The style and text of the e-mail you write depends on many things such as:

- Why do you write? Do you need a favor, or are you doing someone a favor?
- Who do you write? Is it a business mail, or do you mail your best friend? Is the person higher in status than you or lower?
- Is it the first time you contact, the second, or the 20th time?
- Are you taking the initiative, or is it a reply to a previous mail?
- Cultural differences, between countries, or between communities. (Computer) scientist tend to write much shorter (condensed) e-mails with bullet points, while people in social sciences tend to write longer sentences and structured paragraphs.

This document will give you some ideas and examples, but there are many other options, so please keep the above points in mind when writing an e-mail.

**General e-mail/letter structure:**

(see also [http://www.qgroupllc.com/category/writingemails](http://www.qgroupllc.com/category/writingemails) for more examples)

1. **Subject** (e.g., “Documents for the meeting on Thursday, 11:00”)
2. **Salutation** (e.g., “Dear <name>,”)
3. **Opening sentence** (e.g., “Attached please find the documents about ... ”)
4. **Main information** (e.g., “In addition to these documents, I would like to mention that ...”)
5. **Closing sentence** (e.g., “Please don’t hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.”)
6. **Sign-off** (e.g., “Best regards,”)
7. **Signature** (only for a real letter on paper, put your sign)
8. **Your name**
9. **Your affiliation if needed / automatic e-mail signature** (e.g. “Lecturer at the department of XYZ, The university of ABC.”)

**Subject:**

Make sure you put a subject which is meaningful to the reader. People often receive many e-mails, and if they can understand the subject, they know how important it is and when to read (and reply to) it.

- Room change for meeting of 14 Oct at 15:30
- Documents you requested regarding ...
- Requesting appointment regarding ...
✓ Homework Submission for Skype of 26 Oct
✓ This is Taro from XXX University
✓ Hello
✓ Documents
✓ Meeting
✓ Skype

Salutations (greetings):
Unlike Japanese, you normally don’t write your name and affiliation at the top of the e-mail. You also don’t excuse yourself for bothering the other person.

- Dear Professor <last name>
- Dear Dr. <last name>
- Dear Mr. <last name> / Dear Ms. <last name>
- Dear <first name> <last name> (in case you don’t know the recipient’s gender)
- Dear <first name>
- Hello <first name>
- Hello / Hi <first name> / Hey <first name>
- Hi! / Hey!
- <nothing>

If you don’t know any name:

- Dear Sir/Madam,
- To whom it may concern, (if you are writing to a company, not an individual)
- Lectori Salutem, (generally abbreviated as “L.S.,“) (Latin, meaning: Greetings to the reader. Is it used in English???)

Opening sentences for e-mail/letter (for business):
Your opening sentence is not a greeting, so don’t say “hello” again.
“Dear Mr X, Hello, my name is ....” → “Dear Mr. X, My name is ....“ or “Hello Bob, How are you doing?”

If you write the first mail:

- I am writing to inquire about ... *(UK: enquire) (=obtain information about)*
- I write you regarding (a(n)/the) ... <noun>
- I write you because ... <sentence>
- I found your information ... ↓ ... and thought you might be interested (in/to know that/...) ...
  - o on the XYZ website
  - o on the paper you submitted to the ABC journal/conference
- I (would) like to bring it to your attention that ...
- I (would) like to notify/tell you about ...

Unlike Japanese custom, you don’t always need to mention your name at the start of the e-mail (you should always write it at the bottom anyway). However, in some cases you may want to give a short self-introduction (in particular if you will have 1 to 1 personal contact, rather than person-company or company-company style contacts). Remember to keep in short and come to
the main point quickly. You can add more personal details in one of the paragraphs in the main body of the e-mail.

➢ I am a Bachelor/Master/Doctor course student at ABC University
  o in the department of XYZ.
  o and studying under the supervision of Professor X, who gave me your contact details.
  o and taking the class of Professor X, who gave me your contact details.

➢ My name is <first name> <last name> from ABC company. (Keep your self-intro short!)
  o I got your contact from Prof. <last name>
  o I found your information on the XYZ website.
  o Prof. <last name> suggested me to write you regarding ...

If you reply to an earlier (in-person/mail/telephone) conversation:

➢ Thank you for contacting ABC Company.
➢ Thank you for your (<adjective>) mail about ...
➢ We met at <event at place/time> and talked about ...
➢ Following our (phone) conversation, I hereby send you ....
➢ In response to your .... (e-mail / invitation / request / ....)
➢ As we agreed, ....
➢ ... as you requested.
➢ Following your request ...

If you reply to a reply:

➢ Thank you for your (prompt) reply.

Other useful sentences:

➢ Hereby I send you ...(the documents regarding ...). Please find them attached.
➢ Hereby I submit (my homework/the (application/enrollment) forms necessary for ...)
➢ Attached please find ... (the documents regarding ...)
➢ I would like to make an appointment with you to ... (discuss further details)
➢ I suggest that we ... (if you can take the initiative, i.e., you are higher/equal in status)
➢ Why don’t we .... (informal)
➢ Please let me know your availability in the week of <date>
➢ Please let me know if you have time to
  o receive me (you go to visit them)
  o come to my office (they visit you)
  o meet at (you meet with them at some other place)
  o discuss further by telephone

Closing sentences for e-mail/letter (for business):

➢ Please don’t hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have
➢ Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments
➢ (Please) Let me know if you have any questions or comments
➢ I look forward to meeting you soon
➢ I look forward to your reply
I look forward to hearing from you (soon)
Please let me know your answer as soon as possible (not very polite because you ask to hurry up!)
I hope this answers your questions
Thank you in advance (for your time)

Sign-offs for e-mail/letter:

MOST FORMAL

➤ Yours faithfully  (*if you don't know the name of the person*)
➤ Sincerely yours,  (*if you know the name*)
➤ Yours sincerely,
➤ Kind regards / Best regards
➤ Regards, / Respectfully,
➤ Best wishes,
➤ Best
➤ See you (tomorrow/next week)
➤ Take care
➤ Bye!
➤ Cheers!

MOST INFORMAL

Write your name below this closing greeting, especially for formal letters. Don’t just have your “signature” of your e-mail program there, write your name by yourself (it may mean your name shows twice, this is normal. Your e-mail signature will be grayed out and has a ———— or so above it which separates it from the real message, so you have to write your name again.

P.S., (post scriptum, Latin: “after the writing”) (追伸 in Japanese)
P.P.S., (post post scriptum, Latin: “after the after the writing”)

What to write:
Subject: <something containing the keywords “Skype” and “appointment”>

Dear <name>

<who are you><why do you mail him/her> (short).

<maybe thank him/her for volunteering, give details about yourself, the course, what you expect>

<suggestion for dates of times to meet> <specify if you mean Japanese time, Boston time, GMT, and maybe about summer/winter time if it is about to change>

<ask which date/time is convenient for him/her>

<closing>

<your name>

<your signature (if any)>