

Blog Notes ESL Adults

Level: B2 (Upper Intermediate)



3 Business English Email Mistakes to Avoid

Professional emails matter. Whether you're speaking to clients, colleagues, or employers, small mistakes in English can have a big impact. Here are three of the most common email mistakes non-native speakers make – and how to avoid them.



1. Using an Overly Casual Tone

Business emails should be clear, polite, and professional. Phrases like:

- ✗ “Hey there”
- ✗ “What’s up?”
- ✗ “Cheers, mate”

...can feel too informal or inappropriate for many professional settings.

✅ Try instead:

- Dear Mr Smith / Hi Sarah
- Kind regards, Best regards, or Sincerely

💡 Tip: If you're not sure how formal to be, always start with a more formal tone. You can adjust later if needed.

Source – *British Council*

2. Translating Directly from Your First Language

Translating word-for-word often leads to awkward or incorrect English. For example:

❌ "I wait for your answer"

❌ "I make a research"

✅ Try instead:

- I look forward to your reply.
- I did some research

💡 Tip: Use real English business phrases – don't rely only on translation tools.

Source – *Cambridge English*

3. Not Checking Grammar and Spelling

Mistakes in grammar, spelling, or punctuation can affect how professional you sound. For example:

❌ "I am interesting in your offer" - (should be: interested)

✅ What you can do:

- Use free tools like Grammarly or Microsoft Editor
- Read your email out loud before sending
- Double-check names, attachments, and details

💡 Tip: Keep a checklist of your most common mistakes and review it before you send emails.

Source – *Grammarly Blog*

Final Thoughts

Being professional in English doesn't mean being perfect – but it does mean being clear, polite, and careful. Avoiding these three mistakes will help you sound more confident and competent in every message you send.

Want to improve your Business English?

Contact Letstalk Language Lab for 1:1 coaching designed for working professionals.

Email: info@letstalk.africa

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