

**Technical English for Engineers**  
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**Lecture – 25**  
**Email Writing**

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Good morning, this is what we are going to do today writing and some reading as well. Under writing, we are going to talk about emails, how we write the subject, the body, the content, what should be the tone and what should be the language of an email particularly in formal and semi formal situations. So, basically, we will be talking about how to write an appropriate email, appropriate to what are the parameters of appropriateness - tone, language, also the way we write the subject. These are the important features of email writing. We will do this in greater detail today; we will also talk about how to write a précis.

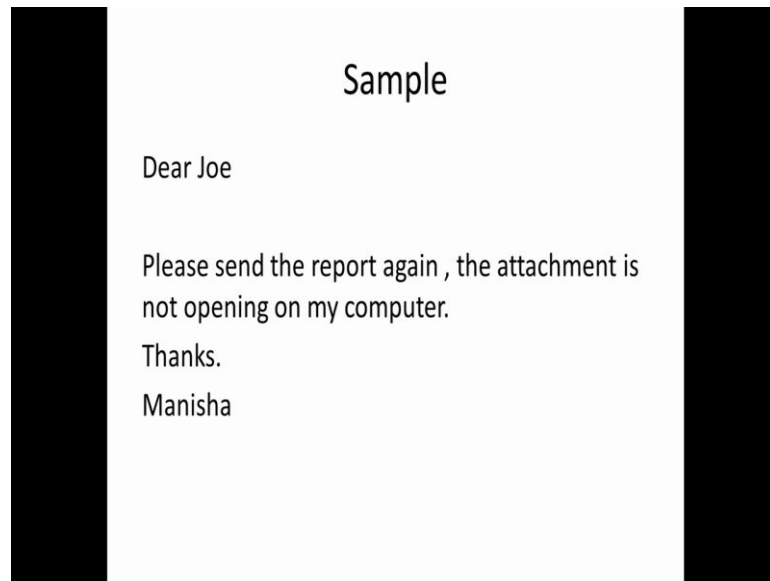
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Now, let me show you this email. **I have brought some sample text, and here is one.** Dear Mani Thanks for looking at the account. You were right, there were errors in calculation. I accept full responsibility for that. By the end of this month we will start our e-commerce store, so we will be able to do away with the manual aspect of accounts. Thanks for your help. Will catch up. Cheers. Obviously, this mail is written in a work place. You here think such as errors, calculations, accounts, accepting responsibility, e commerce, so this is an email between two colleagues.

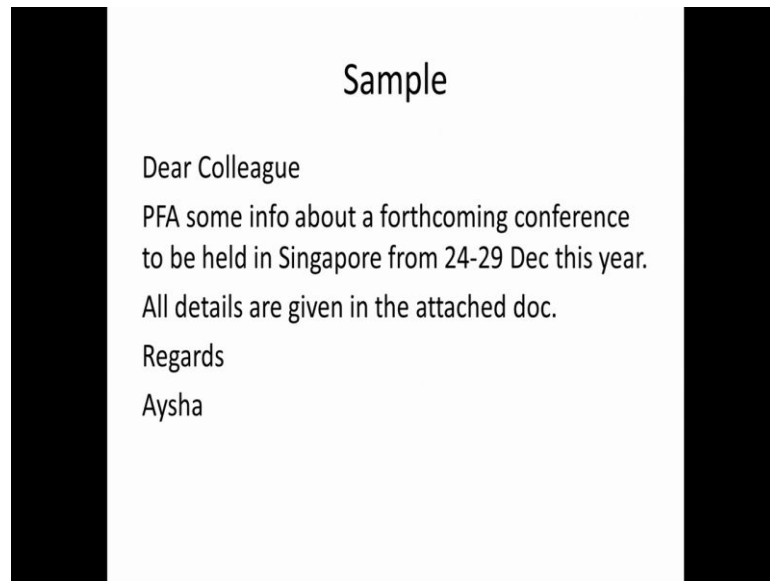
However, the fact that it is rounded off with will catch up, cheers, it means that the writer of this email is on familiar terms with the person, he **is** sending the mail to the receiver of the mail. So, the writer is on good terms with the receiver. So, therefore, the use of will catch up, cheers. Still remember that just because the writer and the receiver appear to be familiar with each other and on good talking terms. Still, look at the rest of the language look at the body of the email; he thanks him, there was an error pointed out to him, he accepts responsibility; he also says that why these things may are not going to happen in the future and then he thanks him again. So, what we should understand is that when we are writing in work place situation, it is important to be professional about things; it does not matter even if you are very close to the person.

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Second sample; look at the text, read the slide. Dear Joe, please send the report again, the attachment is not opening on my computer. Thanks. Manisha. Again, it looks like an exchange at the work place. You see report, attachment all these things, so and very short very precise, thanks. Now here she is not saying or the writer is not saying cheers, a see you, will catch up or let us go for coffee together, nothing of the sort. It is clear, simple to the point, and again an email between colleagues. So, this is another example of writing an effective mail that she makes her point very clearly; if you are not on social terms with the receiver, keep the tone extremely formal and professional.

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Let us look at another email. Dear Colleague, PFA or please find attached some info about a forthcoming conference to be held in Singapore from this to this. All details are given in the attached doc. Now, this could be one of those mails where the author of the mail - the writer of the mail is sending some kind of information to his colleagues or her colleagues. So, look at the tone of the mail. It starts with the salutation Dear Colleague, it rounds off with regards. These are formal uses of languages.

This is a formal instance of writing an email, Dear Colleague, Regards and again extremely to the point, the use of info that is information is absolutely acceptable, where let us assume that you are sending this kind of a mail to a group, you are already familiar with and you know their personal interest. So, this would this word info would not come in the way of effective communication. However, if you are writing an email or to a person who is much superior to you in station, in work place situation then it is better to write complete words, and make it short and concise. And never use the rounding of expression cheers, and let us catch up soon, especially with your boss or with your instructor or vendor.

So, what have we seen so far, the components of a mail. I am sure that all of you are extremely comfortable with the structure of an email. We know how these things work to

is the address of the recipient or recipients, cc is the copy - copying people more than one; bcc is blind carbon copy, where many people are attached or addressed or the mail is being sent to many people. Subject, remember, subject is very important people should be interested in looking at your or opening your mail, so that is the crux of the mail. We have to greet, that is salutation Dear so, Dear, Dear Jim, Dear John, Dear colleague, Dear professor so and so dear Dr so and so, so greeting.

The body of the mail, we have already seen and then the signature always write, always conclude it with something your sincerely, your or with regards, yours truly. In email writing, we are not too fussy about the use of the distinction between yours truly, yours sincerely, with regards, warm regards all these are more or less acceptable in formal, semi formal situations.

And let us assume there is an attachment also. So, you have to be very careful about this, if you are saying please find an attachment- PFA then make sure that before sending the mail, you have attached the document. Many a time, it does happen; in our stress, in our hurry, we forget to attach a relevant piece of information, although in the body of the mail, we have already mentioned a please find here, please find attached.

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### Exercise:

From UK lottery  
Need interest free cash?  
Message from the CEO  
Pay slip  
'I need your assistance'  
Confirmation of order no. AW 208899768  
Renewal of subscription

Now, look at the slide, and here is a list of subjects for email. From UK lottery, Need interest free cash?, Message from the CEO, Pay slip, 'I need your assistance', Confirmation of order number so and so, Renewal of subscription. Now your question is how many of these subject lines are relevant to you, I mean I can immediately tell you 'From UK lottery' this is one of those spam mails right. We keep getting all of us, keep getting **the this** sort of mail, and then I need your assistance. So, these are clearly a spam mails. Most of us would delete it without giving this sort of mail, a second thought a second look.

But if it, if you know that the messages from the CEO, Pay slip, Renewal of subscription - if you want to renew or want to cancel, Confirmation of order - you have placed the order for some online thing and it is the dealer is confirming your order. So, all these are things that we use on our daily bases. Now, again need second one, need interest free cash is also one of those spam mails. So, this is a an exercise that I would like you to do identify spam mails and write three kinds of emails, Message from the CEO, Pay slip, and Confirmation of order number so and so. So these are the topics, I will repeat, Message from the CEO, Pay slip and Confirmation of order number. So, your work is now to write appropriate emails using these heading as in your subject, and then you can always consult your partner, your friend and compare notes.

Tone and style of emails one of the key features of emails in the work place is that they are precise and to the point. You have already seen one; thanks for the info, here is some info, please find the attachment. Most email writers need not write more than they need to, is not at all necessary to go into lots of examples or description, just to drive home a point. Now what are those occasions when we must write a mail.

Now, email works best when the recipient is not easily available for a more personal more face-to-face interaction. Also the information you want to share is not time sensitive, so this is what you know, so therefore, we are not sending an sms or WhatsApp message, we are the information you want to share is not time sensitive. Responses to mails can also always be delayed, you have to remember that. Some people travel a lot they may not be able to access their mails. So, these are the situations when we write an email rather than texting or calling people up. Again, it also depends on our own need,

we need to send an electronic file, we need to have some kind of an attachment. So, it works beautifully, email works very well in such circumstances.

And again, if particular information should reach a large number of people, a large huge group of people then again we need to write an email. Again many a time, we use an email to have a written record of the conversation of the communication. It is important that we want to play something on record and we write an email for that. Are there any situations when it is not at all necessary to write a mail? We have to remember that email is not the right medium of communication, if the message is long and complicated and these things can be sorted out only face-to-face or even on the phone.

Sometimes it so happens that the message is very long and people generally do not like reading emails, a very lengthy email, a very long email can also be misconstrued. Also when the information we need to communicate is highly confidential because this is one point where you should avoid writing an email, because an email can be forwarded, circulated, leaked or recovered from the server even after deletion. So, therefore, always be careful about sending an email that concerns something very sensitive or confidential.

Now, in a mail, two sections should be filled with the email address of the recipient, we all know that. It is always necessary and it is very convenient when we cc – copies of the mail to other people, and the communication of the thread will be visible to everyone else and then we also know that how we use blind carbon copy that is bcc, and this we send while ensuring the anonymity of other recipients. So, we must have seen discussion groups been created, where the personal email ids of other recipients are not revealed to all. The subject of an email, remember, it should always be short and precise and should communicate exactly what you are trying to say. So, the most important information should be concise as concise as possibly. Many a time, we find a subject line absolutely blank or just one hello or hi, it is always advisable to write something, unless the receiver and you are on very comfortable terms, it is better to write a subject of an email.

How do we greet, how do we write the salutation, extremely important in all formal writings, there has to be salutation. So, for example, Dear sir, Dear madam, these are the most commonly used salutations in writing. We can also say let say Dear friend, Dear

colleague, so all these are acceptable. Now, addressing someone as Respected sir or Respected madam, which is a quite acceptable in many cultures, but by and large if possible stick to Dear sir and Dear madam or Dear colleague unless you are dealing with some who actually demands to be addressed that way that is Respected sir or madam; otherwise, in all other cases Dear sir, Dear madam, Dear colleague is perfectly acceptable.

We have to also bear in mind that we use sir and madam in formal situations and when we want to use a formal tone the other day we were talking about tone of a passage. So, emails, also letters also have a particular kind of tone. So, keep the tone formal, as formal as possible. We use sir and madam, when we may not know the exact identity of the recipient, this can happen when you are sending an emails to universities, institutions, corporate companies, but it is always advisable to do enough research and find out whom you are sending the mail to and then address them accordingly.

Moving onto the body of the mail; body of the mail should be kept brief and concise **is** especially for formal mails. Why do we need to do this? This helps in reducing the possibility of errors in our language, and increase the overall readability of the mail. Again the language should be formal and free of errors; you can always double check for grammatical mistakes. Do avoid making a grammar and spelling mistakes, when you are sending an email to your professor, to your instructor, and also someone who you think would not really appreciate reading a mail **is** which is full of errors.

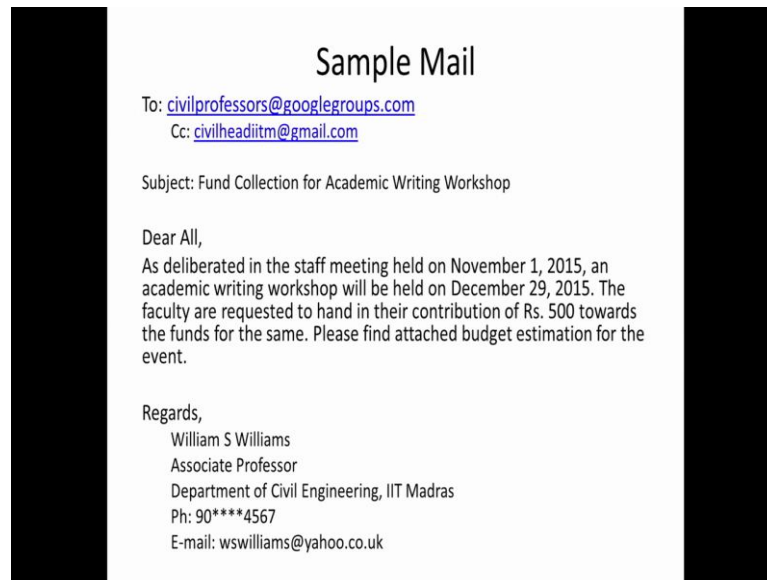
For signing of, or the signature, we use regards, warmly, sincerely; these are some of the common usage especially in formal situations regards and sincerely work best. And then we should also write our names and in many formal situations, our designation and contact details; especially, if it is a formal professional, a business kind of a situation, always mention your designation and your email and also your phone number.

Talking about attachments, if you have files as attachments, you should mention the same along with the brief on its contents in the body of the mail. The file and this is very important it should be named according to the contents, so that the files are still identifiable, once the receiver downloads it. So, even in the attach file is advisable to



write the title that says it all that this is a report about research on thermodynamics. So, please keep all this in mind and you should also always ensure that the attachments are properly uploaded and the contents are comprehensible to the recipients.

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Please look at the mail here. This is an example of a well written professional email to this, cc to this. Subject: Fund Collection for Academic Writing Workshop. Dear All, As deliberated in the staff meeting held on November first, 2015, an academic writing workshop will be held on December 29, 2015. The faculty are requested to hand in their contribution of rupees 500 towards the funds for the same. Please find attached budget estimation for the event regards so and so and so and so. So, now, based on this email that you have just seen, this is your exercise, I want you to write a response to this mail. How would you response to this mail, and also as part of your research, I would like you to find out what are the features of email etiquette.

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Well, let us move on now, and we will talk about précis writing. What is a précis, a précis is a condensed form of piece of writing and encapsulating the essence of its ideas. So, there is text the passage and you have to encapsulate the main ideas that is what précis is. Remember without understanding the text and its signal words, you cannot write or comprehend the contents of a text. So, it is always extremely important that you highlight a mark, the signal words, what are the most important words here in this passage. A précis should be one-third the length of the original text. So, you must count the words, and remain as close to the word limit. It is important while writing précis to stick to the point and the main idea. Always avoid digressions, examples and other supporting details. You just do not have the luxury of including every detail here.

In précis, we may change the structure and even reorder the ideas. A précis therefore, is different from a regular summary, which is just recounting of an abridgment of the original passage. The key steps to writing a précis, please make a note, you have to start by reading the original passage very carefully and always read it more than once for any kind of reading comprehension, one reading is never enough. Note the main points; rearrange the order if necessary and if you feel that rearranging the order of ideas will lead to a more logical development of the text. You should also use your own words and language, delete adjectives and reduce clauses where possible.

So, let me tell you something about direct and indirect speech. In précis, we always use the indirect speech and not the open inverted commas kind of dialogues, if they are there in the original précis, and if you think they are extremely important, you should mention it as succinctly as possible, as briefly as possible just say so and so person things or according to this. But you do not have to, according to this person or any name that you want to say, but remember that you cannot use open inverted commas. Now, from précis writing, I would like to have a focus on some elements of reading, developing our reading comprehension.

Again as we have been doing a lot of reading; let me reiterate, it is a good idea to skim through the passage very quickly. First to get the general idea of each paragraph, a good tip that I can give you here is that you should avoid taking in or reflecting over each and every word separately and individually. Pay attention to paragraph structure, you must know that each para has a topic sentence that contains the central idea. Always pay attention to the first sentence of the para as well as the last sentence.

So, now, we are going to read a text a passage, and please note down your pre reading discussion based on this particular text. You can work in précis; I am going to now show you a passage on global warming. So, before we start reading the passage, I would like you to work in **précis pairs** and discuss, any ten words that are relevant to the issue of global warming. What are the words that come to your mind, write a list, make a list of 10 words and compare notes with your friend. Your next pre reading discussion should be discussing any two solutions for the global warming problem.

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## Reading

Climate change is the greatest humanitarian crisis of our time, responsible for rising seas, raging storms, searing heat, ferocious fires, severe drought, and punishing floods. It threatens our health, communities, economy, and national security.

Worldwide, nations have begun taking steps to combat this growing threat, working toward an international agreement in which every country on earth plays its part. Many of the world's largest polluters have stepped up with significant commitments, amplified by efforts from cities, businesses, sports leagues, churches, and many other individuals and groups that have responded to the urgent need for climate action.

Here in the United States, power plants represent the single-largest source of carbon pollution, spewing two billion tons into the air each year. In response, President Obama's U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has developed the Clean Power Plan, which sets the first national limits on carbon pollution from power plants and provides states with the flexibility to meet them.

So, now here is your text, let us read it together. Climate change is the greatest humanitarian crisis of our time, responsible for rising seas, raging storms, searing heat, ferocious fires, severe drought, and punishing floods. It threatens our health, communities, economy, and national security.

Next paragraph: Worldwide, nations have begun taken taking steps to combat this growing threat, working towards an international agreement in which every country on earth plays its part. Many of the world's largest polluters have stepped up with significant commitments, amplified by efforts from cities, businesses, sports leagues, churches, and many other individuals and group that have responded to the urgent need for climate action.

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- The plan represents the most important step the United States can take right now to combat climate change and help spur climate action around the globe, as world leaders look toward an important meeting in Paris this December. With nations working together to cap carbon pollution, expand renewable power, and embrace energy efficiency, we'll have a fighting chance at getting off this destructive path.
- Time may be running out to fight climate change, but we are not running out of solutions.

<http://www.nrdc.org/climate/default.asp>

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And we continue reading. Please look at the slide. The plan represents the most important step the United States can take right now to combat climate change and help spur climate action around the globe, as world leaders look forward look toward an important meeting in Paris this December. With nations working together to cap carbon pollution, expand renewable power, and embrace energy efficiency, we will have a fighting chance at getting off this destructive path. Time may not be running out to fight climate change, but we are not running out of solutions.

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### Exercise

1. Identify at least 3 complex sentences.
2. Write a precis of the given passage.
3. Mention at least three reference words.

Now, look at this exercise and this is what I want you to do based on the passage that we have just done. Identify at least three complex sentences, you do remember what is complex sentence right. Complex sentence where there is a main clause and subordinate clause. Compound are those where two clauses of equally **snatched, adjoined** together by let us say by some kind of a punctuation or some signal word, some connector. But complex sentences, the subordinate clause cannot stand on their own.

I would also like you to write a précis of the given passage and mention at least three reference words. I hope you remember what are reference words it, this, he, she, that, those, so once a group has already been identified then in reference word, by using reference words, we do not say, we do not need to say the Environmental Protection Agency did that. You can always use the word term or the words it for it; it refers to the Environmental Protection Agency.

Complex sentences again take a look, very first sentence; climate change is the greatest humanitarian crisis of our time and etcetera, etcetera, all these details that are given. And then let us see a second line in the second para, many of the world's largest polluters have stepped up with significant commitments amplified by efforts so and so and then and many other individuals and groups that have responded to the urgent need for

climate action. So, this is a very interesting written paragraph; of course, it takes a higher order candidate or writer or to blend complex and compounds sentence, but here is a very significant example.

So, thank you very much, and we will meet for our next class soon.

### *Tags*

Reading English, English for Engineers, English words, English Exercise, Exercises in English, Grammar usage, English Grammar, vocabulary, words and phrases, spoken communication, written communication, English writing, English speaking, scientific English, report writing, CV, formal letter, Speech-Preposition, Noun Phrases, Countable and uncountable nouns, singular, plural, Modals and Voice, Tenses, Effective Speaking

Essay writing, word categories, word formation, formal tone, paragraph writing, tone in writing, speaking tone, signal words, Letter writing, understanding essays, Mechanics of Essays, publishable essays, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, propositions, determiners, linking words, 'be' form, linking words, reading, listening, sentence, Subject, Verb, Object, Articles, comparatives, passive voice, Dictionary skills, Presentation, Punctuation, collocation