**Exercises for “Getting Diplomacy, Emphasis and Tone Right in E-mail Messages”**

1. Good writing should be **audience-focused**. This means thinking about the audience and writing in a way that highlights the benefits to the reader. How could this sentence be rewritten in a way that is more audience focused?

*John, I want to go to the training session so I can improve my presentation skills.*

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2. **Acknowledge** the work of others and provide praise when possible. How could this be rewritten?

*Now that the project is finished, lets have a meeting to plan our next step.*

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3. Avoid **blaming** others or being negative when it is unnecessary. How could this be rewritten?

*Our last manager was terrible so we rarely met to discuss career goals.*

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4. Use **Active** and **Passive voice** to your advantage. Should these sentences be rewritten? If so, how?

*Vivian’s great suggestion helped the department save thousands of dollars.*

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*Larry insulted the client in the meeting, so now he’s reluctant to do business with us.*

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*Unfortunately, none of us noticed the mistake in time.*

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5. When giving criticism, try to be constructive by explaining the negative **consequences** of such behavior. How could this be rewritten?

*Don’t wear shorts and sandals to a meeting with clients.*

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6. Instead of criticizing others, Use ‘**I Statements**’ to explain how the behavior affects you. How could this be rewritten?

*You make me so angry! You never finish your work on time!*

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7. Use **modals** (*may/might/could be*), indirect language (*seems/I think/I’m not sure),* ***qualifiers*** (*a little (bit)/slightly/kind of*) and **positive** language instead of negative (~~wrong~~ = *not correct*) to be tactful and diplomatic.

* *Her writing is really bad. -> Her writing could be improved.*
* *That’s a stupid idea. -> I’m not sure that’s the best idea.*

How could the below sentences be rewritten?

*This is wrong.*

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.*

*He’s slow at completing his tasks.*

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*The presentation was really boring.*

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*That price is much too high.*

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8. Be **concise** when writing memos (documents within the company). Time is money!

* Acceptable to a customer: *I’d like to inform you that your order, #302-0232, has been shipped.*
* Better internally: *The order, #302-0232, has been shipped.*

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Possible Answers:

1. John, I think improving my presentation skills would help our company get more clients, so I think it’s important I attend the training session.

2. Firstly, I’d like to thank everyone for their hard work on the project. We worked as a team, and we had success as a result. Let’s continue our momentum and start thinking about our next step.

3. In the past, we rarely discussed career goals.

4.

* (no rewrite necessary because the active voice here highlights an achievement)
* Unfortunately, the client may have felt insulted, so he may be reluctant to do business with us.
* Unfortunately, the mistake was not noticed in time.

5. If you wear casual clothes to client meetings, it will reflect poorly on us as a company, which can hurt our business.

6. I feel frustrated when work is not completed on time because it means I have to wait until I can do my work.

7.

* This may not be correct.
* He’s not the quickest worker.
* The presentation could have been more exciting.
* That might be a little expensive.