

Tip 6 – Give precise deadlines

When you request something, you push your reader to action. Always be clear about what you want this person to do, and when. “*As soon as possible*” can mean one thing to you and something very different to your reader. Explaining why you need something by a certain date or a precise time softens what may be perceived as a command.

For example:

"We spoke last week about your new Xmple software and I would like more information. As my organization is in the process of purchasing new software, I will need that information by next Friday."

Tip 11 – Make your reader feel good about your message

Tone in writing can be hard to detect, but we feel good when we read something that is written in a friendly, professional and effective tone. We don't feel as good when we read something that is poorly written in an unpleasant or aggressive tone. ([See Tip 31](#))

Tip 14 – Choose your words with care

Think of the way you speak, the simple language you use, and try to use that in your writing. Instead of “subsequent to”, why not write **after** or **following**? Why use “remuneration” instead of **pay**, or “expedite” instead of **speed up**?

TEST YOUR SKILLS

EXERCISE 4 – Write in plain language

What plain language would you use to replace these wordy phrases?

| | |
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| Wordy phrases <ul style="list-style-type: none">– conduct an investigation– despite the fact that– at this point in time– do an analysis | Answer Answer Answer Answer |
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Tip 26 – Avoid discussing confidential information

Sending an email is like sending a postcard. If you don't want your email to be displayed on a bulletin board, don't send it. Moreover, never make any libellous, sexist or racially discriminating comments in emails, even if they are meant as a joke.



Remember, no message is truly secure. Even if you delete a message, it is not erased from the system's memory. Thus, nothing is truly secret. Also, bear in mind that messages can be forwarded by the recipient without your knowledge.

TEST YOUR SKILLS

EXERCISE 5 – Improve your Proofreading Skills

Count the number of errors in each of the following paragraphs and click on Answer to compare your findings to ours:

2. Just between you and I the agreement is a bad one because they're work was not done to our satisfaction. Neither of the solutions are acceptable to me. In my opinion it would be better to wait until we get the report from Mary and John comes back from his trip. ([Answer](#))