

Welcome
to the
Email Writing Workshop

Presented by



English Communication Service, LLC

San Jose, CA

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Lesson 1: **Introductions and Overview**

Objectives of the workshop

- Write emails that save time.
- Write emails that are clear and concise.
- Learn the best words and best phrases to use in emails.

Exercises

Each lesson has at least one exercise that lets you practice what you learn in the lesson.

All exercises can be done on paper or online, and submitted to the Instructor for checking.

All communication with the Instructor online will be through email, to
rogergr@ix.netcom.com

In the subject line of every email, use this format, exactly as shown here:
EWB Lesson <n> Exercise <n>

Other information

You may receive additional student material and course information from the Instructor throughout this course.

As necessary, additional procedures for communicating among the Instructor and students will be explained.

Your Instructor's name is **Roger Grainger**, B.A. TEFL/TESL
English Communication Services Instructor

1. Use the minimum number of sentences.

Why?

- Don't waste the recipient's time.
- The recipient throws away long messages.
- The recipient ignores long messages.

How?

- Start with the 5-sentence rule.
- Add the fewest number possible.

2. State what you want immediately.

Why?

- People aren't interested in your life story.
- The recipient just wants to know what you want.
- Forced to search for the action needed.

How?

- Avoid long introductions.
- Depend on the thread.
- Say what you want at the beginning.

3. Write about only one thing.

Why?

- Multiple requests/topics get ignored.
- The recipient will do only 1 or maybe 2.
- Causes information overload.

How?

- Stick to one subject.
- Send a second/third short message.

4. Avoid humor and emotions.

Why?

- They don't come across well.
- The wrong tone can offend.

How?

- Don't use emoticons.
- Avoid jokes.

5. Use "If ... then" statements.

Why?

- To limit the reply-response-reply-response cycle.
- Saves time.

How?

- Anticipate the possible responses.
- Give the desired action for "if" and the desired action for "then."

6. Review for clarity.

Why?

- Your message could be misinterpreted.
- Saves rewriting and re-sending.

How?

- Use formatting.
- Read it like an outsider would.

7. Revise for conciseness.

Why?

- Wrong words cause wrong actions.
- Saves your time and the recipient's time.

How?

- Use correct vocabulary.
- Review - trim - clip - review - trim - clip.
- Avoid flowery language.
- Avoid old-fashioned phrases.



Lesson 2: Use the Minimum Number of Sentences

This lesson covers...

- The 5-sentence rule.
- A technique for writing short emails.

The 5-sentence Rule

You can use more if needed. But cut the email to the fewest number of sentences that still communicate clearly. That number, and no more. This rule ensures that you're not wasting the time of the recipient, and that your email actually gets read (people tend to put off reading longer ones, and might even delete them).

The Problem E-mail takes too long to respond to, resulting in continuous inbox overflow for those who receive a lot of it.

The Solution Treat all email responses like SMS text messages, using a set number of letters per response. Since it's too hard to count letters, we count sentences instead.

The 5- *Sentence Rule* is a personal policy that all email regardless of recipient or subject will be five sentences or less. It's that simple.

Bad example:

Hello Everyone,

Since I don't want this request to get lost in the information below, please confirm if a TENTATIVE IPO conference date of Thursday, August 11th in the afternoon, probably beginning at 1 or 3 PM, will work for your schedule. This date is of course contingent upon your satisfaction with my revisions based on your comments provided in May.

Attached is the latest draft of our press release. Before embarking on making actual changes, I carefully read through the comments and suggested revisions you all provided AND then read through the first draft of the press release that you all received. I prioritized the resulting tasks and began work deliberately and thoroughly to address your concerns and incorporate your guidance and suggestions.

As a result this draft is a tad bit longer, yet the writing is less repetitive, my argument more clear, and the details and timeline of the IPO more pronounced.

Below is a list providing an overview of the major revisions you will notice in the talking points:

blha, blah, blah

After the 5-sentence rule:

Hello Everyone:

Please confirm that you can attend the IPO conference on Thursday, August 11th, at 1 p.m.

The attached press release and the talking points listed below incorporate your comments.

Talking points:

- Blah blah blah ...
- Lorem ipsum ipsum ...
- Blah de blah la blah ...
- Etc.

Exercise 1

Bad example:

Subject: Sorry, bos!!!!

Lisa, Sorry I missed ur meeting last week. I was in court.

Oh, btw thx 4 the message last week saying that I needed to drop by yesterday. I guess I missed that appointment too.

That judge was really mean to me and paid me pay to much money!

I don't think he liked me.

OK, gotta run. Say hey to Mr. Kim. He is my favorite supervisor ever!!

::Fred

After the 5-sentence rule:

Subject:

::Fred

Exercise 2

Try out the 5-sentence rule... Use the *5-sentence Rule Worksheet* to write a message that gives a co-worker or your direct reports the following information:

- You are planning to go on a business trip. Write the details below.
 - ✓ The situation can be imaginary, or you can make it similar to your real-life job.
 - ✓ Where are you going?
 - ✓ How long are you going to stay?
 - ✓ Why are you going?
 - ✓ What is your itinerary (the places you will visit)?

5-sentence Email Worksheet

Subject:

SMS version of the message:

Email message:

Exercise 3

Compose an email message that covers all the information in this situation:

Your company is thinking of having a stand at a trade fair, and you received an email from your direct boss asking you to research some possibilities. Write a reply to your boss, telling him you've got the required information from the organizers of the trade fair and passing that info on to him, including:

- Cost
- Payment terms
- Deadline for reserving a stand