Unit 1 Making enquiries

1A Study section

- emails
- opening and closing a message
- subject headings
- asking for and sending information
- email style
- being polite

Test yourself
You want a new printer for your computer. You have seen an advertisement for the Solar EX43. Write an email to Computer World, sales@computerworld.com, and ask them how much the printer costs and how long they would take to deliver it. Write a complete email, with a subject heading, names, etc. (Invent any details you need.)

When you have finished, put the message away until the end of this section.

1.1 Intercity Bank ask for catalogues

Read this message and the one on page 8.

a Why does Jennifer Long want the catalogues?

b Mr Basuki is sending something in the post and something with his email. What?

c Why do you think Jakarta Furnishings offer a 5% discount for web sales?

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When you have finished, put the message away until the end of this section.

Dear Sir or Madam

We are expanding our offices in Jakarta and we will need extra desks, lights, chairs and filing cabinets.

Please can you send us your catalogues with prices, sizes and colours for these items?

Yours faithfully

Jennifer Long

Office Manager

Intercity Bank plc

Jalan Thamin 58

Jakarta 11196

Indonesia

Tel. 021 6376008

Fax 021 6376733

www.intercitybank.com/indonesia

To: Jakarta Furnishings <sales@jakartafurnishings.com>

From: Jennifer Long <jlong@jkta.intercitybank.com>

Subject: Request for catalogues

Cc: Michel Leff <mleff@jkta.intercitybank.com>

Request for catalogues

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www.cambridge.org
1.2 Email: the basics

Look back at the two emails and match each item (1–7) to the correct meaning (a–g).

1. To:
2. From:
3. Subject:
4. Cc:
5. Bcc:
6. Attached:
7. Signature

- A document or other file you want to send with the email
- The name and email address of the person you are writing to
- The name and email address of someone you want to send a copy to
- Your full name, address and other details that are automatically put at the end of your email
- The topic you are writing about
- A document or other file you want to send with the email
- The name and email address of someone you want to send a 'blind copy' to (i.e. the other people who receive the message can't see that this person has also received a copy)

Notice the layout of the email messages.

- Where does each paragraph start?
- How are the paragraphs separated?
- How does the email open and close?
1.3 Dear ... / Yours ...

Here are some ways to start your message.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening</th>
<th>Closing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dear Sir or Madam</td>
<td>to a company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dear Sir</td>
<td>to a man if you do not know his name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dear Madam</td>
<td>to a woman if you do not know her name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dear Mr Smith</td>
<td>to a married or unmarried man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dear Ms Smith</td>
<td>to a married or unmarried woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dear Mrs Smith</td>
<td>to a married woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dear Miss Smith</td>
<td>to an unmarried woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dear John</td>
<td>to a friend or someone you know well</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing tip

Be careful how you open a message.

- Do not use Mr/Mrs/Ms with a first name (e.g. Dear Mr John is not correct).
- Unless you know that a woman prefers to be called Miss or Mrs, use Ms.

The way you close a message depends on how you open it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening</th>
<th>Closing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dear Sir or Madam</td>
<td>Yours faithfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dear Mr/Ms/Mrs/Miss Smith</td>
<td>Yours sincerely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dear John</td>
<td>Best wishes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Choose the correct close from the box for each of the openings (a–g).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening</th>
<th>Close</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Dear Mrs Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Dear Madam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Dear Ms Hemsuchi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Dear Susanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Dear Mr González</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Dear David</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>Dear Sir or Madam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4 Subject headings

Writing tip

Many businesses receive hundreds of emails every day. Unfortunately, a lot of these messages are ‘junk mail’, usually advertising. Many people do not even open these messages – they delete them straight away. For this reason, it is important that your emails have a short, clear subject heading which encourages the reader to open the message. This can also help to ensure that the message goes to the right person.

What subject headings can you put for these messages (a–d)?
1.5 Practice

What’s wrong with this email? Look at 1.1–1.4 again and write it out correctly.

1.6 Asking for and sending information

You can ask for information in different ways.

Please can you tell me …
Please can you send me …
Please can you send me details of …

If you are replying, you can first thank the person for their message.

Thank you for your email.
Thank you for your email, dated 6 June.
Many thanks for your message, dated 6 June.
Thank you for your enquiry.

You can then send the information they want.

I am attaching details of …
I have pleasure in attaching …
I attach some information which I hope you find useful.
I attach our price list and look forward to hearing from you.
You work for a company that sells mobile phones. What can you write in these situations?

a Someone has written asking for details of mobile phones that include a camera.

b Someone has written to ask you for details of the types of accounts you offer.

c You want to know more information about the new MI300 Henrison mobile phone and when it will be available.

d The air conditioner in your shop doesn’t work. You want a list of service centres.

1.7 Message style

Writing tip There are many different styles of writing. For a student of English, this can be a problem, because if you use the wrong style, you can cause offence or give the wrong impression. For this reason, in Company to Company you will learn a style that you can use in most situations.

- Write in a natural style. Do not use an old-fashioned, very formal style. Say Thank you for your letter, dated 14 June, not We have received your letter of the 14th of this month.

- Do not use very informal language, unless you know the person well. Do not write Hi! or Hello! or Ciao, John! Write Dear John (if you know the person) or Dear Mr Smith.

- Do not use text-message abbreviations such as I hope I can c u soon or Yr order is waiting 4 u.

- Do not use slang. Write Someone in the office can help, not A guy here can help.

- Do not use ‘emoticons’. Emoticons are symbols which people often use in Internet chat, such as :-) (happy), :-( (sad).

What’s wrong with these messages? Write them correctly.

a Hello, Steven!
   Thx for yr email. I’m gld u recvd the plc Ok. Great 2 hear u like the pics. :-)

b Dear Mr Wilson,
   We are in receipt of your message, dated 15th of this month. I can confirm that we have despatched your order according to your instructions.

c Hi there
   How r you? I’ve passed your msg to Bill, a guy in my office, and he’ll contact you u soon. Bye.

d Dear Ms Brown
   We are awaiting your instructions concerning the address for the despatch of your order.
1.8 Practice

There are two things missing and two style problems in each of these messages. Check 1.1–1.7 again and complete and correct each message.

To: Next Travel <info@nexttravel.com>
From: Renate Makosch <rmakosch@observer.org>
Subject: a
Attached: pricelist.pdf

Dear Sir or Madam

This year, the Daily Observer newspaper will print a special report on travel agencies. We were wondering if you’d like to put an ad in it.

I attach our price list and look forward to hearing from you. :-)

Renate Makosch
Advertising Manager

To: Ms I. Morales <i.morales@iol.it>
From: Tom Lander <tlander@sportscar.co.uk>
Subject: c
Attached: Swiftzx.doc

Hi!

Thank you for your email about the Swift ZX series sports cars. I attach some information which I hope you will find useful.

Bye for now.

d

1.9 Be polite!

In business, if you are polite, you will usually get a better response and better service. Users of English often do the following to show politeness.

- Say please and thank you:

  Thank you for your email. Please can you send me your catalogue?

- Say more:

  Thank you for your order for 10 boxes of Sunlight Wallpaper. Our price for each box is $250, plus an additional $50 for postage. Our normal delivery time is 3–5 days, not We got your order. The cost is $250 per box plus $50 for delivery. Delivery is 3–5 days.

- Avoid being very direct:

  We think your prices are rather high, not Your prices are not acceptable.

- Ask rather than order:

  Please could you send it as soon as possible, not You must send it straight away.

- Use indirect questions:

  I was wondering if you could help me, not Can you help me?

- Avoid blaming or accusing the addressee:

  I am afraid there is a problem with the order, not You’ve made a mistake with my order.

- Understate the point:

  It seems we have a small problem, not There is a problem.
There are many examples of polite letters and emails in *Company to Company*. As you read them, compare with what you would say in your language.

These messages sound impolite in English. Make them more polite.

a  Dear Mr Brown
Your company delivered the goods very late. This is very bad service.
  Please deliver on time in future.
b  Dear Sharon
Let's meet next Monday at 1 p.m. We can meet at The Mousetrap restaurant. 
  I have to leave at 2 p.m., so come on time.
c  Dear Ms Mustapha
I received your letter. I have sent the goods. You will get them on Tuesday.
d  Mr Smith
Send me your price list. I need it now, so send it immediately.
e  What's your price for a Delphi ZX45 modem?

### 1.10 Consolidation: a complete email

You are the Purchasing Supervisor at Green Supermarkets. Your manager has just sent you this email. Write a polite email to Corona (sales@corona.com.nz) with a copy to your manager.

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**To:** Purchasing Supervisor <purchase@green.com.nz>  
**From:** Stock Manager <stock@green.com.nz>  
**Subject:** Corona order for orange juice

We sent an order for orange juice to Corona on 4 January, but we have still not received a delivery. Can you email them and ask what has happened to the order, and when they will deliver it? You can attach the order to your email again. You’ll find it on our network as Order564.doc.

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**What have you learned?**

Look back at the message you wrote to Computer World at the beginning of this section. Compare it with your message to Corona. Can you see an improvement?

Think about:
- email layout
- opening/close
- subject headings
- how to ask for information
- style
- politeness.
1B Activity section  Misplaced orders

1 Slembruck BVBA, a wholesaler in Belgium, have problems. Business is not good, and they have dismissed a lot of staff. Their offices are now very disorganised. Here are some orders that their sales executive brought back after a trip to England. The orders are not clear. Answer the following questions.

a What have ABC (Drinks Machines) Ltd ordered?

b Who ordered the shampoo?

c How can you improve the layout of the orders so that it is clearer?

wholesaler
a business that buys goods in large quantities from the manufacturer and then sells them in smaller quantities to shops, etc.
2 The accounts department made out these invoices for the orders. Look at them and answer these questions.

a Are the invoices correct?

b If the Court Hotel want to write to Slembrouck BVBA, who will they address their email to? How will they open and close the email?

c If ABC (Drinks Machines) Ltd want to send a similar message, what will they write?

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3 Slembrouck BVBA have now delivered the orders to the Court Hotel and ABC (Drinks Machines) Ltd. Unfortunately, there are some problems with both orders. In three groups, write the messages between the three companies. The role cards at the back of the book will help you, but you must decide what to write. When you have written your message, ‘send’ it to the correct group. Then ask for a new card number. (There are three cards for each company.)
1C The writing process

Getting help

1 Use Company to Company

There are three sections at the back of the Company to Company that can help you while you are writing. What are they? Look at these pages:
- pages 117 to 121
- pages 124 to 127
- page 128

a In which section would you look if you wanted to find the following?
1 how to begin and end an email
2 where to write the date in a letter
3 the correct style for personal business letters
4 an example of a message or email asking for a refund

b Look in the correct section and find the page reference for each item 1–4 above.

2 Use your dictionary

a A good dictionary is a very useful tool when you are writing. You need one! Find sell in your dictionary. Does it have this kind of information?

- It can tell you how to say a word.
- It can tell you what type of word it is.
- If it is an irregular verb, it can give you the past forms.
- It can give you examples.
- It can tell you the correct spelling.
- It can give you useful phrases with the word.
- It can tell you the meaning.

b Sometimes, words have different meanings if you use them as a noun or as a verb. Find these words in your dictionary. What differences in the noun and verb meanings are there?
service share credit trip

c Some words have different spellings in British and American English, or a completely different word is used. Look in your dictionary and complete the tables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British English</td>
<td>American English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>catalogue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 center</td>
<td>note (money) 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 check (money)</td>
<td>5 apartment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>car park</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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