

## **Writing a Business Letter**



## **Guidelines:**

- At the beginning of your letter, immediately address your concerns, objectives, and/or reason for writing.
- Consider the multiple audiences of your letter and be sure that your letter covers any questions that each may have.
- o Provide any necessary background information that your audience(s) may need.
- o Make sure that your letter uses professional and polite language. It should be clear and to the point.
- o It is very important to proofread your paper for any possible spelling or grammar issues.
- o If your letter is emailed and sent as an attachment, use universal software (such as Microsoft Word) that will be easily opened by the receiver.

## Parts of the Letter:

- Return Address: This is information about you (the sender of the letter). This should be formatted one inch from the top of page, at the left margin, and should not include your name. The top line states your street address. The second line lists your city, state, and zip code. The third line will tell your audience the date that the letter was written.
- Inside Address: This is information about the person you are sending the letter to. There should be a double space between the Return Address and the Inside Address, and it should also be left-aligned. State the person's title and name. Following this, list on separate lines: the company name, street address, city, state, and zip code. Make sure that the person's name and address are spelled and copied correctly.
- **Salutation:** This is the greeting to the person who is receiving the letter. There should be a double space between the Inside Address and the Salutation. If possible write to a specific person or a specific job title. A colon should follow the name. Examples are: "Dear Mr. Smith:" or "Dear Head of Marketing:"

- O **Body:** This is the content of the letter. There should be a double space between the Salutation and the Body of the letter. There are no indentations within the body, the paragraphs should be single-spaced, and there should be a double space between each paragraph. The paragraphs should be short and to the point. Do not begin the letter with "My name is..." End courteously and thank the person or audience of the letter.
- O **Close:** This is the last part of the letter, before your name and signature. If there is more than one word in the closing, capitalize only the first and place a comma at the end. For example, the closing may read "Sincerely," "Yours truly," or "Sincerely yours,".
- o **Signature:** This includes both your signature and your typed name. Your typed name should be four single spaces below the Close. You should then sign your name between the Close and the Signature.
- **Enclosure:** This lists anything that you may be sending with the Business letter, in case a separation of the items occurs. There should be a space between the Signature and the Enclosure.
- **Copy List:** If you are sending copies of the letter to multiple people, you should write "cc:" at the bottom of the letter and list the recipients.

For a sample Business Letter, see the attached page.

345 Madison Avenue Albany, NY 12203 July 6, 2008

Ms. Anne Jones Target District Team Leader 1440 Central Avenue Albany, NY 12205

Dear Ms. Jones:

I recently purchased an Emerson microwave oven from your store. I have had it just over three months and it is no longer working to my satisfaction. It fails to re-heat food and de-frost frozen items and turns off after one minute of the requested heating time.

I brought the microwave back to your store in its original box and with the receipt. However, because it was just over 90 days ago that I purchased it, the woman at customer services refused to refund my money. I realize this is your store policy, but I believe that in a case such as this, I should at least be compensated with a new microwave.

For your convenience, I have enclosed a copy of my receipt. Thank you very much for considering this request. I appreciate the time you have taken to address my concerns.

Sincerely yours,

Patricia Williams

Patricia Williams

**Enclosure: Product Receipt** 

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Permission is granted to duplicate and distribute this handout, providing that the following information remain intact:

This page is located at: http://www.strose.edu/writingcenter

The College of Saint Rose, 2008 Designed by Emily Vachula