



Work Area 4 Written communication

2.8 USE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS TO PRODUCE A VARIETY OF ROUTINE BUSINESS DOCUMENTS

- LO013: Demonstrate the ability to recall the main principles of effective forms of written communication and demonstrate competence in applying these principles in a clear and effective way in order to produce simple routine documents
- LO014: Demonstrate the ability to produce a variety of routine business documents (based on predefined templates)
- LO015: Demonstrate the ability to communicate in writing in the business environment (use business terms, avoid jargon etc.)



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Module Details

Work Area Code:	4
Work area title:	Written Communication
Unit Code:	2.8
Unit Title:	USE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS TO PRODUCE A VARIETY OF ROUTINE BUSINESS DOCUMENTS
Learning Outcomes Nos:	LO013, LO014, LO015
Learning Outcomes titles:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate the ability to recall the main principles of effective forms of written communication and demonstrate competence in applying these principles in a clear and effective way in order to produce simple routine documents• Demonstrate the ability to produce a variety of routine business documents (based on predefined templates)• Demonstrate the ability to communicate in writing in the business environment (use business terms, avoid jargon etc.)
Recommended Duration:	3 hours
Trainer:	



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Different types of documents



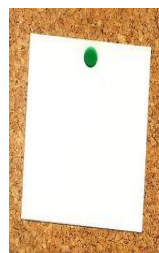
Agenda



Fax



Letter



Memo

Report



Minutes



Emails @



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There are several types of documents:

- ✓ -Mail
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Faxes
- ✓ Minutes
- ✓ Websites
- ✓ Ads
- ✓ Contracts
- ✓ Newsletters
- ✓ Press releases
- ✓ Notes
- ✓ SMS
- ✓ Letter of Interest/
Motivation
- ✓ Letter of Complaint
- ✓ Fax
- ✓ Thank you Letter
- ✓ Report

Several types of documents

- **Minutes**
 - also known as protocols, are the instant written record of a meeting or hearing. They typically describe the events and discussions of the meeting.
- **Notes**
 - A simple explanation of tasks, etc.
- **SMS**
 - Short Message Service (SMS) is a text messaging service component of phone, web, or mobile communication systems, using standardized communications protocols.



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- **Letters**

- Letter of Interest/Motivation

- A letter of interest is usually sent to prospective employers to express interest for a career in the organisation. It may also be a letter sent by a prospective client expressing interest in a specific service or product.

- Letter of Complaint

- Complaint letters are an effective way of expressing your dissatisfaction about a service, a product, etc.
- They are better than a verbal complaint as the written word always yields more power than a verbal one.



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Several types of documents

- Thank you letter
 - A thank you letter is an effective way of expressing a positive attitude to the customer, both internal and external.
 - A Thank you letter can be:
 - A birthday card,
 - Christmas Card,
 - A letter after an interview in which you want to express your enthusiasm.



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Several types of documents

- **Fax**

- The traditional way of sending documents quickly and efficient.
- In many corporate environments, standalone fax machines have been replaced by "fax servers" and other computerized systems capable of receiving and storing incoming faxes electronically, and then routing them to users on paper or via an email (which may be secured). Such systems have the advantage of reducing costs by eliminating unnecessary printouts and reducing the number of inbound analog phone lines needed by an office.

- **Memo**

- It is a professional note that is usually being used as a way of formal in-company communication. Memos facilitate recordings of events or observations on a topic, or communicating rules and regulations in the in-company environment.



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- **Reports**

- are documents which present focused, salient content to a specific audience. Reports are often used to display the result of an experiment, investigation, or inquiry.
- The audience may be public or private, an individual or the public in general. Reports are used in government, business, education, science, and other fields.
- Different kinds of reports:
 - Economic and Financial (Tables, Graphs, etc.).
 - Dossiers (Pictures, etc.).
 - Performance Management related.



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- Text structure refers to the ways that authors organize information in text.

1. Introduction

2. Main Subject

3. Epilogue/
Conclusions



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- **Introduction:**

- the first paragraph(s) of a written research paper, or the first thing you say in an oral presentation, or the first thing people see, hear, or experience about something.
- In written communication the introduction.
 - captures your audience's attention.
 - gives background on your topic.
 - develops interest in your topic.
 - guides your reader to your document

1. Introduction



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- **Main Body:**

- In the main body of a document you present the arguments for the subject you are covering.
- Depending on the type of the document you may present data or information to support your arguments.
- Depending on the type of document, you may express your beliefs and feelings.
- In the main subject you will find the whole idea of the document.

2. Main Body

- **Epilogue/ Conclusions**

- Usually a shorter section of texts which serves two functions.
 - The first is to summarise and bring together the main areas covered in the writing, which might be called "looking back" and
 - the second is to give a final comment or judgement on this. The final comment may also include making suggestions for improvement and speculating on future directions.

3. Epilogue/ Conclusions



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A well written document

A well- written document is like good music - it has the right rhythm.



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- **Things to think about before you start**

- Who the information is for.
- What they need to know.

- **Words**

- Use simple words.
- Avoid putting more than one idea in a sentence.
- Stick to concrete ideas.
- Try to use I, we, you.
- Try to use the present tense.
- Try not to use jargon, or long and difficult words.
- If you must use a difficult word, explain what it means.



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Advantages of written communication

- Easy to read.
- Visually appealing.
- Knowledge of subject.
- Respect to the reader.
- Use techniques for handling large sets of data easily.
- Appropriate tone.
- Who is the receiver? How formal/informal the document should be?
- Use of appropriate words that can make a difference.



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Advantages of written communication

- Easy to preserve
- Easy presentation of complex matter
- Permanent record
- Prevention of wastage of time and money
- Accurate presentation
- Use as a reference
- Longevity
- Effective communication
- Maintaining image
- Proper information
- Less distortion possibility
- Easy to verify



Disadvantages of written communication

- Expensive
- Time consuming
- Useless for illiterate person
- Difficult to maintain secrecy
- Lack of flexibility
- Delay in response
- Delay in decision making
- Cost in record keeping
- Complex words
- Lack of direct relation
- Lack in quick clarification and correction



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- Easy to read

- To make a document easy to read means that one needs to provide written information which are easier to understand. Documents which are easy to read have short, simple sentences and often use pictures.
- An easily readable document includes:
 - A clear structure.
 - Presenting information in an effective way.
 - Explain to the reader what you mean.
 - Use simple words.
 - Use pictures if appropriate.
 - Always ask yourself why the reader should care to read the document, before writing the information.

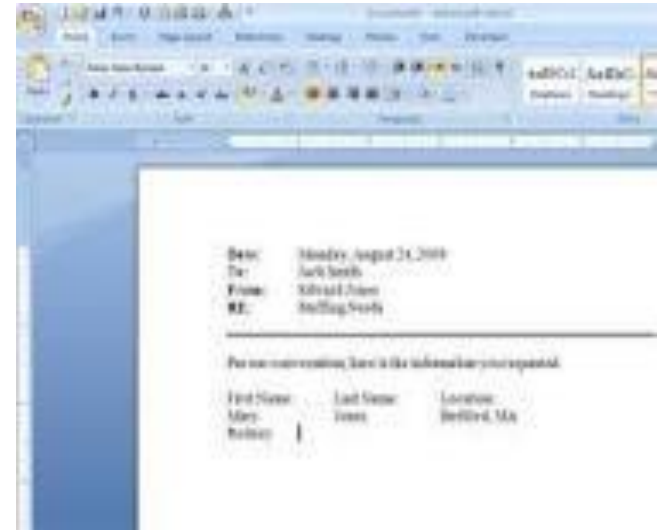


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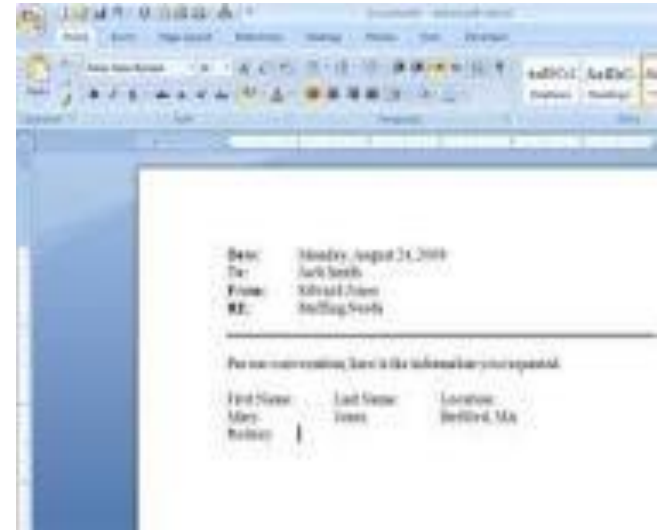
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- Use headings
- Use headers and footers.
- Pay attention to the fonts.
- Bold, Italics, Underline.
 - The purpose of the functions *Italics* and Underline is basically the same, since they are both used to make you notice certain words. Underlining started being used in hand written documents, nevertheless both functions can now be used as typographical devices. But remember – when emphasising a particular word throughout the same document, try to be consistent in choosing either italics or underlines, and avoid using both for the same purpose within the same document.



- Pay attention to justification (left, right, centered).
- Use Lists.
- Use numbered lists, for example:
 1. Get in the car.
 2. Go to the store.
 3. Put your groceries in the trolley.
 4. Run away without paying for them.
 5. Just kidding. Always pay for your groceries.



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- It is essential to be exact and accurate in your writing.
- In order to achieve this you should always do your research regarding the written topic.
 - i.e. You work for a local newspaper as a PA and you have to find writers that are experts in the issue of corporate social responsibility.
 - The best way to accomplish your task is to become familiar with the topic.
 - An easy way to start is to Google the meaning of corporate social responsibility.

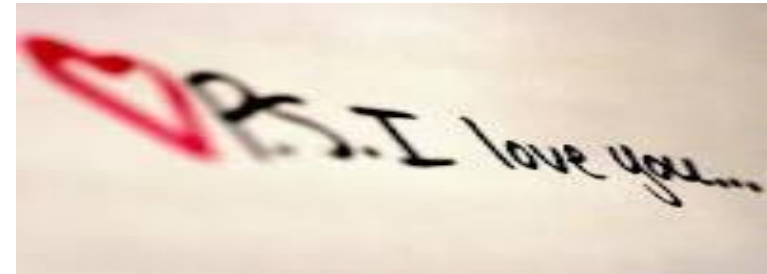


- Be aware of your audience and respect their limits.
 - Try to understand their:
 - Needs.
 - Background.
 - i.e. You are writing a Christmas Card for your CEO who is much older than you.
 - In the above case your writing should be polite and formal.



Use different techniques to present different types of information

- **Normal document**
 - To express ideas or feelings or arguments.
- Sometimes you only need a few words to express big feelings.



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Use different techniques to present different types of information

- **Tables**

A good method of displaying data

No	Month	Sales volume	Receipt
1	January	120	360000
2	February	155	465000
3	March	99	297000
4	April	134	402000
5	May	201	603000
6	June	189	567000
7	July	157	471000
8	August	105	315000
9	September	108	324000
10	October	201	603000
11	November	182	546000
12	December	125	375000

Who we represent ?	
To whom?	
Our strength?	
Customer needs?	
Loyal customer?	
How we can keep the customer satisfied ?	



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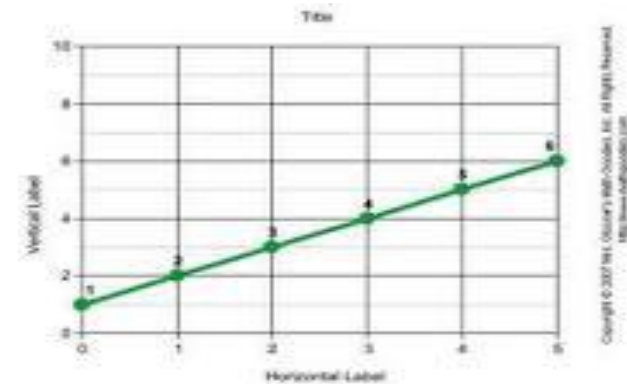
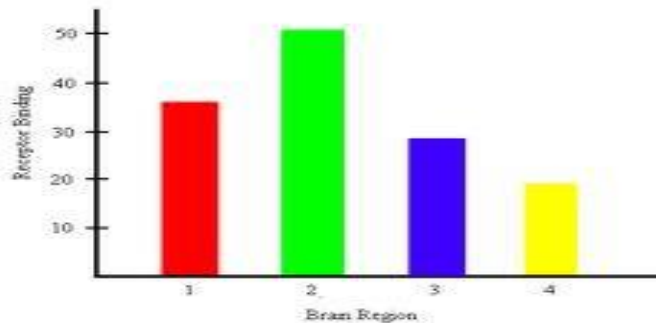
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Use different techniques to present different types of information

• Graphs

- Especially when dealing with large amounts or data analysis:
 - Easy to read.
 - Visually appealing.
 - Handles large data sets easily using keyed icons.



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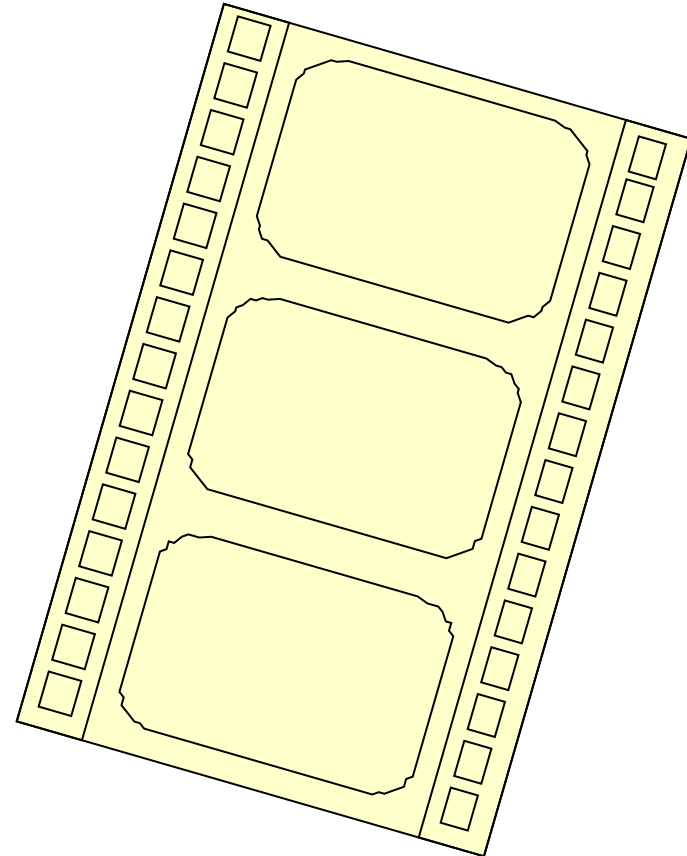
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Use different techniques to present different types of information

- **Pictures**

- To make a document more appealing
 - Easy to read.
 - Visually appealing.
 - To show something (e.g. a product)



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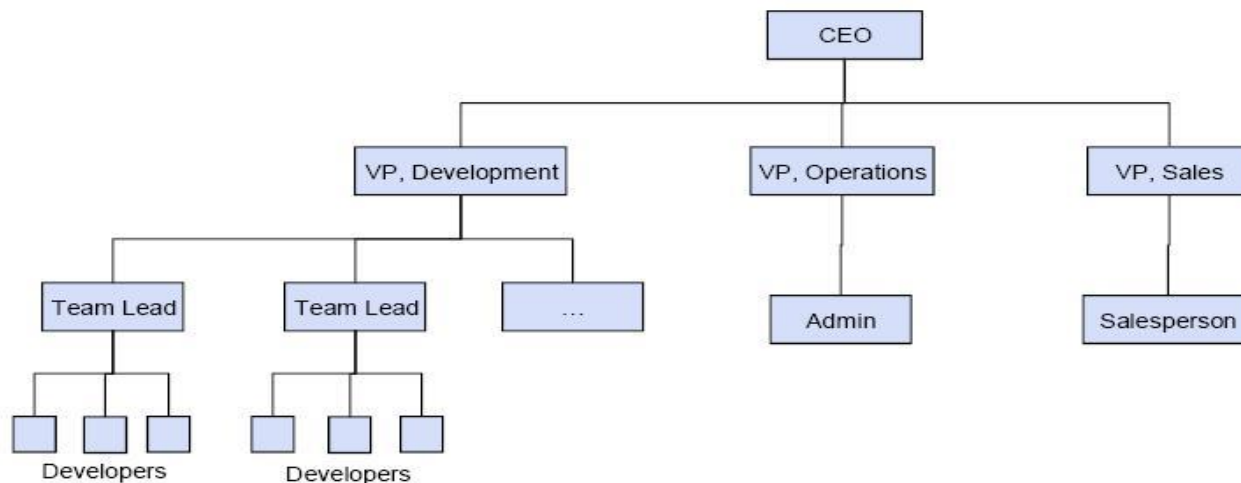


Use different techniques to present different types of information

- **Diagrams**

- To make a complex structure easy to understand
 - E.g. Organisational chart

Traditional Org Chart



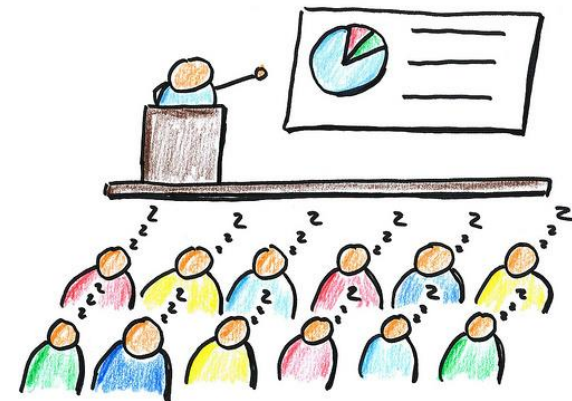
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The audience is important!

- **Is it your boss?**
 - Formal writing tone.
- **Your colleagues?**
 - Even though you might be friends outside work a professional but less formal tone is appropriate.
- **Your friends?**
 - Informal writing tone.
- **A stranger?**
 - Formal writing tone.
- **A Public service?**
 - Formal writing tone.



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eūpa
next

- **Be assertive and forthright.**

- Be assertive and forthright in your business writing. Customers and prospects become distrustful of evasive writers.

- **Avoid gender bias.**

- Avoid gender-biased nouns and pronouns in your business writing. It is more appropriate and 'politically correct' to use gender-neutral words instead. For example: Replace "chairman" with "chairperson"; use "humanity" instead of "mankind"; write "he/she" instead of "he" when referring to both genders, or change to plural form "they". Gender-neutral nouns and pronouns make everyone feel included.



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- **Avoid use of jargon and buzzwords.**
 - Avoid use of jargon (highly specialized technical writing) or buzzwords (stylish and trendy words used primarily to impress laypersons) in your business writing. They only prevent your message from getting across as most people do not understand them.
- **Correspondence with foreign clients.**
 - Business correspondence with foreign clients needs a great deal of care. Not everyone speaks the same language, so express yourself in short, simple, and concise terms.



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Business Writing Tips

- Less is more
- Write once, check twice.
- Pay special attention to names, titles, and genders.
- Save templates.
- Be professional, not necessarily formal.



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- Remember the 5 W's (and the H)
 - What?
 - Where?
 - Why?
 - When?
 - Who?
 - How?
- Call to action.
- Don't give too many choices.
- What's in it for your readers?



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Appropriate words can make a difference

- Use of “Magic” words that can make a difference
 - There are a number of words and phrases that can help you express your opinion effectively and efficiently and at the same time promote your image as a professional.



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How they look like Common “Magic” words

Customer service
Customer oriented
Vision
Positive
Strategy
Communication
Competitiveness
Balance
Benefit
Organized
Service
Successful
Interesting

Unique
Quality
Quantity
Popular
Fantastic
Secure
Secret
Dynamic
Personal
Professional
Handy
Useful
Leader



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Business Writing: Words to use

- *Agenda*
- *Advantage*
- *Benefit*
- *Calculate*
- *Develop*
- *Estimate*
- *Incentive*
- *Invest*
- *Maintain*
- *Negotiate*
- *Objective*
- *Participate*
- *Process*
- *Schedule*
- *Structure*
- *Target*
- *Thank you*

words
have
power



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- Document templates

- Templates are useful **starting points** for standard documents because you can present them with layout, graphics, and text. For example, if you prepare a monthly magazine, you can create a template that contains the layout of a typical issue, including grids, master pages, placeholder frames, layers, and any standard graphics or text. That way you can simply open the template each month and import new content.



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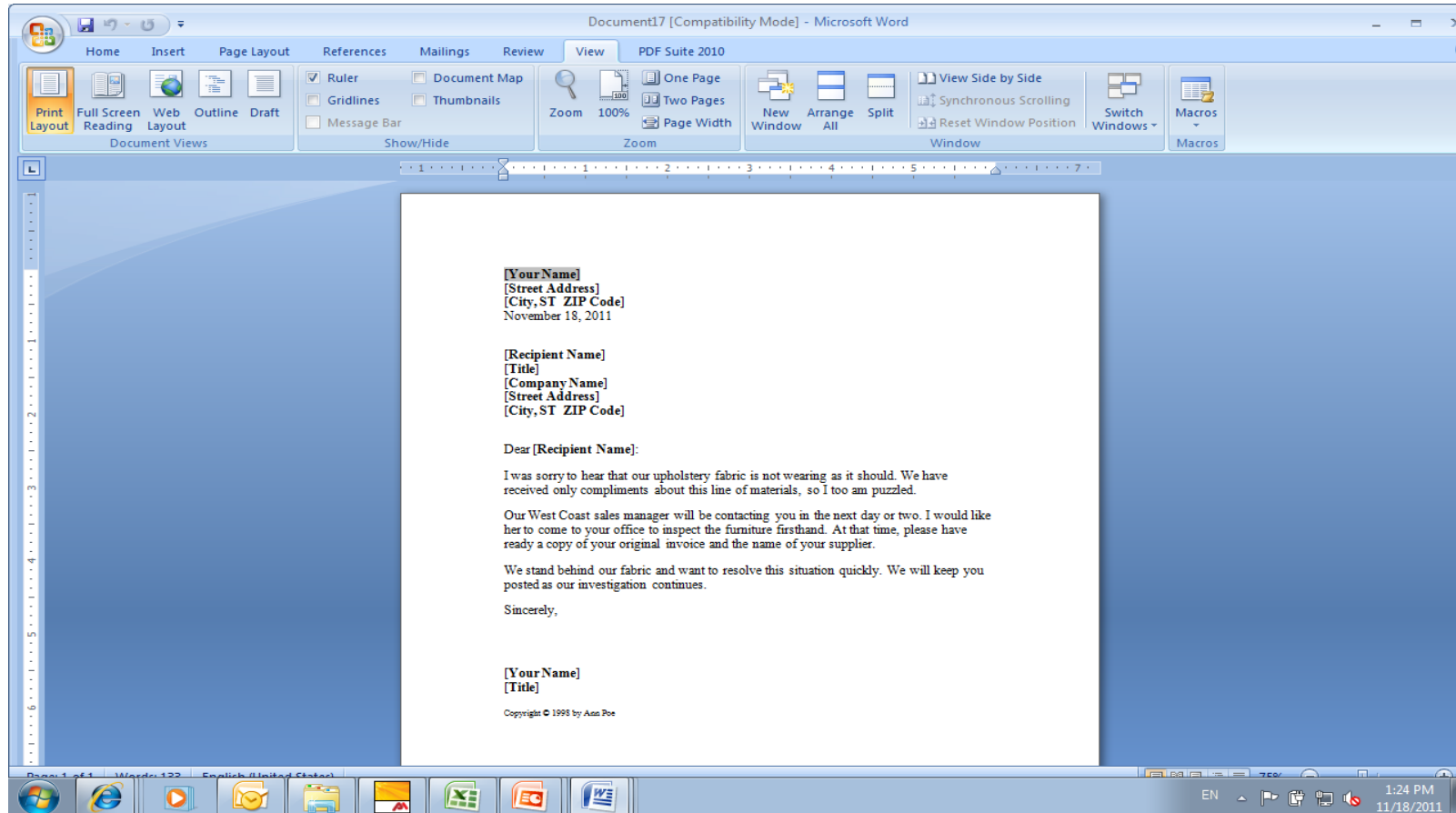
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- Standardization and consistency in the office in
 - The structure.
 - The fonts.
 - The use of logos.
- Some ready templates are provided by different software (eg. Microsoft Word) or companies develop their own.



Template: Apology Letter

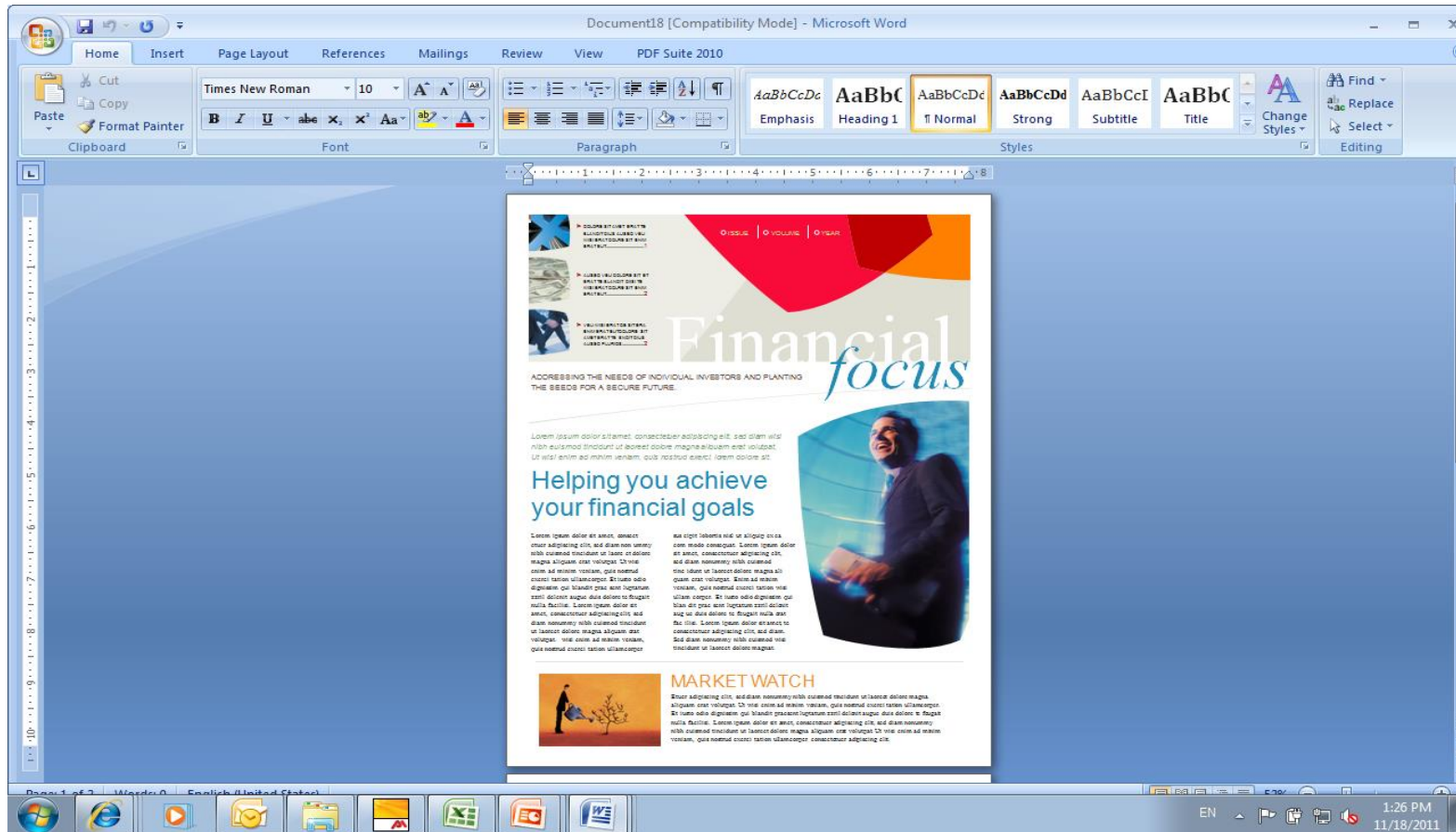


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Template: Newsletter

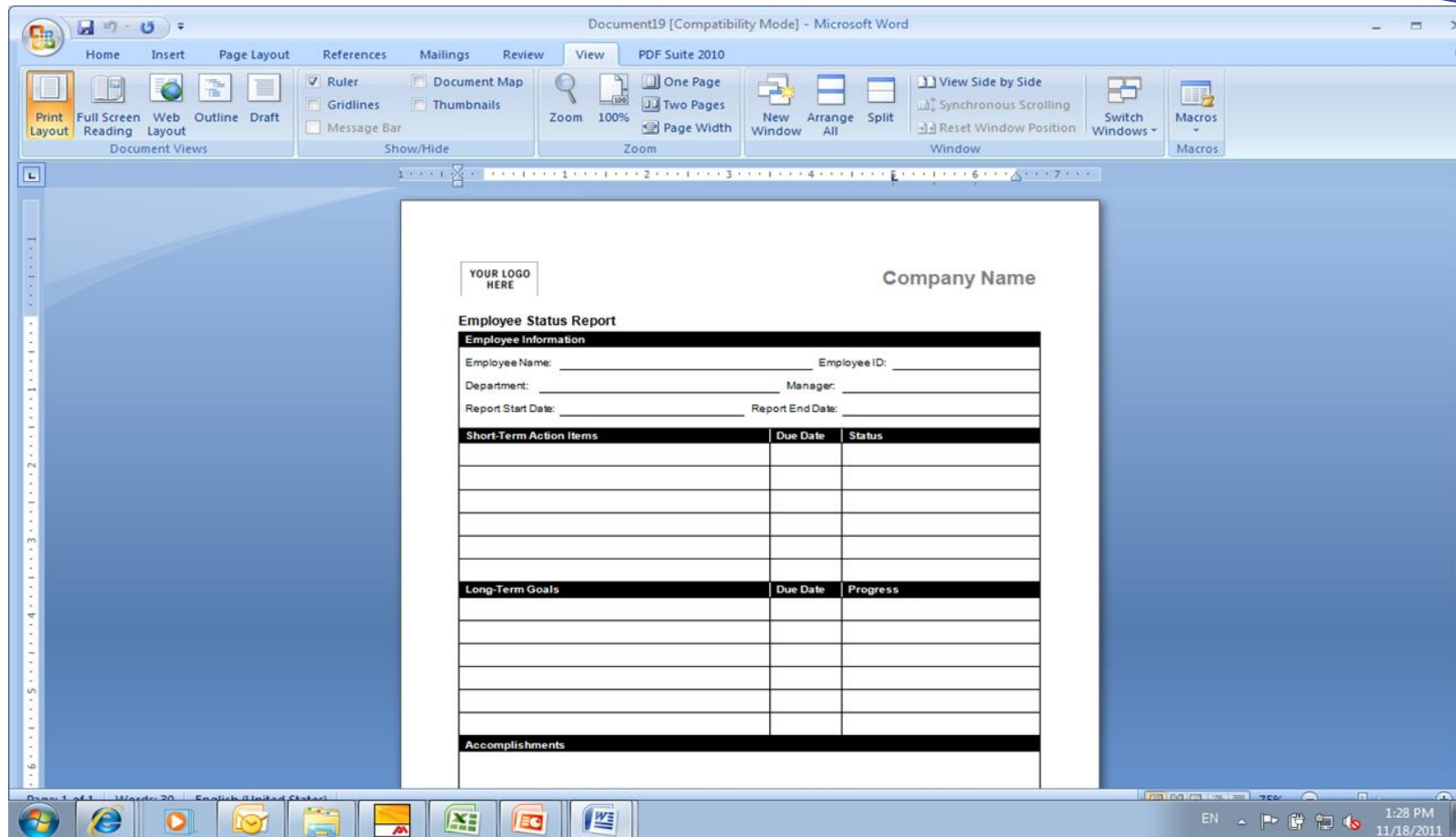


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Template: A Project Report



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Examples of documents - Business letters



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Some key points for writing a well-structured business letter

1. Organisation name and address

2. Date of issue

3. Introduction

4. Subject of the letter

5. Main Part

6. Signature



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Some key points for writing a well-structured business letter

- **Includes:**
 - The name of organisation
 - i.e. MMC Ltd
 - The Address
 - i.e. 16, Imvrou Str.
 - The Postal Code
 - i.e. 1050
 - The town/ city
 - i.e. Nicosia
 - The Country
 - i.e. Cyprus

**1. Organisation name
and address**



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Some key points for writing a well-structured business letter

Day/Month/Year

14/12/2011

Or

Month/Day/Year

i.e. 12/14/2011

2. Date of issue



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Some key points for writing a well-structured business letter

Start with:

'Dear Sir/ Madam'

Close with:

'Yours faithfully'

'Yours sincerely'

Be precise, polite and informative.

3. Introduction



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Some key points for writing a well-structured business letter

Always use subject box in order to provide the reader with a short introduction on what the document is all about.

Be aware of the spelling mistakes.

Be aware of the receivers.

4. Subject of the letter



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Some key points for writing a well-structured business letter

- **Main body**

- The main body of the document comprises of an analysis and discussion of the issue or topic. When the task is to discuss a given topic, the main body will contain objective arguments based on chosen sources. The structure of the main body depends on the topic; it may be structured chronologically, thematically, or as arguments for and against.

5. Main body



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Some key points for writing a well-structured business letter

- **Close with:**
 - ‘Yours faithfully’ (when the recipient is not addressed by name or you do not know the person personally - more formal).
 - ‘Yours sincerely’ (when the recipient is addressed by name or is known to you to some degree – slightly less formal).
- **Your Name, Surname, and your job title.**

6. Signature



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How to write a business letter - an example

- **Start**

Dear Personnel Director,

Dear Sir or Madam: (use if you don't know who you are writing to - it is always preferable to find out).

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 you are asked to use Mrs or Miss).

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

- **Reference**

With reference to your advertisement in the *Times*, your letter of 23rd March, your phone call today,

Thank you for your letter received on March 5th .



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How to write a business letter - an example

- **Closing/Signature**

- Yours faithfully, (If you don't know the name of the person you are writing to).
- Yours sincerely, (If you know the name of the person you are writing to).
- Best wishes,
- Best regards, (If the person is a close business contact or friend).



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- **The Reason for Writing**
 - I am writing to
 - inquire about
 - apologize for
 - confirm
- **Requesting**
 - Could you possibly?
 - I would be grateful if you could.
- **Agreeing to Requests**
 - I would be delighted to
- **Giving Bad News**
 - Unfortunately
 - I am afraid that



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- **Enclosing Documents**

- I am enclosing
- Kindly find enclosed
- Enclosed you will find

- **Closing Remarks**

- Thank you for your help
- Do not hesitate to contact us again if we can assist you in any way/ there are any issues/ have any questions.

- **Reference to Future Contact**

- I look forward to ...
 - hearing from you soon.
 - meeting you next Tuesday.
 - seeing you next Thursday.



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- **Avoid using “weasel” words**

- Avoid using “weasel” words such as “seems”, “perhaps”, “apparently”, “usually”, in your business writing. They give the impression that you are being insecure or insincere.
 - For example: ‘It seems that perhaps we may be able to have our meeting on Monday’ may better be written as: ‘We will have our meeting on Monday’.

- **Dateline in business correspondence**

- Write the dateline in your business correspondence in full, not abbreviated or in figures.
 - For example: Write August 1, 2006, *not* Aug. 1, 2006; August 1st, 2006; or 8-1-06.



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Business Letter, Example

Ken's Cheese House
34 Chatley Avenue
Seattle, WA 98765
Tel: 12345678
Fax: 12345667
Email: arres@mmc.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,
Arres Thomson

Director of Ken's Cheese House



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Human Resources Response/ Rejection templates

- Example

Dear Xxxxx,

Your application for the position: [XXXX]

Position code: [xxxx]

We would like to thank you for your interest in MMC Ltd and the services we provide.

I refer to the position of ***[Personal Assistant to the Manager]*** for which you have applied and I would like to inform you that your recruitment was not possible.

Kindly note that we will keep your CV in our records, and will contact you if there is a possibility for future cooperation.

We would like to wish you every success in your career.

Yours sincerely,

Xxxxx XXXXXXXX

Human Recourses Director

MMC LTD



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Written Exercise, Example:

SAMPLE COMPLAINT LETTER

Your Address
Your City, State, Zip Code
Date

Name of Contact Person, if available
Title, if available
Company Name
Consumer Complaint Division (If you have no specific contact.)
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear (Contact Person):

Re: (account number, if applicable)

On (date), I (bought, leased, rented, or had repaired) a (name of the product, with serial or model number or service performed) at (location, date and other important details of the transaction).

Unfortunately, your product (or service) has not performed well (or the service was inadequate) because (state the problem). I am disappointed because (explain the problem: for example, the product does not work properly, the service was not performed correctly, I was billed the wrong amount, something was not disclosed clearly or was misrepresented, etc.).

To resolve the problem, I would appreciate your (state the specific action you want—money back, charge card credit, repair, exchange, etc.) Enclosed are copies (do not send originals) of my records (include receipts, guarantees, warranties, canceled checks, contracts, model and serial numbers, and any other documents).

I look forward to your reply and a resolution to my problem, and will wait until (set a time limit) before seeking help from a consumer protection agency or the Better Business Bureau. Please contact me at the above address or by phone at (home and/or office numbers with area code).

Sincerely,
Your name
Enclosure(s)

- describe purchase
- name of product, serial number
- include date and place of purchase
- ask for specific action
- enclose copies of documents
- state problem
- give history
- allow time for action
- state how you can be reached

Letter of Complaint



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Written Exercise, Example: Dealing with complaints

Everlong Batteries
171 Berkley Road
Oklahoma
Tel/Fax XXXXXXXX

Mr Klitou
Purchasing Officer
Fortune Goods
317 Orchard Road
Oklahoma

8 Sep 2011
Dear Mr Klitou,

Order No. 2639/L

Further to our telephone conversation, please accept our sincere apologies for the error made by our company in fulfilling your order no. 2639/L dated Monday, 5 September 2011.

As stated during our discussion you have ordered 12,000 size Ultra super-long-life premium batteries, but our dispatch office sent 1,200. This was due to a typing error. The balance of 10,800 batteries was dispatched by express courier to your store this morning and will arrive by Friday, 16 September 2011.

We value your business and therefore we would like to offer you a 10% discount off your next order with us. We look forward to receiving your further orders.

Yours sincerely,



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- **The perfect business letter:**

Includes an Introduction, Main Part, Conclusion

Fulfils its goal

Has key points

Is well structured (Headlines, Punctuation)

Has a "rhythm" when you read it

Has a positive impact to the reader



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Examples of documents - Fax



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- Same thing occur when we want to write a fax.
- We use the same structure as we do with letters.
 - You can send faxes without a cover sheet, but if you include a cover sheet with your fax it will ensure that the receiver knows who the sender is and who the fax is addressed to.
 - Moreover, the recipient can confirm that he/ she has received all the pages. The cover sheet should be the first sheet when sending a fax.



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Examples of documents - MEMO

Memo

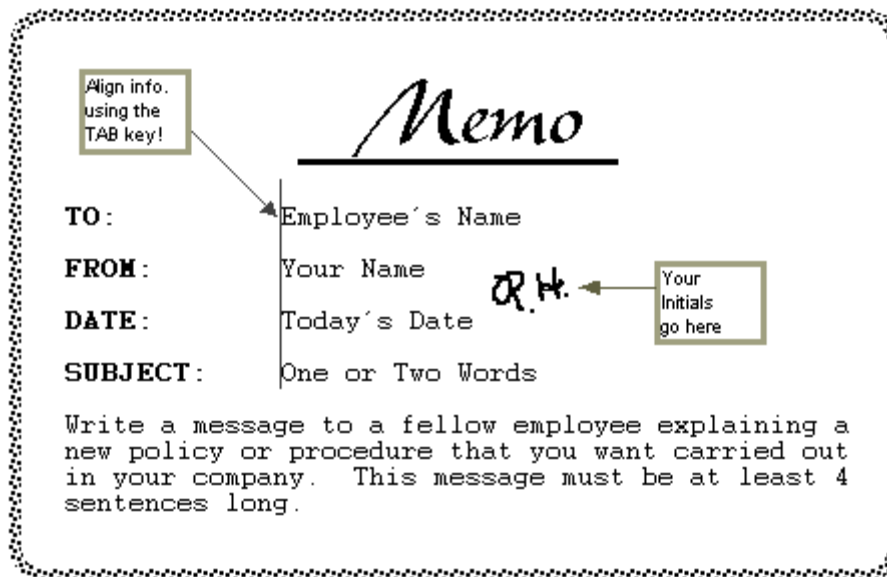
TO: Employee's Name

FROM: Your Name *R.H.*

DATE: Today's Date

SUBJECT: One or Two Words

Write a message to a fellow employee explaining a new policy or procedure that you want carried out in your company. This message must be at least 4 sentences long.



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Writing a Memo Document

- In-company use...therefore
 - More informal.
 - Usually used inside the company to inform co-workers on several issues.
- Use the above details when you are writing a memo:
 - From: (person or group sending the memo).
 - To: (person or group to whom the memo is addressed).
 - **RE:** (the subject of the memo, this should be in **bold**).



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Writing a Memo Document - Example

- **Example Memo**

From: Management

To: Northwest Area Sales Staff

RE: New Monthly Reporting System

We'd like to quickly go over some of the changes in the new monthly sales reporting system that we discussed at Monday's special meeting.

First of all, we'd once again like to stress that this new system will save you a lot of time when reporting future sales. We understand that you have concerns about the amount of time that will be initially required for inputting your client data. Despite this initial effort, we are confident that you will all soon enjoy the benefits of this new system.



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Examples of documents - EMAIL



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- The following are some tips to help you when you using emails:
 - A heading is not necessary in an email (your return address, their address, and the date).
 - However, subject is vital. Use a **descriptive subject line**.
 - Avoid using an inappropriate or silly email address; register a professional sounding address if you do not have one.
 - Use simple formatting, align text left; avoid special formatting and tabs.



- Keep your email message formal; just because it is an email, there is no excuse for informality (do not forget to use spell check and proper grammar).
- Try to keep your email less than 80 characters wide, some email readers will create line breaks on anything longer and this will ruin the formatting.
- If possible, avoid attachments unless the recipient has requested or is expecting an attachment. If it is a text document, simply cut and paste the text below your email and strip out any special formatting. On the other hand, your email should not be too long. In that case it is better to use attachments.
- If the person's name is unknown, address the person's title e.g. Dear Director of Human Resources.



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Template for a new company policy

To: All Employees
From: Maria
Re: Policy Concerning Public Holidays
Date: 2 January 2xxx

I would like to inform you that you should inform us on your annual summer holiday by the 15th of June the latest.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,
Maria Nicolaou
HR Department, HR Coordinator



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Written exercise (group):

1. You have a dissatisfied customer. What document should you send?
2. You need to update your manager regarding a task/project etc, what kind of written document can you use?



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IN SUMMARY: Your goal in every document

- Depending on the occasion your document should be:

- CLEAR AND EFFECTIVE.
- Well structured (paragraphs, structure of the document).
- Informative.
- Easy to read.



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eüpa
next

Methodological tool

Creative demonstration of your writing skills

EUPANEXT_LO_013_M_001



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Methodological tool



Making an order

EUPANEXT_LO_014_M_001



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Methodological tool



Writing appropriately

EUPANEXT_LO_015_M_001



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Questions

- Describe different types of documents that may be used at work
- List advantages and disadvantages of written communication.
- Describe the basic structure of written communication and the content of each part
- Describe different formats in which text may be presented depending on the type and amount of information of the specific document
- Describe the procedure you will follow when you produce various types of routine business documents based on predefined templates
- Explain what is meant by the term 'writing in the business environment'



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- **Business writing tips:**

- Be assertive and forthright.
- Avoid gender bias.
- Avoid use of jargon and buzzwords.
- Less is more
- Write once, check twice.
- Pay special attention to names, titles, and genders.
- Save templates.
- Be professional, not necessarily formal.
- Remember the 5 W's (and the H)
 - What?
 - Where?
 - Why?
 - When?
 - Who?
 - How?
- Call to action.
- Don't give too many choices.
- What's in it for your readers?



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Well Done!

You have completed this unit



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