

**Effective Writing**  
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**Lecture – 14**  
**Format of Business Letters and Memos**

Good morning friends and welcome back to the second part of lecture on Business Letters and Memos. If you remember well in the first part we talked about the basic differences between business letters and memos, in their tone, in their structure, in their format. Here we shall focus our attention more on business letters and we shall also see the various parts of a business letter.

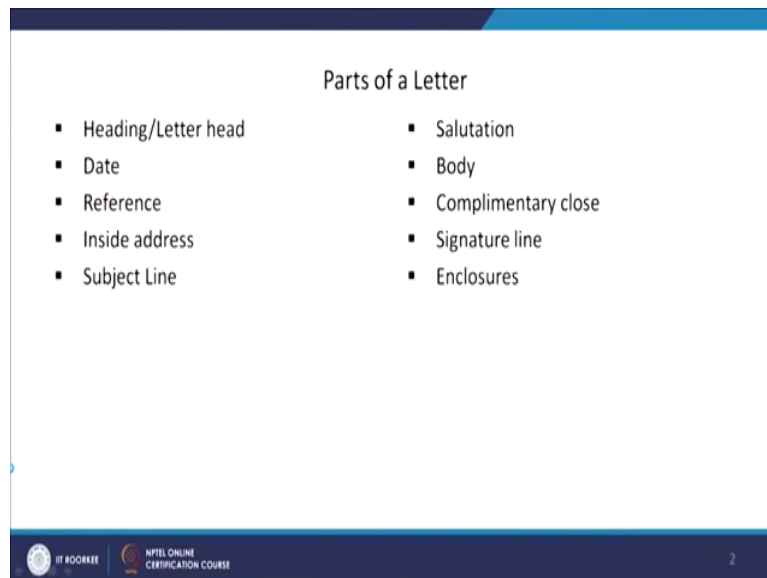
As you already know, we have talked about the six important C's of business letters, but here we shall try to focus more on the parts of business letter. Now, you might at times be thinking that do we really need to write letters. We have already discussed in the past lecture as to why writing business letters it is still important and it has to be brought back for the smooth flow of business. .

Many of the youngsters nowadays who have been addicted to writing emails, they perhaps do not know the nitty gritty of writing a letter, and forget about personal letters even if you can do well with writing emails personal emails, but then in a business world you at times depending upon the exigency and the demand of your organization, you have to write or you have to draft a business letter.

Now, for those who do not know what are the various parts of a letter, I think it would rather be appropriate to understand the various parts of the letter. Since, majority of you are working in an organization, when you get an opportunity to write a letter you are provided with a letterhead. So, the very first part of a business letter is a heading or letterhead. Now, what is a heading?

Now, this heading comes in the top center of the letter which is already printed, it actually denotes the name of the organization and the address along with the phone numbers, fax numbers, emails, email ID's or website details.

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But then, organizations where you do not have this you are to ensure that you can write it yourself because when you write a letter the other party or the receiver would like to know from where the letter has come.

So, the first attention or the first thing that we want to find out is the heading or the letterhead. Next to the heading comes date, letters as I said earlier they become a part of record hence a letter written five years ago at times also can be brought to the notice of people

when the need so arises, that is why the date is very important. Now, where should we write the date that will also see; just after the date comes the reference.

In business it is actually that because of some sort of urgency or some sort of need we talked to each other and that is why we also have to refer to the context in which we are talking. And when an organization exchanges so many letters, the previous letters also become important because through that we refer to. That is why in many letters you will find reference number, apart from the date and then comes the inside address.

Now, what is this inside address? This inside address is the address of the person to whom you are writing this letter, I mean we can also call addressee I mean the person whom you are going to address. And then comes the subject line since, it is not a personal letter and when you are writing a letter maybe to a BG professional, that professional would first like to see why this letter has been written and what is the context that is why a subject line has to be given and the subject line tells the purpose of the letter.

Just after the subject line we have a salutation though those who are writing emails they seem to have forgotten the need of a salutation even in email because in many organizations emails have also become formal, they are being accepted. So, salutation is very important, and through salutation you are actually greeting the other person, you are addressing the other person I mean the receiver. And then comes the body where you are going to mention; I mean you are going to explain the purpose the body can have three parts..

The first may be the opening paragraph where you are talking about the purpose of your writing your letter, the second part may be the explanation of the entire thing and the third part may be you are going to wind up, you are going to emphasize or whatsoever depending upon the need of the situation and then comes the signature line and then the enclosure. Now how to write all of them or how to draft all of them very carefully because a letter gets its recognition and its importance not only by the content, but also by its design also by the way it has been formatted.

In the organizations that you are working in you might be having a certain design of a letter. So, if you are working in an organization please see to it that you maintain the organizational letterhead and you write on it depending upon what way the correspondences flow in your organization. When you are going to write the date, the month should be spelled in full for example, and this date line would come only two space below the letterhead.

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The slide is titled "Date and Month" and contains the following content:

- While mentioning date, month should be spelled in full:  
*October 07, 2019 Or 07 October 2019*
- Date line should be placed two lines below the letter head.
- Letter head is not used for continuation pages. Continuation page heading should contain first line of inside address.

The letterhead example is:

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*Brilliant Tutorials  
Malviya Nagar,  
Varanasi.*

07 October 2019

The slide footer includes the IIT Kharagpur logo, the text "IIT KHARAGPUR", the NPTEL Online Certification Course logo, and the number "3".

The letterhead will always be in the centre and you have to leave two spaces and then write the date line.

Now, it depends whether what mode or what format of letter you are following, if you are following a full block format the date will be written on the left we shall discuss it further. So, here you can see there are two ways you can write date. So, the name of the month has to be in full; for example, if it is October 7th today we must write October 7 and then 2019, I am

in the year and in and between you must not forget to put a comma. There are some other practices also where many people do not provide comma. Now, depending upon what practice is allowed in your organization you go accordingly .

Now, the date line should be placed as I said two lines below the letterhead here you can find this is actually this is the letterhead of an organization Brilliant Tutorials Malviya Nagar, Varanasi. I mean here we have not mentioned the entire address, but the entire address has to be maintained and then below that I mean leaving two spaces below there let us come to write the date, 7 October, 2019. Now, in many organizations when you are writing a letter and the letter becomes longer no, you should not I mean if you are continuing the continuation page for the continuation page it is better not to use the letterhead.

So, letterhead is not used for continuation pages continuation page heading should contain first line of the inside address this is actually to specify to whom it has been written. So, if your content continues even up to the second page please do not go for the letterhead rather the other page will be the normal page, but you have to mention the first line of the inside address on the continuing page.

So, this is very important my dear friend, there are certain minor things which at times people forget and you know that actually gives a very bad impression and remember you are while you are writing a letter you are the ambassador of the organization. Hence what you should do is you should actually see that the image of the organization is maintained. Next to writing the date comes the inside address and the inside address as I said will be the address of the person to whom you are addressing the letter, to whom you are writing the letter.

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**Inside Address & Salutation**

- Inside address: Ms. Miss, Mrs, Dr., Prof., Col. Col. Janmejay Kumar Narayan  
56, Main Park, Military Quarters, Chandigarh- 145367

**Salutation**  
In case of not knowing the gender of the addressee, full name is written without a courtesy title:  
Dear Kali Charan Sharma  
Dear Shilpi  
Dear Dr. Singh

Place Salutation a double space below the last line of the inside address or the attention line.

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Now, in this what you should do is while you are going to write the inside address if a person has got a title please maintain that title.

Now, the question is you also are to greet them, that is why you write miss mister misses doctor, but it is only in the address line only in the address line. Somebody may be a doctor, somebody may be a professor, somebody may be a colonel and these are written you know in an abbreviated form. Here you can find the address of a person has been written inside address and here I have willingly left the email id and whatsoever, but then you can always maintain it fine.

So, now here the name of the person and the name of the person in the address has to be written in full, has to be written in full Colonel Janmejay Kumar Narayan. Isn't it this is actually the full name of the person to whom you are writing. And then comes the address

fine fifty six main park military quarters Chandigarh whatsoever and provide the pin code in as well.

So, having written the inside address we come to the salutation, no salutation is the first step in the letter when you are going to address this person. Imagine you are writing a letter to a person and you do not know you are in you are a new employee in the organization the person whom you are writing you do not know or you are unaware of the gender. So, in case you do not know the gender of the addressee full name is written without a courtesy title; full name is written without a courtesy title I mean you do not know whether he is a doctor or a professor whatsoever.

So, it is better to write like this dear Kali Charan Sharma fine, in many countries you know when you address a person with their first name though in many countries they appreciate writing or addressing a person with a first name, but it varies from one country to another. But then if you are writing to a person with whom you have already had a sort of business transaction or an exchange of letter, you can also write dear Shilpi; dear Shilpi because you know the other person that is why you are addressing with the first name.

But in case you do not know the person fine, you are not acquainted with the person you can also write dear Dr. Singh, here you should not write the complete name of the person. You know him, but then he has a designation and that should be provided.

Now, where to put this salutation of the letter? Place salutation a double spaced below the last line of the inside address. Suppose this is inside address and the last line of the inside address is this remains or leave to two spaces I am in double space and then start the salutation. So, salutation is very important my dear friend these days because of the excessive use of emails, even the youngsters they have forgotten how to provide salutation, but remember every now and then the receiver of your letter will not be a young person like you, maybe there are experienced people.

Hence providing salutation is very important and as a careful and sincere writer you will do justice with that. Next to that will come the subject line you will always provide the subject

line as I said in the beginning. Subject line actually tells the other person what this letter is about and the subject line is written one space below the salutation and in subject whatever is the subject you may mention. And next to that comes the body of the letter; the body of the letter can be called the heart of the letter because here is the place where you are going to do business and then when you start you are mentioning what you are going to say.

So, when you go into the body of the letter put double spaced below this salutation, after the salutation no put double spaced and then start you later.

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Complimentary Close

- Double space below the last line of the body.
- Capitalize only the first letter of complimentary close.
- Yours faithfully/sincerely/truly/cordially/
- Truly yours/Yours very truly

*Dear Shilpi*  
*Yours faithfully*

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The very first line or very first paragraph of your body will be about the purpose of writing this letter and naturally depending upon the need, depending upon the exigency of writing this letter you will find whether your letter is going to be a longer one or a shorter one or whatsoever, because since you are going to explain things naturally it will be in two or three



paragraphs. So, ensure that within the paragraph; within the paragraph single space is maintained and between two paragraphs double space, you know this is what I mean by courtesy and consideration when we are drafting professional letters.

So, ensure single space within and double between the paragraph then the body as I said depending upon the content you can divide your body into three paragraphs and if you feel that you need to write longer you can try to accommodate your content into three paragraphs sometimes it may go longer as well. But sometimes when the letter becomes longer and what happens we come to a sentence and the last word of the sentence is still unfinished. So, what many people do? They actually bring this last word to the next page, now this is not a good idea. Never divide individual words between pages it is always better to try to conclude or try to come to the end of the sentence so that the next sentence can begin from the next one it actually causes a difficulty to the reader of the letter.

Hence as sincere letter writers and careful beings in the business world you will see to it that you do not divide individual words between pages. Next to that we come to the complimentary close. Now, what is this complimentary close? Complimentary close is having written the body of the letter, you are actually going to end the letter or you are going to take a leave no. So, complimentary close is having written all the three paragraphs, now you are trying to complete the letter or end the letter, but before ending the letter you have to close it and this is called complementary close.

So, this complementary close should have double space below the last line of the body. Below the last line of the body let there be two spaces and many people when they write, when they make a complimentary close they do not understand the difference between the two words that they write you know sometimes many and there is a usual practice when you begin your letter with dear Shilpi or whatsoever or sometimes when you do not know other people there is a practice of writing dear ladies and gentlemen, sometimes they also write dear sir and madam, but depend because we have to do a business. So, it is always better or to create a sort of rappo and this rappo is done if we know the person, even if we do not know the person we address them in a very decent and proper manner.

So, many people, usual practice it is always better to keep yourself away from the debate and the controversy and write sincerely your sincerely it has often been seen and youngsters often fall into this habit of putting both these words your and sincerely and they capitalize the first word of these two letters this is actually wrong. So, capitalized only the first letter of complimentary close. For example, if you are writing yours and then faithfully or sincerely it is always better that we capitalize only the first letter, not the first letter of the second word as well it has been seen and when the word process they ensure that they capitalize both these words, no this is really wrong.

So, when you are going to have a complimentary close, [vocalized- noise] there are so many ways people can make a complimentary close yours faithfully, your sincerely, yours truly, yours cordially, sometimes people also write yours respectfully, sometimes they also convert it saying truly yours fine, if it is truly yours the first letter only should be capitalized not the other letter or yours.

Sometimes you know when you have had a business relationship with the other receiver for a long time you can always write yours very truly, these are all the ways because as I have been saying that a letter establishes not only a relationship, but a goodwill as well, that is why when you are going for a complimentary close you are going to take a leave. And when you end this letter, when you end this letter what you are going to do you are actually to bring something to action isn't it.

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Ending your Letter

**Avoid participial endings**  
Hoping for positive response / Looking forward / Waiting for favourable response

✓ **Use complete sentences, such as:**  
We look forward to your response  
We hope to receive a prompt reply ✓

*you-view!*

✓ **End with call to action and express appreciation**  
We plan to send you our latest brochure by November 05. Can you send some orders by November 15?  
That will allow us to accommodate your orders and send you the goods well in time.

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So, ending the letter also becomes very important, many people you might have seen when they end their letters they end it in a very haphazard manner and at times it has been seen they actually end it with a participial ending. What is this participial ending? For example, hoping for positive response; now see the hoping is a participial looking forward waiting for these are all wrong my dear friends.

So, please avoid that avoid participial endings, rather it is better and it is advisable to use complete sentence such as we look forward to your response or we look forward to receiving your response we hope to receive a prompt reply in this regard, I mean complete sentences are always welcome. And when you end because it is only in the end that you are going to emphasize and that you are going to see that some action will be taken.

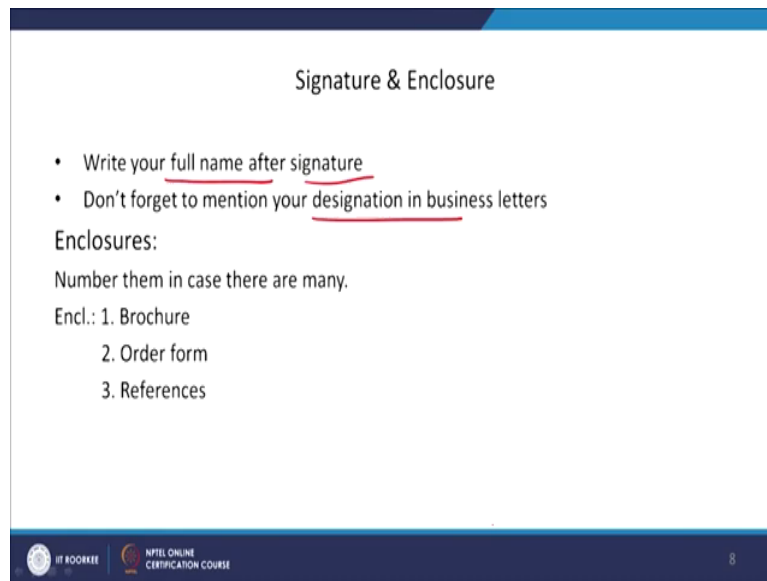
So, end with call to action what is this call to action and also express appreciation you have already expressed appreciation in the beginning, but when you are going to end it even then you must appreciate. How? Here is an example a sentence that I have taken from some letter, we plan to send you our latest browser by November 5, can you send some orders by November 15.

Now, you see you are trying to be very interactive and you are trying to show concern, because you want to serve the other party you what you say is that will allow us to accommodate your orders and send you the goods well in time, you remember in the previous lectures we have talked about the you view. So, because you are trying to retain or to continue relationships that is why this you view has to be maintained and this you view can be maintained at times by making use of you at a times twice or thrice.

So, when you end your letter you actually have a sort of satisfaction that some action has been taken and your letter when you end your letter, now you are and in a belief you are under the impression that you are going to get orders or whatsoever your you are going to make your requests materialized or you are going to see that you are going to get a favourable response or whatsoever that is why ending the letter is very important.

Now, when you end your letter and you have written yours faithfully sincerely respectfully whatsoever right your full name after signature, remember this is not a personal letter. In a personal letter because you have had a personal relationship with the other party you can simply write your name, your first name as well.

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Signature & Enclosure

- Write your full name after signature
- Don't forget to mention your designation in business letters

Enclosures:  
Number them in case there are many.

Encl.: 1. Brochure  
2. Order form  
3. References

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But in a business letter you have to write your full name after signature; signature will be different no signature will be different sometimes your letter is being typed by somebody else as I said to the other day. So, in that case also, but then when you are signing, you may sign with a pen or whatsoever, but even after your signature your full name has to be written so that the receiver comes to know from whom this letter has come. Never forget because you are writing from an organization, so your designation also matters your designation matters.

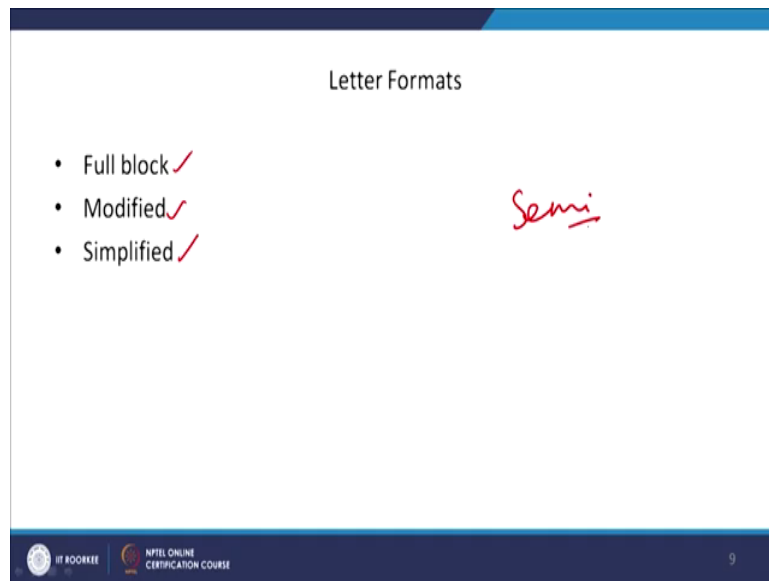
So, put your designation in business letters in order to ensure or in order to tell other people who is writing who is sending and next to that the last is enclosures. In business we actually deal in several things and sometimes we also want to ensure that we send them brochures, at times you also send them the list of what we deal in, sometimes we are also sending them order forms references whatsoever. Because letters in professional world are written for various purposes and depending upon the purposes when you are writing your letter and if

you feel that some enclosures are also essential for providing the customer or the receiver some more information.

So, if you find that the enclosures are actually things which you attach which you attach to your letter. So, when you do that please see if there are different categories you can always number them, number them in case there are so many enclosures because that will give the other party a better experience.

Next to that having understood how to write a business letter and also understood what are the different parts of a letter. Now, we come to the formats of the letter there are different formats and whatever organization you are working in my dear friend, your organization may use a different format; is not it? Now, there can be three formats, at times there are four also first is the full block format and in the present day world majority of organizations go with this full block format.

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And then there can be modified one, simplified one, many organizations also write in semi block format also, but then it actually varies from one organization to another. Now, what are the requirements of all these formats that we will find out?

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### Full Block

- ✓ Everything is flushed towards the left.
- ✓ No punctuation in inside address, except in the paragraphs.
- ✓ Inside address is aligned left and is the same as on the envelope.
- ✓ Body is single spaced within the paragraph and double spaced between the paragraph.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR  
Pondicherry,  
Gandhi Path, Pondicherry

October 07, 2019

Ms. Rizki  
First Travels Agency  
25 Vikas Marg  
Shantipur UK-254533



Dear Ms Rathode

Subject: Regarding ticket booking

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Sincerely,  
Abhyudaya Anand

Abhyudaya Anand  
Chief Administrator



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Now, in this slide you will find I have already provided a sample also a full block. Now, why do we call it full block? In a full block format everything I mean right from the date, except you know the later head the letterhead will always be in the top centre, but apart from that everything will be flushed left you see, everything will be flushed left. I mean address, I mean the inside address this is on the left and then dear Ms. Rathode ,you are writing to somebody this salutation and then next to that will come the subject line and after subject line here I have left it empty so that you can fill it in.

And here you may depending upon the purpose of your letter you will write, maybe it is two paragraph three paragraph or whatsoever and when you are going to make a complimentary close you are going to write your full name along with the signature and as I said you are also going to write your designation, inside address is left and the same on the envelope on the envelope also the same address will be there body will be a single spaced within the



paragraph as I said and double spaced if you are switching over from one paragraph to another. So, this is about full block format.

Now, majority of organizations nowadays follow the full block block format, but then there you should also know the other formats; for example, a modified block format. What is the difference between the two? You have already seen the other one, in modified block format there is a slight difference. And what is the difference?

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**Modified Block**

- Date, complimentary close and signature line are flushed towards the right.
- Inside address, attention line and salutation are aligned with the left had margin.
- Open punctuation is followed and paragraphs in the body are blocked.

Suman Electricals Ltd  
78 Vidyut Marg  
Vikaspur, Sitapur, U.P.

October 10, 2019

Titan Company Ltd  
56 Bhagwanpur  
Roorkee, Haridwar 24657

Attention Line: Account Section

Dear Sir/Madam

Sincerely  
Radha Menon  
Radha Menon  
Distribution Head

Enclosure

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Even though the inside address is there on the left and the salutation is always on the left only the date line and the signature, date line complimentary close and signature they are flushed right they are flushed right, but enclosures again will be flushed left. So, date complimentary close and signature line are flushed towards the right.

Inside address, attention line; attention line is subject line you know in many institutions in many organizations they call it attention line and then salutation are aligned with the left hand margin fine and open punctuation is followed and paragraphs in the body are blocked. Now, paragraphs in the body are blocked this actually gives them a better a view. In many cases many organizations also follow, the paragraphs are indented I mean one space is left in every paragraphs. So, depending upon what format is being followed in your organization you can goead my dear friend and write your letters.

Now, the last one; the last one which is very important is this simplified format it is it is simplified because it is not addressed to an individual it is actually addressed to a company. When you do not know to whom you are writing you are writing to a company my dear friend and when you are writing to a company no salutation and no complimentary close is required, there is no salutation neither this salutation nor complimentary close.

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Simplified

- ❖ Addressed not to an individual but to company.
- ❖ No salutation and complimentary close.
- ❖ Date, complimentary close and signature are flushed towards the right margin.
- ❖ Subject line in upper cases but without subject.

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You actually right after the letterhead you start no you start writing there is no salutation the inside address will be there fine, but the inside address you will mention the name of the organization and there were no salutation will, but then there will be a subject line or the attention line. Date, complimentary close and signature are flushed towards the right margin, date complementary close you already are aware of date complementary close and signature, they are flushed towards the right as we have seen in the previous one.

And the subject line will always be in upper cases, but then there is no need to mention subject or attention. In certain cases you mention attention because even though you are writing to an organization, you may write because you do not know the name of the person you may write the chairman a finance section or the head finance section, but remember that there is no need of mentioning subject fine.

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Summing up

“Letters have to pass two tests before they can be classed as good: they must express the personality both of the writer and of the recipient.”

- E.M. Forster

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We can always, when we write a letter see to it you have to be very particular. When you are writing a letter what you must see is not only are you following the format which is being practiced in your organization, but at the same time you must see for example, if you are writing to an individual as I said naturally you write the name, you address them by salutation, but since you are not writing to the individual you are writing to the company so we can say titan company limited and then when you write the attention line there is no need writing attention line.

And you are going to mention subject line in upper cases; upper cases I mean you may write chairman and in upper cases. And then finally, when you have done that now the letter has to go and when you write the letter please see to it that the letter is formatted well and before we close this session, let us remember what E M Foster said, letters have to pass two tests. What

are these two tests, two tests? Before they can be classified as good before and you are all trying to write good letters they must express the personality, as I said in the beginning also.

Even though you are writing from the side of the organization you are writing to a person and the other person by reading your letter also starts imagining about your personality. So, in order to make a letter good, they must express the personality both of the writer and of the recipient because it is a two way process. Hence while we write a professional letter which let us be reminded of what E M Foster says it has to pass two tests before they can be classed as good they must express the personality, both of the writer and also of the recipient, because through letters as I have been saying that we are actually trying to create a relationship we are trying to create a relationship. You can find several examples of letter and with these examples you can also practice writing letters for a professional purpose, because letters remain a piece of record. And letters also tell us who the writer is and even in course of time even when you are not in the organization letters written by you which are in the record they can make people remember you and there are quite good many letters written from the side of organization and also from the side of individuals.

It has always been seen that most of the literary lovers they express their emotions through letters and their letters are converted into the form of books and essays, but then here there is a slight difference when you are writing letters for professional purposes your letters should see to it that business relations relationship is maintained without being too informal. Because formality is the hallmark and the dignity of a professional or a business letter, let us come to conclude this and wish you all a good day and also look forward to getting you see write good letters in future.

Thank you very much.