

Inquiry letters ask questions and request a reply. If there has been no such advertised offer, the manager might write an unsolicited inquiry to the same company asking if any troubleshooting information is available. Research consultant Alan Greene is preparing a report on the feasibility of harnessing solar energy for home heating in Alaska. For example, a manager at a computer repair company might write a solicited inquiry to a computer manufacturer that offers free troubleshooting guides for repair specialists. In a solicited inquiry, be brief and to the point and be sure to reference the advertisement or announcement that prompted you to write. If your questions are too numerous or complex to be answered in print, you might alternately request an interview (assuming the respondent is nearby). They may be solicited (in response to an advertisement or announcement) or unsolicited (spontaneously written to request some type of information you need for your job). In an unsolicited inquiry, you are asking a busy person to spend the time to read your letter, consider your request, collect the information, and write a response. After learning that a non profit research group has been experimenting with solar applications, Alan decides to write for details. Notice how Greene tries to make the respondent's task as easy as possible. Apologize for any imposition and express your appreciation. Avoid long, involved inquiries that are unlikely to be answered. Figure 11.9 is an example of an unsolicited letter requesting information. Therefore, keep your request reasonable and state the purpose clearly and concisely.