

### Official Letters/Government Letters

#### 4.1 Official Letters/Government Letters

In the business world, generally, two types of communication are used—external communication and internal communication. Internal communication is an essential part of the internal functioning of any organization. Likewise external communication forms an integral part of all official correspondences.

A government office cannot be conducted without letters. Official correspondence forms an essential part of every human being. The official letters may be written for correspondence within an office or out-side the office. Such official letters are formal in nature. They are based on certain formal rules and regulations. They differ from business letters and private letters in various ways. Official correspondence has a set form and may be of varied types.

##### 4.1.1 Forms of Official Correspondence

In the government office, many forms of communication are adopted. Some important forms are listed below:

##### Forms of Official Letters

Official Letters	Memos
Demi-official/D.O. Letters	Press Notes
Circular letters	Notifications
Express letters	E-mail
Notices	Proclamation
Reminders	Despatch
Endorsement	Telegrams etc.

##### Points to Remember

- \* In an official letter only one subject is dealt with. It should not deal with two subjects at a time.
- \* Official letters should always be precise and concise.
- \* They should follow set rules and regulations of official correspondence.
- \* Subject matter should be divided in
  - beginning/introduction
  - body/main subject matter
  - closing

- Words of slang, colloquialism, bombastic style, too much quotations and foreign phrases should be avoided.
- Letter should be written in clear and lucid style and should also be complete.
- Another important point is the correctness of language otherwise letters, full of errors, may lead to confusion.

The ability to write a clear and suitable letter that fulfills exactly the object for which it is written is indispensable to the smooth working of an office. In the words of Hari Mohan, "Administration—whether in a government office or a business house—cannot be conducted without letters, but poor and unsuitable letters hinder the smooth working of administration and hamper business, while well-conducted correspondence adds to the efficiency of the administration and is so strong a factor of success in business".

#### 4.1.2 Parts of an Official Letter

(for details see Unit 3, Chapter 3 and Page Nos. 113 & 114.)

- 1. Name of the Correspondent and his address** (including the address of the sender as well as of the recipient)
- 2. Date and place**
- 3. Number** : An official communication must be numbered e.g. No F B 3904(2) etc.
- 4. Subject Line** : Before starting the proper letter, in brief subject of the letter should be written.

##### For example :

Subject : Purchase of Computers

Subject : Premium of LIC

- 5. Salutation** : In official letters usual form of salutation is 'Sir' / 'Madam'.

- 6. Body of the Letter** : It should be divided into three parts

- The opening/Introductory paragraph
- Main Paragraph and
- The Last/Concluding paragraph

If a letter is written under the direction or authority of a superior, the phrases like 'I am directed to' or 'I am desired to' or 'I have the honour to', or expressions like this are used.

- 7. Complimentary Close** : In all official letters, complimentary close is formal one e.g., 'Yours faithfully'. But if there is a letter written by a superior, complimentary close will be 'Yours sincerely' or 'Sincerely Yours'.
- 8. Signature** : Signatures should be legible and no prefix like **Dr.**, **Sir** should be added. Likewise no degree or honorary title should be written while signing a letter.
- 9. Superscription** : Address of the addressee on the envelope should be neatly written.
- 10. Optional Lines** : In official letter, if necessary, a list of enclosures is given, number of the copies ('C' for copy) should also be written.

#### 4.2 Demi-Official/D.O. Letter

"This is the name given to an enquiry between two officers of different departments which has an indirect bearing on an official subject under consideration", comments Hari Mohan Sinha. This form is employed when the matter dealt with is confidential or not sufficiently important to merit an official letter or to expedite matters otherwise being delayed. Demi-official letters are not supposed to be quite formal. As a matter of fact, they are private letters on an official subject. They are written in order to save time.

## Points to Remember

- (i) Like other official letters, no. of the letter, date etc. should be written.
- (ii) If the communication is addressed to a Department in-charge of a minister, the designation should be written, e.g., '**Secretary to Government of .....**', 'Government of Uttar Pradesh, Department of Medical Sciences etc.
- (iii) After the subject of the letter, there should be salutation like 'My dear Sir' .... or 'Dear Sir' ....
- (iv) In a demi-official letter, the phrases like '**I am desired to**', '**I am directed to**' are used because the sender is often a subordinate<sup>2</sup>.
- (v) The complimentary close in a demi-official letter is '**Yours sincerely**' or '**Sincerely Yours**', in case the sender is a senior official.
- (vi) Demi-official letters should not be brought on proceedings without a special order.

Other specifications of a demi-official letter are the same as they are in an official letter.

Below is a Demi-official letter written by Human Resource Director to all employees to formally introduce a new manager to the staff :

April 18, 2008

To : All Employees of Gregg Mather inc.  
 From : Jason Leavitt, Human Resources Director  
 Re : Meet your New IT Manager

D.O. Letter No : E/23/13102

**Dear Employees,**

Our new IT manager will begin work at Gregg Mather inc. this Thursday. Please take a moment to welcome Sarah J. Thomton to our team.

Sarah has nearly 20 years experience in the information technology field. She comes to us from her position as IT manager at Ohio Glass Co., where she managed a staff of nine, running the midrange computer system at the company's Dayton office and providing desktop support.. In 2007, Sarah oversaw her department's upgrade to 15.

Sarah holds an MIS degree from Ohio State and has the expertise to run the computer systems in our office.

I encourage each of you to introduce yourself to Sarah during her first few days here and make her feel welcome.

**Sincerely**

Jason Leavitt

Human Resources Director