# Introduction to Contemporary Business

# 当代商学概论（英文版）

彭 敬 编著

高等教育出版社
HIGHER EDUCATION PRESS

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Dangdai Shangxue Gailun

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# 前 言

国际商学（International Business Studies）作为一门学科在国外已经有半个多世纪的历史，已经从最初的基于实际需要的实用主义探讨渐变为当今的理论和实践兼具的科学的、规范的和系统的学科专业体系。随着其学科体系的不断完善，社会对其在经济社会发展中的重要性的认识逐步加深，各行各业中国际商学人才供需矛盾的日益凸现以及国际商学院或国际商学系在国外大学的纷纷设立，使得国际商学走向成熟和繁荣具有了坚实的组织基础。近三十年来，国外出版了大量的国际商学研究著作和国际商学专业教材，这又为国际商学理论的发展创造了良好的条件。

改革开放前后，为适应对外经贸交流合作对涉外人才的需要，国内一些高校先后开设了涉外专业，国家在不同地区开办了对外贸易学院（或大学），这极大地推动了国内、国际商学理论研究和国际商科的学科建设。近十多年来，无论从理论研究还是从人才培养看，国际商学的发展突飞猛进，国内不少知名大学纷纷成立国际商学院或国际商学系，甚至民办独立学院也开办了国际商学专业。这无疑会促进国际商学的学科建设、理论研究和人才培养。当然，应该看到，国内的国际商学研究仍然存在着不少值得严重关切的问题。例如，学科理论体系和基础尚不健全，理论研究尚处于初探阶段，国际商学内容体系尚未完全成形，人才培养尚缺乏师资支撑，以及国际商学教学尚无配套的优质教材等。

“当代商学”(Contemporary Business) 在国际商学研究体系中具有举足轻重的地位，这不仅因为它在国际商学研究体系中处于基础地位，还因为它在国际商学研究体系中处于核心地位。“当代商学”是国际商学的“先导”和“入场券”。正因为如此，国外出版了大量的国际商学基础研究著作和形式多样的当代商学教材。据不完全统计，仅在美国出版的当代商学教材就多达八十余种，有关当代商学研究的著作则难计其数。然而，纵观目前国内图书市场，国际商学研究不仅为数不多，而且基本上都是用汉语写成，而种类繁多的国际商务英语图书，从商务英语阅读到写作与函电，从商务英语听力到会话与谈判，再到商务英语手册与辞典，基本注重国际商务实务，对国际商学理论一般都不涉及，难以与国外对接。从国外引进的国际商学理论著作和教材又存在语言艰深、消化困难、价格昂贵、与国情脱节等问题。

于是，国际商学和国际商务英语学习者，尤其是大专院校本科生、研究生以及具有相当英语水平的社会人士陷于这样一种尴尬的境地：他们掌握了一定的英语语言技能，也掌握一些国际贸易实务技能，但希望能够借助已有的英语知识和能力更加全面地掌握国际商学理论知识，了解国际商学研究的前沿动态，进一步提高自己的国际商学理论素养甚至英语水平，解决实际工作中遇到的问题。令人遗憾的是，这样一部用英语撰写的国际商学理论著作或教材在国内市场难觅其踪迹。

这种窘境的长期存在孕育着巨大的市场潜力，也势必要求国际商学理论工作者在扎实的英语功底与连贯的国际商学理论体系之间寻求结合，在国际商学理论知识介绍与国际商学前沿研究之间寻求平衡，但这种结合和平衡不应是直接对国外出版的国际商学理

论著作或教材的剪辑拼凑，而应是在借鉴国外商学前沿理论研究成果的基础上，以创新的国际商学理论框架和驾驭国际商务全局的眼光，结合中国国际商务的国情，针对国内国际商学理论研究的需求和外语教育的实际，通过长期理论探索、案例分析与教学实践，凝结成一部体系科学、知识完备、适合中国国情、具有本土化特色的理论框架和内容体系的国际商学理论著作或教材。

《当代商学概论（英文版）》是编著者长期从事国际商学研究和教学的结晶。凭借长期积累的英语语言文化背景和在国外多所大学研习国际商学所得，本书编著者通过对国际商学的深层探究和对所收集的国际商学素材的系统梳理，辅以在国内外知名企业工作和观摩体验的总结提升，加之数年大学本科国际商务英语课程的教学感悟，全面系统地消化了大量国际商学领域的传统和前沿文献，对国际商学理论体系和国际商学教材体系构架进行了细致的探讨和观照，用英语编写了这部内容涵盖国际商学领域主要方面、介绍国际商学研究前沿问题的国际商学著作。

《当代商学概论（英文版）》集中讨论国际商学领域的核心内容，共有十二章，内容涉及国际商学基本概念、企业组织与治理结构、企业行为与社会责任、全球贸易与市场、工商企业管理、人力资源管理、质量控制与管理、生产与服务运作管理、市场营销等。为了节省篇幅，本书没有将财务与预算管理、金融市场等国际商学的边缘知识纳入。本书虽然对当代商学的基础和前沿理论进行了探讨，但在撰写过程中充分考虑了作为高校教材的功能。它可以用作大专院校本科涉外专业（如国际贸易、国际金融、国际商务、英语语言文学等）的国际商学基础课程（如“当代商学概论”）和商务英语综合课程（如“商务英语精读”）的教材，也可以作为大学其他专业学生修完大学英语四级之后的国际商务英语综合教材，以及攻读经济学和管理学硕士学位的研究生专业英语教材，同时还可以供从事涉外专业课程教学的教师、具有中等英语水平的从事涉外商务、管理和交流的人员和对国际商学和国际商务感兴趣的社会各界人士参考。

本书在编写过程中参阅了国内外大量原版国际商学理论著作和教材、报纸杂志、研究文献和大型跨国企业案例资料，浏览了国内外众多企业、社区、非营利组织以及有关政府机构网站，从中提炼素材形成案例。这使编著者能够用崭新的眼光和广阔的视野，站在国际商科的前沿，审视本书的编写、体系的构建、内容的选择和案例的提取与分析，尽可能多地吸收新观点、新思维和新经验。但是，由于编者水平所限，本书难免有不妥之处。欢迎广大读者提出宝贵意见，以便修订时加以改进。

编　者

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# Chapter 1

# Contemporary Business: Some Basic Concepts

**Chapter Focus**

**In this chapter you will learn:**

1. how business is an economic activity and a way of life;
2. how economic forces affect business;
3. how business environments and their changes affect business now and in the future;
4. the four major economic roles the government is supposed to play.

*What comes into your mind when you read or hear the word "business"? Do pictures of giant corporations such as General Motors, Gree and Haier pop up before your eyes? Does your mind conjure up images of small firms such as a local restaurant and even a one-person operation like a second-hand bookshop at a street corner? Each of these is a business, but the word "business" means much more than just this.*

*Business is such a common term and activity in everyday life that no one may even want to give a minute to think about it. So much has been thought and written about it, but there remains even more that is to be explored. This chapter will start with some of the most fundamental concepts in contemporary business studies.*

## 1.1 Foundation of Contemporary Business

On the web page of Wharton University of Pennsylvania, the first-rate business school in the world, business is defined as "building your own company", "inventing technology", "leading a TV network", "creating a better world", "traveling to space", "running a website", "caring for kids", "working with cool bands", "making money work", "creating an image", and "changing the world". Indeed, business can be anything you can imagine doing.

As a technical term, the word "business" originally relates to the state of being busy either as an individual or society as a whole, doing commercially viable and profitable work. It has at least three usages, depending on the scope—the singular usage to mean a particular company or corporation, the generalized usage to refer to a particular

market sector, such as "the music business", and the broadest meaning to include all profit-seeking activities that provide goods and services required by customers, ranging from an ice-cream stand at the street corner to a huge company with tens of thousands of employees and billions of dollars in sales.

In addition to virtually all daily necessities, businesses provide us with many other things that make our lives more comfortable and enjoyable. They also provide us with opportunities to create wealth for the good of the public and become wealthy. Wal-Mart is now found in many cities in China, and its founder Sam Walton began his business by opening one store in Arkansas and, over time, became the richest person in America. Bill Gates started Microsoft with a small group of people and is now among the richest people in the world. Li Kaishing (Jiacheng) started his career from the bottom of life and now ranks among the wealthiest Chinese.

### 1.1.1 Business and business activities

A business, also called a firm or an enterprise, is a legally recognized organization designed to provide goods and/or services to consumers for profits or for non-profit purposes. Businesses are predominant in market economies, the great majority being privately owned in most parts of the world and formed to increase the wealth of its owners and grow the business itself.

Procedures of starting a business vary with countries. In the United States, starting a small business is pretty easy. Submit a business plan, change the message on your answering machine, buy a computer, create a website, and you begin to sell your products over the telephone. But in some other countries, it may take 6 months, and there is a required minimum investment: $35,000 in Germany and $60,000 in Republic of Korea. Application procedures used to be extremely complicated in China, and it took a very long time to complete all the procedures, but they have been reduced to the greatest extent, with the standardization of government and regulation.

The success of a business depends on a wide range of factors. A good business must start with a good vision and a good mission. It must have clear and realistic objectives and goals. It must have its development plans and strategies. It must have the necessary resources and the right ways of using these resources. The success of a business also requires a great deal of hard work, admirable wisdom and great courage on the part of its owners and management teams. A successful business must satisfy customer needs, earn profits, be managed efficiently, and be socially responsible.

**Customer satisfaction** Satisfaction is basically a psychological state, but customer

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