

- 4) Notice the option for **Suppress lines with empty fields** in section 2 of Figure 330. Using the Wizard, you do not have to create your own conditional suppression fields, as you do when using the manual form letter method described earlier in this chapter..

Step 4: Create salutation

It is possible to create just about any salutation you want in this step (see Figure 335).

Select **This document should contain a salutation** to enable the *General salutation* list box. Some general texts are available in the list box, or you can enter your own text. A preview pane displays your choice.

Select **Insert personalized salutation** to enable further salutation constructs.

You can, for example, use a different greeting for men and women. To do this, Writer must have some way of knowing whether a person is male or female. In a spreadsheet, you might have a column called Gender. In the section *Address list field indicating a female recipient*, set the **Field name** to Gender and the **Field value** to F. The Male salutation is then printed for all men and the Female salutation for all women. Unfortunately, LibreOffice does not provide for other genders; however, you can use a non-gendered salutation.

If you do not have such a column in your spreadsheet, or if you do not need to distinguish between genders in the salutation, then you can leave the **Field name** and **Field value** boxes empty and use the customized content of the *Male* list box for the salutation to all recipients.

The screenshot shows the 'Mail Merge Wizard' dialog box, specifically the 'Create a Salutation' step. On the left, a 'Steps' sidebar lists five steps: 1. Select starting document, 2. Select document type, 3. Insert address block, 4. Create salutation (highlighted), and 5. Adjust layout. The main area is titled 'Create a Salutation' and contains several options and input fields. Two checkboxes are checked: 'This document should contain a salutation' and 'Insert personalized salutation'. Below these, there are two rows for gender-specific salutations: 'Female' with a dropdown menu showing 'Dear Ms <Last Name>' and a 'New...' button, and 'Male' with a dropdown menu showing 'Dear Mr. <Last Name>,' and a 'New...' button. Underneath is a section 'Address list field indicating a female recipient' with a 'Field name' dropdown set to 'Gender_ID' and a 'Field value' dropdown set to 'f'. Below that is a 'General salutation' dropdown menu showing 'Hello'. At the bottom is a 'Preview' section with a text box displaying 'Dear Mr. Lederstrumpf,' and a 'Match fields...' button. At the very bottom of the dialog are buttons for 'Help', '< Back', 'Next >', 'Finish', and 'Cancel'. The status bar at the bottom right indicates 'Document: 1'.

Figure 335: Create a salutation