When I receive a polite e-mail, I expect to see most (and probably all) of the following:

1. **a subject line showing it’s a student message (and thus not spam!)**
   * Request from Taro Suzuki
   * Office visit (from Michiko Tanaka)
   * English class homework from Chikako Yamamoto
2. **a polite salutation (careful of punctuation and spelling, please)**
   * Dear Dr. Elwood,
   * **Not** Dear Dr. elwood.jim, *(that’s my e-mail address, not my name!)*
   * **Not** Dear Elwood, *(that’s very, very rude!)*
3. **an introduction (who is sending me this e-mail?)**
   * My name is Taro Suzuki, and I’m in your 1st period writing class on Friday.
   * My name is Michiko Tanaka, and I’m a student in the Physical Education Department at Tsukuba University.
   * My name is Chikako Yamamoto, and I’m a graduate student here at Tsukuba University.
4. **a concise explanation of the sender’s purpose** 
   * As you mentioned in class, for my final project I need to visit your office and speak with you.
   * I have a question about my homework.
   * I would like to consult with an American about…
   * I’m writing a paper on genetics and I have several questions about English terms.
   * I’m sending my homework as an attachment
   * I’m sorry I was absent from today’s class. I had a cold and could not attend any of my classes.
5. **your polite request, question, etc. (notice the “May I…?” form)**
   * May I visit your office next Friday, February 18th, at 2:30?
   * May I ask you to look over my paper for grammatical mistakes, please?
   * May I send you some questions about genetics terms in English?
   * May I take a few minutes of your time sometime next week?
   * May I ask you to check my homework, please?
6. **a “thank you” for using some of my time.**
   * Thank you for your time.
7. **a polite closing & your name**
   * Sincerely,

Taro Suzuki

For example, your message should look something like the message on page 2:

