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## 18 A customer-supplier sequence

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You are going to exchange a series of emails with a partner. You will supply them with a product/service. They will also supply you with a (completely different) product/service.

Prepare the situation using the questions below. The information can be real or imaginary.

- What kind of products/service does your company offer?  
*Ideas:* something that your company does in real life; some other kind of product that you know about such as computers, digital cameras, cars or financial advice; a product in the classroom such as dictionaries or board pens; a product that someone is wearing such as a particular brand of watch; a product that you have in your bag.
- Think about one particular product/service in more detail. This is what you are going to supply to your partner.  
*Ideas:* price; features; functions; customer benefits; performance; appearance such as size, weight, shape, materials and colour; design and technical specifications; availability; possibility for customisation.

When you have decided on the product/service, find a partner. Tell your partner what product/service your company is going to supply, and find out what they are going to sell to you.

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### EMAIL 1

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You are in the role of the customer. Write a short email requesting information about your partner's products/service.

*Ideas:* how you got the contact, reason for writing, request for general and specific information.

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### EMAIL 2

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Exchange emails with your partner. Now you are in the role of the supplier. Write a reply to the email you receive, giving information about your own products/service.

*Ideas:* thank them for their email, give factual information about your company and what it supplies, attach some information, highlight one or two key points and answer specific questions.

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### EMAIL 3

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Exchange emails with your partner. Now you are in the role of the customer. Write a reply to the email you receive, asking for better terms.

*Ideas:* say that you are interested, give some details about what you want and discuss terms.

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### EMAIL 4

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Exchange emails with your partner. Now you are in the role of the supplier again. Write a reply to the email you receive, replying and agreeing terms.

*Ideas:* agree terms or look for a compromise, answer any questions, suggest that you call to discuss final details and ask when would be a good time.

When you finish, work with a partner. Check each other's grammar, spelling, punctuation and style. Is everything clear, well-structured and easy to understand?