**Tips for Your Pre-Program Assignment**

You will be writing a practice email to a foreign organization asking for consultation on an overseas business trip (please check the assignment file provided by the NHI). The assignment should be sent to the email address [jaminbassette@korea.kr](mailto:jaminbassette@korea.kr) before the program starts. Below, you can find some tips and advice that should make your writing assignment easier for you.

**Tips for writing an Email**

After a salutation (such as “Dear Dr. Bassette,”) you should give your name and place of work (e.g. “This is Jamin Bassette from the National Human Resources Development Institute (NHI).”). Your very next sentence should be the reason why you are writing to them, (usually as “I am emailing you to (verb)”) as you do not want them to have to read an entire paragraph just to know what the point of your email is.

Do not begin by making comments about personal health or the weather (small talk); they are not appropriate in an official email. They sound too familiar -- only a mother would say something like “Be careful that you don’t catch a cold” or “Take care of your health.”

When choosing how to write your name, the order and number of capital letters will change how English speakers read your name. For instance, Kim Taehee would be read as two words, while Kim Tae-Hee would be read as three words, changing the pronunciation. Choose which ever you think sounds better, but note if you start with your family name, people are likely to call you just that (i.e. calling Kim Taehee just “Kim,” but Taehee Kim would likely be called “Taehee”).

Do not use contractions (e.g., won’t, don’t, can’t etc.) in your emails, as they are too informal for government work.

Numbers from one to ten should be written as words rather than as numerals (i.e. “Two students” not “2 students”).

The word “City” added to the name of a Korean city looks awkward in English.   
*Seoul City* (awkward)  
*Seoul* (good)  
*Our headquarters are in the city of Seoul* (good)

In English, there are no spaces before a colon:  
*Dear Dr. Smith :* (incorrect)  
*Dear Dr. Smith:* (correct)

On the other hand, there is always a space before a set of parentheses:  
*This(is not correct)  
This (is correct)*

The wavy line that Koreans like to use for dates is not used in English:  
*July 26~27* (not used)  
*July 26-27* (correct)

Do not use “Hi” or “Hello” to start; these are used in informal emails. In a professional/business email, “Dear” serves as the greeting.

There is no need to indent the opening lines of your paragraphs.

In my experience, the full name “the Republic of Korea” is not well known to non-Koreans. I realize that others may not agree, but I recommend using “South Korea” to avoid any confusion or both, i.e. “The Republic of Korea (South Korea).”

Koreans often use the word “benchmark” as a verb, while native speakers do not. In English, “benchmark” is often used as a noun in the phrase “use as a benchmark.”  
*We would like to benchmark your organization.* (Not natural)  
*We would like to visit your organization to study your processes and procedures and to use them as a benchmark in redesigning our own administrative system.* (Good)

In English it is not common to use the present progressive tense when describing our work position. Use the present tense to describe your job and your workplace.   
*\* I am working at Statistics Korea.* (Not common. The reader may wonder, “Is she leaving the position soon? Is she quitting soon? Is she getting transferred soon?”)   
*\* I work at Statistics Korea.* (Good, clear, unambiguous.)

A sentence like “I look forward to your positive response” is not appropriate in English as the tone is somewhat presumptuous. Better is “I look forward to hearing from you soon.”

Make sure to tell the reader how best to contact you, be it “at this email address,” or an additional phone number or address you will give them. A common phrase for this is “Please feel free to contact me at this address at your earliest convenience.”

**For a request to visit**

It is polite to use “would like” rather than “want.” *We would like to visit your organization.*

This is the email where you will be writing to a company/organization with your basic information and explanation for wanting to visit them.

Make sure to mention the fact that you are a government professional who is looking for specific field experience that they can offer.

Make sure to give numbers, like how many people, what time/dates, and what you will be able to provide to them.

Try to be specific about what you hope to learn from your visit, but also what you think you could offer them in exchange for their time.

List some documents you are able to provide with a line such as “I have an English language abstract for our research available upon request.”

Always leave a way to contact you, such as a phone number and any additional email address.

Always say specifically what you want to learn from working with them, what you plan to do with that training, and why you want to work with them rather than another company.

Before ending your email, be sure to thank the recipient for considering your application, e.g. “Thank you very much for your time and consideration.”

Make sure to give them a soft and hard deadline for responding to your request, so they know how quickly they need to reply.

**Note:** Below is an example email so that you can better understand the format. Your content should be related to one of the two assignments given to you at NHI.

**Example Email:**

Subject: Request for visit to your institution this spring, NHI Korea (Bassette)

Dear Sir/Ma’am,   
  
My name is Jamin Bassette. I am a government official in South Korea. I work at the National Human Resources Development Institute in Gwacheon, just outside of Seoul. My duties include teaching English to other South Korean government officials, and proofreading government documents that are published in English.   
  
I am writing to ask if you could consider allowing my team to visit your institution this spring. I heard from my colleague that your institute has an excellent training program for Singaporean government officials before they go overseas to give presentations, hold negotiations, and give speeches. I train Korean officials who do the same things overseas at our institution. Therefore, I am very interested in comparing the English training of Singaporean and Korean officials; specifically, how they use English in both social and official situations.  
  
At your institute, we would like to do research on the differences in language education for public officials in Singapore, Malaysia, Laos, Korea, Japan, and other Asian countries. I have attached a copy of my team’s resumes and can provide more information on my team and myself upon request.   
  
I look forward to hearing from you soon. I have to decide on an overseas institute sometime this spring, so if you could contact me within a week that would be greatly appreciated. Also, please let me know the person to whom I should address future emails. Thank you for your help. Best regards,

(Mr.) Jamin Bassette, Ph.D.   
Global Education & Cooperation Division  
National Human Resources Development Institute  
Gwacheon, South Korea