



Inquiry Letter

Inquiry letters are written for the purpose of asking for something from the recipient. Inquiries can be sent as a formal business letter (outside of your company) or as an e-mail. Before sending your inquiry, you should be certain that the information is not available through other means, such as the company website.

1. **Types:** There are three primary categories of inquiry letters:
 - A. Status inquiries are typically sent to request references or recommendations.
 - B. Routine inquiries are letters written to an individual or company for the purpose of gathering specific information.
 - C. Sales-related inquiries are written to a company or individual to obtain information about a product or service and may be the first step of collecting information for a report.

2. **Components:**
 - A. Introduction: The purpose of the introduction is to provide your audience with the basic information of who, what, and why.
 - I. Introduce yourself and where you are from.
 - II. Provide a statement of purpose.
 - III. Include some subtle flattery, but only if the purpose is not sales-related.
 - B. Body: The purpose of the body is to provide the recipient with the inquiry—what you want from him or her and what you will do with that information.
 - I. In a sales inquiry, you might include the dimensions of the product, quality, price, availability, discount rates, return rate, service terms, or any other pertinent information.
 - II. If you are sending an inquiry for information, you will list no more than five questions.
 - C. Conclusion: The conclusion functions to establish goodwill and express gratitude.
 - I. Thank the recipient for his or her time and consideration. You are not thanking him or her in advance; instead, you are thanking him or her for the time he or she has spent reading the letter and considering your inquiry.
 - II. Include any permission you may need for quoting him or her in your work (if you are seeking information).
 - III. Provide your contact information: address, e-mail, phone number, etc.

3. **Characteristics:**
 - A. Write clearly and concisely.
 - B. Be considerate and provide a sufficient timeline.
 - C. Provide a route for a response, such as a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE).