



普通高等教育“十一五”国际经济与贸易专业规划教材

国际商贸英语

主 编 郭继荣



西安交通大学出版社

XI'AN JIAOTONG UNIVERSITY PRESS



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西安交通大学出版社
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· 西安 ·

内容简介

全书共十三章,涉及建立贸易关系、询盘、发盘、还盘、索赔、保险、装运等外贸业务的各个环节。书中还增加了近年来在外贸业务中使用频率越来越高的电子商务。编写体例简洁明了、深入浅出。每个章节都有对专用词汇的释义和内容丰富的例句。练习题设计能够紧扣外贸业务的各个环节,帮助读者理解课文内容,巩固所学知识。

本书可供高等院校经济贸易类专业的本科高年级学生及 MBA、硕士研究生使用,也可供非经贸类专业学生、对外贸易业务人员、各类涉外企业人员、教师及相关人员自学之用。

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普通高等教育“十一五”国际经济与贸易专业规划教材

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总 序

随着经济全球化和信息技术的发展,国际经济与贸易活动的环境、内容和方式都发生了重大变化。国际经济与贸易活动的内容不仅包括商品的跨国流动,还包括服务、技术以及知识的跨国流动,这些跨国流动比过去任何时候都规模更大、程度更高,同时也伴随着大量的劳动和资本的国际流动。对于国际经济与贸易方式,电子商务、电子结算等新的技术手段的出现和发展大大地减少了国际贸易的交易成本,提高了国际经济与贸易活动的效率,也使许多非贸易产品和服务变得可贸易。国际贸易产品提供者不仅要考虑东道国经济、政治和法律的影响,也必须考虑社会的、环境的、甚至伦理因素的影响。今天的跨国企业比过去任何时候都需要承担更多的社会责任,也比过去任何时候都将受到国际组织和贸易伙伴国相关规则的约束。

随着我国经济发展和对外开放规模的不断扩大,国际经济与贸易人才成为我国经济建设和社会发展需求量较大的人才,其人才培养模式多样化已成为必然的趋势。为了及时反映经济全球化和我国经济发展、对外开放的变化,促进国际经济与贸易领域人才的培养,发挥院校之间相互合作的优势,使国际经济与贸易专业的学生能尽快适应快速变化的国际经贸环境,西安交通大学出版社邀请了部分国内学有所长的专家教授编撰了这套普通高等教育“十一五”国际经济与贸易专业规划教材。为使这套教材的编撰有序地进行,还专门成立了教材编写委员会,由总主编、分主编和有关委员组成。各分册主编分别由具有一定实力的本学科学术带头人担任,组织编写人员时注意老中青结合、教学人员与科研人员结合。同时还建立了规范的编、审制度,每一分册的编写组拟出大纲,其框架和内容经过编委会详细讨论,最后由总主编和分主编审订。

这套教材具有如下特点:第一,涵盖了新环境下国际经济与贸易学

科的主要领域和前沿课题,力图准确、全面、系统地阐述国际经济与贸易专业学生所应掌握的主要领域的最新知识和技能。第二,遵循规范化、国际化和本土化的要求。各教材尽量用现代主流经济学和管理学的规范化理论和研究方法阐述问题,也尽量与国际接轨,同时也特别注重理论和政策的中国化。不照搬西方理论,语言风格和具体案例尽量适合中国学生的学习兴趣,避免了一些翻译教材的语言晦涩和外国教材的距离感等问题。此外,特别对中国遇到的国际经济和贸易问题给予重点关注。第三,结构安排上最大限度地方便读者。各教科书每章的内容阐述前都明确列出了本章的重点问题,在章节内容讲述完毕后,都附有本章小结和思考练习题。

这套教材的作者们都来自教学和科研第一线,对国际经济与贸易的教材建设都有一些切身的感受和见解。教材经反复讨论、几易其稿,吸纳了各合作院校的独特风格,必将更加适合于学生的学习。

衷心感谢参加这套教材编写的教师们,正是由于他们的辛勤劳动,这套系列教材的编写工作才得以顺利完成。我还要真诚感谢西安交通大学出版社的领导和有关编辑,正是由于他们的支持和认真督促,这套教材才能够如期与读者见面。当然,也应看到,由于院校之间、编写者之间的差异性,教材中还是难免会出现一些问题和不足,欢迎选用本系列教材的教师、学生提出批评和建议,也希望参加这套教材编写的教师在今后的教学和科研实践中能够百尺竿头,更进一步,实事求是,不断改进,以使这套教材能够日臻完善。

王洛林

2008年8月于北京

前 言

函电在国际贸易中发挥着极其重要的作用。企业间的经济交往、贸易磋商、合同签订都离不开函电。因此,从事国际贸易的人员不仅需要具备专业知识和英语水平,而且需要掌握撰写外贸函电的写作知识与技能。只有这样,才能成为适应社会发展、经济进步所需的复合型人才。

本书内容丰富、知识新颖、语言规范、信息量大、实用性强。全书共十三章,涉及建立贸易关系、询盘、发盘、还盘、索赔、保险、装运等外贸业务的各个环节。书中还增加了近年来在外贸业务中使用频率越来越高的电子商务。编写体例简洁明了、深入浅出。每个章节都有对专用词汇的释义和内容丰富的例句。练习题设计能够紧扣外贸业务的各个环节,帮助读者理解课文内容,巩固所学知识。

本书由郭继荣负责总体设计和统稿,各章参编人员和具体分工如下:郭继荣编写了第一章,并审阅修订了全部书稿;王玉钊编写了第二章;于璐瑶编写了第三、四章;谢兴龙编写了第五、六章;杨建玫编写了第七、八章;王佩编写了第九章;张新丽编写了第十、十一章;白凯编写了第十二、十三章。

本书的编写得到了西安交通大学金禾研究中心冯宗宪教授的大力支持,在此表示感谢。并对所引用文献的作者表示感谢。

编者

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Fundamentals of Writing English Business Letters

@ I Introduction

Business letters are the most frequently used means for communities to gain satisfactory exchange of information. They are widely used in inquiring, ordering, promotion and other processes of business transactions. Letters are regarded as legal documents in dealings. Therefore, it is vitally important to write business letters both swimmingly and effectively. On the contrary, improper writing may lead to misunderstanding, even loss of customers.

1.1 Requirements for Writing Business Letters

To secure good business letter writing, you should:

- (1) have a good command of English;
- (2) have the knowledge of business theory and practice;
- (3) have the knowledge of technical terms;
- (4) have the knowledge of psychology;
- (5) have the skills in salesmanship.

1.2 Seven Guidelines of Writing English Letters

In order to write business letters effectively, you should be familiar with and follow certain essential qualities of business correspondence, which can be summed up in the Seven C's, i. e. Clearness, Conciseness, Courtesy, Consideration, Completeness, Concreteness, and Correctness.

① Clearness

You should make sure that the message conveys what you wish to say and is not liable to any misunderstanding. Avoid vague and ambiguous expressions.

In order to achieve clearness, you'd better use well-constructed sentences and paragraphs as well as straightforward and simple English.

② Conciseness

Clearness and conciseness often go hand in hand in business correspondence. Conciseness needs to include any information that is to the point, but to leave out those statements that don't bear on the subject. In other words, the true sense of conciseness lies in that you say everything that must be said but do not waste your reader's time in words or phrases that can be spared. Say things briefly but completely without sacrificing clearness or courtesy. To achieve conciseness of your letter writing, try to keep your statements short, avoid unnecessary wordiness or repetition, and eliminate excessive details.

Paragraphing carefully can make a business letter clearer, easier to read and more attractive. It is a good rule to confine each paragraph to only one point or topic.

③ Courtesy

Courtesy in letter writing refers to employing good human relation skills. It consists, not in using polite phrases, such as "your esteemed order", "your kind enquiry", but in demonstrating your consideration for your correspondent. Treat the reader with respect and friendliness and sincerity, and be tactful, thoughtful and appreciative.

Try to avoid irritating, offensive or belittling statements. You'd better answer letters promptly, for punctuality will please your recipient who hates waiting for days before he obtains a reply to his letter. Sometimes, discrepancy may occur in business, but with diplomacy and tact it can be overcome and settled without ill will on either side. Never show your anger in a business letter.

And you must also adopt the right tone. Before you begin to write, think carefully about the way in which you want to influence your customer. Ask yourself, "What do I write this letter for?" and then express yourself accordingly, being persuasive, apologetic, firm and so on. The right tone may arouse good will, warmth and interest in your reader.

④ Consideration

Consideration is another rule of good business communication. The letters

you send out must create a good impression. Put yourself in your reader's shoes. Try to imagine his reaction to your letter, that is, consider how he will feel about what you write. Plan the best way to present the message for your reader to receive. Try to imagine that you are receiving rather than sending the letter. Emphasize the "You" attitude rather than the "I" or "We" attitude. The "You" attitude simply means that you should show respect for your reader's interests in mind, you will be able to write clearly so that no misunderstanding will emerge. The "You" attitude requires that you should make the "reader-centeredness" obvious in the very wording of the letter, and this calls for special effort on your part.

One more point, try to understand and respect your reader's point of view and resist the temptation to reply as if you could not be in the wrong. If your correspondent sends you a rude letter, try your best not to reply in similar sharp terms, answer him courteously instead.

⑤ Completeness

As a commercial communication should be concise, it must include all the relevant information. Make sure that it does not lack any necessary data that your reader needs to act upon. A business letter that has an incomplete message or information is annoying and costly because it holds up business transactions and duplicates work.

One of the best ways to assure completeness is to put yourself in the reader's place and ask yourself constantly, "What are his needs, his wishes, his interests, his problems, and how can I meet them?" "If I were to receive a letter of the kind I propose to write, what would be my own feelings?" "Would it answer my questions?" "Are there any points that need additional elaboration?" before you send the letter, check the message carefully.

⑥ Concreteness

Make your letters specific, definite and vivid. In your letter, you should use either loose or periodic sentences. Use expressions with precise meanings. When you acknowledge a letter, refer to the date, subject and references number (if any). Avoid using vague expressions but concrete words.

⑦ Correctness

As applied to a business correspondence, correctness refers to appropriate and grammatically correct language, factual information and accurate reliable

figures. Special attention should also be paid to the form and convention, as well as to the content, such as the name of articles, specifications, quantities, and units.

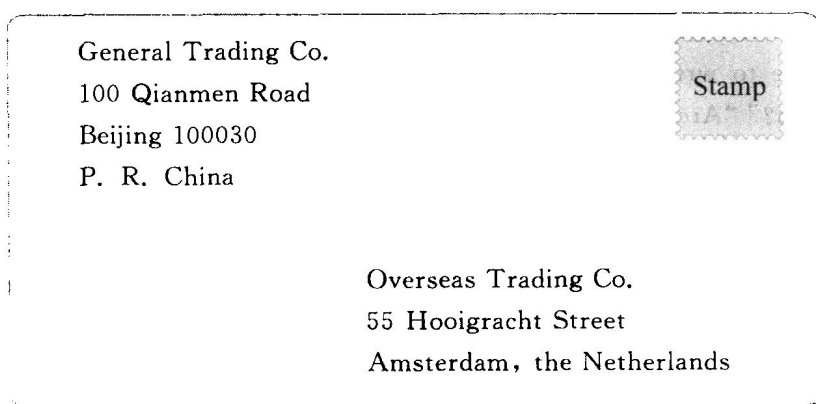
Errors frequently occurring in business letter writing are those without pronouns, adjectives, articles, verbs, adverbs, conjunctions and participles. There are some errors of fact, too. These mistakes are often the result of inattention and carelessness. For instance, errors in price quotations and delivery dates are often oversights caused by careless typing, insufficient proofreading, or too hasty correction of erasures.

Errors may also occur if reference books are not consulted when necessary. This failure may result in misspelled names or words, and errors in the diction.

It is discourteous to include errors in business letter writing. Therefore, every effort should be made to ensure the accuracy of business communication in various aspects. All the facts and information should be checked and rechecked. Careful attention to details, conscientious proofreading, and the use of reference books will contribute to the reduction of errors in business letter writing.

1.3 Addressing Envelopes

There are three important requirements in addressing envelopes, i. e. accuracy, clarity and good appearance. Here are two examples showing respectively the blocked and the indented forms of address:



(Blocked Style)

General Electricity Co.
200 Washington Street
Louisville 20083
U. S. A.

Stamp

Shandong Huanghe Plant
International Mansion
58 Haibin Road
Qingdao P. R. C.

(Indented Style)

II Parts of English Business Letters

2.1 The Letterhead

The letterhead, which is often placed at the top of the paper, expresses the firm's personality and contributes to forming one's impression of the writer's company. A printed letterhead usually contains all the essential particulars about the organization's name, address, postal codes, telephone numbers, telegraphic and telex address, the telegraphic codes used, fax number, e-mail address, the kind of business carried on, and possibly the name of the chief executive, etc.

2.2 The Date

The date should be typed or written in full and **never** be abbreviated (e. g. September for Sept.). For the day, either cardinal numbers or ordinal numbers can be used. However, there is a growing tendency to omit the ordinal suffixes -st, -nd, -rd and -th that follow the day of the month in the date line (e. g. 2 July for 2nd July). So the recommended forms for dates are, for examples, as follows:

September 10, 2007

10 September, 2007

Keep in mind that never give the date in figures, for doing so is in a bad taste

and it can easily cause confusion. For instance, 7/8 2007 would mean August 7, 2007 in Britain, but in the United States and some other countries it would be taken as July 8, 2007.

2.3 The Reference Notation

Most letterheads provide hiats for reference letters and numbers, e. g.

Your ref:

Our ref:

They enable replies to be linked with any earlier correspondence and ensure that they reach the right person or department without any delay.

Since the reference is generally used as a useful indication for filing, it should be easily seen. It may include a file number, departmental code or the initials of the signer of the letter to be followed by the typist's initials in this fashion:

Our ref: ZDY/zy

Your ref: ZY/zdy

2.4 The Inside Name and Address

It is the usual practice to include, in all business letters, the name and complete addressee of the correspondent or organization for which the mail is intended. The inside name and address of a business English correspondence may comprise several parts. The usual sequence of display in the letter is (not all addresses have all the following parts though):

- name of the person addressed
- title of the person addressed
- name of the house or organization
- number of the house or organization and number and name of the street
- name of the city or town
- state or province and postcode
- name of the country (if necessary)

For foreign correspondence, in order to avoid being ambiguous, the name of the country should always be included, even though the city mentioned is the country's capital.

Whenever possible, address your letter to a specific individual. In this way, your letter will receive quick attention. Where the appropriate head of department is known, when addressing the letter, use his official title (Sales Manager, Director, Vice President, etc.). On some occasions, one of the traditional courtesy titles (Mr. Mrs. Miss or Ms.) can also be included even when an official title follows:

Mr. Francis Lawrence
Vice President
Swinton Co.
Toronto, ST 9878
Canada

If your addressee has earned some other title, such as Professor Will Williams, Dr. Bessy Morris, or Senator John Thackeray, that title should always be included in the inside name and address. Note, too, that except for "Mr.", "Mrs.", "Ms." And "Dr.", titles of respect should be spelled out.

2.5 The Salutation

The salutation is the complimentary greeting with which every letter begins. Its particular form depends on the writer's relationship with the addressee.

If you are not sure whether a man or a woman will read the letter, use the following greeting:

Dear Madam or Sir,

The trend to use the salutation nowadays is towards informality, especially if the writer knows the receiver personally. Hence the warmer greeting: "Dear Mr. Schieveland," etc.

2.6 The Subject

The subject line, often inserted between the salutation and the body of a business letter, summarizes the topic of your letter. It is particularly useful if ever two firms have a lot of correspondence with each other on a variety of subjects, as it immediately tells what the letter is about. It is useful as a guide for filing as well.

The subject line should be placed two line-spacing below the salutation, capitalized, underscored, and centered on the page.

2.7 The Body of the Letter

This contains the actual message of the letter and is the part that really matters. Before beginning to write, you must first of all consider the following two points:

- What is your aim in writing the letter?
- What is the best way to go about it?

When writing, note the following reminders:

- Write simply, clearly, courteously, grammatically, and to the point.
- Paragraph correctly, each paragraph is confined to one topic only.
- See that your typing is accurate and the display is artistic.
- Aim at an attractive and pleasing appearance for your letter.
- Avoid stereotyped phrases and commercialness. The letter should be carefully planned, with the opening paragraph referring to any previous correspondence and the closing one to a statement of your intentions, hopes or expectations concerned with the next step.

2.8 The Complimentary Close

Like the salutation, the complimentary close is merely a polite way to bring a letter to an end, and purely a matter of custom and courtesy, adding nothing to the message. "Yours faithfully," is in Britain the standard closure for business letters, but Americans object to employing it as the complementary close, for they prefer to use "Yours truly," "Yours sincerely," or "Sincerely yours," which is less formal, and is used between persons known to each other, or where there is a wish to dispense with formality.

The most commonly used sets of salutation and complimentary close are as follows:

Formal:

Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

Dear Sirs,

Gentlemen,

Yours truly, (or Truly yours,)

Less Formal:

Dear Mr. Smith,

Yours sincerely, (or Sincerely yours,)

Dear Mr. William,

2.9 The Signature

The signature is the signed name or mark of the person writing the letter and taking responsibility for it, or that of the firm he or she represents. Because many hand-written signatures are illegible, the name of the signer is usually typed below the signature and followed by his job title or position.

A signature is the distinguishing mark of the one who uses it, so the same style must always be adopted; the signature as written and the signature as typewritten must correspond exactly.

Never sign your letter with a rubber stamp. It is a sort of discourtesy.

2.10 The Enclosure

When such documents as catalogues, price lists, sample books, proforma invoices are attended with your correspondence, you should add an enclosure notation. The list reminds you of preparing your letter for mailing to enclose the appropriate material, and it contributes to alerting your correspondent.

When there is something enclosed with your letter, type the word “Enclosure”, or an abbreviation of it (Enc. or Encl.) immediately in the bottom left-handed corner below the reference initials, with a figure indicating the number of the enclosures, if there are more than one, e. g.

Enclosures (3)

Encl. 4

Enc. As stated

2.11 The Carbon Copy/CC

When copies of the letter are sent to other readers, use the distribution notation. There are mainly two types of carbon copy notations in current use. The first is indicated by “cc” “(Cc” or “CC”) followed by the names of the persons who will receive copies of the letter. This notation is typed on the original and carbon copies.

If you do not want the prime recipient to know that copies of the letter have been distributed, use the second type of carbon copy notation. It is specified on the copy only not on the original by the abbreviation “bcc” (blind carbon copy) and the recipient’s name. No one other than the recipient of the “bcc” and you