

Writing for Change

How can regular people change problems that affect them and their communities?

Making change is hard. It takes a lot of effort and time. But, there are ways to fix problems, change bad situations, and improve circumstances. The first step is to figure out what needs changing. The next is to communicate that need to someone who can fix the problem.

How do I communicate with people who have the power to fix problems?

There are many ways to do this: phone calls, visits, and **writing**. All three of these methods, especially if a group of people do them, can be very effective.

What would I write?

Letters are a great way to get your concerns across to someone who can make change happen. Emails are also very effective. You can also create petitions, websites, blogs and proposals, among other things.

Will someone actually care what I write?

Yes, they will. In general, if you write a letter about a problem, the person who receives it assumes that almost **25** other people feel the same way as you do. In other words, writing increases your voice in a situation. And, if you can organize a group of people to write about the same issue, people really will take notice of the problem.

You can get help with writing letters and emails at the SLCC Community Writing Center. Writing Coaches and other resources are available for you today!

Call 801.957.4992 for the
SLCC Community Writing Center

OR

go to www.slcc.edu/cwc

What should I write in a letter?

There are a few things that should be included in every letter/email to make change:

1. A respectful greeting
2. A description of the problem
3. A solution to the problem
4. Why the problem needs to be solved
5. Offer your help, if possible.
6. A respectful closing

It also helps to explain who you are and why fixing the problem is important to you.

Who do I send it to?

This is sometimes hard to know. What agency is responsible for the problem? Does a law need changing? Check with your community and city councils, or ask your local librarian for help to figure it out.

How long should it be?

Probably not more than a page for a letter; an email should be no longer than three paragraphs. This is the main challenge of this kind of writing: how to get everything that needs to be said in a small amount of space.

How important is grammar/spelling?

Your writing needs to be easy for someone else to read, but it doesn't need to be perfect. Just have someone else read your letter before you send it to see if there are any big problems.

Does it need to be typed/computed?

Yes and no. Sometimes a handwritten letter can be more powerful than a typed one, but typed letters are easier to read (and you can include more on one page). You should do whichever you feel most comfortable with (as long as your handwriting is easy to read).



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