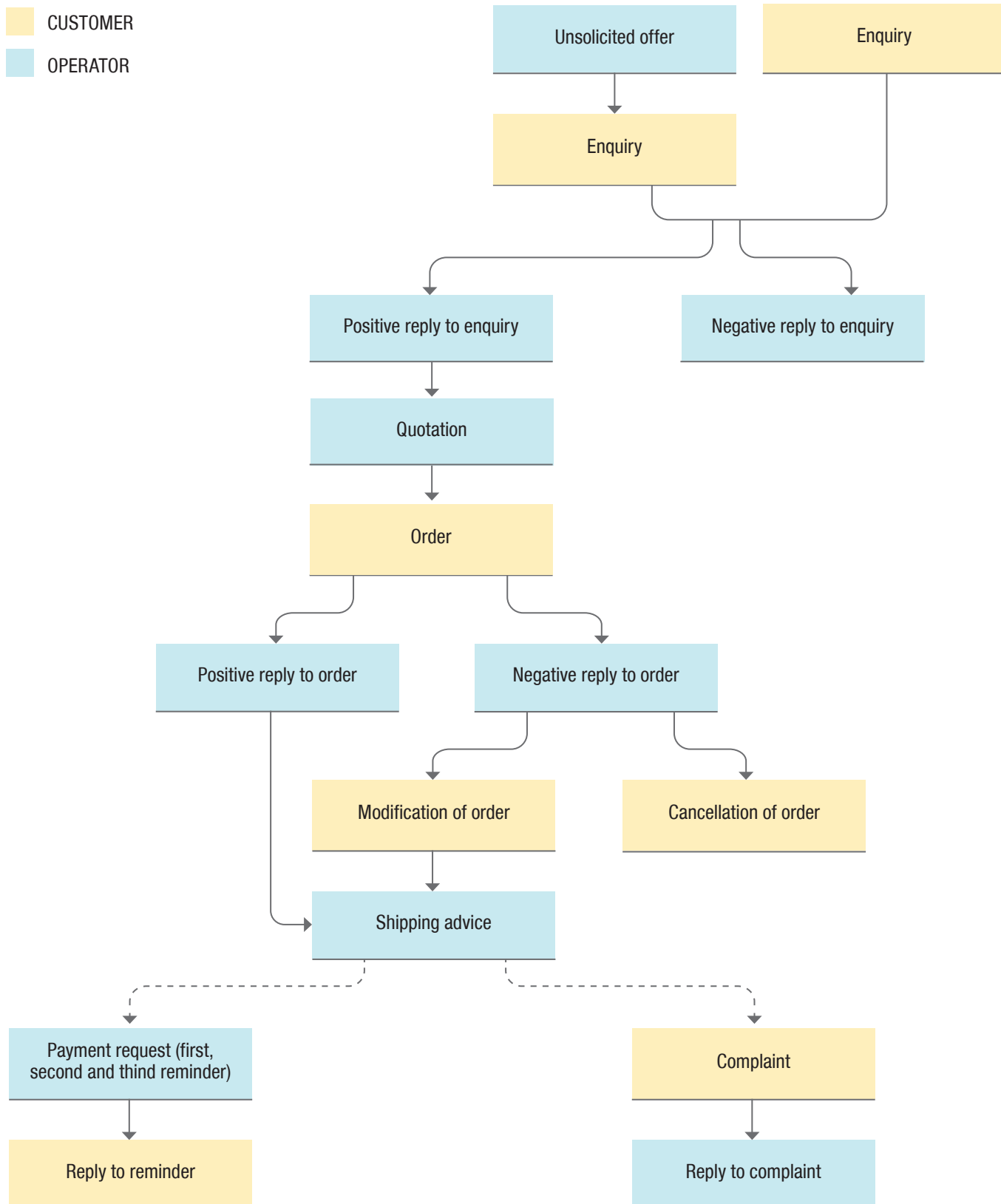


# Handy manual of business correspondence

## ■ Buying and selling



### Unsolicited offer

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1. Introducing the offer</b>                   | Capture the attention of the prospective buyer underlying the exceptionality of the offer.       |
| <b>2. Giving the details of the offer</b>         | Provide all the details of the offer, i.e. special price, delivery conditions, expiry date, etc. |
| <b>3. Expressing hope for an order or contact</b> | Express your hope of receiving an order or a reply.  |

### Enquiry

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>1. Source of information and reference to product</b> | Quote the source of information (newspaper, magazine, website, local Chamber of Commerce, etc.).            |
| <b>2. Information about the company (optional)</b>       | Provide information about your company (size, business field, etc.).  |
| <b>3. Requests</b>                                       | Make a specific request for a catalogue, price list, samples, a quotation, delivery and payment terms, etc. |
| <b>4. Closing</b>  | Thank the receiver for their attention.   |

### Positive reply to enquiry

- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>1. Reference to the enquiry</b>   | Refer to the enquiry received.  |
| <b>2. Positive reply</b>             | Assure the customer that you can satisfy their request.                 |
| <b>3. Enclosing what is required</b> | Make reference to what you are enclosing (price list, catalogue, etc.). |
| <b>4. Closing</b>                    | Express your hope of receiving an order.                                |

### Quotation

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>1. Reference to the enquiry</b>   | Refer to the enquiry. i.e. the request for a quotation.                                      |
| <b>2. Making an overview statement about the pricing information/sales terms</b> | Make a general statement about the way you determine prices, i.e. how prices are calculated. |
| <b>3. Giving details about the quotation</b>                                     | Provide the correct quotation for the goods or service required.                             |
| <b>4. Summarising the key benefits of the quotation (optional)</b>               | Point out the special conditions or benefits of your quotation.                              |
| <b>5. Asking for an order/further action</b>                                     | Ask for a reply to your quotation.   |
| <b>6. Closing</b>  | Express your hope of receiving an order.   |

### Negative reply to enquiry

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>1. Reference to the enquiry</b> | Refer to the enquiry received.  |
| <b>2. Negative reply</b>           | Apologise and provide a reason for not being able to satisfy the customer's request.        |
| <b>3. Counteroffer</b>             | Suggest an alternative (a similar article, an online catalogue, a delay in delivery, etc.). |
| <b>4. Closing</b>                  | Apologise again and express your hope for a favourable consideration of your counteroffer.  |

### Order

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>1. Reference to previous correspondence</b> | Refer to an offer, reply to enquiry or quotation (if any). |
| <b>2. Order details</b>                        |  |
| <b>a. Goods</b>                                | Specify the type of goods, quantity, price, etc.           |
| <b>b. Delivery</b>                             | Confirm or request delivery conditions.                    |
| <b>c. Transport</b>                            | Confirm or request the type of transport.                  |
| <b>d. Packing and marking</b>                  | Provide instructions for packing and marking.              |
| <b>e. Discounts</b>                            | Remind the seller or ask for a discount.                   |
| <b>f. Payment</b>                              | Confirm or require payment conditions.                     |
| <b>3. Closing</b>                              | Ask for a confirmation of your order.                      |

### Positive reply to order

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1. Reference to order</b>                  | Refer to the order received.   |
| <b>2. Order confirmation</b>                  | Inform the customer that you can supply the goods or provide the service required. |
| <b>3. Delivery and transport details</b>      | Confirm the conditions requested or agreed, or state usual conditions.             |
| <b>4. Packing and marking details</b>         | Confirm that you will follow the instructions received.                            |
| <b>5. Details about payment and discounts</b> | Confirm the conditions agreed or stated in the contract of sale.                   |
| <b>6. Closing</b>                             | Express your hope for future orders.   |

### Negative reply to order

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>1. Reference to order</b>      | Refer to the order received.  |
| <b>2. Refusing the order</b>      | Express your regret for having to refuse the order as the goods are not available or you cannot meet the customer's requirements. |
| <b>3. Counteroffer (optional)</b> | Propose alternative goods or a delay in delivery, an alternative method of payment, etc.  |
| <b>4. Closing</b>                 | Express your hope that the customer will accept your counteroffer.  |

### Modification of order

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>1. Reference to order or reply to order</b> | Refer to your order or to the seller's confirmation of your order.                                |
| <b>2. Modification</b>                         | Require the modification of your order, for example increase or reduce the quantity of the goods. |
| <b>3. Closing</b>                              | Ask for confirmation of the changes required.   |

### Cancellation of order

- 1. Reference to order or reply to order** Refer to your order or to the seller's confirmation of your order.
- 2. Cancellation** Specify the reason for the cancellation, for example, you cannot accept the seller's counteroffer.
- 3. Closing** Ask for confirmation of your cancellation.

### Shipping advice

- 1. Reference to the order or invoice** Refer to the order or to an invoice number.
- 2. Shipping details** Provide information on the date of shipment, carrier or ship's name, date of arrival, special packing conditions, etc.
- 3. Reference to transport documents** Quote the type and number of transport documents.
- 4. Closing (depending on payment terms)** Ask to be informed on receipt of the goods or assure that you will send the original documents as soon as you receive payment.

### Complaint

- 1. Reference to order or shipment** Refer to the order or shipment which is the object of your complaint.
- 2. Reason for complaint** Specify the reason for the complaint:
  - goods not yet arrived
  - wrong goods
  - wrong quantity
  - missing goods
  - damaged goods
  - mistakes in the invoice, etc.
- 3. Action required** Require immediate shipment of the missing goods, replacement of wrong goods, correct invoice, etc.
- 4. Closing** Ask the seller to look into the matter urgently.

### Reply to complaint

- 1. Reference to complaint** Refer to the complaint and apologise for the inconvenience occurred.
- 2. Explanation of the problem** Explain the reason/s for the inconvenience, i.e. a technical problem, a delay in deliveries, etc.
- 3. Action** Solve the problem:
  - send the missing goods and
  - replace the wrong ones
  - collect extra goods
  - send the correct invoice
  - grant a discount to show
  - goodwill, etc.
- 4. Apologies** Apologise again and assure the customer that there will not be any problems with future orders.

**Payment request**

- 1. Opening (optional)** Thank the customer for the order.
- 2. Enclosing the invoice and requesting payment** Give instructions for payment as per enclosed invoice.
- 3. Closing** Tell the customer that you are ready to answer any questions concerning the invoice.

**First reminder**

- 1. Reminder of payment** Remind the customer of the overdue invoice, account, etc.
- 2. Request for explanation** Request an explanation for the delay in payment.
- 3. Request for settlement** Request payment of the sum due.
- 4. Closing** Tell the customer to ignore the reminder if the payment has already been made.

**Second reminder**

- 1. Reminder of payment** Refer to the previous unanswered reminder and to the unpaid sum.
- 2. Request for explanation** Ask why the first reminder has not been answered.
- 3. Request for settlement** Request immediate payment of the sum due.
- 4. Closing** Point out that you expect immediate settlement.

**Third reminder**

- 1. Request of payment** Point out that in spite of your previous reminders, you have received neither payment nor a reply.
- 2. Request for settlement and reference to legal action** Point out that it is the final reminder and that in case of non settlement, you will have to take legal action.
- 3. Closing** Ask for immediate remittance and reply.

**Reply to reminder**

- 1. Reference to reminder** Refer to the reminder received.
- 2. Reason for delay** Provide a good reason for the delay.
- 3. Payment details or proposal for the settlement** In case you have already made the payment, provide the details. Otherwise, ask for a delay or negotiate conditions for the settlement, for example, to pay in instalments.
- 4. Closing** Apologise and assure the supplier that the problem is only temporary, or ask for a confirmation of your settlement proposal.

## ■ Transport and insurance

### Enquiry about freight rates

- 1. Information about the goods to be delivered** Provide all the relevant details for the goods to be delivered.
- 2. Details about the dispatch** Provide all the details of the dispatch: date, place, packaging, size, etc.
- 3. Enquiring about conditions** Ask if the freight forwarder can dispatch your goods and deal with relevant documentation. Ask for a quotation.
- 4. Closing** Ask for a reply.

### Instructions to freight forwarders

- 1. Reference to previous contact** Refer to your request of quotation, phone conversation, etc.
- 2. Instructions** Provide detailed instructions with reference to:
  - packing
  - size and weight
  - delivery terms
  - dates.
- 3. Final request** Ask to receive shipping notification to be informed of the arrival of the goods at destination, etc.
- 4. Closing** Thank the freight forwarder for their cooperation.

### Insurance claim

- 1. Details of the goods and shipment** Provide detailed information on the goods (size, weight, package, value, etc.) and the shipment (date, documents, etc.).
- 2. Conditions of the insurance policy** Quote the insurance conditions (type of insurance, certificate number, insured value, premium, etc.),
- 3. Description of the events which led to the damage or loss** Provide a detailed description of the events that led to the damage or the loss of the goods (e.g. fire, water, theft, etc.).
- 4. Insured's opinion on the matter (optional) and/or request of assessment of the damage or loss** Express your view on what you think might have happened and/or request the visit of an expert to evaluate the damage or loss.
- 5. Damage or loss calculation and request of payment** Provide your evaluation of the damage or loss and ask for payment.
- 6. Documents enclosed** Refer to the documents you are enclosing to support your claim.
- 7. Closing** Ask for reimbursement and show your willingness to provide further details.

## ■ Getting jobs

### Job advert

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>1. Business name</b>  | Highlight the name of your company.   |
| <b>2. Position required</b>  | Specify the position required (e.g. receptionist, personal assistant, etc.).  |
| <b>3. Type of position</b>   | Specify the type of the position (full time, part time, seasonal job, etc.), the expected hours, the salary and the main benefits of the job (e.g. ticket restaurants, Christmas bonus, etc.).                              |
| <b>4. Short description of the business</b>                              | Provide a short description of your business, in particular the location.   |
| <b>5. Description of the job</b>   | Describe the job or type of work, i.e. specify the various duties (e.g. answering the phone, sending emails, contacting customers, etc.).   |
| <b>6. Essential (or desirable) skills, qualifications and experience</b> | Specify the skills needed for the job (e.g. computer skills, foreign languages, etc.), the qualifications (e.g. high school diploma, degree, etc.) and experience required (e.g. minimum years of experience in the field). |
| <b>7. Instructions on how to apply and contact details</b>               | Provide instructions to candidate on how to contact company if they are interested (e.g. phone number, email, web form, contact person, etc.).  |
| <b>8. Reminder of the expiry date (if any)</b>                           | If there is an expiry date for calling, specify it in a clear way.  |

### Cover letter: conservative letter

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>1. Reference to the post and source of information</b> | Refer to a job advertisement or any other source of information. Remember to specify the post you are applying for. |
| <b>2. Education, working experience and skills</b>        | List briefly all the qualifications, skills and job experience that are relevant for the post.                      |
| <b>3. Personal qualities and motivation</b>               | Highlight personal qualities that are relevant for the post and your motivation for the job.                        |
| <b>4. Enclosures</b>                                      | Refer to the enclosed CV and any other relevant documents.  |
| <b>5. Closing</b>   | Express your hope of being contacted for a job interview.   |

### Cover letter: speculative letter

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>1. Enquiry about vacancies</b>                  | Explain the reason for the letter, i.e. you are enquiring about vacancies.  |
| <b>2. Education, working experience and skills</b> | List briefly your qualifications, skills and job experiences that could be relevant for the company you are writing to. |
| <b>3. Personal qualities and motivation</b>        | Highlight personal qualities that could be relevant for the company.  |
| <b>4. Enclosures</b>                               | Refer to the enclosed CV and any other relevant documents.  |
| <b>5. Closing</b>                                  | Express your hope of being taken into account if the need should arise.   |

**Curriculum Vitae (CV)**

- 1. Personal information** Provide the following:
  - name
  - address
  - nationality
  - date of birth
  - contact details (phone number, e-mail address, etc.).
- 2. Personal statement** Specify the job you are applying for.
- 3. Work experience** For each post, specify:
  - date
  - occupation or position held
  - main activities and responsibilities
  - name and address of the employer
  - type of business or sector.
- 4. Qualifications, education and training** For each qualification, specify:
  - date
  - type/name of qualification (e.g. certificate, diploma, etc.)
  - main subjects studied
  - school/University/organisation name.
- 5. Achievements, personal skills and competences** Organise this part in four different sections.
  - a. Languages spoken and level**  
For each language, specify the level according to the CEFR (e.g. B1, B2, etc.) and relevant certificates.
  - b. Organisational skills**  
Write a short paragraph highlighting your ability to manage team work, working on projects, etc.
  - c. Computer skills**  
Describe your computer skills with reference to operating systems, programming languages and or software programs. Include here qualifications such as the ECDL or Eucip-Core.
  - d. Artistic skills**  
Describe artistic skills that may not seem relevant for the job, but that can help understand your personality.
- 6. Hobbies, interest and voluntary work** List here any relevant activities that may be useful to describe your personality and interests.
- 7. References** Quote some references. They may be former teachers, former employers, former colleagues, etc.



## ■ Business travel

### Booking tickets

- 1. Reason for writing** Specify the reason for writing: a request for a train ticket, a plane ticket, etc.
- 2. Ticket details** Provide all the details necessary for booking the ticket:
  - passenger's name
  - passport number
  - type of ticket: single or return, business or economy, etc.
  - place and date of departure
  - place and date of arrival.
- 3. Closing** Ask for confirmation and be available to provide further details.

### Ticket confirmation

- 1. Reference to ticket request** Refer to the ticket request.
- 2. Ticket confirmation** Confirm the ticket/s listing all the details. State that you are enclosing the tickets or how you are sending them.
- 3. Closing** State your availability to provide information or services.

### Hotel reservation

- 1. Enquiring** Enquiry about availability on specific dates.
- 2. Requirements for accommodation** Specify:
  - the type of room (single, double, etc.)
  - the type of accommodation (full board, half board, B&B, etc.).
- 3. Closing** Ask for confirmation.

### Hotel confirmation

- 1. Reference to the enquiry** Refer to the enquiry received.
- 2. Confirmation or Counteroffer** Confirm that the room/s requested is/are available on the dates required. Confirm the price.  
or  
Apologise because the room/service required is not available and suggest an alternative.
- 3. Closing** Ask for a confirmation.