TECHNOLOGY

GTech, founded in 2015 in America, is a newly established scientific and technical company. Its main business activities focus not only on developing intelligent robots by applying advanced technologies like AI and VR, but also on researching the implementation of these advanced technologies. Although GTech is a new company, it has great potential for further growth.

Amy Li

Product manager in the product design team. She is responsible for the chip design and development of intelligent robots. She also needs to participate in and make presentations at some industry conferences.

Wang Wei

Senior product manager in the product design team. He is Amy's colleague.

John Peters

Chief technology officer (CTO) of GTech. He is Wang Wei and Amy's supervisor, and the leader of the whole product design and technical R&D team. He is mainly in charge of the technical development of intelligent robots.

CASE

1

Can the new demands be accepted?

Case briefing

GTech and Johnson Education Association developed a new robot interpreter. It has become very popular since it was put on the market. Recently, Tom Stone, CTO of Johnson Education Association, has emailed John, asking GTech to evaluate three new demands for improving the robot.

In this case, John asks Amy to hold a meeting to discuss those new demands and then give feedback to the Association. Suppose you are Amy. You probably should:

- discuss the new demands for improving the robot
- give feedback on the new demands

Here is a video clip showing the scene of the case. In the video, John is briefing Amy on the case and the requirements, and Amy is taking notes.

Video clip

1 **Watch the video clip and complete Amy's notes.**

The problem:
GTech received an email from Johnson Education Association talking about 1) _____.

Steps to solving the problem:
- Learn about the new demands
- Get 2) _____
- Hold a meeting
- Reply to the email

Considerations:
- Improve the 3) _____ of the robot
- Improve the 4) _____ of the robot

Something else:
Reply to the email using the correct 5) _____.

2 **Work in pairs and discuss the following question based on the information you've got in Activity 1.**

How would you organize the meeting to discuss the new demands for improving the robot?

Discuss the new demands for improving the robot

Starting up

Hosting a discussion is a common practice in all walks of life. Many things can be discussed in a meeting, such as a new plan and a new request. The ability of hosting a discussion is an essential skill. In this case, the first thing Amy should do is to discuss the new demands for improving the robot interpreter. Suppose you are Amy. How would you host a discussion about whether to improve the robot or not?

After learning this unit, you will be able to:

- get information about product improvements from various sources
- get familiar with the structure of hosting a discussion
- interrupt others politely in a discussion
- host a discussion

Taking in

Reading

To evaluate the new demands for improving the robot, the first thing Amy needs to do is to get to know what the new demands are. The following is an email from Tom Stone, CTO of Johnson Education Association, in which the new demands are mentioned. John has forwarded the email to Amy. Read the email and get the detailed information about the new demands.

1 **Work in pairs and discuss the following questions.**

1 What is the purpose of the email?

2 What information will be contained in the email?

2 **Read the email about the three new demands made by CTO of Johnson Education Association.**

To: Amy Li

Subject: Fw: Three new demands for improving the robot

Hi Amy,

I'm forwarding the email by Tom Stone of Johnson Education Association.

Please read it carefully and evaluate those demands.

Best,
John

> **Original Message**
>
> **From: Tom Stone**
> **To: John Peters**
> **Subject: Three new demands for improving the robot**
>
> ---
>
> Hi John,
>
> I'm writing to let you know that our robot interpreter should be improved according to the market needs. Our robot interpreter has drawn great attention recently, because it interprets more accurately, and sounds more like the

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VOCABULARY

modify /ˈmɒdɪˌfaɪ/ *vt.* 修改；更改

accessory /əkˈsesəri/ *n.* [C, usu. pl.] 零件；配件

perception /pəˈsepʃn/ *n.* [U] 理解；看法

evaluation /ɪˌvæljuˈeɪʃn/ *n.* [U] 评估；评价

empathetic /ˈempəˌθetɪk/ *a.* 移情的；产生共鸣的

way people speak the language. Based on our keen attention to our competitors and customers' needs now and in the future, we feel it is necessary to modify and advance our product in the following three ways:

1 Increase the robot's working hours

Our first suggestion is to increase the robot's working hours. We all know that technology is changing practically all aspects of the world rapidly, and the interpretation industry is no exception. Our robot interpreter has done a good job in terms of its working duration. However, we can still apply such new technologies as solar charging, mobile power supply accessories and fast charging to further increase our robot's working hours, which may enhance its competitiveness.

2 Improve the robot's appearance

We all know that a robot's appearance can affect the user's expectation, perception and evaluation of its behavior and capability. Since our robot now only has a functional appearance, we hope it can have a more human-like appearance. If its appearance and actions are made more human-like, people's emotional response will become increasingly positive and empathetic. Most of our customers are in the service and education industries, so a human-like appearance will make our robot more attractive.

3 Extend the robot's language coverage

Now our robot interpreter is able to interpret in five languages, including English, Chinese, Spanish, French and German. We hope it can offer interpretation services in more languages, since some of our customers say that there are increasing demands for such languages as Japanese, Korean, Russian and Turkish. Therefore, we want you to extend the language coverage of our robot in order to meet the market needs and attract more customers.

You are our long-established partner, and for our mutual benefit we hope you can consider and meet these three new demands.

Best regards,
Tom Stone
CTO
Johnson Education Association

3 Complete the information by filling in the blanks.

Three new demands for improving the robot

The first demand: Increase the robot's 1) _____
   It can be realized by using such new technologies as 2) _____, mobile
   power supply accessories and fast charging. This will make the robot more competitive.

The second demand: Improve the robot's 3) _____
   Our robot interpreter should have a 4) _____, which will make it more
   attractive to our customers as most of them are in the service and education industries.

The third demand: Extend the robot's 5) _____
   Our robot had better offer 6) _____ in more languages, since some of our
   customers say that there are increasing demands for such languages as Japanese, Korean,
   Russian and Turkish.

4 Work in pairs. Discuss which improvement is the most important and why. Then
share your ideas in the class.

Viewing

Apart from knowing the three new demands proposed by Johnson Education Association, Amy also needs to get customers' opinions on the three new demands. The following video clip is an interview, in which three customers are expressing their opinions on the three new demands. Watch the interview and identify their opinions.

VOCABULARY

phrasebook /ˈfreɪzˌbʊk/ *n.* [C]（尤指供外国旅游者使用的）外语常用语手册

1 Work in pairs and discuss the following question.

When you watch an interview, what kind of information would you like to get?

2 Watch the interview and complete the customers' opinions by filling in the blanks.

	Working hours	Appearance	Language coverage
Customer A	Not necessary. Reasons: • It will cause high cost and consequently a 1) _____. • Humans know the local culture 2) _____ than robots.	Not necessary. Same reasons as the first demand.	Welcome it because the customers are from 3) _____ and that will help a lot.
Customer B	Longer working hours will be beneficial.	The robot with human features seems to be 4) _____ and less friendly.	Broader language coverage will be useful.
Customer C	Longer working hours would be 5) _____ for the business.	Improved appearance would be welcome.	Not necessary. Reasons: The number of tourists who speak Japanese, Korean, etc. is 6) _____, and most foreign tourists can speak our language with the help of a phrasebook.

Work in pairs and check your answers.

3 Work in pairs and make a short summary of the different opinions according to the information you've got in Activity 2.

Building up

Preparing for the structure

After getting information about the three new demands and customers' opinions, Amy may have made good preparations and can host a business discussion. How would she host the discussion? The following is an audio clip, in which four people are discussing if it is necessary to improve the robot. Do the following activities to find out the basic structure of hosting a discussion.

Structure of hosting a discussion

1 Work in pairs and talk about how to host a discussion. Take notes if necessary.

2 Listen to the audio clip and discuss the steps of hosting a discussion.

Audio clip

Sharpening the skills

Amy has got the basic knowledge about how to host a business discussion. However, when hosting the discussion, she may still have some difficulties, such as how to introduce the topic, how to make transitions, how to invite speakers, and how to wrap up the discussion. Do the following activities to learn the skills in hosting a discussion.

Introducing the topic

1 Work in groups to brainstorm how to introduce the topic in a discussion.

2 Work in groups. Host discussions based on the following situations. Your focus should be put on how to introduce the topics. You may refer to what you've got in Activity 1 and the sample discussion in "Preparing for the structure" for reference.

Situation 1

The company you work for is going to hold a party to celebrate the New Year and commend the best employees of the year at the same time. You have been asked to host a discussion about what kind of activities should be arranged at the party and how to choose the best employees.

Situation 2

Your company is planning to provide employees with 30 hours of business English training. You have been asked to host a discussion about how to encourage employees to take part in the training and what arrangements would be suitable for the training.

Situation 3

The retail company you work for has decided to open its first branch abroad. You have been asked to host a discussion about how to find useful information on premises in that country and what staffing arrangements might be necessary for the new branch.

SKILLS

The introduction of a discussion is meant to help people get involved naturally. How the host handles the opening minutes can make a huge difference to the effectiveness of the discussion that follows. In the opening of a discussion, the host should tell people specifically what will be shared, such as the goal, theme and form of the discussion.

The following are some useful expressions for opening a discussion:

- Today we are here to discuss …
- The goal of our discussion today is …
- Today we are going to talk about …
- Today we'll discuss …

Making transitions and inviting speakers

1 Work in groups and brainstorm how to make transitions and invite speakers in a discussion.

2 Listen to the sample discussion in "Preparing for the structure" again and write down the sentences that make transitions and invite speakers.

Sentences for making transitions	Sentences for inviting speakers

SKILLS

During a business discussion, the host should:

- keep the discussion moving
- bring in all the participants

The following are some useful expressions for making transitions and inviting speakers:

Making transitions

- Let's go on to another point.
- Next, let's talk about …

Inviting speakers

- What is your opinion, A?
- Do you agree with A's opinion, B?
- A, what do you think we should do?
- A, what are your views regarding this point?

Wrapping up a discussion

Work in groups and brainstorm how to wrap up a discussion.

SKILLS

At the end of a business discussion, the host should:

- make sure everyone understands the key points
- have the group review the whole discussion
- ask open-ended questions that will lead the group to reflect on what has been discussed

The following are some useful expressions for closing a discussion:

- To sum up, …
- In short, …
- In conclusion, …
- We have concluded that …
- We can come to the conclusion that …
- Our conclusion is that …
- On the whole, …
- In brief, …
- In a word, …

Developing the strategies

As the hostess of the discussion, Amy has to interrupt someone sometimes for certain reasons. How would she interrupt politely in the discussion? Do the following activities to find out the strategy.

Interrupting politely in a discussion

1 **Work in pairs and discuss the following questions.**

   1 Have you ever interrupted others during a discussion? Why or why not?

   2 How do you feel when interrupting others?

2 **Work in pairs. Listen to the audio clip about interruptions in business discussions, and discuss which one is polite and which one is not. Explain your reasons.**

Audio clip

STRATEGIES

In a business discussion, there are some situations where you have to interrupt others. Get familiar with the following three situations:

1 Agree and change the subject. For example, "You're right, Bob. Now how about the first quarter margins?"

2 Disagree with the statement. For example, "I'm not sure about that, Bob, but it is interesting."

3 Interrupt to clarify the roles of participants. For example, "Sorry, let's make sure we all know our roles in this project."

The following are some useful expressions showing how to interrupt politely:

- Could I just add something here?
- Excuse me for interrupting, but I should add that …
- I'd like to add something here, if I may.
- Do you mind if I come in here?
- If I could just come in here …
- Could I just jump in here for a minute?

Carrying out

Biz practice

In "Taking in", Amy has learned how to read for specific information and how to listen for opinions. In "Building up", she has learned how to introduce the topic, make transitions, invite speakers and wrap up a discussion, and how to interrupt politely.

Suppose you are Amy. You are going to host a discussion. The following steps may help you with the project.

Step 1 Get information

Get information about the three new demands for improving the robot in "Reading" and the customers' opinions on the demands in "Viewing".

Three new demands	Customers' opinions

Step 2 Organize the discussion and write an outline

After getting information about the three new demands and customers' opinions, you should spend some time organizing the discussion and writing an outline. You may refer to "Preparing for the structure" for reference.

Step 3 Rehearse the discussion

Following the steps above, you may get ready for the discussion. Before it really takes place, you need to rehearse your role as the host/hostess in the discussion. Pay attention to the way of interruption, which should be polite and appropriate. You may refer to "Developing the strategies" for reference.

Step 4 Revise and reflect

Now, you've finished rehearsing what you have to say in the discussion. Before carrying out the discussion, you may improve and reflect on your rehearsal based on the following questions.

1 Have you introduced your topic at the beginning?

2 Have you made transitions and invited speakers in the discussion?

3 Have you wrapped up the discussion?

4 Have you led your group to discuss all the three new demands?

5 Have you interrupted others politely in the discussion?

Looking beyond

The development of intelligent robots depends on the level of education in a country. In order to have a better understanding of hi-tech products, Amy has searched for some information about the educational technology development. Read the following passage and learn about educational technology.

1 Work in pairs and discuss the following questions.

   1 Have you ever had the experience of distance learning?

   2 Can you name any examples of using hi-tech in your study?

2 Read the passage about the future of technology in education.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION?

1   A couple of weeks ago I was asked what I thought the future of technology in education would be like. It is a really interesting question and one that I am required to think about all the time. By its very nature, technology changes at a fast pace and making it accessible to pupils, teachers and other stakeholders is an ongoing challenge.

2   So what is the future? For me the future of technology in education is the cloud.

3   Technology can often be a barrier to teaching and learning. I think the cloud will go a long way to removing this barrier.

4   Schools will only need one major thing to be prepared for the future. They will not need software installed, servers or local file storage. Schools will need a fast robust Internet connection. Infrastructure is very

important to the future of technology in education.

5   We don't know what the new "in" device will be in the future. What we do know is that it will need the cloud. Schools and other educational institutions will need to futureproof their infrastructure the best as they can.

6   This should be happening now. If you want to start to use mobile technology in your school, whether it is an iPad program or a bring-your-own-device program, your connectivity must be fast and reliable. Student and teacher support is so important. If the network is slow and things are not working properly, students and teachers will not want to use the devices. Make sure the infrastructure is there before the devices.

7   Teachers can use the cloud to set, collect and grade work online. Students will have instant access to grades, comments and work via a computer, smartphone or tablet. Many schools are already doing this. Plus, services such as the educational social network Edmodo offer this for free.

8   This is where devices come in. All devices, no matter which ones we will use in the future, will need to access the cloud. Each student will have their own, either a device specified by the school or one they have chosen to bring in themselves.

9   School classrooms are going to change. Thanks to the cloud and mobile devices, technology will be integrated into every

part of school. In fact, it won't just be the classrooms that will change. Games fields, gyms and school trips will all change. Whether off-site or on-site the school, teachers, students and support staff will all be connected. In my ideal world, all classrooms will be paperless.

10   With the cloud, the world will be our classroom. E-learning will change teaching and learning. Students can learn anywhere and teachers can teach anywhere.

11   The cloud can also encourage independent learning. Teachers could adopt a flipped classroom approach more often. Students will take ownership of their own learning. Teachers can put resources online for students to use. These could be videos, documents, audio podcasts or interactive images. All of these resources can be accessed via a student's computer, smartphone or tablet. As long as they have an Internet connection either via WiFi, 3G or 4G they are good to go.

12   Rather than being "taught" students can learn independently and in their own way. There is also a massive amount of resources online that students can find and use themselves, without the help of the teacher.

VOCABULARY

stakeholder /ˈsteɪkˌhəʊldə/ *n.* [C] 利益相关者
futureproof /ˈfjuːtʃəˈpruːf/ *vt.* 使不过时；使适应未来
integrate /ˈɪntɪˌɡreɪt/ *vt.* 使整合
flipped classroom 翻转课堂

3 Complete the information by filling in the blanks.

> **The future of technology in education**
>
> The future of technology in education is 1) _____.
>
> **Schools**
> - Software, 2) _____ or local file storage will not be needed.
> - A fast robust 3) _____ will be needed.
>
> **Teachers and students**
> - Teachers can use the cloud to 4) _____ online.
> - Students will have 5) _____ grades, comments and work via a computer, smartphone or tablet.
>
> **Classrooms**
> - Teachers, students and support staff will all be 6) _____, whether off-site or on-site the school.
> - All classrooms will be 7) _____.
>
> **Learning styles**
> - 8) _____ can be encouraged by the cloud.
> - There is a massive amount of 9) _____ online available to students.

Give feedback on the new demands

Starting up

When your business partner demands to improve the existing product, it is quite important to consider and discuss their demands carefully, and then decide whether or not to make the changes. In this case, after the group discussion, Amy needs to write an email to give feedback on the new demands for John so that John can reply Tom Stone of Johnson Education Association. Suppose you are Amy. How would you synthesize all the information to write the email?

After learning this unit, you will be able to:

- get information about customers' feedback from different sources
- get familiar with the structure of a rejection email
- reject demands in a polite and formal way
- write a rejection email

Taking in

Viewing

After receiving customers' opinions on the robot interpreter, John holds a meeting. The following video clip is part of the meeting, in which John, Wang Wei and Amy are discussing the new demands of Johnson Education Association. Watch the discussion and get the main ideas.

1 **Work in pairs and discuss the following question.**

When you attend a meeting, what kind of information would you like to get?

2 **Watch the discussion and complete the discussion notes by filling in the blanks.**

VOCABULARY

upfront cost 前期成本

segment /ˈseɡmənt/ *n.* [C] 部分

Discussion notes

Wang Wei's opinions

Adding new features to the robot is 1) _____, because it will increase costs and requires 2) _____. There might be changes in 3) _____ and other processes, which will make the cost rise. Moreover, the improvements may not 4) _____ on its sales.

Amy's opinions

Product improvements can meet customers' 5) _____. With the change of customers' needs over time, new segments will probably 6) _____. So it is necessary to consider the needs of the new marketplace and improve the product accordingly.

John's opinions

Not all improvements to the product will 7) _____. For example, ATech made changes to its existing robot, but the changes were not favorable.

Work in pairs and check your answers.

3 **Work in pairs and make a short summary of the different opinions based on the information you've got in Activity 2.**

Reading

Before writing the rejection email, Amy needs to get a thorough understanding of customers' feedback on the three new demands made by Johnson Education Association. The following is a report on customers' feedback. Read the report and get useful information for writing the rejection email.

1 **Work in pairs and answer the following question.**

What is the role of the headings in a report?

2 **Read the report on customers' feedback on the new demands made by Johnson Education Association.**

Tech

Report on customers' feedback

Introduction

We have interviewed many of our customers and collected some representative opinions about the robot interpreter. The purpose of this report is to sort out customers' feedback.

Working duration of the robot

At present, our robot interpreter can work for 10 hours at a stretch, and our partner wants to extend its working hours. In order to find out its necessity, we interviewed some of our customers. They don't think it is a good idea because it will raise the price of the robot. If the price does increase, they will employ humans instead to do the interpretation. Furthermore, humans, compared with robots, have the advantage of understanding the local culture better. Therefore, even though extending the working hours of our robot sounds good, some customers will stop buying our robot if its price rises.

Appearance of the robot

The robots on the market generally have three types of appearance: human-like, animal-like and machine-like. Our robot interpreter now has a machine-like appearance. Our partner suggests that a human-like appearance would meet the market needs better because some customers prefer a human-like appearance to a machine-like one. However, we found that robots with a human-like appearance will make some children scared. Instead, robots with an animal-like appearance would be attractive to them. Since children's preference plays a crucial role in parents' decision-making, we should be cautious about changing the appearance of our robot.

Language coverage of the robot

Now our robot can provide interpretation services in five languages. Our partner thinks that it would make a difference if we extend its language coverage to ten by adding some languages. Unexpectedly, some of our customers, especially some tourism companies, reject this change, because the number of tourists from those countries is not that large. Also some tourism companies say that the use of robot interpreters is limited since most tourists can speak English, or at least some with the help of a phrasebook. Given this, it is not necessary to extend the language coverage.

Conclusion

To sum up, about the three demands from our partner for improving the robot, we interviewed many of our customers and collected some information from them. The results show that it is not necessary to improve the robot's working hours, appearance and language coverage. On the basis of the analysis, it is reasonable to give the following recommendations: We can't accept our partner's request until there is really a market for the robot with longer working hours, a human-like appearance and extended language coverage.

3 Answer the following questions according to the report.

1 In the part of "Working duration of the robot", which sentence states an opinion?

2 In the part of "Appearance of the robot", which sentence is a factual source?

3 In the part of "Language coverage of the robot", which sentences indicate the survey result?

4 In the part of "Conclusion", which sentence shows the final decision?

Work in pairs and check your answers.

Building up

Preparing for the structure

After discussing with John and Wang Wei, and collecting some information on customers' feedback, Amy needs to write a rejection email. When she writes the rejection email, what should be mentioned? The following sample is a rejection email based on customers' feedback. Do the following activities to find out the basic structure of a rejection email.

Structure of a rejection email

1 **Work in pairs and discuss the following question.**

What should be mentioned in a rejection email?

2 **The following sample is a rejection email to Tom Stone of Johnson Education Association. Work in pairs and label each part with its purpose in the box.**

A	Express appreciation
B	Show rejection
C	Give reasons for rejection
D	Conclude the email with a brief note of thanks

To: Tom Stone

Subject: About the three new demands for improving the robot

Dear Mr. Stone,

1) ___ Thank you for your email regarding the improvement on the robot interpreter. Given our long-term cooperation, we have carefully considered and investigated the new demands you mentioned in your email.

2) ___ These demands are professional and feasible, and can really improve our robot. However, some of the customers' feedback indicates that they don't really need the improved robot. As a result, I'm regretful to inform you that these demands will not be met for the moment.

3) ___ The reasons are as follows: First, to increase the robot's working hours, the price will go up and some customers are not willing to foot the bill. Instead, they would hire humans to interpret for them. Second, robots with a human-like appearance are not attractive to all customers, especially the hotels with many children staying in. Third, more language interpretation services are not needed urgently for some of our customers because those languages are not frequently used. Therefore, we think that it is not the right time to improve our robot.

4) ___ I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your kind advice and let you know how sorry we are that we do not see the need to meet your demands. We will be more than happy to consider more suggestions on the robot interpreter.

Best regards,
GTech

Sharpening the skills

Amy has got the basic knowledge about how to write a rejection email. However, while writing, she may still have some difficulties such as how to express rejection and how to choose the proper language style. Do the following activities to learn more skills in writing a rejection email.

Expressing rejection

1 Choose the best way to answer the following questions.

1 What should you begin your rejection email with?

 A A salutation with the candidate's name followed by a courteous message thanking them for the new demands.

 B A salutation with the candidate's name closely followed by your decision.

 C Your decision.

2 What should you do if you have to reject a candidate for a position?

 A You should apologize and say that you have found a better candidate.

 B You should recommend additional training or certificates and encourage them to apply for different positions in the future.

 C You should lie about the reason why you didn't hire them.

2 Complete the following candidate rejection email by filling in the blanks with the choices in the box.

> **A** Unfortunately/Our heartfelt apology is that
>
> **B** Thank you again for applying for this position.
>
> **C** I want to thank you for your interest

To: Amelia Gates

Subject: Candidate rejection

Dear Ms. Gates,

1) _____ in the position of research analyst in Health and Co. We appreciate the time you have put in the job application and interview process.

2) _____ we will not be able to offer you the position. Although your academic record and educational qualifications are quite impressive, and also demanded by the job, there are other applicants who possess hands-on experience and we have chosen one among them. I hope that after you have acquired some professional experience, you will apply for other jobs offered by Health and Co. in the future.

3) _____ We will surely keep your resumé on file and let you know if any position that suits your credentials comes up.

Sincerely,
Mariah Carey
Human Resources Manager
Health and Co.

Work in pairs and check your answers.

When you express rejection, you have to offer the following things:

1 Start your rejection email with appreciation. There are such useful expressions as
   - Thank you for your …
   - We really appreciate your …

2 Express your regret in your rejection email. There are such useful expressions as
   - Our sincere apology is that we will not …
   - We regret to inform you that …

3 Explain your reasons for rejection and provide evidence to back up your position.

4 Close with a brief note of thanks. There are such useful expressions as
   - Thank you once more for …
   - Again, we thank you for …
   - Thanks again for taking the time to …

Choosing the proper language style

1 **Read the sample email in "Preparing for the structure" again. Work in pairs and discuss the following questions.**

1 What is the style of the email?

2 Which words or expressions can show its style? Try to underline them.

3 Is the style of the email appropriate? Why or why not?

2 **Read the following formal email and choose the suitable expression in each pair in italics.**

To: Nathan Bradley

Subject: Candidate rejection

Dear Mr. Bradley,

We appreciate your interest in Sundell Development Co., Ltd. and the 1) *position/ job* of marketing manager in our company.

2) *I am sorry/I regret* to inform you that your application has not been successful and the position has been given to another candidate.

I understand that this post is important for you but our interviewers have decided on another candidate who is more experienced and qualified. From your 3) *curriculum vitae/CV* we can see that your skills perfectly suit this post but we are 4) *seeking/looking for* someone who has spent time in a manufacturing company before. It seems that you have only worked at IT service providers till now and this is the main reason for our decision. I hope you understand our decision and I encourage you to apply for suitable posts in the future.

Thank you again for the time you invested in the job application and interview process. 5) *We are/We're* grateful for the opportunity to speak with you.

Yours faithfully,
Christa Schmidt
Human Resources Manager
Sundell Development Co., Ltd.

When you write a business email, it is important that the formal style should be used. When writing a formal email, you should:

1 **Use complete sentences**
   For example, it is better to use "I am looking forward to seeing/hearing from you" than to use "Look forward to seeing/hearing from you".

2 **Avoid colloquial words/expressions**
   Formal writing should avoid things like slang, figures of speech and broken syntax. For example, it is better to use "Lecturers still count on students to use correct grammar and punctuation in essays" than to use "Lecturers expect students to use correct grammar and punctuation in essays".

3 **Use full words instead of contractions or abbreviations**
   In formal writing, no contractions should be used to simplify words (eg. use "I am" rather than "I'm", "It is" rather than "It's", "cannot" rather than "can't", etc.). Abbreviations must be spelt out in full when they appear for the first time (eg. use "curriculum vitae" rather than "CV").

4 **Show a limited range of emotions**
   Formal writing should show a limited range of emotions. It should avoid emotional punctuation like the exclamation mark and ellipsis unless they are cited from other sources. Moreover, passive voice is often used so as to avoid a personal tone.
   For example:
   Informal: I considered various research methods for the study.
   Formal: Various research methods were considered for the study.

Developing the strategies

It is important to maintain a balance between firmness and politeness in business communication, especially when you have to reject the other party. How can Amy express rejection and at the same time not offend the recipient? Do the following activities and find out the strategy.

Being polite

1 **Work in pairs and discuss the following questions.**

Have you ever been rejected by others? How did you feel when you knew that you had been rejected?

2 **Work in pairs. Read the following sentences and discuss which one is polite and explain your reasons.**

1 Unfortunately, we are currently not in need of replacing our existing photocopier.

2 We are not interested in what you sell.

3 Although your proposal is very professional and well-constructed, we think that the design doesn't focus enough on the social media channels our company uses.

3 **Work in pairs. Identify what is inappropriate in the following email.**

To:	James Rice
Subject:	Candidate rejection

Dear Rice,

We can't offer you the job of personal assistant, because there are other candidates who we think meet our needs better.

You may apply for other positions in the future.

Lucy Smith
Human Resources Manager
Wanner Technology Co., Ltd.

Polite rejection can help maintain a good relationship between two parties. The following are some guidelines that you may follow in writing a polite rejection email:

1 Avoid using harsh words

We have to show our appreciation and then offer the reason for rejection, rather than refusing directly and rudely. For example, in a rejection email to an interviewed candidate, we can first say "We thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to participate in the hiring process for …" and then continue with "We are sorry to inform you that you have not been selected for the current vacancy" with valid reasons.

2 Use positive remarks

Be calm and collected in relaying the rejection message. Try to give positive remarks so as not to burn any bridges or to dishearten the applicant or proposal maker. For example, you might say "Although your academic record and your educational qualifications are quite impressive and are required by the job, there are other applicants who possess hands-on experience and we have chosen one among them".

Carrying out

Biz practice

In "Taking in", Amy has learned how to listen for main ideas from a discussion and how to synthesize information from a report on customers' feedback. In "Building up", Amy has learned the structure of a rejection email, how to express rejection, how to choose the proper language style and how to be polite.

Suppose you are Amy. You are going to write a rejection email to Johnson Education Association for John. The following steps may help you with the project.

Step 1 **Discuss customers' feedback**

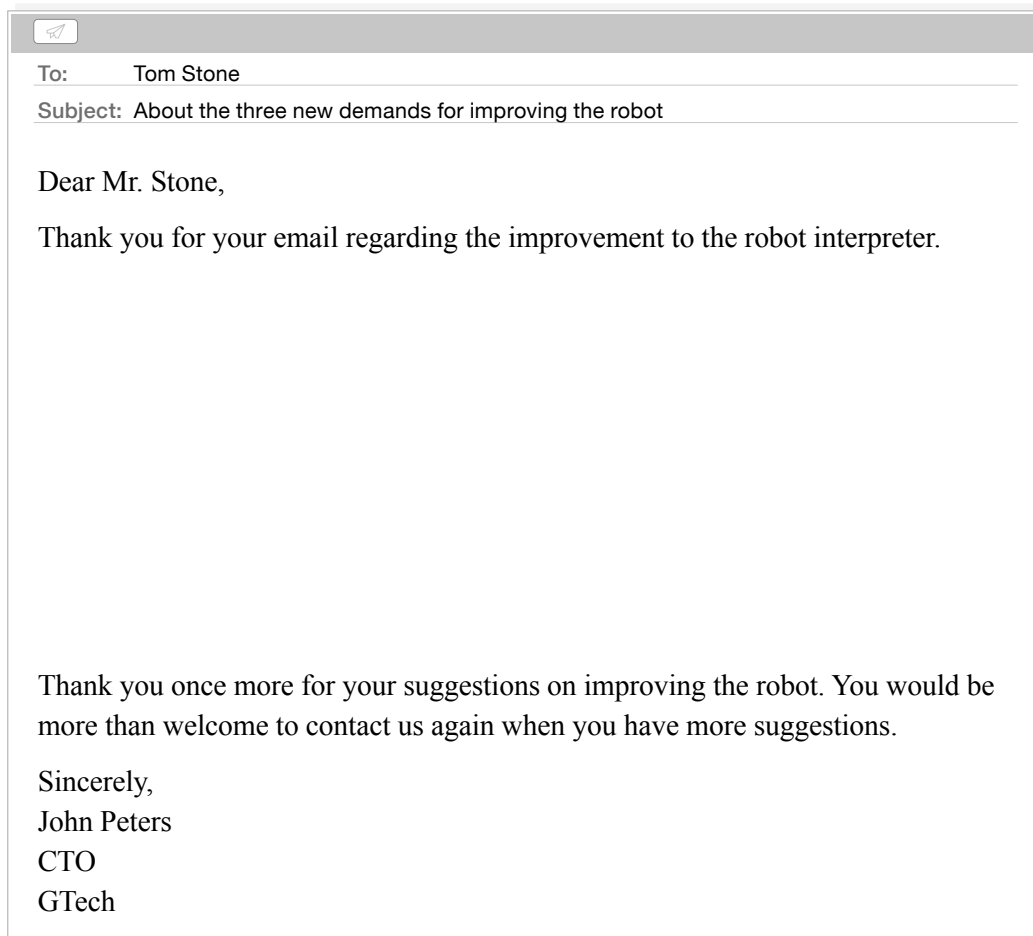Get information about customers' feedback and have a discussion within your team.

Customers' feedback	Discussion results
• They don't want to pay more for longer working hours. • _____ _____ • _____ _____	• Adding new features to the robot is risky and will increase the cost. • _____ _____ • _____ _____

Step 2 **Organize the rejection email and write an outline**

After synthesizing customers' feedback on the new demands, you should spend some time organizing your email and writing an outline. You may refer to "Preparing for the structure" for reference.

Step 3 Write it up

The beginning and ending of the email have been provided. You are about to write the body part. Make sure your rejection is supported by valid reasons. Try to use the correct language style and avoid harsh words in your email. You may refer to "Sharpening the skills" and "Developing the strategies" for reference.

To:	Tom Stone
Subject:	About the three new demands for improving the robot

Dear Mr. Stone,

Thank you for your email regarding the improvement to the robot interpreter.

Thank you once more for your suggestions on improving the robot. You would be more than welcome to contact us again when you have more suggestions.

Sincerely,
John Peters
CTO
GTech

Step 4 Revise and reflect

Now, you've finished writing the rejection email. Before sending it to John, you may revise and reflect on it based on the following questions.

1 Have all the three demands been covered?

2 Have you provided enough evidence to support your rejection?

3 Have you structured your rejection email in a clear and logical way?

4 Have you used the proper language style?

5 Have you used positive remarks?

Looking beyond

VR will revolutionize education and using VR in education is no longer a fantasy. Read the following passage to find out more about VR's future in education.

1 Work in pairs and discuss the following questions.

1 What is VR?

2 Where is VR used?

3 Can you name any examples showing the use of VR in education?

VR'S FUTURE IN EDUCATION IS BECOMING TANGIBLE

2 Read the passage about VR's future in education.

1   When Zhong Qiu first tried a virtual reality game in early 2016, she was impressed and inspired by the technology: "It could solve a lot of problems if it could be applied to a simulation of laboratory class!" At that time, Zhong was a chemistry teacher at Beijing Royal School. During her five-year teaching career, she has found it difficult to teach the preview class before letting students loose into the laboratory. "It's hard to make students remember all the details of the experiment if they receive the information passively," says Zhong. "But I felt that VR can let students explore the subject proactively on their own."

2   Now Zhong works for Phantom Whale, a start-up company focusing on VR education. "After my VR experience, I learned by chance that the company was hiring, and decided to give it a try," says Zhong. She designs the content for a chemistry class that will be taught in the VR education application that the company is developing. In the virtual laboratory environment created in the app, students could preview a particular experiment, learning all the proper procedures before doing them in a real lab.

3   "We are planning to develop VR courses for all subjects in K-12 (from kindergarten to the 12th grade) education," says Cai Nizhe, who co-founded the company in early 2016 with three friends. The company now has a team of around 30 employees, and plans to hire more young teachers like Zhong, who have not only a strong background in teaching but also a sense of the new technology.

4   "VR can provide education resources to areas that lack good teachers and facilities at a lower cost," says Cai. "It can also broaden the horizons of students in rural areas by bringing them to other places in the world virtually." Besides designing VR courses for K-12 education, the company has applied VR technology in vocational education through a partnership with Guilin University of Electronic Technology on navigation and logistics. "In the past, a complete navigating simulator cost millions, but now a VR device set designed for the same purpose costs only tens of thousands," adds Cai.

5   Phantom Whale is not the only company eyeing the VR education market, which Goldman Sachs predicts will have 15 million users in 2025. A market that size would generate $700 million in revenue just from educational software. Alvin Wang Graylin is the China Regional President of Vive, the VR operation of the Taiwan-based smartphone company HTC. In an interview with the People's Daily website, he said that although entertainment content is still what fuels the rapid growth of the VR industry now, in the long term, education will become the major growth driver. "Parents won't spend some 6,000 yuan on a VR headset for their children to play video games, but if you tell them that through VR, their children could attend classes given by the best teachers in the best schools and universities in the world — they will probably buy it."

3 **Decide the best title for each paragraph of the passage.**

> **A** The application of VR in chemistry classes
> **B** The influence of VR on education, especially on navigation and logistics
> **C** Present situation and possible future of the VR education market
> **D** The future plan of Cai Nizhe
> **E** The first impression of VR on Zhong Qiu

1 Paragraph 1 _____
2 Paragraph 2 _____
3 Paragraph 3 _____
4 Paragraph 4 _____
5 Paragraph 5 _____

VOCABULARY

inspire /ɪnˈspaɪə/ vt. 给（某人）启示；赋（某人）灵感
simulation /ˌsɪmjʊˈleɪʃn/ n. [C, U] 模仿；模拟
proactively /prəʊˈæktɪvli/ ad. 主动地
start-up /ˈstɑːtʌp/ a. 创办时的；起始阶段的
facility /fəˈsɪləti/ n. [C, usu. pl.] 设施
navigation /ˌnævɪˈɡeɪʃn/ n. [U] 航海；航行
logistics /ləˈdʒɪstɪks/ n. [pl.] 物流
driver /ˈdraɪvə/ n. [C] 驱动因素