

A Guide to Business Writings

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Contents

Chapter Title	Page Range
Chapter 1: Introduction	1–7
<i>1.1 What is Business Communication?</i> <i>1.2 Objectives of Business Communication</i> <i>1.3 Forms of Business Communication</i> <i>1.4 Process of Business Communication</i> <i>1.5 Barriers to Effective Business Communication</i> <i>1.6 Characteristics of Effective Business Communication</i> <i>1.7 Importance of Business Communication</i> <i>1.8 What is Business Writing?</i> <i>1.9 Objectives of Business Writing</i> <i>1.10 Types of Business Writing</i> <i>1.11 Characteristics of Effective Business Writing</i> <i>1.12 Importance of Business Writing</i> <i>1.13 Conclusion</i>	
Chapter 2: Formal Applications	8–16
<i>2.1 Definition</i> <i>2.2 Types of Formal Applications</i> <i>2.3 Language Used in Formal Applications</i> <i>2.4 Format of a Formal Application</i> <i>2.5 Importance of Formal Applications</i> <i>2.6 Conclusion</i> <i>***Solved Examples and Questions for Practice Attached***</i>	
Chapter 3: Formal Letters	17–28
<i>3.1 Definition</i> <i>3.2 Types of Formal Letters</i> <i>3.3 Conclusion</i> <i>****Solved Examples and Questions for Practice Attached****</i>	
Chapter 4: Formal Email	29–35
<i>4.1 Definition</i> <i>4.2 Key Features of a Formal Email</i> <i>4.3 Format of a Formal Email</i> <i>4.4 Email Etiquettes</i> <i>***Solved Examples and Questions for Practice Attached***</i>	
Chapter 5: Cover Letter, CV and Résumé	36–47
<i>5.1 Definition of Cover Letter</i> <i>5.2 Purpose of a Cover Letter</i> <i>5.3 What a Cover Letter Should Include</i> <i>5.4 DOs of a Cover Letter</i> <i>5.5 DON'Ts of a Cover Letter</i> <i>5.6 Definition of CV (Curriculum Vitae) and Résumé</i>	

5.7 Key Differences Between CV and Résumé	
5.8 Similarities Between CV and Résumé	
5.9 DOs of CVs and Résumés	
5.10 DON'Ts of CVs and Résumés	
Solved Examples and Questions for Practice at the End of Chapter	
Chapter 6: Notice and Memorandum	48–56
6.1 Definition of Notice	
6.2 Purpose of a Notice	
6.3 Format of a Notice	
6.4 Dos of Writing a Notice	
6.5 Don'ts of Writing a Notice	
6.6 Definition of Memorandum (Memo)	
6.7 Purpose of a Memorandum	
6.8 Format of a Memorandum	
6.9 Dos of Writing a Memorandum	
6.10 Don'ts of Writing a Memorandum	
6.11 Differences Between Notice and Memorandum	
6.12 Similarities Between Notice and Memorandum	
Solved Examples and Questions for Practice Attached	
Chapter 7: Agenda and Minutes of Meetings	57–65
7.1 Definition of Agenda of Meetings	
7.2 Purpose of an Agenda	
7.3 How to Draft an Agenda	
7.4 What to Include in an Agenda	
7.5 When to Circulate the Agenda	
7.6 Dos of Preparing an Agenda	
7.7 Don'ts of Preparing an Agenda	
7.8 Sample Format of an Agenda	
7.9 Definition of Minutes of Meeting (MoM)	
7.10 Purpose of Minutes of Meeting	
7.11 Types of Minutes	
7.12 Key Components of MoM	
7.13 Characteristics of Good Minutes	
7.14 When Are Minutes Prepared?	
7.15 Format of Minutes	
7.16 Dos of Writing Minutes	
7.17 Don'ts of Writing Minutes	
7.18 Difference Between Agenda and Minutes of Meeting	
7.19 Sample of Minutes of a Meeting (MoM)	
Solved Examples and Questions for Practice Attached	
Chapter 8: Reports	66–151
8.1 Definition	
8.2 Purpose of a Report	

8.3 Types of Reports	
8.4 Key Features of a Report	
8.5 Essential Components of a Report	
8.6 Informational Report	
8.7 Analytical Report	
8.8 Academic Report	
8.9 Business Report	
8.10 Technical Report	
8.11 Progress Report	
8.12 Incident Report	
8.13 Survey Report	
8.14 Research Report	
8.15 Annual Report	
<i>***Solved Examples and Questions for Practice Attached***</i>	
Chapter 9: Press Release	152-157
9.1 Definition	
9.2 Format of a Press Release	
<i>***Solved Examples and Questions for Practice Attached***</i>	
Chapter 10: Conclusion	158-159

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is Business Communication?

Business communication refers to the systematic and goal-oriented exchange of information, ideas, facts, and emotions within and outside an organization. It is described as structured because it follows established channels, formats, and conventions such as official hierarchies, written documentation, professional language, and ethical standards. Unlike casual or social communication, business communication is guided by organizational policies, objectives, and professional norms.

The term purposeful highlights that every act of business communication is directed toward achieving a specific outcome. These outcomes may include informing employees about organizational policies, coordinating tasks among departments, persuading clients or stakeholders, resolving conflicts, negotiating agreements, or motivating employees to improve performance. Thus, business communication is never random; it is intentional and result-driven.

Business communication takes place both **within the organization (internal communication)** and **outside the organization (external communication)**. Internal communication ensures smooth functioning by enabling planning, organizing, directing, and controlling managerial activities. External communication helps the organization build relationships with customers, suppliers, investors, government agencies, and the public, thereby shaping the organization's reputation and market position.

The definition emphasizes that business communication is **not merely the transmission of messages**, but a process that ensures the message is clear, accurate, timely, and effective. Clarity ensures that the message is easily understood without ambiguity. Accuracy guarantees that the information conveyed is correct and reliable, which is essential for sound decision-making. Timeliness ensures that information reaches the receiver at the right moment, as delayed communication can lead to missed opportunities or operational failures. Effectiveness means that the communication achieves its intended purpose—prompting understanding, appropriate response, and action.

Ultimately, effective business communication leads to **shared understanding**, which is crucial for coordination among individuals and departments. It supports **decision-making** by providing relevant information and feedback and facilitates **action** by guiding behaviour and performance. In this way, business communication acts as the backbone of organizational efficiency, enabling strategy implementation, teamwork, and organizational success.

1.2 Objectives of Business Communication

The primary objectives include:

- **Information sharing** – conveying facts, policies, procedures, and updates.
- **Coordination** – aligning efforts across departments and teams.

- **Decision-making** – providing data and analysis to support managerial choices.
- **Persuasion and influence** – motivating employees, convincing clients, or negotiating with stakeholders.
- **Relationship building** – fostering trust with internal and external audiences.
- **Control and evaluation** – monitoring performance and ensuring compliance with standards.

1.3 Forms of Business Communication

1.3.1 Verbal Communication

- **Oral:** meetings, presentations, interviews, phone calls.
- **Written:** emails, letters, reports, proposals, memos.

1.3.2 Non-Verbal Communication

- Body language, facial expressions, posture, eye contact.
- Visual elements such as charts, graphs, logos, and layout.

1.4 Process of Business Communication

The business communication process includes:

- **Sender** – initiates the message.
- **Message** – information, idea, or instruction.
- **Encoding** – converting ideas into words, symbols, or visuals.
- **Channel** – medium used (email, meeting, report).
- **Receiver** – person or group receiving the message.
- **Decoding** – interpreting the message.
- **Feedback** – response confirming understanding.
- **Noise** – any barrier that distorts the message (language issues, emotions, distractions).

1.5 Barriers to Effective Business Communication

- **Language and cultural differences**
- **Psychological barriers** (stress, prejudice, emotions)
- **Organizational barriers** (hierarchy, rigid structure)
- **Technological barriers** (poor connectivity, lack of skills)
- **Semantic barriers** (jargon, ambiguous terms)

Effective communication aims to minimize these barriers.

1.6 Characteristics of Effective Business Communication

Effective business communication should be:

- **Clear and concise**
- **Accurate and factual**
- **Complete and relevant**
- **Courteous and professional**
- **Audience-centred**
- **Timely**

These principles ensure that messages achieve their intended purpose.

1.7 Importance of Business Communication

Business communication is essential because it:

- Improves **efficiency and productivity**
- Enhances **employee engagement and morale**
- Supports **leadership and management functions**
- Builds **organizational reputation and brand image**
- Facilitates **conflict resolution**
- Enables **customer satisfaction and loyalty**

Without effective communication, even well-designed business strategies fail.

1.8 What is Business Writing?

Business writing refers to the formal, structured, and purpose-driven use of written language in professional and organizational contexts to communicate information, ideas, decisions, and requests clearly and effectively. It is a core component of business communication and plays a crucial role in documentation, coordination, decision-making, and relationship management. Unlike creative or personal writing, business writing prioritizes **clarity, precision, and functionality** over stylistic expression. The primary aim is to ensure that the reader understands the message quickly and acts appropriately.

1.9 Objectives of Business Writing

The main objectives include:

- **Informing** – sharing facts, data, policies, and procedures.
- **Instructing** – giving directions or guidelines for tasks.
- **Persuading** – influencing decisions, opinions, or actions.
- **Recording** – creating permanent records for legal and administrative purposes.
- **Evaluating** – examining performance, outcomes, or proposals.
- **Building relationships** – maintaining goodwill with stakeholders.

1.10 Types of Business Writing

1.10.1 Internal Business Writing

Used within the organization.

- **Memos** – brief messages for internal communication.
- **Emails** – quick, efficient digital correspondence.
- **Notices and circulars** – announcements and instructions.
- **Reports** – detailed analysis and findings.
- **Minutes of meetings** – official records of discussions and decisions.

1.10.2 External Business Writing

Used to communicate with outside stakeholders.

- **Business letters** – formal correspondence with clients, suppliers, and authorities.
- **Proposals** – persuasive documents offering solutions or services.
- **Sales letters** – promotional writing aimed at customers.
- **Press releases** – public communication through media.
- **Contracts and agreements** – legally binding documents.

1.10.3 Language and Style in Business Writing

The language of business writing should be:

- **Simple and precise** – avoid jargon unless necessary.
- **Objective and factual** – minimize emotional or biased language.
- **Active voice** – promotes clarity and responsibility.
- **Audience-centred** – tailored to the reader's needs and expectations.

Tone varies depending on purpose—informative, persuasive, apologetic, or instructional—but remains professional throughout.

1.10.4 Common Errors in Business Writing

- Lack of clarity or structure
- Overuse of technical jargon
- Grammatical and spelling mistakes
- Inappropriate tone
- Incomplete information
- Poor formatting

Avoiding these errors improves effectiveness and professionalism.

1.11 Characteristics of Effective Business Writing

Effective business writing typically has the following features:

- **Clarity** – ideas are expressed in simple, unambiguous language.
- **Conciseness** – unnecessary words and repetition are avoided.
- **Correctness** – accurate facts, grammar, and formatting.
- **Completeness** – all relevant information is included.
- **Courtesy** – polite, respectful tone.
- **Coherence** – logical flow of ideas.
- **Professional tone** – formal yet approachable style.

These principles are often referred to as the **7 Cs of Business Communication**.

1.12 Importance of Business Writing

Business writing is vital because it:

- Serves as **official documentation**
- Supports **legal and administrative accountability**
- Facilitates **smooth organizational operations**
- Enhances **professional image and credibility**
- Reduces misunderstandings and errors
- Enables **effective knowledge sharing**

In many cases, written communication becomes the primary evidence of business decisions and transactions.

1.13 Conclusion

Business writing is an essential managerial and professional skill that ensures ideas, information, and decisions are communicated accurately and efficiently. In an increasingly digital and global business environment, effective business writing supports transparency, coordination, and trust, making it indispensable for organizational success.



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