

How to Write Emails People Actually Read

The three-part email: clear, kind, and opened

EPISODE 9 • LEVEL B1-B2

Episode summary

- One email, one topic. If you have three topics, write three emails — or number them clearly.
- The subject line is the trailer: topic plus action plus deadline. “Approval needed: new logo design, by Friday.”
- Put the ask in the first three lines. Busy readers stop reading — the inverted pyramid puts the most important first.
- Match your tone to the relationship: warm but strong. Delete “just” and the shrinking apologies — politeness lives in “please” and “thank you.”
- To is for people who must act; C C is for people who should know. Never use B C C to secretly watch someone.
- Proofread with four checks: ask in the first three lines, no “just,” a clear deadline, read it out loud once.

What’s inside this PDF

20 key words • the three-part email • Say It Better upgrades • 3 practice exercises

Key Vocabulary

20 words from this episode — learn them, then use them this week

1. subject line

the headline of your email.

> Write a subject line with a topic and an action.

2. attachment

a file you send with an email.

> I have attached the final design.

3. deadline

the date something must be finished.

> Could you approve this by Thursday?

4. sign off

how you end an email.

> Match your sign off to the relationship.

5. thread

a chain of replies on one email topic.

> Keep one thread per topic so nothing gets lost.

6. nudge

a polite reminder email.

> Send a nudge if they did not reply in three days.

7. concise

short and clear, with no extra words.

> Keep it concise — busy people skim.

8. polite

showing good manners and respect.

> Politeness lives in “please” and “thank you.”

9. urgent

needing action very soon.

> Mark it urgent only when it truly is.

10. forward

to send a received email to someone else.

> I will forward the thread to the team.

11. reply

to answer an email.

> Reply to them alone, not to the whole company.

12. proofread

to check a text for mistakes before sending.

> Proofread once out loud before you hit send.

13. tone

the feeling in your writing — friendly, cold, warm.

> Match your tone to the relationship.

14. greeting

the opening line of an email.

> Skip the long greeting — start with the point.

15. formal

serious and correct in style.

> Use a formal tone with people you do not know.

16. request

asking for something clearly.

> Put the request in the first three lines.

17. reminder

a message that helps someone remember.

> A gentle reminder beats a sharp one.

18. draft

an unsent version of an email.

> Save the draft and read it again in ten minutes.

19. inbox

where your received emails live.

> Bring it back to the top of their inbox.

20. clear

easy to understand, not confusing.

> Clear beats clever in every email.

The Three-Part Email

headline, ask, next step

Subject: topic + action + deadline

“Approval needed: new logo design, by Friday.”

First line = the ask

“Could you approve the attached design by Thursday?”

Number multiple asks

If one email must carry two asks, number them so nothing is lost.

The warm nudge

“Just bringing this back to the top of your inbox. Could you let me know by Wednesday?”

Sign off to the relationship

First email to a stranger: “Best regards.” A colleague: “Thanks.”

Say It Better — 10 upgrades

☐ “I hope this email finds you well.”	☐ “Writing about tomorrow’s client meeting.”
☐ Subject: “Hello” or “Question.”	☐ “Approval needed: new logo design, by Friday.”
☐ Hiding your request in line nine.	☐ Say it in line one: “Could you approve the attached design by Thursday?”
☐ “Sorry to bother you, I just wanted to check.”	☐ “Could you please send me the report by Tuesday?”
☐ “As per my last email.”	☐ “Just bringing this back to the top of your inbox. Could you let me know by Wednesday?”
☐ Reply all to the whole company for one person.	☐ Reply to them alone. Reply all only when everyone needs your answer.
☐ Hitting send and hoping.	☐ Proofread with the four checks: ask first, no “just,” a clear deadline, read it out loud.
☐ “Please do the needful.”	☐ “Could you please send the invoice by Friday?” — specific beats vague.
☐ One giant paragraph.	☐ Break it into short lines. White space is kindness.
☐ “ASAP!!!” in capitals.	☐ “Could you send this by three today? It is urgent.” — calm urgency works.

Practice Time

3 exercises — do them today, not “someday”

Exercise 1 — Fill in the blank

Word bank: subject line • deadline • nudge • attachment • thread

1. The _____ is the headline — write topic plus action plus deadline.
2. Every ask needs a _____, or it floats forever.
3. Send a _____ if they did not reply in three days — warmth, never blame.
4. Attach the _____ first, before you write a single word.
5. Keep one _____ per topic so nothing gets lost.

Exercise 2 — Humanize it

Rewrite each robot email line (answers below):

1. “I hope this email finds you well.” > Say it better:
2. Subject: “Hello” > Say it better:
3. “As per my last email.” > Say it better:

Exercise 3 — The three sentence email

Rewrite a weak email in three sentences: greeting plus point, the clear ask with a deadline, the sign off. “Hi Maya. Could you approve the attached design by Thursday? Thanks, Leo.” Three sentences — nothing more.

- An email asking your manager for leave.
- An email requesting a document from a colleague.
- A nudge about an unanswered email.

Answer key

Ex 1: 1 subject line • 2 deadline • 3 nudge • 4 attachment • 5 thread

Ex 2: 1 “Writing about tomorrow’s client meeting.” 2 “Approval needed: new logo design, by Friday.” 3 “Just bringing this back to the top of your inbox. Could you let me know by Wednesday?”