



Format for a Professional Letter

When crafting a letter for professional purposes, following a specific format will result in a well-polished, clear message. There are several acceptable formats, including the most standard type: **Block Format**.

In this format, separate each part of the letter with a blank line. Single space paragraphs and do not indent the first line (to create **blocks** of text that are flush with the left margin). Here are the parts of the letter, in order, that you'll want to include:

- **Sender's Name, Address, and Date**
Include your street address, city, and zip code. You may also include your phone number and/or email address here. Then write the date on which the letter was completed, spelling out the month.
- **Inside Address**
This is where you put the address of the person or company you are writing to. Be sure to name the recipient by their proper title, or if unsure of gender, use full name.
- **Salutation**
Use a formal greeting such as **Dear (Name):**. Use a colon after the salutation.
- **Body**
Write the content of your letter. In the first paragraph, quickly introduce the purpose of your letter. In the second, explain the importance, then continue to cite any necessary details and/or background information. In the last paragraph, restate the purpose and perhaps call for action. You may mention how you can be reached for further questions. Leave a blank line between paragraphs.
- **Closing**
Use a formal closing such as **Thank you,** or **Sincerely,**. Use a comma after the closing.
- **Signature**
Type your full name and title underneath the closing, leaving a few spaces to sign your name.
- **Enclosures**
If you have included any documents in the envelope with the letter, indicate this by typing "Enclosed: (list of your attachments)" below your name.

Tips:

- Use a basic font like Calibri, Arial, or Times New Roman
- Use 12 point font, for readability
- Single space the letter; double space between paragraphs
- Print your letter on good quality, 8 ½ x 11 paper
- Use formal, concise language
- Be assertive, yet maintain a friendly tone, avoiding negativity
- Avoid exclamation points and abbreviations
- Opt for active over passive voice





Sample Professional Letter:

Alex Greengold
CSU 0000
PO Box 8793
Williamsburg VA, 23187

May 10, 2018

Ms. Keisha Smith
Intern Coordinator
Center for the Study of Study
PO Box 1222
Washington DC, 20003

Dear Ms. Smith:

My application for your summer internship for undergraduate students is enclosed.

As an education major, I have a strong interest in the study of study. The experience of working in a non-profit think tank like the Center for the Study of Study would provide me with valuable experience and insight as I prepare to become an educator. My strong organizational skills, collaborative abilities, work ethic and enthusiasm would allow me to fit in quickly with your group. And my technical abilities, particularly in the area of application development and document design, would help further your goal of creating free online study tools for educators.

Thank you for considering me for this position. If you have questions, please contact me at agreengold@email.wm.edu.

Sincerely,

Alex Greengold

Alex Greengold
College of William & Mary

