

An email request for help

Read an email asking for help from another department to practise and improve your reading skills.

Before reading

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

Preparation task

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

Vocabulary

1. to clear something with somebody
2. to talk through something
3. product design
4. to launch a product
5. to have a good eye for detail
6. packaging

Definitions

- a. the material used to protect goods and present them to the customer
- b. the process of producing or improving a product to suit customers' needs
- c. to introduce a product to the customers for the first time
- d. to be good at noticing the smaller but important parts of things
- e. to discuss something carefully and in detail
- f. to get approval or permission from somebody to do something

Reading text: An email request for help

To: James Forrester

Date: 6 November

Subject: Possible help with product design

Dear James,

As you know, we have been working on the new perfume that we are launching in April and we are unsure about some of the packaging details. We have seen some of your creative work in the sales department and we think you have a very good eye for detail.

Do you have some time before close of business this Friday to sit down with us and talk through some of our designs? We would truly appreciate your advice on this. It shouldn't take longer than two hours of your time and we would be happy to clear it with Patricia, your department head, if necessary.

Best regards,

Sarah Ford

Head of Department

Product Design

Tasks

Task 1

Circle the best answer.

1. What department does James work for?
 - a. Marketing
 - b. Product Design
 - c. Sales
 - d. Research and Development
2. Which department is working on the new perfume?
 - a. Marketing
 - b. Product Design
 - c. Sales
 - d. Research and Development
3. What is happening in April?
 - a. The company will introduce the new perfume to the public.
 - b. The product design department will finish their design of the new perfume.
 - c. The sales department will stop selling perfumes.
 - d. The marketing department will design advertisements for the new perfume.
4. What is Sarah requesting?
 - a. For James to design the perfume.
 - b. For James to have a meeting with the product design department to help them with the packaging of the perfume.
 - c. For James to ask Patricia for permission to sell the perfume.
 - d. For James to move to the product design department.
5. Who is the head of the sales department?
 - a. James
 - b. Sarah
 - c. April
 - d. Patricia
6. When would Sarah like to sit down with James?
 - a. Today
 - b. Some time next week
 - c. Any time between today and the end of Friday
 - d. This weekend

Task 2

Write a number (1–6) to put the events in the order they are mentioned.

- _____ James has a meeting with Sarah and her team.
- _____ The product design department starts work on the design of the new perfume.
- _____ Sarah asks Patricia for permission to use James.
- _____ The product design department introduces the new perfume to the public.
- _____ Sarah and her team finalise the details of the packaging for the new perfume.
- _____ Sarah writes an email to James asking for help.

Discussion

What should you include in an email asking for help?