

1 > Emails

Lead-in

The content and style of emails may differ from country to country. Here are some questions to think about before you write work-related emails:

- 1 Think about who you are writing to. In general, emails are either informal (more like spoken English) or formal/semi-formal (similar to a business letter). Emails to senior staff or people outside of your organisation may use more formal language than those sent to work colleagues.
- 2 Think about the style you need to use. Should your email be a) short and direct or b) longer with polite introductions and endings? Sometimes this depends on the recipient's country/culture.
- 3 What information are you going to communicate? Check the tone and organisation to make sure that the end result is polite and clear.

Model answers

Informal email

Hi Deenesh,

Just a quick email to say that we've arranged an informal presentation for project managers to introduce the new computer system. Are you free on Friday at 11 a.m.? Let me know if you're available and I'll send details.

We've decided to run a series of longer training sessions at the end of the month for all staff members. I've attached a list of software training course dates which might be of interest for your team.

Let me know if you need anything else on this. Otherwise, hope to see you on Friday!

All the best,
Kasia

Formal email

Dear Ms Park,

Further to our telephone conversation yesterday, we are pleased to invite you to an open day for candidates applying for intern positions at Godrey & Maine. Attendees are requested to report to reception at 9.30 a.m. on 21 June. Please confirm by email whether you will be able to attend.

The attached document contains full details of the events and seminars taking place throughout the day.

We are delighted to confirm that we will be welcoming distinguished speakers from Harvard Business School, Singapore Management University and Instituto Tecnológico de Mexico (ITAM).

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,
Adriana Borges
Training Coordinator

Functional language

Opening and closing an email

	Formal/Semi-formal	Informal
Greeting	Dear Sir or Madam, Dear Ms/Mrs/Miss/Mr/Dr Jamal,	Hi/Hello Norbert, Good morning Maria,
Concluding	Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries. Do let me know if I can be of any further assistance on this matter. Please let me know if you require any further details/information. I look forward to hearing from you.	Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Hope to see you / hear from you soon. Let me know if you need anything else / more information on this.
Signing off	Yours sincerely, Kind regards, Regards, Sincerely, Yours,	Best wishes, All the best, Best,

Reasons for writing

Function	Formal/Semi-formal	Informal
Linking to previous communication	Further to our conversation/ meeting, ... In response to your email, ... With reference to our conversation on Monday, ...	Thanks for your email. It was good to speak yesterday.
Saying why you are writing	I am writing to inform you that your application has been accepted. I am writing regarding / with regard to our meeting on 23 January.	I'm writing to let you know that the meeting has been changed from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. I just wanted to confirm the date of our next meeting. Just a quick question about the schedule.
Referring to attachments	Please find attached a list of clients. You will find attached the itinerary. Please sign the contract attached.	I've attached the project update. You'll find the document/file attached.
Requests and offers	I would be most grateful if you could update your contact details. Please confirm if/whether you are able to attend. I would appreciate it if you could send me the file. I would also like to know when Mr Lee would be available for a call.	Could/Can you let me know if you're available? I was just wondering if you could join our meeting on Friday. Would you mind filling in the attached form?
Informing of a decision	We are delighted to confirm that Sara West has agreed to accept the role of Vice President. We are pleased to announce that work on the new building will begin in July. We are sorry / regret to inform you that your application was not successful.	We've decided to change the logo to improve brand image. We thought that it was best to discuss this at the meeting next week. I'm sorry to have to tell you that your proposal was not approved.

Invitations

Function	Formal/Semi-formal	Informal
Inviting	Godfrey & Maine invite you to a fundraising auction on 29 August. We are pleased to invite you to a communications seminar. We hope that you will be able to join us for refreshments after the ceremony.	I'd like to invite you to a product demonstration. Are you free on Thursday? Would you like to come to a talk on career progression? It would be great if you could join us.
Thanking / Responding to thanks	Thank you for your kind invitation. It was my pleasure.	Many thanks / Thanks for the invitation. No problem!
Accepting	I would be delighted to attend the debate. I can confirm that I will be able to attend the videoconference.	I'd love to come. I'm looking forward to attending the workshop.
Declining	Unfortunately, it will not be possible to attend. Sadly, I will have to decline your kind invitation as I have a prior engagement.	Sorry, I won't be able to make the team meeting this week. It's not going to be possible to go to the seminar as I already have an appointment.

2 Letters

Lead-in

Letter writing style and layout may differ from country to country. In general, letters have a more formal style than emails, and use of contractions, idioms and slang are avoided. Short paragraphs and clear language will make letters easier to read. Letters often include a subject line, which helps the reader understand important details.

Model answers Covering letter

Dear Mr Weber,

Re: Social Media Coordinator vacancy

I am writing in response to your recent advertisement on the Schloss Tours website regarding the planned expansion of your social media team. Please find my CV enclosed.

I have had two years' experience in the travel sector and also studied German at Edinburgh University. I have also gained additional post-graduate qualifications in computing and marketing. In my current position, I gained experience in IT and was the project leader for the team which developed the company website. For the last six months I have been in charge of social media and promotions while the department manager has been on maternity leave. The temporary post has been very successful and I would like to pursue a permanent position in the same field.

My main interest relates to the use of social media in the travel industry to promote sales, and the coordinator role would be an excellent opportunity to use both the marketing and language skills that I have developed. You will find detailed examples of the social media projects I have worked on in my CV.

I have also taken the opportunity to study your current social media presence and have some ideas which I would be interested to discuss with you. I would be grateful for the opportunity to learn more about the role and your company.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my application.

Yours sincerely,
Theresa Gonzalez

Letter of complaint

Dear Sir or Madam,

Subject: Catering quality issues

I am writing regarding a problem which occurred during a recent training session at the Greenlanes Outdoor Pursuit Centre in Eastbourne, Kent. Your company was asked to arrange lunch at the venue for 25 people, including 3 vegetarians.

However, there were serious issues with the service supplied. No vegetarian option was available. The quantity of food was insufficient (for 15 rather than 25 people). The quality of food was unsatisfactory (cold and inedible).

As a result, we had to pay extra to have food delivered from a local restaurant. I have tried to contact Alan Conway, who made the initial arrangements, but he has not answered my emails nor returned my calls. As a result, I am now contacting customer services in an attempt to resolve the issue.

We have used your company on previous occasions and have been pleased with the service. However, as you can imagine, we are disappointed both with the problems described and also with the communication breakdown that we have experienced.

We will not be able to pay the invoice submitted by your company until these concerns have been addressed and a suitable discount has been agreed.

Your prompt response will be appreciated.

Yours faithfully,
Alex Tekin

Functional language Opening and closing a letter

Greeting	Dear Sir or Madam, Dear Ms/Mrs/Miss/Mr/Dr/Professor Kline, To whom it may concern,
Highlighting the subject	Re: Subject:
Referring to documents	Please find enclosed my CV. The enclosed documents/contract ...
Closing	I look forward to hearing from you. I look forward to (receiving) your reply.
Signing off	Yours sincerely, Yours faithfully, Kind regards, Sincerely, Yours,

Covering letters

Saying why you are writing	I am writing in response to / with regard to your advertisement on your website. I am writing to enquire about the position of Sales Manager you advertised on your website.
Providing information	I have completed a degree in computer science / a computer science degree. Additional qualifications have been gained in accounting. I have experience in the insurance sector.
Reasoning/ Skills	As you can see from my enclosed CV, my qualifications and experience match this position's requirements. My professional qualifications appear to be well suited to your company's requirements. These skills make me a perfect candidate for the job. I work well under pressure and enjoy working in a team. My native language is Italian, but I can also speak Spanish and German.
Closing remarks	I would appreciate / be grateful for the opportunity to discuss the position. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would be happy to attend an interview at any time convenient to you. I can supply references from previous employers if required. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Letters of complaint

	Complaint
Referring to the problem	I am writing regarding a late order. I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with one of your products. I am writing to complain about a holiday you arranged for me.
Giving / Asking for details	There were serious issues with the service supplied. The goods were damaged. Several parts of the order were missing. The agreed delivery day was 25 April but the goods did not arrive until 11 May. Unfortunately, the products were nothing like we had been led to expect.
Describing results	Because of this, we were unable to use the product. As a result, we had to find another supplier. Due to this, the event had to be cancelled.
Requesting action	We would be grateful if our money was refunded. It seems only fair that you should offer a full refund. I would appreciate it if you could look into this matter as soon as possible. I would appreciate your immediate attention to this matter.

3 > Reports

Lead-in

The content and style of reports may differ from company to company. Reports are usually written using formal style and clear language. Here are some questions to think about before you write reports:

- 1 Will the reader be from inside or outside the company? Company style, layout and content may differ for internal and external reports.
- 2 What length is appropriate for the report? A short report might be a single page but longer reports require more detail. It is important to organise the information so that it is easy to read, using headings and subheadings. Longer reports may also include a summary or executive summary at the start, which contains key information, decisions or recommendations included in the report.
- 3 It is important to read and edit your report, checking punctuation, grammar, spelling and data before sending.

Model answer

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to consider requests by staff representatives to move over to flexible working hours from September. We will explain the reasons that the changes have been requested and look at the potential problems and effects. Finally, the report will offer recommendations regarding limited changes to working hours.

Reasons for changes to working hours

Staff representatives have raised employee concerns that the current working hours are leading to problems in staff retention. The HR department has also noted that it is currently proving difficult to attract new staff. After studying our competitors in the industry, the following ideas were put forward for consideration:

- Increase salaries by five percent or offer a performance-related annual bonus scheme.
- Offer flexible working hours to attract employees with young families back to the workforce and retain current employees.
- Include an additional two days to current annual paid leave after one year's service.

Feedback from a recent board meeting indicated that it would not be possible to increase wages, offer a bonus or extend annual leave, but that it would be possible to explore the possibility of flexible working hours.

Problems and effects

While staff would support flexible working hours, concerns have been raised by management. A series of consultation meetings found that during the next six months, three major projects will begin which will require intensive teamwork. A key issue raised by team leaders and project managers is that flexible hours would cause problems scheduling meetings and working hours for collaborative tasks, which could have an impact on productivity.

Recommendations

While full flexible hours would not be practical, it is recommended that staff should be offered the option of starting and ending the day an hour earlier or later. Discussion with management teams indicate that these arrangements are unlikely to cause problems with current or future projects and would prove popular with staff. The Marketing department has agreed to take part in a one-month trial and the findings will be reported back to department heads at the next interdepartmental meeting. If the trial is successful, limited changes to working hours would then be recommended to the board of directors.

Conclusion

This report has looked at requests by staff representatives to move to flexible working hours for staff. We have considered views that working hours are one of the factors which make our company less attractive to potential new staff when compared to competitors.

Consultation with management teams highlighted the fact that moving over to fully flexible work patterns could cause problems with projects which require team collaboration and common schedules. Instead, it was recommended that staff are offered limited flexibility in the start and end times of the working day. A trial period has been agreed and findings will be presented in the next interdepartmental meeting. If the trial is successful, we would then recommend moving to implement these changes in all departments across the company.

Functional language Starting and ending a report

Most reports will contain an introduction, a main body and a conclusion. Some longer reports may also include a summary, an appendix (additional data or information at the end of the report), references or a table of contents.

Section	Function	Example
Summary	It is found at the start of a report and it tells the reader what type of information the report will contain. It is usually short (less than 150 words). The summary can be written after the rest of the report is complete.	This report explores global trends in workplace design. Each year over 3,000 small companies close due to problems with financing new ideas. The report looks at ways in which the financial sector can support small businesses and encourage growth.
Introduction	It states the purpose of the report and briefly outlines what the report intends to do.	The purpose of this report is to outline the advantages and disadvantages of using green energy and recommend ways to improve environmental strategy in line with company policy. The aim of the report is to look into the cause and effect of stress in the workplace and suggest solutions for both employers and employees. This report looks into the main reasons for customer service complaints and proposes changes to staff training in order to resolve the issues.
Conclusion	It restates and summarises the main points of the report. Bullet points or numbered lists may be used to highlight key information.	In this report we have looked at ways to improve productivity and outlined key areas which need to be improved. In conclusion, it is essential to communicate the relationship between exercise, diet and health to educational organisations.

Main body of a report

The main body of the report expands key points or findings, outlines problems or issues and makes recommendations. Headings and subheadings are used to organise information and bullet points can highlight key points.

Reporting problems, reasons and results	The main problem is pollution which is destroying sea life. The key issue seems to be lack of housing to attract a skilled workforce. This was because of changes in the exchange rate. There are two main reasons for the increase in prices. The new logo was unsuitable due to the style and colours. As a result, the supplier was unable to meet the deadline. The consequence of this was that interest rates rose by 1.5 percent. This could have a negative impact on brand loyalty. The most important effect was that communication improved significantly.
Making recommendations	To improve delivery times, we should employ more drivers and change our main delivery routes. The warehouse needs to be extended to allow for the proposed increase in supplies which will take place from next year. The following recommendations are designed to answer the question 'How can we increase tourism using a minimal marketing budget?' It is suggested that health and safety procedures are reviewed annually and that safety training is offered to all staff.

4 ➤ Note-taking and summarising

Lead-in

A summary is a shortened version of factual information (e.g. a talk or text). Reporting and paraphrasing skills are useful in order to avoid repetition, and the writer presents the information in his/her own words. When writing a summary, it is useful to:

- include key points.
- leave out unnecessary detail.
- use your own words.

It can be useful to take notes before you summarise information. Begin with general notes which focus on the main points, and then go back to organise the information before you write your summary.

Model answers Notes

Seminar: Key skills of the modern entrepreneur

Article by: F. M. Miller (note: find out which uni?)

Research methods: 1,000 questionnaire participants / 250 face-to-face

Aim: identify common traits = key to success

Key skills:

raise/mnge \$

hire/train/mnge staff

new trends

Other views: Prof Saito – Kyoto uni:

questions M's research methods

Did questionnaires + F2F interviews use same subjects?

Important: don't use in publications – gather info first re: methodology

Summary

F. M. Miller: Entrepreneurship

F. M. Miller developed the article from a paper given at a seminar titled 'Key skills of the modern entrepreneur'. He reports that over 1,000 entrepreneurs were approached to complete a questionnaire and a further 250 were interviewed face-to-face. Data was gathered relating to common advice and qualities which the participants recognised as being key to success. The three top skills identified were:

- the ability to raise and manage finances.
- hiring, training and managing staff.
- recognising and responding to new trends.

However, these findings have now been challenged by Ayako Saito, Professor of Business Management at Kyoto University. Professor Saito argues that the research methods used by F. M. Miller need to be reconsidered as participants from the face-to-face studies also took part in the questionnaires. It is recommended that we should avoid including F. M. Miller's research data in any of our publications until further research is carried out into the methodology.

Functional language Note-taking techniques

Technique	Description	Examples
Abbreviations	Notes leave out words or shorten words and use abbreviations. Useful abbreviations include: e.g. for example i.e. that is cf. compare etc. and the rest vs. versus	Contracts sent to Head-office HO 18/7 Deadline: Thursday Thurs morning a.m. or Friday Fri morning a.m.? An example of this is the previous budget e.g. last budget Peak season prices increase during the in summer, that is i.e. July-Aug. This affects Finance, HR, Marketing, and the rest of the departments etc. Compare cf. bank loan versus vs. investment for finance strategy.
Highlight key information	Make the important information stand out by underlining, highlighting or using asterisks.	<u>Key reasons new business ideas succeed</u> discovery made by J. N. Zaleski in 2018 five <u>most urgent</u> areas for change good communication is vital**
Bullet points and numbered lists	There are different styles of bullet points (e.g. • or -). Bullet points are often used to list information where the order is not important. When the order is important, numbered lists are usually used.	Main probs with project: - communication - change to schedule Three key markets: 1 Turkey 2 Mexico 3 Korea
Use of symbols	Common symbols include: = equals @ at < less than > more than & or + and C20 twentieth century \$/£/€ currency symbols	result = increased employment marketing: not enough € in budget changes @ HO <10% key inventions of C20

Summarising

Technique	Examples
Using synonyms and paraphrase	<i>The article was written by F. M. Miller following a seminar delivered by the Professor of Sociolinguistics at the University of Uppsala in Sweden, which was titled 'Key skills of the modern entrepreneur'.</i> F. M. Miller developed the article after a university professor's seminar titled 'Key skills of the modern entrepreneur'.
Reporting	<i>'We need to reconsider the research methods,' says Professor Saito.</i> Professor Saito argues that the research methods used by F. M. Miller need to be reconsidered.