

# business

Action checklist

# *insight*

## WRITING A MAILSHOT

1. Clarify the **objective** of the mailshot, for example, to collect leads, to make direct sales, or to give information to existing customers.
2. Identify your **target audience** — what do they already know about your business and products, what are their needs, and what objections might they have?
3. If appropriate, identify different **groups** of readers and consider preparing different versions of the mailshot for each group.
4. Decide what the main message of the mailshot will be and focus on the single **major benefit** you offer.
5. Decide whether you can write the letter **yourself**, or whether you should invest a few hundred pounds in using a freelance copywriter.
6. Produce a headline and an **opening** sentence which will highlight the main benefit and encourage the reader to read on.
7. Make a **credible offer**: explain the reasons for buying your product or service, anticipate likely objections and provide facts to back up your claims.
8. Maintain the reader's **interest** throughout the letter, for example, by linking it to topical issues, using 'you', or including provocative questions.

### Business Insight

Central Library, Chamberlain Square  
Birmingham B3 3HQ  
Tel 0121 303 4531



[business.library@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:business.library@birmingham.gov.uk)  
[www.birmingham.gov.uk/businessinsight](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/businessinsight)  
[www.bestforbusiness.com](http://www.bestforbusiness.com)



9. Use short sentences and keep everything **clear**, simple and convincing.
10. **Format** the mailshot as a letter, but use underlining, italics and so on to make key points stand out.
11. End with a call to **action**, telling the reader what to do, now; make it easy (eg by including a freephone number or reply-paid card).
12. Add a **PS** which restates your main point in a different way.
13. Consider what **other contents** will support your message, for example, a free sample, a brochure, press cuttings, or an order form.
14. Proof read your letter and **try it out** on colleagues and customers; use sample mailings to test how effective it is.
15. Use software to **personalise** each reader's letter with their name and sign the letters, preferably by hand.

## *Do's & Don'ts*

### Do:

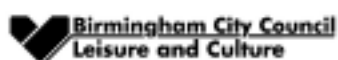
- focus on a **single message**
- create **interest**
- explain **clearly**
- make it easy to **reply**
- **personalise** the letters

### Don't:

- **confuse** the message with unrelated information
- fail to back up your claims with **facts**
- send mass mailings without **testing** your copy

### **Business Insight**

Central Library, Chamberlain Square  
Birmingham B3 3HQ  
Tel 0121 303 4531



[business.library@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:business.library@birmingham.gov.uk)  
[www.birmingham.gov.uk/businessinsight](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/businessinsight)  
[www.bestforbusiness.com](http://www.bestforbusiness.com)

