

Writing at Work: Emails

Name: _____

After this module you will be able to:

- Understand the basics of a good email**
- Write a simple, professional, and concise e-mail**
- Edit your e-mails to include only the most important information**
- Edit your e-mails to clearly request what you need**
- Edit your e-mails to encourages a quick response**
- Reply to e-mails**

Date	Learner Comments	Instructor Comments

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Parts of An E-mail

Addresses: Contains the e-mail address of the recipient and the e-mail address of the sender

Date: The date and time the e-mail is sent.

Subject: Tells you what the e-mail is about

✉ To: your.name@gmail.com
From: random.person@hotmail.com
Sent: March 14, 2020
Subject: Sample E-mail
Dear Your name, Thank you for your recent e-mail. Sincerely, Random person

Different Kinds of Addressees:

To: These are the primary recipients, the people you need a reply from. Addresses listed here appear to everyone getting the e-mail

Cc: Cc stands for carbon copy. These people are sent the e-mail because they may need the information, but they may not need to reply. Often in the workplace you might Cc a supervisor or coworker to create a record of an important conversation. Addresses listed here appear to everyone getting the e-mail.

Bcc: Bcc stands for blind carbon copy. Any address entered here is not visible to anyone but the person it is sent to. Often you need to protect contact information in the workplace. By using Bcc you can keep e-mail addresses confidential and send the same e-mail to many people. Sometimes blind carbon copy is used to send a copy in secret without someone in the **To:** or **Cc:** address fields knowing about the e-mail.

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Purpose:

To write a good workplace e-mail think about what information the other person needs to know and the response that you want to get back. In previous booklets we called this **purpose**. Often an e-mail does not need to include every detail to communicate effectively. Include only the information needed to achieve your task. Detailed conversations should be done in person or over the phone.

The two e-mail examples below both describe the same workplace situation. Both e-mails communicate the same information. One e-mail has many extra details.

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Task 1:

Highlight the unnecessary information in the first e-mail below (Email Example 1).

E-mail Example 1:

✉ To: Molly.Boss@exampleworkplace.ca
From: Jim.Printer@exampleworkplace.ca
Sent: 3:53pm Tuesday July 2, 2019
Subject: Report Copies for Meeting Delayed
<p>Dear Molly,</p> <p>I was copying the yearly report for the annual board meeting when there was a weird grinding noise coming from the machine, and then a hot burning smell. The machine jammed and I followed the steps to clear the jam. It looks like someone put tracing paper in the machine.</p> <p>I called a service person to come fix the photocopier. The service person will be here tomorrow to fix the copier.</p> <p>The yearly reports are not ready for the Thursday's meeting.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Jim Printer Office Administrator Exampleworkplace</p>

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Good Email Basics:

- Keep your message short
- Make the heading clear and exact
- Use a personal but business-like tone
- The most important information, the action required, or recommendation should come first
- If it is urgent, mark it “urgent”
- Don’t respond in anger
- Do not use all caps, no caps, or ‘slang’ acronyms

Professionalism:

Email is a quick and popular form of workplace communication, but it is not always the most appropriate one. In general, email is good for positive or neutral news and sharing information. Sometimes other methods of communication (face-to-face, phone, instant messaging, video conferencing, etc.) may be more appropriate.

Email should never be considered a private form of communication. Emails can be sent via BCC to individuals without our knowledge, they can be forwarded on after the initial conversation is over, they can be printed and read by other people and they can be stored electronically for many years. There have been many scandals involving inappropriate emails, including the highest levels of government around the world. You need to always be aware that you can not control who may see your email exchange so keeping your email content and tone professional is very important.

Use a professional email address. Make sure your e-mail address is professional.

Something along the lines of FirstnameLastname@email.com or Lastname@email.com is clear, simple, and professional.

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Summarizing Email Content:

It is particularly important to summarize the content of emails as people expect them to be short and to the point. Using bullet points to emphasize and shorten content in an email is very acceptable. Staying on topic is important.

Task 4:

Please make the following email concise and on topic using the blank template. Use summarizing techniques, like bullet points to help you send the important ideas without a bunch of extra chit chat.

✉ To: CEO.Amy.Wright@exampleworkplace.ca
Cc:
Subject: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS
Attention: CEO Amy Wright:
<p>How are you today? It was great seeing you the other day at lunch. I loved your casserole. I will try that recipe next week. Please give me your feedback when I finish it.</p>
<p>As the CEO I believe you need to be made aware that I've found that the employee benefits are not covering the basic necessities for dental/health and I have been receiving complaints that a half hour break for lunch is not long enough. Employees keep complaining and they would prefer to work longer and have a more enjoyable lunch break to get their personal errands done before coming back to their desk to work for the rest of the day.</p>
<p>Our dental and health benefits cover \$400 a year for dental and 50% coverage on prescriptions and we do not have any privilege for professional services, such as chiropractors and physiotherapy. Can we get this changed?</p>
<p>I hope you think it is a good idea.</p>
<p>Sincerely,</p>
<p>M. Mazza HR Department</p>

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✉ To: CEO.Amy.Wright@exampleworkplace.ca

Cc:

Subject: **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

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Task 5:

The following email has several issues which makes it inappropriate for the work place. Spot and highlight or underline as many as you can see and then rewrite the email in the template provided to be a professional and polished piece.

✉ To: J.Jones@abccompany.com
From: Sexybeast69@unawarenet.com
Cc: AllTheEmployees@abccompany.com
Bcc: PeopleIKnowThatYouDon't@gmail.com
Subject: REALLY SUPER IMPORTANT BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY!!!!
<p><u>Hey there Mr. Jones!</u></p> <p>I am writing to you today to introduce myself. I'm an add specialty sales rep hear in your area. I have worked with other businesses in the community and I feel that I can be of service to you as well.</p> <p>BTW: I have been in the business for 25 yrs. Please contact me if you have any upcoming events or promotions. I want your business!!!! I'll do what it takes to get it! ROTFLMAO!</p> <p>Ciao,</p> <p>account exec Best Foot Forward Ads</p>

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Answer Key

Task 1:

Dear Molly,

I was copying the yearly report for the annual board meeting when there was a weird grinding noise coming from the machine, and then a hot burning smell. The machine jammed and I followed the steps to clear the jam. It looks like someone put tracing paper in the machine.

I called a service person to come fix the photocopier. The service person will be here tomorrow to fix the copier.

The yearly reports are not ready for the Thursday's meeting.

Task 2:

Answers will vary but the second email should be preferred.

Task 3:

✉ To: Jim.Printer@exampleworkplace.ca

Cc: Sara.Money@workplace.ca

Subject:

Hello Jim,

Thank you for the update. I am concerned that the photocopier will not be ready to go in time for you to get these reports copied for the meeting and it is essential that they be done. Please consider the expenses of getting them printed up as approved and attend to this ASAP. I appreciate you being on top of this.

Thank you for attending to this matter,

Molly Boss

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Task 4:

Answers and wording will vary, this is an example only.

✉ To: CEO.Amy.Wright@exampleworkplace.ca
Cc:
Subject: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS
<p>Attention: CEO Amy Wright:</p> <p>I wanted to make you aware of some ongoing concerns I am hearing from employees regarding health benefits and break times.</p> <p>Our dental and health benefits cover \$400 a year for dental and 50% coverage on prescriptions and we do not have any privilege for professional services, such as chiropractors and physiotherapy. These benefits are not covering the basic necessities for dental/health care.</p> <p>I have also been receiving complaints that a half hour break for lunch is not long enough. Employees are requesting to work longer in order to have an hour lunch break in order to get errands done or relax more fully. I feel this change would be good for staff morale.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>M. Mazza HR Department</p>

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Task 5:

✉ To: <u>J.Jones@abccompany.com</u>
From: <u>Sexybeast69@unawarenet.com</u>
Cc: <u>AllTheEmployees@abccompany.com</u>
Bcc: <u>PeopleIKnowThatYouDon't@gmail.com</u>
Subject: <u>REALLY SUPER IMPORTANT BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY!!!!</u>
<p><u>Hey there Mr. Jones!</u></p> <p>I am writing to you today to introduce myself. I'm an add specialty sales <u>rep</u> <u>hear</u> in <u>your area</u>. I have worked with other businesses in the community and I feel that I can be of service to you as well.</p> <p><u>BTW:</u> I have been in the business for 25 yrs. Please contact me if you have any upcoming events or promotions. <u>I want your business!!!!</u> <u>I'll do what it takes to get it!</u> <u>ROTFLMAO!</u></p> <p><u>Ciao,</u></p> <p><u>No Name</u> <u>account exec</u> Best Foot Forward Ads</p>

Answers will vary for the rewritten email, hand in to be marked.

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Task 6:

Answers will vary, hand in to be marked.

Additional Sources

<https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-and-communication-centre/resources-writing-professional-emails-workplace>

<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/effective-e-mail-communication/>

<http://lopesgoodandbade-mails.blogspot.com/2011/10/example-of-good-and-bad-business-email.html>

End of Module Reflection

After completing this module, answer the questions below. If you answer agree (3) for each question, ask for a review or a final assessment from an instructor. If you answer maybe (2) or no (1), have a discussion with an instructor to make a plan to improve your performance and confidence.

1 – No

2 – Maybe

3 – Yes

A	I understand all of the outcomes covered in this module.	1	2	3
B	I do not need any further assistance from an instructor on the material covered in this module.	1	2	3
C	I do not need more practice questions or assignments	1	2	3
D	I am confident in my abilities to complete tasks related to this module.	1	2	3
E	I am ready to complete a review and/or a final assessment related to this module.	1	2	3

Reflection
