Effective Email Writing

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Aims & Objectives

- Think critically about and relate better to your reader's purpose or response
- Recognize and understand good structure
- Ensure a logical flow in your emails
- Use clear business writing style
- Use good soft skills in your emails

Session 1 - EEW Writing Process

Session 2 - Professional Email Writing

Content

Session 3 - Soft Skills for EEW

Session 4 - Effective Expression & Case Analysis

Part 1- EEW Writing Process

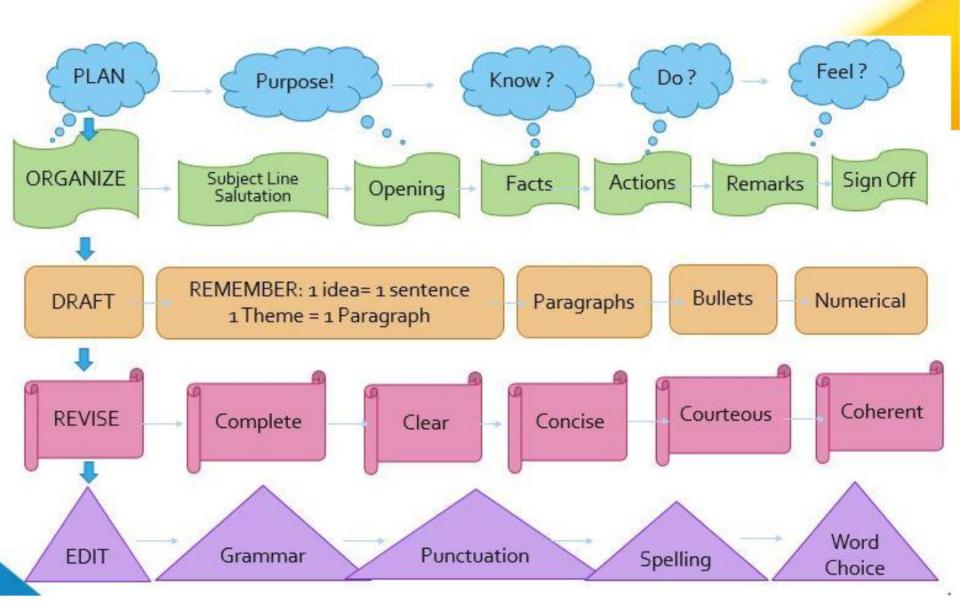


Layout

Content:

- Salutation
- Body
- Closing
- Signature

PODRE



Section 1 Planning

Why

• Determine writing purpose

Who

Analyze audiences What

 Organize information How

- Choose
- tone/
- style/
- format

Writing Purposes Examples

- **≻**Appreciating
- ➤ Gathering Information
- ➤ Providing Solutions
- ➤ Confirming Information
- ➤ Following Up
- ➤ Apologizing
- > Reassuring/Comforting Customers
- ➤ Asking for Suggestions/Help

...

Exercise

Instruction: Match the verbs of purpose with their corresponding fragments by writing the letter for each verb next to the post.

I noticed you have a problem using Office 365 professional. I am not very sure what your problem is, could you please answer the following questions:

- · When did the problem start happening?
- Do you have problems accessing your Office 365 email account?

2.<u>C</u>

It seems you are having an urgent issue accessing VS 2010. For urgent service requests, please contact phone support at 1-800-3535. A new thread will be opened to support you moving forward.

3._<u>D</u>_

I'm sorry for the delayed response due to the weekend. Please note, our working hours are Monday to Friday, 9-5pm, EST.

4. <u>A</u>__

We really appreciate your contribution to this forum. You really helped us resolve our issue with email migration from the Hotmail to Office 365 server.

Verb choices:

a. Express gratitude b. clarify details c. escalate an issue d. apologize

Section 2 --- Organization: SOFARS

Subject and Salutation greet your reader(Hi/Dear xx,)

Opening background + purpose (≤ 2-3 sentences)

reader's information and what your reader needs (solutions)

Action

Remarks(closing)

polite closing: leave your reader with a positive, personal impression of you

Sign-off the final statement or phrase before your name is listed

1. S——Subject line and Salutation

Subject Line:

- Main indicator of importance of the email
- Reflection of your writing purpose
- Less than 10 words
- Capitalization

The first and last words of titles and headings should be capitalized. So should all the other

words **EXCEPT**:

- 1. Articles: a/an/the
- 2. Coordinators: and/or/but/for/not/so/yet
- 3. Short Preposition: in, on, of

A clear subject



- Don't leave "Subject" as blank
- Make the subject as concise and concrete as you can
- Ensure any confidential/sensitive/offensive information are not shown in "Subject"

Exercise 1

- David will visit China and attend a technology conference in Shanghai. During his stay there, he will also visit 2 local clients for product demo. 5 days prior to his arrival, one of the client visit has been cancelled. In addition, he will also check in another hotel since the formerly booked one is not available anymore. As David's counterpart in China, you need to inform David about this.
 - A. Write David an email about this with the subject "Travel Update"
 - B. Write David an email about this with the subject "Two Changes in Your Shanghai Itinerary"
 - C. Write David an email about this with the subject "Urgent-Two Important Changes in Your Shanghai Itinerary"
 - D. Write David an email about this with the subject "Urgent-Two Important Changes in Your Shanghai Itinerary". If David doesn't reply in 24 hours, call him to confirm receipt of my email.

Exercise 2



> Subject:

Richard's monthly salary increase of 25% effect from May 1st

Questions:

- 1) Is this email subject appropriate?
- 2) What else should NOT be included in an email subject?

Practice for writing a subject line

Hi there,

Since we'll have to report ABC project to Microsoft, the get-together lunch with our VP has to be rescheduled to Friday (12/19) at 1pm instead of Thursday (12/18) at 12pm.

Regards, Yujie

Salutation:

- To greet your audience
- Effective form: Hi XXX, / Dear XXX, / Hello XXX,

Dear	Very formal.
	Used when you do not know the person you are writing to <u>OR</u> when you are very well known to the person you are writing to.
Hello	Informal.
	General greeting that is suitable for all situations.
Hi	<u>Informal.</u>
	More informal than "Hello". Used when you are friendly / well known to the person you are writing to, or if the situation is not formal.

Examples of "Dear":

"Dear Sir" (don't know the person)

"Dear Ann" (first time you're writing to the person)

"Dear Father" (well known to the person)

Examples of "Hello":

"Hello Bob" (don't know the person)

"Hello Ann" (first time you're writing to the person)

"Hello Jim" (well known to the person)

Examples of "Hello":

"Hi Bob" (well known to the person)

"Hi Ann" (informal situation)

Exercise

Instruction: Please write appropriate salutations for the following recipients.

Kevin Brown: a friend of yours

Serena Zhang: your superior

Linda Sun: your colleague

Operation Team: Unknown Team

- 2. O——Opening:
- Pleasantry
 - -Initial small talk/welcome
 - -Thank the customer
- Connect with your reader
 - -Introduce yourself
- State your purpose
 - -Come straight to the point
- Be no more than 2-3 sentences

- ☐ Common used sentences:
- ➢ I'm writing to ...
- ➤ I would like to...explain / request...
- Some of the verbs you can use: announce, confirm, explain, inform, notify, propose, request and suggest.

Certain patterns of main message

- ✓ Requests
- ✓ Follow-up emails
- ✓ Reminders
- ✓ Apologizing



Requests

- ☐ A request is a message asking the receiver to do sth.
- 1 would be grateful if you could ...
- 2 I would appreciate it if you could ...
- (3) Could you please ...
- 4 I am writing to /I'd like to apply for...

Follow-up emails

- State immediately that the email is a follow-up. Restate your original message and request.
- Per your requirement...
- ❖ As you requested...
- ❖ As our decision...
- As we discussed...
- ❖ With reference to...
- Further to our telephone conversation, ...



Reminders

- State up the item you wish to remind the reader
- 1 Just a reminder to you that ...
- 2 Just a note to confirm you will be ...
- (3) I'm just writing to remind you of ...



Apologizing

In case of postponing, changing, missing something.

- 1 regret that...
- (2)I am afraid that...
- 3 I apologize for that...
- 4 Unfortunately, ...
- 5 It was a pity...



Exercise:

- Read the two situations below and write an appropriate opening for each of them.
- Situation 1: You are replying to a customer who called this morning asking for details about opening a new account.
- Situation 2: You are replying to a customer's letter that you received yesterday. He would like to know why delivery of his order is late.

Example 1:

Hi Susan,

Thank you for contacting Microsoft support. My name is Lee and I will be assisting you with this service request.

Example 2:

Dear Brian,

Thanks for your reply.

Example 3:

Dear James,

I'm sorry for the delay.

Example 4:

Hello Albert,

This is Lee from Microsoft support. How are you?

Example 5:

Hi Travis,

Thanks for getting back to me. It's great to hear that Excel now works properly!

Example 6:

Hi Tracy,

It's great to hear from you again. I hope you had a great vacation!

Exercise

Effective Vs Ineffective Opening

- I would like to come to your office at 3 pm and talk about our plan for next week.
- It has been a while. How is life treating you? I miss you so much. I would like to let you know that I have a task for you which is ...
- I am writing to invite you to our English Corner this afternoon at 1:30 pm in the Conf RM2609.
- How are you doing? How is your family? How is your pet? I was wondering if you can do me a favor about......

3. Facts: The problem you have or want to clarify

4. Actions: The essence of an email as per dealing with an issue

- Use numbers/bullets for sequencing.
- Be consistent with tenses, format & structure

The main body of the email contains one or more of:

- Explanations
- (Troubleshooting steps)
- Solutions
- Updates
- Recommendations
- Etc.

'Main body'

CLOSING

At the start of the main body, you should usually include a paragraph referring to the customers previous email.

Example:

According to your previous email, you completed everything except Step 3, where you received a permissions error. If I have misunderstood, please let me know.

5. Remarks/Closing:

The section to leave your reader with a positive, personal impression of you

6. Signature/Sign Off:

The final statement or phrase before your name is listed at the end of an email.

- To supervisor or show respect: Best regards, Best wishes, Sincerely, Cheers,
- General: Regards, Thanks,

Closings will consist of one or two of the followings:

- Very brief reminder of what customer needs to do
- Keep the door open to the customer
- Thank the customer

OPENING

'Main body'

CLOSING

REMARKS

- When writing to customers, you want to end politely and positively.
- Examples:
- I look forward to hearing from you.
 - I hope this information is useful.
 - Please contact me if you have any questions.
 - Please let me know if you have any concerns.

Example 1:

If anything is unclear, don't hesitate to get in touch. I look forward to your reply.

Regards,

Lee

Example 2:

Please try my suggestions and let me know the result. Have a nice day!

Regards,

Lee

Example 3: (last email to customer ONLY)

It's been a pleasure working with you. Thank you for choosing Microsoft!

Regards,

Lee

Situation	Business emails	Friends and the like
To superiors or to show respect	Best regards, Best wishes, Sincerely, Cheers,	All the best! Take care! Good luck! (specific situations)
General	Regards, Thanks,	Warmly,
Universal Have a nice day! Have a good day! Have a great weekend! Happy Holidays! (DO NOT use specific holiday names!)		

In most cases, "Love," "sincerely yours," "truly yours" are not encouraged to be used.

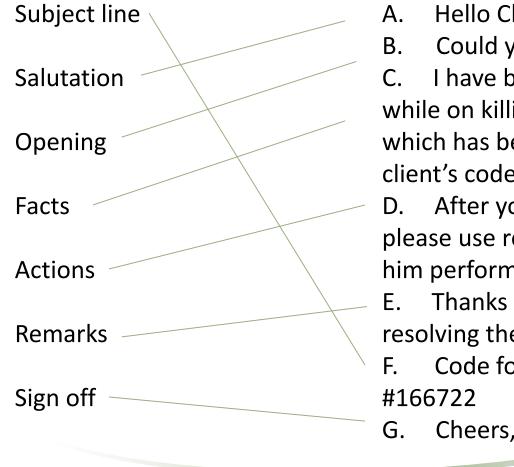
Mistakes

- Bst Rgrds,
- REGARDS
- Truly yours



Exercise

Instructions: Match each sentence with its correct writing process name in the correct order.



- Hello Chris,
- Could you do me a favor?
- I have been working for a while on killing a bug #166722 which has been interfering with a client's code.
- After you send the code, please use remote desktop to help him perform the process.
- Thanks again for your help resolving the issue
- Code for killing a bug
- Cheers,

- There are 10 sentences and 3 other parts of a letter below. Please arrange them in the correct order (1-13).
- (1) Best Regards,
- (2) May I suggest that you contact Mr Ong directly.
- (3) I am sorry that I was not in the office when you rang.
- (4) We do have a branch in Singapore.
- (5) I hope this information is helpful.
- (6) Hi Mr Rushford,
- (7) The address is 54 Liu Fang Road, Jorong Town, Singapore.
- (8) Alex Ribero
- (9) I am pleased to provide the information you requested.
- (10) The manager is Mr David Ong
- (11)He can provide you with the financial advice you are seeking.
- (12) Thank you for trying to contact me by phone yesterday.
- (13) His telephone number is +65 535 1234.

Answer:

Hi Mr Rushford,(6)

Thank you for trying to contact me by phone yesterday.(12) I am sorry that I was not in the office when you rang.(3)

I am pleased to provide the information you requested.(9)

We do have a branch in Singapore.(4) The address is 54 Liu Fang Road, Jorong Town, Singapore.(7) The manager is Mr David Ong(10) May I suggest that you contact Mr Ong directly.(2)

His telephone number is +65 535 1234.(13) He can provide you with the financial advice you are seeking.(11)

I hope this information is helpful. (5)

Best Regards,(1)

Alex Ribero(8)

Set-phrases for opening

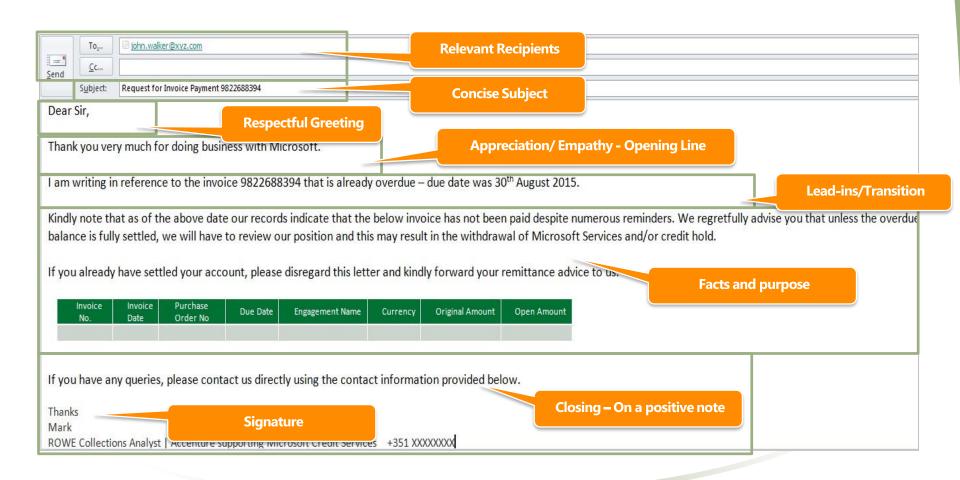
- As you requested, ...
- Regarding the ...
- In your Email, you mentioned ...
- As per your query/request about ...
- Regarding your request/enquiry/suggestion about ...
- As you mentioned in your Email, ...
- As we discussed, ...
- Per our discussion, ...
- Further to ...

Set-phrases for remarks

- If you have any other concerns, please feel free to let me know.
- If you require further assistance, please feel free to contact me at any time.
- If you have any further questions or concerns, please ...
- If you have any problems, don't hesitate to contact ...
- You could contact me if there are any problems.
- Feel free to contact me at any time.
- I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Business Scenario: Ideal E-mail

Mark could have written the e-mail in the following way that offers due respect to the reader. Here are the components of a well-written e-mail.



Email Template

Initial response

Hello Customer,

Thank you for contacting Microsoft Support. My name is Joe. I am the Support Engineer in XXX team who will be working with you on this issue. You may reach me using the contact information listed below, XXX.

I'm now reviewing the case log and will call you back to further discussion **in one working day.** If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Cheers, Joe

Section 3 Drafting

Key Questions to Ask as You Draft

- Am I giving my readers too much or too little information?
- Is this point necessary and relevant?
- Am I repeating or contradicting myself?
- Have I ended appropriately for my audience?

Section 3 Drafting

Good Paragraph:

- It expresses one main idea
- It has a clear topic sentence
- It has supporting details
- It has coherence/transitions/linking words

Topic Sentences:

- Name the topic
- Give a controlling idea

E.g. There could be <u>many reasons</u> why your server is crashing.

controlling idea

topic

Exercise

Please circle the topic sentence and underline its controlling idea.

- There are many ways to prevent viruses on your PC.
- To install Hotfix ABCD, follow these steps:
- If you follow these steps, your issues should be resolved.
- Several steps should be taken to resolve this issue.

Vocabulary List-Transitions

Sequence

First of all, to begin/start with, for a start; additionally, subsequently, in addition, afterwards

Opinion

In my opinion/view, from my viewpoint/perspective, from my point of view, as far as I am concerned

Reason

Because of, due to, owing to, as a result of/consequence of, in response to, seeing that, considering that, given that, in that, for the reason that

Contrasting Condition

Although, though, even though, even if, in spite of, regardless of, despite

Contrast

But, yet, while, whereas, however, nonetheless, alternatively, conversely, unfortunately, contrarily, otherwise, in contrast, in comparison, on the contrary

Example

For example/instance, particularly, especially, in particularly, to illustrate, take...as an example/illustration

Conclusion

To sum things up, to summarize, in conclusion, in summary, in short, in brief, in a word, overall, briefly, ultimately

Section 4 Revising

Key Questions to Ask as You Revise

Content

- Is it accurate? (figures, names, addresses, dates, references, terms, statistics)
- Is it relevant for my readers and purpose?
- Have I included information that is unnecessary, too technical, or not appropriate?
- Have I give enough evidence to explain things adequately and to persuade my readers?
- Have I left something out?

Section 4 Revising

Key Questions to Ask as You Revise

Organization

- Have I clearly identified my main points and shown my readers why those points are important?
- Is everything in the correct, most effective order? Should anything be switched or moved-closer to the beginning or toward the end of my document?
- Have I spent too much (or too little) effort on one section? Do I repeat myself? What can be cut?
- Have I grouped related items in the same part of my report or letter, or have I scattered details that really need to appear together in one paragraph or section?

Section 4 Revising

Key Questions to Ask as You Revise

Tone

- How do I sound to my readers-professional and sincere, or arrogant and unreliable?
- What attitude to do my words or expressions convey?

Strategies for revising emails

- > 5C Strategy
- Be clear
- Be concise
- Be correct
- Be courteous-

Positive Personal Polite

Be coherent



1) Be clear

- State your purpose clearly
- Get straight to the point

I'd like to...

Answer all questions, and pre-empt further questions.

2) Be concise

- One idea for one paragraph
- Use proper structure & layout

Write in short paragraphs.

Split your email into two to four short paragraphs.

Use bullet-points for extra clarity.

Put a double line break between paragraphs.

- Avoid long sentences.(15-20 words)
- Avoid unnecessary words and phrases

Wordy

- For the month of August
- I expected it to be
- During the year of 1995
- For the development of
- In the city of Dallas
- express a preference for
- for the reason that

✓ Concise

- □ for August
- Expected
- □ during 1995
- □ for developing
- □ in Dallas
- Prefer
- because

Using plain English: replace long, complicated words with short, simple ones:

- 1. You can convey the same meaning without <u>use/apply</u> (*utilizing*) the same words.

 struggle/try your best
- 2. You'll never be promoted unless you _____ (endeavor) to be more patient. check/insure/ensure/see
- **3.** I have to wait until payday to _____ (ascertain) whether I got the raise or not.
- **4.** John will send you a copy, once he's inserted all the <u>change/modification</u> (alterations) you've requested.
- **5.** Grand Tree _____ (*fabricates*) office furniture that is both durable and attractive.
- **6.** I understand from your letter that you expect a full refund, __but (nevertheless) your warranty expired more than a year ago.

3) Be correct

Use capitals appropriately

Don't write in all capital letters.

Always capitalize "I" and the first letter of proper nouns (names)

Always start sentences with a capital letter

- Proper spelling, grammar & punctuation
- Check before you send

4) Be courteous

- Watch your tone and cut redundancy
- Try to use a positive tone as possible
- Don't try to use slang or abbreviation
- Do not overuse the high priority option
- Don't send or forward emails containing offensive, racist remarks.
- Timely response

a. being positive

Use 'if' or 'as soon as' to link conditions with action, rather than threaten your reader.

Unless we receive your Case number, we will not be able to help you.

We would be happy to help you as soon as we have your Case number.



Focus on the positive by saying what you 'can' do.

Your request for documentation regarding next month cannot be met.

We would be able to provide documentation through this month.



Put the burden on yourself, not the reader, if appropriate.

You have to give us the address.

We need your address to follow up on your request.



b. being personal

Focus on people: Use names and personal pronouns

This situation should be dealt with by an escalation engineer.

One of our escalation engineers, Jack Jia, can help you with this situation. 😁



Consider using contractions:

I'll update you about progress on your case.

I'd like to update you about progress on your case.



c. being polite

Use modal verbs: would like to, could you, would you

The report is due Friday.

I would like to let you know that the report is due Friday.



Use magic words: Please, thank you, I'm sorry.

Send me the logs by Friday.

Please send me the logs by Friday.



Ask a question to soften the message, if appropriate.

Send me the screen shots by Friday.

Could you send me the screenshots by Friday?



Degree of Politeness

- Polite Could you please send me...?
 Could you send me..., please?
- Very polite —— I would be grateful if you could send me
 I would appreciate if you could...
- More direct —— Please send me...
- Polite but direct ——Could you send me...?
 Would you send me...?

Exercise

Instructions: Please modify the sentences below making them more concise.

- Due to the importance of using English, and at the same time, the reason that a lot of people can't have a partner or a teacher to help them practice their English, we have made a decision to hold an English Corner to give a chance for you guys to practice your English and also make friends. The English corner will be next week. I hope you can spare some time to join us.
- Thank you for contacting Microsoft. It is my greatest pleasure to serve you and work with you. I will try my best to help you and assist you on solving the case. Thank you very much.

Exercise

Instructions: Please modify the sentences below making them courteous.

- You have to send me the results of this action plan as soon as possible.
- To help you solve the case, you'd better give me the logs and reports that I've requested in the last email.
- Edward, because you are the team leader of WPT, and we have a new product which needs to be tested tomorrow. You need to push your team to finish it on time.

Section 5 Editing

Editing Organization & Structure

- Use the appropriate format
- Review the purpose
- Use the topic sentence
- Make sure the supporting details related to the topic sentence
- Make the actions easy to be found
- Check the spelling & grammar errors (tense/subject/verbs/punctuations)



Section 5 Editing

SEVEN Guidelines for Editing Phase of Your Work

- Avoid needlessly complex or lengthy sentences
- Combine short, choppy sentences
- Edit sentences to tell who does what to whom or what
- Use strong, active verbs rather than verb phrase
- Replace wordy phrases or clauses with one-two-word synonyms
- Combine sentences beginning with the same subject or ending with an object that becomes the subject of the next sentence

Exercise

Rewrite the sentences to be more courteous.

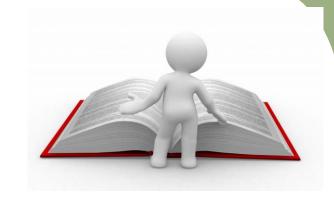
- 1. But like I told you on the phone, unless you do the action plan, you can't expect the issue to fix itself.
- 2. You have to send me the results of this action plan as soon as possible.
- 3. I spoke to someone in your office today instead of you, but he was not sure when you would return.
- 4. For your information, the minimum requirement for this upgrade is Windows 10.
- 5. If you want us to consider your request for a grace case, you must contact us today. We have already informed you of the time limits on this offer in a previous message, which you do not appear to have read.
- 6. Kindly email me immediately, otherwise you will not get the support that you need on this issue.



Linking and Transitions

Practice: choose the appropriate word from the three examples listed.
1. Unfortunately, I am tied up on a call(finally, consequently, and) I will not be able to contact you at our scheduled call-back time(in the future, similarly, however), my colleague, Kevin Wang is available to work with you on the issue (and, briefly, but) has all necessary case information.
2. I understand that your SQL server has been down for 10 hours today, (namely, but, as a result) your business needs to function. (as soon as, currently, therefore) you are available, please contact me(so, likewise, still) we can work on this issue together.
3. I'd like to arrange another live meeting session(now, for example in order to) ensure the issue has been resolved(even though, despite, now) you are not currently experiencing a problem with viewing calendars in Outlook, the root cause may still exist(finally, if, so) we do not detect any complications during the live meeting session, we can go ahead and close the case.

Vocabulary List-Transitions



Additional detail:

first, second, third, finally, moreover, furthermore, in addition, besides, ...

• Illustration:

such as, for example, for instance, in particular, in this case,

Contrast:

however, but, yet, in fact, unlike, until, not so much, whereas, nevertheless, on the other hand...

Cause and effect:

because, since, for, as, therefore, result in, originate from, accordingly, thus, consequently, hence, as a result, so...

• Summary:

in conclusion, to conclude, in summary, to sum up, in brief, in short...

Attitude:

point out, it shows that, describe...

Comparison:

similarly, here again, likewise, in comparison, still

• Condition:

although, if

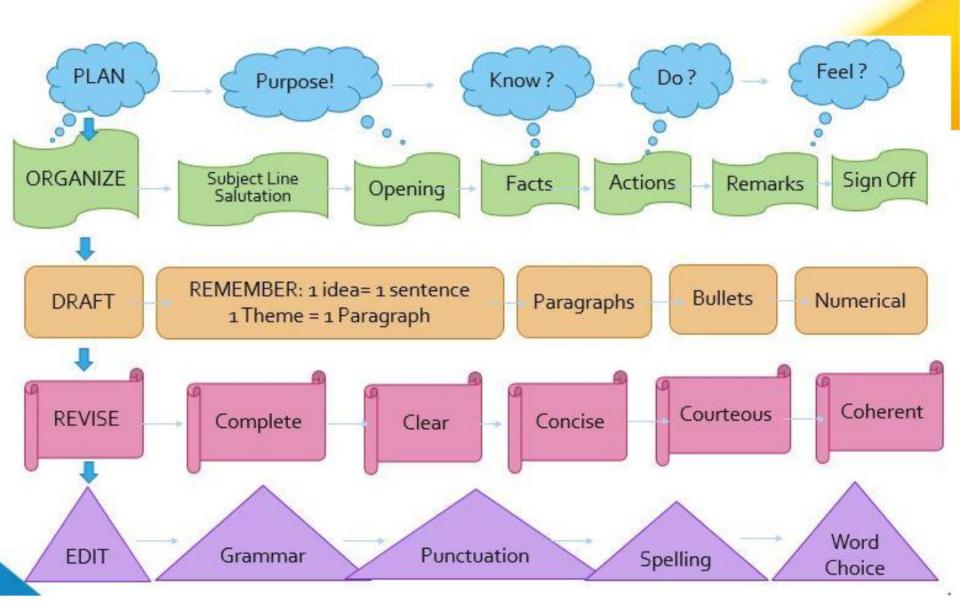
• Time sequence:

formerly, after, when, meanwhile, sometimes

Repetition:

that is, in other words, as I mentioned earlier

PODRE



Review the following email for errors, underlining mistakes:

Hi Matt,

Thanks for your email to let me know your concerns. And thank you for taking time to share your experience with our team. I can totally understand your frustration in the response time. As a manager in Microsoft Technical Support, I am also responsible for collecting our customers' feedback to improve our service.

The moment I received your email, I reviewed the case history thoroughly and talked to Steven who was in charge of the case. It turns out that there was some misunderstanding. Our working hours are 8:00PM-5:00AM EST, which is the reverse of yours. This is why the response time is within 24 hours. And I noticed that the case is the first ticket that you submit to out platform support team. Those tickets you submitted for System Center was handled by India engineer, which time zone is same with yours. It is available to get real-time support.

I am glad to hear that your problem has been resolved. And I am sorry for the inconvenience of our email support. We need re-think about the our email support and we need find a method to end the disadvantage. The feedback from all of our customers is vitally important to us and we always strive to meet their requirements and exceed their expectations. Although there are few things we can do about the time difference. I will have a team meeting later to discuss how we can expedite our response to our customer within our power.

You are a value customer, and we look forward to providing better services in the future.

Best Regards,

Jay

Thank you for Listening!