**Written Comprehension and Expression 6 Teacher: KHELEF Embarka**

**Writing Effective Business E-mails**

**Introduction**

Letters have always been an important part of the world of affairs. Business correspondence is the most common field of writing letters. This field has developed its own 'etiquette' and styles. With the development of human communication thanks to the technological revolution, the field of business opted for computer-based communication. It proved to be more effective, faster and easier than traditional 'snail mail'. Like traditional short hand-written professional letters; emails in business have also to be professional and writers must comply with the norms of the world of business.

**Advantages of emails**

1. Sending electronic mails is faster, cheaper and easier than traditional letters;
2. Emails can be sent to as many addresses as you wish in one click;
3. A reply is received almost instantly;
4. Email senders have 'attachments' feature which permit to send different kinds of contents: documents, graphs, pictures, forms…etc as far as the server allows.

**The Characteristics of Effective E-Mails**

To be effective, email writers should conform to a set of features including:

1. Using a helpful subject line: written in a phrase form, it should precisely and concisely express the objective for writing .
2. Having an appropriate beginning;
3. The message should be kept brief and direct to the objective. If there is a need for detailing, it is advisable that the writer divides the email into shorter paragraphs giving each a concise title, or s/he can use a list; it is easier to read.
4. The addresser has to make the email easier to read by using a plain font and numbered lists.

**E-Mail Language Style**

An e-mails is a formal type of writing. The writer should opt to formal English ([See the previous lesson for the characteristics of formal style)](Writing%20Letters.docx). In addition, the writer should use polite, friendly tone avoiding irony and humour. The choice of words is crucial. They should be the clearest and the most precise ones.

When ending their e-mails, writers should sign off; closing in the usual traditional expressions: sincerely/ faithfully/ truly yours and their full names (Don't innovate). To be more professional, some people create a standard sign off including their names, their title(s), phone and fax numbers and their postal and e-mail addresses.

Before being sent, an e-mail should be revised, proof-read, copied and then sent.

**Problems to Avoid**

'Netiquette' is a key term in the field of business. Blended of the words 'net' and 'etiquette', the word means the rules of good behaviour and manner that one should mind and conform to when using the internet. These manners include:

1. Don't write the whole message in upper-grade (capital) letters; if you do, this means you are 'SHOUTING'
2. Don't use emoticons in business writing; many people find it annoying. Instead, find the right appropriate words to express your feelings. One needs to show off one's writing skills.
3. Never forward anyone else's e-mail without permission; it may be confidential material.
4. Think twice before writing, and many times before clicking to send or forward a message.

**Conclusion**

Professional e-mails are written for immediate pragmatic purposes. The writer has to be wise and careful to be effective and to fulfill one's objective.