

英汉对照

现代商业书信指南

[美] Betty & Hutchinson 著



安徽科学技术出版社

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Business Letters made simple

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Introduction 引言

Business Letters Made Simple is an easy-to-use manual for business letter writing. It provides the following features:

1. A discussion of effective business communications.
2. Guidelines to clear business letter writing.
3. Special considerations for international business letter writing.
4. The format and elements of a business letter.
5. Types of business letters.
6. Tips on how to write each kind of business letter.
7. Examples of each kind of business letter.
8. Special features of business letter writing made possible by electronic word processing.

You will find you can easily use or adapt many letters, paragraphs, and phrases directly from *Business Letters Made Simple*. We have written the sample letters for the purpose of saving you the effort of having to "reinvent" all your own letters from scratch. By changing or adapting a word here and a phrase there, you can readily make these "standard" paragraphs yours. They will then reflect your company or business situation and your own personality.

Whenever you need to write a letter on a new topic—one that is out of the ordinary for you—there is a discussion of that kind of letter in this book and samples for you to use or adapt.

Business Letters Made Simple is the result of six decades of combined experience in writing business letters. The authors have written these letters from senior management, large international corporate experience, from middle management, middle-sized business experience, and from privately held small business experience. They have combined a breadth of subject matter, communications theory, and knowledge of electronic word processing to make *Business Letters Made Simple* a unique, contemporary, practical guide for today's business letter writers.

《简明商业尺牍》(英汉对照本改名《现代商业书信指南》——出版者注)是一本撰写商业书信时使用方便的手册。它提供以下特有内容:

1. 对有效的商业书信的讨论;
2. 撰写清晰明确的商业书信的准则;
3. 撰写国际商业书信需要特别考虑的问题;
4. 商业书信的格式和组成部分;
5. 商业书信的类型;
6. 撰写各类商业书信的提示;
7. 各类商业书信的实例;
8. 商业书信的撰写有可能由电子文字处理的一些特性。

你将发现,你可以直接从本书中轻而易举地摘抄或改写许多书信、电文和成语。为了省却你自己从零开始去“重新发明”各类书信写法所费的工夫,我们写出了各类信件样例。只需要在这里或那里变更或改动一个词或一个成语,你就可以容易地将这些“标准”的段落变成你自己的东西。这样一来它们将反映你公司或企业的情况和你自己的个性。

每当你需要写一封新题材的书信时——一封对你来说是超乎寻常的信——本书中就有关于那种书信的讨论,并有样例供你采用或改写。

Contents 目录

INTRODUCTION

1 THE IMPORTANCE OF CLEAR COMMUNICATIONS	清晰明确的通讯的重要性	1
Principles of Effective Communications	有效通讯的原则	1
The Sender and the Receiver	发信人和收信人	
The Subject	主题	
The Message	信文	
Transcultural Communications	交错文化的通讯	
The Language of Effective Communications	有效通讯的语言	3
Range of Sending and Receiving	寄信和收信的范围	
Levels of Formality	合乎礼仪的水准	
Levels of Education	受教育的水准	
Level for Business Correspondence	商业通信的水准	
Steps in Effective Communications	有效通讯的步骤	4
Make Sure You Clarify the Subject to Yourself	一定要做到:自己对主题很明确	
Make Sure You Understand the Receiver As Much As Possible	一定要做到:尽可能地了解收信人	
Analyze the Nature of Your Message	分析你的信息的性质	
Determine the Response You Want to Elicit	确定你设想得到的反应	
Elements in Effective Communications	有效通讯的要素	6
Clarity	简单明了	
Accuracy	内容准确	
Brevity	删繁就简	
Timeliness	及时	
A Record	记录	
Personal	个人化	
Effective Communications with Overseas Business Correspondents		9
与海外商业通信者的有效通讯		
From Romance Language Areas	来自罗曼斯语地区的通讯	
Technical Words	技术词汇	
British English	英国英语	
A Sample Letter	书信样例	
2 FORMAT OF A BUSINESS LETTER	商业书信的格式	16
General	概述	16
Reduce Keystrokes	减少打字符号	
Block Left	并列式	
One Page	一页篇幅	

Format for a Single-Page Letter	单页书信的格式	17
Date	日期	
Address	封内地址	
<i>Social or professional title</i>	社交或职业的头衔	
<i>Business title</i>	企业头衔	
<i>Company name</i>	公司名称	
<i>Street/box number</i>	街道/信箱号码	
<i>City, State, ZIP</i>	城市、州、邮区编号	
Subject Line	标题	
Salutation	称谓	
<i>First name</i>	名字	
<i>Social or professional title</i>	社交或职业的头衔	
Body	正文	
Complimentary Closing	补充结尾词	
Signature and Title	签名和头衔	
Typist's Initials	打字员姓名首字缩写字母	
Enclosures	附件	
Copies	副本	
Some Alternative Formats	某些替换格式	37
Semiblock	混合式	
Address at Base of Letter	在信末尾的收信人地址	
One-and-a-half Spacing or Double Spacing	行间间距增加一半或加倍	
Envelopes	信封	41
Regular Business Envelopes	正规的商业信封	
Window Envelopes	开窗信封	
Larger Flat Mailers	较大的扁平邮件	
Packages	纸袋包裹	
3 CLEAR AND UNADORNED LANGUAGE	清晰而朴实的语言	44
Use Language That Acts	采用主动的语言	44
Explain, But Don't Overexplain	需作解释,但不宜过多	45
If You Claim Too Much, You Lose Your Credibility	如索价太高会失去信用	46
Keep Your Letter Serious	保持严肃认真	46
Write in Your Own Style	使用自己的体裁	47
Use the Paragraph as Your Main Unit of Thought	以段落作为思想的主要单元	47
Say Things in a Positive Way	从正面谈问题	48
Generally, Stay with Standard Words	一般说来,使用规范的词语	48
Choose Clarity Instead of Shortcuts	选择清晰的语言而不是操捷径	49
Keep Your Tone Consistent in a Letter	语气始终连贯一致	50
4 LETTERS FOR BETTER CUSTOMER RELATIONS	增强与客户关系的信	51
Welcoming a New or Potential Customer to the Community		51
欢迎新客户或潜在客户进入社交圈子		
Welcoming a New Customer to Your Business	欢迎新客户的信	54
Holiday Greetings	节日祝贺信	57

Appreciation for a Good Business Suggestion 赞赏良好的营业建议信	59
Appreciation for a Business Suggestion You Did Not Implement 对未被采纳的建设的感谢信	61
Appreciation for a Favor 感谢提供帮助信	63
Acknowledgment of Receipt of a Letter 收信回函	65
Appreciation for a Complimentary Letter About an Employee 对反映雇员情况的感谢信	67
Adjustment Made 作出调整的信	69
Adjustment Denied 拒绝调整的信	72
Thanks for a Difficult Job Done Well 感谢圆满完成困难工作的信	75
General Thank-you Letter 一般感谢信	77
Letter of Apology 道歉信	79
Anniversary of an Employee 雇员的周年纪念信	81
Anniversary of a Firm 一家公司的周年纪念信	84
Apology for an Employee's Attitude or Action 为雇员的态度或行为道歉的信	86
5 GENERAL LETTERS 一般信函	89
Letter of Introduction 介绍信	89
Letter of Recommendation 推荐信	92
Letter of Solicitation for a Good Cause 为某高尚事业呼吁信	96
6 SALES LETTERS 销售业务书信	100
General Sales Letter 一般的销售书信	100
Sales Letter to an Inactive Customer 给一位不活跃客户的销售信	103
Introduction to a Request for a Demonstration or Interview 要求作示范或会见的引见信	106
Follow-up After a Demonstration or Interview 示范或会见后的补充信	108
A General Morale Builder for Salespeople 给销售人员的一般鼓励信	111
Introducing a New Salesperson 介绍新推销员的信	114
Answering a Request for Information 对要求提供信息的复信	116
Follow-up Sales Letter 补充销售信	118
Stay-in-Touch Letter 调查信函	121
When a Customer Has Been Promoted or Has Changed Jobs 祝贺客户被提拔或改变工作的信	123
When a Customer Is Ill or Injured 客户生病或受伤时的慰问信	126
When There Is a Death in a Customer's Family 客户亲属死亡时的慰问信	128
When Something Good Happens in a Customer's Life 祝贺客户喜事临门信	130
When You Read About a Customer 谈到有关客户消息时的信	132
7 CREDIT AND COLLECTION LETTERS 信用及收款信	135
Credit Inquiry Letter 信誉咨询信	135
Granting Credit 赊卖信	137
Denying Credit 拒绝赊卖信	139
Inviting an Account 征求赊购信	141
Collection Letters 索款信	144
Letter of Credit Delinquency 拖欠债户催告信	147
Apology for a Collection Letter Sent in Error 因误发索款信表示道歉信	148
Collection Letter to an Old Customer 给老客户的索款信	150

8 LETTERS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS 特殊场合的书信	153
Accepting an Invitation 接受邀请信	153
Declining an Invitation 谢绝邀请信	155
Letter of Compliment 恭维信	157
Requesting Permission to Use Copyrighted Material 征求允许使用版权所有材料的信	159
Letter of Praise to an Outside Firm 对外部公司的赞扬信	163
Letter to a Public Official 给公务员的信	165
9 LETTERS FOR BETTER COMMUNITY RELATIONS 改善社团关系信	168
Accepting an Invitation 接受邀请信	168
Contribution to a Charitable Cause 捐助慈善事业信	171
Refusing to Contribute to a Charitable Cause 拒绝向慈善机构捐赠的信	173
Request for Zoning Modification 建议修改区域布局的信	175
Invitation to a Reception 邀请参加招待会的信	178
10 LETTERS TO EMPLOYEES 给雇员的信	180
Welcome to a New Employee 欢迎新雇员的信	180
Congratulations on a Promotion 祝贺晋升信	183
Condolence or Sympathy 吊唁信或慰问信	185
Thanks for an Employee Suggestion 感谢雇员建议信	187
New Company Direction 有关公司新方向的信	190
Company Reorganization 有关公司改组的信	193
Increased Benefits 增加津贴信	197
11 LETTERS TO THE MEDIA 致舆论机构信	201
Correcting Misstatements About Your Company 要求纠正关于公司的错误报道的信	201
Supporting a Position 支持信	205
Demanding a Retraction 要求撤回报道的信	207
12 FINANCIAL LETTERS 财务书信	210
Banking Letters 银行事务信	210
Credit Bureaus 给征信所的信	212
Financial Institutions 给金融机构的信	214
To Creditors or Debtors 给债权人或债务人的信	217
13 LETTERS ABOUT SERVICES AND PRODUCTS 关于服务和产品的信	220
Asking for Information 征求信息信征	220
Asking for Bids or Estimates 求投标或估价信	223
Placing an Order 订货信	226
Rejecting a Bid 拒绝投标信	228
Letter of Complaint 抱怨信	230
Letter of Compliment 恭维信	233

14	LETTERS ABOUT EMPLOYMENT	职业书信	236
	Seeking Employment	求职信	236
	Request for Letter of Reference	征求证明信	239
	Letter of Reference	证明信	242
	Letter of Resignation	辞职信	244
	Seeking an Employee	招聘雇员信	247
15	BUSINESS LETTERS AND ELECTRONIC WORD PROCESSING		249
	商业书信与电子文字处理系统		
	Format	格 式	249
	Spelling Verification	拼写检验	250
	“Boilerplate” or Stored Paragraphs “公式化的”或储存的段落		250
	List Processing	编目处理	251
	Copy Features	复印器件	251
	Mathematical Features	数学器件	252
	Tables and Columns	表和栏	252
	Reports That Repeat Data	重复资料的报告	252
	File Copies	永久性的副本	252
	Diskette Maintenance	塑料磁盘的保存	253
	Frequent Letters	常来往的信件	253
	Improved Communications	改善的通讯	253

CHAPTER 1

The Importance of Clear Communications

清晰明确的通讯的重要性

Communications is the lifeline of modern business. It is essential that ideas be sent and received in a timely and clear manner. A message received too late or one that does not readily disclose its author's intent is at best, useless or, at worst, harmful.

通讯是现代商业的生命线。人们的思想需要及时和清晰明确地交流或沟通。迟到的信息或没有直截了当表达作者意图的信息最好的情况是成为废纸,最坏的情况则造成祸害。

PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS 有效通讯的原则

Before going into the format, mechanics, and contents of business letters, it is helpful to consider some basic principles from communications theory. Once these principles are grasped and adopted, you can approach any letter-writing task with confidence. You know what the letter is supposed to accomplish, what you have to do, and how your reader will interpret it. You know these things because you apply the principles of sound communications theory to your business letter writing.

在研究商业书信的形式、结构及内容之前,先考虑一下通讯理论方面的一些基本原则是有益的。一旦掌握和接受了这些原则,你就能满怀信心地处理任何一种写信任务。你会懂得这封信应完成什么使命,你得做什么事,以及读信人会如何领会它。你会懂得这些的,因为你把正确的通讯理论的原则应用到你的商业书信中去了。

The Sender and the Receiver 发信人和收信人

First, there are two *people* involved in a business letter: you and the person to whom you address the letter. In communications theory you are called the "sender"; the person to whom you address the letter is called the "receiver." There may also be some others who look over your shoulder, people to whom you send copies of the letter. These are called "observers." Their role essentially is passive, whereas the roles of the sender and the receiver are active. You are trying to get the receiver to *understand* something (cognitive response) and possibly to *do* something (active response). In some communications you are even trying to get the receiver to *feel* something (emotive response).

第一,商业书信涉及两个人:你和你给他写信的人。在通讯理论中你被叫做“发信人”,你给他写信的人被叫做“收信人”。也许还有其他一些监督你的人,你要给他们送去这信的副本。这些人被称为“监察者”。他们的作用基本上是消极的,而发信人和收信人的作用则是积极的。你试图使收信人理解某事物(认识反应)而同时可能又去做某事(行动反应)。你甚至在某些通讯中试图使收信人产生某种感觉(感情反应)。

The Subject 主题

Second, there is a concept or subject you have in mind. Usually, this concept is a vague cluster of ideas. It is not until you begin to express this concept in words that it starts to take

a clear, identifiable form. You need to give some structure to this concept, to organize it in a logical outline, to make parts of it concrete with names and figures, to give it a kind of life of its own with a beginning and an ending. For instance, you may want to talk over some business matter with the receiver. That's your vague concept. But when it comes to actually inviting him to come to your office for a business discussion, you need to expand that concept into a specific day and hour for an appointment, an agenda for points to be discussed with any backup financial and technical data that should be included in the discussion, plus a generalized impression of where you hope the discussion will lead. The actual discussion may arrive at some other conclusion, but you need to have your primary goal in mind for the meeting to be other than a social visit.

第二,你想到了一种概念或主题。这个概念通常是一串模糊的思想。只有在你开始用语言表达这个概念时,它才开始轮廓清晰分明。你要给这个概念赋予某种结构,把它组织成一个符合逻辑的大纲,使它某些部分具体地以姓名和数字表示出来,加上信的开头和结尾格式,赋予它独自的生命。例如,你也许想同收信人洽谈某项生意等。那就是你的模糊的概念。但是,当到了实际邀请对方来你的办公室进行一种商业洽谈时,你就需要把那个概念扩大而为一次约会的特定的日子和钟点,要讨论各要点的议事日程,包括应该讨论的任何预备的财务数据和技术资料,加上你希望这样一次讨论将会导致的概括性的印象。实际的讨论也许会得出某种其他方面的结论。但是,你对这样一次会面要预先心中有数,不同于一次社交访问。

The Message 信文

Third, there is the message you send to the receiver. This is a written replication of your subject. In your message, you want your receiver to have in his mind the same subject or concept that you have in yours. You are trying to enable him to see the concept in the same way you see it, to understand it as you understand it, to feel about it as you feel about it. The success of your business letter can be measured by the degree to which your receiver has in the end the same view of the subject that you had when you wrote the letter.

第三,你给收信人寄去的是一种信息。这就是你主题的一种书面形式。在信中,你想要收信人心中与你怀有同样的主题或概念。你在想法使他能够以你看问题的同样方法去看待此概念,象你理解它那样去理解它,象你琢磨它那样去琢磨它。你商业书信的成功程度可以通过最终你的收信人对你写信时所具有的主题的看法相同的程度来衡量。

Transcultural Communications 交错文化的通讯

In some instances your message will have to cross cultural lines. This may occur when you write to people within this country of a different educational experience, of a different social group, or to people of a different technical specialty. When you write to these people, you cannot take it for granted that they will readily understand your technical terms or your professional assumptions. And it most surely occurs when you write to people overseas, to people who use English as a second language, to people who have different managerial systems, to people who order their government and society by different patterns. When you write to these people, you have to take even less common ground for granted.

在某些情况下,你的信不得不越过一些文化上的界限。当你写信给国内不同教育经历、不同社会集团的人们,或给不同技术专长的人们时,这种情况就有可能发生。当你写信给这些人时,你不能想当然地认为一切不成问题,他们将易于理解你的术语或你的职业性的设想。这种情况最可能发生在你写信给侨居海外的人们、用英语作第二语言的人们、具有不同管理制度的人们、以不同的模式建立他们自己的国家和社会秩序的人们时。当你写信给这些人时,你就不得不姑且当作甚至较少共同点了。

THE LANGUAGE OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS 有效通讯的语言

Range of Sending and Receiving 寄信和收信的范围

Every user of a language is both a sender and a receiver. You normally understand many more words that you hear or read than you normally use in your own speech or writing. You recognize them or guess their meaning close enough, even though you may not use them as a working word in your own everyday vocabulary. This is true also of grammatical forms. You have a feeling for when grammar is correct and when it is less formal, even though you may have forgotten all the special names for verb forms or all the rules for dealing with gerunds. Usually we are more at home with our spoken language than with our written language. Our reading and listening vocabularies are considerably larger than are our writing and speaking vocabularies.

一种语言的每个使用者既是寄信人又是收信人。正常情况下你所懂得的,即你听到的或读到的词语大大多于你平常在讲话或书写中所用到的词语。即使你也许没把它们用作日常词汇的工作词语。你却认识它们或相当准确地猜出其意思。各种语法形式情况也如此。当语法正确或当它较为不正式时,你都会有一种语感,即使你可能已经完全忘了动词形式的那些特殊名称或者有关动名词的全部规则。通常口语与书面语相比较,我们对口语更能运用自如。我们的阅读词汇和听力词汇大大超过我们的书面语和口语词汇。

Levels of Formality 合乎礼仪的水准

We use our language at different levels of formality. A person who is speaking to the annual meeting of a company's stockholders uses a different level of vocabulary and grammar than the same person does when telling a joke at a backyard barbecue. A person who is interviewing for a job uses a different level of formal language than does the same person when describing the interview to a close friend.

我们在不同的形式水准下使用着我们的语言。一个向公司股东年会致词的人使用的词汇和语法水准不同于他在后院宴会上所使用的词汇和语法水准。一个为求职而被接见的人所使用的正式语言水准不同于他向一位挚友描述接见的情况时所用的语言水准。

Levels of Education 受教育的水准

There is educated language, that is, language used in formal and informal situations by a person who has had years of formal education. A college professor who gives a lecture to a scholarly organization uses educated formal language; and when he tells friends about his vacation, he uses educated informal language. In his lecture he will use technical and literary words that he may not normally use when talking about his vacation. This high-level educated language—doctors talking to each other about medicine, lawyers talking to each other about a legal case, computer scientists talking to each other about high-technology developments—includes many technical words that give accuracy to language and serve as abbreviations in rapid communication between specialists, but these words are usually unintelligible to those who are outside the specialty.

有一种受过教育的语言,即是一个受过多年正式教育的人在正式和非正式场合下使用的语言。给一个学术性组织讲演的大学教授使用的是正式的受过教育的语言,但当他给朋友讲述他的假期生活时,他就使用非正式的受过教育的语言。在讲演中他将使用在讲述假期生活也许

一般不大用的技术词语和书本词语。这种高水平的受过教育的语言——相互谈论医药的医生们,相互谈论一个法律案件的律师们,相互谈论高技术发展过程的计算机科学家们——包含许多赋予语文准确性以及在科学家们之间的快速通讯中用作缩写的技术词语,但是这些词语对那些外行人来说一般是晦涩难懂的。

There is also uneducated language, the language of people who have limited formal education. This language might be street language in a big city or mountain language in a rural hill community. The people who use uneducated language are not ignorant, indeed they may be quite brilliant, but their language is not the product of formal education. It is the product of the living environment. This language, too, has many technical words that make the speech colorful, but also make it unintelligible to those who are outsiders.

同样也存在着未经教育的语言,受过有限的正式教育的人的语言。这种语言可能是大都市的街头语言或乡间山村社会的山区语言。使用未经教育语言的人们并非是不学无术的人,确实,他们十分有才华,但是他们的语言不是正式教育的产物。它是生活环境的产物。这种语言也有许多技术词语,使言谈丰富多彩,但对门外汉来说同样是晦涩难懂的。

Levels for Business Correspondence 商业通信的水准

Most of your business correspondence is in the common (that is, shared by both educated and uneducated users) area of the language. This guarantees the greatest degree of communication—it is not so educated or formal that most people fail to understand it, nor is it so slangy and informal that people feel it is unimportant or reject it as inappropriate. However, if you write about a technical subject in your business letter, you will probably use special words that “insiders” know, and these words are generally not in the common area of the language. In this kind of letter, parts of the letter will be in the *technical* business correspondence level of the language.

大部分商业通信语言都属于普通的语言范畴(即受过教育的人和未受教育的人都共同使用的语言)。这就在最大程度上保证了通讯的顺利进行——它不是多数人无法理解的十分深奥或正式的语言,也不是人们觉得不重要或由于不恰当而拒绝使用的俚语和非正式的语言。然而,如果你在商业书信中写到技术问题,你也许要用一些“内行人”懂得的专门词汇,但这些词汇一般不属于语言的普通范畴。在这类书信中,信的有些部分将属于技术性商业通信水准的语言。

STEPS IN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS 有效通讯的步骤

There are some standard steps to take to achieve clear communications with your receiver.
有些标准步骤可采取,以达到清楚明确地与收信人通讯。

Make Sure You Clarify the Subject to Yourself

一定要做到:自己对主题很明确

If you have not clarified the subject to yourself, you will never be able to communicate it to the receiver. The first step is to satisfy yourself that you fully understand what you want to say, then work to find the clearest words in which to express the concept. We say “work” because sometimes you will have to try two or three times before you are satisfied that you have the best possible wording. For this reason drafts are essential for important letters.

如果你的主题不明确,你决不可能把它传达给收信人。第一步要使你自己对充分理解自己想说什么感到满意。然后“动脑筋”推敲出表达这一概念的最清楚明了的词语。我们说“动脑

筋”，因为有时你得“推敲”两三次才会满意地认为你已做到最好地措词。为此，重要的书信要起草稿。

Make Sure You Understand the Receiver As Much As Possible

一定要做到：尽可能地了解收信人

The second step is to try to put yourself in the place of the receiver. What can you presuppose he knows that the two of you share in common? What will you have to define further or to expand upon? What will move him to take the action you want him to take or to feel the response you want him to feel? What is his “need to know” in order for him to enter into your concept? The more you have worked with the receiver in the past, the less you will have to elaborate your concept, since you and he have already learned to think along the same lines. The less you have worked with your receiver, the more explicit you will have to be in your message to ensure that your concept is adequately conveyed.

第二步是想法做到替收信人设身处地想一想。你能推测出他懂得你们两人通常共同享有的语言文字吗？你将要进一步表明或阐述什么东西？什么东西将促使他去采取你想要他采取的行动或使他感觉到你想要他感觉到的反应？为了使他进入你的想法之中他需要知道什么？过去你与收信人打交道越多，你就可以越少地煞费苦心说明自己的想法，因为他和你已经懂得沿着相同的思路去想问题。你与收信人打交道越少，你更要较明确地在信中表明你的想法，以保证你的想法能适当地传递给对方。

Analyze the Nature of Your Message 分析你的信息的性质

Much also depends on the nature of your message. A letter requesting payment of an overdue bill can be much shorter and to the point (since you both know about the history of the transaction) than does a proposal for developing a new software product for a computer products company. A letter of enquiry will be less formally worked out than a complete business proposal.

许多情况也取决于信息的性质。一封要求支付一张过期票据的信件与提出为计算机生产公司研制一种新软件的建议信相比，可以短而中肯得多（由于你们双方了解这次交易的历史状况）。咨询函要比一个完整的商业建议较为非正式些。

Determine the Response You Want to Elicit 确定你设想得到的反应

Much depends on the type of response you wish to elicit in your receiver. Do you want understanding only or understanding and action? How much emotion do you need to generate in order to set in motion the action you want your reader to take? If you are writing a sales letter or a fund-raising letter, the action you call for (a purchase or a contribution) should serve to satisfy some need your reader senses (a new gadget to make barbecuing easier) or to make him feel good about himself in some way (helping a child in a Third World orphanage). Some words are emotion-filled: “the joy of helping to feed hungry children and to give them hope”; “this new wonder of modern chemistry will restore that showroom sheen to your car, and heads will turn to watch you as you drive by in the sparkling sunlight.” The emotion in a covering letter with a contract, in contrast, is much more subdued: “I take great pleasure in sending you this signed contract. After long hours of mutual preparation and negotiation, we are delighted to take this first formal step in what we hope will be a long business journey together.”

许多情况取决于你希望收信人方面作出反应的形式。你仅仅要求理解,或者是理解加行动?为了使你的读者把你想要他采取的行动付诸实现,你需要激发出他多大的热情?如果你是在写一封销货信或一封筹措资金信件,你希望唤起的行动(认购或摊派)应该可以满足你的读者意识到的某些需要(一种新的灵巧装置使烤烧过程较为容易)或者使他在某些方面自我感觉良好(帮助第三世界一个孤儿院的一名儿童)。有些词语是充满激情的:“在给饥饿儿童以食物并给他们以希望中的助人乐趣”,“现代化学的这种新奇迹将会使您的汽车恢复那崭新的光泽,而当您在金光闪闪的阳光下驱车而过时,人们都会转过头来观看您。”相比之下,一封随合同寄送的伴书中的感情则不同,要淡薄得多:“我高兴地给贵方寄去这份已签订的合同。经过长时间的共同准备和谈判之后,我们高兴地迈出了将是我们漫长的共同业务联系中的第一步。”

ELEMENTS IN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS 有效通讯的要素

There are some elements that are a necessary part of effective communications. Every business letter will have these elements to some degree.

有些要素是有效通讯的必不可少的部分。每封商业函件都在一定程度上具有这些要素。

Clarity 简洁明了

You know your subject well and have thought it out clearly. You choose the best possible way of expressing your subject. You keep the receiver foremost in mind, since your intent in sending the communication is to enable him to share your perspective on the subject. Care in thinking, care in choosing words, and care in evaluating how best to convey your message to the receiver results in clarity. A breakdown at any one of these points leads to a muddled communication. You may be clear to yourself, but that in itself is of little avail in achieving effective business communications.

你十分清楚自己的主题并且已清楚地仔细地考虑过。你选择了可能是最好的表达你主题的方法。你心中要牢记收信人,由于你寄去信的意图是使他能够共享你主题的远景。细心思考,细心措词,细心估计如何最好地传达你的信息给收信人,从而得出简洁明了的结果。在任何这样的要点上考虑不周都会全功尽弃,你可能自己心中明了,但仅此一点无补于事。

Accuracy 内容准确

You need to make sure you have your facts right. Most business letters contain references to dates, money, events, products, processes, schedules, agreements, relationships, and the like. You are building on past fact to move matters forward in some way. If you present your facts loosely or inaccurately, you contribute to confused communication. You show the receiver that you are careless about the facts, encouraging him to have less regard for you or to be equally indifferent to the facts. Double-check your facts for the sake of the business arrangement as well as for your own professional reputation.

你需要明确你所谈的事实是清楚的。大多数商业书信都提到日期、钱款、事件、产品、加工过程、明细表、协议、各方关系等等。你在过去的事实基础上把事情在一定程度上推进一步。如果你把事实写得松松垮垮或含糊不清,你就使得这次通讯杂乱无章。你给收信人的印象是你对事实十分粗枝大叶,从而促使他较少考虑你的意见,或者同样地对这些事实不关心。为了商业上的安排以及为了你自己业务上的声誉,请你一再核实你提到的事实。