

Writing Effective Emails



Course Overview

Getting People to Read and Act on Your Messages

Keep your emails clear and concise, to avoid confusing the reader.

Email is a widely used tool for business communications, but a 2015 survey by Sendmail, Inc., found that it has caused tension, confusion, or other negative consequences for 64 percent of working professionals.

So, how can you avoid your emails doing this? And how can you write emails that get the results you want? This session looks at strategies you can use to ensure that your use of email is clear, effective and successful.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this workshop, you will be able to:

- Define E-mail & its features
- State the need for E-mail Etiquette and the Do's and Don'ts of E-mail Etiquette while:
 - Sending Messages
 - Replying to Messages
 - Form and tone of messages
 - Attachments
 - Identify situations when not to E-mail
 - Effective Subject lines
- Identify consequences of flaming
- Identify the 7 Cs of Communication
- Discuss the 10 Common Email Mistakes and how to avoid them

Personal Objectives

Discussion Questions

What is an Email?

Can you think of some Advantages and Limitations?

Why need E-mail Etiquette?

Sending an Email - Think of Do's and Don'ts

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Replying an Email – What you must remember

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Writing Effective Emails

The average office worker receives [around 80 emails each day](#). With that volume of mail, individual messages can easily get overlooked. Follow these simple rules to get your emails noticed and acted upon.

1. Don't Overcommunicate by Email

One of the biggest sources of stress at work is the sheer volume of emails that people receive. So, before you begin writing an email, ask yourself: "Is this really necessary?"

As part of this, you should use the phone to deal with questions that are likely to need some back-and-forth discussion. Also, email is not as secure as you might want it to be, particularly as people may forward emails without thinking to delete the conversation history. So avoid sharing sensitive or personal information in an email, and don't write about anything that you, or the subject of your email, wouldn't like to see plastered on a billboard by your office.

Whenever possible, deliver [bad news](#) in person. This helps you to communicate with empathy, compassion, and understanding, and to [make amends](#) if your message has been taken the wrong way.

2. Make Good Use of Subject Lines

A newspaper headline has two functions: it grabs your attention, and it summarizes the article, so that you can decide whether to read it or not. The subject line of your email message should do the same thing.

A blank subject line is more likely to be overlooked or rejected as "spam," so always use a few well-chosen words to tell the recipient what the email is about.

You may want to include the date in the subject line if your message is one of a regular series of emails, such as a weekly project report. For a message that needs a response, you might also want to include a call to action, such as "Please reply by November 7."

A well-written subject line like the one below delivers the most important information, without the recipient even having to open the email. This serves as a prompt that reminds recipients about your meeting every time they glance at their inbox.

Bad Example	Good Example
Subject: Meeting	Subject: PASS Process Meeting - 10 a.m. February 25, 2014

If you have a very short message to convey, and you can fit the whole thing into the subject line, use "EOM" (End of Message) to let recipients know that they don't need to open the email to get all the information that they need.

Example
Subject: Could you please send the February sales report? Thanks! EOM

Of course, this is only useful if recipients know what "EOM" means.)

3. Keep Messages Clear and Brief

Emails, like traditional business letters, need to be clear and concise. Keep your sentences short and to the point. The body of the email should be direct and informative, and it should contain all pertinent information.

Unlike traditional letters, however, it costs no more to send several emails than it does to send just one. So, if you need to communicate with someone about a number of different topics, consider writing a separate email for each one. This makes your message clearer, and it allows your correspondent to reply to one topic at a time.

Bad Example	Good Example
<p>Subject: Revisions For Sales Report</p> <p>Hi Jackie,</p> <p>Thanks for sending that report last week. I read it yesterday, and I feel that Chapter 2 needs more specific information about our sales figures. I also felt that the tone could be more formal.</p> <p>Also, I wanted to let you know that I've scheduled a meeting with the PR department for this Friday regarding the new ad campaign. It's at 11:00 a.m. and will be in the small conference room.</p> <p>Please let me know if you can make that time.</p> <p>Thanks!</p> <p>Monica</p>	<p>Subject: Revisions For Sales Report</p> <p>Hi Jackie,</p> <p>Thanks for sending that report last week. I read it yesterday, and I feel that Chapter 2 needs more specific information about our sales figures.</p> <p>I also felt that the tone could be more formal.</p> <p>Could you amend it with these comments in mind?</p> <p>Thanks for your hard work on this!</p> <p>Monica</p> <p>(Monica then follows this up with a separate email about the PR department meeting.)</p>

It's important to find balance here. You don't want to bombard someone with emails, and it makes sense to combine several, related, points into one email. When this happens, [keep things simple](#) with numbered paragraphs or bullet points, and consider ["chunking"](#) information into small, well-organized units to make it easier to digest.

Notice, too, that in the good example above, Monica specified what she wanted Jackie to do (in this case, amend the report). If you make it easy for people to see what you want, there's a better chance that they will give you this.

4. Be Polite

People often think that emails can be less formal than traditional letters. But the messages you send are a reflection of your own [professionalism](#), values, and attention to detail, so a certain level of formality is needed.

Unless you're on good terms with someone, avoid informal language, slang, [jargon](#), and inappropriate abbreviations. Emoticons can be useful for clarifying your intent, but it's best to use them only with people you know well.

Close your message with "Regards," "Yours sincerely," or "All the best," depending on the situation.

Recipients may decide to print emails and share them with others, so always be polite.

5. Check the Tone

When we meet people face-to-face, we use the other person's [body language](#), vocal tone, and facial expressions to assess how they feel. Email robs us of this information, and this means that we can't tell when people have misunderstood our messages.

Your choice of words, sentence length, punctuation, and capitalization can easily be misinterpreted without visual and auditory cues. In the first example below, Emma might think that Harry is frustrated or angry, but, in reality, he feels fine.

Bad Example	Good Example
<p>Emma,</p> <p>I need your report by 5 p.m. today or I'll miss my deadline.</p> <p>Harry</p>	<p>Hi Emma,</p> <p>Thanks for all your hard work on that report. Could you please get your version over to me by 5 p.m., so I don't miss my deadline?</p> <p>Thanks so much!</p> <p>Harry</p>

Think about how your email "feels" emotionally. If your intentions or emotions could be misunderstood, find a less ambiguous way to phrase your words.

Form and Tone of message –

- **Neatness counts**
- **Email composition skills reflects knowledge and abilities**

Do's

- Carefully compose your message. Think before you write
- Start with a strong and meaningful subject line
- Write short, brief, direct messages
- Use proper structure and layout
- Make use of bullets and short paragraphs
- Avoid misinterpretation of dates by spelling out the month
- Trim a quoted message
- Check if paragraphs need rearrangement
- Create separate signature files for business/personal
- Take time to proof read (by a peer if possible) and use the spell check

Don'ts

- DO NOT TYPE WITH **CAPS LOCK ON**
- Don't try to send out the entire text from a web page. Instead just give the URL
- Don't be very wordy
- Don't use abbreviations or acronyms

6. Proofreading

Finally, before you hit "send," take a moment to review your email for spelling, grammar, and punctuation mistakes. Your email messages are as much a part of your professional image as the clothes you wear, so it looks bad to send out a message that contains typos.

As you proofread, pay careful attention to the length of your email. People are more likely to read short, concise emails than long, rambling ones, so make sure that your emails are as short as possible, without excluding necessary information.

Key Points

Most of us spend a significant portion of our day reading and composing emails. But the messages we send can be confusing to others.

To write effective emails, first ask yourself if you should be using email at all. Sometimes, it might be better to pick up the phone.

Make your emails concise and to the point. Only send them to the people who really need to see them, and be clear about what you would like the recipient to do next.

Remember that your emails are a reflection of your professionalism, values, and attention to detail. Try to imagine how others might interpret the tone of your message. Be polite, and always proofread what you have written before you click "send."

The 7 Cs of Communication

A Checklist for Clear Communication

The 7 Cs provide a checklist for making sure that your [meetings](#), [emails](#), [conference calls](#), [reports](#), and [presentations](#) are well constructed and clear – so your audience gets your message.

According to the 7 Cs, communication needs to be as below; we'll illustrate each element with both good and bad examples.

1. Clear.
2. Concise.
3. Concrete.
4. Correct.
5. Coherent.
6. Complete.
7. Courteous.

1. Clear

When writing or speaking to someone, be clear about your goal or message. What is your purpose in communicating with this person? If you're not sure, then your audience won't be sure either.

To be clear, try to minimize the number of ideas in each sentence. Make sure that it's easy for your reader to understand your meaning. People shouldn't have to "read between the lines" and make assumptions on their own to understand what you're trying to say.

Bad Example	Good Example
<p>Hi John,</p> <p>I wanted to write you a quick note about Daniel, who's working in your department. He's a great asset, and I'd like to talk to you more about him when you have time.</p> <p>Best,</p> <p>Skip</p> <p>What is this email about? Well, we're not sure. First, if there are multiple Daniels in John's department, John won't know who Skip is talking about.</p> <p>Next, what is Daniel doing, specifically, that's so great? We don't know that either. It's so vague that John will definitely have to write back for more information.</p> <p>Last, what is the purpose of this email? Does Skip simply want to have an idle chat about Daniel, or is there some more specific goal here? There's no sense of purpose to this message, so it's a bit confusing.</p>	<p>Hi John,</p> <p>I wanted to write you a quick note about Daniel Mark, who's working in your department. In recent weeks, he's helped the IT department through several pressing deadlines on his own time.</p> <p>We've got a tough upgrade project due to run over the next three months, and his knowledge and skills would prove invaluable. Could we please have his help with this work?</p> <p>I'd appreciate speaking with you about this. When is it best to call you to discuss this further?</p> <p>Best wishes,</p> <p>Skip</p> <p>This second message is much clearer, because the reader has the information he needs to take action.</p>

2. Concise

When you're concise in your communication, you stick to the point and keep it brief. Your audience doesn't want to read six sentences when you could communicate your message in three.

- Are there any adjectives or "filler words" that you can delete? You can often eliminate words like "for instance," "you see," "definitely," "kind of," "literally," "basically," or "I mean."
- Are there any unnecessary sentences?
- Have you repeated the point several times, in different ways?

Bad Example	Good Example
<p>Hi Matt,</p> <p>I wanted to touch base with you about the email marketing campaign we kind of sketched out last Thursday. I really think that our target market is definitely going to want to see the company's philanthropic efforts. I think that could make a big impact, and it would stay in their minds longer than a sales pitch.</p> <p>For instance, if we talk about the company's efforts to become sustainable, as well as the charity work we're doing in local schools, then the people that we want to attract are going to remember our message longer. The impact will just be greater.</p> <p>What do you think?</p> <p>Jessica</p> <p>This email is too long! There's repetition, and there's plenty of "filler" taking up space.</p>	<p>Hi Matt,</p> <p>I wanted to quickly discuss the email marketing campaign that we analyzed last Thursday. Our target market will want to know about the company's philanthropic efforts, especially our goals to become sustainable and help local schools.</p> <p>This would make a far greater impact, and it would stay in their minds longer than a traditional sales pitch.</p> <p>What do you think?</p> <p>Jessica</p> <p>This second message is much clearer, Watch what happens when we're concise and take out the filler words</p>

3. Concrete

When your message is concrete, then your audience has a clear picture of what you're telling them. There are details (but not too many!) and vivid facts, and there's laser-like focus. Your message is solid.

Consider this advertising copy:

Bad Example	Good Example
<p>The Lunchbox Wizard will save you time every day.</p> <p>A statement like this probably won't sell many of these products. There's no passion, no vivid detail, nothing that creates emotion, and nothing that tells people in the audience why they should care. This message isn't concrete enough to make a difference.</p>	<p>How much time do you spend every day packing your kids' lunches? No more! Just take a complete Lunchbox Wizard from your refrigerator each day to give your kids a healthy lunch and have more time to play or read with them!</p> <p>This copy is better because there are vivid images. The audience can picture spending quality time with their kids – and what parent could argue with that? And mentioning that the product is stored in the refrigerator explains how the idea is practical. The message has come alive through these details.</p>

4. Correct

When your communication is correct, it fits your audience. And correct communication is also error-free communication.

- Do the technical terms you use fit your audience's level of education or knowledge?
- Have you checked your [writing](#) for grammatical errors? Remember, spell checkers won't catch everything.
- Are all names and titles spelled correctly?

Bad Example	Spot the Mistake
<p>Hi Daniel,</p> <p>Thanks so much for meeting me at lunch today! I enjoyed our conversation, and I'm looking forward to moving ahead on our project. I'm sure that the two-week deadline won't be an issue.</p> <p>Thanks again, and I'll speak to you soon!</p> <p>Best,</p> <p>Jack Miller</p>	<p>If you read that example fast, then you might not have caught any errors. But on closer inspection, you'll find two. Can you see them?</p>

5. Coherent

When your communication is coherent, it's logical. All points are connected and relevant to the main topic, and the tone and flow of the text is consistent.

Bad Example	Good Example
<p>Traci,</p> <p>I wanted to write you a quick note about the report you finished last week. I gave it to Michelle to proof, and she wanted to make sure you knew about the department meeting we're having this Friday. We'll be creating an outline for the new employee handbook.</p> <p>Thanks,</p> <p>Michelle</p> <p>As you can see, this email doesn't communicate its point very well. Where is Michelle's feedback on Traci's report? She started to mention it, but then she changed the topic to Friday's meeting.</p>	<p>Hi Traci,</p> <p>I wanted to write you a quick note about the report you finished last week. I gave it to Michelle to proof, and she let me know that there are a few changes that you'll need to make. She'll email you her detailed comments later this afternoon.</p> <p>Thanks,</p> <p>Michelle</p> <p>Notice that in the good example, Michelle does not mention Friday's meeting. This is because the meeting reminder should be an entirely separate email. This way, Traci can delete the report feedback email after she makes her changes, but save the email about the meeting as her reminder to attend. Each email has only one main topic.</p>

6. Complete

In a complete message, the audience has everything they need to be informed and, if applicable, take action.

- Does your message include a "call to action," so that your audience clearly knows what you want them to do?
- Have you included all relevant information – contact names, dates, times, locations, and so on?

Bad Example	Good Example
<p>Hi everyone,</p> <p>I just wanted to send you all a reminder about the meeting we're having tomorrow!</p> <p>See you then,</p> <p>Chris</p> <p>This message is not complete, for obvious reasons. What meeting? When is it? Where? Chris has left his team without the necessary information.</p>	<p>Hi everyone,</p> <p>I just wanted to remind you about tomorrow's meeting on the new telecommuting policies. The meeting will be at 10:00 a.m. in the second-level conference room. Please let me know if you can't attend.</p> <p>See you then,</p> <p>Chris</p>

7. Courteous

Courteous communication is friendly, open, and honest. There are no hidden insults or passive-aggressive tones. You keep your reader's viewpoint in mind, and you're empathetic to their needs.

Bad Example	Good Example
<p>Jeff,</p> <p>I wanted to let you know that I don't appreciate how your team always monopolizes the discussion at our weekly meetings. I have a lot of projects, and I really need time to get my team's progress discussed as well. So far, thanks to your department, I haven't been able to do that. Can you make sure they make time for me and my team next week?</p> <p>Thanks,</p> <p>Phil</p> <p>Well, that's hardly courteous! Messages like this can potentially start office-wide fights. And this email does nothing but create bad feelings, and lower productivity and morale. A little bit of courtesy, even in difficult situations, can go a long way.</p>	<p>Hi Jeff,</p> <p>I wanted to write you a quick note to ask a favor. During our weekly meetings, your team does an excellent job of highlighting their progress. But this uses some of the time available for my team to highlight theirs. I'd really appreciate it if you could give my team a little extra time each week to fully cover their progress reports.</p> <p>Thanks so much, and please let me know if there's anything I can do for you!</p> <p>Best,</p> <p>Phil</p> <p>What a difference! This email is courteous and friendly, and it has little chance of spreading bad feelings around the office.</p>

Key Points

All of us communicate every day. The better we communicate, the more credibility we'll have with our clients, our boss, and our colleagues.

Use the 7 Cs of Communication as a checklist for all of your communication. By doing this, you'll stay clear, concise, concrete, correct, coherent, complete, and courteous.

Flaming

What do you mean by Flaming?

Can you think of ways to responding to Flaming?

Attaching a file

Do's

Don'ts

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Mass Emails

When sending Mass E-mails, remember:

- Make sure content words are spelled properly
- Make sure that the e-mail is for everyone to view and is not offensive
- Don't make any personal comments/remarks
- Always remember adults read all these mails



Example 1	Comments
<p>To: Group@massmails.com</p> <p>From: big@yahoo.com</p> <p>Subject: Attn Marc</p> <p>This is for marc only and if you are not him delete.</p> <p>Marc the ballgame the other day was just sweet, I know we are the best team.</p> <p>Marc you are the coolest!!!!</p> <p>Tim</p>	

Example 2	Comments
<p>To: Members@thelist.com</p> <p>From: billy@hotmail.com</p> <p>Subject: Officers Meeting (officers only)</p> <p>I was emailing you to tell you that we will have a meeting this Thursday at MacDonald's. We will be going over the months community service projects.</p> <p>See you there</p> <p>Bob</p> <p>President</p>	

Example 3	Comments
<p>To: Group@massmail.com</p> <p>From: Songsinger@email.com</p> <p>Subject: problems at the club office This week the construction going on around the office has been sort of destructive.</p> <p>The power has been cut at the office and there is no power.</p> <p>If you were planning on going by the office to work on the project,</p> <p>Please try next week.</p> <p>James</p>	

Example 4	Comments
<p>To: Tech@ga4h.org</p> <p>From: Robbie@robsworld.com</p> <p>Subject: The web page assignments</p> <p>As you all know the deadline for turning in the pages you are designing is March 24th.</p> <p>Please have these completed by this time and up on FTP.</p> <p>Hope everyone gets these done</p> <p>ASAP.</p> <p>Robbie</p>	

Tips while composing messages:

- Get to the point. Don't beat around the bush.
- Keep it simple. Use short and simple sentences.
- Use active and passive voice.
- Use nondiscriminatory language
- Check your organization's email policy.
- Once the message has been sent, you will not be able to recover it. Double check before you hit the "send" button.
- Don't keep mails on the server longer than necessary, especially large attachments.
- Fill the "To" field after you complete proof reading your mail. You might accidentally hit the send button before finishing your mail.
- Check the need, subject line, and labels before sending
- Use Flagging as option for follow up
- Think of what you write as being public and confine to one subject per mail.
- Don't send large attachments unrequested.
- You may need to change the subject line when you forward an e-mail.



When not to use E-mail

You may need to pick up the phone when:

- No agreement is reached
- Thread is longer than 5-6 mails
- Text is longer than a page
- Mail generates emotion
- Context is unclear



Remember.....

- The e-mail you send may be forwarded on to almost any one.
- It may be quoted, circulated, and forwarded and acquire a level of importance that was never intended.
- Always be careful about what you write; Assume all messages are for public reading.

**DON'T
FORGET**

Exercise

Activity	Do you see any Mistakes!
<p>To: actng@scgtraining.com</p> <p>From: jdoe@scgtraining.com</p> <p>CC: Jackie.colr@scgtraining.com, Steve.bladr@scgtraining.com, Molly.daut@scgtraining.com, Aron.sn@scgtraining.com</p> <p>Subject: BIG MESS UP!</p> <p>I submitted my expense report last week and I still don't have a check back :-/ I always have problems receving my chks on time! I know that you have cutoff times and I usually make them, so I don't know what is happening? Is there any way that you could notify people when you don't process thier reports on time? CAN YOU CLARIFY EXACTLY HOW YOUR PROCESS WORKS?- as well as review the policy that you have regarding cutting checks after the standard cut off times? I'd like to get my check Fedexed to me. I realize that TNSTAAFL but there might be a better way to handle this!!!!!! How do you process checks for dir.dep? Do you have the same cut off times? Can you process last week's expense report and get it into my Account as soon as possible? I really don't want to have to wait an extra week on this if at all possible. Please advise. Please don't just me the typical RTM accounting response.</p>	

Eight Strategies for Effective Email

Email is one of the most important communication tools that we use. It's instant, effortless and ideal for reaching people scattered across the globe.

The problem is that we often don't use email as effectively as we could. We expect instant replies; we write long, rambling messages that confuse the reader; or we send a flurry of mail that recipients are never likely to read.



The Importance of Using Email Effectively

Although email is extremely useful, it can eat up a lot of your time and energy if you don't use it effectively.

For example, how much time do you spend reading forwarded emails that have nothing to do with you or your work? Or how often have you had to search through your inbox for an email that required your immediate attention, which the sender hadn't flagged as "urgent"?

Below, we've outlined eight strategies that will help you use email more efficiently.

1. Using Email Fields Correctly

When you choose your recipients, it's important to use "To," "cc," and "bcc" correctly.

Only use the "To" field for recipients who need to take action, or to include people who are directly affected by the email.

The "cc," or "carbon copy," field is for recipients who need to know about the message, but don't necessarily have to take any action.

Use the "bcc," or "blind carbon copy," field when you want to send an email to a large number of people, but don't want to reveal the names and email addresses of everyone on the list.

2. Being Selective with "Reply to all"

The "Reply to all" feature gives you an effortless way of replying to everyone included in an email thread. However, you should only use it when you're sure that your response is relevant to each person.

When you give feedback to, or criticize, one person, never use "Reply to all." If you have to share bad news or give feedback, start a new email and send your comments directly to that person.

3. Avoiding Email Tennis

We've all played email tennis before. It occurs when people shoot messages back and forth – often in a short amount of time – to pin down the date of a meeting or to ask and answer questions.

You can avoid email tennis, and save time, by giving your recipients options in your initial email.

Example	Comments
<p>Hi Sam,</p> <p>We need to schedule a time to meet this week. I have Wednesday morning at 10:00 a.m. or Thursday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. available. Does either day work for you?</p> <p>Best,</p> <p>Layla</p>	<p>Imagine what would have happened if Layla hadn't given Sam any options. He might have wanted to meet on Monday, for example, and Layla would have had to reply that she was unavailable.</p> <p>Give your recipients as much information as necessary in your initial email, and keep it simple. This will save time and frustration, and it will allow you to wrap up the exchange quickly. Alternatively, pick up the phone and talk to the person directly.</p>

4. Being Courteous

Make sure that you go through your inbox regularly, and respond to emails within a sensible time frame. This is a simple act of courtesy and it will encourage others to reply to your emails in a timely manner.

How regularly you should check your mail depends on the nature of your work. Typically, a good way to manage your inbox is to check it, say, three times a day.

Sometimes you can waste time by replying too quickly. For example, imagine that a colleague emails you for your advice about a problem. A minute later, she writes to let you know that she has solved the problem on her own. However, you don't see her reply until after you've drafted a lengthy response to her initial question.

If you need to send a detailed response to an email but don't have the time to pull the information together right away, acknowledge the message and say when you will respond fully. Last, use your out-of-office setting when you are away from your email for a day or more, regardless of whether you are on leave or in meetings.

5. Flagging up Urgent Emails Where Appropriate

Emails that are top priority should be flagged as "urgent" in the subject line, before the topic heading, so that the recipient knows that she needs to prioritize them.

Example	Comments
Subject Line: URGENT Please Revise by 12:00 p.m.	<p>However, always make sure that email is the best way of sending urgent messages. For example, if the recipient is out of the office and doesn't check her emails, she is unlikely to read the message by 12:00 p.m.</p> <p>Therefore, you might want to use instant messaging or telephone the person if you have an urgent message.</p>

6. Signposting Clearly

How many times have you received a forwarded "FYI" email from someone and have had to scroll down through several exchanges to discover the relevant information? We've all had to do this at some point. It's frustrating and it wastes time.

Do your recipients a favor and summarize what they need to know when forwarding "FYI" emails. This signposting is particularly useful when you send attachments. List the key points from the attached document at the top of your email, so the recipients can see at a glance what's in there.

Example
<p>Subject: Summary of February 12 Meeting Notes</p> <p>Hi everyone,</p> <p>Here are the key points from today's meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project deadline changed to February 17. • Omar will take over as group project manager during Chad's leave of absence. • Liam Nelson will join the team as IT project manager. <p>I've also attached the minutes if any of you would like a more detailed look at what we discussed today.</p> <p>All the best,</p> <p>Manuel</p>

7. Sending Thank-you Emails

How many times have you sent an email that just said "thanks!"?

Everyone wants to feel appreciated, but, while it's important to express your gratitude for someone's hard work, sending short "thank-you" emails back and forth isn't efficient. When you are sending a lot of thank-you emails to someone, a better approach is to send just one, longer "thank-you" message.

Example	Example
<p>Hi Lucy,</p> <p>I wanted to thank you for all your hard work this week. Your communication has been great, and I really appreciate your quick responses. This project will be a success with your assistance!</p> <p>Thanks again,</p> <p>Madeline</p>	<p>Alternatively, you can say "Thanks!" in your email subject line, and follow it with "EOM," meaning "End of Message."</p> <p>Subject : Thanks for the prompt delivery of the report! EOM</p> <p>You can also use "NTR," or "No Thanks Required," when you send an email. Just make sure that the people you communicate with know what this acronym means.</p> <p>Hi Jaap,</p> <p>That's done. I've attached the final document. (NTR!)</p>

8. Sending Confidential Information

When you must send confidential information, remember that email is not 100 percent secure. Once you have sent an email, the recipient can forward it to anyone.

Don't put sensitive information in the body of an email. Instead, why not save it in a locked file or secure, password-protected folder?

Alternatively, convey confidential information face-to-face, or by phone/VoIP.

A good rule is to assume that recipients won't treat emails as being private.

Key Points

Email has become an important communication tool, which is why you should know how to use it effectively.

When you write an email, make sure that you use the "To," "cc," and "bcc" fields correctly. Ensure that it includes all the necessary information, so that you avoid the back-and-forth of "email tennis." Also, summarize long emails at the beginning, so that your reader can quickly grasp what he or she is about to read. Last, use the "NTR" acronym, which stands for "No Thanks Required," to reduce unnecessary "thank-you" emails.

Let's Practise

Starting an Email

WARM-UP

Complete the sentences using the words in the box.

expertise
lease

advised
appointment

reference
designed

1. His _____ in sales has greatly helped our company's economic status.
2. A client has to call to make an _____ with the CEO.
3. The HR _____ the new employee to resign due to his poor work performance.
4. They plan to _____ a bigger building since their employees are increasing in numbers.
5. Our engineers _____ a project which is beneficial to the masses.
6. Please make sure to give everyone a copy of our company manual for future _____.

Read the email below and fill the subject line.

 Send	To...	
	Cc...	
	Account ▼	Subject:

Subject _____

Dear Ms. Dominique Brown,
I have heard from Angela that you have designed many offices and have been advised to contact you. The pictures that Angela showed me during our last meeting clearly show that you have the expertise in designing offices.

We are planning to open a new office branch in San Diego, California. As of the moment, the building that we have leased is very plain. Our CEO is asking me to find a designer for it. With reference to Angela's information about you, I would like to ask you to be the designer of our new office. I understand that you are quite busy with your schedule. I'd be happy to have an appointment whenever is most convenient for you. Please let me know when I can meet you through confirming this email. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Reese Green
Office Manager, Ross Marketing
Tel: 0501 3652961

Starting an Email

II. Comprehension Check

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. What is the purpose of the email? | To ask someone plan a colleague's birthday party
To invite a colleague for a meeting
To ask someone to design a new office branch |
| 2. Which title best fits the subject line? | Office Design- new branch (San Diego)
Angela's birthday
Meeting- San Diego, California |

III. LANGUAGE BOX

How to start

Thank you for sending us the requested information about our organization.
I have been advised to contact you regarding our previous orders.

New Information

As you may be aware of...
We're hoping to...

Action

I would be grateful if you could give us the detail as soon as possible.
Please let me know if you can't make the delivery.

How to end

Thank you again for your help
We hope to hear from you soon.
I'm looking forward to doing business with you again.

IV. Remember!

If you have to write an email for the first time, to whom will you address it? What's the purpose of your email?
What kind of first time emails do you receive?

Write an email to the training team, telling them you want to attend a particular training and the reason why are you interested in the attending this training.

Writing a Formal Email

I. WARM-UP

Vocabulary

Read the words/phrases and their definition. Try to explain them using your own words.
Finally, make your own sentences using the words/phrases.

1. draw someone's attention to someone or something – to attract someone to notice or focus on someone or something
2. unsatisfactory – it is not good as it should be, and cannot be considered acceptable
3. notify – to officially inform
4. grateful – appreciative of benefits received; thankful
5. oblige – doing something necessarily because of a certain situation, rule or law
6. foolproof – never – failing

II. DIALOGUE BOX



The image shows a standard email composition window. On the left, there is a 'Send' button with a paper plane icon, an 'Account' dropdown menu, and a 'Subject:' label. To the right of these are three input fields: 'To...', 'Cc...', and 'Subject:'. The 'To...' and 'Cc...' fields are stacked vertically, and the 'Subject:' field is below them.

Dear Mr.

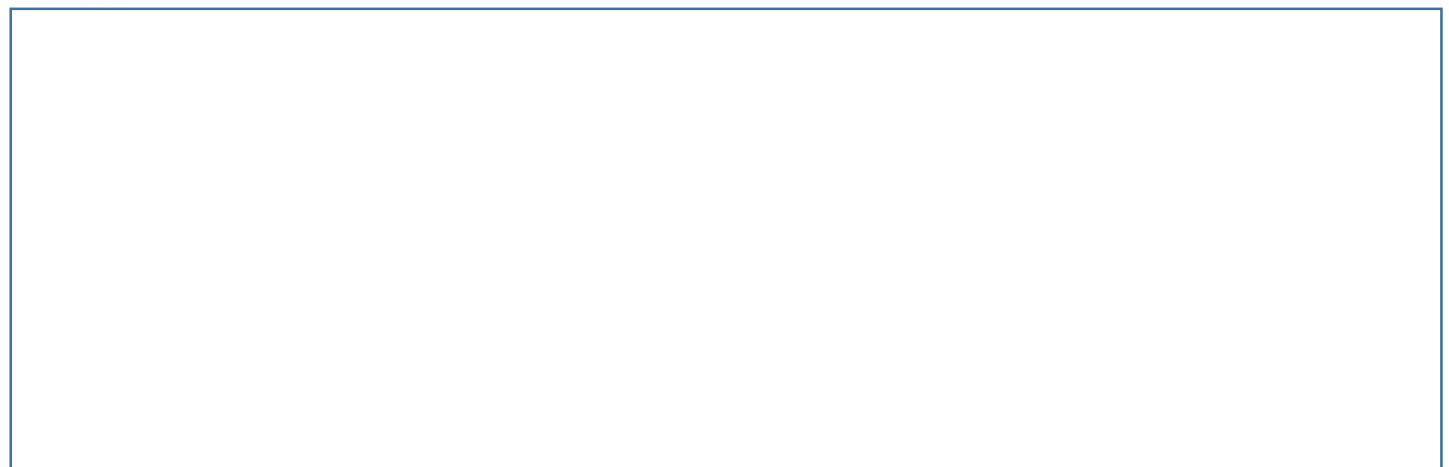
I am writing to draw your attention to the technical problems that we have been experiencing with your software. We have called your office several times already, and I find it most unsatisfactory that we have not been notified of the reason for the said problem.

I would be grateful if you would offer me an explanation and assure me that this problem will not arise again.

If I do not hear from you, I regret to inform you that I will be obliged to find another type of software that is foolproof.

Always,

Peter Mitchell
Marketing Manager Speakspeak International
New York



A large, empty rectangular box with a thin blue border, intended for a signature or additional text.

Writing a Formal Email

Comprehension Check

1. What does Peter Mitchell write to Mr. Lu?
2. What action does he want from the other party?
3. What action would Peter Mitchell make if he will not receive any reply?

III. LANGUAGE BOX

How to write a formal email

A. use a formal vocabulary

I am afraid I will find another type of software that is foolproof.

Not: I'm sorry I will find another type of software that is foolproof.

B. use fewer phrasal verbs

If any problems arise...

Not : If any problems come up...

C. do not contract the verb forms

I am writing to inform you...

Not : I'm writing to inform you...

D: use the passives

The stocks will be sent next week.

Not : We will send the stocks next week.

IV. SAY IT!

Using the expression in Language Box, write this email in a more appropriate style. Invent any extra information you need.

Hi there Xavier

I'm writing to you about the orders I made last month. You said that they would arrive a week after we made the order but we haven't received them. I'm sad that nobody called to tell us why the orders have been delayed for this long.

I would be happy if you could give me a call and explain why such thing happened. If not, I will be forced to cancel my order and get my pay back.

Alicia

Writing an Informal Email


I. WARM-UP

Vocabulary

Match the words in Column A with their meanings in Column B.

A	B
1. off	a. refers to letters or parcels that are delivered to you
2. memos	b. a detail, aspect, or quality of something or someone
3. away	c. not in the place where people expect you to be
4. post	d. a short official note that is written from one person to another within the same company or organization
5. points	e. in absence from work, service, a job, etc.

II. DIALOGUE BOX

	To...	"Darren Thoren" <darren.thornten@odt.com>
	Cc...	"Hallwell, Tanya" <tanya.hallwell@odt.com>
	Account ▼	Subject: Holiday

Hey Darren,

How was the holiday? I'll already be away on mine when you get this! I'm off to Sunny Florida. :-)

This is just a note telling you that all the information updating you on the last couple of weeks is with Tanya. She's collected memos and post for you and also a list of important points from me.

Hope you had a great time. I can't wait to get away myself!

Speak to you when I get back, as I won't be checking my emails while I'm gone.

See ya!

Always

Jina

Writing an Informal Email

Comprehension Check

1. Where will Jina go on a holiday?
2. Why does the sender write a note to Darren?

III. LANGUAGE BOX

You can often omit, I'm and It's in a friendly email:

- Will call you tomorrow after lunch.
- Pleased to hear you got back safely.

Sometimes you can omit the verb clause completely:

- Speak to you when I get back.
- Great night last night.

In most cases the words that can also be omitted:

- Just to let you know (...) I'm thinking about your proposal.
- Sorry to say (...) you're leaving the company.

IV. SAY IT!

Write an email to Sarah, a Filipino friend you are hoping to meet at the World English Conference you are in charge of next month. You are enclosing the conference information and you want to meet one night for dinner.

Writing Assertive Emails

WARM-UP

Vocabulary

Match the words in column A with their meanings in column B.

A	B
1. rectify	a. to set apart for a particular purpose
2. alternative	b. expect or hope for
3. look forward	c. one party prosecutes another for a wrong done or for protection of a right or prevention of a wrong.
4. allocate	d. to make, put, or set right
5. legal action	e. a possible or remaining course or choice

II. DIALOGUE BOX

The image shows a standard email composition window. On the left, there is a 'Send' button with a paper plane icon, an 'Account' dropdown menu, and a 'Subject:' label. To the right of these are three input fields: 'To...', 'Cc...', and 'Subject:'. The 'To...' and 'Cc...' fields are empty, and the 'Subject:' field is also empty.

Dear Jina,

I feel I should make you aware of the problem, being that one of your employees use the parking spaces allocated for our office. This has resulted in the delay of jobs being completed due to the fact we have to find an alternative parking area.

If immediate steps are not taken to rectify the situation, we will be forced to consider legal action.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Xavier

Comprehension Check

1. What problem does Xavier mention in his letter?
2. What action will the sender take if the problem is not rectified?

III. LANGUAGE BOX

A. Getting the recipients attention

1. I am writing to remind you that...
2. I feel you should be made aware of...
3. I would like to point out that...

B. Making the consequences of the problem clear

1. This has resulted in...
2. This has led to...
3. This has caused...
4. As a consequence / result of this...

C. Making clear what the consequences will be if there is no action

1. If immediate steps are not taken to rectify the situation, we will be forced to consider legal situation.
2. Unless we receive the parts by Friday, it will be necessary to contact another agent.
3. Please send us an assurance that this will not happen again, otherwise we will have no option but to cancel the contract.

IV. SAY IT!

A. Which sentences do you think are assertive, and which are aggressive? What's the difference?

- Take your car out of our park and don't put it there again!
- Please send me a full refund, and erase my name from your customer's list.
- The clients are questioning the quality of your work.
- I'd like to point out that as an employee, we have to be cognizant of our work responsibilities.
- Please send us assurances that this will not happen again

B. Write an email to the manager of a computer store where you purchase your new LCD desktop computers. The screen is blurry and the sound is not clear. Tell them what actions you want them to take.

10 Common Email Mistakes

Using Email Effectively

How many hours do you spend communicating by email every day? Most of us would answer, "Too many!"

According to a study by [McKinsey® & Company](#), people spend 28 percent of their working week reading and replying to emails. However, despite the risk of becoming [overloaded](#) with messages, it remains one of the most powerful and efficient communication tools.

Using email is a quick and easy way to stay connected with your team members, customers and stakeholders, particularly those who are [geographically dispersed](#). However, it can be very easy to send ineffective emails, create the wrong impression, or even damage your reputation with sloppy practices.

Mistake 1: Using the Wrong Tone

You might be tempted to send emails quickly when you're in a rush, without thinking carefully about your audience, what you're saying, or how your message might come across. So, it's important to consider who you're "talking" to and what action you want them to take, before you start writing.

For example, an email to a senior manager should be more formal than a quick update to a team member, and a message to a customer will likely be more enthusiastic and polite than an exchange with a close colleague.

Although your email's subject matter may be clear to you, its recipient might not share your knowledge or understanding. So, avoid using abbreviations, [jargon](#) or "text speak," and consider whether your message is appropriate before you hit the send button. Will your reader understand what you're saying? And is your information clearly structured and presented?

A good rule to follow is to address people in an email as you would in person. For example, making a quick request or providing instructions without a "hello" or "thank you" will likely come across as rude, regardless of how busy you are. So, make sure that all of your emails are courteous and respectful, and avoid typing in capitals, which implies anger or aggression.

Mistake 2: Hitting "Reply All"

How often have you been copied into an email exchange that's not relevant to you, and doesn't require you to take any action? Chances are, it happens regularly, and you know how frustrating it can be.

"Reply all" is a useful tool for keeping multiple team members in the loop, or for documenting group decisions, but many people use it without considering who should actually receive their email.

Receiving numerous irrelevant emails throughout the day can be distracting and time consuming; and becoming known as the person who always hits "reply all" can potentially damage your [reputation](#), as it can appear thoughtless, rushed and unprofessional. It might also suggest that you're not confident [making decisions](#) without input from senior managers.

So, consider whether you should "reply all" or respond only to the email's sender. And, think about whether using "cc" (carbon copy) or "bcc" (blind carbon copy) to include selected team members is more appropriate.

Mistake 3: Writing Too Much

Brief and succinct emails that contain only the important details are much more effective than long or wordy ones.

If you're struggling to keep your message short, consider whether the subject matter is too complex. Would another way of communicating it be more effective? Would a face-to-face meeting or telephone call make it clearer? Should you put your information in a procedure document instead?

Mistake 4: Forgetting Something?

How many times have you sent an email without attaching the relevant document? Perhaps you included a link that didn't work? Or even attached the wrong file?

These mistakes can often be fixed quickly with a follow-up email, but this adds to the large volume of messages that people receive, and it can appear unprofessional or forgetful. Consider attaching files as soon as you start drafting your message, and always check all of your links carefully.

Attaching the wrong document can be much more serious, particularly if it's sensitive or restricted. Identify what information is confidential in your organization, and to think about how to protect your data.

Mistake 5: Emailing the Wrong Person

Today, email providers increasingly use "auto-fill," predictive text and "threads" (or "conversation view"), which can all increase the risk of you sending your message to the wrong person.

This can be embarrassing, but it also means that your email might not reach its intended recipient unless someone flags up your mistake. More seriously, you risk distributing sensitive information to the wrong people, and damaging your organization's reputation. So, always pause to review your email before you send it.

When you reply to or forward an email within a thread, make sure that all the messages contained within it are appropriate for the recipient. Is there any sensitive information? Are there any personal comments or remarks?

Mistake 6: Being Too Emotional

One of the main benefits of email is that you don't need to respond immediately. It's particularly important to delay your response when you're stressed, angry or upset – if you send a message in the heat of the moment, you can't get it back (although some email clients do have a limited "undo" or "retrieve" option). These emails could damage your working relationships, or even be used as evidence against you.

So, avoid sending any messages when you feel this way. Wait until you've calmed down and can think clearly and rationally.

Mistake 7: Not Using "Delay Send"

It can be satisfying to send an email as soon as you finish writing it, so that it's "off your desk." However, many email clients now provide a "delay" or "scheduled send" function, which can be particularly useful.

For example, imagine that you're catching up on your emails late at night or during the weekend. What sort of impression will this give clients and stakeholders? How will they view your time management? Will team members feel that they should take action out of working hours?

Alternatively, imagine that you're working on a project, and you want to provide your team members with information at a specific point. Scheduling an email to arrive at a certain time is a good way to do this, and it can help you manage your time and organize your workload.

Mistake 8: Using Vague Subject Lines

As we've said, email is most effective when your message is concise and to the point (but not abrupt). So, it's important to start with a clear subject line, so that people know what to expect when they open it.

What is your email about? Is there an important deadline date? Do you want people to take action before a certain time? Is it urgent or non-urgent? Tailor your subject line accordingly, so your recipient can give the email the right level of priority and attention.

Mistake 9: Not Reviewing

Proofing your emails is one of the most important things you can do. It only takes a few minutes, and it helps you to pick up poor grammar, spelling mistakes and punctuation errors, which look unprofessional and [sloppy](#).

It's also important to ensure that you properly read and understand emails that are sent to you, including all messages in threads or conversations. Here, someone may have already dealt with your question or concern, and raising it again will likely result in duplication, frustration and confusion.

Finally, don't add the recipient to your email until the last moment. This ensures that you can't accidentally send your message before you've finished writing it, have added your attachment, checked the email, and spotted any errors.

Mistake 10: Sending Unnecessary Emails

Because email is so quick and convenient, it can easily become your default communication method with your team. However, it's important to remember that email is also impersonal, and you risk losing touch with people if you rely on it too much. It's certainly not a substitute for face-to-face or even [phone communication](#).

Key Points

Email can be a quick, efficient and effective way of communicating if it's used properly. However, think carefully about how you use it, and how reliant you are upon it.

Reviewing an email before you send it can help ensure that its tone, meaning and length are appropriate, that your spelling, grammar and punctuation are correct, and that you've selected the right recipient and attachment.

Avoid sending emails when you feel stressed or angry, consider the impact on people if you do it out of office hours or at the weekend, and think carefully about whether you should use "reply all."

Focus on being concise and to the point, though not abrupt, and make your requests clear.

Apply This to Your Life

- Get into the habit of reviewing and re-reading your emails before you send them – you may be surprised by what you pick up.
- Think carefully about how you use "reply all," cc and bcc.
- Take time to consider whether you are spending too much time communicating by email. Do you rely on it too much when managing your team?

Books References:**Managing Your Email Before it Manages You**

by Mike Song (Author), Vicki Halsey (Author), Tim Burrell (Author)

Writing That Works; How to Communicate effectively in Business

by Kenneth Roman

The Encyclopedia of Business Letters, Faxes, and Emails: Features Hundreds of Model Letters, Faxes, and E-Mails to Give Your Business Writing the Attention It Deserves

by Robert W Bly and Regina Anne Kelly

Personal Action Plan

I am already doing these things well:

I want to improve these areas:

I have these resources to help me:

As a result of what I have learned in this workshop, I am going to...	My target date is...	I will know I have succeeded when...	I will follow up with myself on...