

Minister  
of Economic Advancement Canada



Ministre  
d'Avancement Économique Canada

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0Z0

The Honourable John Smith, P.C., M.P.  
Minister for International Trade  
125 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2

Dear Colleague:

The opening paragraph should quickly introduce the reader to the subject of the letter. It should not exceed two or three lines.

In a reply to a letter that the minister has received, the opening paragraph should thank the reader for the letter and state the subject. For example: “Thank you for your letter of January 15, 2004, inviting me to address the Canada Perspectives 2020 conference on April 23, 2004.” If the letter is initiated by the minister, the opening paragraph should state the purpose of the letter. For example: “I am writing to seek your views on options for increasing stakeholder participation in a new program my department is conducting to foster innovation in the construction industry.”

The structure of a letter is much more flexible than that of a memo to the minister. Even so, the concepts of issue, background, considerations and conclusion/recommendation will serve you well in drafting a letter. Refer to [Format Guidelines for Letters](#) for details on these and other principles of formatting a letter.

The closely paragraph serves to wrap things up. It should be short and, if possible, positive. Here is an example: “Again, thank you for the invitation. I look forward to addressing the conference.” Here is another example: “Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your response.”

Yours sincerely,

Catherine R. Kathiria