

Present Simple and Continuous in business communication

Fill the gaps below with Present Simple or Present Continuous. Usually only one tense is correct, but sometimes more than one is okay.

Emailing

Email opening lines

- _____ (I write) to you about the meeting next week.

Email closing lines

- _____ (I look forward to) hearing from you.
- _____ (I look forward to) seeing you then.
- _____ (I hope) we have the opportunity to meet again soon.
- If _____ (you have) any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Telephoning

Starting phone calls

- Good morning. My name is Alex Case. _____ (I call) from ABC Limited.
- Hi John. _____ (I return) your call.
- Hi Steve. _____ (I phone) about our meeting next week.
- So, the reason why _____ (I call) is...
- Anyway, _____ (I phone) in order to make an appointment for next week.
- Anyway, _____ (you have) time to talk?

Asking for the other person's name

- Of course. Can I ask _____ (who call)?
- Who _____ (I speak) to, please?

Negative answers to requests to speak to someone

- I'm sorry, _____
(she meet) a client at the moment. Shall I ask her to call you back?
- I'm afraid _____
(she not work) on Mondays. She'll be in on Tuesday.

Taking messages/ Taking dictation

- I'll ask her to call you back. _____ (she have) your number?
- Just a moment. _____ (I look for) a pencil and paper.
- Sorry. How _____ (you spell) your family name?

Email or telephone

Friendly opening lines/ Social opening lines

- How _____ (it go)?
- How _____ (you do)? Hope everything's going okay.

Enquiries/ Asking for information

- Secondly, _____ (I have) a question about your after sales service.

Negative replies/ Giving bad news/ Explaining delays/ Asking them to wait

- I'm sorry but _____ (we presently wait) for the next delivery of that product.

Brainstorming stage

Brainstorm phrases for each function below, look above, then brainstorm more.

Email opening lines**Email closing lines****Starting phone calls****Asking for the other person's name****Negative answers to requests to speak to someone****Taking messages/ Taking dictation****Friendly opening lines/ Social opening lines****Enquiries/ Asking for information****Negative replies/ Giving bad news/ Explaining delays/ Asking them to wait**

Suggested answers

Emailing

Email opening lines

- I'm writing

Email closing lines

- I look forward to/ I'm looking forward to
- I look forward to/ I'm looking forward to
- I hope
- you have

Telephoning

Starting phone calls

- I'm calling
- I'm returning
- I'm phoning
- I'm calling
- I'm phoning
- do you have

Asking for the other person's name

- who is calling
- am I speaking

Negative answers to requests to speak to someone

- she's meeting
- she doesn't work

Taking messages/ Taking dictation

- Does she have
- I'm looking for
- do you spell

Email or telephone

Friendly opening lines/ Social opening lines

- is it going?
- are you doing?

Enquiries/ Asking for information

- I have

Negative replies/ Giving bad news/ Explaining delays/ Asking them to wait

- we are presently waiting

Flip a coin to decide:

- if you should communicate face to face (heads) or not (tails)
- if you should communicate by email (heads) or by phone (tails) (if you aren't communicating face to face)
- if you should choose a Present Simple sentence above (heads) or a Present Continuous sentence (tails) to use in your communication

Your teacher will tell you if you can look at the whole sentences above, can only look at the verbs in the answer key, or must make suitable sentences with no help.