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E-mail Correspondence

Basic Structure and Common Expressions in E-mail Writing

BASIC E-MAIL STRUCTURE

1. subject line
 - it should be short and as specific as possible
2. initial salutation
 - depending on the context, use a formal or less formal salutation
 - e.g.
 - o Formal: *Dear Professor Petrović*, (you can use the title Professor only if the person in question has an academic title (Croatian: doc. dr. sc., izv. prof. dr. sc., red. prof. dr. sc.); *Dear Mr./Ms. [Surname]* (everyone else, including language instructors/teaching assistants (Croatian: lektori, asistenti))
 - o Informal: *Hi/Hello John*,
3. the opening sentence
 - indicate the purpose of your writing
 - depending on the context, use formal or less formal language
 - e.g.
 - o Formal: *I am writing to inform you*
 - o Informal: *Just a quick note on...*
4. the concluding scene
 - indicate your expectations from a recipient
 - depending on the context, use formal or less formal language
 - e.g.
 - o Formal: *Looking forward to hearing from you*
 - o Informal: *Hope to hear from you soon*
5. final salutation
 - depending on the context, use a formal or less formal salutation
 - e.g.
 - o Formal: *Best regards*
 - o Informal: *Bye*

GENERAL TIPS FOR E-MAIL WRITING

structure

- the subject line should be as specific as possible so that the recipient immediately knows what the email is about
- make sure your email has a clear and logical structure
- make sure your recipient knows what you want from them, i.e. be precise and explicit in your requests
- avoid writing too long emails with unnecessary details; instead, be concise and use short sentences
- provide enough information for your recipient to understand your message
- always indicate that you are attaching a document

writing conventions

- be aware of the appropriate level of formality (see below)
- make sure you do not mix formal and informal language
- be aware of the cross-cultural writing conventions
- make sure you spell your recipient's name correctly
- always check the gender of your recipient, especially if the first name is used for both males and females
- be aware of the academic titles (Professor/Dr)

language and style

- in formal emails, avoid using colloquial or slang expressions
- abbreviations are usually avoided in formal emails, especially in first contacts (e.g. *info* = *information*: *Dear Prof* = *Dear Professor*)
- avoid using emoticons (e.g. 😊😞) or use them if your recipient has used them first
- use polite and respectful language
- e.g. *Can you send me/Send me...* vs. *Could you please send me...*
- use diplomatic, unoffensive language, especially when dealing with problems
- e.g. *We have a problem!* vs. *Unfortunately, /I am afraid/It seems that we have a problem. /We have a slight problem.*
- keep a professional tone and avoid using exclamation marks or capitalized words to show your emotional reactions
- e.g. *We need your reply now!!* or *We need your reply NOW!*
- always check your spelling and grammar
- if you use a spell checker, make sure that you reread your email before sending it

some common expressions in e-mail writing

Initial salutation

FORMAL

a) addressing the recipient whose name you know:
Dear Professor Johnson
Dear Dr. Johnson:
Dear Mark Johnson,
Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. Johnson,

NEUTRAL/INFORMAL

Dear Mark,
Hello,
Hi,
 Salutation omitted

b) addressing an unknown recipient or a group
Dear Session/Conference/Workshop organizers,
Dear Editor(s)/Editorial Assistant,
Dear Committee Members,
Dear Sir or Madam,

Dear all,
Hi everybody,

Final salutation

Best/kind regards
With kind regards
With warm regards,
Regards,
Sincerely,
Yours sincerely¹

Best/kind regards
Best wishes
All the best/Best,
Have a great day,
Hope to hear from you soon.
Speak to you soon.
See you (soon).
Bye (for now)
Take care
Cheers
 (just the name)
 (no close)

Beginning the email

- recipient unknown

I am writing to enquire about/inform you/clarify/confirm/let you know/update you...
I found your name in the references of X's paper on ...
I am writing to arrange a meeting with you.
Your email address/name was given to me by ...

- recipient(s) known

This email is to inform you that ...
Just a quick note to
Just a quick update on ...
Just to let you know that...

- referring to the previous contact

In relation to our conversation of yesterday/meeting/telephone conversation/your inquiry..
With reference to...
Regarding ...
Further to ...
As requested I am sending you ...
You may recall that we met at the conference...

Ending the email

- offering assistance

If you need any further details do not hesitate to contact me.
Please do not hesitate to contact us should you need any further clarifications.
Do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further assistance.

- indicating that you want a reply

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future/soon/before the end of the week.
Looking forward to your reply.
I would appreciate a reply as soon as possible.

¹ Very formal, rarely used in email correspondence

Sending attachments

• sending attachments	<i>I am attaching/sending you ... I have attached... Please find attached ... Attached you will find ... I am sending you ... as an attachment.</i>
• confirming	<i>Please confirm /acknowledge receipt. I confirm receipt of your attachment.</i>
• dealing with problems	<i>I am afraid you forgot to attach the document. I received your mail, but I'm afraid I can't open the attachment. Could you please send it again? Sorry, I just sent you an email without the attachments.</i>
• Requesting information/Making inquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Could you please send me ...</i>• <i>I have some questions about ...</i>• <i>I am interested in finding out...</i>• <i>I would like to know...</i>• <i>Would it be possible for you to send me a bit more information on ...</i>• <i>We would be grateful if you could send us...[*]</i>• <i>We would appreciate some information on...^{*2}</i>• <i>I would appreciate a reply as soon as possible.</i>
• Responding to inquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Thank you for your email/inquiry/interest.</i>• <i>Thank you for contacting me.</i>• <i>I am pleased to hear that you found my paper /presentation interesting/useful ...</i>• <i>Regarding your queries/questions about ...</i>• <i>I am pleased to send you...</i>• <i>As requested, I am sending you ...</i>• <i>Please find a copy of the document in the attachment.</i>
• Arranging (online) meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Let's arrange a call so that we can discuss it further.</i>• <i>Would it be possible for us to meet next week?</i>
• confirming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>I would like to confirm...</i>• <i>Looking forward to seeing/meeting you...</i>• <i>I look forward to seeing you on 15 May/ May 15³/ the 15th of May.</i>
• postponing/cancelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>I am afraid I will not be available next week. Would May 15th suit you?</i>• <i>I apologize but I can't make the meeting at 10.00. Can we change it to 12.00? Please, let me know.</i>• <i>This is to let you know that I have had to postpone... due to...</i>• <i>I regret that I will not be able to attend...</i>• <i>I am writing to cancel...</i>
• Thanking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Many thanks for your email.</i>• <i>Thank you for the quick response.</i>• <i>Thank you very much for your assistance.</i>• <i>I thank you in advance for your cooperation.</i>• <i>Thanks for your help in this matter.</i>• <i>Thank you for your help in solving this problem.</i>• <i>Many thanks for this.</i>

² very formal, often used in first-time contacts

³ day-month-year (UK and other countries); month-day-year (US)

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- **Apologizing**
 - *I apologize for not sending you the information you requested.*
 - *Apologies for the late reply.*
 - *Please accept our apologies for not getting back to you sooner.*
 - *Please accept my apologies, I was convinced that I had replied to you.*
 - *I've been away for the last few days.*
 - *Sorry for the delay in getting back to you.*
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common informal vs. formal verbs used in e-mail correspondence

- We can't **answer** personally to each submission.
- We can't **reply** personally to each submission.
- We don't **give** such information to our clients.
- We do not **provide** such information to our clients.
- Our project may **help** our local community.
- Our project may **assist** our local community.
- I **got** this information from your colleagues.
- I **received** this information from your colleagues.
- **Tell** us if you notice any inaccurate data.
- Please **inform** us if you notice any inaccurate data.
- If you **need** any further **help**, **get in touch with** us via the following link.
- If you **require**/Should you **require** any further **assistance**, please **contact** us via the following link.
- They have decided **to set up** a meeting to discuss this issue in more detail.
- They have decided **to arrange** a meeting to discuss this issue in more detail.
- The meeting was **put off** for another week.
- The meeting was **postponed** for another week.

common time expressions in Croatian and English

Croatian	english
20. 9. 2022. / 20. rujna 2022.	(on) 20 September 2022 (BrE) (on) September 20, 2022 (AmE) on the 20th of September 2022
u svibnju, lipnju, itd.	in May, June, etc.
u ponedjeljak, utorak, itd.	on Monday, Tuesday, etc.
u 9h, 22h, itd.	at 9 a.m., at 10 p.m., etc.
ujutro/ poslijepodne/ navečer	in the morning/afternoon/evening
za 2 dana, 3 tjedna, itd.	in two days, in 3 weeks, etc.
za vikend	at the weekend (BrE); on the weekend (AmE)
do petka/do kraja mjeseca, itd.	by Friday/by the end of the month, etc.

references

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