Technical Writing
for General
and Social Occasions

社交
实用英文写作

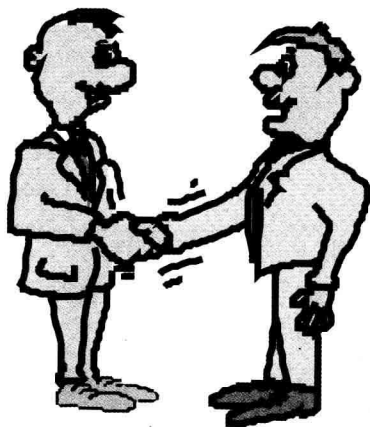*Technical Writing for General and Social Occasions*

张 伟 程贵清 编著

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中国计量出版社
CHINA METROLOGY PUBLISHING HOUSE

内　容　提　要

《社交实用英文写作》是一本非常实用、便于查阅的现代英语应用文工具书。它包括了各种常见的实用社交英文写作方法、书写格式、特点、书信组成部分、写作原则等。内容丰富、体裁多样，语言文字规范、自然流畅。有正式的亦有非正式的，有传统的亦有当代的，有事务性质的亦有轻松活泼的，有工作关系的亦有亲朋好友的。读者可以查阅到任何一个话题，进行摹写、改写，省时省力，事半功倍。该书的每个主题都分别列有丰富的相关写作要点、写作词汇、写作短语、写作句子以及可供参考的写作段落、写作范例。

该书可供英语教师、大学生、外企员工、商务人员、科技工作者和机关管理干部参考。

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INTRODUCTION

（序言）

改革开放以来，特别是自中国加入世界贸易组织（WTO）以后，涉外交往日益频繁，商务活动逐渐增多，对外人员交流、书信往来越来越广，人们迫切想了解如何使用英文书信与外国人进行沟通。即便今天大量的商务往来、社会交往是通过电话、传真、电邮或面对面进行的，但毫无疑问，书信交流依然拥有绝对的必要性，如：公文、便函、合同、电报、电传、广告、邀请、考察、求职、感谢、道歉、产品介绍、出国留学等，书信应用扮演着极其重要的角色。因此，在经济全球化这个现代社会大背景下，英语书信仍是人们进行商务活动、信息交流、公关交往等必不可少的手段和途径。同时，能写好英语书信也是取得个人事业成功的一个重要标志。

《社交实用英文写作》（Technical Writing for General and Social Occasions）就是一本非常实用英语应用文工具书。本书包括了各种英语应用文的写作方法、书写格式和特点、书信组成部分、写作原则，有公函亦有私函，内容丰富、体裁多样，尤其是主体部分附有大量写作词汇、短语、句子、段落、范例。

本书旨在为有一定英语基础的广大英语爱好者、大学生、机关管理干部、商务从业人员及科技工作者提供一本查阅、参考和模拟套写的英语信函写作手册，目的是帮助他们熟悉各种信函的特有格式和写法，掌握规范、自然、流畅的语言文字，具备应付和处理涉外方面问题的能力。

该书的另一本姊妹篇《职场实用英文写作》（Technical Writing in the Work Place）与本书同时面世，同样是一本极具特色的英语应用文写作工具书。

在编写该书过程中，编者参阅了有关书籍和资料，对其中选用的资料予以加工、整理、修改。在此也衷心感谢陈聪尔、董江红、徐明、张雨蒙等同志所提供的支持和帮助。

由于时间和水平有限，书中肯定有不妥、疏漏或不足之处，恳请读者指正。

编　者

2008 年 3 月

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ELEMENTS OF A LETTER

（信函組成部分）

1. Personal Letters （个人信函）

Date：The date is placed near the top of the right side of the page. When the person is unfamiliar with your address and you aren't using stationary with your address on it, start with your address in the upper right corner (usually two lines) followed by the date. The left edges of these three lines line up underneath each other.

Salutation：Begin the salutation a few spaces down and flush left. It is followed by a comma("Dear Jean,"). You don't usually put the person's address above it, as you would with a business letter.

Body of the letter：Indent the first paragraph-five spaces if you are typing the letter, about 3/4″ if you are handwriting it. Indent all other paragraphs the same way.

Closing：The complimentary close("Love", "Sincerely") is set about one line below your last sentence and to the right, its left edge on a line with the left edge of your date. Sign your name on the line below the complimentary close.

If your letter is more than one page long, generally write only on one side of your stationary.

2. Memos (便函)

Headings: At the top of the memo are the headings, the to/from/date/subject lines, which replace the letter's salutation. The most common ways of arranging the headings on the page are:

> **TO**: Paul Rayley
> **FROM**: Minta Doyle
> **DATE**: April 23, 2003
> **RE**: Lighthouse repairs

Message or body of the memo: There are no rigid ruels for spacing in a memo, but two or three blank lines are commonly left between the headings and the text, which is single-spaced. Each paragraph begins flush left and is separated from other paragraphs by a single line of space.

Notation lines: Notations such as "Enc. :" or "cc:" are placed flush left at the bottom, as in a letter.

No signature is necessary on a memo, but people often sign or initial it at the bottom or next to their name in the "From:" line. Some memos are arranged in two parts so that the recipient can respond on and return the second half.

3. Business Letters (商务信函)

Return address: If you aren't using letterhead stationary, use the two lines immediately preceding the date line for your street address, city, state, and zipcode. Unless the letter is extremely formal, abbreviations ("Rd. ," "Apt. ,"

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"NY") are acceptable.

Date: For dates use this format: "October 12, 2003." The month is not abbreviated, the day is not spelled out, and endings for numbers ("16th", "2nd") are not often used. But with the use of computers, We have more and more of this kind of endings. You may see "12 October 2003" particularly for international or government business. If you are typing in your return address, the date line goes directly beneath it. Otherwise, it is placed two to six lines below the printed address. When using the shortened date from("11/12/2003") in a casual memo, remember that this is used primarily in the United States; in other countries the first number is the day, the second the month.

Confidential or personal notation: Indicate "Confidential" or "Personal" halfway between the date line and the inside address, flush left.

Inside address: The number of spaces between the date line and the inside address depends on the length of your letter. Balance the elements of the letter so that there's not too much white space above the inside address or below the last printed line. The inside address is always flush left and single spaced. If one line is long, put half of it on the next line, indenting two or three spaces. The person's name goes on the first line. A brief title follows the name, preceded by a comma. Otherwise the title goes on the second line, or if you need the space, can be omitted. When writing to two or

more people, list them one to a line in alphabetical order. The company's name is on the next line, and the department or division is on the following line (unless space is a problem, in which case omit it). Information such as suite, room, floor, or apartment usually has its own line, unless it and the street address are short enough to fit on one line. It used to be standard practice to spell out all words of the inside address, but the use of two-letter state abbreviations has spread from the envelopes (where the Postal Service wants to see them) to the inside address, and if the letter is not formal, other abbreviations ("Ave.") may appear as well. Spell out compass directions that precede a street name but abbreviate those that follow it ("14 North Cedar", "14 Cedar N. W. ").

Attention line: When you don't know the name of the individual to whom you are writing or you want to direct the letter to a particular person's attention, the attention line ("ATTN: Customer Service Representative") is placed below the inside address, leaving one line of space between them. You can also include an attention line as part of the inside address on either the first or second line (after the company name).

Subject line: To indicate the subject of your letter, type "Subject:" or "Re:" (for "regarding") between the salutation and the body of your letter or between the inside address and the salutation. A brief phrase follows it ("Sub-

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ject: block and brick work" or "Re: vacation dates").
Many people replace the salutation with a subject line when
writing an impersonal letter to an anonymous recipient (your
credit card statement was incorrect, for example). The sub-
ject line is popular with people handling stacks of incoming
letters, trying to quickly identify the purpose of each. It is
not recommended when your letter deals with several sub-
jects.

Reference line: When referring to an order number or
to a reference number used either by your correspondent or
by your firm, handle it like a subject line and place it
between the inside address and the salutation or between the
salutation and the body of the letter (leaving one line of
space on both sides in each case). It may also be placed
between the date line and the inside address.

Salutation: Leave one line of space between the inside
address (or the subject line) and the salutation. The saluta-
tion is followed by a colon (which is more formal) or a com-
ma.

Body of the letter: Leave one line of space between the
salutation (or the subject line) and the body of the letter. In
general, single space within paragraphs and leave a line of
space between paragraphs. If your letter is brief, however,
double-spacing (or even 1 1/2 spacing) will make it look
better on the page. Wide margins will also balance brief let-
ters on the page just as narrow margins (but not less than 1

1/4) modify long letters. To indent paragraphs, start in five to ten spaces.

Do not justify the right margin.

If your letter runs to a second page, indicate the name of the recipient, the page number, and the date across the top of the page (about six lines below the page's edge). When writing to two individuals, put both names on the left, one under the other, and on the right indicate the date with the page number under it. Then leave three to five lines before resuming the body of the text. There should be a minimum of three lines of type in addition to the signature block to justify a second page.

Complimentary close: Leave one line between the body of the text and the complimentary close (Yours truly).

Signature: Your handwritten signature goes between the complimentary close and your typed name and title.

Name and title lines: Four spaces (or more, if your signature is large) below the complimentary close, type your name with the first letter directly beneath the first letter of the complimentary close. If you use a title, it is typed on the line beneath your name, and also lined up with the left edge of your name and the complimentary close. Omit the title if it appears on the letterhead.

Identification line: Leave one line of space between the name or title line and the identification line. Type the letter-signer's initials in capital letters flush left, followed by

a slash or colon and the typist's initials in lowercase letters ("DCK/jp," "IN:pjm"). Or, since it is obvious who has signed the letter, the typist's initials appear alone. The identification line is no longer much used.

Enclosure line: Leave one line of space between the identification line or the name/title and the enclosure line. Set flush left, this line begins with "Enc. :" and lists any enclosures in the order in which they are found in the envelope, one to a line. You may also use "Encl." or "Enclosures" followed by the number of items enclosed: "Enclosures(4)".

Copies line: Leave one line of space between previous material and the copy line. After "cc:" (from the old "carbon copy") list those receiving copies of the letter in alphabetical order, one to a line, either by their full name, initials and last name, or title and last name only. The person's address may also be included. If you don't want the recipient of the letter to know that copies were sent, indicate "bcc:" (blind carbon copy) with the names of those receiving copies on the office copy of the letter.

Postscript: A postscript, preceded by "P. S. " is typed flush left two spaces below the last typed line.

Mailing notation: Instructions for mailing (Special delivery, Overnight express) are noted on copies of the letter, but not on the original. This is rarely used today.

LETTER FORMATS

（信函格式）

There is no "best" way to arrange the elements of a letter on the page (unless your company has a house style). You do, however, need to be consistent (if you indent one paragraph, you indent them all) and the layout must be readable and appealing. The following four formats are the most common, but any arrangement is acceptable if it makes sense, is readable, and is spaced nicely on the page.

1. Full-block letter （齐头式）

The easiest format for the typist, full block-style means that every line begins at the left margin-no exceptions. If you have a second page, the name of the recipient, the page number, and the date are typed flush left, one under the other.

CHANGING FURNITURE RENTAL
1927 James Avenue
Huntly, WI 53597

March 15, 2003

Confidential

York Furniture Rental
ATTN: Constance Yorke
1862 Wood Street
Huntly, WI 53597

Dear Constance Yorke,

Re: bad checks

We spoke at the Huntly Business Association meeting last month about exchanging lists of customers who have written at least three unbankable checks. Enclosed is my list.

Yours truly,
(signature)
Hamish Channing
President
Enc. : list

P. S. I don't feel too bad about passing these names along because I keep this same list posted by my cash register.

2. Block letter (半齐头式)

The block letter is identical to the full-block with two exceptions: the date line and reference line are typed flush right and the signature block (complimentary close plus sig-

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nature plus name line and title line) are also set flush right or at least to the right of center. Otherwise, everything is flush left and there are no identifications. This format, which has a more traditional look than the full-block format, is used in the majority of business letters.

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