

Analysis

3 Work with a partner. Put the emails in Exercise 2 on the scale below, according to their level of formality. Does the potential impact on business affect the level of formality used?

informal ←————→ neutral —————→ formal

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batch
dashboard
ERP
flaw
pallet
stain
teething problems
vial

Language focus

4 Find more informal and more formal expressions in the emails in Exercise 2 to complete the table. Compare your answers with a partner.

| | More informal | Neutral | More formal |
|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Asking for action | | Could you please act quickly to ...? | |
| Promising action | | We'll replace it ... We'll arrange to ... | |
| Reassuring | | I'm sure we can find a solution. | |
| Asking to be contacted/updated | | Please let me know what you plan to do. | |
| Apologizing | | I'm very sorry about ... My apologies for ... | |

Output

5 Work in groups of three. Decide who is A, B and C. Together, read the notes below and decide if the situation requires an informal, neutral or formal email. Then, write an email to your supplier to explain the quality problem and request action. Send your emails: A to B, B to C and C to A. Write an appropriate reply to the email you receive.

A
We can't use the latest batch of vials (10,000) delivered last week as some of them are slightly bigger than normal and get stuck in the filling machine. We have enough stock for this week but need replacements by next Monday.
Contact: George Ramos

B
The forklift truck we bought from a new supplier last month has broken down again - this is the third time in the last two weeks. The technician sent to repair it has changed several parts but can't find the real cause. We need a vehicle we can rely on!
Contact: Ciara Leone

C
Our cleaning company has forgotten to put bin liners in the recycling bins. It's not a major issue but we need to send them a quick reminder to do it before the weekend.
Contact: Amanda Simmons

Internet research

Search for the keywords *email phrase bank* to find some more key expressions you can use in emails. Choose the five most useful and report back to the class.

