MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

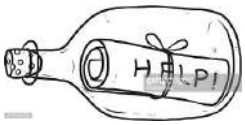
EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Learn new vocabulary for e mailing. Learn new techniques for internal communication and e mailing. Practice your reading comprehension. Practice expressions for e mailing. Practice writing an e mail. Practice

Activity One - Ask and answer

1. Do you ever feel that you are drowning in e mails?
2. Do you think that some e mails are too long and unclear and that people don't seem to get to the point?
3. Do you feel that people send messages without reading them through before they press send?
4. Do you feel that you get too many messages each day? Or each minute?
5. Do you consult your messages on your i phone?
6. Do you sometimes feel a bit obsessed about checking your e mail?
7. Do you feel that you have to respond straight away?
8. What do you think the acceptable response time is for an e mail?
9. Does your company give guidelines for response time or for e mail format?
10. Do you check e mails at the weekend?
11. Do you think that e mails from your company should be all in the same format?
12. What would it be like if there was no e mail and people had to send a message in a bottle???

Activity Two - ***Message in a bottle*** - pros and cons.



The message in a bottle concept is good in some ways. The message has to be short so that it can fit into the bottle, so the sender has to be careful about writing it in a concise way and making it clear. The message takes time to reach its destination, so there's no pressure on the person receiving the message to respond quickly. The bottle is watertight, so the message is safe from harm and won't be changed on its way.

However, the message in the bottle could get into the wrong hands. It could be opened by the wrong person. Furthermore the message in a bottle could take a really long time to arrive. And some messages after all, are urgent!

Activity Five - E mail **do's and don'ts**…

Here's some advice which could help you to improve your professional e mails.

Read the article and find answers to these questions:



1. Why is standardised formatting a good idea according to this advice?

2. What do people need in e mail communication?

3. What are the dangers of e mails?

4. What advice is given here about what to include in your e mail and how to format it?

5. Which advice do you particularly relate to?

6. Would you follow any of this advice?

Use Generic and Conceptual Formatting in your Communication.

Research shows that internal communication is an effective driver of communication with concise and generic formatting. It's easy to make quick comparisons. It's easy to quickly understand what's new. So if you always use the same kind of formatting and use **bold** or underlined or *italics* for a consistant and specific reason, then you will be more effective.

When we receive a message or some information we need answers quickly. We ask ourselves How urgent and important is this to me? What do I need to know and what do I need to do now? We need to be able to find that information quickly. Easily identifiable sections save time and improve accuracy. Conceptual layout helps people quickly understand how the information is relevant to them and what they need to do. Perceptual visual layout allows people to simplify and condense information so that it's easy to read and remember. Paying extra attention to semantics helps people to clarify and to avoid misunderstandings and mistakes.



Communication works both ways.

To be effective communication has to be clear and efficient both UPWARDS and DOWNWARDS.You need to make sure that people in your organisation know which channels for communication to use and who to contact about what.

Only send messages when you need to.

In most companies people receive hundreds of unimportant messages and often receive several messages about an issue, sometimes cancelling each other out or correcting previous messages so don't send information until it is complete - wait longer before you send it to avoid updates and confusion.

We all need time to read and to take stock.

Have one or two days a week which are NO MAIL DAYS.We need to think about WHEN to send a message. When is it most effective to send which type of message. Setting some rules in your team about a standard response time will help you to organise your work and avoid burn out. When people see that the mountain of unanswered e mails just keeps getting bigger and bigger it can be very stressful.

Make the subject line useful. A good subject line provides a useful summary of the email's content, preparing the reader quickly.
Save abbreviations like LOL (laugh out loud) or IDK (I don't know) for text messages among friends. Some may not understand your abbreviations. And while emoticons are fun, they just aren't professional and you don't know how the recipient will take them. Just like abbreviations, readers may not know what they mean. It's better to spell it out and write what you mean.

Keep your email concise, conversational, and focused. It is harder to read letters on a computer screen than on a sheet of paper, so keep emails short and to the point. While there is no ideal email length, keep sentences short, about 8-12 words and leave a space between paragraphs.

- In a work email, get straight to the point: "I'm hoping you will..." "I think we should...." etc right up front, making the case in the following lines. Many people only read the first few lines before deciding to respond or to save for later. Those line should give enough of the "meat" to allow an informed decision.

Be careful of who you copy on replies. If you reply to a message and then CC: a third-party that the original sender did not include, be certain in your mind that the original sender will not be upset about it.

Source - Business Technology Blog and Wiki How

Activity Four - Sting a song! Let's sing along with sting!

Just a castaway
An island lost at sea
Another lonely day
With no one here but me
More loneliness
Than any man could bear
Rescue me before I fall into despair

I'll send an SOS to the world
I hope that someone gets my
Message in a bottle

A year has passed since I wrote my note
But I should have known this right from the start
Only hope can keep me together
Love can mend your life
But love can break your heart

I'll send an SOS to the world
I hope that someone gets my
Message in a bottle
Walked out this morning
Don't believe what I saw

A hundred billion bottles
Washed up on the shore
Seems I'm not alone at being alone
A hundred billion castaways
Looking for a home

I'll send an SOS to the world
I hope that someone gets my
Message in a bottle

Sending out an SOS



Activity Five - Gap Fill - fill the gaps with the correct e mailing words. (Please prepare this activity before the lesson.)

Appreciate I really ……. the help. / time / assistance / support you've ……. me.

Attach – Please …….. the report attached/ As you can see from the……..

Best – ……. the best/ Best wishes/ …… my best wishes on to John/ …….. regards

Convenience – Please reply at your earliest ……../ We would like to apologise for any inconvenience ……../ Please let me know what dates are …….. for you

Concern - To whom it may ……/ I'm writing to you ……..

Forward – I look …….. to hearing from you soon/ Please …….. this to John

Hear – …….. to hear from you soon/ It was really nice to …….. from you

Inform – We …….. to inform you that.../ We …….. like to inform you that.../ If you need any further ……., please do not …….. to contact me

Matter - Thank you once more for your help in this ……..…../ It does not matter if you can't reply straight ……../ I would ……..…. your immediate attention on this matter.

Thanks/ Thank you – Thanks (again/ in advance)/ Thank you ……. your email/ quick reply/ ……. back to me so quickly/ …….. the time to see me yesterday.

Activity Six - E mail Message - Re-write the message in Sting's song in e mail format using the advice from above and some of the expressions from activity five.

