

Phrase bank

BASICS

	Formal/Neutral	Informal
Name	Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms Dupuis Dear Mary	Hi/Hello Mary Mary, ... (or no name at all)
Previous contact	Thank you for your email of ... Further to your last email, ... I apologise for not getting in contact with you before now.	Thanks for your email. Re your email, ... Sorry I haven't written for ages, but I've been really busy.
Reason for writing	I am writing in connection with ... I am writing with regard to ... In reply to your email, here are ... Your name was given to me by ... We would like to point out that ...	Just a short note about ... I'm writing about ... Here's the ... you wanted. I got your name from ... Please note that ...
Giving information	I'm writing to let you know that ... We are able to confirm that ... I am delighted to tell you that ... We regret to inform you that ...	Just a note to say ... We can confirm that ... Good news! Unfortunately, ...
Attachments	Please find attached my report. I'm sending you ... as a pdf file.	I've attached ... Here is the ... you wanted.
Asking for information	Could you give me some information about ... I would like to know ... I'm interested in receiving/finding out ...	Can you tell me a little more about ... I'd like to know ... Please send me ...
Requests	I'd be grateful if you could ... I wonder if you could ... Do you think I could have ...? Thank you in advance for your help in this matter.	Please could you ... Could you ...? Can I have ...? I'd appreciate your help on this.
Promising action	I will ... I'll investigate the matter. I will contact you again shortly.	I'll ... I'll look into it. I'll get back to you soon.
Offering help	Would you like me to ...? If you wish, I would be happy to ... Let me know whether you would like me to ...	Do you want me to ...? Shall I ...? Let me know if you'd like me to ...
Final comments	Thank you for your help. Do not hesitate to contact us again if you require any further information. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. My direct line is ...	Thanks again for ... Let me know if you need anything else. Just give me a call if you have any questions. My number is ...
Close	I am looking forward to ... (+ -ing) Give my regards to ... Best wishes Regards	Looking forward to ... (+ -ing) Best wishes to ... Speak to/See you soon. Bye (for now)/All the best

Writing styles

Formal/Informal

	Formal/Neutral	Informal
Example phrases	Thank you for your email received 12 Feb. With regard/reference to ... I would be grateful if you could ... We regret to advise you that ... Please accept our apologies for ... I was wondering if you could ... We note that you have not ... We would like to remind you that ... It is necessary for me to ... It is possible that I will ... Would you like me to ...? However, ... / In addition, ... / Therefore, ... If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to meeting you next week.	Thanks for the email. Re ... Please could you ... I'm sorry to tell you that ... I'm sorry for ... Could you ...? You haven't ... Don't forget that ... I need to ... I might ... Shall I ...? But, ... / Also, ... / So, ... If you'd like more details, let me know. See you next week.
Latin / Anglosaxon origin	assistance/due to/enquire/inform/information obtain/occupation/possess/provide/repair request/requirements/verify	help/because of/ask/tell/facts get/job/have/give/fix ask for/needs/check (prove)

Direct/Indirect

	Direct	Indirect: polite/diplomatic
Requests	Can you ...? Please could you ...	Could you ...? I was wondering if you could ...
Asking for permission	Can I ...? Could I ...?	Is it all right if I ...? I wonder if I could ...?
Offering help	Can I ...? Shall I ...?	Would you like me to ...? Do you need any help with ...?
Making a suggestion	What about ... (+ -ing)? Shall we ...?	Why don't we ...? Perhaps we should ...?
Softening a strong comment	There is a problem. That will be very expensive. We can't do that. That gives us very little time. It will be better to ask Heidi. I disagree.	I'm afraid there is a small problem. It seems there is a slight problem. That might be quite expensive. Won't that be a bit expensive? I'm not sure we can do that. Actually, that doesn't give us much time. Wouldn't it be better to ask Heidi? I can see what you're saying, but ... Don't you think that ...? To be honest, I think it might be better to ...

Rejecting I'm not so sure about your idea.
It sounds like a good idea, but I don't think it would work in practice.
It sounds like a good idea, but I can see one or two problems.

Special situations

Thanks Just a quick note to say many thanks for ...
I really appreciate everything that you have done.

Good luck Good luck with ...
I would like to take this opportunity to wish you every success in the future.

Congratulations Many congratulations on your promotion/new job.
I was delighted to hear the news about ...
Well done!

Best wishes Please give my best wishes/regards to ...

Bad news I was so sorry to hear about ...
I was really sorry to hear you're not well. ... Hope you feel better soon.
If there's anything I can do to help, let me know.

Job application

Greeting (formal) Dear Sir/Madam

Reason for writing With reference to your advertisement on the ... website, I am interested in applying for the
post of ...

Your background
and experience I am 26 years old and am currently studying for a degree in ... at ... University.
For the last two months/years I have been working as a ... at ...

The job itself I am interested in this job because ...
I feel that I would be well-suited for this job as I enjoy/have a lot of experience in ...

Referring to your CV I have attached my CV as a Word document. You will notice that I ... as well as You will
also notice that ...

Final comments I would be grateful if you would consider my application.
You will see from my CV that two people can be contacted as references, one is ... and the
other is from
I am available for interview in .../by phone any weekday afternoon, and you can email me or
telephone me on the number below.

Close I look forward to hearing from you soon.
Yours faithfully

Reports

Report structure

Introduction / Background	As requested at the Board meeting of 18 April, here is my report. The report will discuss/consider/describe/analyse/review ... The report is based on ... I have divided the report into three sections.
Findings	The findings/figures/results/investigations show that ... It appears that ... This has led to a situation where ... The graph/table shows that ...
Signposts	As can be seen in table 1/section 2/figure 3, ... As mentioned above, .../..., see below. ... and I will discuss this in more detail below/in section 3.2.
Conclusion / Recommendations	I (would like to) suggest/recommend that ... My specific recommendations are as follows.
Closing comments	Please have a look at the report and let me have your comments. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Linking words

Sequence	Firstly, ... Secondly, ... Finally, ...
Talking generally	In general, ... Usually, ... On the whole, ...
Contrast	However, ... Nevertheless, ... On the other hand, ...
Adding another point	In addition, ... Moreover, ... On another point, ...
Examples	For example, ... For instance, ... e.g.
Alternatives	Either ... or ... Alternatively, ... Instead of ...
Real (surprising) situation	In fact, ... Actually, ... As a matter of fact, ...
Something is obvious	Clearly, ... Obviously, ... Of course, ...
Most important point	Especially, ... Above all, ... In particular, ...
Rephrasing	In other words, ... That is to say, ... i.e.
Result/consequence	As a result, ... Therefore, ... For this reason, ...
New topic	In relation to ... Regarding ... With reference to ...

Careful, balanced style

Giving both sides of an argument	In general ..., however ...	On the whole ..., but ...
Making a statement less general	Many/Some ...	Usually/Typically/Often ...
Making a statement less certain	It is possible/probable that ...	It seems/appears that tends to be ...
Making a comparison less strong	substantially/considerably/much (+ comparative adjective) significantly/relatively (+ comparative adjective) marginally/slightly (+ comparative adjective)	
Concluding	On balance, ... Taking all the above points into consideration, ...	