

Assignment

2

Business Letter

Sometimes you need to communicate a message to a superior or authority figure with whom you do not have an informal relationship. For the purpose of this lesson, we draft a letter that you might send to a professor or instructor to request a meeting. In this case, your reader probably does not know you personally, so you need to be clear and direct in every aspect of your communication to ensure your message is received and completely understood. The best way to achieve this goal is to use a standard form of professional communication that is simple, contains all pertinent information related to the message, and delivers it in a simple and organized manner that readers in any field will find recognizable.

Professional letter might be a better name than Business letter for this document, because you can use this type of letter for

more than just business correspondence. This letter is based on the traditional full-block format, which means all fields of the letter (return address, recipient address, signature, date, body, etc.) are aligned to the left.

You need to take care when communicating with authority figures because these people are often decision-makers and you will want to cultivate your reputation as an effective communicator. Your ability to construct a professional letter not only shows respect for your reader through your attention to detail, but also demonstrates that you can be trusted to communicate in a professional manner. Just one spelling mistake can damage that reputation, or worse, send the wrong message. It is in your best interest to review your letter more than once before you send it.

Open Microsoft Word 2010

Open Microsoft Word 2010. Before you do anything else, you know what to do: save your file.

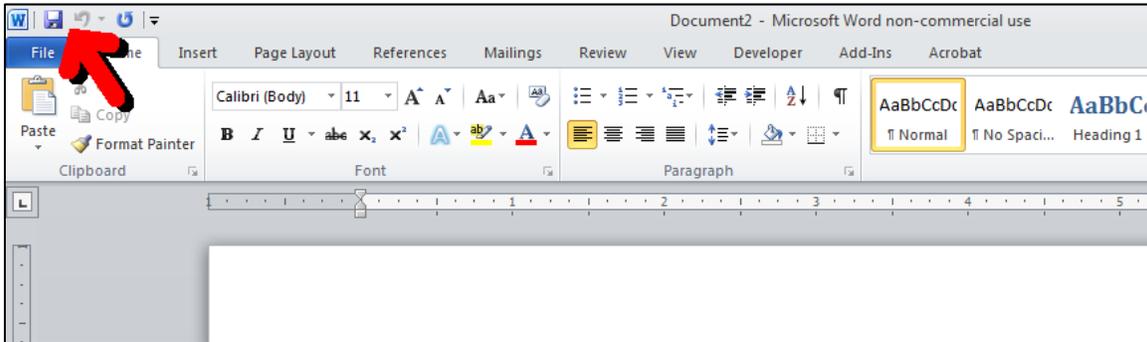


Figure 2-1 – The Quick Access Toolbar

Save The File



Select the Save button on the Quick Access toolbar or hold CTRL and hit S (CTRL+S) on the keyboard to save.

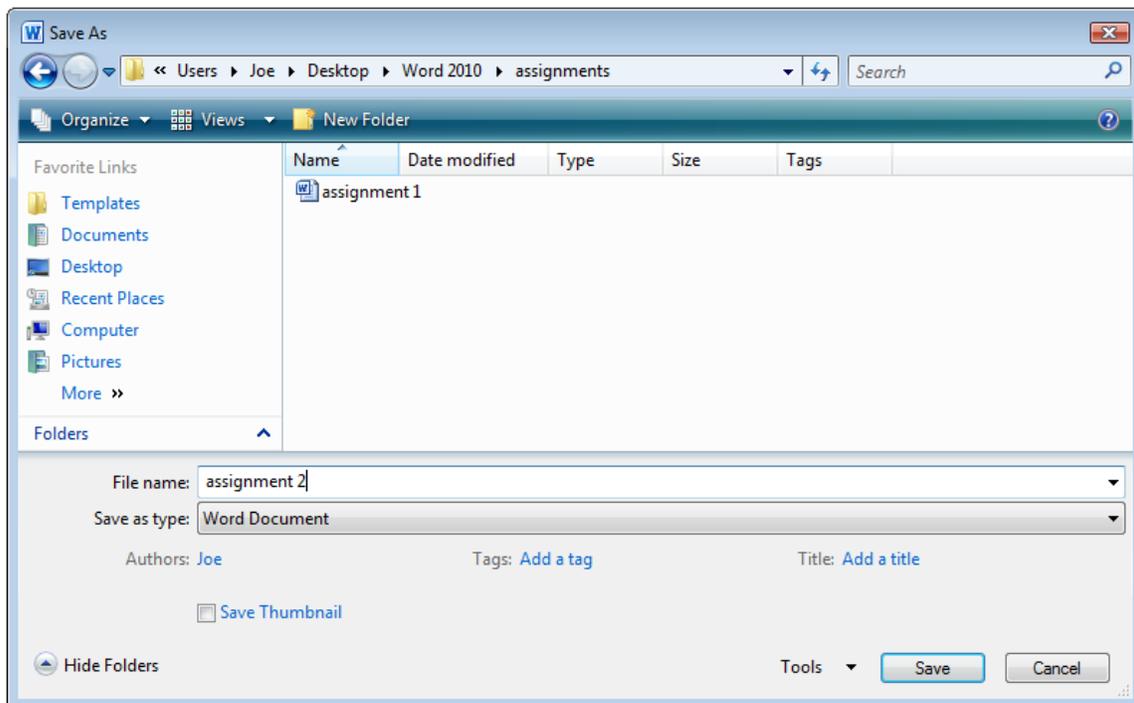


Figure 2-2 – Saving the file as “Assignment 1”

Modifying Paragraph Settings

Before you start typing, you need to modify the paragraph settings. Find the small arrow in the bottom right-hand corner of the Paragraph panel and click it to open the Paragraph window. You will see the Indents and Spacing tab open in the Paragraph window. Under General, set the alignment to Justified.

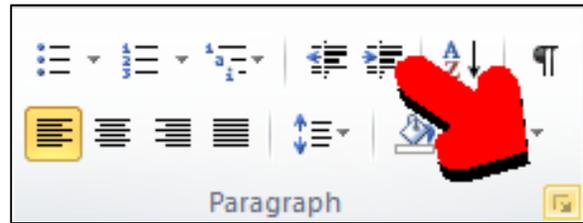


Figure 2-3 – Opening the Paragraph window

You can also set it to Left if you prefer, but we'll use Justified in this example. Leave the Indentation settings alone. In the Spacing area, set Before and After both to 0 and change Line Spacing to Single.

Click the Set as Default button at the bottom of the window and set the default to this document only, or All Documents Based on the Normal template, if you would like. This will make the settings you just configured the default settings for this document, and All Documents Based on the Normal template if you selected that option. If you did not select that option, the default settings for Word 2010 are 10 pts. of space After, and line spacing of 1.15. Hit OK to close the window and save the settings you have configured.

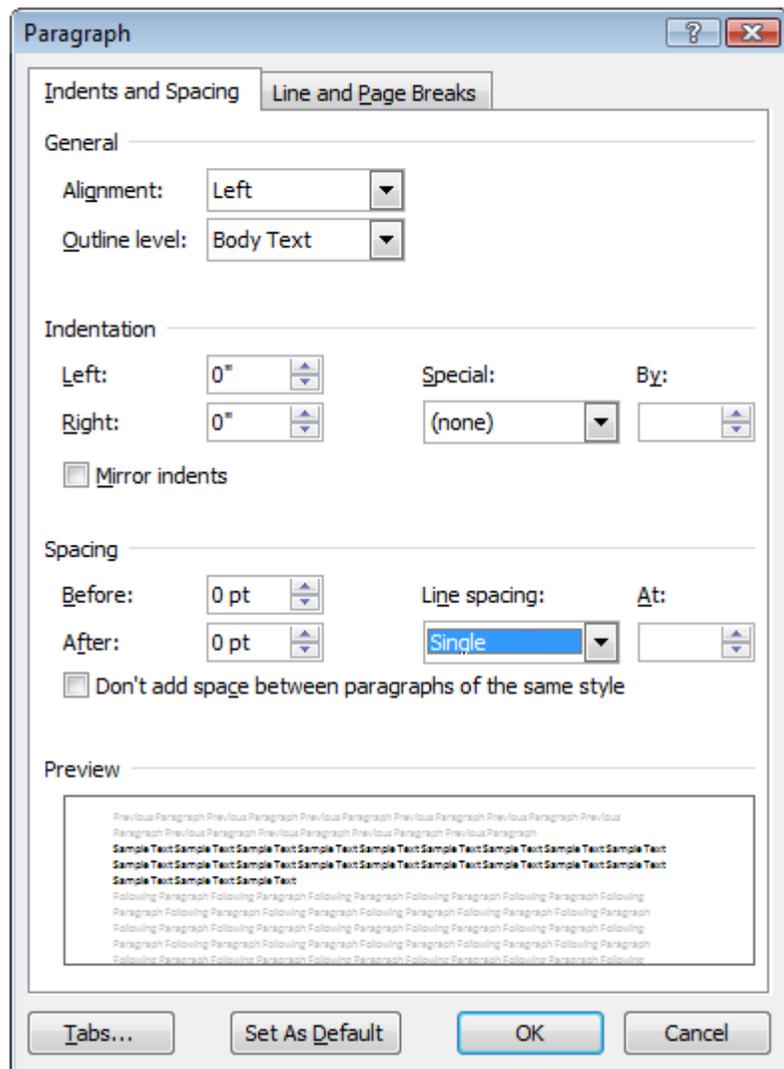
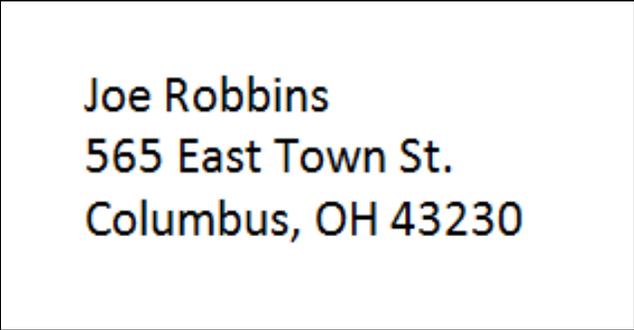


Figure 2-4 – Configuring Indents and Spacing

Typing the Letter

Now you are ready to start typing. Begin with typing your full name, and then hit ENTER to start a new line. Type your mailing address (known as the return address), putting the city, state, and ZIP code on a third line by hitting ENTER after typing your street number and name. Hit ENTER 3 times to create two spaces. Now you need to add the date.



Joe Robbins
565 East Town St.
Columbus, OH 43230

Figure 2-5 – Typing Your Address

You can type it, or you can select Date & Time from the Text panel under the Insert to bring up the Date and Time window. Select the date format that shows the month, the day and the year.

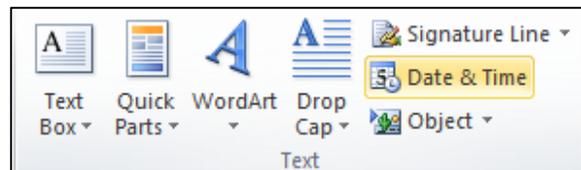


Figure 2-6 – Insert Date & Time

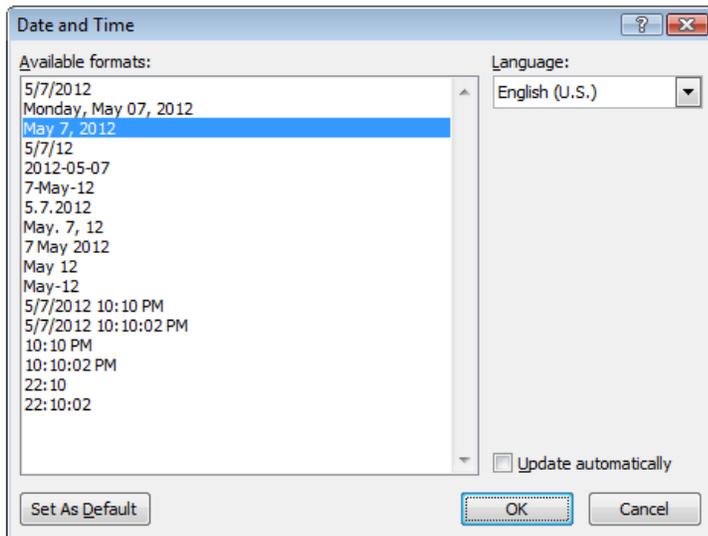
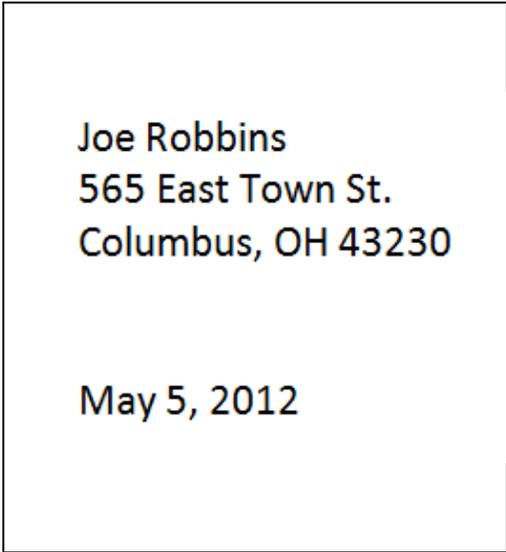


Figure 2-7 – Inserting Date and Time Window



Joe Robbins
565 East Town St.
Columbus, OH 43230

May 5, 2012

Figure 2-8 – Adding the Date

Hit ENTER 3 times again to create two more spaces and then type the name of the recipient. Use their formal professional title. Hit ENTER and type the mailing address of the recipient like you did for yourself above.

Joe Robbins 565 East Town St. Columbus, OH 43230
May 5, 2012
Dr. Maurice Williams 140 Court St. Rm. 208 Athens, OH 45701

Figure 2-9 – Recipient’s Address

Hit ENTER 3 times and type the word Dear, the title of the recipient, and his/her last name, followed by a colon. This part of the letter is called the **salutation**. Hit ENTER 3 times and then begin the body of your message. In our example, we begin by clearly stating the purpose of the letter. Do not indent the paragraph. All lines should begin at the left margin of the page as shown in the example.

Joe Robbins 565 East Town St. Columbus, OH 43230
May 5, 2012
Dr. Maurice Williams 140 Court St. Rm. 208 Athens, OH 45701
Dear Dr. Williams:

Figure 2-10 – Typing the Salutation

I would like to request a meeting w
I outlined below:

- |

Figure 2-13 – The First Bullet

I would like to request a meeting w
I outlined below:

- |

Figure 2-14 – Increasing the Indent

Type each of the topics to be bulleted, hitting ENTER at the end of each to end the topic and start a new bullet. At the end of your last bullet, hit ENTER 3 times. This will toggle the Bullet tool off, create a space, and start a new line. Finish your message by providing the best way to contact you and thank the reader for their time.

- I would like to review my most recent exam with you to get clarification on some of the notes you made and go over a few of my mistakes that I am still unsure about
- I have some questions about the research project and I would also like you to review some of the sources I have selected to ensure that they meet the project guidelines
- I have a previous engagement on Thursday, May 25, 2012 and I will not be able to attend class on that day. I want to make sure I know about any important assignments or in-class work that I will need to make up at a later date.

Please let me know when you have some time available to see me and where we should meet. Feel free to call or email jr135706@ohio.edu. Thanks so much for your time and I am looking forward to speaking with you soon.

Figure 2-15 – The Bulleted List and Message Conclusion

Hit ENTER 3 times and then type the word Sincerely followed by a comma. Now hit ENTER 5 times and type your full name. The 5 spaces will allow you enough space place your signature on the letter between the word Sincerely and your printed name after you print the letter.

Please let me know when you have some time available to see me and where we should meet. Feel free to call or email jr135706@ohio.edu. Thanks so much for your time and I am looking forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,

Joe Robbins

Figure 2-16 – The Signature

Vertical Alignment

Right now your letter starts at the very top of the page. You can give your letter a refined look by aligning the content vertically to the center of the page. Rather than starting at the top of the page and extending down, your copy will grow from the center of the page so that it exists in the exact center of the page. To set the vertical alignment of your letter, select the small arrow in the bottom right-hand corner of the Page Setup panel under the Page Layout tab.

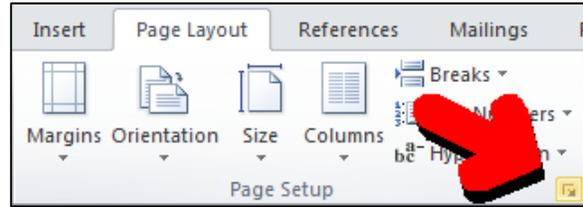


Figure 2-17 – Setting the Vertical Alignment

In the Page Setup window, select the Layout tab and find the Page section. Change Vertical alignment from Top to Center. Hit OK to save the changes.

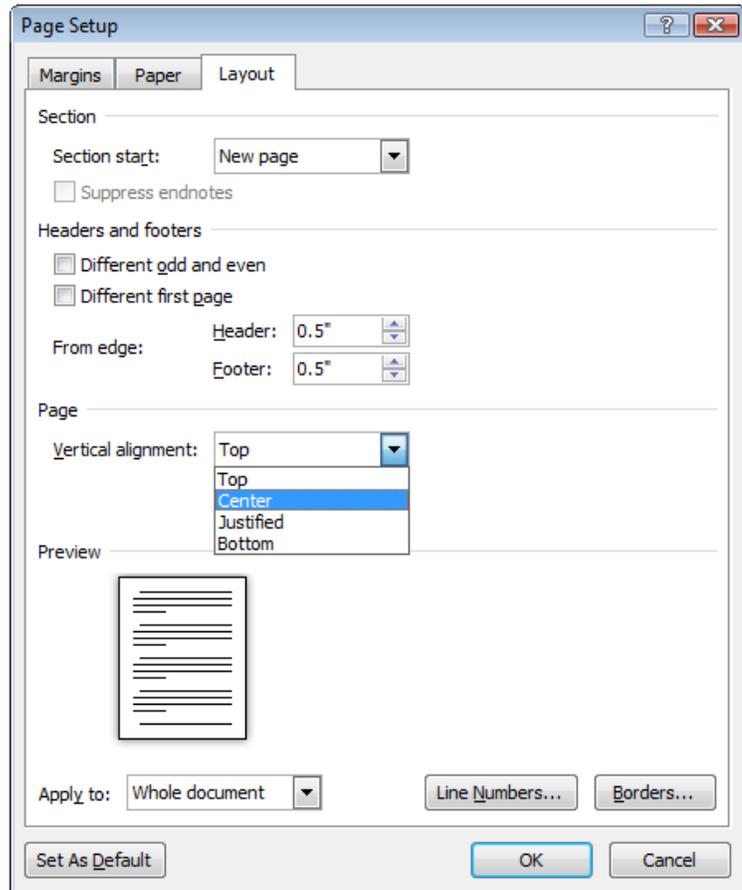


Figure 2-18 – Setting the Vertical Alignment

Save The File



Select the Save button on the Quick Access toolbar or hold CTRL and hit S (CTRL+S) on the keyboard to save.

Proofing

Spelling, grammar, and word usage are important in every document you create, but in professional communication it is imperative that you avoid these mistakes because they will negatively affect your communication and your reputation, sometimes resulting in irreversible consequences. Keep in mind the time-old phrase, “you never get a second chance to make a first impression.”

Of course, you yourself should review your own work thoroughly, but mistakes are inevitable. Probably the best way to ensure your documents are error-free is to ask someone who you trust and respect to review your work, looking for mistakes and making suggestions for unclear/confusing language. Word has tools designed specifically for collaborative editing under the Review tab on the Comments, Tracking, and Changes panels, which we will consider in another assignment. Word also has tools to help you review and polish your documents on your own. The Spelling & Grammar and Thesaurus tools can help you eliminate major errors, making the job of your proofreader much easier.

Spelling & Grammar

In the last assignment, we quickly reviewed a portion of the Spelling & Grammar tool’s functionality. Words underlined in a wavy red line were identified as misspelled according to Word’s dictionary, and words/phrases underlined in a wavy green line are considered grammar errors according to Word. Word will also underline some words in a wavy blue line that it believes are contextual spelling errors. For example, Word will see that the word “their” is spelled correctly, but it may also notice that you meant to use the word “there”. You can right-click on the errors and select a correction from the selection of possible correct versions in the menu that appears. You can choose to ignore a spelling error by selecting Ignore. You can ignore all instances of the misspelled word by selecting Ignore All, but if the word is spelled properly and Word still identifies it as misspelled, you should select Add to Dictionary. Adding the word to the dictionary will ensure that it will appear as spelled properly in every document you create from then on. You can choose to correct or ignore a grammar error.

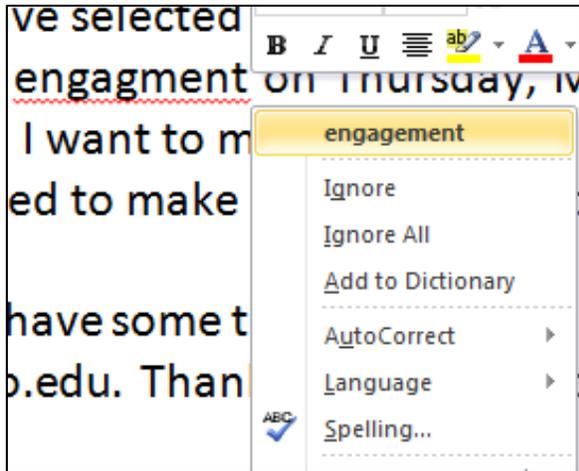


Figure 2-19 – Correcting Spelling Errors

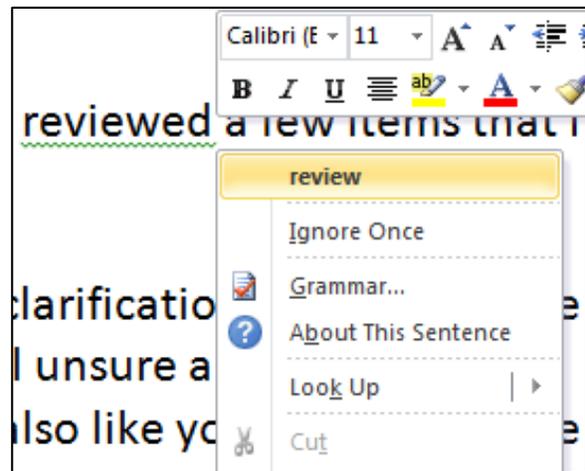


Figure 2-20 – Correcting Grammar Errors

Notice the disclaimer for these indicators: Word only alerts you of errors that it can recognize. And believe it or not, sometimes Word gets it wrong. Some newer words or names are not in Word's dictionary, and sometimes Word does not understand what your words mean. Sometimes, Word does not catch your spelling or grammar errors because it doesn't recognize any problems. In any case, you should review all spelling and grammar errors that Word does identify because chances are if Word doesn't understand your meaning, your reader may not understand you either.

You can also select the Spelling & Grammar tool from the Proofing panel under the Review tab to open the Spelling and Grammar window. The Spelling and Grammar window allows you to work through each error that word has identified with the option to ignore or change the error to a correct version listed as a Suggestion.

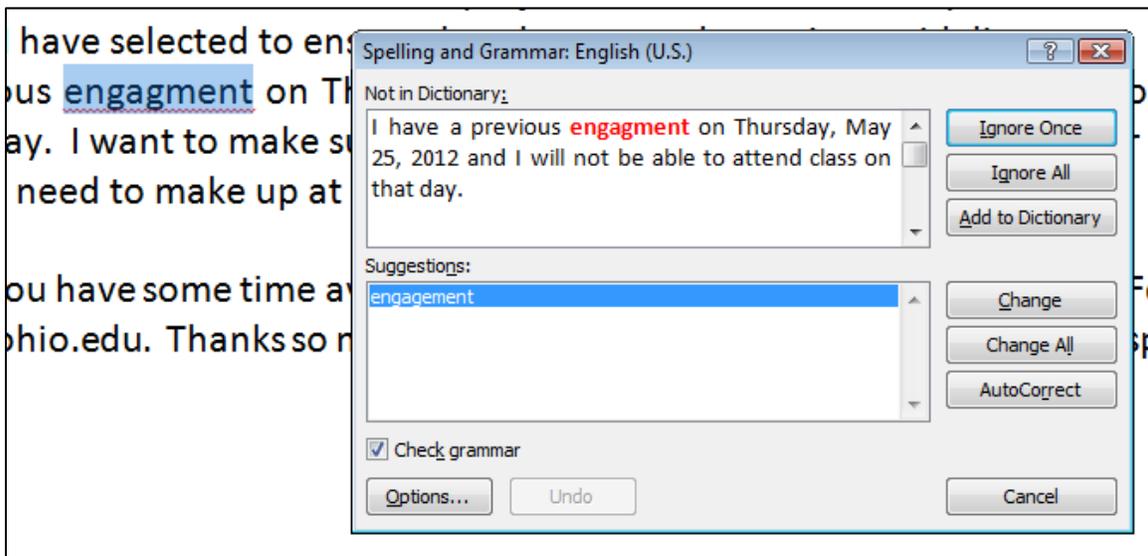


Figure 2-21 – Spelling Error in the Spelling and Grammar Window

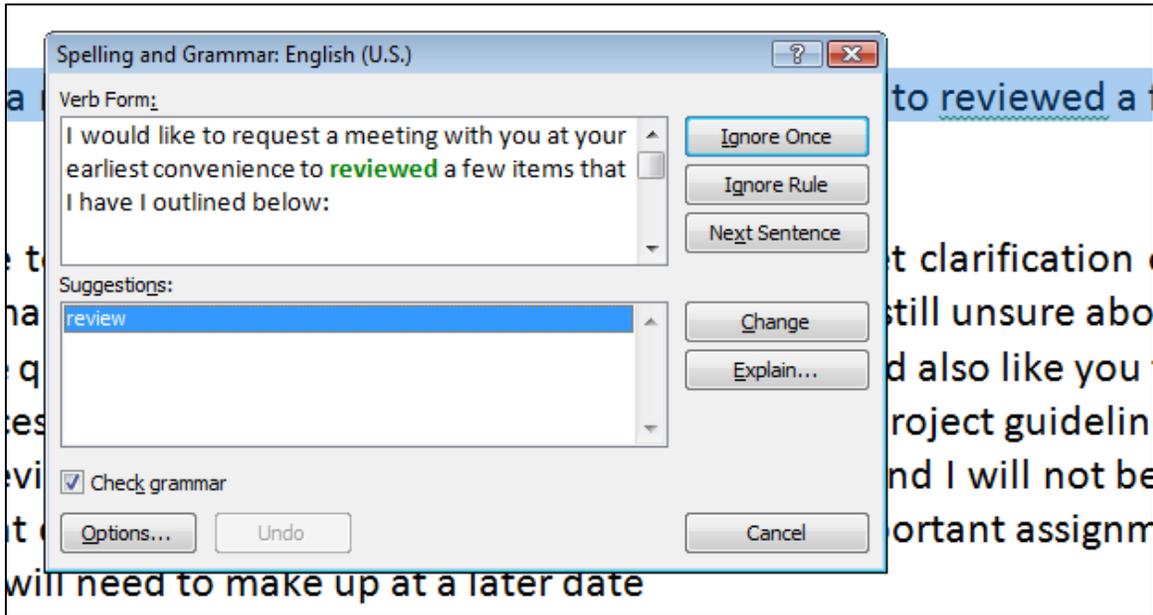


Figure 2-22 – Grammar Error in the Spelling and Grammar Window

Thesaurus

Another way you can polish your writing is to vary the words that you use. By expanding your active vocabulary you can keep the reader interested, be more specific when necessary, and appear to have a strong control of language. Word includes a thesaurus that can automatically suggest similar or opposite words to words you have already used.

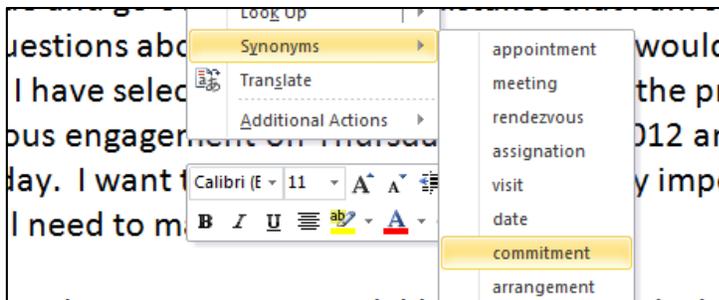
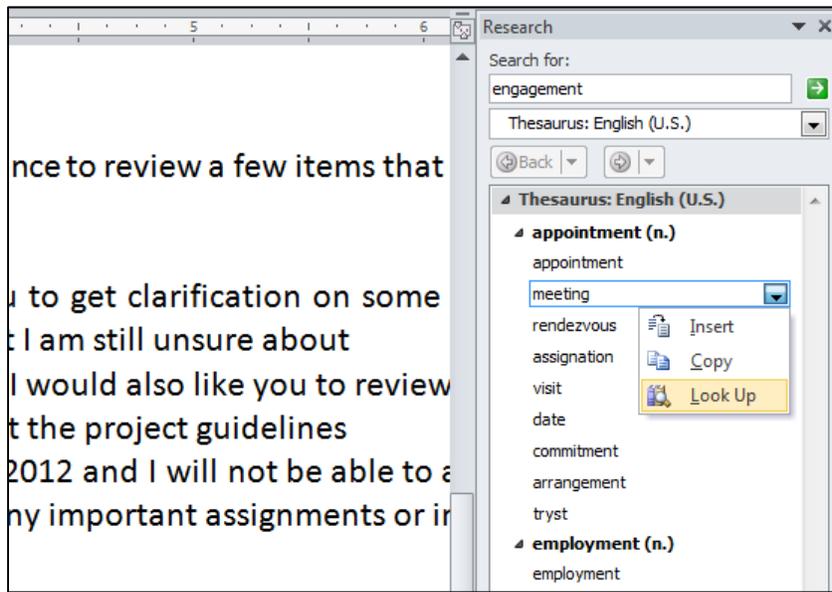


Figure 2-23 – Synonyms for the word “Engagement”

You can quickly access thesaurus suggestions by right-clicking on the word you’d like to change and selecting a different word from the suggestions listed in the Synonyms section of the menu that appears. To dig deeper, select Thesaurus from the list or you can open the thesaurus from the Proofing panel under the Review tab.



The Thesaurus opens in the Research panel on the left side of the screen. Here you will be able to search for specific words, view all suggestions, and lookup suggestions for the words that appear in the thesaurus. Just click the word to look up suggestions for it. You can click the upside-down triangle next to each word to insert it into the document or copy it to the clipboard.

Figure 2-24 – The Research Panel: Synonyms for the word “Engagement”

One word of caution: again, Word can make mistakes. Sometimes thesaurus suggestions may not make sense. Make sure that you are positive that the word you choose from the thesaurus makes sense the way you are using it.

SAVE YOUR WORK



Select the Save button on the Quick Access toolbar or hold CTRL and hit S (CTRL+S) on the keyboard to save.

Print

Select the File tab and then choose the Print option from the left side of the screen. You will see a preview of the document on the right side of the screen. On the left side, select the printer you want to use and the number of copies that you'd like to print, and then hit the Print button. We will go over the other print settings another time. Don't forget to sign the letter.

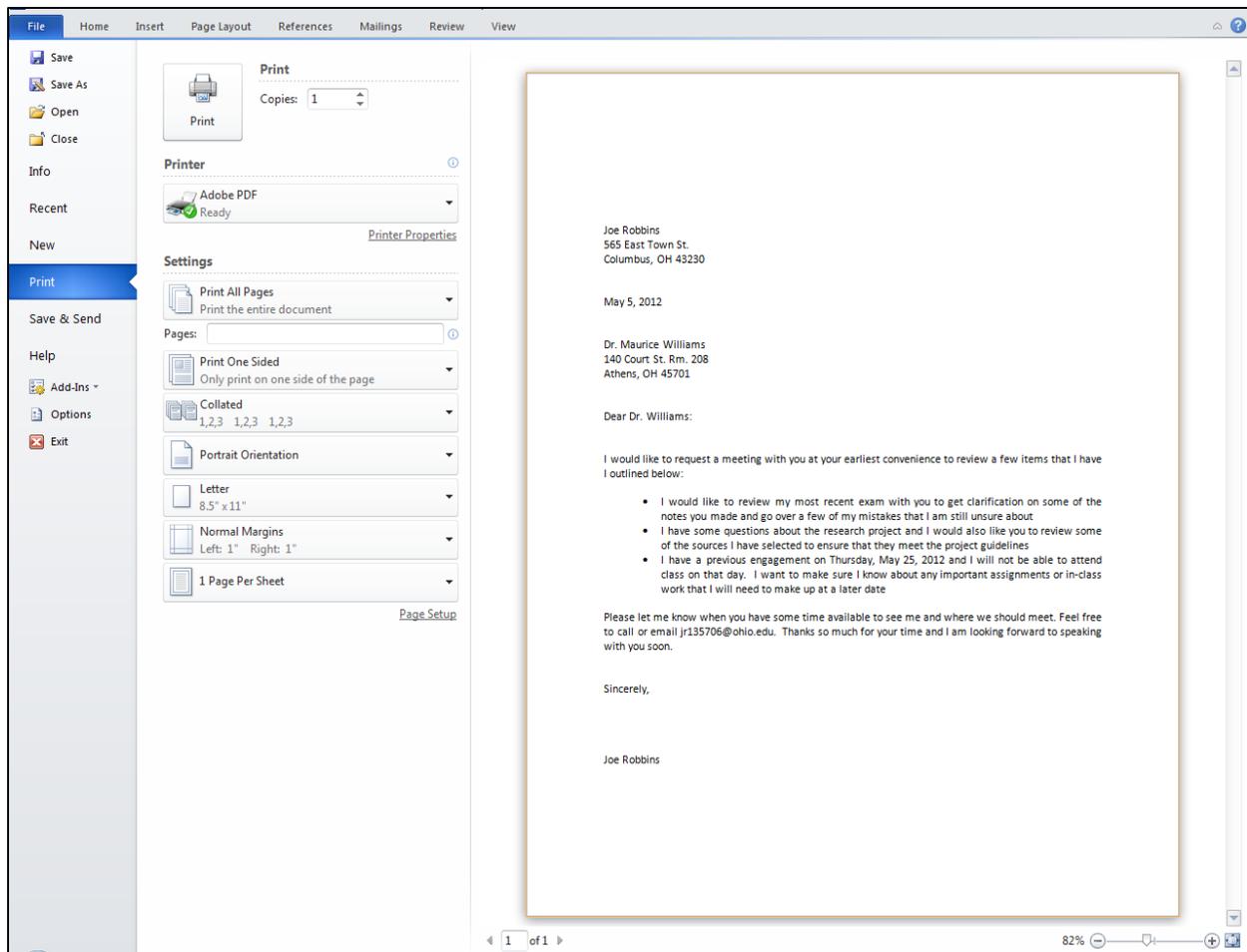


Figure 2-25 – Printing the Note

Congratulations! You have finished assignment #2. Thank you so much for your hard work. You can use the file you have saved to create new letters in the future by opening the file and editing the copy.

*** World Class CAD Challenge 30-02 * - Create a professional letter, save and print the document in less than 30 minutes. Continue this drill four times, each time completing the note in less than 30 minutes to maintain your World Class ranking.**