

# How to Write a Business Letter

Please have out the following materials:

1. Your organization's address
2. Business Letter worksheet



# Scenario:

The iPhone nano just came out, and of course, as one who keeps up with technology, you were the first in line at Best Buy to buy it (because who wants to pay and wait for shipping?).



iPhone



iPhone Nano



iPhone Shuffle

(will arrive 2010)

**Problem:** There are major glitches with your new iPhone nano. Your awesome touch screen freezes every five seconds, the internet connection isn't compatible with your wireless network at home...and



**What do you do now??**

First, you attempt to call Apple's toll-free customer service number.



But we all know after an hour of waiting on the phone to talk to a service agent, we would all rather write a couple of Ms. Tsai's *Romeo and Juliet* journal entries.

Another way to get your frustrations  
heard is writing a letter -  
a BUSINESS LETTER.

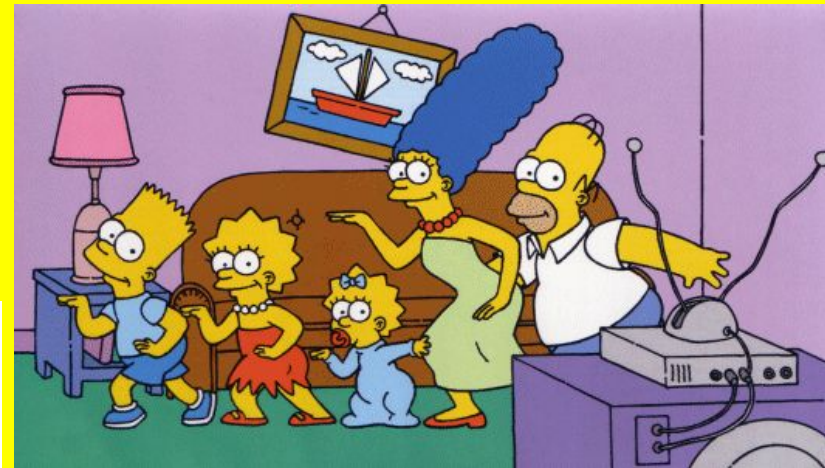


But...we've never  
written one, Ms. Tsai.

Audience – who are you writing to?

Friendly Letter:

Friends



Family

# Consider Pig's letter to his girlfriend, Pigita:





Remember, you are writing a formal letter to your organization.

## **What is TONE?**

the overall attitude a writer projects toward the reader and the subject matter.

## **How do we create a FORMAL tone?**

Sentence structure, formality and specificity of vocabulary, and neatness all contribute to a letter's tone.

# Formal versus Informal:



# Compare the following conversations:

Vanessa, your BFF since 6<sup>th</sup> grade, wants to know all about your date with Tommy last night.

Vanessa: *TELL* me all about it!!

Me: Okay, like, oh my goodness, he showed up with a dozen roses and took me to this bomb restaurant, and we totally hung out at the pier.

Vanessa: Shut up!!

Me: Serious!

**Now at dinner with your grandparents, they somehow found out about Tommy and want to know all about your date:**

Grandma: How was your date last night, dear?

Me: It was delightful, Grandma. Tommy was a gentleman.

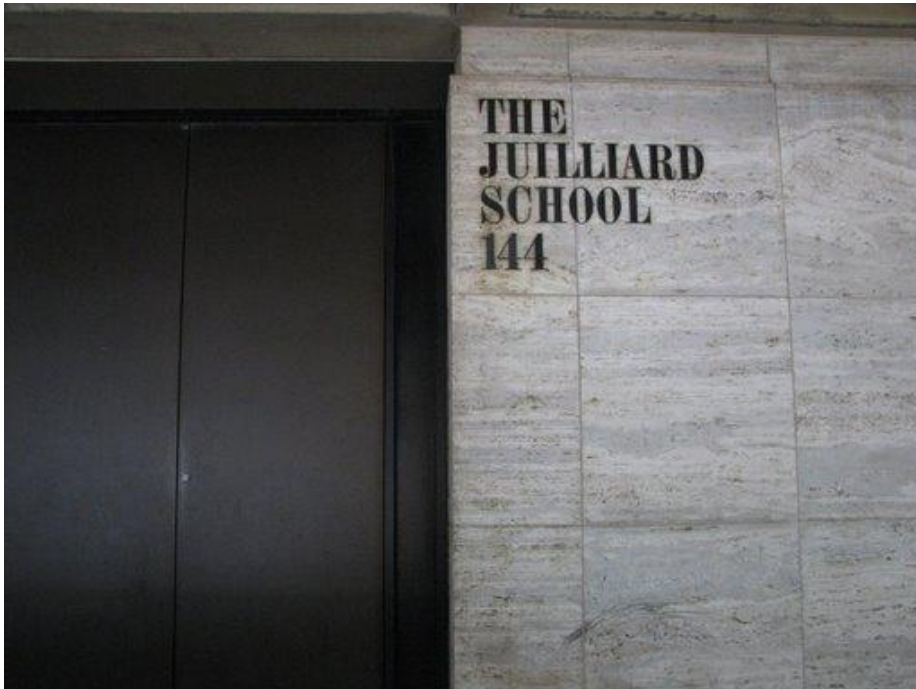
Grandpa: Of course he would be – only the best for my granddaughter.

Me: Tommy took me to Cheesecake Factory and then we went for a walk on the pier.

Grandma: Well, isn't that sweet!

# Purpose – why are you writing this letter?

Your purpose is to ask your organization for information about your career.



 THE INTERNATIONAL  
CULINARY SCHOOL™  
at The Art Institute of California—Los Angeles



*Bistro 31*

JANUARY 9 - MARCH 22  
LUNCH & DINNER  
Monday - Wednesday  
Lunch: 11:30 am - 2:00 pm  
Dinner: 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm

Reservations welcome  
310.314.6057

2900 31st Street | Santa Monica, CA 90405-3035

## Sample Business Letter

Begin your heading 1 to 1.5 inches from the top of your paper. Side margins should also be 1 to 1.5 inches.

1234 Melrose Street  
San Diego, CA 92127  
December 10, 2002

### Heading

Type the writer's address (no name), followed by the current date

### Inside address

Type the name and address of the receiver

### Salutation

Begin with *Dear*, end with a colon.

### Body

The first questions states the letter's subject and purpose. It answers the question: Why are you writing this letter?

The middle presents details of the message.

The ending requests action, shows appreciation, or motivates the receiver. It answers the question: What do you want the reader to do?

### Complimentary closing

Capitalize the 1<sup>st</sup> word; end with a comma.

### Signature lines

Sign your name in blue or black ink above your typed name.

Indicate whether you are including enclosures and/or sending copies of the letter to others.

*Four to seven spaces*

Ms. Helen Moss  
Poway Unified School Board Member  
13626 Twin Peaks Road  
Poway, CA 92064-3098

*Double space*

Dear Ms. Moss:

*Double space*

I am currently a student in the Poway Unified School District, and I am writing to you regarding the recent ban on soda sales in the Los Angeles Unified School District. I am concerned that the Poway Unified School District will attempt to do the same, and in doing so, will be making a grave mistake. There are many reasons not to ban soda sales.

*Double space between paragraphs*

Our schools desperately need the money brought in by soda sales. If we sacrifice such profits, we will have greater difficulty supporting the events they fund. Furthermore, the ban might not even work, since banning soda sales is not enough to combat the problem of childhood obesity. Students should adopt healthier lifestyles, not use quick-solution diets. In addition, it would be hypocritical to refuse to sell sodas but still offer foods like pizza, French fries, and doughnuts. Schools instead should better educate students on how to make healthy choices on their own.

As you can see, banning the sale of sodas on high school campuses would be an inadequate solution for teen health problems. I have enclosed an essay on this topic that gives evidence to support my claim. Please read my essay, and when you receive the chance to vote on whether to enforce a soda ban, please vote against it.

*Double space*

Sincerely yours,

*Sean Kosmo*

*Four spaces*

Sean Kosmo  
Student

*Double space*

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Lopez, Poway Unified School Board member

# Business Letter in Block Style

(notice that you don't indent at all in a block style business letter)

## Sample Business Letter

# 1. Margins: the space around your letter.

1. Go to “File.”
2. Scroll down to “Page Set-Up”
3. On the “Margins” Tab, Put “1-Inch” for the top, bottom, left, and right margins.

Begin your heading 1 to 1.5 inches from the top of your paper. Side margins should also be 1 to 1.5 inches.

1234 Melrose Street  
San Diego, CA 92127  
December 10, 2002

### Heading

Type the writer's address (no name), followed by the current date

### Inside address

Type the name and address of the receiver

### Salutation

Begin with *Dear*, end with a colon.

*Four to seven spaces*

Ms. Helen Moss  
Poway Unified School Board Member  
13626 Twin Peaks Road  
Poway, CA 92064-3098

*Double space*

Dear Ms. Moss:

*Double space*

I am currently a student in the Poway Unified School District, and I am writing to you regarding the recent ban on soda sales in the Los Angeles Unified School District. I am concerned that the Poway Unified School District will attempt to do the same, and in doing so, will be making a grave mistake. There are many reasons not to ban soda sales.

*Double space between paragraphs*

Our schools desperately need the money brought in by soda sales. If we sacrifice profits, we will have greater difficulty supporting the events they fund. Furthermore, the ban might not even work, since banning soda sales is not enough to combat the problem of childhood obesity. Students should adopt healthier lifestyles, not use quick-solution diets. In addition, it would be hypocritical to refuse to sell sodas but still offer foods like pizza, French fries, and doughnuts. Schools instead should better educate students on how to make healthy choices on their own.

As you can see, banning the sale of sodas on high school campuses would be an inadequate solution for teen health problems. I have enclosed an essay on this topic that gives evidence to support my claim. Please read my essay, and when you receive the chance to vote on whether to enforce a soda ban, please vote against it.

*Double space*

Sincerely yours,

*Sean Kosmo*

*Four spaces*

Sean Kosmo  
Student

*Double space*

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Lopez, Poway Unified School Board member

### Body

The first question states the letter's subject and purpose. It answers the question: Why are you writing this letter?

The middle presents details of the message.

The ending requests action, shows appreciation, or motivates the receiver. It answers the question: What do you want the reader to do?

### Complimentary closing

Capitalize the 1<sup>st</sup> word; end with a comma.

### Signature lines

Sign your name in blue or black ink above your typed name.

Indicate whether you are including enclosures and/or sending copies of the letter to others.

# Sample Business Letter

2. You need your own address.

This part goes in the "heading" section.

Underneath your address, put the date.

Skip four lines.

Begin your heading 1 to 1.5 inches from the top of your paper. Side margins should also be 1 to 1.5 inches.

1234 Melrose Street  
San Diego, CA 92127  
December 10, 2002

Ms. Helen Moss  
Poway Unified School Board Member  
13626 Twin Peaks Road  
Poway, CA 92064-3095

Dear Ms. Moss:

I am currently a student in the Poway Unified School District, and I am writing to you regarding the recent ban on soda sales in the Los Angeles Unified School District. I am concerned that the Poway Unified School District will attempt to do the same, and in doing so, will be making a grave mistake. There are many reasons not to ban soda sales.

Our schools desperately need the money brought in by soda sales. If we sacrifice such profits, we will have greater difficulty supporting the events they fund. Furthermore, the ban might not even work, since banning soda sales is not enough to combat the problem of childhood obesity. Students should adopt healthier lifestyles, not use quick-solution diets. In addition, it would be hypocritical to refuse to sell sodas but still offer foods like pizza, French fries, and doughnuts. Schools instead should better educate students on how to make healthy choices on their own.

As you can see, banning the sale of sodas on high school campuses would be an inadequate solution for teen health problems. I have enclosed an essay on this topic that gives evidence to support my claim. Please read my essay, and when you receive the chance to vote on whether to enforce a soda ban, please vote against it.

Sincerely yours,

Sean Kosmo

Sean Kosmo  
Student

Enclosure  
cc: Mr. Lopez, Poway Unified School Board member

**Heading**  
Type the writer's address (no name), followed by the current date

**Inside address**  
Type the name and address of the receiver

**Salutation**  
Begin with *Dear*; end with a colon.

**Body**  
The first paragraph states the letter's subject and purpose. It answers the question: Why are you writing this letter?

The middle presents details of the message.

The ending requests action, shows appreciation, or motivates the receiver. It answers the question: What do you want the reader to do?

**Complimentary closing**  
Capitalize the 1<sup>st</sup> word; end with a comma.

**Signature lines**  
Sign your name in blue or black ink above your typed name.

Indicate whether you are including enclosures and/or sending copies of the letter to others.



## Sample Business Letter

Begin your heading 1 to 1.5 inches from the top of your paper. Side margins should also be 1 to 1.5 inches.

1234 Melrose Street  
San Diego, CA 92127  
December 10, 2002

### Heading

Type the writer's address (no name), followed by the current date

### Inside address

Type the name and address of the receiver

### Salutation

Begin with *Dear*, end with a colon.

### Body

The first question states the letter's subject and purpose. It answers the question: Why are you writing this letter?

The middle presents details of the message.

The ending requests action, shows appreciation, or motivates the receiver. It answers the question: What do you want the reader to do?

### Complimentary closing

Capitalize the 1<sup>st</sup> word; end with a comma.

### Signature lines

Sign your name in blue or black ink above your typed name.

Indicate whether you are including enclosures and/or sending copies of the letter to others.

*Four to seven spaces*

Ms. Helen Moss  
Poway Unified School Board Member  
13626 Twin Peaks Road  
Poway, CA 92064-3098

*Double space*

Dear Ms. Moss:

*Double space*

I am currently a student in the Poway Unified School District, and I am writing to you regarding the recent ban on soda sales in the Los Angeles Unified School District. I am concerned that the Poway Unified School District will attempt to do the same, and in doing so, will be making a grave mistake. There are many reasons not to ban soda sales.

*Double space between paragraphs*

Our schools desperately need the money brought in by soda sales. If we sacrifice such profits, we will have greater difficulty supporting the events they fund. Furthermore, the ban might not even work, since banning soda sales is not enough to combat the problem of childhood obesity. Students should adopt healthier lifestyles, not use quick-solution diets. In addition, it would be hypocritical to refuse to sell sodas but still offer foods like pizza, French fries, and doughnuts. Schools instead should better educate students on how to make healthy choices on their own.

As you can see, banning the sale of sodas on high school campuses would be an inadequate solution for teen health problems. I have enclosed an essay on this topic that gives evidence to support my claim. Please read my essay, and when you receive the chance to vote on whether to enforce a soda ban, please vote against it.

*Double space*

Sincerely yours,

*Sean Kosmo*

*Four spaces*

Sean Kosmo  
Student

*Double space*

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Lopez, Poway Unified School Board member

3. Put your organization's address in the "inside address" section.

Double space.

## Sample Business Letter

Begin your heading 1 to 1.5 inches from the top of your paper. Side margins should also be 1 to 1.5 inches.

1234 Melrose Street  
San Diego, CA 92127  
December 10, 2002

### Heading

Type the writer's address (no name), followed by the current date

### Inside address

Type the name and address of the receiver

### Salutation

Begin with *Dear*, end with a colon.

### Body

The first question states the letter's subject and purpose. It answers the question: Why are you writing this letter?

The middle presents details of the message.

The ending requests action, shows appreciation, or motivates the receiver. It answers the question: What do you want the reader to do?

### Complimentary closing

Capitalize the 1<sup>st</sup> word; end with a comma.

### Signature lines

Sign your name in blue or black ink above your typed name.

Indicate whether you are including enclosures and/or sending copies of the letter to others.

## 4. Salutation/Greeting

**Dear Ms. Smith  
(or whoever is  
the head of your  
organization)**

**Use Ladies and  
Gentlemen when  
name is unknown**

**Double space.**

Ms. Helen Moss  
Poway Unified School Board Member  
13626 Twin Peaks Road  
Poway, CA 92064-3098

*Four to seven spaces*

Dear Ms. Moss:

*Double space*

I am currently a student in the Poway Unified School District, and I am writing to you regarding the recent ban on soda sales in the Los Angeles Unified School District. I am concerned that the Poway Unified School District will attempt to do the same, and in doing so will be making a grave mistake. There are many reasons not to ban soda sales.

*Double space*

Our schools desperately need the money brought in by soda sales. If we sacrifice such profits, we will have greater difficulty supporting the events they fund. Furthermore, the ban might not even work, since banning soda sales is not enough to combat the problem of childhood obesity. Students should adopt healthier lifestyles, not use quick-solution diets. In addition, it would be hypocritical to refuse to sell sodas but still offer foods like pizza, French fries, and doughnuts. Schools instead should better educate students on how to make healthy choices on their own.

*Double space between paragraphs*

As you can see, banning the sale of sodas on high school campuses would be an inadequate solution for teen health problems. I have enclosed an essay on this topic that gives evidence to support my claim. Please read my essay, and when you receive the chance to vote on whether to enforce a soda ban, please vote against it.

*Double space*

Sincerely yours,

*Sean Kosmo*

*Four spaces*

Sean Kosmo  
Student

*Double space*

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Lopez, Poway Unified School Board member

## Sample Business Letter

**5. Body:** State your purpose for writing this letter. Be formal and polite; the organization is doing YOU a favor by sending you the information.

Begin your heading 1 to 1.5 inches from the top of your paper. Side margins should also be 1 to 1.5 inches.

1234 Melrose Street  
San Diego, CA 92127  
December 10, 2002

**Heading**  
Type the writer's address (no name), followed by the current date

**Inside address**  
Type the name and address of the receiver

**Salutation**  
Begin with *Dear*, end with a colon.

*Four to seven spaces*

Ms. Helen Moss  
Poway Unified School Board Member  
13626 Twin Peaks Road  
Poway, CA 92064-3098

*Double space*

Dear Ms. Moss:

*Double space*

I am currently a student in the Poway Unified School District, and I am writing to you regarding the recent ban on soda sales in the Los Angeles Unified School District. I am concerned that the Poway Unified School District will attempt to do the same, and in doing so, will be making a grave mistake. There are many reasons not to ban soda sales.

*Double space between paragraphs*

Our schools desperately need the money brought in by soda sales. If we sacrifice such profits, we will have greater difficulty supporting the events they fund. Furthermore, the ban might not even work, since banning soda sales is not enough to combat the problem of childhood obesity. Students should adopt healthier lifestyles, not use quick-solution diets. In addition, it would be hypocritical to refuse to sell sodas but still offer foods like pizza, French fries, and doughnuts. Schools instead should better educate students on how to make healthy choices on their own.

As you can see, banning the sale of sodas on high school campuses would be an inadequate solution for teen health problems. I have enclosed an essay on this topic that gives evidence to support my claim. Please read my essay, and when you receive the chance to vote on whether to enforce a soda ban, please vote against it.

*Double space*

Sincerely yours,

**Complimentary closing**  
Capitalize the 1<sup>st</sup> word; end with a comma.

*Sean Kosmo*

*Four spaces*

Sean Kosmo  
Student

*Double space*

Enclosure  
cc: Mr. Lopez, Poway Unified School Board member

**Body**  
The first questions states the letter's subject and purpose. It answers the question: Why are you writing this letter?

The middle presents details of the message.

The ending requests action, shows appreciation, or motivates the receiver. It answers the question: What do you want the reader to do?

**Signature lines**  
Sign your name in blue or black ink above your typed name.

Indicate whether you are including enclosures and/or sending copies of the letter to others.

## Sample Business Letter

Begin your heading 1 to 1.5 inches from the top of your paper. Side margins should also be 1 to 1.5 inches.

1234 Melrose Street  
San Diego, CA 92127  
December 10, 2002

### Heading

Type the writer's address (no name), followed by the current date

### Inside address

Type the name and address of the receiver

### Salutation

Begin with *Dear*, end with a colon.

### Body

The first question states the letter's subject and purpose. It answers the question: *Why are you writing this letter?*

The middle presents details of the message.

The ending requests action, shows appreciation, or motivates the receiver. It answers the question: *What do you want the reader to do?*

### Complimentary closing

Capitalize the 1<sup>st</sup> word; end with a comma.

### Signature lines

Sign your name in blue or black ink above your typed name.

Indicate whether you are including enclosures and/or sending copies of the letter to others.

*Four to seven spaces*

Ms. Helen Moss  
Poway Unified School Board Member  
13626 Twin Peaks Road  
Poway, CA 92064-3098

*Double space*

Dear Ms. Moss:

*Double space*

I am currently a student in the Poway Unified School District, and I am writing to you regarding the recent ban on soda sales in the Los Angeles Unified School District. I am concerned that the Poway Unified School District will attempt to do the same, and in doing so, will be making a grave mistake. There are many reasons not to ban soda sales.

*Double space between paragraphs*

Our schools desperately need the money brought in by soda sales. If we sacrifice such profits, we will have greater difficulty supporting the events they fund. Furthermore, the ban might not even work, since banning soda sales is not enough to combat the problem of childhood obesity. Students should adopt healthier lifestyles, not use quick-solution diets. In addition, it would be hypocritical to refuse to sell sodas but still offer foods like pizza, French fries, and doughnuts. Schools instead should better educate students on how to make healthy choices on their own.

As you can see, banning the sale of sodas on high school campuses would be an inadequate solution for teen health problems. I have enclosed an essay on this topic that gives evidence to support my claim. Please read my essay, and when you receive the chance to vote on whether to enforce a soda ban, please vote against it.

*Double space*

Sincerely yours,

*Sean Kosmo*

*Four spaces*

Sean Kosmo  
Student

*Double space*

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Lopez, Poway Unified School Board member

You may or may not have more than one paragraph. If you do, between each paragraph, be sure to **double space**.

# Sample Business Letter

Begin your heading 1 to 1.5 inches from the top of your paper. Side margins should also be 1 to 1.5 inches.

1234 Melrose Street  
San Diego, CA 92127  
December 10, 2002

**Heading**  
Type the writer's address (no name), followed by the current date

**Inside address**  
Type the name and address of the receiver

**Salutation**  
Begin with *Dear*, end with a colon.

**Body**  
The first questions states the letter's subject and purpose. It answers the question: Why are you writing this letter?

The middle presents details of the message.

The ending requests action, shows appreciation, or motivates the receiver. It answers the question: What do you want the reader to do?

**Complimentary closing**  
Capitalize the 1<sup>st</sup> word; end with a comma.

**Signature lines**  
Sign your name in blue or black ink above your typed name.

Indicate whether you are including enclosures and/or sending copies of the letter to others.

*Four to seven spaces*

Ms. Helen Moss  
Poway Unified School Board Member  
13626 Twin Peaks Road  
Poway, CA 92064-3098

*Double space*

Dear Ms. Moss:

*Double space*

I am currently a student in the Poway Unified School District, and I am writing to you regarding the recent ban on soda sales in the Los Angeles Unified School District. I am concerned that the Poway Unified School District will attempt to do the same, and in doing so, will be making a grave mistake. There are many reasons not to ban soda sales.

*Double space between paragraphs*

Our schools desperately need the money brought in by soda sales. If we sacrifice such profits, we will have greater difficulty supporting the events they fund. Furthermore, the ban might not even work, since banning soda sales is not enough to combat the problem of childhood obesity. Students should adopt healthier lifestyles, not use quick-solution diets. In addition, it would be hypocritical to refuse to sell sodas but still offer foods like pizza, French fries, and doughnuts. Schools instead should better educate students on how to make healthy choices on their own.

As you can see, banning the sale of sodas on high school campuses would be an inadequate solution for teen health problems. I have enclosed an essay on this topic that gives evidence to support my claim. Please read my essay, and when you receive the chance to vote on whether to enforce a soda ban, please vote against it.

*Double space*

Sincerely yours,

*Sean Kosmo*

*Four spaces*

Sean Kosmo  
Student

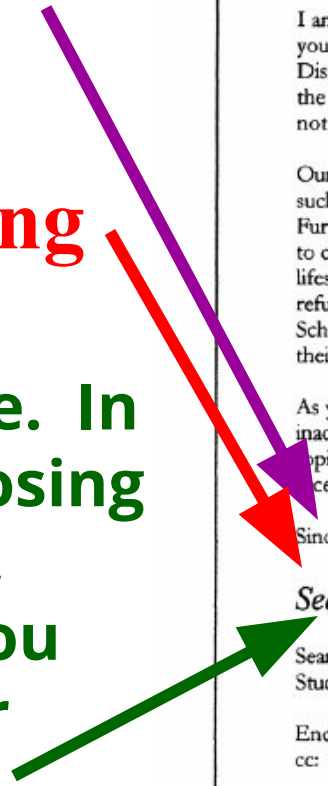
*Double space*

Enclosure  
cc: Mr. Lopez, Poway Unified School Board member

6. Closing: Your Sincerely

Four spaces after the closing

Then your name. In between the closing and your name, that is where you would sign your name.



# Your assignment tonight:

- 1. Type up your business letter.**
- 2. Follow the format in your Writing Handbook on Page 29.**
- 3. Your letter is due tomorrow.**

