 - an **initial** contact (④)
 - **stating** that you are applying for a job
 - briefly **identifying** your special qualifications that make you a suitable candidate
 - an **evidence** section (⑤)
 - **providing** details and solid facts to support your initial contact
 - facts you quote should be selected for their **relevance** to the position sought
 - a **closing** statement (⑥ ⑦)
 - closing the letter with a polite remark
 - **opening** the door to the next step, employment interview

Types of Application Letters

- ✓ Are you responding to an advertisement for a specific job?
⇒ **solicited letter of application**
- ✓ Are you just writing an application letter hoping you may be offered a position even though no job is known to be open?
⇒ **unsolicited letter of application**

The solicited letter of application

- ★ you can focus your letter (the **evidence** section or ⑤) on the facts that specifically meet the employer's requirements

The unsolicited letter of application

- ★ you cannot focus your letter (the **evidence** section or ⑤) on the facts to specifically meet the requirements for a particular position
- ★ your letter should sound positive and directed
 - ✓ **address** the letter **to the person who is most likely to be interested** in you and not the personnel manager, e. g., a project manager, the head of a particular department.
 - ✓ **find** out enough **information about the company/firm/ organization**
 - type of work
 - qualifications the company/firm/ organization needs

- ✓ make your **initial contact** positive and interesting
e. g. “... As a(n) ... engineer with a strong background and interest in ..., I am seeking a position where I can use and further develop my knowledge on... . Do you have any openings in your Project or Design Departments? ”

II. Follow-Up Letter

- You sent your résumé.
- You are granted an interview.
- You attend the interview.
- If you are still interested in the position, you should write a **Follow-Up Letter** soon after the interview.

III. Letter Accepting an Employment Offer

- You are granted an interview.
- You attend the interview.
- You are offered a job.
- If you are interested in the position, you should write an acceptance letter immediately and mention under what conditions you accept the offer.

IV. Letter Declining an Offer

- You are offered a job.
- However
 - the job offered does not interest you (any more)
 - the job offered is not suitable to your qualifications
 - you might have more than one offer and you decided to accept another offer
- As soon as you decide not to accept a specific offer, respond to the employer.
- You do not have to give a reason for declining, if you do not want to do so.

V. Letter for Transmitting an Abstract for a Talk/a Manuscript

- You are **presenting a paper** at a conference/meeting/ symposium/convention.

OR

- You are **submitting a manuscript for publication** in a scientific/ technical journal/magazine.

THEN

- You should write a **cover letter** that indicates to the recipient/addressee why your paper/manuscript is important enough to be considered.

VI. Contractual Letter

- offer of a permanent position
- a contract for a position
- a bid to purchase some equipment
- acceptance of the services of a consultant/advisor
- ★ A contractual letter is **legally binding**!

VII. Letter of Complaint

- letter to a local utility (electric, gas, telephone) company
- letter to a contractor
- letter to your boss
- letter to the editor of your daily newspaper/weekly magazine ...
- ★ Complaint letters are **difficult to write**. When you are **angry/upset/irritated**, it is difficult to present your case logically.
- ★ To be **effective**, in your complaint letters you should state the problem **clearly** and **unemotionally**. Maintain a **courteous, businesslike** manner even though the situation is **extremely frustrating**. Describe all of the important circumstances. Your audience will be more **receptive**, when you are clear and unemotional.
- ★ To be **effective**, keep your letter as **short** and **to the point** as possible. Avoid wordiness!

VIII. Letter of Apology

- We make mistakes without intending and sometimes, we may need to apologize formally.
 - complete and sincere
 - realistic
 - formal
 - simple statement of apology
 - indicate accommodations/remedies you will make
- e. g. “I will make every effort to remedy this in the future”

İTÜ letterhead:



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