

Examinations

Writing a Proposal

About Proposals

- **Format:** Proposals can generally be a letter, memo or a report. Unless told otherwise or given a specific type of document to respond to I'd recommend using a report style, because this gives you the ability to use headings and follow a simple formula for writing.
- **Writing Style:** You should use formal English, but the passive isn't used much in reports.
- **Vocabulary Required:** The vocabulary is similar to that used for business documents, although it depends on the subject.
- **December 2008 Changes:** If you are preparing for the December 2008 examination, the format will change: you will have less input, less time to answer and a lower word limit. You may also be expected to write an email reply.

Step By Step

1. The Problem

Firstly look at the scenario you have been given, if it is a task 1 question you will be given quite a lot of information and it is important that you follow that precisely. If it is question 2-5 then you will be expected to introduce the subject and state what the problems are.

Exam Tip: Do not attempt Task 5 questions, unless you have relevant work experience, because a part of the marks will be based on accurate work knowledge.

2. Suggest Your Ideas

Develop only as many ideas as you have been told to do so... If you have more than one idea make sure that the ideas work well together.

Exam Tip: Don't give too many ideas than you have to, because this uses up valuable exam time, which you could be using to develop the ideas more fully.

3. Justify Them

For each idea that you come up with you should say why it is a good idea and you must do this in a way that will appeal to the reader, often in Cambridge examinations this will be the principal of your school or your manager.

4. Ask For What You Need

Then ask for what you need, you may have been directly told this and if that is the case you should follow the instructions. In past papers it has been to ask for more money or in some cases it maybe just permission to do it.

This formula is just a general plan and will need to be adapted for each situation!

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Guided Essay

Look at the following question and write an appropriate proposal.

You are a student in the senior class at Kuala Lumpur International College and you have received a memo from your principal asking for your assistance in choosing suitable software. Read the memo below, on which you have made some notes and a list of software available. Then, using the information appropriately, write your proposal to the Principal, outlining how you think the money could be put to best use.

MEMO

I'm afraid that I am not very technically minded and as you are club-chairperson for the computer club, I'd like you to advise me on the software we should buy for our computers. We have a fairly small budget and I'd like to spend some of it on new computer desks.

I am also concerned that students spend too much time playing games on the Internet and am very keen to buy Net-Cop as it seems to limit access to Audio files on the Internet including Real Audio Files.

Please let me know as soon as possible which other piece of software you feel will be useful to the student body

Thank you

John Blacksmith

Don't need them - The Computer desks are fine, would rather have another piece of software.

Don't want it - Real Audio can be used to listen to the BBC and other educational sites, this would only encourage students to use download services, which bypass Net-Cop.

Ask for two more pieces of useful software to replace the desks and Net-Cop.

Software for Schools

- **Microsoft Encarta** – This encyclopaedia has everything needed to research homework.
- **Net-Cop** – Ensure students don't listen to streaming audio using programs such as Real Audio and do other illicit activities.
- **Photoshop** – Allows students to create graphics and pictures using industry standard tools
- **Dreamweaver** – Encourages students to create their own web-pages using the industry standard tools
- **Oxford English Dictionary** – The complete Oxford English dictionary with 500,000 words defined with their history and quotations
- **Maya** – Create 3D graphics and models. This can be used for creating simple objects, buildings, cityscapes and even dream worlds.
- **Flash** – Create animations and games with this useful programming tool.

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**Now write your proposal to the Principal as outlined (approximately 250 words).
You should use your own words as far as possible.**

Your Answer	Hints
MEMO	You have been given a memo, so you should reply in the same format. Start with an appropriate greeting
	Explain why there is no need for new desks
	Explain that although Net-cop sounds like a good idea it also creates a number of problems and hinders access to genuine educational Websites.
	Request that the budget not be used for Net-Cop and new computer desks and instead could be used to buy two more pieces of software
	1 st piece of software and why it is useful
	2 nd piece of software and why it is useful
	3 rd piece of software and why it is useful
	Ending Formulae.

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More Proposal Questions

1. You see this announcement in a local magazine:

Tourism Month

In July we are holding a special Tourism month for our region and want you to think of an event that will attract more tourists to our area. We want it to be something that celebrates our culture and is fun for all the family.

Write your proposal

2. Your Headmaster has asked you to write a proposal suggesting ways to improve Physical Education.

3. The local council has requested proposals on improving after-school activities in your area.

4. Your local art gallery are looking into ideas to encourage young people to visit them. Write a proposal outlining what kinds of exhibitions would encourage young people to visit.

5. An area of land has been set-aside to make a recreational ground. They have asked you to create a proposal that will appeal to young people.

6. You see this in the local newspaper:

Wanted – Your Ideas

We are Club Aerodrome and want ideas for an under-18 night. Please submit your proposal to the club management.

Write your proposal

Business Question:

1. Your manager has asked you to create a proposal to improve team morale. You should include details on what currently affects team morale and steps you would take to improve it. The budget for this is very limited.

2. Your manager wants to improve the quality of English in the company, but is aware that people have busy schedules. He wants you to write a proposal that covers the following areas:

- Motivating staff to take up English courses
- Encouraging more reading amongst staff
- Use of the IT infrastructure to provide training

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Sample Answer (Question 1)

Your Answer	Hints
MEMO I'm glad to assist in this important task of choosing new software for our computers.	You have been given a memo, so you should reply in the same format. Start with an appropriate greeting
Purchasing New Desks It would be nice to have new desks, but the students feel that the current desks are quite sufficient and have a few more years of life in them. They would much prefer the money to be used to buy more software.	Explain why there is no need for new desks
Net-cop problems Net-cop sounds like a good idea in principle, but it also stops students listening to genuine resources such as the BBC and it doesn't prevent the use of download sites which have been specifically designed to get around this software. If this money was to be invested in another piece of software, then the students would use that educational software instead of spending time unproductively on the Internet.	Explain that although Net-cop sounds like a good idea it also creates a number of problems
Software Choices If the money saved on net-cop and new desks were put to use on software, then I hope this would provide budget for three pieces of software that would really benefit the students.	Request that the budget not be used for Net-Cop and new computer desks. Instead use the money to buy two more pieces of software
Photoshop Photoshop would give students vital graphic design skills and will allow them to excel at art projects and improve their grades.	1 st piece of software and why it is useful
Oxford English Dictionary The Oxford English dictionary would help students to have a greater understanding of the English language and expand their vocabulary. It is also useful when studying English literature.	2 nd piece of software and why it is useful
Dreamweaver Dreamweaver could help students to create interesting English projects, update the school Website and provide skills demanded by industry.	3 rd piece of software and why it is useful
I hope that the information I have provided will help you to make an informed choice and please don't hesitate to ask for more feedback.	Ending Formulae.

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Tourism Month - Sample Answer

Dear Sir/Madam I read with great interest that you were looking for ideas for events for the tourism month in July for the region of Selangor. I'd like to propose the idea of a floral Carnival. I believe this would be an excellent idea for the following reasons. Firstly it is very family friendly: children will love the colourful floats, they'll be able to learn about the different flowers grown in our region and listen to local music too. Adults will also enjoy the decorations and flowers and even senior citizens will be able to appreciate the event, because it isn't too physically demanding. Secondly the event is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our cultural heritage, because we can show the flowers that we grow in our region and on the floats we can perform traditional dances in our local costumes. Our programme of events can also include cultural information about our region and places of interest. Thirdly I think it will be a great boost to tourism in our area, because we can put together some fabulous holiday packages. To do this we should encourage local hotels to provide special rates and arrange transport from popular hotels directly to the carnival. We should also provide seating for our guests and make sure that our facilities are easy for the elderly and disabled to use. To ensure that we make full use of the promotional opportunities to boost tourism, we should ensure that children receive a goody-bag with stickers, postcards and a colouring book with pictures of our local heroes and fun places to visit, so that when they go back they will tell their friends, give out stickers and postcards all with details of our region. For adults we should provide a programme of events free-of-charge to ensure that will naturally include our local tourism office's Website, phone number and address. We can also sell a range of attractive souvenirs such as T-Shirts, Postcards and key-rings to create better awareness of our region. This event will allow us to focus our tourism efforts and if we do it well then it will give our visitors something very positive to talk about, generate good publicity and give travel agents a good reason to encourage holiday makers to visit Selangor! Yours faithfully James Abela	No name given, so use Dear sir/madam or dear editor Clearly identified Selangor as a region as demanded in question Addressed key point in question: fun for all the family. Addressed cultural requirement. Also begins to mention ideas for boosting tourism. Clearly flags how tourism will be boosted Conclusion Appropriate ending for letter
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