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# 1 Useful Information

A full stop (.) is used at the end of a sentence.

A comma (,) is used:

- like a brief pause in speech to make the sentence easier to read. to separate items in a list, except for the last two items where we use and.
- after many linking words that come at the beginning of a sentence, e.g. However, Also, Moreover, In addition, For example
- before please if it's used at the end of a sentence, e.g. Can you provide me with some examples of this use, please?  
However, at the beginning of a sentence please is usually not separated by a comma, e.g. Please provide me with examples.
- After a salutation and a closing line. However, in modern emails commas may be dropped in these cases, e.g. Dear Mary (); Best regards ( ).

A colon (:) is used to introduce items in a list, e.g. action items.

A semi-colon (;) is used to separate long items in a list, particularly if there are commas inside some items.

Capital letters (upper case) are used:

- to begin a sentence;
- for names of people (Kate Smith), places (Minsk), events (IT Week) and organizations (EPAM);
- for job titles (Business Analyst);
- for nationalities (Belarusian);
- for calendar information like days (Friday), months (September), etc.

## 2 Common Email

COMMON EMAIL STRUCTURE:

1. Greeting
  - (a) Salutation
  - (b) Pleasantry
2. Body
  - (a) Reference to the previous context
  - (b) Purpose of the email
  - (c) Giving details
  - (d) Call to action
3. Closing
  - (a) Closing line
  - (b) Complimentary closing
  - (c) Signature

## **2.1 Salutation**

### **2.1.1 Formal**

- Dear Mr Smith,
- Dear Mrs Smith,
- Dear Sir or Madam,
- Dear Sir or Madam:
- To whom it may concern,
- To whom it may concern:

### **2.1.2 Neutral**

- Hi John,
- Hi John
- Dear Alex,
- Dear Alex
- Dear all,
- Dear colleagues,
- Dear team,

## **2.2 Pleasantry**

### **2.2.1 Formal**

- I hope you are well.
- It was a pleasure meeting you last week.
- Thank you for your email of 12 January.
- My apologies for not replying sooner.
- I am very grateful to you for responding to my e-mail so quickly.

### **2.2.2 Neutral**

- How are you doing?
- How are things?
- How are you?
- Hope you're well.
- Great to see you again.
- I hope you had a good weekend.
- I hope you have recovered from your cold.
- I hope you're well.
- I hope all is well.
- I hope all is well since we last spoke.
- Thanks for your email.
- Thanks for getting back to me.
- Thanks for your quick response.
- Thank you for your quick reply.
- Thank you for getting back to me so quickly.
- Thanks for your email.
- Sorry for not getting back to you.
- I hope that everything is OK over there

## **2.3 Reference to the previous context**

### **2.3.1 Formal**

- Regarding your last email,...
- Further to your last email,...
- With reference to your email...
- Following up on your email...
- I am writing with regard to ...
- Further to our conversation last Friday, ...
- With regard to ... (or With reference to)
- I am writing in connection with your inquiry about ...
- With reference to your last email regarding ...
- Your request for additional information has been received ...

### **2.3.2 Neutral**

- With reference to your email...
- Re: your email,...
- About the meeting:
- Re: our conversation last Fri, ...
- Following our last meeting
- In answer to your email about the current situation with...
- Following your request...

## 2.4 Purpose of the email

### 2.4.1 Formal

- Requesting
  - I would very much appreciate it if you could confirm...
  - I am writing to inquire about...
  - I was wondering if you have any information on...
  - Could you possibly inform me whether...?
  - I would very much appreciate it if you could confirm...
  - I am writing to let you know that...
  - I am pleased to say that...
  - I would appreciate it if you could send me ...
  - I wonder if you could ... ?
  - Would you like me to find out ... ?
  - I would be grateful if you could provide me ...
  - We would be grateful for some information about ...
  - I would appreciate it if you could ...
  - I was wondering if you could ...
- Providing
  - I would like to update you on...
  - Here is just a quick note to inform you about...
  - I am writing to confirm that...
- Clarifying
  - If I understand correctly, you're saying that ...
- Apologizing
  - I would like to apologize for...
  - Please accept our sincerest apologies for...
  - I sincerely apologize for...
  - Unfortunately, I am unable to ...
  - I would like to apologize for ...
- Thanking
  - I appreciate your time/assistance.
- Meeting Arrangement
  - I would like to arrange a Business Skype call on the result of ...



### 2.4.2 Neutral

- Requesting
  - Could you please tell me about..?
  - I need some info about...
  - Please send me ...
  - Can you ... ?
  - Shall I find out ... ?
  - I just have a few questions about...
  - I have a number of questions which I hope you could answer.
  - I'm interested in receiving/finding out...
  - As you know, we need to have...
  - Can I have...?
- Providing
  - Here's the info that you asked for:...
  - I'm writing to let you know that...
  - We can confirm that...
  - Here is just a quick note to inform you about...
  - Here's the info that you asked for.
- Clarifying
  - Are you saying that ... ?
- Apologizing
  - I am sorry for...
  - Sorry for the delay in...
  - I'm sorry to hear that...
  - Sorry about ...
  - Sorry, but I can't ...
  - Please accept my apologies for ...
  - I regret to inform you that ...
- Thanking
  - Thank you for bringing this to my attention.
  - Thank you for sharing with me...
- Meeting Arrangement
  - I'm writing to arrange time to meet.
  - Just writing to arrange a meeting to discuss ...
  - I would like to invite you to join our meeting on (date).

## 2.5 Giving details

### 2.5.1 Formal

- I would be grateful if...
- Would it be possible to arrange a meeting...
- I will investigate the matter and contact you again shortly.
- I can assure you that...
- As far as I know, you have not ...
- I look forward to meeting you next week.
- Could you possibly ...?
- Do you think you could ...?
- Please find ... in the attachment.
- I'm sending you ... as a pdf file.
- I'm sending you ... as an attachment.

### 2.5.2 Neutral

- I'll look into it and get back to you.
- See you next week.
- Can you give m an update on ...?
- I'd also appreciate if you could explain ...
- Could you also confirm...
- We'd especially like to know if ...
- I've attached ...
- Please find attached ...

## 2.6 Call to action

### 2.6.1 Formal

- Please ensure that you...
- Could you please review the above mentioned points and let me know what you think?
- Can you get back to me about that by the end of the week?
- Would you please send us the links to...
- I would appreciate it if you could send me ...
- I wonder if you could ... ?
- I was wondering whether we could meet ... ?
- I was wondering if you could ...
- I would like to remind you that ...
- Please get back to me with information as soon as possible.
- Could you possibly send me you feedback by/before...?
- I would appreciate it if you replied by...
- If you require any further assistance, please do nit hesitate to contact me.
- Should you gave any further inquiries, do not hesitate to contact me.

### 2.6.2 Neutral

- Please send me ...
- Can you ... ?
- Can we meet ... ?
- Please, could you ...
- Don't forget ...
- Please email me by/before...
- I need you response by/before...
- I am looking forward to you response by...
- Please let me know if you need any other information.
- If you have any questions, feel free to contact with me via email or the mobile...
- Give me a ring if you need anything else.

## **2.7 Closing line**

### **2.7.1 Formal**

- Fell free to contact me if you have any questions or issues.
- I will follow up shortly to check you thoughts.
- Thanks so much for helping me out with this.
- I look forward to your response.
- Look forward to hearing from you shortly.
- If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.
- I look forward to hearing from you.
- I look forward to meeting you at the conference.
- Thanks in advance.
- Have a great day!

### **2.7.2 Neutral**

- If you need anything else, just let me know.
- Speak to you soon.
- See you at the conference.

## **2.8 Complimentary closing**

### **2.8.1 Formal**

- Best wishes,
- Best regards,
- Your faithfully, - for Dear Sir or Madam
- Your sincerely, - for Dear Mr Smith

### **2.8.2 Neutral**

- Regards,
- Best Regards,
- Kind regards,
- Thanks,
- Best wishes,

## 3 Tips

### 3.0.1 LINKERS

Formal:

- In addition
- Additionally
- Therefore
- However
- Especially
- In other words
- In short
- Lastly

Neutral:

- Also
- But
- So

### 3.0.2 GREETINGS

Dear(+ first name)

Dear Mr/Ms (+ surname)

Dear Sir/Madam (BrE)

Ladies and gentlemen (AmE)

Hello/ Hi (+first name) (informal)

### 3.0.3 REFERENCE

Thank you for your email/message of [date] concerning/about/enclosing/enquiring

...

I have received your email of [date] ...

Further to/With regard(s) to/Regarding/With reference to ...

On the subject of ...

In terms of ...

In response to ...

Re your email ...

### **3.0.4 PURPOSE**

I am writing to request/enquire/inform/check/confirm/ask ...  
Just a quick email to ...

### **3.0.5 SOCIAL OPENINGS**

How are you? (informal)  
How're things?(informal)  
Hope you are well.

### **3.0.6 REQUESTING**

I would be grateful if you could ...  
I would appreciate it if you could ...  
Could you please send/supply/confirm ...  
Please send/supply/confirm ...

### **3.0.7 INFORMING**

I am pleased to inform you ...  
I would like to inform you ...  
Here is just a quick note to let you know...

### **3.0.8 EXPRESSING WISHES**

I would like to organize a meeting ...  
I (particularly) want to ...  
I (do) hope ...  
I need ...  
It would be great to ...  
I would prefer not to ...  
I would rather not ...

### **3.0.9 ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION**

It is not clear whether ...  
I am not sure if ...  
Could you clarify ...  
Could you provide more information on...  
Am I right in thinking ... ?  
Could you please explain what you mean by ... ?

### **3.0.10 OFFERING**

I would like to offer you/provide you with...  
If you wish, I would be happy to...  
Would you like me to...  
Shall I...  
Do you want me to...

### **3.0.11 PROVIDING DOCUMENTATION**

I am attaching ...  
I attach ...  
Please find attached ...

### **3.0.12 CONFIRMING**

I hereby confirm ...  
I am able/pleased to confirm ...  
This is to confirm that ...

### **3.0.13 DRAWING ATTENTION AND REMINDING**

I would like to point out ...  
May I draw your attention to ...  
Please note that ...

### **3.0.14 AGREEING**

I am willing to ...  
I agree to ...  
I am happy to ...  
... is acceptable/fine.

### **3.0.15 DISAGREEING AND REFUSING REQUESTS**

Unfortunately, I am unable to ...  
I am unwilling to ...  
I cannot agree with ...



### **3.0.16 ASKING FOR APPROVAL**

We hope that [our solution] will be to your satisfaction.

We hope that you will have no objections to ...

### **3.0.17 MAKING SUGGESTIONS**

I propose/suggest that ...

I would (strongly) advise/recommend ...

It is advisable ...

You might consider ...

### **3.0.18 EXPRESSING URGENCY AND NECESSITY**

I should like to remind you ...

It is obligatory/necessary for ...

It is important/vital/essential that ...

You are obliged to ...

It is required to ...

You must/have to ...

... at your earliest convenience.

... as soon as possible.

... without further delay.

... by Friday at the latest.

### **3.0.19 GIVING GOOD NEWS**

I am delighted to inform you/hear that ...

You will be delighted to hear that ...

You'll be happy to hear that ...

### **3.0.20 GIVING BAD NEWS**

I regret to inform you that ...

Unfortunately, ...

I am afraid ...

I'm sorry but ...

### **3.0.21 EXPRESSING DISAPPOINTMENT**

I was disappointed to hear your decision ...

I am very sorry that ...

### **3.0.22 APOLOGIZING**

I am/was sorry to hear that ...  
I apologize for ...  
Please accept our apologies for ...  
I regret that ...

### **3.0.23 REFUSING POLITELY**

I (fully) appreciate your point of view but ...  
I'm afraid that we are not in a position to ...  
Regretfully, I have to inform you that ...

### **3.0.24 GIVING ASSURANCE**

I assure you/give you my assurance that ...  
I will personally make sure that ...

### **3.0.25 EXPRESSING NEED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY**

Please treat this as strictly confidential.  
I should be grateful if you would handle this matter with discretion.

### **3.0.26 GUARANTEEING CONFIDENTIALITY/DISCRETION**

Any information will be treated as strictly confidential.  
The matter will be handled with discretion.

### **3.0.27 REMINDING**

May I remind you ...  
I would like to remind you ...  
Just to remind you ...  
Don't forget to ...

### **3.0.28 EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE AND HOPE**

We are confident that ...  
We trust/hope that you will ...  
We expect/think/believe ...

### **3.0.29 EXPRESSING CERTAINTY, PROBABILITY, IMPOSSIBILITY**

It is certain that ...  
There is no doubt that ...  
I am confident that ...  
It is likely/probable/possible that ...  
There is some doubt as to whether ...  
It is unlikely that ...

### **3.0.30 CONGRATULATING**

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on ...  
I would like to congratulate you on ...  
Congratulations on ...

### **3.0.31 NEXT STEPS**

What

- The next steps are as follows:
- The plan for the next phase is:
- We expect to move forward as follows:

Who

- Therefore I would be grateful if you could ...
- Could you please confirm that you can ...
- We would appreciate it if you could ...

When

- The deadline for receiving the information is ...
- The deadline for project completion is ...
- We would like to finish this phase by ...
- We must/have to/need to finish ... by ...

### **3.0.32 OFFERING FURTHER ASSISTANCE**

Do not hesitate to contact us again if you require further assistance.  
If you have any further questions, please contact me.  
Let me know if you need any more help.  
Please contact me if I can be of further assistance.

### **3.0.33 FRIENDLY SIGN-OFF**

I look forward to meeting/ seeing you next week.  
I am looking forward to meeting/seeing you ...  
I am looking forward to hearing from you.  
I look forward to receiving your report ...  
Looking forward to ...  
See you ...

### **3.0.34 FINAL THANKS**

Thanking you in advance.  
Thank you once again for your assistance.  
Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

### **3.0.35 CLOSING LINE**

Yours sincerely  
(Best) regards  
Kind regards (BrE)  
Best wishes  
All the best

### **3.0.36 OTHER**

to take into account unforeseen circumstances

## 4 Special cases

## 4.1 MEETING FOLLOW-UP

MFU STRUCTURE:

1. Greeting
  - (a) Salutation
2. Body
  - (a) Reference to the previous meeting + a pleasantry
  - (b) Summary of the meeting
  - (c) List of action points: what should be done, who is responsible and by when
3. Closing

### 4.1.1 Reference to the previous meeting + a pleasantry

- My team and I enjoyed meeting with you and ...
- I'm glad we had the opportunity to discuss ...
- On behalf of the team, I would like to thank you for making up time to discuss this important matter.

### 4.1.2 Summary of the meeting

At our meeting on ... we ...

- Outlined
- Decided
- Brainstormed
- Chose

### 4.1.3 List of action points

Structure:

- Who has to do something?
- What does he have to do?
- When does he have to do?

Assigning tasks:

- The person in charge of (the task) is Jim
- Jim is placed in charge of (the task)
- Jim will forward a copy of the report to ... by ...
- Jim should provide feedback by ...

#### 4.1.4 Closing an MFU

**Formal** Thank you once again for the fruitful discussion.

If you require any clarification or further information on meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me by email (...) or by phone (...).

Best wishes, [signature]

#### **Neutral**

- Please keep me in the loop
- Please inform me about the results by (date)
- I will call you at the end of this week to see whether you have any additional questions or concerns. In the meantime, feel free to contact me at XXX-XXXXXX at any time.

## 4.2 MEETING ARRANGEMENTS



## **4.3 REPORTING A PROBLEM**

STRUCTURE:

1. Greeting
2. Starting your purpose: reporting a problem
3. Giving details
4. Calling to Action
5. Closing

### **4.3.1 Starting your purpose**

- I am writing to inform you that...
- Lately we've encountered a problem with...
- There is an issue with...
- I am having an issue with...
- I have trouble with...
- I am facing a problem...

### **4.3.2 Giving details**

- I had difficulty with...
- The only problem is that...
- I have tried unsuccessfully to resolve this...
- The security problems have been identified...
- The problem first arose in...
- The problem lies in lack of...
- This illustrates another potential problem.
- This caused us considerable inconvenience.

### 4.3.3 Calling to Action

#### Formal

- I would like to seek your assistance with...
- I would appreciate it if you could assist with...
- I would be very grateful if you could offer me...
- I would appreciate your assistance in...
- I am looking forward to your feedback at your earliest convenience.

#### Neutral

- Shall we use...
- Please let me know...
- Can I ask you to look into the matter with...
- I really need your help with...
- Could you, please, confirm whether you find it acceptable?
- Can I ask you to look into the matter with ..?

### Setting a deadline

#### Formal

- I would appreciate it if you replied by...
- I look forward to receiving a reply at your earliest convenience.
- I would be grateful if you could respond within 2 days.

#### Neutral

- I need your response by/before...
- Hope to hear from you by...

### 4.3.4 Closing line

- Thanks in advance for your help/assistance.
- Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

#### 4.3.5 Synonyms

**Problem:**

- Complication
- Issue
- Obstacle
- Question
- Trouble
- Disagreement
- Doubt
- Bug
- Hitch
- Inconvenience
- Breakdown
- Computer
- Malfunction
- Defect
- Error
- Failure
- Fault
- Something wrong
- Incident
- Delay
- Concern

**Problematic:**

- Questionable
- Tricky
- Uncertain
- Unsettled
- Arguable
- Unclear
- Undecided
- Unpredictable
- Complicated

## 4.4 DEALING WITH A PROBLEM

STRUCTURE:

1. Greeting
2. Showing empathy/apologizing/thanking for feedback
3. Explaining why or how the problem happened
4. Offering a solution
5. Inquiring if the solution is acceptable
6. Offering further help if necessary
7. Apologizing/thanking for feedback
8. Closing

### 4.4.1 Showing empathy/apologizing/thanking for feedback

#### **Formal**

- Please allow me to apologize for...
- Please accept our/my (sincere) apologies for...

#### **Neutral**

- I'm sorry to hear that...
- I am really sorry for the delay in...
- I realize how complicated it is to...
- I can understand how frustrating it is when your Widget breaks down.
- I know how confusing it must be when...
- I understand that it would be very handy to...
- I'm glad you reported the problem so that we can take care of this right away.

#### **Appreciation of feedback**

### **Formal**

- Thanks for the update.
- Thanks for pointing out these issues.
- Thank you for drawing our attention to the issue with...
- Thank you for your feedback on...
- I appreciate the opportunity to clarify what we think has happened.

### **Neutral**

- We do appreciate your informing us about...

#### **4.4.2 Explaining why or how the problem happened**

- I have looked into your question.
- I have investigated the issue.
- The investigation revealed...
- After studying ..., it was found that...

#### **4.4.3 Offering a solution**

##### **Formal**

- I would be delighted to assist you.
- In compensate for the inconvenience caused we would like to offer you...

##### **Neutral**

- I suggest that you (apply)...
- I think it would be a good idea to...
- I recommend that you (apply)...
- My second suggestion is that...
- You should try to apply...
- In order to respond to this issue, we will... This will not happen again.

#### **4.4.4 Inquiring if the solution is acceptable**

##### **Formal**

- Could you let me know whether the steps described are acceptable for you?

### **Neutral**

- Can you confirm that the offered timing is OK for you?
- Please let me know if it helped to sort out the issue.
- I'm glad you reported the problem so that we can take care of this right away.

#### **4.4.5 Offering further help if necessary**

##### **Formal**

- Should you have any further queries/questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

##### **Neutral**

- Let me know if you need anything else.
- Feel free to contact me, if you have further questions.

#### **4.4.6 Apologizing**

- Once again, sorry for the inconvenience caused.
- Once again, I am really sorry for...
- Once again, I do apologies for...
- Please accept my apologies for the inconvenience caused.

#### **4.4.7 Thanking for feedback**

- Thank you for bringing this problem/matter to my attention.
- I really appreciate your valuable feedback.

## 5 Being Diplomatic

### Language tools:

1. modals: would, could, might, may
  - We need to ... - We might need to ...
  - We'll miss the deadline - We may miss the deadline
  - Email that report me - Could/Would you email that report to me?
2. qualifiers: slight, a bit, rather, a few
  - We have a problem - We have a slight problem
  - We are expecting a delay - We are expecting a short delay
  - I was disappointed to ...- I was rather disappointed to ...
  - We have found a serious bug - We have found a rather serious bug
3. softeners: I'm afraid, to be honest, with respect, just, unfortunately, it seems, there seems to be, it appears
4. passive forms: it was assumed, it was considered
  - I consider ...-ing ... - It was considered to ...
  - We assumed that ... - It was assumed that ...
5. continuous forms: I was wondering, we are aiming
6. words and phrases with less negative meaning
  - A problem - An issue
  - No - Not really
  - I haven't done/finished - I haven't been able to do/finish
  - I can't do/won't do - I am unable to do/I am not able to do/ I am not in a position to do
  - Reject - Unable to accept
  - Unhappy - Not entirely/totally/completely happy
7. restrictive phrases: at the moment, at this stage, at this point, so far, just, yet
8. 'yes... but...' statements
  - I understand your concern, but I am not in a position to ...
  - I see your point, but our budget is too limited to ...