

Unit 1: Emails – Managing your inbox

How to read your inbox and short emails

1. Before going through the points, ask your learners about the place of email in their schools (pre-work learners) or organizations (in-work learners). How many do they receive a day/week? Do they look at emails during the weekend and on holiday? How do they deal with them? Is there any way that the number of emails could be reduced? What do they think of the idea, used in some organizations, of having one day a week where sending email is not allowed?
2. Explain any difficulties (e.g. *skim* and *scan*). Ask learners to discuss the four points in pairs, thinking about whether the advice is useful in their own work or study contexts, and then ask them to report back to everyone, ready for a whole class discussion.

Getting started

Exercise 1

1. Give your learners time to scan over the new emails in Alex's inbox. Tell them that they should scan the material, rather than read it in detail.
2. Do the exercise as a whole class activity, discussing the answers as you go.

Exercise 2

1. Give your learners exactly one minute to skim over the emails on page 5. (For this exercise, you can decide whether to help learners with vocabulary or not.)
2. Get learners to answer the question and to justify or explain their answer.

Understanding

Exercises 1 & 2

1. Before doing the exercises, give your learners time to read the emails in more detail. This time, explain any difficult phrases, e.g. *keep you all in the loop*, *tie up loose ends*, *give someone the green light*, *close of play* (=end of the working day).
2. Ask your learners to do the exercises in pairs and then feedback their answers to the whole class.

Developing your reading skills

Exercises 1 & 2

Ask the class to complete this in pairs, after which they should check the answers with the whole class. Explain any remaining difficulties (for example that both *apologize for* and *apologize about* are acceptable).

Language focus

Exercise 1

Complete as pair work and check the answers with the whole class, explaining any difficulties.

Exercise 2

This is best done as a whole class activity. Discuss any language points that arise. The learners might comment that British English can be indirect. For example, *Could you possibly* is usually a definite instruction to do something, not an optional invitation to do it! The same applies to *I would appreciate it if you could*. Learners can work further on *could* by looking at *Collins Intermediate Business Grammar & Practice*, Unit 19.

Exercise 3

This is a good test of whether your learners were listening when you explained these expressions earlier! Do this as a whole class activity. Tell your learners that they are free to use these expressions, but point out that some native speakers might dislike the phrase *close of play* and *in the loop*.

Review

You will already have dealt with some of these points earlier in the lesson, but have a whole class discussion of any outstanding issues.

Extended Learning through COBUILD

Bring your learners' attention to page 101 of the book. Go through the examples and collocations (=typical word combinations) for each heading, concentrating on those that have caused particular difficulty during the class.

Learners can also refer to the online *COBUILD Advanced Dictionary* (www.collinsdictionary.com/COBUILD) for more information.

Extension activity

1. In response to emails 2 and 3 on page 5, you could ask your learners to make phone calls in pairs. For example, in email 2, Learner A is Alex, Events Organizer (recipient of the email) and Learner B is Jane, Sales and Marketing Account Manager (the person who has written the email). Alex phones Jane to get additional information about the figures, with the learners making up the details of the call (e.g. A: 'Thanks for your email. I need more information about the January figures.' B: 'What would you like to know?' etc.).
2. Go through the beginning of the conversation with one learner to demonstrate what you have in mind, and then tell your learners to have the conversation in parallel pairs, followed by one or two public performances for the whole class with learners incorporating corrections and improvements. (If you don't have phone equipment available, you could ask pairs to sit back to back and model this instead.)

Homework task

Ask your learners to write responses to the emails on page 5. Give them a number of options for each email. For example, in response to email 1, Alex could write an email confirming that they will be attending the conference, or saying that they will be unable to come, giving reasons. For email 2, they could ask for additional information on the sales figures. For email 3, they could request more time to prepare their budget, giving a reason.