Estimating and changing tone

Sometimes it is difficult to be sure what the feeling or attitude is behind something you've read. AI tools may be able to help you figure out the tone. You can also use these tools to check your own writing to make sure it sounds the way you want it to.

Example:

You are writing an email to your tutor to ask for help on an upcoming assignment and want to make sure the tone is professional and polite.

> Your email:
>
> "Subject: Need Help with Assignment
>
> Hi Tutor,
>
> I'm having a hard time with the assignment that's due soon. I don't get the example about the velocity of the parachute and it's kinda confusing. Can we maybe meet or can you give me some advice?
>
> Thanks a lot!"

You draft the email and then ask an AI tool to judge the tone to see if you are on the right track.

> AI tool response:
>
> "The tone of the email is polite, respectful, and somewhat informal. It expresses a clear request for help while showing appreciation for the tutor's assistance. The use of phrases like "I'm having a hard time" and "it's kinda confusing" conveys a sense of frustration or difficulty, but it's balanced with a courteous tone. The overall message is straightforward and considerate."

The feedback from the AI tool suggests it might be a bit informal.

You can redraft it yourself now, or if you need more help you could ask an AI language tool for some suggestions to make it more formal.

> AI tool response:
>
> "To make the email more formal, you can adjust the language to be more precise and professional. Here's a revised version:
>
> **Subject: Request for Assistance with Assignment**

Dear [Tutor's Name],

I hope this message finds you well.

I am encountering some difficulties with the assignment that is due soon, specifically with the example of the velocity of the parachute. I find this aspect to be quite confusing and would greatly appreciate your guidance.

Could we possibly arrange a meeting to discuss this, or could you provide some advice on how to address the issue?

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

This version uses a formal salutation and closing, and employs a more precise and respectful tone throughout."

Remember you shouldn't just take what the AI tool gives you - in this example, the AI recommendation is very formal and wouldn't sound like it was coming from you.

What you can do is take parts that you like and mix them with your original email so that it still has your voice but it more formal.

The final email in this example might look more like this:

"Subject: Request for help with assignment

Dear Tutor,

I hope you are doing well.

I'm having a hard time with the assignment that's due soon. Particularly, the example of the velocity of the parachute is quite confusing. Could we possibly meet, or can you give me some advice?

Thank you very much."

The highlighted areas show how you might take inspiration from the AI output to make your original email more formal while keeping your voice.

Suggested tools:

Text generation tools e.g., Microsoft Copilot, ChatGPT, Google Gemini

Web tools e.g., Goblin.tools - Judge and Formalizer,

Prompt suggestions:

How can I make this more formal/informal/polite/respectful/direct?

What is the tone of this?

What feelings is the writer trying to show in this text? Please provide examples from the text.

Tips:

AI tools can never replace asking someone what the meaning is behind their message – if you can check with the writer of the text this will be the best solution.

This example can involve inputting your own or others writing into a tool – remember to be sure not to include personal information.