



Writing Smarter: Using AI to Master Email

We will cover

- ▶ Use AI to draft and edit emails more efficiently
- ▶ Adjust tone and clarity with AI suggestions
- ▶ Handle common email challenges using smart prompts

The challenge

- ▶ Impact of email on civil servants
- ▶ Main form of regular communication
- ▶ Tone misunderstandings cause friction and impact on follow-ups
- ▶ Drafting + redrafting = time lost

The AI email toolkit

- ▶ ChatGPT (OpenAI)
- ▶ Microsoft Copilot (Outlook, Word)
- ▶ Google Gemini (Gmail)
- ▶ Grammarly or Wordtune (tone and clarity tools)

The fundamentals remain the same

- ▶ BLUF
- ▶ Avoid jargon
- ▶ Consider length
- ▶ Clarity

AI is a tool to help, not a replacement

Ask yourself questions

- ▶ What does the intended audience want from me?
- ▶ What do I need from the intended audience?
- ▶ Have I reflected the input of others?
- ▶ Is this helping me to build relationships?
- ▶ Am I likely to receive input?
- ▶ Do I need to be challenging?
- ▶ What does this email say about me?

Prompts that work

- ▶ Drafting: 'Write a professional email explaining [topic] in a clear, concise tone.'
- ▶ Tightening: 'Rewrite this email to make it 30% shorter but keep the tone respectful.'
- ▶ Tone: 'Rewrite this to sound polite but firm, avoiding bureaucratic language.'
- ▶ Replies: 'Draft a calm, professional response to a complaint about [issue].'

Ask it questions

- ▶ Is the 'call to action' clear enough in this draft email to my line manager?
- ▶ Is the tone of the email professional enough?
- ▶ Have I included sufficient information to ensure that the recipient understands the issue?
- ▶ Are there are typographical errors?

You set the parameters

- ▶ Audience
- ▶ Tone / persona
- ▶ Content
- ▶ Task
- ▶ Format / length

Always

- ▶ Consider security
- ▶ Proofread
- ▶ Personalise
- ▶ Consider if it is needed – one-to-one?
- ▶ Does it sound like you? Phrases etc
- ▶ Provide the background / history / context
- ▶ Watch out for:
 - ▶ Optimism bias
 - ▶ M dash
 - ▶ Jargon
 - ▶ Too many description words

Tips for Real-World Use

- ▶ Always do a final review before sending – AI drafts, you decide
- ▶ Use AI as a thinking partner
- ▶ Add additional emphasis (**bold**, *italics* etc)
- ▶ Check the format – use shorter paragraphs?
- ▶ Reuse effective prompts for recurring email types – ensures your own consistency

Case study: The tricky reply

- ▶ Scenario: A stakeholder complains their funding request was ignored
- ▶ Prompt: 'Write a calm reply acknowledging frustration and explaining reviews are ongoing'
- ▶ AI Output: 'Thank you for your patience. Reviews are ongoing; we'll update shortly'

Key Takeaways

- ▶ Use AI for the first draft, not the final word
- ▶ Be specific in your prompts (tone, audience, purpose)
- ▶ Treat AI as a learning tool to improve your writing – a personal tutor
- ▶ Start small – try one AI-generated email tomorrow

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