

2.5



LETTERS OF ADVICE, FEEDBACK AND SUGGESTIONS

Letters of this sort are typically written to organizations, and thus should be composed in a formal tone. For the purpose of this section, we will use the following:

Write a letter to your local library suggesting something they could do to improve their facility. In your letter include:

- a recount of a poor experience you had
- what you feel the library should change
- why you feel the library needs alteration

The opening paragraph should mark what the nature of your suggestion is:

I am writing to you to outline an area I feel the Ottawa Public Library could improve. Please allow me to explain.

Following this, you should speak about the details of your advice. As usual, this will likely involve a bit of creativity on your part to expand upon the situational basis you have been given in your IELTS Task 1 question.

While perusing titles in the library this past weekend, I could not help but notice the awkward manner in which various sections are organized. For example, all texts in the multimedia lab are classified by author, while the remaining sections of the library are categorized by title. As you can imagine, this made it extremely difficult for me to track down all the titles I was looking for, as I constantly had to shift my thinking from one categorical system to another. I cannot imagine why the resources are organized in this way.

To conclude our letter, we state what outcome we expect our message to bring. As our letter is only a suggestion, we would not use overly forceful language here:

I am sure that I would not be the only one who would appreciate your library reorganizing its texts to allow for more standardized browsing by its patrons. Thus, I hope you will consider my suggestion and make the necessary changes.

Our farewell should be polite:

Looking forward to hearing back from you,

Thanking you in advance,

Let's look at the letter in its entirety:

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you to outline an area I feel the Ottawa Public Library could improve. Please allow me to explain.

While perusing titles in the library this past weekend, I could not help but notice the awkward manner in which various sections are organized. For example, all texts in the multimedia lab are classified by author, while the remaining sections of the library are categorized by title. As you can imagine, this made it extremely difficult for me to track down all the titles I was looking for as I constantly had to shift my thinking from one categorical system to another. I cannot imagine why the resources are organized in this way.

I am sure that I would not be the only one who would appreciate your library reorganizing its texts to allow for more standardized browsing by its patrons. Thus, I hope you will consider my suggestion and make the necessary changes.

Thanking you in advance,

Ryan

2.6



LETTERS OF APOLOGY

As this sort of letter is typically addressed to an individual or an organization, this instance is once again one where you will have to judge your question before deciding upon what tone to use in your writing.

For this section, we are going to analyze the following sample Task 1 questions:

Question 1

You were absent from an important event held by the company you work for. Write a letter to apologize for this absence. Your letter should include:

- what the event was
- why the event was important
- why you were absent

Question 2

Your friend invited you to his/her birthday party, but you were unable to attend. Write a letter apologizing for your absence. In your letter:

- state why you could not go
- explain your reason for not contacting your friend sooner
- suggest another time to meet

As with the other letters, we start with a statement of purpose:

Sample 1

I would like to formally apologize for my absence at the annual company retreat this past week. Please allow me to elaborate on why I was not present.

Sample 2

I am writing to express how sorry I am for missing your birthday party last night. Please let me explain what happened.

Following this, details are fleshed out:

Sample 1

I am completely aware of the healthy teambuilding effects these retreats provide us at ActiveCorp, and I truly would not have missed it for anything. However, I was faced with a medical emergency. You see, my appendix ruptured on the day of the retreat. I was immediately rushed to hospital and operated upon within the hour. It was for this reason that I could not contact you to tell you of my plight. Please do not be concerned about my condition. The surgery went very well and I am currently in recovery.

Sample 2

As you know, I would not have missed your party for anything. Unfortunately, however, my wife, Kathy, started to feel ill right before we were about to leave for your place. I would have called to explain the situation to you, but we are in the middle of changing our mobile service providers and have not yet been issued new numbers. Simply put, it was an unfortunate coincidence. Please do not worry about Kathy. She is feeling much better now.

The statement of request closes the letter:

Sample 1

I hope you can grasp the severity of the situation I experienced. I will back be in office this Thursday and will, of course, be present for all future workshops.

Sample 2

I heard your party was memorable, and I really wish my wife and I could have made it. Kathy and I would like to take you out for dinner instead. Please get back to me with a suggested date.

Farewells should be made politely:

Sample 1

Thanking you for your understanding,

Sample 2

Hope to see you soon,

Now let's pull these sections together. Please notice how the different sections of these letters work together:

Sample 1

Dear Sir or Madam,

I would like to formally apologize for my absence at the annual company retreat this past week. Please allow me to elaborate on why I was not present.

I am completely aware of the healthy teambuilding effects these retreats provide us at ActiveCorp, and I truly would not have missed it for anything. However, I was faced with a medical emergency. You see, my appendix ruptured on the day of the retreat. I was immediately rushed to hospital and operated upon within the hour. It was for this reason that I could not contact you to tell you of my plight. Please do not be concerned about my condition. The surgery went very well and I am currently in recovery.

I hope you can grasp the severity of the situation I experienced. I will be back in office this Thursday and will, of course, be present for all future workshops.

Thanking you for your understanding,

Ryan

Sample 2

Dear Ivan,

I am writing to express how sorry I am for missing your birthday party last night. Please let me explain what happened.

As you know, I would not have missed your party for anything. Unfortunately, however, my wife, Kathy, started to feel ill right before we were about to leave for your place. I would have called to explain the situation to you, but we are in the middle of changing our mobile service providers and have not yet been issued new numbers. Simply put, it was an unfortunate coincidence. Please do not worry about Kathy. She is feeling much better now.

I heard your party was memorable, and I really wish my wife and I could have made it. Kathy and I would like to take you out for dinner instead. Please get back to me with a suggested date.

Hope to see you soon,

Ryan