Unit 2: E-mail or Informal Writing

This document provides common vocabulary found in various stages of an e-mail. E-mails typically have a less formal style than many other written communication forms. As always, the level of formality will depend upon the target audience of the communication. Formal phrases are found in the left column and the equivalent informal phrase in the right.

Formal	*Informal*
Greeting	***Greeting***
Dear Sir or Madame (unknown) Dear Mr (or Ms if known) Dear Team	Hi (uname left out-unusual to do) Hi Christine (first name known) Hi All
Reason for e-mail	***Reason for e-mail***
This e-mail is required for (passive is formal) I write to request (simple is more formal than present continuous) I would appreciate it if you could (use of modal verbs is more formal) Your e-mail was provided to me because	Could you please send (active is less formal) I am writing to request (present continuous is less formal) I need document x from you (lack of modals is less formal) Please send me (imperative sentences are informal)
Request or respond to enquiry	***Request or respond to enquiry***
Could you please inform me (modal is formal) Have you already sent ... (question form beginning with verb is polite) Any information you could send would be appreciated (passive is more formal) Further to our call yesterday, I have given... As requested, I have attached I am please to inform you (passive) We would again request that ... (use of "we" is more formal than I)	Please inform me (impertive is informal) When did you send ... (question words less polite than auxilary verb eg, "have") I want more information (direct sentences are less polite) As a follow-up to yesterday's call, here is ... I have attached the doc you want Pls send the form asap use of abbreviations is informal) I remind you that ... (use of "I" is less formal than "we")

Formal	*Informal*
Identification of next steps in process	**Identification of next steps in process**
Could you please review the attachment and provide any input as to changes (regular verbs "review" can be more formal)	Pls check through the attachment and bring up any changes (rphrasal verbs "check through" are often less formal)
Once we have finished the timetable, we can proceed to ...... (typical sentence structure somewhat more formal)	After the timetable, we can move on to ... (shorter sentences less formal than long sentences with more formal verbs
With reference to your request, once I have fully reviewed it ... (see above)	RE your request , once I check it I'll let you know (abbreviations and contractions (I'll) are less direct)
Once you have gotten the information, please inform us as to whether we can proceed	Once you know, give us the word (use of slang, eg, "word" is informal)
Could you please respond by Friday in order to meet the next deadline (modal is formal)	Let me know by Friday because I have the next deadline (impreative and direct is less formal)
Sending or receiving e-mails or documents	**Sending or receiving e-mails or documents**
I hereby enclose the documents ... ("hereby" is unnecessary which makes it very formal)	Here are the docs
We would request that the previously enclosed invoice be paid immediately (modals make it formal)	Please pay the overdue bill. (short sentence and simpler word "bill" is less formal)
Have you received the e-mail dated ...(polite questions is formal)	Did you get my mail from ...(direct question is less formal)
I have received your e-mail, but I am afraid no attachment was included. (it is more polite not to inform the other what they did no do)	I got your e-mail, but you forgot to send the attachment. (one should onyl directly identify errors with close contacts-it is too direct)
I appreciate all of your efforts in so quickly revising the document (it is polite to show gratitude for extra effort)	Thanks for the great work! (always thank for extra effort)
Making arrangements	**Making arrangements**
Could we arrange a meeting on (could is more	Can we meet on ... (use of "can" and verbs

Formal	*Informal*
formal than can) Would it be possible to change our meeting to ... (to cancel or change plans with a question is more polite) Is it possible to reserve a room for the 24th ...(an enquiry is more formal) I look forward to seeing you on ... As requested, I have attached I am happy to confirm our meeting of the 24th ..	(meet) rather than nouns is less formal) I need to change our meeting to ... (the direct form is less polite) I need a room for the 24th ...(a command is less polite) I am looking forward to seeing you on ... (present continuous is less formal than simple) I confirm the 24th meeting
Thanking and giving apologies The entire team would like to thank you for your great efforts (making messages inclusive brings more formality) The team's outstanding efforts and enthusiastic commitment are the reason for our success (use of strong adjectives makes it sincere and formal) Sorry for the delay in responding, but I have been out of e-mail contact all week ... (explaining the cause of something is more formal) Please accept our sincere apologies for ... ("sincere" is formal) We regret that the report was completed after the due date (passive is formal) Sorry for the delay in responding, but I have been out of e-mail contact all week ... (explaining the cause of something is more formal)	***Thanking and giving apologies*** I want to thank you for your great efforts (the use of "I" can be less formal though it is personal) Our success is because of the team (providing less detail or specifics about the effort is more informal and less sincere) Sorry that the report was late (typically mistakes or errors are explained in a more formal manner) Sorry for the delay in getting back to you, I wasn't available ... (this could suggest other person is not important)