Learning objectives in this lesson

Discussing the types of business writing students regularly send and receive at work. Developing the ability to understand the relationship between the sender and receiver. Raising awareness of formality and encouraging students to recognize commonly used formal and informal language. By the end of the lesson, students will understand the differences between formal and informal text types and they will be able to write an email, memo, or letter using appropriate language.

1 Ask students to read the three texts (a, b, and c) quickly and answer the questions. Avoid discussion of any unknown words. The focus is on general understanding at this stage.

> **Answers**
> **1** memo = c, email = a, letter = b
> **2** a = probably a colleague to a colleague
> b = supplier to a client / customer
> c = boss to all the staff

2 Ask students to work in pairs and discuss the questions. During class feedback you could extend the discussion by asking what they would like to be able write in the future. This is a good opportunity to find out about the current and future writing needs of your students.

3 Ask students to read the texts in more detail. This is a good stage to deal with any unknown vocabulary. Students can then work in pairs and match the texts to the sentences. During class feedback, ask students to give reasons for their choices.

> **Answers**
> **1** a (this is obviously true), c (is also presumably true – we would assume the boss knows each member of staff)
> **2** c (it was sent to *All Staff*)
> **3** b (It's the first time Nile has written.)
> **4** b
> **5** a and b (Note that c is formal but direct and not very polite and although b is more formal, it is also friendly.)
> **6** c (use of imperatives, e.g. *Remember …, Please attend …*)
> **7** a and b
> **8** c
> **9** b

4 Ask students to work in pairs and match 1–7 to a–g. Most of the words and phrases are from texts a, b, and c, so students may find it helpful to refer back to the texts and find these words and phrases being used in context.

> **Answers**
> **1** f **2** c **3** g **4** e **5** a **6** b **7** d

Extension

Ask students if they know any more pairs of formal and informal words or phrases. These can be from written or spoken texts. For example: *ask for / request, tell / inform, give / provide*, etc.

5 Ask students to read the rules for writing a memo and to choose the correct answers. If they are unfamiliar with memos then they can refer back to text b.

> **Answers**
> **1** beginning   **4** Do
> **2** Do   **5** direct and polite
> **3** one subject

6 Ask students to work in pairs. They can write just one set of rules for either emails or letters, but with stronger groups and if you have time they can write both. Monitor their writing and make suggestions where necessary. When they are ready, students should compare their rules or even present them to the whole class. Allow time for discussion to see if everyone agrees with each other. Agree on a final list of rules for each type of writing by the end of the lesson.

> **Possible answers**
> Guidelines for writing informal emails.
> • Begin with *Dear …, Hi …,* or nothing.
> • Use short words and sentences.
> • You can miss out words such *I or I'm.*
> • You can use contracted forms and exclamation marks.
> • End with expressions like *All the best, Best wishes, Bye for now.*
>
> Guidelines for writing formal letters.
> • Always start your letter *Dear …*
> • Write full and complete sentences.
> • Use more formal words and phrases (e.g. *would like* is better than *want*).
> • Don't use contracted forms or exclamation marks.
> • End with *Yours sincerely.* If you don't know the name of the receiver start with *Dear Sir / Madam* and end with *Yours faithfully.*

7 Students can write a text on their own or with a partner. Encourage students to use language presented in this lesson where appropriate. For sample answers, refer back to the texts in **1**.

Evaluation tips

Afterwards, students can swap their writing with a partner. They can then evaluate the writing and decide if the writer has followed the rules generated in **6**.