

Business communications brainstorming and errors

Brainstorm as many useful phrases as you can into each gap below.

	Phrases
Email – Opening greeting	
Email – Opening line	
Email – Closing line	
Email – Closing greeting	
Email – Signing off with your name	

Telephoning – Starting	
Telephoning – Ending	
Meeting people for the first time	
Meeting people again	
Ending conversations	

Starting meetings (including small talk and getting down to business)	
Ending meetings (including small talk at the end)	
Opening teleconferences and video-conferences	
Ending teleconferences and video-conferences	

Answers with errors

Each section below has one which is incorrect and one which is rare. Cross off the wrong one and put brackets around the rare one.

	Phrases
Email – Opening greeting	Dear Alex Dear Mr Case Dear Ms Smith Dear Sir Dear Sir or Madam Dear Sir/ Madam Dear all Dear my teacher Hi Alex Hi everyone To: All staff
Email – Opening line	Heard about the big storm in Florida – hope you are okay. Hope you had a good weekend. How was your trip to America? How’s it going? I am writing to you concerning... I am writing to you in connection with... I am writing to you in order to... I am writing to you regarding... I’m writing to you about... I’m writing to you because... I’m writing to you to... Sorry for my late reply. Thank you for meeting me yesterday. Thank you for your continuing support. Thank you for your quick reply. Thanks for your email. This is Alex.
Email – Closing line	Cheers. Hope that helps. I hope that is acceptable with you. I hope we have the opportunity to meet again soon. I look forward to hearing from you soon. I look forward to hearing from you soon. If you have any more questions, please feel free to contact me. If you need any more info, just let me know. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I’m expecting your reply. I’m looking forward to hearing from you.

	<p>Once again, please accept our apologies for any inconvenience caused/ for the inconvenience caused/ for the delay/ for...</p> <p>Please let me know if that's okay with you.</p> <p>See you tomorrow.</p> <p>Sorry I couldn't be more help.</p> <p>Thank you for your cooperation.</p> <p>Thanks again.</p> <p>Thanks for your patience.</p> <p>Thanks for your understanding.</p> <p>Thanks in advance.</p>
Email – Closing greeting	<p>ATB</p> <p>All the best</p> <p>BR</p> <p>BW</p> <p>Best</p> <p>Best regard</p> <p>Best regards</p> <p>Best wishes</p> <p>Sincerely</p> <p>Sincerely yours</p> <p>Yours</p> <p>Yours faithfully</p> <p>Yours sincerely</p>
Email – Signing off with your name	<p>A.M.Case (Mr)</p> <p>Alex</p> <p>Alex Case</p> <p>Alex Case (Mr)</p> <p>Case</p>
Telephoning – Starting	<p>Good afternoon. Can you put me through to John Smith, please?</p> <p>Good evening. Please connect me to John Smith.</p> <p>Good morning. ABC Limited. Alex Case speaking. How can I help you?</p> <p>Good morning. I'd like to speak to John Smith, please.</p> <p>Good morning. I'm calling to...</p> <p>Good night. ABC Limited. This is Alex. Can I help you?</p> <p>Have you got a minute (to talk)?</p> <p>Hello, can I speak to John, please?</p> <p>Hello. I'm phoning about...</p> <p>Hi John, this is Steve.</p> <p>It's great to hear from you./ It's so nice to hear from you again.</p> <p>How's work?</p> <p>Sorry I didn't get back to you...</p> <p>Sorry I didn't have more time to speak earlier.</p> <p>Sorry it took me so long to get back to you (but...)</p> <p>Sorry to phone so early in the morning (but...)</p>

	<p>Sorry to phone so late in the evening/ at lunchtime/ last thing on Friday....</p> <p>Sorry to ring again so soon (but...)</p> <p>Sorry to trouble you again (but...)</p> <p>Thanks for calling me back./ Thanks for getting back to me (so quickly).</p> <p>Well, just a quick call to say...</p>
Telephoning – Ending	<p>Anyway, it's been great to talk, but I'm afraid I have a meeting in a few minutes/ I'm afraid I... (so...)</p> <p>Bye (for now).</p> <p>Have a good evening/ day/ weekend/....</p> <p>Have a good trip.</p> <p>I look forward to your call.</p> <p>I'd like to talk more about this but I'm afraid someone has just come in/ I'm afraid... (so...)</p> <p>I'd love to chat more, but I have someone on another line (so...)</p> <p>I'll check (...) and call you (right) back.</p> <p>I'll find out and get back to you/ call you (back)/ email you/ get in touch...</p> <p>Is that everything?</p> <p>Is there anything else I can help you with today?</p> <p>Looking forward to hearing from you.</p> <p>Okay, I'll make sure (that) he gets your message. (I'm sure he will get back to you soon.)</p> <p>Okay, I'll tell him that you called/ I'll pass your message onto him (as soon as I can/ as soon as he gets back)./ I'll stick a Post-it on his monitor.</p> <p>Okay, speak to you then. Bye.</p> <p>Okay. That's been really helpful, thanks.</p> <p>Please call again if you have any other questions/ problems/...</p> <p>So, I think that's all (that I needed to ask) (for now), thanks.</p> <p>So, I think that's covered everything, thanks.</p> <p>So, was there anything else?</p> <p>Sorry I couldn't be more help.</p> <p>Speak to you then/ tomorrow/ soon/ later/... (, then).</p> <p>Thanks (again) for letting us know.</p> <p>Thanks for the information.</p> <p>Thanks for your call.</p> <p>Thanks for your calling.</p> <p>Thanks for your help.</p> <p>Well, it's been great to catch up, but my next client has just arrived (so...)</p>
Meeting people for the first time	<p>(I'm very) pleased to meet you.</p> <p>(We've emailed many times but) it's so nice to finally meet you.</p> <p>Can I introduce myself? This is Alex Case.</p> <p>I don't think we've met.</p>

	<p>It's a pleasure to meet you. It's an honour to meet you. Nice to meet you. You must be Alex.</p>
Meeting people again	<p>Are you okay? How's it going? It's so nice to meet you again. It's so nice to see you again. Long time no see. How have you been?</p>
Ending conversations	<p>As I said, I'll email you later today about... I hope we have the chance to meet again soon. It was a pleasure to meet you. It was nice to meet you again. It was nice to meet you. It was so nice to see you again. See you again. See you later. See you on Monday. See you soon. So, I'd love to talk longer but I'm afraid I have a meeting in a few minutes. I'll email you later today. Well, I'm afraid I have to go but...</p>
Starting meetings (including small talk and getting down to business)	<p>Anyway, you must tell me more about that later, but we have to leave at 11, so shall we make a start? As you know, the reason why we called this meeting is... By the way, shall we get started? Did you have a good trip? Did you have any trouble finding us? Did you have any trouble getting here? How was your flight? How was your journey? Is it your first time here in...? Okay, we have a lot of things to talk about today, so... Well, I'd love to chat more but we have a lot to get through today, so let's get down to business, shall we?</p>
Ending meetings (including small talk at the end)	<p>Do you have many more meetings today? I think we've covered everything. Is there any other business we need to discuss? Is there anything else we need to talk about before we wrap things up? Thanks again for your coming. Thanks for all your great ideas. That's it. Thanks for coming. There don't seem to be any more questions, so shall we call it a day?</p>

	There seem to be people waiting for the room, but we'll talk about this more when you get there next week.
Opening teleconferences and video-conferences	<p>At this end we have John, Jacob and me, Jane.</p> <p>Can you hear me?</p> <p>Can you see me okay?</p> <p>Can you speak up?</p> <p>How's the weather over there now?</p> <p>I can't hear you very well. Could you move the microphone?</p> <p>Is the picture okay?</p> <p>It must be really early over there.</p> <p>Let's first check who is with us. I'll call out your names one by one.</p> <p>Perhaps we should start by saying who is there.</p> <p>Shall we start by introducing ourselves?</p> <p>Thanks for agreeing to talk to us.</p> <p>Thanks for coming.</p> <p>What's the time there now?</p>
Ending teleconferences and video-conferences	<p>Are you finished for today?</p> <p>Can I have all that in writing?</p> <p>I'll email you about the next teleconference later today.</p> <p>Right, I think that's everything for today.</p> <p>Sorry, I have to go.</p> <p>Thanks for meeting us.</p> <p>The consensus seems to be that...</p>

Suggested answers

Wrong ones are in **bold** and (very) rare ones in *are italics and brackets* ().

	Phrases
Email – Opening greeting	<p>Dear Alex Dear Mr Case Dear Ms Smith Dear Sir or Madam Dear Sir/ Madam Dear all Hi Alex Hi everyone To: All staff</p> <p>Dear my teacher X <i>(Dear Sir)</i></p>
Email – Opening line	<p>Heard about the big storm in Florida – hope you are okay. Hope you had a good weekend. How was your trip to America? How's it going? I am writing to you concerning... I am writing to you in connection with... I am writing to you in order to... I am writing to you regarding... I'm writing to you about... I'm writing to you because... I'm writing to you to... Sorry for my late reply. Thank you for meeting me yesterday. Thank you for your quick reply. Thanks for your email.</p> <p>Thank you for your continuing support. X <i>(This is Alex.)</i></p>
Email – Closing line	<p>Cheers. Hope that helps. I hope that is acceptable with you. I hope we have the opportunity to meet again soon. I look forward to hearing from you soon. I look forward to hearing from you soon. If you have any more questions, please feel free to contact me. If you need any more info, just let me know. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I'm looking forward to hearing from you. Once again, please accept our apologies for any inconvenience caused/ for the inconvenience caused/ for the delay/ for... Please let me know if that's okay with you.</p>

	<p>See you tomorrow. Sorry I couldn't be more help. Thanks again. Thanks for your patience. Thanks for your understanding. Thanks in advance. I'm expecting your reply. X <i>(Thank you for your cooperation.)</i></p>
Email – Closing greeting	<p>All the best Best wishes Sincerely Sincerely yours Yours Yours sincerely Best Best regards BR BW ATB Best regard X <i>(Yours faithfully)</i></p>
Email – Signing off with your name	<p>Alex Alex Case Alex Case (Mr) Case X <i>(A.M. Case (Mr))</i></p>
Telephoning – Starting	<p>Good afternoon. Can you put me through to John Smith, please? Good morning. ABC Limited. Alex Case speaking. How can I help you? Good morning. I'd like to speak to John Smith, please. Good morning. I'm calling to... Have you got a minute (to talk)? Hello, can I speak to John, please? Hello. I'm phoning about... Hi John, this is Steve. It's great to hear from you./ It's so nice to hear from you again. How's work? Sorry I didn't get back to you... Sorry I didn't have more time to speak earlier. Sorry it took me so long to get back to you (but...) Sorry to phone so early in the morning (but...) Sorry to phone so late in the evening/ at lunchtime/ last thing on Friday.... Sorry to ring again so soon (but...) Sorry to trouble you again (but...)</p>

	<p>Thanks for calling me back./ Thanks for getting back to me (so quickly).</p> <p>Well, just a quick call to say...</p> <p>Good night. ABC Limited. This is Alex. Can I help you? X (<i>Good evening. Please connect me to John Smith.</i>)</p>
<p>Telephoning – Ending</p>	<p>Anyway, it's been great to talk, but I'm afraid I have a meeting in a few minutes/ I'm afraid I... (so...)</p> <p>Bye (for now).</p> <p>Have a good evening/ day/ weekend/....</p> <p>Have a good trip.</p> <p>I look forward to your call.</p> <p>Is there anything else I can help you with today?</p> <p>I'd like to talk more about this but I'm afraid someone has just come in/ I'm afraid... (so...)</p> <p>I'd love to chat more, but I have someone on another line (so...)</p> <p>I'll check (...) and call you (right) back.</p> <p>I'll find out and get back to you/ call you (back)/ email you/ get in touch...</p> <p>Looking forward to hearing from you.</p> <p>Okay, I'll make sure (that) he gets your message. (I'm sure he will get back to you soon.)</p> <p>Okay, I'll tell him that you called/ I'll pass your message onto him (as soon as I can/ as soon as he gets back)./ I'll stick a Post-it on his monitor.</p> <p>Okay, speak to you then. Bye.</p> <p>Okay. That's been really helpful, thanks.</p> <p>Please call again if you have any other questions/ problems/...</p> <p>So, I think that's all (that I needed to ask) (for now), thanks.</p> <p>So, I think that's covered everything, thanks.</p> <p>So, was there anything else?</p> <p>Sorry I couldn't be more help.</p> <p>Speak to you then/ tomorrow/ soon/ later/... (, then).</p> <p>Thanks (again) for letting us know.</p> <p>Thanks for the information.</p> <p>Thanks for your call.</p> <p>Thanks for your help.</p> <p>Well, it's been great to catch up, but my next client has just arrived (so...)</p> <p>Thanks for your calling. X (<i>Is that everything?</i>)</p>
<p>Meeting people for the first time</p>	<p>(I'm very) pleased to meet you.</p> <p>(We've emailed many times but) it's so nice to finally meet you.</p> <p>I don't think we've met.</p> <p>It's a pleasure to meet you.</p> <p>Nice to meet you.</p> <p>You must be Alex.</p>

	<p>Can I introduce myself? This is Alex Case. X <i>(It's an honour to meet you.)</i></p>
<p>Meeting people again</p>	<p>How's it going? It's so nice to see you again. Long time no see. How have you been? It's so nice to meet you again. X <i>(Are you okay?)</i></p>
<p>Ending conversations</p>	<p>As I said, I'll email you later today about... I hope we have the chance to meet again soon. It was a pleasure to meet you. It was nice to meet you. It was so nice to see you again. See you again. See you on Monday. See you soon. So, I'd love to talk longer but I'm afraid I have a meeting in a few minutes. I'll email you later today. Well, I'm afraid I have to go but... It was nice to meet you again. X <i>(See you later.)</i></p>
<p>Starting meetings (including small talk and getting down to business)</p>	<p>Anyway, you must tell me more about that later, but we have to leave at 11, so shall we make a start? As you know, the reason why we called this meeting is... Did you have any trouble finding us? Did you have any trouble getting here? How was your flight? How was your journey? Is it your first time here in...? Okay, we have a lot of things to talk about today, so... Well, I'd love to chat more but we have a lot to get through today, so let's get down to business, shall we? By the way, shall we get started? X <i>(Did you have a good trip?)</i></p>
<p>Ending meetings (including small talk at the end)</p>	<p>Do you have many more meetings today? I think we've covered everything. Is there any other business we need to discuss? Is there anything else we need to talk about before we wrap things up? Thanks for all your great ideas. There don't seem to be any more questions, so shall we call it a day? There seem to be people waiting for the room, but we'll talk about this more when you get there next week. Thanks again for your coming. X <i>(That's it. Thanks for coming.)</i></p>

Opening teleconferences and video-conferences	<p>At this end we have John, Jacob and me, Jane. Can you hear me? Can you see me okay? How's the weather over there now? I can't hear you very well. Could you move the microphone? Is the picture okay? It must be really early over there. Let's first check who is with us. I'll call out your names one by one. Perhaps we should start by saying who is there. Shall we start by introducing ourselves? Thanks for agreeing to talk to us. What's the time there now? Thanks for coming. X <i>(Can you speak up?)</i></p>
Ending teleconferences and video-conferences	<p>Are you finished for today? Can I have all that in writing? I'll email you about the next teleconference later today. Right, I think that's everything for today. The consensus seems to be that... Thanks for meeting us. X <i>(Sorry, I have to go.)</i></p>

Brainstorming similar phrases but for the body/ main part/ middle part of business communication into the spaces by function below.

Apologising/ Responding to complaints

Asking for permission to do something

Clarifying/ Confirming

Giving bad news

Inviting

Making arrangements (suggesting and fixing appointments, meetings, etc)

Making offers

Making enquiries/ Asking for information

Requesting (= Asking for something or asking for help)

Responding to invitations

Thanking (e.g. acknowledging receipt of something)