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## UNIT 3 FORMAL LETTERS-II

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### 3.0 OBJECTIVES

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After reading this unit, you will be able to strengthen your skills in writing:

- applications for jobs;
- accepting and declining offers of jobs;
- letters ordering goods; and
- letters to government and other organisations.

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

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The aim of this unit is to give you practice in writing some other types of formal letters. In Unit 2 we talked about some of the special features of the formal style of communication. We told you in some detail about the essential elements of a formal letter. Two types of formal letters were discussed to illustrate the points that we made, namely,

- i) letters of request
- ii) letters of complaint

In this unit we shall concentrate on two other types of formal letters. These are:

- applications for jobs
- letters to government and other organisations.

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### 3.2 LETTERS ABOUT JOBS

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If you are looking for a job, or wish to change your job, you will probably have to write a number of letters, particularly the letters of application that you will send along with your curriculum vitae, by which is meant a short written account of your education and past employment (also known popularly as bio-data). The other types of letters may be requests for references, follow-up letters when you receive no reply to an application, and letters accepting or rejecting an offer of a job. In this section we shall discuss some of these letters, but shall pay the most attention to letters of application. This letter requires a special effort, as you have to convince your reader that you deserve to be called for an interview.

### 3.2.1 Applications

Whenever you send a copy of your curriculum vitae to an organisation where you are looking for a job, you should also send a personal covering letter, which is known as the *letter of application*. The two are sent together, and you should consider them inseparable, even if you are answering an advertisement that asks for only the curriculum vitae. This letter supplements your curriculum vitae in that it provides information that is not usually included in the curriculum vitae, or cannot be fitted in it for lack of space. A letter or application, therefore, is an elaboration and an explanation of the facts that you list in your curriculum vitae.

There is an important difference between a letter of application and the curriculum vitae. The curriculum vitae is a straightforward, presentation of the facts relating to your education, work experience and other qualifications. These facts may qualify you for a number of jobs in different organizations. In the covering letter you have a chance to interpret these facts, and show how they are particularly relevant to the position you are applying for. So your letter goes beyond merely saying that you have certain qualifications; it shows that your qualifications are appropriate to a specific job and organisation. And your aim in the letter should be to offer your reader several convincing reasons why she/he should talk to you in person in connection with your application. Therefore, your letter and curriculum vitae together explain your qualifications. They also provide an evidence of your ability to select appropriate information and organise it for the reader. An effective presentation can easily make even average qualifications appear quite impressive. A poor presentation can just as easily make excellent qualifications look ordinary.

Your letter of application must attempt to do three things:

- i) catch your reader's attention favourably,
- ii) convince your reader that you are qualified for the position,
- iii) ask for an interview.

You should try to achieve the three objectives in a one-page letter.

If you are applying for a specific job which has been advertised, identify the job by title, and state where you came to know about it. Remember that an organisation may have advertised for several jobs on the same day, in the same newspaper or professional journal. If you do not specify which job it is that you are applying for, it will confuse your reader, and give her/him sufficient reason to move on to the next application.

Some of the ways you could begin are:

I am interested in applying for the post of..... which was advertised in The Hindu on 21 June, 2001.

In answer to your advertisement in The Times of India of 21 June, 2001, I wish to apply for the post of... in your organisation.

Your advertisement in The Hindustan Times of 21 June, 2001 for a production manager interested me because your requirements closely parallels my work experience.

There may be occasions when you may be **exploring** the possibility of a suitable job in different organisations. Then, you should explain that you are seeking a particular kind of job and are writing to inquire whether the organisation has any opening for such a job.

#### *Example*

I am looking for a responsible position in the sales department, where my training in marketing and experience in selling consumer goods may prove useful. I would be interested in exploring the possibility of obtaining such a position in your firm.

After you begin your letter (i.e. state the title of the job and indicate where you came to know of it), your aim should be to convince your reader that you are suitable for the job. You, therefore, need to explain how your experience and skills qualify you for the job.

In your curriculum vitae, you should have listed the basic facts relating to your education, experience and special skills. In your letter, you will have to show your reader what these facts mean by placing them in the specific context of the job you are applying for. For instance, if you are applying for a sales job, indicate that your previous job has taught you to present a product line effectively. If you are applying for a job as an office manager, indicate any supervisory experience you may have had. However, if you are applying for your first job, highlight how your education matches the job and show your capacity for hard work and taking initiative.

*Example*

- 1) (In response to an advertisement for the post of an experienced OT B grade Nurse for Nayyar Hospital, 3, Amar Enclave, Navada, Uttam Nagar, Najafgarh Road).

I have been employed as a nurse at Shanta Nursing Home, Samaypur and thus have the necessary experience. In this post I have had to assume a certain amount of responsibility. I have been incharge of the new entrants and have for the last three months been acting as the second-in-command.

If I am found suitable for the post advertised, I feel that my experience and talents will contribute not only to the growth of your organisation, but also to my personal growth.

You may want to enter into an entirely new field in which you lack experience. In that case you should frankly admit that you are inexperienced. At the same time you should give persuasive reasons why you wish to change your job, and show your keen interest in the new area that you wish to enter.

*Example*

- a) At the moment I am working as a nurse in a small nursing home. I do not find this work particularly interesting, and wish to make a career in a bigger institution.
- b) Although I lack previous experience, I think I have the necessary personal qualities to be successful in this field. I enjoy working with people. My academic record is good, and the resident doctor with whom I am attached at the moment will be able to testify to my willingness to learn and work hard. In order to make myself more efficient in this field, I have registered for a correspondence course.....

The final stage of your letter is to ask your reader to do something for you. In a letter of application this is the place to request for an interview. Now, it is obvious that the aim of your letter is to ask for an interview. Therefore, the important thing is not what you ask for, but how you do it. The point is to do it tactfully, without appearing to beg or demand.

**Don't** write in any of the following ways:

- I hope that my letter receives your kind favour and you will give me a chance to appear for an interview.
- I am sure that when you have reviewed all the applications for this position, you will see that I am best qualified for this job.

Try to be polite but direct; ask for what you want like this:

I will appreciate an opportunity to talk to you in person about the position of..... in your company and will be available for an interview at your convenience.

If my application is considered, I shall be available at any time to suit your convenience, though I would need a little notice in order to make travel arrangements.

The last paragraph of your letter is also the place to state any restrictions on when you will be available for an interview, or special instructions about how to contact you.

*Examples:*

- i) I will be happy to meet you at your convenience and provide any additional information you may need. You can contact me either at my home address or at 3426431 during regular business hours.

- ii) Could you fix an interview to discuss my qualifications in more detail? With a week's notice I can arrange to travel to Bombay at your convenience.

You must make sure that you type/word process your letter and avoid all errors.

**Check Your Progress 1**

- 1) Given below are sentences taken from an application for the post of a sales officer. Rearrange the sentences in the correct order, and organise them into separate paragraphs.
  - i) My present job requires me not only to sell goods but also to keep an account of the sales, and do a bit of typing.
  - ii) I am twenty-seven years old and have a diploma in marketing.
  - iii) I am interested in applying for the post of a Sales Officer which was advertised in Indian Express on 21 June, 1988.
  - iv) I enclose my Curriculum Vitae, and will be happy to give you any further information that you require.
  - v) You can contact me either at my home address or at 623029 during regular business hours.
  - vi) The reason I wish to leave this job is that I find the office routine too monotonous for me.
  - vii) I have been working in a department store for the last three years, where I have often been in sole charge of the shop.
  - viii) Since the job advertised involves travelling and meeting people, it would suit my abilities and temperament better.

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- 2) Given below is a letter of application for the post of a stenographer in a commercial organisation. The beginning and the end of the letter are missing. Complete the letter by filling in the gaps.

16, Indira Nagar  
 Lucknow 226004

16.7.2000

The Personnel Manager  
 Chand Book House  
 Lucknow 226006

Dear Sir,

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I am twenty-three years of age, and have recently graduated from Indira Gandhi National Open University with an A Grade. I have also completed a two-year secretarial course at the Institute of Vocational Studies, where I studied commercial subjects and shorthand and typing. I may add that I also took a special course in Computer Science offered by the Institute, and am quite proficient in the use of the word processor.

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Yours sincerely  
 (Anita Sinha)

- 3) Here is an advertisement that appeared in Delhi Times on 17th August, 2001. Keeping in mind the format discussed in this unit write an answer to the advertisement for the post at number (3).

Jeewan Hospital requires 1) BAMS Female Resident Doctor with minimum 5 years experience in gynae., 2) OT Nurse, minimum 3 years experience, 3) A/B grade nurses for ICCU ward, 4) Lab and X-Ray technician. Contact 12 B, Shastri Nagar, Delhi.

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**3.2.2 Accepting an Offer**

If you are offered a job that you would like to take up, you must write a brief letter of acceptance as soon as possible, certainly within a week. The format of the letter is simple.

- Begin by thanking the person for giving you the job. Then, accept the job that you have been offered. Take care to identify the job by title.
- In the second paragraph you should specify when you would like to take up the post.
- Conclude the letter with a statement that you look forward to working for your new employer.

Some of the ways in which you could begin a letter of acceptance are:

- i) Thank you for your letter of 6 May, 2001 offering me the post of Storekeeper in your company, which I am glad to accept.
- ii) May I thank you for the kindness and courtesy shown to me when I came for interview on the 16th May, 2001. I am glad to accept the post of Accounts Assistant in your organisation on the terms stated in your letter of yesterday.
- iii) Thank you for your offer of the post of..... in your..... I have great pleasure in accepting the offer.

Some of the ways in which you could conclude your letter are:

- i) I look forward to what I am sure will be a rewarding future with Exact Time Watches.
- ii) I am looking forward to working for your company.
- iii) I feel very happy to have obtained this appointment and assure you that I shall do my best to make a success of my work.

**Check Your Progress 2**

Imagine a situation where you have received a letter from G.M. Modi Hospital, Saket saying that you have been selected for the job you applied for. Given below is the main part of the letter. Write a letter accepting the offer.

**G.M. Modi Hospital**  
**Saket, New Delhi 110 016**

October 19, 2000

Dear Ms. Srijja

I am pleased to be able to offer you the post of a Nurse (OT) in our hospital.

As we discussed during our talk with you, your initial salary will be in the scale of Rs. 5000-250-6500. You will also be entitled to the regular perks that we provide for our employees.

If you accept this offer, please let us know how soon you can join our hospital.

With best wishes

Sincerely yours

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**3.2.3 Declining an Offer**

While searching for a job, you may have applied to several organisations and may as a result receive more than one offer. You will then have to select the job which is most attractive to you, and write a letter of refusal immediately.

When writing such a letter, begin by giving a thought to your readers. Remember that they have invested some time and effort in you, compared you with other applicants, and found you the best person for the job. They may have counted on your accepting the job. If you refuse the offer they will have to do some of their work over again.

Therefore, in your letter of refusal, you must be tactful and courteous. Try to give honest and sincere reasons for your refusal. If you have accepted another offer, say so, and explain why. Do everything to ensure that you and your readers part company as friends.

You may begin the letter by first thanking them for offering you the post. Then make a reasonable excuse for not accepting the offer.

*Examples*

Thank you for your letter of... offering me the post of.... in your organisation. I am sorry I am unable to accept this offer as.....

Thank you for your offer of the post of..... in your... I am afraid I am unable to accept your offer as.....

A more unconventional but equally polite way of rejecting an offer is as follows:

I enjoyed talking with you about your opening for a ... and was gratified to receive your offer. Although I have given the offer serious thought, I have decided.....

One of the ways in which you can conclude your letter is:

I appreciate your consideration, and I am sure I would have enjoyed working for your organisation.

**Check Your Progress 3**

Read the letter given in the exercise under Check Your Progress 2 offering you the job of a Nurse (OT). Write a letter in reply, refusing the offer.

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**3.3 LETTERS TO GOVERNMENT AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

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So far we have mainly dealt with letters you may need to write if you are applying for jobs in various organisations or if you are working in such organisations and have to order goods. There may, however, be situations, when you as an ordinary citizen need to write to various government or other organisations about the problems that you may be facing in your daily life. These are also formal letters and include letters of complaint, letters of request, and letter making enquiries or suggesting. We often avoid writing these letters because we don't know how to. In this section we shall give you some examples of these letters and provide you practice in writing them yourself.

**3.3.1 Letters of Complaint**

A letter we have to write frequently is a letter of complaint or protest. You may find that the Electricity Undertaking or the Telephone Nigam has overcharged you. Your telephone may be out of order for days or even months without the authorities bothering to repair. The bus conductors may be rude to you. The sanitary conditions in your area may be deplorable. You should then write to the department dealing with your specific problem.

Given below is the main part of a letter written by a resident of Mayapuri complaining about the unhygienic conditions in the area.

I want to bring to your notice that the sanitary conditions around the 696 LIG flats and as many adjoining Janta flats in the G-8 area, Mayapuri, are deplorable. The sewer lines are faulty and stinking water is stagnating in almost every open drain. The cleaners turn up once in a fortnight and the garbage is rarely removed. It remains lying in heaps till it finds its way to the open drains.

With the onset of the monsoon, things have worsened. The whole area has become a breeding place for mosquitoes and flies, and the residents open the doors and windows of their homes at their own risk. Human excreta from the three houses of JB-32 LIG Block are overflowing from the septic tank to the open drain, as the line to the main sewer is blocked with concrete which got into it when the road was built.

Kindly take some action immediately before the situation becomes still worse and there is an outbreak of infectious diseases.

What are the points that you should keep in mind while writing such a letter?

- Don't make the complaint too general. Give details of what is bothering you. In the letter given above, for example, notice how specific the writer is. He gives the precise details of the area he is writing about: "around the 696 LIG Flats and as many adjoining Janata Flats in the G-8 area, Mayapuri.....", "... The three houses of JB-32 LIG Block". You must include facts that your reader cannot possibly ignore.
- Ask for satisfaction firmly but politely. If you can suggest a solution, do so.
- End your letter forcefully. Make clear what you expect of your reader.
- Address your letter of protest to the appropriate person. For instance, if you want to complain about a bill, send your complaint to the Accounts Officer, not the Chairman of the organisation.
- If you have made the same complaint before, say so in your letter.

**Check Your Progress 4**

There is probably something that you want to complain about to the local authorities. Write a letter of complaint giving details of your problem. Take care to adopt the format of a formal letter.

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**3.3.2 Letters Giving Instructions**

We sometimes write letters in which we convey our instructions to various organisations in order to have something done for us. For instance, you may change your address and will then have to ask the circulation manager of the magazine you have subscribed to, to send the magazine to the new address; or you may have to instruct the post office to redirect your letters.



What are the points that you must keep in mind in writing such a letter?

- Give the essential information you want your reader to have clearly and completely.
- Leave your reader with a clear understanding of what you expect him to do.

The letter given below is from a woman who is writing to the circulation manager of the magazine she subscribes to, informing him of her change of residence and instructing him to send the magazine to the new address.

W-57, South Extension  
Chandigarh-160017

20.5.2003

The Circulation Manager  
Reader's Interest  
Madras 600 107

Subject: Change of Residence

Dear Sir

I am a subscriber to Reader's Interest. My subscription number is: D2/478. I am writing to inform you that I shall be moving to a new house on 2nd July.

My new address will be  
642, Civil Lines  
Chandigarh 160 019

Please send the future issues of the magazine at my new address. I hope we shall continue to receive them as regularly as we used to.

Yours sincerely

Chitra Subramaniam

**Check Your Progress 5**

You've lost a bearer cheque. Write a letter to the manager of the bank instructing him to stop payment. After you've written your letter, refer to the specimen letter given at the end of the unit.

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**3.3.3 Letters of Request**

We often have to request official bodies for various things; this is probably the most common type of official letter. It includes letters to various organisations requesting for the provision of services. For instance, you may request the public transport organisation in your town to run more buses in your area. If you wish to meet an official, you often have to write a letter asking for an appointment. Letters have to be written to universities asking for application forms or duplicate copies of certificates.

The following letter is a request to Delhi Transport Corporation for a better bus service in a specific area.

Sector A/45  
 Vasant Kunj  
 New Delhi-110 008

21.5.2003

The General Manager  
 Delhi Transport Corporation  
 Delhi-110 054

Dear Sir,

I am resident of Vasant Kunj, an area rather poorly connected to the rest of the city by buses. The people most affected by this lack of bus service are school children and teachers, who find it difficult to reach a convenient bus stop in time to catch the bus to their schools.

I request the DTC to improve the bus service from this area. Specifically, could you start a direct bus service from Vasant Kunj (touching sectors A & D) to Lajpat Nagar? It would benefit at least 150 school children and teachers.

I hope you will take immediate action to solve our problem.

Sincerely

Seema Bhagat

This is one type of a letter of request where you have a problem, and request a certain organisation to solve it for you. How is this letter organised?

- First, you state the problem.
- Then, you request the organisation to solve problem, and give details of how you would want it solved.
- Conclude by asking for immediate action.

Other types of letter of request will have a different organisation. When you do the next exercise, you will discover it for yourself.

**Check Your Progress 6**

You want to become a postal member of a library. Write to the library asking for information regarding the rules for such membership. Also ask for the application form.

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### 3.4 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit, we discussed some more types of formal letters. These were:

- 1) Application for jobs; accepting and declining offers.
- 2) Letters to government and other organisations.

You should now be able to write the different types of formal letters required for various purposes.

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### 3.5 KEY WORDS

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**Curriculum vitae** : A brief written account of the main events of one's life. It includes one's personal details, education, and past employment, and is used especially when one applies for a job. It is also called 'bio-data' by many of us.

**Letter of application** : Covering letter sent with the curriculum vitae.

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### 3.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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#### Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Paragraph 1 : Sentence iii)  
Paragraph 2 : Sentence ii), vii), i)  
Paragraph 3 : Sentence vi), viii)  
Paragraph 4 : Sentences iv), v)

- 2) The beginning of the letter:

I would like to apply for the post of a stenographer that was advertised in Navbharat Times on 15 October, 2000.

The conclusion of the letter:

I enclose my curriculum vitae, and would appreciate an opportunity of being interviewed.

I would, then, be able to give you a better idea of my abilities.

- 3)

<p>Shanti Building 2, 19 BK Roy Road Faridabad 24.8.2000</p>	<p>Jeewan Hospital 12 B Shastri Nagar Delhi. Dear Sirs, I am interested in the job of 'A' grade nurse for ICCU ward advertised by your organisation in Delhi Times on 17th August' 2000. I have four years experience in a Nursing home. In my present job I am responsible for patient care and monitoring of the entire unit. However I am looking for a challenging position with more responsibilities. I enclose my curriculum vitae, and will be happy to meet you at your convenience to provide any additional information. I would, however, need a little notice in order to make travel arrangements. Sincerely K. Saraswati Encl. Curriculum Vitae</p>
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**Check Your Progress 2**

Dear Sir,

Thank you very much for offering me the position of Nurse (OT) in your reputed organisation. I am pleased to accept the offer on the terms stated in your letter of yesterday.

I will be free from the first of November, so I can start work on that very day.

I look forward to working in your hospital.

Yours sincerely

S. Srija

**Check Your Progress 3**

Thank you for your letter of 19th October' 2000 offering me the position of a Nurse (OT) in your organisation.

I am afraid I shall not be able to accept your offer because of certain personal reasons. I appreciate your offer and I am sure I would have enjoyed working for your hospital.

Yours sincerely

S. Srija

**Check Your Progress 5**

5/26, Seva Sadan  
Hydereabad 500 008

4th April, 1988

The Manager  
Indian Bank, Aurobindo Marg  
Hyderabad 500 008

Dear Sir

I have a Saving Bank Account with your bank (Account No 2661).

My bearer cheque No..... dated ..... for Rs. .... has been lost.

To prevent unauthorized withdrawal, I request you to STOP PAYMENT of this cheque.

**Check Your Progress 6**

I am a staff nurse in a government hospital of the capital, and wish to borrow books on nursing and health promotion from your library.

I understand that you admit 'postal' members, who can borrow and return books by mail. Are there any conditions for this type of membership?

I shall be grateful if you can send me the rules and regulations and an application form for 'postal' membership.

Yours sincerely

Surender Bharadwaj