

BUSINESS ENGLISH

Formal Email Writing

A Udemy course by Logan Susnick
English with Logan

Cheat Sheets #3

EMAIL VOCABULARY

Vocabulary - Common Mistakes and Questions

Do not omit subjects unless they are already stated

~~*Attached please find the contract; will mail you a signed copy.*~~

I have attached the contract, and I will also send you a signed copy by mail.

I have attached the contract and will also send you a signed copy by mail.

Do not omit auxiliary verbs

~~*You want me to send you a sample?*~~

Do you want me to send you a sample?

Would you like me to send you a sample?

- Don't become too formal too soon
- Wait for the other person to address you in a less formal tone
- You can offer to be addressed more casually
- Don't push it, be patient

- Use the same formality you use in person or over the phone
- If you are more formal in your email, it's going to sound strange or cold
- If you are less formal, still use *please* and *thank you*

- Be formal but be clear, don't overdo it
- Don't write to impress, write to express



Vocabulary - Phrases, Verbs, and Nouns

Use single-word verbs instead of phrasal verbs:

<i>contact</i>	<i>get in touch with</i>
<i>omit</i>	<i>leave out</i>
<i>handle</i>	<i>deal with</i>
<i>inform</i>	<i>fill in</i>
<i>consider</i>	<i>think about</i>

Use formal instead of informal nouns:

<i>residence</i>	<i>home</i>	<i>occupation</i>	<i>job</i>	<i>currency</i>	<i>money</i>
<i>retail outlet</i>	<i>store</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>place</i>		

Use formal instead of informal verbs:

<i>terminate</i>	<i>end</i>	<i>purchase</i>	<i>buy</i>	<i>reside</i>	<i>live</i>
<i>retain</i>	<i>keep</i>	<i>consume</i>	<i>use</i>		

More formal vs. informal suggestions:

<i>I apologize</i>	<i>I am sorry</i>
<i>We are delighted</i>	<i>We're so happy</i>
<i>I would like to inform you</i>	<i>I wanna tell you</i>
<i>however</i>	<i>but</i>
<i>therefore</i>	<i>so</i>
<i>That is acceptable</i>	<i>That's OK</i>



Vocabulary - Staying Neutral

If you can't avoid a pronoun, use plural instead of he or she:

~~*Our average customer is not concerned with his product warranty.*~~

~~*Our average customer is not concerned with his or her product warranty.*~~

Our average customer is not concerned with their product warranty.

Avoid gender specific occupations:

~~*A good salesman keeps in regular contact with his customers.*~~

Good salespeople keep in regular contact with their customers.



Vocabulary - Shortened Forms

Do not use text message speak and Internet shorthand in formal emails

LOL, IDK, Ru, 2b, @, Pls, L8r, IMHO, AFAIK, BTW, FYI, FWIW, POV

Use full words instead of shortened and colloquial ones:

information	info	telephone	phone	television	TV
laboratory	lab	children	kids	guys	men
through	thru	night	nite	and	&

Mr., Dr., and Prof. are OK but only in front of a person's name:

I need to see Dr. Kim. I need to see a doctor. ~~I need to see a Dr.~~

Use full words instead of abbreviations:

number	no. #	date of birth	d.o.b.	maximum	max.
minimum	min.	minutes	mins.	months	mos.
versus	vs.	January	Jan.	street	st.

Acronyms are created from the beginning letters and can be pronounced like words

- *NATO, scuba, UNICEF, AIDS, SARS, NASA*

Initialisms are created from the beginning letters and have to be spelled out

- *FBI, BBC, IBM, UK, USA*

For both acronyms and initialisms, write their long name in full the first time you use it followed by the short version in parentheses that you can then use for all the following mentions in your text.



Vocabulary - More Suggestions

- Don't use any slang, jargon, and idioms
- Even native speakers may not be familiar with the meaning
- Do not repeat same words or phrases
- Be extra careful when using same words with different meanings

Unnecessary words can be left out

~~new~~ innovation

~~true~~ facts

~~added~~ bonus

ATM ~~machine~~

PIN ~~number~~

Avoid words that are not specific:

really

~~really good idea~~

excellent idea

stuff

~~all this stuff on my desk~~

all this paperwork on my desk

things

~~all the things~~

all the issues

sort of

kind of

enough

a lot

a few

Use more active verbs:

~~We were at the meeting~~

We attended the meeting

