

Correspondence

Importance of Good Correspondence

- Creates a written record
- Saves time
- Saves effort
- Builds good will

Common Reasons for Writing E-mails, Letters, and Memos

- Report information
- Provide instruction
- Request information
- Deliver favorable/unfavorable news
- Urge action or approval
- Reply to a request or complaint

Format for Letter and Memos

- Block
- Semi-Block
- Modified Block

Principles for Correspondence

- Be Clear
 - Know what you want to say (purpose)
 - Present the material in a logical order
 - Use headings when necessary
 - Make a good impression
- Be Concrete
 - Give details
 - Use specific language
- Be Concise
 - Stick to the topic
 - Give enough but not too much information
 - Use short paragraphs, sentences, and words
- Be Complete
 - Include all information or details readers need
 - Put purpose and topic in subject line
 - Provide a one or two sentence summary
 - Emphasize action
 - Send copies to everyone who needs them
 - Sign or initial your correspondence

- Be Courteous
 - Use a friendly, respectful tone
 - Use personal pronouns
 - Use language and terminology readers will understand
 - Use “you-attitude”
- Be Correct
 - Check spelling, punctuation, and grammar
 - Check accuracy of names, dates, addresses, and figures

Appropriate Tone in Emails, Letters, and Memos

- Avoid phrases that suggest the reader is careless, stupid, or dishonest
 - EX: You wrote to the wrong department.
- Avoid wording that sounds insincere, arrogant, caustic, or sarcastic
 - EX: I'm sure you won't be able to finish the project without my report.
- Adopt a conversational style – use personal pronouns
 - EX: Here is the report you asked for.
- Adopt wording that is respectful of the readers and sensitive to their emotions – but don't be sappy.
 - EX: We apologize for the delay in shipping your order.
- Avoid insincere flattery
 - EX: It is indeed a profound privilege for us to work with you.

Additional Considerations for Email

- Always be specific in the subject line
- Be brief
- Use short paragraphs and headings for long messages
- Ask simple yes/no questions
- Clearly end the message
- Put context and main points in the first sentence
- Assume that many people may read your message
- Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation
- Do not use emoticons