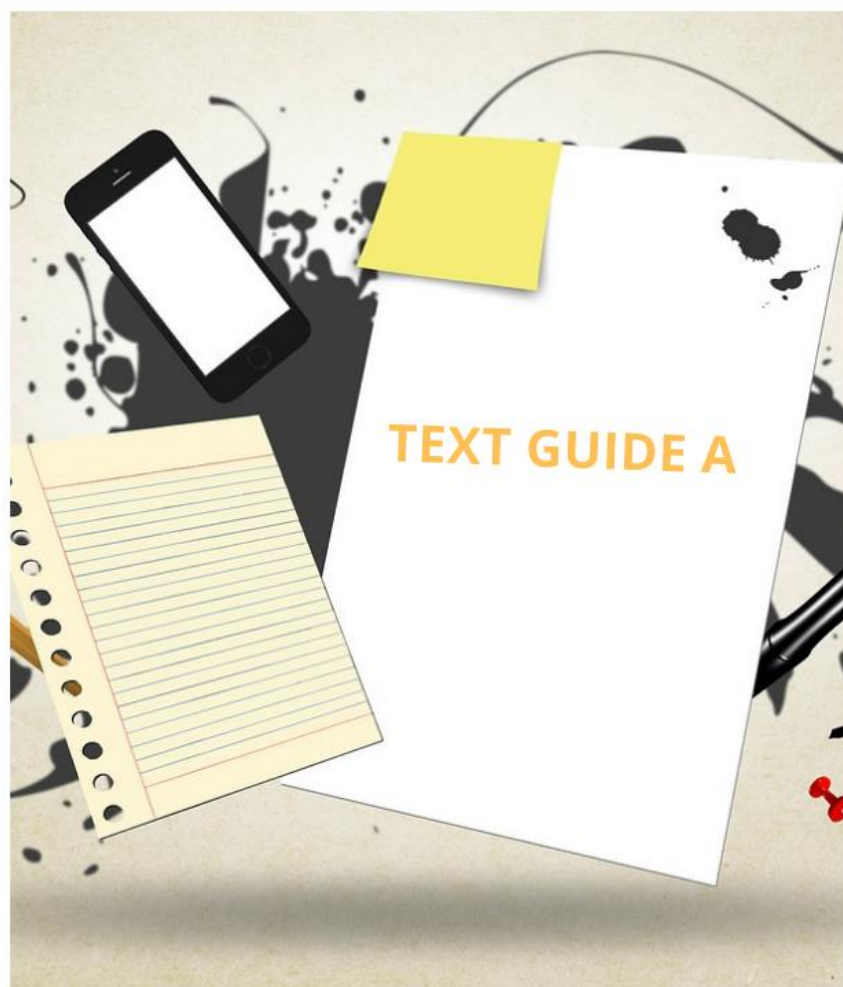


THE COVER LETTER

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ANG-5105 WRITING SKILLS II



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Throughout your life, you will have to write all kind of letters for your personal and professional life. Let us have a deeper look at how to write a cover letter.

In this booklet, you will:

Study how to make an application for a job or a program

Review the following notions:

- ✍ Types of business letter.
- ✍ Elements of a business letter.
- ✍ Punctuation.
- ✍ Sample cover letter.

Read a job ad: [Manager, Finance, Bell Media](#)

- ✍ Practise the opening and the closing of a cover letter

Read a job ad: [Pony Express](#)

- ✍ Write a cover letter



Types of a Business Letter

Cover letters, complaint letters, thank you letters, letters of recommendation, memos, etc.

Elements of a Business Letter

When we write a letter, we can use formal English or informal English depending on the type of written productions.

Here are a few specific tips to differentiate formal and informal writing.

Formal and informal language

Definitions:

Informal: It is unofficial, casual. You use an informal language when you speak to your friends.

Formal: It is official, conventional. You use a formal language when you speak to your boss or to someone you do not know well. It is used when you do not know well (or not at all the receiver). You use formal language for serious matters.

Greetings



Formal and informal greetings:

- If your email or letter has a formal tone, use *Dear* and a colon at the end your email salutation. Dear Ms. Watson:
- If your email or letter has an informal tone, use either a comma or a period at the end of the greeting. Hello Kathy, (followed by your message) or Hi Kathy, (followed by your message).

Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/email-salutations-formal-informal-comma-colon-kathleen-a-watson>, by Kathleen. A Watson

Contractions

In formal writing, there are no contractions:

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| I am writing to you. | } | Formal language (no contractions) |
| He has bought a new car. | | |
| I'm writing to you. | } | Informal language (contractions) |
| He's bought a new car. | | |

Relative clauses:

Formal language:

The students whom the principal met were all texting in class

Informal language:

The students the principal met were all texting in class.

Vocabulary:

Phrasal verbs are usually used for informal language.

| Formal | Informal |
|------------|----------|
| Acceptable | Ok |
| A little | A bit |
| Accelerate | Speed up |

Slang is considered very as a very informal language. You will use slang when addressing your best friend or a member of the family.

She's such a *geek.

Geek is a slang word.

Tone, audience, purpose:

Before starting writing, whether it is academical or personal, you may consider the tone, the audience and the purpose of your document. Be sure they all match together.

Audience:

Who is going to read your document? Are they experts?

Purpose:

Do you have opinions and feelings that you want to share? Are you applying for a grant, a position? Are you trying to provide facts to people or rather to persuade them?

Tone:

Your tone is closely linked with the purpose. Depending on what you are writing and to whom, the language used will not be the same. For example, if you are writing a formal letter, an essay or a report you are not going to use “gonna”, “wanna” and any informal language. It would be very inappropriate.

The tone indicates the feelings and the attitude of the writer.

Punctuation in a business letter



COMMAS:

We can use a comma, a colon or nothing for a **salutation**

- Dear Mr. Leonard De Vinci,
- Dear Mr. Leonard De Vinci:
- Dear Mr. Leonard De Vinci

We can use a comma or nothing for a **closing**

- Sincerely,
- Sincerely

We use a comma **before a short conjunction** (but, and, or, yet, nor, for) when combining two independent clauses.

- I was happy to meet with you, and I am looking forward to working together.

We use a comma **to separate items** in a series.

- I have been to China, India and Japan.

EXCLAMATION MARKS

Exclamation marks **should be used sparingly** in a formal letter. Make sure you use it wisely and not too often.

- What a great position you are offering me!

Sample of a Business Letter

Date

Month Day, Year

Greetings

Dear Sir:
Dear Madam or Sir:
Dear Madam:
Dear Mrs. De Vinci:
Dear Mr. De Vinci:

Openings

Skills and experience: an asset for the company. Ask to be considered for the job.

Explain how you got information.
Ex: "I am applying for the position of...which was advertised in..."

Body

Give a brief summary of your skills and experience and how it will benefit the company. Ex: "From my enclosed résumé, you can see that I have been graduated from..."

"I have worked as a..."

Letter Closing

"I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my qualifications." OR "I would be happy to come in for an interview at your convenience."

Tell how you can be reached, and express your willingness to have an interview.

Greetings:

Yours Truly,
Sincerely yours,
Gratefully,
Yours,

Signature
Your name
Address

Read the following ad.

Manager, Finance, Bell Media

Date: Mar 28, 2019

Location: Scarborough, ON, Canada

Critical Qualifications/Competencies:

- Minimum 3-5 years working experience in Finance
- Ability to see the “big picture” and to summarize into an executive review
- Strong communication skills along with the ability to convey financial analysis to management
- Previous industry experience an asset

Complete the first and the last paragraphs of a cover letter for the ad.

April 10, 20XX

Bell Media
Scarborough, On, CA

Dear Personnel Manager:

I am applying for the position of



I have completed



From the information enclosed in my résumé, you can see that I have been working managing the performance and risk profile of Microsoft for five years, where I assisted the Senior Manager to prepare and process budget.

My work required strong observation and computerized systems skills. My social skills are excellent as well as my ability to see the big picture and to summarize it into an executive review. I am also used to conveying financial analysis and summarizing it clearly into a report. It is one of my strengths.

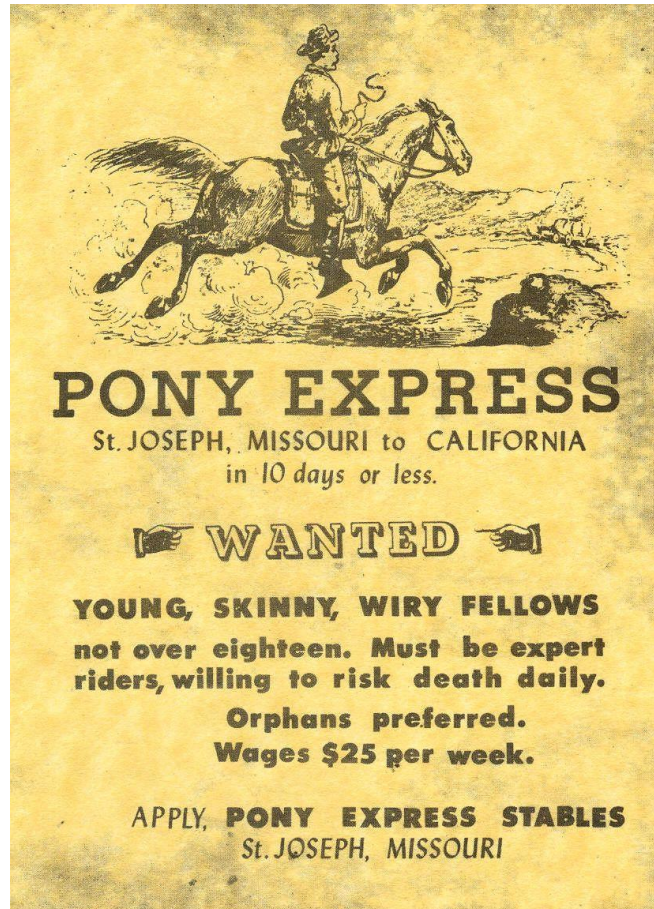
As a prospective finance manager, I would be extremely interested in spending the years to come at Bell Media.



Sincerely yours,
Nick Jocoubain
Address
encl.

Making an Application For a Job

Read the following job ad.



Instructions:

- ✍ Write an application letter to Pony Express Stables, St. Joseph, Missouri
- ✍ Include all the elements of a cover letter
- ✍ Refer to the model provided on page 8
- ✍ Proofread your letter for correct grammar, spelling, vocabulary (audience, tone, purpose, formal/informal), content and punctuation.

[illegible]

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