

## Business Emails

### Warm up:

- Do you ever have to write business emails in English? What are they about?
- What are the most common emails you have to write in your day-to-day business?
- How many emails do you receive per day on average?
- Do you think business emails are becoming more or less formal?
- Do you think anything will replace emails in the future as a method of communication?
- Are there any emails that you really hate writing or receiving?




### 1. Read the email and answer the questions below.

Subject: Lighting, Equipment, and Speakers Rental

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Gerald Rivers, I am contacting you because I would like to enquire about renting some equipment from you for an upcoming concert. The concert in question will be a very large concert for the pop star Sailor Tift, which will be held in a large arena. Under normal circumstances we would arrange to use our own equipment, but unfortunately there has been some kind of issue with the travel permits for the equipment, and the French customs department has confiscated our equipment. This is obviously quite a major setback for us, and we need speakers, lighting, and extra-large LED screens as soon as possible. We have many experienced technicians on our staff, so we do not require assistance setting up the equipment. I have attached a list of our requirements, could you please examine it and let me know if your company is capable of fulfilling our requirements? This situation is obviously time sensitive, as the concert is in 1 week, so we would appreciate a prompt reply. We have contacted several other rental companies, but as yours is the largest and most reputable, we would prefer to work with you.

Sincere regards, Gerald Rivers

 *required equipment.pdf*

- Where is the concert being held? *France, in an arena*
- Why does Mr. Rivers need the equipment? *His equipment did not make it through customs*
- Why doesn't Mr Rivers need help setting up the equipment? *He has experts who can do it on his staff.*
- Why does Mr. Rivers need a fast reply? *The concert is next week*
- Why would Mr. Rivers prefer to work with this company and not any other? *Because they are the largest and most reputable company*



## 2. Match the vocabulary from the email in exercise 1 to its synonym.

- |                               |                                     |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Circumstance <b>7</b>      | 1. Need                             |
| b) Examine <b>4</b>           | 2. Quick                            |
| c) Require <b>1</b>           | 3. Ask for information              |
| d) Dear Sir or Madam <b>5</b> | 4. Look at                          |
| e) Prompt <b>2</b>            | 5. A greeting for an unknown person |
| f) Upcoming <b>8</b>          | 6. A problem or delay               |
| g) Setback <b>6</b>           | 7. Situation                        |
| h) Enquire <b>3</b>           | 8. In the future                    |



## 3. Read the reply from Lightsabre Productions and answer the questions below.

Re: Lighting, Equipment, and Speakers Rental

Hi Gerald,

Thanks a lot for getting in contact, that sounds like quite a tough situation, honestly the French customs department are pretty much famous for being difficult to deal with!

I've had a look at your list of requirements, and I think we can help you, but we may not have the exact equipment you've asked for. Normally this kind of order wouldn't be a problem, but Christmas is our craziest time of year, and some of the items you've asked for are out of stock. However, I think we should be able to offer you some pieces of equipment that should work just fine in your situation. For example, we don't have the two P90z speakers you asked for, but we can get you four Megasound 2000 speakers, which will be just as loud, and the sound quality will be even better. Give me a few hours and I'll send you through a detailed proposal ASAP for what we can offer you. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Kind Regards, Scott Mills

- Why can't Mr Mills offer the exact equipment Mr Rivers requires? *Because it is Christmas, their busiest time of the year*
- What do you think ASAP stands for? *As Soon As Possible*
- What is the difference between the P90z speakers and the Megasound speakers? *Megasound have better sound quality*
- Who do you think is more formal, Gerald Rivers or Scott Mills? What language makes their emails sound more or less formal? *Scott Mills is more informal, he uses abbreviations, acronyms, and doesn't use formal synonyms*
- Do you prefer to write in formal or informal style?



### Formal vs Informal Emails

- Contractions are used less in formal emails.  
Eg. *We've looked into the matter.* vs *We have looked into the matter.*
- Acronyms and abbreviations such as "info", "asap", "etc", and "brb", are not used in formal emails.  
Eg. *FYI, we have attached an explanation.* vs *For your information, we have attached an explanation.*
- Phrasal verbs such as "put off", "call off", "go over", "hold on", and "keep on" are usually replaced with words such as "postpone", "cancel", "review", "wait", and "continue" in formal emails.  
Eg. *I'll get back to you as soon as I know.* vs *I will reply as soon as I know.*
- Indirect questions are often used in formal emails.  
Eg. *Can you send me the documents by Friday?* vs *Would you mind sending me those documents by Friday?*
- More formal synonyms are often used in formal emails. Words such as "need", "get", and "can" are replaced by synonyms such as "require", "receive", and "could."  
Eg. *I'd like to ask about the apartment.* vs *I would like to enquire about the apartment.*



4. Read the email from Scott Mills and make it more formal by replacing the underlined words with the words in the box. Some of the verbs should be changed to past tense.

request	receive	acceptable	review	require	regarding
provide	discussed	however,	inconvenience	am aware	inform

Re: Lighting, Equipment, and Speakers Rental

Hi Gerald,

I'm emailing you about *(regarding)* the equipment you need *(require)*. I'm happy to tell *(inform)* you that we can give you *(provide)* almost all the equipment you asked for *(requested)*. We can send you the lights and the Megasound speakers we talked about *(discussed)* earlier. But *(However,)* I'm afraid at the moment we don't have any LED TV screens in stock. One solution I can offer is LCD screens, they are cheaper and easier to install than LED screens, but they don't look as good in sunlight. I know *(am aware)* it's a daytime concert, and I'm sorry for any trouble *(inconvenience)* this causes you, but I'm afraid we don't have any other choice.

I have attached a quote for this order, if you have any questions, you can give me a call and we can go over *(review)* it together. If this is O.K. *(acceptable)* for you, then you should get *(receive)* the equipment by Monday afternoon.

Kind Regards, Scott Mills

*Sailor Tift Quote.pdf*

### Formal Questions

Questions can be made more formal in many ways, such as changing “can” to “could.”

E.g. “*Can you send me the report*” vs “*Could you send me the report?*”

Another way is to use “do you mind...?” or “would you mind...?” structures. “Do you mind + verb + ing” is a more formal version of “could you..?”

E.g. “*Could you send me the report?*” vs “*Do you mind sending me the report?*”

“Do you mind if I + verb” is a more formal version of “Could I...?”

E.g. “*Do you mind if I send you the report tomorrow?*”



#### 5. Use the rules above to convert the questions into more formal questions.

a) Can you do me a favour and send me through the sales figures for March?

*Do you mind sending me the sales figures for March? / Could you send me the sales figures for March*

b) Is it O.K if I postpone our meeting next week? *Do you mind if I postpone our meeting next week? / Could I postpone our meeting next week?*

c) Can you remind me to call Mr Watkins tomorrow? *Do you mind reminding me to call Mr Watkins Tomorrow? Could you remind me to call Mr Watkins tomorrow?*

d) Can you schedule a face-to-face meeting for July? *Do you mind scheduling a face-to-face meeting for July / Could you schedule a face-to-face meeting for July?*

e) Can I interview the next candidate?

*Do you mind if I interview the next candidate? / Could I interview the next candidate*



#### 6. Make the emails more formal using the rules and vocabulary you have learned.

The answers given in this section are just guidelines. There are many correct answers

a) Hi Davie, I'm afraid I have to put off our Friday meeting till next week because I'm feeling a bit sick. Would next Tuesday work for you?

*Hello Davie, Unfortunately I have to postpone our Friday meeting until next week due to illness. Are you available next Tuesday?*

b) Hey Larry, a potential client called and asked about our new software. Could you do me a favour and send me the info on how that works ASAP? Cheers.

*Hello Larry, a potential client called and enquired about our new software. Would you mind sending me information on how that functions as soon as possible? Thanks in advance.*

c) Hi Glen, I haven't gotten the invoice for May yet, can you confirm that you sent that? And it would be great if you could let Barbara in accounting know that you've sent it, cheers.

*Hello Glen, unfortunately I have not received the invoice for May yet, would you mind confirming that you sent it? Also, I would appreciate it if you could inform Barbara from the accounting department that you have sent it.*

d) Hi Leslie, I just wanted to say sorry for the trouble on Friday. I know delays like this are not O.K, especially in your business. I have talked about it with my boss, and she has agreed to give you a 50% discount on your next order.

*Hello Leslie, I wanted to apologize for the inconvenience on Friday. I am aware that delays like this are not acceptable, especially in your business. I have discussed it with my boss, and she has agreed to give you a 50% discount on the next order.*



7. Read Gerald River's note below and reply to Scott Mills' email from exercise 4. You are happy to accept his offer, but you want the questions on the note answered, and you need to give him the information marked with an asterisk.

Questions for Lightsabre Events

- Will LCD'S work in a bright room?
- Equipment fully insured?
- Services for removing equipment not on quote. Is that included?
- \* Deliver equipment to 149 st Vincent Alley, 2265 between 9 and 5pm
- \* Send the invoice to "invoicing@musicworld.com"

A few questions about the quote

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