

Tips and Tricks for Email Communication with ESL Students

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Some Basic Principles

- Be student-centered
- Develop positive relationships
- Deliver excellent customer service
- Provide timely and effective communication
- Demonstrate respect to all people and cultures
- Develop and demonstrate cultural awareness and competence



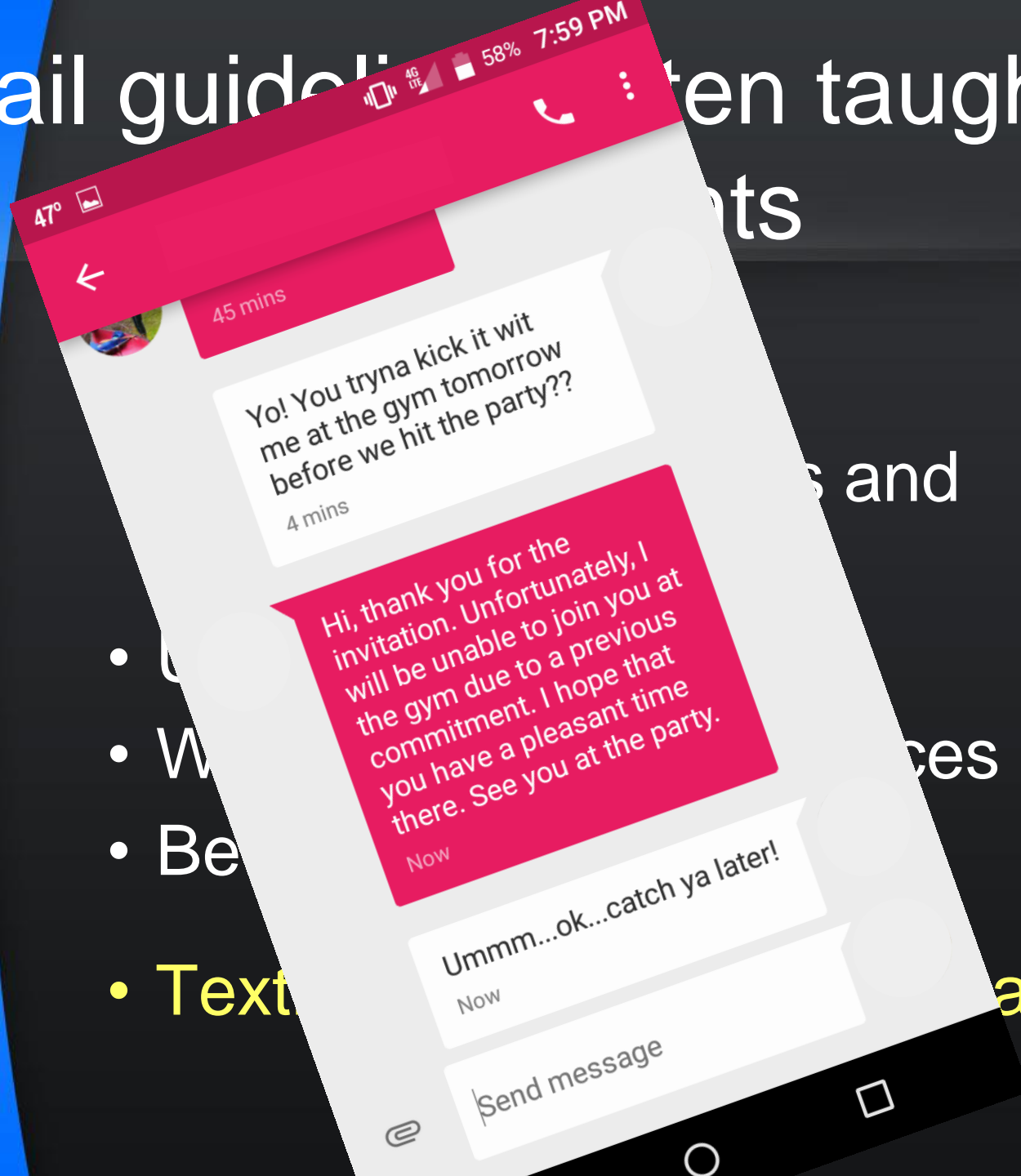
Email guidelines

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Email Language

- Be simple, clear, and to the point
- Avoid idioms and slang words and phrase
 - ☆ Be aware of students' range of ability
 - ☆ Use simple language, but *don't* patronize
- Re-read email before sending
- Ask for clarification if necessary
 - ☆ Admit if you do not understand
- Be patient
- Be aware of different cultural perspective



Tone

Strive for email responses that are:

- Polite and Positive
- Friendly
- Helpful
- Calm
- Be careful when using humor
- Take into account students' culture



High-Context vs. Low-Context



Low Context

Communication:

- Specific
- Detailed
- Precise

Poorer at decoding:

- Unspoken message
- Body language

High Context

Communication:

- Less direct

Emphasis on:

- Human relations

More sensitivity to:

- Non-verbals
- Feelings of others



Dear [student name],

I work at the University of Washington as the International Student Affairs Coordinator. In this capacity I help students with problems relating to their campus life and as part of my work I help students find volunteer positions at various locations throughout the greater Seattle area.

To start, from your message I couldn't tell if you are a matriculated student at UW, or if you are in our AEP or IEP program. If you are a matriculated student, then you will need to contact your department at the university regarding their requirements for volunteer positions. **They are the ones who would have to help you with this matter.** If you are a student in our English Language Program here, I am unable to help you. **You are not here.** If you are not enrolled in a program here, I cannot help you. If you are, indeed, in this program, **I could only help you with volunteering in the Seattle area, not in Korea.**

I apologize that I am unable to help you. I hope your department at the University of Washington is able to assist you.

Best wishes, [name]

Dear [name],

My name is [student name], an international student of the University of Washington. Now, I have come back to Korea for vacation. I want to work while here, but I only find volunteer position. The company asked for a letter from my school that allows me to go out for volunteering. So, is school has any department that response for that?

Thank you,
[student name]



Discussion Questions

- What are some of the biggest issues/concerns when corresponding with current students?
- What are some of the challenges when emailing with and engaging prospective students?
- What are some ways we can improve email correspondence?
- What are some good responses if you receive an email sent to the wrong person?



References

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