The 5 Cs of Writing Business Letters

A good business letter is always written with the reader in mind. The writer considers: Who will be reading the letter? What does the reader already know? What does the reader need to know? What does the reader need to do? Knowing the 5 Cs of business writing can help you write effective letters.

Your letter should be:

- **Clear:** Make sure your purpose and intent is clear to the reader.
- **Complete:** Include all the information the reader needs to have.
- **Concise:** Make sure your letter is not too wordy.
- **Courteous:** Address the reader politely.
- **Correct:** Edit and proofread your letter so that it has no grammar, spelling and punctuation errors.

1. **The letter below does not follow the 5Cs. In groups, discuss the questions to identify what is wrong.**

   1. Is the opening statement clear? If not, how would you change it so that it is clear?
   2. Is the information complete? If not, what is missing?
   3. Are the sentences concise? If not, what words would you eliminate to make them more concise?
   4. Is the message courteous? If not, which sentence would you change?
   5. Is the letter correct (free of grammar, punctuation and spelling errors)? If not, what needs to be corrected?

   
   Dear Mr. Tom Black:
   
   I wish to draw your attention to an upcoming event that we are organizing for the purpose of celebrating the retirement of our Director of Finance, Mr. Melvin Switzer. The event will take place on the 23rd of July and we anticipate your attendance at this function. You are cordially invited to a dinner being held at the Diamond Golf and Country Club at 6:30. The dinner will be a formal affair so please make sure you wear formal clothes. You are also welcome to bring your wife if you care to do so.
   
   If you have any questions, please contact Julie Smith at ext. 451 and she would be happy to furnish you with any additional details.
   
   Sincerely,
   
   Julian Cuddmore
   
   President

2. **Rewrite the letter so that it is clear and concise, complete and correct.**