



SOS BUSINESS LETTERS

**HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS LETTERS
ROBERTO DE PAULA LICO JÚNIOR**

SOS Business Letters
English Language Development Program
Roberto de Paula Lico Júnior
licoreis@uol.com.br

The Author

Roberto de Paula Lico Júnior is a lecturer in English as a Foreign Language and he has considerable expertise in the field of Overseas Trade, having designed and taught a number of classes related to International Law and Overseas Trade. He has a postgraduate degree in European Business and Languages (South Bank University – England – 1996) and a BA in Law (Universidade Salesiana de Direito de Lorena - 1990). And he also concluded the Advanced Overseas Trade Course (London College of Printing and Distributive Trade - England) in 1994 and the Courses in International and Immigration Law (City University - England) in 1991 and 1992 respectively. Nowadays he lives and works in Guaratinguetá, State of São Paulo, Brazil.

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- I. Introduction
- II. Writing a Business Letter
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I Introduction:

As we know writing business letters can take up more and more of your time.

And as the person who has to actually write these letters it can become, especially in today's world where businesses and people are being judged more and more on their communication skills, a quite anxious and difficult job.

Since that we have decided to write this book with the main goal of helping all the professional people who are involved in this kind of situation where writing is an important issue.

Here the reader will find a lot of tips and some business letters models, that we are sure will help him in his future business dealings.

We strongly advice that the business letters here showed are only to be used as an example or support and we don't take any kind of responsibility for its wrongfully use.

II Writing a Business Letter:

The importance of good business writing skills cannot be underestimated. Here are some tips:

1. Remember the old public speaking adage: "Tell them what you're going to say, say it, then tell them what you said." The same principle holds when writing a business report. In an introductory paragraph (or section), tell your reader what you are going to say; in the body, say it; and in a concluding paragraph (or section), review what you have said.
2. Be excited by your topic. It shows! If you are not excited, you can be sure your readers will share your lack of enthusiasm.
3. Break up your writing with headings, subheadings, lists, tables, and figures. This helps the reader to understand and organize the content of your document. It is difficult to focus on and digest unrelieved text.
4. Proof-read, spell-check, and grammar-check your work! A good trick for proofreading is to read your report aloud in a conversational voice. Your tongue will often catch awkward phrases and words which your eyes might otherwise overlook.
5. Cite your sources of information and data, and include a reference list. A good and simple way to cite your sources is simply to include the name of the author and year of publication in parentheses within the body of your text (Lawrence 1999). Then include the full citation in a reference section at the end of your paper:

III The Business Letter:

Here you will find a model of a business letter:

[Your Name]
[Street • City • State • Zip Code]
[Phone # • Fax phone # • Messages phone # • Email]
_____ [Date today]

[Recipient's Name]
[Company Name]
[Address]
Attention [Recipient's Name]

*Re: [To what this letter refers]

Dear [Recipient's name]:

[SUBJECT – The body of the business letter]

Sincerely,
[Sign here]

[Your name, title]

Enclosures: [Number]

cc: [Name for Copy]

IV. The Ten Secrets of Writing a Business Letter:

1. Start From the End

Decide what the result of your letter ought to be. List things you'd like to say, and review them. Remove those not supporting the main idea. Good letters have a strong sense of purpose.

2. Get to the Point Early

Don't delay. You should state your main cause in the first paragraph.

3. Put Yourself in Your Reader's Place

If the letter came to you, how would you respond? Be pleasant; try to turn negative statements into positive ones.

4. Say it Plainly

Phrases like "in compliance with your request" and "enclosed herewith" are stilted. Write as you talk — naturally. Include just one idea. Sentences longer than two typed lines are suspect.

5. Clear the Deadwood

Cut words, sentences, and even paragraphs that don't contribute. Work hard to simplify your reader's job. Be especially careful with adjectives, which can sap strength from your words.

6. Use Active Verbs

Passive voice is weak and confusing. "A decision has been reached by the committee" is inferior to "The committee has reached a decision." Also, readers can sense your evasiveness if you write: "Your order has been misplaced" instead of "I misplaced your order."

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7. Be Human

Your letter should read like a conversation. Address your reader by name: “Dear Ms. Hartman.” And if you can fit it in naturally, use Ms. Hartman’s name in the body. You want her to know the letter is personal. Whenever you can, use pronouns like I, we, and you.

8. Never Write in Anger

Anger will evaporate; a letter won’t. Devise a way to handle problems in an upbeat manner. Your chances of success will multiply tenfold.

9. End With an Action Step

The end of a letter should suggest the reader’s next move, or your own. Don’t write distracting closings like: “Again, thank you for . . .” or “If you have problems, please don’t hesitate to call.” Close with a simple “Sincerely,” and your signature; it may be a perfect ending.

10. Be Professional

The most well-written letters can’t survive bad presentation. Use a clean, logical format for your letter. A crowded or over-designed page distracts from your message.

V. Models of Business Letter:

Acceptance of Resignation

Dear

It is with deep regret, that we accept your resignation
 as (position) of the (organization)

We can appreciate the demands that this position has placed
 on you, and appreciate all of the fine contributions you
 have made as (position)

Acknowledged Receipt of Goods

The undersigned hereby acknowledges receipt and delivery
 of the goods described on the annexed list or invoice and
 further acknowledges that said goods have been inspected and
 are without defect.

Signed under seal this _ day of _, 19_.

Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Order

Date: _

To: _ (Customer)

We are in receipt of your order as contained in the
 attached purchase order form.

We confirm acceptance on said order subject only to the following exceptions:
 (describe)

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On exceptions noted, we shall assume you agree to same, unless objection is received within ten days of receipt of this notice.

Thank you for your patronage.

Very truly,

Acknowledgement of Change in Meeting Date

Dear

Pursuant to your request, we have changed your meeting with (name of individual) to (time), on (date)

We are pleased to be able to accommodate you in this manner, and (name of individual) will be looking forward to your meeting on this newly appointed date.

Acknowledgement of Receipt (Documents)

(date) ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of the following documents from the firm of (firm) :

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

(Signature of Client)

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Announcement of Change of Address

Dear

As of Monday, July 1, 1986, Kabuki Sales Corporation of America's Eastern Regional Office will be located in our new offices and warehouse building at 401 Grandiosa Boulevard, Tampa, Florida, 33715. The telephone number for this new location is (813) 555-5428.

Our Manufacturing Division will remain at 2550 Santa Fe Avenue, in St. Petersburg.

I have enclosed our most recent brochure on robotic equipment for your review. I hope you find it interesting.

Announcement of New Area Representative

Dear

It is my great pleasure to advise you that (name of new sales representative) will now be representing our firm in your area.

(name of individual) has been handling our accounts in (locale) for some time and is extremely knowledgeable in the field of (specify)

Your new representative is scheduled to visit your office on (date)

Announcement of Price Increase

Dear

Due to the increase in raw material costs, we must unfortunately raise the cost of our merchandise to you.

We have avoided raising our prices for as long as possible, but we can no longer prolong the inevitable.

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We have enclosed our new price list for your review which goes into effect on (date) Any orders placed between now and (date of increase) will be honored at the lower prices.

We wish to thank you for your valued account and know that you will understand the necessity for this price increase.

Announcement of Price Reduction

Dear

Rarely do we have the opportunity to inform our customers of such good news. The legislature's tariff ruling which was handed down on May 15th, 1986, has made it possible for our company to reduce our list price for Egyptian cotton. Effective as of June 1, 1986, all full orders received for six week delivery will be billed as follows:

STOCK OLD PRICE NEW PRICE

#0134 \$57.00 \$51.30

#0135 \$53.00 \$47.70

#0136 \$49.00 \$44.10

We are very pleased to be able to pass this savings directly on to you. These prices do not include the additional 2 per cent discount that is offered to our customers who pay within the 10 day discount period.

Apology After Cancellation of Order

Dear

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of (date) in which you set forth your reasons for canceling your purchase order #

I am very sorry about the misunderstanding that led to

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this cancellation and have taken the matter up with management in order to ensure that a problem of this nature does not occur again.

As one of our valued customers, your satisfaction is one of our primary concerns. Please accept our apology.

Apology and Replacement of Damaged Goods

Dear

It was distressing to learn that the chocolate we shipped to your firm last week arrived in bits and pieces. Per your request, a new shipment for 30 lbs. left our dock this morning and is scheduled for afternoon delivery to you on May 26th. Please turn over the damaged goods to the driver at the time of deliver.

I am sorry that this unfortunate incident occurred and sincerely appreciate your continued patronage.

Demand for Delivery

DEMAND FOR DELIVERY

Date: _

To: _ (Supplier)

Whereas the undersigned has now made full payment to you in the sum of \$_, for all goods to be shipped pursuant to our order dated _, 19_; we demand delivery of said goods in accordance with our contract.

Very truly,

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Bill of Sale

Bill of Sale

I, _____, of (name of firm) , in the County
of _____, State of _____, in consideration of _____ Dollars,
(\$_____), to be paid by _____, of (name of firm), the receipt of which is
hereby acknowledged, do hereby grant, sell, transfer and
deliver unto _____ the following:

(Description)

To have and to hold the same to _____ and his heirs,
executors, administrators, successors and assign, to their use forever.

And I hereby covenant with the grantee that I am the lawful owner of said goods;
That they are free from all
encumbrances; That I have good right to sell the same as aforesaid; And that I will
warrant and defend the same against the lawful claims and demands of all persons.

In witness, whereof, I _____, hereunto set my hand, this ____ day
of _____ 19__.

Congratulations on Increased Sales

TO: Sales Department Members
FROM: H.C. Chambers
SUBJECT: Monthly Results

The numbers are in and I am proud to inform you that our total sales for the period
of April 15th through May 15th amount to \$358,466.00, which represents a 10%
increase over our sales for the preceding period.

You have achieved the goal we established in the first week of April, and you are
all to be highly commended for your achievement. Congratulations!

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Contract - Goods

CONTRACT

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into this ___ day of _____, 198_, by and between _____, the Seller, and _____, the Buyer:

1. The seller hereby undertakes to transfer and deliver to the buyer on or before _____, 198_, the following described goods:
2. The buyer hereby undertakes to accept the goods and pay for them in accordance with the terms of the contract.
3. It is agreed that identification shall not be deemed to have been made until both the buyer and the seller have agreed that the goods in question are to be appropriated to the performance of the contract with the buyer.
4. The buyer shall make payment for the goods at the time when and at the place where the goods are received by him.
5. Goods shall be deemed received by the buyer when received by him at .
6. The risk of loss from any casualty to the goods regardless of the cause thereof shall be on the seller until the goods have been accepted by the buyer.
7. The seller warrants that the goods are now free and at the time of delivery shall be free from any security interest or other lien or encumbrance.
8. The seller further warrants that at the time of signing this contract he neither knows nor has reason to know of the existence of any outstanding title or claim of title hostile to his rights in the goods.
9. The buyer shall have the right to examine the goods on arrival, and within business days after such delivery he must give notice to the seller of any claim for damages on account of the condition, quality, or grade of the property, and must specify the basis of his claim in detail. The failure of the buyer to comply with these rules shall constitute irrevocable acceptance of the goods.
10. Executed in duplicate, one copy of which was delivered to and retained by the buyer, the day and year first above written.

/S/.....

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Authorization

AUTHORIZATION

TO: _____

Re: Loan # _____ or Savings Account # _____,

I hereby authorize release to _____,
 credit information for my pending credit application on a real estate transaction.

 Signature

Loan Opened _____ Monthly Payments _____

High Credit _____ Current Balance _____

Paying Record _____

Savings Account:

Date Opened _____ Present Balance _____

The above is furnished to you in strictest confidence to your request.

Date: _____

By _____ By _____

Equipment Maintenance Agreement

EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

Chambers Corporation agrees to provide maintenance service including up to two maintenance calls annually and interim calls as required at the installation address specified above on the equipment listed. All charges specified are those currently in effect and are subject to change only at the time of subsequent annual renewal. If the charges are increased, the customer may, as of the effective date of such increase, terminate this Agreement by written notice to Chambers Corporation. Otherwise, the new charges shall become effective upon the date specified in the renewal invoice. This Agreement is limited to equipment regularly operated during

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a single eight hour shift per day, and all Chambers Corporation calls hereunder are restricted to the normal working hours of Chambers Corporation. To cover increased maintenance costs, if any piece of equipment is regularly operated during more than one eight hour shift per day, an increase in Annual Rate will apply as follows:

Two Shifts 50% Three Shifts 100%.

All service commenced outside of Chambers Corporation's normal working hours will be charged at published rates for service time and expense only.

The following services are included:
(fill in services here)

Optimum performance of the equipment covered by this Agreement can be expected only if supplies provided by, or meeting the specifications of Chambers Corporation are used. Chambers Corporation shall have full and free access to the equipment to provide service thereon. If persons other than Chambers Corporation's representatives perform maintenance or repairs, and as a result further work is required by Chambers Corporation to restore the equipment to operating condition, such repairs will be billed at Chambers Corporation's published time and material rates then in effect.

For service as specified above on the equipment listed, the undersigned agrees to pay in advance the total annual charge specified below to Chambers Corporation, in accordance with the terms specified on the face of the invoice.

There shall be added to the charges provided for in this Agreement amounts equal to any taxes, however designated, levied or based on such charges or on this Agreement, or on the services rendered or parts supplied pursuant hereto, including State and Local privilege or excise taxes based on gross revenue, and any taxes or amounts in lieu thereof paid or payable by Chambers Corporation in respect of the foregoing, exclusive, however, of taxes based on net income.

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The undersigned represents that he is the Owner of the equipment, or that he has the Owner's authority to enter into this agreement.

This Agreement is subject to acceptance by Chambers Corporation, at its Home Office. It takes effect on the date written above and continues in effect for one year and will remain in force thereafter, with automatic annual renewal at then prevailing rates, until cancelled in writing by either party. If cancelled, the unearned portion of any advance payment will be credited to the customer.

Date _____

By _____

Date _____

By _____

Explanation for Delay of Partial Shipment

Dear

After some investigation, I believe that we have found the source of the problem that led us to our misunderstanding on (date)

When we received your purchase order for (quantity, product), we were unable to fill the order for immediate delivery due to (explanation for delay in delivery)

Our letter informing you of this delay and requesting your instructions was mailed to you on (date) We did not receive a reply and proceeded to send a follow-up letter to you on (date)

We have been able to make delivery to you since the (date) but felt that since you had emphasized "for immediate delivery" on your purchase order, we should wait for your authorization before shipping.

I can easily understand why you were so upset with us (day)

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if no one made you aware of our correspondence. We have always appreciated having you as a customer and hope that we can continue to provide you with our products in the future.

Final Notice Before Legal Action

FINAL NOTICE BEFORE LEGAL ACTION

Date: _

To: _ (Customer)

We have repeatedly requested payment of \$_, on your overdue account. Our demands for payment have been ignored.

Accordingly, we shall turn this account over for collection within the next ten days unless payment, or an acceptable proposal for payment is obtained.

Enforced collection on this obligation may result in additional legal or court costs to you and may impair your credit rating.

Very truly,

Financing Statement

FINANCING STATEMENT

_____ Debtor (Last Name First/Individual) Social Security Number

_____ Mailing Address City, State Zip Code

_____ Additional Debtor - (If Any) Social Security Number _____

Mailing Address City, State Zip Code _____ Debtor's Trade Names or

Styles Federal Tax Number _____ Secured Party Social Security No. _____

Name Federal Tax No. _____ or

Address Bank Transit and City, State A.B.A. No. _____

Zip Code _____ Assignee of Secured Party Social Security No. _____ Name

Federal Tax No. _____ or Address Bank Transit and City, State A.B.A. No. Zip

Code _____

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This FINANCING STATEMENT covers the following types or items of property (include description of real property on which located and owner of record when required).

Products of Collateral are also covered

Yes _____ No _____

Debtor is a "Transmitting Utility" Yes _____ No _____

Date:

Signature(s) of Debtor(s) _____

Type or Print Name of Debtor _____

Signature(s) of Secured Party(ies) _____

Type or Print Name of Secured Party _____

Return Copy to: _____

Letter of Resignation

Dear _____

This is to inform you that an opportunity has presented itself that will enable me to work in the area of my stated preference, which is (designate)

I am therefore tendering my resignation from your company and wish to advise you that (date) will be my last day of employment.

I would like to thank you for the experience of having worked for (name of firm) , a truly outstanding organization.

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New Customer Welcome

Dear

The (name of firm) would like to welcome you as a new customer to our firm. We know that you will be extremely satisfied with our line of products and the service we provide to our customers.

You are invited to purchase our merchandise on our regular open account terms, (set forth terms) Our credit manager, (name) , will be happy to discuss any aspect of our credit policy with you at your convenience.

I am enclosing our catalog and price list for your review.

I believe that you will find our prices competitive and in keeping with industry trends. Throughout the year we offer our valued customers frequent discounts as an incentive and as a showing of our appreciation.

I do hope you will afford us the opportunity to serve you in the near future.

Request for Advice

Dear

Frankly, I need your advice on a matter of great concern to the employees at the local manufacturing facility. It seems the constant rumors of a corporate takeover are filtering down to the general work force, and the loyalty may soon falter. I have heard of some employees submitting their applications to our competitors. This could create problems if not dealt with now.

I feel obliged to make some sort of official statement to the employees and hope for your guidance as to the content thereof.

I would be most grateful for your thoughts and advice on this most sensitive matter.

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Xmas Season Thank You to Valued Customers

Dear

As the Christmas season approaches, there is always so much activity and personal business to attend to that it is easy to forget to thank our valued customers, like you, for their orders.

So before I forget, thank you, and may this holiday season bring to you and your family all of the joy and happiness that you deserve.

Rejecting Claims (Damaged Goods)

Dear

Thank you for your letter of [date]. I am afraid we cannot accept your claim that [number] [products] delivered to you as part of order [number] were damaged.

I have enclosed a photocopy of our delivery note which was signed by [name], your [title], clearly noting that the delivery was made and the products were in good condition.

As you can appreciate, we do not feel we can take this matter any further on this occasion.

Yours Sincerely

Payment (overdue)

Dear [Name]

We write to inform you that we have not yet received payment of invoice [Number] for [Amount] due on [Date]. We realize you must have mistakenly overlooked this payment but ask that you give it your prompt attention at once.

If the payment has already been sent, please disregard this letter. If you have any queries about your account, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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Letter Order of Merchandise

Dear

Please send me the following items from your Springtime catalog:

1 Freedom 5" Color TV #ACI645 \$299 (7.50) \$306.50

1 Dog Race Analyzer #WNW209 \$ 50 (3.50) 53.50

Total \$360.00

I am enclosing my check made payable to you in the amount of \$372.25, which includes the cost of handling and shipping. Thank you.

Letter Canceling Unfilled Order

Dear

Our customer has informed us that she can wait no longer for the merchandise we ordered from you on [date] .

We are therefore canceling our purchase order #, which was contingent on delivery prior to [date] .

Under the circumstances, we are certain that you will understand the necessity of our canceling this order.

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Pre-arrival Letter to Hotel for Corporate Guest

Dear

This letter is to confirm our recent telephone conversation regarding [individual's] stay at your hotel next week.

All charges are to be directed to me at the address on our letterhead.[individual] will arrive at the Los Angeles airport on [date] . She should be checking in around [time] The rate for her room will be \$ plus tax per day.

She will probably be staying for days.

Please have flowers in her room when she arrives.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Cover Letter in Response to Catalog Request

Dear

Thank you for your inquiry about our [equipment] I am enclosing our catalog for your review.

We developed [name of equipment] to provide educators with a comprehensive and effective means of transmitting information and to help modernize educational methods. That children are highly receptive and stimulated to learn through the usage of audio-visual material, is widely accepted by educators throughout the field.

After you have reviewed our material, we would appreciate hearing your comments, and we will look forward to answering any questions you have about our product.

Once again, thank you for your interest in the [product]

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Promotional Letter, Interior Design

Dear

As a new customer of [firm], we thought you might be interested in knowing that our Custom Interior Shop offers you free interior design consultation along with the finest selection of fabrics and wallpaper designs to choose from.

Our experienced designers will be happy to meet with you either in your home or at our store to discuss your interior decorating needs. In addition to the merchandise we offer in our store, we have catalogs from the major manufacturers of furniture and accessories throughout the country from which you can make your selections.

Please feel free to either drop in or make an appointment with one of our interior designers at anytime. Thank you for being a customer of [name of firm]

Invitation to Demo New Product Line

Gentlemen:

It is our great pleasure to inform you that our new product line is ready for your inspection.

We believe that you will be delightfully surprised to see some of our latest innovations in both concept and design and invite you to call for an appointment to visit our display room [name of individual] will be happy to arrange a demonstration time for you at your convenience.

We will look forward to seeing you soon.

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Apology and Replacement of Damaged Goods

Dear

It was distressing to learn that the chocolate we shipped to your firm last week arrived in bits and pieces. Per your request, a new shipment for 30 lbs. left our dock this morning and is scheduled for afternoon delivery to you on May 26th. Please turn over the damaged goods to the driver at the time of deliver.

I am sorry that this unfortunate incident occurred and sincerely appreciate your continued patronage.

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Frankly, I need your advice on a matter of great concern to the employees at the local manufacturing facility. It seems the constant rumors of a corporate takeover are filtering down to the general work force, and the loyalty may soon falter. I have heard of some employees submitting their applications to our competitors.

This could create problems if not dealt with now.

I feel obliged to make some sort of official statement to the employees and hope for your guidance as to the content thereof. I would be most grateful for your thoughts and advice on this most sensitive matter.

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Request for Full Refund

Dear

The Vegematic I purchased from you on May 15, 1986 turned out to be quite a disappointment. While it looked the same as the one I saw in your commercial, it did not perform in the same way.

Following the instructions, I placed an onion in its proper position and pushed down on the mincer, which immediately bent out of shape. I experienced the same problem when I attempted to dice a carrot.

Therefore, I am returning the Vegematic to you and ask that you issue me a full refund. I am not interested in receiving a replacement.

Announcing Change of Address

Dear

As of Monday, July 1, 1986, Kabuki Sales Corporation of America's Eastern Regional Office will be located in our new offices and warehouse building at 401 Grandiosa Boulevard, Tampa, Florida, 33715. The telephone number for this new location is (813) 555-5428.

Our Manufacturing Division will remain at 2550 Santa Fe Avenue, in St. Petersburg. I have enclosed our most recent brochure on robotic equipment for your review. I hope you find it interesting.

Announcement of Price Increase

Dear

Due to the increase in raw material costs, we must unfortunately raise the cost of our merchandise to you.

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We have avoided raising our prices for as long as possible, but we can no longer prolong the inevitable.

We have enclosed our new price list for your review which goes into effect on [date] Any orders placed between now and [date of increase] will be honored at the lower prices.

We wish to thank you for your valued account and know that you will understand the necessity for this price increase.

Request for Information in Advance of Purchase Order

Dear

Attached to this letter is an overview of those items and services which we anticipate ordering from your firm, providing your terms and conditions are favorable, and your prices competitive.

Since this is only an informed guess as to our needs, it should not be considered as anything more than a rough idea of our requirements.

Please provide to us, in writing, a price list, along with your terms and conditions of sale, applicable discounts, shipping dates and additional sales and corporate policies. Should the information you provide be acceptable and competitive, you can look forward to our first order within thirty (30) days.

Thank you for your cooperation.

We have also enclosed our procurement specifications and conditions for your review.

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Apology of a conduct of employee

Dear

Thank you for your letter of [date], complaining about the conduct of one of our employees.

Please rest assured that we have investigated your complaint and that the person concerned will be severely reprimanded.

Please accept our sincere apologies for any distress this situation may have caused you and be assured that it will never happen again.

Thank you also for bringing this matter to our attention. We place great importance on the conduct of our employees and your complaint will give us the opportunity to remedy any problem that may exist.

Yours Sincerely

Request for Information on Invoice

Dear

This is to acknowledge our receipt of your invoice #

We are unable to process this invoice due to the fact that you have omitted our purchase order number.

Please forward same to us and we will make our remittance promptly.

Thank you.

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Request for Item Missing from Carton

Dear

After thoroughly searching through the shipping carton in which my Chambers Turntable arrived, I am still unable to find the "protective cover" that is referred to in the User's Manual. I can only conclude that it was inadvertently forgotten.

Please send me a cover as soon as possible. Thank you.