

## Formality and politeness in business requests

*Which of each pair of requests below are more formal or polite and why?*

- Any assistance you could give me in this matter would be gratefully accepted./ Any help at all would be much appreciated.
- Can you...?/ Could you...?
- Could you...?/ Could you possibly...?
- Could you...?/ Could you give me a hand with...?
- Hope that's okay./ Is that alright?
- I have a favour to ask you. .../ I have a request (for you). ...
- Can you...?/ I'd like to request...
- I need some help with.../ I need a hand with...
- I was wondering if you would be able to.../ Could you...?
- I would be very grateful if you could.../ Could you...?
- If you're not too busy,.../ Do you have time to...?
- Thanks in advance./ Thanks.
- There's something I think you can help me with. .../ I need your help with...
- Would it be possible for you to...?/ Could you...?
- Would you mind...ing (...)?/ You don't mind ...ing (...) (for me), do you?
- If..., that would be a great help./ Help!

*What are the general rules/ patterns of politeness and formality?*

*Which are the very most formal/ polite above? Are they too much for your typical business communications? Does that depend on whether you are writing or speaking?*

*Which of the above are most suitable for your average business emails?*

*Which of the above are good closing lines for those emails?*

*None of the phrases below are acceptable requests language in most situations. Why not?*

Would you...?

Thank you for your cooperation.

Please + verb

We would appreciate your help in...

*What paragraph structure and opening lines might you use for your emails making requests?*