

上海市高校教育高地建设项目

English

for Business Correspondence  
and Contracts

商务英语

函电与合同

主 编 黄文伟 刘美华

上海大学出版社

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# English for Business Correspondence and Contracts

## 商务英语函电与合同

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## 编 者 的 话

在经济日趋全球化的今天,一个国家的经济发展越来越离不开与别国的交往和合作,而与别国的交往和合作依赖于大量的能用外语进行口笔头交流、能阅读和翻译各种外语合同等常用文件的外语人才,《商务英语函电与合同》一书就是为培养适应这一需求的外语人才而编写的。本书可作为高校英语和国际贸易等专业的教材使用,也可供广大从事国际贸易或国际商务工作的人员自学或参考。

本书内容分商务函电写作和商务合同阅读两部分,在编写上具有以下特色:

1. 函电部分按商务活动(以商品的进出口贸易为主)各环节所商洽的内容为主线,着重介绍各环节函电写作的特点和要求,兼顾贸易术语和基础知识的介绍;合同部分以介绍常见商务合同的内容、语言和文体特点为主,适度介绍相关法律常识。
2. 函电部分每个单元(除第一单元“引言”外)含导读、例文、写作技巧、词汇、词汇学习、常用句型和练习七个部分。合同部分每个单元(除第一单元合同“简介”外)含导读、例文、词汇学习和练习四个部分。
3. 函电部分的例文都加了评注,以帮助读者更好地体会各环节商务信函的写作特点,并通过各单元写作技能的训练,学会写作符合各环节要求的、语言得体礼貌的、富有成效的函电。合同例文则采取对关键词加译注的方式,以方便读者阅读和正确理解合同内容。
4. 本书练习的设计强调实用性,着重技能的训练和培养。函电部分练习有语言的训练,更有写作技巧的训练。写作练习改变了常见的翻译式(用中文给出要求)或组句成文式(用英语给出要

求)的写作练习模式,采取写回信的形式,这要求读者在理解来函的基础上给出恰当的回复,以训练和培养读者独立处理函电的能力。合同部分的练习设计则本着务实的精神,强调对合同的正确翻译,特别是英语合同的汉译,因为商务合同的制订对法律知识有较高的要求,而广大的外语工作者不可能都具有全面的法律知识,所以,他们一般不可能去制订合同,他们所大量从事的工作则是翻译合同,其中更多的又是英语合同的汉译。基于这样的现实,本书合同部分的练习仅设计了合同条文的翻译和合同特有词语使用的训练。所有练习都附有参考答案,以便读者自学。

本书作为“上海市高校教育高地建设项目”的一项内容,在编写过程中得到了上海大学外国语学院领导和英语系许多教师的支持和帮助,其中戴晓富老师为本书编写大纲的构思提出了许多宝贵的意见,白岸杨老师为本书的编写提供了许多富有参考价值的例文,在此一并表示感谢。

由于编者水平有限,疏漏和不当之处实属难免,在此恳请业界同仁和读者批评指正。

编 者

2007年9月

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# Part I

*Business Correspondence*







# UNIT ONE

## *Introduction*



### **I. Business Letters**

Business letters are letters written between one firm and another to convey and exchange information, news, ideas or opinions. But a business letter is effective only if it reflects in the mind of receiver a true image of the thought conveyed by the writer.

Of all composition styles, letter-writing is probably the freest and the most agreeable. When one is asked to write a composition on a given subject one may be at pains to find out something to say. It is not so with letter-writing, which is actually a piece of conversation in written form. One would not write a letter unless one had something to say, and the nearer what one has to say approaches the level of good conversation, the better the letter is likely to be. The test for a good letter is to ask oneself whether the message could be read over the phone and still sound natural. If it could, then the letter is probably a good one.

Of course, what one writes should be free from grammatical mistakes and also free from the possibility of being misunderstood. There are certain essential qualities of business letters which should be kept, i.e. neatness, simplicity, conciseness, directness and courtesy.



### **I) The layout of business letters**

Although the formality in business letter-writing is not stereotyped,

it still follows a set pattern determined by custom and practices. It is better to follow established practice, because it provides a standard to which the business world has become accustomed and both writers and recipients could save time and avoid confusion.

Nowadays there are two styles used when laying out business letters, i.e. block style and semi-block style (modified block style).

Block style is one in which all lines begin at the same point, that is, against the left-hand margin, as indicated in Figure I.

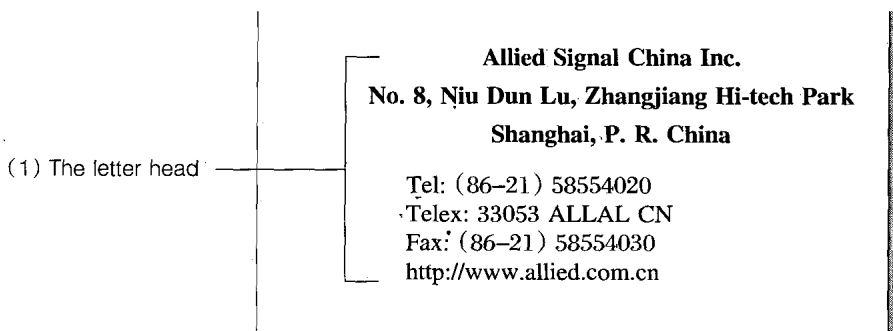
Semi-block (modified block) style is set out as in Figure II — basically the date, the complimentary close and signature are typed from the middle of the typing line and the first line of each paragraph is usually indented.

In modern business letter-writing, we have two ways of punctuating letters. One is called Open Punctuation Pattern and the other called Mixed Punctuation Pattern.

Open punctuation pattern is often used in the interests of economy and speed. While the body of the letter is punctuated as normal, the other parts of the letter are left unpunctuated (See Figure I).

Mixed punctuation pattern is one in which the body, the salutation and the complimentary close are punctuated, while the other parts of the letter are left unpunctuated (See Figure II).

Figure I Block style with open punctuation pattern



- (2) The date and reference — January 10, 2007  
Your ref: Gh/8721  
Our ref: Hp-A1234
- (3) The inside name and address — San Chang Co. Ltd.  
No. 62 Pierrepont Street  
Brooklyn, New York 11201  
U.S.A.
- (1)\* The attention line — Attn: Mr. Judith Barbnel\*
- (4) The salutation — Dear Sirs
- (2)\* The subject — **The Format of a Business Letter\***

(5) The body —

This is to inform you the format of an ordinary business letter that is nowadays widely used.

Letters with all the parts beginning at the left margin are written in block style. This style saves typing time since the typist doesn't have to use the *tabulator* in setting up the letter.

The block style usually uses the open punctuation pattern in which the body of the letter is *punctuated* as normal, while the other parts of the letter are left unpunctuated. The number of blank lines between the dateline, reference, inside name and address, attention and salutation may vary between two to six lines depending on the length of the letter.

The complimentary close may be put two lines under the last line of body. At least four lines are left for the signature. The secretary's initials and other end notes follow two lines below the signature.

The parts with \* are all *optional*. The use of them depends on necessity.

To give you a general idea of the writing of each part of a business letter, we are now sending you, enclosed, the notes to them.

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| (6) The complimentary close    | Yours faithfully<br>Allied Signal China Inc.                    |
| (7) The signature              | David Gilmore<br>Manager  |
| (3)* The reference initials    | DG: cw  |
| (4)* The enclosure(s) notation | Encl.*: Notes to the writing of each part of a business letter. |
| (5)* The carbon copy notation  | CC: Mrs Nancy Fells   |
| (6)* The postscript            | P. S.*: The use of the parts with * depends on necessity.       |

Figure II Semi-block style with mixed punctuation pattern

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| (1) The letter head             | <p><b>Allied Signal China Inc.</b><br/> <b>No. 8, Niu Dun Lu, Zhangjiang Hi-tech Park</b><br/> <b>Shanghai, P. R. China</b></p> <p>Tel: (86-21) 58554020<br/>         Telex: 33053 ALLAL CN<br/>         Fax: (86-21) 58554030<br/> <a href="http://www.allied.com.cn">http://www.allied.com.cn</a></p> |
| (2) The date and reference      | <p>January 10, 2007</p> <p>Your ref: Gh/8721<br/>         Our ref: Hp-A1234</p>   |
| (3) The inside name and address | <p>San Chang Co. Ltd.<br/>         No. 62 Pierrepont Street<br/>         Brooklyn, New York 11201<br/>         U.S.A.</p>   |
| (1)* The attention line         | Attn: Mr. Judith Barbnel*   |

(4) The salutation

Dear Sirs,

(2)\* The subject

**THE FORMAT OF A BUSINESS LETTER\***

(5) The body

This is to inform you the format of an ordinary business letter that is nowadays widely used.

The semi-block (modified block) style is a *variation* of block style, in which the typist changes only the position of the date line, the complimentary closing, and the signature. All these parts usually start at the center of the page. However, the date may be aligned to end at the right margin, and the subject line may be centered or indented five spaces.

The opening line of each paragraph can be both blocked or indented five to ten spaces. Mixed punctuation pattern is often used in this form. Thus, a colon or comma appears at the end of the addressee's name in the salutation, and a comma is used after the complimentary close.

Spacing is also designed to give the letter a balanced look on the page.

The parts with \* are all optional. The use of them depends on necessity.

To give you a general idea of the writing of each part of a business letter, we are now sending you, enclosed, the notes to them.

(6) The complimentary close

Yours faithfully,  
Allied Signal China Inc.

(7) The signature

David Gilmore  
Manager

(3)\* The reference initials

DG/cw

(4)\* The enclosure (s) notation

Encl.\*: Notes to the writing of each part of a business letter.

(5)\* The carbon copy notation

CC: Mr. Francine Dollar

(6)\* The postscript

P. S.\*: The use of the parts with \* depends on necessity.

## Notes:

An ordinary business letter consists of seven main parts, i.e.

- (1) the letter head,
- (2) the date and the reference,
- (3) the inside name and address,
- (4) the salutation,
- (5) the body,
- (6) the complimentary close, and
- (7) the writer's signature.

(1) The letter head includes the sender's (a company's) name, address, and telephone, telex and fax numbers and nowadays the website or e-mail address. It is usually printed at the head of the sheet.

(2) The date may be typed in the order of day-month-year (British way) or month-day-year (American way) and can be typed above or below the reference line or, sometimes, from the middle of the same line as the reference in the case of semi-block style used. As a general rule the date is never abbreviated, because this may cause confusion. For the day, both *cardinal* and *ordinal* numbers can be used.

The reference helps in filing and quick recognition for both the sender's and the receiver's company. If the letter is one of a series, "Our ref" and "Your ref" will be printed on the paper and the typist has simply to type in required information.

(3) The inside name and address is the repetition of the recipient's name and address that you put on the envelope.

(4) The salutation is the greeting with which every letter begins. It may be personal, when the addressee is known to the writer by name, e.g.

Dear Bob  
Dear Jane

Used for informal business letters — implies a personal friendship.

Dear Mr. Smith  
Dear Miss Shapiro  
Dear Mrs. Gilmore  
Dear Ms. Anthony  
Dear Ms. Shapiro and Mrs. Gilmore  
Dear Messrs. Chambers and Smith

Used in routine business correspondence addressed to one or several individuals — formal and cordial.

or *impersonal*, when the addressee is not known to the writer by name, e.g.

Dear Sir  
Dear Madam  
Dear Sir or Madam

Used in formal business correspondence addressed to one whose name or gender is not known by the writer.

Dear Sirs  
Gentlemen  
Ladies and Gentlemen

Used in routine business correspondence addressed to a company or a group.

But business letters are usually addressed to the company not to an individual person because in this way, the letter will receive quick attention.

- (5) The body is the main part of a letter. It is usually made up of more than one paragraph.
- (6) The complimentary close is placed two lines or more below the last line of the last paragraph of the body. The customary complimentary close in a business letter is “Yours faithfully” or “Yours truly”, when the salutation is impersonal, or “Yours sincerely”, when the salutation is personal. “Yours faithfully”

is the British way while “Yours truly” the American way. The position of the complimentary close will depend on the style of the letter used.

- (7) The signature consists of the name of the company (if the writer has the right to represent the company), the handwritten name of the writer and the writer's title (if he or she has one). In case the signature cannot be read, the name of the signatory is typed. The writer's title is usually typed beneath the name of the signatory.

Strictly speaking, only the owner or a partner of a firm is entitled to sign the name of his firm, but it is not always possible for the owner or partner to sign the letter personally because he or she may be away from the office or there may be too many letters to sign personally. In such cases an employee may be authorized to sign the letter. Then pp or per pro or p.pro (meaning per procuracionem — a Latin phrase denoting agency) are typed before the name of the firm and the letter is signed by the person authorized, e.g.

*PP Peter & John Co.*  
*William Smith*

Besides the above-mentioned seven main parts, any of the following optional parts can be included, when necessary.

- (1)\* The attention line: It is used when firms have a rule that all *correspondence* must be addressed to the firm, not individuals at the firm and it is usually typed below the inside name and address. The word “attention” can be abbreviated as “Attn”.
- (2)\* The subject line: It gives the gist of the letter and, in the block



style, it is typed against the left-hand margin while it is centered in the semi-block style. It is customary to underline the subject line in either style if it is typed with initial capital letters (see Figure I). While if it is typed in capital letters it may not be underlined (see Figure II).

- (3)\* The reference initials: It consists of the initials of the person who dictated the letter and those of the typist or secretary. It is used to show the responsibility. The initials of the person who dictated the letter are usually in capital letters and those of the typist or secretary in small letters. It is typed two lines beneath the signature against the left-hand margin.
- (4)\* The enclosure(s): It should be indicated below the signature and initials (if necessary) against the left-hand margin, sometimes with the actual number, though they are indicated in the message.
- (5)\* The carbon copy notation: When the writer wishes to send a copy of the letter to one or more persons and wishes the addressee to know, a carbon copy (abbreviated as CC or cc) notation is indicated on the original and all duplicate copies of the letter.
- (6)\* The postscript: In business letter-writing, it is usually used to emphasize a certain point stated in the message, not to add an after thought, because adding an after thought is considered to be a sign of poor planning. Its abbreviation is P. S. or p.s.

Business letters are usually one page long, but sometimes a letter may go on to more than one sheet of paper. Therefore continuation sheets must be used. The continuation sheet(s) should be plain (without the printed letter head on the top), of the same size and quality as the first sheet and be typed in the same style as the first one. In a block style letter, it is usual to type the page number at the left-hand margin with the date and the name of the addressee typed below, e.g.