

全方位商务英语系列教材

Business English Writing
—Based on Practical Cases

商务英语应用文

刘菁蓉 陈 婵 编著



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前 言

经过三十年的改革开放,我国对外经济贸易的发展可谓喜忧参半。喜的是,我国对外竞争能力在不断地增强;忧的是我国对外经济贸易发展的环境日益错综复杂。在激烈的商务竞争背景下,商务英语应用文——作为国际商务从业人士的沟通工具——显得尤其重要,因为沟通的成功与否直接决定了商务机会的多寡。

随着我国外语教学及对外交流的不断发 展,学生的外语基础也在不断地提高。但是在商务知识方面,他们却储备不够。因而,在学习商务英语应用文的过程中,如何理解每封商务信函的背景,如何写出符合其背景及措辞恰当的信函对他们是一种挑战。

本教材不仅注重语言讲解和语言练习,还采用商务案例讨论与写作的形式,激发学生的讨论,激活学生的思考,促进学生灵活应用商务知识及商务英语语言,以实现学生对商务英语写作的综合应用能力,达到商务英语写作真正的教学目的——根据不同的商务背景,恰当地运用商务知识与商务英语语言,实现良好的商务沟通。

该教材也提供了一种商务英语写作的教学方法——案例型教学法。本教材共 12 单元,除第一单元外,其他单元内容主要包括信函和商务知识介绍、样信学习、案例讨论与写作及语言练习等部分。信函和商务知识介绍部分为样信的学习进行了铺垫;样信的学习让学习者感受应用文写作的特点;案例讨论与写作可以活跃课堂气氛,实现寓教于乐,又能让学习者巩固和挑战自身的写作能力;语言练习可以由学习者根据自身学习情况,自主选择学习。

该教材所选案例和样信来自于商务实践,学习者可以学习真实的商务用语和写作格式;与此同时,学习者可以体验真实的商务环境。

通过本教材的编写,希望能够向当前商务英语写作教学提供一种新思路,即注重培养学生商务思维和商务知识与语言应用能力,帮助学习者能够更好地步入职场。

本教材广泛适用于各大专院校商务英语专业、国际贸易专业和非专业学生的后续课程;也适用于欲从事国际商务的自学人士和相关的培训机构。

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浙江工商大学外国语学院 刘菁蓉

2011 年 10 月

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Unit 1

Introduction to Business Email Writing

Important tool of communication—email

Business English writing is a means of communication to handle business matters among businessmen in different nations. About 20 to 30 years ago, it took the form of airmail, but with the development of computer and Internet, it is email that bridges the communication between businessmen.

Email has obvious advantages over other communication tools, such as telephone, mobile, MSN or face to face negotiation. First, email is very convenient and fast. With the rapid increase of computers and usage of Internet, email can reach almost every corner of the world within seconds. It greatly strengthens the communications in doing international business, facilitates the problems solving and hammers the relationships between businessmen. Second, email is cheaper than most other communication tools. Businessmen usually put profit as their priority. Low cost certainly will help them gain more profits. Third, email takes the written form of communication and it produces evidence for each transaction. As we all know, anything would happen at each step of the complex international business. When facing the problems, how to protect the interest of a businessman himself is quite critical. The best way to prove himself is to provide corresponding evidences. Email is the tool which records all the details of communication.

Layout of email writing

An email usually two components—the head and the body of a message. The head mainly consists of *To Field*, *From Field* and *Subject Field*. Usually a writer should fill *To Field* with a receiver's email address and put a subject to *Subject Field*. In business writing, the business writer should handle the subject carefully. He should write the main idea of the message there.

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A good subject will impress the receiver and give an edge to the message, while a poor subject will irritate and disinterest the receiver and consequently help result in junk mail. In addition, the head also includes BCC (Blind Carbon Copy), CC (Carbon Copy) and Enclosure. BCC means that the email also will be sent to some other receivers invisibly, while CC means to someone visibly. Enclosure is very useful for the writer to enclose other documents.

The body of a message is similar to the main part of a letter and includes salutation, the main body, the complimentary close and the signature.

To: purchaser@gmail.com
BCC:
CC:
From:
Subject: contact information
Enclosure:
<p>Dear George,</p> <p>Many thanks for your reply and having me informed. Could you give me the company name, telephone and contact person? We just worry about the law problems. I will discuss these problems with my boss.</p> <p>Please check our website: www.zzz.com and it is good if you can solve these problems. Please do not worry about our quality. I can assure you of this.</p> <p>After checking the website, please tell me which model you like. I will send you the language price list. Could you give me your city name for I do not understand German and will not know which city you are in.</p> <p>Many thanks.</p> <p>Best regards,</p> <p>Jason</p> <p>Sales Director</p>
<hr/> <p>Shenzhen Zzz Furniture Company add: No.188 Binhai Street, Luohu District, Shenzhen, China Tel: +86-755-ZZZZZZZZ</p>

Fax: +86-755-zzzzzzzzzz
 website: www.zzz.com
 CELL: +86-zzzzzzzzzz
 MSN=
 SKYPE =

The body of a message has two styles. One is the block style, just like the above example. All the things start from the left hand and no space is allowed. But there must be one-line space left between different paragraphs or parts of the body of the message. It is very convenient for the businessmen to write and is the most popular way to write a business email. The other is the indented style, which requires a 4-letter space left for each paragraph. The salutation must start from the left hand. The complimentary close, the signature and the title of the writer should be put in the right-hand bottom under the body of the message. Here is an example.

To: purchaser@gmail.com

BCC:

CC:

From:

Subject: contact information

Enclosure:

Dear George,

Many thanks for your reply and having me informed. Could you give me the company's name, contact telephone and contact person? We just worry about the law problems. I will discuss these problems with my boss.

Please check our website: www.zzz.com and it is good if you can solve these problems. Please do not worry about our quality. Our quality is very high. I can assure you of this.

After checking the website, please tell me which model you like. I will send you the language pricelist. Could you give me your city name for I do not understand German and will not know which city you are in.

Many thanks.

Best regards,

Jason

Sales Director

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Shenzhen Zzz Furniture Company
 add: No.188 Binhai Street, Luohu District, Shenzhen City, China
 Tel: +86-755-zzzzzzzzzz
 Fax: +86-755-zzzzzzzzzz
 website: www.zzz.com
 CELL: +86-zzzzzzzzzz
 MSN=
 SKYPE =

Salutations and complimentary close vary with relationships between the addresser and the addressee. If business emails are written to unknown businessmen or customers, the salutation can be very formal; after several communications, the salutation can be less formal. With further communications, the trading partners will feel like old friends, then the salutation and complimentary close can be very casual to show closer relationships. The popular salutation and complimentary close are as follows:

	Salutation	Complimentary close
Formal	Dear Sirs, Dear Sir, Dear Sir or Madam, Gentlemen: Ladies: Ladies and Gentlemen:	Yours faithfully, Faithfully yours,
Less formal	Dear Mr. White, Dear Ms. Brown, Dear Manager, Dear Customer,	Yours sincerely, Yours truly,
Casual	Dear Jenny, Dear Mike, Hi Lily, Hi Andrew,	With many thanks, Best regards, Kind regards, Warm regards, Regards,

In business writing, open style is often adopted, i.e., no punctuation is used after salutations or complimentary closes.

标点
 punctual
 准时

Language style

With the globalization of the world economy, international business has extended to either English speaking countries or non-English speaking countries. English as world language is the major communication language for the international business. To promote and ease business between businessmen, the language style of business English writing, especially in the form of email, is very concise.

First, spoken words are used instead of big words. Spoken words can be understood well by businessmen not only from English speaking countries but also from non-English speaking countries. Thus, no misunderstanding will arise and business can be done better. In addition, sometimes businessman will use initials of business words.

Instead of	Use
<i>alleviate</i>	<i>reduce or lessen</i>
<i>consequence</i>	<i>result</i>
<i>endeavor</i>	<i>try</i>
<i>implement</i>	<i>begin</i>
<i>expedite</i>	<i>speed up</i>
<i>you</i>	<i>u</i>
<i>your</i>	<i>ur</i>
<i>because</i>	<i>coz</i>

Second, simple sentences are more often used than compound sentences to serve the business purpose. The paragraph below shows us this feature of sentences in business English writing.

Please check our website: www.zzz.com and it is good if you can solve this problem. Please do not worry about our quality. Our quality is very high. I can assure you of this.

Third, most business writings get to the point directly. This can help businessmen focus on the main issues and save time and energy. However, if the writing requires some tactics, it will be an exception, such as a writing to convey negative news or some special requests.

In conclusion, the language style is concise and clear in most cases, but it also depends on the special situation and also the businessman who writes. One thing is sure that the simpler the writing is, the better understanding it induces.

Language principle

Doing international business involves many different kinds of emails. Each kind of email, based on the specific situation, has its own writing principles. However, there is a basic principle which caters to any kind of email writing. That is Sincerity.

Sincerity decides the words the writer uses, the way the writer informs and the attitude the writer holds to the trading partner. If the writer is sincere, he will choose polite words to show his respect; he will better organize the writing to avoid any side-effect feeling and misunderstanding; he will consider the position of his trading partner to settle any disputes objectively and finally consolidate and lengthen business relationships.

For the specific writing included in this textbook, its principle will be discussed in each unit. However, those general principles had better be regarded as reference instead of rules to write. The specific writing in practice should be based on the combination of factors like micro and macro business backgrounds, businessmen's culture backgrounds and market strategies.



Unit 2

Development Letter

Finding a potential customer

International business is the business between different regions and nations, which are usually far away from each other and have different languages and cultures. Consequently, to carry out each transaction always means a long and complex procedure which involves many indispensable steps, which vary with the different nations.

However, before businessmen conduct their businesses, initially they face the same and very significant step—finding their potential customers, the possible foreign businessmen to do business with. Only with successful finding can they go on with further negotiations and fulfillment of business.

How do businessmen find their potential clients nowadays? No definite answer is available. Different businessmen try different ways. Some can find their customers with the help of advertisements in newspapers, magazines or other media; others by contacting banks, chambers of commerce in foreign countries or the Economic and Commercial Counsellor's Office of the Embassy in foreign countries; still others consider attendance to a commodity fair or searching online, which are the latest and popular ways today. Probably most businessmen would agree that a wise businessman will find his potential trading partners by trying different ways.

In finding a potential customer, the more specific the information is, the bigger the chance is to win the customer. With the specific name and email address, a businessman will pay attention to his email; with the specific number of telephone or cellphone, the writer can give a call later to impress his potential trading partner and show his sincerity to do business.

After you find your potential customers, the next job to do is to write a development email to them, expressing your desire to do business with them. Generally speaking, where you get the name and address of the addressee and why you address to him/her are mentioned at the very beginning of the email to avoid abruptness and to inform the addressee of your

trading intention. Then, of course, you will mention your business line or the products you handle. To impress your potential partner with details of your products, you'd better give your business website as soon as possible. Finally, your special way of doing international business is mentioned to win time and focus on the critical and necessary matters during further negotiations. A good development email includes the parts just mentioned, but should have different ways to express. Only the good knowledge of the products and markets will inspire writers.

In good times, it is relatively easy to find a trading partner for more business opportunities. And in hard times, only lucky businessmen can find potential partners quickly. What counts for the most businessmen then? They are strong determination, persistence, unique writing and right products.

Sample letters to study

Letter 1

Dear Sirs,

As we all know, your supermarket is regarded as one of the leading supermarket chains in China. From your recent ads, we learn that you are looking for a trustful partner who can provide you qualified imported vegetables and fruits, so here we hope to express our sincere desire to cooperate with you.

Please firstly allow us to introduce our company. We specialize in exporting different kinds of food with high quality. Take exported vegetables for example, we can ensure the freshness and nourishment through our efficient transportation and improved food preservation technology. Most importantly, we will do our best to meet your demands in time.

In order to give you an overall idea about our goods, we are sending you a copy of the latest catalogue which covers all the products we handle.

We are looking forward to hearing from you and your specific enquires.

Yours faithfully,

Vera

Sales Director

Letter 2

Dear Sirs,

Learning from your official website that you are one of the leading importers of silk in your area, we have the pleasure of writing to you with a view to establishing business relations with you. We have sent you several specific emails to introduce ourselves to you as a

competitive corporation and we will continue writing to you and make all efforts to win your appreciation.

Our company is located at Hangzhou, a picturesque city in southeast China. The city is famous for its silk products which have beautiful outlook and good quality. To give you a general idea of our products, this is our official website: www.hzsilk.com. By referring to those pages, it is certain that you can have a better understanding of our silk products.

We are looking forward to your early news in this connection and we believe that through our mutual cooperation both of us will gain a lot in the near future.

Yours faithfully,

Winifred

Sales Representative

Letter 3

Dear Sir,

We have your name from www.exporter.alibaba.com, and learn your company is a successful kitchenware appliance company. We take this liberty of writing to you with a sincere wish to establish business relations with you.

We are a privately managed company with more than 7 years' experience in the kitchenware business. We have 4 assembly lines, and 11 workshops in charge of different tasks, yet cooperating with each other. Our business scope is mainly in processing kitchenware components and manufacturing all kinds of kitchenware. We have been doing exports for about 5 years, and have stable business relations with 4 foreign firms. With the increasing reputation in this field, we are seeking to build business relations with you to expend our exporting trade.

To give you a general idea of our products, we enclose an E-catalogue showing our latest products with details, including specifications and pictures. We shall be glad to answer any of your inquiries at any time. Also enclosed in the letter is the detailed location and address of our company. If you have any interest, you could contact us.

We look forward to your early reply.

Yours faithfully,

Li Yun

Sales Manager

Letter 4

Dear Sirs,

You have been introduced to us by Mr. A.G Topworth, sales director of Swanson & Bros., in Hamburg. From him, we are glad to learn that you wish to enter into trade relations with a well-established corporation in the line of chinaware goods.

This is to introduce ourselves as a chinaware supplier. Our firm, located at the east of China, was established nearly a century ago. Owing to our long history, we have many years' experience in this particular line of business, and gain a reputation in this field. Our products win every year's golden prize in the Chinaware Competition. You can visit www.chinaware.com to see our certificates from the year 2000 to 2009.

Our goods are very popular and sell well not only in the USA, but also in France, Germany and some other European countries. Therefore, we are confident to open the market and gain the popularity in your country.

We take the liberty of writing to you with a view to establishing business relations with you. We enclose a complete set of leaflets showing various products and quotations, you can certainly find your own favorites.

As chinaware are valuable and fragile, samples will be sent upon receipt of your specific enquires and you need to pay \$10 for it.

In case you need more information about our financial standing or business status, we shall be only too glad to introduce a reference to you.

We are looking forward to your early reply.

Yours faithfully,

Polly

Manager

Letter 5

Dear Sirs,

I got your e-mail address from Alibaba.com. I learnt that you are looking for a long-term bag supplier in China.

Our company J&S is one of the most famous bag suppliers in China. Our biggest production base is located in Guangzhou and near the port which is very convenient for delivery of the goods. We have a long history and good reputation for our bags. Besides, we have our own excellent bag designers. There are all series of bags in our company for women and men. What's more, we produce new bags according to the latest international fashion.

Our target market is the middle-class which is the same with yours. If you establish business relations with us, you will enjoy two competitive advantages of our bags—good

quality and low price. One of our honorable certificates is “the most trustable company” which was given by the Guangzhou Bag Production Association. The retail price of our bags are mostly between RMB 200 and RMB 500, which is within the reach of most middle-class people.

We have no international partner up to now. But we are trying to push our bags into the international market this year. In order to show your company our sincerity, we would like to go to your head office in America and give you a more detailed introduction about our company and products. Of course, you can also get more information by login our website www.js1998.com. And we would like to forward our quotation as soon as we get your specific inquiry.

We are looking forward to establishing business relations with your company and we believe we will have a satisfactory cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Nigel

Manager

Letter 6

Dear Sir,

We are a specialist manufacturer of thermos flasks with plastic housing and stainless steel coffee pots amongst other domestic thermo utensils which are primarily aimed at the mid-range and high-end markets in China, Europe, America and the Middle East.

Since its founding in 1991, we have done our utmost to keep in pace with the rhythm of times, grasp the trend of market and put more efforts in the development of new products, resulting in a wide catalogue consisting of over 200 items, a dozen of which are patent protected, and an extensively recognized goodwill. Thanks to our long-held strategy focusing on the development of human and information resources and taking science and technology as the No. 1 production force, now we have over 300 employees in all.

From now on, we will commit ourselves to offering our customers unsurpassed products and service as we have done before, and enable our dealers as well as ourselves to stand at a more favorable position by means of leading edged technologies, unrivaled quality and unbeaten price.

By following our excellence-pursuit and service-oriented tenet, and the quality-centered and harmonic-operation focused business philosophy, we will make unremitting efforts to introduce state-of-the-art technologies and management ideas in a bid to enhance the development of this sector and make contributions to the improvement of life level of the people around the world.