

COMPOSING TWO BUSINESS LETTERS

Business Letter and Informal Letter

Performance Standard 3C.I

Each student will write two letters, one an informal letter to a friend and one a business letter to complain about a problem he/she has encountered. The two letters will be evaluated for format and content accordingly:

Business Letter

- *Formatting the letter:* include the components of the business letter (i.e., return address, date, inside address, salutation, body, closing, signature); place components (e.g., margins, spacing, paragraphing, sequence of components) on the page; punctuate components.
- *Organizing content – Message and Tone:* include five required parts of the message (i.e., person addressed, nature of the problem, how it was discovered, what will satisfy the writer, how to reach writer) in the body; use formal tone; use appropriate language.

Informal (Friendly) Letter

1. *Formatting the letter:* include components of the friendly letter (i.e., date, salutation, body, closing, signature); place components (e.g., margins, spacing, paragraphing, sequence of components) on the page; punctuate components.
2. *Organizing content – Message and Tone:* include in the body the parts of the message recorded in the business letter; use informal tone.

Procedures

1. ***In order to communicate ideas in writing to accomplish a variety of purposes (3C)***, students should experience sufficient learning opportunities to develop the following:
 - Compose informational writing (e.g., narrative, expository, persuasive, argumentative) that supports a topic or thesis statement with well-articulated evidence.
 - Adjust voice, tone, vocabulary and grammatical conventions according to both purpose and audience.
 - Demonstrate the proper format/conventions for business letters.
 - Convert a formal letter into an informal one (or vice versa).
 - Use available technology to draft, design, produce, revise and present compositions and multimedia works for specified audiences.

It is critical that students entering business related occupations are able to compose both business and informal (friendly) letters with well-articulated evidence and proper format. This assessment can be incorporated into courses such as office procedures, cooperative education and/or business English. This assessment aligns with the Administrative Support Cluster occupational skills, standard 65 (Word Processing/Key, print and store correspondence (letters and memos) from legible longhand or edited rough draft). In addition, this assessment aligns with the Illinois Workplace Skills D4 (Communicating on the Job/Preparing written communication), K1 (Demonstrating Technological Literacy/Demonstrate basic keyboarding skills) and K2 (Demonstrating Technological Literacy/Demonstrate basic knowledge of computers).

2. Have business students review and discuss the assessment task and how the rubric will be used to evaluate their work.
3. Students will be familiar with the elements (format, language, style) of an informal (friendly) and a formal (business) letter.
4. Students will have written several informal and formal letters prior to the assessment.
5. Each student will complete the “Letter of Complaint Planning Sheet.”
6. Each business student will write a letter of complaint to a company, using a standard business letter format and a word processing program. The letter should include the description of the problem, how the writer became aware of the problem and the action which the writer wants the company to take to solve the problem. Possible topics for the letter could include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Writing to a bank about a proposed increase in check processing charges.
 - b. Writing to a credit card company about past-due fees.
 - c. Writing to a cellular phone company about cellular service being cut off because a monthly payment was one day late.
 - d. Writing to an accountant about a fee for preparing income taxes.

7. Each student then writes an informal (friendly) letter to a friend using a word processing program, telling the friend about the same problem with the company and explaining what he/she expects the company to do to fix it.
8. Evaluate both letters for proper formatting (i.e., formal (business) style and informal (friendly) style) and for content appropriate to the perceived audiences.
9. Evaluate each student's performance using the rubric. Add each student's scores to determine the performance level.

Examples of Student Work

- [Meets](#)
- [Exceeds](#)

Time Requirements

- One to two class periods

Resources

- Writing materials, including available technology
- Letter of Complaint Planning Sheet
- Letter Writing Rubric

LETTER OF COMPLAINT PLANNING SHEET

Your task is to complete a letter of complaint to a business in your hometown. To decide what to include in your letter, answer the following questions before you begin:

1. Who is the person who can help you with your problem? What is the address that will reach him/her?
2. What exactly is the problem that you have with the business? Be specific about the details of the problem.
3. How did this problem come to your attention?
4. What do you want the company to do to correct the problem? If you can give the person some specific guidance about the solution to the problem which would satisfy you, then he/she can work with you more easily to see that the problem is solved.
5. How can the person reach you to tell you what the company will do to satisfy you? After all, if the company representative cannot reach you, your problem will not be solved.

Now that you have the essential information down, complete the letter using the proper business letter format that your teacher has taught you.

LETTER WRITING

NAME _____ DATE _____

- Exceeds standard (must receive 15 - 16 total points) Approaches standard (must receive 7 -10 total points)
 Meets standard (must receive 11 - 14 total points) Begins standard or absent (must receive 4 - 6 total points)

	BUSINESS LETTER		INFORMAL (FRIENDLY) LETTER	
	Format	Content – Message and Tone	Format	Content – Message and Tone
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All components of the business letter are present (i.e., return address, date, inside address, salutation, body, closing, signature). All components (e.g., margins, spacing, paragraphing, sequence of components) are properly placed on the page. All components are properly punctuated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All five required parts of the message (i.e., person addressed, nature of the problem, how it was discovered, what will satisfy the writer, how to reach writer) are present in the body. Consistently uses formal tone. Consistently uses appropriate language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All components of the friendly letter are present (i.e., date, salutation, body, closing, signature). All components (e.g., margins, spacing, paragraphing, sequence of components) are properly placed on the page. All components are properly punctuated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All parts of the message recorded in the business letter are present in the body paragraphs. Consistently uses informal tone.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most components of the business letter are present. Most components are properly placed on the page. Most components are properly punctuated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All five required parts of the message are present in the body. Usually uses formal tone. Usually uses appropriate language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most components of the friendly letter are present. Most components are properly placed on the page. Most components are properly punctuated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most parts of the message recorded in the business letter are present in the body paragraphs. Usually uses informal tone.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some components of the business letter are present. Some components are properly placed on the page. Some components are properly punctuated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 - 4 of the required parts of the message are present in the body. Sometimes uses formal tone. Sometimes uses slang or jargon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some components of the friendly letter are present. Some components are properly placed on the page. Some components are properly punctuated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parts of the message recorded in the business letter are present in the body paragraphs. Sometimes uses informal tone.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few or no components of the business letter are present. Few or no components are properly placed on the page. Few or no components are properly punctuated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 - 2 of the required parts of the message are present in the body. Seldom or never uses formal tone. Overuses slang or jargon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few or no components of the friendly letter are present. Few or no components are properly placed on the page. Few or no components are properly punctuated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few or no parts of the message recorded in the business letter are present in the body paragraphs. Seldom or never uses informal tone.
Score				