

In this quarter's **TRAINFO**, we focus on **EMAILS & MEMOS** which play such a predominant part in today's business world. In today's business communication, the rule is to "write it as you would say it". Formal correspondence has more or less passed out unless you are writing formal business letters or contracts. This of course makes life easier, but it is also easy to forget that you are no longer in control of an email once you have pressed the 'send' button. For this reason, it is necessary to take care about content and style.

My advice for emails in English is a) to use a spell check and b) to print it out before you send it. This makes it easier to check for mistakes. Good luck and best wishes

Joan

Email Salutations

Formal: You don't know the name:

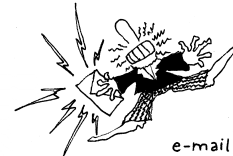
- *Dear Sir (be careful here – only if you are sure that it is a man!)*
- *Dear Madam (ditto – only if you are sure that it is a woman!)*
- *Dear Sir or Madam ('Dear Madam or Sir' is be better, but sounds rather strange!)*
- *Dear FPN (if you are writing to a company, association or department)*

Formal: You know the name:

- *Dear Mr Jones / Dear Dr Jones / Dear Ms Jones*

Informal:

- *Dear Peter / Hi Susan / Hello Richard / Joan*



If writing to several addressees you know well:

- *Dear all*
- *Greetings from Frankfurt (or home city)*
- *No greeting, just start with the text (personally, I don't like this too much)*

IDIOM OF THE MONTH:

BETWEEN YOU AND ME AND THE GATEPOST

This means that the matter is very confidential (*Unter uns gesagt...*).

e.g. What I am going to tell you is between you, me and the gatepost, so don't tell anybody.



EMAIL

Email is playing an increasingly important role in business communication, with tens of millions of pieces of mail being sent daily. Email is also becoming a problematic form of business communication because there are no general standards and expectations (etiquette) among users.

Missing or uninformative subject lines are a problem for email senders and readers. Subject lines for email, as for memos, are intended to focus both the sender and the reader. The sender can check the subject line to see if the goal of a memo was met, and the reader can decide when, or if, to open the incoming message. Subject lines should be concise, informative and highlight the goal of the message or a needed action.

Unfortunately many people don't take the time and care with email messages that they might with a hard-copy memo or business letter. This leads to ineffective messages that require more follow-up for clarification and response. The same amount of time should be spent writing and editing email as with memos and letters.

The contents of emails are not '**between you, me and the gatepost**'! Confidential information should therefore never be sent by email.

MEMO

A good memo is one that is read and acted upon. The chances of this happening are increased if the memo is:

- From the boss
- Clearly linked to the context
- Good subject line and 1st paragraph
- Clearly structured
- Concisely phrased and well-written
- Short
- Easy to read

Traditionally there was a very simple difference between memos and business letters. Memos were internal documents and business letters were external documents. In recent times, the distinction has become unclear as emails are used for internal and external communication.

This can be problematic when people fail to realize that their email memos are not internal documents that are automatically confidential, protected or limited in circulation.

When memos are sent as emails to people outside a company (i.e. as external documents), they functionally become business letters, and must therefore be held to a higher standard during all phases of their creation, editing, and distribution.

TRAINFO

TRaining + INFOrmation

Opening

Formal

With reference to your email of ...

Informal

I hope you are keeping well

Reason for writing

Formal

We are writing to ...

Informal

Just a short note to ...

Good news

Formal

We are pleased to ...

Informal

I'm happy to



Bad news

Formal

We regret to inform you that ...

Informal

I'm sorry, but ...

Offering help

Formal

If you require ..., we would be happy to ...

Informal

Please let us know if you require ...

Saying sorry

Formal

We regret that ...

Informal

I'm sorry for/about ...



Attaching files

Formal

Please find attached ...

Informal

I'm attaching ...

Ending

Formal

If you have any further questions, please contact me.

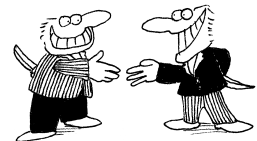
Informal

Let me know if you need any more help.

Positive final comments

Formal and Informal

Thank you for your cooperation



Close

Formal

Yours sincerely

Informal

Best regards