

THE WRITE STUFF

Drafting, sending, and responding to emails in the workplace





OBJECTIVES:

After completing this session,
you will be able to ...

- identify the main parts of emails.
- evaluate appropriate word choice based on recipients.
- apply skills for acceptable sign-offs.
- be able to write an appropriate professional email.



WHAT WE'LL COVER

Informal vs. Professional language

How to word your emails appropriately

Greetings and Closings

How to begin and end an email professionally.

Subject Lines

How to get their attention.

Common Phrases

Words you'll use often.

Common Mistakes

Making sure you don't confuse readers.

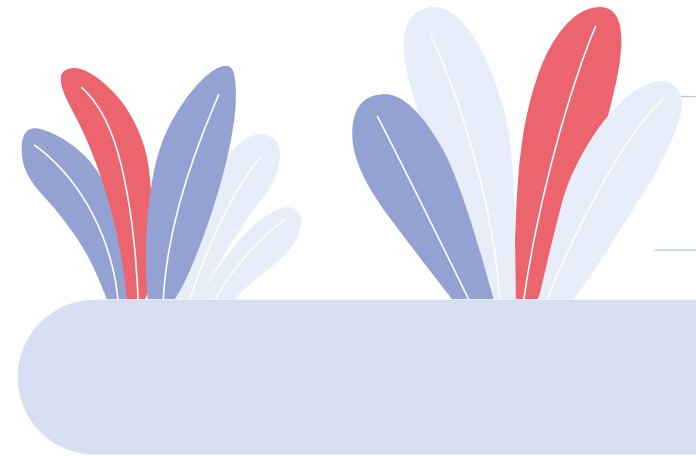
Informal vs. Professional Speech

Informal

Makes the assumption that you have a close, personal relationship with the person to whom you're emailing

Professional

Understands that your relationship is mostly professional and that is the image you are communicating



Informal vs. Professional Speech

Informal

Uses slang and casual language
Ex: "You guys," "super," "wow"

Professional

Uses neutral or formal language
Ex: "All staff members," "very,"
"impressive"



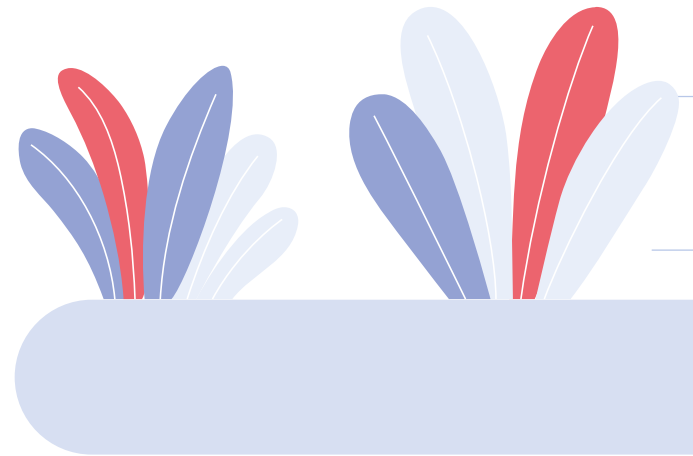
Informal vs. Professional Speech

Informal

Uses casual salutations and closes

Professional

Uses more formal or appropriate salutations and closes



Informal vs. Professional Speech

Informal

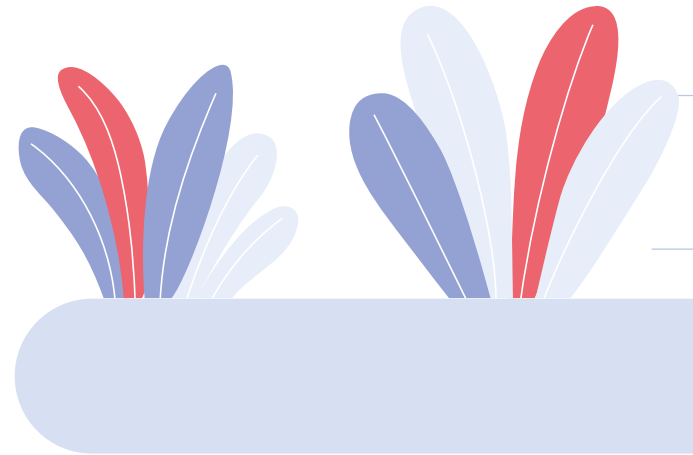
Uses sentence fragments

Ex: "Hope to hear from you,"
"Good news!"

Professional

Uses complete sentences with a subject and a verb.

Ex: "I hope to hear from you soon."



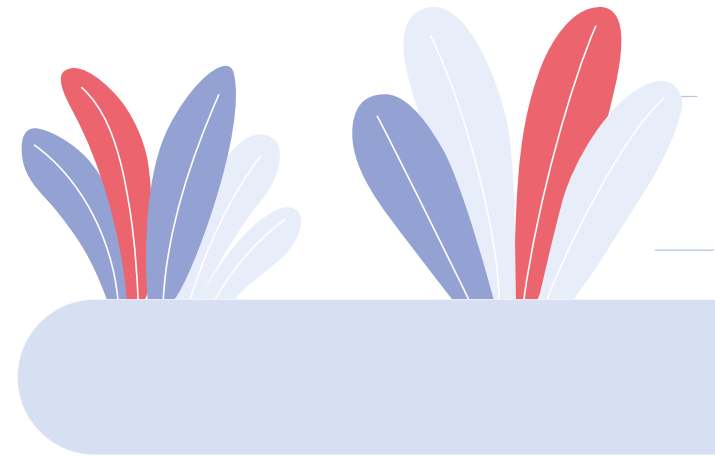
Informal vs. Professional Speech

Informal

Shares personal information

Professional

Communicates only what the other party needs to know



Informal vs. Professional Speech

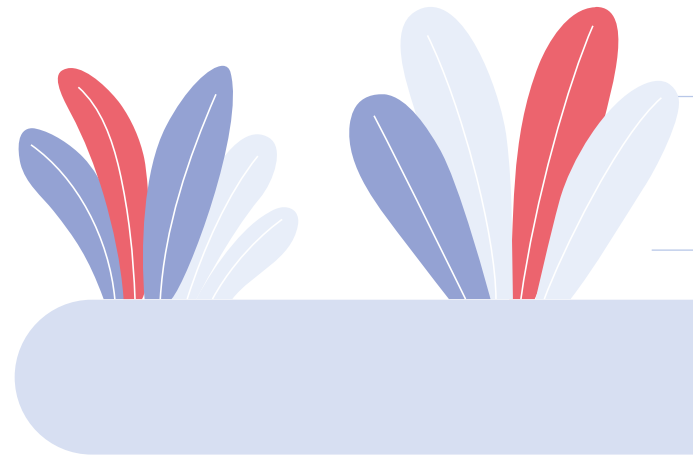
Informal

Uses CAPITAL letters for emphasis

Professional

Uses a larger vocabulary and strong adjectives/adverbs

Ex: “extremely,” “quite,” “sincerely,” “significant”



GREETINGS AND CLOSINGS



GREETINGS AND CLOSINGS



Hello

Don't just start with your text, and don't just stop at the end without a polite signature.

When in doubt, address someone more formally to avoid offending them.

Dear Professor Smith,
Hello, Ms. McMahon,
Hi, Mary-Jane,



Who?

If you don't know the name of the person you are addressing, or if the email addresses a diverse group, try something generic, yet polite.

To whom it may concern,
Dear members of the
selection committee,
Hello, everyone,



Goodbye

Your closing is extremely important because it lets the reader know who is contacting them. Always sign off with your name at the end of your message. If you don't know the reader well, you might also consider including your title and the organization you belong to.

Mary Watkins
Senior Research Associate
Bain and Company

GREETINGS AND CLOSINGS



Friendly

For your closing, something brief but friendly, or perhaps just your name, will do for most correspondence:

Thank you,
Best wishes,
See you tomorrow,
Regards,



Formal

For a very formal message, such as a job application, use the kind of closing that you might see in a business letter:

Sincerely,
Respectfully yours,



Email openings



Rank the following salutations in level of formality on a scale of 1 -5.

5 is the most formal, 1 is the least formal.
You can use the same number more than once.

Dear Mr. Smith,



Dear Elizabeth,



Hello Ms. Jones



Hi James,



Patti,



Hello everyone!



Closing your emails

Rank the following closings in level of formality on a scale of 1 -5.
5 is the most formal, 1 is the least formal.
You can use the same number more than once.



Yours
Sincerely,



Cheers,



Thanks!



Sincerely,



Regards,



- Anne



From



SUBJECT LINES



SUBJECT LINES



Main Points

Email subject lines are like newspaper headlines. They should convey the main point of your message or the idea that you want the reader to take away.



Specificity

Therefore, be as specific as possible. One-word subjects such as “Hi,” “Question,” or “FYI” are not informative and don’t give the reader an idea of how important your message is.



Timeliness

If your message is time sensitive, you might want to include a date in your subject line, like “Meeting on Thurs, Dec 2”.



COMMON PHRASES



ATTACHMENTS

“**Please find attached** the 2015 wage summary report”

“**I am enclosing** a copy of the report with this email for your perusal.”

“**Enclosed with this email you will find** a copy of your 2015 tax return.”

“**Attached is** the agenda for Thursday’s meeting, as per your request.”

MAKING REQUESTS

Could you please provide us with more detailed information so that we can discuss it and get back to you?

Would it be possible to meet and discuss this issue, perhaps by this Friday?

Would you be able to give us a copy of your report from yesterday's presentation?

I am looking for more information regarding our 2015 Mexican sales numbers, and **I am wondering if** you would be able to provide this to us?

LEVELS OF POLITENESS WHEN MAKING REQUESTS

Very Polite

I would be grateful if you
could send me ...
I would appreciate if you
could ...

Polite but Direct

Could you send me ... ?
Would you be able to ... ?

Polite

Could you please ... ?
Could you send me ... , please?

More Direct

Please send me ...
Please meet me ...



CONCLUSIONS

I am hoping to hear from you at your earliest convenience.

Please have a look over the attached recruitment poster and let me know your feedback.

I look forward to hearing from you.

- Please let me know if you have any questions about this email.

Thank you for your support!





COMMON MISTAKES

STAKES

Choose the correct or most appropriate word.

I am writing with (1) *connection/reference/regarding* to our telephone conversation this morning about your order 7895LG. I must (2) *regret/apologize/sorry* for the delay in processing this order. I can now confirm that the goods have been shipped and should (3) *arrive/reach/deliver* you within 10 working days. We have taken special (4) *care/attention/caution* to make sure that the items are exactly as you requested.

Once again, please (5) *take/have/accept* our apologies. If you have any further questions, do not (6) *stop/fail/hesitate* to contact me again.

STAKES

Choose the correct or most appropriate word.

I was (1) *sorry/unhappy/afraid* to hear about the damage to the products that you received this morning. However, I am (2) *afraid/apologise/regret* that we cannot (3) *accept/except/have* responsibility in this (4) *topic/material/matter*. All our products are (5) *controlled/checked/looked* very carefully before leaving the factory, and the damage in this case must have been caused in transit. I (6) *propose/suggest/tell* that you contact the shipping company directly about possible compensation. In the meantime, we can ship the same order to you again, if it would help. If you give us a firm instruction to do so (7) *until/by/within* the next few days, it should reach you (8) *until/by/within* the end of the month.

STAKES

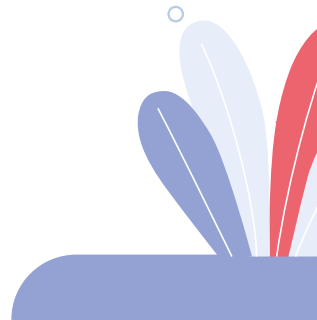
Choose the correct or most appropriate word.

I am writing to you (1) *affecting/connecting/concerning* the meeting that we (2) *combined/appointed/arranged* for this Friday. I am afraid something urgent has come up and I will not be able to attend. Can we (3) *cancel/postpone/schedule* the meeting until next week? I can make any time Wednesday or Thursday. I apologize for any (4) *disadvantage/inconvenience/unfortunate* this may cause, and I (5) *look forward/wait/anticipate* to (6) *hear/hearing/know* from you.

FINAL EXERCISE:

You are going to write two emails:

- the first trying to arrange a meeting
- the second responding to somebody else who is trying to meet with you.



EMAIL #1

Write to a representative of another organization to arrange a meeting. Prepare the situation using the questions below. The information can be real or imaginary.

- What is your organization? What services do you offer?
- What is the meeting about? Why is it happening?
- Who are you writing to? Why do they need to be at the meeting?
- What day, time and place will you suggest? (e.g. your own office)
- Do you need to include a reference to where your organization is, or how to find it?
- Do you need to include a reference to how they will get to the meeting? (e.g. pickup)
- Do you want them to take any action before the meeting? Ideas: bring something; prepare something; tell you about possible agenda items.
- Ask for a quick reply.

Now write the email.

When you finish, work with a partner. Check each other's grammar, spelling, punctuation and style. Is everything clear, well-structured and easy to understand?

MAIL #2

Exchange emails with a different partner. Write a reply to the email you receive.

Some ideas are given below, but adapt and change them as you wish.

- Thank them for their email.
- Agree that the meeting is important.
- Say that the time is not good for you, and suggest an alternative.
- Apologize for any inconvenience caused (if appropriate).
- Say that you will call them to finalise the arrangements.
- Respond to any other points in the email you received.



YOU DID IT!

CONGRATS!

Do you have any questions?

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