

Writing file 5

Writing instructions

1 Work with a partner and discuss the following questions.

- 1 What activities might you give or receive instructions for at work (e.g. how to use the printer)?
- 2 Do you ever receive instructions in writing (e.g. in an email)?
- 3 Are instructions always easy to write or follow? Why? / Why not?

2 Read these instructions quickly. What are the instructions for? Put the instructions in the correct order (1–9).

- a When the display says 'success', hang up the phone. ____
- b Place the document you want to send into the tray on top of the machine. ____
- c Dial the phone number of the person who you are sending the fax to. ____
- d Have the number of the person the fax will be sent to ready. ____
- e Wait for the other machine to answer. ____
- f Once the whole paper has gone through, check the fax display. ____
- g Press 'start' on your machine and the fax should start to move from the tray. ____
- h Check the fax machine is switched on. ____
- i Fax machines usually require the document to be face down so check your machine requires this method. ____

3 Written instructions need to use clear and simple language. Work in pairs. Using the instructions in **2** to help you, rewrite the instructions in the following email so that they use clear and simple language.

Hi Jack

You asked about adding more people to a list of invitees for a regular meeting. Here's how to do that.

The first thing you need to do is open your emails. Then you should click on 'My calendar'. The next thing you need to do is click on the meeting that you want to change. It's then a good idea to check all the meeting details are correct by clicking on 'View details'. Finally write a message in the message box if you want to, then add the new people and click 'send' to send them an invitation.

Hope that's all clear.

Best wishes

Megan

4 Compare the language you used to rewrite the instructions with the language in the original email? What are the differences?

5 Think of an activity you might need to describe at work, or choose an activity from 1–3. Write simple instructions, but don't say what the activity is.

- 1 making a mobile phone call
- 2 using an instant messenger service (IMS)
- 3 using an ATM / cash machine

6 Exchange instructions with a partner. Read your partner's instructions and try to guess the activity.