

■ 高职高专“十二五” 商务英语系列教材

商务英语写作

ON-THE-JOB WRITING

王丹丹 宋晓丹/编著



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前 言

商务英语写作能力不仅是商务英语专业学生的核心能力，更是从事国际商务工作的相关人员必备的一项技能，本书主要是为了提升学生的商务英语写作能力而编写的。

随着当今全球商务活动范围和内容的变化，本书所涉及的商务业务知识和惯例、传递信息的手段和方式以及使用的语言也随之变化。本书除了包括商务英语写作的基本特点和写作过程以及商务英语写作的一些基础知识和技能之外，还包括工作申请材料、公司内部常用信函、非正式文件、电子邮件、商务博客等商务英语写作要求，采用最新的商业情境和日常工作场所作为学习情境，有效地展示不同类型商务文档的功能、范围和组织形式，利用最新技术手段、互联网、电子邮件、商务博客和网络视频会议作为训练写作的媒介，使学习者能成为实际工作中的成功写作者，提升商务英语写作的有效性，从而提升学习者的就业能力。

本书的主要特色是以能力培养为主线，把与工学结合、强调有效沟通、多元评估和多样性等要素植入每一个章节中，具体表现为以下几个方面：

- 知识目标和能力目标 (Objectives) 介绍：指导读者如何学习本章内容。
 - 名人引言 (Quotations)：引导读者思考本章主题。
 - 批判性思考问题 (Thinking Critically)：引导读者如何结合个人经验和所学内容来应对实际工作场合的真实挑战。
 - 能力培养 (Skill Builder)：帮助读者强化对所学知识和技能的应用。
 - 跨文化差异的问题 (Understanding Diversity)：提升读者的跨文化意识，提高跨文化交际的有效性。
 - 总结 (Summary)：帮助读者更好地反思所学的知识和技能。
 - 练习 (Practices)：每章结束后有三项练习。练习一是提升读者对所学的概念的理解；练习二是提升读者的商务英语写作能力；练习三是针对实际商务场合的写作练习。
 - 知识和能力清单 (Checklists)：帮助读者评估对所学内容的理解和应用。
- 希望通过本书的学习和训练，不仅可以提高读者的商务英语写作水平，而且能提升综合职业能力，为职业上的成功提供切实有效的帮助。

大连职业技术学院 王丹丹 宋晓丹

2013年1月1日

Introduction

Welcome to On-The-Job Writing and the amazing world of business writing at work. This book was written to show you, how to write job-related communications easily and well.

The objectives of this book can be described by the acronym T.R.E.E.D. which also reflects the characteristics that effective business people possess and continually develop throughout their careers.

- **Techniques**—Students will demonstrate the use of writing techniques, knowledge production, and work management techniques through learning this book.

- **Reach beyond the classroom**—Students will reach beyond the classroom by writing some documents at work, networking with people out of campus, and considering the informational and social roles of specific documents in a specific business setting.

- **Effectiveness in communication**—Students will practice effectiveness in communication with the help of SKILL BUILDER in this book.

- **Evaluation**—Students will adapt evaluation instruments to be evaluated by peers, teachers and people in business.

- **Diversities**—Students will prepare and present messages adapted to meet diversities of people having different backgrounds, languages and values.

The main characteristics of this book are the followings:

- Each chapter opens with learning **Objectives** to guide your study of the chapter material.

- **Quotations** get you thinking about the themes of each chapter.

- **Thinking Critically** questions challenge you to apply your personal experiences to the chapter content and offer opportunities to consider real-world challenges you will face in the workplace.

- **Skill Builder** at the end of each chapter provides opportunities for you to increase your skills in the concepts and principles of business writing at work.

- **Understanding Diversity** directs you to situations that describe how different people view in another country.

- The **Summary** at the end of each chapter recaps for you the basic concepts covered.

- **Practices** at the end of each chapter provide opportunities for you to increase your



understanding about the concepts and principles of professional business writing at work, improve your writing skills, and improve the applications of your knowledge and skills at work.

● **Checklists** provide chances to assess your understanding and application of the topics covered in the previous sections.

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Chapter 1

Writing and Your Career

If I went back to college again, I'd concentrate on two areas: learning to write and to speak before an audience. Nothing in life is more important than the ability to communicate effectively.

—Gerald R. Ford

38th President of the United States

OBJECTIVES

After studying the material in this chapter...

You should understand

1. The importance of professional business English writing skills.
2. Why and how we use business communication at work.
3. The characteristics of professional writing.
4. The key to effective professional writing.

You should be able to

1. Recognize a range of writing formats and their purpose at work.
2. Describe why and how we use written communication.
3. Discuss the characteristics of professional writing .
4. Identify the reasons why writing will influence the content, style and format.
5. Distinguish the audience for writing and analyze how the content, style and accuracy will be influenced.

Chapter 1 gives you some basics information about writing. The importance of writing will be discussed in general. Then we will focus on when and where we are supposed to using wring to communicate. Your communication skills are vital to your success in the workplace. The ability to communicate effectively with customer, coworkers, subordinates and supervisors may be the determining factor in your career advancement.



I . THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONAL WRITING

Because of the emergence of the paperless office, e-mail, the internet and web pages, the power of the written word increases. The ability to write is important in all aspects of life. Writing is not only an essential job skill, but also a reflection on the level of confidence and professionalism of you and an image of your company.

It is widely accepted that writing is an essential job skill. Your writing skills are vital to your success in the workplace. In obtaining a job, your writing techniques are important. Looking at classified advertisements and job descriptions, you will find the majority of companies specifying that a successful applicant should have excellent writing skills. Employers will screen resumes and cover letters for evidence of applicant's job-related knowledge and experience. The report cited a survey of 26 companies that identified writing as "the most valued skill of employees." Furthermore, many employers include essay-eye questions on their application forms to help them in evaluating writing skill.

Whether you like it or not, many people judge your ability and intelligence by the quality of your writing. How you communicate with others through writing determines their opinion of your overall competence and integrity. It is truly believed that many people judge your abilities and intelligence specifically by the quality of your writing. The memos, letters, and reports you write demonstrate your ability to communicate which determines their opinion of your overall competence and integrity. If your writing skills are poor, however, others tend to question your abilities no matter how intelligent, talented, and knowledgeable you are. Others also will not trust you and will become hesitant to work with you if you make statements that are not factual, if you make untruthful comments, or if you are careless in your writing.

Writing is an essential skill for both employers and employees. For many businesses, a written document is their only shop window. That document may take many different forms—from a website, to a newsletter, to a letter, memo, e-mail, or fax, to a complex technical report, or even a simple quotation. But that document, like the shop window, may be the first, and often the only, impression that people have of your business. Since people who read these form an opinion of your organization, presenting yourself well in writing means you will create a favorable image of you organization as well as promote successful business operation. When you write as an employee of your company, you represent the company. Customers will evaluate your company based on their interaction with you. Any company with employees who can write clearly and concisely has a competitive advantage over others.

This book was written to show you, step by step, how to write these and other job-related communications easily and well.

UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY

Different types of written communication are found within the workplace. Most workplaces use preset formats, such as forms, charts, spreadsheets, memos, e-mails, letters, posters, etc. to record and communicate information, along with more open outline formats that allow for extended writing. Whatever is written, however, needs to be accurate and concise. Do people have the same attitude toward the conciseness of message all around the world?

SKILL BUILDER

1. What is your chosen career? Make a list of the types of writing you think you will do, or have already been assigned, on the job.

My Career:

The Types of Writing:

2. Find an example of each type, saying who uses/creates the writing, how frequently, what it is about, where it gets stored and what format is used.

3. Present your information in a table or similar format so that the information can be easily compared.

Type of writing	Who creates it?	What it is?	Where it gets stored?	What format is used?

II. THE SPECIFIC SITUATIONS FOR BUSINESS WRITING

Written communication is more appropriate than oral communication. You may choose to use writing for a various reasons. Among the reasons are following:

Convey Complex Information. When you communicate technical, statistical, or detailed information, you need to include charts, graphs, diagrams, or other visual data



to present complex information. Your reader may find it easier to understand written material than material presented orally.

Reach your intended receiver. You may find it is easier to reach your intended receiver through written communication. On the one hand, a person who may not be available by phone will eventually read a written correspondence. On the other hand, using writing is a fast method of sending the same information to a number of individuals.

Provide proof of the communication. A written communication provides proof of the communication and becomes a document that may be legally acceptable as a binding contract or as evidence in a court of law. A Written message also can be reread as many times as is needed in order to interpret its message or remember what to do.

Provide convenience for your reader. A written communication allows your reader to review the material at a convenient time and place without interruptions.

Plan your message. A written communication allows you to spend time on the content of your message and to word it in the most advantageous way. A telephone or personal contact, however carefully planned, is subject to the events of the moment.

Stress the importance of the communication. People pay much greater importance to a letter than to a phone call. You may use a special mail service such as registered or verified mail that will attach greater importance to the message.

Save time and money. A written communication may be less expensive and time-consuming than a personal visit or a telephone call. That is to say, many people can receive message and instructions at the same time, so it can be a more effective way of passing on information.

THINKING CRITICALLY

Goodwill is often viewed as an approximation of the value of a company's brand names, reputation, or long-term relationships that cannot otherwise be represented financially.

Most business owners view goodwill as good service, products and reputation. One dictionary defines Goodwill as, "A desire for the well-being of others; the pleasant feeling or relationship between a business and its customers."

Explain the significance of goodwill in a business situation.

SKILL BUILDER

Categories these under the following types:

Writing at work			Purpose for writing			
- Identify all the types of writing in your own workplace using the list below (add your own if necessary). - Tick what you think is the main purpose for doing the writing. - Indicate in the FOH column how often you carry out the writing task as part of your job by writing the appropriate letter.						
F —Frequently O —Occasionally H —Hardly ever	Used at work	F O H	To inform	To instruct	To report	To collect data
Telephone message						
Time sheet						
Memo						
Order form						
Letter						
E-mail						
Delivery sheet						
Accident report form						
Log sheet						
Quality checks						
Fault form						
Appointment book						
Maintenance checks						
Dispatch form						
Daily planner						
Diary						
Report						
Assignment						
Temperature chart						
Stock sheet						

III. THE KEY TO BUSINESS WRITING

Writing business correspondence is a many-sided challenge. First, business writing is briefer and more concise than many other types of writing. You'd better impress the reader quickly. Business is busy—your letter, memo, or report may only have a thirty-second reading. You had better get to the point quickly, support your reasoning, and finish fast. Second, writing at work is a combination of activities going on at the same time. It's not a disconnected or isolated series of steps. As you write, think of the overall effect of the whole message to make sure your correspondence always to be clear and reader-friendly and



to accomplish your purpose. In order to meet the challenge, you will need to consider the following in planning your message:

- Determining the Purpose.
- Identifying the Audience.
- Developing Your Message.
- Selecting Your Style and Tone.

Determining Your Purpose

Business writing is action-oriented, rhetorical, and user-centered. It aims to effect positive change, through both persuasive and informative strategies. It is essential that you have a clear understanding of the purpose of your document.

- What is your purpose in writing?
- What purpose should the writing serve for your reader?
- Is your main point stated early in the document?
- What do you want your reader to do when she / he finishes reading the writing?

The purposes of your writing also can be to explain, express, describe, analyze, recommend, summarize, instruct, and hypothesize. When you write, your purpose may be one or more of the following:

To inform (General information: Health and Safety law, policies, posters, newsletters, union business, pensions, e-mails, letters, etc.)	To instruct (Workplace instructions and procedures—how to do something)
To report (Sales figures, end of year reviews, accidents, fault-finding, etc.)	To collect data (Forms which generally collect regular data/words, e.g. machine readouts, greenhouse/cold storage temperatures, signatures, times, etc.)

However, you might also write a business letter to persuade others to take action or to propose your ideas. Business letters even function as advertisements at times. Consider the letters long-distance phone companies send to those not signed up for their services or the cover letter to your resume. Both of these serve to promote or advertise. Sometimes, you write business communication to build goodwill to improve the relations between the parties. Most organizational writings often have two or all of these purposes at the same

time.

Knowing your purpose will help you determine exactly what you can and must say. Since your purpose controls the amount and order of information, state it clearly at the beginning of every letter or report.

Start writing with such an opening firmly fixed in mind:

- I am writing to inform you about four changes in your owner’s manual.
- This report has been written to review the water supply problems at Bear Harbor and to recommend a solution.
- This publication has been prepared by the Architectural Woodwork Institute to provide a source book of conventional details.
- I am writing to apply for the vacant post of sales manager advertised in today’s *Dalian Daily*.

SKILL BUILDER

Write down the differences between writing for school and writing at work.

Aspect	School	Business
Purpose		

Identifying Your Audience

Any writing is an act of communication, and basic communication theory indicates communication involves both a source and a receiver. You are the source; who is your receiver? As a writer you always have to ask: Just who is my reader?

Getting a clear picture of your readers before you start to write is important in effective writing. The better picture you have of your readers, the better you can direct your writing. Once you have identified your audience, you will be able to aim your message at its specific needs. Remember, not all audiences have the same needs. What has to be said to one group may not necessarily have to be said to all.

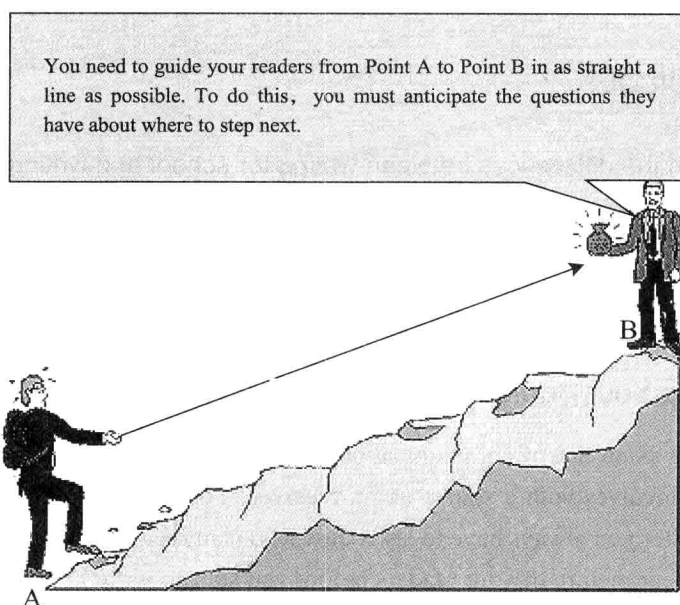
In a letter it is pretty easy to identify who your audience is; it is usually the person you are writing to. However, you must also consider any additional readers. For instance, if you write to a member of congress about a constituent problem, the office of the member of congress may attach a cover letter and send it on to the constituent without any further explanation. Therefore, you must write so that both audiences understand your letter.

Identifying your audience should do more than just cause you to make sure the terms you use are clear. It should help you focus on the reader’s needs. You should do this by



thinking about what your reader knows about the situation now. Then think about how to guide them from their current knowledge base to what you need them to know. Take some time, before you start to write, to think about what the reader will need to know. To help you do this, try answering the following questions:

- Who is the reader?
- Is there a secondary reader we need to give information?
- What does the reader (s) already know about the subject?
- What questions will the reader (s) have?
- What's the best outcome for my agency? What do I need to say to get this outcome?
- What's the best outcome for the reader? What do I need to say to get this outcome?



By thoughtfully considering, and sometimes reconsidering, these issues, you will be able to make more informed choices when you are writing. The following are examples:

- If you are writing for a market manager who likes facts and figures⁹, you would be wise to use statistics, charts, and figures to develop your points.
- If you are writing to a production supervisor who doesn't want to hear complaints, you might want to write using a positive tone emphasizing solutions to problems instead of focusing on problems.
- If you are writing to a maintenance worker who doesn't want to read too much, be more specific or concrete, otherwise they may miss the point.
- If you are writing to a customer who knows little about the topic, provide more