

Email Vocabulary – Lesson 1: Advanced Email Conventions

Level: B2 | Business English | Student Worksheet

Vocabulary

NOUNS

inference (noun)	A conclusion drawn from what is implied rather than explicitly stated.	<i>The inference from his email was that the deadline would be extended.</i>
ambiguity (noun)	Uncertainty caused by language that can be interpreted in more than one way.	<i>The ambiguity in the contract clause led to a disagreement.</i>
brevity (noun)	The quality of expressing something clearly in few words.	<i>In business email, brevity is valued — say what you need to and no more.</i>
conciseness (noun)	The quality of being brief and to the point without unnecessary detail.	<i>The report was praised for its conciseness.</i>
coherence (noun)	The quality of being logically consistent and clearly organised.	<i>The email lacked coherence — it jumped between topics without structure.</i>
nuance (noun)	A subtle difference in meaning or tone that changes how something is understood.	<i>There is an important nuance between "I will consider it" and "I will look into it".</i>
implication (noun)	Something suggested without being stated directly.	<i>The implication of her email was that she disagreed with the decision.</i>
confidentiality (noun)	The obligation to keep information private.	<i>This email is subject to strict confidentiality.</i>
precedent (noun)	A previous case used as a basis for future situations.	<i>Agreeing to this request could set a precedent that is difficult to manage later.</i>
liability (noun)	Legal responsibility, especially for a loss or debt.	<i>The disclaimer is intended to limit the company's liability.</i>
redress (noun)	Compensation or remedy given to correct a wrong or loss.	<i>The client is seeking redress for the damage caused by the delay.</i>
caveat (noun)	A warning or condition attached to an agreement or statement.	<i>I can approve the proposal, but with one caveat.</i>

VERBS

infer (verb)	To draw a conclusion from evidence or implication.	<i>From the tone of his email, I inferred that he was unhappy with the outcome.</i>
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convey (verb)	To communicate a message or feeling through careful choice of language.	<i>It is important to convey the urgency of this matter without causing alarm.</i>
stipulate (verb)	To state something clearly as a condition or requirement.	<i>The contract stipulates that payment must be received within 14 days.</i>
omit (verb)	To leave something out deliberately or accidentally.	<i>He omitted to mention that the deadline had already passed.</i>
reiterate (verb)	To say or do something again for emphasis or clarity.	<i>I would like to reiterate that all submissions must be received by Friday.</i>
substantiate (verb)	To provide evidence or facts to support a claim or statement.	<i>Could you substantiate your claim with the relevant documentation?</i>
mitigate (verb)	To reduce the severity or impact of something.	<i>Steps have been taken to mitigate the risk of further delays.</i>
defer (verb)	To postpone something to a later time, or to yield to another's judgement.	<i>We have decided to defer the decision until we have all the relevant information.</i>

Exercise 1: Sentence Transformation

Rewrite each sentence using the word or phrase given. Do not change the meaning.

1. The vague wording of the clause meant that both sides interpreted it differently.

Use: **AMBIGUITY**

2. I concluded from her email that she would not be attending, though she never said so directly.

Use: **INFERRED**

3. The contract clearly states that all disputes must be referred to arbitration.

Use: **STIPULATES**

4. He failed to mention the additional costs in his report.

Use: **OMITTED**

5. The purpose of the disclaimer is to reduce the company's legal responsibility.

Use: **MITIGATE**

6. We are postponing the final decision until all parties have reviewed the proposal.

Use: **DEFERRING**

Exercise 2: Error Identification

Each sentence may contain one error or no error. Underline the error and write the correction. If correct, write "Correct".

1. The implication of his email was that the project would be cancelled, though he never stated this explicitly.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

2. Could you please substantiate your allegation with the relevant documentation?

Error: _____ Correction: _____

3. I would like to reiterate that the deadline is non-flexible and cannot be extended.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

4. The ambiguity in the original wording has led to considerable confusion among the stakeholders.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

5. Steps have been taken to mitigate the consequence of the data breach.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

6. The contract stipulates that payment must be remitted within thirty calendar days of the invoice date.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

7. We have decided to delay the announcement until all board members have been consulted.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

8. The caveat attached to this offer is that all terms must be agreed before the end of the quarter.

Error: _____ Correction: _____

Exercise 3: Gap Fill

Complete each sentence with the correct word or phrase from the box.

Word Bank: brevity | reiterate | precedent | inferred | substantiate | liability | nuance | defer

1. The ___ of the CEO's email was striking — he communicated the entire restructuring plan in four sentences.

2. Please ___ to the client that no amendments can be made after the contract has been signed.

3. The ___ set by this decision will affect how similar cases are handled for years to come.

4. I ___ from the silence that followed that the board had not reached a consensus.

5. Could you ___ the figures in your report with the original source data?

6. The disclaimer limits the organisation's ___ in the event that the information provided proves to be inaccurate.

7. There is an important ___ between expressing concern and making a formal complaint.

8. We have agreed to ___ the matter until the legal team has reviewed the relevant documentation.

Exercise 4: Matching

Match each word or phrase (A) to its definition (B).

A – Word / Phrase	B – Definition
1. inference ____	4. The quality of being logically organised so that ideas connect naturally
2. caveat ____	6. The quality of expressing something clearly in as few words as possible
3. redress ____	1. A conclusion drawn from what is implied rather than explicitly stated
4. coherence ____	7. A previous case used as a basis or example for future situations
5. liability ____	2. A warning or condition attached to an agreement or statement
6. brevity ____	8. The obligation to keep information private and not share it without permission
7. precedent ____	3. Compensation or remedy given to correct a wrong or loss
8. confidentiality ____	5. Legal responsibility, especially for a loss or debt

Exercise 5: Word Sort

Place each word in the correct category.

Word Bank: conciseness | ambiguity | coherence | precedent | caveat | inference | confidentiality | nuance | redress | liability | brevity | implication

Meaning & interpretation	Qualities of good writing	Legal & formal concepts
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Exercise 6: Paragraph Gap Fill

Complete the email extract by writing the correct word or phrase in each gap.

Word Bank: confidentiality | omitted | ambiguity | liability | reiterate | precedent

1. All staff are reminded of their obligations regarding ____.
2. Several recent emails ____ key information that recipients needed.
3. Any ____ in your message may give rise to misunderstanding.
4. ...and could expose the organisation to ____.

5. We therefore wish to ____ that all external emails must be reviewed.
6. ...the board has confirmed that it sets a ____ for future communications.

TEACHER ANSWER KEY

Do Not Distribute to Students

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Exercise 1: Sentence Transformation

1. The vague wording of the clause meant that both sides interpreted it differently.

Answer: The ambiguity in the clause meant that both sides interpreted it differently.

2. I concluded from her email that she would not be attending, though she never said so directly.

Answer: I inferred from her email that she would not be attending.

3. The contract clearly states that all disputes must be referred to arbitration.

Answer: The contract stipulates that all disputes must be referred to arbitration.

4. He failed to mention the additional costs in his report.

Answer: He omitted the additional costs from his report.

5. The purpose of the disclaimer is to reduce the company's legal responsibility.

Answer: The disclaimer is intended to mitigate the company's liability.

6. We are postponing the final decision until all parties have reviewed the proposal.

Answer: We are deferring the final decision until all parties have reviewed the proposal.

Exercise 2: Error Identification

1. The implication of his email was that the project would be cancelled, though he never stated this explicitly.

Answer: Correct — no error.

2. Could you please substantiate your allegation with the relevant documentation?

Answer: Correct — no error.

3. I would like to reiterate that the deadline is non-flexible and cannot be extended.

Error: "non-flexible" → Correction: "non-negotiable"

Reason: Wrong word — "non-flexible" is not standard formal English; "non-negotiable" is correct for something that cannot be changed.

4. The ambiguity in the original wording has led to considerable confusion among the stakeholders.

Answer: Correct — no error.

5. Steps have been taken to mitigate the consequence of the data breach.

Error: "consequence" → Correction: "impact"

Reason: Wrong word — "mitigate" collocates with "impact" or "risk", not "consequence".

6. The contract stipulates that payment must be remitted within thirty calendar days of the invoice date.

Answer: Correct — no error.

7. We have decided to delay the announcement until all board members have been consulted.

Error: "delay" → Correction: "defer"

Reason: Wrong register — "delay" is too informal here; "defer" is the appropriate formal verb.

8. The caveat attached to this offer is that all terms must be agreed before the end of the quarter.

Answer: Correct — no error.

Exercise 3: Gap Fill

1. The ___ of the CEO's email was striking — he communicated the entire restructuring plan in four sentences.

Answer: brevity

2. Please ___ to the client that no amendments can be made after the contract has been signed.

Answer: reiterate

3. The ___ set by this decision will affect how similar cases are handled for years to come.

Answer: precedent

4. I ___ from the silence that followed that the board had not reached a consensus.

Answer: inferred

5. Could you ___ the figures in your report with the original source data?

Answer: substantiate

6. The disclaimer limits the organisation's ___ in the event that the information provided proves to be inaccurate.

Answer: liability

7. There is an important ___ between expressing concern and making a formal complaint.

Answer: nuance

8. We have agreed to ___ the matter until the legal team has reviewed the relevant documentation.

Answer: defer

Exercise 4: Matching

1. inference → 1

A conclusion drawn from what is implied rather than explicitly stated

2. caveat → 2

A warning or condition attached to an agreement or statement

3. redress → 3

Compensation or remedy given to correct a wrong or loss

4. coherence → 4

The quality of being logically organised so that ideas connect naturally

5. liability → 5

Legal responsibility, especially for a loss or debt

6. brevity → 6

The quality of expressing something clearly in as few words as possible

7. precedent → 7

A previous case used as a basis or example for future situations

8. confidentiality → 8

The obligation to keep information private and not share it without permission

Exercise 5: Word Sort

Meaning & interpretation:

inference, implication, nuance, ambiguity

Qualities of good writing:

brevity, conciseness, coherence

Legal & formal concepts:

liability, confidentiality, redress, precedent, caveat

Exercise 6: Paragraph Gap Fill

1. All staff are reminded of their obligations regarding ____.

Answer: confidentiality

2. Several recent emails ____ key information that recipients needed.

Answer: omitted

3. Any ____ in your message may give rise to misunderstanding.

Answer: ambiguity

4. ...and could expose the organisation to ____.

Answer: liability

5. We therefore wish to ____ that all external emails must be reviewed.

Answer: reiterate

6. ...the board has confirmed that it sets a ____ for future communications.

Answer: precedent