

CAE Skills Worksheet

Read the email in response to your task carefully. Complete the activities and choose the most suitable options for each blank or slash.

Hi Tom,

It's great to hear you **are / will be** free next Saturday — I'd really **appreciate / appreciated / am appreciating** your help at the shop! I'm sure you'll handle it perfectly; you've always been so **conscientious** and attentive with customers, which **make / makes / made** a huge difference on busy days.

What does *conscientious* mean here?

- a) careless and lazy b) hard-working and responsible c) spontaneous and fun d) creative but unreliable

As for the staff, you'll be working with Mia and Leo. Mia can be a bit **sweet / pushy** when things get hectic, but she means well — just make sure to **stand / stands / stood** your ground. Leo, on the other hand, is quite **sheltered / smart** and sometimes a little immature, so he **might need / needs** a bit of guidance. I know you're patient enough to deal with that!

Tone Awareness:

Compare the two versions below. Which one is **more appropriate** in tone for a friendly but semi-professional email?

Version A

"Mia can be a bit pushy when things get hectic, but she means well — just make sure to stand your ground. Leo, on the other hand, is quite sheltered and sometimes a little immature, so he might need a bit of guidance."

Version B

"Mia is bossy and annoying when things get busy, and Leo's childish — you'll have to babysit him a bit."

Which version would you choose? A or B ?

Why? What differences in vocabulary and tone can you identify?

Choose the better explanation:

This version sounds polite and tactful — it uses softer, more neutral language instead of harsh words. The tone is friendly and respectful, suitable for a semi-formal message.

This version is better because it sounds honest and direct — the writer expresses frustration clearly without worrying about politeness.

We **open / opened / have opened** at nine, but it's best to arrive by quarter to, so you can check the displays. At closing time, make sure all the tills **are / were / will be** balanced — I know you're far too **responsible** and **devoted** to leave that undone! Oh, and please double-check the back door; it can be tricky to lock properly.

Responsible = a) careless b) dependable c) lazy d) nervous

Devoted = a) loyal and committed b) bored c) angry d) self-centred

Thanks again for helping out. I really **owe / owed / am owing** you one — I promise to return the favour whenever you need an extra pair of hands.

The idiom *to owe one* means...

a) I'm annoyed with you. b) I owe you money. c) I'm grateful and will help you later. d) I expect an apology.

Take care,
Sue

Tone Transformation - Rewrite these sentences so they sound more tactful and CAE-appropriate:

a) "You mustn't let Mia tell you what to do."

"You might want to make sure Mia doesn't take over too much." - "Don't let Mia boss you around."

b) "Leo's lazy and childish."

"Leo sometimes needs more motivation and maturity." - "Leo never does any work and acts like a kid."

c) "Check the tills!"

"Go and check the tills now." - "Could you please double-check the tills?"

Would these sentences sound appropriate in Sue's email?

"I'd really appreciate your help at the shop." Yes / No

"You're a legend for helping me out!" Yes / No

"Make sure all the tills are balanced." Yes / No

"Please double-check the back door — it can be tricky to lock properly." Yes / No

"Lock up, yeah?" Yes / No