

The basics of good business letter writing are easy to learn. The following guide provides the phrases that are usually found in any standard business letter. These phrases are used as a kind of frame and introduction to the content of business letters. At the end of this guide, you will find links to sites that give tips on the difficult part of writing successful business letters - arguing your business objective. By using these standard phrases, you can give a professional tone to your English business letters.

1. The Start

Dear Personnel Director,

Dear Sir or Madam: (use if you don't know who you are writing to)

Dear Dr, Mr, Mrs, Miss or Ms Smith: (use if you know who you are writing to, and have a formal relationship with - VERY IMPORTANT use Ms for women unless asked to use Mrs or Miss)

Dear Frank: (use if the person is a close business contact or friend)

2. The Reference

With reference to...

...your advertisement in the Times, your letter of 23 rd March,

...your phone call today,

Thank you for your letter of March 5 th .

3. The Reason for Writing

I am writing to...

...inquire about

...apologize for

...confirm

4. Requesting

Could you possibly...?

I would be grateful if you could

5. Agreeing to Requests

I would be delighted to...

6. Giving Bad News

Unfortunately,...

I am afraid that...

7. Enclosing Documents

I am enclosing...

Please find enclosed...

Enclosed you will find...

8. Closing Remarks

Thank you for your help.

Please contact us again if...

...we can help in any way.

...there are any problems.

...you have any questions.

9. Reference to Future Contact

I look forward to ...

...hearing from you soon.

...meeting you next Tuesday.

...seeing you next Thursday.

10. The Finish

Yours faithfully, (If you don't know the name of the person you're writing to)

Yours sincerely, (If you know the name of the person you're writing to)

Best wishes,

Best regards, (If the person is a close business contact or friend)

Sample Letter

Here is a sample letter using some of these forms:

Ken's Cheese House
34 Chatley Avenue
Seattle, WA 98765
Tel:
Fax:
Email: kenny@cheese.com

October 23, 2006

Fred Flintstone
Sales Manager
Cheese Specialists Inc.
456 Rubble Road
Rockville, IL

Dear Mr Flintstone:

With reference to our telephone conversation today, I am writing to confirm your order for: 120 x Cheddar Deluxe Ref. No. 856

The order will be shipped within three days via UPS and should arrive at your store in about 10 days.

Please contact us again if we can help in any way.

Yours sincerely,

Kenneth Beare
Director of Ken's Cheese House