

What I need from you

Commercial Correspondence Drafting

This list explains what I need for this service, why I need it and where you can usually find it. Send the information together where practical. Tell me straight away about anything unavailable or urgent. I will confirm when the essential information is complete and the delivery date is fixed.

Essential items are needed before the relevant work can proceed. Important items affect what I can conclude; optional items add useful context. If an item is missing, incomplete, unreadable or a different version from one already sent, identify it by its number and explain what you hold. I will tell you what replacement is needed, why it matters and any effect on the agreed work or date.

1. The facts and chronology OPTIONAL

Why I need it. A letter that gets the facts wrong is worse than no letter.

Where you'll find it. The site diary, the minutes, the instruction register and a short conversation with you.

Without it. The letter is written from the documents rather than your account, so it may take longer to find what is needed, but nothing about the letter itself is weaker for the lack of it

2. The contract clauses relied on ESSENTIAL

Why I need it. The letter has to stand on the contract, not on grievance.

Where you'll find it. The job's commercial folder or the order email normally holds the signed copy.

Without it. The letter has nothing to stand on but grievance, and a letter without the clause behind it is easy for the other side to bat away

3. All prior correspondence in the chain ESSENTIAL

Why I need it. What has been said already binds what can be said now.

Where you'll find it. The project inbox and the sent items of whoever has been writing so far.

Without it. The letter risks contradicting something already said, and you find that out from their reply rather than before you sent it

4. The outcome sought ESSENTIAL

Why I need it. A letter with no ask achieves nothing.

Where you'll find it. There is no document for this one: it is a short conversation with you about what you actually want the letter to achieve.

Without it. The letter has nothing to ask for, so even a well written one achieves nothing

How to send it

Everything to contact@jackbutlerkettle.com. Original files rather than scans of printouts wherever you have them, and forwarded emails rather than text copied out of them, because the dates and the addressees travel with the original and they often turn out to matter.