

## BUSINESS LETTER WRITING

### Every letter is a sales letter!

(You are selling a service or a product.)

- Appeal to the reader. “You” is the important word, not “I”. Speak to the reader. Start your first paragraph with something other than the word “I”.
- Be positive, sincere, and friendly. Do not use negative words such as “not,” “never,” “cannot.”
- One page only—cover one topic per letter. The letter should be three or four short paragraphs with short sentences.
- Make sure that your letter has quality by checking the five “C’s” of letter writing:
  1. **Correct**—Is the information correct?
  2. **Concise**—Is the letter concise—not more than three or four short paragraphs?
  3. **Coherent**—Does the letter make sense? Is it logical? Is it clear?
  4. **Complete**—Is the letter complete with the necessary information?
  5. **Courteous**—How is the tone? Does it build goodwill?
- Proofread, Proofread, Proofread! Misspelled words or typographical errors are inexcusable. Spell check doesn’t catch misused words.
- FBLA Word Usage: Use chapter, organization, association—NOT club.  
Use conference—NOT convention.  
Use challenges—NOT problems or obstacles.  
Use “adviser”—NOT “advisor”.  
Write Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) for the first time you mention it in your letter. After that, use FBLA.
- Use official California FBLA letterhead stationery for all official correspondence.
- Make four copies: adviser, state president, state director, and the files. State VP’s make an additional copy for your section director.
- Make two signature blocks (one for you and one for your adviser).

# LETTER FORMAT

(The parts of a letter)

## Spacing

All correspondence is single spaced with double spacing between paragraphs.

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## Return Address

If you need to type a return address as you would on the California FBLA stationery, return twice after the heading, and type it at the left margin.

### Example:

Live Oak High School  
1505 East Main Avenue  
Morgan Hill, CA 95037  
June 1, 20\_\_

Note: You leave off your name. Names of streets are spelled in full. CA is the correct two-letter abbreviation for the state in all caps. The comma is between the city and the state. The date is the last line of the return address, spelled in full.

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## Letter Address (address of person to whom you are sending the letter)

Start four returns below the date, or you may adjust the spacing depending on the length of the letter.

- Person's name
- Title of addressee (if short, it can appear on the first line after the name separated by a comma)
- Company name
- Street address or P. O. Box number
- City, State, ZIP (space once or twice after the state for the ZIP)

### Example:

Mr. Wayne Anthony  
Admissions Counselor  
DeVry University  
Fremont Campus  
6600 Dumbarton Circle  
Fremont, CA 94555-3615

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## Salutation (This is the greeting.)

Double space below the letter address. If the letter is addressed to a company, the correct salutation is "Ladies and Gentlemen:" Notice it doesn't have "Dear". For a lady, it can be "Ms." If you do not know the marital status.

Example:

Ms. Jane Brown (This letter is going to DeVry University, to Ms. Jane Brown’s attention.)  
DeVry University  
6600 Dumbarton Circle  
Fremont, CA 94555-3615

Ladies and Gentlemen

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Ms. Jane Doe  
7568 Third Avenue  
San Jose, CA 95139

Dear Ms. Doe:

**Body** (This is the letter itself.) Start it a double space below the salutation.

- Opening paragraph should present the purpose—the most important information, good news, or confirmation. (Begin with something other than “I”.)
- Second paragraph should follow up with necessary details and explanation. Remember to keep it positive even though it might be something about which you are complaining.
- Last paragraph should be friendly, optimistic, and promote goodwill.

(Remember the five “C’s” of letter writing and the other important information that were presented on the first page. See sample letter in this packet. )

**Complimentary Close** (This is the goodbye.)

Double space it below the last line of the letter.

Examples (Sincerely, is the most often used.) Notice that only the first word is capitalized.

Sincerely  
Sincerely yours

Yours truly  
Very truly yours

Cordially  
Cordially yours

**Signature**

Place the writer’s name four lines below the complimentary close, starting exactly under it. The title of the person can go on the next line, or it can follow the name with a comma separating the name and the title. For state or section officers, you need an adviser’s block also.

Example:

Signature Block for Officer and Adviser

Sincerely

Sincerely yours

John Jones, National President

John Jones  
National President

James Smith  
Chapter Adviser

### **Typist's Initials or Reference Initials**

Double space it after the typed signature or the title of the writer at the left margin. Use lower case without any periods or commas.

#### **Example of closing parts**

Sincerely

John Jones, Financial Consultant

kn

Enclosure

c Jane Doe

**Enclosure (s)** (Use “enclosure” for one item; “Enclosures” for two or more items that are included with the letter.)

This is double-spaced two lines below the reference initials. (See the above example.)

**Copies** (See the example above.)

Type “c” a double space below the enclosure notation if there is one, or if not, under the reference initials followed by a person’s name if a copy of this letter is to go to someone else.

## SAMPLE LETTER IN BLOCK STYLE

Live Oak High School  
1505 East Main Avenue  
Morgan Hill, CA 95037  
June 1, 20\_\_\_\_

Ms. Jane Brown  
FBLA State Officers' Adviser  
Redwood High School  
1001 West Main Street  
Visalia, CA 93291

Dear Ms. Brown

Gives purpose.  
Presents good news first.

Enclosed is the information you requested about the keynote speaker for the State Leadership Conference to be included in your initial mailer.

Gives details.  
Explanation of why.

You will notice that Mr. John J. Kilcullen is the President and CEO of IDG Books Worldwide, the "Dummies" series of paperbacks with the bright yellow, black, and red covers with such titles as *The Internet for Dummies*, *Personal Finance for Dummies*, *Spreadsheets for Dummies*, to name a few, which are so popular in the computer stores and even at Costco. Since FBLA members who will be attending the conference are very computer savvy, he should prove to be an interesting keynote speaker.

Further explanation.  
Back up to Paragraph 2.

The price is right as he consented to waive his fees since this is a high school group. However, he would like to promote his series of books in a short video at the beginning of the PDC production at the first general session prior to his keynote. I feel confident that this will meet the approval of the Board.

Positive note for ending.

For further information, please contact me at (408) 779-9996 (home).

Sincerely

Mrs. Kiki Nakauchi  
Conference Chair

Enclosure

(This is a block style of letter which means that everything begins at the left margin. The punctuation style is open which means that the colon after the salutation and the comma after the complimentary close are eliminated.)

## ENVELOPES

- Use No. 10 envelopes (large ones)
- The printers have a diagram of how to insert your envelope into the printer. If done properly, it will print your return address and the letter address in the proper place on the envelope. Your letter address is transferred from your letter immediately following the completed letter.
- If you are typing the letter address, start about one-half way down the envelope and about five spaces to the left of center.
- Single space it.
- If the letter has an attention line, that is the first item you type on the envelope for the address.

### Example

K. Nakauchi, FBLA  
Live Oak High School  
1505 East Main Avenue  
Morgan Hill, CA 95037

Ms. Jane Brown  
FBLA State Officers' Adviser  
Redwood High School  
1001 West Main Street  
Visalia, CA 93291

### **Folding for the No. 10 Envelope** (*See attached sheet on Procedures for Folding and Inserting Letters*)

- Put the letter in reading position.
- Fold up from the bottom one third.
- Fold down from the top to within a quarter inch of the folded edge.

### **Putting the Letter in the Envelope**

- Put the folded letter in the envelope with the first folded edge toward the bottom of the envelope.
- The open edge should be toward the flap of the envelope and should look at you.

## MAILING NOTATIONS, FOLDING FOR LARGE, SMALL, AND WINDOW ENVELOPES

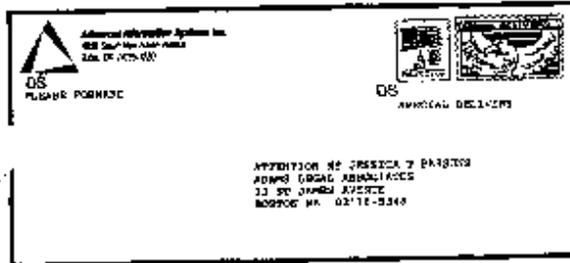
### Address notation

Key address notations, such as **HOLD FOR ARRIVAL, PLEASE FORWARD, or PERSONAL**, a double space below the return address and about 3 spaces from the left edge of the envelope. Key these notations in **ALL CAPS**.

If an attention line is used, key it as the first line of the envelope address.

### Mailing notations

Key mailing notations, such as **SPECIAL DELIVERY and REGISTERED**, below the stamp and at least 3 line spaces above the envelope address. Key these notations in **ALL CAPS**.



### Large envelopes (No. 10, 9, 7 1/2)

#### Step 1

With letter face up, fold slightly less than 1/2 of sheet up toward top.



#### Step 2

Fold down top of sheet to within 1/2 inch of bottom fold.



#### Step 3

Insert letter into envelope with last crease toward bottom of envelope.



### Small envelopes (No. 6 1/2, 6 3/4)

#### Step 1

With letter face up, fold bottom up to 1/2 inch from top.



#### Step 2

Fold right third to left.



#### Step 3

Fold left third to 1/2 inch from last crease.



#### Step 4

Insert last creased edge first.



### Window envelopes (letter)

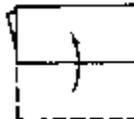
#### Step 1

With sheet face down, top toward you, fold upper third down.



#### Step 2

Fold lower third up so address is showing.



#### Step 3

Insert sheet into envelope with last crease at bottom.



## MEMO WRITING

- The content for a memo is the same as it is for a letter.
- Use the standard heading (see below) instead of the return address, letter address, and salutation.
- Use only the reference initials, enclosure notations, and copy notations for the closing. (See letter format notes.)
- Memos are used to correspond within an organization such as to your executive director or to other officers in California. Use FBLA letterhead.
- The body is single spaced with a double spacing between paragraphs—same as in a letter.
- Block everything to the left margin.

### **Example of standard heading**

TO: Tina Shyuan, Chapter President

FROM: Vivian Nguyen, Bay Section President (initial your name)

DATE: June 1, 20\_\_

SUBJECT: Meeting of Bay Section Chapter Presidents at LDI

Please attend . . . (A request starts with “please”.)

## SCRIPT

The script gets the presenter(s) organized and serves as a reminder on what you are to do, say, or who is to follow you—eliminates those dead silences when one forgets.

- Divide the paper in half lengthwise
- Put instructions on the left; put text on the right side of page
- Use 16-18 font so that you can read the material at a glance
- Need script for general sessions and for workshops

### **SAMPLE SCRIPT FOR WORKSHOP** ***SHAKING THE MONEY TREE***

**Leadership Development Institute**  
**John Doe, Bay Section Treasurer**

#### EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

Projection unit, Screen,  
PowerPoint materials, colored stickers  
to give out as members enter (Be sure  
to bring these.)

#### ROOM SET UP:

Regular classroom for easy viewing  
of screen for projection unit, but  
leave enough room on sides for aisle  
and for group work.

Have members stationed at door to  
give out different colored stickers as  
members arrive for the workshop for  
the different groups.

Slide 1 should be on screen as  
everyone enters.

Good morning everyone, and  
welcome to ***Shaking The Money  
Tree***. I'm John Doe your Bay  
Section Treasurer.

Slide 2

The purpose of this workshop is  
to give you ideas of how you can  
earn money for the chapter treasury  
so that you can pay for some of  
the necessary activities.