



普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材

高等学校英语 **拓展** 系列教程

商务英语写作 (修订版)

BUSINESS ENGLISH WRITING

© 主编：胡英坤 车丽娟

专业英语类

外语教学与研究出版社
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

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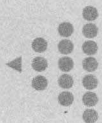
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前 言



随着经济全球化的发展,英语在商务环境中的重要性日益凸显。这对大学英语教学提出了新的要求,即学生能用英语在未来的工作中进行有效的商务沟通。在大学英语教学中,应用型课程开设得越来越多,商务英语写作就是其中一门。

商务英语写作应用范围广泛,除涵盖传统意义上的贸易书信外,还包括日常工作中的往来信函。此外,求职信、报告、意向书等都是商务写作不可缺少的部分。从实践的角度来看,利用商务信函进行沟通的能力是每个从业者获得职业成功必备的基本能力之一。尤其随着互联网的发展与普及,运用互联网进行信息沟通正变得日益频繁和常规化。这也让商务英语写作课程在大学英语教学中越来越受重视。

商务英语写作首先强调写作知识和写作技能的传授,在培养语言能力的基础上,教会学生如何使用商务写作模式、专业术语、常用句型、语言修辞等。商务英语写作还涉及商务知识、商务惯例和做法,这要求学生不仅关注英语语言能力,更要注重语言沟通原则与技巧。通过这门课程的学习,学生不仅要知道“写什么”,还要知道“怎么写”,以及“为什么这样写”。

此次再版,我们采纳了许多教师和学生的建议,对本书的内容进行了调整和优化,在强调写作能力的基础上,更加突出商务英语写作的特点,全面介绍与商务写作相关的各类知识和交际原则,同时注意培养学生的判断力和创造力,启发学生思考。修订版所作的主要调整如下:第一,在原有基础上对章节内容进行了添加与重组,使全书内容更为丰富,线索更为清晰;第二,根据提供的写作原则,更新并增加了不少例文,涵盖了贸易书信、日常办公沟通书

信、求职信、报告、意向书、调查问卷以及商务协议等多种文体，写作原则与具体实例一一对应，一目了然；第三，对单元结构进行优化，先阐述完成本单元写作任务的基本原则，再提供范例并设计讨论题，帮助学生理解和掌握写作原则。同时，范例附有中文旁注和综合评论，解析信函结构，点明写作技巧，加深学生的理解，帮助学生灵活运用；第四，增加了范例对比板块，一坏一好两个例子引导学生综合运用写作技巧进行批判性思考；第五，补充、梳理了常用句型部分，为学生提供更多的商务语言输入，方便学生识记。由于本版涵盖的内容较多，教师可根据具体情况，对学习内容进行适当的调整。





本书系全国教育科学“十一五”规划教育部重点课题“财经类高校大学英语教学模式与教材建设研究”（项目号：GPA105009）以及2012年度辽宁省普通高等教育本科教学改革研究项目“2+2+X+C 大学英语课程体系优化研究与实践”（项目号：辽教384）阶段性成果之一。我们希望该书此次再版能帮助学生提高商务英语语言的基本功，了解和学习商务英语应用的社会环境，掌握有效沟通技巧，全面提高商务英语写作能力。我们真诚欢迎使用本版教材的教师和学生，以及商界的朋友们提出宝贵意见。让我们共同为该教材的不断完善，为商务英语写作课程质量的不断提高不懈努力。

编者

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全新英语后续课程教材 全面提高英语综合应用能力

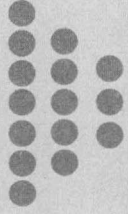
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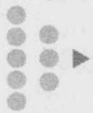
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Chapter

An Overview of Business Writing

商务写作概述

The ability to write effectively is a valuable business asset. One reason is that a great deal of business is transacted in writing. With the wide use of fax and EDP¹, writing is involved in every part of business. More and more people feel the need to put ideas and information into written form. Another reason is that effective business writers can use their writing skills to help increase their companies' sales and profits by promoting good relations with customers, employees and the general public. Moreover, proficiency in writing gives the man/woman in business a professional advantage over less capable writers and contributes substantially to his/her self-confidence—a necessary quality for business success.



Functions of Business Writing

Every business message is designed to achieve a specific business objective. Its success depends on what it says and to what extent it induces a favorable response from the reader. Thus, business writing has two functions: to inform and to persuade.

Messages to inform are used to convey the vast amount of information needed to complete the day-to-day operations of the business—explain instructions to employees, announce meetings and procedures, acknowledge orders, accept contracts for services, etc. The major purpose of most of these messages is to have the receiver understand a body of information and concentrate on the logical presentation of the contents.

In addition to providing information, some business messages also

1 EDP: Electronic Data Processing 电子数据处理

influence the reader's attitudes and actions. These messages might include letters promoting products or services and seeking support for ideas and worthy causes presented to supervisors, stockholders, customers, clients and others.

To secure the desired response, it is necessary to have an adequate knowledge of the English language and an understanding of human nature. The writer should have an acquaintance with the particular interest and, if possible, the emotions of the reader. It seems easy enough, for example, to ask for payment of a bill, but it is quite difficult to secure payment without offending the reader and losing his/her future patronage (光顾). No communication is wholly successful unless it retains the reader's goodwill.



Six C's—Criteria and Techniques for Effective Business Writing

A business message is considered successful when: 1) the receiver interprets the message as the sender intended it, and 2) it achieves the sender's purposes. In order to meet these objectives, American experts in business communication developed six C's principles: Courtesy, Correctness, Conciseness, Clarity, Concreteness and Completeness. The six C's are both criteria and techniques for effective business writing.

Courtesy

Review of actual business correspondence reveals that special attention should be devoted to assuring the courtesy of business communication. By courtesy we mean treating people with respect and friendly human concern. Effective writers visualize the reader before starting to write. They consider the reader's desires, problems, circumstances, emotions and probable reactions to their request. Developing courtesy in a letter usually involves three aspects: using you-viewpoint, taking a positive tone and being conversational.

► Using you-viewpoint

Writing from the you-viewpoint (also called you-attitude) is a technique for

building goodwill in letters. You-viewpoint is to focus interest on the reader. It is a technique for persuasion and for influencing people favorably.

In a broad sense, you-viewpoint writing emphasizes the reader's interest and concerns. It emphasizes "you" and "your" and de-emphasizes "we" and "our". But it is more than a matter of just using second-person pronouns. It is an attitude that places the reader in the center of things. Sometimes, it just involves being friendly and treating people in the way they like to be treated. Sometimes it involves skillfully handling people with carefully chosen words to make a desired impression.

Examples

We-viewpoint	You-viewpoint
1. We are happy to have your order for Kopper products, which we are sending today by Mercury Freight.	1. Your selection of Kopper products should reach you by Saturday, as they were shipped by Mercury Freight today.
2. We sell the Forever cutlery set for the low price of \$6 each and suggest a retail price of \$8.5.	2. You can reap a \$2.5 profit on each Forever set you sell at \$8.5, for your cost is only \$6.
3. We have shipped the three dozen desk sets you ordered.	3. Your three dozen desk sets should reach you with this letter.

When you use you-viewpoint in writing, avoid insincerity. The you-viewpoint can be used to the point of being insincere, and it can be obviously flattery. Remember the objective of the you-viewpoint is to treat people courteously—the way they like to be treated. You cannot afford to sacrifice sincerity by overdoing it. Use the you-viewpoint for good goals. If you use it for bad goals, it will have the effect of manipulation². Use the you-viewpoint only when it is friendly and sincere and when your goals are good. In such cases, using the you-viewpoint is "telling it as it is" or at least as it should be.

► Taking a positive tone

People enjoy and react favorably to positive messages. A positive tone builds the reader's confidence in the writer's ability to solve problems and strengthens

2 the effect of manipulation: 被操纵的感觉

personal and business relationships. Positive words are helpful especially when persuasion and goodwill are needed. Positive words emphasize the pleasant aspects of the goal and tend to put the reader in the right frame of mind³. They also create the goodwill atmosphere readers seek in most letters. Negative words tend to produce the opposite effect. They may stir up your reader's resistance to your goals, and they are likely to be highly destructive of goodwill.

Examples

Negative	Positive
1. You failed to give us the fabric specifications of the sofa you ordered.	1. In order that you may have the sofa you want, will you please check your choice of fabric on the enclosed card?
2. I cannot accept the recommendation of the site-selection committee.	2. I wish I could accept the recommendation of the site-selection committee.
3. We regret to inform you that we must deny your request for credit.	3. For the time being, we can serve you only on a cash basis.

► Being conversational

A letter—a good letter—should be pleasing to the reader. In a good letter a conversation is held. The reader should be made to forget that he/she is reading a letter. Instead, the writer has traveled on a piece of paper to talk to the reader. People who write with a sense of personal contact have a better chance to make what they say interesting and convincing than those who feel they are writing letters. Whatever you talk about in the letter, the language you use should be the same as if you met the person on the street, at home or in the office. Such language is warm and natural. It leaves a favorable impression on people. It is also the language we use most and understand best.

The executives of your company do not want letter contacts to be cold and too formal. They know that the most loyal customer is the one who feels like “one of the family”. But when faced with a writing task, many of us tend to hide our hospitality. Instead of writing in friendly, conversational language, we write in stiff and stilted (生硬的) words. There is a misconception that big and difficult words are preferred in business letters, but the result of such words is a cold and

3 put the reader in the right frame of mind: 使读者有好的心情

unnatural style—one that does not produce the goodwill you want your letters to have.

The following examples illustrate the problems of being too formal and ways to correct them.

Examples

Stiff and dull style	Conversational style
1. Reference is made to your May 3 letter, in which you described the approved procedure for initiating a claim.	1. Please refer to your May 3 letter, in which you tell how to file a claim.
2. In reply to your June 18 letter, please be informed that your adherence to instructions outlined therein will greatly facilitate attainment of our objective.	2. By following the procedure you listed in your June 18 letter, you will help us reach our goal.
3. I shall be most pleased to avail myself of your kind suggestion when and if the price declines.	3. I shall gladly follow your suggestion if and when the price falls.

Correctness

Correct grammar, punctuation and spelling are basic requirements for business writing. Errors in business letters and reports have a negative impact on the reputation of the company and the writer. Errors distract the reader from the message itself and thereby reduce the effectiveness of the document. Business writers should follow grammatical rules, which means using correct sentence structures, avoiding sentence fragments⁴, run-on sentences⁵ or comma splices⁶. Besides, you should also watch for common types of errors: misplaced elements and dangling modifiers (垂悬结构) in business letters, because they can cause confusion to the reader. To avoid misplaced elements, you should place words, phrases or clauses near the words they modify. Placing words, phrases or clauses in the wrong position can confuse the reader.

4 sentence fragment: 不完整句

5 run-on sentence: 连写句

6 comma splice: 逗号错误, 指用逗号连接两个独立句子

Conciseness

Effective writing is concise—each word, sentence and paragraph counts. Conciseness means to write in the fewest possible words without sacrificing completeness and courtesy. Because a wordy message requires more time to write and read, business people put a high premium on⁷ conciseness in business messages. Conciseness will give emphasis to the message. We should economize on words and seek brief ways of saying things. One way of doing this is to avoid cluttering phrases and eliminate surplus words. Instead of saying “*In the event that* payment is not effected by March, the operation will cease”, we can use “If” to substitute for “*In the event that*”.

Examples

Cluttering words	Concise substitutions
at the present time	now
for the purpose of	for
for the reason that	since, because
in accordance with	by
in the near future	soon
in view of the fact that	since, because
on the basis	by
on the occasion of	on
with a view to	to
with regard to, with reference to	about
prior to	before

As with cluttering phrases, we often use meaningless extra words either out of habit or because of ignorance. Eliminating these surplus words may require recasting a sentence, but sometimes they can simply be left out.

Examples

With surplus words	Without surplus words
1. <i>There are</i> five rules that should be observed.	1. Five rules should be observed.
2. <i>In the period</i> between June and August they found the error.	2. Between June and August they found the error.

⁷ put a high premium on: 高度重视

Besides, avoiding unnecessary repetition of words or ideas is another way to achieve conciseness. Repeating words obviously adds to sentence length. Of course, such repetition sometimes serves a purpose as when it is used for emphasis or some special effects. But it is not surprising to find that business correspondence is full of padded phrases. In the following examples you will find nothing has been lost in meaning or effectiveness without the italicized words.

Examples

1. It came *at a time* when we were busy.
2. Leather depreciates *in value* slowly.
3. It will cost *a sum of* \$120.
4. *a certain* person by the name of Bill Jones
5. *in the city of* Columbus
6. The radio sells for *the price of* \$50.

Repetition of ideas through the use of different words that mean the same is known as redundancy. Here are more examples of redundancy and ways to eliminate them.

Examples

With repetition	Without repetition
1. Our new model is longer <i>in length</i> than the old one.	1. Our new model is longer than the old one.
2. The consensus <i>of opinion</i> is that the tax is unfair.	2. The consensus is that the tax is unfair.

Clarity

Clarity tells the reader exactly what the author wants and needs to know, using words and a format that make the writing totally understood. Familiar words and simple sentences rather than difficult words and complex sentences are preferred for this purpose.

The following examples will illustrate the effect of using familiar words on communications.

Examples

Long and unfamiliar words	Short and familiar words
1. Company operations for the preceding accounting period terminated with a substantial deficit.	1. The company lost much money last year.
2. This machine has a tendency to develop excessive and unpleasant audible symptoms when operating at elevated temperature.	2. This machine tends to get noisy when it runs hot.

The degree of formality in writing is dictated by the nature of the message and the background of the reader. The writing in dissertations, theses, legal documents and high-level government documents is expected to be formal. Business memorandum (memos), e-mail messages and reports are expected to be informal.

Business writers usually prefer the informal words in the right column rather than the formal words in the left column.

Examples

Formal and unfamiliar words	Informal and familiar words
terminate	end
procure	get
remunerate	pay
corroborate	support
utilize	use
elucidate	explain
consummate	close
peruse	read

Short, average-length sentences are easy to read and preferred for communicating clearly. But, too many short sentences may make the writing choppy (支离破碎的); therefore, sentences should vary in length and in structure. Variety is just as desirable in paragraph length as it is in sentence length. A paragraph can be from one line in length to a dozen lines or more. However, just as average sentence length should be kept short (the average length of sentence is 12 to 16 words), average paragraph length also should be kept short.