1. Insult each other. Say something rude. Irina you are talking too loud on a workplace
2. Situations – what would you say in these situations?:

Could I – permission

Would you like – invite

I was wondering if you could …

Would you mind opening

1. You need to ask your British colleague if he wants to eat lunch with you.

Would you like to have a lunch

Would you mind – **permission**

1. You need to reschedule a meeting with a senior colleague visiting from the US. How you do ask her?

Could I ask you ~~if it’s not a trouble~~ to reschedule a meeting (**ugly form**)

1. Your junior colleague visiting from the UK is talking very loudly on the phone, disturbing your own skype call. What would you say?

Excuse me mate, I have a skype call, ~~may~~ could I ask you to talk a bit **more** quietly

1. You are in America. The office has a hot desk policy. You find an empty desk. What will you ask to be sure you can sit there?

**Can I / Could I**

Excuse me, Is this desk free?

1. A visitor from America is sitting at your desk in the Prague office. You need to access the files there. What do you say?

Do you think I could

**Could**

~~May~~ I ~~ask you to~~ access my files from the box.

1. A US colleague is making a presentation but is speaking too fast. What do you say?

**Sorry for interrupting**

**Do you think you could**

~~May~~ I ask you talk a bit slowly.

Which of the above are offers and which are requests?

Was there a difference in the phrasing you used for that?

**Opening the conversation:**

I hate to bug you,…. **informal**

Excuse me,…. **neutral**

I’m sorry to bother you,…. **formal**

**General polite forms:**

**Can could**

We can use **can** or **could** to ask people to do something or to ask for something

Could is more polite:

**Requests:**

Excuse me,….

Can you help me?

Could you help me?

Do you think you could help me?

Can you pass the salt?

Could you pass the salt?

**Asking for permission:**

Excuse me,….

Can I leave now?

Could I leave now?

Do you think I could leave now?

**PLUS:**

Do you mind if I leave now? (less formal)

Is it alright if I leave now? (less formal)

**Offering and inviting**:

We can use **Can** to offer:

Can I make you a coffee?

But **MORE** polite is **would you like**

Would you like a coffee?

Would you like to come for lunch with us?

1. **Let’s go back to the situations in 2 – How would you alter your original answers?**

We will do them again as conversations.

**More advanced polite forms:**

1. Pp 22 (Appendix 1). How do they ask? Ex. 10
2. Examine the constructions:

**Requests:**

1. I was wondering if.. **subject** + **could + verb** **(more polite than could you)**
2. Do you think …. **subject+ could + verb** **(more polite than could you)**
3. Would you mind + ing

**Asking permission:**

1. Would you mind if + past simple **(asking permission)**
2. Would it be possible for me/you/him/us/them + infinitive

**Expressing A HOPE:**

1. I was hoping + subject + could + verb

**Giving advice:**

1. Second conditional: If I were you, I would…

**Offering / inviting:**

1. I was wondering if.. **subject** + **would + like** **(more polite than would you like)**

Let’s go back to the general polite forms and see if you can make them **MORE polite:**

**Requests:**

Can you help me?

Could you help me?

Can you pass the salt?

Could you pass the salt?

**Offering and inviting:**

Would you like a coffee?

Would you like to come for lunch with us?

1. Rewrite the sentences. Ex 11

Let’s try the replies for exercise 2 again – can you make them more polite than they are?

**Part II – refusals, rejections and criticism**

1. **Saying “no” politely – general phrases**

**Polite:**

I’m afraid it’s not possible  
I’m afraid + subject + negative verb

I’m afraid I can’t come tonight.

I’m sorry …..

**More polite:**

I’m really sorry ….

I’m really/ terribly sorry about this but ...

I’m really / terribly sorry about this but I’m afraid ...

The phrase **I’m afraid** can be added after a rejection, as well as in front of it:

I’m afraid I can’t come to the meeting. I’m sorry.

OR

I can’t come to the meeting, I’m afraid. Sorry.

**Other structures:**

**It’s also considered polite to express how lovely an invitation** is, or **praising some work** before refusing it:

That sounds wonderful/ lovely/ exciting but unfortunately, I can’t, I’m afraid. I have to go to the doctors. I’m sorry. Maybe tomorrow?

**Formula: Praise, apology, rejection, reason, apology:**

This idea is a good one, but I’m afraid we can’t use it. It’s going to be too expensive, I’m really sorry.

**How would you politely reject the requests made to in the situations in exercise 2?**

1. Imagine the following situations – role play and both students, try and be polite:
2. **A** -You are a senior US colleague, visiting Prague and asking your junior colleague to join you for dinner that evening.

**B -** You have another engagement. You need to politely refuse?

1. **A –** You are visiting the US. Your colleague is training you but is in a hurry. You need him to slow down.

**B –** You have to train this new guy. He is slow and doesn’t seem to understand you much. He keeps interrupting you and asking you to repeat obvious stuff.

1. **A -** Your junior colleague from the UK is pressing you to finish some work. You are very busy on a second urgent project. You need to politely explain that the work they’re waiting for is not a priority and will be delayed.

**B** – Your colleague is supposed to deliver a project but is already a day late. Can you politely press him to send the work asap.

1. **Criticising politely and expressing negative opinions**
2. Appendix 1 Ex, 13 and 14. Pp 22.

**Summary:**

1. **Use could, would, might to sound less direct**

You need to start again = You could start again

That won’t work = That might not work

1. **Use a negative with a positive adjective.**

That’s a bad idea = That’s not a good idea

He’s useless = He’s not the best

I don’t like it = I’m not very excited about it

1. **Use understatement**

He’s terrible at English = He’s quite poor at English

You failed = You didn’t quite make the necessary standard

**WE can also combine the above:**

That might not be a good idea.

1. Now rewrite your insults to be polite, if you can?

Let’s try these role plays:

1. **A –** Your client has come to you late with a difficult bug and is demanding it be fixed immediately. The client has had the software for over a month but only began testing this week. The client wants to go live at the end of the week and wants results now!

**B** – You are going live with some software at the end of the week. You began testing this week and found a category 5 bug. A needs to get this fixed today!

1. **A –** You expect your junior colleague to go to the next USInspire. He complains that it’s a long way to go and that he gets jet lag.

**B**- Your Boss wants you to fly to the US for Inspire. You don’t much want to go. You’ve got a deadline to meet and not a lot of free time. Can you politely persuade him to drop it?

1. **A-** Your colleague has an idea that they’ve worked on for a long time. The idea is interesting but ultimately not commercial. You need to tell him politely that the idea sucks and won’t be pursued.

**B –** You’ve worked a lot of hours on a new project idea. You are expecting your Boss to greenlight it today.

**Revision:**

**Make the following more polite:**

1. Where’s the bus station?
2. I can’t come to your meeting.
3. I need the work finished today.
4. Will you talk more quietly?
5. What did you say?
6. I can’t hear you.

Appendix 4 and 5 Future continuous

**Part III Writing emails**

The difference between informal and formal:

Formal: Passive, No contractions, longer words.

Informal: Active, contractions, shorter words

Formal/ neutral email phrases. Do you know what these mean – where would you put them in an email?:

1. With reference to

2. Yours sincerely,

3. I look forward to hearing from you

4. I would be grateful if..

5. Please find …attached.

Appendix 2 and 3. Key phrases.

Other useful phrases:

**I’m writing to confirm** our appointment on Tuesday 6th June

Unfortunately**, I will not be able to make** the meeting.

**You will be pleased to hear that** your application has been successful.

**I regret to inform you that** your application was not successful.

**Please get back to me if** you need any more information.

**Let me know if there’s** anything else you need.

Let’s do some practice. Let’s try to combine the polite forms we learnt in the first workshop with some of the key email phrases.

**Email role plays**

**Student A**

**Task 1**

You are organising a workshop. You need B to attend and make a presentation about his field of expertise. B is an employee of the company you work for. The company policy is to pay staff’s travel and food expenses but no special fee for speaking. You can’t change the date of the workshop.

Write to him/ her and invite him/ her.

Reply and follow up when they answer.

**Task 2**

1. You need B to book a place ticket and accommodation for you so that you can attend Inspire in Texas, yeehaw!

Please write to B and ask them to make the booking, with the dates and times.

1. Two months later……Inspire is in a month and you have not received any further information from B – write **to B** to ask them about your flights

**Task 3**

You are a client of Alteryx. You use their Loaders. You are encountering a bug every time you use the newly released loader. Please write to B and explain the bug and request some solution and feedback.

Reply to B as appropriate.

**Task 4**

You are in charge of cutting back feature creep in Connect. B is responsible two features which need to be cut from Connect. You need to write to him an email explaining why the features need to be cut.

Read his reply and reply to it if appropriate.

**Task 5**

Your colleague is on holiday. He has forgotten to supply a client with a bug fix. The client is writing to you about this. This isn’t your fault but you are loyal to your friend and don’t wish to get him in trouble. You can’t open your friend’s files to find the work. Try to solve this politely with the client

**Student B**

**Task 1**

You are an expert in Data Field Mechanics. Read A’s invitation. Reply as you see fit. You have the time to attend. However, you normally charge 1000 dollar speaker fee for conferences.

Reply and follow up if they answer.

**Task 2**

1. You are in HR and part of your job is booking flights and accommodation for visiting non-US colleagues. Read A’s email and reply.
2. Inspire in a month. You completely forgot about A’s request and you have booked nothing. Read their email and reply.

**Task 3**

A is your client. They are writing to you about a bug in your loader. Read their email. You feel the problem is not with your loader but with the age and state of the server that they are trying to access data from. Politely try to explain this to them.

**Task 4**

A is your new Boss. He needs you to cut 2 features from Connect. Read his email. You believe cutting these features is a mistake and will make the software much weaker. Reply to his request and politely try to explain why you disagree and change his/ her mind.

**Task 5**

An Alteryx employee has forgotten to supply you with a bug fix. He promised it at the end of last week. It is now Wednesday. He isn’t answering his phone or emails. Write to his colleague on the Loader’s team about the problem.