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5 1 Introduction

Business letters are important tool for the development and publicity of business. According to the requirement in business, different types of business letters are used. In this chapter, we shall discuss inquiry letters and reply to inquiry letters with the help of some sample letters.

It is very much necessary for a modern businessman to obtain latest information through inquiry in order to develop his business and to maintain his place in the world of commerce. Inquiry can be made to know the formal and informal details, the financial position and other matters and opinions regarding his business.

As a customer before we buy anything from the market, we would like to know about its price, weight, quality, packing, maximum discount, etc. Moreover, we would also like to know about the product's guarantee and warranty, facility of instalment etc. before taking a decision. If a customer is so cautious about his limited purchase, the trader will certainly be absolutely careful because he purchases a large number of goods of different varieties on a large scale. Thus, the prospective customer writes inquiry letter to get information from the seller about the goods he desires to purchase. Now, we shall study about such inquiry letters in detail.

5 2 Explanation of Inquiry Letters

When a customer or a businessman writes a letter to a seller requesting him to give required information for purchase of goods, generally in bulk, such letters are known as inquiry letters. Generally, these type of letters are written by customer or businessman.

Inquiry letters are frequently written by customers or buyers in the world of commerce. A customer of goods will write such letters to several sellers and analyze the information before he places an order.

5 3 Important Points to be considered for writing Inquiry Letters

- (1) In the beginning of an inquiry letter, letter writer gives introduction of his firm or organization.
- (2) It should be mentioned whether the inquiry is in reference to an advertisement by the seller, in reference to the details of business directory or through the recommendation of someone.
- (3) The purpose of inquiry must be mentioned at the beginning of the letter. It must inform whether the inquiry is for the purchase of goods or to avail services or to obtain general information.
- (4) Request for catalogue, pricelist, quotation, samples and demonstrations of goods should be made.
- (5) The inquiry should be clear and specific about the goods to be purchased. Inquiry about the available variety of the specified goods can also be made.

(6) Inquire about the price of goods and other expenses. Other expenses means – transportation charges, charges for unloading the goods, packing charges, etc. It should be also clearly mentioned that who will bear sales-tax/VAT etc.

(7) Mention the expected size of the order so that the minimum price and the maximum discount can be obtained.

(8) Inquire about the mode of payment; i.e. payment should be made in cash, by cheque; draft, or online payment, etc.

(9) Obtaining the goods at the right time is very important in business. Hence it is necessary to inform the seller about when the goods are needed and inquire whether the seller can deliver within that time period.

(10) Inquire if the seller can provide specific types of goods in specific packing according to your requirement.

(11) At the end of the letter, give an assurance to a seller for a large order in future.

(12) The letters of inquiry should be short but precise and to the point. There should be no confusion or misunderstanding about the type or quality of goods due to complex language.

5 4 Replies to Inquiry Letters

With the intention of large scale purchase, the buyer writes inquiry letters to several sellers. The response to these letters is called Reply to inquiry letters. As these letters are used to attract the customers, they must have features like accuracy, promptness, point wise response, business tact etc.

When the seller receives an inquiry letter from a buyer, he gets an opportunity to sell his goods. To convert this opportunity into reality the seller gives prompt and systematic reply to all the inquiries of the letter. Sometimes leading businessmen provide additional information besides the inquiries made by a buyer or a customer so that the customer or the buyer can be convinced to place his order. In short, Reply to the inquiry letter has to act as a representative of the seller.

5 5 Points to be considered in writing Reply to Inquiry Letters

(1) At first, the seller should thank the customer for showing interest in his product or goods. Considering him as your future customer, this letter should be written with 'You Attitude'.

(2) Reference number and the Date of the inquiry letter should be mentioned in the beginning of the letter.

(3) Even if the seller is unable to send the goods, he should give prompt reply to the customer showing the reason of his inability to do so. This will create good impression in the mind of the customer.

(4) A catalogue showing the features of the variety of goods available should be sent along with the letter. Samples of the product should also be sent and if required, demonstration can be arranged.

(5) Give clear information about the mode of payment i.e. payment will be accepted either through cash or cheque or demand draft or online payment, etc. Even the duration of credit should be clarified.

(6) Mode of transportation of goods and who shall bear the expenses of it must be mentioned. If the goods are insured, the customer must also be informed.

(7) The seller must inform the customer about the suitable packing facility; if it is available.

(8) Inform the buyer whether the goods can be delivered within the specific time limit or not.

(9) Besides giving reply to all inquiries of customer, he should be ensured to provide services at all stages of business.

(10) Attractive schemes should be offered by the seller. e.g. (i) If your order exceeds ₹ 10,000 you will be given additional 10% discount. (ii) If you sell 50 units in a month, you will get 5% extra discount.

(11) Concluding part of the letter should be written so effectively that it compels the customer to order the goods.

5 6 Sample Letters

(1) On behalf of Tapasvi Tea Traders, Kalol write a letter to Gujarat Tea Depot, Kalupur, Ahmedabad inquiring about large scale purchase of different types of tea, their prices and terms of payment.

TAPASVI TEA TRADERS

15, Bhavana Market,
S. T. Road,
Kalol-382721

Phone No. (02764) 263465

E-mail : tapasvitea@gmail.com

24th March, 2016

Gujarat Tea Depot,
55, Adarsh Complex,
Rice Market,
Ahmedabad-380001

Sub. : Inquiry about different types of tea.

Dear Sir,

We have been dealing in the retail business of different varieties of tea for the last 15 years at the above address. With reference to your advertisement published in 'Ajana Samachar' of 15th March 2016, we are motivated to write this letter.

We wish to purchase different types of tea each in 50 kg packing. So, please send your latest catalogue and price list to us. We would like to know about the different varieties of tea, their packing according to quantity, the price, discount, conditions of payment and the mode of delivery and expenses.

As we wish to receive the goods within 10 days of placing an order, you are requested to reply soon. If we find the price and terms and conditions satisfactory, we shall place large orders in future.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

XYZ

Proprietor

(2) Gujarat Tea Depot, Ahmedabad has received letter inquiring about quality and price of tea.
Draft a suitable reply for it.

Gujarat Tea Depot

Phone No. (079) 76346588

Email : gujrattea@yahoo.com

55, Adarsh Complex,
Rice Market,
Kalupur,
Ahmedabad-380001

27th March, 2016

Tapasvi Tea Traders
15, Bhavana Market,
S. T. Road,
Kalol-3827219

Dear Sir,

We have received your inquiry letter dated 24th March, 2016. Thank you for showing an interest in the variety of tea products sold by us.

Our tea is popular in most of the cities of Gujarat because of its high quality and reasonable price. We, herewith send the samples of the tea through post parcel. Our price list and catalogue are enclosed along with this letter. Our Tea is available in 100 gm, 250 gm, 500 gm and 1.00 kg packings. If your order exceeds ₹ 20,000, we shall give you additional 5% discount. We send our goods through our own transport. Goods will be dispatched within 10 days of receiving your order. The total amount of bill must be paid through D.D. within one month of the date of bill.

We hope that the high quality and reasonable prices of our goods will suit you to place large orders with us.

Yours faithfully,

XYZ

Manager

Encl. :

(1) Price-list

(2) Catalogue

(3) Adarsh Nivasi Chhatralaya, Kheralu wants to purchase specific furniture from Jay Hind Furniture Mart, Patan. Write a letter on behalf of them inviting quotation for the purchase of specific furniture.

Adarsh Nivasi Chhatralaya

Near Sahyog Dairy,
At. & Po. Kheralu,
Dist. Mehsana-384325

Phone No. (02761) 255178

20th April, 2016

Jay Hind Furniture Mart,
17, Shivam Complex,
Palace Road,
Patan-384265

Dear Sir,

We require furniture for our Adarsh Nivasi Chhatralaya, Kheralu Dist. Mehsana. We require furniture like tables, chairs, steel cupboards, cots etc. in bulk. We wish to buy the following goods from you.

- (1) Wooden chairs : 30 pieces
- (2) Reading/writing table (wooden) (2 × 4 ft.) 30 pieces
- (3) Steel cot (6 × 2.5 ft.) 30 pieces
- (4) Steel cupboard (6 × 3 ft.) 30 pieces

We expect superior quality and minimum prices for our above mentioned order. Kindly send us quotation stating the minimum cost and maximum discount, terms and condition of payment, cost of transport and state who would bear the other expenses.

We await your prompt reply.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

XYZ

Principal

(4) Write a suitable reply to the letter asking for quotations and pricelist for the purchase of furniture.

Jay Hind Furniture Mart

17, Shivam Complex,
Palace Road,
Patan-384265

Phone No. (02766) 263465

Email : satyamtiles@gmial.com

25th April, 2016

Adarsh Nivasi Chhatralaya
Near Sahyog Dairy,
At. & Po. Kheralu,
Dist. Mehsana-384325

Dear Sir,

We thank you for your inquiry letter dated 20th April, 2016 for the purchase of furniture. We are pleased to know that you are interested in our products. The quotation and terms for the purchase of furniture are as under :

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1 Price | (a) Wooden chairs ₹ 1200 each
(b) Wooden Table (4 × 2 ft.) ₹ 2200 each
(c) Steel cot (6 × 2.5 ft.) ₹ 3200 each
(d) Steel cupboard (6 × 3 ft.) ₹ 4200 each |
| 2 Discount | 20% on the price list |
| 3 Payment | 50% payment along with the order letter
Remaining 50% amount within one month of receiving the goods |
| 4 Delivery of goods | Within 10 days of receiving the order |
| 5 Transportation | Through our vehicle, at our cost |
| 6 Duration of terms | 30 Days |

Keeping in mind your large order, we offer goods at maximum discount with a credit facility. We hope that our prices and terms will be acceptable and you will place order promptly.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,
XYZ
(Proprietor)

(5) Write an inquiry letter to National Cycle Co. New Delhi with reference to their advertisement of Super Speed Cycle on Television.

Vinayak Cycle Co.

Mandavi Chowk,

S. V. Road,

Anand-388001

Phone No. (02692) 272478

Email : vinayakcycle@gmail.com

30th April, 2016

The Manager,
National Cycle Co.
M.G. Road,
Chandani Chowk,
New Delhi-110006

Dear Sir,

Your advertisement telecasted on television has drawn our attention to the different models of 'Superspeed' Cycles. It has motivated us to write this letter.

We have a large network in Gujarat for the sale of Cycles of different companies. If the prices and terms of business are satisfactory, we shall purchase approximately 500 cycles next year.

Please send us the catalogue and pricelist of the different models of Superspeed Cycles and inform us about other details like transport facility and discount etc.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

XYZ

Manager (sales)

(6) National Cycle Co., Delhi has received a letter inquiring about their recently launched Super Speed Cycle. Write a suitable reply for it.

National Cycle Co.

M.G. Road,
Chandani Chowk,
New Delhi-110006

Phone No. (011) 76846588

Email : nationalcycle@gmail.com

Date : 10th May, 2016

Vinayak Cycle Co.
Mandavi Chowk,
S. V. Road,
Anand-388001

Ref. Your letter dated 30th April 2016

Dear Sir,

We thank you for your inquiry letter for Superspeed Cycles. We hereby inform you that we have launched different models of Superspeed Cycles in the market. We have a wide range of cycles for children, young boys and girls, adults and even for exercise. We have received good response for all these models from our customers.

The price-list and the catalogue are enclosed along with this letter. Keeping in mind your large order, we offer maximum discount and facility of credit. If required, our sales representative will visit your firm.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

XYZ

Sales Manager

Encl. : As mentioned in the letter

What you have learnt in this chapter ?

Business letter is an important tool for the development and publicity of business. As per different requirements of business, different types of business letters are written. In this chapter you have studied inquiry letters, their features, suitable replies to inquiry letters through model letters.

Exercise

1 Choose the most suitable option from the given options

- (1) About what does the writer say in the beginning of an inquiry letter ?
(A) Goods (B) Business firm
(C) Advertisement (D) Manager
- (2) A statement showing price and terms of business is known as.....
(A) Pricelist (B) Quotation (C) Catalogue (D) Samples
- (3) Replies to inquiry serve as...
(A) the quality of goods (B) the method of payment
(C) advertisement (D) sales representative

2 Answer the following questions in one sentence :

- (1) For which matters can inquiry be done ?
- (2) Who writes an inquiry letter and to whom ?
- (3) In reply to an inquiry letter, what should the seller do besides giving reply to all the inquiries of the customers.
- (4) Suggest an appropriate word, used for the list of items and their fetures.
- (5) How should the reply to an inquiry letter be written ?

3 Answer the following questions in two or three sentences :

- (1) Mention the points to be considered for writing letters of inquiry ?
- (2) What are different objectives of writing an inquiry letter ?
- (3) What are replies to inquiry Letters ?
- (4) Give examples of attractive proposals offered by the seller in reply to an inquiry letter.
- (5) How does the customer get information about the sellers, when he wants to purchase necessary goods for his business ?

4 Draft letters on the basis of the details given below :

- (1) You want to purchase 'Comfort' Tube Lights for your shop, Prakhar Electronics, Modasa. Write a suitable letter inquiring about its quality, price and terms of business, to Prakash Electronic, Mumbai.
- (2) Sir Shivaji High School, Dhandhuka wants to purchase stationery from Saraswati Stationery, Bhavnagar. Write a suitable inquiry letter on behalf of them.
- (3) You have received an inquiry letter from Chatpata Namkin Stores, Jamnagar for your recently launched 'Swadist Namkin'. Write a suitable reply providing necessary literature.
- (4) You have received an inquiry letter requesting to send pricelist and terms of business to purchase variety of spectacles. Draft a suitable reply to this inquiry letter.
- (5) High-fi Digital World, Vadodara wants to purchase computers items in bulk from Laxmi Agency, Bhuj. Draft a suitable inquiry letter on behalf of them.
- (6) You have received an inquiry letter from Hardik Sports, Dabhoi asking for competitive quotations and maximum discount. Draft a suitable reply letter.

