

# Company to Company

A communicative approach to business  
correspondence in English

**Third Edition**



**Student's Book**

Andrew Littlejohn

**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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To: Daniel, aged 1½, who almost made the writing of the first edition of this book impossible; Lita, who tried to keep the rascal occupied; Fiona, whose imminent arrival kept me working; and David, who came just in time for the second edition!

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## Note on the Third Edition

For the third edition of **Company to Company**, both the Student's and the Teacher's Book have been completely reset, with a clearer layout in colour. In addition, there are new 'Writing process' sections which help students to develop their writing strategies, self-test tasks at the start of each unit so they can see their progress, sections on the use of electronic mail and inclusion of World Wide Web material. Changes have also been made to support students in planning letters. The Teacher's Book now includes short photocopiable tests.

We welcome your comments on using **Company to Company**. Please write to Andrew Littlejohn, c/o ELT Group, Cambridge University Press, The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU, England. Fax: +44 (0)1223 325984.

You are also welcome to visit the website which Andrew Littlejohn maintains. Articles, papers and an A-Z of methodology are available at the following website:

[http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/A\\_Littlejohn](http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/A_Littlejohn)

## To the student

**Please read this first! (Teachers, too!)**

*Company to Company* is probably very different from other books that you have used to learn English so it may help if you read this introduction first.

The book has eight **units**. Each unit is divided into different **sections**.

**Section A** is the **Study section**. At the beginning of the section, you can do a letter-writing exercise. You can then learn phrases for writing business letters. At the end, there is another letter-writing exercise. These beginning and end exercises will show you how much you have learned in the section.

**Section B** is the **Activity section**. This helps you to practise writing in a 'real' situation. Here, you can use everything you learn in Section A. In the activity, the class is divided into groups. Each group is one of three 'companies' in a business situation (for example, buying or selling something). In your group, you have to write letters to the other 'companies' using the role cards at the back of the book. (See page 83.) There are three cards for each group in each activity and your teacher will tell you which card to look at next. The role cards and the letters that you get from other groups give you new information and, together, you will have to make decisions before you write. Your company is trying to get its business done so you will have to think and write as quickly as possible!

To get maximum benefit from the activity it is important that **everyone in your group writes** the letter you are discussing. Once the activity is over, you can look back at your own letters, and the letters written by other students, to see if you can improve them.

**Section C** is **The writing process** section in Units 2 to 7. This section shows you how you can develop your abilities in writing, how you can plan and revise letters and help yourself.

At the back of the book, there is an **Index of model letters and key words** that you can use in class, at work or at home. This will help you to find an example letter or a particular word. There is also a **Summary of useful phrases and main points** from each unit and a **Letter layout guide**.

We hope you learn a lot from this book and enjoy using it.

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# Unit 1

## 1A Study section

### Letter layout, the date, opening/closing, subject headings

#### TEST YOURSELF

You work in Computer World, a computer shop. A customer ordered a new printer, the Solar EX43, and it has now arrived. Write to the customer and ask him/her to collect the printer as soon as possible. Write a complete business letter, with names, addresses, dates, etc. (Invent any details you need.)

When you have finished, put the letter away until the end of this section.

#### 1.1 Letter layout

Look at the following two letters.

- 1 What can you notice about the layout of the paragraphs?
- 2 Is there any punctuation in the addresses?
- 3 What differences are there between the two letters?



**Intercity Bank plc**

Jalan Thamrin 58  
Jakarta 11196  
Indonesia  
Tel 021-6376018  
Fax 021-6376333

[www.intercity.com/indonesia](http://www.intercity.com/indonesia)

Prapatan Office Supplies  
Jalan Prapatan 7  
Jakarta

Your ref:  
Our ref: JL/da/246  
12 January 2001

Dear Sir or Madam

We are expanding our offices in Jakarta and we will need extra desks, lights, chairs and filing cabinets.

Please send us your catalogue with prices, sizes and colours for these items.

Yours faithfully

*Jennifer Long*

Ms Jennifer Long  
Manager

expand  
make bigger

Mr S Basuki  
Jakarta Furnishings  
7 Jalan Arjuna  
Jakarta

Dear Mr Basuki

Office furniture

We are expanding our offices in Jakarta and we will need extra desks, lights, chairs and filing cabinets.

Please send us your catalogue with prices, sizes and colours for these items.

Yours sincerely

*Susan Woods*

PP Jennifer Long  
Manager

PP  
'in the place of'

## 1.2 Block style

There are many ways to lay out a business letter. The letters from Intercity Bank are examples of the most common way. Complete the description:

- the name and address of the addressee (the person you are writing to) are at the top on the \_\_\_\_\_ (left or right?)
- there is no punctuation in the address or after 'Dear ...' or after 'Yours faithfully/sincerely'
- the date is on the \_\_\_\_\_ (left or right?)
- the paragraphs start at the margin. Between each paragraph there is \_\_\_\_\_
- under the signature, there is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

In this book, you will see some other ways of laying out business letters, but the 'block style' is the most useful to learn because it is accepted everywhere.



## 1.3 The date

Be careful with the date! In British English, they write the day first, but in American English they write the month first. This means that

12 06 2002

is the twelfth of June in Britain but in the United States it is the sixth of December! So write the date like this:

12 June 2002

and then everybody will know what you mean. Remember to use a capital letter for the month. You do not have to write **th**, **rd**, **nd** or **st** after the day.

How would you write these dates in a letter?

- |                          |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>a</b> Jan. 16th, 2001 | <b>b</b> 23rd March 2002 | <b>c</b> 6/11/03 (UK)   |
| <b>d</b> 09-07-01 (USA)  | <b>e</b> 21.1.01         | <b>f</b> 04.08.02 (USA) |

## 1.4 Dear .../Yours ...

Here are some ways to open a letter.

Dear Sir or Madam	– to a company
Dear Sir	– to a man if you do not know his name
Dear Madam	– to a woman if you do not know her name
Dear Mr Smith	– to a man
Dear Ms Smith	– to a married or unmarried woman
Dear Mrs Smith	– to a married woman
Dear Miss Smith	– to an unmarried woman
Dear John	– to a friend or someone you know well

**Notes:** Letters do not usually open with 'Dear Mr John' or 'Dear Mr John Smith'. Unless you know that a woman prefers to be known as 'Miss' or 'Mrs', it is best to use 'Ms'.

The way you close a letter depends on how you open it.

Dear Sir or Madam	– Yours faithfully
Dear Mr/Ms/Mrs/Miss/Smith	– Yours sincerely
Dear John	– Best wishes

**1** Join these openings to the right ending.

<b>a</b> Dear Mrs Wilson	<b>b</b> Dear Madam	<b>c</b> Dear Ms Hemsuchi	<b>d</b> Dear Susanna
<b>e</b> Dear Mr Gonzalez	<b>f</b> Dear David	<b>g</b> Dear Sir or Madam	

Best wishes	Yours faithfully	Yours sincerely
-------------	------------------	-----------------

2 Now put in the missing openings and closings.

- |                         |                          |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>a</b> The Manager    | <b>b</b> John Hall       | <b>c</b> Ms B Carrillo   |
| Fuchi Bank              | Ave Paul Hymans 26       | Restaurante ¡Bien Padre! |
| Tokyo 101               | 1200 Brussels            | Guadalajara              |
| Dear .....              | Dear .....               | Dear .....               |
| Yours .....             | Yours .....              | .....                    |
| <b>d</b> The Manageress | <b>e</b> Trufit Shoe Co. | <b>f</b> Mrs H Cheng     |
| Bells Supermarket       | 841 Pacific St           | 5 Hatton Road            |
| 76 Oxford Road          | Los Angeles 90121        | Hong Kong                |
| Bath BA2 5HD            | .....                    | .....                    |
| .....                   | .....                    | .....                    |
| .....                   | .....                    | .....                    |

## 1.5 Practice

There are ten mistakes in this letter. Can you find them? Write out the letter correctly, in 'block style'.

Ms Margareta Lindell,  
Slottsberget 26,  
Göteborg 41803,  
Sweden.

Your ref  
Our ref FH/ts

Dear Sir

Thank you for your letter of the nineteenth of May two thousand and one

I have pleasure in sending you our brochure with details of all our holidays.

I look forward to hearing from you.

2001, may 22nd

Best wishes  
Sales Manager  
Fred Henderson

*Fred Henderson*

ISLAND  
WORLD  
HOLIDAYS

181 North Street  
London W1M 2FW  
Tel 020-8676 9096  
Fax 020-8676 9222

www.island.co.uk  
sales@island.co.uk



## 1.6 Subject headings

The letter to Jakarta Furnishings (1.1) has a heading, *Office furniture*. This draws Mr Basuki's attention to what the letter is about and helps to make sure that he will pass the letter to the right person. Sometimes, when we put a heading we then use the word *above*, like this:

Dear Mr Chang

Order No. 519

The above order of books has now arrived.

Please can you collect it as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

*Michael Paine*

Mr Michael Paine  
Sub-Manager

## 1.7 Practice

Can you complete these four letters? There are two things missing in each one.

WESTERN COMPUTERS		
Invoice No. 258 3/3/2001		
1 DGS Computer	950	50
1 SH1000 Monitor	300	25
1 Word Mate Word Processing Package	206	00
Total £	1,456	75

a

Dear Miss Spencer

.....  
I am writing about the above invoice for £1,456.75. I would like to remind you that it is now three months since we delivered the goods.

Please could we have your payment as soon as possible.  
.....

*B. East*

Mr Brian East  
Accountant

b

Dear Ms Morales

Mercedes SL series

Thank you for your letter about

I enclose some information which  
I hope you will find helpful.

*T. Lander*

Mr Thomas Lander  
Sales Representative

# Mercedes SL series

The legendary convertible from Mercedes-Benz.

## Technical data

	Performance			
	SL 280	SL 320	SL 500	SL 600
No. of cylinders	4	4	6	6
Bore/stroke	89.90/84.60	89.90/86.60	89.90/88.60	90.90/89.60
Total displacement	2199 cm <sup>3</sup>	2699 cm <sup>3</sup>	3199 cm <sup>3</sup>	3699 cm <sup>3</sup>
Compression ratio	10.0:1	10.0:1	10.0:1	10.0:1
Engine oil capacity max./min. (litres)	5.5/3.5	5.5/3.5	7.0/5.0	7.0/5.0
Capacity of cooling system (litres)	8.7	8.7	9.3	9.3
Generator	14 V/70A	14 V/70 A	14 V/80 A	14 V/80 A
Battery	12 V/620 Ah	12 V/620 Ah	12 V/620 Ah	12 V/620 Ah
Max. 5-speed man.	125 mph 200 km/h	131 mph 210 km/h	144 mph 230 km/h	147 mph 235 km/h
speed 4-speed auto	122 mph 195 km/h	128 mph 205 km/h	141 mph 225 km/h	144 mph 225 km/h
Fuel	Premium, unleaded, in accordance with DIN 51607			

c

Dear Sir or Madam

This year the Daily Observer newspaper will print a  
special report on travel agencies. We were wondering if  
your company would like to put an advertisement in it.

I enclose our price list and look forward to hearing  
from you.

*Renate Makosch*

Renate Makosch  
Advertising Manager

## Daily Observer

### Special Report on Travel Agencies

Advertising prices:

Full Page .....£1,100

Half Page .....£600

Quarter Page.....£400

*Reminder!*  
*Write to Peter Brown*  
*about the conference*

d

Dear .....

Thank you for your letter of 12 February.

I am happy to say that I will be at the Marketing Conference in Paris in March.

I look forward to seeing you there.

.....

*John*

## 1.8 Letter practice

You are the Purchasing Supervisor at Green Supermarkets, 13 Station Road, Dublin, Ireland. Your manager has just sent you this memo.



To Purchasing Supervisor

Date 15th April 2001

From Stock Manager

Subject Order 564

We sent an order for orange juice to Corona on 4th January but we have still not had a delivery.

Please write to them and ask them when they can deliver the orange juice. Their address is Calle Mayor 340, 28014 Madrid, Spain.

Write the letter to Corona. Make sure that you lay it out in the modern 'block style'. Put a heading in your letter that says what it is about.

# 1B Activity section

## Misplaced orders

- 1 Slembrouck BVBA, a wholesaler in Belgium, has problems. Business is not good and their profits have fallen. They have dismissed a lot of staff and now their offices are very badly organised. Here are some orders that their sales representative brought back after a trip to England.

### wholesaler

a business that buys goods in large quantities direct from the manufacturer and then sells them in smaller quantities to shops, etc.

*Orange juice*

*Court Hotel*

*1,000 small bottles shampoo*  
*contact: Ms D. Hicks*

*Ingram Supermarkets*

*400 x 125 ml*


*ABC (Drinks Machines) Ltd*

*150 kgs Tea-powder*

*& coffee*

- a What has ABC (Drinks Machines) Ltd ordered?  
b Who ordered the shampoo?

- 2 The accounts department made out these invoices for two of the orders.

 **SLEMBROUCK**  
BVBA  
Violetstraat 187, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium  
Tel 02 242 3789 Fax 02 242 3927

---


Invoice No. 391 Date: 25 Jan  
Order No. 256 Contact: Stephan Ghislain

---

To: Court Hotel  
Chilcompton  
Bath BA3 4SA England

---

1000 small bottles of shampoo			
@ £40 per 100	£	400	-
fixed delivery charge	£	15	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	£	<b>415</b>	<b>-</b>

 **SLEMBROUCK**  
BVBA  
Violetstraat 187, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium  
Tel 02 242 3789 Fax 02 242 3927

---

Invoice No. 732 Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Order No. 260 Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

---

To: ABC (Drinks Machines) Ltd  
186 Park Lane  
Bristol BS2 8BE

---

150 Kgs powdered tea @ £3 per kg	£	450	
fixed delivery charge	£	15	
<b>TOTAL</b>	£	<b>465</b>	

*Prices agreed in £ sterling*

- a Are they correct?
- b Look at the invoices again.
  - i If the Court Hotel wants to write to Slembrouck BVBA, who will they address the letter to?
  - ii How will they open the letter? (Dear ...)
  - iii What subject heading will they put?
  - iv If they want to ask Slembrouck BVBA to deliver the order as soon as possible, how will they start the letter? (... above ...)
  - v How will they end the letter? (Yours ...)
  - vi If ABC (Drinks Machines) Ltd wants to send a similar letter, what will they write?

- 3 Slembrouck BVBA has now delivered the orders to the Court Hotel and ABC (Drinks Machines) Ltd. Unfortunately, there are some problems and both the Court Hotel and ABC Ltd have to write to complain.

Work in three groups. One group is Slembrouck BVBA, another group is the Court Hotel and another group is ABC (Drinks Machines) Ltd. The role cards at the back of the book will help you but you must decide exactly what to write.

You must write neat, clear business letters. Remember to:

- put the date
- write to a particular person if you have his/her name
- use a subject heading
- thank the person for any letter they have sent you
- use 'Yours sincerely/faithfully' correctly
- sign the letter with your name and title.

When you have written a letter, give it to the correct group. Then ask for a new role card number. (There are three cards for each company.)



Start on card 59



Start on card 2



Start on card 30



# Unit 2

## 2A Study section

### Parts of a letter, beginning and ending

#### TEST YOURSELF

Your office needs to rent a video camera for one month. You need a small machine that produces a professional quality image. Write to Photofinish Ltd and ask them if they rent machines like that and the price. Write a full business letter, with names, addresses, etc. (Invent any details you need.)

When you have finished, put the letter away until the end of this section.

### 2.1 Interfon looks for new agents

Interfon, Inc., USA, is looking for new business so they sent a letter to their bank's branch in Bahrain. They received the faxed reply shown.

- 1 What differences are there between the layouts of the two letters?
- 2 How can Eastern Bank help Interfon?
- 3 How many copies of Eastern Bank's letter will Interfon receive?

: sometimes used after the opening in American English

**Dear Corporate Section Manager:**

in American English, a job title is sometimes used to open a letter. (British English: Dear Sir or Madam)

**catalogs**

British English: catalogues

**Sincerely yours**

British English: Yours sincerely/Yours faithfully

**inquire**

ask

**forward**

send further, pass on

**enc**

short for 'enclosure'

Your ref  
Our ref RW:jd

Corporate Section Manager  
Eastern Bank  
PO Box 3455  
Bahrain  
Arabian Gulf

**Interfon, Inc.**



1677 Sea Harbor Drive  
Orlando, Florida 35509  
USA  
Telephone: 407-240 3000  
Fax: 407-240 5454  
export@interfon.com

February 8, 2001

Dear Corporate Section Manager:

We are writing to inquire about agents for our products in Bahrain. Your branch in Orlando, Florida, has told us that you may be able to help us.

We manufacture radio telephones. At present, we export to Europe and Latin America, but we would like to start exporting to the Arabian Gulf.

Could you please forward this letter to any companies in Bahrain that might be interested in representing us? We enclose some of our catalogs.

Sincerely yours

*Robert J Winston*

Robert J. Winston  
Export Division

enc