

Chapter 11	The Basics of Business Documents ①	/
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1. What is a business document?

Social networking has been increasingly adopted in business today. The use of business documents has also increased in social networking as a necessary tool in various aspects of business. However, the business document is still used in a traditional manner.

With a business document, you should try to convey your intention and objective using easy-to-understand expressions. The way of writing a business document is different to how a report or article is written. For example, a business document should be written within one side of A4 paper, as a rule.

In addition, there are basic expressions and phrases specific to business documents. If you keep them in mind, it will help you organize a business document.

2. Types of business document

There are two types of business document: inside and outside documents

Both types are segmented depending on their purpose. It can be said that there are as many documents as there are business operations.

Outside documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Business transaction documents</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invoice, quotation, cover letter, letter of decline, apology, demand letter, claim letter, etc. • <i>Social letters</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congratulation and condolence, gratitude, seasonal greeting, invitation, greeting, introduction, notice, etc.
Inside documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Announcement</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice, circular, invitation, etc. • <i>Report</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for approval, report, settlement document, etc.

3. How to write a business document

When writing a business document, adopt the YTT method to save time.

- ① Take notes on important points of the document and confirm there are no mistakes.

For example, check for errors or omissions in the information, such as deadlines, numbers, places, etc.

- ② When sending a large number of letters, such as invitation letters, be sure to write the correct addresses and titles of recipients.
- ③ When writing an external letter, be sure to clearly write the contact number of the person in charge in case the recipient needs to get in touch.

◆Make good use of 6W3H.

- What (subject of the letter): The title should explain what the letter is about.
- Who (name of the sender or the division): Clarify who is sending the letter.
- Whom (name of the recipient or the division): Clarify who should receive the letter.
- When : If the letter is urgent, be sure to make it clear.
- Where: venue of the event. If the venue has been changed from where it is usually held, be sure to make it clear.
- Why: Be sure to clearly explain the purpose of the letter.
- How to: For example, how to apply: whether by email, telephone, or in writing.
Consider the most convenient way for the recipient.
- How many (numbers): Be sure to clarify the unit of amount.
- How much (amount of money): cost, price, tax, etc.

◆the address and honorifics

honorifics	recipient	example	remarks
onchu (御中)	To organizations of companies, government agencies, and departments When you don't write your personal name	Yamamoto Co. (Sales Department onchu (山本株式会社営業部御中))	
dono (殿)	To the job title, the job title and the individual name	Nakamura eigyo bucho dono (中村営業部長殿)	In recent years, "sama" is common in individual names.
sama (様)	To the individual	Maeda Tomonori sama (前田友則様)	
sensei (先生)	Teachers, doctors, lawmakers, artists, celebrities, etc.	Noguchi Hideyo sensei (野口英世先生)	

kakui (各位)	When omitting an individual's name and addressing a large number of the same sentence	Shain-kakui (社員各位)	There is an example assumed to be "Everyone", too.
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◆A combination of Salutations and Conclusions

Japanese business documents have the words "Salutations " and "Conclusion". These are always one set, and each acroma has a fixed number of conclusions.

Document type	Salutations	Conclusion
case of general	haikei (拝啓)	keigu (敬具)
case of polite	kinkei (謹啓)	keihaku (敬白)
case of hurry	kyukei (急啓)	sousou (草々)
case of preamble omission	zenryaku (前略)	sousou (草々)
case of replies	haifuku (拝復)	keigu (敬具)

* The above is a common case.

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▼Let' s learn the format of external letters.

*An A4 size sheet is usually used for business documents.

- ① Document number: Number for managing and storing a document (upper-right)
- ② Outgoing date and time: under the document number
- ③ Recipient: Name of the company, affiliation, job title, and name
- ④ Sender: Name of the company, affiliation, job title and name
- ⑤ Subject: to inform the recipient of the content
- ⑥ Headline and lead
- ⑦ Body: main message, content
- ⑧ Closing, greeting
- ⑨ Conclusive words
- ⑩ Additional comments

4. Filing

As we have learned in previous sections, transactions between companies are carried out via documents. Documents increase as transactions proceed, or as counterparty companies increase.

Documents are stored as important materials for the future. Documents are usually in print form, but these days are also kept on computers. Documents should be stored in

a way that makes them easily accessible for relevant parties, a system otherwise known as filing.

4.1 Way of Filing

When classifying documents in individual folders, several rules should be followed. Classification can be done in various ways depending on the ways of use or the characteristics of the documents, for example in alphabetical or chronological order, etc.

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▼ Consider what kind of way would be suitable for classifying the following documents.

- ① Business cards: less than 200 cards
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- more than 200 cards
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- ② Orders of client companies in the past
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- ③ Annual order records of the sales department
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4.2 Computerization of Documents

When storing documents on computer, it is necessary to consider ways to prevent them from being falsified, such as by storing them in PDF format.

In addition, it is desirable to store documents on a system in a way that makes them easily accessible for other employees as shared materials.

As documents are important materials, you should be careful in how you handle them, and therefore avoid actions such as copying them onto a USB stick. In the case where is necessary to transfer documents to a portable storage system or send them by email, you should do so with great care and attention.

4.3 Furniture, fixtures and equipment

In business organizations, furniture, fixtures and equipment are part of their important assets (economical value). Thus, lockers, bookshelves, telephones, etc. should be treated with extra care. Even a pencil given as a consumable should be treated in the same way.

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▼Kinds of files



☞Pipe-type file, flat file, extensive file, clear file folder, ring file folder, Z file, clear file book, separate-type file folders box, presentation file, document file (portable file folder), business card folder, invoice folder

▼An example of stationery that makes work convenient, such as files

Consider the following applications:

- ◆Flat Lyle
- ◆Clear file
- ◆Clear holder
- ◆Pipe type file (2 holes)
- ◆File with a growing back width
- ◆Ring file
- ◆Z type file
- ◆Presentation file
- ◆ Business card organization file
- ◆File for documents
- ◆Document file
- ◆Clear Book
- ◆ Individual folder file box



※If you use these in your student life, it will be convenient.

【Post-learning task】

◆ Business Document ②

Write a following business document on A4 paper.

【Gratitude Letter】

• Haruo Ito, a member of the office for Setsunan Co., Ltd.'s Training Program, will write a letter to Koji Yamashita, Manager of the Human Resources Department at Sumibeni Bussan Co., Ltd.

The letter should include the following:

1. The pamphlet Mr. Yamashita asked for has been sent separately with the training materials, and will arrive the day after tomorrow (Wednesday).
2. Mr. Yamashita's continuous participation in the training programs will be appreciated.

【Pre-learning task】

◆ Business Document ③

Write the following business document.

【Outside documents／Social letter】

- Sumibeni Bussan Co., Ltd. has recently established a distribution center.
- The general affairs manager is in charge of holding a rollout ceremony and wants to send invitation cards to 100 business client and partner companies.
- The event will take place on September 16, 20●●, at 11 am, with a light meal served to guests.