

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

Jeremy Day

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

Introduction

Welcome to the **Writing for Impact Trainer's Notes**. In these notes you will find advice on the following:

- **Timing:** how long each module should take, to help you plan your schedule.
- **Practicalities:** advice on how to manage pairwork activities and how to use technology in the course.
- **Course features:** how to make the most of the support resources available in the book and online.
- **How to run a business writing course:** an extended section on how to make the course as useful and effective as possible.
- **Final thoughts:** my own advice to writers and teachers of business writing courses.

Timing

Writing for Impact has been designed to allow plenty of flexibility in terms of teaching times. Each module (e.g. Module 1) contains two lessons (e.g. 1A and 1B). There is also an introductory section, **Getting ready to write for impact**, as well as two case studies, making a total of 27 lessons.

It would be possible to cover each lesson in around 45 minutes, giving a minimum course length of around 20 hours of input. However, it is vital that this input time should be balanced with plenty of opportunity for trainees to plan and complete in-class writing tasks, to give and receive feedback on their extended writing (see **Marking: responding to writing** below), and to provide additional input based on trainees' weaknesses and needs, so an ideal course length would be 30–40 hours.

The suggestions for additional activities throughout these **Trainer's Notes** enable teachers to expand each lesson to 60 or even 90 minutes. These activities also provide additional flexibility: to help teachers shorten or lengthen input in order to stick to a timetable, if necessary.

One possible way of organising the course is as follows:

Session 1 (90 minutes)	<i>Getting ready to write for impact</i> (45 minutes)	Lesson 1A (45 minutes)
Homework	Trainees complete writing tasks from Lesson 1A	
Session 2 (90 minutes)	Feedback and analysis of homework writing from Lesson 1A; additional input based on trainees' weaknesses and needs (45 minutes)	Lesson 1B (45 minutes)
Homework	Trainees complete writing tasks from Lesson 1B	
Session 3 (90 minutes)	Feedback and analysis of homework writing from Lesson 1B; additional input based on trainees' weaknesses and needs (45 minutes)	Lesson 2A (45 minutes)
...		
Session 26 (90 minutes)	Feedback and analysis of homework writing from Lesson 12B; additional input based on trainees' weaknesses and needs (45 minutes)	Case study 2 (45 minutes)

Homework	Trainees complete writing tasks from Case study 2	
Session 27 (90 minutes)	In-class writing from Case study 2 (assessed writing) (45 minutes)	Feedback and analysis of homework writing from Case study 2; end-of-course review based on trainees' weaknesses and needs (45 minutes)

Of course, this schedule will depend on the size of your group and the amount of time you have available. Session 27 could easily be skipped, in which case you could provide feedback and analysis of trainees' final writing tasks by email. See **Course features** below for ideas on how to handle the Case studies.


It is not essential that you work through the modules in numerical order, but however you organise the course, you should begin with **Getting ready to write for impact**. It is also advisable to work through the modules on reports in the order they appear in the book (i.e. 4, 5, 8, 10 and 12).

Practicalities

If you have an odd number of students, most **pairwork activities** will work just as well in groups of three. Where activities are designed for pairs, the **Trainer's Notes** provide specific guidance for adapting the activity to groups of three.

You do not need any **technology** to make this course work: for in-class writing tasks, trainees can write on paper. Of course, there are advantages to having access to computers in the classroom, whether one each or only enough for trainees to work in groups, as well as a data projector to allow you to show trainees' work on a screen, but none of these is essential to the success of this course.

Course features

The course takes examples from and draws upon research of actual examples of English used in business taken from the **Cambridge English Corpus**  – one of the world's largest databases of written and spoken language. You can be confident that the language presented is real language used in business today.

Each module ends with a list of **Course links**, which show how the various modules are connected to each other. You could encourage trainees to look back at earlier modules to remind themselves what they contained, and to look ahead briefly to later modules to see how the topic will be developed.

There are two extended **Case studies**, after Modules 6 and 12. These can be treated as normal lessons – the biggest difference is that they lead to more and longer writing tasks. You could consider getting trainees to complete some of these writing tasks in class as assessed writing, to measure their progress and achievement.

The **Answer key** is an important part of this course. Some suggestions have been made in the **Trainer's Notes** for exploiting the *Answer key*, but it is a good idea to make sure both you and your trainees read and discuss the *Answer key* for every exercise.

The **course website** (<http://www.cambridge.org/elt/writingforimpact>) contains **Templates** of the documents that are covered in the book, presented in two formats:

- a PDF with a full explanation and comments about the language used
- a Word document that trainees can use as the basis for creating their own documents.

How to run a business writing course

How much writing do they need to do?

If this writing course is to be successful, all the trainees need to get plenty of practice of writing. Unfortunately, writing is often seen as boring and time-consuming, so many trainees will try to get away with as little writing as possible. The most important role for the teacher, therefore, is to motivate the trainees to write more, and to make the experience of writing less unpleasant (see **In-class writing** below for some specific techniques for doing this).

It is vital that trainees have a clear understanding of your expectations at the start of the course. For example, you could state at the beginning that successful completion of the course depends on completing all of the writing tasks satisfactorily. They cannot pass the course simply by attending the face-to-face sessions. Similarly, they need to understand that the more they put into the course (in terms of completion of writing tasks), the more they will get out of it (in terms of practice, progress and feedback from you).

The other side of this deal is that you, as the teacher, have to be prepared to invest time and effort into marking their writing. (There will be some practical advice on this in the section below on **Marking**.) This means that you (and your employer) need to be prepared for this when setting up the course. One way of managing this is for trainees to pay for three 45-minute sessions per week (for example). Two of these sessions are face-to-face; the other is allocated to trainees' writing. What trainees are paying for in this second hour is a share of your additional marking and preparation time.

Essential writing skills

There are numerous writing tips throughout the course, but it is important to remember some more general tips that can guide our trainees throughout the course, and in their professional lives.

Firstly, much of what we write consists of **fixed expressions** (e.g. *I am writing to enquire about ...; I would be grateful if you could ...*). There are hundreds of such phrases, many of which can be found in this course. These enable writers to use sophisticated, natural language without much effort or time. The worst mistake that learners make when writing in English is to try to translate these fixed expressions from their own language into English. This is time-consuming and often generates unnatural language. Instead, learners need to train themselves to use as many of these fixed expressions as possible (within reason). These **Trainer's Notes** contain many **Extension activities** designed to draw attention to these fixed expressions.

Native speakers know many of these phrases by heart, and can use them effortlessly. Non-natives either have to learn them or know where to find them. For this reason, it is extremely useful to keep a **Useful phrase bank**, which learners can refer to when writing. This could be simply in the form of a list of phrases in a notebook, or it could be stored electronically (e.g. in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet) so that it can be sorted and searched easily. For this to work, learners need to train themselves to **notice** useful language when they see it in authentic pieces of writing, and they need to be disciplined enough to record it and then use it. You, the teacher, can help them do this by encouraging trainees to find and record useful phrases in every **Model answer** in this course. These *Model answers* are clearly marked in the **Answer key** (pages 64–79) and the bank of *Model answers* for **Extended writing tasks** (pages 88–95).

Another common mistake that learners make is to spend too long crafting a perfect piece of writing, where a few short sentences would be enough. Learners need to train themselves to write quickly and efficiently. Partly this involves things like using **Useful phrase banks**, but it also involves techniques like setting a time limit for writing, accepting that 100% accuracy may not always be possible (or necessary) and keeping messages short and simple. The skill of **writing efficiently** is just as important as the skill of writing accurately.

Of course, accuracy is also important, so it is useful for learners to understand how to check and edit their own work. One possible technique here is to use **checklists of common mistakes** to watch out for, such as articles or third person 's'. This technique is described at the end of the course (Module 12), but of course you could use it throughout the course. Each trainee could build his/her own checklist of mistakes that he/she often makes (based on feedback from you). Before they submit each written assignment, they should go through their checklists, point by point, to look out for mistakes. Of course, they will not spot

everything, especially things they have never been taught, but they should at least notice some careless mistakes. If the same mistakes keep coming up, you may decide to do some remedial work on this particular aspect of language with the class (see **Responding to weaknesses and needs** below).

In-class writing

Each module contains several short writing tasks, and the ones with more development are labelled **Into action**. There is also an **Extended writing task** for most modules (in the **Course links** box). A good way of managing these two types of tasks is to get trainees to write the *Into action* task in class, and the *Extended writing task* at home.

In-class writing does not need to be time-consuming: five minutes is often enough. As suggested above, it is good to set a tight time limit for writing tasks, as this encourages efficiency. It also doesn't have to be solitary: there are many benefits to getting trainees to write together. Firstly, they talk together, so the experience of writing is less solitary. Secondly, they generate ideas together, so their writing can be more creative. And thirdly, they can support each other with useful language and peer correction. Even the process of discussing whether to use this tense or that tense, or how to spell a particular word, is beneficial to the learners.

Here are some examples of techniques you can use in class to make writing quicker and less of a chore:

- **Oral writing:** This is an essential technique for any writing course. Trainees work in pairs to say (orally) what they would write. This is much faster than actually writing things down, but is still useful for a range of writing skills (e.g. using fixed expressions, expressing yourself concisely).
- **Speed writing:** If you set an impossible time limit (e.g. four minutes for an email), and enforce it strictly, your trainees will make more mistakes, but they will also find they can achieve a lot in this time.
- **Team writing:** One member of the team acts as the secretary, to write down the ideas generated by the rest of the team.
- **Chain writing:** After trainees (or teams) have completed a piece of writing (e.g. a letter of complaint), have them pass it on to a different group, who write a reply to it (e.g. an apology). Such chains can go over several turns. They are effective because they involve real communication and exchange of ideas.
- **Constrained writing:** By imposing some constraint on what trainees may or may not write, you can actually make their writing much more creative and fun. This is especially useful for generating ideas, when trainees can't think of a real-life situation for a writing task. For example, before doing the first **Into action** task in Module 1A (*Introduce yourself and your company to a potential client who has contacted your customer services / reception staff and asked for some basic information*), you could elicit three letters of the alphabet from the class, and write them on the board (e.g. B, L, G). Trainees then have to use these letters to invent details for the writing task: the type of company should start with B (e.g. a bakery or a butcher's shop); the potential client should start with L (e.g. a law firm or a lawnmower manufacturer); the basic information requested should start with G (e.g. What do you have in your garage?). The trainees' challenge is to write this email in such a way that the crazy situation sounds less crazy.
- **Pass the plan:** This involves separating the planning stage from the writing stage. One group makes the paragraph-by-paragraph plan for a piece of writing, and then passes this to another group, which has to write the piece for that plan. This works best if the plan is quite detailed and funny.

Extended writing tasks

The **Extended writing tasks** at the end of most modules are best set as homework, although you may want to run one or two in class as an assessed task. If you set them as homework, set a clear deadline. Ideally, trainees should email their writing to you well in advance of the next session, so you have time to mark them and plan feedback and remedial work while the writing is still fresh in their minds. It may feel unfair to set a deadline only a few days away, but the writing itself should take no more than around an hour (in most cases), so they don't really need a week. Of course, people often have other commitments, so you can show flexibility and make exceptions where appropriate.

Before setting writing as homework, you should do as much as you can in class to guide trainees in the **process of writing**. This means going through the step-by-step guidance in each **Extended writing task** (see pages 84–7). For example:

- **Review what is covered in the module:** Tell trainees to read the instructions for the writing task and then look back through the relevant module to find useful language (especially phrases they can copy), patterns (e.g. ways of organising the text) and techniques (e.g. guidance on how to approach the task). They could discuss their ideas in pairs and then feed back to the class. It is worth spending at least five minutes on this stage for every writing task.
- **Gather ideas / think carefully about the purpose and the audience:** You may want to use the **Constrained writing** technique here to help them generate ideas (e.g. for Module 1, what does the company do? Which new market is it planning to enter? What exactly do you want the market research company to research?).
- **Plan what you need to include / what you are going to write:** Trainees could sketch a plan in pairs and then feed back to the class. The plan could include not just content (i.e. things that must be mentioned) but also useful phrases or language that they want to include and a paragraph-by-paragraph outline.
- **Write the email/letter/report:** You could set a target length (e.g. one page of A4) and possibly a time limit (e.g. try to spend no more than one hour on this task). It is probably best if trainees write on a computer, as this makes it much easier to edit and redraft later. If they are writing on paper, tell them to leave lots of space on either side of their text, and between paragraphs, which will allow them to make changes later.
- **Check and edit your writing:** At the very least, this means reading through, slowly and carefully, to make sure there are no obvious mistakes and that it all makes sense and sounds natural. Trainees could also use checklists (see above) to look for specific language areas that they have problems with (e.g. articles, tenses). Even better would be to swap their drafts with another trainee, to help identify each other's mistakes and suggest improvements.
- **Write a final version:** This is straightforward if trainees are writing on a computer. If they are writing by hand, you could tell them not to worry too much about making their final drafts look beautiful: if necessary, they can rewrite individual sentences or paragraphs and place these at the end of their first draft, with a numbered reference to show where they belong in the main text. As long as you can read and make sense of their writing, it should be acceptable.
- **Exchange your writing with a partner and reply to them:** This could be done at a distance (e.g. by sending a real email to another trainee) or in class. This is a very valuable exercise, as it encourages trainees to interact in a more authentic way, which is very motivating. It also means they are writing for a real target reader, rather than simply for you to assess their writing.
- The Student's book contains **Model answers** to each **Extended writing task** (see pages 88–95). Of course these will be very different from your trainees' own writing, and are not necessarily 'better' than your trainees' versions. However, it can be very useful to compare trainees' versions with the Model answers to check whether trainees have left out some essential information or used a very different style, for example. There are brief **Extension activities** in these **Trainer's notes** for each **Extended writing task**, to help you exploit the **Model answers** in class.

Marking and responding to writing

There are four serious errors that teachers can make when responding to writing.

Firstly, they ignore the content and focus immediately on the language. It can be extremely demotivating for trainees if the teacher appears to take no notice of the content of their writing. So the first time you read their work, **focus on what it is saying, not on the language it uses**. This should also be the first feedback you write or say to the trainee: comment on how interesting or effective the writing was as a piece of communication, or ask them a question about the content.

The second error is to try to mark everything and to correct every mistake. This is very time-consuming for the teacher, and dispiriting for the trainee. When a trainee receives a piece of writing back from the teacher with dozens of corrections, his/her first reaction is likely to be a sense of failure. The second reaction could well be to try to forget about that writing task, and not to bother analysing the corrections. It can be much more effective if you **don't correct every mistake**. If there are only four or five corrections, the trainee is much more likely to analyse them and learn from them. Ideally, these corrections should be focused on one or two language areas (e.g. for one task, you could decide to focus only on problems with the spelling or punctuation).

It doesn't make sense to correct mistakes involving language that you haven't taught yet, or which the trainees can't be expected to know. Of course, you may decide to use an interesting mistake to teach the class about some useful grammar or vocabulary (see **Responding to weaknesses and needs** below), but this is teaching, not correction.

The third error happens because there is pressure on teachers to mark everything and therefore, for practical reasons, they don't set many writing tasks. If the teacher thoroughly corrected two or three pieces of writing per trainee per week, he/she would have no time for anything else. Instead, it is best to think of writing practice as similar to speaking practice: most teachers don't limit speaking practice to activities where every mistake can be corrected. Most teachers understand that the real value of speaking is in the act of practising: planning which words to use, experimenting with new grammar and more sophisticated language, activating and reinforcing language in your memory, etc. The same is true of writing: the real value is in the act of practising, not in being corrected. For this reason, it is important to **set plenty of writing tasks to provide opportunities for practice**, even though you can't correct them all.

You and your trainees need to accept that you will not correct all their writing. There will be some pieces that you will correct thoroughly, some pieces that you will correct lightly, and some that you may not correct at all. This is an unnatural situation for teachers and trainees, so you will need to explain the rationale behind it and the benefits of practice.

Of course, there is nothing more demotivating than writing a text in the knowledge that no one will ever read it. So if there are some pieces of writing that you don't mark, it is even more important that you (or somebody else) read the writing as a piece of communication. This is why email exchanges are so useful: trainees read and respond to each other's writing, with the main focus on communication, not correction.

The final error teachers make is to leave the trainee with nothing to do once they receive the marked writing back. It is much more effective to highlight their mistakes and **get them to correct their own work**. One very popular technique is the use of **correction codes**. These codes use abbreviations and symbols to identify the location and type of mistake, so the trainee can correct it him/herself. Examples of abbreviations and symbols include: \wedge (= insert a word), WW (= wrong word), Gr (= grammar mistake), T (= wrong tense), WO (= wrong word order), Sp (= spelling mistake), P (= punctuation mistake). Don't forget to highlight good language too, by underlining it and writing 'Good' or simply '😊'.

Of course, it's vital to explain the code to trainees. Just as importantly, you need to **follow up** in a later lesson, to check that the trainees have corrected their writing properly, and were able to make sense of your comments. More generally, you should keep a record of the important mistakes trainees have made, especially recurring ones, in order that you can plan remedial work (see **Responding to weaknesses and needs** below).

As well as writing corrections in the body of the text, it's useful to write one or two sentences at the bottom to highlight the key information. Use these sentences to **provide positive as well as negative feedback**, as well as to comment on the content itself. Don't forget to comment on the structure and organisation of the writing. For example: *This is a really nice report, very well-organised and logical. I think your Recommendations are all great ideas. The Executive summary is perhaps a bit too long, and it repeats too much word-for-word from the rest of the report – it's better if you paraphrase. Also, did you plan it carefully? Some sections feel a bit unplanned. Can you correct the spelling for next week?*

For some types of course, **grading** will be important, especially if a third party (e.g. the trainees' employer) wants to measure progress. There is no need to grade every piece of writing; four or five over the course should be enough. Try to make your grading as objective as possible. It is useful to break your grade into several criteria. For example:

- **Content:** Has the writer included all the necessary information?
- **Format and organisation:** Is the writing logical and attractively laid out?
- **Coherence and cohesion:** Do the paragraphs fit well together, and the sentences within each paragraph?
- **Accuracy:** Does the writer use correct grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation?
- **Range:** Has the writer experimented with more sophisticated structures (and possibly made more mistakes as a result), or simply used simple structures (and therefore avoided mistakes)?
- **Overall impression / effect on target reader:** Is the purpose of the writing clear? Would the target reader understand the text, and would they be likely to react positively to it?

It is up to you how you balance these criteria with each other, but note that accuracy doesn't have to be the key to how good or bad the writing is. In many ways, content and effect on target reader might be more important than accuracy. You could also focus on different criteria for each piece of writing (e.g. you could pay more attention to things that you have covered recently in class). The simplest approach might be to award scores of between 0 and 5 for each of the criteria, giving a total out of a possible maximum of 30.

Responding to weaknesses and needs

In many ways, the real value of the course for your trainees lies in what you, the teacher, do beyond the coursebook.

Responding to weaknesses involves identifying common or recurring problems with trainees' writing, and providing remedial work to overcome these problems. These problems could be connected with language in general (e.g. tenses and other grammar topics, vocabulary) or specifically with writing (e.g. spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, linking words, coherence and cohesion) or with the process of writing (e.g. planning, editing, generating ideas).

The simplest form of remedial work is to make **worksheets of actual errors** made by trainees, which they can then correct and analyse with the class. Of course, these errors must always be anonymous, to avoid embarrassing individual trainees (which might discourage them from taking risks in future writing tasks). If done sensitively, these group correction activities can be very effective: they enable you to explain rules and techniques much more deeply and effectively than if you were to do it as part of your regular marking. It also gives you the chance to check whether trainees have actually understood what you are trying to say. This can be an effective way of starting each lesson: a ten-minute correction activity. You could even turn it into a game: teams get points for each good correction they make.

Another form of remedial work is **tests**, especially spelling tests. Simply read aloud a list of, say, ten words which were misspelled in the writing homework. Trainees try to write them down correctly. Award points for correct spellings, and then go through the answers carefully at the end. It is useful to come back to the most problematic spellings later in the course to check if trainees have improved. Again, these short activities can be a useful way of starting a lesson or filling a spare five minutes, or simply changing the focus of a lesson.

In addition to responding to trainees' weaknesses, you should also take care to **respond to their needs**. Find out what they have to write in their work or studies (or what they will have to write in future), and make sure you give them plenty of practice of those tasks. Most of the writing tasks in this course can easily be adapted to match trainees' specific needs, but you should ask them regularly if the writing tasks are relevant, and be ready to add more relevant tasks if necessary.

A simple way of finding out and responding to their needs is to take a look at their **authentic writing** in English. Ask them to forward one or two authentic emails or reports in English that they have written or received. Of course, they will need to delete any confidential or sensitive information. You could then either correct this authentic writing, or simply read it to get a better idea of what your trainees need and therefore what writing tasks to plan.

Final thoughts

Writing in a foreign language is never easy, and can be especially stressful for learners because it leaves a permanent record. Learners feel self-conscious about their mistakes, and may tie themselves in knots trying to express complex or delicate messages to strangers who may have a very different cultural background, without causing offence. Something that sounds perfectly natural or polite in one language or culture may come across as too cold, too friendly or simply odd in another language or culture.

The only way to overcome this problem is to provide plenty of guidance, both general and tailored to your learners' needs and weaknesses, and especially to provide opportunities for practice. Your biggest challenge is to keep the learners motivated. This means taking a genuine interest in what they have written, showing learners that they are making progress, guiding them clearly on how they can improve, and, above all, making the process fun and enjoyable. Good luck.

Jeremy Day

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

Getting ready to write for impact

Use your first session to get to know your trainees and to focus on their experiences of business writing, their needs and their expectations from the course. Ideally, you should also do this with each trainee individually before the course, but it is still worth using this first session to help your trainees get to know each other, and to identify shared needs.

Quote

Go through the quote from Tim Banks on page 4 with the class, pausing after each sentence to discuss the following questions.

- 1 Do you agree that everyone in business needs to write? Does everyone need to write in English?
- 2 Which changes in technology mean that we write more than ever before?
- 3 What do you think Tim Banks means by the following expressions from the last sentence: *good language, clearly, concisely, relevant?*

Suggested answers



- 1 Almost everyone has to write at least something in their work, but writing in English is much less universal.
- 2 We use emails (and, to a lesser extent, SMSs and instant messaging). In the past, people used more phone calls and face-to-face communication. Much of today's communication simply never happened in the days before the Internet: it was simply not worth sending a letter with just a few lines of text.
- 3 Good language: accurate and sophisticated grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, etc.
Clearly: in a way that is easy for the reader to understand
Concisely: no longer than necessary
Relevant: tailored to focus on what the target reader needs to know or will find useful/interesting

Show the class the different elements of the course, as described in the paragraph following the quote. If you have access to the Internet in your training room, use this opportunity to demonstrate the **Templates** at <http://www.cambridge.org/elt/writingforimpact>

Explain that they are templates of the documents that are covered in the book, and they come in two formats:

- a PDF with a full explanation and comments about the language used
- a Word document that trainees can use as the basis for creating their own documents.

The secret of writing for impact

Tell trainees to close their books. Elicit from the class what the secret of writing for impact might be. Trainees then read the list of bullet points to compare it with their ideas. Go through the list in class, to elicit specific examples for each point, and why each point is important.

The approach

Trainees read the section to find out about the approach. Use these questions to discuss the approach with the class.

- 1 What does Tim Banks mean when he says '*Effective writing doesn't take place in isolation*'? You may want to elicit the meaning of 'isolation' first.
- 2 How can you '*relate the topic to your own learning context and ... reflect on what you have learnt in order to apply it to your own unique circumstances*'?
- 3 How important is practice?

Suggested answers



- 1 You can't just practise writing by itself. You need a clear context so you understand the purpose of your writing and its target reader. For this reason, the writing tasks in this course are presented with plenty of context.
- 2 Choose writing tasks (or adapt the ones in the book) to make them as relevant as possible to your own professional needs (e.g. what you need to write for your job) and your language needs (e.g. you are aiming to improve your spelling or use of articles).
- 3 It is absolutely vital to this course.

Writing practice

Trainees read the section to find out how they will practise writing during the course. Afterwards, tell them to find examples of each feature, i.e. short activities to develop skills; Into action sections; Extended writing activities; Case studies (pages 30–1 and 56–7); Audio scripts (from page 58); Answer key (from page 64); model documents (from page 80); Extended writing tasks (from page 84) and their Model answers (from page 88).

Use this opportunity to discuss your own expectations (e.g. how much writing your trainees are expected to produce; how long they will have to complete homework writing tasks; how you will assess – or not assess – their writing). See **How to run a business writing course** for a detailed list of things to discuss with trainees at the beginning of the course.

Flexibility

Discuss this section with the class. Explain how you are planning to approach the course, and (if appropriate) discuss with the class the order they would prefer to follow.

Writing for Impact and you

Tell the trainees to cover the right-hand column. They work in pairs to discuss the statements – which statements are true for them, and ways of overcoming the problems. When they have finished, discuss the questions as a class, using the advice in the right-hand column to guide your discussion.

Extension activity

Keep a record of trainees' answers to the questionnaire, in order to measure progress when you reach the end of the course. It can be very motivating for trainees to realise that they can do something at the end of the course that they were unable to do at the beginning.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

1A Introductions, requests, enquiries

Aims

Trainees read the two aims. Elicit from the class at least one example each of introductions, greetings, opening lines and endings.

Suggested answers



- Introductions: My name is ...
- Greetings: Dear Sir
- Opening lines: I am writing to enquire about ...
- Endings: Best regards

- 1 Trainees discuss the two questions in pairs, using examples from their own experience where possible. Encourage them to focus on any differences between emails and letters in their answers. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.
- 2 02 Play the recording for trainees to take notes. They discuss their notes in pairs, including similarities and differences compared with their own ideas from exercise 1, before feeding back to the class.

Extension activity

Trainees work in pairs to create a short list of recommendations for good writing, based on Sue and David's comments. You could play the recording a second time for them to check their answers.

Suggested answers



- Writing should be concise, direct and to the point.
- Letters can be more formal with a longer introduction.
- Writing shouldn't be too formal or too complicated.

Tip

Tell trainees to close their books. Write *Dear Paul* and *Regards* on the board. Elicit from the class whether there should be a comma at the end. Discuss any differences of opinion with the class, and then tell trainees to read the information in the Tip to compare it with their ideas.

Background note

It is more traditional to use commas, and therefore might be more appropriate when writing a very formal letter. It is considered more modern and 'cleaner' not to use commas. A similar choice arises with full stops in abbreviations, especially those with capital letters: *P.S.*, *R.S.V.P.*, *P.T.O.* and *Mr.* are more traditional; *PS*, *RSVP*, *PTO* and *Mr* are cleaner and more modern.

- 3 Trainees discuss the source of the six beginnings in pairs. When you discuss the answers with the class, focus on the clues that helped them to decide.

Extension activity

Trainees work in pairs to discuss what they can guess about the senders and recipients of the six messages, the relationship between them and their real reason for writing. They then share their ideas with the class.

Tip

Trainees close their books. Elicit some ways that a greeting in an email or letter is like a handshake. Elicit also four things that the greeting might depend on. They then read the Tip to compare it with their ideas. Go through the four factors with the class to elicit ways in which they might affect the choice of greeting, with examples.

Suggested answer



- How well you know the person: Use a more formal greeting with someone you don't know well.
- The subject of the communication: Use a more formal greeting for more serious subjects (e.g. a resignation letter).
- The local culture: Be ready to use informal greetings in less hierarchical cultures (e.g. the USA, the UK) to express friendship; use more formal greetings in more hierarchical cultures (e.g. Japan, Germany) to express respect.
- The culture of your company: Use a more formal greeting if your company has a formal culture (e.g. a law firm) and less formal greetings in a company with an informal culture (e.g. an advertising agency).

- 4 Trainees work alone to complete the matching task and then feed back to the class.

Extension activity

You could also discuss when to use *Hello* and *Hi* in greetings.

Suggested answer



A good technique is to copy what the other person uses when writing to you, or, if you want to appear friendly, go down one level (e.g. *Dear Ms Potts* > *Dear Linda* > *Hello Linda* > *Hi Linda* > *Hi*). If the other person stays at the 'Dear' level, it's best not to go below the 'Hello' level when you write back.

- 5 Trainees work in pairs to complete the exercise and then discuss their ideas with the class.

Background note

An easy way to remember the rule about *Yours sincerely* and *Yours faithfully* is that the two 'S's (*Sir* and *Sincerely*) don't go together. Many people do not pay much attention to the rule, but there is always a risk that the recipient may be one of the people who do pay attention to it, so it is still worth using. It may even make the difference between getting shortlisted for a job interview and being rejected: in a situation where there are hundreds of equally suitable candidates for a single job, the selectors may use arbitrary criteria like this to make their shortlists.

Tip

Tell trainees to close their books. Write the following greetings on the board, and elicit whether they are acceptable or not, and in which situations they can/should be used. Trainees then read the Tip to compare it with their ideas.

Dear All Dear Ms Susan Barnett Dear HR Manager Dear Mr Walker
Dear Sir/Madam

- 6 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs. After a few minutes, discuss the answers with the class. Write trainees' suggestions for question 1 (other words/phrases) on the board.
- 7 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups and then share their ideas with the class.
- 8 Trainees work alone or in pairs to write the beginnings of the two emails. See page 5 for ideas on how to manage **In-class writing** and page 7 for advice on **Marking and responding to writing**.

Extension activity

Trainees read the Model answers on page 64 to identify useful phrases that they could use in their own writing. See page 4 for information on **Useful phrase banks**. They could use both emails as templates for **Oral writing** (see page 5), substituting their own details into the emails but otherwise keeping as much as possible identical.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

1B Introductions, requests, enquiries

Aims

Go through the aims quickly with the class. Elicit the difference between an enquiry and a request.

Suggested answer

An enquiry is a request for information; a request usually involves asking for help.



- 1 Trainees discuss the two questions in pairs. For question 1, make sure they know to discuss both making and handling enquiries. For question 2, you could ask them to think about how the status of the recipient might affect the language you use. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.
- 2 Trainees read the letter to answer the questions. They compare their answers in pairs before checking with the class.

Extension activity

Discuss with the class whether the letter is generally formal and official or informal and friendly. (Answer: It is more formal and official.) Elicit from the class what language features, apart from the three phrases underlined in exercise 2, show that this is a formal letter. (Answer: Many ideas which could be expressed with verbs are instead expressed with nouns: see table below.)

Less formal (the most important information is in the verbs)	More formal (the most important information is in the nouns)
Please quote for these items.	I am writing to ask you to provide a quotation for the following promotional items.
Please tell us how much it costs to deliver ...	Could you please include in the quotation the cost of delivery ...
... and estimate how soon you can deliver after we order the goods?	... and give an estimate of the time from placing an order to delivery of the goods?
Please fax or email the quotation.	... provide the quotation by fax or email .

Tip

Trainees read the tip to find five adjectives to describe good business writing. Discuss with the class whether the model letter meets these criteria.

Answers

concise, clear, effective, short, simple



- 3 Trainees work in pairs to complete the sentences and answer the questions, and then share their ideas with the class.

Extension activity

Elicit from the class the grammatical patterns that follow each phrase. Where two phrases have the same pattern, elicit the difference between the two phrases. You may also need to reassure trainees that there is nothing wrong with the construction *if + would* in this context (*I'd appreciate it if you would allow ...*).

Suggested answers



- *I am writing to ask you + to-infinitive*
- *Can you | Could (please) + infinitive*
Could is more formal and tentative than *Can*.
- *I'd be grateful if you | I'd appreciate it if you + could | would*
There is no important difference between these phrases, but *I'd be grateful* might be used for a smaller request than *I'd appreciate it*.
- *Would you mind + -ing* form (or *if + subject + verb in past tense*, e.g. *Would you mind if I borrowed ...*)

- 4 Trainees work in pairs to complete the email. If they struggle, you could tell them that they need one word for the first gap, two for the second and three for the third. Discuss the answers with the class, including any alternative answers.

Extension activity

Discuss with the class the function and style of each paragraph, using examples of useful phrases from each paragraph.

Suggested answers



- Paragraph 1 states the purpose of the email. The enquiry itself is presented using quite tentative language (*... about the possibility of ...*) and with only a vague explanation of the nature of the proposed cooperation (*... with regard to ...*). This is a deliberate technique to avoid giving away too much information and making too many commitments at the beginning of the relationship, especially as there is a good chance that Mr Zhukov may not be interested in cooperation.
- Paragraph 2 presents more background, but everything is simply a statement of objective facts (*I am interested in identifying ...*). There is nothing in this paragraph to suggest that the writer is especially keen on working with Mr Zhukov. Again, this avoids making too much of a commitment at this early stage.
- Paragraph 3 is a clear call to action: it states clearly and simply what the writer wants Mr Zhukov to do (*Could you please ...?*).

- 5 03 Go through the notes first with the class to elicit what sort of information might be missing from each gap (e.g. a number, a date, etc.). You may need to check everyone understands that a *delegate* is a person who attends a conference. Then play the recording for trainees to answer the question and complete the notes.

Extension activity

Trainees read the script on page 58 to underline phrases for making enquiries and requests. Discuss with the class any differences between these spoken requests and the written ones from this unit.

Answers

- Enquiries: I'm enquiring about ...; Could you give me some details?; I'm interested in ...; Can you provide that?; Could I ask ...?
- Requests: Could you give me a quote?; Can you quote ...?; Could you give me your contact details?
- The phrases are similar to those in writing, but *Can* and *Could* are used very often. This is probably because the requests and enquiries are all very simple, so there's no need for more complicated structures.

- 6 Discuss the question with the class.
- 7 Trainees work alone or in pairs to write their emails. Encourage them to use language from this module. You could set a tight time limit (e.g. four minutes) to encourage them to work quickly. Afterwards, ask a few volunteers to read their emails aloud to the class.

Extended writing task 1

Tell trainees to read the information on page 84 to find out who they are, who they are writing to, and what information they are requesting. See **Extended writing** on page 6 for guidance on how to handle this task and follow up on trainees' writing.

Trainees could plan their writing in class and write up their answers at home.

Extension activity

As a follow-up, you could go through the Model answer on page 88 with the class, to identify the function of each paragraph and to underline useful phrases and techniques that they could use in their own writing.

Suggested answers

Paragraph	Function	Useful phrases	Useful techniques
1	Introduce yourself	<i>I work for ...</i>	Use positive adjectives to describe your work: <i>young, fast-growing.</i>
2	Explain your purpose	<i>We are looking for ... which can help us ... and provide ...</i>	Use a long noun phrase to describe what you are looking for. This is less direct than telling the other person what you want them to do.
3	Essential background	<i>We are based in ... and currently operate in ...</i> <i>Our initial research has identified ... as ... with great potential for us.</i>	Present facts about your company and your research before proposing a business relationship.
4	Specific details of what you want	<i>We would now like to engage ... to conduct ...</i>	Avoid making a proposal during this first email: <i>We would now like to engage a market research agency</i> rather than <i>We would now like to engage your market research agency.</i> Use bullet points to make your purpose clear.

Paragraph	Function	Useful phrases	Useful techniques
5	The actual business request / offer / proposal	<i>I would be grateful if you could tell me if your company would be able to offer this service, and what range of services you can provide.</i>	Keep the proposal itself simple (e.g. a <i>yes/no</i> question), polite and hypothetical (... <i>would be able ...</i>).
6	The call to action: what you want the other person to do to take this forward	<i>... if you are able to help, I would like to arrange a meeting to discuss this further.</i>	Again, avoid making a proposal: <i>a long-term relationship with a suitable agency</i> , rather than with your agency.
7	Friendly closure	<i>I look forward to hearing from you.</i>	Use this phrase to make it clear that you would like a response.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

2A Notes and minutes

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Elicit from the class the similarities and differences between notes and minutes.

Suggested answers




- Similarities: They are both used to summarise and record spoken language.
- Differences: Notes are used in a wider range of situations (e.g. taking telephone messages, attending lectures and presentations), while minutes are used only in meetings; minutes are usually treated as a finished document for others to read, while notes are often only for the writer to read, and are rarely treated as a finished document.

- 1 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.

Possible answers



- 1 Taking phone messages; attending meetings, negotiations and presentations; planning what you have to do today, etc.
- 2 (Mainly for taking notes of phone messages): Don't be afraid to ask for clarification if you don't understand; use words to represent letters (e.g. The reference code is A for Alex, P for Peter, R for Robert); use a checklist to make sure you have noted all the key information (e.g. name, company, contact number, required action); read back your notes to the other person to check you have understood everything; write up your notes immediately.

- 2  04 Play the recording for trainees to take notes. They compare their notes in pairs and then feed back to the class. Then compare trainees' answers with the suggested answer on page 65 and discuss any differences.


Extension activity

Elicit from the class which words have been omitted from the message in the Key.

Suggested answer



Articles and possessives (e.g. The flight / His flight); auxiliary verbs (~~has been~~ delayed, is not working). The last line of the message is a bare imperative (Meet), with nothing to make it more polite (e.g. Can you please meet him ...? / He wants you to meet him ...).

- 3  04 Play the recording again for learners to complete the questions. Then check with the class.

Extension activity

Trainees read the script on page 58 to find useful phrases for leaving and taking messages, in addition to the ones highlighted in exercise 3.

Suggested answers

I'm afraid she's away from her desk at the moment; Can I take a message for her?; I'm supposed to be ... but ...; Could you ask her to ...?; OK – no problem; I'll pass on the message as soon as she's back.

Tip

Trainees close their books. Elicit from the class what the most important note-taking skill might be. Then discuss how much of the conversation consisted of background information and how much was key information. Finally, elicit some tips for distinguishing between background information and key information. Tell trainees to read the Tip to compare it with their ideas.

Suggested answer

Put yourself in the shoes of the person receiving the message, and try to imagine what information that person will need. Ask questions (like the ones in exercise 3) to focus on key information.

- 4 **05** Go through the instructions with the class. Elicit briefly some examples of making a company more environmentally friendly while cutting costs. Go through the notes with the class to predict what the missing information might be in each case. Then play the recording for trainees to complete the notes. They compare their answers in pairs and then listen a second time if necessary before feeding back to the class.

Extension activity

Trainees work in pairs to analyse the completed notes (i.e. the notes in exercise 4 with the suggested answers on page 65) in terms of how they are different from other types of written English. Then discuss the answers with the class.

Suggested answers

- Omission of articles (e.g. A member of the working group ...; the resource areas with the highest spend)
- Omission of auxiliary verbs (e.g. was reporting back)
- Numbering (1, 2, 3) and lettering (a, b, c) used to organise ideas
- Use of *to*-infinitive for future (e.g. to be studied)
- Use of symbols (e.g. more facilities = less travel) and abbreviations (e.g. esp.)

Tip

Tell trainees to read the Tip to find out (a) what the role of a note-taker or minute-taker is; (b) what's important to record and what's not important; and (c) whether it's better to write as much as possible or to wait and listen before writing anything down. When they have found the answers in the Tip, discuss whether they agree with the advice.

- 5 Go through the instructions with the class. If trainees are not sure what to talk about, allow them to describe anything that they know well, e.g. their holiday plans, their hobby, etc. Whatever they decide to talk about, make sure they know to include a mixture of key information (e.g. names, dates, objectives, action points) and background information. Allow a few minutes for trainees to plan their talks, and then put them into small groups to deliver their talks and to take notes. Make sure they know that the focus of this task is note-taking, not effective presentations. When everyone has delivered their talk, discuss how easy/difficult it was to take notes effectively.

Extension activity

You could ask trainees to retell the information from their partners' talks, using only their notes. Their partners then judge whether the retelling is accurate and contains all the key information.

- 6 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.
- 7 Go through the instructions with the class, eliciting what they remember about the company from exercise 4. Divide the class into small groups, and make sure they know that around half the trainees in each group should represent the suppliers of videoconferencing equipment. Make sure that both sides in each group have chosen a minute-taker. Alternatively, the role of minute-taker could rotate within each team (for example, after each of the four bullet points). Allow up to around ten minutes for the meetings, and then a further five minutes for trainees to discuss the accuracy of the notes that were taken. Finally, discuss the activity with the class, focusing on how easy/difficult it was to take good notes.

Extension activity

As a homework task, tell trainees to find a short, interesting video clip on the Internet. For example, it could be a one-minute summary of today's news from the BBC News website (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/video_and_audio/), or any news story from Google news (<http://news.google.com>, most of which have video content when you 'Click to see related articles'). They watch the clip to take notes of the key information. You could set a rule that they are only allowed to watch once or twice.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

2B Notes and minutes

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Elicit briefly from the class what the purpose of meeting minutes might be, and some basic ways that the style of minutes can vary (e.g. length, structure, level of formality). Note that both these questions are discussed fully during the module, so avoid going too deeply into them at this stage.


- 1 Trainees read the two quotes. In the second quote, check they understand 'indispensable' (= essential, something you cannot do without). Trainees then discuss the three questions in pairs and share their ideas with the class. Note that question 3 is explored further in exercise 3.

Background notes

- Peter Drucker was a management consultant who is often referred to as 'the founding father of management studies'.
- J.K. (John Kenneth) Galbraith was one of the most famous 20th century economists.

- 2 Go through the instructions with the class. Elicit briefly some examples of how to 'develop team-working' (e.g. hold staff integration days, have open-plan offices rather than individual offices, offer incentives for teams, etc.). Make sure trainees know to take good notes during the meeting. They also need to remember that the meeting should involve decision-making, not just brainstorming.

Divide the class into small groups (around four trainees). Allow around five minutes for the meetings, five minutes for them to write up their minutes and five minutes to compare their minutes with others in their groups. Finally, discuss any similarities and differences with the class.

- 3  06 Go through the notes with the class to elicit what the missing information might be. Then play the recording for trainees to take notes. They compare their answers in pairs, including whether they agree with the speakers' opinions. They listen a second time if necessary before feeding back to the class.

Extension activity

Trainees use the script on pages 58–9 to create a list of advice for holding meetings and for taking minutes during meetings. They discuss their ideas in pairs and then share them with the class.

Suggested answers

- Make sure concrete decisions are made during each meeting.
- Avoid time-wasting.
- Make sure you know the purpose of the minutes in advance.
- Keep a record of decisions.
- Record what was said for absent colleagues, if appropriate.
- Keep minutes clear and simple.
- Focus on decisions, deadlines and what needs to be done.
- Don't include lengthy reports of discussions.

Tip

Trainees read the Tip to identify four questions. Then discuss briefly with the class how they might affect the style of minutes.

Suggested answers

- 1 Is it an internal meeting? If so, the notes might be less formal.
- 2 Will the minutes be published more widely? If so, they need to be more formal and structured. They may need to include more background information.
- 3 Is it external, with a client or partner? If so, the minutes will probably be more formal and structured. There may need to be a minute-taker for each party. If there is a single minute-taker, the minutes will probably be seen and approved by people from the other company, so care needs to be taken with sensitive or controversial information.
- 4 Is it a formal meeting such as an AGM? If so, the minutes are a legal document, and will probably need to follow a very structured format.

Background note

An AGM is an Annual General Meeting. Most public companies and organisations are obliged to hold a formal AGM every year.

- 4 Trainees work in pairs to discuss the questions for the three extracts. Then discuss the questions with the class.

Extension activity

Use these questions to analyse the language of the three examples on page 80 with the class.


- 1 In Example 1, the 'Items' are not presented as full sentences. What two structures are used instead?
- 2 What words have been omitted from the two 'Minuted points'?
- 3 What does NA stand for?
- 4 What structure is used to refer to a planned action or commitment?
- 5 In Example 2, what verb form is used to report the events and decisions in the meeting?
- 6 What verb forms are used to present background information to decisions?
- 7 What verb form is used to refer to future plans?
- 8 What is the function of the phrase 'General concern that ...'?
- 9 What is unusual about the last sentence of the first paragraph ('An increase ... also noted ...')?
- 10 Why do you think the writer included information that 'Stephen volunteered to conduct', rather than simply stating 'John to conduct ...'?
- 11 In Example 3, what grammatical features are the same as those in the other two examples?

Answers



- 1 The first item is an imperative starting with a verb (*Review ...*). This suggests it has been copied from the pre-meeting agenda, where an imperative is more logical, to state what must happen first. The second item is a noun phrase (*Approval of ...*). Most other items in the minutes will probably follow a similar structure.
- 2 Auxiliary verbs, articles, *there is/are: All actions ~~have been~~ completed. ~~There were~~ some concerns about a lack of balance in ~~the~~ plan. Training focuses on management staff, ~~but there is~~ little training for front line staff.*
- 3 Not applicable / not available.
- 4 A to-infinitive (*Alan to make ...*).
- 5 Past simple (*gave a summary, volunteered*).
- 6 Present perfect simple (*there has been*) and present perfect continuous (*has been running*).
- 7 *Will (will meet)*. NB In conversation, *going to* is more likely here, but *will* is seen as more formal.
- 8 It shows that this problem was discussed, that the concern was shared by most or all the participants, but does not identify exactly who expressed the concern. It is often important to record discussions and opinions, and not only decisions.
- 9 It looks like past simple, but in fact it's a passive sentence, with the verb 'be' omitted: *An increase ~~was~~ also noted*. This structure is useful for referring to important discussions, where no firm decisions were taken.
- 10 To highlight the fact that he wasn't simply nominated as the person to do this.
- 11 Noun phrases for items (*opening, announcements, approval*); past simple for the events at the meeting (*opened, were approved*); present perfect for background information (*has been received*); omission of 'be' in passive (*Thanks ~~were~~ expressed*). Note that the full passive is used in point 3 (*The minutes were approved*) because the sentence is already very short, so it would seem odd to shorten it further.

- 5 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.
- 6 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

- 7  07 Elicit briefly from the class what might be discussed in a weekly meeting of a marketing and communications team. Make sure trainees know to make notes only of the Items (i.e. the first column). Then play the recording for trainees to complete the task. They compare in pairs, including what else they remember about each item, and then check with the class. Play the recording a second time for them to complete the rest of the table. They check in pairs and feed back. Focus on the form of their notes (i.e. omitted words, etc.) as well as the content. Finally, tell trainees to compare their notes with those in the Key on page 66. Discuss any important differences with the class.

Extension activity 1

Trainees read the script on page 59 to underline useful phrases for keeping meetings on track and focusing on recording clear decisions. They compare in pairs and feed back to the class.

Suggested answers



- OK, that deals with the minutes.
- Shall we move on to item 2?
- How are we doing with ...
- Right – so an action point for ...
- ... make sure you've ... by the end of the financial year.
- Now, on to the next point.
- Karl, could you give us the main points and issues?
- Am I right in saying ...
- Yes, I think that's a fair summary.
- So Karl, you'll work with your team on ... and you'll send round ... by next week. Is that right?

Extension activity 2

As a homework task, trainees write up the notes they took in their role-plays at the end of module 2A. Their notes should be in the form of formal minutes.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

3A Invitations and letters

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Elicit some examples of business invitations. Elicit also whether it is easier to accept or decline an invitation.

Suggested answers



Examples of invitations: to a conference, to a product launch, etc.; it is probably easier to accept an invitation, as declining usually involves making excuses. Of course, the easiest option would be ignore the invitation, but this is rather rude.

- 1 Trainees read the letter and discuss the questions in pairs. Then check with the class.
- 2 Trainees work alone to put the paragraphs in order and then check in pairs.
- 3 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then check with the class.

Background note

Articles (*a/the*) are very important for showing how different parts of a text relate to each other. They tell the reader whether each noun phrase is a new piece of information or something they already know (or can work out from context). Articles and other *reference words* (e.g. *this, that, it*) are part of a much larger family of structures called *cohesive devices*, which add *cohesion* to a text. In other words, they show how different parts of the text are related to each other. Other examples of cohesive devices include: repetition of vocabulary; paraphrases and synonyms; sets of related words; relative clauses; omission of repeated words, etc.

Extension activity

Use these questions to analyse the cohesive devices in the letter with the class.

- 1 What other articles (*a/the*) are used in the invitation? Why are these articles used in these positions?
- 2 How many points are made in most of the sentences? How are these points linked together?
- 3 What do you notice about the sentences joined with '*and*' in paragraphs D and E? What words are missing?
- 4 What is the function of the word '*it*' in Paragraph D?

Answers

- 1 Paragraph E: **a** new kind of potato snack ('a' because *kind* is new); Paragraph D: **the** new product, **the** product ('the' because this is the same product that was mentioned before); Paragraph A: **the** launch presentation ('the' because the reader can be expected to work out from context that there will be a launch presentation – new products are often launched at such events); Paragraph B: **the** presentation ('the' because this is the same presentation as the one mentioned earlier).
- 2 Most of the sentences have two main points, linked together either with 'and' or a relative pronoun (e.g. *which*, *during which*, *that*). Sentences with two main points usually feel 'just right' in formal writing; shorter sentences feel too short and conversational; longer sentences with three or more points can be too confusing.
- 3 The subject of the second part of each sentence is missing, because it is the same as the subject of the first part (*We believe ... and we wondered ...; This product is ... and this product comes ...*). This omission of repeated subjects makes the style more formal, and makes the letter feel more cohesive.
- 4 'It' has no meaning in this sentence. It just serves as a 'dummy' subject to avoid having a long clause as subject (*[Organising promotions in outlets where people can try the product] will be vital ...*).

Tip

Elicit from the class what reference words are (see Background note above) and why they are important. Trainees then read the Tip to compare it with their ideas.

- 4 Trainees work alone to complete the sentences, and then compare their answers in pairs. They should also discuss the second part of the task (which phrases are informal) in their pairs. When you check with the class, elicit the rules that helped them choose the correct answers (see Background notes below). Note that three of the extracts are questions, which makes it easier to choose the correct forms.

Background notes

- *How about* + *-ing* form
- *would like* (sb) + *to*-infinitive
- to invite sb to sth
- *Why don't you* + infinitive. Note that *Why don't you ...* would be inappropriate in sentence 2, because it is too informal.

Extension activity

Elicit from the class which invitation phrases are used in the letter in exercise 1.

Answer

We would like to invite you to ...; we hope you will be able to attend; (we) wondered if you would be interested in participating.

- 5 08 Trainees read the two letters to identify the difference between them. You may need to check everyone understands 'a former engagement' (= an appointment or arrangement that was made earlier). Then play the recording for trainees to decide which letter is sent. Trainees then discuss the follow-up questions in pairs and feed back to the class.

Extension activity

Trainees listen to the recording a second time to identify how Sonia and Ian feel about the event. Discuss the answers with the class.

Suggested answers

They both agree that it is important and useful (*Sounds great | ... build relationships with a potential supplier | It's not that I don't want to*), but they would both prefer if the other person attended (*Oh no – another invitation | ... it'd be such a good opportunity for you | Do I have to?*).

Tip

Elicit from the class two reasons for giving an excuse when you decline an invitation. Then tell them to read the Tip to compare it with their ideas. You could also elicit some more examples of excuses from the class (e.g. *Unfortunately, I will be out of the country at the time | I have already agreed to attend a different event that evening | I am tied up with family commitments that day*).

- 6 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.
- 7 Go through the instructions with the class. If trainees struggle to come up with real-life situations for writing invitations, you could use the **Constrained writing** technique (see page 5) to generate a context. Elicit the type of company your trainees work for, the product(s) or service(s) it provides, the type of event and the location for the event. Trainees complete the writing task at home or in class.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

3B Invitations and letters

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Discuss briefly what is meant by 'formats', and how the format of business letters can vary.

Suggested answer



The format of a letter includes things like the layout (e.g. alignment, spacing, bolding and underlining, etc.) and style conventions (e.g. with full stops in abbreviations, commas after greetings, etc.).

- 1 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class. For sample answers to question 2, see exercise 2.
- 2 09 Go through the questions with the class to make sure everyone understands them. Make sure everyone knows that they should circle both A and B for some questions. Then play the recording for trainees to complete the task. They compare their answers in pairs, including a discussion of their own experience of receiving letters, and then feed back to the class.

Extension activity

Trainees look at the script on page 59. They listen a second time to underline the types of documents the two speakers refer to. When you check with the class, elicit exactly what is meant by each type of document.

Answers



Speaker A mentions *promotional stuff*, such as *direct mail advertising* (i.e. adverts sent directly to the potential customer); and *internal things* (i.e. letters from colleagues from the same place of work). Speaker B mentions *documents that need to be signed in hard copy* (i.e. on paper, not electronically) such as *contracts; invitations; transactional stuff* (i.e. writing to perform an action, such as inviting or accepting, rather than simply communicating); and *promotional literature*.

- 3 Trainees work alone to complete the descriptions. They check in pairs and discuss the questions at the top of page 17. Finally, discuss the answers with the class.

Extension activity

Trainees work in pairs to underline useful language techniques for making the writing more positive, formal and polite in the letter. Then discuss the answers with the class.

Suggested answers

Sentences beginning with *As* (*As [you are] ...*); flattery (saying nice things about the recipient: *a valued member*); *be able to* instead of *can* (*we are able to offer ...*); positive language (*confident, success, special*), including comparatives (e.g. *greater*) and superlatives (e.g. *largest*).

Background note

For more on different formats of business letters, refer to the **Templates** at <http://www.cambridge.org/elt/writingforimpact>

Tip

Go through the Tip with the class. Discuss whether your trainees' organisations have their own templates for business letters, and how they are different from the one in exercise 3.

- 4 Trainees work alone to complete the letter. Make sure they know that some words have been removed from the notes (e.g. articles), so they should pay particular attention to the correct form when completing the task. They compare their answers in pairs before feeding back to the class. As a follow-up, you could refer trainees to the Model answer on page 66 and discuss how the full forms are different from the notes.

Background note

The second paragraph contains an example of a cleft sentence. This structure uses *it* + *be* + *that*-clause to draw attention to part of the sentence by moving it towards the beginning of the sentence. Compare these two versions – the cleft sentence is the second version.

- [*We have been able to complete this project*] [*largely thanks to your generosity*].
- **It is** [*largely thanks to your generosity*] **that** [*we have been able to complete this project*].

Tip

Elicit some examples of fixed phrases in business letters (e.g. *Please find enclosed, I am writing to ask you to ...*) and why fixed phrases and standard formats are especially useful in business writing. Trainees then read the Tip to compare it with their ideas.

- 5 Trainees discuss the question in pairs and then feed back to the class.
- 6 Trainees work alone or in pairs to plan and write the reply. Make sure they pay close attention to getting the format right. Afterwards, ask some volunteers to read their letters aloud to the class.

Extended writing task 3

Go through the instructions with the class. See **Extended writing** on page 6 for guidance on how to handle this task and follow up on trainees' writing.

Trainees could plan their writing in class and write up their answers at home. If you set the task as homework, get trainees to reply to each other's invitations in the next lesson.

Extension activity

As a follow-up, you could go through the Model answer on page 89 with the class, to identify the function of each paragraph and to underline useful phrases and techniques that they could use in their own writing. You could get trainees to plan their emails/letters in class and write them at home.

Suggested answers



Paragraph	Function	Useful phrases	Useful techniques
1	Introduce yourself	<i>You may be aware that ...</i>	This is a useful phrase for referring to something that the other person may or may not know.
2	The invitation	<i>As a highly valued partner, we would be delighted if you could attend ..., which will take place at ... on ... from ...</i>	Use positive language (e.g. <i>highly valued, delighted</i>). State the location, date and starting time very clearly.
3	Information about the event	<i>The launch party will feature ...</i>	Explain why the event will be worth attending, e.g. <i>special appearances by well-known figures</i> .
4	The persuasion	<i>We very much look forward to ..., and would like to take this opportunity to ...</i>	Use positive language (e.g. <i>very much look forward, celebrate</i>). Show that the event is not just about you (e.g. <i>launching our new product</i>), but also relevant to the other person (e.g. <i>our partnership, our joint success</i>).
5	The call to action	<i>I would be grateful if you could confirm your attendance using the contact details below.</i>	Explain exactly what the other person should do.


Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

4A Preparing a report


Aims

Go through the aims briefly with the class. You could elicit one example for each aim, but note that the aims are discussed in exercise 1, so avoid eliciting too much at this stage.

- 1 Trainees work in small groups to discuss the three questions. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class. Write trainees' suggestions for questions 2 and 3 on the board, but avoid confirming or rejecting their ideas, as these questions are answered in exercises 2–5.
- 2  10 Go through the instructions with the class. Point out that trainees will listen a second time in exercise 3 to complete the notes. They could also start to complete the notes from the second column – for example, the first word from each note. After you have played the recording, trainees discuss their answers in pairs, including what they remember about the notes. Go through the four key points with the class, making sure everyone fully understands what they mean. You could also compare the key points with trainees' ideas on the board.

Background notes

- If somebody is *on the right lines*, they have a good general understanding.
- If something is *overly formal*, it is too formal.
- If you *skim* a text, you read it quickly to get a general understanding of it.
- If you *bang off* a long piece of writing, you write it quickly, without giving it much thought.

- 3  10 Play the recording a second time for trainees to complete their notes. They compare in pairs and check with the class.

Extension activity

Trainees discuss the advice in pairs, including whether they have written or read reports which break any of the advice. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

- 4 Trainees work alone to complete the matching exercise. When you check with the class, compare the list with trainees' ideas on the board.

Background note

The normal plural of **appendix** is *appendices*. The regular plural, *appendixes*, is also possible, but this might be inappropriate in formal reports.

- 5 Trainees work in pairs to discuss the best order for the sections. Then discuss the answers with the class.

Tip

Trainees close their books. Elicit from the class whether the order of writing the sections should be the same as the order in which they appear in the report. They then read the Tip to compare it with their ideas.

Trainees discuss the best writing order in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.

- 6 Trainees work in pairs to discuss which sections the extracts come from. Then check with the class.

Extension activity

Use these questions to analyse the language of the six extracts with the class.

- 1 What verb form is used in extract 1? Why?
- 2 What is the difference between *internal* and *external data*?
- 3 What verb form is used for extract 2? How might this be expressed in less formal English?
- 4 What word in extract 2 shows how the recommendation is based on an earlier section of the report?
- 5 What verb form is used in extract 3? Would this verb form always be used in this section?
- 6 Which word in extract 3 means '*compared with*'?
- 7 Does extract 4 use personal or impersonal language? Why do you think this is?
- 8 What structure is used in the first line of extract 4?
- 9 What is the difference between the type of conclusion in extract 4 and the one in extract 5?
- 10 What is the subject of the sentence in extract 5? What other long, impersonal subjects are used in these extracts?
- 11 What are the functions of the two sentences in extract 6?

Answers



- 1 Past simple, because the research is completed.
- 2 Internal data comes from the company itself (e.g. its employees, its sales, etc.). External data comes from outside (e.g. a market research company, public records, etc.).
- 3 *Recommend* (present simple) is followed by an infinitive (*be*). In less formal English, *should* or an *-ing* form might be used: *we recommend that Ms Chon **should** be appointed | we recommend **appointing** Ms Chon*.
- 4 *therefore*
- 5 *would* + infinitive. This form is used because the report contains a prediction for the future and a proposal. In a report on a past event, past tenses (e.g. past simple) would be used.
- 6 *on (... would save 25% annually **on** current arrangements)*
- 7 Impersonal language: there is a non-human subject (*the findings*), passive voice (*reported above*) and a noun phrase (*frequent failures*) instead of subject + verb (*they failed frequently*). This impersonal language is used because the report aims not to place blame but rather to identify more general problems in order to find a solution.
- 8 A reduced relative clause: *the findings ~~which are~~ reported above ...*
- 9 Extract 4 is a conclusion about a past event; extract 5 is a conclusion about a future proposal.
- 10 *Failure to implement wide-ranging changes*. Other examples of long impersonal subjects: *outsourcing cleaning services* (extract 3); *the findings reported above* (extract 4); *the headquarters relocation project* (extract 6).
- 11 The first sentence presents a background fact in the past simple; the second sentence relates this fact to the purpose of the report, in the present simple.

- 7 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then share their answers with the class.
- 8 Trainees work alone or in pairs to plan and write their reports. Make sure they spend plenty of time planning and checking their work. Note that the word limit (150 words) is for guidance only, to prevent trainees spending too long. It is more important to include all the sections from exercise 4, even if most of these sections consist of only one or two lines. If you prefer, you could ask trainees to write much fuller versions of their reports as a homework task, with no word limit.

Extension activity

You could ask trainees to find some examples of authentic reports and proposals from the Internet (e.g. <http://www.annualreports.com/>). Because these reports tend to be rather long, it is best if this is done online, either as a homework task or on computers in the classroom. Distribute the reports so that each group has a report. Trainees analyse the reports in terms of whether they follow the advice from exercise 2 and include the sections from exercise 4. They then report back on their findings to the class.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

4B Preparing a report

Aims

Trainees read the aims. Elicit briefly from the class what the process of writing might involve.

Suggested answer

Planning, drafting, editing, redrafting, etc.



- 1 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups and then share their ideas with the class. Focus on any differences in their approaches for the three types of writing.
- 2 Elicit what Jan Waterman said about the process of writing. You could play the last part of the interview ('*One more thing ...*') to remind trainees. Trainees then work in pairs to complete the diagram. When you check with the class, make sure everyone fully understands what each stage involves.

Background notes

- *Generating content* involves coming up with a rough list of ideas of things which might be included. These ideas can then be refined and extended later.
- *Focusing and selecting* involves deciding which ideas to include, which to develop and which to discard.
- *Structuring and organising* involves planning the sections or paragraphs of your writing, and what will be included in each section or paragraph.
- *Drafting* involves writing the report, with a view to editing and redrafting it later.

Tip

Elicit from the class what the benefits of reviewing and evaluating are. They then read the Tip to find three benefits.

Answers

- 1 To achieve content value, i.e. is the content useful and valuable. This relates to point 1 in Jan Waterman's advice in 4A exercise 2.
- 2 To achieve clarity, i.e. is the message clear. This relates to point 2 of Jan Waterman's advice.
- 3 To keep your writing concise, i.e. no longer than it needs to be.



- 3 Tell trainees to read the situation to find out what the report is, who it is for, and what it should contain.

Suggested answers

- The report is a summary of research into new, larger premises.
- The report is for the Executive Board.
- It should include background to the premises move, an analysis of the two preferred options, a summary of their advantages and disadvantages, and a clear recommendation of the best option.

Trainees then read Technique 1 and the Tip to underline the key information (i.e. *detailed questions; relevant and important ... from the reader's point of view*). Make sure everyone understands the technique. Trainees then work in pairs to come up with a list of questions for this situation. After a few minutes, elicit a list of questions from the class and write them on the board. If there are still some important questions from the Key that no one has thought of, you could use key words of the missing questions as prompts (e.g. *Renewable? How soon?*).

Trainees then read the report on page 81 to answer as many of the questions from the Board as possible. They discuss their answers in pairs and then feed back to the class. You could discuss with the class whether the report is successful (i.e. does it answer all of the most important questions or is there essential information missing?).

Suggested answers (to possible questions from Key)

	Option A	Option B
How were the two preferred options chosen?	In previous research.	
How long are the leases?	Five years	Five years
Are they renewable?	Not answered	Not answered but suggested (... <i>further expansion thereafter</i>)
How much office space is available?	500m ²	600m ²
Does this meet our needs?	Yes, for next five years	Yes, beyond next five years
How much is the cost per m ² ?	€24	€20
How soon can we move?	Not answered	Not answered
How much will the move cost?	€20,000	€50,000
How long will the move take?	Up to one month	Up to one week

Trainees look at Technique 2 and read the Tip. They identify three advantages of this technique in the Tip. Elicit from the class what these advantages mean in practical terms.

Suggested answers

- It helps you develop content ideas, i.e. come up with more ideas for the content of your report.
- It helps you group information, i.e. identify which facts go naturally together.
- You can use much of the language in the actual report, i.e. you can plan which words and grammar structures to use in each section. This is especially useful when writing in a foreign language, as it makes the actual writing stage quicker and more fluent.

Trainees then work in pairs to complete the spidergram for the report on page 81. Note that there are no boxes for the length of lease.

Background note

Mind maps are considered more useful than traditional linear lists because they are more flexible and more closely reflect the way information is stored and accessed in the brain. The terms *spidergram*, *spidergraph* and *web* are also commonly used.

Extension activity

Trainees read the report on page 81 to identify useful phrases. They should also identify the verb forms used in each paragraph. After a few minutes, check with the class.

Suggested answers



Useful phrases:

- Two alternatives have been examined.
- ... recommends Option B as it is ...
- This report outlines ... and recommends ...
- For this report, (we) conducted desk research ...
- This estimate is based on ...
- This is relatively low as we would ...
- This is an increase of ... over our current ..., which would meet our estimated needs over this period.
- (This would) allow for further expansion thereafter.
- For ... reasons it be necessary to ...
- See Appendix A for details.
- Both options are worth consideration.
- Option A/B involves less/ more ..., but ...
- The (long-term) benefits outweigh the extra cost ...

Verb forms:

- Executive summary: present perfect for background (*has decided, have been examined*); present simple for recommendation (*recommends*).
- Introduction: present simple (*outlines, recommends*).
- Research: past simple (*were identified, conducted, met, conducted*).
- Findings: Most sentences contain no verb in a tense. There are a few examples of present simple (*is*) and conditional forms (*would meet, would be, could be staged*).
- Conclusion: present simple for facts (*are, involves, does not allow, allows*) and conditional for a prediction beyond the five-year period (*would be*).
- Recommendation: present simple (*recommends, is, allows, outweigh*).

Background notes

- *Desk research* is research that is carried out without leaving one's desk. Typically, this involves using the Internet and the telephone. It contrasts with *field research*, which involves going out and talking to people, measuring things, etc.
- *Thereafter* means *after that time*.
- *Business continuity* refers to the need for a company to keep running in spite of disruptions cause by unexpected events (e.g. a fire) or planned events (e.g. holidays, retirements, a premises move).
- If you *effect a move*, you make it happen.

- 4 Trainees work in pairs to complete the plan. Point out that they should base their plans on the questions and notes from exercise 3. Discuss the plans with the class, and tell trainees to compare their plans with the one in the Key on page 68.

Tip

Go through the Tip with the class. Elicit how the two stages (spidergrams / focus questions and outline planning) relate to each other, and how the first stage makes the second stage much easier.

Suggested answer

The first stage is used to generate ideas, but does not put those ideas into any order. The second stage puts the ideas into the most logical order. This is much easier if the ideas have already been generated. Of course, you may still generate more ideas at the outline planning stage.

- 5 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.
- 6 Trainees work alone or in pairs to generate content and plan the outlines of their reports. Encourage them to use the techniques from this module. If they cannot think of a natural situation where they might write a report, you could use the **Constrained writing** technique (see page 5). Elicit the following information from the trainees: What is the company? Who is the report for? What is the report about? What does the reader want to find out?

Extension activity

As a follow-up, you could ask trainees to write their complete reports as a homework task. They should aim for a similar length report to the one on page 81, i.e. about one page of writing.

Extended writing task 4

Trainees follow the instructions carefully. You could get them to plan their reports in class and then write them up as homework. When they have finished, you could ask trainees to read each other's reports to see who makes the most sensible (or interesting) recommendations.

Extension activity

As a follow-up, you could go through the Model answer on pages 89–91 with the class, to underline useful phrases and techniques that they could use in their own writing.

Suggested answers

Section	Useful phrases	Useful techniques
Executive summary	<i>This report into ... finds that ..., and this is leading to ...</i> <i>Key recommendations are: ...</i>	Use bullet points for the key recommendations. Use imperatives (<i>Enhance, Reduce, Ensure, Broaden</i>) to introduce recommendations.
Introduction	<i>This report has been written at the request of ...</i> <i>The report examines ..., assesses ... and makes recommendations for ...</i>	Use long noun phrases (e.g. <i>the training and development opportunities currently provided for staff in the company; the effectiveness of the current scheme; recommendations for changes to enhance the offer and so improve staff skills, motivation and performance</i>) to express a lot of information concisely.

Section	Useful phrases	Useful techniques
Research	<p><i>In order to assess ... I researched and listed ...</i></p> <p><i>I conducted two areas of research to ...</i></p> <p><i>This research was conducted in two stages:</i></p> <p><i>This was conducted in two focus groups, one with ... and one with ...</i></p> <p><i>All research was conducted on the understanding of confidentiality.</i></p>	<p>Use numbers (1, 2, 3 ...) and letters (a, b, c ...) to organise your research.</p> <p>Use the same grammar structure (e.g. all noun phrases) for each numbered or lettered point.</p>
Findings	<p><i>The most significant findings on current T&D are:</i></p> <p><i>It is felt that ...</i></p> <p><i>... and this is not seen as ...</i></p> <p><i>All staff consulted feel there is a need for ...</i></p> <p><i>There were many suggestions for improvements to the ..., many of which respond to the issues identified above.</i></p> <p><i>There is broad agreement on these points amongst ...</i></p> <p><i>Full details of the Findings are provided in Appendix 1. These include: ...</i></p>	<p>Use verbs like <i>feel</i> and <i>see</i> as to report opinions.</p> <p>Use bullet points to organise your findings.</p>
Conclusions	<p><i>There is a strong feeling that ...</i></p> <p><i>This is perceived to lead to ... and may contribute to ...</i></p> <p><i>... needs to be ... so that ...</i></p> <p><i>... is not perceived as being ...</i></p> <p><i>There is a need to ...</i></p>	<p>Use impersonal language.</p>
Recommendations	<p><i>At present ...</i></p> <p><i>... is a necessary first step.</i></p> <p><i>Make better use of ...</i></p>	<p>Use imperatives (e.g. <i>Enhance, Reduce, Broaden, Use, Make use of</i>).</p>

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

5A Making your case in a report

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Elicit why the Introduction to a report is so important, and at least one example of language for expressing objectives in a report.

Suggested answers



- The Introduction sets the tone for the rest of the report. If the Introduction is interesting, readers are more likely to read the rest of the report and be influenced by it.
- *The purpose of this report is to ...*

- 1 Trainees read the two versions and then discuss the questions, including how the two versions are different, in pairs. After a few minutes, discuss the answers with the class. You could refer trainees to the Key on page 68 to compare it with their ideas.

Background notes

- *Industrial action* is a general name for strikes and similar forms of protests by workers against their employers.
- An *ad hoc committee* is one that has been set up for a limited period of time for a specific purpose.

Tip

Trainees close their books. Elicit from the class what a good Introduction should include (ideally three things) and whether there is a maximum or minimum length for an Introduction. They then read the Tip to compare it with their ideas. They could also look at the cartoon to see how it relates to the topic.

Answers



It should include the report's purpose, its content and possibly its organisation. There is no maximum or minimum length. The man in the cartoon has probably just read the Introduction to a report. The cartoon perhaps illustrates the danger of being too focused on details and losing track of wider issues.

- 2 Trainees read the four Introductions and then discuss the questions in small groups. For question 2, they should identify examples of formal language. After a few minutes, discuss the answers with the class.

Background notes

- All of the extracts use good, formal English, which would be suitable for all kinds of reports. The feature that makes extracts 1 and 4 especially formal is the longer introductory phrase at the beginning of each (*LGA has prepared this proposal in response to ...* / *CS Solutions is pleased to submit this proposal in response to ...*). In both cases, a simpler introductory phrase (*This proposal is in response to ...*) would make the proposals slightly less formal.
- Technically, a *tender* is an offer to do a job for a certain price and under certain conditions. Large companies and government departments often announce a *Call for Tender* (CFT) when there is a large job to be done (e.g. to build a new hospital), and then choose the most attractive tender from a range of potential suppliers. In practice, the word *tender* is often used as shorthand for Call for Tender. This is the way it is used in extract 1. A *Request for Quote* (RFQ) is very similar, but tends to be used more for offers from suppliers of simpler products or services, where price is the most important factor. There is considerable overlap between these terms, and other similar terms are also used (e.g. IFB – Invitation for Bid, etc.).

Extension activity

Trainees underline useful verb + noun combinations in the four extracts. You could take this opportunity to check they understand all the verbs (e.g. to *detail sth* = to explain in detail; to *adhere to sth* = follow closely). They then work in pairs to make other combinations of these verbs and nouns which might be useful in reports. When you discuss the answers with the class, allow some creativity in the answers. The only 'wrong' combinations are the ones that repeat similar words (e.g. to detail details, to provide the current provision).

Suggested answers



Combinations from the extracts	Other possible combinations
to prepare a proposal	to prepare a costing / instructions / ...
to outline our experience	to outline the results / a solution / ...
to provide details of ...	to provide a costing / a solution / ...
to include a costing	to include details of ... / the costs / ...
to analyse the training provided	to analyse a proposal / the costs / ...
to detail the current provision	to detail our experience / the results / ...
to present the results	to present a proposal / a solution / ...
to compare the costs	to compare the results / our experience / ...
to recommend a solution	to recommend a proposal / the training provided / ...
to submit a proposal	to submit details of ... / instructions / ...
to adhere to instructions	to adhere to a costing / a proposal

- 3 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then share their ideas with the class. You could also recommend that trainees compare their answers with those in the Key on page 68.

Background note

So as to and *in order to* are the most useful phrases for expressing purpose in a report. A simple *to*-infinitive is also possible (e.g. We have written this report to analyse ...), but the longer phrases are more formal. The structures are also possible with *that*-clauses: *so that* and *in order that*.

- 4 Trainees work alone to complete the statements of purpose and then compare their ideas in pairs. Then check with the class.

- 5 Trainees discuss the question in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.
- 6 Trainees work alone or in pairs to write their statements of purpose. Encourage them to add extra details from their own imaginations. Ask a few volunteers to read their statements of purpose aloud, and compare trainees' versions with the ones in the Key on page 68.

Extension activity

As a homework task, you could ask trainees to prepare the Introduction to a report about a current news or business story. If possible, they should focus on the impact of this story on their own organisation or region. Encourage them to write a longer Introduction than the ones in Module 5A, and to cover the three points from the Tip on page 22 (i.e. the purpose of the report, its content and its organisation). In the next lesson, ask volunteers to read their Introductions aloud to the class. You could get the class to vote which full report they would most like to read.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

5B Making your case in a report

Aims

Elicit the difference between the two aims.

Answer

You can *present information* visually (e.g. in a table, a chart). *Describing data* is usually done as a written text (or spoken presentation), and supports visual presentations.



- 1 Trainees work in groups to discuss the three questions. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

Background notes

- There is no important difference between the names *graphs* and *charts*: different people (and different organisations) prefer different names. Common examples include *bar graphs* (or *bar charts*), *line graphs* and *pie charts*.
- A *testimonial* is a description of an experience, usually written by a satisfied customer and used as a marketing tool to persuade other potential customers.
- *Direct costs* (see table) are those costs that can be allocated to a specific project (e.g. to produce a batch of a specific product) or department. *Indirect costs* are more general, and cannot be easily allocated. In the table, *direct costs* include *staff costs* (i.e. the salaries of those employees working on the project), *premises costs* (i.e. the cost of the buildings or parts of buildings allocated to that project), *running costs* (i.e. the cost of operating the process, including energy and maintenance costs) and *materials* (i.e. buying and storing raw materials and parts).

Extension activity

Use these questions to discuss the two visuals with the class.

- 1 What type of visual are they?
- 2 What trends do they show?
- 3 How might the trends be related to each other?
- 4 Are they the best way of showing the data in each case?

Answers

- 1 The top visual is a line graph. The bottom visual is a table.
- 2 The line graph shows a gradual increase in the dollar exchange rate over three years, including a projection of trends into the future. The table shows a steady increase in direct costs over the same period.
- 3 The increase in costs might be the result of the changing exchange rate. This might explain why there is a more dramatic increase in running costs and materials, both of which may involve imports.
- 4 The line graph might be clearer if only the top part were shown (e.g. above the level of 1). This would allow more detail to be visible. It would also be useful to show a clear line between past facts and future predictions. The table might be easier to interpret as a bar chart, to make the changes more visually apparent.

- 2 11 Go through the statements with the class to make sure everyone understands them. Then play the recording for trainees to complete the table. They compare their answers in pairs, including a discussion of which speaker they agree with most, and then feed back to the class.

Background notes

- An *unsolicited proposal* is one that you did not request and were not expecting to receive.
- A *prospectus* is a type of brochure which companies use to describe their work and create a positive impression. It serves a similar function to a company's homepage on their website.

Extension activity

Trainees look at the script on page 60. They listen again to underline all the good advice for writing reports and proposals. They then work in pairs to create a list of advice. Discuss the answers with the class.

Suggested answers

- It should be very clear.
- Let the reader know quickly what you are proposing.
- Back this up with solid data.
- Convince the reader that what you say is true.
- The data must be presented in a meaningful and accessible way.
- Don't include very detailed tables of data (it can be in an appendix or just referred to).
- Focus on the main points, the critical information – if I need more, I can ask for it.
- Use stories – they give a much rounder picture.
- Include examples of your previous work.
- Include actual testimonials from clients.
- Include information about the company.

Tip

Elicit from the class which section of a report or proposal is most likely to contain the presentation and description of data. Trainees then read the Tip to check their ideas.

Answer

In the Findings section.

- 3 Tell trainees to re-read the extract from CS Solutions' proposal from Module 5A (exercise 2, extract 4). They then look at the table and graphs to discuss the three questions in pairs. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.
- 4 Trainees read the description and then discuss the questions in pairs. Point out that they are not looking for factual differences in the two versions, but different approaches to presenting the information.

Extension activity

Trainees work alone to underline useful words for describing data.

Answers



to rise (steadily) (from X to Y) (by + date); to fall (to X); to increase; a fall in sth; to grow

Tip

Trainees read the Tip to find three ways of presenting data. You could then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each way with the class.

Answers



In tables, in graphs and charts, in text.

- 5 Trainees work alone to complete the text. They compare their answers in pairs before feeding back to the class.

Extension activity

Tell trainees to underline useful phrases and structures in the two extracts, which they could use in their own reports and proposals. Then discuss the answers with the class.

Suggested answers



Useful phrases:

- Based on projections from ..., (we) project that ...
- This means that ...
- This ... will be achieved through ... as the volume grows.
- We expect the volume of ... to ... over the period.
- As with ..., the unit cost will ... as ...
- Our projection is that this ... will be reached in ...

A useful structure is the use of the words 'rising' and 'falling' to link sentences, followed by a time reference (*as, by or when*):

- The proposed cost of telephone call handling is \$0.75 at 50,000 calls a year, **falling** to \$0.68 **as** the volume of calls increases.
- This means that the total cost of telephone call handling will be nearly \$40,000 in 2016, **rising** to only \$47,000 **by** 2017.
- At 45,000 enquiries the cost will be \$0.5 per enquiry, **falling** to \$0.45 **when** the volume reaches 50,000 enquiries.

Tip

Tell trainees to close their books. Brainstorm a list of words that can be used instead of *rise* and *fall*. Make sure everyone fully understands all the words. You could also discuss whether any of the words are more suitable for journalism than a formal business report (e.g. *soar*, *plummet*, *slump*). Then tell them to compare their lists with the ones in the Tip. Note that the Tip contains a good range of vocabulary: enough to avoid too much repetition in a text, but without getting into the colourful language used by some financial journalists.

- 6 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then feed back to the class.
- 7 Trainees work alone or in pairs to write their paragraphs. Encourage them to use the useful language from the extracts in exercises 4 and 5. Afterwards, ask some volunteers to read their paragraphs to the class. You could also get trainees to compare their answers with the Model answer on page 69 to see if they used a similar range of structures.

Extended writing task 5

Tell trainees to read the instructions on page 85. Make sure they know there are two alternative tasks. They may do both tasks if they prefer. If they don't have time to gather actual data, they could invent it, but this would make the writing less interesting. You could get them to plan their writing in class and write it up at home. When they have finished, they could read each other's writing to work out whether the writer used real or invented data.

Extension activity

As a follow-up, you could go through the Model answer on page 91 with the class, to underline useful phrases and techniques that they could use in their own writing.

Suggested answers

Section	Useful phrases	Useful techniques
Introduction	<p><i>This report examines ..., comparing ... to ...</i></p> <p><i>The report lists areas which are a concern as regards ..., and recommends ...</i></p> <p><i>It does not make specific recommendations for addressing these issues, as that is beyond the scope of the present investigation.</i></p>	Explain what the purpose of the report is not (i.e. that is beyond the scope of the present investigation).
Findings	<p><i>Three main areas were examined ...</i></p> <p><i>This means there isn't enough data to draw on as yet.</i></p> <p><i>The three main areas are: ...</i></p> <p><i>It is clear that there is ...</i></p> <p><i>This contrasts with ...</i></p> <p><i>... there is a clear issue, which will require further investigation.</i></p> <p><i>This does not appear to be a significant area of concern.</i></p> <p><i>However, given the nature of ... this is hardly surprising, and does not need further investigation.</i></p> <p><i>The situation here is very similar to ... (above).</i></p> <p><i>... this is easily explained by ...</i></p> <p><i>The findings of this limited study indicate that the main area for further investigation is ...</i></p>	Present your findings as separate paragraphs.

6A Getting the tone right

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Elicit what is meant by 'the style' of emails and 'culturally appropriate'.

Suggested answers



The style relates to the level of formality, plus related issues such as whether they are personalised or impersonal, written in simple language or sophisticated language, etc. If an email is culturally appropriate, it shows the writer has taken the cultural background of the reader (e.g. their nationality, their job, their company, their background) into consideration.

- 1 Trainees read the five emails to decide where on the scale they fit. They discuss their answers in pairs. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

Extension activity

Trainees work in pairs to underline the features of the five emails that show how formal or informal they are. Discuss the answers carefully with the class.

Suggested answers



- Email 3 is the most formal. There are full forms (e.g. *I am*) instead of contractions (*I'm*). *That* is not omitted (*I am sure that it will be ...*). Some formal fixed expressions (e.g. *on behalf of, to all concerned*). The sentences are longer than they could be in less formal English (e.g. *I am writing to thank you for ...* → *Thank you for ...*; *You all deserve congratulations for ...* → *Congratulations for ...*). The greeting and ending (*Dear ... | Yours sincerely*) are also very formal.
- Email 2 is slightly less formal, as illustrated by the greeting and ending (*Dear + first name | With best wishes*). *Thank you* and *I look forward to* are more formal than *thanks* and (*I'm*) *looking forward to*. The use of a reduced relative clause (*... the materials which were supplied*) is rather formal.
- Email 1 is friendly but not especially formal or informal. The greeting and ending (*Hi | Regards*) are suitable for business contacts who are friendly but not necessarily friends. Some of the sentences omit words, in a conversational style (e.g. *Please accept my apologies for ...; I hope ...*). There is a mixture of contractions (e.g. *doesn't*) and full forms (e.g. *he will not*). Some language is idiomatic (e.g. *tied up, kicking off*), but some is more formal (e.g. *I can now confirm that ...; ... is deeply apologetic ...*). The dashes (–) are a rather informal way of punctuating the email.
- Email 4 is rather informal but still suitable for business correspondence between colleagues who know each other well. There are omitted words (e.g. *I'm sorry that I missed you ...*) and short, simple sentences. The dash (–) is informal. The phrase *urgent and unscheduled* is slightly more formal.
- Email 5 is the most informal. There is no greeting or ending, just first names. The vocabulary is very simple and conversational (e.g. *it went really well, I think* – a more formal version would be *I believe it was very successful*). There is a contraction (*couldn't*) and a dash (–).

- 2 Trainees work in pairs to answer the questions. When you discuss the answers with the class, elicit the useful phrases for each function in question 2.

Answers



- a I was very interested to learn more about ...
- b Sorry I missed you.
- c ... is deeply apologetic ...
- d Thanks for all your help on ...
- e I am writing to thank you for ... on behalf of all of us at ... / You all deserve congratulations for ...

- 3 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class. For question 3, you could elicit some examples of company styles for emails (see Background note).

Background note

Company styles for emails could involve things like punctuation, spacing, fonts and standardised greeting lines. Some companies also specify what should be included in various types of email (e.g. in response to an enquiry or complaint, always begin and end by thanking the other person for their time).

- 4 12 Trainees read through the six statements to make sure they understand all the words. Then play the recording for trainees to complete the task. They discuss their answers in pairs, including the follow-up question (*How far do you agree ...?*) and then share their ideas with the class.

Extension activity

Write these questions on the board. Play the recording a second time for trainees to answer the questions. They check in pairs before feeding back to the class.

- 1 According to Speaker 1, which cultures use a more formal style between colleagues?
- 2 How does Speaker 1 suggest you change your style for people with lower levels of English?
- 3 What three examples does Speaker 2 give of informal style in some companies?
- 4 What type of external contact does Speaker 2 advise being especially polite with?

Suggested answers



- 1 Some Asian cultures
- 2 Keep your messages clear and simple and use a polite style.
- 3 They encourage staff to dress informally; there's not much gap between levels in the hierarchy; internal emails tend to be very informal.
- 4 People you don't know or haven't met

Tip

Trainees read the Tip to find four pieces of advice. Then discuss each piece of advice with the class: does everyone agree, and what, in practical terms, can you do to follow the advice.

Suggested answers

- Use a clear, polite style with non-native speakers, neither too formal or too informal: use short, simple sentences and common words. Avoid colloquial language or slang and difficult grammar structures. Don't bury your meaning in layers of politeness, where a non-native may struggle to understand what you are actually trying to say.
- Make the purpose clear at the beginning: use a phrase like *I am writing to ask you ...*
- Keep the main part concise: avoid including unnecessary details.
- Say politely what you want them to do: use a phrase like *Could you please ...?* or *I'd like you to ...*

- 5 Trainees work alone to complete the matching task and then check in pairs. When you check with the class, focus on pairs of formal and informal words in the phrases (i.e. *request* = *ask for*; *postpone* = *put off*; *I regret* = *I'm sorry*; *inform* = *tell*; *I'd be grateful if you could ...* = *Could you ...?*; *contact* = *get in touch with*; *reply* = *answer*; *require* = *need*; *convenient* = *OK*; *with reference to* = *about*).

Extension activity

Trainees test each other in pairs. One trainee reads formal phrases to elicit the informal equivalents from his/her partner, whose book is closed. They swap roles, focusing this time on the formal equivalents of informal phrases.

- 6 Trainees discuss the question in pairs and then feed back to the class.
- 7 Trainees read the task and the email. Discuss with the class what style would be appropriate for the email to Mr Schmidt (Answer: formal and polite). Trainees then work alone or in pairs to plan and write their emails.

Extension activity

As a follow-up, you could ask trainees to pass their invitations to another trainee or pair, who write a response from Mr Schmidt. This email conversation could continue over several turns, perhaps becoming slightly less formal in later emails. Alternatively, or additionally, you could ask trainees to reply to Ruth (the writer of the original email) explaining that the invitation has been sent (and perhaps summarising Mr Schmidt's response). The email to Ruth should be in fairly informal English.

6B Getting the tone right

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Elicit briefly which emails from 6A included apologies and which included thanks.

Answers

Emails 1 and 4 included apologies. Emails 2, 3 and 5 included thanks.



- 1 13 Make sure trainees know to take only very brief messages. Play the recording. Trainees compare in pairs before feeding back to the class.
- 2 13 Trainees read the notes to try to remember what was said. Then play the recording a second time for them to complete the notes. They compare in pairs and check with the class. Point out that these two messages will form the background to exercises later in the module.
- 3 Trainees try to remember what the missing words in each sentence were, and then look back at the emails in 6A to check. Check briefly with the class.
- 4 Go through the model with the class. Point out that the phrases for expressing thanks in 3 could be added to the second line of the model. They then work in pairs to find the phrases and create a model for apologising. Point out that their model doesn't have to fit exactly with the emails in 6A: the whole point of a model is that sections can be added or removed to suit the needs of the situation. For example, email 1 contains two apologies – one for a delay in replying and one for the CEO dropping out of the project. When they have finished, elicit some possible models from the class and write trainees' ideas on the board. There is no need to find a single model that everyone agrees on. Trainees could refer to the sample answer on page 69 to compare it with their ideas.

Extension activity

Elicit from the class which parts of emails 1 and 4 relate to each stage in the model.

Suggested answer

Greeting	Hi Rob	Hi Rita
Give apology	Apologies for the delay in getting back to you.	Sorry I missed you on Wednesday
Give background to the problem	Advantage's CEO has been tied up with year-end activity but ...	I had an urgent and unscheduled meeting
Try to reach a solution	Gordon Mair – the CEO – is deeply apologetic ... hopes to collaborate in the future ...	Can we meet next week, maybe on Thursday?
Ending	Regards Amanda	Ahmed



Tip

Elicit from the class some advantages to using models to write emails and letters. Trainees then read the Tip to compare it with their ideas.

Answer

It is easier to write and your writing will be clearer.



- 5 Trainees read the emails and discuss their similarities and differences in pairs. Check the answers with the class.

Extension activity

Trainees identify useful phrases from the two emails for each function in the pattern for apology emails.

Suggested answer

Greeting	Hi ...	Dear ...
Give apology	Just writing to say that I'm really sorry, but ...	I am writing to apologise for ...
Give background to the problem	We've been having transport problems – you might have read about ...	As you may be aware, ... has caused serious disruption ...
Try to reach a solution	Anyway, ... should be with you by ...	I hope that we will be able to complete ... by ...
Reiterate the apology	I hope that's not a big problem for you.	I apologise again for the delay, and I hope that this will not cause you any serious inconvenience.
Ending	Regards Jean-Paul	Regards Jean-Paul Berthier

- 6 Trainees work in pairs to complete the email. You could play the second voicemail message again to help trainees remember what was said. When you check with the class, you could elicit whether the email follows the pattern for thanking emails exactly. (Answer: No, because it begins with an explanation (Sally has asked me ...) and ends with a reiteration of the thanks (Thanks again). Otherwise, it follows the pattern.)
- 7 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.
- 8 Trainees work alone or in pairs to plan and write the email. You could play the voicemail message again to remind them. Encourage them to use the patterns from this module in their answers. When they are ready, ask volunteers to read their emails aloud. You could hold a class vote to decide which apology is most effective.

Extended writing task 6

Go through the instructions carefully with the class. Make sure trainees know to follow the pattern for thanking emails. When they have finished, ask volunteers to read their emails aloud to the class.

As a follow-up, trainees could reply to each other's emails, as if from the potential customer. The customer has to cancel the invitation or rearrange the visit, and should therefore apologise politely for these changes.

Extension activity

Go through the Model answer on page 88 with the class, to identify the function of each paragraph and to underline useful phrases and techniques that they could use in their own writing.

Suggested answers

Paragraph	Function	Useful phrases	Useful techniques
1	Explain purpose of email – thanking	<i>I'm writing to thank you for your positive response to ...</i>	Make it personal: <i>I'm writing to thank you for your positive response to our proposal ...</i>
2	Short sales pitch	<i>We feel that ... that we can provide, including ..., would fit extremely well with your requirements.</i>	Use either <i>will</i> or <i>would</i> in your sales pitch. <i>Will</i> suggests you are more confident, but it may appear over-confident.
3	Accept the invitation	<i>We would therefore be delighted to in greater depth ...</i>	Use <i>therefore</i> to show that the sales pitch is related to your acceptance.
4	Explain procedure	<i>As the head of this project I will ... I will be joined by colleagues from ... who will be able to answer your questions in detail.</i>	Use <i>will</i> to explain the procedure. This is more official than <i>going to</i> .
5	Request for information	<i>Could I ask how long ...? Could I also ask what ...?</i>	Use indirect questions (e.g. <i>Could I ask ...?</i>).
6	Positive closure	<i>I look forward to meeting you on ...</i>	You can include a date in this fixed expression.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

Case study 1: Kompleet solutions

Lead-in

Trainees discuss the two questions in small groups. Point out that new markets could refer to new countries, or new parts of countries which are currently established markets, or new sectors (or sub-sectors) of the economy. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

Suggested answers



- 1 There are many barriers to entry, for example: it may be very expensive to set up a new office; it could take a long time to learn how to work with the regulations in the new market; there may be strong established competitors; it can be difficult to find good employees and partners in a new market; there may be more risk because the company managers know less about the new market.
- 2 Start small and build up gradually; make sure you've got good people who know the market well; use trusted partner companies (e.g. agents and distributors) rather than set up everything yourself.

Briefing

Go through the Briefing with the class. You could use the following questions to focus attention on the four bullet points. Discuss each question briefly with the class.

- 1 What might the expansion plans involve?
- 2 What are some examples of promotional activity?
- 3 How might you measure the performance of promotional activity?
- 4 Why might this report be especially important in the context of expansion?

Suggested answers




- 1 Opening a new office in a new country or city; starting to sell a completely new product or service.
- 2 Adverts, launch events, special offers, PR activities (e.g. radio interviews), etc.
- 3 Compare the cost with the amount of new business generated, ideally showing how the promotion led to the new business.
- 4 Because the managers in head office may be cut off from information on the day-to-day running of the new office/department.

Background

- 1 14 Trainees listen to the interview to make brief notes to answer the questions. They compare their answers in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Background note

- If you **lease** office space, you rent it from a landlord (who owns the office space). You may then be able to sub-let it, i.e. rent it, or part of it, to another party.
- Economies of scale are the savings that come from doing something on a large scale. For example, the cost of producing 100 litres of soup will be much less than 100 times the cost of producing 1 litre.

- 2  14 Trainees discuss the notes in pairs to try to remember what the missing information was. Then play the recording a second time. Trainees check in pairs and then report back to the class.

Issues

Trainees read the email to answer the question. Check with the class.

Extension activity

You could use these questions to analyse the structure and language of Angela's email with the class.

- 1 What is the function of the three paragraphs?
- 2 What do you think Angela means by 'a big push'?
- 3 What phrases does Angela use to emphasise how important this is?
- 4 What technique does she use to describe the problem? Why?
- 5 What techniques does she use to make the email less negative and aggressive?

Suggested answers



- 1 The first paragraph gets straight to the purpose of the email and what Angela wants in general; the second paragraph provides background information and justification for her concern; the third paragraph includes explicit requests for actions.
- 2 An aggressive marketing campaign, involving more effort than is currently being made.
- 3 *We really need ...; we're well behind ...; Can you urgently ...?*
- 4 An understatement, emphasising the temporary nature of the problem (*the numbers aren't looking great at the moment*). A more direct description (e.g. *the numbers are really bad*) might be too demotivating – Angela wants to find a solution. However, this understatement of the problem is balanced by the strong emphasis she places on the importance and urgency of finding a solution.
- 5 She uses 'we' to show that they're all on the same side here; she acknowledges that Rod and his team already understand the situation (*As you know ...*) and are working to find a solution (*I know they're doing this already*).

Task 1

Tell trainees to read the task to identify what they will have to write and what two things to include. (Answer: An invitation to an open event; a summary of the benefits of Komplete's service.) You could elicit from the class which modules from this course will be especially useful for this task. (Suggested answer: Module 1 (Introductions) and Module 3 (Invitations).) You could elicit what they think the 'open event' might involve. (Suggested answer: A launch presentation, possibly with a meal and entertainment.)


You could get trainees to plan and draft the email in pairs or small groups, and then write up their emails as a homework task. The email could be longer than the writing they have done for the main modules. Note that it is not necessary for trainees to complete the writing before moving on to the next part of the Case study.

When the emails are ready, ask volunteers to read their emails aloud to the class. You could also get trainees to compare their answers with the Model answer on page 70, and to identify useful language and techniques from the Model answer.

Extension activity

As a follow-up, you could ask trainees to swap invitations and to reply to each other's invitations, either accepting or declining the invitation.

Meeting

 **15** Go through the minutes with the class, to elicit what sort of information might be missing in each gap (i.e. a number for gaps 1 to 3). Then play the recording for trainees to complete the minutes. They check in pairs and listen a second time if necessary before feeding back to the class.

Background notes

- A Chamber of Commerce is a local business organisation, where business people can build relationships with each other and lobby jointly on behalf of the business community.
- Occupancy is the ratio of leasable property which is occupied by rent-paying tenants. A rate of 35% (as in the Case study) means that nearly two thirds of the office space is currently empty.

Task 2

Elicit from the class the tone Rod should use in the email to Angela. (Suggested answer: Not too formal, because they are close colleagues, but also not informal: Angela is Rod's boss, and he is giving her very bad news, which could affect whether he keeps his job.) Trainees work in pairs to plan and draft the email. They could write up their emails at home. When the emails are ready (or at least planned), you could ask some volunteers to present their emails to the class. Finally, ask trainees to compare their emails with the Model answer on page 70 to identify similarities and differences compared to their own writing, in terms of organisation (e.g. function and length of each paragraph) and tone (e.g. level of formality).

Extension activity

Use these questions to analyse the Model answer with the class.

- 1 What is the function of each paragraph?
- 2 What do you notice about the functions of the paragraphs?
- 3 How does Rod balance facts with opinions (= how he feels about the facts) and conclusions (= his interpretation of the causes and implications of the facts)?
- 4 How does Rod suggest there is still hope at the end of the email?

Suggested answers



- 1 Paragraph 1: purpose for writing, plus executive summary (*It's not very good news*); paragraph 2: description of action taken; paragraph 3: results of action; paragraph 4: explanation for poor results, based on evidence (*Feedback ... suggests ...*); paragraph 5: implications of result.
- 2 They closely follow the order of sections in a report: Executive summary / Introduction; Research (= action taken); Findings (= results); Conclusion (= explanation); Recommendations (= implications).
- 3 The email is mostly fact-based, including the explanation in paragraph 4, which he emphasises is not simply his opinion. This is a good approach when giving bad news: let the reader draw his/her own conclusions. Rod uses short phrases to express his opinions (*not very good news, I'm afraid; ... has not been particularly good; Unfortunately*) to show that he understands the situation, but avoids expanding on his opinions. He also keeps his conclusions brief and at the end of the email.
- 4 He uses the verb *struggle* instead of *fail*, to show his team is prepared to keep trying, and may even succeed. He says they will *struggle to improve significantly*, suggesting that a slight improvement is more realistic, rather than a further decline. He adds *unless there is an economic recovery* to show that the problem is dependent on external forces, but may still be resolved.

Task 3

You could elicit a brief agenda for the meeting (e.g. Fuller report on the event; Options for the future; Action plan) and write it on the board. Trainees work in pairs to role-play the situation. If you have an odd number of trainees, you could have a group of three, where the third trainee is a member of Rod's team (either Paul or Martina). Allow around five minutes for the role-plays. Afterwards, ask volunteers to report back on their conclusions from the meetings.

Crisis?

Trainees work in small groups to discuss the data and the three questions. Allow around five minutes for the discussion, and then open up the discussion to include the whole class.

Suggested answers



See Model answer for Task 4.

Task 4

Go through the instructions with the class. Point out that point 1 is only a heading, not a section: there is no need to develop it into a paragraph. Trainees then work in small groups to plan what they would write for each paragraph, possibly using the **Oral writing** technique (see page 5). They write up their report at home. Point out that this report can be longer than the ones from other modules: they should make it as realistic as possible for the situation. When the reports are ready, trainees can read each other's reports to identify similarities and differences in style and content. Discuss with the class which reports are best.

Extension activity

Trainees read the Model answer on pages 70–1 to underline useful phrases and patterns that they could use in their own writing. Discuss the answers with the class.

Suggested answers



(NB the whole report is full of useful collocations and patterns. The fragments below are just a small sample.)

- This report outlines the situation facing ..., based on data on ...
- It recommends + adverb + *-ing* form, e.g. closely monitoring / urgently seeking ...
- This report outlines the current situation of ..., looking at ...
- It goes on to make recommendations for ...
- For the purpose of this report, I have gathered data on ... leading indicators of ...
- I have also gathered data on ..., which we can take as a measure of ...
- All of these measures have been studied over the last ... full years, which coincides with ...
- (Total income) was ... in year 1, with ... in year 2, especially in ...
- The most recent year, year 3, has seen a ... trend in ...
- (GDP growth) has fallen from around ... to ... in less than a year, and the forecast is for ...
- This has led to ..., a climate where ...
- While ... have been very badly affected, they are still ...
- However, ... has never ..., and in the current climate it is unlikely to do so.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

7A Making and responding to complaints

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Elicit why letters of complaint are especially difficult to write.

Suggested answer



Because the writer needs to find a balance between being negative (i.e. showing that he/she is serious about the problem) and positive (i.e. persuading the other person to solve the problem; and possibly maintaining a long-term business relationship).

- 1 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups and then share their ideas and experiences with the class. Try to collect a range of experiences for question 3, as these can then be used as the basis for the writing in exercise 8.
- 2 16 Go through the questions with the class, eliciting a possible answer for each question (based on the knowledge that the speakers are department heads at an insurance company). Then play the recording for trainees to answer the questions. They discuss their answers in pairs and listen a second time if necessary before feeding back to the class.

Extension activity

Trainees look at the script on page 61. They listen again to underline all the information that Zohra should include in her email. When you go through the answers with the class, you could write the key information on the board, as this will help with exercise 3.

Suggested answers



- Well, yes, though it's more of the same, really. I've been doing regular checks, as we agreed, to see the standard of their work, and it's really not getting any better.
- Not really. Several of the staff have mentioned the dirt to me – they really don't like it and say it's affecting their work. And we've also had more complaints – well, comments really, from customers as well. They're commenting on the cleanliness of the reception area and in the offices.
- Well, lots of the computer screens have fingerprints and dust on them, the windows are dirty, and the plants are never looked after – they all need to be watered regularly – and it gives a bad impression.
- So, what's the plan? You're going to write to the company explaining the problems and what we want done, are you?
- Well, don't forget to mention that we've had complaints from customers, and tell them there's a risk to our reputation.
- And make it clear that we expect to see some immediate improvement, otherwise ...
- Yes, we'll reconsider the contract, certainly.

- 3 Tell trainees to read the email to answer the question. They discuss the answers in pairs and then feed back to the class.

- 4 Trainees discuss the task in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Extension activity

Tell trainees to compare the model in exercise 4 with the email in exercise 3, to see whether it has the same five sections. They also identify useful phrases for each section. When they are ready, check with the class.

Suggested answers



The email uses the same five sections as the model. Useful phrases:

- 1 Purpose of the letter/email: *I am writing to complain about the poor service we have received from your ... company.*
- 2 Details of the complaint: *Unfortunately, we have realised that ...; Moreover, ...; These are all tasks which are stipulated in our contract and we are highly dissatisfied that we do not receive the right level of service from you.*
- 3 Impact of the problem: *This has a bad effect on ..., who ..., and on ..., some of whom have complained about ...*
- 4 Response expected: *We insist that in future you provide us with a better service and fulfil our expectations. We will reassess the situation in one week and make a decision based on the results.*
- 5 Sign off: *If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask me. Yours sincerely, ...*

Background note

In the phrase '*We insist that you provide ...*', *provide* is in the infinitive, not the present simple. This is clearer in a sentence with *be*: *We insist that you be more careful* This is the same structure as appears in Module 4A, exercise 6 (*We recommend that Ms Lily Chon be appointed ...*). The infinitive is used in *that*-clauses after *insist*, *recommend*, *demand* and *suggest*.

Tip

Elicit from the class whether it is better to give full information about a complaint, or to keep it brief. Then tell trainees to read the Tip to compare it with their ideas. You could discuss with the class whether they agree with the advice. Discuss also how giving too much explanation could reduce the impact of your email.

Suggested answer



If the person making the complaint includes every small detail, there are likely to be some major problems mixed with minor problems. The writer may come across as being too fussy and negative, which may provoke a hostile response. The recipient may focus too much on the minor problems, and feel the need to defend him/herself against exaggerated complaints. It is much better to focus on the most serious problems, which the recipient cannot dispute, and then deal with smaller details in later correspondence or by phone.

- 5 Trainees discuss the five extracts in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Extension activity 1

Discuss with the class the verb forms used in each extract, and why these forms were used in each case.

Suggested answers

- 1 *shall be expecting* (= a form of the future continuous): This is less direct than a simpler verb form (e.g. *we shall expect* | *we expect*).
- 2 *I'm writing* (= present continuous): This is a standard expression for the beginning of an email. The contraction (*I'm*) makes it less formal and therefore less 'cold'.
- 3 *have caused* (= present perfect): This focuses on the present results of a past problem.
- 4 *look forward* (= present simple): This is a standard expression for the end of an email. Present simple is more formal than present continuous in this case (i.e. *I'm looking forward*).
- 5 past simple (*provided, rented*) and past perfect (*had requested, had not been*). These narrative tenses are used to tell the background story to the complaint. Past simple is used for the main events of the story as they happened; past perfect is used for things that happened (or didn't happen) before those main events.

Extension activity 2

You could get trainees to expand some of the extracts into full emails, inventing whatever details are necessary.

- 6 Trainees work alone to complete the email and then check in pairs before feeding back to the class.

Extension activity

Elicit from the class whether the email follows the pattern from exercise 4, and useful phrases for each section.

Suggested answers

The email uses the same five sections as the model. Useful phrases:

- 1 Purpose of the letter/email: *I am writing to complain about the standard of work on our recent ... project.*
- 2 Details of the complaint: *... do not meet the standards set out in our contract with you. In several cases ...*
- 3 Impact of the problem: *This is having a negative impact on our ability to ...*
- 4 Response expected: *As required in the terms of the contract, I hope that you will ensure that these problems are corrected within ... working days. The final payment will not be made until we are satisfied that ... as per the agreed standards.*
- 5 Sign off: *I look forward to hearing from you by tomorrow at the latest.*

Tip

Trainees read the Tip. Elicit from the class why very formal language should be avoided.

Suggested answer

Because it can seem cold and unfriendly, especially if previous correspondence has been more informal and friendly. A shift from an informal or neutral to a very formal style can be seen as very hostile. In such cases, it may change the relationship from one where the recipient wants to work with you to find a solution, to one where he/she is obliged to solve your problem as a result of your threats. In general, it is better to go for the first approach and only use the second approach if the first one fails.

- 7 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups and then share their ideas with the class.
- 8 Elicit from the class some examples of things they might complain about. You could use their experiences from exercise 1 to generate ideas. Trainees then work alone or in pairs to plan and draft their emails. Allow plenty of time for them to get the tone of their emails right. Afterwards, ask some volunteers to read their emails. Discuss with the class whether the emails are too formal or not direct enough.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

7B Making and responding to complaints

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Trainees discuss briefly in small groups their experiences of handling complaints, and the best approach to take. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

- 1 Trainees read the three letters to identify the differences. They then discuss the differences, plus the follow-up questions at the bottom of the page, in small groups. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.
- 2 Trainees work in pairs to match the patterns to the letters and then feed back to the class.

Extension activity

Trainees identify useful phrases in the letters for each section of the patterns. They discuss their ideas in pairs before feeding back to the class.

Suggested answers



A

- Welcome feedback: *Thank you for your feedback on ...*
- Action taken: *I have looked into the situation, talked to ... and inspected ...*
- Accept negative perception, but don't agree: *Although I feel that we are ... as agreed in the contract, I realise that you are disappointed.*
- Offer something: *I would be happy to offer you a discounted rate ... to show our good will, and I will continue to monitor ...*

B

- Welcome feedback: *Thank you for your letter regarding the standard of ...*
- Acknowledge the problem: *I am very sorry that you have not been satisfied with ...; I have investigated your complaint, and feel that your comments are justified.*
- Offer explanation: *We strive to maintain the best possible service to our customers, and failures such as this are rare. I fully understand the importance of ...*
- Propose a solution: *I have asked one of our managers to take personal responsibility for ..., to ensure that you receive the quality of service you expect.*
- End on a positive note: *I hope that this will be a satisfactory solution for you.*

C

- State purpose of letter/email: *I am writing in response to your complaint about ...*
- Acknowledge dissatisfaction, politely reject complaint: *I understand that you are not satisfied with ...; However, after investigating the issue, I feel that our staff are ... set out in our agreement (enclosed for reference).*
- End politely – offer further contact: *If you would like to discuss this further with me, please do call me.*

- 3 Discuss the question with the class.

- 4 Trainees work in pairs to find the phrases. They check in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Tip

Tell trainees to read the Tip. Elicit from the class some ways that these patterns might differ across national and corporate cultures, and how the three patterns might be interpreted within trainees' own cultures.

Suggested answers



In some cultures, formality may be a sign of politeness rather than coldness; for some people, it is a sign of weakness to admit any mistakes, and this should be avoided.

- 5 17 Go through the notes with the class. Elicit what type of information may be missing from each space. Then play the recording for trainees to complete the notes. They compare their answers in pairs before feeding back to the class. Discuss the follow-up question (*How far do you agree ...?*) with the class.

Extension activity

Tell trainees to look at the script on pages 61–2. They listen again to underline concrete advice on what to write for each of the four points.

Suggested answers



- 1 Write that you understand that they are upset, without accepting that you've done anything wrong.
- 2 Write that you want to get their opinions and that you value them.
- 3 Admit that your company was at fault and then apologise. Explain what you are going to do for the person complaining (i.e. will you offer a refund, a replacement, or compensation, for example?).
- 4 (Don't make excuses); just tell them what you're going to do to help them now.

- 6 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups and then share their ideas with the class.
- 7 Trainees work alone or in pairs to plan and draft the letter. Encourage them to use the language from this module. Afterwards, ask some volunteers to present their letters to the class.

Extension activity

You could ask trainees to swap their letters of complaint with another trainee or pair. They then write a response to the letter of complaint.

Extended writing task 7

Go through the instructions with the class. Tell trainees that they can choose which pattern from exercise 2 to follow – in some ways, it is better to practise the most difficult model (e.g. model C) in a way that isn't too negative. They could plan and draft their writing in class and then write up their ideas at home. When the letters are ready, they read each other's to decide which is the most/least effective.

Extension activity

As a follow-up, you could go through the Model answer on page 92 with the class, to identify the function of each paragraph and to underline useful phrases and techniques that they could use in their own writing.

Suggested answers



Paragraph	Function	Useful phrases	Useful techniques
1	Thanking, explaining context	<i>Thank you for your letter of ..., pointing out that ...</i>	Always thank the person for their feedback, good or bad.
2	Show what action you have taken – investigation	<i>I have investigated the issue and identified the cause of the problem.</i>	Use present perfect to describe your completed investigation.
3	Apologise and explain cause of problem	<i>I can only apologise for this. The ... have been caused by a glitch in ... which had not been picked up until you made us aware of the problem.</i>	It's always easy to blame technological <i>glitches</i> (= small problems) – but make sure you show that you have resolved the problem.
4	Show what action you have taken – resolving the problem	<i>We have now fixed the problem should have been paid ...</i>	Use present perfect + <i>now</i> to show the problem is solved. Use <i>should have</i> + past participle to describe what you believe has happened.
5	Apologise again, explain how important the customer is	<i>I apologise for any problems this has caused you, and I hope that this issue will not damage a relationship which we consider very important to our company.</i>	Use <i>any</i> to show there may or may not have been problems. Use personal language (<i>I apologise, I hope</i>) to show it's you, not only your company, that is responding.
6	Make it clear that you welcome feedback like this	<i>Please do check that let me know if there are any further problems.</i>	Use <i>do</i> to emphasise that you really want somebody to do something. Use <i>any</i> to show there may or may be further problems.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

8A The body of the report

Aims

Go through the Aims with the class. Elicit from the class one or two simple words for linking ideas (e.g. *and*, *because*). Discuss briefly with the class what makes an effective paragraph.

Suggested answer



An effective paragraph has a single, clear purpose. The main point is clear and supported by appropriate evidence.

- 1 Trainees discuss the question in small groups. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

Suggested answers



See exercise 2.

- 2 18 Go through the notes briefly with the class to predict what the missing information might be. Then play the recording for trainees to complete the notes. They check in pairs before feeding back to the class.

Extension activity

Tell trainees to look at the script on page 62. They listen again to underline useful phrases for expressing an opinion. When you check with the class, elicit some equivalent phrases for expressing an opinion in a report.

Suggested answers



Phrases from script	Equivalent for written reports
Having said that, for me, I think without doubt ..., for a few reasons.	However, I firmly believe that ... There are several reasons for this: firstly, ...
I'll try to explain why I say that.	In the following section I will explain the rationale behind this conclusion.
It's mainly because ...	The main reason is that ...
But for me ...	In my opinion, ...
Maybe it's just me, ...	Of course, this is only my opinion. I acknowledge that other people might reach a different conclusion.

- 3 Trainees work alone to complete the exercise. Make sure they realise that there are four expressions to match with three functions, so one heading must be used for two expressions. Check with the class.

- 4 Trainees work alone to add the linking words and phrases to the table. They check in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Extension activity

With the class, discuss the grammatical differences between the various linking words and phrases, i.e. which phrase is followed by which structure.

Suggested answers



- The following can be used as adverbial phrases to link separate sentences, usually with commas: *for example, furthermore, besides, in conclusion, also, in addition, in other words, however, as a result*. Adverbial phrases like this can be removed from a sentence, and the sentence would still make perfect sense (although the paragraph as a whole would make less sense). Note that '*also*' can be used with or without commas.
- One phrase ('*This is because*') acts like an adverbial phrase, linking separate sentences, but without commas.
- The following can be used as prepositions, followed by a noun phrase (e.g. *something*): *due to, e.g., such as, because of*.
- The following can be used as conjunctions, linking two clauses together in a single sentence: *since, although, so*.

Tip

Tell trainees to read the Tip to identify three advantages and one possible disadvantage of linking words and phrases, and two places where they are especially useful. When you check with the class, elicit why they are especially useful in the Recommendations and Conclusions sections of reports.

Suggested answers



- Advantages: they make your writing clear; they help 'glue together' the parts of a paragraph and the whole text; they 'signpost' what you are saying.
- Disadvantage: if you over-use them your writing may sound unnatural.
- They are especially useful in the Recommendations and Conclusions sections of a report because this is where the writer relates facts to opinions, weighs up advantages and disadvantages, and shows how various facts support or conflict with each other. Other sections of the report are more about presenting simple facts, so linking words and phrases are slightly less important.

- 5 Discuss the question with the class.

Extension activity

Discuss with the class how the paragraph could be changed to fit with the second pattern, and which version is more effective.

Suggested answer



- *The Recommendations section is the most practical section of a report. I can, for example, use it to create an action plan. Furthermore, since recommendations are based on solid research and evidence, the Recommendations section is like a short summary of the whole report. For these reasons, I believe it is the most important section of a report.*
- The first version is arguably clearer: the reader knows exactly what point the writer is making, and can therefore follow the arguments easily. The second version is more creative, and arguably more interesting, but it makes the reader work slightly harder to follow the argument.

- 6 and 7** Trainees work alone to complete the paragraphs. They check in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Extension activity

Discuss with the class which pattern from exercise 5 the two paragraphs follow, and whether this is the best pattern for presenting the information.

Suggested answers



- The paragraph in exercise 6 follows pattern 2: the main point (*action needs to be taken*) is at the end. This pattern works well because it keeps the background information (*It appears that there have been cases of fraud ...*) separate from the main point of the paragraph. If the other pattern were used, these two things would have to be combined (e.g. *Action needs to be taken to deal with the problem of fraud ...*).
 - The paragraph in exercise 7 also follows pattern 2: the main point is the two recommendations, which make up the last two sentences. This is a good way of organising the paragraph because it means the paragraph can begin with a short, powerful sentence (*The evidence of fraud is clear*) and the recommendations, when they come, have already been justified.
- 8** Trainees discuss the questions in small groups and then share their ideas with the class.
- 9** Trainees work alone or in pairs to write up Jim Butler's opinion. Alternatively, they could write up their own opinions on the question from exercise 1. Encourage them to use linking words and phrases. When they are ready, ask volunteers to read their paragraphs aloud to the class.

Extension activity

Tell trainees they are staff representatives in the company mentioned in the report in exercises 6 and 7. Having seen the report recommending the dismissal of several members of staff, they have decided to write an email to management explaining why this action is inappropriate. They could write their emails alone or in pairs, in class or at home, but they should pay particular attention to linking words and phrases.

8B The body of the report

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Discuss briefly with the class why it is important to think about the reader, and what this means in practical terms. You could also elicit some examples from trainees' own experience of writing that was not suitable for the target reader. Elicit what they understand (or can guess) about 'plain English'.

Suggested answers



- It's important to think about the reader because he/she often has different knowledge and assumptions from the writer, and may not understand (or be offended/irritated) if the writing is not tailored to the reader.
- The simplest technique is to ask questions about the reader's knowledge and purpose for reading (see exercise 1) and to simplify the language where appropriate (see exercise 7).
- Examples of writing that is not suitable for the target reader include technical and legal writing, where the writers often assume far too much knowledge on the part of the reader, or try to show off in an attempt to sound professional.
- Plain English is English which can be read and understood by non-specialists. Features include the use of short, simple sentences and the avoidance of technical jargon, unusual structures and acronyms. See <http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/about-us/facts.html> for some background to the Plain English Campaign and its impact around the world.

- 1 Tell trainees to read the report to answer the questions. They discuss their answers in pairs and then share their ideas with the class. See Extension activity below for a different way of approaching this reading activity.

Extension activity

Before getting trainees to read the whole report and focus on the questions in exercise 1, you could ask them to read the report, apart from the Conclusions and Recommendations sections, to underline all the words and phrases that a non-English-speaker or non-specialist might find difficult. They then discuss their ideas in pairs, including their predictions of which option the report will recommend, in small groups, and then share their ideas with the class. Discuss whether the target reader of the report would have similar problems, or whether his/her background knowledge of the subject would avoid the problems. They then read the Conclusions and Recommendations to check their ideas. Finally, discuss with the class why it was difficult to predict the final recommendations, and what this says about the target reader. You can then ask trainees to discuss the questions from exercise 1, as above.

Suggested answers

- Non-native speakers might have a problem with the following words and phrases from the report: *promotional booths* (= small stands from which customers can try samples of products); *a new line* (= a new set of products, a new brand); *to be tasked with doing sth* (= given the task); *to scope sth down* (= to reduce the number of options, to focus); *a prestige shopping mall* (= an expensive, glamorous one); *an upmarket supermarket* (= an expensive one); *a food court* (= a part of a shopping mall where there are many restaurants); *an edutainment zone* (= a part of a shopping mall with educational and entertainment facilities, such as an educational play area, a cinema or a bowling alley); *a crèche* (= a place where parents can leave their small children while they go to work); *availability is tight* (= very limited). The writer assumes that the report either will not be read by non-native speakers, or that those that read it will have fairly strong vocabulary and subject knowledge.
- Non-specialists might have a problem with the following words and phrases: *mid-to high-end fashion* (= more expensive clothes, often with designer labels); *B/C1 customers* (see Background notes below); *the traffic and demographics of visitors* (= how many people pass through and what type of people they are); *mid-level outlets* (= shops which are neither very expensive or very cheap); *C1/C2 customers with some B and D* (see Background notes below); *a very broad demographic* (= a broad range of ages and income levels). It can be assumed that the target reader is familiar with this type of language.
- It is difficult to predict the conclusion and recommendation because we don't have some key information, i.e. that the new soft drink is aimed at the higher end of the market. The target reader, on the other hand, would be expected to know this.

Background notes

Market analysts use various criteria such as age and income level to group people into *demographic* categories. One common system, the *NRS Social Grades*, is very popular in the UK. It uses letters (A, B, C1, C2, D and E), based on the work of the main income earner in the household. In simple terms, *A* refers to professionals (e.g. lawyers) and senior managers. *B* refers to middle managers. *C1* refers to skilled clerical workers (e.g. people who work in shops, banks, offices, etc.). *C2* refers to skilled manual workers (e.g. people who do skilled physical work such as plumbers and electricians). *D* refers to unskilled or semi-skilled manual workers (e.g. many factory workers) and *E* refers to casual workers and those who depend on the state for their income (e.g. pensioners and the unemployed). See <http://www.nrs.co.uk/lifestyle.html> for full details.

Tip

Tell trainees to read the Tip to identify four types of questions that writers need to think about, and why they are important.

Answers

Purpose, audience, style, level of English. They are important because they help you meet the needs of your audience.

- 2 Make sure all trainees actually read reports as part of their work. If not, you could ask them to think about reports they read in their day-to-day life (e.g. consumer reports, news reports). You could also check they understand the difference between following (question 2) and understanding (question 3), i.e. that following is more about the layout and organisation of the writing, while understanding is more about the language used. Trainees then discuss the three questions in pairs and feed back to the class.

- 3 Go through the instructions with the class. Make sure everyone knows what *auditors* are (= people from external organisations who examine a company's procedures and documents, and especially their financial records and systems, usually to ensure the company is acting within the law and providing good value for shareholders). Make sure they know that the report was not written by the auditors.

They read the report and discuss the question in pairs. Then they share their answers with the class.

Extension activity

Use these questions to focus attention on specific problems with the report. Discuss them with the class.

- 1 What is wrong with the Introduction?
- 2 What sections are missing between the Introduction and the Recommendations? What would you expect to find in each missing section?
- 3 What is wrong with the first Recommendations paragraph?
- 4 What is wrong with the final paragraph?

Suggested answers



- 1 It needs to be clear who '*their*' refers to. Also, the purpose of the report needs to be stated: why did the CEO request it? The word '*recent*' is also very vague, but could be clarified in a later section.
- 2 Probably *research* (or details of the audit, what problems they identified, plus what the writer tried to find out after the visit), *findings* (i.e. what the writer found out) and a *conclusion* (i.e. whether the auditors' complaints were an accurate reflection of the situation).
- 3 It is not a recommendation. It also uses lots of vague language (*a number of problems, many purchases, we don't always, may be paying*) which is largely meaningless.
- 4 This policy recommendation should be much more complete: what exactly does '*all staff responsible for ordering things*' cover? How many quotes for comparison should they get? How regularly do they need to get these quotes (in the case of repeat orders)? What happens after they '*show them*' to the manager?

- 4 Go through the instruction with the class. Elicit which module of this course taught them how to write good Introductions (Answer: Module 5). You could elicit some useful phrases for report introductions from Lesson 5A (e.g. *The purpose of this report is to ... and ...*). You could suggest that the report should have two purposes, which correspond to the two paragraphs of the Recommendations section. Trainees then work alone or in pairs to improve the Introduction. Afterwards, ask some volunteers to read their writing aloud. You could also ask them to compare their ideas with the Model answer on page 73.
- 5 Trainees read the paragraph and discuss the question in pairs. Then discuss the answer with the class.
- 6 Trainees discuss the question in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Tip

Tell trainees to read the Tip to identify three things to avoid in writing. Then discuss with the class why some people use these three things.

Suggested answers



Over-complicated language, unusual language and unnecessarily long sentences. People use these because they want to sound intelligent and professional, or to show off how good their English is. This shows that they are thinking more about themselves than about their target reader. It is possible to sound intelligent and professional without using difficult language.

- 7 Trainees work in pairs to find examples for each feature, and then share their ideas with the class.

Extension activity

For each feature from exercise 7, trainees work in pairs to make them more reader-friendly. When they are ready, discuss the answers with the class.

Suggested answers



- Passive voice / It + passive: **we are targeting** the higher end of the soft drinks market; **We suggest** that Option A is the most suitable; our brand image **fits** well with The Times Square Shopping Mall's image.
 - Long sentences: *The product is aimed at the higher end of the soft drinks market. **For this reason**, we suggest that Option A is the most suitable. This option shares a similar demographic to our target customers. **The location is also** a good fit with our proposed scope of activities.*
 - Unusual vocabulary: our proposed **scope-of** activities
- 8 Trainees work in pairs to improve the sentences. When you check with the class, elicit a range of possible improvements, and encourage trainees to compare their answers with the sample answers in the Key.
- 9 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.
- 10 Brainstorm with the class some possible incidents which might lead to a serious complaint from a client (e.g. a very late delivery; over-charging the client; a member of staff was very rude to them; their data were shared with a third party, etc.), and write their ideas on the board. Trainees then work alone or in small groups to choose one of the incidents and plan and write the report. Make sure they consider the target reader (for example, by asking the questions from exercise 1) and use plain language as appropriate. When the reports are ready, they could swap with another group to check whether the writing is sufficiently clear.

Extended writing task 8

Go through the instructions with the class. You could check they all understand what international standards and accreditations are (see Background notes). They could plan their reports in class and write them up as a homework task. When the reports are ready, trainees could read each other's reports to decide which is the most persuasive, and which uses the clearest language.

Background notes

The best known international standards and accreditations are managed by ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) – see <http://www.iso.org/iso/home.html>. The accreditation process is difficult, expensive and time-consuming, but it serves as a guarantee of quality. Many larger companies insist that their suppliers and partners have the right accreditation before they will do business with them.

Extension activity

As a follow-up, trainees work in pairs to discuss the questions in the Model answer on page 88. They should check whether they have answered all the questions in their writing, and if not, whether they need to add more information. Afterwards, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

9A Negotiating in writing

Aims

Go through the aims with the class, and elicit how they are different from each other.


Suggested answer

The whole negotiation may be conducted by email, or it may be conducted face to face or by phone, with writing used only to confirm details and keep a permanent record of spoken agreements.

- 1 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class. For question 1, make notes of some situations on the board, as these can then be used for the writing task in exercise 7.

Suggested answers

- 1 This includes not just obvious negotiations (e.g. negotiating over the price of a purchase) but also common situations like asking someone to do a job for you or even arranging a meeting, where the parties disagree on the best time. Very often, part of a negotiation is conducted in writing (e.g. the pre-negotiation discussions, the follow-up confirmation).
- 2 and 3 See exercise 2.

- 2  19 Go through the notes with the class. Elicit some possible answers for each gap in the notes. Then play the recording for trainees to complete the notes. They compare their answers in pairs and then listen a second time, if necessary. They should also discuss the follow-up question (*How far do you agree ...?*). Finally, check the answers with the class.

Tip

Elicit from the class the benefits of checking things in writing after an oral negotiation. Trainees then read the Tip to compare it with their ideas.

- 3 Trainees read the email and then discuss the questions in pairs. Then discuss the questions with the class.

Extension activity

Trainees underline useful phrases in the email, and then check with the class.

Suggested answers

- I am looking to source ...
- We are currently seeking ... with a view to ...-ing ...
- I would be grateful if you could send me details of ... including ...
- I look forward to hearing from you.

Tip

Trainees read the Tip. Afterwards, discuss whether they agree with all the advice, and why it might sometimes be better not to include all information in an initial email.

Suggested answer

Too much information might undermine the negotiation; it may be irrelevant, especially if the negotiation doesn't go beyond initial emails; it can easily be included in a follow-up email; it may not need to be included at all (e.g. if the supplier can send Rebecca a full catalogue, there is no need for her to specify her needs before she sees the catalogue).

- 4 Go through the instructions with the class. Make sure everyone realises that the email where Pham Tran writes back to Rebecca is not included in the exercise, so the first email in the exercise is from Rebecca. They work alone to complete the task and then check in pairs. They also discuss the follow-up question (*What do you notice ...?*). Finally, check with the class.

Background note

Note that Rebecca uses Pham Tran's full name in her first reply (email C), because she is not sure which part of Pham Tran's name to use. In fact, Pham and Tran are both common Vietnamese family names, and family names come first in Vietnamese names. Pham can also be a boy's given name and Tran is a girl's given name. Rebecca then notices that the reply comes from Tran, so she takes this to be her given name in later emails. This is a good strategy when you are not sure which part of a person's name to use.

- 5 Trainees work alone to find the phrases and check in pairs before feeding back to the class.

Extension activity

Ask trainees to find other useful phrases from the emails. Discuss the answers with the class.

Suggested answers

- Thanks for the confirmation.
- One last point:
- Our standard payment terms are ...
- I hope these terms are acceptable to you.
- Following our talk on the phone yesterday, ...
- I'm writing to confirm that we can offer you ...
- Thank you for your email giving details of ...
- As we are ... and would like to ...,
- I look forward to hearing from you.
- ... under the terms of the lease.
- ... are fine for us.
- If you are happy with all of the points, ...
- ... and send it over to you for signing.
- Thanks for your email.

- 6 Make sure trainees understand that the question relates to Richard Chapman's comments in exercise 2. Trainees discuss the question in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.
- 7 Elicit some situations from the class where they might negotiate by email (or refer to the list on the board from exercise 1). Alternatively, you could tell trainees to use the situation from exercise 4, where the negotiation goes less smoothly (e.g. Pham Tran cannot offer a discount or there is an extra cost for providing a temporary replacement). Trainees then work alone or in pairs to write the first email in the exchange on a sheet of paper, and pass it to a different trainee/pair, who write a reply on the same piece of paper. They can continue these exchanges over several turns. Finally, ask volunteers to report back to the class on their negotiations.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

9B Negotiating in writing

Aims

Elicit briefly from the class what 'the right length' might refer to, and what 'structuring' an email involves.

Suggested answers

Length could refer to the overall word count, the number of paragraphs or simply the balance between key information and extra detail. Structuring involves planning paragraphs carefully to make sure they are in a logical order and contain all the relevant information.



- 1 Trainees read the two emails to answer the question. When you check with the class, you could also elicit who they are to/from. (Suggested answer: They could be from Rebecca, the writer in Module 9A, to senior colleagues in her company.)
- 2 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then share their answers with the class.

Tip

Tell trainees to read the Tip. Discuss with the class what 'thinking aloud' refers to in the content of a negotiation in writing.

Answer

Including unnecessary details; discussing alternatives before coming to a conclusion, etc.



- 3 Trainees read the email to answer the questions. They discuss the answers in pairs and then feed back to the class.
- 4 Make sure everyone knows who the target readers are (Answer: members of staff). Tell trainees to work in pairs to rewrite the email, focusing on the key information they identified in exercise 3. When the emails are ready, trainees read each other's emails to decide which version is most effective.

Extension activity

Analyse the Model answer on page 74 with the class. Elicit which parts of the Model answer relate to which sections of the original email, and the reasons for the changes.

Suggested answers



Original email	Model answer	Summary of changes
<i>You may be aware that ...</i>	<i>As you know, ...</i>	Shorter, more concrete.
<i>... we have been discussing possible changes to the way we do copying, scanning and printing in the office. There are a number of reasons for this, including trying to be more environmentally friendly, as well as making cost savings. Many of you have been consulted as part of this decision-making process.</i>	<i>... following consultation, ...</i>	Much shorter. Note that the content of the middle sentence (<i>There are a number of reasons for this</i>) has been moved to the end of the email.
<i>We are now ready to introduce the new MFDs (multifunction devices) in the office. They will be installed next week, ...</i>	<i>... we will be introducing new multifunction copier/printer/scanners from Monday 25th.</i>	Shorter and more concrete, including a specific date.
<i>... and all old devices will be removed from the office at the same time.</i>	<i>These will replace all existing devices.</i>	Shorter.
<i>We will of course try to help you all adapt to the new situation as easily as possible, and one part of this is providing training in using the new devices. There will be training sessions for all staff over the next week, which will only take about 15 minutes, as I can assure you that the new devices are very easy to use.</i>	<i>There will be short training sessions in using the new devices for all staff over the next week.</i>	Much shorter. Note that the information about the length of time has been omitted. Presumably, it is included on the sign-up sheets, so doesn't need to be repeated here.
<i>Please sign up for a convenient training session.</i>	<i>Please sign up for the sessions on the noticeboard.</i>	More concrete instructions.
	<i>We hope you will all find this a positive change, as well as being cost-effective and good for the environment.</i>	This information has been moved down from the middle of the email, and is intended to end on a positive note.

Tip

Trainees read the Tip. Then discuss with the class how they prefer to balance social content with transactional business, both personally and in their wider cultures.

- 5 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.
- 6 🎧 20 Go through the message with the class, to elicit what the missing information might be. Then play the recording for trainees to complete the notes. They check in pairs and feed back to the class.

Extension activity

Tell trainees to look at the script on page 62. Play the recording again for trainees to underline useful phrases for negotiations. When you check with the class, elicit how these phrases might need to be changed in a written negotiation.

Suggested answers



<i>I'm calling to ask about ...</i>	<i>I am writing to ask you about ...</i>
<i>Anyway, the key questions are: if we ..., do we get ...?</i>	<i>The most important questions that I would like to discuss are as follows:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>If we decide to ..., would it be possible for us to have ...?</i>
<i>I'm thinking ten percent would be fair.</i>	<i>According to my calculations, I consider 10% to be a reasonable amount to expect.</i>
<i>And secondly, we'd like to change ... to ..., rather than ... at the moment.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>We are considering changing ... to ..., rather than ..., which is our current arrangement.</i>
<i>So could you just drop me a line with your thoughts, and we can discuss it in more detail when we meet next week?</i>	<i>I would be grateful if you could reply as soon as possible, so that we can discuss these matters in more detail at next week's meeting.</i>

Trainees then work alone or in pairs to plan and write the email to Natasha. When the emails are ready, they could pass them on to another trainee or pair, who writes a reply. The negotiation could continue over several turns.

Extended writing task 9

Tell trainees to read the instructions carefully to find out what they have to write. They could plan their emails in class and then write them up at home. They could also swap their emails with another trainee before writing a reply. When the emails are ready, ask volunteers to present their negotiations to the class.

Extension activity

As a follow-up, you could go through the Model answers on page 94 with the class, to identify the function of each paragraph and to underline useful phrases and techniques that they could use in their own writing.

Suggested answers



Paragraph	Function	Useful phrases	Useful techniques
1	Purpose of writing	<i>I am writing to you about various issues with ...</i>	'Issues' is less aggressive and more general than 'problems'.
2	Introduce your research and findings	<i>As a result of feedback from a number of colleagues, ...</i> <i>I have conducted a review of ...</i> <i>There are a number of areas of concern: ...</i>	Show that your complaints are based on evidence, not just your own opinion. Use a neutral, impersonal phrase (<i>There are a number of areas of concern</i>) to introduce your complaints.
3 (Cost of flights)	First finding	<i>Several colleagues have mentioned that ...</i> <i>For example, ...</i>	Give a specific example, but make it clear that this is not the only example.
4 (Accommodation)	Second finding	<i>... is the main issue.</i> <i>Members of staff tell me that ...</i>	Use impersonal subjects (e.g. <i>cost is the main issue</i>) and reporting phrases (e.g. <i>Members of staff tell me that ...</i>) to show that the complaint isn't just your own opinion.

Paragraph	Function	Useful phrases	Useful techniques
5 (Provision of information)	Third finding	<i>Many members of our staff commented on the ... It has sometimes taken have often given ...</i>	Use present perfect with adverbs of frequency (e.g. <i>sometimes, often</i>) to show that the problem still happens.
6	Summary of findings; impact of problems	<i>All of these are serious issues, ... The problems are costing our company money, are causing delays in our work, and are annoying staff and distracting them from their work.</i>	Explain how the problems affect your business. Use present continuous to describe repeated events that you hope will end soon.
7	Request for a response	<i>I would be interested to hear your response to these issues, and I would like to arrange a meeting to discuss this as soon as possible, preferably before the end of the week.</i>	Use polite language, but be firm. Set a deadline for your request.
Reply 1	Introduction	<i>I was surprised to receive your email, as this is the first time I have heard of any of these issues.</i>	This is a good way of accepting criticism without accepting blame.
Reply 2	Positive response to feedback	<i>We aim to provide you with the best service possible, and are always glad to receive feedback that can help us achieve this. This is especially so as you are an important client for us.</i>	You can be very positive about receiving feedback and your relationship with the customer, without accepting blame.
Reply 3	Accept request	<i>I would be very happy to meet you to talk about the problems you describe. If you can give me more details when we meet, it will help me investigate the cases.</i>	'Talk about' is safer than 'resolve'. Use the structure 'If you can ..., it will help ...' to make a polite request.
Reply 4	Suggested meeting	<i>Would ... at ... be possible for you?</i>	Suggest a specific time in the form of a question to show you are flexible.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

10A The report concluded

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Elicit how and why the Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations should be linked.

Suggested answer



The Conclusions should be based on the Findings. The Recommendations should be based on the Conclusions.

- 1 Elicit from the class what is meant by *draw a conclusion*. Then tell trainees to look at the definition on page 44 to check. Trainees then discuss the six statements in pairs, including what is wrong with the false statements. When they are ready, go through the answers with the class.

Answers



- You don't present new information in the Conclusions section. This should mainly be in the Research and Findings sections.
- You shouldn't discuss the issue of the report from different perspectives in this section. The conclusions need to be focused so that they present the right perspective for the target reader. Again, different perspectives can be included in the Research and Findings sections.
- You should make recommendations in the Recommendations section, not the Conclusions.
- You summarise the other sections of the report in the Executive Summary, not the Conclusions.

Background note

The word *deductions* has two unrelated meanings. One meaning comes from the verb *to deduct* (= subtract). In this context, deductions are subtracted from a total. The second meaning comes from the verb *to deduce* (= work out based on logical assumptions, e.g. if X is true, then Y must also be true). This is the relevant meaning for this context.

Tip

Tell trainees to read the Tip. Discuss with the class what it means for the Conclusions to be 'logically drawn from' the Findings.

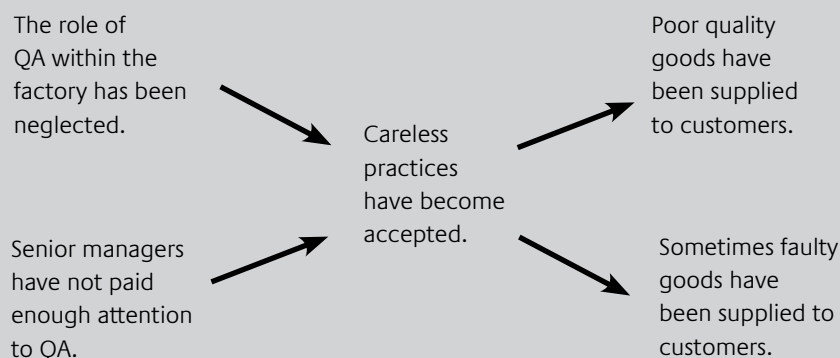
Suggested answer

The Findings section should provide all the information necessary for the target reader to draw logical conclusions. (Of course, the writer can assume some general and background knowledge on the part of the target reader, which does not need to be spelled out.) The Conclusion is all about bringing various findings together to show how they jointly point to a clear conclusion.

- 2 Trainees read the three extracts and discuss the questions in pairs. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

Extension activity

Trainees work in small groups to draw diagrams showing the cause and effect relationships in extract B. You could draw the beginning of the first diagram below on the board as an example. When they are ready, elicit the best diagrams onto the board. Trainees then close their books and try to recreate the original paragraphs orally in pairs using only the information in the diagrams. This is a good way of focusing their attention on the way sentences can be combined in complex ways to create a coherent paragraph. Ask a few volunteers to present their re-creations to the class, and then let them compare their versions with the ones in the book.

Suggested answer

- 3 Trainees read the instructions and look at the graph in pairs. Ask them who they think the report is for.

Suggested answer

The Board of directors or the Sales team.

21 Play the recording for trainees to note the four main findings. They compare their answers in pairs and listen a second time if necessary. They also discuss the follow-up question (*What conclusions ...?*) in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.

- 4 Elicit from trainees what they remember about the report on pages 82–3 (i.e. what it was about). Trainees then discuss the questions in pairs and share their ideas with the class.

Tip

Discuss with the class whether a report always needs separate Conclusions and Recommendations sections, and when it might make sense to merge them. They then read the Tip to compare it with their ideas.

- 5 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then feed back to the class.

- 6 Make sure trainees have a clear idea of the purpose of the report and its target readers (see discussion in exercise 1 above). They then work alone or in pairs to write the Conclusions section. When they have finished, ask some volunteers to read their conclusions aloud. Discuss with the class any differences between the conclusions that different trainees/pairs have drawn.

Extension activity

Tell trainees to read the Model answer on page 75 to work out what the purpose of the report might be. They could also identify useful phrases for relating findings to conclusions. Then discuss the answers with the class.

Suggested answers



The report mentions 'a large promotional campaign in February', suggesting that the report has been written to explore whether such a campaign would be worthwhile. Phrases such as 'this is unlikely to change' and 'there is little prospect of this changing' suggest the report-writers are trying to work out future demand based on past results. The suggestion to 'organise their logistics and planning to meet this period of high demand' implies that the report's readers are unfamiliar with the toy market in the UK, and are planning to invest heavily in it.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

10B The report concluded

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Elicit onto the board a range of words for making recommendations. These could include verbs, modal verbs and adjectives.

Suggested answers



- Verbs: recommend, suggest, propose, advise, urge, ...
- Modals (and semi-modals): should, would, must, need to, ...
- Adjectives: important, useful, vital, essential, crucial, necessary, ...

- 1 Trainees discuss the question in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Suggested answer



It depends why you are reading the report: the target reader may read the whole report two or more times. But for many people, it makes sense to read the recommendations more than once: firstly when you are reading the report to find out what it says, and secondly when you come to implement (or reject) the recommendations. It may be useful to read the recommendations a third time, after you have implemented the recommendations, to check you have done everything suggested (or at least to understand how you have deviated from the recommendations and why).

- 2 22 Discuss briefly with the class what security problems a large department store might have. Trainees then listen to the recording to note the three recommendations. They compare their answers in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Background note

A *spot check* is a procedure for checking something without prior warning. For example, a security guard could be instructed to check the bags of every 20th customer. The purpose is not so much to catch people doing something wrong (as in theory 19 people out of 20 could get away with it), but to make people aware that they might be checked, caught and punished, and therefore to prevent them from doing wrong in the first place.

Extension activity

Trainees listen a second time to make a note of the reasons behind each recommendation. They check in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Answers

- 1 The manageress takes all the cash collected to the bank at midday. There's a risk and she could be attacked and the money could be stolen.
- 2 Cash on the premises is currently kept in a safe, but the safe's not fixed down, so it could easily be carried away.
- 3 A lot of people fail to lock their tills between transactions, with the obvious risk of cash being taken from tills by opportunistic thieves.

- 3 You could discuss the question very briefly with the class, based only on a visual impression of the two versions. Then tell trainees to read the two versions more fully to see if they change their minds.

Extension activity

Use these questions to analyse the two versions with the class.

- 1 In Version 1, what comes first in each paragraph, the recommendation itself, or the reason behind it?
- 2 What two structures are used to make recommendations?
- 3 How are the high priority recommendations (see version 2) distinguished from the medium priority recommendations?
- 4 Which tenses are used to describe the reasons behind the recommendations? Why do you think the writer chose these verb forms?
- 5 What linking word is used in the fourth paragraph to relate the recommendation to the reason?
- 6 In Version 2, what two verb forms are used in the Recommended action column? What is the difference between the way these verb forms are used?
- 7 What two patterns are used in the Reason column?
- 8 What words have been omitted from the Reason column?

Answers

- 1 In all four paragraphs, the recommendation comes first, followed by the reason.
- 2 *should + infinitive; We recommend that ...*
- 3 With adverbs: recommendation 1: *immediately*; recommendation 4: *strongly*
- 4 Recommendation 1 uses present simple (*there is evidence*), but puts the main action into nouns (*careless work and involvement in theft*). This allows the writer to avoid referring to specific people or events directly. Recommendations 2 and 3 both use 'will' to focus on the future benefits of the recommendations, rather than past problems. Recommendations 2 and 4 both use present perfect (*theft has occurred; management has been unclear*) to show that the problems are not isolated incidents in the past, but could be repeated in the future.
- 5 *as*
- 6 *To*-infinitives (*to be relieved; to manage*) and imperatives (*increase*). The *to*-infinitives have subjects (*security manager; store manager*) while the implied subject of the imperatives is 'we' or 'the company' (*should*).
- 7 The first and third reasons are presented as noun phrases (*examples; (a) minimum*); the second and fourth reasons are presented as imperatives (*eliminate; address*).
- 8 ~~*There have been recent, documented examples of careless work and involvement in theft; We need to eliminate the blind spots where theft is high; We need a minimum of 4 staff on duty at all times; We need to address the lack of clarity of roles and inconsistent practice.*~~

Tip

Trainees read the Tip to find four possible formats for the Recommendations section. You could then discuss with the class which format they prefer and why.

Answers

plain text, a table, a bullet-pointed list, a numbered list

- 4 Trainees work alone to put the words in order and then check with the class.
- 5 Trainees work in pairs to rewrite the sentences. Point out that there are several possible correct answers. When they have finished, elicit a range of possible answers from the class.

Background note

As noted in Modules 4A and 7A, some verbs (e.g. *recommend*, *insist*) can be followed by *that* + infinitive (e.g. *we recommend that Ms Chon **be** appointed*). Some adjectives (e.g. *vital*, *essential*) can also be followed by *that* + infinitive. This is largely a matter of taste, and many people use present simple instead. In exercise 5, question 5, we have *It is vital that the company **acts*** (= present simple), but an infinitive (... *that the company **act***) is also correct. In the Key, we have three more examples of present simple, where an infinitive would also be correct (*We recommend that the company review|reviews ...; We strongly recommend that the company provide|provides ...; We recommend that the number of finance staff be|is increased*).

Extension activity

You could draw attention to this useful structure in sentences 1, 2 and 3: *It is | would be* + adjective (e.g. *important*, *useful*, *good*) (+ *for* + somebody/something) + *to*-infinitive. This structure is perhaps more useful for spoken recommendations than a formal report – see advice in the Tip below.

Tip

Tell trainees to read the Tip. Then discuss why the version with *should* is better than the version with *useful*.

Suggested answer

Because it is clearer and more decisive. The reader probably wants very clear, simple advice.

- 6 Trainees discuss the questions in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.
- 7 Trainees work alone or in groups to plan and write their recommendations. Afterwards, ask volunteers to read their writing aloud to the class.

Extended writing task 10

Tell trainees to read the instructions on page 87. If trainees are not experienced business people, you may need to elicit a range of training courses (e.g. computer training, health and safety training) or conferences (e.g. an event where regional sales teams come to head office for training and socialising, etc.) that they might attend in future. You could also elicit why a manager might need the information in the report. (Suggested answer: To help plan future events; to decide whether it was a good use of everyone's time and money.) Trainees then write the two sections of their reports as a homework task. When the reports are ready, trainees could read each other's reports to decide which training course or conference was most useful.

Extension activity

As a follow-up, you could go through the Model answer on page 95 with the class, to underline useful phrases and techniques that they could use in their own writing.

Suggested answers



Section	Useful phrases	Useful techniques
Conclusions	<p><i>A number of conclusions can be drawn from the experience described above ...</i></p> <p><i>Overall, ...</i></p> <p><i>It provided ... that I and other participants felt would help us do our work better.</i></p> <p><i>The most valuable sections of ... were those which were most ...</i></p> <p><i>... were less well received.</i></p> <p><i>The opportunity to ... was one of the most valuable aspects of the course.</i></p>	<p>Make each point as a separate paragraph – even if there's only one sentence per paragraph.</p> <p>Use <i>felt</i> to describe opinions.</p> <p>Use impersonal language to make criticisms (e.g. ... <i>were less well received</i>).</p> <p>Focus on the value for the company (e.g. ... <i>to do our work better</i>), not just what you liked.</p>
Recommendations	<p><i>To maintain and improve the effectiveness of ..., we should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>continue to ...</i> • <i>work with ... to ensure ...</i> • <i>longer term, consider ..., in order to ...</i> 	<p>Use <i>consider</i> for more expensive/complicated recommendations.</p>

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

11A Making arrangements by email

Aims

Trainees read the aims. Elicit from the class how many emails it might take to do the three things mentioned in the aims.

Suggested answers



You can confirm something by asking for confirmation of something you don't understand, or by providing confirmation to the other person. It might take at least four emails to do all these things (i.e. 1 make a suggestion for a meeting; 2 confirm the arrangement; 3 apologise and suggest a change; 4 confirm the change).

- 1 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups and then share their ideas with the class. For question 2, you could discuss the advantages of the two ways of making arrangements.

Suggested answers



When arranging meetings with several participants, email is often better, as it allows everyone to work together to find the best time. Another advantage of using email is that it provides a permanent record of the meeting, which is useful not just so you don't miss the meeting, but also so you can check back after several months to find out when you met. Making arrangements by phone is obviously quicker if there are only two people, but may not be convenient if the participants are difficult to reach by phone (e.g. if they spend a lot of time on the road or in meetings) or if they don't like speaking by phone (e.g. because they are a non-native speaker).

- 2 Trainees read the emails and then discuss the questions in pairs. Then check with the class.

Extension activity

Trainees work in pairs to find examples of formal and informal language in the emails, and then share their ideas with the class.

Suggested answers

- Email 1: Less formal vocabulary: *free* (less formal than 'available'); *talk about* (less formal than 'discuss').
 - Email 2: Long sentence in first paragraph, combining several ideas (i.e. the request for a meeting plus the background to the concerns); more formal vocabulary (e.g. *to discuss concerns* rather than *to talk about some things we're worried about*).
 - Email 3: Less formal vocabulary (e.g. *thanks, free*) and contractions (e.g. *we're, I'm*), but also some long sentences (e.g. the second sentence in paragraph 2) and some more formal vocabulary (*progress, over-due, briefing, timeline, possible*). A less formal email might use verbs to express some of these concepts (e.g. *progress: how you're **getting on**; over-due: we **need** to have another meeting; briefing: **tell** us how it's going; possible: If you **can make** Thursday ...*).
 - Email 4: Mostly non-contracted forms (e.g. *I would, it will*), but also one contraction (*I'm*) to avoid being over-formal. Passive (*you have been shortlisted*). Non-human subjects (*The interview; It*). More formal vocabulary (e.g. *arrange, confirm, attend*).
- 3 Trainees work alone to underline the phrases and then check in pairs before feeding back to the class.
 - 4 Trainees work alone to complete the sentences. They check in pairs and feed back to the class.
 - 5 Go through the instructions with the class. Make sure everyone understands that *decline* means 'say no'. Trainees work alone to match the replies and then check in pairs before feeding back to the class.

Extension activity

Use these questions to discuss the four replies with the class.

- 1 What word in reply A is a synonym for a word in email 3? Why do you think the writer used a synonym?
- 2 Why didn't the writer of email B stop after the word 'fine'?
- 3 What words have been omitted from reply C? Why?
- 4 What can you guess about the power balance between Sarah (the writer of reply D) and Tony (the writer of email 2)?

Suggested answers

- 1 *due = over-due*. It avoids repetition, and shows that the writer hasn't just copied the other writer's words.
- 2 In an informal email, it would be acceptable to stop at the word 'fine', but as this is a very formal situation, the writer needs to answer the request very specifically, echoing the original writer's exact words.
- 3 ~~*I will*~~ *talk to you tomorrow*. This makes it much friendlier and more conversational.
- 4 Sarah is more senior in the company hierarchy. Although it is Tony that requests the meeting, Sarah sets the time and decides who else to invite. She does this politely, but it is clear that she expects Tony to do as he is told.
- 6 Trainees highlight the phrases and then check with the class.

Tip

Elicit from the class two things that you should mention when you decline an invitation or arrangement. Trainees then read the Tip to check.

Answers

A reason, an alternative

- 7 Trainees discuss the question in pairs and then feed back to the class.
- 8 23 Play the recording for trainees to complete the notes. They check in pairs and listen a second time if necessary before checking with the class. Trainees then work in pairs or alone to plan and write their emails. When they have finished, they could pass them to another trainee or pair to write a reply, requesting a small change to the arrangement. They could continue this email exchange over several turns.

Extension activity

Use these questions to discuss the Model answer on page 76 with the class.

- 1 What word in the first paragraph makes the introduction much friendlier and less formal?
- 2 In the second paragraph, what would be a more formal way of saying 'the time is fine'?
- 3 What is the function of the third paragraph? Why is it especially important in this email?

Suggested answers

- 1 *just*
- 2 *the time you suggested would be suitable | I am available at that time*
- 3 It shows the writer is willing to be flexible. It's especially important because the writer was very direct and decisive in the second paragraph (i.e. '*we'll meet next Tuesday*' rather than '*can we meet next Tuesday?*'). It's important to make decisions in emails, but it should always be done delicately.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

11B Making arrangements by email

Aims

Discuss the difference between the two aims with the class.

Suggested answer



Both phrases have two possible meanings: you can check your own understanding (e.g. *What do you mean?*) or the other person's (e.g. *Does that make sense?*). You can clarify by asking for clarification (e.g. *Can I just clarify (= find out) what you mean?*) or providing clarification (e.g. *Let me clarify (= explain) what I mean*). A common sequence is to check the other person's understanding and then clarify meaning (= explain) if they have failed to understand.

- 1 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

Tip

Trainees read the Tip to find three pieces of advice.

Suggested answers



Take time to think about what you want to say; check what you write before you send it; don't press Reply too quickly.

- 2 Trainees read the email and discuss the two questions in pairs. Then discuss the questions with the class.
- 3 Discuss the question with the class.

Tip

Trainees read the Tip to find five causes of problems. Go through each cause in turn, checking what they mean, and eliciting examples from trainees' experience where possible.

Suggested answers

- 1 The content (i.e. the message doesn't contain all the necessary information; the information isn't presented clearly; the writer uses humour, which can be misinterpreted as aggression).
- 2 The style (e.g. the message uses technical language or very long sentences; the writer uses a conversational style with too many words omitted).
- 3 The tone (i.e. the message is too informal or too formal).
- 4 The grammar (e.g. a non-native speaker writer uses incorrect grammar, which has an unintended meaning; or a native-speaker writer uses very sophisticated grammar, which the non-native reader doesn't understand).
- 5 The vocabulary (e.g. the writer uses words with more than one meaning, e.g. '*We still have some **free** tickets*' could mean '*there are some tickets still available*' or '*You don't have to pay for them*').

- 4 Trainees read the email and discuss the question in pairs.
- 5 Trainees work alone to highlight the phrases and then check with the class.

Extension activity

Discuss with the class what three techniques Becky used to make her email less negative, and whether on balance the email is positive or negative.

Suggested answers

- She says the email was *a little unclear* (less negative than simply *unclear*); she uses *please* in her request; she allows for the possibility that the misunderstanding in the final paragraph might be her own fault (*I don't remember ...*), even though she probably thinks it's Nigel's fault.
- On balance, Becky's email feels rather negative, but if she is really frustrated with Nigel, this could well be the best approach. This is a very difficult situation to balance: Becky is clearly not happy with Nigel, and wants to show this in her email, but she also has to remain polite and reasonable. Her request (*Also, please don't ...*) comes across as rather direct. She could have softened it slightly by providing a reason (e.g. *I might have another appointment scheduled for that time*). She could also have changed the negative request into a positive one (*Please make sure you always check with me before adding meetings in my calendar*).

- 6 Trainees work alone to complete the sentences. They check in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Extension activity

Trainees work in pairs to write a reply to Becky from Nigel, where he answers her questions and apologises. They should invent all necessary details. Afterwards, ask volunteers to read their replies aloud. Discuss with the class which reply is most effective.

- 7 Trainees read the email and then discuss the question in pairs.
- 8 Trainees discuss the question in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.
- 9 Trainees work alone or in pairs to plan and write the reply. Encourage them to use the phrases from this module in their answers. When the replies are ready, they could swap with another trainee/pair to continue the email conversation.

Extension activity

Ask trainees to look at the Model answer on page 77, to underline useful phrases that they could use in their own writing.

Suggested answers

- Thank you for your reply. However, you haven't completely answered my questions.
- Could you please clarify the following points?
- I'd be grateful if you could get back to me on these points as soon as possible.

Extended writing task 11

Go through the instructions with the class. Make sure everyone understands what a logistics company does (i.e. it provides transport and sometimes related services such as warehousing and import/export). Trainees could plan their emails in class and write them up at home. When the emails are ready, they pass them to another trainee, who writes a reply.

Extension activity

As a follow-up, you could go through the Model answer on page 95 with the class, to identify the function of each paragraph and to underline useful phrases and techniques that they could use in their own writing.

Suggested answers

Paragraph	Function	Useful phrases	Useful techniques
1	Thanking and context	<i>Thank you for your email enquiring about cooperation between our companies.</i>	This is a very useful way of starting an email.
2	Initial positive response	<i>As a leading ... company, we are of course interested in discussing ...</i> <i>We are able to offer ...</i>	Be careful to avoid accepting too much. Show that you are interested, and what you <i>are able to</i> (not <i>can</i>) offer.
3	Request for more information	<i>Before we take this further, could I ask you to provide more detail about ...?</i> <i>I'm attaching ..., which will help you ...</i>	Ask for information before taking things further.
4	Next steps	<i>If you could ..., I'll be able to ...</i> <i>At that point, I would be happy to arrange a meeting with you to discuss the matter further.</i>	Use <i>if</i> -sentences (<i>If you ... I'll be able to ...</i>) as a polite way of making a request.
5	Positive ending	<i>I look forward to hearing from you, and I hope we will be able to cooperate on this.</i>	Use ' <i>hope</i> ' to show your enthusiasm without committing yourself to too much.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

12A Finishing a report

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Elicit from the class what 'skim value' is – this was mentioned in the interview with Jan Waterman in Module 4A.

Suggested answer



The ability to understand the key messages quickly and easily without having to read in great detail.

- 1 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class. For question 3, you could encourage them to think about the importance for both the reader and the writer, and in both reports and proposals.
- 2 Remind trainees that they read this report in Modules 8B and 10A, so they should already be familiar with its key points. Make sure they know to actually write down the key points. Allow exactly one minute, after which tell them to close their books. They compare their notes in pairs and then share their ideas with the class. You could write up the main points on the board, as this will be useful for the writing task in exercise 8.

Trainees then discuss the technique they used to identify the main points in pairs, and share their ideas with the class. Discuss with the class how easy it was to skim the report, even without an Executive summary.

Suggested answer



It is still fairly easy to skim the report, because the sections are clearly labelled and contain the right information that you would expect in each section. One way to skim this report would be to read the *Terms of reference*, *Conclusions* and *Recommendations* sections, and to skip the *Procedure* and *Findings* sections. From the *Conclusions* section, it may not even be necessary to read the *Advantages* and *Disadvantages*.

- 3 24 Go through the questions with the class, to predict what Olivia Hamilton might say about each question. Then play the recording for trainees to answer the questions. They check in pairs and then feed back to the class.

Extension activity

Tell trainees to look at the script on page 63. They listen again to underline the key phrases that they could use to write a one-sentence Executive summary of her advice. Afterwards, you could ask them to actually write the Executive summary in pairs.

Suggested answers

- Key phrases: don't have much time for reading anything more than a page or so long; don't really need to know everything; have to trust the people who work with me; give me the highlights; an outline of the main points – what I need to know to make a decision.
- Executive summary: Olivia Hamilton doesn't have time to read long documents or a need to know all the details, so she has to trust the people who work with her to give her the highlights and an outline of the main points so she can make a decision.

Tip

Trainees read the Tip to find two things that busy people want from reports, and two things for writers to make sure of.

Answers

They want (1) to get to the main points quickly, and (2) to decide if they need to read all of the report. Writers must make sure they (1) meet their needs, and (2) get their message across.

- 4 Trainees discuss the statements in pairs and then share their ideas with the class.

Background note

The cartoon mentions **incarceration**. This means *going to prison*.

- 5 Trainees read the Executive summary and then discuss the questions briefly in pairs. Check with the class.

Background notes

- An *exclusive agreement* (or *exclusivity agreement*) is a contract between two business partners (e.g. a producer and a distributor) that forbids one partner from doing business with the other partner's rivals.
- *Barriers to market entry* are the legal, financial and practical problems that make it hard for a company to enter a new market. One of the strongest barriers to market entry is usually the strength of existing players in the market, who will do what they can to make life difficult for new entrants.
- Literally, if you *get a foothold* when you are climbing a cliff, you have somewhere strong to stand, which enables you to keep climbing. Metaphorically, *getting a foothold* involves establishing a firm base, from which you can expand and develop your operation.

- 6 Trainees discuss questions 1 and 2 in pairs. For question 1, you may want to suggest that they think in terms of how direct or indirect the language is, whether it is formal, informal or neutral, and whether it is an internal or external document. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

Extension activity

Use these questions to analyse the Executive summary with the class.

- 1 What tenses are used in the first two paragraphs? Why do you think the writer chose these tenses?
- 2 What structure is used to introduce the recommendations?
- 3 What verb forms are used for the three proposed responses?
- 4 What tenses are used in the final paragraph?
- 5 Find examples of long noun phrases in the summary. What impression does this use of long noun phrases create?

Suggested answers



- 1 The first paragraph uses present perfect (*we have learnt, we have had*) to relate background information in the past to the present reason for the report. It uses present continuous (*is planning*) to focus on the immediate reason for the report. The second paragraph uses present simple (*assesses, proposes*) to introduce the purpose of the report itself.
- 2 Passive voice (*are proposed*). This makes it less personal than active voice (*we propose*), although this version would also be acceptable.
- 3 Imperatives (*develop, sign up, plan, bring forward, launch*)
- 4 Present simple for the main conclusion (*We believe*) and *will* for a prediction of the future outcome (*will prevent*). Note that the final clause has the subject (*it*) and *will* omitted to avoid repeating them after *and* (*this strategy will prevent ... and so it will preserve ...*).
- 5 Examples of long noun phrases: *one of our main competitors in a number of regions; an unchallenged position as the market leader; the threat to our business; an action plan to protect our position; our knowledge of Amsel's previous launches and tactics; the strength of our relationship with wholesalers and retailers; the barriers to market entry for Amsel; an aggressive promotional campaign to coincide with the initial launch of Amsel products on the market; the launch of our own updated product range; the Amsel launch; a foothold in this region; our market leader status; relatively little extra cost.*
By placing so much information into noun phrases (rather than using full sentences with verbs), the writer can write more concisely and create a more professional impression.

Trainees complete question 3 in pairs. Make sure they know not to write the full report. When they have finished, ask volunteers to present their outline plans to the class. They could also compare their writing with the suggested answer on page 77.

Tip

Elicit from the class a range of ways of ensuring your report or proposal has 'skim' value. Trainees then read the Tip to compare it with their ideas.

Extension activity

Trainees could write up their outline plans from exercise 6 into a full report, either in class or at home. They should use the advice in the Tip to make sure their report has 'skim' value.

- 7 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.
- 8 Trainees work alone or in pairs to plan and write their Executive summaries. When they have finished, they read each other's writing to decide which summary is most effective, and has the best 'skim' value.

Extension activity

Tell trainees to look at the Model answer on page 77 to find similarities and differences between it and the Executive summary in exercise 5.

Suggested answers

- Both Executive summaries start with background information. The Model answer uses past simple where the other summary uses present perfect. Both versions would be correct.
- The second paragraphs of both summaries follow the same pattern: *This report + (present simple) and (present simple)*.
- The Model answer includes a sentence about the research (*Locations considered in detail ...*), which was not included in the other summary.
- Both summaries use passive voice to introduce recommendations (*are proposed, is recommended*).
- The Model answer uses two paragraphs for recommendations, while the other summary uses numbered points.
- The summary in exercise 5 ends with the reasons for the recommendations and a prediction; the Model answer includes reasons as part of the first recommendation (*because of ...*), but offers no prediction of the benefits.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

12B Finishing a report

Aims

Go through the aims with the class. Elicit the difference between editing and checking.

Suggested answer

Checking involves finding problems; editing involves fixing them.



- 1 Trainees discuss the questions in small groups. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

Suggested answers

See exercise 2.



- 2 25 Go through the instructions and the notes with the class, to predict what Laura Bloomberg might say. Tell trainees not to worry about the verb forms in the two *if*-sentences (gaps 1 and 2), see Background note below. Then play the recording for trainees to complete the notes. They discuss their answers in pairs, including the follow-up question (*Which piece of advice ...?*) and then feed back to the class.

Background note

The first part of Laura's answer provides a good illustration of the way people mix different conditional structures when they are speaking fluently. Her first *if*-sentence (*if you knew something was wrong, you wouldn't have written it in the first place*) is about the unreal present (*if you knew*) and the unreal past (*wouldn't have written*). In her second *if*-sentence (*if you know how to say something better, or more clearly, you'd say that the first time*), she mixes the real present (*if you know*) with the unreal present (*you'd say*). We tend to avoid mixing real and unreal in careful writing, but it is quite common in spontaneous speech.

Extension activity

Play the recording a second time for trainees to note down more information for each way of approaching editing, such as problems with each approach or specific examples. Then discuss the answers with the class.

Suggested answers

- Get someone else to check your writing. **Problem:** you need to have someone who doesn't mind spending time on it.
- Use a checklist. **Examples:** length of sentences, use of the passive voice.
- Create your own checklist. **Examples:** style (being too formal or informal), spelling or grammar mistakes.
- Use the spelling and grammar check. **Problem:** they're notoriously unreliable.



Tip

Elicit from the class when it is important to check a text thoroughly and when it is less important. They then read the Tip to compare it with their ideas. Discuss with the class why accurate writing is so important in formal situations.

Suggested answer

It proves that you are intelligent and careful. Sloppy writing may suggest a sloppy attitude to other things.

- 3 Trainees read the paragraph and discuss the questions in pairs. Then check with the class.

Suggested answers

- 3 There are eight spelling and grammatical mistakes: hour (our); desert (dessert); produce (product); as ample (a sample); drawers (draws); described (describes); plants (plans); expand into overseas (expand overseas / expand into overseas markets).
The Suggested answer on page 77 includes stylistic improvements as well, related to exercise 5 below.

Tip

Elicit from the class some limitations of computer grammar and spelling checks. Then tell trainees to read the Tip to compare it with their ideas. You could elicit some examples of mistakes that a computer grammar or spelling checker might miss (e.g. *form* instead of *from*).

Background note

There is a name for problems caused by computer spelling checks: the *Cupertino Effect*. It takes its name from a common problem when writers accidentally wrote *cooperatino*, instead of *cooperation*. Some spelling checkers automatically changed this to the word *Cupertino*, which is the city where Apple Inc. has its headquarters.

- 4 Trainees discuss the question in pairs. For each item in the checklist, they could also discuss how to use it in practice: how can they actually check that they have followed each piece of advice? Then discuss the answers with the class.

Suggested answers

- Make the purpose of my writing clear: Make sure you, as a writer, are fully aware of your purpose, and that this is expressed clearly at the beginning.
- Take into account what the reader knows or doesn't know already: Think carefully about the target reader's knowledge. Check each key fact in turn to decide if you are making unrealistic assumptions about the target reader's knowledge.
- Use an appropriate, generally direct and positive tone: Read the text again, looking for any parts which might cause offence or be seen as too negative.
- Include all necessary information: Check your plan to make sure you've included everything.
- Include accurate information: Pay particular attention to numbers and dates.
- Follow a clear, logical structure: Look at each paragraph in turn, to decide what its purpose is, and whether it flows naturally from previous paragraphs.
- Use headings, sub-headings and subject lines as appropriate: Check if you have used them and add them if they are missing.
- Look good on the page (e.g. is there some white space): Change the view on your computer screen to one page, or print out your document to see what it looks like.

- Use unnecessary words/phrases: Look at the word count and set yourself a target of reducing it by 10%.
- Avoid using jargon, possibly unknown abbreviations, unnecessarily complex words: Underline all words and phrases that a schoolchild might not understand. Then for each underlined word, decide if it could be expressed more clearly.
- Have accurate spelling and grammar: Make sure the language is set to English and run a spelling and grammar check. Read through your document carefully afterwards to check it still makes sense.

Background notes

- *Headings* and *sub-headings* are used in reports and proposals; *subject lines* are used in letters and emails.
- *White space* is the name for parts of the page which are left empty. White space is an important concept in design and publishing, where it is used creatively to avoid making a page look cluttered and confusing.

Tip

Trainees read the Tip. Afterwards, discuss whether they agree that the other points in the checklist are *at least as important* as grammar and spelling, with examples of problems from their own experience where possible.

Trainees work alone to look back through their marked writing to identify items that they should include in their checklists. They compare their lists in small groups and then share their ideas with the class. You could write up the most common issues on the board.

- 5 Trainees work in pairs to rewrite the paragraph. Encourage them to pay particular attention to removing unnecessary words.

Extension activity

Go through the Suggested answer on page 77 with the class, eliciting how it is different from the original and why.

Suggested answers



The spelling mistakes have been corrected. Other changes:

Original	Improved version	Reason
<i>the way in which we were able to test</i>	<i>how we tested</i>	much shorter and simpler
<i>it draws on data</i>	<i>it presents data</i>	simpler, more concrete language
<i>data collected during test marketing, and during ...</i>	<i>data from the test marketing phase and from ...</i>	simpler sentence structure; the addition of the word 'phase' provides clarification of the jargon 'test marketing'
<i>It describes our plans</i>	<i>It also outlines our plans</i>	'also' adds coherence; 'outlines' may be more accurate than 'describes', if the report is brief

Original	Improved version	Reason
<i>to expand the brand into overseas markets in the future</i>	<i>for future expansion into overseas markets</i>	the change from a verb (<i>expand</i>) to a noun (<i>expansion</i>) means it doesn't need an object (<i>the brand</i>) and <i>future</i> can be added as an adjective, making the phrase more concise

- 6 Trainees read the paragraph and discuss the question in pairs. Then check with the class.

Extension activity

Use these questions to focus attention on the specific problems with the paragraph.

- 1 How could the writer avoid the need for a glossary?
- 2 What is wrong with the phrase 'If you think there is a problem'?
- 3 What is wrong with the phrase 'the first thing is to check'?
- 4 What is wrong with saying 'of course'?
- 5 What is wrong with the order of information?
- 6 What is wrong with the last sentence?
- 7 What examples of jargon, other than abbreviations, appear in the last sentence?

Suggested answers



- 1 Write the phrases in full, possibly with the abbreviations in brackets (e.g. ... *check System Availability (SA)* ...) so the abbreviation can be used in later paragraphs. Note that the full forms of the abbreviations still contain jargon (e.g. *an outage*), so would need to be explained to non-specialists.
- 2 There is no context to suggest what sort of problem this deals with. The context comes later (*when you are dealing with financial system problems or expenses claims*), but this might still not be enough context.
- 3 There is no subject of the verb 'to check', so we don't know who should check this.
- 4 Even though something is obvious to the writer, it may not be obvious to the reader. This suggests that any reader who failed to understand the first sentence is missing something obvious.
- 5 The context (sentence 2) should come before the instruction (sentence 1).
- 6 It is too long. The section in brackets makes it especially complicated. It should be split into several sentences.
- 7 *The Help menu* (the reader may not know what this is or where to find it) and *escalate the problem* (= pass it on to a higher-level specialist or manager).

- 7 Trainees discuss the question in pairs and then share their answers with the class.
- 8 Trainees work alone or in pairs to rewrite the paragraph. When they have finished, they could compare their paragraphs with other trainees or pairs, to see whose version is clearest.

Extension activity 1

Use these questions to analyse the sample of corrected writing at the bottom of page 55 (*Dear John*) with the class.

- 1 Why has the editor changed the name from *Birt* to *John*?
- 2 Why has *thank you* been changed to *thanks*?
- 3 Why have the words *which we ran* been deleted?
- 4 Why has the full form of *I am* been changed to a contraction (*I'm*)?
- 5 Why has the phrase *that we ran in your office building* been deleted?
- 6 Why has *managed to succeed in attracting* been changed to *succeeded in attracting*?
How could this be shortened further?
- 7 Why has *people* been added?
- 8 Why has *who work* been changed to *working*?
- 9 Why has *were able to give* been changed to *gave*?
- 10 Why has *as a result* been deleted?
- 11 Why is *confident* better than *highly confident*?

Suggested answers



- 1 Because *Birt* is probably his surname, which is not used in such greetings.
- 2 To make it more friendly.
- 3 They are unnecessary.
- 4 To make it more friendly and informal.
- 5 It is unnecessary, and repeats information from the first paragraph.
- 6 It is better (and more concise) to focus on the result, not the process of attempting and managing. It could be shortened to *we attracted*.
- 7 To make the sentence less complicated and the meaning clearer.
- 8 It is shorter.
- 9 This is the same as in question 6: it focuses on the achievement, not the process of attempting.
- 10 It is unnecessary – the meaning is clear without it.
- 11 By itself, *I'm confident* means I am 100% sure. The modifier *highly* reminds the reader that confidence can also be gradable (e.g. *I'm fairly confident*), and therefore suggests I am less than 100% confident.

Extension activity 2

You could print out some examples of badly written paragraphs from the Plain English Campaign website (<http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/examples/before-and-after.html>). Trainees work in pairs or alone to improve the paragraphs, and then compare their versions with the recommended improvements on the website.

Writing for Impact

Trainer's Notes

Case study 2: ADC

Lead-in

Trainees discuss the questions in small groups and then share their answers with the class.

Suggested answers



- 1 It is difficult to control quality; the team in the new country may not be reporting full or honest information back to head office; the team in the new country may lack experience or training to work at the same level as their counterparts in the original country.
- 2 For example, people may be less willing to admit misunderstandings, and therefore won't check when they don't understand something.
- 3 The workers may resent the fact that other people are doing their jobs; they may fear that they will be made redundant.

Background

- 1 and 2 Trainees read the information to underline the key facts. They complete the notes and then compare their answers in pairs. Then check with the class.
- 3 Trainees discuss the question in small groups. After a few minutes, open up the discussion to include the whole class.

Further developments

Trainees read the information and the email to identify the problem. They then discuss possible causes of the problem in pairs and share their ideas with the class.

Suggested answers



- The problem is that the production team in the UK has to deal with too many requests for guidance from the Asian team, despite full training.
- Possible reasons: The training was inadequate; the trainees didn't understand key information (perhaps because of language problems); they prefer to check and double-check everything to make sure they are not making mistakes, etc.

Background notes

- If you *accommodate* somebody, you try to make them feel welcome and try to make allowances for their needs.
- If you *get to the root of a problem*, you identify its real cause.

Task 1

Elicit from the class how formal Kim's email to Steve should be. (Suggested answer: Probably fairly formal, as his email was rather formal. This is a serious matter, so other people may need to read the email exchange later. Therefore, it should be friendly but businesslike.)

Trainees then work alone or in pairs to plan and write a reply to Steve. Afterwards, ask volunteers to read their emails aloud to the class. Note that it is not necessary for trainees to complete the writing before moving on to the next part of the Case study.

Extension activity

Use these questions to analyse Steve's email with the class.

- 1 Where in the email does Steve mention the purpose of writing? Is this the best place to state the purpose?
- 2 What is the purpose of each sentence in paragraphs 1 and 2? Is this the most logical sequence?
- 3 How does Steve make his complaint less negative?
- 4 What useful phrases from Steve's email could you use in your own writing?

Suggested answers

- 1 In the third paragraph (*We would therefore suggest ...*). This fits in logically with the way the information is presented (i.e. it makes sense to provide plenty of background before stating the request), but the third paragraph feels rather late to mention the purpose. It might be better to start with a simple version of the request at the beginning (e.g. *We've got a difficult situation with the Asian office, and I'd like to ask for your help in resolving it*), with the full request in its current position.
- 2 General background, which Kim already knows (*As you are aware ...*); specific situation (*During the summer ...*); what happened (*We did our best ...*); outline of problem (*We are therefore surprised ...*); analysis of problem (*As I am sure you are aware ...*). This is a very clear, logical sequence for explaining a problem. Note the symmetry between the first and final sentences (*As you are aware | As I am sure you are aware*), both of which suggest Kim should know and understand the situation.
- 3 He paints his own team in the best possible light (*We did our best to accommodate them; to the best of our abilities*); he uses neutral language to describe the problem (*We are therefore ~~annoyed~~ surprised ...; ... this is ~~a waste of our time~~ not a good use of our time ...; it ~~isn't cost-effective~~ seems not to be part of the cost-effective plan ...*); he focuses on the positive reasons for his complaint (*... find out what the actual problem is; We are happy to help; ... would like to get to the root of the problem ...*).
- 4 *As you are aware; We did our best to ...; to the best of our abilities; We are therefore surprised that ...; As I am sure you are aware, ...; this is not a good use of our time; this seems not to be ...; ... (the plan) you had in mind; We would therefore suggest that you ...; We are happy to help; ... would like to get to the root of the problem rather than ...*

Task 2

Go through the instructions with the class. Elicit what the purpose of Kim's email might be (Suggested answer: To ask for informal advice) and how formal or informal it should be (Suggested answer: Informal, because Kim knows the colleague well). Trainees then work alone or in pairs to write a short email to the colleague.

Extension activity

As a follow-up, trainees could swap their emails with another trainee or pair to write a reply from the colleague, advising Kim on how to handle the situation.

Investigation

- 1 **26** Go through the instructions and the questions with the class. Then play the recording for trainees to answer the questions. They check briefly in pairs and then feed back to the class.
- 2 **26** Trainees discuss the notes in pairs to try to remember what information was missing, and then listen a second time to complete the notes. They check again in pairs before feeding back to the class.

Task 3

Go through the instructions with the class. They could plan their emails in class and then write them up as a homework task. When the emails are ready, trainees could swap their emails with another trainee to write a short reply from Steve.

Extension activity

Use these questions to analyse the Model answer on page 78 with the class.

- 1 What is the purpose of the phrase '*As promised*' in the first paragraph?
- 2 How does Kim make the criticism less direct in the second paragraph?
- 3 In paragraph 3, do you think Kim really feels he is partly to blame?
- 4 What is the function of the phrase '*Moving forward*' in paragraph 4?
- 5 What two techniques does Kim use to finish on a positive note?

Suggested answers



- 1 It shows that this is a follow-up email; it reminds Steve that Kim promised to write, and has therefore kept her promise.
- 2 She starts with positive feedback (*First, I would like to thank ...*). She then presents the less positive facts (*However ...*) using objective language (*it has been brought to my attention*) and indisputable facts (*the Asian team feel that ...*) rather than claims that may turn out to be false (e.g. *They were not given the full training*). The criticism, when it comes, is in the form of positive guidance on how to handle such situations in future (*If we are to provide ...*), rather than analysing who did what wrong (e.g. *You should have briefed your staff ...*).
- 3 Possibly, but she may also believe that it was Steve's responsibility to find out what was needed. Either way, it is good to accept part of the blame in order to make the criticism less direct.
- 4 It shows that Kim is less concerned with what went wrong and who is to blame than on making sure the problem is resolved and doesn't get repeated.
- 5 She thanks Steve again, and expresses a positive hope for the future.

Task 4

Trainees work in pairs to role-play the situation. If you have an odd number of trainees, you could have a group of three, where the third trainee plays the role of Steve.

Allow five to ten minutes for the role-plays. At the end, ask volunteers to report back on what conclusions were reached.

Task 5

Go through the instructions with the class. Trainees could plan their reports in small groups and then write them up as a homework task. When the reports are ready, trainees could read each other's reports to decide which is the most effective. They could also discuss any differences in their conclusions and recommendations.

Extension activity

Use these questions to analyse the Model answer on page 79 with the class.

- 1 In the Executive summary, what is the purpose of the phrase '*It has been brought to our attention that ...*'?
- 2 How is the summary of the purpose of the report in the Executive summary different from the one in the Introduction?
- 3 How are the recommendations in the Executive summary differently phrased from the ones in the Recommendations section?
- 4 In the Introduction, why do you think the writer used the phrase '*a recent breakdown in communications that occurred*'?
- 5 Why is the phrase '*the incident raised serious questions*' so useful?
- 6 In the first paragraph of the Background section, what verb form is used to report most of the events leading to Steve's complaint? What other verb form is used? Why?
- 7 What do you notice about the other two paragraphs in the Background section? How could they be simplified?
- 8 What verb forms are used in the Investigation section?
- 9 In the Findings section, how does the writer avoid blaming anyone directly?
- 10 In the Conclusions section, how does the writer avoid blaming anyone directly?
- 11 What technique does the writer use at the end of the Conclusions section to link the main recommendation to its expected outcome?
- 12 How many of the Recommendations relate to who is to blame for the past problems, and how many are about the future? Why is this?

Suggested answers



- 1 It shows that the report is based on a specific complaint or accusation, without mentioning the person who raised it.
- 2 The first version uses more noun phrases (*This report details the problems, the results of the investigation into the problems, and recommendations*) while the second version uses mainly verbs (*The report identifies what went wrong, analyses problems in the chain of communication, and recommends actions to correct these*). This makes the first version rather more formal and concise.
- 3 In the Executive summary, there are three *-ing* phrases (*briefing ...; being aware ...; introducing*). Together, they make a single sentence (*Recommendations include X, Y and Z*). In the Recommendations section, there are five long, full sentences (presented as bullet points), all using *should*.
- 4 It is a very impersonal statement, which avoids mentioning who was involved and therefore who was to blame.
- 5 Because it shows the matter is serious without making a judgement about the answers to those questions.
- 6 Most of the verbs are in the past simple. There is one example of the future in the past (*The intention was that they would then return ...*) to describe something that was planned or predicted in the past.
- 7 They both consist of single sentences, each of which contains some rather complex grammar to tie it together. A simpler version of paragraph 2 might be: *I received an email from Steve Morris at the Cardiff factory. He said: 'Although we provided the training to the Asian team members, they keep asking my team questions. The training should have covered these questions.'* A simpler version of paragraph 3: *I decided to contact James Cheng, operations manager in the Asian factory. I asked him: 'What is your perspective on the issue? How can we improve training in the future? How can we avoid the ongoing problems that we have encountered?'*
- 8 Past simple for the main events in the actual investigation (*I contacted, He was able*) and past perfect for what was being investigated (*had led, had not been*).

- 9 By using the verb '*felt*' twice, to report their feelings (which must be true) rather than make accusations (which may or may not be true). The writer also uses abstract noun phrases to describe the problem (*a number of failings; a negative attitude amongst the UK-based staff; a problem with the training; a lack of awareness*), to avoid blaming people directly.
- 10 Again, by using noun phrases to cover all the negative events and feelings, rather than verbs with subjects (*There has clearly been a sequence of failures in communication. These failures have caused frustration in the UK, where there is a feeling that ...; There is also frustration in the Asian factory, where there is a feeling that ...*)
- 11 *It is vital that we* (recommendation) *if we are to* (expected outcome).
- 12 The first recommendation accepts blame on behalf of the whole organisation. The other five recommendations are all about the future. This is because it is more important to learn from mistakes and move forward than to focus too much on who is to blame.