



Project Superintendent Certification Program

Prepare to demonstrate your skills, gain valuable feedback, and achieve the recognition you deserve. Engage with our Project Superintendent Evaluation and take the next step towards professional excellence in construction management.

Let's Build Your
Future Together

Welcome to Construction Management Certification

Dear Student and Fellow Worker,

Welcome to a pivotal moment in your career journey! We at Construction Management Certification are thrilled to have you join our community of forward-thinking construction professionals. As you embark on this learning path, we want to acknowledge the significant effort and time you're investing by stepping away from your daily responsibilities to enhance your skills and knowledge.

Your Learning Experience

This course is meticulously designed to familiarize you with essential industry terminology and to provide you with a foundational understanding of the topics covered. While it may not delve deeply into every nuance of the subject matter, it will equip you with the critical tools and concepts needed to succeed in your role.

Remember, you are here to learn and grow—so do not feel intimidated by new concepts or terminology. Each lesson is crafted to be accessible and engaging, ensuring that you gain confidence as well as competence.

Accredited Certification – Opening Doors to New Opportunities

By choosing an accredited certification program like ours, you are not just learning—you are unlocking new opportunities. The knowledge and credentials you acquire here will significantly enhance your professional profile and open up new avenues in the construction industry. Certification is a testament to your dedication to professional development and positions you well to soar to new heights in your career.

Let's Begin

As we start this lesson, remember that every module is a step towards greater opportunities. We are here to support you throughout your learning journey and to celebrate your achievements along the way.

Thank you for choosing Construction Management Certification. Let's build a robust future together!

Warm regards,

The Construction Management Certification Team

We encourage you to approach each lesson with curiosity and enthusiasm as you pave your way

Effective Letter Writing for Project Superintendents

Prompt and accurate communication is an essential task in the construction business, and the project superintendent may be called on, from time to time, to compose an effective letter when certain situations require this form of documentation. To be effective, a letter should include certain basic elements, but the real challenge is to state your case without wasting a word.

Effective letter writing does not come naturally to many people. We all have to work on it—not to win any writing awards, but to be able to express ourselves clearly and precisely when the occasion arises.

There are all kinds of guidelines to follow when composing a letter, but the two that seem to make the most sense are the three C's and the five W's.

The Three C's of Writing—Clarity, Correctness, and Courtesy

Clarity

Decide what you want to say and say it. What points am I trying to make? What ground do I want to cover in this letter? Think through the content of your letter before you sit down at the computer or with pencil and paper in hand.

Correctness

Use the correct words and the correct spelling. Certain words are most expressive and have greater impact than others. Your job is to search out those correct words. Long, complicated words are not necessarily the best approach to impress your intended reader. Sometimes short, concise words are more effective. Most of the word processing software today alerts the writer to misspelled words by highlighting these words in red. If you are not using a computer with one of

these spell check programs, are writing a letter by hand, and are unsure of the spelling of a word, go to the dictionary. Nothing turns off a reader faster than finding misspelled words in your letter or words that are used incorrectly. If you are not sure that the word you are using is correct, select one that you can use with assurance.

Courtesy

Although your emotions may be running high and you want to let the reader know that you are really angry or upset about the situation in hand, be careful of how you express your anger and the words you use to express those feelings. Ask yourself, How would I respond if I received such a letter? Control your thoughts and present your case, objectively—without those four-letter words.

The Five W's—Who, What, Why, Where, and When

The five W's method of letter writing may have had its origin in the criminal investigation field or certainly in newspaper reporting. To compose a letter or a report, certain questions need to be answered, and that is the basis of the five W's approach:

Who

Who is the intended recipient of this letter, not only the primary recipient, but also others who either may receive a copy directly or may have an interest in your letter. When you are writing to an architect, explaining the reasons behind a recently disputed item of work involving, say, the electrical contractor, do you want to send a copy to the electrical engineer and/or the electrical subcontractor, or do you not want anyone else to be aware of what you are doing?

What

What do you want to convey? What is to be accomplished by this letter? Do you want to ask a question? If so, then you will want to include a statement that you will expect an answer—don't assume that the reader will respond. Request a written response, and if the issue is time-sensitive, include a reasonable date by which you would like to receive a response. Are you stating a position on a specific matter or issue? Are you responding to a previous letter you received? That's the essence of the "what."

Why

Somewhat similar to the W above, this also asks the question, *Why* am I writing this letter? Do you want to document a verbal direction received or one that you initiated? Do you want to explain your position on a certain matter, or do you want to defend your position?

Where

Where did the events included in your proposed letter take place, or where are the events to take place? Were they the result of a field discussion or a project meeting or a meeting on the site?

When

When did the event in your proposed letter take place, or when do you expect the event to take place?

Use the Draft Approach to Letter Writing

It is often difficult to produce the final letter at first writing. Professional writers often wrestle for hours or days over the right word to use in a particular sentence or two, or whether they are clearly expressing all the thoughts and facts they intended to express. The draft approach to letter writing is one way of coping with *writer's block*—the inability to pick the words that describe the situation you wish to present.

By scribbling your first thoughts in that first draft, you will gain a starting point. Someone once said that a thought was not a thought until it was expressed verbally or in writing. Although you may have thought that you had the letter composed in your head, when you try to put it down on paper, you may find these thoughts don't come easily or clearly.

In many cases, it is more important that the content of your letter be correct and complete than that the letter be transmitted quickly. However, a letter written too late after an event loses much of its impact. "If it was so important, why did he or she wait 10 days before sending me this letter?" So there is the balance between accuracy and completeness and promptness.

It is also helpful to put the draft away for a few hours or even overnight, so that a fresh look later on will either reinforce what you have already written or change its content. Don't be discouraged if you find yourself preparing three or four drafts before you create the final one. When that letter is finally typed, you will gain some satisfaction in knowing that it contains the correct words and phrases and conveys the exact thoughts that you set out to convey.

Some Basic Letter-Writing Principles

1. Before you write that letter, establish a clear purpose for the letter. What do I want to accomplish by writing this letter? Do I want to notify someone of an impending problem? Do I want to clarify my company's position on a certain matter? Do I just want to document some important verbal directive or confirm, in writing, a position I have stated orally? Do I want to put someone on notice that a contract violation is occurring or will occur unless some action is taken?

2. Learn to express your thoughts on paper in the same way as you would when talking. This will allow you to write in a more conversational manner. But you shouldn't use the word *ain't* or drop the letter *g* from the end of *beginning* or *assisting*. Don't try to insert big words to impress. Don't use "expletive deleted" words (even if you'd really like to). Pretend you are having a conversation with the person to whom you are writing. Would you use the phrase *set forth herein*, or would you use the word *attached* or *enclosed*? The answer is probably the latter and not the former, so try to avoid these stilted expressions.

Many words or expressions ought to be avoided in your letters:

Instead of:	Use:
Hold in abeyance	Wait
Pursuant to your request	As you requested
Prior to	Before
Subsequent to	After
Conceptualize	Think of
Due to the fact that or Inasmuch as	Because
At an early date	Soon
Taken into consideration	Consider
Ascertain the data	Get the facts
As this point in time	Now

Can you think of any others? If so, add them to your own "use instead of" list.

3. Be concise. Try to use as few words as possible to express yourself. Searching for that right word might be difficult, but once you have found it, it will be worth the effort. Often the right word can take the place of three or four less effective words. As an example, suppose you are writing a letter to an architect or an owner, advising the person that an addendum or contract modification or change order has not been received on the date promised. You could have written the following:

As we discussed last week, you indicated that we would receive a (copy of Addendum No. 2) or (a copy of a proposed change) or (Change Order No. 4) on June 5, 2003; however, we did not receive this (document) on that date as promised.

This sentence consists of 24 words, exclusive of dates and items in parentheses. You could also state the same thing by using only 7 words (exclusive of the item in parentheses and the date).

We did not receive (document) on June 5, 2003, as promised.

Consider the following expressions and how fewer words express the same thought better.

If you want to say:	Shorten it to:
Engage in conducting an inspection	Conduct an inspection
Long or lengthy period of time	Long time
Enclosed herewith	Enclosed
Decide at a meeting to be held on Monday	Decide at Monday's meeting
During the period of 2003	During 2003
There is one point that is clear and that is	One point is clear
The cost was higher than I expected it to be	The cost was higher
That is (was) the situation at that time	That is (was) the situation
During the course of the meeting	During the meeting
The trouble with the compressor was that it was too noisy	The compressor was too noisy

4. Research before you begin to write. Ask yourself, What documents will I need to refer to as I write this letter? You may need to refer to

- A specific contract requirement
- Specific plans or details, sections
- The specification book
- Inspections, architect/engineer reports
- Previous correspondence
- Shop drawings

If you need to refer to any of these documents, then assemble them, make copies, or have the originals on hand as you prepare the letter. Those “sticky notes” can be used to flag pages in the specifications or drawings. If any of these documents are to be attached to the letter, get them beforehand so that you can refer to them as needed; and after all, you will need them when the letter is completed. Avoid long interruptions during the letter-writing process due to the need to locate a referenced document, so that your train of thought will not be broken.

5. Organize the letter and the topics to be included in the letter. Sometimes it is easier to create an outline to establish the order in which each part of a lengthy or complex letter is to be prepared. This “skeleton” can then be fleshed out with the facts once the outline has established the orderly presentation of events or facts.

6. Finally, check the spelling of the person’s name to whom the letter is addressed. The person’s title and company address are important. You don’t want to misspell the recipient’s name, nor do you want to list an incorrect title. Nothing turns off a reader more quickly than having her or his name misspelled or title or position in the company listed inaccurately.

Writing effective letters may be difficult to many people, but it occupies an important role in every manager’s business and personal life. With patience and practice and a little advance preparation, everyone can produce concise, clear, and effective letters.



End of Lesson Wrap-Up

Congratulations on completing this lesson! You've taken another important step in your journey to becoming a certified professional in the construction industry.

Up Next: Quiz Time

Before we move forward, there's a short quiz waiting for you. Remember, this quiz isn't designed to trip you up but to reinforce your understanding of the concepts we've covered. It's a way to ensure that you have grasped the essential elements of the lesson and are ready to build on this knowledge in subsequent modules.

You're Doing Great!

You're doing an excellent job so far, and we encourage you to keep up the momentum. Every quiz and lesson is a building block towards your ultimate goal of certification and professional advancement.

See You in the Next Lesson!

We are excited to continue this journey with you and look forward to seeing you in the next lesson. Keep up the great work and stay motivated—your future in construction management looks promising!

Keep learning, keep growing, and remember, we are here to support you every step of the way. See you soon for more learning and development

Contact Information:

Construction Management Certification

Website: www.ConstructionManagementCertification.com

Email: support@ConstructionManagementCertification.com