

ESL Right Now

Formal, Informal and Neutral Language

Read through the three extracts and decide which is Formal, Neutral and Informal.
Give reasons and examples to support your answers.

[Extract 1](#)

Dear Mr Watkins

With reference to your letter on 15 March, unfortunately I am unable to attend the video conference meeting on Friday, due to a previous engagement. However, I would be very grateful if you could send me a copy of the agenda. Please find attached the marketing document.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

David Bell

[Extract 2](#)

Hi Simon,

Great news: got the contract! Let me know if you're interested in working with us on this one. I'll keep you posted over the next couple of days to check out your needs so I can tell HQ. Attached are the photographs of our recent holiday! What you think?

Best Wishes,
Paul

[Extract 3](#)

Dear Joe

I am writing to ask you about your opinion of the new Exec summary of the final report (Chapter 7). We will make an individual document for your internal use. Could you possibly send me the marketing strategy for the IMTA? I am sorry about the website; we are experiencing some technical difficulties.

If you have any questions, contact me on my office number.

Look forward to hearing from you

Denise

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Formal – Neutral – Informal reference guide

Complete the following gaps with the most appropriate word or expression from the either the formal, informal or neutral email on page 1. Use this as a reference guide for your future email writing.

	FORMAL	NEUTRAL	INFORMAL
First Contact	I am writing to enquire about	I am writing to ask you	I'd like to find out about
Referring to previous contact		Thank you for your letter on (+date)....	Got your message on (+ date)
Giving good news	I am delighted to inform you that	I have some good news about	
Giving bad news	I regret to inform you that		Sorry, but
Making an offer	If you wish, I would be happy to..	Would you like me to	Shall I....
Making a request	I would be grateful if you could		Please can you
Refusing an invitation		I will not be able to come because	I can't come because
Apologising	I would like to apologise for (+verb gerund),	I am sorry for / about (+verb gerund)	Sorry, but....
Closing remarks	If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me		Call / Mail me if you need any more help
Attachments		I am attaching	Attached is
Refer to the future	I look forward to hearing from you in the near future	Look forward to hearing from you	See you soon