

Employability Skills Pack

Student pages · print and hand out

PROFESSIONAL EMAIL TEARDOWN

FOR STUDENTS

Read the email below. A student sent it to a teacher to ask about a missed assignment. It gets the job done, sort of, but it would not fly at a job or an internship. Your task is to spot what is wrong, then rewrite it so it sounds like someone an employer would trust.

THE EMAIL AS SENT

Subject: (none)

yo so i wasnt in class friday and idk what we did can u just tell me what i missed and if theres like homework or whatever. also did i miss anything important on the test review because my mom said i HAVE to pass this class lol. get back to me asap i kinda need this today

- sent from my phone

Step 1. What is wrong with it?

Check every problem you can find in the email above.

- ☐ No subject line, so it is easy to ignore or lose
- ☐ No greeting and no name, so the reader does not know who sent it
- ☐ Too casual: slang, 'yo', 'lol', missing capital letters
- ☐ Spelling and grammar are sloppy
- ☐ The tone is demanding ('asap', 'i need this today') instead of polite
- ☐ It asks the reader to do the work the sender should do first
- ☐ No thank-you and no sign-off

Step 2. Rewrite it

Rewrite the email so it is professional. Keep the same request, but fix everything you checked on the last page. Use the checklist under the lines to make sure you covered it all.

Subject line _____

YOUR REWRITTEN EMAIL

Before you hit send, check yourself

- ☐ I wrote a clear subject line
- ☐ I started with a greeting (Dear / Hello + their name)
- ☐ I was polite and not demanding
- ☐ I spelled the reader's name right and used real sentences
- ☐ I said thank you and signed my full name

Print and cut apart. Each card is a real situation you could hit at any job. In pairs, act out how you would handle it, then talk through the debrief questions your teacher leads. There is no single right answer, only better and worse ways to respond.

The late teammate

Your group project is due tomorrow and one teammate has not done their part. They keep saying they will 'get to it.' What do you say to them, and what do you do so the work still gets done?

Unclear instructions

Your manager gives you a task but you honestly do not understand what they want. They look busy. Do you guess and hope, or ask? Show how you would ask without sounding lost or annoyed.

A disagreement

A coworker wants to do the task one way and you think your way is better. Neither of you is clearly right. How do you push for your idea while keeping the working relationship good?

A mistake to own

You made an error that cost the team time. Nobody has noticed yet, but they will. Do you hide it or own it? Show how you would tell your manager and what you would offer to do about it.

A rude customer

A customer is angry and taking it out on you, even though the problem is not your fault. Stay calm and professional. What do you say to de-escalate and still try to help them?

Being overwhelmed

You have been given more work than you can finish by the deadline. Saying nothing means you miss it. How do you tell your manager you are overloaded, and what do you suggest instead?

Name _____

Date _____

Rate yourself honestly on each skill below. Circle the number that fits you best right now: **1 = not yet, 2 = getting there, 3 = solid, 4 = strong.** This is not a grade. It is a starting point, so being honest helps you more than scoring high.

Skill	What a strong version looks like	My score (1 to 4)
Communication	I speak and write clearly, listen well, and adjust my tone for the situation.	1 2 3 4
Teamwork	I pull my weight, share credit, and help the group when someone is stuck.	1 2 3 4
Professionalism	I show up on time, dress and act the part, and follow through on what I say.	1 2 3 4
Time management	I plan ahead, meet deadlines, and do not leave everything to the last minute.	1 2 3 4
Problem-solving	I stay calm, break problems down, and try solutions before asking for rescue.	1 2 3 4

Set one goal

Pick your lowest score. Write one specific thing you will do this month to move it up a level.

The skill I want to grow _____

WHAT I WILL DO ABOUT IT
