

Instructions for a colleague

Learn how to write instructions for a colleague.

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the text and tips and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the phrases (a–f) with the vocabulary (1–6).

Vocabulary

1. Date
2. Time
3. Day of the week
4. Place
5. Number of people
6. Event

Phrases

- a. Room 310
- b. 26 November
- c. 11 o'clock in the morning
- d. Friday
- e. team meeting
- f. 25 members of the team

Instructions for a colleague

From: Amelia Smith

To: Tim Young

Subject: Things to do for the team meeting

Tim,

We have a team meeting in Room 310 on Friday 26 November at 11 a.m. We are expecting 25 members of our international team there.

- Could you please book the room for us?
- Would you please prepare 25 pens and notepads for the meeting?
- Also, can you write an email to the team members to tell them the time and place of the meeting?

Thanks very much for your help. If you have any questions about this just let me know – I'll be in the office tomorrow morning.

Best,

Amelia

Tips

1. You can start a note with just the name of the person you are writing to or *Hi ...* . You don't need to use *Dear ...* .
2. Make sure dates are very clear. Include the day, date and time.
3. Explain the reason for the instructions.
4. Write clear and polite instructions. Use phrases like *Can / Could / Would you please ... ?*
5. At the end offer the chance to ask questions and check the instructions.
6. Finish the note with *Best,* or *Thanks,* and then your name underneath.

Tasks

Task 1

Are the sentences true or false?

| | Answer | |
|--|---------------|-------|
| 1. The team meeting will be in the evening. | True | False |
| 2. There will be people from different countries at the meeting. | True | False |
| 3. Amelia has already booked Room 310 for Friday 26 November. | True | False |
| 4. Amelia wants Tim to get 25 pens and notepads ready for the meeting. | True | False |
| 5. Amelia wants Tim to email the 25 team members. | True | False |
| 6. If Tim has any questions, he can ask Amelia tomorrow morning. | True | False |

Task 2

Choose the correct answer.

1. What is the best way to start an email to a colleague?
 - a. Dear Ms Brown,
 - b. Hi Louise,
 - c. Dear Sir/Madam,
2. What is the first thing to explain?
 - a. why you need help
 - b. who is helping
 - c. what you want the person to do
3. What is the best way to write the time of the meeting?
 - a. Tuesday lunchtime
 - b. 09/07 at 1
 - c. Tuesday 9 July at 1 p.m.

4. What is the best way to ask a colleague something?
 - a. Can you help me with the meeting?
 - b. Help!
 - c. I'm so sorry but if it's OK with you, could you possibly help me with the meeting?
5. What should you do at the end of the note?
 - a. Give five more tasks.
 - b. Apologise for all the extra work.
 - c. Offer the chance to check the instructions and ask questions.
6. What is the best way to finish?
 - a. Best,
 - b. Bye,
 - c. Yours sincerely,

Task 3

Put the words in the correct order to make questions.

1. me a favour? you do Can
2. you Would please order five more?
3. call Mark to tell him? Could you
4. speak to you I Could on Tuesday?
5. help me organise the meeting? Can you
6. email everyone to tell them? Would please you

Discussion

When you have to give someone instructions, do you prefer to write them a note or speak to them? Why?

Answers

Preparation task

1. b
2. c
3. d
4. a
5. f
6. e

Task 1

1. False
2. True
3. False
4. True
5. True
6. True

Task 2

1. b
2. a
3. c
4. a
5. c
6. a

Task 3

1. Can you do me a favour?
2. Would you please order five more?
3. Could you call Mark to tell him?
4. Could I speak to you on Tuesday?
5. Can you help me organise the meeting?
6. Would you please email everyone to tell them?