



How can you plan effective e-mails and letters?



Introduction

Effective correspondence writing is not just about keeping your sentences short and using correct punctuation. It is about having a clear purpose for writing and then choosing and organizing your information with the reader in mind.

Good planning is essential to effective writing. The type of document you are writing will help you determine its purpose and the best way to start it. To select and organize the information you will include in your document, a useful approach is to imagine having a **dialogue with the reader**. The dialogue approach uses a question-and-answer format that will help you anticipate and meet your reader's needs.

Your assignment for this module will take you through the process of planning a document and then writing a first draft. You will complete a Reader Analysis and a Dialogue with the Reader Worksheet based on whether you are planning to write a responsive or an initiative document. As you work through this module, you will develop the components of your Dialogue Worksheet. You will then turn the components of your dialogue into a written document.

QUOTE



"The main message has to be clear at the beginning."

—Country Director



Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to

- Distinguish between two types of correspondence: responsive and initiative.
- Assess a document's purpose, the reader's identity and needs, the main question that the correspondence will answer, and the main message.
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- Plan a responsive and an initiative document by completing a Dialogue with the Reader Worksheet.
- Draft an e-mail, a letter, or a short document based on the information developed in the Dialogue with the Reader Worksheet.



Responsive and Initiative Correspondence

As you saw in Module 1, there are differences between e-mails and letters, including the typical reader, the format, and the level of formality. In addition, there are also differences *within* each type of correspondence. One major difference has to do with whether the correspondence is responsive or initiative. In fact, one of the writer's first tasks is to determine whether a particular e-mail or letter responds to a request from the reader or initiates a discussion.

In **responsive** correspondence, you are writing in response to a previous request. An example of a responsive document is when you reply to an e-mail you received. You let the reader know right away that you are responding to the reader's previous request.

In **initiative** correspondence, you are raising a new topic or a new question — one that the reader and you have not previously communicated about. You are initiating the topic or question. The reader may or may not be expecting this document from you. Whether the document is expected or not, you must introduce it in a way that clearly indicates that it is an initiative document.



Comparing Responsive and Initiative Correspondence

The activity below illustrates the difference between the two types of correspondence. For this activity, you will assemble a table that contains distinguishing features of both responsive and initiative documents. Use your mouse to drag the features into the proper category, either responsive or initiative.

Writer is initiating the dialogue.	May be written on behalf of someone else (supervisor or colleague)—if the reader has asked that person for something.	Writer may be reacting to a situation, but there has been no specific request from the reader.
Reader has started the dialogue; writer is responding.	May be written on behalf of someone else (typically a supervisor), but the reader is not expecting it.	Reader has asked writer to do something; reader is expecting the document as a response.
Document must begin with a reminder to the reader.	Document should usually begin with a bit of context.	Reader is not expecting the document.
Writer is writing in response to a specific request from the reader.		

Responsive

Initiative



Opening Responsive Correspondence

Knowing whether you are writing a responsive or initiative document will determine how you begin. In particular, a responsive document should begin with a responsive reminder — a statement that acknowledges the original request.

This reminder helps you capture interest and prepare the reader for your message. Consider these typical responsive reminders:

- As you requested, I have [investigated the printers].
- I'm writing in reply to your memo of ...
- Thank you for your letter of February 15 ...

Note: In an e-mail reply message, it is not always necessary to add a responsive reminder. Because the subject line contains the abbreviation "Re:," it is clear that the document is a responsive e-mail.



Identifying Responsive Reminders

In the activity below you will see a list of various openings for correspondence documents. Select the ones that belong to responsive documents.

As you asked, I am sending ...	Attached is the ABC I promised to send you.	I'm just writing to let you know that ...
There are some items of importance that I would like to take up with you ...	I am writing to request your assistance with ...	As I had anticipated, it seems that ...
I am writing in response to your request that ...	As you requested, I have ...	As I promised on the phone ...
Thank you for your suggestion that we ...	Please be informed that as of today ...	I have reviewed your concerns about ... in your e-mail of [date].
Enclosed are the XYZs you requested.	Ms. X asked me to respond to your question about ...	We appreciate your feedback on ABC and want to address some of your comments.
	As we discussed, ...	

Responsive Openings

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Opening Initiative Correspondence

As we have seen, you write an initiative document when the reader has not requested it from you. The reader is likely not even expecting to hear from you. This is what distinguishes the opening for initiative correspondence from the opening for responsive correspondence. While responsive correspondence must begin with a responsive reminder, initiative correspondence often begins with a brief statement of the context.

Like the responsive opening, an initiative document still must answer the reader's first question: "What is this document about?"

Whether the purpose is explicitly stated or not, the reader needs to understand it readily when reading the opening of the document.

Here are some examples of initiative openings:

- The fire department will be conducting tests in several of our buildings this week. This e-mail is to inform you of procedures to follow if you are affected by any of these tests. ...
- Given the department's requirements for data published on the web, I would like to recommend that our data publishing date be changed from the beginning to the end of every month. ...
- I am writing to request leave for the period July 1 to July 31 of this year. ...



Identifying Responsive and Initiative Documents

Click to open each of the sample responsive and initiative documents below. Read each document and determine whether it is responsive or initiative. Using the marker tool provided, highlight the text that lets you know whether the document indicates a responsive or initiative purpose.

SharePoint	Printer	Dow Jones (revised)	XYZ Letter
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Closing Responsive and Initiative Documents

The purpose of a closing is to bring your document to an appropriate conclusion. You do not want your reader to wonder what to do next or end on a note of uncertainty. In a closing, you might suggest next steps, summarize agreements, restate the main message, thank the reader, offer further help, or suggest action.

Whether your document is responsive or initiative, how you close depends on your purpose. If there is an action that you are requesting the reader to take, you must say so. Similarly, if there is a deadline, you must include it in the closing.

Closings may also depend upon the tone of the document or the relationship you have with your readers. For example, if you are writing a very informal e-mail to someone you work with all the time, you may not need to write a closing.

Here are some examples of effective closings:

- I have additional information for anyone who is interested.
- Send your questions to [X] through [A].
- I'd be happy to move forward with purchasing the Tektronix if you agree.
- I will let you know if any problems arise from these new procedures. In the meantime, you might want to update Amsale Belaye on them.



Identifying Closings

Read the list of statements below. Select the ones that are most likely to be used as closing statements of documents.

I hope you will not be surprised by my recommendations to extend the deadline ...	So that we may close our books on this matter, please let us hear from you by [X date].	If you concur, I would appreciate your expediting the purchase by ...
I will be away next week. If you have other questions, please contact ABC at ...	Again, thank you for your suggestions. I am looking forward to working with you on this project.	In addition to the issues already stated, you might also want to consider ...
Please update ABC on what we have discussed. OR I will update ABC on what we have discussed.	Enclosed you will find the statement of purchase that you requested.	If you could let me know what you think by [X date], I would be grateful.
I hope I have answered your questions. If not, please call me at ...	If I do not hear otherwise from you by [X date], I will proceed as outlined above.	We believe that these three clear benefits make XYZ the right choice. We hope you will agree.
I will let you know if any problems arise from these new procedures.	Send your questions to [X] through [A].	Thank you for your e-mail of August 10 in which you stated ...
I have additional information for anyone who is interested.		There are many issues of importance for you to consider.

Closing Statements

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Openings and Closings: Reflective Activity

Review your own correspondence for examples of documents. Can you find any other examples of openings and closings? If so, take a moment to jot them down.

REFLECTION



Reflection 3: Openings and Closings



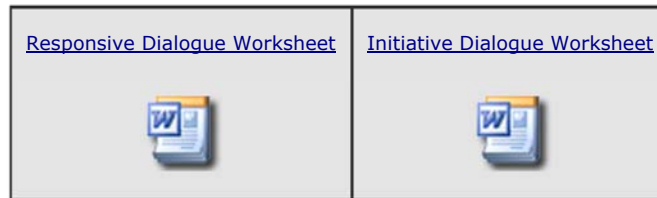
Planning Responsive and Initiative Correspondence

Once you have determined whether you are going to write a responsive or an initiative document, the next step is to create a letter or e-mail that will fulfill your purpose and answer your reader's questions. How? You will begin by planning — imagining the components of your document as questions and answers in an imagined face-to-face dialogue with the reader.

Only after this planning process should you begin to draft and revise your document.

The next section of this module takes you through the planning process in detail. You will use a planning document — the Dialogue with the Reader Worksheet — where you fill in the details of your imagined dialogue. Filling in this planning worksheet helps you to formalize your thinking and ensures that all the pertinent details for your correspondence are captured before you start drafting. This makes the drafting process easier and more effective.

Open the blank Dialogue Worksheets below; you should refer to these as you work through the next few activities. The next section of the module outlines the content you will fill in for Section 1, at the top of the worksheets. Read through this section of the worksheets, and then review the information on the writer’s purpose and the reader on the following pages. You will be returning to the same worksheets later in the module and using them with your assignment.



The Writer’s Purpose

The first step in planning an effective document is to identify your purpose for writing. Your purpose explains why you are writing the document. It also addresses the first questions readers will ask: “What is this document about? Do I need to read it? Must I read it now, or can it wait until later?”

In your document, you may state the purpose directly, or you may find that the purpose is already clearly conveyed in other parts of the document (for example, in the subject line of an e-mail or in the main message of a short document). Whether you state it or imply it, the purpose must be clear to the reader within the first few moments of reading.

In your Dialogue Worksheet, you should state your purpose as “to” plus a verb. Your purpose should explain what you want to accomplish by writing this piece of correspondence.

Here are some examples, which all use the “to + verb” format:

- **To request** leave in January
- **To inform** department members of recent changes to the procedure for processing travel reimbursements
- **To schedule** a meeting with all staff members next week
- **To update** the department on the status of the procurement department’s budget situation

The Reader

When planning your correspondence as a dialogue with the reader, you should try to anticipate your reader’s needs or questions. By doing this, you are more likely to provide the information that your reader needs. You will also be more likely to organize that information into a sequence that makes sense to the reader.

You have already considered the reader’s first question: “What is this document about?” This question usually results in an answer that tells the reader whether the document is responsive or initiative.


One way to discover your reader’s needs is to conduct a **Reader Analysis** by considering factors such as your reader’s background knowledge, available time, and likely reaction to the topic discussed in your document.

Conducting a reader analysis helps you to anticipate your reader’s needs as you plan your correspondence. This is a key part of the planning process for all writing.

Conduct a Reader Analysis

Consider the following examples, which illustrate the process of reader analysis. As you answer the questions below, you should notice how thinking about the reader can help you to plan a document.

When you are planning a document, you can answer these questions in the Reader Analysis to clarify what you know about your reader. You can then use the information from this process to fill in the relevant details about your reader in your Dialogue Worksheet.

First, choose a document: 



The Reader’s Main Question

Up to this point, you have considered your purpose in writing a document and you have analyzed your reader. Now it is time to think about expanding your dialogue with the reader in order to determine your main message and the content of your correspondence.

As you have already learned, for both responsive and initiative documents, your reader’s first question will be “What is this about?” In other words, “What are you recommending, requesting, or informing me of?” In initiative documents, this is the reader’s main question.

In responsive documents, you will answer this first question (“What is this about?”) with a responsive reminder, which refers to the reader’s original request and makes clear the purpose of your document. But then the reader has another question: “What is your response to my original request?” This is the reader’s main question for a responsive document.

Anticipating the reader’s main question is crucial to setting the right direction for your document. You must anticipate this question and answer it appropriately, so that the reader can easily understand what you want.



The Main Message

Once you are clear about your purpose and have anticipated the reader’s main question, the next step in the dialogue is to formulate a clear answer to that main question. This answer is known as **the main message**, and it is crucial to the meaning of any document.

Your main message must be clearly stated near the beginning of the document. In e-mails, letters, and short documents, this usually means within the first paragraph or at least at the beginning of the second.

- **In responsive documents**, your main message quickly follows your responsive reminder. In effect, you are telling your reader that you have responded to their request (purpose) and now you are providing an answer (main message).
- **In initiative documents**, your main message is presented first or after a brief statement of context.

By providing the main message up front, you provide a service for busy readers by providing an overview at the beginning of the document that tells them what they need to know. After stating the main message, the dialogue then goes on to anticipate and answer all of the reader’s likely next questions. You will have a chance to practice anticipating and answering your reader’s questions later on in the module.



Recognizing the Main Message

When planning a document, you must establish a clear relationship between your purpose, the reader’s main question, and the main message. These three elements are distinct from each other, but they must be linked together to provide coherence.

The Main Message in the Dialogue with the Reader

1. Focus My Thoughts		
Purpose (Why am I writing?)	To [recommend, request, inform, or other verb]...	
	Example 1 To recommend changes to two measures for assessing project effectiveness...	Example 2 To inform you of ACS staffing requirements in the unit for the coming year...
2. Plan the Document		

Reader's Main Question What is this about?	Your Answer (This sentence summarizes what you are recommending, requesting, or informing the reader of; it should reflect the purpose, but not necessarily in the same words. In a responsive document, it responds to the reader's original request.)	
(Example 1: What changes are you recommending?)	Example 1 Main Message: I recommend that we change the first two measures so that they reflect work completed instead of work that is still in progress.	
(Example 2: What staffing requirements are you informing me of?)		Example 2 Main Message: The overall number of ACS staff will remain the same; however, since I am retiring in December, the unit will need to find a new office manager.



Identifying the Main Message

In this activity, you will see how a main message makes its way from a dialogue with the reader to a finished document. When you apply this practice to your own writing, keep the following principles about the main message in mind:

- It must reflect the writer's purpose.
- It must answer the reader's main question.
- It should provoke further questions from the reader.
- It must be a complete sentence — or perhaps two sentences.

Read each of the following extracts. Only the first part of the document appears, but it should be enough for you to identify the main message from a list of choices.

<u>Sample 1: Status of Possible Employment</u>	<u>Sample 2: Request for Date Change</u>	<u>Sample 3: Farewell Party</u>
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Effective Writing and Correspondence

Now, let's combine what you know about responsive and initiative documents with what you know about good writing in general. Do you remember those [core assumptions about effective writing from Module 1](#)? Both responsive and initiative documents should exhibit the general characteristics of a good e-mail or letter:

Good organization

- The purpose must be clear.
- The main message must be stated explicitly.
- Information must be arranged logically.

Reader focus

- The subject line (if any) should be informative.
- Responsive documents must have a responsive reminder.




Good mechanics

- Mechanics (spelling, grammar, and punctuation) must be correct.
- Visual elements (such as bullets and headings) must emphasize or make obvious the logical structure of a document.



Analyzing Responsive and Initiative Documents

You have already seen the documents that you are going to review for this activity. However, this time you are going to analyze them more critically. For each document, use the checklist provided below to help with your analysis.

	<u>SharePoint</u> 	<u>Printer</u> 	<u>Dow Jones (revised)</u> 
Question			
Reader focus			
Does the document have an informative subject line (if used)?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes, the subject line indicates that the document includes information on using SharePoint and that this will cover a specific use.</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes, the subject line includes the key elements of evaluating printers and making a recommendation.</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes. However, the first paragraph is not parallel with the subject line. The two main ideas in the text (problems and resolution) are presented in reverse order from the subject line.</i>
If responsive, does it have a responsive reminder?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Not a responsive document</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes: "As you requested ..."</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Not a responsive document</i>
Good organization			
Is the purpose clear?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes, the purpose is stated in the first paragraph: "... the purpose of this document is to explain ..."</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Although the purpose is not explicitly stated in this e-mail, it is implied by the subject line.</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes, the writer states the purpose: "This is to advise you ..."</i>
Is the main message explicitly stated?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes, the main message is stated right after the purpose statement: "SharePoint offers several benefits and requires three easy steps to use."</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes, the main message is stated in the first sentence of the second paragraph: "I recommend that we purchase the Tektronix Phaser 780..."</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes. Note: In this case, the purpose statement is embedded in the main message: "This is to advise you of how these problems are being resolved..."</i>
Is the information logically arranged?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes, sections and paragraphs answer specific questions readers may have in a logical sequence, and are clearly marked by headings and topic sentences.</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes, paragraphs are clearly marked and follow a logical sequence.</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes, apart from the reversal of information from the subject line to the first paragraph, the information does flow logically from the main message.</i>
Good mechanics			
Is the document visually appealing and appropriate?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes, the document uses two levels of headings to clearly show readers where to find the answers to their questions.</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes, the writer uses a table to make the comparison of printers more visually apparent.</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes, the writer uses short paragraphs and bulleted lists to make information visually distinctive.</i>
Are the mechanics correct (spelling, grammar, and punctuation)?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes.</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes.</i>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>Yes.</i>



Extending the Dialogue

The dialogue with the reader does not work to identify the main message only; you can also use it to plan your entire document. You will find that a good main message directs the next questions in the dialogue. For example, suppose you are writing an e-mail message in response to a request about your training needs for the next year. If your main message is "I need training in French and Excel over the next year," you can expect your reader to want to know more about why you have chosen these two subjects. Your answers to these next questions, in turn, will form the body of your message. Have a look at how these questions would appear in a dialogue with the reader.

The Dialogue with Further Questions

1. Focus My Thoughts		
Purpose (Why am I writing?)	To [recommend, request, inform, or other verb]...	
	Training Needs (responsive) To respond to the reader's original request (i.e., to outline what training you need over the next year)	E-mail Overload Problems (initiative) To advise staff to archive e-mail messages to avoid e-mail overload problems
2. Plan the Document		
Reader's Main Question What is this about?	Your Answer (This sentence summarizes what you are recommending, requesting, or informing the reader of; it should reflect the purpose, but not necessarily in the same words. In a responsive document, it responds to the reader's original request.)	
Training Needs: What is your response to my original request? (What training do you need over the next year?) (responsive)	Training Needs Main Message: I need training in French and Excel over the next year.	
Email Overload: What is this about? (What are you recommending, requesting, or informing me of?) (initiative)		Email Overload Main Message: E-mail overload is creating server problems in the Bank Group, so we are asking staff to archive older messages.
Reader's Next Questions	Answers	Answers
Training Needs 1. Why do you need training in French? 2. Why do you need training in Excel? (The reader will likely have other questions as well. But these are the two that arise directly from the main message.)	(Answers here respond to the next questions and develop the next level of detail in your document.)	
E-mail Overload 1. What is the nature of the server problems? 2. How do I archive older messages?		



Alignment in a Dialogue

Your main message and the next questions that you anticipate of your reader should generally follow the same pattern. This creates a logic that makes your message easier to follow. Such a pattern is known as alignment.

As in the examples you encountered on the previous screen, a strong main message should prompt obvious subsequent questions. These questions should be aligned with the main message. For example, if the main message is "I need training in French and Excel," then your subsequent questions should come in the order of French first and Excel second. The paragraphs of your e-mail would likewise follow this same order.

Using alignment in this way meets your readers' expectations and is an excellent organizing strategy.



Analyze a Dialogue with the Reader

Consider the scenarios about the security issue and the recommendation for written communication guidelines that you looked at earlier. Suppose that it was your responsibility to draft some correspondence related to both scenarios. (One document is a response to a request; the other is written on your own initiative.) How do you think a completed dialogue worksheet would look in each case?

Click on the links below to open the examples.

[Responsive example](#)

[Initiative example](#)



Critique Reader Dialogues

Click to open the sample dialogue worksheets below. For each one, read through the worksheet and assess its effectiveness. Look for a clear purpose, an explicit main message, logical next questions, and an appropriate closing.

[Sample 1:
Employment Inquiry](#)

[Sample 2:
Printer Evaluation](#)



Practice with the Process

Now it's time for you to practice the planning process, from the first rough idea, through the dialogue with the reader, and finally to drafting an e-mail message.

Scenario: The administrative officer has asked you to send her an e-mail outlining the training you think you need in the next fiscal year. As you walk to work, you find yourself imagining a conversation with the administrative officer about your training needs — perhaps when you meet her in the elevator.

Before thinking about the writing process, imagine the spoken conversation you might have. Your side of the conversation is provided: predict the questions the administrative officer will ask.

You say:	<i>I wanted to talk to you about something.</i>
Administrator's first question:	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"><input type="text"/></div> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 5px;"><input type="button" value="Submit"/></div> <p>What did you want to talk to me about?</p>
Your response:	<i>It's about the memo you sent, concerning training needs for the upcoming year.</i>
Administrator's main question:	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"><input type="text"/></div> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 5px;"><input type="button" value="Submit"/></div> <p>What are your training needs for the coming year?</p>

Your response: (Main Message)	<i>I need training in French and in Excel.</i>
Administrator's next question:	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <input type="text"/> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <input type="button" value="Submit"/> </div> <p>Why French?</p>
Your response:	<i>It has become more important in our unit. I speak it, but I don't write very well. We are working more and more with counterparts who speak only French. Even more important, some of our meetings are being conducted in French, and my supervisor would like me to be able to take minutes.</i>
Administrator's next question:	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <input type="text"/> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <input type="button" value="Submit"/> </div> <p>And Excel?</p>
Your response:	<i>We're using Excel to keep track of the details of Project Y. There are many tricks in Excel that I don't know, so I am not as efficient at keeping my part up-to-date as I could be. We have agreed that Excel is the best program for the task.</i>
Administrator's response:	Thanks for telling me all this! I'll get back to you later with more questions about costs and so on.



Dialogue with the Reader: A Planning Document

With the imagined conversation from the previous screen fresh in your mind, complete a Dialogue with the Reader Worksheet to plan an e-mail that would be appropriate in this situation. Remember, it will be a responsive e-mail, since the administrative officer began the conversation by asking you to outline your training needs.

Complete the Dialogue with the Reader Worksheet now.

Dialogue with the Reader

1. Focus my thoughts	
Purpose (Why am I writing?)	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <input type="text"/> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <input type="button" value="Submit"/> </div> <p>To respond to the reader's original request</p>
Reader	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <input type="text"/> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <input type="button" value="Submit"/> </div> <p>Administrative officer</p>
Reader's Original Request	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <input type="text"/> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <input type="button" value="Submit"/> </div> <p>What are your training needs for the upcoming fiscal year?</p>
2. Plan the Document	
Reader's Questions	My Answers
What is this about?	

	<div style="text-align: right;"> <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Submit"/> </div> <p>(Responsive reminder statement: This sentence reminds the reader of the original request.) [Examples: You asked me to ... or As we discussed ...] You asked me to outline my training needs for the upcoming fiscal year.</p>
What is your response [to my original request]?	<div style="text-align: right;"> <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Submit"/> </div> <p>(Main message: This sentence responds to the reader's original request.) I need training in French language and Excel.</p>
Reader's next questions: <i>(Fill in questions arising from main message.)</i>	
1. Why do you need French language training?	<div style="text-align: right;"> <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Submit"/> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in the amount of work in the unit with people who speak only French. • I need to take minutes at some of our meetings, which are held only in French (supervisor's request). • I want to improve written skills (spoken French is better).
2. Why do you need Excel training?	<div style="text-align: right;"> <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Submit"/> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For record-keeping in Project Y. • I need to learn the tricks to using the program so I can update my records more efficiently • Team agrees it is the best program for the task.
Closing Follow-up action required? Need any other closing?	<div style="text-align: right;"> <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Submit"/> </div> <p>Let me know if you have questions.</p>



From Planning to Drafting: Write the E-mail Message

Now review the completed dialogue worksheet and write a draft based on it. Click the link below to begin.

[Planning for E-mail:
Dialogue Worksheet](#)



Compare your draft with the suggested response. Your e-mail will not be identical, of course, but it should cover the same main points.

[Planning for E-mail:](#)
[Suggested Response](#)



Assignment 2: Planned and Drafted Documents

Your assignment will consist of **two** planned and drafted documents. You will submit four files in total to your tutor for review: both planning documents and both final correspondence documents.

Choose two documents from your job that you are planning to write. At least one of the two documents should be an e-mail message; the other can be an e-mail message or a short document. You will need to follow the conventions for each of these types of documents in your assignment.

One of the documents that you plan and draft will be a *responsive* e-mail message; the other will be an *initiative* document. (Decide for yourself whether this will be a short document or an e-mail.) For each document, you should do the following:

- Complete a [Reader Analysis Form](#). This will help you to reflect on your reader's needs and to prepare the Dialogue with the Reader Worksheet. Do not submit the reader analysis to your tutor; it is just a tool for you to use in planning.
- Complete a Dialogue with the Reader Worksheet. Each worksheet should include at least two additional reader questions (shown on the worksheet as "Reader's Next Questions") after the main message.
 - [Responsive Worksheet](#)
 - [Initiative Worksheet](#)
- Write the document based on your plan in the dialogue worksheet.
- Note: Your e-mail or short document should be at least three paragraphs long.

When you have completed your planning and drafting for both documents, upload the following four Word files to the Assignment 2 section in [Moodle](#):

- Responsive Worksheet
- Responsive E-mail
- Initiative Worksheet
- Initiative Document (either an e-mail or a short document)

Your tutor will provide feedback on the overall effectiveness of your planning worksheets and your documents. You may be asked to revise and resubmit any part of the assignment based on this feedback.



Resources and Documents

Working Documents

- [Reflection 3: Openings and Closings](#)
- [Dialogue with the Reader Worksheet: Initiative](#)

- [Dialogue with the Reader Worksheet: Responsive](#)
- [Reader Analysis Form](#)



Summary

Keeping in mind our core assumptions about effective writing — good organization, reader focus, good mechanics — you should be able to plan and draft a well-written letter, e-mail, or short document based on a dialogue with your reader.

The first step of planning is to determine whether you are writing a responsive or an initiative document. That is, did the reader ask for something (responsive), or are you starting the dialogue (initiative)?

From there, you can continue planning with a reader analysis and then a dialogue with your reader. Using the appropriate Dialogue Worksheet, you will do the following:

- Determine your purpose.
- Consider the reader's main question.
- Answer the main question in your main message.
- Anticipate the next questions that your reader will have after reading the main message, and sketch out your answers to those questions.
- Plan how to close your e-mail, letter, or short document.

As you draft your document, work from the plan you created in your Dialogue Worksheet. Pay attention to the particular standards for e-mails or letters, especially the format and the opening and closing of your document. Be sure to position your main message near the beginning of your document — in the first paragraph or at the beginning of the second.

