**COMM 1100 – Fall 2024**

**Email Assignment**

**Due:** Week 5

**Weight:** 10%

**Course Learning Outcomes**

* CLO1 - Identify and prepare information suitable for the intended audience and purpose
* CLO2 – Apply professional writing strategies that include format, components and structure
* CLO4 - Modify writing for clarity, coherence and grammatical correctness

**Essential Employability Skills**

The following Essential Employability Skills are assessed in this assignment. You can find out more about Essential Employability Skills [here.](https://durhamcollege.ca/ctl/academic-quality/curriculum-development/essential-employability-skills/)

* EES 1 - Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.
* EES 2 - Respond to written, spoken, or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.
* EES 7 - Analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.

**Overview**

**Part 1: First draft written by student without AI.**

* Revise the email considering the criteria provided (eg. PAIBOC, direct approach, tone)
* Other requirements: subject line, greeting, purpose, structure

**Part 2: Develop AI prompts to revise the student’s first draft then answer reflective questions.**

* The AI prompts used and the AI output must be included in the assignment submission.
* Sample reflective questions:
  + Were the prompts provided to the AI tool clear enough?
  + Did you need to edit the prompts to improve the quality of the output received from the AI? Provide examples.
  + Compare the AI revised version to the assessment criteria (eg. tone). In what ways is the AI version better than your first draft? In what ways is it worse?

**Part 3:** **Review and edit the AI output to create a final draft, then answer reflective questions such as those below.**

* Is the purpose of the message clear? What is it?
* Have you considered the audience? Provide examples showing how you have done this.
* What is the tone you are using?  Why is it appropriate in this context?
* Check editing (sentence structure, spelling, grammar)

All AI prompts used and the AI output must be included in the assignment submission. Failure to do so will result in 0 on this assignment.

**Part 1: First draft written by student without AI.**

**First Draft – Please ensure on separate page (1-page max.)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| To: | Dr. Evil |
| From: | Amy Park |
| cc: | Todd Martin |
| Date: | February 3rd, 2025 |
| Re: | Request for PTO from Amy Park |

Salutation, Body, Closing, Signature

Hello Dr. Evil,

Hope you had a great weekend.

I am writing to request a few days off during the first week of August to recover from my upcoming double thumb surgery I mentioned in our 1:1 last week. Specifically, I'm hoping to have Monday through Thursday to recover, but depending on how things go, I may need to take Friday off as well. Do you think this will be okay?

On the calendar for those dates, there is only one inter-departmental meeting scheduled during that time, but Random Task and Mr. B have let me know that their schedules are flexible if I need to push that meeting to the following week. If there are any projects or initiatives not yet on the roadmap that may require me during that time, please let me know and I will reschedule the surgery.

Thanks for your consideration,

- Amy Park

Part 2:

Develop AI prompts to revise the student’s first draft then answer reflective questions.

* AI prompts (Min. 3)
* Reflective response (Min. 150 words – Full sentences/paragraphs)

**Prompt 1:**

“Please review this email and provide me suggestions for how to make it more acceptable for a professional context. Focus on the grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and tone. Here is the first draft, please provide me two different choices suitable for different workplace dynamics.”

**Output 1:**

Here are two revised versions of your email, tailored for different workplace dynamics:

**Option 1: Formal & Concise (For a Traditional/Corporate Workplace)**

This version is structured, professional, and to the point.

**Subject:** Request for Time Off – First Week of August

Dear Dr. Evil,

I hope you had a great weekend.

I am writing to formally request time off from Monday, August 1st, through Thursday, August 4th, to recover from my upcoming double thumb surgery, which I mentioned in our 1:1 last week. Depending on my recovery, I may also need to take Friday, August 5th, and I will provide an update as soon as possible. Please let me know if this schedule poses any conflicts.

I reviewed the calendar and noted that there is only one interdepartmental meeting scheduled during that time. Random Task and Mr. B have confirmed that they are available to reschedule if necessary. However, if any upcoming projects or initiatives require my presence, I am happy to coordinate accordingly and, if needed, adjust my surgery date.

Please let me know your thoughts, and thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Amy Park

Option 2: Polished Yet Personable (For a More Casual/Flexible Workplace)

This version maintains professionalism while keeping a friendly and approachable tone.

**Subject:** Time Off Request – Early August

Hi Dr. Evil,

Hope you had a great weekend!

I wanted to check in about taking some time off during the first week of August to recover from my upcoming double thumb surgery, which I mentioned in our 1:1 last week. Ideally, I’d like to take Monday through Thursday off, but depending on my recovery, I may also need Friday. Would this work for the team?

I took a look at the calendar and saw that the only major commitment that week is the interdepartmental meeting. Random Task and Mr. B have both let me know they’re flexible with rescheduling if needed. That said, if there are any high-priority projects or unexpected needs that come up, I’m happy to coordinate and adjust my plans accordingly.

Let me know what you think, and I appreciate your consideration!

Best,

Amy

Both options refine the tone, grammar, and structure while keeping the message professional and clear. The first is ideal for a formal setting, while the second is better suited for a workplace with a more relaxed culture. Let me know if you’d like any further adjustments! 😊

**Reflection 1:**

I like asking the AI for different options for tone because my own tone in writing can veer towards being overly verbose, formal, and direct. Sometimes it’s important to dial that back to keep things light, so I took note of some grammar and style choices in the second option, such as using an exclamation point instead of a period at the end of the “Hope you had a great weekend!” line. It didn’t feel to me that I needed to use AI to write this email, but it’s always interesting to ask it for critique along certain lines and evaluate what it tells me about my own writing.

**Prompt 2:**

“Here is draft 2 of an email request to my boss. Please fix up the punctuation and ensure it's written with a respectful but casual tone. Thank you.”

Output 2:

Your email is already well-structured and professional with a respectful yet casual tone. I made a few minor punctuation and phrasing refinements for clarity and flow. Here’s your polished version:

**Subject:** Time Off Request – Early August

Hi Dr. Evil,

Hope you had a great weekend!

I wanted to check in about taking some time off during the first week of August to recover from my upcoming double thumb surgery, which I mentioned in our 1:1 last week. Ideally, I’d like to take Monday through Thursday off, but depending on my recovery, I may also need Friday. Would this work for the team?

I looked at the calendar and saw that the only major commitment that week is the interdepartmental meeting. Random Task and Mr. B have both let me know they’re flexible with rescheduling if needed. That said, if any high-priority projects or unexpected needs come up, I’m happy to coordinate and adjust my plans accordingly.

Let me know what you think—I appreciate your consideration!

Best,

Amy

This keeps it polished, professional, and friendly while ensuring smooth readability. Let me know if you’d like any further tweaks! 😊

**Reflection 2:**

In this one, I’m really getting nit-picky about some phrase choices such as “took a look” which is a casual colloquialism I would use in my verbal speech. In this case I decided to use the less verbose and more direct “I looked” instead. I am also trying to decide how to phrase the final paragraph, which is trying to strike a balance between being accommodating and really not wanting to reschedule a surgery unless absolutely necessary. In this case I decided that it would be important to indicate a willingness to do that if the team needs me to, because I’m a team player and ready to take on the burden of more personal schedule complexity if it would make things run smoother for my boss and colleagues. I’m banking on the fact that showing that willingness will be recognized and will suffice, because I’m making it clear that I’m not asking anyone to accommodate me and my personal life. However I am concerned that being too accommodating in tone in the final line of that paragraph so that is what is on my mind for the next prompt.

**Prompt 3:**

“Would you please give me one more round of potential edits to consider? With the goal of achieving a respectful, direct, and casual tone with my boss in a letter with perfect English punctuation at a grade 7 reading level.”

Output 3:

Here’s another refined version of your email, keeping it respectful, direct, and casual with polished punctuation and smooth readability:

**Subject:** Time Off Request – Early August

Hi Dr. Evil,

Hope you had a great weekend!

I wanted to follow up on taking some time off during the first week of August to recover from my upcoming double thumb surgery, which I mentioned in our 1:1 last week. Ideally, I’d like to be off Monday through Thursday, but depending on my recovery, I may also need Friday. Would that work for the team?

I checked the calendar and saw that the only major commitment that week is the interdepartmental meeting. Random Task and Mr. B are both open to rescheduling if needed. That said, if any high-priority projects or last-minute needs come up, I’m happy to coordinate and adjust my plans accordingly.

Let me know your thoughts—I appreciate it!

Best,

Amy

This version simplifies phrasing for clarity and flow while keeping it professional yet natural. Let me know if you’d like any other adjustments! 😊

**Reflection 3:**

For the final prompt, I wanted to tie it all together with a specific reading level to make sure it’s accessible and understandable at that 7th grade level. Not a knock on my audience Dr. Evil, but writing above the 7th grade level can sometimes send a message unintentionally that I was hoping to avoid. I decided to pick and choose my favourite edits and advice from all the different AI outputs. Overall for this kind of email, I would get opinions from AI and incorporate it, but I wouldn’t use it for a simple email request like this because it becomes overly confusing for me to juggle different edits.

**Part 3:** **Review and edit the AI output to create a final draft, then answer reflective questions such as those below.**

* Reflective response (Min. 150 words – Full sentences/paragraphs)
* Is the purpose of the message clear? What is it?
* Have you considered the audience? Provide examples showing how you have done this.
* What is the tone you are using?  Why is it appropriate in this context?
* Check editing (sentence structure, spelling, grammar)

It is my belief that the purpose of the email is clear, because I have put the main point of the email in the subject line and have tried to establish the point quickly within the main body paragraph. I have considered the audience, my boss Dr. Evil,

**Final Draft – Please ensure on separate page (1-page max.)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| To: | Dr. Evil |
| From: | Amy Park |
| cc: | Random Task, Mr. B |
| Date: | February 3rd, 2025 |
| Re: | Re: Time Off Request |

Hello Dr. Evil,

Hope you had a great weekend!

I wanted to follow up with you about my request for time off during the first week of August to recover from my upcoming double thumb surgery, which I mentioned in our 1:1 last week. Ideally, I’d take Monday through Thursday off, but depending on my recovery, I may also need Friday. Do you think this would work for the team?

I took a look at the calendar and saw that the only major commitment my team has that week is the interdepartmental meeting. However, Random Task and Mr. B have both let me know they’re flexible if I need to reschedule it. That said, if there are any other high-priority projects that come up, I’d be happy to coordinate and adjust my plans to accommodate that.

Let me know what you think, and I appreciate your consideration!

All the best,

Amy

[In class, you asked us to delete the last page, reflective question portion of this assignment]